

ROOTED IN COLOR

LuEsther T. Mertz Library

Those Who
Helped Us Grow:
Profiles of
NYBG Staff
and the Plants
They Love



NYBG

Cover: *Hyssopus officinalis* L.
L'Obel, Matthias de, *Plantarum seu stirpium icons*. Antverpiae, 1591.

Staff Spotlight: Staff Spotlight: Henry Teuscher was a Dendrologist at NYBG between 1933–1936. After leaving the Garden, Teuscher became the Director of Technical Services at Montreal Botanical Garden and was imperative in formulating the initial plans for the urban oasis.

Figure 1: *Narcissus papyraceus* Ker Gawl.—Daffodil
Dodoens, Rembert. *Stirpium historiae pemptades sex, sive libri XXX*. Antverpiae, Ex Officina C. Plantini, 1583

Figure 2: *Dahlia pinnata* Cav.—Dahlia
Regel, Eduard, *Gartenflora*, 1907

Figure 3: *Cactus ficus-indica* L.—Prickly Pear Cactus
L'Obel, Matthias de, *Plantarum seu stirpium icons*. Antverpiae, 1581.

Figure 4: *Hemerocallis fulva* (L.) L.—Daylilies
L'Obel, Matthias de, *Plantarum seu stirpium icons*. Antverpiae, 1581.

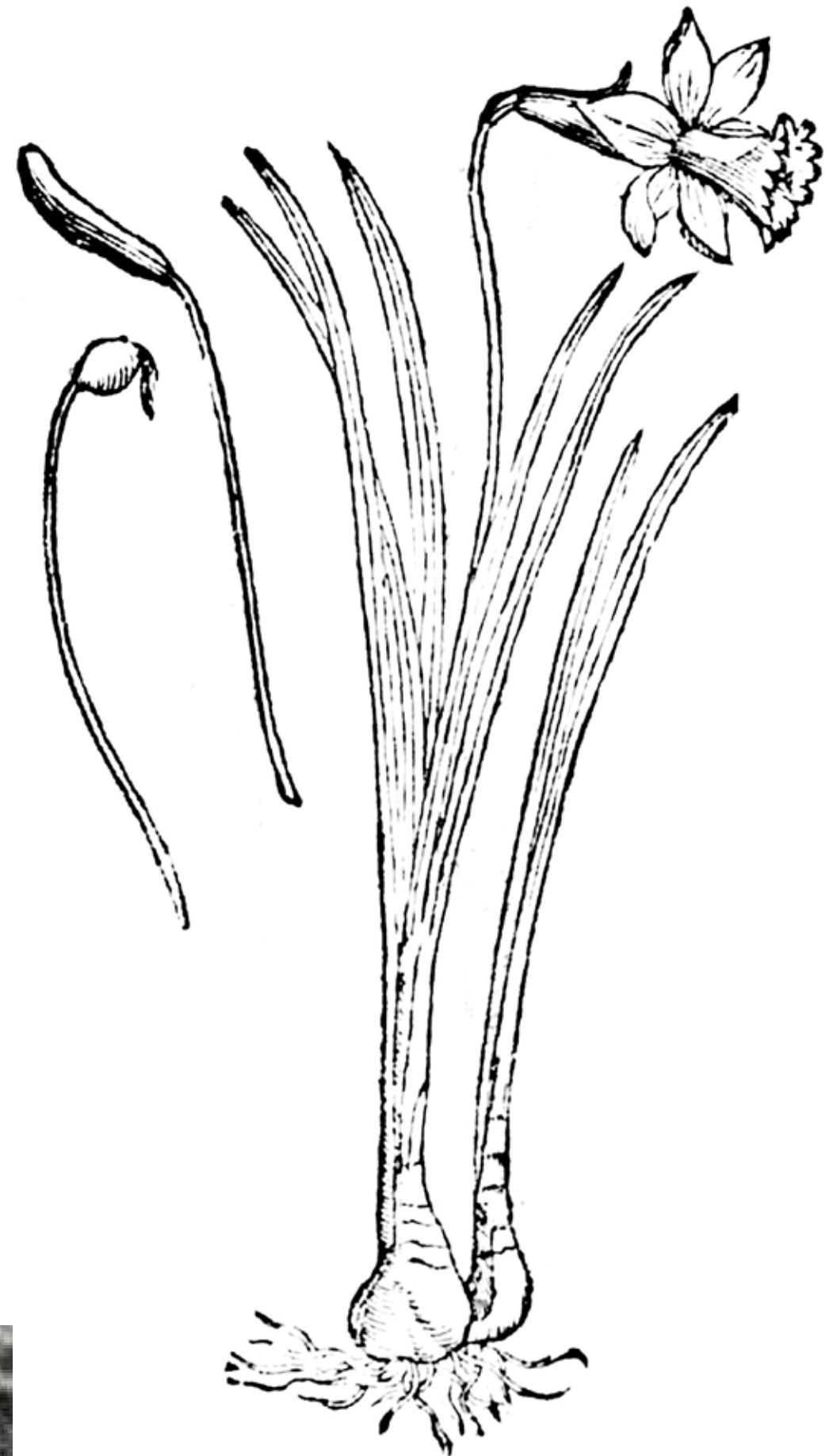
Figure 5: *Salvia officinalis* L.—Sage
Dodoens, Rembert. *Stirpium historiae pemptades sex, sive libri XXX*. Antverpiae, Ex Officina C. Plantini, 1583

