



THE MOUNTAIN LAKE SANCTUARY

FLORIDA



THE MOUNTAIN LAKE SANCTUARY
AND SINGING TOWER

Lake Wales, Florida

COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS BY LE VERNE SMITH

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THE MOUNTAIN LAKE SANCTUARY
AND SINGING TOWER

are the gift of

EDWARD WILLIAM BOK

*and on his behalf were dedicated and presented
for visitation to the American people by*

CALVIN COOLIDGE

President of the United States

February the First

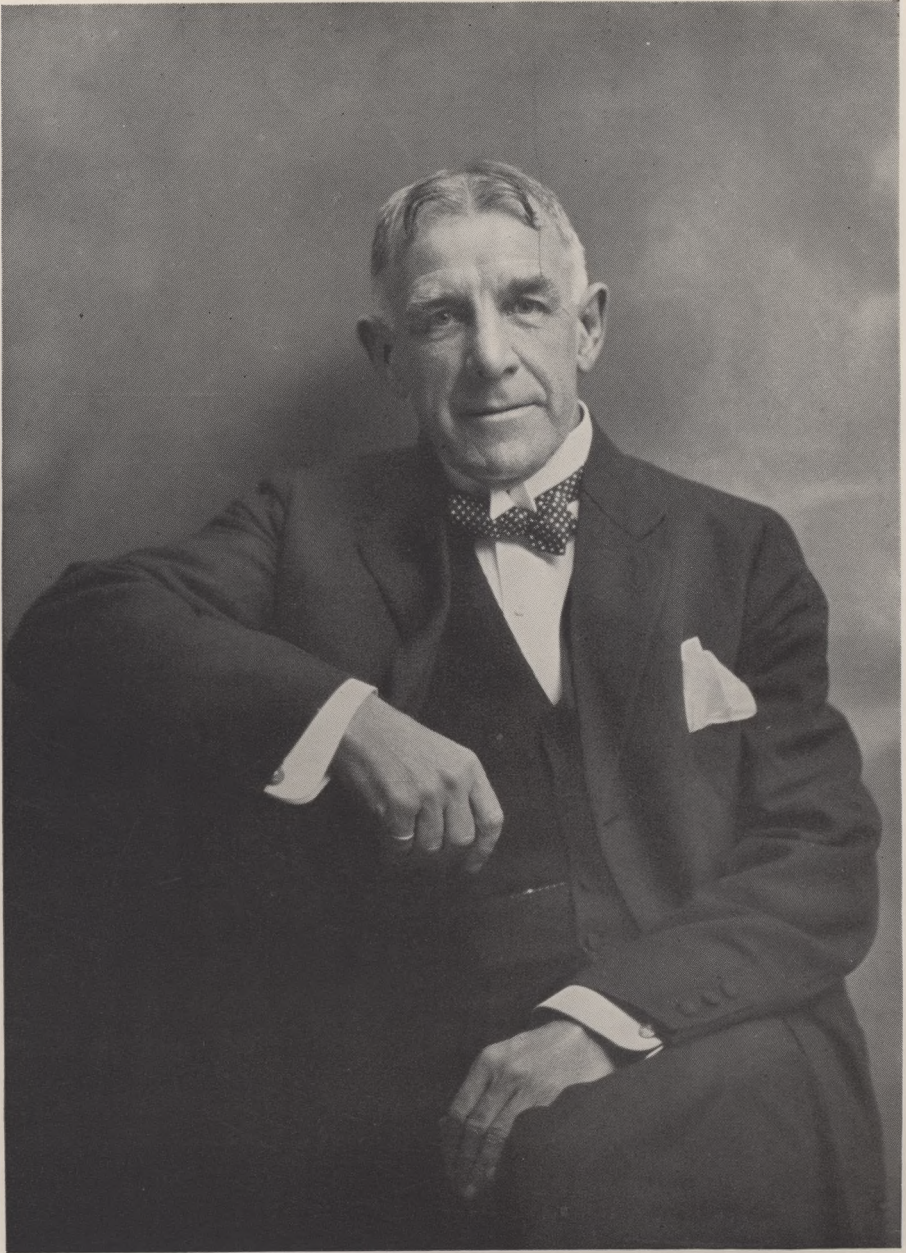
1929

*The Mountain Lake Sanctuary and Singing Tower,
a place set apart from human strife,
welcomes all people.
Here, through nature's healing beauty
and the music of the bells,
we may have a renewal of that inspiration
so necessary to establish order
in our own lives
as well as in the lives of those
committed to our care.*

