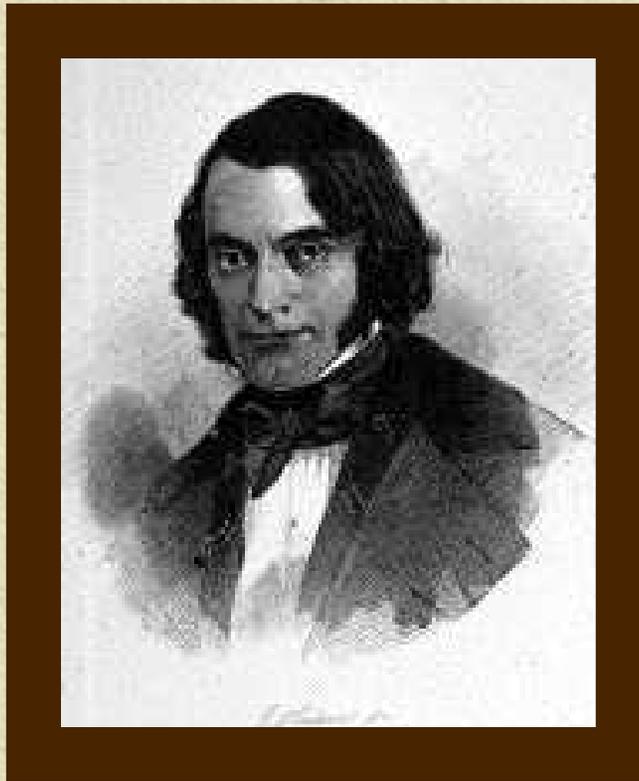


Andrew Jackson Downing

“Father of American Parks”



“When smiling lawns and tasteful cottages begin to embellish a country, we know that order and culture are established” - Downing

Agenda

- ✦ *Biography - Paul Herrera*
- ✦ *Literature - Courtney Ferrell*
- ✦ *Place (Springside) - Kate Giglio*
 - ✦ *Impact - Amy Durant*
- ✦ *Lesson Plan - Amy Durant*
- ✦ *Web Page- Courtney Ferrell*
 - ✦ *Guidebook - Kate Giglio*
- ✦ *Itinerary - Paul Herrera*
- ✦ *Slide Show - Amy Durant*

Thesis

✦ Although his life was cut short at the peak of his fame, Andrew Jackson Downing had a profound effect on the landscaping and architecture of the Hudson River Valley because of his powerful and innovative writings, designs, and public opinions.

- Biography -

Downing, Andrew Jackson

(October 31, 1815 - July 28, 1852)

-
- ✦ Downing began writing books in 1841

 - ✦ Downing traveled to England during the summer of 1850
 - ◆ Series of eight letters, published in the *Horticulturist*

 - ◆ Established a "Bureau of Architecture"
 - Matthew Vassar estate, Springside, Poughkeepsie, NY
 - Daniel Parish house, Newport, Rhode Island
 - Dodge Houses, Washington, D.C.

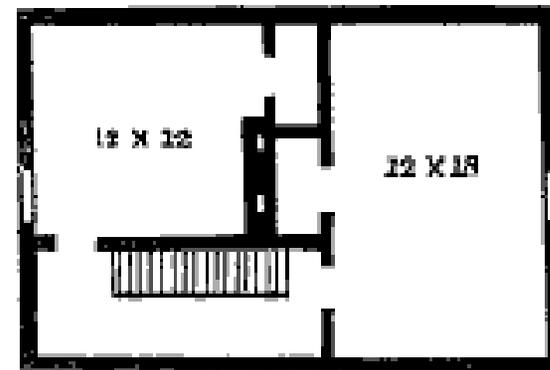
Biography (continued)

-
- ✦ Early advocate of public agricultural education
 - ✦ Commissioned to landscape Washington, D.C. (1850)
 - ✦ Proponent of creating suburbs
 - ✦ Died July 28th in the burning of the Hudson River steamboat *Henry Clay*
 - ◆ “a truly national loss” – Asa Gray
 - ✦ New York’s Central Park & Andrew Jackson Downing Memorial Park

