

MADISON LEWIS WOODLANDS CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: MADISON LEWIS WOODLANDS LANDSCAPE HISTORY

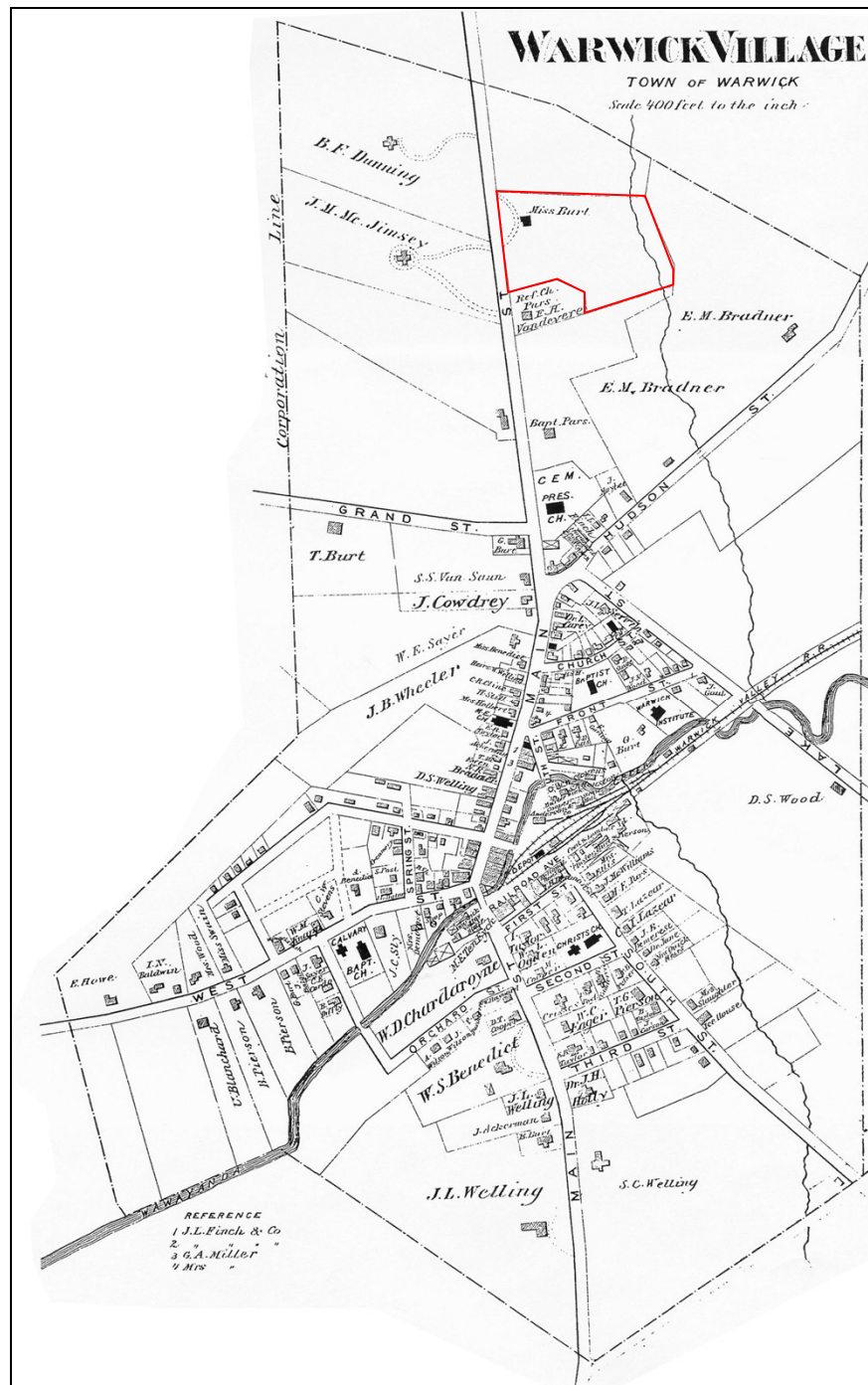


Figure II.1. The land of the future Belair estate is outlined in red on the 1875 atlas with a house and crescent shaped drive owned by 'Miss Burt'. Courtesy Albert Wisner Public Library. (R-MLW-AWL-OrangeCoAtlas-1875-148-crop.jpg)

