



Formal Horticultural Gardens at Wormsloe, ca. 1930s.

De Renne Family Papers, Hargrett Library, University of Georgia.

From its English settlement in the 1730s, Wormsloe has continuously been the site of practical and ornamental gardens. Noble Jones experimented with tropical and subtropical plants on his new plantation. He cultivated pomegranates, oranges, grapes, white mulberry trees, agave, apricots, and other exotic species. The succeeding generations continued this horticultural experimentation, planting camellias, roses, azaleas, and ornamental trees across the plantation landscape. Around the turn of the twentieth century, Wymberley J. De Renne launched an extensive campaign to landscape a substantial portion of the plantation with botanical specimens.

De Renne also designed the formal gardens pictured above. His son, Wymberley, and daughter-in-law, Augusta, expanded these formal gardens behind the main house in the 1910s and 1920s. The De Rennes built brick walls, a dove cote, iron fences, arbors, gazebos, and fountains to complement neat beds and borders of flowering plants. Wymberley's and Augusta's landscaping drew attention from visitors and the press, and the formal gardens served as the centerpiece of Wormsloe Gardens tourist attraction, which opened in 1927. Portions of the walled garden remain today.