

# The Achievement Medal of the Garden Club of America

Awarded to Mrs. Bratenahl for the Cloister Garth of the College of Preachers

THE Garden Club of America has awarded each year for the past ten years a medal for what it considers to be the greatest achievement, accomplished by one of its members, within the span of that particular year. The membership of the Garden Club of America, which extends throughout the country, now numbers over six thousand; and from these one is chosen each year to receive this award, known as the Emily D. Renwick Achievement Medal, named after the donor who established it. This year the medal has been given to Mrs. G. C. F. Bratenahl for her achievement of the Cloister Garth of the College of Preachers. Mrs. Bratenahl, wife of the Dean of Washington, is in charge of the landscape design and development of the Cathedral Close. She has been associated with All Hallows Guild, the Garden Guild of the Cathedral, for fourteen years as Treasurer as well as Chairman of its Garden Committee. Besides being responsible for the design and development of the planting of the College of Preachers, including its Cloister Garth, she was the landscape architect of the Bishop's Garden and the recently completed Pilgrim Steps and their planting. A few months ago she was invited to become one of the Corporators of the Lowthorpe School

of Landscape Architecture at Groton, Mass.

The letter announcing the award of this medal and its acknowledgment follow:

THE GARDEN CLUB OF AMERICA  
598 MADISON AVENUE  
NEW YORK

May 28, 1930

My dear Mrs. Bratenahl:

*In the judgment of the Committee for the Renwick Medal Award, your achievement, The Cloister Garth of the College of Preachers, is outstanding in its completeness, in its atmosphere of peace and for its appealing beauty. Therefore, to you is awarded the medal for the year 1929.*

*Should you be unable to be present at the Annual Meeting in July to receive it, the medal will be forwarded to you.*

*Offering you my congratulations, I am*

*Very sincerely yours,*

(signed) ANNE T. STEWART,

MRS. S. EDSON GAGE,

MRS. ROY ARTHUR HUNT,

MRS. LEWIS GOUVERNEUR MORRIS,

MRS. ROLLIN S. SALTUS,

MISS ANNE R. WEBB,

MRS. JOHN A. STEWART, JR.,

Chairman.

THE DEANERY  
3525 WOODLEY ROAD  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

My dear Mrs. Stewart:

*May I express to you and through you to the members of your Committee for the Renwick Medal Award my deep sense of appreciation for the great honor the Garden Club of America has conferred upon me in the Award of their Medal for 1929 for the*

## A Collect for All Hallows Guild

**O** GOD OUR FATHER, who hast wonderfully blessed us with thy gifts of the flowers of field and garden, the trees of the wood, and the birds of the air; Vouchsafe, we beseech thee, the aid and guidance of thy Holy Spirit to All Hallows Guild and all of its members, and grant that by their labours this Cathedral Close may become more and more a haven of peace and refreshment, a revelation of thy beauty, and a gateway of Paradise; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

achievement of the Cloister Garth of the College of Preachers.

This portion of my landscape work on the hillside of the National Cathedral meant a great deal to me during the year of its development; and there was a deeper feeling when, because of it, the Garden Club of Cleveland wished to sponsor me as their Medal Candidate for this year; but it now means to me far more because in the judgment of the Garden Club of America it has been chosen as an achievement worthy of the Renwick Award. Besides my own personal happiness in receiving this honor I feel great pleasure in the realization that the medal for this year is associated with a garden, which by reason of its character, should carry peace and beauty through the centuries, so that the story of this award will become one of its cherished traditions.

And this tradition will naturally lead one to recall, as a matter of fragrant garden history, that during war-torn periods in youthful England, it was the monasteries and other religious foundations that preserved the knowledge and love of gardening for the world; nourishing it in a manner not less vital than the way such knowledge and love of gardening is being intelligently stimulated and widely shared by that unique organization of our own day of which I am proud to be a member: The Garden Club of America.

It is a matter of deep regret that I will be unable, because of Dean Bratenahl's illness, to be present at the Annual Meeting in Seattle; but I hope that through this written word some measure of appreciation may be conveyed to you all. Perhaps a few recent photographs of the Cloister Garth, which I am forwarding to you, may be of interest at this meeting, for this garden seems, in its very atmosphere, to express far better than I can the happiness and gratitude that I feel.