Figure 6: *Campanula rotundifolia* L.—Harebell (Wildflower)
Dodoens, Rembert. *Stirpium historiae pemptades sex, sive libri XXX*. Antverpiae, Ex Officina C. Plantini, 1583

Figure 7: *Clematis viticella* L.—Clematis
Dodoens, Rembert. *Stirpium historiae pemptades sex, sive libri XXX*. Antverpiae, Ex Officina C. Plantini, 1583

Figure 8: *Microlepia strigosa* (Thunb.) C. Presl—Fern
American Fern Journal, 1957

Figure 9: *Sagittaria latifolia* Willd.—Broadleaf arrowhead
Dodoens, Rembert. *Stirpium historiae pemptades sex, sive libri XXX*. Antverpiae, Ex Officina C. Plantini, 1583

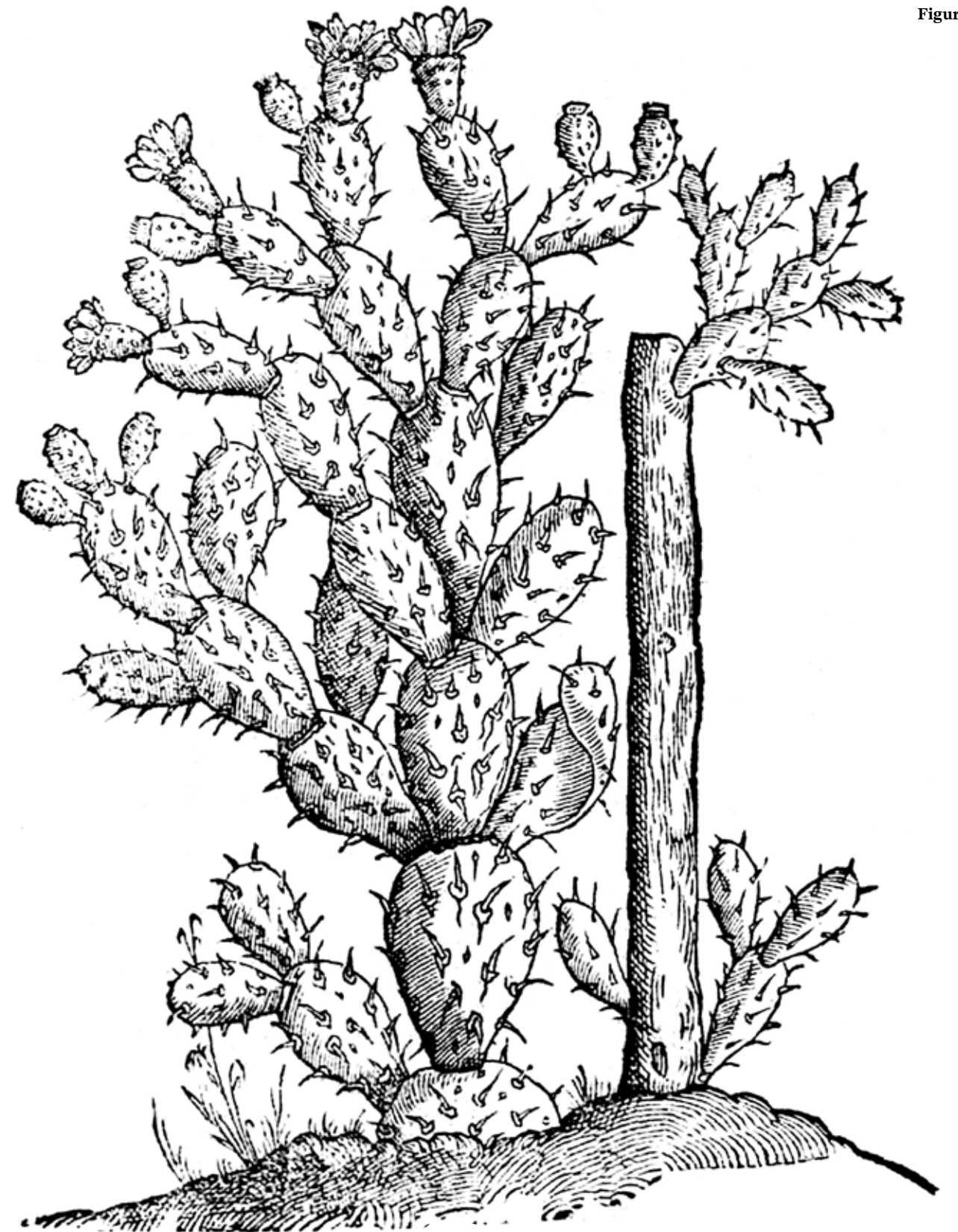


An avid grower of daffodils, Ethel Anson Steel Peckham was instrumental in curating NYBG's Daffodil Hill. In 1924, she partly gave and partly purchased, using the *Narcissus* fund that she established, 10,000 *Narcissus* bulbs to NYBG. She was named NYBG's Honorary Curator of Iris and Narcissus Collections in 1927.

Figure 2



Figure 3



Many knew him for his personality and curating NYBG flower show displays, but Louis P. Politi was an influential force in implementing physical elements to the Rock Garden, propagating plants and managing the Greenhouse. As a young student gardener, Politi's wealth of botanical knowledge officiated his position as the lead Horticulturist, winning medals and horticultural prizes for numerous flower shows. Though he did not have a favorite plant, he taught NYBG courses and facilitated successful dahlia trial gardens for the American Dahlia Society.