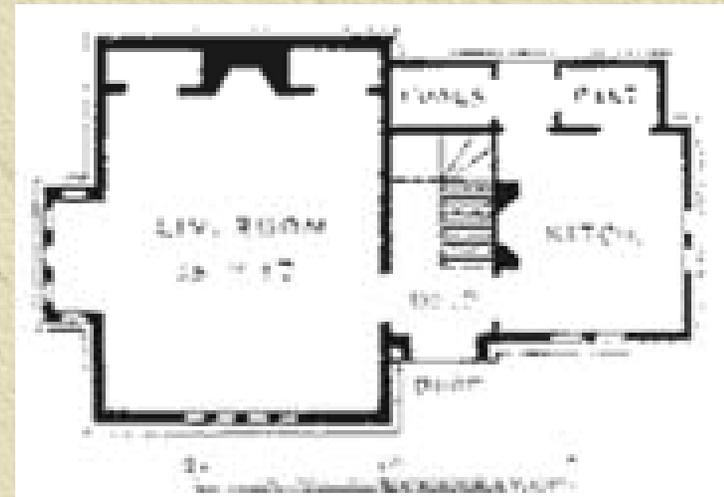
A.J. Downing's Literary Contributions

Cottage Residences (1842) and *The Architecture of Country Houses* (1850)

- ✧ Provided lists of necessary materials, ideas for decorations, furniture
- ✧ Understood financial limitations
- ✧ Combined many styles for his designs of farms and villas
 - ◆ Gothic
 - ◆ Tuscan
 - ◆ Rhine
 - ◆ English



[Fig. 7. Chamber Floor.]



Downing's Philosophy

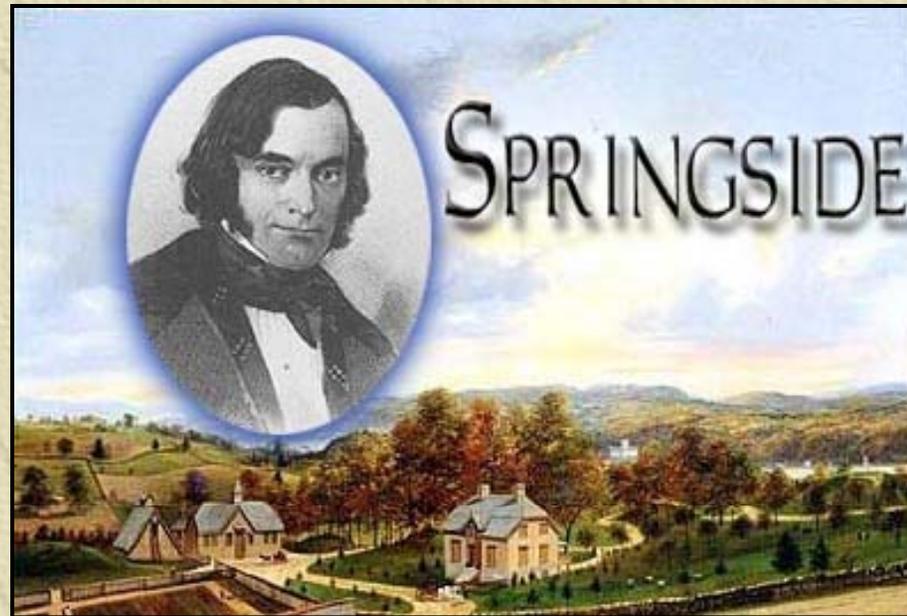
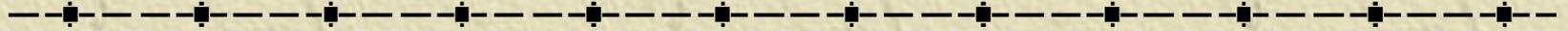


- ✦ People's pride in their country is connected to pride in their home.
- ✦ If they can decorate and build their homes to symbolize the values they hope to embody, such as prosperity, education and patriotism, they will be happier people and better citizens.

Downing wrote in *Architecture*:

- ✦ A good house will lead to a good civilization
- ✦ The "individual home has a great value to a people."
- ✦ "There is a moral influence in a country home."
- ✦ A good home will encourage its inhabitants to pursue a moral existence.