*I will make a covenant of peace with them . . .
and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.*

Ezekiel XXXVII : 26





*Make you the world a bit better or more beautiful
because you have lived in it.*

EDWARD WILLIAM BOK

October 9, 1863 • January 9, 1930

A PERSONAL FOREWORD

The inspiration for the Sanctuary and the Tower came of that stuff of which dreams are made. The two combined a dream to carry on the work of my grandfather, who a hundred years ago transformed a grim desert island in the North Sea, ten miles from the Netherlands mainland, into a bower of green verdure and trees to which came the birds which made the island famed.

But an inspiration is of little value if it is not carried into realization, and I was fortunate to enlist the deep interest and sympathetic cooperation of two men who are responsible for what the visitor sees: Frederick Law Olmsted for the Sanctuary and Milton B. Medary for the Tower. Naturally, I could not have obtained two men more thoroughly fitted to give me what I wanted to present to the American people for visitation, and what has been so often called "The Taj Mahal of America"—a spot which would reach out in its beauty through the plantings, through the flowers, through the birds, through the superbly beautiful architecture of the Tower, through the music of the bells, to the people and fill their souls with the quiet, the repose, the influence of the beautiful, as they could see and enjoy it in the Sanctuary and through the Tower.

And incidentally it gave me a wonderful opportunity to follow and carry out the injunction of my grandmother to her children and grandchildren: "Wherever your lives may be cast, make you the world a bit better or more beautiful because you have lived in it."

That is the basis upon which the Sanctuary and the Tower rest.

Edward W. Bok

EDWARD WILLIAM BOK was born in den Helder, The Netherlands, on October 9, 1863, and at the age of six came with his parents as an immigrant boy to the United States. He was successful as editor of The Curtis Publishing Company's magazine "The Ladies' Home Journal" and as the author of several books, the best known of which was his autobiography, "The Americanization of Edward Bok," Scribner's, New York, 1920.

