

# **The Journal** **OF** **The Scottish** **Rock Garden Club**



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# The Journal

OF

# The Scottish Rock Garden Club

*Editor*—J. L. MOWAT, University Botanic Gardens, St. Andrews

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## Editor's Notes

THIS ISSUE of *Journal* and *Review* once again marks the end of yet another very successful year in S.R.G.C. history. Some idea of the increase of Club activity in many parts of the country may be gained from the reports under "County Activities"; and there is reason for congratulation that in this section are this year counties whose names have not appeared in the *Review* for some considerable time. We know that we speak on behalf of all Club members when we wish all who have taken on district responsibilities success in their new duties and much pleasure and happiness in the work they have undertaken.

Speaking of this part of the Club's work recalls something that passed through our mind recently. It would seem that the numbers of members in areas like N.W. America, New Zealand and Australia are sufficient to make it well worth while for them to get together and elect district representatives to organise local activities and develop closer contact with fellow members here in Scotland. All home members would be thrilled to read regular reports of the doings of their fellows overseas, and even more interested to hear of their individual successes and failures in rock gardening.

Another recent thought in connection with group activities is this. Do we put too much emphasis on organising visits to some considerable distance, or, to put it conversely, do we always pay sufficient attention to the possibility and desirability of organised visits within a group's own immediate vicinity? It has been brought to our notice that the further afield an excursion is, and therefore the longer the time involved, the greater the number of members who are debarred from taking part by the pressure of their normal duties. It has been pointed out that organised distant visits (with the time involved) are often outwith the attainment of many members, and tend to become the prerogative of those with leisure or able to adjust their hours of duties.

Members who knew her well, particularly those of us who are among the older members of the Club, will mourn the passing of Mrs. Maud Kelly. Her kindly disposition gained her the affection of all who knew her, just as her energy and enthusiasm in Club affairs and her unfailing courage in illness aroused their admiration and respect. The N.E. England group has indeed suffered a great loss.

When the April number of the *Journal* was issued we were, in most parts of Scotland at least, still in the grip of a drought which had persisted, with little easement through the winter, from the summer of 1955. The spring was well advanced into summer before rain in any quantity came to ease the situation. Since then we have had an increasing abundance, but along with it we have had an unbroken spell of persistently low night temperatures. Judging by the losses we have had ourselves and have had reported by other members there

should be many interesting stories to be told. Reports of the sudden collapse of plants which flowered beautifully and appeared in good health till well on in the year have been common, and any suggested explanation would be welcomed by many. The soil of our own garden is so dry and hungry that we feel such happenings with us were simply the result of the rains being too long delayed, but reports of similar sudden collapses in other gardens of good soil and much less arid conditions seem less easily explained.

This summer two of Scotland's most prominent plantsmen, Major and Mrs. Knox Finlay of Keillour Castle, Perthshire, shook the leading growers of the south with a wonderful exhibit they staged in London. The *Nomocharis* family is not entirely unknown at the big shows in the south of England, but previously *Nomochares* have been staged in small groups of two or three as beautiful rarities. Judge then the excitement and admiration created by an exhibit of well over two hundred plants in full flower and many of them three or four feet tall. We warmly congratulate Major and Mrs. Finlay on the high honours and awards their exhibit very deservedly received—Gold Medal for the group as a whole, with a First Class Certificate for *Nomocharis mairei*, and an Award of Merit for *N. pardanthina* var. *candida*.

What must have struck many who read of this wonderful display was the achievement of transporting such an exhibit from Perth to London without damage or loss. However, the explanation, as given by Major Finlay, was amazingly simple. It seems that the recently inaugurated train-car ferry service between Perth and London was responsible for the successful arrival of these lovely plants in such perfect condition.

The plants were carefully packed into the car at Keillour, driven to Perth, where the car was loaded on to the train, and on arrival at London driven to the show hall where they were unpacked again—the first handling since they had left the garden.

A feat like this opens up great possibilities. We hope that the Finlays, and many other able plantsmen too, will be able to show more of the plants we can grow so well in Scotland to our fellows in the south at Vincent Square.

Exhibits at Club shows have been of a high standard this year, and many plants showed their appreciation of the thorough ripening they got last year by an unusual abundance of bloom. Particularly has this been the case with many of a hardwood or shrubby nature. Many visitors to the show at Dundee must have been thrilled to see the wonderful display by Lady Maitland of Forfar. The centrepiece was a large vase of several beautiful sprays of *Davidia involucrata* in full bloom—a sight entirely new to most of us in Scotland. Also in the group was *Kolkwitzia amabilis*, which too benefited from the wonderful summer of '55, and a collection of beautiful and interesting hybrids of *Paeonia delavayi* and *P. lutea*.

Before this *Journal* reaches members the Club show at North Berwick on 8th September will have come and gone. Coming as it does in the autumn, this show provides a unique opportunity for the exhibition of many of the autumn-flowering gentians, which of course can never be seen at any of the other shows. We hope that, in spite of the very inclement weather as we write, there will have been an attractive display and a very successful show by the time this reaches our readers.

Your editor wishes to conclude his remarks with thanks to all contributors to this issue—those whose sense of loyalty to the Club has inspired them to devote some of their time to the benefit and pleasure of fellow members. Out of a membership of three thousand their numbers are few. Why? Is it that everyone agrees unreservedly with all that is written in our *Journals*, and therefore has no desire to query or contradict? Is it diffidence? Or is it just plain apathy? How can an editor know?

*September, 1956.*

## Obituary

BY THE death of Miss E. J. Harvey in July the Club has lost a very keen member who was a regular exhibitor at Club shows in Edinburgh. In addition to being an active member of the Scottish Rock Garden Club, Miss Harvey was also a committee member of the Edinburgh branch of the National Cactus and Succulent Society.

Nearly forty years ago, while engaged in research work in association with Dr. Rennie and Dr. Bruce White on acarine disease among bees, Miss Harvey was responsible for the discovery of the parasite causing the disease, and did much good work on the subject. She was a Fellow of the Royal Physical Society of Edinburgh.

## Annual Subscription, 1956-57

ALL MEMBERS who have not already paid their annual subscriptions of 10/- due on 1st September should do so as soon as possible to the **Hon. Treasurer, Mr. STEWART MITCHELL, 1 Muirfield Crescent, Dundee, Angus.** Please do not send to any other Official, as this creates unnecessary work for those concerned, including the Treasurer.

## Club Christmas Cards

THE ARRANGEMENTS regarding Club Christmas Cards as set out in the April *Journal* had to be cancelled owing to the disappointing standard of the colour blocks concerned. It is therefore proposed to use instead the picture shown on the front cover of *Journal* No. 14, April 1954—*Primula edgeworthii*.

Cards should be ordered **as soon as possible** from the *Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Stewart Mitchell, 1 Muirfield Crescent, Dundee*. The cost, including envelopes, is 6/6 per dozen, post free, and cash should accompany the order.

Steadily rising costs make the production of the *Journal* increasingly difficult and a good sale of Christmas Cards will help towards the illustrations of next year's publications.

## Seed Distribution, 1955-56

MEMBERS are requested to send to the Seed Exchange as much good seed as they can spare, cleaned, and correctly named. It is essential that the seed should reach me **not later than 31st OCTOBER 1956**, as the completed list has to be in the printer's hands early in November. Last year a great deal of valuable seed arrived too late to be included. If it is not possible to send seed by the above date, a list of "Seeds to Follow" is quite satisfactory—provided, of course, that they do follow !

C. E. DAVIDSON (Mrs.),

Linton Muir, West Linton, Peeblesshire.

## Correction

FOR THE word "Calabrian" in the last line on page 8 of *Journal* No. 18, April 1956 ("New to My Garden") read "Cantabrian."

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# The American Rock Garden Society

Probably most members are aware of the existence in the U.S.A. of a Society comparable with our own. Some members may have wished to join this Society, but have been deterred by the apparent difficulty of transmitting their subscription.

We understand that this difficulty is not insuperable. Permission has to be obtained from the Exchange Control in the first place and evidence has to be supplied of the existence of the Society and its membership fees. Having secured sanction, the member obtains a draft from his Bank and forwards it to the Society. In practice it would probably be best first to consult one's Bank, which could supply advice and the appropriate forms.

The annual subscription is 3½ dollars, or 10 dollars for three years if paid in advance, and the Secretary, who will send further particulars, is Edgar L. Totten, 238 Sheridan Avenue, Ho-Ho-Kus, N.J., U.S.A.

In addition to its bi-monthly Bulletin, the American Society has a Seed Exchange in operation and issues special plant leaflets under the name of Saxiflora.

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## Oddities and Rarities

By ROGER WATSON

WHEN ONE has been rock gardening for a good many years, there is sure to be included in the collection of plants acquired some which qualify for one or perhaps both of the categories of my title. Odd—that they may strike a note of clear independence and be completely different in habit from our conception of the genus to which they belong, in some cases scarcely recognisable among their more conventional brethren except to a botanist. Rarity can be accounted for in several ways. A plant may be rare because it is newly discovered or raised and is still not well known, or it may be because of its difficulty of culture or propagation, appealing only to the specialist, or it may be because of neglect and the plant having been lost to cultivation. There are many instances of this last, and many once-popular plants which have for some reason lost favour among gardeners are now sought after and hailed as real treasures.

The plants I have enumerated are some which we grow, though I realise that there is a great difference in the gardening preferences between here in the West of England and in Scotland, and plants which we think rare are common place things in the North. My first plant is one that will never fail to confound the uninitiated, *Gypsophila aretioides*. It is not really rare, but it is certainly odd and as “un-gypsophila like” as can be imagined, for who could imagine a “gyp.” making a perfectly tight dome of tiny leaves and being practically flowerless. It is perhaps almost a perfect example of a cushion plant, and the form *G. aretioides caucasica* is even more rugged and hard. From the A.G.S. seed distribution of 1955, I raised *Draba pterosperma*, a plant almost unknown in the British Isles. In one season it has made a small cushion somewhat after the pattern of the better known *D. polytricha* and looks like being a good cushion plant. Both this and *Draba acaulis*, a tiny woolly ball of rosettes, are in the alpine house, planted wedged between stones so that no water may fall on the rosettes and foliage, a thing they very much dislike and soon show: they damp off very readily. Another rare cushion plant is *Minuartia pulvinaris*, which is an Alsine or Arenaria. From a tap root it forms a tight dome of short shoots rather heath-like in appearance. We have not yet had any flowers on our plant, but I expect they are white.

One of our great treasures is *Diosphaera asperuloides*. From a close dome of tiny rounded leaves come the comparatively large flowers, lavender blue with a prominent white pistil, and there surely cannot be any plant which carries more flowers than this, for it will completely cover the dome of shoots and look like a lavender pincushion, the foliage being quite hidden. A native of the banks of the dreaded River Styx of mythology, it is best accommodated in gritty soil in the alpine house. *Arabis bryoides* “Olympus Var.” is not often seen, but, grown in scree or poor soil, makes a tight cushion more like an

Aretian Androsace than an Arabis and produces its white flowers sitting closely on the rosettes.

A plant which will qualify for both categories is *Euphorbia acanthothamnus*. It is rarely met with and is about as odd a plant as can be imagined. The stem seems to be swollen to the size and shape of an egg; the roots strike downwards, the succulent milky stems issuing from the top and producing blue grey little rosettes and insignificant flowers. Above this the plant covers the rosetted short-stemmed growth with a canopy of interlacing spines and is described by Dr. Peter Davis as "looking as though covered with rusty wire-netting." This weird creature is hardy enough to live in a cold greenhouse. An extremely rare plant, also in the cold house, is *Corethyrogone* sp., California. A composite, it has a basal rosette of grey foliage and the flowering stems rise to a height of eight inches, producing semi-double daisies in a peculiar shade of dusky pink over a long period in late summer and autumn.

There are many gems among the Androsaces, mostly fairly well known, but *Androsace jacquemontii* is a choice rarity which came to me from an alpine plant specialist in Scotland. It is a plant from the Himalayas, very much like the European *A. villosa*, but the abundant flowers are a good pink colour. It is quite hardy, but if grown outside would appreciate a glass covering in winter. A rare treasure is *Alyssum* P.D. 18391. Here it is quite hardy in scree, making a close mat of very silvery shoots which in early summer it adorns with the brightest yellow, almost stemless, flowers. It is very sparing with seed and does not seem to propagate very readily from cuttings, this perhaps accounting for its scarcity. Nearby in the scree is another rare plant, *Synthyris subpinnatifida* v. *lanuginosa*, a close hummock of very much cut silver foliage and short-stemmed heads of bright blue flowers in spring. This also would make an excellent alpine house plant. Another silver-leaved rarity is *Helichrysum frigidum*. As this gem intensely dislikes winter wet it is in the cold house, where the silver-grey heath-like shoots are attractive the whole year and the papery white "everlasting" flowers are carried over a long period in summer.

A fascinating little treasure which for some reason we cannot do well is *Viola yakusimana*. It needs very careful cultivation in scree or alpine house, but we usually manage to get some of its wee pansies which needs a lens to appreciate their full beauty, so minute are they. An old world curiosity for which we find a corner is *Plantago monstrosa rosularis*, the Rose Plantain. It is a rare plant, at least down this way, and very odd, as the flower is not a spike but a flat head which to me looks more like a green candytuft flower than a rose. Another rare plant in this part is *Dondia* (*Hacquetia*) *epipactis*. At almost any time from January until April in a shady corner can be seen the yellow-green flowers of this oddity.

A plant about which little is known is *Oxalis* "Cherry Ingram." The foliage appears rather shyly at first in late spring and later on

short stems, the buds opening to large flowers of the most beautiful rose red, a succession of which are kept up all summer, the whole plant becoming completely herbaceous in autumn. Another *Oxalis*—by no means rare, but quite odd—is *Oxalis vespertilionis*. A place should be found for this where it will not interfere with choice plants by reason of its spreading by bulbils. The odd part of this plant is the almost skeletonised triangular leaf segments which earn it the varietal name, meaning “Bat winged.” The flowers are lilac rose, in umbels, and quite pretty. My next is another oddity, *Ephedra andina*, a curious leafless plant, somewhat like the bad weed, *Equisetum* or Horsetail, which in summer throngs the leafless stems with small white flowers which are said to produce orange berries from which Ephedrine, the medical drug, is produced. We have not yet seen the berries. An interesting point about this curiosity is that it is reputed to be the link between conifers and flowering plants: it could well be.

A rather rare little shrub at the present time, but one that should become very popular when better known, is *Cytisus*  $\times$  “Peter Pan.” It forms a tangled bush of almost leafless stems to a height of twelve to fifteen inches, which it decorates in early summer with good-sized flowers of deep red and appears like a miniature of the well known brightly coloured hybrid brooms, and is the only dwarf broom that I know of with other than yellow flowers. A very great rarity about which little is known as yet is *Sorbus reducta*, as it is only just appearing in cultivation. Discovered by Captain Kingdon Ward recently, he says of it that it is a dwarf form of Mountain Ash or Rowan which reaches a height of about one foot and flowers and berries freely. Our plant of this is a seedling and we shall await its maturing with great hopes. A plant which was introduced many years ago from South America by Mr. Clarence Elliott but seldom has been seen is *Verbena tridens*. The stems grow stiffly erect and are closely set with tiny bristly leaves, and the flowers, typically verbena-like, are produced in summer and are pink. It may not be hardy everywhere, but makes a good alpine house shrub.

Most people love heaths and most of them are old and well-tried plants, but I must mention one of recent introduction, *Erica darleyensis* “Arthur T. Johnson,” which was raised and introduced by the great gardener whose name it bears and was awarded the Award of Merit in 1952. Like *E. darleyensis*, but with flowers of a richer colour, it has the same great flowering period from Autumn to Spring. A rare willow is to be found in *Salix apoda* ‘male’ form, a slow-growing almost prostrate shrub which decorates its branches in spring with large catkins of a peculiar shade of orange pink. But the male form must be insisted on, as the female form is plain by comparison. Another rare willow is *Salix myrsinites* var. *jacquinii*, which forms a little bushy plant of tortuous branches and in spring puts forth tiny catkins which are bright red. In a good spring when these are plentiful the plant is most unusually attractive. A plant not often met with is *Berberis hunbergii atropurpurea nana*. What its origin is I do not know, but

it has the appearance of a microform of the type plant. It is very slow-growing, about twelve inches in height, with deep crimson purple foliage which in autumn, before falling, turns to the most brilliant scarlet and persists like this for several weeks.

Among the dwarf conifers will be found many which qualify for these notes, but as I recently wrote about these I shall confine my notes to several rare forms which have come into my possession since these notes were written. It is good to know that some of these interesting plants, some of which were thought lost for ever, are again being found and propagated. A great treasure which has come my way is *Pseudolarix amabilis nana*, a dwarf form of the deciduous larch which, although only about six inches in height, is a plant of some years. Another is *Cephalotaxus drupacea prostrata*, a most uncommon form of the Japanese "Cow's Tail Pine," rather like a prostrate yew in appearance. I think it will cover some ground in time, but is an interesting and rare form. A beautiful and extremely rare plant is *Abies nobilis glauca prostrata*, a prostrate form of the "Noble Fir," a striking plant with very glaucous blue-grey foliage. A form of *Picea Abies (excelsa)* which had been thought lost for years has reappeared in the recent discovery of *Picea Abies pachphylla* in a Midland garden. Our plant of this is a mere cutting as yet, but this is a striking form with deep green thick blunt foliage and some of the branchlets ending in a "blind" bud. But one of the most unusual of the forms of the common Spruce is *Picea abies reflexa*. It is a plant which has the odd habit of at first growing upright and suddenly turning downwards and forming a mass of pendulous shoots which will literally flow down over rocks and become a most natural feature.

This, then, is the account of some of the odd, and what we think rare, plants in our garden. I hope my readers who have followed me through these notes are not bored, and that interest may have been aroused in some perhaps long-neglected plant which may prove one day to be an acquisition to our gardens again.

## WINTER HOLIDAYS

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## A North-facing Town Garden

By WINIFRED ROBERTSON

AMONG ALL the good advice written for garden-owners it is odd that there is never an article upon the Town-house garden, lying, as so often it does, in shadow for five months of the year. So, as it may be of interest to fellow sun-losers, I shall give this short note of what I succeed in growing best by trial and error—(lots of errors !).

Our house is four storeys high at the North-facing back, which means that the slope of the ground creates a frost-pocket in the garden, which has a six-foot wall round it. Once, at a Rock Garden Club Quiz Evening, I asked what might be done to mitigate the effects of frost-pocket and a learned friend advised me to "knock a good-sized gap in the bottom wall and let the cold air flow through." But, as British Railways owns the other side, the Directors might have other views, so I have not yet made a breach either of the wall or the peace.

My alpine border, backed by the East wall, loses the sun in early October and is not touched again by it until late in March—and then only for an hour or so in early afternoon. I find that the hard-wooded, fibrous-rooted things are happiest. I have had to eliminate Saxifrages, except our native *oppositifolia*, which nearly always flowers so exquisitely in cold North-facing gullies in the hills. Also I have said goodbye to Androsace, Morisia, and other small sun-lovers.

For the most part I concentrate on Ericaceae, *Daphnes Cneorum*, *collina*, and *Blagayana*—this last coming into flower towards the end of March—*Rhododendrons racemosum*, *keleticum*, *ciliatum*, *kam-schaticum*, *impeditum*, *Vaccinium delavayi*, and *Gaultheria procumbens*. Also *Cassiope lycopodioides* and *Mertensiana* do well.

However, by June-July my border, facing West, is in a blaze of afternoon heat which can be felt reflected off the wall eight feet away until quite late on a summer evening.

So, for coolness round the roots I underplant with some of the less rampant Campanulas such as *garganica*, *hostii*, *haylodgensis*, *Anemones blanda* and *appennina*, *Antennaria alpina*, *Veronica rupestris*, *Acaena* and others. Also underplanted, for earlier flowering around the little *Rhododendrons*, *Daphnes*, etc., are species *Croci*, "Canarybird," "Snow-Bunting" and *Scilla bifolia*, which looks up at you instead of hanging its bonny head like its sister *siberica*. By the time these leaf-spikes are "has-beens" the summer ground cover is well up.

Apart from the foregoing, *Erinus* and various *Thymes* ramp about at the path's edge. *Dryas octopetala* flowers abundantly in an isolated limey pocket. *Gentiana septemfida* is thoroughly happy and gaily bushed, but *G. sino ornata praecox* only just manages to catch the bus before the sun says farewell to it in late September. *Aethionema* "Warley Rose" and *Primula marginata* "Linda Pope" both live under cloches all winter, and pay their house-rents very prettily.

In my other borders hybrid Rhododendrons do very well, also *Viburnum carlesii* and *V. fragrans*, with a few H.T. and Floribunda Roses.

And under the dappled shade of four old Apple-trees are colonies of *Meconopsis betonicifolia* var. *baileyi*, Primulas *Florindae*, *japonica*, *chungensis*, and other shade-lovers, and, of course, a Lily-of-the-Valley bed.

Mine is not an easy garden in which to harvest seed. Only in last year's amazing summer did I, for once, have a real orgy. But how good it is that so many lovely things *will* thrive and bloom with so small a ration of sunshine in their life-cycles.

## Colour Problem

I wanted a delphinium for my herbaceous border ;  
The one I chose was listed Cornflower blue :  
But when I got a pencil out to write the garden order,  
I found that there were doubts about the hue.  
One Catalogue said amethyst, another indigo—  
One said the eye was dark—another light ;  
It really was bewildering, for how was I to know  
Which nurseryman was wrong, and which was right.

The man who was supplying me just dotes on shocking pink,  
Magenta too—a colour I refuse.  
An amateur might find it very helpful, I should think,  
If we had a proper colour chart to use—  
With numbers for each range and shade that experts had agreed,  
Where you could find the one you like the best ;  
In this way we'd be certain to secure the plant we need,  
And not some horrid colour we detest.

ANON.

**Lt.-Colonel J. H. STITT,** ALPINE PLANT  
NURSERY

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## A Town Front Garden

By D. M. MURRAY-LYON

[Reprinted from the Bulletin of the American Rock Garden Society,  
Vol. 13, No. 4—October, 1955]

FOUR YEARS ago, for various reasons, we decided to give up our country home in Perthshire and to move into Edinburgh. Our new home is the ground floor of a largish stone villa, with the front garden approximately seventy feet by thirty feet, and a small bit of the back garden, really just a drying green, about forty-five feet by thirty feet.