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Figure II.2. View toward the south end of the semi-circular drive on Maple Avenue shows an expanse of mown lawn in the foreground. Two stone piers with a double gate stand to either side of the drive, which curves in an arch. Dense deciduous trees are located along the frontage of the public road and individual trees extend into the property. Other small tree and shrub plantings are visible. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-VW-BA2-Gate-1900.jpg)



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Figure II.3. View from Maple Avenue shows the southern drive entrance onto the Belair estate grounds. A metal swinging gate attached to the stone piers mark the entrance to the curving drive. Metal fencing continues along the Maple Avenue frontage. Dense plantings screen views of the estate from the public street. Immediately beyond the drive, the landscape slopes downward and a portion of the woodlands is visible in the background. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-SG-DrivePiers-1908-front.jpg)

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Figure II.4. 1900 view of the original Belair carriage house shows the building sited at the top of a sloping hillside with open turf and the woodlands visible beyond. A driveway curves to run parallel with the front of the building. Small evergreen trees are planted along the drive edge, additional young trees grow on the hillside and a trimmed hedge and a young tree are sited in the turf across from the building. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-VW-BA2-CarriageHouse-1900.jpg)



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Figure II.5. This 1900 view looking across the vegetable garden toward the rear of the carriage house shows the plowed vegetable garden with a row of plantings defining the edges. A large tree and a small tree grow on the grassy hillside between the garden and carriage house. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-VW-BA2-CarriageHouseVegetableGarden-1900.jpg)



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Figure II.6. View of a gazebo reveals its rustic style, constructed of rough cedar posts with an angled wood roof covered in bark slabs and a simple wood floor. The gazebo is set in an area of open turf with prolific trees and shrubs directly behind. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-VW-BA2-Gazebo-1900.jpg)

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Figure II.7. This circa 1910 postcard view of a rustic gazebo depicts a second 'summer house' in a slightly different form and setting from the previous view. Constructed of unmilled natural cedar posts, rails and decorative panels it has a cedar shingle roof and wood floor. Rustic benches are set inside and a stone foundation is visible. Sited on a grassy knoll, a path runs along the front and narrow semi-circular walk provides access to the entry. Individual flowering shrubs grace the area with dense plantings in front and the woodlands beyond. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-VW-SummerHouse-1910.jpg)





Figure II.8. A rustic wooden arbor covers a crowned path with gutters to both sides near the formal garden area. Grape vines climb the arbor, creating interesting patterns of light and shade. The edge of the ice house is visible at the end of the arbor. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R-MLW-VW-BA-GrapeArbor-1910.jpg)



