



'Ellen Willmott' - Photo by Wagner's Rose Nursery

Singularly Beautiful Roses

*A Publication Dedicated to Single,
Nearly Single, and Semi-Double Flowered Roses
Volume 12, Issue 2
August 2021*

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Ellen Ann Willmott - "My plants and gardens come before anything in life for me."



Ellen Willmott
Portrait by Rosina Mantovani

The life of Ellen Ann Willmott (1858-1934) was one of privilege and extravagance. Born into an upper middle-class family, she was the oldest of Frederick and Ellen Fell Willmott's three daughters. All three Willmott girls, Ellen, Rose, and Ada, attended the Gumley House Convent School in West London. Like many genteel young ladies of that era, they were tutored in foreign languages, music, and painting. After the untimely and deeply saddening death of Ada in 1872, Frederick purchased a thirty acre country estate named Warley Place in Essex, northeast of London. The family moved there from London in 1876 upon completion of extensive additions to the house.

The ladies of the Willmott family all had a love of plants and gardens and immediately set about planting orchards and flower borders. Using in part the rather extravagant financial gifts given to her on birthdays by her godmother, and with the blessing of her permissive father, Ellen commissioned the construction of a vast alpine garden on the property circa 1879. The massive project was overseen by alpine specialists James Backhouse and Sons and involved creating a gorge-like ravine with a running stream, pools, waterfalls, and small grottos. Swiss alpine expert Henri Correvon, a long-time mentor and friend, would later write, "Miss Willmott's garden appears to me the perfection of alpine gardens."¹ To oversee the garden she would eventually "poach" the services of one of Correvon's gardeners, Jacob Mauer.

Daffodils were also an early passion. Great drifts of dozens of species were planted on a grand scale. It is said that her gardeners would load the bulbs on wheel barrows and let their children toss them all over the grounds. Each was planted where it fell. Young Ms. Willmott made some deliberate crosses and if resulting offspring were found worthy would offer them commercially. Several of the "Warley" hybrids would eventually win awards of merit and first class certificates at shows sponsored by the Royal Horticultural Society.



Warley Place, the Willmott family home
Painting by Alfred Parsons



Ellen and Rose Willmott

Although the family regularly traveled to Europe, in 1888 the family celebrated Ellen's thirtieth birthday with a grand tour abroad with numerous stops in Italy, Germany, and France. She had fallen in love on previous visits with the region around Aix-les-Bains in the southeast of France, enjoying its climate and the warm springs that soothed her and her mother's struggles with rheumatism. Ellen purchased a château in nearby Tresserve in 1890, subsequently engaging in what can only be described as an extravagant refurbishing of the residence and grounds. It and La Boccanegra, a home bought in 1905 on the Italian Riviera, allowed her to acquire and work with a palette of plants not adapted to her Warley garden. [Ed. note; Ellen was able to make these purchases due to the passing of her godmother, Countess Helen Tasker in 1888. Both Ellen and her sister Rose each received £140,000 (£5,000,000 or \$7,000,000 in today's economy) upon her death.]

After Rose's marriage and departure from Warley in 1891 and her father's death in 1892 Ellen's horticultural pursuits became more expansive, eventually requiring the services of roughly one hundred full time gardeners. Numerous greenhouses and a variety of sheds and buildings were constructed. Her interest in the gardening philosophy of William Robinson, who advocated the use of shrubs, hardy and half-hardy perennials planted in natural borders, brought her into a circle that included Gertrude Jekyll. She joined the Royal Horticultural Society in 1894 and having won awards and medals at various shows soon "invaded" the all-male narcissus committee. Her encyclopedic horticultural acumen attracted the attention of gardening luminaries, such that she was one of only two women among the sixty individuals to receive the Royal Horticulture Society's first Victoria Medal of Honor in 1897. Her mother's death in 1898 left Ellen the sole occupant of Warley Place. The privilege of inherited wealth allowed Ms. Willmott to lavishly augment her collection of plants. It was estimated by 20th century British botanist William Stearn that her gardens contained over 100,000 species of trees, shrubs, and plants.

Ellen's celebrity and circle of influential horticultural acquaintances continued to grow on into the twentieth century. One friend was Sir Thomas Hanbury, the owner of La Mortola, a grand villa located on the Italian Riviera. During one of her visits she apparently suggested that Hanbury purchase the sixty acre Wisley garden of recently deceased George F. Wilson and donate it to the Royal Horticultural Society. After acquiring it Hanbury presented it in trust to the society in 1903 in celebration of its centenary, and Ms. Willmott was made one of the garden's trustees. In 1905 Ellen, along with ten other distinguished lady botanists, became one of the first female members of the Linnean Society.