Springside Logo

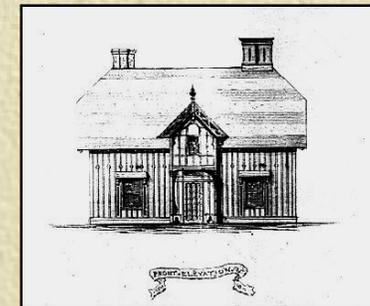
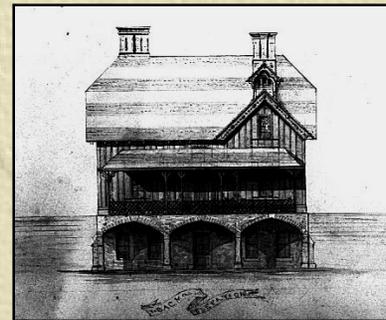
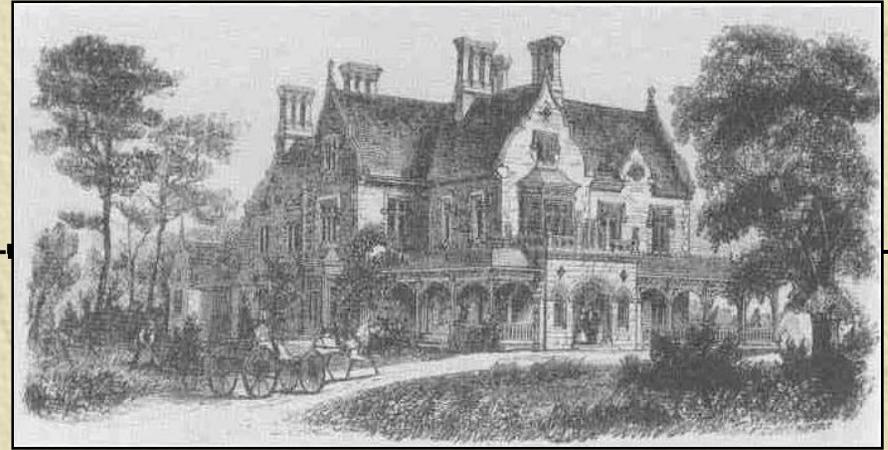


Springside

✦ Historic landscape in Poughkeepsie, New York

✦ Designed in 1850

✦ Picturesque building and landscape styles



Sketches signed by Downing

Springside ...



✦ **1868:** Vassar dies.

