



HOKE COUNTY CLUB WOMEN AT SOUTH CAROLINA GARDENS

Charleston Garden Tour

On April 6 and 7, a group of twenty-two Home Demonstration Club members from Hoke County and sixteen from Scotland County visited the Azalia Gardens and other points of interest in and near Charleston, S. C.

The women of Hoke County met at the Courthouse in Raeford where they boarded the bus. Seven o'clock in the morning is rather early, but believe it or not, all the women were on time.

After getting on the bus, we were all introduced to Mr. Bullock, who conducted our tour. Mr. Bullock was very patient and thoughtful. Our bus driver was Mr. Crouch. All the younger girls were well pleased with him and the older members of the party couldn't find it in their hearts to blame them. The Laurinburg group met us at the post office there.

Our first sight seeing stop was the Cypress Gardens near Charleston. These gardens are about a mile from the main highway. Along the road from the highway to the garden entrance, groups of colored children were dancing and singing. It was amusing to see how they would stop in the middle of a song when the expected pennies and nickles were thrown from the bus windows. Some of our group made pictures of the children when we stopped to hear them sing.

The tour of the Cypress gardens can be made by walking around the edge of the lake or by riding in a canoe. A few of the ladies

were water shy so they walked. Each canoe seated four passengers and a colored boy, dressed in a blue sailor suit, who rowed the boat. One lady who wanted to go by boat was wondering if she could wade out if the boat capsized. She was told that the lake was only three feet deep. She decided to walk anyway saying that "with all those heavy women in the boat it will surely rise three more feet." It was warm enough to really enjoy the boat ride. Beautiful grey moss hung from the cypress trees and brilliantly colored azaleas grew along the water's edge and made a lovely reflection in the water. We passed under several rustic bridges that were built for those who walked around the garden.

From the Cypress gardens, we went on to Charleston, arriving around one o'clock. We were given a couple of hours to get lunch and to shop before we were carried on a tour of the city of Charleston. Most of us made a run on Kress and were back on time. Miss Hall very nearly broke up the tour when she appeared in the door of the bus with a big box of Ivory Flakes. There was a stampede, then, as every woman on the bus rushed out to get a box.

Mr. Lesane, a native Charlestonian, served as guide for our tour of the city. Many interesting and historical spots were pointed out to us. We visited the old Post office building where Washington and Lafayette were entertained in colonial days. We went through the city park, the Citadel and Ashley Hall,

a private school for girls. We were all interested in the old homes with slaves' quarters in the French Huguenot section. We saw many beautiful old churches, among them one of the oldest Presbyterian churches in the country.

After our sightseeing trip, we were carried to three tourist homes to spend the night. Two of these were a few miles from town. One landlady checked her guests as they came in at night. Several of the women, including Mrs. Balfour, went out for dinner and decided they would return early. The landlady missed them as they came in and sat up until 2:30 A. M. She said she remembered Mrs. Balfour's hat and she didn't see it come in. Good thing our landlady wasn't checking us in by hats. We happened to know Margie Campbell went out with one on and came in with another.

Mrs. Marshall Newton lost her shoes, too. Well, we don't know the details.

A near calamity was averted when someone discovered Mrs. Lucy Smith got Louise Blue's weekend bag by mistake as she left the bus. Mrs. Smith could have wrapped up in something, but what about "Speck?"

While window shopping, we came across Mrs. N. F. Sinclair shivering in the doorway of Walgreen's Drug Store. She said "My, I believe the temperature has dropped two or three degrees." Jessie Bright Ferguson explained to her that she was standing under a ceiling fan.

We were told to be ready

at 8 o'clock to catch the bus to go to breakfast. Mrs. Lucy Smith said she made a resolution, before leaving home, to have a good time. We want her to add a new resolution next time - to refrain from taking a bath after the bus arrives to take us to breakfast.

After breakfast, Mr. Bullock announced that we would visit Middleton Garden which is located on the Ashley River. Arthur Middleton, signer of the Declaration of Independence, is buried in a large gray tomb in the garden. It was in these gardens that Michaux, the French batanist, set one of the first camellia japonicas ever brought to America. Of the four plants set out, three are still living. During the war between the states, the Middleton home was pillaged and burned by the Federal Forces. Part of the right wing escaped and has been restored by the present owner, J. J. Pringle Smith, direct descendent of Henry Middleton. The gardens are formal. It is said 100 slaves worked ten years to complete the terraces, walks, and to plant the flowers and shrubs on the river bank and in the gardens. It is too bad they

cannot see the fruits of their labors as the garden is truly a place of beauty. Azaleas, camellias, panies, daffodils, spiraea, and other flowering plants were reflected in

glorious colors in the two beautiful lakes. There is one oak tree that is said to be 400 years old.

(Continued on Page 12)

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