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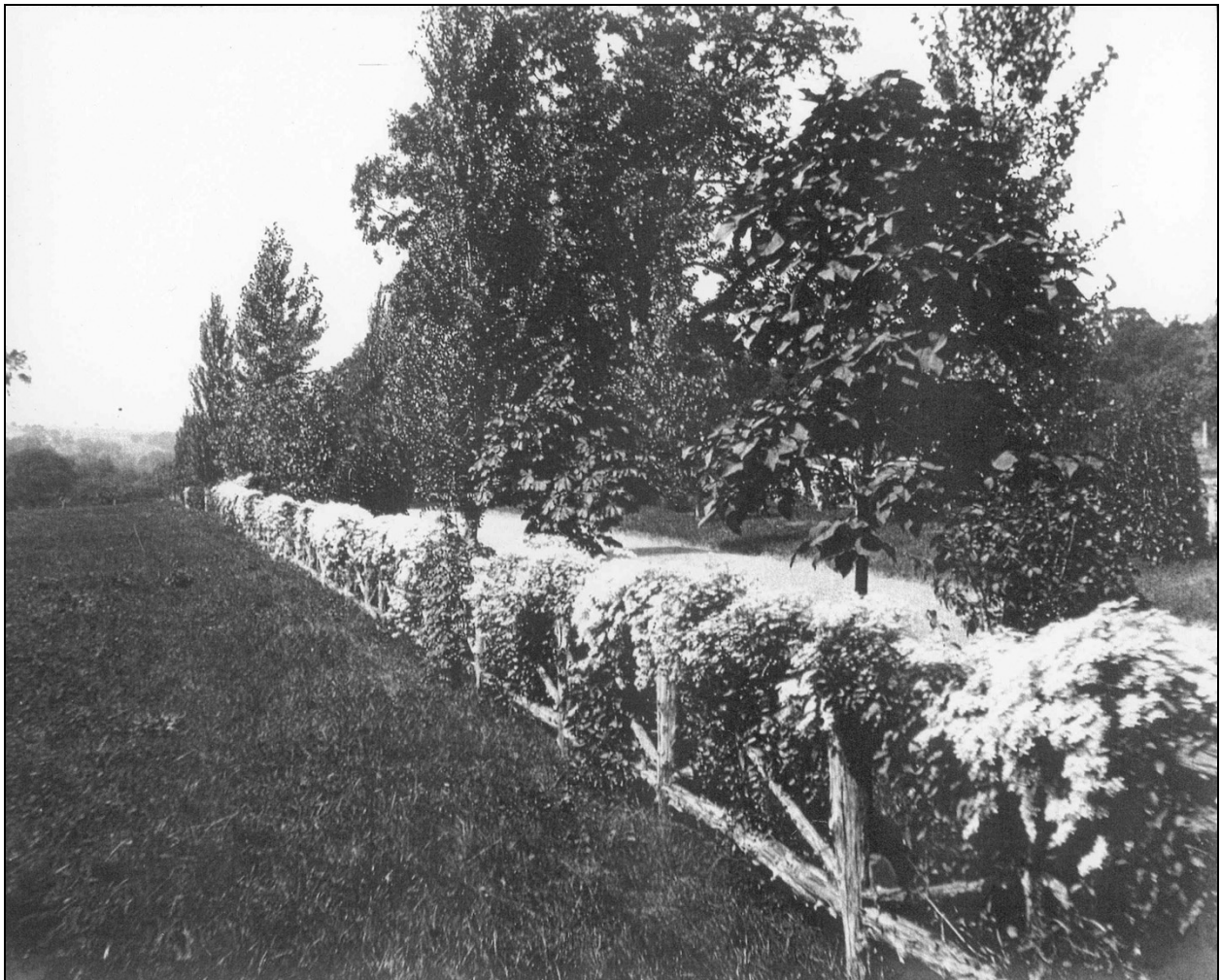


Figure II.9. This view shows a carriage drive edged with a rustic, cedar log fence with a uniform cover of blooming flowering vines, possibly sweet autumn clematis. An open grassy field is located to the left, while deciduous trees line the carriage drive. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R-MLW-VW-BA-Fence-1910.jpg)

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Figure II.10. This hand colored print depicts a portion of the Belair estate with the main carriage drive, Italian Garden to the left, and a vine arbor to the right. The cross drive provides access between the carriage house and the constructed pond and ice house. Colorful flower beds line portions of the drives. The edge of the white pergola is visible to the left. As shown on period maps the main drive continues through the woodlands to Colonial Avenue. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-SG-GardenAxis-1910-front.jpg)



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Figure II.11. View looking northwest shows a grassy slope with the Belair mansion and plantings beyond. Several young trees are planted in rows indicating that this may be the edge of the orchard to the southeast of the house. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-VW-BA2-OrchardField-1900.jpg)



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Figure II.12. This 1906 view along a constructed path through the woodlands shows planted margins of ferns with shrubs, young trees and older trees providing shade. While the precise location of the photograph is unknown, the depicted character documents dense under-planted woodland. The sunny area beyond the trees may be an open field. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R-MLW-VW-BA-Footpath2-1906.jpg)



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Figure II.13. This historic photograph is centered on a constructed channel with stabilized edges crossed by a small bridge. A row of trees and a walk run alongside the stream to the right while a frame, possibly a trellis, extends above a stone wall on the left or opposite side of the stream. A structure is visible in the background to the right. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R-MLW-VW-BA-Brook-1910.jpg)

