Chapter 1
Published Virtues of the Earth: An Introduction

A surprising number of early modern English books are identified in their titles as collections of plants. The English Short Title Catalogue turns up a plethora of printed works depicted as posies, nosegays, gardens, orchards, forests, sylvas, arbours, and bowers. In 1569, for instance, appeared the first of several anonymous editions of *A godlie gardeine, out of the which most comfortable herbes may be gathered for the health of the wounded conscience*.[1] Devotional books like this one frequently deployed botanical metaphors that emphasized their health-giving properties. More secular and more spectacular in its use of the same sort of titular trope is George Gascoigne's bouquet of 1573,

> *A Hundreth sundrie Flowres bounde vp in one small Poesie, Gathered partely (by translation) in the fyne outlandish Gardins of Euripedes, Ouid, Petrarke, Ariosto, and others; and partly by inuention, out of our owne fruitefull Orchardes in Englande: Yelding sundrie sweete sauours of Tragical, Comical, and Morall Discourses, bothe pleasant and profitable to the well smellyng noses of learned Readers*.

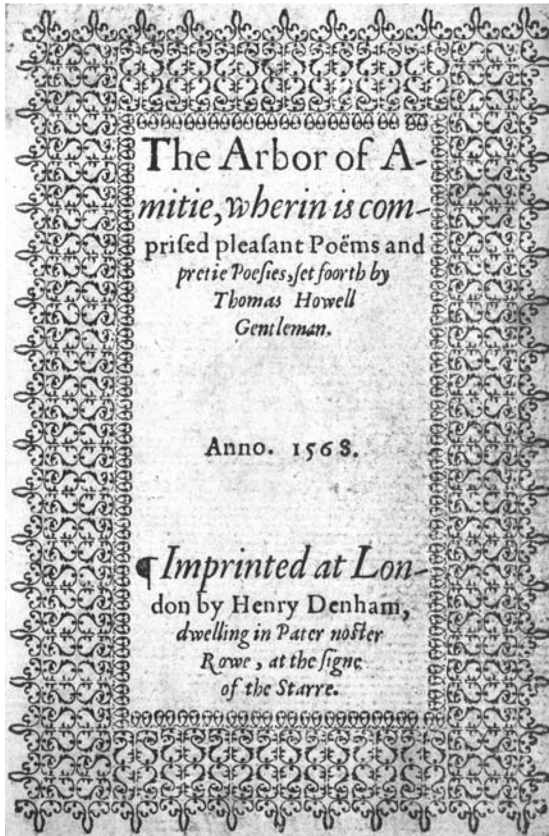
A similarly microcosmic botanical garden was envisioned in 1577 on the title page of John Bishop's

> *Beautifull blossomes, gathered ... from the best trees of all kyndes, diuine, philosophicall, astronomicall, cosmographical, historical, & humane, that are growing in Greece, Latium, and Arabia, and some also in vulgar orchards, as wel fro[m] those that in auncien time were grafted, as also from them which haue with skilful head and hand beene of late yeares, yea, and in our dayes planted: to the vnspeakable, both pleasure and profite of all such as wil vouchsafe to vse them.*

Around the same time, Richard Jones printed the more modest *Smale handfull of fragrant flowers, selected and gathered out of the louely garden of sacred scriptures, fit for any honorable or woorshipfull gentlewoman to smell vnto* (Breton); here the metaphor is conventionally gendered and moralized, but a couple of decades later Jones altered the same metaphor to emphasize the architectural features that

---

[1] The date on the title page (1659) is a printer's error, according to the English Short Title Catalogue record.



The Arbor of A-
mitie, wherin is com-
priſed pleaſant Poëms and
pretie Poeſies, ſet foorth by
Thomas Howell
Gentleman.

