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# Urtagarðurin hjá Hans Kristoffuri á Ryggi í Miðvági

## The garden of Hans Kristoffur

*Forord: Jóannes Rasmussen*

*Elizabeth Taylor 1921: The Garden of Hans Kristoffer*

*Sverre Patursson 1918: Det store Blomsterbed hos H. C. Joensen*

Urtagarðurin hjá Hans Kristoffur Joensen, bónda á Ryggi, var eitt satt prýði fyri Miðvágs bygd. Tá í tíðini, í seinnu helvt av fyrru øld og væl inn í hesa øldina, var ikki vanligt, at fólk gjørdu sær urtagarðar, ansurin fyri gróðri og gróðurrøkt mundi vera lítil tá millum fólk. Hans Kristoffur var dúglicur bóndi og undangongumaður í mongum lutum. Hann røkti garðin væl, men umframt tað hevði hann alsk til alt, sum nældi, og legði stóran dent á urtagarðsbrúk. Í garði hansara vóru bæði nýtsluplantur, sum berjarunnar og rabarbur, litfagrir blómuteigar og, sum óvanligt var tá í tíðini, hópur av runna- og træavøkstri, sum randaði allan garðin. Á gamalsaldrinum, heilt upp í 1920-árin, legði Hans Kristoffur alla megi sína í røkt av urtagarðinum, men tá hann fall frá, kom garðurin spakuliga í afturhond, men enn vísa trø og runnar á, hvar hesin prýðiligi urta- og træagarður var.

Tá »Laura« í juni 1895 legði inn á Havnina á veg til Íslands var ein amerikansk kvinna, Elizabeth Taylor, við. Hon var á veg til Íslands, men gjørdist, aftan á stuttan steðg her, so hugtikin av Føroyum, at hon ferð eftir ferð kom aftur til oyggjarnar. Tá kríggið brast á í 1914, lá hon eftir og varð verandi í Føroyum til 1919. Elizabeth Taylor hevði mong áhugamál, bæði síðsøgulig, listarlig og náttúrusøgulig. Hon hevði stóran ans fyri gróðri. Árin hon var í Føroyum, helt hon til ymsastaðni í landinum, mest á Eiði, har hon búði øll krígsárin, á Viðareidi og í Miðvági. Í Miðvági búði hon hjá Hans Kristoffuri á Ryggi. Í húsi hansara fann hon seg sera væl.

The Garden of the farmer “á Ryggi”, Hans Kristoffur Joensen, was a true pride to the village of Miðvágur. In those days, the latter part of the last century, people did not usually keep a garden and the interest in and care for growth, seems to have been very little. Hans Kristoffur was a very capable farmer and a pioneer in several ways. He kept his farm well. Moreover, he was devoted to all that sprouted and was particularly interested in gardening. In his garden grew utility plants, berry-bearing shrubs, and rhubarbs, richly-coloured flower beds and, unusual in those days, a lot a bushes and trees encircling the entire garden. In his old age Hans Kristoffur put all his energy into the care of the garden. However, when he died the garden gradually went into a state of neglect, but trees and bushes still show where this splendid garden was.

*Royniviður og  
pálmapílur. Kunoy.  
Sorbus intermedia and  
Salix phylicifolia. Kunoy.  
Photo H. Vedel, Aug.  
1976.*



*Lützens garður,  
Áarvegur 1, Tórshavn.  
Lützen's garden,  
Áarvegur 1, Tórshavn.  
Photo H. Vedel, 1972.*







*Runnagirding við sponskum hindberum, við Gøtugjógv.  
Rubus spectabilis, Gøtugjógv. Photo S. Rasmussen, 1981.*



*Runnagirding við ljósareyðum Ribes í fríttarøkinum á Ternuryggi.  
Ribes sanguineum planted at a summer cottage outside Tórshavn. Photo T. í Hoyvík, June 1981.*

When in June 1895 “Laura” called in at Tórshavn on the way to Iceland, an American woman, Elizabeth Taylor, was on board. She was on her way to Iceland, but after the short stop here, she was so fascinated by the Faroes that she returned to the islands again and again. When the war broke out in 1914, she was left behind and stayed in the Faroes until 1919. Elizabeth Taylor had many interests, in history of civilization as well as in art and natural history. She paid great attention to growth. The years she spent in the Faroes, she stayed at different places, mostly on Eiði where she lived during the war, in Viðareiði and Miðvági. In Miðvági she stayed at Hans Kristoffur á Ryggi’s home. She felt well there.

Niðanfyrri eru prentað brot úr grein, hon hefur skrivað um urtagarðin hjá Hans Kristoffuri á Ryggi (The Garden of Hans Kristoffer in Atlantic Monthly, 127: 639–648, May 1921).

Below are printed extracts from an article which she has written about the garden of Hans Kristoffur á Ryggi (The Garden of Hans Kristoffur in Atlantic Monthly, 127: 639–648, May 1921).

