

## THE COLTON HOUSE

In 1926, Dr. and Mrs. Colton bought thirty acres of pasture and forest land a few miles north of Flagstaff. They had camped on the site during previous summers in Flagstaff, and purchased the land upon making their decision to relocate. On this land were two camp structures earlier built by the Coltons and used as sleeping quarters and for cooking.

The next year, the Coltons bought, from Mrs. John Francis following the death of her husband,

Dr. Colton's sister, Suzanne Colton Wilson, and her family). The entire complex of buildings was named Coyote Range by Mrs. Colton to celebrate the singing of coyotes who roamed the area. Coyotes and deer were frequently seen at nearby Coyote Spring.

Malpais Manor burned on the frosty evening of December 17, 1928, because of a faulty chimney flue; igniting and blazing so quickly that the

Coltons were only able to salvage a dining room table, two Navajo rugs, and clothing. Lost were books from Dr. Colton's extensive library, many of Mrs. Colton's paintings, and most of their furniture. Fortunately, some of the paintings were stored in her studio, and Dr. Colton's papers were kept in his office, and neither of these buildings burned.

The Coltons then built what is today known as Colton House on the site of the previous Malpais Manor. Former architectural student Dr. Colton designed and sketched plans for a 6,000-square-foot Spanish Colonial Revival style home. Dr. Colton's architect brother, Ralph, turned the sketches into blueprints, and construction began in June, 1929.

Six months later, the home, which cost about \$60,000 to build, was ready to occupy. The walls were constructed of local malpais rock, with pine timbers, Douglas fir crossbeams, and aspen. Trees were cleared to enhance the view of the San Francisco Peaks from the living room picture window. The north center gable holds a 1929 inscription with the initials of Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton and Harold S. Colton.

Combining Spanish Colonial and Pueblo styles, the home is unusual for northern Arizona. The mix of features includes an arched door at the



MARY-RUSSELL'S FLOWER GARDEN IN FRONT OF THE COLTON HOUSE IN THE 1930S. (MNA COLLECTIONS MS 207-211-2(34-16))

an adjacent seventy acres with an existing house, known as Malpais Manor, and some outbuildings. The Coltons remodeled the kitchen and moved into the house in the early summer of 1926. They also moved the two camp buildings together with a two-story center section to create one structure named "Sunrise House," used as housing for hired help. Over the next two years, the Coltons built additional structures: the Annex (Dr. Colton's office), the Studio (Mrs. Colton's art studio), Pack Rat's Nest (Ferrell's playhouse), and Blue Jay (for