When I first saw the garden it was a typical small front garden plot. Along the south or street side and also on the east side were high and thick privet hedges. There were, too, a number of old overgrown uninteresting shrubs somewhat hacked about. In a grass plot were a couple of beds containing some ancient and decrepit roses, and paths led to the front and back doors. There was also a "Rockery" of the Plum Pudding or Dog's Grave variety.

Before I moved in, the drains were found to be out of order and had to be dug up. As a result the garden looked more like a battlefield than anything else, with seven-foot trenches in every direction. One good thing resulted from this though: the rockery was pulled to pieces and the stones stacked.

The first thing I did was to tear out the hedge and shrubs along the south or street side. The hedge was replaced with a six-foot fence of woven teak type wood, which I also put up along my west boundary. Before putting up the fence, however, I had a lorry load of boiler ash (or cinders) and some tons of gravel, chips, and sand dumped. The soil, by the way, was rather heavy and sticky, with a clay subsoil.

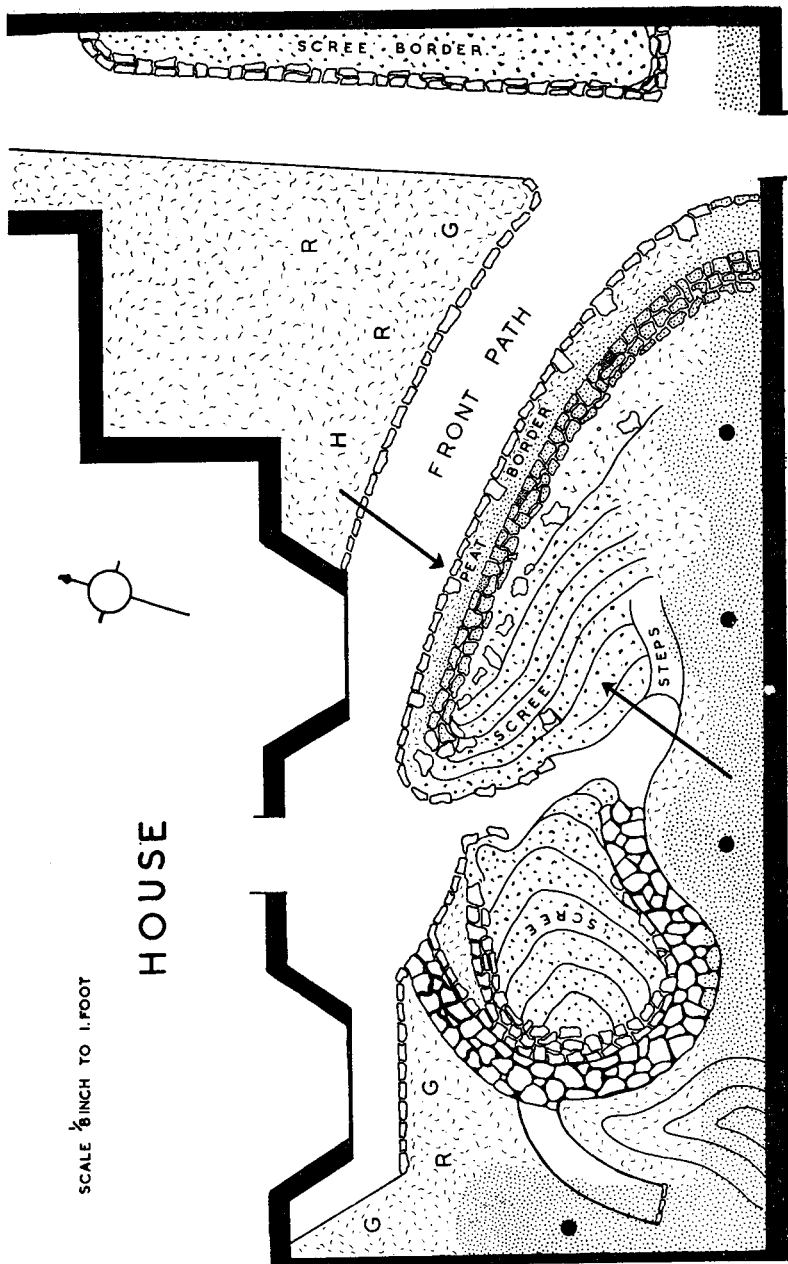
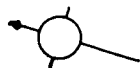
Having been quite successful in my old garden in the Highlands in growing plants, some of them allegedly difficult, my idea was to try to provide similar quarters for my plants in my new garden. I did not propose attempting to try to build natural-looking rockwork, which is difficult to fit into the rather formal frame of a garden such as mine. I did, however, want to get away from the dead flatness of the area, which I accomplished by building walls, and planned two screes sloping down from the walls. On the south side, in the shade of the fence supplemented by the shade thrown by four or five small flowering trees, I proposed growing shade and semi-shade lovers such as meconopsis, primulas, etc.

For the time being ignore the scree border shown in the plan along the east boundary, for at this stage there was still a privet hedge there.

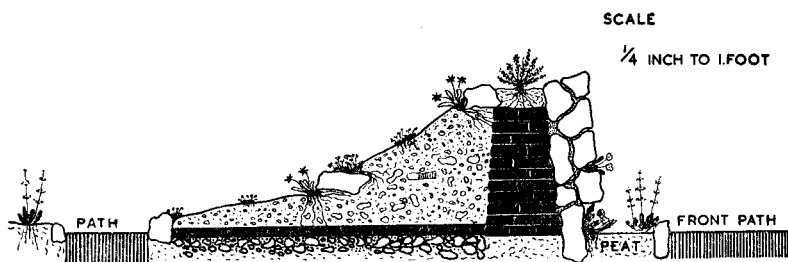
Now to get down to a bit more detail. First the walls—I have mentioned that I had a bit of a drying green at the back. I dug up all the grass there in good fat divots, and with them I built walls roughly two feet thick at the bottom, tapering to eighteen inches at the top;

SCALE  $\frac{1}{8}$  INCH TO 1 FOOT

HOUSE







Cross section of a scree

*Dr. R. B. Pike.*

the height was two feet six inches. These turf walls gave me something against which to build my dry stone walls, or, as I prefer to call them, stone and earth walls. The turves also provide something for deep-rooting plants to get their teeth into.

As the plan shows, the stone walls were built on the north and west faces of the turf walls, thus catering for plants requiring different aspects. At the foot of the north wall is a narrow peat border.

Now for the screes. There are two of these, each sloping down from a wall, one facing S.S.W. and the other S.S.E. The boiler ash or cinders, of which I had about five tons, was largely for these screes, which contain up to 50% or more of this material in their makeup.

Here would be a good place to mention one mistake I made. The north wall is mainly planted with moisture-loving plants, but the wall tends to dry out, and resort has to be made to watering. If a more or less watertight wall of brick or concrete had been inserted between the turf wall and the scree, this drying out would largely have been prevented.

Now look at the plan (page 102) again: up in the right-hand corner are rhododendrons, heaths and gentians—marked R, H, and G; the same families are catered for in the left-hand top corner. Between the west wall and the mound in the southwest corner is a small “pass” with the paved path going through it. This was christened by my wife “The Pass of Killiecrankie” after a place near our old home. On either side of “the pass” grow plants which are natives of Scotland.

Now, about that privet hedge in front of the east boundary wall, worse than useless and taking up an inordinate amount of space. A year after taking over the garden, having got the other jobs done, I had that out too. In its place I built a wall out of old granite setts from the streets of Edinburgh. Between this wall and the boundary wall I made a scree bed, three feet wide at the south end and tapering off to eighteen inches at the north end. Its height is two feet, which brings the plants up to a height at which it is much easier to see and admire them, especially the tinier ones.

That completes the list of major works at the front of the house. At the back are a small alpine house and frames, and a cutting border to provide flowers for the house.

Now for a little more detail about what I did to try to improve the rather heavy, sticky soil. Apart from the screes, I dug in quite a lot of cinders and granulated peat, which have greatly improved the texture of the soil.

As regards the scree mixtures, no two people will agree as to what is the best ; this is hardly surprising, as what will suit one district will not suit another. What is the best mixture for a district with a fairly heavy rainfall is not likely to be satisfactory in a district with a dry climate. A sandy gravelly soil, naturally well drained, is not going to need drainage, or sand and gravel additions which a heavy clay soil would call for.

I am not going to try to suggest what are the best mixtures, but I shall give details of the different mixtures in my screes. East scree : 2 parts garden soil, 1 peat, 1 gravel, and 3 ash ; i.e., 3 parts soil mixture to 4 parts drainage material, a comparatively rich scree. West scree : 1 garden soil, 1 peat, 1 gravel, 3 ash ; i.e., 2 parts soil mixture to 4 parts drainage material, a poorer mixture than the other. At the bottom of both screes is a layer of drainage about 12 inches deep at the high end and 6 inches at the bottom. So far I cannot say that I see any difference in results, but the west scree will, I suppose, need feeding sooner than the east.

The East Wall Scree was made differently, and except for a short length at its north end, it consists entirely of soil and ash. From the bottom up it consists of layers as follows : 8 inches of stones, broken bricks and large cinders ; 4 inches of reversed turf ; 6 inches of a mixture of 2 parts ash and 2 parts soil ; 6 inches of a mixture of 3 ash and 1 soil ; and on top 1 inch of whinstone chips. The richness increases as one goes down. The length at the north end, which I said is different, has extra soil and peat added to make it more suitable for ericaceous plants. This scree, also, has proved quite satisfactory.

In all the screes the drainage is of course covered by a filter layer consisting of reversed turf, or old carpets and sacks covered with a three or four inch layer of soil.

I suggest that it is best to keep your scree rather on the poor side, then when you are planting you can add a little bit of whatever you think a particular plant would like : a little leafmould, a dash of bonemeal, or perhaps an extra dollop of chips or gravel, or even a few bits of dry cow manure.

All the screes of course have a top dressing of about an inch of chips, although gravel is as good ; this prevents evaporation or at least much reduces it, insures drainage around the necks of plants, and prevents flowers getting splashed with mud.

Chips and gravel should tone in with any stone used. Limestone chips must not be used where lime-hating plants are to be grown. Stones or rocks are not essential in a scree, but a few are an advantage, not only as stepping stones for use during weeding, but also for other reasons. Some plants like to get their roots under a stone, as they find moisture there ; some like a bit of shade from the hottest of the midday sun, and a properly sited stone will provide it. A few stones to define roughly the bottom of the scree also help to protect plants from the feet of the not so careful visitor.

A word of warning : boiler ash or cinders obtained from gas, electricity and other works must NOT be used fresh, as they contain sulphur and other harmful chemicals. They should be weathered for six months, or else thoroughly washed. Breeze blocks used for building are made from boiler ash, and the ash has to be free from chemicals for this purpose. If, therefore, you do not want to wait for six months, or wash them yourself, you may be able to buy washed ash from a building contractor ; I know I did.

I shall not mention any plants, for that would take up far too much space, and anyway it is another story.

The photographs (figs. 17, 18 and 19), will, I hope, give some idea of what the garden looks like.

## Note Books

By "LOCUM TENENS"

NOTE BOOKS can be fun. They can also be annoying, useful, or a nuisance. Similarly their absence can be amusing or infuriating. It depends on your point of view or your memory. It is usually the person who claims to have a good memory who is most in need of a note book.

People who come round our garden frequently produce note books and I am always interested in their methods. Sometimes they do not have a pencil. I often wish I could see afterwards what they have written down. Some of these note books are about the size of a thumb nail, others are much larger. One visitor and his wife, who came from the U.S.A., were not only charming but also highly efficient. The husband (obviously a terrific gardener of vast experience) looked at everything with a knowledgeable and kindly eye. His wife followed behind with a note book about the size of a suitcase and was so busy writing things down that she hardly had time either to admire or to criticize what there was to be seen.

I always carry a notebook myself and write down a lot of things in it and, when I remember to look at it, these things sometimes get done. The trouble is that I am inclined to leave it too long and then the brief notes I have made tend to lose their meaning. The following

examples are taken verbatim from my note book of more than a year ago :—

“Acreage of Tank  
Self 6 × 8 (new)”

What that means I now have no idea. There is, too, some obscurity about these next two entries :—

“Riffanus Mice and Crocus Two Girls”	and	“White Form Nerine Flexuosa Orbite Grease”
--	-----	--

I have also come across my notes of the instructions, given me by my wife, for looking after her Alpines when she was away one winter. This illustrates how valuable my note book is.

“Bulb Frames, shower but not much. Big Frame shower. Bulb and Big shut at night. Brown Frame more water than bulb. Little Frame as for Brown. Alpine Frame—don’t let dry out otherwise keep damp. Water gravel. Swish once a day but avoid pin cushions. Seed Frame keep shut. Swish when dry.”

A more recent entry on a similar occasion was this :—

“Don’t do anything. Take covers off specials unless freezing hard. Air but not wind. No watering. If it freezes hard gravel dries up so water. Rugs at night.”

My wife says she has a bad memory. So she has a note book, but it depends on what she is wearing whether she has it with her. She prefers more obvious reminders like knots in handkerchiefs, but, better still, she puts things on the hall table “to remind her.” These are often a motley collection. Some of them are puzzling, others entertaining, and some mildly irritating. The following I have noticed. One bed sock ; a wine glass with seeds (or dust) in it ; a bottle of Anchovies with the lid off ; a stick of celery ; a calendar (this lay there for a month) ; a book on flowers (open at a particular page) ; a fir cone ; a potato. Moreover, I do not think that I am drawing on my imagination when I say that there was once a live lobster on the table, but I have certainly seen a dead mouse there.

I am now beginning to wonder whether my wife’s method is not better than mine. It is undoubtedly more striking but it requires more apparatus, and there is, of course, a limit to what the table will hold.

I think, on the whole, that the best solution is quite a simple one. If the wife is the gardener of the family, the husband should carry the note book and if he is, she should. But you have to be married.

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## Mont Cenis, 1955

By C. E. DAVIDSON

15TH JULY. The last of ten perfect days at Lautaret. Have not kept a diary, Lautaret being well-known and much written up. Sufficient to record that, being July, the meadow flowers are superb ; *Erytrichium nanum* seems to be more plentiful than ever in his rocky fastnesses ; and, the snow-line having retreated to over 9,000 ft., we were able to reach the top of a mountain, where we found *Androsace pubescens* in slabs of crumbling, shale-like rock.

16th July. Bid Mme. Bonabel a tearful farewell, and set about packing the car—a formidable task involving luggage for four. Usual discord about how and where cases should be placed, further complicated by profuse advice from Emile, the concierge, and several hotel guests. At last all is stowed in, and we set off for Mont Cenis, via Susa. Heat is intense. Seem to be continually crossing from France into Italy and back again. M., Jo and I sit stewing in car while J. grapples with officials at the numerous *douanes*, which, he tells us, are infernos of heat and struggling humanity. Thankful to reach our destination and breathe cool air again. Hotel is situated near the lake ; surrounding country unusually open and rolling, and very beautiful. Feel apprehensive on being told our bedrooms are in the annex. Annex, however, turns out to be nearer the lake, and removed from noises of traffic. Pleasant rooms on ground floor. Rush to window expecting view of lake. View, alas ! consists of large dilapidated barn, cows and cow-pats, plus three little girls, who, seeing that *Les Anglais* have arrived, press their noses to the window pane, and take a lively interest in our unpacking (and, subsequently, dressing and undressing). M. asks firmly for hot water to be brought in the morning. Maid looks surprised, but says she will see what can be done.

17th July. Hot water arrives at 7.30. At breakfast, Mme., the proprietrix, tells us that she knows Mr. Clarence Elliot, and can remember Farrer's visits to the hotel ! She takes a keen interest in flowers, and remarks that, if she were twenty years younger, she would accompany us on our climbs. Spend the morning exploring round the upper end of the lake and find many interesting plants. *Anemone sulphurea*, which we had hoped to see, is over, but in a shady hollow we discover one lovely anemone just tinged with yellow, probably a cross between *sulphurea* and *alpina*. A sandy spit jutting into the lake is covered with *Campanula pusilla*, in every imaginable shade from pure white, through lilac, to deep lavender blue. Some plants are even flowering under the water, the level of the lake having been recently raised. Many other flowers grow round the shores, notably *Saponaria ocymoides rubra* (but not *compacta* !). The meadows above are a blaze of colour, and, conspicuous amongst *Campanula*, *Dianthus*, *Anthericum*, *Aquilegia* and *Thalictrum* are quantities of *Lilium martagon*, *Veratrum album* and *V. lobelianum*. In the short turf around the village we find *Aster alpinus* in many colour forms, *Dianthus*

*neglectus*, *Linum alpinum*, *Globularia cordifolia*, *Dryas octopetala*, *Gypsophila (repens ?)* and *Centaurea uniflora*. This last is a beautiful plant with silver-felted leaves and flowers of brilliant carmine-rose. There is a bewildering number of campanulas, among them *Cc. barbata*, *linifolia*, *rhomboidalis* and *thyrsoides*.

For lunch we have trout from the lake perfectly cooked in butter. These trout, which have a continental reputation for excellence, are large, silvery and as pink-fleshed as salmon. Although undoubtedly good, we agree that their flavour is not so fine as that of Loch Leven trout. After lunch, watch the Italian anglers going out to fish. They are wonderfully clothed in sporting checks, and carry up to six rods apiece. One even includes a golf umbrella in his kit, but whether this is to protect his complexion from the sun, or his clothes from the rain, remains a mystery. Decide to look for *Cortusa matthioli*, which, we are told, grows under alder scrub on the opposite side of the lake. Spend at least two hours crawling about amongst lush woodland vegetation and over mossy boulders, but no sign of *Cortusa* do we see. Wander up one of the many gullies which are a feature of this side, and find *Saxifraga diapensioides*, *Rhododendron ferrugineum* and other shrubs.

18th July. J. and I set out for the Col du Petit Mont Cenis, which lies some seven or eight miles S.W. of the lake. At a short distance from the hotel, have the misfortune to disturb hornet's nest, and am attacked by a cloud of the creatures, and horribly stung round eyes and on hands. J. drops his ice-axe and heriocrally beats them off, and we run for our lives. Discover axe has been left behind, and poor J. has to go back into hornet territory to retrieve it ; mercifully, hornets leave him alone. Face very painful, but spirits soon rise, for, as the path gains height, the turf becomes short and springy, and stinging insects are left behind. Gentians, and other favourites long since over at lake level, appear. *Gentiana verna* and *Ranunculus pyrenaicus* are abundant all the way to the pass. *Linaria faucicola* (or *L. alpina minus*, orange lip ?) grows by the path, and *Gentiana bavarica* in damper places. A new note of colour is struck by *Crepis aurea*. This is a delightful alpine : about 3 ins. high, with dandelion leaves and flowers of deep tawny tangerine. Cannot understand why it is so seldom seen in cultivation.

As we stand on the pass, gazing at the path which plunges madly down towards the valley of the Arc, find it hard to believe that Hannibal (according to some authorities) chose this route when he crossed the Alps. In the afternoon we separate, J. climbing east, and I west. Find *Primula hirsuta*, and what I take to be *P. pedemontana*, on rocks beside a stream. Climb up to snow slides, and see large colony of *Anemone baldensis* in full flower—a lovely sight. (I wish it would do this at home). *Thlaspi rotundifolium* and *Petrocallis pyrenaica* fairly plentiful. Extensive and lovely views all round, and, far to the east, a sheet of water which must be Lac Savine (Farrer's "Lago Fresco"). On rejoining J., hear that he, too, has found *Primula pedemontana*

(can clearly see rusty brown hairs on edge of leaves with his magnifying glass). Very envious when he shows me a collected plant of *Saponaria lutea*. Have never seen this before, and don't agree with Farrer—find soft butter-yellow petals, set off by black anthers, very attractive.

19th July. Face looks like an over-ripe tomato ; everyone asks if it was the bees. Cannot remember French for "hornets," so reply "quelque-chose plus sauvage," and leave it at that. M. and Jo. walked right round the lake yesterday, and report interesting country at the lower end, so we take the car to the dam there, on the way passing fortified hospice, the north wing of which was built and occupied by Napoleon. Search scrub along the S.E. bank of lake for *Cortusa*, but again draw a blank. *Primula farinosa* and various orchids still in flower on banks of a stream, and *Saponaria lutea* plentiful on dry ground.

20th July. J. and I decide to climb to Lac Clair, a tiny lake which lies at about 10,000 ft. in mountains behind hotel. Waiter tells us that if we climb to the top of Mt. Lamet, we might be lucky enough to find the Edelweiss. Thank him politely. The path at first follows the bed of a stream. The rocks here are covered with *Sempervivum arachnoideum*, and in shady hollows *Viola calcarata* still lingers. On breasting the first rise, we find ourselves in a vast basin, or corrie, surrounded by an amphitheatre of precipices, two miles distant. A little higher, the turf is starred with *Gentiana nivalis*, but we hardly recognise it, for there it is 5 or 6 inches high, and carries a head of 3-5 flowers. While at no great elevation, we come across the famous Edelweiss (curious how the legend of the rarity and inaccessibility of this flower persists). At the bottom of the stone slopes *Campanula allioni* takes possession of the scene, and we have the good fortune to find a lovely white form. It is not till we are near the cliffs that we find what we have come to see—*Campanula cenisia*. The starry flowers are of a curious cold blue, just tinged with lavender, and lie close to the stones. The thread-like roots are a foot or more in length, and meander about in the scree—a difficult plant to collect. *Saxifraga biflora* and *Viola cenisia* are also growing here, but I fear we pay them scant attention, having eyes only for the campanula. Can't imagine where Lac Clair can have hidden itself on this raking slope, but eventually discover it, tucked in at the back of a knoll. As we are eating our sandwiches, a violent thunder storm bursts upon us. Retreat from ice-axes and look for shelter, but there is none. I have foolishly come without protection from rain, and have to make for home. Arrive soaked to the skin. M. kindly makes me a cup of tea on her spirit stove ; much appreciated. J. arrives two hours later, also very wet.

21st July. As J. has run out of colour films, we all go in car to Lanslebourg. This town was heavily bombed, and is still a wreck. (We frequently came across evidence of fighting during our climbs, and much wanton destruction done by the retreating German army). No films to be had at Lanslebourg, nor at Modane, which is hot and

dusty—glad to get out of it. At lunch, ask waiter if swimming is permitted in the lake. He replies that it is not forbidden, but nobody ever swims there—much too cold. Nevertheless, grown desperate by lack of baths, J. and I, armed with soap and towels, repair to a secluded bay, far removed from picnic parties. Water is cold, but no worse than Scottish sea-lochs, and we are enjoying ourselves when a launch is heard approaching. Dash for shore and just have time to struggle into swim suit, before it appears. J. continues to swim about brazenly in his birthday suit. Watch anxiously, fearing he may be taken for an out-size trout and foul-hooked, but anglers ignore him.