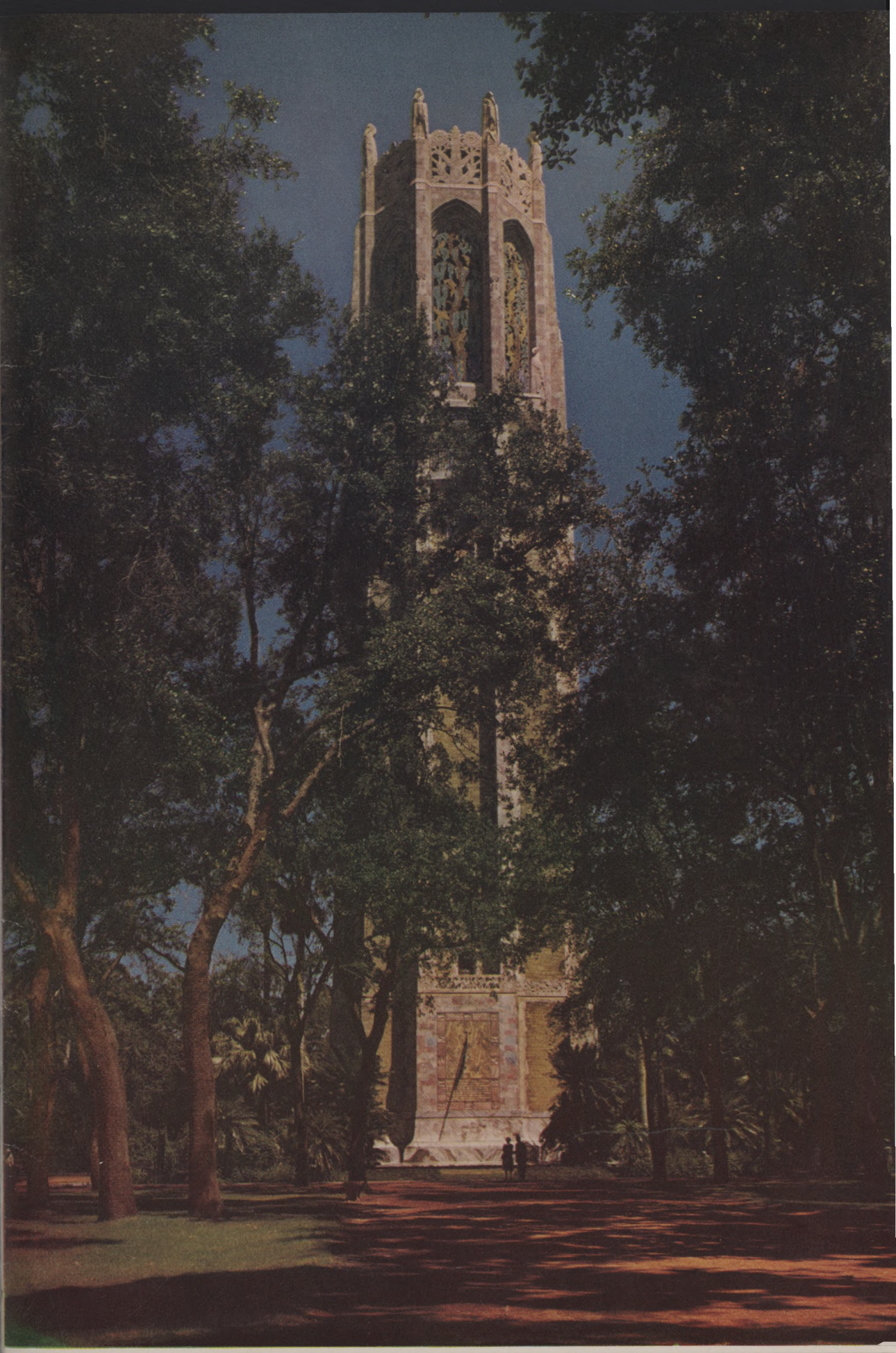
When he retired in 1919, he bought a winter home at Mountain Lake, Florida. It looked out upon Iron Mountain, once the sacred upland of the Seminole Indians and the highest point of land on the Florida peninsula, two hundred and ninety-five feet above sea level. It occurred to him that as he had found a place of rest for himself, this high land might serve as a footing for migratory birds and for human beings in need of quiet.

He bought the top and slopes of Iron Mountain and began to irrigate and fertilize the sandy soil. Frederick Law Olmsted, landscape architect, soon transformed what had originally been a pine-clad hill with scrub underbrush into a garden of native Florida planting. A pond was dug as a point of interest, but a central accent was missing. Edward Bok looked at the unprepossessing water tank on the highest point which held the water pumped for irrigation from Mountain Lake, a few hundred yards away.

The more he looked at the tank the more he remembered the bell towers of the Low Countries, and the idea grew in him to create an American tower of native materials. The idea also came to him that this Tower and the Sanctuary surrounding it should be his tangible thanks to the American people for the chance they had given him. The present Singing Tower, suggested by the bell tower at Mâlines, Belgium, was the result.

The Sanctuary now consists of ninety-two acres, of which over half are cultivated. Water was at first drawn from Mountain Lake, but later a well was sunk and now supplies the necessary irrigation.

The Sanctuary is a haven for birds and other wildlife. More than one hundred species of birds have been identified, ranging from the abundant mockingbirds and cardinals to the less common redheaded woodpeckers and barn owls. All living things are protected here. Nature is allowed to strike its own balance. The Sanctuary, with its flora and fauna, is under the protection of the public.



THE DESIGN OF THE TOWER was by Milton B. Medary, the sculpture by Lee Lawrie, the ironwork and the brass entrance door by Samuel Yellin, and the faience by J. H. Dulles Allen. The Tower was built by Horace H. Burrell & Son. These men were all from Philadelphia, which was also Mr. Bok's home. The carillon was cast by John Taylor and Company, of Loughborough, England. The pink and gray marble came from the quarries of the Georgia Marble Company at Tate, Georgia. The tan coquina stone between the Tower's ribs is native to Florida and is the same stone as that of the old fort at St. Augustine.