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Figure II.14. This view along the carriage path shows a bridge edged by peeled cedar rails located near the edge of the woodlands. The rustic wooden bridge posts match the style of other landscape features. Mature deciduous trees overhang the end of the bridge while a flowering shrub row appears to edge the path with a corn crop behind it to the left. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R-MLW-VW-BA-CarriagePath-1910.jpg)



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Figure II.15. This view along the side of a woodland carriage path shows a rustic bridge that crosses a dry depression. Deciduous trees define the background while shrubs cover the ground plane. A rhododendron is visible in the left lower corner of the image. This rustic bridge image provides sufficient information to reconstruct this picturesque bridge. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-SG-Bridge-1900-front.jpg)



Figure II.16. View along the curving drive shows an entrance into the Belair estate. A rustic pole and twig gate creates a framed entry over the drive. Deciduous trees of varying sizes line the drive with the woodlands visible beyond. The ground plane is covered with a blooming meadow. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R-MLW-VW-BA-Gate-1910.jpg)



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Figure II.17. View along the curving drive shows the rustic pole and twig gate shown in the previous image and additional features at the entrance into the estate. A pedestrian gate is located to the side of the carriage gate. A simple roof provides shade, and wooden fence extends to either side of the gate. To the left, the fence connects with a wooden post and wire fence that restricts access onto the estate grounds. Deciduous trees of varying sizes line the drive with the woodlands visible beyond. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-SG-GateDrive-1927-front.jpg)

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Figure II.18. View looking across the Italian Garden from the edge of the pergola conveys the formal character of the garden space. Beds of flowering plants line the north and south edges with spruce hedge to the north. A central, circular stone fountain sprays a water jet high into the air, providing a focal point for the garden. Planting beds extend to both sides of the fountain. The far end of the garden is punctuated by a white marble bench with a bust and pedestal in front of it. A sundial on a pedestal is located near the left edge of the photo. A pruned catalpa tree stands to the left with the climbing vines of the pergola just beyond the frame. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R- MLW-VW-BA-Garden-1910.jpg)





Figure II.19. Another formal garden view shows the curving, white marble bench and sculptural stone bust shaped as a traditional herm. The garden edge planting bed defines the foreground with woodlands to the right. Trees, shrubs, and open turf are seen in the midground of the image. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R-MLW-VW-BA-GardenBust-1910.jpg)

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Figure II.20. View from within the pergola looking out toward the entrance to the formal garden. Fluted columns support the pergola roof. Wisteria and Dutchman's Pipe cover the structure. A carved stone bench is placed under the pergola. The trimmed catalpa tree visible beyond the pergola may be the same tree seen in Figure II.18 or it may be part of a paired planting. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R-MLW-VW-BA-Pergola-1910.jpg)



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Figure II.21. This view looks northeast from inside the rustic arbor toward the formal garden from under the trellis at the garden entrance. A trimmed catalpa tree and the planting bed that defines the south garden edge is evident. The fountain edge plantings are barely visible beyond the tree. The northern evergreen hedge is visible with the dense woodlands beyond. This view provides a basis for the construction details of the proposed entry arbor. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R-MLW-VW-BA-GardenArbor-1910.jpg)



Figure II.22. Photograph of the spacious, furnished wrap-around porch of the Belair mansion conveys the relationship between building and landscape. Vines adorn the exterior of the porch. The planted vegetation growing on and around the building contributes to the character of the near landscape and frames views into the estate grounds. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-VW-BA2-Porch2-1905.jpg)



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Figure II.23. This view looking toward the southwest corner of the Fowler mansion shows the plantings that flank the drive, climb on the porch and appoint the landscape near the building. The planting character is quite showy and is in a different style from that of the naturalistic character of the estate woodlands. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-VW-BA2-HousePlantings-1905.jpg)