*22nd July.* Third attempt to find *Cortusa matthioli*. This time we succeed. Colony is not extensive, out of flower, and hidden behind boulders—could easily be missed. This would appear to be much scarcer than in Farrer's time.

*23rd July.* The last day at Mont Cenis. J. and I are determined to reach Lac Savine—a good 12 mile climb. Half way to the Petit Mont Cenis discover matches have been left behind. J. (on a non-smoking phase) remarks that a day without smoking would do me no harm. Do not agree. Luckily, there is a farm ahead of us, and, after dodging two savage dogs, obtain four sulphur matches from farmer. Do not care for the company of hostile dogs, and have wasted precious time making myself understood. People in these parts speak a curious patois, a mixture of French and Italian, and do not understand (my) French. When having lunch on the Col, we are joined by a young Italian, who has walked over the Clapier Pass from Italy, and is on his way to Modane to seek work. Very sorry to see he has only dry bread to eat, and offer him ham, butter and peaches, which he accepts gratefully. On taking leave, he thanks us with great courtesy, and presents us with a box of matches. Oh, wonderful !

We pursue our way up a steep valley strewn with granite boulders, but see little of botanical interest except a fine display of *Primula pedemontana* on the cliffs, and at last reach the lake at 2.30 p.m. And what a lake ! It lies like a mirror surrounded by snow-clad mountains. The water is crystal-clear and of the colour of aquamarines. On the right, the twin peaks of Mt. d'Ambin rise sharply, and from the nearer peak the Glacier de Savine comes curving down. Great cushions of *Silene acaulis* grow amongst the stones on the shores, interspersed with *Saxifraga retusa*. As we make our way round the shore, we see a large boulder studded with the brilliant blue of *Eritrichium nanum*, and, nestling amongst damp stones, *Androsace glacialis*. A memorable day ! Camping under a huge rock which makes tents unnecessary, are two French students. They tell us they are spending their vacation up here, climbing and fishing. On hearing that we are studying the alpine flora; one of them remarks "You seek the Edelweiss, no doubt." Fearing that he is about to tell us where we might be lucky enough to find it, I hastily reply "We do not interest ourselves in the Edelweiss," and enjoy his look of incredulous horror. We watch them spinning for some time. They use grasshoppers, but catch nothing while we



are there. Hope they have enough to eat—appetites are keen at 9,000 ft. Arrive home after 8.30. Dinner is nearly over, but we are served with the usual excellent one by an amiable waiter. Truly, the French are an admirable people.

27th July. On the homeward journey have visited Annecy, Beaune, Dijon, and Rheims, and are now at Le Touquet waiting for the air-ferry. An interesting and most enjoyable holiday.

## Hardy Cyclamen

By J. G. COLLEE

REGINALD FARRER in his book, *The English Rock Garden*, proposes that the Cyclamen should be called "The Food of the Gods" and not that terrible name by which they are known, namely "Sow-bread." They belong to the order Primulaceae, were first introduced to this country about 1600, and consist of hardy and greenhouse perennial plants. All are tuberous rooted and deciduous and each and everyone of them is beautiful to behold. We, as rock garden enthusiasts, confine our attention to the hardy varieties and a rock garden is indeed an excellent place for their growth. There are many species of hardy cyclamen and by planting different varieties we can have them in bloom almost all the year round. The blooms of the hardy varieties are not so outstanding as the pot grown ones which we usually buy for Christmas decoration, but they are nevertheless beautiful little plants with a charm all their own. Their beauty is enhanced by the marble marked foliage of some of the species and their delicate colouring has to be seen only once in order to make the onlooker fall completely for their charm and grace. They grow from corms which increase, in some cases, to enormous proportions with age. They are easily propagated from seed, provided the seed is sown directly it is ripe on the plant. Sow the seed in boxes containing John Innes mixture, with perhaps a little more leaf mould or peat added than usual. When the seedlings are large enough to handle, put them into separate pots and give them frame protection until of sufficient size to plant outside. When planting in the rockery give them a shady position or even plant them in turf under some large trees. They absolutely revel in such a situation and make a beautiful picture during the flowering season. Place the corms about two inches below the surface and not too close to one another. Allow sufficient room at all times for the plants to develop.

*Cyclamen Coum* comes into bloom as early as February. It is widely grown and has lovely red blooms with twisted petals. Besides doing well in the open rockery, they make a lovely table decoration when grown in an ornamental pot. *Cyclamen ibericum* is another early variety, being of the same colour as *Coum* but about three inches in height. It, too is red, but it is more difficult to obtain. *Cyclamen*

*libanoticum* is another March flowerer, has rose blooms with a deep carmine spot at the base of the petals, and is very fragrant. It is unfortunately not so hardy as *Coum* and requires winter protection. *Cyclamen repandum*, often erroneously called *Cyclamen hederaefolium*, is a general favourite. It is rosy red in flower from late March to May and has lovely ivy-leaved marbled foliage. The underside of the foliage is of a purple colour. It is easy to grow and spreads rapidly. The easiest variety to grow, however, and the most accommodating in every way, is the late flowering species known as *Cyclamen europeum*. It flowers from July onwards, is very prolific in bloom, and bears sweet scented red flowers. This variety bears its leaves at the same time as its flowers. The latest to flower is *Cyclamen neapolitanum*, the flowers of which vary from pure white to rose. They prefer a rather shady place but they are as nice as their earlier flowering cousins. All are worthy of a place in your rock garden and to keep them in good condition only requires an occasional top dressing of some cow manure. When giving this, scrape away the old soil round about the corm. One word of caution, however, with which to finish ! Be very careful not to plant any *Cyclamen* corms where there is a possibility of a drip of water lodging on or near the corms. If this happens your plants will assuredly rot away. Although they are hardy, a little protection with straw in the winter months will not be out of place. Remember Farrer calls them "The Food of the Gods," and you too will admire them as much as he did.

## Jewels

Topaz of the day's first light ;  
Lapis lazuli of night,  
                                diamond studded.

Spider's silver filigree ;  
Coral on an almond tree,  
                                newly budded.

Opal bow, moonstone mist ;  
Lilac sprayed with amethyst ;  
                                ruby roses.

Sapphire gentian, emerald lined :  
Gold the sun has left behind,  
                                when day closes.

R. M. H.

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**TELL THE ADVERTISER**

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## European Primulas (cont'd.)

By DAVID LIVINGSTONE

THIS ARTICLE continues an account of European primulas begun in *Journal* No. 18, issued in April 1956.

*P. glaucescens* is a variable primula, some forms of which are not at all desirable. In its best forms the colour is lilac purple and the flowers, comparatively large, are borne five or six on a short scape. It thrives well in full sun and quickly increases in size. It divides easily in Spring after flowering. I have been told by other members of the Scottish Rock Garden Club that this species does not flower at all freely with them, but my plants produce flowers regularly every Spring and very often again later in the Summer. It is not nearly so good a plant as its near relative *P. Clusiana* and, unless one intends to have a comprehensive collection of European primulas, there is not much point in growing it.

There is some doubt about the nomenclature of the next primula, which I grow under the name of *P. Goeblii*. My plant is very similar in habit and growth to several of the *P. pubescens* tribe and this may be an indication that it is correctly named, since *P. Goeblii* and the *pubescens* varieties originated from the same cross *Pp. auricula* and *hirsuta*, now known as *rubra*. In any event, the plant which I grow under this name is quite handsome and flowers freely each year. It bears a number of large lavender flowers, each with a distinct creamy white eye. In addition, this is one of the nicely scented European primulas.

*P. hirsuta* or, as it should now be known, *rubra*, is the parent of a good number of excellent garden and natural hybrids. It is sometimes confused with *P. viscosa*, but there is little point in going into the differences here. *P. hirsuta* forms rosettes of broad, ovate leaves which are quite densely covered with reddish hairs. The flowers in good forms are rose-red in colour and are borne in considerable quantity on short scapes. The flowers are set off, again in good forms, by a distinct white eye. It is perhaps as well to buy this species when in flower, so that you can be certain of obtaining a good one.

In notes of this kind I think it is as well to warn people off undesirable subjects, and that is my only reason for including *P. integrifolia*. This plant has narrow strap-shaped leaves and it has flowers of varying shades of pink, few in number, on short scapes. It is not at all free with its flowers and they are poor things in any event and certainly not of much garden value.

The natural hybrid *P. intermedia*, the parents of which are *Clusiana* and *minima*, grows well with me in full sun, but so far I have not been rewarded with many of the large soft rose flowers which authorities state are borne freely. Perhaps I am being too kind to it, or perhaps it has not yet had time to settle down, since it has been moved on a number of occasions since I planted it four years ago. Certainly Mr.

Jack Drake is able on occasion to show very fine plants of it in full flower and it would, judging by his exhibits, appear to be really desirable.

In my last article I mentioned two natural hybrids—*P. bileckii* and *P. forsteri*, both of which have the same parentage (*minima* and *hirsuta*). There is yet another of the same parentage, *P. Kellereri*, which is very close to *P. bileckii*, and unless one is making an extensive collection there is no need to have both, but one or other should, I think, be in every collection. Certainly the exhibitor cannot afford to ignore them.

The exact parentage of that handsome plant *P. "Linda Pope"* is in some doubt, but it seems certain from the appearance of its serrated silvery leaves that *P. marginata* was used somewhere in the hybridization. It has large round symmetrical flowers of a rich lavender blue, making in all a most striking plant. With some people it does not flower as freely as they would wish and, in such cases, I would recommend one of its seedlings, *P. "Barbara Barker."* It lacks the silvery leaves of "*Linda Pope*" but its flowers are of much the same quality and are more freely borne. I have wondered in the last year or two when visiting the Club's Spring Shows if exhibitors are not rather inclined to starve "*Linda Pope*." I would advise a little cow dung in the compost and, additionally, or alternatively, as one chooses, a feed now and again during the growing season of one of the branded liquid manures. Perhaps this is the place to confess that this year I have been using two of those manures on the larger growing European primulas—the result has been increased vigour and extremely healthy-looking foliage. It will be interesting to see whether the flowers are also improved.

A very popular European primula is *P. marginata* and many fine forms of it are available. It has handsome silvery leaves serrated on the edges and blueish lilac flowers borne on short scapes. In nature I understand that this species trails down rock faces, its stems sometimes reaching a length of two feet, but I have never seen it grow to this extent in cultivation. It does, however, become leggy, and it should, therefore, be planted in a situation where its stems can trail over a rock. The form which I grow is Pritchard's variety, which has larger flowers than those of this type and are deeper in colour. It is strongly scented and only one pot is required to scent a whole alpine house. Mr. Jack Drake has a magnificent form of *P. marginata*, collected by himself, which he has called "*Drake's variety*." In appearance it is a bigger form of Pritchard's variety.

A hybrid from *P. marginata*, for which I have a great affection, is *P. Marven*. It, too, has silvery leaves, but its flowers are deep violet blue with a paste white eye. This hybrid is also scented and I would suggest that it is a must for the exhibitor and for the small rock garden. It has been suggested that *P. Marven* is probably more suitable for the alpine house than for the open rock garden, but I cannot subscribe to that. My plants go from strength to strength outside with only a little top dressing each year. They face south-east in a very open position and therefore receive all the sunshine that there is.

The smallest in growth of my European primulas is *P. minima*, which makes a carpet of tiny wedge-shaped leaves. I have in the past when growing this species in a pot found it to be not at all free with its flowers and some of the plants I have grown have had poor flowers of a rather washy pink. But I now have three plants growing in the rock garden which appear to be freer with their flowers and which are of a good pink. The flowers are comparatively large and tend to obscure the foliage. It certainly looks as though I have been unfortunate in the past and that I shall now have to revise my opinion of this little plant.

And now to another *bête noir*, *P. Palinurii*, which is, I believe, found growing on the cliff faces at Salerno Bay, Italy, known to our troops in the last war. It is a big hearty grower and in early Summer its leaves are almost cabbage-like, but for all its growth the flowers are most disappointing. They are very small, bright yellow in colour, and are borne on scapes 10 to 12 inches long. Although its flowers are fragrant, I regard the whole plant as a fraud and it was without any qualms at all that I threw mine on to the compost heap.

We now come to that excellent group of easily grown plants which we find under the heading of *P. pubescens*. All respond well to a fairly rich diet and all will stand planting in full sun with the exception of *P. pubescens alba*, which I feel is the better of a little shade. Perhaps I should add that although they appreciate full sun above ground, they seem also to appreciate some sort of root shade and they should, therefore, be planted where their roots can seek out the cool shelter of a rock. Perhaps the best known and best loved of them all is *Pr. "Mrs. J. H. Wilson,"* which is very free flowering and which has a wonderful constitution. The flowers, deep lilac in colour with a creamy white eye, are carried on short erect scapes. "*The General*" which I mentioned in my earlier article is also very good and with me belies the suggestion of a number of writers that it has a weak constitution. It grows and flowers well and as its flowers are a rich terracotta red it is well worth having. "*Faldonside*," a deep velvety crimson of dwarf growth, is also said to have a poor constitution, but if it is top-dressed annually it will remain healthy, although it is never so vigorous as some others. I find that after flowering it has a tendency for its leaves to become yellow, but this soon passes. The following varieties are all excellent garden plants and one cannot go wrong with any of them. "*Ruby*" has wine-red flowers rather smaller than most but very nicely set off by a white centre; *pubescens alba* has long been popular, deservedly so. It has neat leaf rosettes and dense heads of small sweetly scented white flowers; "*Rufus*," which has large brick red flowers, is a strong robust grower and is the last with me of the *pubescens* family to flower. I have omitted mention of one which masquerades under the name of "*Mrs. J. H. Wilson*." It seems to have originated in the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh. It is a large stronger grower than the rightful owner of the name and its flowers are bigger and are deeper purple in colour. Whatever its

origin it is an excellent grower and makes a fine specimen outside or in a pot.

*P. spectabilis* is a handsome plant but it is not very generous with its flowers. Its leaves form a flattish rosette and the flowers, four or five in number, are carried on a short scape. They are clear rose pink in colour and their beauty is enhanced by a white eye. It is not difficult to grow, requiring the usual position for European primulas, but, as I have said already, it is not free with its flowers.

*P. villosa* is a sweet little thing when in flower. The leaves are inclined to be sticky and are covered with tiny reddish hairs. The flowers, soft pink with a white eye, are carried in a small umbel on a short scape. I don't know why, but *P. villosa* in flower rather makes me think of a prim young lady in unfamiliar surroundings.

*P. viscosa* is said to resemble *P. villosa*, but I much prefer the latter. It certainly has the same narrow sticky leaves, but with me they are always an unhealthy-looking yellow and give off an unpleasant smell. In its best forms the flowers are rosy red, but it is one of those primulas which are very variable in colour. A distinguishing feature is the fact that the flowers are carried on one-sided umbels.

The plants I have named in these two short articles do not exhaust the list of European primulas available. There are others which the connoisseur may wish to try, but I doubt whether he will find anything of better garden value or a better plant for the show bench than those I have listed.

European primulas are, like most plants, subject to pests and ailments. The two principal pests are, I think, the larvae of the vine and raspberry weevils and root aphid. The adult weevils are extremely difficult to find, as they are nocturnal feeders. In addition as soon as one flashes a light on them, and search must be made in the dark, they stop dead in their tracks and are difficult to see. However, if they are suspected in a collection of pot-grown plants, I still think it is worth while spending time in searching for them in the frames or alpine house by torchlight. They somewhat resembles beetles but are dull dark greyish in colour and their presence is indicated by pieces eaten out of the edges of the leaves. Outside it is more difficult to find the weevils and I confine my attention out-of-doors to sifting carefully by hand the soil in and around the roots of plants for the larvae when I lift them for division. Indeed, if one is particularly affected by this pest it pays to lift the plants annually after flowering to make this search. The plants would come to little or no harm by lifting and certainly they would suffer considerably if they were left to the attention of the weevil larvae, which can be recognised readily. They are about one-third of an inch long, white in colour, and lie in a characteristic half curled state. I know of nothing that will kill them, although it is said that arsenate of lead in the soil will do so.

With regard to the root aphid, an infestation is usually noticed around the necks of the plants, which appear to be covered with a white down.

This will also be found to extend down to the roots. The plants should be lifted and washed clean of all traces of the aphid and replanted. Pot-grown plants should be washed, too, and repotted. A crystal or two of para-di-chlor-benzine put under the vent of the pot will prevent a recurrence of the pest in the near future. In fact, if the attack is not severe the placing of crystals of para-di-chlor-benzine in the vent of the pot will no doubt clear up the trouble. I am not sure whether it would be possible to treat open-grown plants by placing crystals of this chemical in the soil, but I think it might be well worth trying. Para-di-chlor-benzine is highly volatile and it may be necessary to renew the application of the crystals on two or three occasions.

This year I have come across another insect pest which I believe to have been the source of some little trouble in the past, although I did not then know the reason. One or two of the European primulas have shown in the past two years or so a decay on one side of the plants, the cause of which I was unable to diagnose, but this year on searching a plant of *P. pubescens alba* so affected I found a little grub about an eighth of an inch long and as thin as a darning needle, which had tunnelled its way from half way down the leaf stalk into the heart of the plant. This caused me to keep close observation and I found that in all plants affected with this decay there was either a trace of the grub having tunnelled down the leaf or I found it actually at work. It worked in a similar way to the leaf mining maggot of the chrysanthemum and the carnation maggot, but I feel certain that it is different from those two pests. Perhaps one of the scientific members of the Club may be able to help us to name this pest and give an account of its life history. In any event, I took the precaution of dusting all the European primulas with 5 per cent. DDT powder and I feel certain that any further damage was prevented by it. It would be a help, however, if we knew when the grub first became active in the Spring so that the dusting could be given before any damage was done. If you do not grow European primulas do not be put off by these few words on pests, because there are no plants more rewarding for the little attention they require and even the smallest rock garden should have a selection of them. They make excellent plants in pots for the Alpine frame or house and more exhibitors old and new should be forward with them in numbers on the show bench.

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## Lewisia rediviva

By P. P. KRIEGER

THE EXPEDITION of Captain Lewis and Clark left in May 1804 to explore the lands from the Mississippi to the Pacific Ocean. Besides the geographic discoveries they brought back much valuable information on western plants.

The *Lewisias* or Bitter-roots derived their botanical name from Captain Meriweather Lewis. The *Lewisias* are members of the Portulaca family. All *Lewisias* are perfectly hardy and make splendid rock garden subjects. *Lewisia rediviva*,\* the state flower of Montana, is the oldest and most cultivated plant of this family in our gardens. It forms dense rosettes of narrow spine-shaped leaves. The white to deep rose, silky, short-stemmed flowers are very showy. They bloom in May and June and are with us for many weeks. The succulent foliage disappears at blossom time to come miraculously again in fall.

The Bitter-root mountains, forming the boundary between Idaho and Montana, are named after this plant. The Indians call this plant "Spatlem" and they relish the dried, thick and starchy roots as a winter food. The bitter taste of the roots does not appeal to the white men.

When it is Bitter-root time the Flathead Indians of western Montana used to come down from their reservations to dig the roots with their hand-made digging irons which are especially made for this purpose. The digging iron gets the roots but disturbs only a minimum of the sod.

Less than a generation ago at the time when the Bitter-root flowers were in bud, the Flathead Indians used to pitch their wigwams, to form a large village in the open flats near the Montana University city of Missoula. Today's younger generation has lost its interest in this age-old custom, as well as in many other Indian customs and arts. Only a few camps are now scattered along the Bitter-root Valley. The older squaws with some of the papooses do the digging in the early morning hours. During the heat of the day the Indians sit in the shade of their tepees, peeling the roots with a paring knife. The shining white roots are spread out on a sheet of burlap, to be dried in the sun. After a few weeks, when they have their winter's supply of dried roots, the Indians break camp and move back to their reservation.

We propagate our *Lewisias* from seed. The seed will easily germinate when sown as soon as it is ripe in summer. We sow the seeds thinly in 8-inch bulb pans or in flats. The seeds should be covered to about one-eighth of an inch with the sifted seed soil. We water the seed pans only once before germination and they receive very little water after we place the pans in the cold frame.

When the first true leaves appear we transplant the seedlings into three-inch pots with gritty potting soil and sink the potted plants in moist sphagnum moss in the cold frame, where they stay until spring to be planted in their permanent position.

Princeton, Iowa, U.S.A.

\*See fig. 20.



## “Gentlemen who Work in Gardens”

FATHER HAD bought a house in the country with a large and very neglected garden, and because none of us were able to attempt the task a local nurseryman was told to send men to put the place in order. It was impossible to go over very often, but when we did go the clearance seemed to be progressing quite satisfactorily.

One thing distressed us. They had made a round mountain of a rockery that was exceedingly ugly. However, we decided to cover it up with plants that grow quickly and wait until we found a regular gardener before trying to alter it.

Time and again we put plants in, but they soon looked sickly and most of them died. In spite of care the ground seemed to be powder dry and as time went on it sank in places till it became more ugly than ever.

My mother was tiny and frail, but her great joy was using a hose. She called it “giving the garden a good do” but her efforts were rather too vigorous. Always there were roots to cover and small treasures to replant after she had finished. Also, the person who helped her with moving the coils of hose got very wet as she was none too careful about direction.

One evening I had left her watering the rockery and gone indoors. Suddenly my small daughter rushed after me saying, “Mummy, come quickly. Grannie was giving the rockery a good do and she’s blown a hole right through it and there’s a bicycle inside.” We were puzzled but father soon realised what had happened. The nurserymen had been given money to hire a cart to remove a large pile of scrap metal that the previous owners had scattered over the orchard. This money had gone into their pockets and the old bedsteads, bicycle, stoves, etc., had been piled up, covered with soil, and then a few rocks and stones had been stuck here and there to make it look like a rock garden. No wonder things couldn’t grow !

. . . Months elapsed before we found a gardener. Smy knew his work but ignored orders and went his own way. Worst of all, his temper was very trying. The garden was no longer a pleasant place, but for a year we endured it. Then my father was ill and unable to bother with gardens, so Smy gave notice that he was leaving. “I ain’t never in all my life bin bossed by no females and at my time of life I ain’t agoing to begin,” he remarked rudely.