The Tower is fifty-one feet wide at the base and thirty-seven feet wide at the top, which suggests the shape of a bell. Its total height is two hundred and five feet. It is square below one hundred and fifty feet and octagonal above.

The brass entrance door shows the story of Creation in thirty panels. The East and West window grilles depict a young man feeding birds and watering plants. Thirty-two feet above the base is a frieze of Florida wildlife, including pelicans, herons, flamingoes, geese, and swans. About three-quarters of the way up the Tower, where the octagon begins, there are corner finials of eagles and on either side doves and oak branches. At one hundred and thirty feet above the base the faience begins: undersea life in the lowest windows, then man. At the top, each of the eight windows, thirty-five feet high, is a cascade of trees and flowers in colored tile. Above these is a sculptured marble screen of palms and roses, out of which rise the eight topmost figures of cock and hen herons with nests and young.

The front door opens upon the Tower Room, now used as a record room and closed to the public. It is done in Gothic arches of pink marble and coquina, and contains the carillonneur's elevator to the top and the first section, in Yellin iron, of the staircase. Above the Tower Room there are six levels of utilitarian purpose, and at the top hang the Taylor bells. There are seventy-one cast bells in the carillon, with a range of nearly four and a half octaves. Fifty-three notes register: the highest eighteen notes are duplicated. The bells vary in weight from the smallest, eleven pounds, to the deep E-flat Bourdon bell, which weighs over eleven tons.



*The Singing Tower
seen from the northeast
across a bed of azaleas.
Azaleas of many varieties
provide the chief
display of bloom in
the Sanctuary.*

*The live-oak grove
(*Quercus
Virginianus*).*





THE JAPANESE STONE LANTERN near the moat on the Eastern side was the gift of U. Tsujita, of Tokyo, Japan, Mr. Bok's houseboy from 1922 to 1925. "Tsuda," as he was known to the family, took domestic service in order to learn English and learned English in order to learn the shoe business, all of which he did before returning to Japan. He was devoted to Mr. Bok and kept in touch with the family until the outbreak of World War II. As soon as the war was over, Tsuda began touring his country, lecturing about the American he knew who believed and taught the universal brotherhood of man. He then asked leave to make his gift to the Sanctuary, and requested that his lantern stand in sight of Mr. Bok's grave.

*Stately nun orchids
and impatiens
bloom in the
lily garden.*



*One of the
two moat bridges
at the base of the Tower.
The gates
are the work of
Samuel Yellin.*





The bells are hung in five tiers and do not move when played. The clappers, suspended inside, are moved outward against the bells by a system of wires and levers connected with the keyboard. Considerable physical exertion is required to play the carillon.

WHEN THE TOWER WAS BUILT, winter was Florida's one tourist season, and recitals were given on the bells from December 1st to April 30th only. The summer, however, has brought a large number of visitors to the Sanctuary, and in order to ensure music during the greater part of the year a Schulmerich "Carillon Americana" was installed in 1957. This instrument, made in Sellersville, Pennsylvania, contains pieces of bell metal which are struck by small hammers: the resulting sound is electrically amplified. The instrument has sixty-one bell notes, sixty-one harp notes, sixty-one celesta notes, and an organ console with attachments for recording and reproducing individual performances.

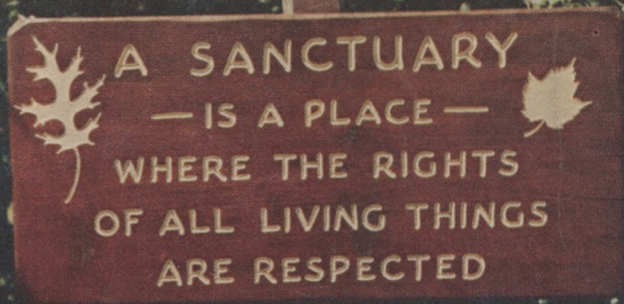
Recitals are given on both the carillon and the electronic bells at times and on dates that are announced in advance. These, together with the



*Anton Brees, Laureate
of the Royal Flemish Conservatory
in Antwerp, Belgium,
became the Tower's carillonneur in 1928.*

quarter-hourly Westminster Strike and hourly recorded selection during daylight, make the structure a true Singing Tower. For many years a special service has been held at sunrise on Easter Day, with a recital and choral singing. Special recitals are also given on Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, on the birthdays of Lee, Lincoln, and Washington, on the date of Edward Bok's death, and on certain evenings of full moon. The best place to hear the music is not near the base of the Tower but at any point about two hundred yards from it. The southern and western slopes are particularly suitable, as is also the northern section of the Sanctuary, and the public will find benches advantageously placed. The wind may have considerable influence on the sound waves. Quiet is requested during recitals.