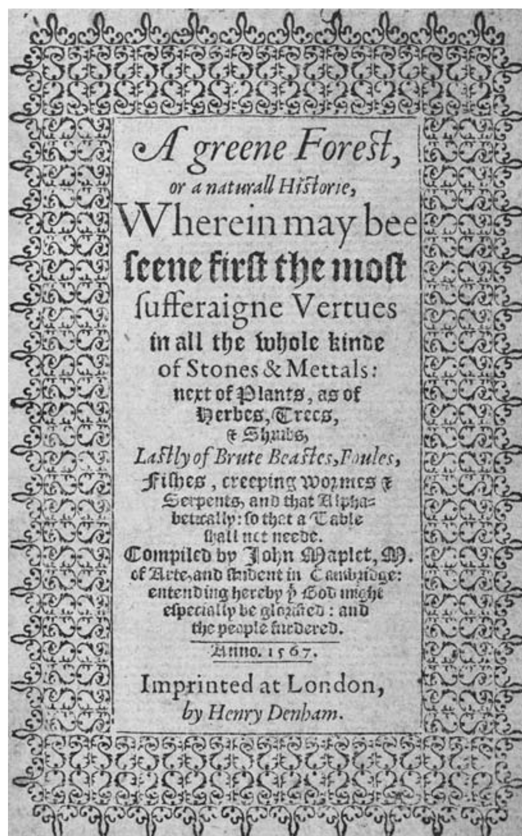
Anno. 1568.

¶ *Imprinted at Lon-*
don by Henry Denham,
dwelling in Pater noſter
Rowe, at the ſigne
of the Starre.

Fig. 1.1 The title page of Thomas Howell's *The Arbor of Amitie*

framed contemporary gardens in two more titillating titles: *Brittons bowre of delights* (Breton) and *The arbor of amorous deuises* (Breton).

These titular choices had a sound linguistic foundation, since a number of English words for textual collection—the florilegium, the sylva, and the anthology—allude etymologically to plants. Moreover, many such books contain collections of brief lyric or epigrammatic poems as well as sententious quotations and proverbs of the kind then sometimes known individually as posies—a term easily conflated in its singular form with poesy, a period term for all imaginative writing. Even some apparently non-vegetable terms for textual collection used in the period may be traced to a botanical root. Jack Goody notes that the term *peristephanon* ("crown"), a title used by the early Christian poet Prudentius, referred to imperial Rome's honorary floral coronas (66, 106); early modern coronas of sonnets, like those of John Donne and Mary Wroth, may thus be further if more obscure instances of the botanical tropes repeatedly chosen by early modern writers and printers to represent the act of textual collection.



A greene Forest,
or a naturall Historie,
Wherein may bee
seene first the most
sufferaigne Vertues
in all the whole kinde
of Stones & Mettals:
next of Plants, as of
Herbes, Trees,
& Shrubs,
Lastly of Brute Beastes, Foules,
Fishes, creeping wormes &
Serpents, and that Alpha-
betically: so that a Table
shall not neede.
Compiled by John Maplet, M.
of Arte, and student in Cambridge:
entending hereby þ God might
especially be glorified: and
the people furdered.
Anno. 1567.
Imprinted at London,
by Henry Denham.

Fig. 1.2 The title page of John Maplet's *A Greene Forest*

Most books masquerading in these ways as gardens and garlands were not remotely botanical in terms of the material they treated, but plant metaphors occasionally also appeared in the titles of texts that really did take plants as their subject matter, such as the pioneering printed book of herbal medicine known variously as the *Hortus* or the *Ortus Sanitatis*: the garden of health. The trope could thus be used in more and less metaphorical degrees. Moreover, the same author or printer might appeal to a botanical trope in utterly different genres: Hugh Plat's *Floures of philosophie* and his *Floraes paradise*, for instance, are a collection of Latin sententiae and a horticultural work, respectively. Similarly, when Henry Denham printed *A greene forest* (Maplet) in 1567 and *The arbor of amitie* (Howell) the very next year, the botanical metaphors conflated instead of distinguishing their different contents: the first is a natural history and the latter a collection of poetry. Their title pages, boxed in by similar knotty hedges of printer's fleurons (Figures 1.1 and 1.2), also fail to disclose the generic difference at first sight. A twenty-first century bookstore browser, on the other hand, rarely mistakes a biology textbook for a slim volume of verse.

