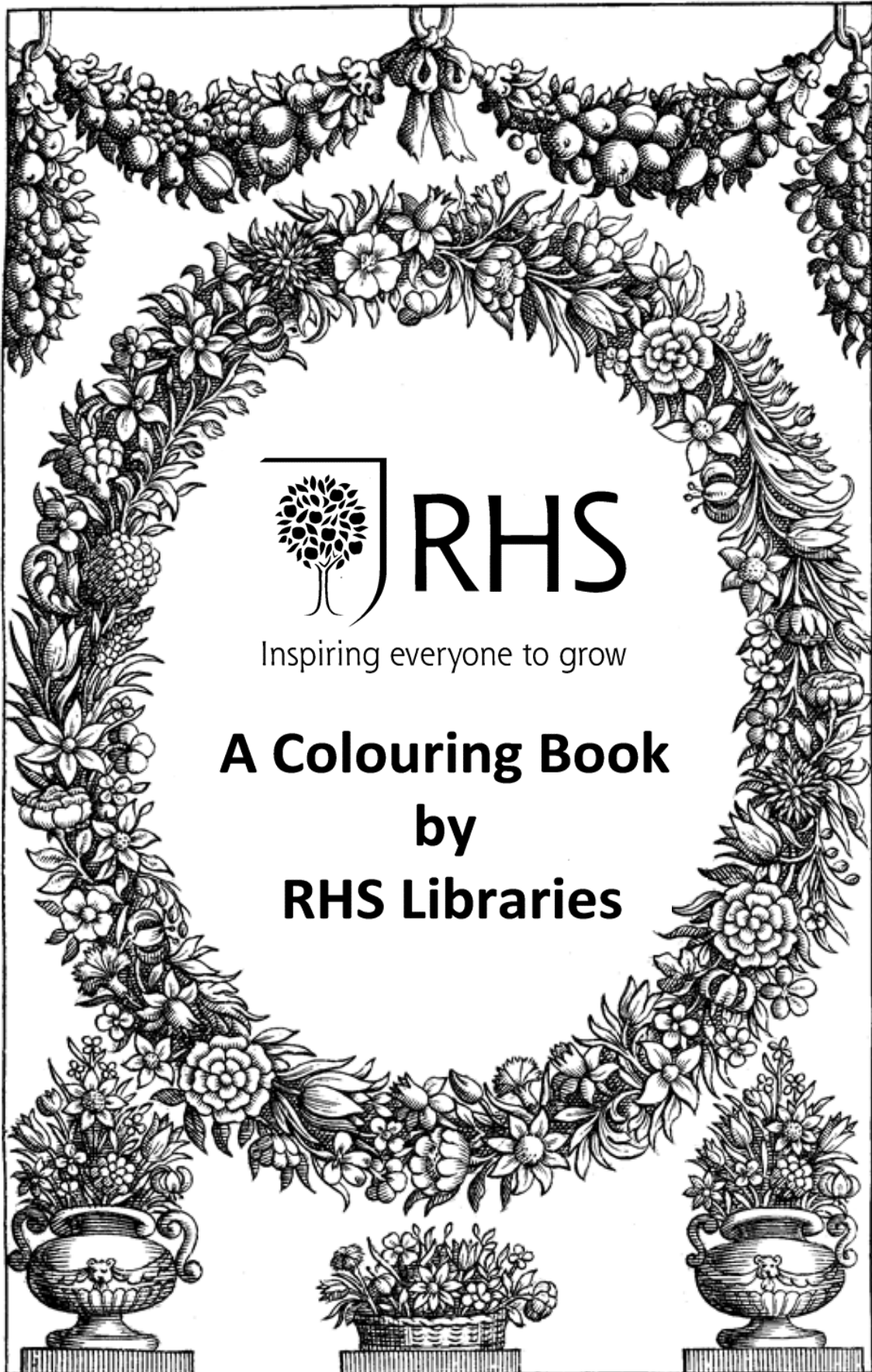


#ColorOurCollections

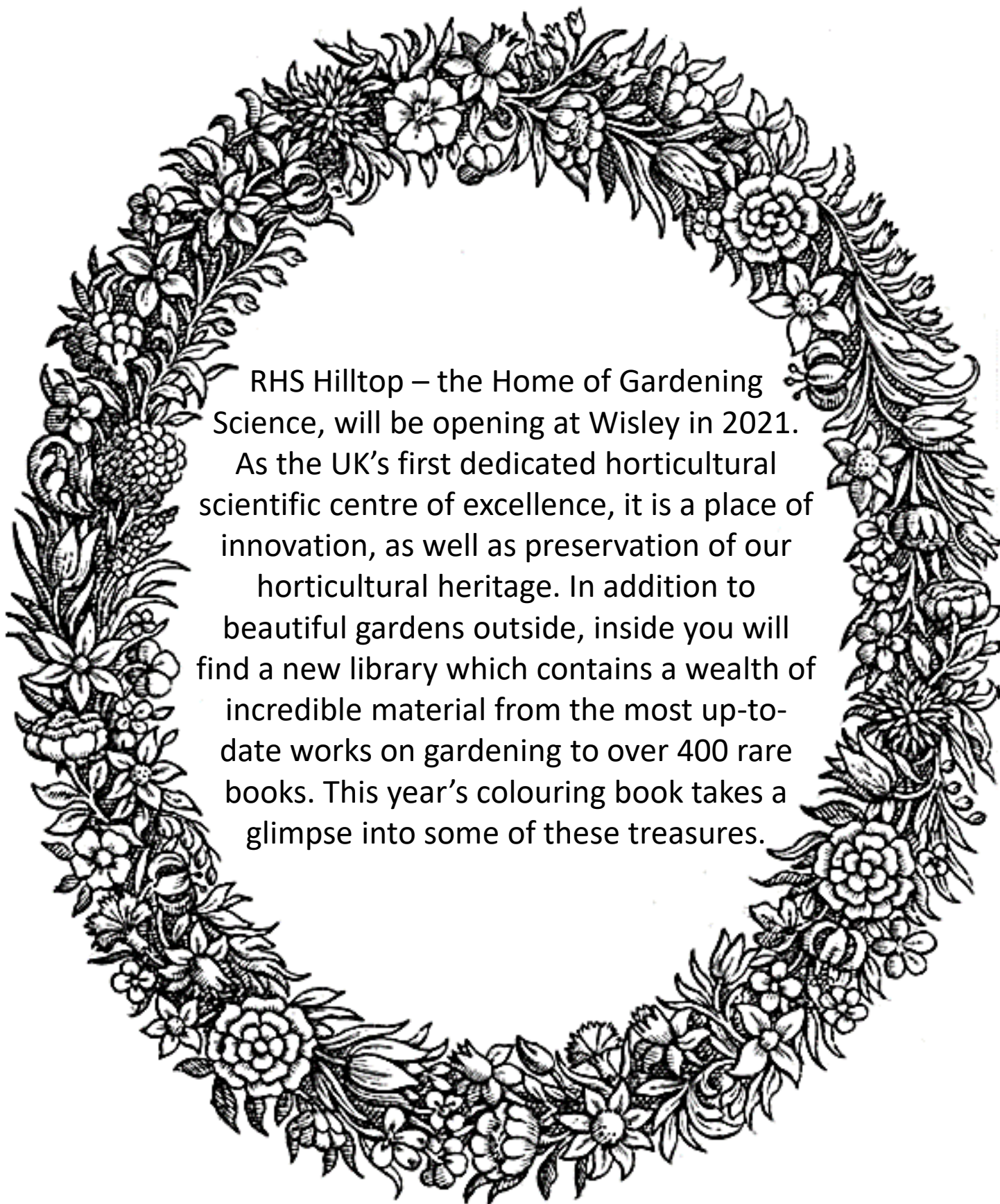
This image is from the collection of



Inspiring everyone to grow

**A Colouring Book
by
RHS Libraries**

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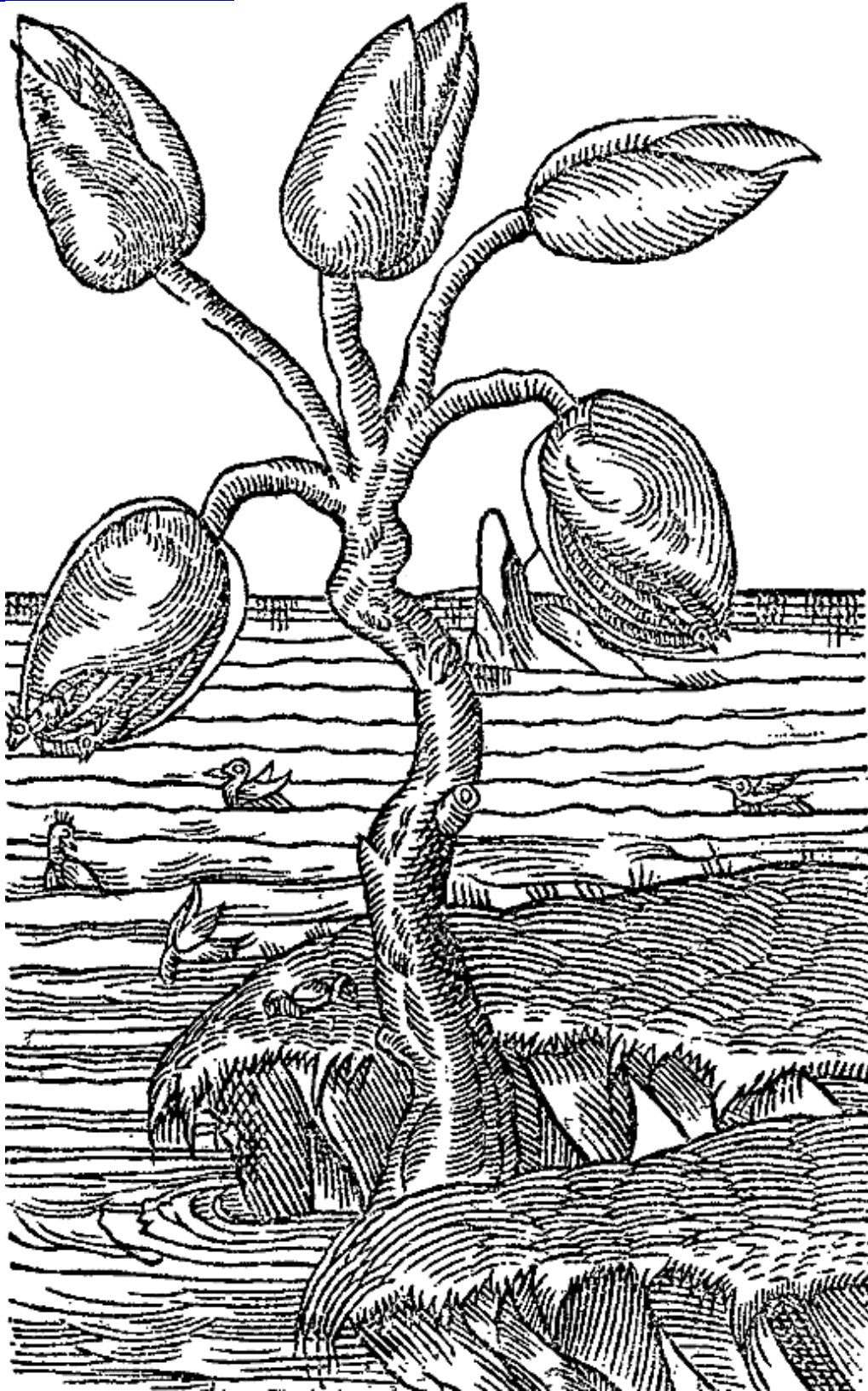
RHS Hilltop – the Home of Gardening Science, will be opening at Wisley in 2021. As the UK’s first dedicated horticultural scientific centre of excellence, it is a place of innovation, as well as preservation of our horticultural heritage. In addition to beautiful gardens outside, inside you will find a new library which contains a wealth of incredible material from the most up-to-date works on gardening to over 400 rare books. This year’s colouring book takes a glimpse into some of these treasures.