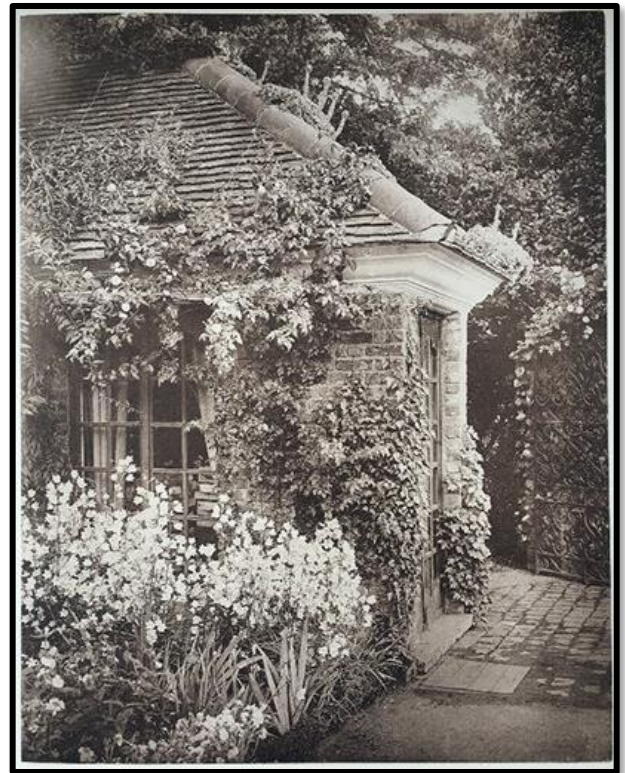


'Ellen Willmott' - Hybrid Tea, Wm. Archer
Photo - National Rose Society

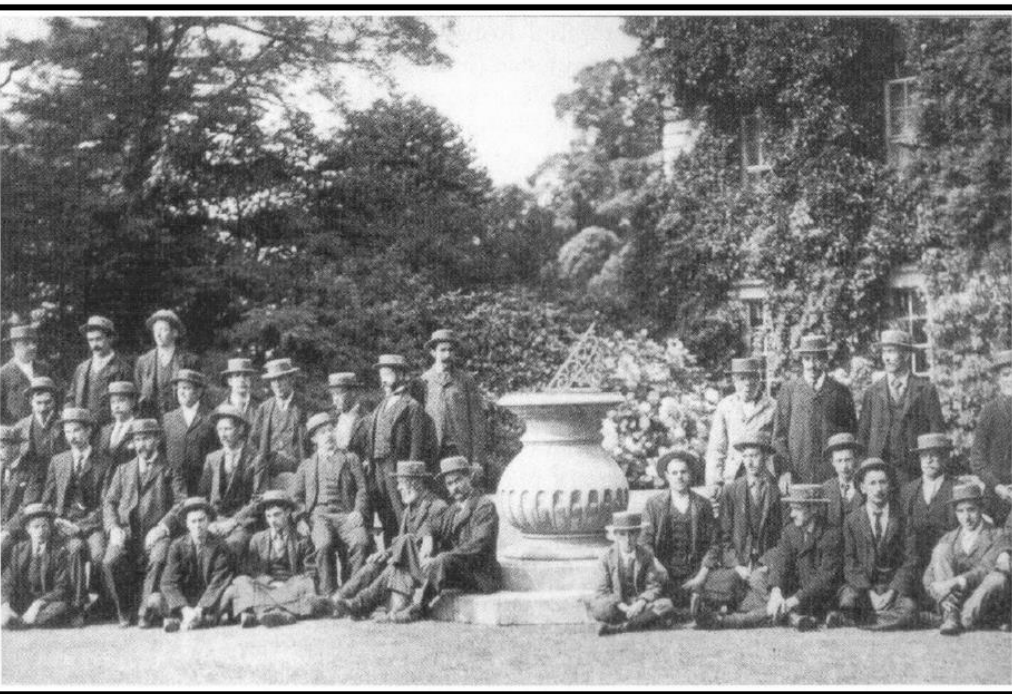
In 1906 Ms. Willmott made the acquaintance of Professor Charles S. Sargent, the director of Harvard University's Arnold Arboretum. Discovering that Ernest H. "Chinese" Wilson was considering an enticement by Sargent to make a third plant collecting trip to China, she offered some persuasion in the form of financial support. Wilson, in turn, sent her numerous seeds of herbaceous plants and flowering shrubs.