Figure II.24. This image looking northeast at the Fowler estate carriage house and garage shows a compacted gravel drive gently sloping away from the buildings. Rough turf covers the ground plane, while trimmed vines cover the first story of the stable. This carriage house was constructed in approximately the same location as the original carriage house. It appears that the carriage drive has been realigned and much of the earlier plantings have been removed. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R-MLW-VW-BA-GarageStable-1910.jpg)





Figure II.25. A grass tennis court is seen in this view looking southeast toward the playhouse. The two-story wood-frame structure provides indoor play space for the Fowler family. A stone and wood well is seen to the left (north) with a wooden tête-à-tête bench placed near it under the canopy of a deciduous tree. Four deciduous trees are seen in a row along the front of the building. Beyond the building, the ground plane slopes up with a meadow ground plane that serves as a transition to the woodlands beyond. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R-MLW-VW-BA-PlayhouseLawn-1910.jpg)

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Figure II.26. The still water of the pond reflects a row of deciduous trees in this view looking southeast across the lawn to this constructed water feature. Several small evergreen trees are positioned along the edges. Simple benches and a dock are visible in the shade under the trees. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-VW-BA2-Pond-1900.jpg)



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Figure II.27. This view looking southeast toward the orchard, gazebo and pond provides a broader context on the designed landscape of the Fowler estate. Young orchard trees are located on the grassy hillside in the foreground, while the constructed pond, roof of a rustic gazebo, and open fields are beyond. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-VW-BA2-PondOrchard2-1900.jpg)

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Figure II.28. View looking south from the carriage house and stables show a drive curving downhill, past the orchard to the right and an arbor, center. The drive continues to the left to the woodlands. The arbor-covered secondary drive runs parallel to the orchard and leads to the constructed pond, visible at end of the drive. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R-MLW-VW-BA-FromStable-1902.jpg)



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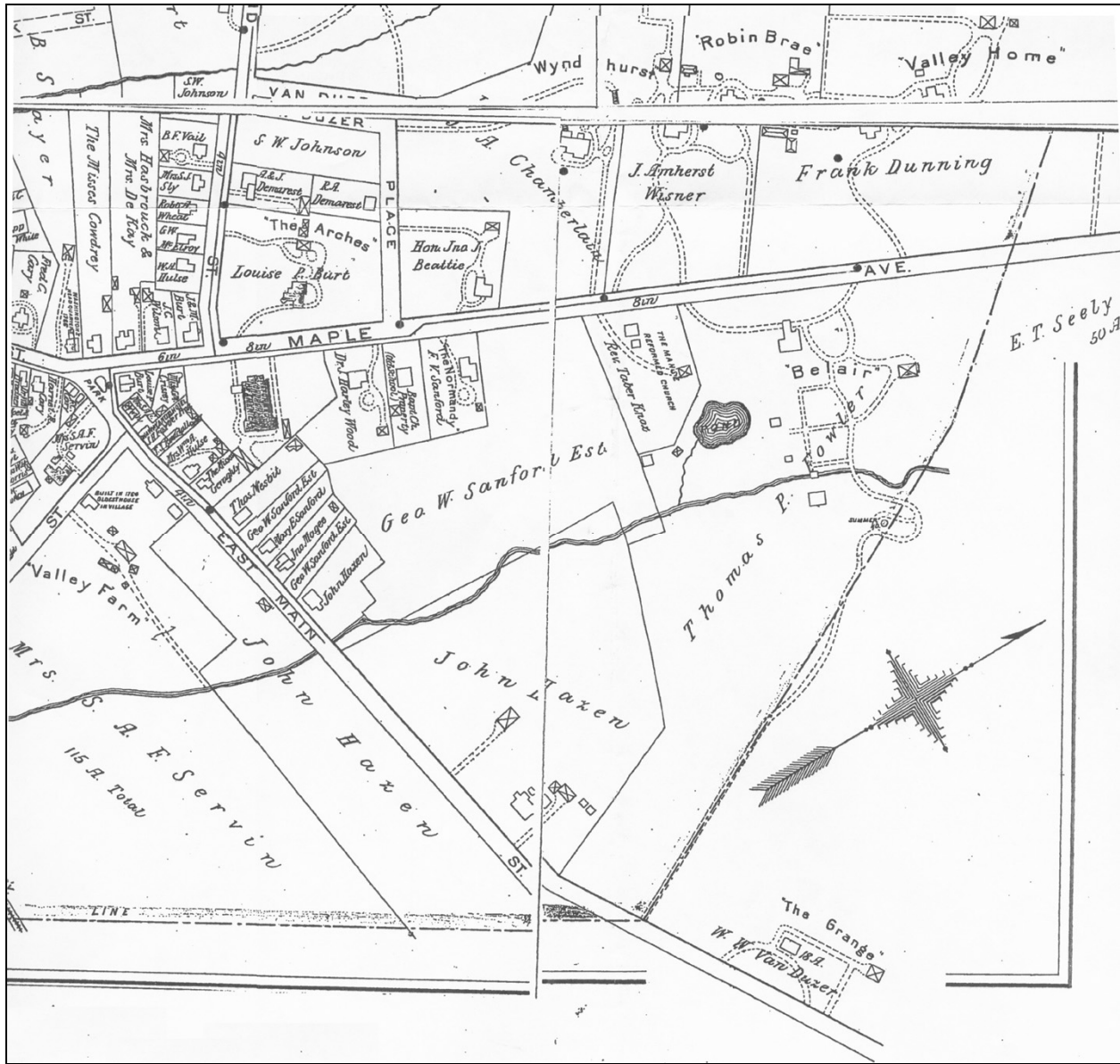