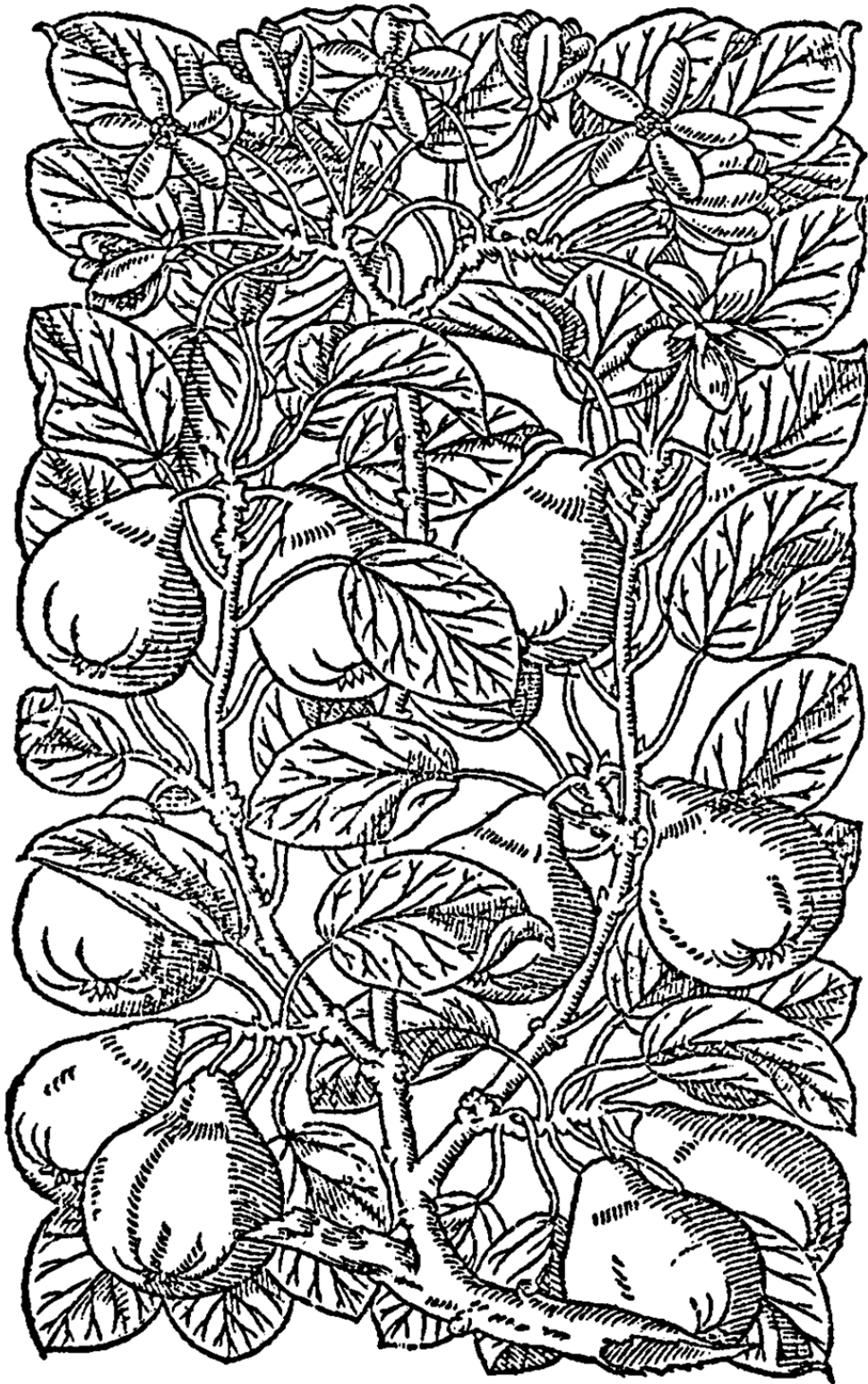
The oldest book in the collections of RHS Wisley Library is the 1542 edition of a herbal by Leonhart Fuchs, *De historia stirpium commentarii insignes*. This pivotal work is filled with woodcut illustrations of plants which were drawn directly from life to capture as much detail as possible. As Fuchs' noted, "a picture expresses things more surely and fixes them more deeply in the mind than the bare words of the text ... we have devoted the greatest diligence that every plant should be depicted with its own roots, stalks, leaves, flowers, seeds and fruits". These are all features of plants that we now recognise a useful for identification. An innovation for the time was also Fuchs' inclusion of portraits of those involved in producing the book, including portraits of Fuchs himself (seen here), as well as Albrecht Meyer who made the original drawings, Heinrich Füllmaurer who copied the drawings onto woodblocks and Veit Rudolf Speckle who cut the blocks ready for printing [1542, 615.5 FUC].



