

Downing Monument Re-dedicated

GEORGE L. SLATE, *President*
American Pomological Society

The Downing Urn which was erected by the American Pomological Society on the grounds of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. in 1856 was re-dedicated in a brief ceremony on the Smithsonian grounds on April 25, 1972. The urn had been removed from the Mall in 1965 because of construction. Because of its deterioration from many years of exposure to Washington smog, it was restored extensively by the Smithsonian Institution. The restoration was done by the sculptor, Renatto Luchetti of Arlington, Virginia. The urn now stands in a conspicuous location at the east end of the Smithsonian "castle."

The American Pomological Society was represented at the re-dedication by George L. Slate, President and Harold Fogle, Vice-President.

The monument, of Carrara marble, cost \$1585.64 which was raised by subscription. A description of the monument is in the Proceedings of the American Pomological Society for 1856, pp. 28-33. On each front of the monument are long inscriptions. On the pedestal is this inscription:

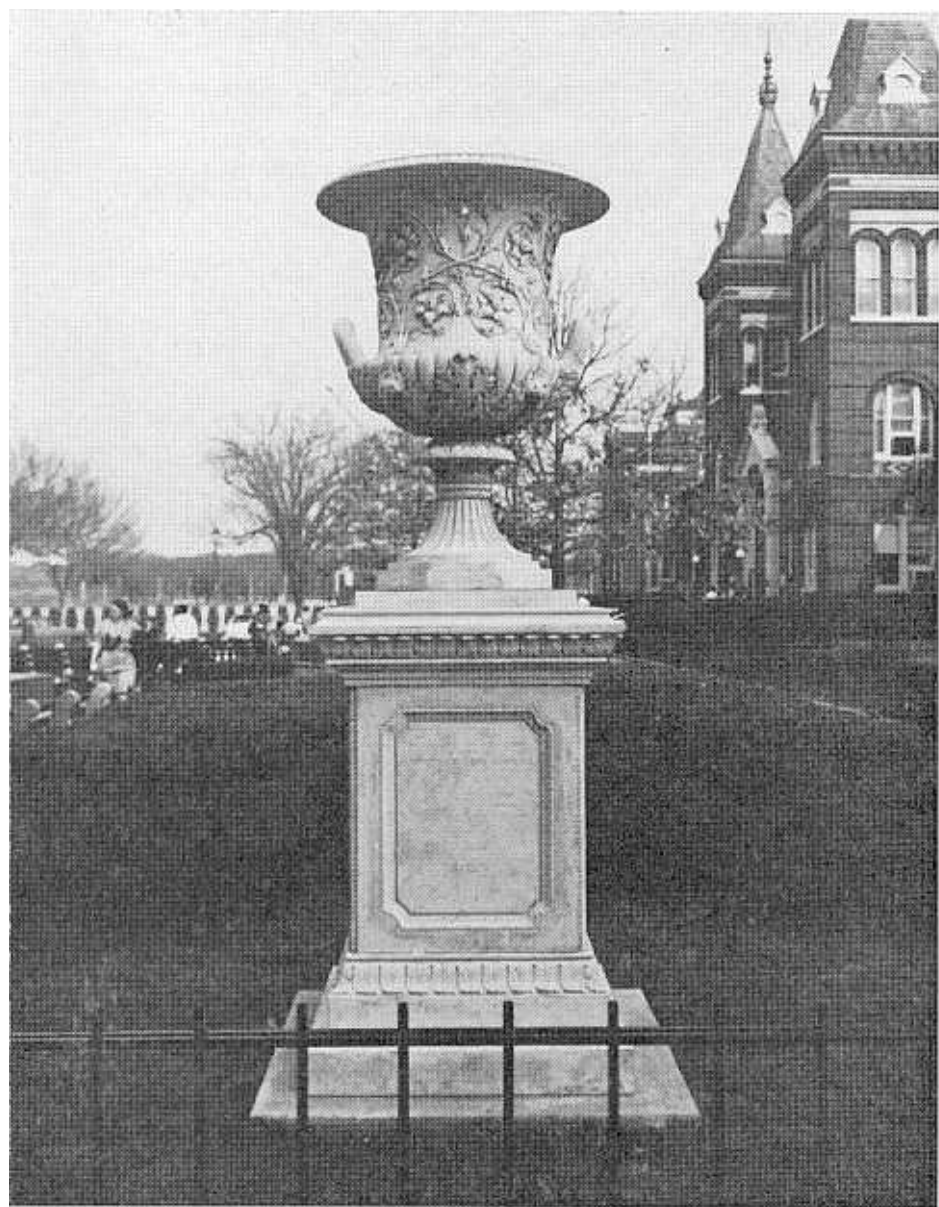
*This Memorial
Was erected under a resolution
passed at Philadelphia,
in September 1852 by the
AMERICAN POMOLOGICAL
SOCIETY*

*of which Mr. Downing was one of the
original founders.
Marshall P. Wilder, President*

Andrew Jackson Downing, 1815-1852, was one of America's great horticulturists. At the time of his death at the age of 37, in a steamboat accident on the Hudson River in 1852, he was engaged in developing the plans for the Mall in Washington. His great book on landscape gardening was published in 1841. American pomologists know him for his "The Fruits and Fruit Trees of America," published in 1845. This excellent and famous book immediately became the standard American pomology. His brother, Charles Downing 1802-1885, revised it several times—the last in 1872 with appendices dated 1881. Although the book was the work of Charles Downing, in later years the title page always carried the name A. J. Downing as the author, followed by "Revised and corrected by Charles Downing."

A "Eulogium on the Late A. J. Downing" by Marshall P. Wilder, pronounced before the American Pomological Congress at Philadelphia, September 13th, 1852 may be found in the Proceedings of the Second Session of the American Pomological Congress for 1852. It is also in the Horticulturist VII:491-500, 1852.

A biographical Memoir of Downing is included in Rural Essays (1853) by A. J. Downing, pp. XI-IVIII. Another biography is in Bailey's Encyclopedia of Horticulture under Horticulturists.



Downing Urn after restoration by the Smithsonian Institution, April 1972.