Figure II.29. This detail of the 1903 atlas of the Village of Warwick shows the Belair estate north of the village center and depicts several landscape features. The system of drives is shown as are the pond, mansion and carriage house and several other buildings. The building directly north of the constructed pond is the ice house and the building to the east of the stream is the playhouse. One ‘summer house’ is noted on the east side of the stream, circled by the carriage path. The purpose of the other three structures depicted on the plan is unknown. Courtesy Albert Wisner Public Library. (R-MLW-AWL-VillageAtlas-Detail-1903.jpg)

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Figure II.30. View looking north along the Belair driveway shows the drive running under a porte-cochere that extends from the west façade of the house. A collection of trees is seen on the gently sloping hillside south of the house. Another tree is visible along the drive edge. Vines grow on the façade of the house and porte-cochere. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-VW-BA2-HouseDrive-1905.jpg)





Figure II.31. This view along a compacted gravel path or drive shows a curving alignment emerging from the shade of the woodlands. Beyond the woods, shrubs and meadow cover the ground plane. In the background, the path curves around a sunny hillside. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R-MLW-VW-BA-Footpath-1906.jpg)



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Figure II.32. This view looks north across the constructed pond. A floating swan sculpture is visible and a small white boat is at the pond edge in front of the evergreen tree. The constructed stone wall that defines the pond edge is evident. A carriage path and additional plantings can be seen in the background. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-SG-Pond-1920s-front.jpg)



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Figure II.33. This view looks northwest across the constructed pond. The rock fountain sprays water into the air, adding a focal point to the water feature. A sculpture of a swan floats on the still water near the fountain. A small boat is visible near the edge of the pond in front of the large evergreen tree and a stone wall defines the pond edge. The Fowler mansion is visible in the background surrounded by plantings. Courtesy Steve Gross. (R-MLW-SG-PondHill-1920s-front.jpg)



Figure II.34. A rustic wooded arbor with climbing vines arches over the constructed gravel path in this 1906 image. This photograph within the woodlands depicts the variable tree cover along the path with a rustic bench located alongside. Deciduous trees of varying sizes are interspersed throughout with a low rough ground plane. This view is a source for the construction details of the proposed entry arbor at the Robin Brae entry. Courtesy Warwick Historical Society. (R-MLW-VW-BA-FootpathArbor-1906.jpg)