But what is a herbal? A herbal is a book that discusses and examines medicinal plants. They were used to help people identify, process and administer plant-based treatments to those suffering from various maladies, This is one of many woodcuts which accompanies Fuchs' descriptions of healing plants (note the flowers, seeds, leaves and roots that he insisted were portrayed). This image is of a dandelion, which although many now consider a weed, has leaves that were used regularly in salads and was traditionally used by apothecaries as a diuretic treatment. At Hilltop there will be a new Wellbeing Garden, in which plants with many healing qualities still valued today will be seen. So neatly tended though, will you spot any dandelions? [1542, 615.3 FUC]



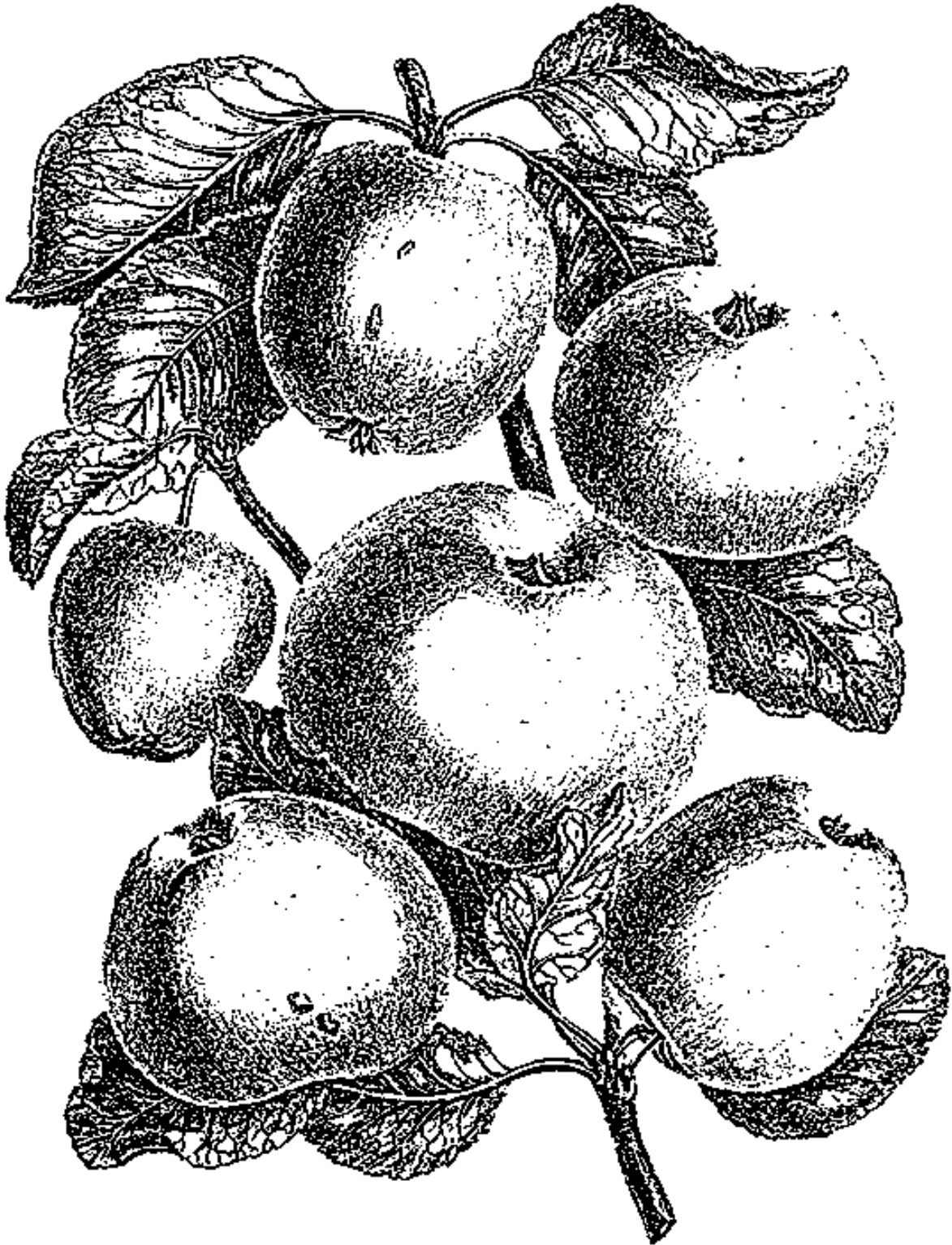
The library collection at Hilltop also includes a number of editions of another well-known herbal by John Gerard *The herball or generall historie of plantes*. Like Fuchs' book you will find an abundance of plant-based remedies here, but herbals like Gerard's could also include some strange folklore about plants and accepted beliefs that were held for centuries that may now strike us as strange. This image is of a curious tree believed to produce not fruit but Barnacle geese! As Gerard described, upon these trees "do grow certaine shells of a white colour tending to russet, wherein are contained living creatures: which shells in time of maturitie do open, and out of them grow those living things, which falling into the water do become fowles ...but the others that fall upon the land perish and come to nothing" [1597, 615.3 GER].