Hand in hand with her interest in plants, Ms. Willmott was a keen photographer. A small dark-room was set up in the house and notebooks reveal a firm mastery of the technical processes of using a large-format box camera. Eventually forty of her photos were published in 1909 in a book entitled *Warley Garden in Spring and Summer*. Although without any descriptive text the black and white photos feature plant portraits, combinations of plants, and garden features. Perhaps most importantly, the photos as a collection, contributed to the growing support for the "English garden" planting philosophy of William Robinson and Gertrude Jekyll. Other photographs taken by Willmott would appear in issues of the periodical *The Garden*, several of Jekyll's books (*Children and Gardens*, *Lilies for English Gardens*, and *Roses for English Gardens*), and later editions of Robinson's books (*Alpine Flowers for Gardens* and *The English Flower Garden*).

It was also during the first decade of the twentieth century that Ellen Willmott began what is perhaps to rose enthusiasts her most enduring contribution to horticulture – her monograph *The Genus Rosa*. Early

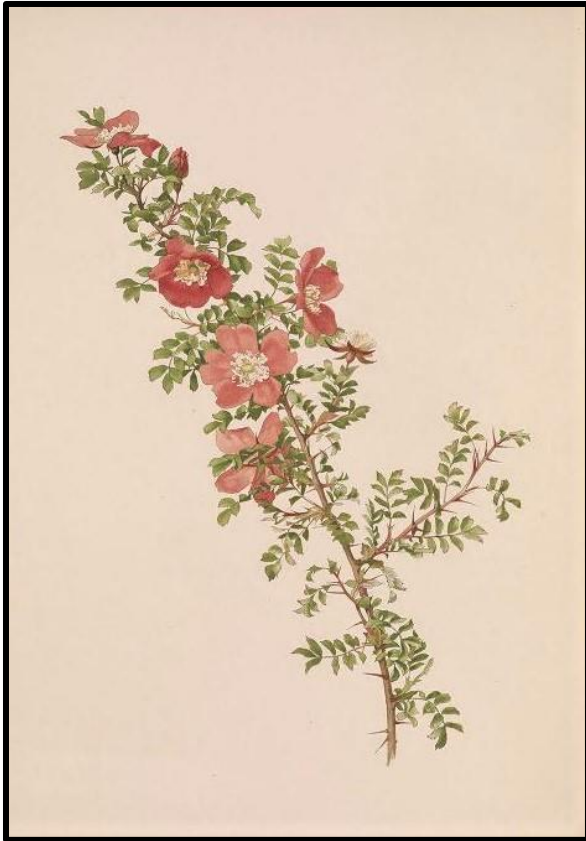


'The Garden House' - Photo by Ellen Willmott
Plate 37
Warley Garden in Spring and Summer



Photograph circa 1898 by Ellen Willmott showing some of her many gardeners around the sundial in front on her home. From *Miss Willmott of Warley Place* by Audrey Le Tievre, p. 64.

encouragement to publish a book on roses came from Rev. Henry N. Ellacombe, a highly respected plantsman and rose lover. Although the precise details would not be finalized for years, London bookseller John Murray agreed to publish the work. Famed watercolorist Alfred Parsons was commissioned to paint the featured roses and John G. Baker, a Kew botanist, to write the Latin and English botanical descriptions. Ms. Willmott herself, supplied a wealth of supplemental historical information for each variety. Although Murray had suggested she engage a managing editor she refused