Early modern elisions between books about gardens and books pretending to *be* gardens extended beyond first impressions, since the prefatory rhetoric found in horticultural handbooks sometimes sounds as if it had been lifted from a volume of verse. One writer addresses his readers thus: “To satisfie therefore their desires that are louers of such Delights, I took vpon me this labour and charge, and haue here selected and set forth a Garden of all the chiefest for choyce, and fairest for shewe.” Another author, writing in a very different genre, instructs his readers to “[m]arke then, what varietie of flowres grow all along as thou goest, and trample on none rudely, for all are right precious. If thy conscience be wounded, here are store of hearbs to heale it .... In briefe, what infirmitie canst thou have, but here it may bee cured?” The first passage comes from John Parkinson’s epistle to the reader in his *Paradisi in Sole*, a horticultural handbook, while the second appears in John Bodenham’s *Bel-vedére or, The garden of the muses* (A3v), a verse anthology—but the passages themselves provide no hint of the distinction in kind. Indeed, the aesthetic emphasis of the first passage, on “[d]elights” and fair shows, might seem more fitting in a book of poetry, while the attention in the second to botanical healing powers sounds more appropriate for a medicinal herbal.

As these examples clarify, plants and texts both belonged to a broader culture of collecting in the period. Plants and texts were both collectible objects, susceptible to encyclopedic or selective gathering, while gardens and books were sites in which to store and display these objects and others. It is most often compilatory texts that are portrayed as gatherings of plants; likewise, it was the activities surrounding plant-collecting that enabled or required the textual counterparts of herbal encyclopedias and herbaria. Lisa Jardine notes the likeness of the extraordinarily rapid and reliable reproductive processes available both to patrons of the press and of bedding plants: “[i]n this respect the book trade, by the 1550s, closely resembled the trade in tulip bulbs at the same date” (165). Collectors imagined and treated these collectibles similarly, she suggests, because they were similarly amenable to division and replication. The same was not generally true of other collectibles, whether natural or artificial. Mammals, fish, and birds portrayed in early modern cabinets generally appear emphatically infertile: dried-out singularities fastened to the ceiling or arranged statically on shelves. Often only parts of a specimen’s carcass would last, so that beaks, claws, and bones had to stand in, synechdochically, for lost flesh. Artificialia, such as coins and medals, were similarly singular except in the reduced form of rubbings and illustrations. Both texts and plants, on the other hand, could be multiplied and shared with relative ease, and without detriment to the original collector. Yet this unusual material quality was just one of the ways, I suggest, in which plants and texts occupied similarly distinct places in an early modern culture of collection.

Yet such intersections between botanical and textual collections have received little sustained study. Significant interdisciplinary studies have, however, established a central role for collecting in early modern culture. Amy Boesky insists that “[t]he collection and organization of objects in the period was not merely a metaphor for cultural practice ... but an entire epistemological construction” (313; also see Mullaney). More particularly, Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor note

in their collection on cabinets of curiosities that "[i]nterest in the natural world was a major preoccupation of Renaissance learning, and here collecting was to play an indispensable role" (1). Paula Findlen's *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* is a remarkable study of such sixteenth-century natural-history collections in a single cultural context. While there is no similar monograph on English natural-historical collections of the same period, Marjorie Swann's *Curiosities and Texts: The Culture of Collecting in Early Modern England* explores and characterizes a widespread variety of similar collections in the seventeenth century. Material and textual versions of collections are closely integrated in her study, but the literary collections most closely identified with the trope of the garden of verse have generally been treated as phenomena apart from the contemporary collections of material, and particularly natural, artifacts.

