On October 31, 2000, William I. P. Campbell, Horticulturist Emeritus of Smith College, died at the age of ninety-eight in Amherst, Massachusetts. He is survived by Alice, his wife of 68 years, five grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren, and members of the family in Scotland. Two daughters, Gay Cross and Jean Vaillancourt, died earlier.

Bill Campbell’s stalwart leadership guided the Smith College Botanic Garden through the middle years of the twentieth century. He saw the campus landscape through recovery from the ravages of the great hurricane of 1938, the difficult years of World War II, and the construction projects that followed in the 1950s and 1960s: Wright Hall, the Fine Arts Center, and the Center for the Performing Arts, each in its way a challenge to the integrity of an ever more complex and sprawling institution.

Bill was born William Iverach Peace Campbell in Boxburghshire, Scotland in 1902, although he often joked that the initials “I.P.” were bestowed “because they didn’t cost anything.” Following an apprenticeship in gardening, he studied for three years at the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh, graduating with a specialty in Horticulture. He came to the United States in 1928. Nearly a decade later, while he was supervising the Gardens of the Nations at Radio City in New York, a fellow Scotsman, Smith President William Allan Neilson, persuaded him to take up the duties of College horticulturist. At that time, the campus plantings, laid out by the firm of Olmsted, Olmsted and Eliot in the early 1890s, were approaching maturity, fulfilling an original
behalf with the changing botanical exhibit in Burton Hall that week. The display, soon assembled, featured bright magenta-pink azaleas, orange fritillarias, their fragrance wafting through the building's heating ducts, and pots of yellow tulips; the horticultural jest drew visitors for days!

His retirement in 1971 was celebrated to the strains of bagpipes by a gala event in the Alumnae House. Bill and Alice then departed for a trip to Holland and their native Scotland. On returning, they moved from their home in Williamsburg to Mount Dora, Florida, where Bill focused his still-abundant energies on gardening and playing golf. In 1978 Bill returned to the College to receive a Smith College Medal for his service to the College and community; and for more than two decades after that the Campbells were regular, if seasonal, visitors to the campus, when his familiar figure could be seen inspecting the Rock Garden or the benches in the Lyman Plant House, assessing the condition of the grounds and, though not too frequently, pointing out occasions for improvement.

Bill recognized that few gardens outlive their creators, one of the sadder facts of landscape history, and sometimes described his years at Smith as a systematic, persistent attempt to deal with a series of unwelcome challenges (he illustrated this with slides showing clematis vines that were rescued time and again, shifted onto and off of various supports as the campus changed around them.) Nonetheless, gardens at educational institutions fare better perhaps than most, and through the last three decades of the twentieth century, many of Bill’s plantings remained essentially intact. The row of glossy abelias in front of the Alumnae House, in flower from August till the hardest frosts; the yellow jasmine and the fragrant viburnum, tucked into warm niches where they bloom in early spring; the magnificent dawn redwood at the edge of Burton Lawn; the endangered *Franklinia* in the Rock Garden, still blooming in November; and the clumps of Dexter rhododendrons. These are a part of his heritage, but his greater legacy is surely a tradition for appreciation of the College grounds, for considering the campus landscape integral to our own experience of the place.