✦ **1969:** Declared a National Historic
Landmark

✦ **1984:** Springside Landscape Restoration

✦ **Hardships encountered before 1984...**

Original Springside

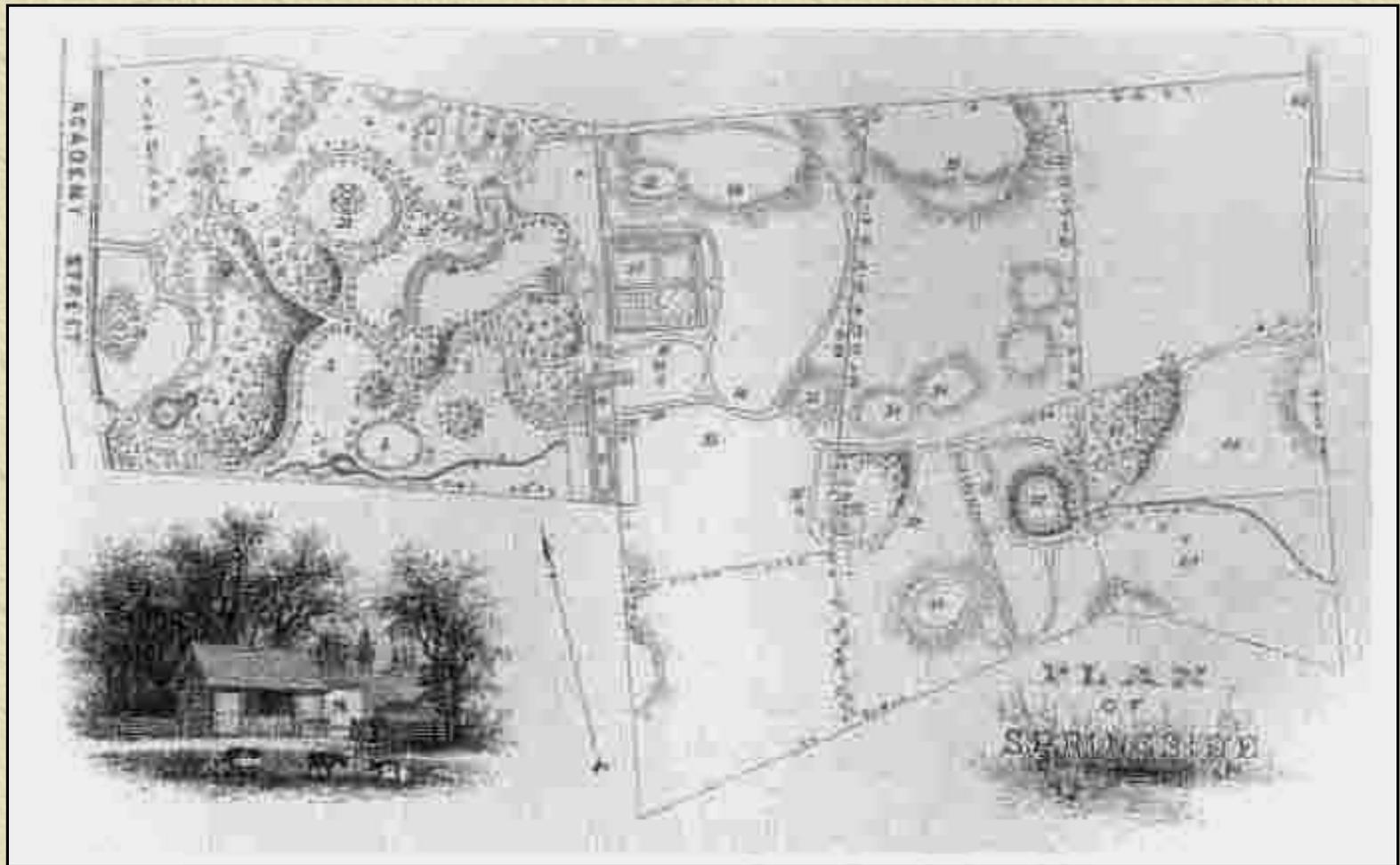
✦ Paintings by Henry
Gritten →



← Gatehouse



Springside — aerial map



Influence on America and the Hudson River Valley

-
- ✦ Springside (Home of Matthew Vassar)
 - ✦ Profession of landscape architecture
 - ✦ Tourism and Recognition
 - ✦ All Social Classes



Springside

Beautiful

✦ The beautiful was characterized by smooth flowing lines, curves and soft surfaces and a house of classical style.



1. Downing, A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening (1841)

Picturesque

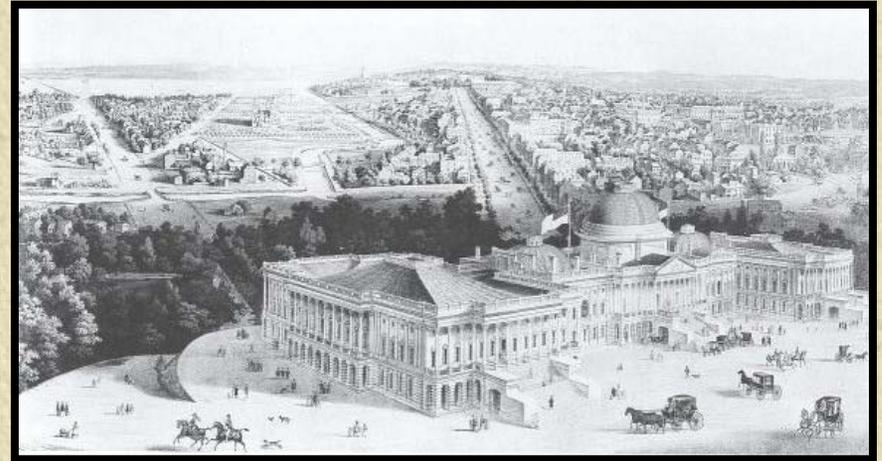
✦ The picturesque was characterized by irregular lines with a wild and broken pattern and a house of rustic Old English or Swiss cottage style.



1. Downing, A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening (1841)

Continuing Effects After Death

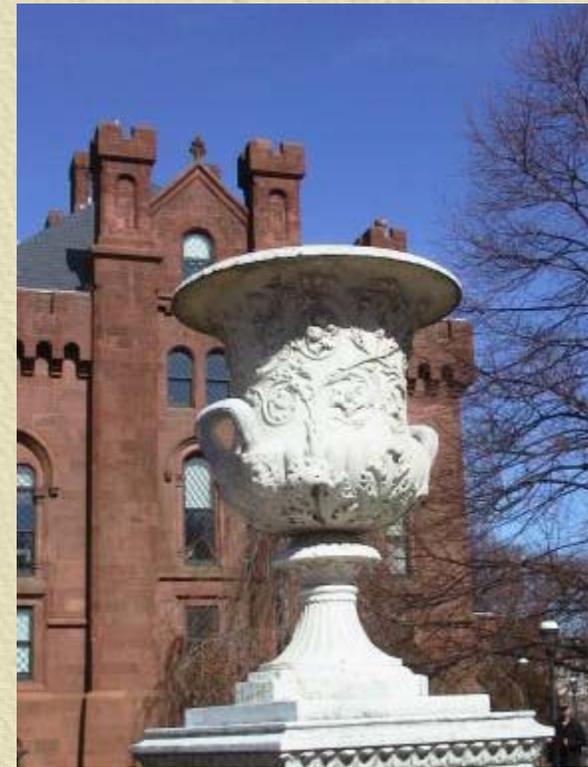
- ✦ Central Park
- ✦ Washington Mall
- ✦ Articles and Books
- ✦ Springside became a public park
- ✦ American Pomological Society