The nature of early modern habits of textual collection have, however, received substantial attention in themselves, and in the course of such studies the prevalence of botanical metaphors has also been treated. Terence Cave's analysis of "the double figure of *copia* and cornucopia as a thread which may be followed through the labyrinth of sixteenth-century writing" (xv) provides a broad intellectual history of the period's use of botanical tropes in textual collections, as does Ann Moss's tracking of the classical and medieval origins of the trope of the scholarly humanist bee, diligently gathering nectars from far-flung textual flowers and compounding them into a honey of their own making. Crane characterizes the self-conscious practises—including botanical tropes—shaping textual collections in sixteenth-century England, while as part of a broader study Bushnell explores the prominence of related botanical metaphors applied to humanist pedagogical practices, noting that "[t]he most frequently cited metaphor for the book in early humanist pedagogy was that of the garden" (*A Culture of Teaching* 135). The most direct study to date of such titular botanical metaphors in English print culture may be found in an essay by Randall L. Anderson, which appends a comprehensive inventory of relevant early modern publications. Despite such extensive interest, both in the period's collections of *naturalia* and in textual collections governed by botanical tropes, gardens of verse have rarely been set in close relation to the contemporary culture of botanical cultivation and collection. That is, material and metaphorical plants have not generally been examined or understood in conjunction, as they so often were in the early modern period, and as they will be here.

This is a study of the plants that grew and some of the texts that grew up around them in late sixteenth-century England, including not only the more familiar gardens of verse but the herbal encyclopedias and herbaria that played so important a part in the botanical culture of the day. While printed herbals have been extensively studied, comparatively little has been said about the writing practices in herbals in relation to the larger literary culture in which these books took form.[2] Those who

---

[2] Agnes Arber's authoritative if somewhat inevitably dated *Herbals*, first published in the early twentieth century by a distinguished botanist, does include some analysis of the nature of descriptive writing in the early herbals, while Brian Ogilvie's *The Science of Describing* treats the subject expansively in a larger study of the development of

have addressed these botanical texts have usually done so from the perspectives of historians of science or of the visual arts.[3] Consequently, they rarely foreground the linguistic, literary, textual, rhetorical, or more broadly bookish matters raised by their primary sources. It is to these matters that I would like to direct my attention.

When she observes her father's imperiled health, Cordelia cries out for help from the "vnpublisht vertues of the earth" (Shakespeare, *M. William Shak-speare* 1v)—but by the time her words were published in 1608, a very long list of medicinally-virtuous plants in England had secured publication. The second half of the sixteenth century corresponds with an English botanical renaissance that kept pace with the much more familiar literary renaissance of the same era. It was in these decades that the physician William Turner and the surgeon John Gerard published their vernacular herbal work; simultaneously, the innovations of the botanical garden and the herbarium had their first impact. English plant culture, ranging from such medicinal herbalism to the more familiar practices of recreational gardening, was correspondingly transformed in ways that may be measured, in part, by the textual production that burgeoned to match the increased interest in these fields. One bibliographer of botanical publications points to a bookish bumper crop, beginning around the middle of the century and peaking at its end (Henrey 3). The historian of botany Julius von Sachs notes that while the invention of botanical gardens "show how lively an interest was taken in botany in the latter half of the sixteenth century[,] this is still more shown by the great number of books of plants" (19). Productivity in one field was paralleled by productivity in the other.

By mid-century, London was populated by a set of botanical enthusiasts who kept not just recreational but experimental gardens (McLean 220–21) and whose novel spadework was newly supported by the earliest English handbook on gardening, Thomas Hill's *How to dresse, sowe, and set a garden*, which was in turn followed by "a steady stream of gardening literature ... from the 1550s onwards" (Cantor 111).

European natural historical studies and writing from the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries. For more incidental treatment, see Eleanour S. Rohde's *Old English Herbals*, an early bibliographic survey; Blanche Henrey offers a more recent and detailed history and bibliography.

