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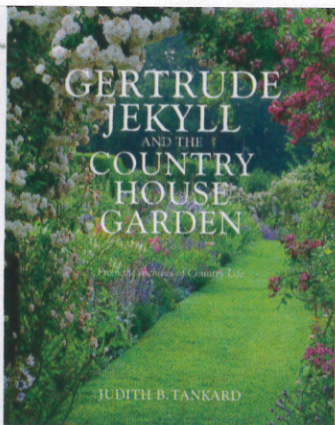
ENGLISH GARDEN

Circulation ('000): 65
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ry leaves

and a gentle breeze make this the perfect
these garden reads in the garden



BIOGRAPHY GERTRUDE JEKYLL & THE COUNTRY HOUSE GARDEN

(Aurum Publishing, £30)

Gertrude Jekyll hardly needs introducing. The grand old lady of British gardening has inspired generations of gardeners. Her partnership with architect Edwin Lutyens is legendary, and so is her garden at Munstead Wood in Surrey. This beautiful book offers more than its glossy, coffee-table book exterior suggests. Well written, thoroughly researched, beautifully produced and illustrated, it is full of insights - some quite unexpected - into this amazing artist, gardener, designer, writer, plantswoman and photographer. Landscape historian Judith B. Tankard writes with clarity and intelligence; her style is easy and eloquent. She covers much ground, but the reader never feels the weight of her research. Tankard looks at Jekyll's early life, her training as an artist, her love of photography and its influence on her designs, her prolific work as a writer, her delight in native, hardy plants, and more. We meet the key



As this book reveals, you cannot appreciate a Jekyll garden without considering its surrounding architecture'

influences in her life, including the 'natural gardener' William Robinson and her friend and work partner Edwin Lutyens, with whom she worked on over 50 gardens over the course of 40 years. Extracts from her books and numerous articles - Jekyll wrote for *Country Life* for more than 30 years - are judiciously used to reveal her eloquent writing style, her theories on colour, planting and texture, and her love of small country house gardens. This is Jekyll writing about St Catherine's Court in Somerset in 1906: 'The eye enjoys the visible prospects and the mind roves with keen expectancy, in joyful

anticipation of the many delights that will probably be found right and left on each successive level.' No wonder she was known primarily as a writer during her lifetime. I was surprised to learn that Jekyll rarely travelled to the gardens she designed (especially in her later years), relying instead on information from clients, soil samples, chips of local stone and topographical photography. Another revelation came from the book's black-and-white country house garden photographs, taken from the *Country Life* archives. Valuable historical documents, these monochromatic images offer an

extra dimension to the modern reader: by highlighting textures and shapes, they remind us that colour is only one part of garden design. Jekyll might have been a painter by training, but she knew that to 'paint a picture' in your garden, you have to take into account flowers, foliage and form. Ultimately, as this book reveals, you cannot appreciate a Jekyll garden without considering its surrounding architecture. As she so rightly wrote: 'It is upon the right relation of the garden to the house that its value and the enjoyment that is to be derived from it will largely depend.'

Claire Masset, garden writer