Unfortunately he lived quite near to us and after he left he seemed to spend most of his time peeping through gates or over the hedge. If we attempted any gardening he would bellow criticism or urge us to look how we were ruining all his good work. What did we know about gardens ? Even after Brown came this continued until the poor man could stand no more and there was a noisy quarrel.

“Mummy,” whispered my daughter, “why is it that gentlemen who work in gardens have such nasty tempers ?”

ANON.

## A Selection of Dwarf Shrubs—Part IV

By A. EVANS

[THE LAST part of this article appeared in *Journal* No. 16 of April 1955, when it ended with descriptions of members of the genus, *Genista*—*Editor*.]

*Halimicistus* (Cistaceae) is a bigeneric hybrid between *Halimium* and *Cistus*. These crosses occur naturally in the wild and although only a few are recorded and cultivated, they make good garden plants. The *Halimicistus* flourishes under conditions similar to those enjoyed by *Cistus* and can be expected to flower profusely in June. A poor diet and an open situation are conditions not difficult to find in most rock gardens. There, the plants will spread fairly rapidly and finally form hummocks of tightly packed slender stems. Being evergreen, they are an asset to the garden during the winter months, and although in some years a few branches may be killed by frost, they are infinitely hardier than the *Cistus*. Following a severe winter after the dead wood has been pruned away, they usually recover completely from the damage and once more fill their allotted space.

*Halimicistus x Ingwersenii* (*Halimium umbellatum x Cistus hirsutus*) has numerous white blooms which smother the plant during the flowering period. The individual flowers last for a very short time, but they are produced in such quantity that two blooms seem to struggle to replace the one which has fallen.

*Halimicistus x Sahucii* (*Cistus salvifolius x Halimium umbellatum*) is a smaller plant than the previous hybrid, but what it lacks in stature it makes up in size of flower. Both can be recommended for a dry sun-drenched slope.

*Halimium* (Cistaceae). In sympathy with all the other members of this order, the *Halimiums* enjoy warm open situations in the rock garden where their wood will be well ripened during the summer and their numerous flowers will be able to enjoy the warmth and light akin to that of their native climes. They flourish in the warm Mediterranean countries, but when planted in suitable sites are completely hardy in these Islands. In addition the *Halimiums* are evergreen and are nicely shaped shrubs at all times of the year.

*Halimium alyssoides* is a most attractive species which in early June transforms itself into a ball of yellow. The flowers measure more than one inch across and the overlapping practically obliterates all evidence of leaves. There are no unsightly bare stems here for the lower branches effectively cover the soil and by so doing successfully smother any weed competition. This species is a native of S.W. Europe and has a stature of 15-18 inches.

*Halimium umbellatum* is a white-flowered species with an upright habit of growth. The plant is viscid all over and the slender shoots support the large flower clusters 18 inches above the soil. Firm planting and subsequently no root disturbance are the first steps to the successful cultivation of these plants.

*Helianthemum* (Cistaceae) levels off a selection of plants in this natural order all of which are worthy of the rock gardener's attention. The many garden varieties of the common "Sun Rose" are extremely popular and it is not possible to visualise a rock garden which does not include at least one member of the genus. Again no shady or sheltered site will produce the desired results, but an open sun-drenched slope, free from all shadow, will admirably suit these plants. Primarily they are dwarf evergreens which appear to enjoy spreading themselves across the surface of a slope or over a rock face. This swamping habit cannot be curtailed without spoiling the general shapeliness of the plants, although cutting back the long shoots after flowering will, to a degree, help to confine the branches. As propagation is so simple it is better to raise young plants by striking cuttings in August and replacing the older plants which have covered the available space. The cuttings are better potted up when rooted and left in the frame until the following spring.

*Helianthemum apenninum* is not one of the more decorative species, but where restraint is desired this plant will produce that subdued effect. It is an evergreen of barely 18 inches and is found growing wild in S.W. England. The fairly large white flowers are produced in terminal racemes which themselves may measure 3-4 inches in length and the flowering period, which commences in early June, continues for a reasonably long period.

*Helianthemum apenninum* var. *roseum* has reddish-coloured flowers.

*Helianthemum nummularium* is the species from which the majority of the colourful garden varieties have been raised and, although a widespread native of Britain, deserves to be mentioned because of its progeny. In its wild form the flowers are yellow, measuring one inch in diameter and are suitably backed by greyish-green foliage. The flowering period may last many weeks but the individual flowers barely last a day. Consequently the plant provides its greatest show of bloom during the morning, when the freshly opened flowers are at their best, for by mid-afternoon many of the earliest flowers will have shed their petals. Flowers are produced so profusely, however, that this apparently short life cycle of the flowers is concealed by the display provided the following day and would hardly be noticeable if it were not for the evidence of the strewn petals. This is an interesting species in a collection of plants but can hardly be recommended when the maximum flower production is the object in view.

*Hydrangea* (Saxifragaceae). Everyone is familiar with the lovely blue *Hydrangeas* which are so popular as house plants, and many know the taller shrubby species which are planted in our shrub borders. These taller plants are widely grown for the large sterile flowers which make them outstanding shrubs for the garden, but few seem to know of a species suitable for the rock garden. There is such a plant, namely *Hydrangea involucrata*, and it is one which does not ask for rich feeding but will flourish for many years in normal garden soil.

*Hydrangea involucrata*\* is a Japanese species with purplish blue flowers which appear towards the end of the summer. They terminate

\*See fig. 21.

the season's growth and remain attractive for some time. This species need never exceed 18 ins., as its dwarf habit may be retained by pruning the top growth to almost ground level in early spring. In some districts *H. involucrata* may not be completely hardy, so that this severe treatment is sometimes carried out by nature and the shoots killed by heavy frost. Almost invariably the plant will recover and produce young shoots from base level. The flowering ability of this species is in no way impaired by these happenings and flowering heads will still appear in their season.

*Hypericum* (*Hypericaceae*). Many members of this genus are herbaceous plants, but there is a number of shrubby species which are not too tall growing and will fit in with many alpine schemes. The semi-shaded, although not overshadowed, corners in the rock garden are ideal homes for many of these plants, for there they will enjoy the extra moisture which is usually available. They like a fairly rich soil and enough humus ought to be added prior to planting to sustain them for a number of years. *Hypericums* will not grow satisfactorily in soil which suits the *Helianthemums*, for example, although they are as easy to grow in conditions which suit them. Without exception the flowers are yellow, although the shade may vary from pale citron to orange yellow. The flowering period is an extended one, providing colour in the rock garden until the autumn. Pruning will be necessary with all species, in fact with some it is recommended that the top growth be cut back to almost base level every year. Other species may also be severely trimmed, as much of the late growth will be insufficiently ripened to withstand the winter. Certainly all shoots should be shortened and in some years a few of the older branches are better removed completely. This allows the habit most suited to the rock garden to be retained. Pruning is best done in spring just as the new growth is starting. Increasing stock is a simple matter, as most *Hypericums* will come easily from cuttings; furthermore it is not uncommon to find many of the lower branches already rooted. If, in early winter, these rooted layers are carefully separated from the parent plant with roots attached they may be planted into their permanent positions right away. Such plants will make attractive and shapely specimens and will flower during the first year if they are headed over in the spring.

*Hypericum Androsaemum* can be found growing wild in this country. Although not a native, it will naturalise if the conditions suit its growth and there must be many districts where this has happened. It is a semi-woodlander and enjoys the moisture and shade found in such an association. Many species produce a few large flowers per shoot, whereas in this case the flowers are fairly small, but many flowers go to form a large umbel. Black fruits which sit stiffly on their receptacles follow the flowers and make this plant an attractive shrub well into winter's season. *Hypericum Androsaemum* is well furnished with foliage to the base of the plant, the leaves being large, broad and soft. If hard pruning is carried out this species need never reach 2 ft. in height.

*Hypericum calycinum*, colloquially known as "The Rose of Sharon," is more or less evergreen. It has a low creeping habit and may be increased by dividing the rootstock and replanting in late autumn or early spring. There are not so many flowers per shoot as in the previous species but here they are much larger in size. *H. calycinum*'s flowering period extends all through the summer and continues so long as the growing season lasts. In *Hypericums* generally the flowers have many stamens, but in this species they are so numerous that they completely fill the centres of the wide open flowers. *H. calycinum* has proved completely hardy in the British Isles although it is a native of eastern countries.

*Hypericum coris* may never exceed 6 inches in height and is a squat procumbent shrub with stems which lie on the surface of the soil. Despite its low stature one plant may extend its branches to form a circle 2 ft. in diameter. It is a native of Central and Southern Europe. The narrow leaves give the plant a delicate look which belies its hardy character. It is better planted on a ledge where the small but numerous flowers may be seen more readily. These small *Hypericums* are naturally not long-lived plants, but cuttings will root readily if taken towards the end of July and inserted in a cold frame. They are best potted up and will form sturdy young plants by the following spring.

*Hypericum elatum* closely resembles *H. Androsaemum* in its habit of growth and method of flowering but, on the whole, it is a dwarfer, neater plant. The species is hardly worth growing, but there is a variety which deserves special mention, *H. elatum* var. "Elstead." Although hardly distinguishable from the species during the spring and summer, it immediately leaps into prominence once the fruits begin to colour. Instead of the usual brown fruits these are coloured light pink at the base, gradually shading deeper until they are a bright rose pink at their tips.

*Hypericum empetrifolium prostratum* may not be the smallest *Hypericum* but it must have one of the finest habits. As its name implies, the branches are low and these follow the contours of the soil or rock covering the undulations with their wiry stems. This plant is an evergreen with fine light green foliage which forms a delightful background to the yellow starry flowers. If planted on a site which is too well drained this variety is liable to dry out although, on the other hand, a shaded position would tend to make sprawling growth which is rather soft. It is better to compromise and plant on one of the lower ledges and completely in the open. No pruning is needed here, but this variety is so desirable that in a collection of miniatures it is an essential acquisition.

*Hypericum olympicum*, a dwarf spreading plant, is native to Southern Europe. It seems to flower best on a south facing ledge in full sun. This species should be treated as a herbaceous plant and consequently all growth should be cut back in early spring. This will encourage masses of young shoots which will be smothered in bloom during

late summer. The whole plant may appear as a dome of yellow. With this treatment *H. olympicum* forms compact shapely plants which may be introduced into many gardens with improved results. The colour of the flowers in the species is bright yellow but there is a lighter flowered variety with blooms of a lemon shade. The name of this plant is *H. olympicum* var. *citrinum*.

*Hypericum patulum* has a taller habit of growth than most others, but it cannot be considered as hardy. In the more sheltered parts of the country it may reach 5-6 ft., but this can be reduced by annual pruning. This plant has lovely foliage and large wide saucer-shaped flowers. As the demand is always for the best of any one species, this is often found in its varieties. In the case of *H. patulum* this is no exception and there are two varieties which are considered to be better than the species in that they have larger flowers of deeper yellow. They are also better able to withstand our uncertain winters.

*H. patulum Henryi*\* is a stronger growing and definitely hardier form, and retains the lovely foliage.

*H. patulum Forrestii* may not be so robust as *H. patulum Henryi*, but it appears to be a finer variety of the type with still larger flowers. Either one of these *Hypericums* is worth growing, but only one, as they resemble one another. *H. patulum* and its varieties were introduced from China.

*Hypericum rhodopeum* is an ideal rock garden plant and an excellent choice for one of the lower pockets. Its  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in. diameter flowers begin to open in early June and although these flowers are still yellow they are enhanced by attractive foliage. The leaves are downy and have a glaucous hue. The plant is similar in habit of growth of *H. olympicum* but the leaves are much larger. Like *H. olympicum* it is a native of S.E. Europe.

*Hyssopus* (Labiatae)—commonly called the "Hyssop." This shrub is a European native. Many medicinal and pungent plants belong to this family and the "Hyssop" has an attractive aromatic scent when any part of its leaf or stem is bruised. It is a plant which appreciates a sunny position and appears to thrive best in a not too rich sandy soil. A hard woody base is formed but the flowering shoots are thin and soft, so that severe pruning in spring tends to prevent this shrub from sprawling and encroaching on other plants in addition to forming a more presentable shape.

*Hyssopus officinalis*† is completely covered in August with its purplish blue flowers. These, though small, are produced in great quantities and almost obscure the thin narrow leaves.

There are two varieties which only differ in flower colour, *H. officinalis ruber*, with rose-coloured flowers, and *H. officinalis albus*, where they are white.

\*See fig. 22. †See fig. 23.

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### ALWAYS

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## A Week in the Cascade Mountains—Part III

By LEO M. LEBLANC

[Part 2 of this article appeared in *Journal* No, 17, September 1955.—*Editor.*]

AFTER STUDYING the steep slope for a possible ascent, we selected the course that seemed to be the safest. Proceeding with caution up through the "heather," for it can be as slippery as ice, when growing on such planes, we finally had to resort to a crawling position, and even then it was difficult to pull ourselves upwards. At last we reached a group of dwarfed alpine fir where the ground was a bit level; here we paused, took a "breather," and searched for our next possible route up the upheaval that lay ahead of us. Our only course was to proceed directly forward and then veer to the east somewhat, detour a mountainous mass of boulders and thence follow around the rocks until we had reached a more southerly exposure; from this side we hoped to find an easier way to the top. Toiling around mammoth blocks of granite we finally came upon one of those very disheartening circumstances that has faced nearly every mountain climber; we found ourselves at the brink of a precipice. The whole south exposure was made up of cliffs and out-jutting crags that towered far above deep canyons; we certainly did not realize that such destruction would be our greeting.

As we stood there looking over the edge a sudden chill enveloped us; we had been climbing quite vigorously and were wet from perspiration; the cool wind sweeping up from the canyon below was penetrating our wool shirts; giving our packs an adjustment, we searched for a possible way out of our predicament. Our one chance of succeeding was to proceed with utmost caution on a narrow ledge that extended along the edge of the drop-off. Roping ourselves together, Bob went on in the lead, while I followed at a distance; both were on the alert in case of a mishap to the other; we paused briefly at two points for "shots" of the scenes we wished to record in colour. Despite the hazardous way, we could only marvel at the magnificent view. A few patches of blue sky were still visible, while storm clouds kept piling higher upon each other, as if in frantic haste to achieve the very summits of the heavens above. Dark shadows raced over the mountains to the east, angry flashes burst from behind the gathering frontal attack, at times it seemed that nature herself would stand in silence as it watched the spectacle of brilliant fire-works. However, we dared not tarry long, for we had a long hard climb yet ahead of us. After a tortuous and arduous journey on the treacherous ledge we found we had arrived at the base of a wall of granite; a careful survey revealed a narrow crevice that would provide a way up. By the use of our picks and throwing our weight from one side to the other of the crevice we found that we were able to climb the giant, gain considerably in height, and to our relief we came out upon another ledge of granite; but

again we had a sheer cliff that stopped us "cold." Once again Lady Luck was riding with us. Looking the smooth surface over, we noted an out-jutting rock above us that offered a solution for our problem ; extending up from this point the cliff had a jagged appearance and it appeared to us that we would have toe-holds that would help us surmount our would-be master. After several tries we succeeded in throwing a "hitch" around the rock, and, testing the rope, we found that it was secured. With a great deal of effort Bob swung upwards, hand over hand, sailor fashion, and finally pulled himself up and onto the craggy surface and then waited for me to come alongside. Seeing he was safely above the rock that held our rope, I followed up in the same manner. When about halfway up, I was obliged to rest, curling my feet in the rope, I managed to relieve my arms for a moment ; in this position it was fascinating to give a downward survey of the country below us.

Straight down, nearly a thousand feet below, at the foot of the rocks, patches of snow glistened in the dim light, while at the edge of these late drifts, pools of water reflected the greying sky. At that moment, when hanging between heaven and earth, it was a deep satisfaction to look down at the wild gulf of desolation beneath, and up to unknown dangers ahead, and feel my nerves cool and unshaken.

After a few more hand pulls I was able to throw one arm around the granite rock that held our rope, and with a last effort I swung my body up and upon it, and then climbed to a position a little lower than my brother. As we gazed down the steep ascent we had come up, I remarked to Bob :

"Did you ever stop to think how we are going to get down ?"

We had a good laugh, rolled cigarettes, and took some time out for a rest.

Having had a brief rest and recovered our wind, we started upward along the face of the cliff, clinging to the jutting rocks and searching for toe-holds for our heavy boots. It was a hard climb and a very dangerous one, but persistence and work with a good deal of effort expended finally brought us up and onto a narrow shelf which led us a little further around the flank of the summit and at last to a thin blade of ridge. Looking upward at the now near top of the mountain, we noticed an overhanging spike of granite that might hold our rope. We agreed it would be safer to try a lasso around the above rock and hoist ourselves up to the summit, rather than risk the narrow ridge, which would mean working our way upwards astride that dangerous blade.

At the third attempt a lucky toss was made, it tightened slowly around the protuberance. Drawing the noose taut, we gradually threw our combined weight upon strong rope ; the test proved it was securely held. Once again Bob went on ahead ; when he had pulled himself safely over the steep side and was on the craggy area just below the top I followed up ; once for a few moments I had some very



anxious seconds ; my hands slipped and down the rope I went for several feet, my hands burning from the friction. But for a projecting rock that my right foot happened to strike a serious accident might have occurred ; after recovering from such a surprise I started upwards again and soon joined my brother.

Once upon the summit, a grand view burst upon us. Hastening forward we climbed the highest part of our now little world of terra firma and from this vantage point we observed the grandeur that lay spread out on all sides.

A glance about proved that we had indeed been very fortunate, for we had made the ascent from the only possible sides ; the others dropped away in sheer cliffs of several hundred feet. Looking at my watch I was surprised to find out that it was already two o'clock. Directing my gaze back to Bob again, we exchanged happy grins and grasped hands ; our goal had been safely reached. Depositing our packs and camera equipment in a safe place, we determined to rest a little while and enjoy a well-earned lunch upon the mountain heights.

Due south of us stretched a series of peaks with successions of precipices and amphitheatre ridges. To the east and south-east extended a long and deep valley that yawned between the range of which our mountain was a segment and the groups of towering masses of upheaval that marked that section of the Cascade Range directly opposite. West we could distinguish the peaks that are grouped around Mt. Index, while further in the distance the foothills of the Western Range showed themselves through the gathering grey. North lay the awe-inspiring view of the panoramic scenes that surround Mt. Baker, Mt. Shuksan, and even the dim shapes of the Canadian Cascades could be enjoyed.

Clustered about below us, we could see a dozen alpine lakes, the higher ones still had some ice about the edges—it had been a late season—while the lower basins clearly reflected the images above them. Many waterfalls were tumbling down from high reservoirs, dropping with faint rumblings into canyons below. The massive destruction of extinct glaciers was evident on all sides ; relics of a former age hung in beautiful tapestries around their ancient birthplace ; and as far as one could see on every side, valleys lengthened and were lost to sight in the dim mists of the afternoon light.

In the valley to the north-east the lake upon whose shores we had established camp looked tiny, but as a jewel of the richest sort. But for the gathering storm in the east, the foothills that rise from the plains of Eastern Washington could have been seen ; even so, the higher parts were made out as they jutted upwards through darkening clouds, indeed they loomed as isolated islands in a land of make-believe.

It was difficult for us to move from this enchanting tower, the view was so grand. But the threatening skies were a warning that before light failed us our movie work had to be completed. This was soon

accomplished, appreciative that the storm-king had withheld his troops long enough for us to record in colour all that we had seen for future enjoyment.

Our descent, though difficult and at times precarious, was made successfully down to the heather-covered slope. From this field to the Crest trail we stopped frequently for plant study and for pictures of them. At one point, on our right, we noted an especially bright and happy *Penstemon*, growing from a small crack in an otherwise smooth-surfaced cliff of granite. Tying one of the ropes around my waist and securing the other end around a stout-trunked Alpine Fir, I lowered myself and the movie camera to a good position below the plant and obtained a nice "shot" of his very happy and perk flowers. Evidently it was not my day to be out rambling around, for once again I lost my hold on the rope and down the cliff I went, tumbling and getting banged against its solid wall. All the time I tried my best to break my rapid fall. Finally, with my one free hand I managed to again secure a firm hold on the rope, and of course for my trouble I received another hand burn from friction ; even so, I received an unmerciful jolt when the end of the rope was reached and it nearly knocked all of the wind from my lungs. Poor Bob all this time had been helpless to give me possible assistance and, of course, was peering anxiously over the cliff edge. Waving the movie camera at him in my free hand, and how I ever managed to cling to that article I shall never know, I started back up, my brother giving me help by pulling the rope up. Soon I was back on top, none the worse for the experience.

Once back on the Crest trail, we gave one more glance toward the towering summit we had surmounted, scarcely believing that we had been able to conquer such a mass of destruction. After the continued climbing of the day, walking was a delicious rest, and we pressed forward with considerable speed, our boots ringing on the hard surfaces. Within an hour camp was reached, and none too soon, for a few sprinkles had started to patter upon our tarpaulin roof, but they proved only to be the forerunner of what was to follow.

As we still had an hour before supper, we tried our fly-rods, but without success ; the fish seemed to be pouting in the deep waters and refused to rise to our "fakers." Propping myself against a large boulder, I laid the rod down and watched the storm center as it bore in from the eastern sky. This entire area was having a heavy rain with lightning causing a terrific show, while the echoing claps of thunder were distinctly heard as they crashed and rumbled through the Range. Other cloud masses were swiftly moving in for the attack, reminding me of reinforcements being brought up from the rear for battle engagement ; for surely the constant flashes across black skies, the booming of thunder and the shrill screaming of wind through the tree tops, was all mindful of war !

When resolution called us to our feet and the pangs of a growing appetite were very apparent, we found that we had developed some

very stiff muscles, indeed the getting-up process was sorely like Rip Van Winkle's in the third act. Our first efforts upon reaching camp were expended upon collecting a large store of dried wood and placing it underneath our shelter. How glad we were the next day that we had been good providers !

The out-let stream of the lake nearby afforded water for our blessed coffee pot ; large slices of ham frizzled with mild, appetizing sounds upon the ends of cedar sticks ; matchless beans permitted themselves to become seductively crisp upon our tin plates. That supper was one that we administered justice to and complete annihilation of, and I am sure that Bob and I must have said some very good "apres-diner" things, though I have forgotten them all.

Strangely most of the sky had cleared directly above our camp ; stars were flashing brilliantly, but in the east and south lightning continued to burst from darkened heavens and thunder rolled incessantly. A high wind was blowing far above us and driven clouds skimmed across the dark vault above ; we indeed were being warned of things to come.