Rosa willmottiae from *The Genus Rosa*
Volume 2, Part 25

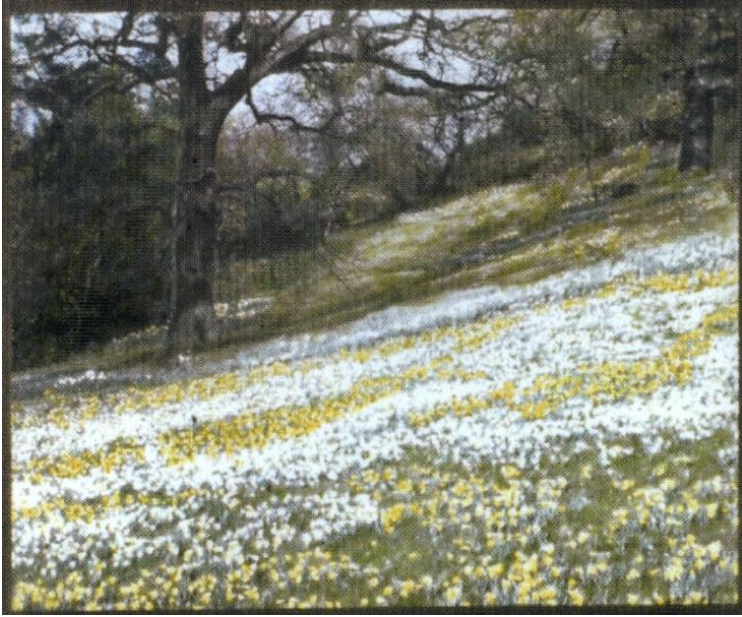
essentially believing no one able to complete the task up to her lofty expectations. Numerous obstructions delayed progress on the project. Completion of the text did not keep up with work on the color plates; her refusal to hire a secretary to facilitate communication between herself and the publisher prompted delays; lack of a detailed agreement on resolving additional expenses impeded timely progress. A deal was finally struck on 21 January 1910 in which one thousand copies of *The Genus Rosa* were to be printed in twenty parts at the cost of one guinea each (£1.05 today).ⁱⁱ [Ed. note; the total number of parts eventually reached twenty-five.] Part one was issued in print in September of that year, with subsequent parts appearing roughly every month thereafter. Parts four and five came with a note that a folio cover would be sent to subscribers, at no extra charge, to protect those already published through part twelve. Monthly publication continued through October of 1912 (part twenty-four) and then halted. One last section was printed on 14 March 1914 with newly recognized species/hybrid species, general and biographical indexes, and an informative section written by the aforementioned John Baker, entitled “Historical Introduction.” Part twenty-five completing the work, subscribers received an offer from bookseller Henry Sotheran & Co. to bind the parts into two volumes (1-13 into volume one, 14-25 into volume two). Because buyers were required to

agree to purchase the whole work, sales flagged. Profits failed to recoup the substantial costs of its publication. The outbreak of WWI in June of that year further killed sales. Despite these difficulties, Gertrude Jekyll quickly published a glowing review. In particular, she praised the work for its “wealth of matter of supreme interest other than purely botanical” to rose enthusiasts.ⁱⁱⁱ Indeed, Ms. Willmott admitted that the scientific issues of classification were a challenge; “I have worked upon roses all my life and the difficulties are insurmountable. I have over and over again felt I was nearing some satisfactory classification and then fresh material has set me astray again.”^{iv} Ultimately, the words of noteworthy geneticist and rose authority C. C. Hurst, testify to the work’s significance; “It is evident that the whole conception of the work, and the welding together of the artistic and scientific elements into a realistic whole with a universal appeal, were due entirely to the genius of Ellen Willmott, and her monograph on roses stands as a lasting monument to her artistic and scientific sensibilities.”^v

Lavish spending on her three properties and the expenditures associated with the publication of *The Genus Rosa* led to a decided change in Ms. Willmott’s finances. Interest payments on borrowed money reduced funds for upkeep of the residences and gardens. [Ed. note; She was forced to sell a prized possession in 1913 – an Amati violin made in 1628. See text box!] Staff either departed for service in the war or were laid off. She initially ignored the obvious solution suggested by friends, selling her French and Italian properties, but by 1920 financial obligations left her little choice and both were sold.

Her sister Rose’s death in 1922 was an emotional blow that confined her to bed for a season. Gradually, work in the garden, hybridizing, and judging various horticultural shows facilitated a return to her accustomed activity. One spirit-lifting event occurred when the National Rose Society awarded her the Dean Hole Medal in 1924.

Genuine violins made by the Amati family are currently valued at +/- \$600,000. At one time Ms. Willmott owned four Amati instruments, two violins, a viola, and a cello. She eventually also acquired a violin made by a pupil of Nicolo Amati - Antonio Stradivari. In 2010 a violin made by Stradivari in 1697 sold for \$3.6 million.



Color lantern slide taken by Ellen Willmott ca. 1900
Warley Place

A noticeable change in her bearing became observable by staff and friends as the years passed. Trip-wires were set up around the daffodil beds that would set off air guns if anyone attempted to pick or steal a clump. Alarm bells were attached to the windows of the mansion at Warley. She revealed to her butler and housekeeper that she kept a loaded revolver in her purse, remarking, "Whoever comes near me will get the worst of it."^{vi} Friends and family had to remind Ellen's housekeeper to keep an eye on her appearance when she went out in public, as she occasionally forgot gloves, scarf, or handkerchief. In 1929 her housekeeper, finding Ms. Willmott's eccentricities and constant demands too much to bear, suddenly quit, leaving only her butler in full-time service. Another grievous blow fell upon her when her sister's oldest daughter died in 1930. Ellen knew there would be no one from the family to live at and carry on the magnificent gardens of Warley Place.