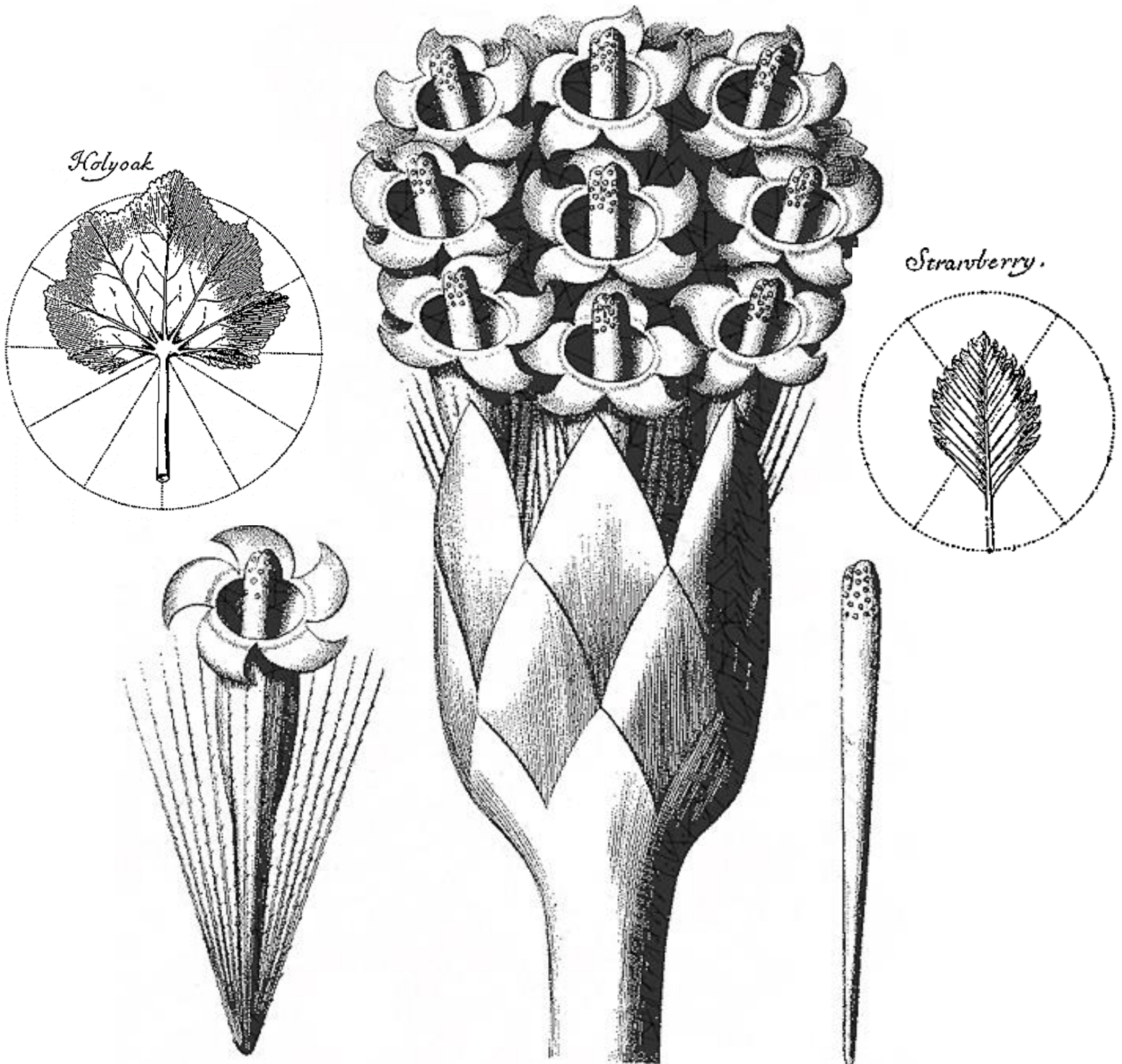
Plants in Gerard's herbal are described in detail including when, where and how they grow, what names they are referred to by and crucially a list of their "Vertues" is given – in other words, how they could be used. "The tame or orchard Peare", meaning those grown domestically rather than their wild relatives, are all described as "colde, and all have a binding qualitie and an earthie substance". Some however, "may with good successe be laide upon hot swellings in the beginning, as may be the leaves of the tree, which do both binde and coole" [1597, 615.3 GER].