(To be continued)

## Hardy Terrestrial Orchids

By J. L. MOWAT

IN CONSIDERING hardy terrestrial orchids suitable for cultivation in the rock garden or its adjuncts the bog garden and wild garden, one naturally thinks first of our own native species before turning to those of Europe, North America, and other temperate regions of the world.

Given the right conditions, most of our British orchids are of fairly easy cultivation, and many of them can be grown into most attractive garden plants. Others, such as the Bog Orchid, Lady's Tresses, and Creeping Lady's Tresses may be rather too small and undistinguished of flower to arouse the enthusiasm of rock gardeners in general, but even with these there is for many a satisfaction to be gained in growing them successfully. I do not propose to include in these notes the entirely saprophytic species, which would probably be of little interest to most rock gardeners.

By far the majority of our native orchids, and many terrestrial orchids of other temperate countries which are amenable to outdoor cultivation in our gardens, prefer a soil which is either neutral or even slightly alkaline. Only some few such as *Orchis latifolia*, *Goodyera repens*, *Malaxis paludosa*, and *Listera cordata* really require an acid soil, but nearly all orchids are united in requiring for their successful growth a soil which is rich in humus. Again, the great majority like a certain amount of shade, even though with some it be only a thin shade from the strongest light and heat of the day.

The use of botanical names in the foregoing paragraph brings us to a point which requires to be dealt with before proceeding further.

The sub-dividing and re-naming which has taken place over recent years creates rather a problem in an article intended primarily for amateur growers and plant lovers rather than for those more interested in details of taxonomy and nomenclature. It would seem advisable to keep as far as possible to names under which readers are most likely to find the plants listed in nursery catalogues or referred to in current horticultural publications. Unfortunately, where a name still commonly used (such as *Orchis latifolia*, *O. maculata*, *Epipactis leptochila*) is now accepted as being an aggregate of a number of distinct species and sub-species, it may be necessary to use "new names for old faces" but in such cases I will try to include the name under which the plant has generally been known to most of us.

Probably the genus of British orchids most familiar to members is *Orchis* itself, a genus predominantly European. In fact at the moment I can only think of one from the New World—the North American *Orchis spectabilis*—and in spite of its specific name this does not compete with most of our own native species as a garden plant. In the case of the genus *Cypripedium*, however, the position is reversed. *Cypripedium Calceolus* is our only native species, and the many other beautiful species which are grown successfully in our gardens come from places as far apart as California, and other parts of North America, to Tibet, West China, and Japan.

The "Early Orchid"—*Orchis mascula*—is a green-leaved, generally short-stemmed plant, found in rich soils and pastures, with a loose spike of rich purple flowers, and does well in the garden, flowering in late spring. A little later in flowering comes the "Marsh Orchid"—*O. latifolia*—now regarded as an aggregate covering the green-leaved *O. praetermissa* with (generally) dark-red flowers, *O. incarnata* with flesh-pink flowers, and *O. pardalina*. All forms are easily grown in a dampish border rich in humus, and are very attractive plants.

The "Spotted Orchid"—*Orchis maculata*, coming into flower in June, ranging through a variety of shades from pale purple to pure white, and with heavily or lightly spotted leaves, is now divided into *O. Fuchsii*—the "Common Spotted Orchid," *O. ericetorum*—the "Heath Spotted Orchid," and one or two other less well-known forms. They are all very well worthy of a place in the garden and respond well to cultivation, making handsome plants and in due time forming sizeable clumps. *Orchis purpurea*—the "Lady Orchid," found in open woods on chalk or limestone, is another that makes an attractive garden plant, flowering in partial shade in early June, and the "Green-Winged Orchid"—*Orchis morio*, and the "Soldier Orchid"—*O. militaris*, are also worth a place in the collection.

Let us now end the *Orchis* group with what, though not a British species, is generally regarded as the most handsome member of the family—*Orchis foliosa* (or *maderensis*) from Madeira. This handsome plant bears nine-inch spires of broad-lipped purple flowers on foot-high stems in late May and early June, while the large leaves are a bright, light green. There are several other species and sub-species of the

genus *Orchis*, but we will leave these and pass on to those which to many of us are still *Habenaria*.

Of these the most showy are probably the "Greater" and "Lesser Butterfly Orchids," long known respectively as *Habenaria virescens* and *H. bifolia*, but now *Platanthera chlorantha* and *Pl. bifolia*. Both are found growing in fairly open grassy places on calcareous soils and are delightful in their grace of well-spaced creamy yellow flowers on stems from ten to eighteen inches tall. Another *Habenaria*—the "Fragrant Orchid" (now *Gymnadenia conopsea*) is worth a place in every collection of orchids for its scent alone. Two or three stems of this small modest orchid, cut and placed in a small vase, will fill a room with a rich scent for weeks, keeping its fresh scent to the end and not going off from "scent" to "smell" as so many flowers do. In general appearance it is rather like an undersized and quiter coloured *O. mascula* and is found on moist calcareous soils rich in humus; it does very well as a garden plant. Others of this group are the "Small White Orchid" (now *Leucorchis albida*) of our Scottish hill pastures, and the "Frog Orchid" (*Coeloglossum viride*).

Of the two Twayblades—*Listera ovata* and *L. cordata*—only the former can be called "a plant for the garden," because its lesser brother *L. cordata* is a small, insignificant, almost puny plant of mossy pinewoods or the sphagnum carpets of wet, peaty heather land; and to survive in cultivation it requires conditions unlikely to be obtainable in most gardens unless specially prepared in cold frame or alpine house—a pan or sink of deep, growing moss. Many people may say that even *Listera ovata*, the common Twayblade found so abundantly in moist thin woodlands, fields, or along roadside ditches, is not worth a place in the garden owing to its lack of colour, the flowers being of the same uniform green as the leaves. For me, however, it has an attraction all its own, with its pair of opposite, roundly ovate, ribbed leaves and its tall spire of green flowers, and certainly it is not a difficult plant if given a reasonably good humus in damp partial shade. The Twayblades are later flowering than the orchids so far mentioned, usually being at their best in the latter part of July.

*Malaxis paludosa*, like the lesser Twayblade, is more a plant for the specialist and lover of small things than for the grower of colourful plants. A little green-flowered plant of two or three inches at most, it is a habitat of wet peat mosses, and only by growing it in a pan of sphagnum set in a saucer of water was I able to cultivate it successfully.

Another orchid which, though not exacting in its demands, is scarcely of sufficient merit to warrant the attention of the ordinary grower is the "Creeping Lady's Tresses"—*Goodyera repens*—a six-inch plant of dark evergreen leaves and spikes of small, scented, spirally arranged white flowers. I found my first plant of *Goodyera repens* nearly thirty years ago in a previously unrecorded station—Knockhill, Fife—where a pine wood was being felled, and grew it with little trouble for many years. A dweller of shady pinewoods, it does well under pot cultiva-

tion in a mixture containing fifty per cent. rotted pine or spruce needles, and should not be allowed to get too wet.

There are other species of *Goodyera*, natives of North America and Japan, several of which are very attractive either in flower or foliage and well worth growing. *Goodyera pubescens*—a pretty-foliaged, three-inch-high North American with white flowers—is hardy in sheltered shade in leafmould and peat. The much larger-flowered pale rose *G. macrantha* of Japan, though perhaps not quite hardy in the open garden, is a very suitable orchid for the alpine house. *G. velutina*, with attractive foliage and flowers of white and pale pink or salmon, is another native of Japan which does well under alpine house conditions.

## Plants and Problems

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

*Scottish Rock Garden Club.* In an article in the April issue of the *Journal* on the alpine garden at Lautaret by Jas. Davidson there is a reference to a similar garden at Patscherkofel, near Innsbruck. I have just returned from a holiday at Steinach, which is not many miles away, and had intended to visit this garden. Before doing so, I made some enquiries, regarding transport, at the local verkehrsburo, and was told that there was no alpine garden there. I then spoke to some people who had been up the Patscherkofel a few days previously and who saw no sign of such a thing. They were not gardening enthusiasts, however, and were not looking for it.

I was told at the verkehrsburo of an alpine garden at the Villa Blanka, Innsbruck, and paid a visit there. The Villa Blanka is a hotel situated in what appears to be a small public park constructed on a steep hillside. There is a small overgrown alpine garden which is about to be enlarged, as several loads of stone had been dumped in preparation.

I also visited the Hof Park, Innsbruck, and found a small alpine section with a good selection of plants.

According to the street map there is a botanical garden in Innsbruck, but time did not permit of a visit there. I mention this since other Club members may have the idea of visiting this garden.

Perhaps the writer of the article in the *Journal* could confirm if he has visited the Patscherkofel garden or where he obtained his information.

I suspect that this garden is another casualty of the war, but none of the people to whom I spoke had ever heard of it.

Yours faithfully,

Glasgow.

A. G. S.

Dear Editor,

I feel definitely frustrated. Will the VIP's of the botany world ever definitely establish nomenclature?

I have had the idea that the Rock Garden folk in Scotland are pleased to get seeds of native plants of the north-west States. But how shall I list them? *Sisyrinchium* becomes *Olsynium*, then back to *Sisyrinchium*. Our lovely western Azalea is no longer *Azalea occidentalis*, but *Rhododendron occidentale*. *Lilium Bolanderi* is now *L. Howellii*. *Lysichitum camtschatcense* is now *L. americanum*. The *Erythronium*, for years *giganteum*, now officially (the last I heard) is *oregonum*. The *Dodecatheon* sweet old Professor Henderson thought of for years as *Hendersoni* is now listed as *latifolium*. And so on.

I understand *Darlingtonia* is no longer *Darlingtonia*. O shucks! Does anyone want seeds of the bug-catcher plant?

D. M.

(Mrs. EARL A. MARSHALL)

Portland, Oregon.

### THE GIRAFFE

THIS YEAR the Giraffe has taken up residence at the top of the peat bank.

He is a direct descendant of one of the original inhabitants of the garden and during the twelve years of our ownership he and his forbears have led a nomadic life. For a time this vagrant existence was shared by *Anchusa* "Morning Glory." Plant her where we might, the next year she was gone, only to reappear at the edge of a border or in some other ill-chosen place from which we hadn't the heart to eject so lovely a lady.

In time she tired of her wanderings and gave up the struggle for life, but the Giraffe is of sterner stuff. Sometimes, it is true, he disappears for a year and we mourn his passing. But the next Spring, at the edge of a path or among the strawberries, appears a clump of big grey-green leaves and we know the Giraffe is back.

One year he carried this playful game of hide-and-seek to extremes when he popped out through a crack in the crazy paving, disorganising for a whole summer the serving of tea out of doors, but by then he had become a family pet and we humoured his caprice.

So if you should visit our garden please do not think we usually plant a six-foot *Verbascum* among the dwarf rhododendrons. By next year he will have gone.

Edinburgh.

K. S. H.

### HELICHRYSUM MARGINATUM

*Helichrysum marginatum* is an attractive member of the great daisy family. It forms a tightly packed cushion of silvery-green rosettes clothed in soft hairs. The flower heads are an inch across and stand an inch or two above the cushion. The ray florets have the typical

“everlasting” straw-like texture, and are glistening white on the inside and crimson on the reverse. They only open fully in fine weather and last in flower from June until well into August.

Its general appearance suggests that the plant might be one of those which moulder off without all the paraphernalia of overhead protection in winter or the cossetting of an alpine house. Most plants one sees have bare patches spoiling the symmetry of the cushion, and winter wetness is blamed for these. Has anyone else noticed that these bald spots come in August and not in November or February as one might expect? My own opinion is that the trouble is caused by drought rather than by too much moisture.

I had two large plants, X growing high up on a hump-backed scree, and Y in a saucer-shaped valley between low rocks. X was given a pane of glass throughout the winter and also during wet periods in the summer. Y was uncovered except by snow throughout the winter and in dry hot weather received two and a half gallons of water overhead before breakfast every morning. X began to look a bit bald before winter started, and when spring came round again it was more dead than alive, so that it had to be dug up, torn to pieces and the good bits propagated. (The divisions need copious water in the cutting frame). Y had only one small bare patch and a few crevices. These were filled with sandy compost and were given a good watering. The adjoining rosettes sent stolons into the bare places and the plant is now beautiful unblemished velvet. It is sixteen inches across and has forty-five flowers, which I believe is considered to be fairly stupendous.

I should be interested to know whether any other members agree with me that it is a plant with an almost insatiable thirst. I should be even more interested to hear under what conditions it grows in its native Africa. My guess is that it grows on south slopes in full sun, at a great altitude close to the snow line, so that it has a short but rapid growing season with melted snow continually running through its roots.

East Lothian.

L. C. BOYD-HARVEY

### LATHYRUS SATIVUS AZUREUS

THIS is an annual pea with very attractive small flowers of much the same size and colour as *Parochetus communis*, a pleasing pale blue.

It only grows to a height of about two feet and is light and dainty in habit, and looks very well climbing up through a small shrub. It tones in very nicely for example with the pink of *Cistus* x “Silver Pink,” or with the yellow and chocolate of *C. algarvensis*, or to be more correct now, *Halimium ocymoides*.

Being an annual it must, of course, be sown each spring, but it is quite easy. Seed has been listed in our seed list for the last two years.

Edinburgh.

M-L.



### PRIMULA ALLIONII

A PLANT of *Primula allionii* was slowly dying in its pot, so I decided to try it in a crevice of a north wall, with great success. At the same time I also planted a healthy *P. allionii* and it is now about 4 inches across and flowered this spring. They have both come through two winters without any protection.

Dunfermline.

E. D. W.

### STREPTOPUS SIMPLEX

THIS DELIGHTFUL little plant was grown from seed collected by Ludlow and Sherriff; this year it produced a number of its little drooping flowers. These are delicately marked in the inside and it has very pointed shiny glossy green leaves. It appears reasonably hardy, though I have not planted one out in the open yet.

Helme Lodge, Kendal.

CICELY M. CREWDSON

### SPARTIUM JUNCEUM

*Spartium junceum* or Spanish Broom belongs to the Leguminosae family, and is closely related to *Cytisus* and *Genista*.

It is not a Rock Plant, but it is very useful for providing light shade for primulas and other plants which require it. It has an open habit and the leaves are small, and few in number. The branches, in fact, look almost devoid of leaves, and are whippy and reed-like. The flowers, which are large and typically "Broom" in form, are a bright-shining yellow and very sweetly scented. One plant on a still summer evening fills the whole of my small front garden with its fragrance, and it remains in flower from June till the first hard frost. This year (1955) it still has a few flowers as I write this on 25th November.

It comes easily from seed, and would no doubt come also from cuttings like other brooms, though I have not tried that myself. It is a fast grower, and one I have, which is three years old, is eight feet high in spite of having been severely pruned.

To prevent its getting straggly and top-heavy it should be pruned after flowering; cut the new growth right back to the last two or three buds. In spite of coming from Southern Europe, including Spain, it is hardy. Like most brooms, it does not require or appreciate rich soil.

Edinburgh.

M-L.

### UNCOMMON PLANTS—HOW TO GET

I HAVE often heard people at shows saying of some of the less common plants on the benches: "Oh, you can't get those unless you are in the know." Now I suggest that that is not correct, or if it is partly

so, then anyone can be "in the know." Every year in our Seed List you will find the names of quite a number of uncommon and rare plants, so anyone, if prepared to take a little trouble, has the chance of raising some of them.

Another way of getting such plants, once you have something worth while to offer yourself, is by exchange. I personally have found one of our "Small Adverts" in the *Journal* good value for getting in touch with potential "swoppers" and have succeeded in getting more than one rare plant in this way.

Edinburgh.

M-L.

### CAMPANULA ZOYSII

*Campanula zoyssii*\* is surely one of the strangest and most beautiful of a great family. It is exceedingly low growing and from the prostrate foliage there arises innumerable and peculiar-shaped flowers pale blue in colour. The shape of the flower has been described as similar to a soda water bottle, but this description is inadequate. Ripe seed of this plant is seldom obtained as fertilization can only take place by insects capable of piercing what appears to be a hermetically sealed envelope. However, the plant provides innumerable runners and by this means propagation is simple. This is an excellent plant for scree or trough and is happy in a loose gritty limey soil enriched with leaf-mould. It begins to flower in August and lasts well into September.

Port Glasgow.

E. DARLING

P.S.—Slugs appear to be particularly fond of this *Campanula*.—*Editor*.

### CENTAURIUM SCILLOIDES

THIS PLANT, Syn. *C. massonii*, *Erythraea diffusa*, belongs to the Gentian family, and is said to be a native of Corsica and the Azores. It is thoroughly at home in a sandy loam mixed with a little peat. A sun lover, it flowers profusely, the flower heads, bright rosy pink stars, being carried some three or four inches above the leaves in July and August. It seeds freely, and stock can also be increased by division of the roots in early spring.

E. D.

### CYANANTHUS INCANUS

*Cyananthus incanus* (Campanulaceae)—a native of the Sikkim pass—comes to life in the late spring, when there spring from the centre crown numerous prostrate shoots some six to eight inches in length. The plant clothes itself with flowers, funnel-shaped, and azure blue in colour. It makes an excellent pot plant and should be grown in a compost of equal parts sandy peat and leaf mould and given a sunny position. Propagate by seed, which has to be carefully gathered, the

\*See fig. 24.



*Photo—W. Kersley Holmes.*

Fig. 17.—Looking towards the house, immediately after planting.



*Photo—H. Tod.*

Fig. 18.—Essentially the same view, three years later.



*Photo—H. Tod.*

Fig. 19.—Another view. From opposite end.



*Photo—D. Wilkie.*

Fig. 20.—*Lewisia rediviva*.



*Photo—D. Wilkie.*

Fig. 21.—*Hydrangea involucrata*.



*Photo—D. Wilkie.*

Fig. 22.—*Hypericum patulum* var *Henryi*.



*Photo—D. Wilkie.*

Fig. 23.—*Hyssopus officinalis*.



*Photo—D. Wilkie.*

Fig. 24.—*Campanula zoysii*.

calyx being torn asunder after fertilization to prevent water lodging in the cup. It can also be propagated by division of the fleshy roots in April and May. Protect from excessive damp in winter and early spring.

E. D.

### VIOLA HEDERACEA

*Viola hederacea* is a native of Australia and is perfectly hardy if given glass protection throughout the winter. It begins to flower in June and continues to do so throughout the remainder of the season. The flowers are strikingly beautiful and dainty, a mixture of rich purple and white, and are but an inch or two above a carpet of kidney-shaped leaves. It thrives in any rich loamy soil, seeds itself in profusion, and forms a network of underground runners.

E. D.

### PHLOX ADSURGENS

*Phlox adsurgens* is one of the best of the Alpine phloxes with a straggling yet graceful habit. It resembles *phlox amoena* in foliage but is more prostrate and like the latter is a native of Western North America. From June to end of July it bears innumerable flowers of a rosy pink colour with a deeper hue in the centre. Does well in a good gritty loam with a liberal mixture of leaf mould and peat. Propagate by cuttings in August.

E. D.

### PELARGONIUM ENDLEICHERIANUM

*Potentilla x Tonguet* is a real treasure among its kind, and is not perfectly hardy in our climate if planted in a sheltered sunny spot in a compost of good loam mixed with leaf mould and old mortar rubble. The plant forms a compact bush some nine or twelve inches high, with dark green geranium-like leaves from which there emerge in August and September clusters of large flowers of a deep rose colour. Can be easily propagated from seed or from side shoots taken from the root, which is of a bulbous nature and lies near or on the surface of the soil.

E. D.

### POTENTILLA X TONGUEI

*Potentilla x Tonguei* is a real treasure among its kind, and is not particular as to soil as long as it gets a fair share of the sun. From the heart of the plant it sends out prostrate branches in all directions and these are studded profusely all summer with fairly large flowers of rich apricot with a deeper tinge of the same colour at the base of each petal. Propagate from seed or by basal cuttings.

E. D.

## OXALIS ENNEAPHYLLA

*Oxalis enneaphylla* is a native of the Falkland Isles and is a treasure of beauty in flower and honeyed sweetness and perfume. It forms peculiarly-shaped rhizomes underground and from these spring the dainty foliage nestling among which we have the lovely pearl white flowers succeeding one another throughout June and July. All it requires in the way of soil is a good rich sandy loam in a choice position of the rock garden in full sun or semi-shade. Can be propagated by division of the rhizomes in autumn or from seed carefully gathered.

E. D.

## TANAKAEA RADICANS

*Tanakaea radicans* comes from Japan, and is known as the Japanese Foam Flower. It belongs to the family of saxifrages, although few would suspect so. It forms a compact tuft of leathery, toothed, and oval-shaped dark green leaves, from which spring in May and June lovely spires of fluffy white flowers some six inches high and for all the world like a miniature Spiraea. It likes a light soil, with a good admixture of leafmould or peat, and half shade. It sends out runners from the root and these can be rooted, or the tufts can be divided in March.

E. D.

## ZAUSCHNERIA CALIFORNICA

*Zauschneria californica*, or the Californian Fuchsia, is perfectly hardy if planted in a sunny position and in a light soil. It is a very striking plant when in flower. From the mass of narrow-leaved foliage spikes there emerge in great profusion long funnel-shaped flowers, deep vermilion in colour, with protruding stamens and style of the same colour. Unfortunately, with many growers species of this plant flower too late in the season, but the particular type described begins to flower in early August and continues blooming until the first early frosts arrive. It can be easily propagated by root division in late spring.

E. D.

## HALIMIUM OCYMOIDES

THIS USED to be known as *Cistus algarvensis* and is an attractive shrub which grows to a height of about two feet. The pointed leaves, about an inch and a half long and half an inch wide, are greyish, especially on the under side. The flowers, about an inch and a half across, are bright yellow with a purplish blotch on the base of each petal.

*Halimium ocymoides* is very free flowering during June and July. It is sometimes said not to be too hardy, but I find it quite happy growing in scree against a fence protecting it from the east wind.

Cuttings strike easily during August and September.

Edinburgh.

M-L.



## CALLUNA VULGARIS INCANA

THIS HEATHER is not very often seen in gardens, but it is attractive in a quiet way. The flowers are not startling, being rather a pale mauvy purple, but quite pleasing against the grey foliage. The foliage remains grey all the year round, and makes a pleasant contrast among the other heathers.

It is of medium size, nine or ten inches in height, and it is completely hardy.

Edinburgh.

M-L.

## PRIMULA SCOTICA

THE CHARM of finding *Primula scotica* growing in its natural setting lies chiefly in the astonishing contrast between the compact delicacy of the plant itself and the wildness of its background.