The last years of her life were spent escorting amateur gardeners around the garden and receiving friends on the rare occasion of a visit. She participated in various Royal Horticulture Society events although she no longer competed for awards. Ellen Willmott passed early in the morning of 26 September 1934. Her butler remained at Warley while the family sorted the accumulated possessions contained there. Items were offered for sale over the ensuing months and the property was finally sold in May of 1935. Mrs. Gray, the new owner, never lived in the house, so there was no protection for the house and gardens. Inevitably, plunder and decay decimated both.

Mr. A. J. Carter purchased the property in July of 1938 with the intent of demolishing the house and building a new dwelling, retaining portions of the garden, and building a luxury housing development. His plans were rejected and all progress was halted. As the prospect of WWII loomed, the mansion was demolished in 1939, ostensibly to prevent the British services from commandeering the property. Green-belt legislation passed in 1947 prevented any further development and the property fell into further decay. In 1977 the property passed to Carter's son, a member of the Essex Naturalist Trust (now the Essex Wildlife Trust) and was leased to them. The Warley Place Reserve was opened in 1978 with volunteers having uncovered bits and pieces of the once glorious gardens.



'Narcissus in Turf at Warley Place'
Photo by Ellen Willmott from
The English Flower Garden by William Robinson

The legacy of Ellen Willmott may initially have been marred by her snobbish attitudes and stubbornness. Her lone biographer has described her in these words; “Ellen Willmott was . . . in possession of a character designed to wear patchily rather than well.”^{vii} However, over time that legacy has changed. It must be remembered that she possessed a vast horticultural knowledge and to her eventual misfortune, spent herself exhaustively in pursuit of it. During her lifetime, difficulties encountered at Kew with the germination of seeds and propagation of plants, had often already been solved at Warley. The honors she received as a woman opened the door for others to be similarly celebrated. Her financial support of Ernest Wilson led to the introduction of numerous Asian flora to the western world. Over sixty cultivars of bulbs/rhizomes, perennials, and shrubs with some variation of ‘Willmott’ or ‘Warley’ are named after or by her. For rosarians, and perhaps most enduring of all, her greatest contribution is *The Genus Rosa*. [Ed. note; a current auction site is offering a first edition set of the two volumes for \$3500.00.] Whatever your reaction to her lavish lifestyle there is probably a little bit of Ellen Willmott in all of us during catalog reading season.



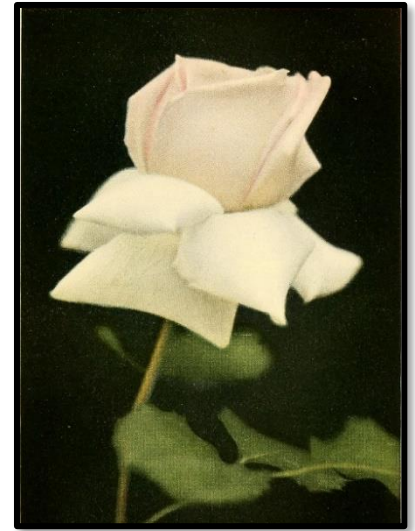
Contemporary photo of Warley Place Nature Reserve

“There is no spot of ground, however arid, bare, or ugly,
that cannot be tamed into such a state as may give an impression of beauty and delight.”

Gertrude Jekyll

Roses Named For Ellen Willmott or Warley Place

Ellen Willmott is known to have purchased plant material from all across Europe. If the Bernaix family, rose breeders from the outskirts of Lyon, France, weren't familiar with her name, then surely winning the Victoria Medal of Honor brought her to their attention. Alexander Bernaix had been breeding and selling roses since 1860. [Ed. note; 'Monsieur Tiller' and 'Baronne Henriette Snoy' are just two of the very fine roses to his credit.] He retired and left the business to be managed by his son Pierre in 1895. Pierre Bernaix is credited with introducing a Hybrid Tea named '**Ellen Willmott**' in 1898. It was described as having large pale pink full blooms with a blush of salmon at the base of the petals, thick foliage, as lacking in fragrance. Numerous sources pronounced it a "strong grower." Capt. George Thomas, Jr., who dedicated himself to buying almost all the new varieties coming out of Europe, considered it one of the best sixteen all-around roses for the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. His evaluation was based on his observation that it didn't ball in wet weather and on its summer and fall repeat-flowering characteristics.