Mary Emily Eaton served as NYBG's botanical artist from July 1911 to January 1932. Her work consisted of beautifully colored plates and illustrations in the *Addisonia* (a journal published by NYBG) and *The Cactaceae* (written by botanists Nathaniel Lord Britton and Joseph Nelson Rose). The 4 volume, reference text provides readers with detailed descriptions of plants in the cactus family.



Arlow Burdette Stout was a botanist, geneticist, and expert in the hybridization of daylilies. His career at the New York Botanical Garden spanned nearly four decades (1911-1947) where he served as Director of Laboratories and later Curator of Education and Laboratories. Dr. Stout was internationally known for his research on selective breeding of daylilies (*Hemerocallis*), which resulted in the development of stunning hybrid flowers.



Elizabeth C. Hall was popular for her garden lectures and plant information advice. She gave advice to tens of thousands via telephone and correspondence, taught adult education classes; led garden tours and was a frequent contributor to library and gardening journals and newspapers including the New York Times. In 1969, the New York Botanical Garden awarded her the Distinguished Service Award. Her career spanned over three decades at NYBG, and she was specifically interested in medieval gardens which typically featured herbs (i.e. rosemary, sage) and ornamental flowers (i.e. violets and lilies). Known to all as "Miss Hall", she was beloved and respected by all those who knew her.