When I visited some small colonies near Bettyhill on the first Saturday in June, the wind was blowing hard from the West and on those exposed cliff-tops, with rocky drops of a hundred feet or so to the sea below, it was uncomfortable to stand anywhere near the edge.

The plants of *P. scotica* were only to be found within a belt of a few hundred yards from the sea, always on the most exposed slopes facing North to West, and yet, in every area in which the scattered flowers appeared, I could sit in a pocket of stillness in spite of the wind tearing overhead.

The combination of fierce wind, steep slopes, precipitous rocks and tossing sea added to the magic of the tiny purple flowers, very regal on their short, firm stems. Nowhere were two plants in flower close enough to photograph them together and there were many more unflowered plants than those with flowers. The flowers appear to be eaten by some insect fairly frequently and, as the continued existence of this gem of our Northern coasts depends entirely on seeding itself, it is of the greatest importance that the flowers should not be picked in ignorance of their rarity by passing visitors.

Muthill.

D. V. ROSE

## The Answer to the Colour Problem

Dear Anon,

I do not want to make you 19 with embarrassment, but it really is very 62 of you not knowing that there is a "proper colour chart" with numbers for each colour and all the tints and shades of that colour. It was published in 1939 by the British Colour Council in collaboration with the Royal Horticultural Society, and was en-

larged and revised in 1942. It is expensive to buy, but for anybody interested in colour it is worth its weight in 3.

It makes me 830 with rage to think that you may have been fobbed off with a 35 Delphinium when the colour you really wanted was 742. I hope you have told your nurseryman never to send you anything 27.

Forgive me for not replying to you in verse ; your skill makes me 55 with envy. May the 042 of happiness descend upon you and your rock garden.

Yours sincerely,

23.

E. Lothian.

19 = Scarlet	742 = Cornflower blue
62 = Sap green	27 = Magenta
3 = Aureolin	55 = Viridian green
830 = Beetroot purple	042 = Blue bird
35 = Amethyst violet	23 = Rose Madder

## Review of the Year

By THE PRESIDENT

WHEN THIS appears in print I shall have nearly completed my first year as President. The membership of the Club has continued to grow, and we are now over 3000 strong. Some districts which, if not moribund, were at least static, have burst into life. The (recruiting) lectures arranged in some of the outlying districts are partly responsible for this, but it is the County Representatives to whom most of the credit is due.

Talking of C.R.'s, one point I would like to make is that reports of County activities, besides being of interest to members generally, are, I think, a great help to new C.R.'s in giving them ideas for their own activities. It is a pity, therefore, that some C.R.'s do not send in reports. The same applies to programmes of coming events ; if these are published in *Journal* and *Year Book*, members of other county groups can see what lectures etc. are coming off, and may be able to attend.

While on the subject of county activities, I would like to suggest that, unless the garden owner has agreed otherwise, *members only* should go on visits to gardens, and also that children are not usually welcome. We are very grateful to all those members who allowed county groups to visit their gardens.

We had our usual stand at "The Highland" and got 43 new members which was, I think, very good. Our thanks are due to our new C.R. for Ross-shire, the Hon. Mrs. Andrew Campbell, and to Mr. Jack Drake for building and furnishing the stall, and to the other members who took spells of duty at the stall.

All seven shows were successful, and the quality of entries was high, although in some cases numbers were down. If our shows are to continue to be the success they now are, it is essential that we have a steady inflow of new exhibitors. While there was a gratifying increase in new exhibitors at some shows, at others the numbers in the novices' classes were disappointing.

We are, I think, rather apt to take the judges for granted and not to realise how much we are indebted to them. Many come at considerable inconvenience to themselves, some even at the cost of a day's leave cut from their annual holidays. I very much doubt, too, if most members realise the amount of hard work put in by show secretaries and their committees to make the shows the success they are.

Co-operation with the National Trust for Scotland continues to be good, and two Scottish Rhododendron Shows were held this year in conjunction with our Glasgow and Edinburgh shows.

The Joint Rock Garden Plant Committee met at the Glasgow and Dundee shows this year. I would like to take this opportunity of conveying the congratulations of the Club to one of the Vice-Chairmen of the Committee, Dr. George Taylor, V.M.H., on his appointment to be Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

The Seed Exchange continues to be one of the most popular services given by the Club, especially with members outwith Scotland who are unable to take part in many of our activities. Both the number of people contributing seed and applying for it have gone up, and Mrs. Davidson, our new "Seed Merchant," has quite a formidable task. Her labours would be eased if members would get their seed in early.

The Slide Library is steadily building up, but Dr. Davidson, the Hon. Curator, will still welcome transparencies of any of the three sizes mentioned in the *Year Book*. A number of lecturers have been supplied with slides to illustrate their lectures, so the library is justifying itself.

The *Journal*, under the able editorship of Mr. Mowat, maintains its high standard, although unfortunately there was a mishap over the coloured photographs for the last number. As the photographs are not considered good enough for use as Christmas Cards, another has been substituted, and details will be found elsewhere.

That brings me to finance, for the editor had to cut the last *Journal* to keep within his budget. I think we may claim that our finances are sound, though with continually rising costs it is a continual struggle to make ends meet. If costs continue to rise, we will be able to keep up our present services to members only if our numbers also keep going up. Otherwise either services will have to be cut or subscriptions increased.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all office bearers for the work they have put in, and I am sure all members would like to be associated with this. Mr. Aitken has produced a number of new ideas in the Publicity business, and of course our Hon. Secretary

and Hon. Treasurer just "Carry On." That means a very great deal now that our numbers have increased so much. The Club owes much to S/Ldr. Boyd-Harvey and to Mr. Stewart Mitchell. If members would sign Banker's Orders, or remember to pay their subscriptions without having to have reminders sent to them, it would lessen their work considerably.

This is a review of past events ; but I do wish to mention one coming event, as it is an innovation.

Last year I attended a "Study Week-end" of another society with similar aims to our own, and I enjoyed it so much that I decided we ought to copy the idea, and our Council agreed. We are therefore arranging to hold a "Discussion Week-end" in Edinburgh in March 1957 from after lunch on Saturday the 16th till Sunday evening the 17th. There will be five lectures and plenty of time for discussion, and I am quite sure it will be a very enjoyable week-end. Look out, therefore, for particulars which will be published in the *Year Book*. The Regius Keeper of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, has kindly arranged for a conducted tour of the Propagating Department on the Saturday morning.

D. M. MURRAY-LYON

## Royal Horticultural Society

### JOINT ROCK GARDEN PLANT COMMITTEE

THE COMMITTEE met at the Scottish Rock Garden Club Show at Glasgow on 17th April 1956, and the following awards were made :—

#### *First Class Certificate :*

To *Pleione pricei*, as a flowering plant for the alpine house. Exhibited by R. B. Cooke, Esq., Kilbride, Corbridge, Northumberland.

#### *Cultural Commendations :*

To Major-General and Mrs. D. M. Murray-Lyon, 28A Inverleith Place, Edinburgh, for a fine pan of *Anemone vernalis*.

To Major-General and Mrs. D. M. Murray-Lyon for a fine pan of *Loiseleuria procumbens*.

To Messrs. Jack Drake, Inshriach Nursery, Aviemore, Inverness-shire, for a well grown plant of *Primula jonardunii*.

To Major and Mrs. Knox Finlay, Keillour Castle, Methven, Perthshire, for a fine pan of *Primula apennina*.

To K. C. Corsar, Esq., Mauricewood, Milton Bridge, Midlothian, for a small pan of *Primula cusickiana*.

To Mrs. C. B. Jamieson, 6 Westbrae Road, Newton Mearns, Renfrewshire, for a fine pan of *Primula marginata* "Linda Pope."

THE COMMITTEE met at the Scottish Rock Garden Club Show at Dundee on 13th June 1956, and the following awards were made :—  
*Award of Merit :*

To *Primula chumbiensis*, as a hardy flowering plant for the rock garden ; exhibited by Major G. Sherriff, O.B.E., V.M.H., Ascreavie, Kirriemuir, Angus.

To *Lilium oxypetalum insigne*, as a hardy flowering plant for the rock garden and alpine house ; exhibited by Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Renton, Branklyn, Perth.

*Certificate of Preliminary Commendation :*

To *Androsace spinulifera*, as a hardy flowering plant for the rock garden ; exhibited by Messrs. Jack Drake, Inshriach Nursery, Aviemore.

*Cultural Commendation :*

To Major G. Sherriff, O.B.E., V.M.H., for a pan of *Primula kingii*.

To Stewart Mitchell, Esq., 1 Muirfield Crescent, Dundee, for a well grown plant of *Phyteuma comosum*.

## Show Reports

### DUMFRIES

April 1956

THE DUMFRIES SHOW, held on 4th and 5th April, once again provided the Club's first show of the season and was well supported both by competitors and the trade. Weather held back some exhibits but made bulbs and others more plentiful. The Secretary wishes to thank the committee members for help given, special prizes awarded, and local funds which prevent loss on the Show.

The beginners section had some good exhibits and in it Mrs. Stuart, Pitlochry, won the Bronze Medal for most points ; she had the best softwood plant in the Show with her pan of *Pleione pricei*. Mrs. H. Drummond, Mersehead, Southwick, Dumfries, won the Lewis Trophy in confined section.

In the Open Section the Forrest Medal was awarded to *Epigaea asiatica*, seldom seen with so much bloom on it, shown by Major and Mrs. Walmsley of Culderry, Garlieston, Wigtownshire ; this was the best hardwood plant in the Show.

Other plants with a wealth of bloom were *Rhododendron repens*, *Jeffersonia dubia*, *Primula allioni* and its white form *alba*, *Narcissus watieri*, and many more.

Section III, devoted to non-competitive items, had some very good pans from a few members, Mrs. Ruth McConnel's being excellent and in perfect condition.

Cacti and succulent plants were very fine, and pots of *Azalea indica* and *Primula obconica* in the pot plant section were outstanding.

In trade groups the marvellous colour provided by over 100 varieties of Narcissi from Harper and Sons, Stranraer, drew all our attention and was awarded a Large Gold Medal, while the floral display and Gold Medal award of Knockdolian Nurseries, Girvan, contained alpine and cut bloom in excellent condition—*Primula bhutanica*, *Atragene alpina*, *Iris graeberiana*, *Iris bucharica*, and exceptional display of Reinelt polyanthus, and many latest Narcissi.

The Large Gold Medal for a built-up rock garden was awarded to the local firm of Longmuir & Adamson, Holywood, Dumfries, whose exhibit contained many fine shrubs and alpine in pots. Dwarf conifers in pots were in great variety; *Abies albertiana conica* was especially outstanding. Dwarf Rhododendrons, *Cyclamen coum roseum*, many forms of *Anemone pulsatilla*, the lovely *Pulmonaria* "Munstead Blue," blue polyanthus, and double primulas also caught the eye.

Edrom Nurseries as usual provided a varied display of alpine, shrubs and bulbs in pans this year and showed many nice primulas, saxifrage, and miniature Narcissus and others which they specialise in. Their *Anemone vernalis*, *Primula reidii* var. *williamsii* and Japanese dwarf azaleas were extra good.

Lt.-Colonel Stitt gave us a built-up rock garden Gold Medal exhibit containing a variety of heaths, saxifrage, gentians, primulas, with shrubs as a background.

Annually the Crichton Royal Hospital, Dumfries, provide a table of pots and pans of alpine and here we were treated to many items not seen on the show benches, especially among the primulas and habereleas.

Sesame Products, West Calder; Floralcrafts, London; and a display of gardening literature all helped to complete the Show.

R. FORBES, *Show Secretary*.

## GLASGOW

THIS YEAR we were unfortunate in choosing 17th and 18th April as the dates of the Show. The National Budget and Grace Kelly claimed all available space in the local press on the Wednesday of the Show and drawings at the door were reduced as a result.

Lady Elphinstone, D.C.V.O., Convener of the Gardens Committee of the National Trust for Scotland, officially opened the Show. She stressed the importance of the combined efforts of the National Trust for Scotland and the S.R.G.C. in fostering a love of gardening among all classes of the community throughout the length and breadth of Scotland and beyond. There was a gratifying increase in the number of entries, one hundred and forty more than in 1955.

Special awards were as follows :—

The Dr. W. Buchanan Memorial Rose Bowl for six Rock Plants was awarded to Mr. Henry Archibald, Carnwath. His best plants were *Rhodothamnus chamaecistus*, *Cassiope selaginoides* and *Rhododendron repens*. The runner-up was Mr. William Urie, Turnberry, who had good plants of *Daphne petraea grandiflora* and *Lithospermum oleifolium*. Miss D. Pape, all the way from Northumberland, who was third, had a good specimen of *Primula marginata*, well flowered.

The George Forrest Memorial Medal was awarded to Mr. Archibald's *Rhodothamnus chamaecistus*, which was a beautiful plant well grown and flowered. It is of interest that *Rhodothamnus chamaecistus* is one of the parents of the bi-generic hybrid, *Phyllothamnus erectus*. The two parents *Phyllodoce empetrifomis*, *Rhodothamnus chamaecistus* together with *Phyllodoce erectus* are all very beautiful plants.

An outstanding plant was Mr. R. B. Cooke's *Pleione pricei*, which was not in competition, but when placed before the Joint Rock Garden Plant Committee was awarded a First Class Certificate. Another good plant, which gained a Cultural Certificate for Mrs. C. Jamieson, Newton Mearns, was *Primula marginata* v. "Linda Pope." This, in the competitive section for one pan of European primula, was also awarded first prize.

The Bronze Medal was awarded to Mrs. E. A. Jackson, Bearsden, for most points in Section II.

In the Rhododendron Section of the Show, held under the auspices of the National Trust for Scotland, The Stirling Maxwell Trophy for highest aggregate in all classes was won by the Gibson Family, Glenarn, Rhu. Colonel J. N. Horlick, Gigha, Argyll, was second, and Mr. Michael Noble, Strone, Cairndow, Argyll, was third.

Awards gained by Trade exhibitors were as follows :—

Large Gold Medal for built-up Rock Garden—W. Barclay Boyd, Barrhead.

Gold Medal—Miss Guthrie Smith, Castlehill Nurseries, Helensburgh.

Large Gold Medal for Rock Garden Plants in pans—Jack Drake, Aviemore.

Large Gold Medal for Floral Display—Knockdolian Gardens, by Girvan.

Gold Medal for Floral Display—George Murray, Boquhan Nurseries, Kippen.

Among other Trade exhibitors whose stands added colour, interest and distinction to the Show were Messrs. Bannatyne & Jackson, Hamilton ; The Edrom Nurseries, Coldingham ; Donald A. Wintersgill, Kennishead ; and Colonel Stitt, Blairgowrie.

Messrs. Grant of West Calder again had their tastefully decorated stand of "Sesame" composts and top dressings, and many people were attracted by the floral brooches and perfumes shown by Floral Handicrafts, London. Messrs. John Smith & Son (Glasgow) Ltd. had

a nice display of Gardening Books, and a welcome newcomer to our Show was Miss Daisy McG. Anderson, Cove, with her delightful pictures of flowers and gardens.

EDWARD DARLING }  
ROBERT J. C. BIGGART } *Joint Hon. Show Secretaries.*

### ABERDEEN

THE 1956 Show was amongst the most satisfactory which we have had. The standard of entries was very high and called forth much comment from the Judges. Considering the severe weather and the great losses sustained by many as a result thereof, it was gratifying to find such good material on the benches.

A popular award was the Forrest Medal to the magnificent *Shortia uniflora grandiflora* exhibited by Mr. Harold Esslemont. Mr. F. G. Sutherland was well to the fore in the prize list with some fine exhibits in many classes and there was a very good representative show from the garden of Mrs. Cozens-Hardy.

In Section II, the Bronze Medal went to the County Representative, Dr. Stirling. This award bears out what we have often said—beginners are to be encouraged! Dr. Stirling is a comparative newcomer to rock-gardening and is to be congratulated on his achievement after such a short period of time.

There were two excellent exhibits of plants, one from the Cruickshank Botanical Gardens and the other from the North of Scotland College of Agriculture. The following Trade exhibitors had stalls: Messrs. Edrom Nurseries, Mrs. McMurtrie, Messrs. Wm. Smith & Sons, and Lt.-Colonel Stitt.

Class 46—Cut Flowers for Home Decoration—had a large entry this year, and was the subject of much discussion among the general public who visited the Show. Due to its popularity, we propose to enlarge this class in the 1957 Show, which incidentally is fixed for May 9th and 10th. Members please note these dates!

W. MITCHELL, Lt.-Col., *Hon. Show Secretary.*

### EDINBURGH

THE 1956 Edinburgh Show was held in the Music Hall on 8th to 10th May 1956. It was to have been opened by the Hon. David Bowes-Lyon, V.M.H., President of the Royal Horticultural Society, but unfortunately illness prevented him from coming. The Earl of Wemyss was to have introduced the Scottish Rhododendron Show which was also "on," and so he kindly combined the two functions, also introducing Lady Elphinstone, who presented the Trophies and Medals for both Shows.

The George Forrest Medal was awarded to *Paraquilegia anemonoides*, shown by Major and Mrs. W. G. Knox Finlay. This was a



fine pan containing two quite distinct forms of this delicate and beautiful little plant which is so tricky to grow and even more difficult to flower well. The K. C. Corsar Trophy was also gained by Major and Mrs. Finlay with this plant and five others : *Rubus arcticus*, *Cassiope wardii*, *Corydalis cashmeriana*, *Primula tsariensis*, and *P. reidii* var. *williamsii*.

The Carnethy Medal was won by Major-General and Mrs. Murray-Lyon with three fine pans of *Phyllodoce empetrifomis*, *Andromeda polifolia grandiflora minima*, and *Loiseleuria procumbens*.

The Boonslie Cup for a miniature garden was won by Mrs. Corsar and the entry in this class was good, though this was a new award. The Kilbryde Cup for a floral decoration of the flowers and foliage of rock plants was won by Mrs. R. B. Cormack.

The Club's Bronze Medal for the highest number of points in Section II was won by Mrs. N. G. Murphy—by a considerable margin—with a wide selection of good plants. The corresponding award in Section I, another new Trophy, the Reid Rose Bowl, presented by Mr. A. D. Reid, who on numerous occasions in the past "swept the boards," was won in a very close competition by Major-General and Mrs. Murray-Lyon. The Archibald Rose Bowl for three plants of easy cultivation and grown in the open was won by Mrs. M. G. Rose. The Cooper Bhutan Drinking Cup for the best *Primula* species was won by Jack Drake with *Primula suffrutescens*—a well-flowered pan of a species that is normally rather difficult to flower.

Large Gold Medals were awarded to Mr. Jack Drake, for a collection of plants in pots, which included an incredible plant of *Cassiope lycopodioides* about two feet in diameter, and some very good *Androsaces*, to Messrs. Bannatyne & Jackson for a built-up rock garden which was very colourful with polyanthus and a lot of good small rock plants ; to Messrs. Thomas Harper & Sons for a floral display of Narcissi and Tulips ; and a Gold Medal to Mr. James Robb for a beautifully-constructed little rock garden which was a lesson in rock-garden construction in itself. It was well clothed with small rock plants and had, as a focal point, a beautiful specimen of *Prunus tenella gessleriana*.

Though it was not a Trade Stand, a Large Gold Medal was awarded to the National Cactus and Succulent Society for what was easily the finest display they have yet put up. It consisted of two main "wings," both built-up "habitat-scenes," one of cacti and the other of succulents. These were joined, a little unhappily, in the writer's view, by a display of cacti and succulents as house plants in pots. The plants were, as we have come to expect from this organisation, superb specimens beautifully grown and many in full flower—together a really notable display.

The standard of the exhibits in the competitive classes was, as usual, high, but there were some rather startling changes, such as the tiny entry in the classes for Asiatic *Primulas*. This was almost

certainly a reflection of the nearly complete wiping-out of these plants by the phenomenal conditions of the summer of 1955, and it reduced to a total of eight or nine pans two classes which would normally display about forty or more, and which were always one of the finest features of the Show. Two other classes which had nearly vanished were the "New, rare or difficult"—here the reason is more difficult to find. European Primulas were very good, though not numerous, and the Saxifrage classes were also rather bare and some of those shown were exhibiting signs of last summer's sun-scorch, which played havoc with the Kabschia classes in the Penicuik and other early shows. Drabas and Androsaces, by contrast, were better than usual; they are two groups which are *not* a strong point of the S.R.G.C. There were several really good pans of Gentians and the classes for Native Plants were well supported, there being several good pans of *Primula scotica* and a really fine pan of *Sax. granulata* shown by Dr. and Mrs. Simson Hall.

There were good entries in the classes for Sempervivums and Sedums, all the exhibits being in fine condition and well-grown, while for a change the Rhododendron classes were well supported. The last few Shows have suffered in these classes from disastrous frosts, but this year they escaped with excellent results. Dr. Morison brought a most notable plant of *Rhododendron williamsianum* in very full flower and looking a picture of health, and Mr. R. B. Cooke showed a *Rh. japonicum* var. which was in such lavish bloom that no leaves could be seen at first sight.

The conifer and dwarf-shrub classes also attracted good entries and, in general, the Ericaceae seemed to be in unusually good condition and flower. The Bulb classes were very strong this year with a wide range, probably having benefited from last summer's baking. These classes, incidentally, gave rise to a very large amount of discussion and, at times, argument over nomenclature and the differences between "close species." This difficulty is increasing steadily as there are so many hybrids, both intentional and unintentional, appearing on the market and the show bench. To add to the difficulty many Tulipa, Narcissus and Fritillaria species are naturally variable, so that the situation is becoming really complicated.

Perhaps the best and most encouraging feature of the Show was that Section II, that constant worry of Show Secretaries, was larger than ever before, and that the standard was extremely good. When a Show has a good "Novice" entry, it has prospects of good "Open" entries in future years, but generally the difficulty is to get members to enter the Section II classes. Once they do, they usually continue to show, but the problem is to get them to start, and without good competitive classes there can be no Show.

Some very interesting plants were shown in Section III, particularly the new plants raised from seed from Patagonia by Mrs. Tweedie. In this section, too, was a plant of *Meconopsis torquata*, just coming into flower for only the second or third time in Britain. This appallingly

difficult plant was shown in beautiful condition by Major and Mrs. Finlay, a very real and noteworthy achievement.

The other part of Section III was in the care of Dr. Duncan Morison and consisted of a very fine display of paintings and photographs of plants of interest. Dr. Morison and his helpers had made a most interesting and artistic exhibit of them in cases most kindly lent to the Club by H.M. Office of Works.