'Ellen Willmott'
Pierre Bernaix



'Miss Willmott'
George Paul

George Paul had already had some commercial success with several single-flowered hybrids, 'Paul's Single White Perpetual' (1883), 'Paul's Single Crimson' (1883), and 'Paul's Single Scarlet' (1897) when he introduced '**Miss Willmott**,' a coppery-red five-petaled rose. Released to commerce in 1899, sources suggest it was a seedling out of the similarly colored Tea-Noisette 'L'Ideal,' and thus it was classified as a Tea. Graham Stuart Thomas compared it in flower form and size to the compact growing crimson China 'Miss Lowe's Variety.' The only known illustration of 'Miss Willmott' appears in part five of *The Genus Rosa*.

Ernest H. Wilson, who wished to go down in history as "Chinese" Wilson, began his second collecting trip to China in 1903. Sponsored by James Veitch and Sons, he was charged with specifically collecting specimens of *Meconopsis integrifolia* as well as the seeds of as many trees, shrubs, and perennials as possible. Records show that his second trip netted 510 seed lots and 2400 herbarium specimens.^{viii} One lot of seeds was from a "wild" rose found on China's western frontier near Tibet. A resulting seedling bloomed for the first time in 1907 and was named *Rosa willmottiae*. Unlike the two previous varieties, *R. willmottiae* is still in commerce. The smallish single flowers range from rose-purple to lilac-pink. Growing to roughly six to eight feet in height and width with an arching habit, the petite foliage is an attractive gray-green.

Two roses follow that were grown in Ms. Willmott's Warley garden and were first described by her in *The Genus Rosa*. She indicates in the work that *Rosa blanda* var. *Willmottiana* originated from seeds sent from America years earlier to John Baker at Kew. Its coral-pink single flowers and



Rosa willmottiae



R. blanda var. *Willmottiana*
- *The Genus Rosa*, Vol. 2, Pt. 16

R. x warleyensis
- *The Genus Rosa*, Vol. 1, Pt. 9



my garden it is upright growing with long cutting stems.



compact habit of growth were thought by Mr. Baker to be distinctive enough to warrant naming. It doesn't appear to have been grown by anyone other than Ms. Willmott. Likewise, *Rosa x warleyensis* was also raised from seeds that had been sent to Kew years earlier. In her comments she described it as a hybrid between *R. rugosa* and *R. blanda*, having characteristics of both. The note that it was "very free flowering" leads one to believe it had *R. rugosa*'s remontancy. Some botanists reversed the parentage suggesting *R. blanda* was the seed parent. [Ed. note; Baker gives two German botanical sources that suggest an earlier synonym may be *R. rugosa x R. virginiana*. The 1893 Koehne source has no botanical description and Koehne actually states that he had not seen the rose. The 1902 Ascherson source merely quotes Koehne.] Pictures/references on helpmefind/roses indicate the rose grows at Sangerhausen.

In 1917 Sam McGredy (II) released a Hybrid Tea he named '**Miss Willmott.**' It, along with a number of others, was a recipient of a gold medal from the National Rose Society in the summer of 1916. 'Miss Willmott's exhibition blooms were white to pale yellow with edges lightly flushed pink. Some sources claimed it was highly fragrant while others reported only moderate fragrance. It received acclaim as a good exhibition and garden rose in Britain, Australia, and America. *National Rose Annual* editor Courtney Page wrote, "There is a particular charm about this Rose, and I am inclined to think that it will rank as one of the raiser's best efforts."^x The 1929 Bobbink & Adkins catalog boldly stated, "This is the almost perfect white rose."^x

Two years after Ms. Willmott's death, the hybridizer of 'Dainty Bess,' William Edward Basil Archer, introduced another single Hybrid Tea he named '**Ellen Willmott.**' A cross between 'Dainty Bess' and 'Lady Hillingdon' (an unusually hardy apricot yellow Tea), the Archer version of 'Ellen Willmott' is creamy white touched by a hint of lemon yellow with a pale frosting of pink around the edges of the petals, especially in cooler weather. Its stamens consist of red filaments topped with golden anthers, and are a prominent and attractive feature as evidenced by a comment recorded by Daphne Filiberti, "If roses had eyelashes this one could certainly bat her eyes." The wavy petals occasionally have scalloped edges. In

Left:
'Miss Willmott'
- Sam McGredy
Photo from
1917 NRS Annual

Right:
'Ellen Willmott'
- Wm. Archer
Photo by
Stephen Hoy



Other Plants Named for Ellen Willmott or Warley Place



Aethionema 'Warley Rose'

Variouly known as Persian stone cress or Persian candytuft, this alpine is a semi-evergreen sub-shrub with rose-pink flowers that appear in late spring to early summer. Awarded a Royal Horticulture Society (RHS) Award of Garden Merit, it grows roughly 6" (15 cm) tall and 12" (30 cm) wide, prefers well-drained soil, and should be grown in full sun to part shade. It is cold hardy to 5° F/-15° C. [Ed. note; this is where I complain about how few catalogs tell me if it is too hot and humid to try it here in central GA.]

