MY GARDEN IN NOVA SCOTIA: BY CAROLINE
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Y little house, when I first saw it a good many years
ago now, stood in a clearing upon rising ground near
Baddeck, Nova Scotia. Spruce trees and alder bushes
partly circled this clearing on one side and some un-
cleared swampy land in which dead and blackened
stumps stood, touched it on another. A road three
hundred feet in length led in an uncompromising
straight line from the front door to the main road that followed the
shore of a lake. On one side of this road were woods and on the other
a clear plot of grass with a very few trees backed by unreclaimed
meadows. The house was part of a large estate and the sheep and
goats belonging to the owner ranged about at will, so I was permitted
to fence in a place at the back for a vegetable garden and to enclose
small patches in front of the house and on the sides to hold my flowers,
for flowers I was determined to have. These strange little fenced-in
gardens looked quite like the private cemeteries of the country, those
lonely little spots of ground around which the plows of the farmers
reverently turn. Those neglected islands surrounded by a sea of cul-
tivation are sanctuaries for the wild flowers and nesting sites for birds.

One of the men in the neighborhood reluctantly and after much
persuasion helped me prepare the ground for the vegetables and also
grudgingly gave me one or two days a week all summer to help with
the weeding. He offered endless advice upon the difficult problems of
what to do next and how to do it; but it was a case of the blind man
leading the blind, however, and into many a ditch of garden difficulties
did we flounder in our combined ignorance. Tomatoes which we care-
fully pinched back according to directions in the books, blossomed out
into African marigolds! Oriental poppies that I had sown with such
hope he took for the familiar wild carrot of the country and indus-
triously weeded them into a despedis place upon the rubbish heap.
Since neither of us knew a flower seedling from a weed, I hit upon a
plan of planting the seeds along lines of strings, leaving the strings
as a guide and cultivating between the safety lines.

One of my ambitions was to have a little pond. Duncan was doubt-
ful, offering objections with the positiveness of inexperience. The
ground was so swampy, I felt sure the clay from the bottom would do
to plaster the sides, so I donned rubber boots and led the complaining,
expostulating Duncan into the mire. Together we dug and formed
the banks of a pool which has held for years, held in fact until under-
mined by the roots of plants I had transplanted along the border. The
winter frosts perhaps helped the border plants somewhat in destroying
the banks. Yet I had the satisfaction of seeing lovely pink and white
RUSTIC PERGOLA built by a garden loving woman in Nova Scotia, planted to quick-growing wild and annual vines while the climbing roses are getting started.
WILD GRASSES, WEEDS AND SELF-SOWN FLOWERS were left in their natural bank of great beauty in the center of the pergola until such time as the busy gardener could replace them with roses.
BLUE, WHITE AND LAVENDER
in this garden in the spring; Later come
poppies, iris, delphiniums and yellow lilies.
FLAMING BRIGHT ORIENTAL POPPIES
with their silver green leaves against the black spruce columns of the pergola make rich color study.
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lilies resting upon my pool, wild azaleas and blue flags on its banks and a willow tree that trailed its long green streamers in the water, adding grace and fresh color to my garden picture.

AFTER a time I obtained the little house and grounds for my own; also, catching the spirit of the neighborhood, some lambs and goats, so everything had to be fenced in securely. It was only when I had banished the goats in favor of flowers that I discovered a beautiful white lilac by the door, for the goats autumn after autumn had feasted on the buds and it had never come to blossom. I also have suspicions that a plant I bought for a fringe tree will eventually be a magnolia if it ever recovers from the unseasonable, persistent pruning of those destructive creatures.

After gaining a little confidence and a measure of wisdom won from many failures, I set about the making of a rose garden and pergola. A trail that had to be made down to the lake left an ugly scar across my garden, yet it opened up a beautiful vista of the lake. This suggested a place for the pergola. Black spruce from the woods made poles both beautiful and lasting. These were placed nine feet apart, braced and later strengthened with wire or brass where the vines were heaviest. Thus was made a pergola three hundred feet long and eight feet wide, not paralleling the road at all, so that it made an acceptable line of variation in the garden design, especially since there was one short turn near the house. On one side trees formed a wind break for the tall plants like delphiniums, lilies, asters and hollyhocks. The flowers bordering the three-foot path that runs through the center of the pergola so encroach upon it by the exuberance of their growth that they must be constantly pinched back to allow room for passing. On the side toward the field is a wide border partly beneath the pergola and partly extending into the field, for it is as wide as I could well make it. Here are the roses and some of my low growing plants.