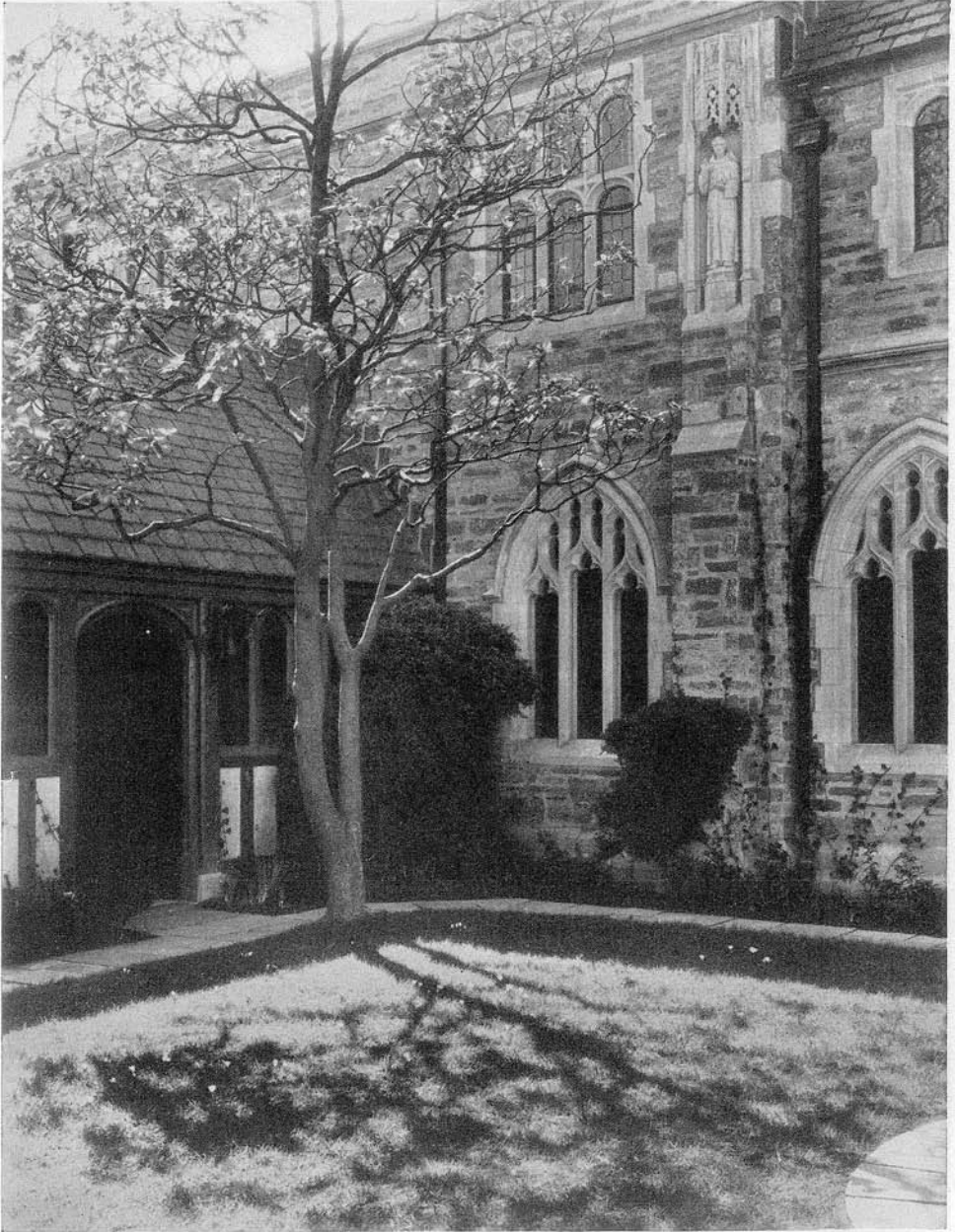
Sincerely yours,

FLORENCE BRATENAHL.