[3] A recent and magnificent exception is Anna Pavord's comprehensive and interdisciplinary *The Naming of Names: The Search for Order in the World of Plants*. Herbals are considered (although also often dismissed as merely pre-scientific) in many histories of botany by, among others, J. Reynolds Green, R.T. Gunther, A.G. Morton, Julius von Sachs, and Edward Lee Greene. Among older histories of natural history, Charles Raven's *English Naturalists from Neckam to Ray* is outstanding, and includes insightful chapters on William Turner and John Gerard, as well as a broader analysis of the development of English natural history. Brian Ogilvie's *The Science of Describing* provides a recent and thorough examination of the developments in European Renaissance natural history. For herbals in art history, see, among others, Wilfrid Blunt's *The Art of Botanical Illustration*, Blunt and Sandra Raphael's *The Illustrated Herbal*, Vera Kaden's *The Illustration of Plants and Gardens 1500–1850*, Lys De Bray's *The Art of Botanical Illustration*: *The Classic Illustrators and Their Achievements from 1550 to 1900*, and Gill Saunders's *Picturing Plants: An Analytical History of Botanical Illustration.*

One historian of natural history has traced the growing interest in gardens by following the changes between the editions of William Harrison's *Description of England* of 1577 and 1587, with the second discovered to be "much amplified in its references to nature" and to contain an added chapter on gardens and orchards (Raven 193). Surviving maps confirm that in the latter half of the century, enclosed gardens were found both inside and outside of London's walls (Schofield 314). Meanwhile, still further outside those walls, new crops began to be cultivated and both old and new agricultural manuals also became marketable commodities (Bushnell, *Culture* 86; Morton 151). Thomas Tusser's *Hundreth good pointes of husbandrie* of 1557, for instance, was reprinted and expanded many times before the end of the century. In a kind of symbiosis that crossed the boundary between art and nature, developments in plant culture played out in textual culture.

This was a time when people interacted with and depended on plants in ways now generally forgotten or concealed by industrialization. As Thomas Johnson wrote in his 1633 edition of Gerard's herbal: "God of his infinit goodnesse and bountie hath by the *medium* of Plants, bestowed almost all food, clothing, and medicine vpon man" (2). Something as essential as pharmacy was largely and conspicuously based on plant material (Siraisi 148), and something as frivolous and frequently condemned as cosmetics was as well (Eyler 26). Few today make their own ink from insect-inhabited galls growing on oak trees (Finlay 26–7). Households that could afford the luxury were strewn with enough rushes, fragrant flowers, and herbs to have the habit remarked upon by visitors from abroad (Peter Thornton 14). Even London itself was not the concrete jungle of today, with the countryside only two miles from the city's centre, where verdure flourished anyhow in both household and market gardens (Amherst 101). The success of local harvests was both more visible and more critical than in a globalized market, since when they failed, people rapidly went hungry (Appleby 105–14). Timber stands, the source of both fuel and building material, were also often at least perceived to be in short supply (Cantor 101; Henrey 101–2). In the midst of perceived and actual dearth, however, a burgeoning variety of vegetables and fruits were hawked on the streets and welcomed to tables as a cornucopia of previously unheard of plants arrived from the Americas and other parts of the world. In less than a century of overseas voyages, over twenty times as many new plants arrived in Europe as had appeared in the previous two millennia (Morton 118). The effect may be observed in the English print record, in which the minuscule number of plants in Turner's first book (134) and the considerably larger but still small number in his second book (almost 400) were dwarfed not a century later when John Parkinson's *Theatrum botanicum* would include descriptions of almost 4,000 plants. Of all these novelties, those with medicinal uses were most valuable and—along with spices, another botanical treasure—rated second only to precious metals (Morton 119). Foreign finds in turn inspired new explorations and applications of native and local flora. Whether flourishing or failing, such varied manifestations of plant culture were not easy either to take for granted or to ignore.