Photo by John James

Campanula x haylodgensis 'Warley White'

The Campanula family is made of annuals, biennials, and herbaceous perennials. The genus gets its common name, bellflower, from its upturned bell-shaped flowers. Different species/cultivars have a diverse range of growing requirements. They generally prefer well-drained soils and cooler nights. *Campanula x halodgensis* resulted from a cross of *Campanula carpatica* and *Campanula cochlearifolia* made in the late 19th century. The cultivar 'Warley White' is a double white-flowered groundcover that grows roughly 2-3" (5-7 cm) in height and 10" (25.5 cm) in width and flowers during the summer months.

Photo by Terra Nova Nurseries, Inc.



Ceratostigma willmottianum

This species of plumbago was collected by Ernest Wilson near Sichuan (formerly Szechuan) in western China and raised by Ellen Willmott in her Warley garden. A bushy herbaceous perennial that loves hot sunny locations, it was awarded a RHS Award of Merit in 1917. Its true blue flowers appear in late summer through early fall on plants that will grow to 3' (.9 meters) in height and eventually spread to 5' (1.5 meters) in width. It is hardy in USDA zones 6 to 9 and drought tolerant once established. As I learned recently, it should not be confused with Cape plumbago (*Plumbago auriculata*), a species native to South Africa, or the ground-cover species, *Ceratostigma plumbaginoides*.

***Cistus x crispatus* ‘Warley Rose’**

Cistus is a genus of plants native to the Mediterranean regions of southern Europe and northern Africa. Also known as Rockrose, *Cistus* are low-growing, sun-loving evergreen shrubs reaching 18” (45 cm) in height and 36” (.9 m) in width. They prefer sunny, dry conditions and their gray green sage-like foliage is deer resistant. The pink single flowers of ‘Warley Rose’ appear from late spring to mid-summer. It is reportedly hardy to 15° F (-10° C).

Photo by Oregon State University

***Corylopsis willmottiae***

Commonly known as Chinese winterhazel, this shrub was found in 1908 by Ernest Wilson in southwest Sichuan. It is a hardy deciduous shrub growing 8-10’ (2.5-3 meters) in height that bears hanging racemes of fragrant yellow flowers in early spring before leafing out. It was awarded a RHS Award of Merit in 1912. *Corylopsis* thrive in filtered light and are considered hardy in USDA zones 5-9. A new cultivar named ‘Spring Purple’ has purplish new foliage.

Photo by Martin Antos

Epimedium x warleyensis

Epimedium, or Bishop’s Hat/Barrenwort, is a semi-evergreen groundcover that thrives in a moist woodland setting. It first appeared in Ms. Willmott’s Warley Place garden. She shared it with Professor William Stearn, a prominent RHS botanist, who realized it was an interspecies hybrid. Recognizing its value he named it after Warley Place. Burnt orange flowers blended with yellow appear on 15” (38 cm) stems above heart-shaped foliage in early spring. It is hardy to USDA zone 5a. Several named cultivars are in commerce, one of which is named ‘Ellen Willmott.’

Photo by Desertcart.com





Lilium x davidii* var. *willmottiae

Originally named *Lilium warleyensis*, this species of lily was collected by E. H. Wilson in the Sichuan province of western China. It was reclassified in 1938 to its present name. *Lilium davidii* var. *willmottiae* grows to 4' or more in height with each stem bearing clusters of 20-40 downward facing orange flowers with dark spots on the petals. The Turk's-cap shaped flowers appear in mid-summer. In its native habitat it is often grown for its edible bulb. Hardy to USDA zone 5.

Photo by Darm Crook

Paeonia obovata* var. *willmottiae

This woodland species of peony grew from seed collected by E. H. Wilson in the Hubei (formerly Hupeh) province of China in 1900. Its white single flowers, appearing in late spring, are offset by beautiful maroon red filaments and yellow stamens. The plant will grow to 2' (.6 m) in height and prefers rich soil. If flowers are not removed seed pods will form, splitting open on maturity to reveal startling blue black seeds. Peonies are generally recommended for USDA zones 5 to 7b.