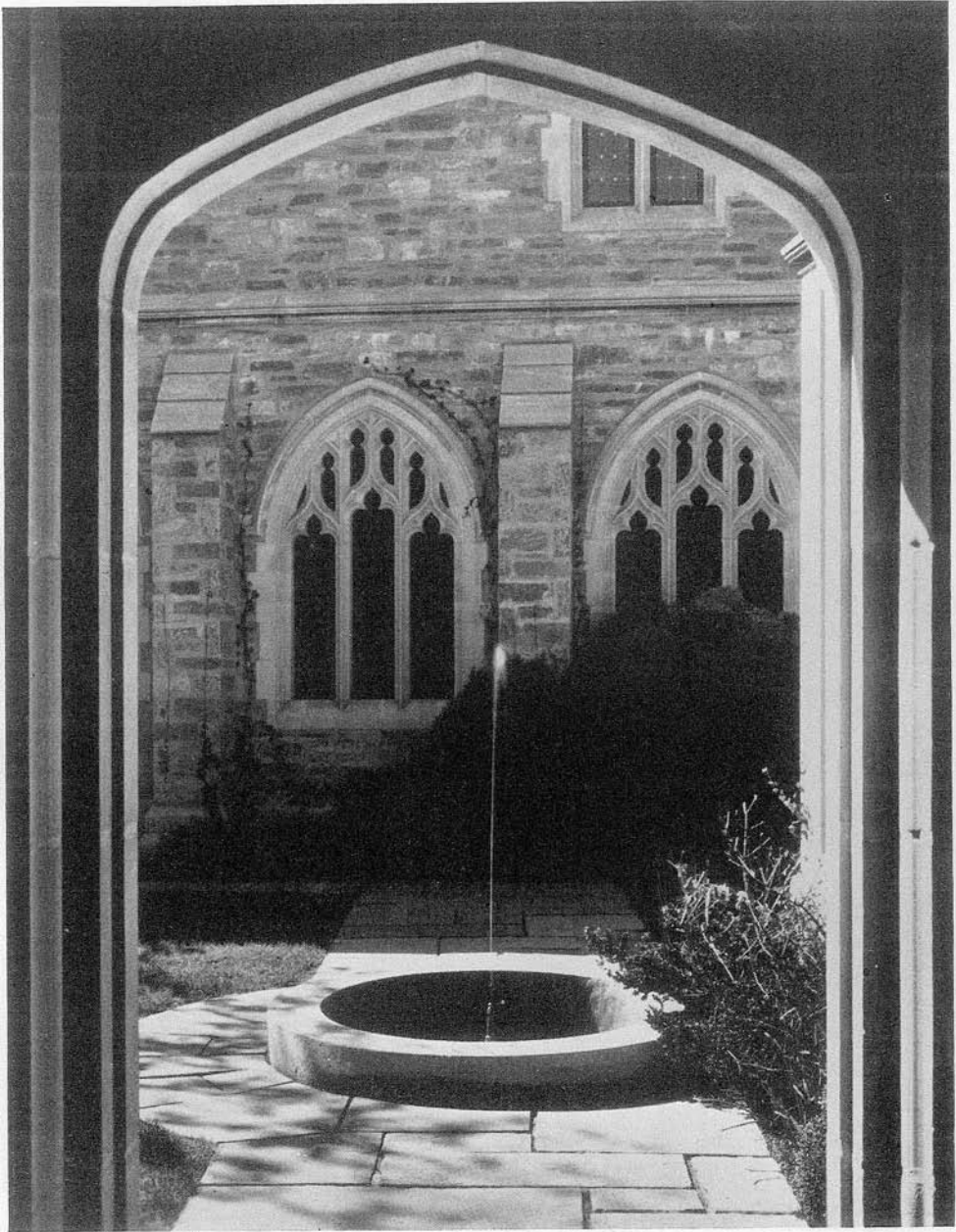
THE RENWICK ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL OF THE GARDEN CLUB OF AMERICA AWARDED ON JULY 8, 1930, TO MRS. G. C. F. BRATENAHL FOR THE CLOISTER GARTH OF THE COLLEGE OF PREACHERS

This Medal, the photograph of which shows both sides, is known as the Emily D. Renwick Achievement Medal. It has been awarded by the Garden Club of America each year, for the past ten years, to one of its members, chosen out of its membership now numbering more than six thousand, for what it considers to be the outstanding achievement of that year. At the Annual Meeting of the Garden Club of America held at Seattle in July, this Medal was awarded to Mrs. Bratenahl "for her achievement of Peace and Beauty in the Cloister Garth of the College of Preachers, Washington, D. C." In the September issue of the *Bulletin* published by the Garden Club of America, is the announcement of this award, accompanied by a recent photograph of the Cloister Garth.