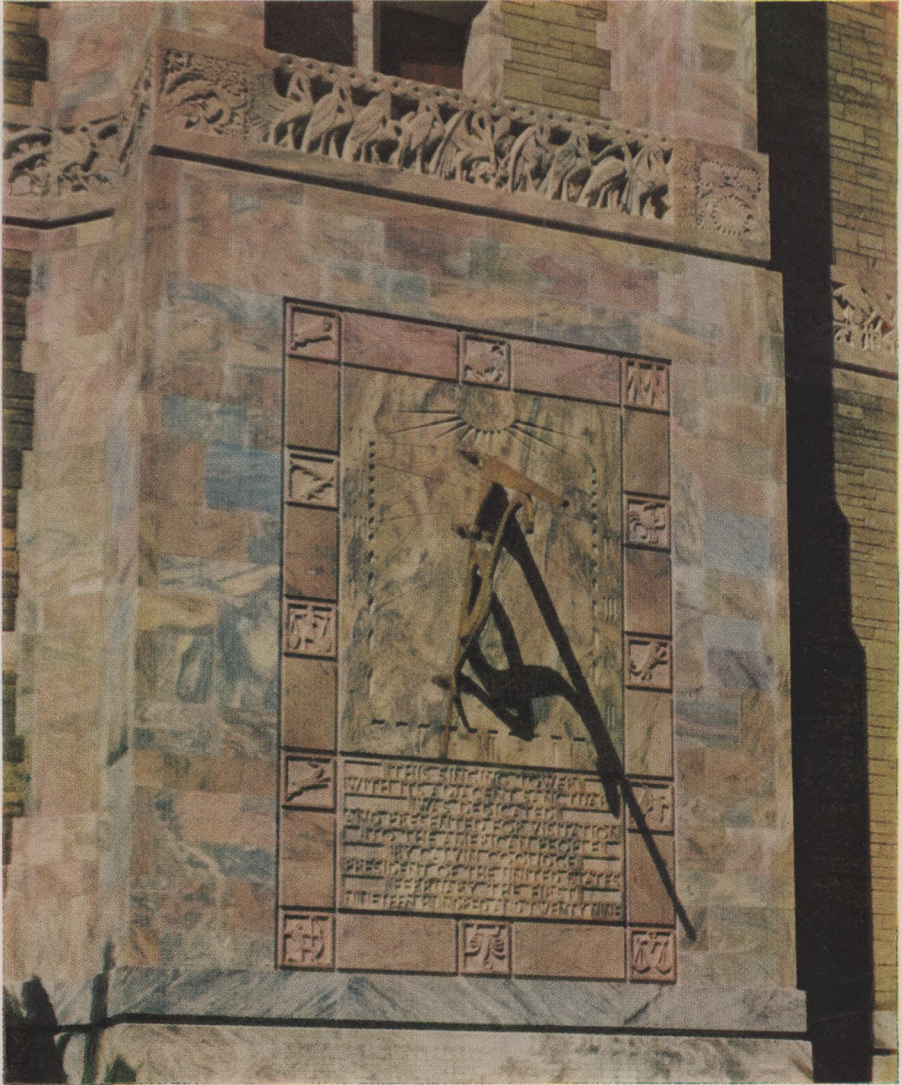
A magnolia on the left and a camphor tree in the center provide a green background for daylilies which bloom in profusion during the spring and summer.





*Those who wish to become familiar with the natural history of the Sanctuary
may study the rustic markers along the trails and
use the check-lists of birds and plants
that are available at the information booth near the Tower.*





The Sundial on the South face of the Tower

gives its exact position as latitude $27^{\circ} 56' 10''$ North, longitude $81^{\circ} 35'$ West.

The gnomon declines Eastward $4^{\circ} 21'$, and a table at the base gives the Equation of Time, the difference between sun time and clock time.