Photo by Hillside Nursery



***Potentilla nepalensis* 'Miss Willmott'**

This herbaceous perennial forms a low mound roughly 12-18" by 12-18" (35-45 x 35-45 cm). Its deep green five-lobed leaves explain its common name - cinquefoil. The cultivar 'Miss Willmott' has pinkish flowers with a darker red eye that appear during the summer months. It likes a sunny spot in the front of the garden or border and is an easy-to-grow perennial. Given a RHS Garden Award of Merit zones it is hardy from USDA zones 2-9.

Photo courtesy of Etsy



***Scabiosa caucasica* 'Miss Willmott'**

Scabiosa caucasica 'Miss Willmott' is a white-flowered perennial from the family of plants commonly known as pincushion flowers. Its single flowers, great for cutting, are 2-3 inches (6-8 cm) wide and will appear throughout the summer months if spent flowers are removed. Attractive to pollinators, *Scabiosa caucasica* requires well-drained soil and sun. It is hardy in USDA zones 3-8.

Photo by Stepheny Houghtlin

***Syringa vulgaris* 'Miss Ellen Willmott'**

This cultivar of the French lilac family was raised by Victor Lemoine in 1903 and named for Ellen Willmott. It received a RHS Award of Merit in 1917. The French lilacs, multi-stemmed deciduous shrubs, are generally grown in USDA climate zones 3-7 (too hot here!) and prefer full sun. This variety will grow to 10' (3 meters) in height and width and has very fragrant double white flowers that appear in mid-spring.

Photo from NetPS Online Plant Data Base



From the Editor

When I first began researching Ellen Willmott my intention was to write an article about a single-flowered Hybrid Tea I've been growing for almost forty years. The research hole kept getting deeper and deeper. If Ellen Willmott the person interests you I recommend picking up a copy of *Miss Willmott of Warley Place: Her Life and Her Gardens* by Audrey Le Lievre. Published in 1980, it is the only biography written about this important figure.

As my current garden transforms from rose only beds to beds with roses and a mixed bag of perennials, bulbs and small flowering shrubs, the "Other Plants" article in the newsletter was of extreme interest to me. All the plants featured are commercially available to gardeners today (in their appropriate climate). There are so

many more plants to be discovered and enjoyed. I would love to hear back from readers regarding their experiences with some of those featured.

I contemplated adding an article entitled ‘The Gardens of Warley Place’ to the newsletter. It was written in 1905 by familiar horticulturist Henri Correvon (of ‘Rouletii’ fame) and published in an historic British periodical entitled *The Garden*. The four-part article was perhaps too long and contained numerous lists of plants with their Latinized names – a form of identification only a few of us plant geeks find interesting. I intend to make it available, with some illustrations, to those who let me know of their interest.

Sources and Contact Information (for roses only)

‘Ellen Willmott’ (H.T., Archer) – Rose Petals Nursery/www.rosepetalsnursery.com; Roses Unlimited/http://rosesunlimitedsc.com; and numerous nurseries in Britain, Europe, & Australia.

Rosa willmottiae (Sp) – does not appear to be available in North America, perhaps you just have to know someone who knows someone; widely available in Britain, Europe, & Australia.

Singularly Beautiful Roses

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R. willmottiae

Photo by Warren Millington

Endnotes for Ellen Ann Willmott - “My Plants . . .”

ⁱ Correvon, Henri, “The Alpine Garden at Warley, Essex,” *The Garden*, Vol. 45, March 3, 1894, 167.

ⁱⁱ Le Lievre, Audrey, *Miss Willmott of Warley Place*, Faber and Faber: London, 1980, 113.

ⁱⁱⁱ Jekyll, Gertrude, “Wild and Garden Roses,” (“Review of *The Genus Rosa* by Ellen Willmott”), *The Quarterly Review*, Vol. 221, July-October, London, 1914, 375.

^{iv} Le Lievre, *Miss Willmott of Warley Place*, 111.

^v Hurst, C. C., “Miss E. A. Willmott,” (obituary), *Nature*, November 10, 1934, 726.

^{vi} Le Lievre, *Miss Willmott of Warley Place*, 203.

^{vii} *Ibid*, 124.

^{viii} <http://arnoldia.arboretum.harvard.edu/pdf/articles/1980-40-3-e-h-wilson-as-a-botanist-part-i.pdf>, accessed 23 August, 2021.

^{ix} Darlington, H. R., and Page, Courtney, ed., *The National Rose Annual*, National Rose Society, 1917, 128.

^x *Roses by Bobbink & Adkins*, 1929, 23.