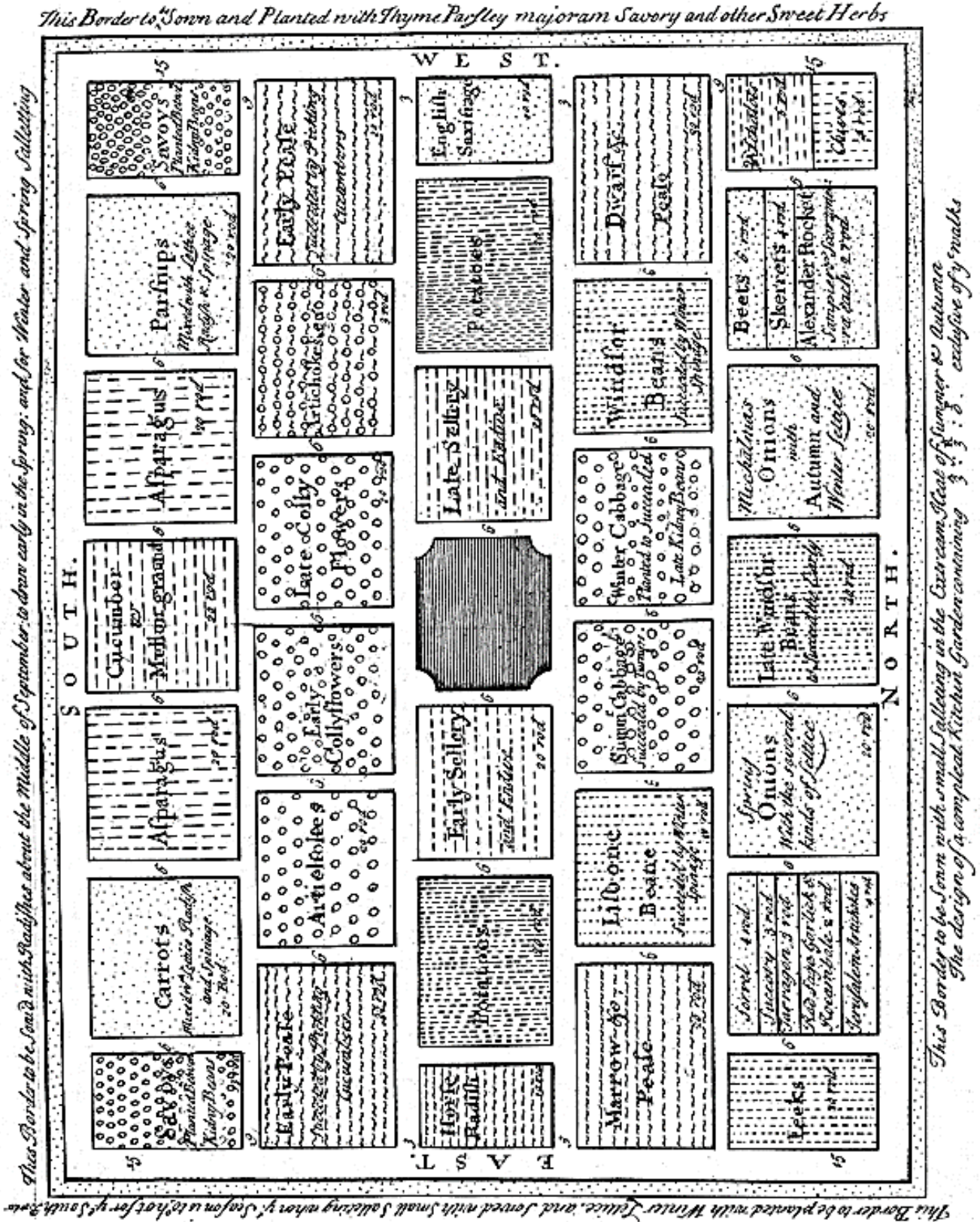
Fruit trials are central to the history of RHS Garden Wisley, and they continue to be so today. If you visit the gardens, you will be able to walk through acres of orchards, while inside the library there are a plentiful supply of books discussing fruit, in particular apples. A beautifully illustrated example from the rare books collection is the *Hereford Pomona*, which was edited by Henry Graves Bull and Robert Hogg, former Vice President of the RHS. Just like Fuchs' herbal, the images here were drawn from nature by Henry Bull's daughter, Edith Elizabeth Bull and Alice Ellis. If you come to see this book in the Library you will find that the original illustrations inside are delicately rendered and coloured to produce extremely realistic representations of fruit forms [1876-1885, 634.10 HER].



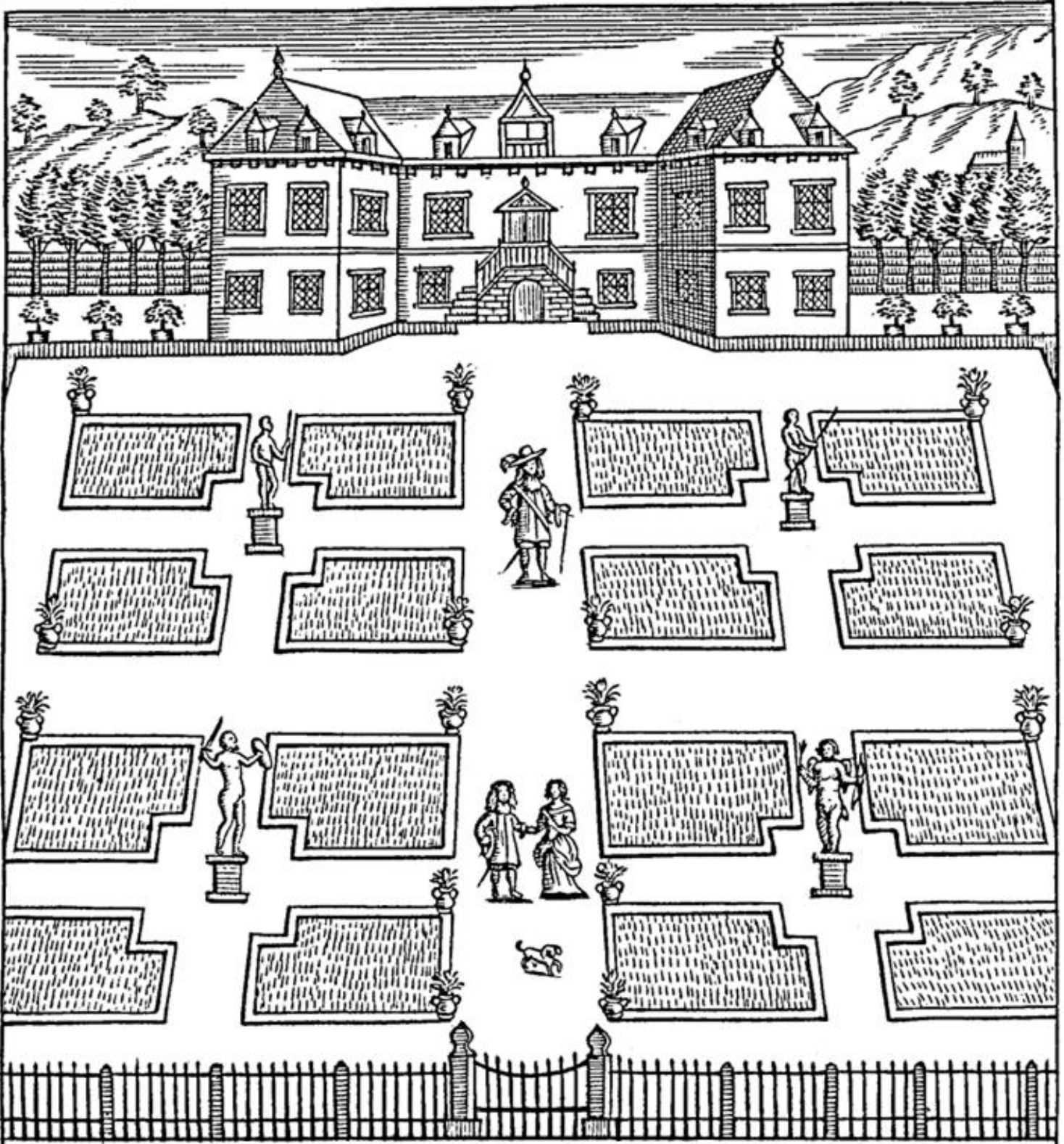
This image is based on an illustration from a magnificent book about apples by the notable fruit grower Hugh Ronalds called *Pyrus malus Brentfordiensis*. Over 40 years before Henry Bull, Ronalds employed the skills of his daughter Elizabeth to create the artistic impressions of the fruits that he would describe in his book. Elizabeth created 42 plates of illustrations for the work, “painted on stone” meaning that the images were printed using a technique called lithography [1831, 634.11 RON].