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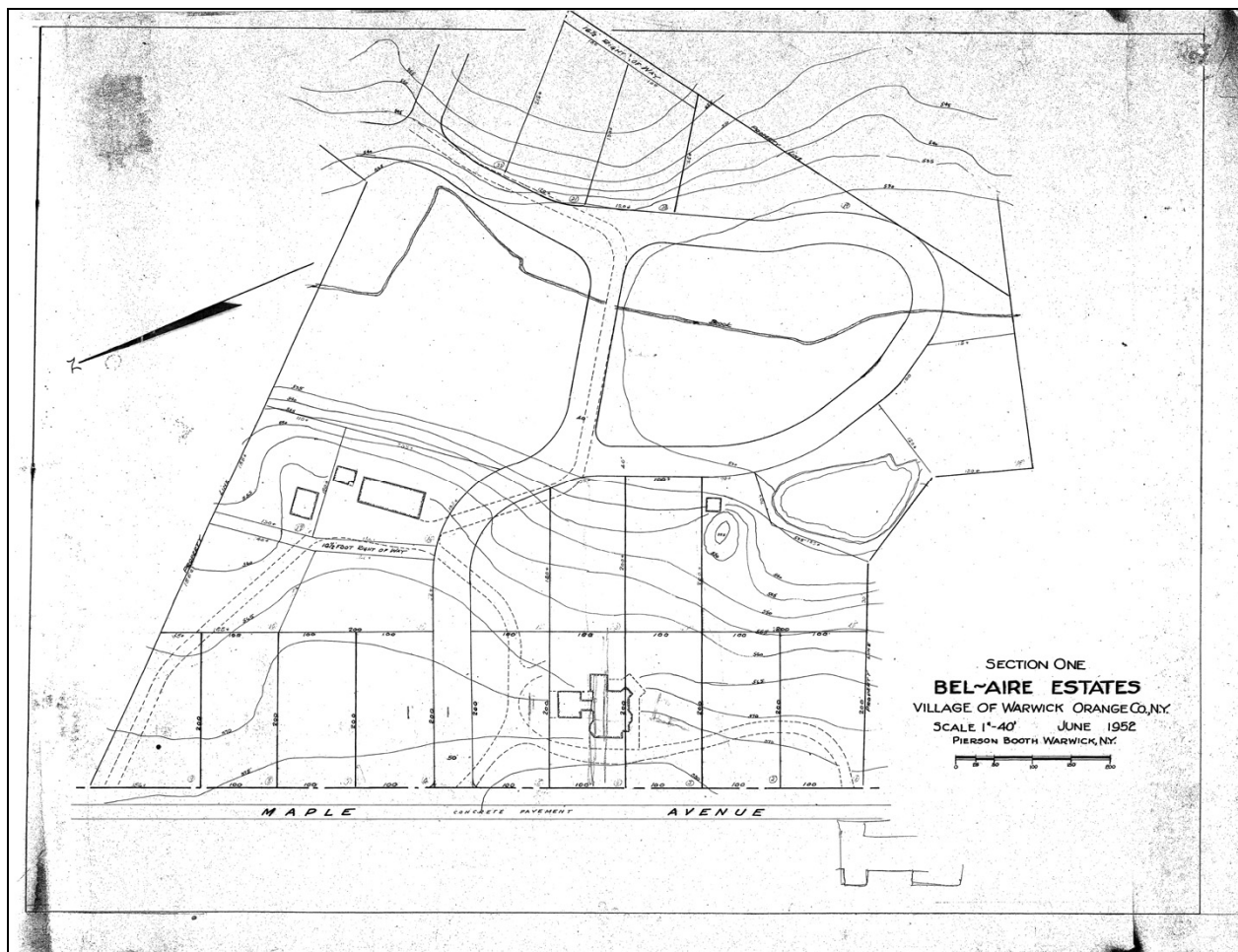


Figure II.35. “Section One Bel-Aire Estates” plan by Pierson Booth shows the subdivision of the 38-acre Fowler estate. It also shows the buildings and drives that remained intact in 1952. The main house and curving entry drive remain along Maple Avenue. The drive continues north and east, connecting with the carriage house and barn. The ice house and pond remain southeast of the house. It appears that the playhouse that was located east of the pond and stream has been removed. Courtesy Garden Club of Orange and Dutchess Counties. (R-MLW- GC-RobinBraePlan-1952.jpg)