Even the dates of the months can be read, as well as the hour of the day.

Surrounding the dial are the signs and figures of the Zodiac.



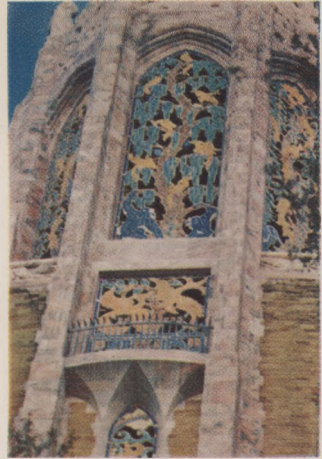
*Feeding stations and bird baths
bring a wide variety of birds
within close range of photographers
who use the "blind" provided for them.*

*Azaleas and cabbage palms
dominate the landscape along the
west side of the reflection pool.*





At the top of the Tower are figures of herons surmounting a sculptured marble screen of palms and roses.



A cascade of trees, birds and flowers in colored tile.



The faience, with undersea life below—man above.

Various groups of flora and fauna, typical of Florida, grace the lower portion of the Tower.



*The East window grille, showing youth feeding birds . . .
Stone frieze of Florida wildlife above,
presenting pelicans and herons.*



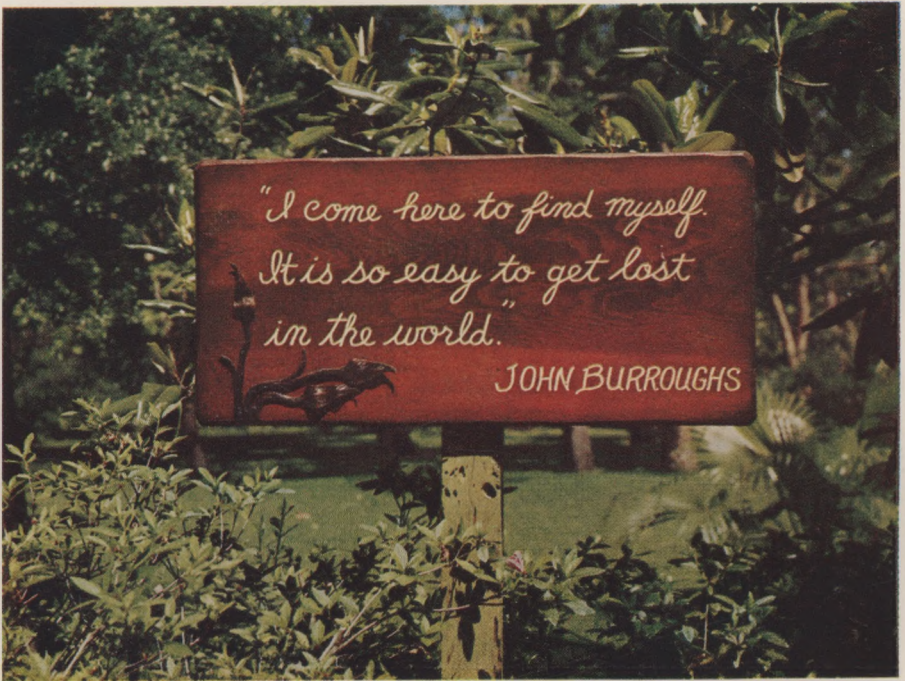
*The tower view terrace
provides a sweeping panorama and is
a fine place to hear the bells.*





*Magnolias, camellias, and azaleas
are banked along the north trail.*





EDWARD BOK died at Mountain Lake, within sight of the Tower, on January 9, 1930, and is buried in the lawn between the brass door and the moat. The gray marble stone bears only his name and dates. The iron gates on the two moat bridges ensure the grave's privacy.

It has sometimes been asked if he did not intend the Tower as a memorial headstone. He did not. When the building was completed his wife asked him if he would care to be buried there. The idea had not occurred to him before, because he had already dedicated the Sanctuary to his grandparents.

In "Two Persons," Scribner's, New York, 1922, he wrote an epilogue to the story of his grandparents that is mentioned on page 7 of this booklet and "describes what he regards as a continuation of the work of his grandfather, and a fulfilment of the message of his grandmother, to whose memory the Sanctuary on the Florida Mountain is dedicated by Their Grandson."

