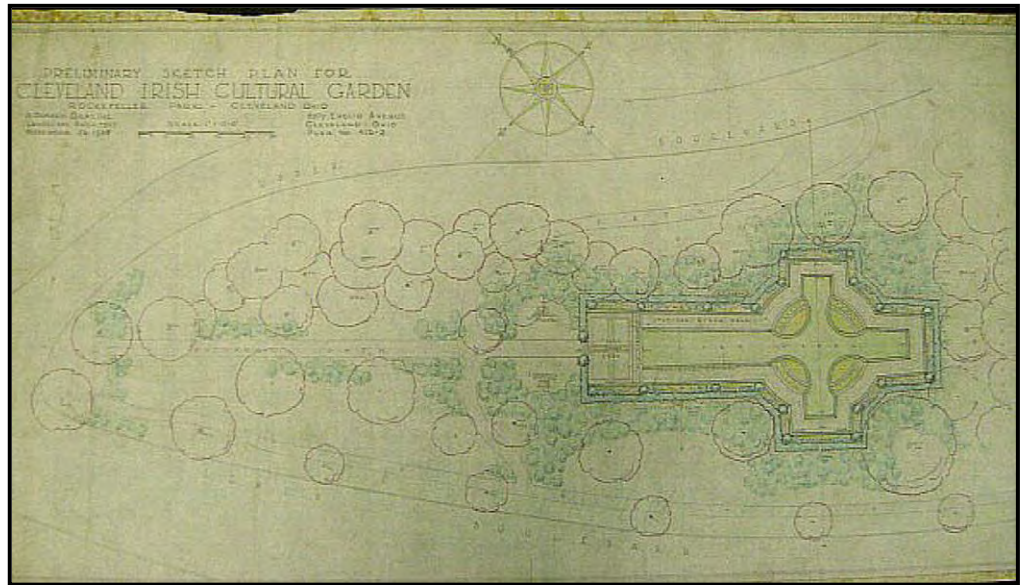
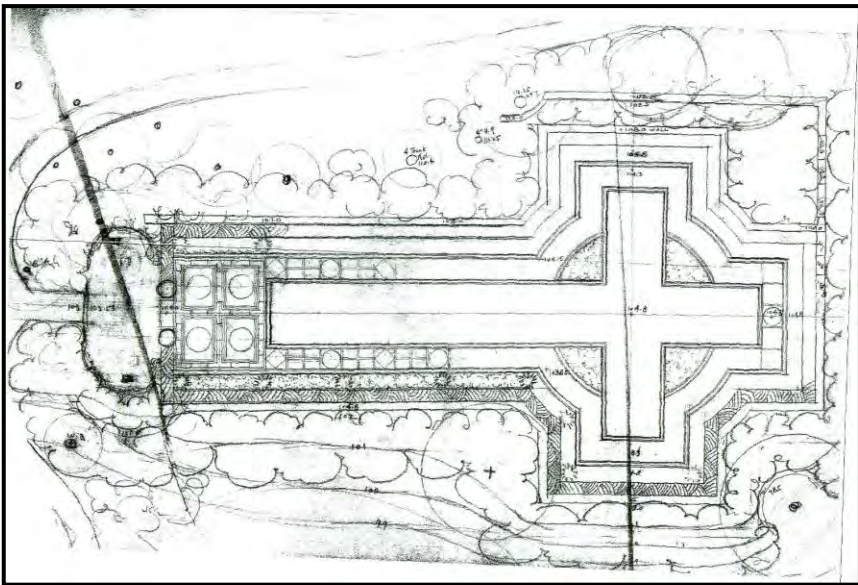


The Irish Cultural Garden: A Timeline

Before 1930: In 1896, John D. and Laura Spelman Rockefeller gifted land to the city for a park that would stretch from the lakefront to University Circle. In 1916, *Plain Dealer* reporter Leo Weidenthal covered the dedication of the Shakespeare Garden in Rockefeller Park and began to contemplate a series of gardens celebrating Cleveland's many nationality groups with the goal of "mutual understanding and wider sympathy" among the city's various ethnic groups. The Hebrew Garden, the first, was established in 1927.

1933: The Irish Civic Association—led by Common Pleas Court Judge Frank J. Merrick—deputized Mrs. Mary K. Duffy to attend Cultural Garden League meetings on behalf of the Irish community. On Sunday, May 28, 1933, 2000 people gathered to witness the planting of Killarney roses in the area reserved for the Irish Garden. In October, Irish-American tenor Morton Downey also planted a mountain ash tree on the same plot of land.

1936: In 1936, the City of Cleveland's Department of Parks and Public Properties created a division of Landscape Architecture in order to unite the gardens into a "harmonious entity." Noted landscape architect Donald Gray was hired to draft a plan for the Irish Garden. Gray designed gardens for such notable clients as the Van Sweringen brothers, developers of the Terminal Tower and of Shaker Heights, and he helped to lay out portions of the Metro Parks. Gray's plan for the Irish Garden featured a cross motif, which took on a more distinctively Celtic shape as his work on the project progressed from the early sketch phase (*left*) to the final presentation drawing (*right*) that he delivered on November 23, 1936.