The entries in Section IV, which caters for plants and flowers which cannot be accurately called Rock Garden, Woodland or Bog Plants, were good. Most classes had good numbers of entries of good quality.

The Trade gave us very strong support this year, for in addition to those mentioned in the list of Awards, Lt.-Colonel Stitt showed a big range of coloured and double Primroses, including those rarities "Hose-in-Hose" and "Jackanapes." He gained a Certificate of Merit for this display.

We were glad to see that at last Messrs. James Laurie & Sons managed to get to the Show. A variety of difficulties have prevented them from "making it" in past years and we were most interested to see this exhibit which had a backing of some very good flowering shrubs, with a really striking plant of *Erica arborea alpina*, the branches of which were completely smothered in flourish. In front of this they had a good selection of Saxifrages, Phloxes and other small rock plants.

We also welcomed a relatively new firm in Mr. J. R. Ponton, Pentland Nurseries, Colinton, who showed a good range of Primulas, Auriculas, Phloxes and suchlike rock plants which must form the backbone of any collection.

The Edrom Nurseries had one stand entirely confined to the two strains of Polyanthus that they grow—they both are magnificent—and their scent brought back memories of pre-war Club Shows where the big Polyanthus classes used to scent the whole hall. Their other stand used some of the finest varieties of these same polyanthus combined with azaleas and a good range of dwarf bulbs.

Another staunch supporter of the Club's Shows from the earliest days is Mrs. Laing of Hawick who, as usual, showed us those really reliable and lovely plants that all rock gardens must have, Gentians, Saxifrages, the little dwarf scree plants, Violas, Potentillas and a range of good colours of Aubrietia, this last a curious plant which is beloved of the professional garden-constructor, and which so often ramps wildly, but fairly often just sulks and then fades away, as it does in the writer's garden.

Finally, we had our accustomed support from Messrs. Wm. Brown Ltd., who showed us a wide range of books on gardening, botany and related topics. Messrs. Ransomes Sims & Jefferies Ltd. made a welcome return after years in which the restriction of supplies precluded any showing of their products which aid so much in the mechanisation of the "hard-work" side of gardening. Messrs. James Thomson Ltd.

let us examine their range of sands, gravels and stone, as well as screening and the like, while Floral Handicrafts exhibited a variety of brooches made by disabled and handicapped labour. Lastly we had a stand by Grant of West Calder (who used to be known to us as Lavex Ltd.) displaying the range of Sesame products and backed by a floral display which bore clear testimony to their quality. Mr. Grant's plants were rivalled only in their class by the platform decoration so kindly carried out for us by the Edinburgh Corporation Parks Department, to whom we are most grateful.

Two demonstrations of the construction of Peat Walls using burning-peat blocks were given by Mr. Charles Walker, with a commentary by the writer, and these gave rise to a large number of enquiries and interest. Mr. David Livingstone gave us one of his fascinating talks on "Plants from the Show Benches" on Wednesday evening, which was well attended and gave rise to a good discussion. The weather was kind for the Show and the "gates" good, and altogether this was a most successful Show.

HENRY TOD

### THE RHODODENDRON SHOW

THERE WAS a large entry in the Rhododendron Section under the aegis of the National Trust for Scotland. The blooms were of a high standard and classes were well-filled. Peculiarly enough the National Trust for Scotland's Rhododendron Trophy, which is awarded on a pointage basis for the most successful competitor, was won jointly by the Earl and Countess of Stair and the Gibson family, Glenarn, Rhu.

R. H. HOOD,  
*Hon. Show Secretary, Edinburgh.*

### DUNFERMLINE

STANDARD of exhibits was again high in the Music Pavilion on 1st June.

The George Forrest Medal "for the most meritorious rock plant or pan of rock plants in the Show" was awarded to a marvellous pan of *Calceolaria darwinii* grown by Mrs. L. C. Boyd-Harvey from collected seed and showing a distinct range of colour markings. Mrs. Boyd-Harvey was also awarded the Mrs. W. B. Robertson Cup for the "best three pans of distinct genera" in Section I, while the Carnegie (Dunfermline) Trust Trophy for most points in this section was won by General and Mrs. Murray-Lyon. The Club's Bronze Medal, for most points in Section II, was won by Mr. Carstairs of East Wemyss after keen competition with Mr. A. Duncan of Newport. In Section IV (confined to Fife members) Mrs. A. W. Wilson won the Institute of Quarrying Quaich awarded for most points. Mrs. Boyd-Harvey's

pan of *Calceolaria darwinii* was adjudged best plant in Section I; *Wahlenbergia serpyllifolia* major—shown by Mr. Carstairs—best plant in Section II; and a *Lewisia hybrid*, of Mrs. Wilson, the best in Section IV.

A number of other very fine plants caught the eye and stood out as worthy of mention. General Murray-Lyon had a particularly interesting exhibit of three very charming hardy terrestrial orchids which we hope will be seen again at shows next year.

Two handsome specimen plants of *Dianthus arvernensis* and *D. "La Bourbrille"*—shown by Mr. T. W. Anderson—aroused general admiration, as did fine specimens of *Campanula aucheri*, *Penstemon menziesii*, *Boykinia jamesii*, and *Wahlenbergia pumilio*.

In Trade exhibits a Large Gold Medal was awarded to Maryfield Nurseries, Leslie, for a stand in which groups of *Nomocharis mairei*, *Jasminum parkeri*, *Berberis corallina compacta*, and *Dianthus "Bombadier"* and *"Musalae"* stood out especially among many other "quality" plants. Colonel Stitt of Blairgowrie was awarded a Gold Medal for a fine stand containing plants of *Primula sherriffae*, *Lewisia trevosiana*, *Kalmia angustifolia*, and *Menziesia ciliicalyx*. H. T. Macpherson of Dunfermline had a most interesting display of all books useful to those interested in any branch of gardening, and The Fife Redstone Quarry Co. had an exhibit of stone chips in all grades and sizes suited to scree and other garden purposes.

Entries from schools were strong as usual and showed (both in flower paintings and miniature gardens) a wide range of attainment. Some of the best miniature gardens could have held their own among seniors in this class in most shows. Unfortunately, at the other end of the scale, it was very obvious that the owners of some "hadn't a clue."

## DUNDEE

13th-14th June

THE WEATHER clerk dealt none too kindly with Dundee members this year in that, after a protracted drought before the show which made life rather difficult for exhibitors, he produced abundant rain during the show, thus deterring less enthusiastic members of the show-visiting public. At any rate the Marryat Hall did not appear to be so thronged as it was two years ago at Dundee's previous show.

Exhibitors in the area appear to have found the 'trial runs' afforded by their County Representative's 'Preparing for Show' meetings, at which plants are staged and discussed, very informative and helpful judging by the very high standards seen in staging and grooming. It was also evident that they had taken full opportunity of the scope afforded in each class as very few items were duplicated and so visitors were able to enjoy a very widely representative show.

The George Forrest Memorial Medal for the most meritorious pan of rock plants was awarded to Major George Sherriff for his entry of

four fine plants of *Primula kingii*. This exhibit also received a Cultural Commendation from the Joint Rock Garden Plant Committee who attended the show. Other awards included an Award of Merit to Major Sherriff for *Primula chumbiensis* and to Mr. and Mrs. Renton for *Lilium* (formerly *Nomocharis*) *oxypetalum* var. *insigne* and a Cultural Commendation to Mr. Stewart Mitchell for *Phyteuma comosum*.

The Alexander Caird Trophy for six pans of rock plants was awarded to Mr. J. C. Weir of St. Andrews whose exhibits included *Penstemon pinifolius* and *Aquilegia bertolonii*. Other fine plants in this class included *Orchis mascula* and *Linum arboreum*. The Dundas Quaich for three pans was won by David J. Mowat whose exhibits included *Phyteuma comosum*.

Classes 3 and 4 for rare, new and difficult plants are always interesting and here the President of the Club showed a very fine pan of *Ceanothus griseus* var. *horizontalis*, *Leptospermum nanum*, *Amitostigma Keiskii* and a *Billardiera* species with creamy tubular flowers. *Polygonatum Hookeri* and *Thymus subspinosum* were also shown.

A splendid pan of *Linnaea borealis* was shown in the native classes, where the prize winners included *Vaccinium oxycoccus* and *Orchis* spp. The silver foliage class attracted *Salvia argentea alpina*, *Andryala aghardii* and *Helichrysum virgineum* and in the cushion class there appeared the seldom seen *Arenaria nevadensis*. Saxifrages and Primulas found the droughty Spring rather trying and were not so well represented as is usual at a June show, but a very fine *Saxifraga norvegica* (Cotyledon group) was shown and the wonderful condition of the *Primulas kingii* and *chumbiensis* already mentioned, *P. Cawdoriana* and *P. polyneura* showed that the difficulties of the season had been overcome at Ascreavie. Mr. and Mrs. Renton showed excellent plants of the recently introduced *P. Reidii* var. *Williamsii* (PSW 3535). *P. nutans* and *P. alpicola* also appeared.

Class 17 included a robust *Dodecatheon* and the *Ranunculaceae* classes produced, *inter alia*, *Aquilegia bertolonii*, *A. alpina*, *A. glandulosa*, *A. ecalcarata*, *Anemone lesseri*, a yellow form of *Delphinium nudicaule* and *D. brunonianum*. The well supported Iris classes had excellent specimens of *I. gracilipes* and *I. innominata*. Mr. J. B. Russell showed a very fine form of *Nomocharis mairei* in Class 23 and the bulb and corm classes, brought in *Allium beesianum* and *Rhodohypoxis* in variety, including a very good white form shown by Mr. Stewart Mitchell, and the pink "Margaret Rose."

The composite classes were well contested and some brave exhibitors brought in magnificent *Celmisias*. Also shown were *Erigeron leiomerus* and *Helichrysum marginatum*. The *Dianthus*es, as to be expected at a June show, were very good and included *D. callizonus* and a richly coloured *D. neglectus*. It was a little surprising to find the *Lewisias* so well represented, as the show was rather late for their high season. Especially noteworthy was a large plant of *L. trevosiana*.

*Ramonda myconi* var. "Wisley Rose" was shown in splendid condition in Class 33, and Class 38 brought in four very good plants of

*Phyteuma comosum*—one of the few repeated items on the show benches—and *Wahlenbergia pumilio*. Mr. and Mrs. T. A. Stuart showed *Calceolaria tenella* in the classes for Scrophulariaceae—not, I imagine, an easy plant to grow in Pitlochry.

In the various shrub and dwarf tree classes we saw an excellent *Rhododendron macrostemon*, *Kalmia caroliniana nana*, *Pseudotsuga douglasii* var. *fletcheriana* and the little known *Thymus membranaceus*. Class 58 for plants not eligible for other classes brought in a good *Boykinia jamesii* and *Talinum okanagense*.

Section 2 was well supported—a very healthy omen for future Dundee shows—with excellent exhibits and competition for the Bronze Medal was close. The winner was Mr. J. McKay of Forfar, whose exhibits included *Draba rigida* (cushion class) and *Incarvillea delavayi*. One of the finest plants in the section was Miss Stirling's *Nomocharis aperta*. Other notable plants were *Primula wardii*, *Androsace villosa*—*A. sarmentosa*, a good orange *Papaver alpinum*, *Celsia acaulis* x *Verbascum*, a deep magenta *Daboecia* hybrid, *Heuchera micrantha* and Mr. Ritchie's sempervivums and sedums exhibited in hyper-tufa pans made according to the recipe given in Vol. 17 of the *Club Journal*. A spectacular specimen of the rat's tail cactus, *Aporocactus flagelliformis* was shown in the cactus classes.

In Section 3, Lady Maitland was awarded a Certificate of Merit for a well staged display of cut flowering shrubs which included *Davidia involucrata*, *Syringa adamiana*, *Kolkwitsia amabilis*, *Paeonia delavayi*, *P. lutea* and various natural Paeony hybrids.

Special awards for trade stands included a Large Gold Medal to Maryfield Nurseries, Leslie, and a Gold Medal to Colonel Stitt, who both showed Built-up Rock Gardens. Maryfield Nurseries showed a good selection of dwarf Dianthus, *Primula nutans*, *Campanula aucheri*, *Ourisia crosbyi* and *Cypripedium reginae*. Colonel Stitt displayed very fine brooms, *Daboecia cantabrica*, *Lewisia cotyledon* hybrids and *Sisyrinchium odoratissimum*. Rock garden plants in pans were displayed by Jack Drake, Aviemore, to whom a Large Gold Medal was awarded, and by Edrom Nurseries, Coldingham, who received a Gold Medal. The former's exhibits included hybrids of *Nomocharis mairei*, *N. saluenensis* and *N. aperta*, *Lewisia* in variety, *Delphinium menziesii*, *Primula reidii*, *P. reptans*, *P. eburnea* and very robust plants of *P. cawdoriana*. Edrom Nurseries showed *Haberlea rhodopensis*, *Tulipa persica*, *Meconopsis simplicifolia*, *Primula involucrata*, *P. waltoni*, *P. secundiflora* and *P. reidii* var. *williamsii*. Lauries of Dundee showed *Acers*, *Cytisus purpureus incarnatus*, azaleas, hybrid rhododendrons and candelabra primulas, for which they received a Certificate of Merit.

Grants of West Calder displayed a comprehensive range of composts and horticultural sand of excellent quality, and Menzies' Bookstall staged a splendid selection of publications to cater for all gardening tastes.

## MIDLOTHIAN and PEEBLES SHIRE DISTRICT

10th March, 1956

FOR THE first time since this Show started, it was held in really lovely spring weather, mild and sunny, which made a very considerable change !

The support for the Show was most encouraging, and entries are increasing each year. At the first Show there were seven competitors with 18 entries and a total of 26 pans on the bench ; this year the figures had risen to 13, 50, and 80 respectively. The increase was, unfortunately, mostly in the Open Section, but this was probably largely due to the fact that Midlothian had been frozen hard until just a few days before the Show and everything was very late.

The entries were again of a very good standard, though most of the Kabschias showed signs of damage from last summer's very abnormal sun and heat—with two exceptions which will be mentioned later. The bulb classes were good, crocuses and iris being particularly notable. The lateness of the season prevented the appearance of any of the really early tulips, and last year's weather undoubtedly was the cause of the very small number of Asiatic Primulas. There were several good plants of *Cyclamen coum*, notably the one shown by the President, which was really fine. He also had rather a remarkable form of *Rhododendron moupinense* which at six or seven years old is still quite dwarf, or more accurately, prostrate, while flowering very freely.

Two Trophies have been put up for this Show. The first, the Midlothian Vase, is awarded for the best plant in the Show by the Show Secretary, and was won for the first time by Mrs. Boyd-Harvey for a really remarkable plant of *Saxifraga burseriana crenata*. This was about six or more inches across and completely covered with flowers. Its companion in Class 15 for two pans of *Saxifraga* was an almost equally large plant of *Saxifraga x jenkinsae* which, however, was only partly out. These two most definitely did not show signs of sun-scorch.

The second trophy, the Midlothian Bowl, has been presented by Dr. Mary Tod to the competitor gaining the highest number of points in the Show. This was won by Dr. and Mrs. Tod this year.

This year's judge was Mr. Evans of the R.B.G., who also judged the Penicuik Society's Bulb Show which made a very good display. There was a very good attendance of members at the Show and our exhibits attracted a lot of interest from the members of our host society.

As usual, everything was made very smooth and easy for the writer by the ladies of the Penicuik Society and altogether it was a very happy and pleasant occasion.

HENRY TOD, *C.R. and District Show Secretary.*



## County Activities

### ABERDEENSHIRE AND KINCARDINESHIRE

**LECTURES :** Five meetings were held last session and all were well attended. We were indebted to Mr. and Mrs. J. Renton, Mr. D. Livingstone, Dr. E. Laing, Mr. R. S. Masterton and Mr. J. Aitken for their informative talks and for the beautiful coloured films and slides with which these were illustrated.

**GARDEN VISITS :** On the 16th May members were the guests of Colonel J. and Mrs. Barclay-Milne at Kinaldie. A new dwarf shrub garden with azaleas, heaths and heathers, daphnes, euphorbias and veronicas attracted much attention. *Podophyllum emodii* was in flower by the side of a pond at the ends of which willows were beautifully sited. Elsewhere *Viburnum carlesii* and *Spiraea arguta* and, in the rock garden daphnes and *Gentiana verna angulosa* were in full bloom.

On the 3rd June, by invitation of Mr. and Mrs. J. Renton, members visited Branklyn—a mecca for rock garden enthusiasts. From the wonderful collection in the garden it is difficult to pick out species for special mention, but all will long remember the splashes of colour of the azaleas, the delicate beauty of *Magnolia soulangiana* in flower, and the lovely *Nomocharis*. Our pilgrimage was well worth while !

There was an attendance of over 80 on both these visits. To Colonel and Mrs. Barclay-Milne and to Mr. and Mrs. Renton we are deeply grateful for the privilege of visiting their gardens and for their further generosity in providing such sumptuous refreshment.

On Thursday, 25th October, Major G. Knox Finlay will speak on "Autumn Colour at Keillour," illustrating his talk with coloured slides.

On Thursday, 24th January 1957, Dr. H. R. Fletcher will give a talk on "The Rock Garden at Wisley." The November meeting still remains to be arranged.

J. STIRLING, C.R.

### ANGUS

OUR WINTER session started on 7th November with an illustrated talk by Mr. R. S. Masterton, M.R.C.V.S., on "Alpines and their Propagation." Colour transparencies were shown with close-ups of cuttings, etc. Major and Mrs. A. Walmsley came on 5th December with colour slides of their garden in Wigtownshire. Here interest lay in the enterprising variety of plants and a fine discussion followed this lecture. A members' transparency night on 9th January was an undoubted success, a big number of members brought transparencies and told us about the plants shown. Mr. David Livingstone on 6th February spoke about "Plants for the Small Rock Garden" in the able way one would expect from his writings, and colour slides illustrated this lecture also. A subject that appealed to members very much was Dr. James

Davidson's lecture on 5th March on "Plant Hunting in the French Alps," well illustrated by his own colour slides. The winter session was completed by our usual members' show on 2nd April, when we were fortunate again to have Mr. J. L. Mowat as Judge and Commentator.

The summer outings began with a visit to the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, linked with a visit to our Edinburgh Show on 9th May. This was not very well supported, although Garden and Show were each worth the journey on their own.

We went to Keillour on 19th May, where there was the usual feast of interesting plants, although the full burst of colour was yet to come. A few names at random from the host seen might be mentioned: *Leiophyllum buxifolium prostratum* just starting its dainty show, *Glaucidium palmatum* really magnificent, with *Schizocodon soldanelloides* near at hand, *Corydalis cashmeriana* in a drift a few yards wide, a picture with *Magnolia stellata* behind, lovely *Anemone alpina sulphurea*, and *Meconopsis cookiana* with its untidy petals. Most amazing to me was *Gentiana pyrenaica* in close clumps of bloom, a rather rare gentian, seen at its best.

Our St. Andrews visit this year on 26th May included Balgove, Priory Acres and the University Botanic Gardens. Balgove had its usual interest to the plantsman with its variety. *Lewisia*s are always a feature, *Androsace sarmentosa chumbyi* and *A. s. watkinsii* were lovely, *Pieris forrestii* with its amazing new foliage ablaze drew attention, and a new one to most of us was dainty *Sisyrinchium filifolium*. Priory Acres we visited for the first time and found a delightful display of colour massing of the more usual rock garden plants, arranged by an artist, as of course Mrs. Tatton is. A large close mass of *Lithospermum prostratum* "Heavenly Blue," the result of skilful pruning, was a feature at one part.

The University Botanic Gardens were most attractive for all; we were interested to inspect the new Heath Garden west of the Bute Buildings, and the work in progress at Dyer's Brae—the new acquisition on the south where tender plants thrive on terraces, and a peat and water garden is being made at its lowest part.

S. M., C.R.

### ARGYLL and BUTE

DURING THE winter five meetings were held in the area. Three lectures in Dunoon attracted good audiences of members and of the public when Major-General D. M. Murray-Lyon talked on "Rock Gardening," Mr. E. Darling on "The West Coast Rock Garden," and Miss M. Wilson showed "The Propagation of Alpines." In May an excursion of Bute and Cowal members visited the gardens of Mr. Darling in Port Glasgow and of Mr. Crow at Kilmacolm. An enjoyable lecture by Mrs. Boyd-Harvey on "Growing Mountain Plants" was arranged

at Ardrishaig, in conjunction with the Ardrishaig Horticultural Society after their Spring Bulb Show.

It is hoped to have small displays at various Flower Shows during the autumn, when also a "Plant Exchange" has been arranged. Lectures will be held during the winter in Oban and in Dunoon, the programme being as follows :—

September 19th : "Alpines at Home and Abroad," by Dr. James Davidson of West Linton.

October 30th : "Primulas and Auriculas," by Dr. R. B. Pike, Millport.

November 27th : "Miniature Gardening," by Mrs. J. J. Boyd-Harvey, Dirleton.

January 29th : "The Rock Garden and Peat Garden at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh," by Dr. H. R. Fletcher, Edinburgh.

February 26th : "Gentians," by Mr. D. Wilkie, Edinburgh.

March 26th :

All these lectures will be illustrated by slides, chiefly in colour. In April a "Bring and Buy" sale in a member's garden is planned.

Thanks are due to the lecturers, garden owners and all the many helpers who have made the year such a success.

J. F. MCGARVA, C.R.

## AYRSHIRE

THE FIRST meeting was held at Auchincruive where practical demonstrations of propagating in all its forms, and a lecture on the same subject, by Dr. Dovaston, brought us right up to date and was very much enjoyed by us all. Dr. Dovaston was assisted during the evening by his secretary, Miss Wilson, who is also a member of the Club, and the evening was rounded-off by a delicious tea.

In November Mr. Walls gave us a lecture on "Bulbs for the Rock Garden" and brought with him many bulbs in flower. This was a most interesting and instructive lecture.

In December we had a lecture on "Rhododendrons for the Rock Garden" by Mr. Jim Russell of Sunningdale. He illustrated this with lovely coloured slides and told us of planting hazards on Gigha and other mountainous gardens in Argyllshire. Some of the pictures were also of his lovely garden in Surrey.

In February Dr. Dovaston gave us a talk on primulas. His first slide showed us the very wide distribution of this family all over the world. There are primula species to be found in sub-tropical regions and in high altitudes where they survive bitter winters. Then we were shown many coloured slides of this big genus and its sub-divisions.