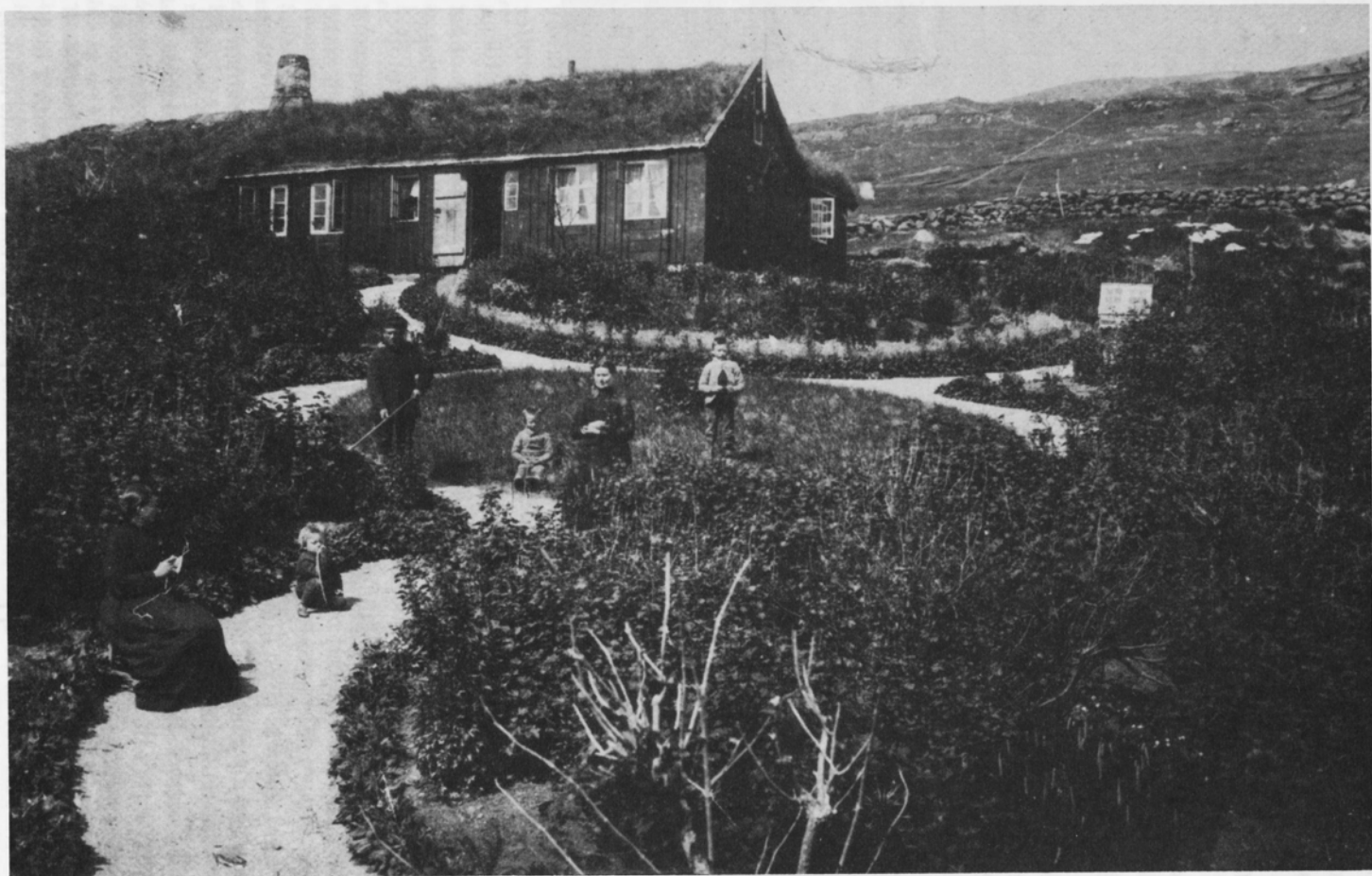
## The garden of Hans Kristoffer

It is a little garden of the North, far up in the sixties, at Miðvágur on one of the Faroe Isles. The years of the garden are seventy-six; those of Hans Kristoffer are eighty-four. His forebears, Norse Vikings seven centuries ago, were not garden lovers, and the chief interests of their descendants are codfish, whales, seafowl, and half-wild sheep. But the Parsonage gardens of Denmark are noted, and back in the eighteenth century the daughter of a Danish Pastor “married in” to this old farm in the Ryggi section of Miðvágur. And I think that ancestral memories of faraway Danish gardens, a heritage of garden lore, have come down to Hans Kristoffer from that “Ann Lisbit, born Svabo.” I think it is to *her* that he owes his garden.

One spring morning he stood, a little boy of eight years, in the doorway of his father’s cottage. A mighty pile of ashes and refuse was close by; a rocky, boggy slope, a marshy bit at the bottom, where a cow stood, knee-deep. Hans Kristoffer surveyed it all, and something stirred to life in his heart. He had never seen a garden, but now he said to himself, “Here I will have a garden; here I will make things grow.” And having made this resolve, he began straightway.