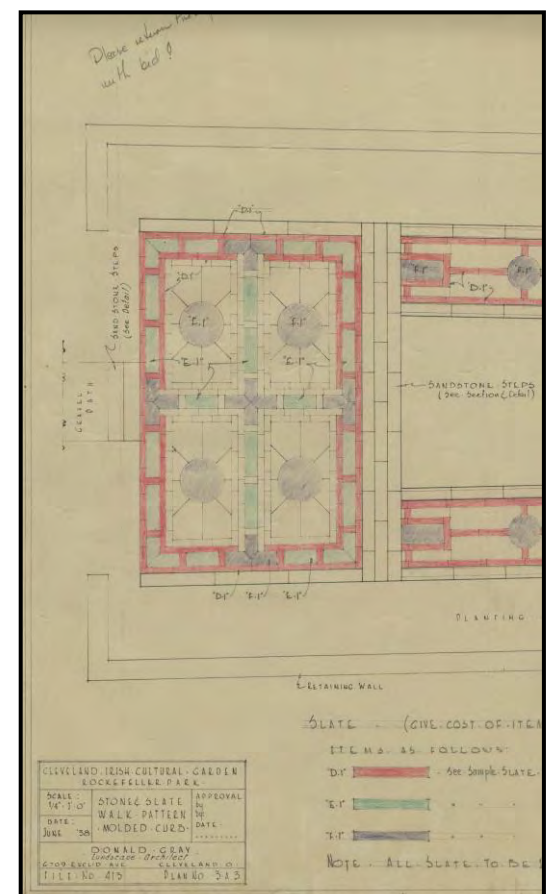
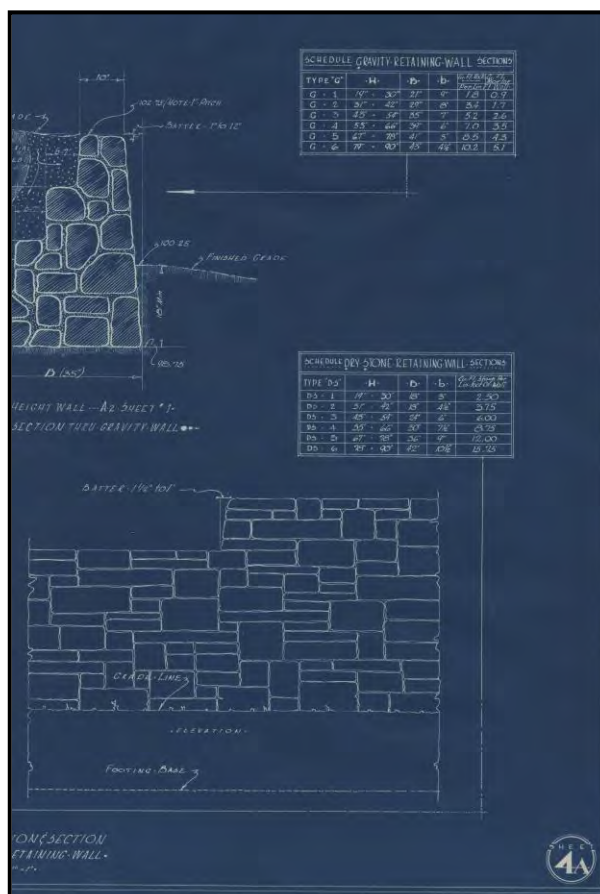


1937: When the City Plan Commission threatened to change the location of the Irish plot, the Cultural Garden League protested. Gray's plan was approved by the League in 1937.

1938: On August 19, the Irish Cultural Garden Association was chartered with the State of Ohio in order to coordinate fundraising efforts. The charter was signed by ten prominent men, including Common Pleas Judge Frank J. Merrick and Monsignor John Hagan, who was then the Superintendent of Schools for the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland. However, contemporary accounts identify Mrs. Mary Kay Duffy (*right*) as a driving force behind the Irish Garden. Mary Kay Duffy was born Mary K. McGarry in Ballaghaderreen in County Roscommon, Ireland, in about 1882. At the age of 16, in 1899, she arrived at Ellis Island, where she told immigration officials she would be joining her uncle in Cleveland. In all five of her McGarry siblings would immigrate to Cleveland. When she first arrived in the city, she served as a maid in the household of Jeremiah Sullivan, a prominent banker. Here she met and married Martin Duffy, another Irish immigrant. An active, energetic woman, she helped her husband launch a real estate business in Collinwood in the 1920s. Dedicated to her native land, she was the National Vice President of the American Association for Recognition of the Irish Republic and presented a radio show called Echoes of Erin on the WHK radio station in Cleveland. She joined the Ladies Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in 1920 and organized an east-side division of the LAAOH. She was recognized as "Hibernian Woman of the Year." Enlisting her fellow Hibernians in the cause, Mary Kay Duffy promoted the goal of an Irish Cultural Garden for many years.



February 1939: Architect Gray submitted a comprehensive field plan for the garden on February 25, 1939. The field plan included detailed blueprints (*left*) and specification sheets (*right*) for contractors bidding to supply the stone paving and other work.



PHOTOGRAPHS:

Donald Gray's early sketch and presentation drawing for the Irish Cultural Garden are courtesy of the Western Reserve Historical Society.

The photograph of Mary Kay Duffy was provided by her grandson Michael Wagner.

Details of Donald Gray's field plan for the Irish Cultural Garden are also courtesy of the Western Reserve Historical Society.