Figure 6



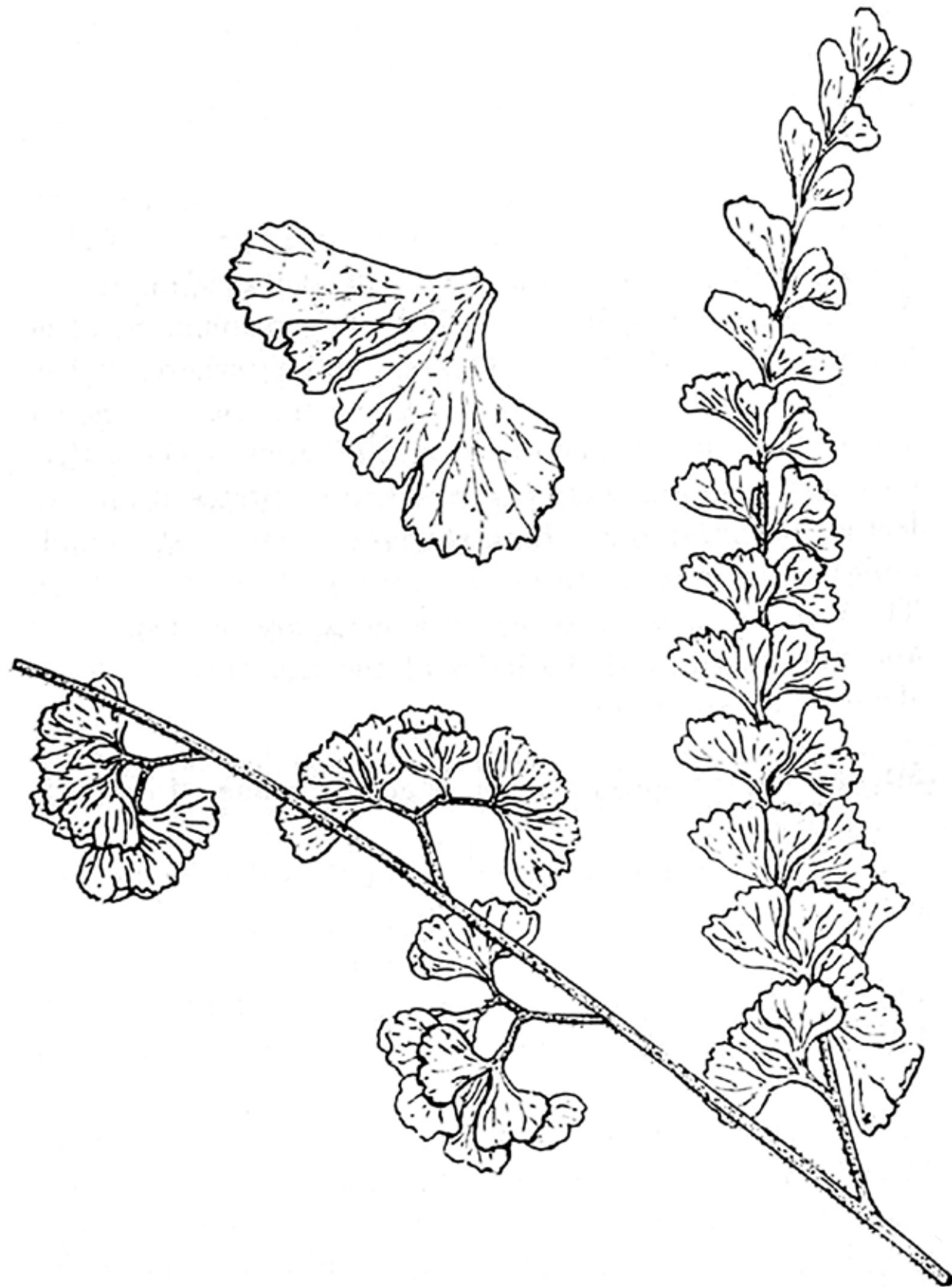
Elizabeth Gertrude Knight Britton was a bryologist, educator, and one of the founding leaders of the New York Botanical Garden. Early in the history of the NYBG, she launched a public effort to raise people's consciousness about wildflower preservation. In 1902, she helped organize The Wildflower Preservation Society of America and published a series of articles on the subject in the *Journal of the NYBG* (1912–29). In recent years, Elizabeth Britton has become the focus of several studies on women in the sciences in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Figures 7