Permission was given him to do what he chose with the land; with permission, but no help. And it would be a labor of years for one small pair of arms to dig and drain it, and build a dike around it. So, to encourage himself at the very outset, he went to the wild moors, dug up violets and catchflies and little orchids, and planted them on the outskirts of the ash heap before he began the task of clearing it away. And that was the beginning of the garden.

After breakfast I went out with Hans Kristoffer, to make a closer acquaintance with the garden. In front of the cottage is a large bed of perennials with a little golden locust tree on the upper border. The taller plants are lilac and white lupines,



7.1. Bóndahúsini og urtagarðurin hjá Hans Kristoffuri á Ryggi í Miðvági. Grafía.



a flowering currant, a foxglove or two, cottage lilies, yellow larkspurs, and one of bright blue monkshood, montbretia, monkey flowers, Jacob's ladders, Shasta daisies, feverfew, mauve and white rockets, doronicums, Fair Maids of France, an oriental poppy, two peonies, and starry astrantiums. The lower plants are sweet Williams, pyrethrums, lilac and white horned violets, forget-me-nots, potentillas, Iceland poppies, a bleeding heart, Scottish bluebells, geums, catchflies, daffodils, Spanish irises, spiræas, and wood hyacinths.

And then there is the border. First, a wonderful band of primroses. Never, no, not under Devon hedges, have I seen such a wealth of blossoms, hardly a leaf showing among them. Then comes a band of London pride, or *Saxifraga umbrosa*, or Mother of Thousands, as you choose to call it. And the inner band is Poet's narcissus. First the primroses bloom, then Poet's narcissus, and then the Mother of Thousands.

Below the large bed is a circular grass plane, with eighteen little beds following its circumference, each just large enough to hold a clump of sweet Williams, or clove pinks, or pansies. And in the center is a tiny spruce. The garden lies on a slope facing the sea, and when the great southeastern rage, I wonder how any mortal plant can survive. But even when mourning some damage done, I remember what charm this sharp decline give the garden, with the lovely tints of sea, strand, and sky as a background for the blossoms. Between the laced branches of little trees are long white bars of surf and the flashing of white wings; and you should see a big clump of Grandis daffodils against the gleaming purples of the strand!

There are gravelly paths that curve and wind down the slope, as paths should do, and all are bordered with primroses and the Mother of Thousands. They pass under the tiniest trees and between the biggest currant bushes that I have ever seen, and lead to a storehouse, or to a sheltered nook among elderly bushes, where there are benches and a table, or to seats by the sea dike, or to the top of the garden with a wide view over sea and fields. And the only help Hans Kristoffer had in planning his garden was a bit of advice given him by a Danish Pastor: "Don't make squares, Hans Kristoffer, make *curves*."

Though most of the flowers are in the large bed, there are not a few in odd nooks – a Thunbergianum lily, irises, beds of vinca, sweet Williams, and several rose bushes that never bloom.

By the time I had seen everything and we sat down to rest on the bleaching grass above the garden, I had discovered that Hans Kristoffer's little trees and his primrose borders are the pride and joy of his heart.

## Det store Blomsterbed hos H. C. Joensen á Ryggi

Í bóklinginum »Fra Færøernes Næringsveje i tekst og billeder«, sum Sverre Patursson gav út í Kristiania (Oslo) í 1918, er eisini eitt yvirlit yvir planturnar í urtagarðinum hjá Hans Kristoffuri. Vit prenta yvirlitið beinleiðis eftir bókini hjá Sverra.

Her hidsættes navnene paa blomsterne i det store blomsterbed hos H. C. Joensen á Ryggi í Miðvági, hvis have er den mest bekendte paa øerne. Og der kan tilføies at dette blomsterbed garneret med *viola cornuta*, lilla og hvid hver sommer staar med en fylde og yppighed som tilhørte det langt sydligere egne: *Viola cornuta*, *primula*, *campanula glomerata*, *spiræa palmata*, *spiræa filipendula* fl. pl., *spiræa aruncus*, *spiræa ulmaria*, *ranunculus aconitifolius* fl. pl., *pyrethrum hybridum*, *papaver orientale*, *paeonia chinensis*, *lupinus polyphyllus*, lila, snehvid, purpur, *erica carnea*, *geum heldreiche*, *dicylra spectabilis*, *delphinium*, gul og blaa, *coreopsis grandiflora*, *chrysanthemum maximum* («kong Edward»), *achillea ptarmica*, fl. pl., *aconitum*, 3 sorter, *digitales purpurea*, *potentilla*, gul og rød, stedmoderblomst, *myosotis*, *agnlegia*, *mimulus*, *polemonium*, *geum rivale*, *doronicum*, *saxifraga umbrosa*, *astrantia major*, *betonica*, *hesperus matronalis*, *veronica*, *primula grandiflora*, *primula polyanthus*, *monbretia*, *lilium croceum*, *lilium umbellatum*, *iris hispania*, *iris anglica*, *narcissus barri conspicuus*, *narcissus grandes*, *narcissus poeticus*, *hyacint*, *muscari*, *crocus*.

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