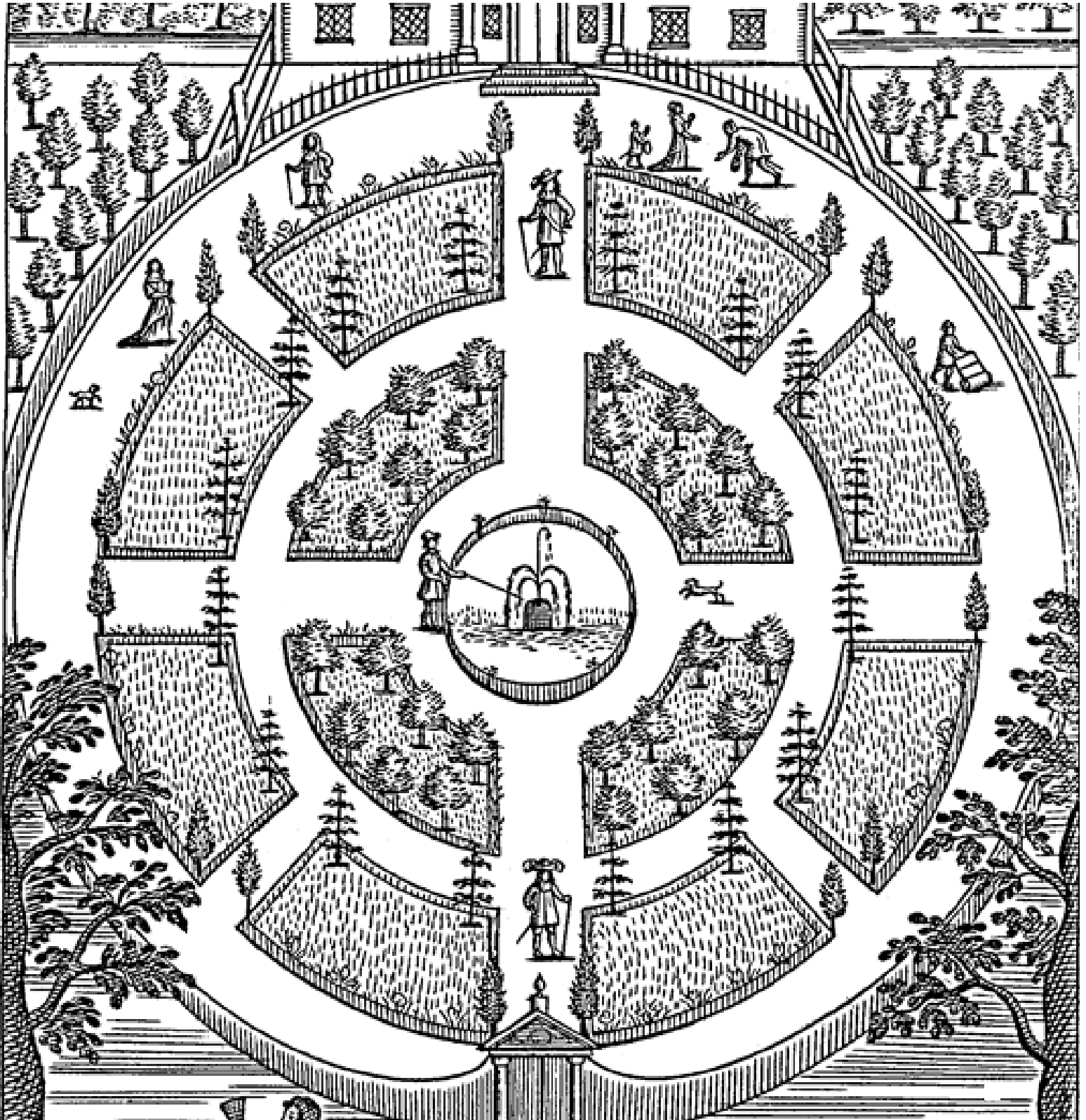
Horticultural science stands at the heart of the work of the RHS and Hilltop will be home to three state-of-the-art laboratories. The scientific study of plants has fascinated and inspired for centuries as we have sought to learn more about the world around us. Nehemiah Grew (1641-1712) is considered one of the founders of the study of plant anatomy and a pioneer in the world of botany. In his greatest work *The Anatomy of Plants*, you will find detailed and intricate images of plant dissections and studies of plants as seen through a microscope. There are even diagrams displaying how leaves could be accurately measured [1682, 581.4 GRE].