A more strictly academic botany began to emerge from conventional medicinal herbalism when European professorships in simples were instituted

in the 1540s. But botanical natural history had long been a bookish pursuit. It was not predominantly an experimental but a historical science, relying more on the authority of ancient texts than on personal observation or experiment. The increasingly elaborate nature of the herbals printed throughout the sixteenth century, however, can largely be ascribed to the relatively novel (at least in England) humanist project to authenticate this classical textual inheritance. The humanist revivification of classical texts encouraged quite literally ground-breaking work in the non-therapeutic study of plants, one of the earliest but today least popularly regarded manifestations of modern science. For instance, while William Turner's first botanical books concentrated on cross-referencing classical and vernacular botanical names, Turner is equally famous for his far-flung field trips—for digging in the dirt as well as in books. His example demonstrates how a humanist interest in ancient botany merged in this period with a more popular interest in home-grown herbalism, one that made a transition at this time from a classical to a vernacular focus.

All of these books on plants—agricultural, horticultural, and pharmaceutical—were produced when the printed book and literacy more broadly began to thrive in England.[4] The formation of the Stationer's Company in 1557 points to the definitive arrival of print as a cultural industry; in the same year, Richard Tottel published both his best-selling and pioneering anthology of poetry, *Songes and sonnettes*, and Tusser's husbandry manual—the latter also, not incidentally, in verse form. The genre of the printed poetic anthology, which is perhaps the most familiar and typical species of textual garden, reached a zenith of popularity and production after Tottel that increased up to around the year 1600 (Pomeroy 29–30); similarly, it was during the 1590s that English botanical and horticultural literature was most prolific (Henrey 3). One scholar suggests that the taste for textual collections—in which writings were often harvested from one context and grafted into others—in fact crossed over at this time from poetry to natural history: William Ashworth argues that Erasmus's frequently printed anthology of adages "helped create a taste for the clever, pithy aphorism that, by the middle of the sixteenth century, spread to include observations about the natural world" ("Natural History" 310). The fifty years that followed grew unusually rich in such botanical and bibliographic interactions.

Even in their sheer raw materials, plants and books were remarkably intertwined in this period. Books depended increasingly for their material existence not on livestock, for vellum or parchment, but on crops, since paper at this time came not from softwood but from flax, via recycled linen rags. Their common material origin could also determine a similar fate for neglected fruits and books, as Spenser

[4] Tessa Watt discusses the years from 1560 to 1580 as a period in which all social groups markedly improved their literacy levels, with the percentage of fully literate husbandmen improving from 10 to 30% and literate yeomen increasing from 45 to 75%, for instance (260). See also her summary of the complexities of evaluating literacy in this period, when many more people may have been have been readers than writers (6).

shows in his portrait of a library "all worm-eaten, and full of canker holes" (*Faerie Queene*, 2.9.57, line 9). Yet the means to preserve books from worms was also to be found in plants: Albertus Magnus notes in his *De vegetabilibus* that wormwood was so named for its ability to repel worms and mice from books, while other plants were put to similar uses in libraries (Perry 137–9). Book chests often contained both plants and books in close proximity; one historian of furniture notes that early English chests often have a "little ledge or shelf just under the lid at the side .... to accommodate lavender or some other sweet herb" (Gloag 38–9), the effect of which would be not merely fragrant but preservative, as is suggested in the book known as Banckes' herbal, where rosemary is advised for just such a purpose: "take the flouers and put them in a cheste amonge your clothes, or amonge bokes and moughtes [moths], shall not hurt the[m]" (Copland).