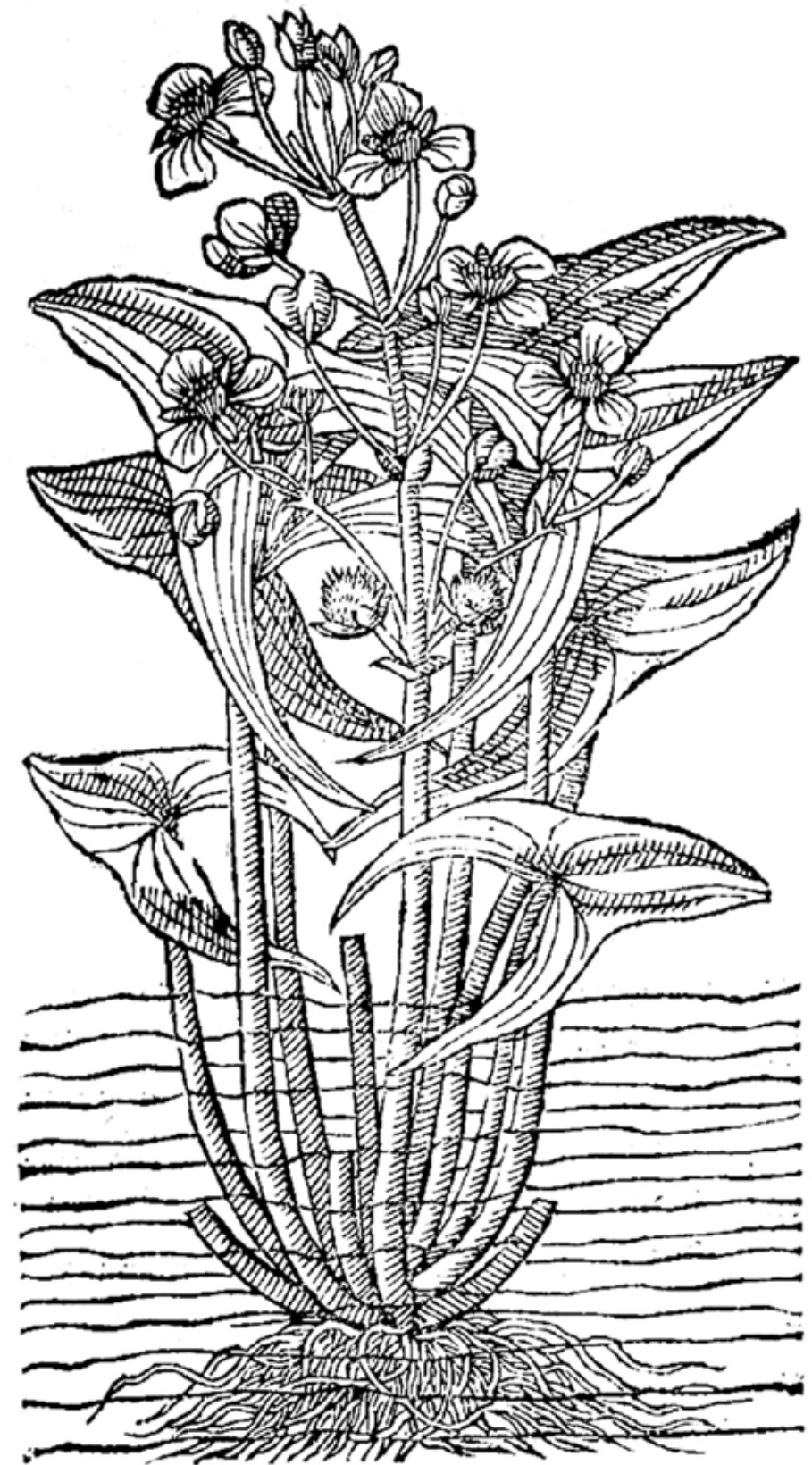
Joel E. Spingarn was a member of NYBG Board of Managers, professor and civil rights activist. He fought for racial justice and became one of the first Jewish leaders who served various roles as chairman, treasurer and president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). As a horticulturist, he specialized in the Clematis species, published written work about the plant and grew it in his Troutbeck home garden. A collection of his personal papers about the genus Clematis can be found in Mertz Library's Archives.

Figure 8



A botanist and educator, Winifred Josephine Robinson studied at the University of Michigan and Columbia University. She was an instructor at Vassar College and chosen as the first dean of the Women's College of Delaware in 1914. Prior to stepping into her leadership role, Robinson worked at NYBG as a Laboratory Assistant. With an educational background in studying ferns, she published several papers and recognized over 100 species of Hawaiian ferns and lycophytes. A leader in women's education and botanical science, she was a member of the Torrey Botanical Club and featured in the biographical directory, *Woman's who's who of America: 1914-1915*.

Figures 9



Gustav L Wittrock served as a Docent and Custodian of the Herbarium at the New York Botanical Garden. During his time, he became an author who wrote popular articles in NYBG's *Garden Journal* and published, "The Pruning Book". Interested in the study of Native American culture, Wittrock conducted research on the food, dye and medicinal plants of the American Indian and wrote an article about the usage and cultivation of Food Plants by North American Indians. He particularly found the *Sagittaria latifolia* to be an interesting plant because, "Roasted or boiled, this tuber becomes soft, palatable, and digestible." (*Journal of NYBG*, March, 1942, p.67).

A collection of Wittrock's personal papers on American Indian culture can be found in Mertz Library's Archives.

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To the past and present staff—thank you for your hard work in making the Garden beautiful.

About the LuEsther T. Mertz Library

The LuEsther T. Mertz Library is a thriving center for research in the study of botany, horticulture, and the integral role plants play in the sustainable development of humankind. It collects, preserves, and shares more than ten centuries of written and visual documents that are essential to understanding our relationship with the plant kingdom. The Mertz Library's outstanding collections and programs are important educational resources for the scientific, scholarly, and artistic communities worldwide and the public at large.

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