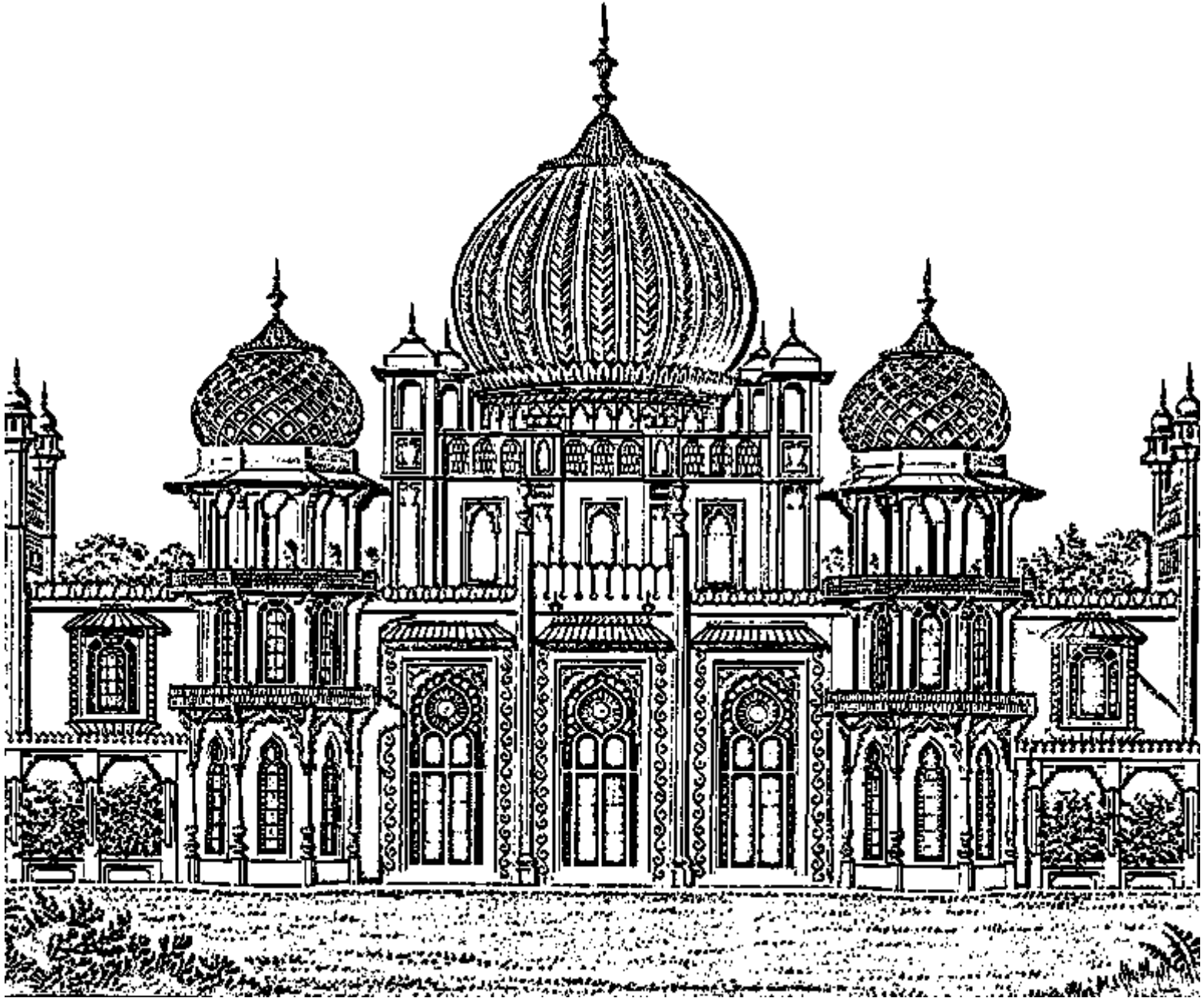
Another garden that will be newly created around Hilltop is the World Food Garden. Vegetable growing often requires meticulous planning. Here is a design for a well stocked kitchen garden in Batty Langley's book *New principles of gardening*, which was printed in London in 1728. How many of the vegetables listed do you recognise today? [1728, 968 LAN]



The design and form of gardens has undergone many changes over the centuries, even the way we use them has evolved through time - from practical herb gardens to grow plants to cure our ills, grand and sweeping landscapes to amble through, to knot gardens and more. What abides though is our passion for gardening. Woodcut illustration from John Worlidge's *Systema horti-culturae* [1688, 950 WOR].



Another garden design from Worlidge's *Systema horti-culturæ* showing an English country house garden, with a distinctive round outline and central water feature. You might be able to spot the gardener rolling the paths on the right [1688, 950 WOR].



Humphry Repton (1752-1818) was the first person to describe himself as a Landscape Gardener. The rare books collection in Wisley Library includes the only copy held in RHS Libraries of the 1822 edition of Repton's *Designs for the Pavillon at Brighton*. In 1805, Repton was commissioned by the future King George IV to produce designs for the redevelopment of the Royal Pavilion and the surrounding grounds. Unfortunately, Repton lost the commission to John Nash, but he did go on to publish his suggestions in this book [1822, 999 (4B) BRI REP].

If you would like to view any of the items in the rare books collection mentioned in this colouring book, you are warmly invited to book a research appointment. Please see our website for details:

www.rhs.org.uk/education-learning/libraries-at-rhs

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