Books depended on plants for their material composition and preservation in still other ways. Covers were made from wooden boards (Lisa Jardine 141), or sometimes leather, which required tree bark in its tanning, as Gerard notes in his herbal (35). Both Gerard and Turner (in the 1562 volume of his herbal) note that one flower's gluey juices could serve as a paste to fasten pages together into home-made booklets (Gerard, *Herball* 99; Turner 398). Most illustrations in sixteenth-century English books were woodcuts; Gerard notes the special suitability of pear wood, which "serueth to be cut into many kindes of mouldes" including "such prints as these figures are made of" (*Herball* 1271). Writing ink, as well as home-made ink for colouring pictures, often derived from galls growing on trees and other botanical materials (Plant 186; Finlay 26–7). Gerard describes one such recipe: "if you lay sap berries in steepe in faire water for the space of two houres, and mixe a little Saffron with that infusion, and laie it vpon paper, it sheweth the perfect colour to limne, or illumine the flower withall" (*Herball* 153); in other words, flowers were used to paint flowers, neatly closing the gap between the artistic medium and its message. Some of the early modern pens that made use of such botanical inks were themselves made out of reeds (McKitterick 15), as were some of the candles by the light of which one read (Thomas 73). Sand was scattered on paper to blot hand-written works, temporarily disguising the page as a tiny plot of earth. Printing introduced still more material and metaphorical links between plants and books. One clever way to meet the higher demand for paper connected print culture to agriculture when Dutch papermakers, in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, altered a seed-grinding machine so that it could pulp rags instead (Avrin 295). Printer's ink was made partly of varnish derived from boiled linseed oil (Plant 186). The generic illustrative ornaments used by printers were called fleurons and tend to resemble above all else bird's-eye views of the herbaceous borders of the typical Tudor knot garden. The wooden printing press itself may have been modelled on, and at any rate resembled in its manufacture and method, presses used on grapes, olives, oilseeds, and herbs (Moran 19). The entire process of printing bore resemblance to the activities of the agricultural calendar, from the initial sowing of the seed-like type, through the plowing of the page with an imprint of those letters, to the seemingly endless harvest of the hundreds of sheets that proliferated from the press, which in turn needed to be

gathered to dry, like grain in a grange, before they could be assembled for market. Printing also, as mentioned, endowed writing with a reproductive system that, in its profusion, speed, and high fidelity, closely resembled the otherwise uniquely prolific fertility of plants.

The material connections between plants and books were complemented by a host of linguistic conjunctions. Botanical titles demonstrate how often the language used to discuss books, texts, and writing appealed to an imaginative link between the verbal and the herbal. This was as true of classical languages as of English: the Greek ancestor of "bible" referred to the inner bark of the papyrus of which it was made, the Latin "liber" to a tree's bark and "codex" to its trunk, while "book" itself may derive from a Germanic word for the beech. "Cultus" had long signified both agricultural tillage and the ploughing of the cloddish mind through a literary education aimed at making it more fertile; similarly, "versus" could signify either a line of verse or a furrow (Herron 101). In sixteenth-century English, the term "tong" was equally applicable to the speaking tongue and the head of a plough, a pun all the more appropriate in an age when so much verse was intended for recitation. Spenser appears to use the pun when he asks his muse, in the proem to the first book of *The Faerie Queene*, to "sharpen my dull tong" (2.9). That the term could be used not only in reference to personal diction but to the language as a literary tool is suggested by the prefatory lament, in a 1567 translation of Xenophon, that "our grosse tongue is a rude and a barren tong, when it is compared with so florishinge and plentifull a tongue" as Greek. The word "slips" could refer either to pieces of paper or to cuttings from plants, as Isabella Whitney shows in her instructions about how best to employ her *Sweet Nosgay*: "when you come into a pestilent aire that might infect your sound minde: yet savour to these SLIPS in which I trust you shal finde safety" (Av^{r}); the double entendre linking books and plants is emphasized typographically, perhaps indicating the special pleasure such paronomasia engendered in the Elizabethan imagination. Similarly, words like "leaves" and "sheaves," then as now, referred equally to pages and to foliage—as, of course, did "folio." Other homonyms linking the fields of vegetable and textual production are now more obscure; for instance, grafting was of considerable importance in English fruit farming (Henrey 55), but the word at the time was generally spelled "graff," the etymology of which derived from the Latin and Greek words for writing and connected to the Old French word for stylus or pencil.[5] More historically-specific instances may also be cited; resemblances between certain material qualities of paper and plants may have been remarked upon metaphorically, for instance, in the designation of