The Sanctuary and Tower have no specific purpose. They were not built as a church, a theater, a school, or a forum. Mr. Bok expressed their purpose in these words:

"The purpose of it all? Simply to preach the gospel and influence of beauty reaching out to visitors through tree, shrub, flowers, birds, superb architecture, the music of bells, and the sylvan setting. And a restful, quiet, beautiful spot where visitors may feel, as the sign at the entrance declares by an extract from John Burroughs:

'I come here to find myself.

It is so easy to get lost in the world.'"

*The brass door,
entrance to the Tower,
tells the story of Creation
in its thirty panels.*

*The Exedra occupies a shaded area
on the Western Overlook. This marble memorial was a gift
to the Sanctuary from its neighbors in Polk County,
and the marble drinking fountains were given by school children.
The verse on the small square in front of the Exedra
is from "The Garden," by Dorothy Frances Gurney.*







EDWARD BOK organized The American Foundation, Inc. in 1924. He deeded the Sanctuary land to the Foundation, which he later endowed by will. After the completion of the Tower he asked Calvin Coolidge, then President of the United States, to dedicate the property to the American people for visitation, and this was done on February 1, 1929.

The Sanctuary stands as an island in the middle of land owned by the Mountain Lake Corporation, a business organization which operates a residential colony and with which The American Foundation has no connection. It was in this colony that Mr. Bok first bought his winter home.

Entrance to the Sanctuary is by private road almost two miles long from the nearest public road in the direction of Lake Wales. This road, over which the Foundation has a permanent easement, is the property and runs through land of the Mountain Lake Corporation. By contract between the Foundation and the Corporation the latter collects a fee from entering automobiles, and uses it to maintain the road and the parking area. This is the only charge made.

The Corporation owns and operates the restaurant and souvenir shop which stands on Corporation land near the entrance to the Sanctuary.

There is no admission or other fee of any kind charged by the Foundation. The Sanctuary grounds are open every day from 8:30 to 5:30, and everyone is welcome.

Inquiries may be addressed to The Mountain Lake Sanctuary, Lake Wales, Florida.

*From the wrought-iron railing
at the end of the reflection pool
various trails invite the visitor
to explore all ninety-two acres
of the Sanctuary.*

HARRY M. NORNABELL
Director Emeritus

KENNETH D. MORRISON
Director

RALPH G. HARWELL
Assistant Director

NEIL JAMES McMILLAN
Head Gardener

Price: 25 cents

The type face used in this Sanctuary booklet is the creation of the Dutch type designer S. H. De Roos and is named after him. This graceful, clear letter is the result of extensive study and preparation by this eminent calligraphic artist and designer.

THE MOUNTAIN LAKE SANCTUARY

THE SANCTUARY IS OWNED BY
THE AMERICAN FOUNDATION,
A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION
CREATED AND ENDOWED BY
EDWARD BOK TO HOLD TITLE TO
THE SANCTUARY AND SINGING
TOWER AND TO MAINTAIN THEM.
MR. BOK BOUGHT THE PROPERTY,
PLANTED IT, BUILT THE TOWER,
AND PRESENTED THE SANCTUARY
TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE FOR
VISITATION. IT WAS DEDICATED
BY PRESIDENT CALVIN COOLIDGE
ON FEBRUARY 1, 1929.

THE SANCTUARY IS UNDER THE
PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC.

Ann. W. Norton

THE MOUNTAIN LAKE SANCTUARY

GUIDE MAP SHOWING TRAILS AND MAJOR POINTS OF INTEREST

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Parking Area | 12. Reflection Pool |
| 2. Entrance Plaque | 13. Exedra |
| 3. Drinking Fountains | 14. St. Francis Bird Feeder |
| 4. Lily Garden | 15. Mockingbird Trail |
| 5. Weather Shelters | 16. North Walk |
| 6. Information Booth | 17. Wildlife Pond |
| 7. Japanese Lantern | 18. East Terrace |
| 8. Live-Oak Grove | 19. Bird Feeder |
| 9. Singing Tower | 20. Refreshment House |
| 10. Moat | 21. Rest Rooms |
| 11. Overlook Trail | 22. Picnic Area |