The first year, climbing annuals like wild cucumber and red beans were planted so that the long row of bare poles could quickly be clothed. Hops, wild clematis, Virginia creeper and all the climbing roses I had were also transplanted to effective positions along its length to give quick cover. Delphiniums, perennial asters and phlox were set in the wide border at their feet. I begged and exchanged all the plants I could from all the neighbors and friends and divided all my own roots, so all down the line flowers of every height quickly obeyed my command to multiply and make beautiful my portion of the earth. Some of the trees were trimmed a bit and encouraged to branch out over the poles. Sand was brought from the shore of the lake and spread upon the path to keep it dry.
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The soil in this part of the world is a stiff clay that bakes very hard in the sun, so it all had to be lightened with coal ashes, sand and manure. This could not be done all at once, so each plant was put in pockets of good earth. Thus in time a good rich and acceptable soil was created and at no great labor.

Some roses which I had obtained from Ireland the year before lived for about two summers and then, either through the severity of the winters or because they were on brier stock, died. Some of the brier stock left, blossomed out the third or fourth summer with bright pink and white single roses. I have cut it back and tied it to wire between some of the poles, where it makes a beautiful shelter. I started a good many roses in the vegetable garden and waited until they had made a fair start before transplanting them into my pergola border.

As I wanted the pergola to look bright and beautiful from the main road as quickly as possible, I started at the ends and worked my plants toward the center, leaving weeds and natural growth in the center till I could replace it. I have some lovely, climbing pink roses, "thousand beauties," or a variety much like it, on each side of the gate and on some of the poles nearby, also some Sweet William, phlox, iris, poppies and yellow pyrethrums. I put the plants with the color I liked best near the house. In the spring there is a beautiful carpet of forget-me-nots, which is gradually sowing itself further and further down the path at the foot of the roses. I also transplant big clumps of it every year. The winters are long and the spring and summer cool, but the falls are mild, so by a little protection I have flowers clear into November.

In the spring my garden is blue and white and lavender. Low border plants, shrubs and trees blow clouds of these sweet, fresh spring colors. Lilaes, lupines, narcissus, forget-me-nots, blue flags, iris, pansies, tulips, daffodils, peonies greet the soft spring winds with profusion of perfect blossoms. Wisteria I tried, but failed to raise in this north country. Oriental poppies come a little later and in midsummer are the rich delphiniums, early and late yellow lilies, yellow pyrethrums, yellow iris and then in the late fall phlox, asters, blue fall crocus. Truly a procession to stir a gardener’s heart with pride and loving affection.

In this reclaimed bit of land are spruce, maple, wild cherry and ash trees. The shad-bush foretells the coming of spring and the elder brings me sweet wine. Meadow rue, purple orchids, roses and wonderful flowering grasses have come of themselves to live in my garden. Rockets have self-sown themselves as they saw fit and I leave them
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standing. Old maid is there also; poppies sown expressly for that purpose cover the manure heap with color. Perennial peas, vetch, clematis Jackmanii and such lovely climbing roses as Dorothy Perkins, crimson rambler, Conrad F. Meyer, Penzance are now well established and seem to take well to this cold north country; so also are such other delightful roses as the Damask, Austrian brier and moss.

Beside the clouds of delphinium and forget-me-nots of which I have spoken, I have tall and willowy foxgloves, old-fashioned pinks, lupines, bachelor buttons, Japanese anemones, Shasta daisies, goldenrod and Canterbury bells. All these flowers have grown in spite of the bleak, dreary coldness of this north country. Many other things I have tried, such as honeysuckles, trumpet creeper, roses on budded stock, hibiscus, forsythia, Montbretias, but have failed. My garden is like a cloud of color in this cold land. It has been a solace, a great and ever-increasing pleasure.

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A ND so
Beginneth a day of glory.
A rising sun and new-born hopes
And a bird that sings in ecstasy.
Green leaves
Fresh from an early bath of dew
Sway like a Hindoo dancer.

And then
Eventide, and hopes unfilled.
With weary wings the singer drops,
And gone with the sun is the joy of life.
Black leaves
Shiver on boughs that the night wind stirs—
Shiver in fear of the night’s approach.

MARJORIE MUIR.