[5] The *Oxford English Dictionary* has "graff," being "superseded in ordinary use by graft" and deriving from "late L. graphium" and "Gr. grafi'on, grafeion stylus, f. gra'fein to write. The sense 'stylus, pencil' is common in OFr.; the transferred sense of 'scion, graft' was suggested by the similarity of shape." A browse through a recent gardening catalogue shows that today's amateur gardeners are advised to use a common pencil sharpener to fashion their grafts.

certain types of tulips as *ghemarmerde*, *marbrée,* or marbled, likely in reference to the marbled paper that reached Europe from Turkey concurrently with the tulip and that was a similarly valuable collectible object (Goldgar 332). Even abstract literary terms could forge connections between plants and texts: for instance, the word "plot," toward the end of the sixteenth century, "pervaded popular discourse in new and interconnected ways: the explosion of surveying manuals (guidebooks for charting the land) corresponded with the development of the idea of narrative plot (literal and figurative charts of a story line)" (Brückner and Poole 618). It may well have been hard to speak about words or books without reference to the vegetable kingdom, and vice versa.

The material facts and metaphorical fictions about the relations among plants and books are thus not easily separated; nor is such a separation likely to clarify how those relations were imagined in the early modern period. In the following chapters I examine some of those relations as they were perceived and portrayed, both in the garden and on the page, during a pan-European botanical boom that cropped up precisely when textual collections of vernacular flowers became a factor on the English book market. The next chapter explores the humanistic mode of plant culture, cultivation, and collection as it took on new form in the middle of the sixteenth century, when medicinal herbalism yielded the novel and interdependent botanical and bibliographic phenomena of experimental gardens, herbaria, and printed herbals. Chapters 3 and 4 each focus on a single English herbalist, closely reading their herbal writings as case studies of the particular connections between plant culture and print culture. I argue, for instance, that the Protestant doctor and divine William Turner was driven by the Reformation's valorization of vernacular translation and printing, while John Gerard's problematic involvement in the creation—or, some would say, plagiarism—of his herbal was bound up in the anthological and commonplacing literary culture that surrounded him. All three chapters highlight the intricacy in early modern botanical work of the apparently simple act of naming—an act in which words and things, texts and artifacts, are ideally (but rarely really) set in an elegant one-to-one relation. The last chapter returns to the textual collections of verse and aphorism disguised as gardens and groves that were printed so prolifically in the Elizabethan period in order to read their governing metaphors as marketing tools that helped transplant books into a domestic setting: the established household place of plants could provide a model for the integration of the relatively novel artifact of the printed book, and texts that likened themselves to plant material made themselves more desirable by purporting to be similarly useful and beautiful things to be collected and preserved against need. As a whole, this study demonstrates the range of ways in which plants and texts occupied remarkably similar and interdependent places in a larger culture of collection in sixteenth-century England, as is evidenced by their linguistic, conceptual, metaphorical, and even material intersections. The still-familiar metaphor of the "garden of verse" provided the people of this period with an imaginative model for the collection, display, and reproduction of texts at a time when these concerns were central to a literary culture that was being transformed by the technology of print. At the same time, the collecting of actual

plants, and the books made to contain and represent those botanical collections, were influenced in sometimes unexpected ways by broader literary conventions of textual collection. In the fields of botany and books, one material was knowable in terms of the other because one was so often and so thoroughly embedded in the other. The following chapters aim to illuminate the resulting interplay among materials and discourses rarely considered in tandem today.