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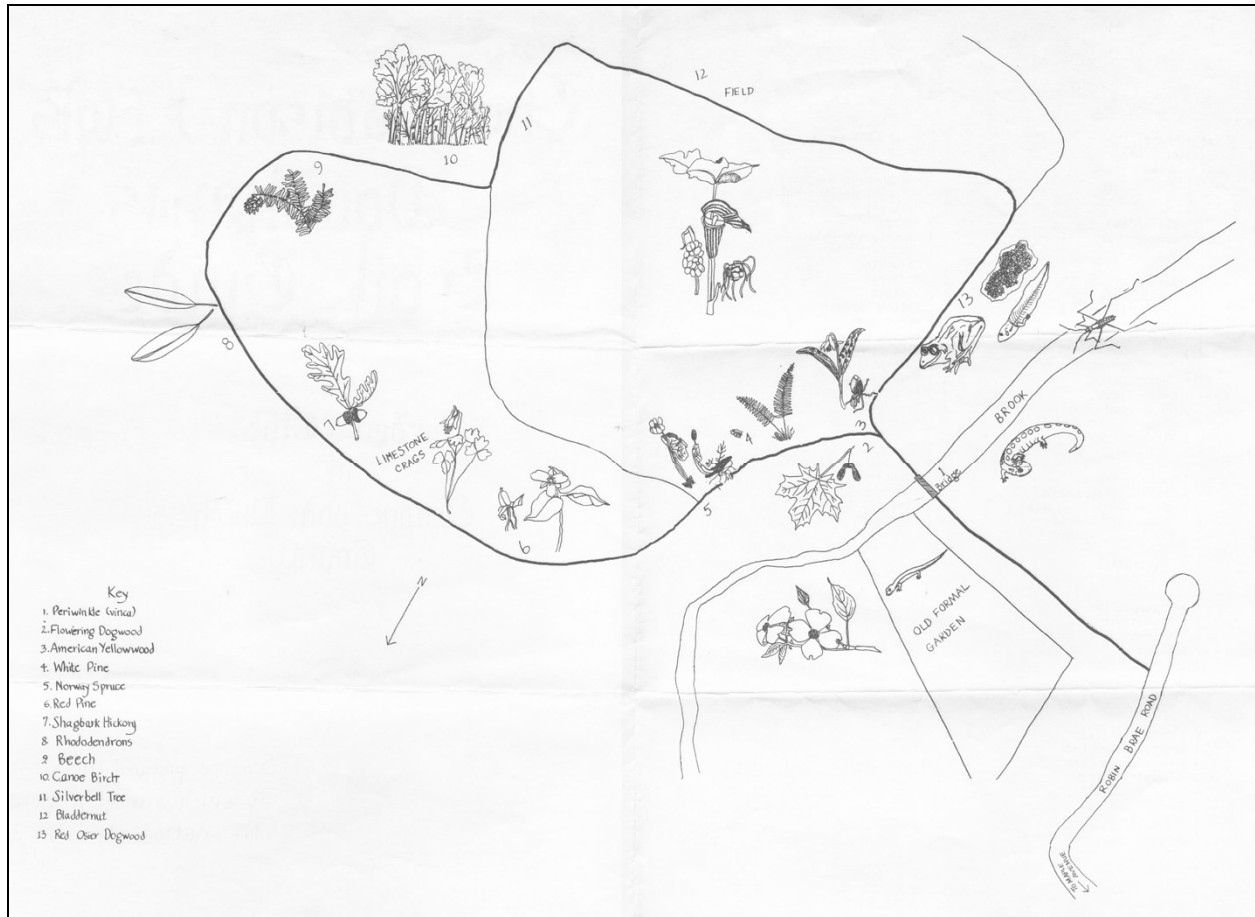


Figure II.36. The “Madison Lewis Woodlands Trail Guide” illustrates the trails through the woodlands, following the historic carriage paths. Simple illustrations and a key note the locations of specific plants that can be seen while strolling through the woodlands. Courtesy Garden Club of Orange and Dutchess Counties. (R-MLW-VW-GC-TrailGuide.jpg)