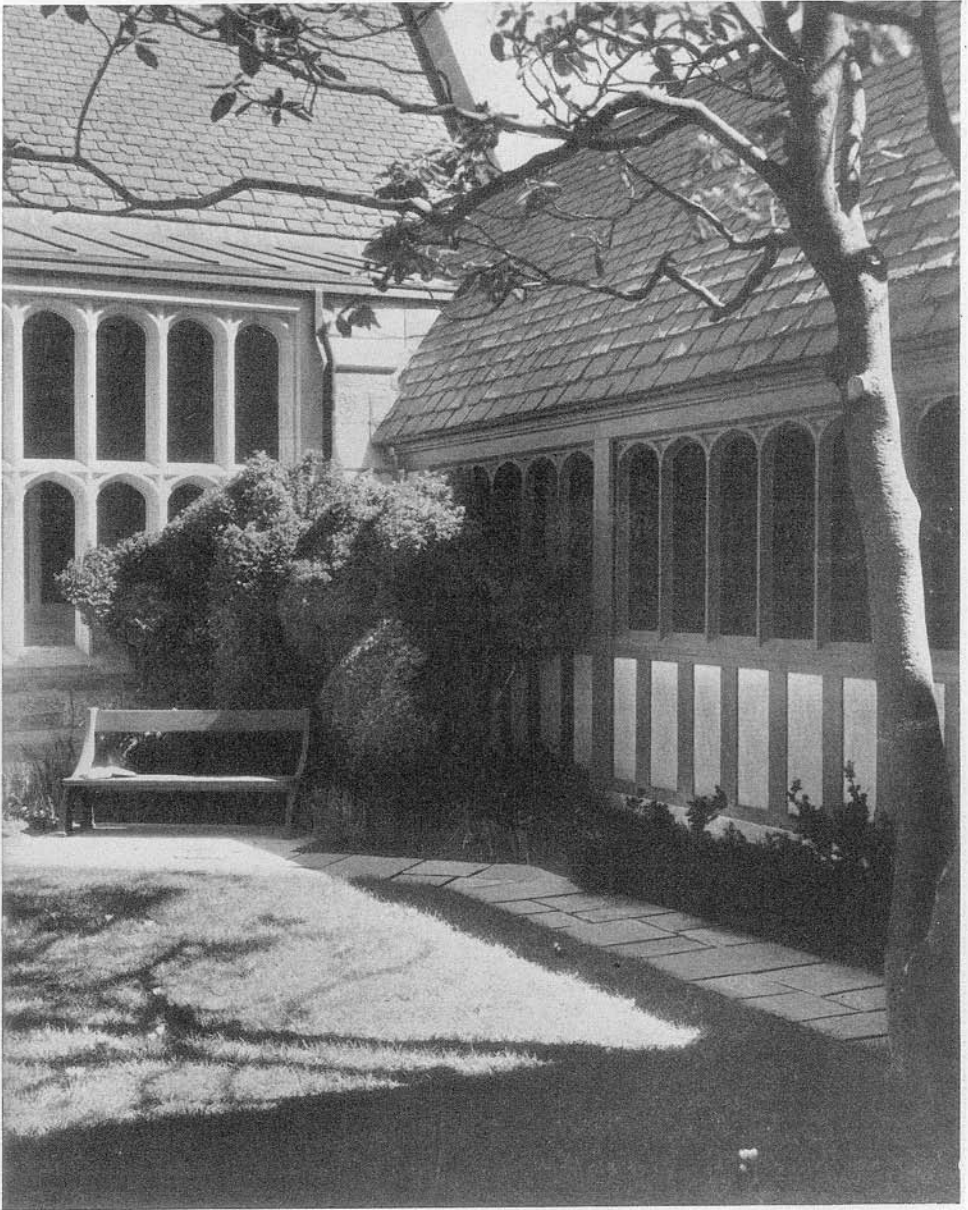
HONORED BY THE ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL OF THE GARDEN CLUB OF AMERICA: THE CLOISTER GARTH OF THE COLLEGE OF PREACHERS

The figure of St. Francis and his birds are in a niche high above in the wall. One is conscious at once of the spirit of this cloister garth: beauty, the quiet assurance of peace within its borders. With its feeling of great age, it is hard to realize that the development of this garden took place less than a year ago. The magnolia tree, that dominant note in the picture, was an unusual adventure some months prior to the completion of the garden. While the building of the College of Preachers was under construction, this 25-foot tree, weighing 9 tons, was literally dropped into this court over a 15-foot wall. In delightful relation to the East Cloister, its branches overhanging the roof and creating shadow patterns on walls and level lawn, it now looks as though it had always been there, carrying its large glossy leaves through the bleakness of winter, bearing fragrant blossoms in early June.



THE FOUNTAIN IN THE CLOISTER GARTH OF THE COLLEGE OF PREACHERS AS SEEN THROUGH THE ARCHWAY OF THE NORTH CLOISTER

Just outside the mullioned windows of the Common Room is a round Pool with slender thread of water, rising and blown by the wind, catching sunlight in its spray. An ancient mill stone of glistening white flint, worn and scored with an attractive marking of grooved lines, forms the bottom of the Pool. In its center an opening in the shape of a cross was filled with molten lead, carved and hammered into a primitive cross, while from its center, out of a heavy shaft of lead, was fashioned the spout of the fountain. It meant hours for the designer, Mrs. Bratenahl, using chisels, hammer and blacksmith's rasp, but there was the joy of working with material that might last through the centuries. The stone rim of the Pool was cut from a solid block, from the historic quarry originally owned by George Washington.



A QUIET CORNER IN THE CLOISTER GARTH WITH AN ANCIENT BOXWOOD SHELTERING A WOODEN BENCH

Space is limited in this garden; only about 30 feet square, so that the nearby country was searched for just the right boxwood to soften angles and to reach upward and outward with irregular forms and Gothic undercuttings so that the music of light and shade and the charm of permanent green might bring peace and contentment and quiet reflection within these walls. Choice of material was also limited, while scale of leafage and flower form and a feeling for those early centuries was not forgotten. Then too color and fragrance were remembered with casement windows opening out onto this "Garden Enclosed." Jasmine, rosemary, columbine, Spanish iris, while the colors of some of the smaller bulbs of the spring weave in the turf "a flowery meade."