Plans for Washington Mall

Monuments to A.J. Downing

- ✦ Urn in Enid A. Haupt Garden
- ✦ Springside
- ✦ Downing Park- Newburgh
- ✦ Central Park



Urn in Enid A. Haupt Garden dedicated by
American Pomological Society

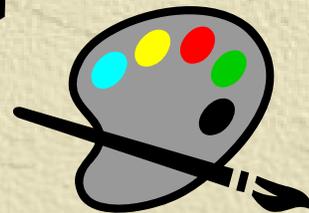
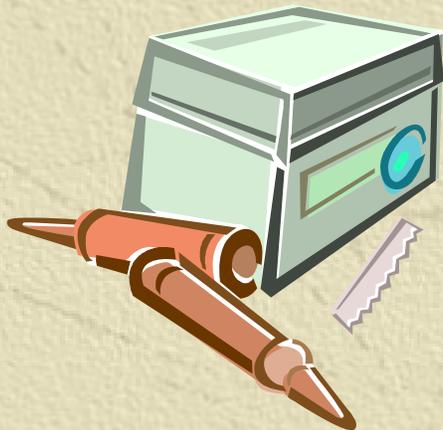


"Downing is dead! But the principles of artistic beauty and propriety, of rural economy and domestic comfort, which he revealed, await a more full and perfect development; and as they advance towards a more glorious consummation, grateful millions will honor and cherish his name. His memory shall live forever."

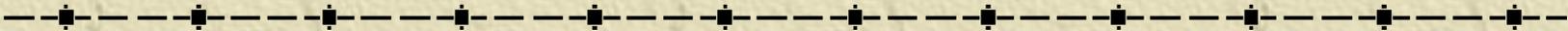
- Marshall Wilder -

Lesson Plan

- ✦ Teach about Downing's life and works
- ✦ Show pictures of places Downing visited
- ✦ Have students design a diorama of a landscape in Downing's style



Conclusion



Andrew Jackson Downing had a profound effect on the Hudson River Valley and the rest of the nation through his landscape and architectural designs, writings, and public opinions. He rejected the classical styles prevalent during his time period and introduced readers to the beautiful and picturesque, using his own unique American style. Despite his early death, his impact resonates throughout history.



“The great attraction is not in the beauty of a site but in the tasteful and harmonious embellishment of the site by art.” - Downing

References

-
- ✦ Shuyler, David. Apostle of Taste. Maryland: John's Hopkins, 1996.
 - ✦ Downing, Andrew. A Treatise on the Landscape Gardening. New York: Orange Judd, 1841.
 - ✦ Downing, Andrew. Victorian Cottage Residences. New York: Dover, 1981.
 - ✦ Downing, Andrew. Pleasure Grounds. New York: Sleepy Hollow, 1988.
 - ✦ Downing, Andrew. The Architecture of Country Houses. New York: Dover, 1969.
 - ✦ Dunwell, Frances. The Hudson River Highlands. New York: Columbia University, 1991.
 - ✦ Shuyler, Andrew. "Downing, Andrew Jackson." American National Biography Online. 12 Oct. 2003. Feb 2000. <http://www.anb.org/articles/17/17-00235.html>.
 - ✦ "Hudson River Valley Architecture." The Hudson River Valley Institute. <http://www.hudsonrivervalley.net/themes/PreCivilWar.php> (9 Oct. 2003).
 - ✦ Stetler, Gilbert A. "The Victorian House and Garden." University of Guelph: Reading a Community. (1996). <http://www.uoguelph.ca/history/urban/mod09.html> (9 Oct. 2003).

References (continued)

-
- ✦ “Gardens of the Historic River Towns of Westchester.” Halfmoon Press. (March 1999).
<http://www.hudsonriver.com/halfmoonpress/stories/0399gard.htm> (9 Oct. 2003).
 - ✦ “The Enid A. Haupt Garden: The Downing Urn.” The Smithsonian Institution: Horticulture Services Division. <http://gardens.si.edu/horticulture/gardens/Haupt/Downing/down.html> (9 Oct. 2003).
 - ✦ “Downing Park.” Downing Family Historical Society of America. (2002).
<http://www.downingfamily.org/> (13 Oct. 2003).
 - ✦ “Springside Landscape Restoration.” Springside. (10 Aug. 2001).
<http://www.pojonews.com/enjoy/stories/0916961.htm> (12 Oct. 2003).
 - ✦ “About Springside.” Springside. <http://home.att.net/~gasiorcj/springsd.htm> (12 Oct. 2003).