At our March meeting we showed coloured slides from the S.R.G.C. library of spring flowers. Several members spoke about the plants they grew and questions were asked and answered.

On 16th May we had a wonderful day with Major and Mrs. Walmsley at Culderry House, Garlieston. Their garden was lovely and full of treasures, all looking so happy in their lovely surroundings. After tea we went on to Corsewall to see the lovely Rhododendrons there. Colonel and Mrs. Carrick Buchanan welcomed us and took us through the Rhododendrons, some of them reaching the size of forest trees and many covered with blossom, on each side of the path. This was truly a day to remember always.

We had two days in Perthshire, first with Mr. and Mrs. Renton at Branklyn, and second at Keillour Castle with Major and Mrs. Knox Finlay. Both gardens are quite wonderful, though very different. To try and describe all the wonders that we saw would fill this magazine, so I cannot start to enumerate them all. It was a marvellous privilege to see these two gardens, and all who can should try to do so.

We held a Bring and Buy Sale at Doonholm, Ayr, by kind permission of Colonel and Mrs. Norman Kennedy. At this we realised enough money to see us through next year. Many thanks to all who so kindly supported this effort. The Doonholm garden was, as usual, looking quite lovely, and our kind host and hostess rounded off the evening with a hospitable cup of tea.

Our Annual General Meeting was held in Young's Tea Rooms on 4th June, when a small number of Members attended and suggestions for next season's meetings were made.

Our first meeting will be on 2nd October, when Mr. Wilkie of the Edinburgh Botanic Garden will talk to us on Gentians.

MARY S. FINDLAY, C.R.

### BERWICKSHIRE

THE COUNTY GROUP held a Bring and Buy Sale in April.

In May a number of members visited the Edrom Nurseries of the Misses Logan Hume. As always Edrom Nurseries were full of interest. Members saw a very fine collection of plants and also many original and useful methods of propagation and cultivation. It was a most enjoyable visit.

J. G. W. HENDRIE, C.R.

### CAITHNESS, SUTHERLAND, ORKNEY and SHETLAND

ON 28TH OCTOBER an Autumn Meeting was held at which plants and cuttings were exchanged.

On 25th January at the Winter Meeting the main item of the evening was Plant Discussion. Later the members present considered the com-

ing Highland Show at Inverness and the provision of helpers at the Club stand.

On 21st April Major-General Murray-Lyon gave an exceedingly interesting lecture on "Rock Garden Construction," followed by "Plants for the Different Months of the Year." This was a most instructive evening which was much enjoyed by members present.

On 14th May twenty-two members visited the garden of Mrs. and Miss Davidson at Buckies, where a Sale of Cuttings was held to raise funds towards lecture expenses.

It is intended to hold another Autumn Meeting in October, when we hope to enrol more new members.

MRS. CHRISTINE MACDONALD, C.R.

### DUNBARTON, GLASGOW and RENFREWSHIRE

LAST WINTER the attendance was well over the hundred mark on several occasions. To defray expenses, plants given by many members averaged about £10 for each of the seven monthly meetings. With this money the branch paid the rental of the room £22, and purchased a new projector and screen costing some £60.

The success of these meetings is due largely to the excellence of the talks, illustrated in many cases by coloured slides, and given by Mr. Stewart A. Howat of Bannatyne & Jackson, Dr. James Davidson of West Linton, Professor G. Pontecorvo of Glasgow University, Mr. J. F. A. Gibson of Glenarn, Rhu, Mr. Alex. D. Reid, M.B.E., of Edinburgh, Mrs. Marion Henderson of Troon, and Mr. Alfred Evans of Edinburgh Botanic Garden.

The outings to gardens took place as arranged and on each occasion we were blessed with good weather. The gardens visited were at Logan House, Stranraer, owned by R. O. Hambro, Esq., the gardens of Mr. and Mrs. MacFarland and Mr. and Mrs. W. Bannatyne in Busby, and the gardens of Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Renton (Branklyn) and Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Knox Finlay (Keillour Castle), Perthshire. To the owners of these lovely gardens we give sincere thanks and appreciation for a great privilege.

The arrangements for next winter session are complete. The first meeting takes place on Monday, 1st October 1956, and we are fortunate in having our genial President, Major-General Murray-Lyon, to set the ball rolling. Circulars giving all particulars for the winter session will be posted to members by their county representatives a fortnight before the opening meeting.

E. DARLING, C.R.

### EAST LoTHIAN

THE SEASON began in October with a lecture on collecting and storing seeds of rock garden plants. This was well timed to remind those

members with a surplus harvest from good plants of their duty to the Club's Seed Exchange. In November members were shown photographs taken in a famous Wigtownshire garden, and were thus introduced to a whole range of unfamiliar plants. Some of us try to grow them in our drier climate and less acid soil, but we cannot grow and flower them with the same gay abandon as they do in the gentler West.

East Lothian has gradually been reaching the stage when it no longer has to depend entirely on the kindness of visiting lecturers for its winter programme. Several members have colour photography as a parallel hobby to rock gardening, and one meeting each year is given up to an exhibition of their slides. Members have now lost their diffidence about standing up in public to give the benefit of their experiences to fellow members, and the discussions last season were particularly lively. One of the subjects discussed was the building of a rock garden by excavating down instead of building up. All books insist on the importance of good drainage, but the drought of summer 1955 and the natural porosity of so much East Lothian soil showed dramatically that one can have too much of a good thing. Members spoke of the advantages of rock gardens below ground level in wind-swept coastal districts, and others warned against the danger of forming frost pockets. Another subject discussed was the making of troughs for miniature gardens sufficiently light in weight for taking to shows and lifting on to the bench. The trough shown was made of sand, peat and cement in equal quantities. Other materials which members suggested for trial included sawdust, vermiculite, pumice stone, and foam slag. Glass wool was suggested for reinforcing the mixture.

A last minute cancellation of a lecture because of illness gave one of our youngest members the opportunity of fulfilling her life-long ambition of becoming a lecturer. Although not much more than sixteen, she is quite an experienced grower and exhibitor, and what she had to say about the coloured slides taken by her father in the family garden was both useful and interesting.

There was the usual interchange of garden visits during the summer, both officially and privately arranged. An outstanding event was the visit to our President's garden in Edinburgh. This is literally no larger than a considerable number of pocket handkerchiefs, and ought to be seen by anybody who says: "Oh no, I haven't really enough space for a rockery." It also gives food for thought to those other types who, searching for elbow room, are everlastingly extending their rock gardens until they attain a size too great for one pair of hands to manage. There is no room in this garden for encroachers, rampagers or the second-rate. An interesting corner is given up to Scottish native plants, of which *Dryas octopetala* received the R.H.S. Award of Merit during the year, and *Loiseleuria procumbens* received a Cultural Commendation. The President has a dislike for cloches and panes of glass in the garden, so any plants which need overhead protection are housed in frames or in his small alpine house. In the frame-yard is also the tidiest of potting sheds, with bins, canisters and bottles of soil

mixtures and plant medicines. Among other tasty delicatessen noticed were dried seaweed and shredded chamois leather.

During the year, plants from East Lothian gardens have appeared at a number of shows in other parts of Scotland. Two Forrest Medals have come to the County since the beginning of the Club Year. The winning plants were *Omphalodes luciliae* at Haddington and *Calceolaria darwinii* at Dunfermline. The beautiful specimen of *Omphalodes* was grown in a mortar rubble and leaf-mould scree facing south-west. An onlooker at its replanting after the show noticed that some of the scree material underneath the plant was red and white. Could it be lobster shells? The same plant appeared again at the Edinburgh show the following April, once more in full flower. One would expect a plant which is so generous with its flowers over so long a period to bloom itself to death, but stories are told of specimens which are more than twenty years old. The grower of *Calceolaria darwinii* says that the plants did not really receive any special cultivation. They were thought to be some sort of Patagonian weed lifted from a seed-pan of *Primula decipiens*. They were dibbled into a sandy scree where they remained exposed to all the hazards of winter. It was only when a friend identified them the following spring that books were read in order to find out how they ought to have been cultivated.

(Report of the Second International Conference. On page 21 :

"I am always frightened to water. Even when we have a great drought I am terrified of watering those plants, because I think you sometimes finish them off." And on page 198 of the same book : ". . . cool conditions and plenty of moisture while growing ; in fact drought and aphids are probably the major difficulties in their cultivation.")

Other principle prizes won by East Lothian members were :

HADDINGTON SHOW : The East Lothian Trophy, The Peel Trophy, The Club's Bronze Medal, The East Lothian Cup.

PENICUIK SHOW : The Midlothian Vase.

DUNFERMLINE SHOW : The Mrs. W. B. Robertson Trophy.

We are now all wondering what will be the effect of holding the Autumn Show at North Berwick instead of Haddington. It is hoped that the Show will bring forward the advantages of membership to holiday visitors from far afield. Intending exhibitors from other counties are booking hotel accommodation, thus making the show an excellent excuse for a week-end by the sea.

L. C. B. H. for C. NISBET, C.R.

## FIFE—EAST

THE SPEAKER on Friday, 11th November, was Mr. David Livingstone, and his subject "Plants for the Small Rock Garden." Mr. Livingstone excels on this subject, which was illustrated with appropriate slides, and owners of small and larger rock gardens alike listened with keen interest. A lively discussion followed.

On 2nd December came "Members' Night," when members showed colour transparencies taken either in their own gardens or when on holiday abroad. This most interesting item was greatly enjoyed by all present. A "Brains Trust" panel was then appointed and plied with questions which brought out some instructive and useful discussion.

On 3rd February Mr. John Renton, C.B.E., was to have shown his beautiful "Colour Film of the Garden at Branklyn, Perth." Unfortunately wintry conditions prevailed and Mr. Renton's talk was postponed until 6th April, when film and talk were much enjoyed by a very enthusiastic group of members. We are more than grateful to Dr. D. Osborne for filling, at an hour's notice, the vacancy caused by the postponement of Mr. Renton's film. Dr. Osborne's beautiful coloured slides of "Wayside Wild Flowers" on journeyings between the east and west coasts of the United States aroused great enthusiasm and brought warm thanks.

Friday, 2nd March, was given over to our ever-popular "Judging Competition," when a large number of plants, many of them of very high standard, were on view. As usual members took part in the "judging" with great keenness, and animated questioning and discussion followed. In May the "Coffee Morning and Bring and Buy Sale" was again most successful and enabled the group to contribute to the funds of the Club Show at Dundee in addition to setting aside a sum against winter lecture expenses.

In July and August the evenings of garden visits were held within the group's own area, with an average attendance of forty members on each occasion. On Thursday, 19th July, members started by visiting The Grange, St. Andrews, where they saw Mrs. Grace's most recent extension to an already attractive rock garden. The fine Asiatic primulas round the pond were almost past but its margin was ablaze with mimulus and some magnificent spires of a very good pink form of *Meconopsis nepaulensis*.

The next garden visited, that of Mrs. G. Jack, is an amazing example of what can be done in a small garden of little better than sand and exposed to every wind that blows and wide open to the blasts off the sea. Here dwarf shrubs, thymes, sedums, sempervivums, and xerophyllous plants such as *Crepis incana*, *Hieracium villosum* and a host of others flourish unbelievably.

Mr. W. Bruce of Tom Morris Drive was the next member visited. His garden is even smaller than the last ; but members are unanimous in their praise of the excellent construction and layout of the fine stones Mr. Bruce has gathered together. The plants are conspicuous for their health and condition, a plant of *Sempervivum brunniaefolium* perfectly set in full sun in a crevice between two rocks drawing general comment.

The evening ended with a visit to the University Botanic Garden, where recent alterations and additions were visited and inspected.

The first visit on Thursday, 26th July, was to Mrs. Purvis' delightful, old-world garden at Earlsall, Leuchars. Here, in addition to the



fine old topiary garden, Mrs. Purvis has gathered a most comprehensive collection of fine flowering shrubs, many of them generally classed as of border-line hardiness. One striking sight was of several specimens of *Viburnum fragrans* laden with their orange fruits. Another was of *Carpentaria californica* almost at its best. One imagines that later in the season, when the gentians are in full flower, the troughs in the terrace garden will be another wonderful show.

A short run of two miles took members to that wonderful garden of Mr. T. Anderson, Guardbridge. This is more a series of small gardens, and every inch and corner is crammed with something good and of interest. Fellow members know Mr. Anderson as a plantsman of outstanding ability and are always keen to see his latest additions and specimen plants, grown not always according to the book, but how and where experience has proved best.

The evening finished with Mr. and Mrs. Wier at Balgove where, after an interesting and pleasant ramble round that "very complete" garden with its wide range of plants, old and new, members were hospitably entertained before dispersing homewards.

On the evening of 16th August a bus party of members visited Maryfield Nurseries, Leslie, where they were shown round the fine collection of rock plants by Mr. Neil Lyle, who afterwards, over a welcome cup of tea, willingly and ably answered questions put to him.

Despite the fact that the evening was wet, members would not be hurried. The long display border of established heaths, gentians, and dwarf conifers captivated everyone, and the neighbouring stock borders of the same set all talking. When Mr. Lyle at length tried to gather the party for tea, members were scattered all over the nursery; those prying into the secrets of propagating pits were loth to move, their enquiries coming thick and fast. A wonderful evening in spite of the weather!

C. R.

### FIFE—WEST

WINTER MEETINGS in Dunfermline are being arranged and members will be notified as soon as possible. Members from other areas and friends will be very welcome.

E. D. WILSON, *Assistant C.R.*

### KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE

LECTURES AND meetings were held as follows :—

On 10th December Mr. A. Evans of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, gave a lecture to a packed hall on "Acid Loving Plants." His coloured slides were particularly fine. A presentation was made to the retiring C.R., Mrs. McLellan.

On 18th February Mr. MacDonald of the Crichton Gardens officiated at a discussion on "Horticultural Problems," illustrated by pans of difficult seedlings of his own rearing.

On 14th April a stand representing the S.R.G.C. was staged at the Kirkcudbright Spring Flower Show. This stand, originated by Mrs. McLellan, has now become a special feature of the above show. On 28th April the meeting previously arranged at Castle Douglas had to be cancelled.

A bus-load of members visited Carnell Gardens by kind permission of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Findlay. The all-electric greenhouse and propagating frame and the wonderful compost excited as much interest as did the wealth of plants. On 28th July a demonstration of the "Building of Peat Walls" at Barnbarroch.

In September there will be the usual Bring and Buy Sale of Plants—this is the major source of county funds.

Next season's activities will be advertised in the usual way.

The Kirkcudbrightshire members are deeply appreciative of the kindness of the lecturers and garden owners.

E. M. H. KING, C.R.

### LANARKSHIRE

THE USUAL Meetings will be held, from October 1956 to April 1957, in Rosalind's Tea Rooms, 33A Gordon Street, Glasgow, on the first Monday of each month, at 7.15 p.m.

Particulars of the Talks and Outings will be posted in September.

G. F. LAURIE, C.R.

### MIDLOTHIAN

THE WINTER MEETINGS will once again be held jointly with the Edinburgh Section, and printed programmes will be sent to Midlothian members giving dates, subjects and place of meetings.

Details of the Midlothian and Peebles District Show on 23rd March 1957 will be found on page 154.

HENRY TOD, C.R.

### PERTHSHIRE

ON 25TH MAY members visited the garden of Muriel, Lady Forteviot, House of Ross, Comrie. The bog garden was still suffering from the bad weather of early spring, but the rock garden, being well sheltered, had a good deal of colour. Specially noted were the various Lewisias and a fine plant of *Daphne burkwoodii*. Only once, in Victoria B.C., have I seen a garden where the natural beauty of the setting had been as fully utilised.

On 9th June we spent a delightful afternoon as the guests of Major and Mrs. Sherriff at Ascreavie. The treasures in this garden are already well known to all our members.

Thanks are due to Mr. Euan Cox and Dr. Harold Fletcher for interesting lectures on Western America and Wisley respectively. Major George Finlay of Keillour is a first class auctioneer of plants, and has helped the County Branch funds considerably.

*Note :* As from 1st September 1956 Mr. Robert G. Dow is taking over the duties of County Representative from Mrs. Geoffrey Cox.

MARY E. COX, C.R.

### ROSS-SHIRE and INVERNESS-SHIRE

TWO VERY interesting lectures were given in Inverness in the spring ; one on 23rd March by Mr. John Lawson on "Plants at Inschriach," which was illustrated by some quite outstandingly beautiful coloured slides ; and a second was given by the President, Major-General Murray-Lyon, on 20th April on the subject of "Scree and Simple Propagation." This was also illustrated by coloured slides.

Members from all the Northern Counties helped to man the S.R.G.C. stand at the Highland Show at Inverness. Several of them came from as far away as Thurso and other parts of Caithness, and 42 new members were enrolled during the four days of the Show. The high-light among plants lent for exhibition on the stand was a very lovely *Lewisia*, a *brachycalyx hybrid*, of Mr. Jack Drake's. Unfortunately, he says he has only three plants of this hybrid and so far has found no means of propagating it. Great interest was taken by the public in the stand, and members were kept busy answering enquiries about the various plants on show.

Major-General Murray-Lyon very nobly came up to Inverness for the Show and was certainly responsible for "roping in" a large proportion of the new members.

HELEN CAMPBELL, C.R.

### ROXBURGHSHIRE

IN APRIL Mrs. Laing, Hawick, opened her garden and had a small Bring and Buy Sale which raised £14 for our Roxburghshire fund.

In May Lord and Lady Joicey very kindly invited members to see their garden at Etal Manor and entertained us to tea. Twenty members were present and we spent a very delightful afternoon. The rock garden was full of interest, and the shrubs and trees alone were worth a visit.

On the 30th October Dr. Henry Tod is coming to Kelso to lecture on "Adventuring with Alpines."

E. D. SHORT, C.R.

### SELKIRKSHIRE

UNTIL THE 12th May this year this area could only boast five stalwart members of the Club, but after a most interesting talk, illustrated with coloured slides, given by Major-General Murray-Lyon in Selkirk on that date, our membership rose to twenty-seven.

Our first venture was to hold an informal coffee evening in the Fleece Hotel, Selkirk. This, we felt, would bring members together for discussion and also introduce a friendly spirit into the Club. We were indeed fortunate to have Mrs. Boyd-Harvey to come and speak to us and also to bring with her some very fine rock plant specimens. She also gave us invaluable advice as to the best kind of plants for beginners to attempt to grow.

An outing was arranged on 30th June to Mrs. Meade, The Hangingshaw, Yarrowford, and although only twelve members attended, and the weather could have been kinder, we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and were shown over the very extensive garden, including a glade where the Azaleas were blooming in profusion. After tea, so kindly provided by our hostess, the members rounded off the afternoon by inspecting the Yews in the garden. These trees of very great age were used for Outlaw Murray's men, 500 in all, to provide wood for their bows and arrows when they encamped at The Hangingshaw.

Ten members, on 8th August, visited by invitation the garden of Mrs. Short, Old Graden, Kelso, on a delightful afternoon. After looking round the extensive garden with its rock garden of attractive plants, the heath garden, and waterfall and lily pond, the visitors were entertained to tea and later set off for home conscious of the devoted attention required to achieve such splendid results in rock gardening.

P. F. EWART, C.R.

### STIRLINGSHIRE

A MEETING was held in the Golden Lion Hotel, Stirling, on 13th February, when Major-General Murray-Lyon gave us a lecture on "Some Rock Plants," illustrated by coloured lantern slides. The meeting was well attended.

On the 25th May, an evening visit was paid to the garden of Mr. J. G. Collee, who is C.R. of West Lothian. There was a good attendance of members and friends and all were most interested to see this delightful garden, and most grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Collee for showing us their treasures.

On the 16th June a small party of members visited Keillour Castle, and were shown round the wonderful gardens by Major and Mrs. Knox Finlay. Those of us who were there will not easily forget this most stimulating experience, and our warmest thanks are due to Major and Mrs. Knox Finlay for having given us this opportunity.

The autumn programme is in process of being arranged, and members will be informed in due course.

JEAN MCEWAN,  
*Secretary to the Stirlingshire Branch.*

## NORTH-EAST ENGLAND

ON SATURDAY, 12th May, a very successful Bring and Buy Sale of Plants was held at the Blue Bell Hotel, Belford.

This was followed on Tuesday, 15th May, by the Annual General Meeting, and then over thirty coloured slides, lent by the Slide Library, were shown.

On Monday, 28th May, and Tuesday, 29th May, the group made their first two-day gardens tour when twenty members visited the gardens at Keillour Castle and Branklyn by kind permission of Major and Mrs. Knox Finlay and Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Renton. Both gardens were superb and provided the greatest interest and the whole meeting was much enjoyed.

Then on Wednesday, 6th June, an afternoon visit was made to the Edrom Nurseries of the Misses Logan Home, where there was a great display of primulas and meconopses in the woodland and many interesting plants in the rock garden, not the least interesting of these being a little plant of *Eritrichium nanum* flowering for the third year in a trough : this plant was brought from Lautaret. Later the nursery garden was visited. Unhappily the weather then turned very cold and showery and only a few members of the party went on to the gardens at Whitcheater, Duns, of Dr. and Mrs. Landale.

In the afternoon of 25th June a visit was paid to Glen Aln, Alnwick, of Mrs. Cawley, and later to Newlands, Belford, the home of Mrs. and Miss Sanderson. The rock garden at Glen Aln is beautiful and full of rare plants superbly grown, while Miss Sanderson's show of Primulas is unrivalled.

The autumn programme is not yet fully arranged, but it is hoped that there will be a social meeting at the Blue Bell Hotel in September and lectures fixed to date are :—

*Friday, 9th November* : "Some Alpine Plants and their Propagation," by Mr. Alex. Duguid (with slides).

*Tuesday, 4th December* : "Awkward Sites and Odd Corners," by Mrs. Boyd-Harvey (with slides).

It is hoped that there will also be a lecture in October and another in March of 1957.

D. C. PAPE, C.R.

## OBITUARY

THE Scottish Rock Garden Club as a whole, and the North-East England group in particular, has sustained a severe loss in the passing of Mrs. Maud Kelly on 12th July. In 1949 Mrs. Kelly gathered the scattered members of the Club in Northumberland together and formed a group. She was made the first County Representative for North-East England and, by her enthusiasm and hard work, a large and powerful group came into being. Lectures were held at the Blue Bell Hotel and social meetings were held regularly at Mrs. Kelly's

beautiful home at Bellshill, where she was always such a genial and generous hostess.

Mrs. Kelly built up the group by good organisation and few realised her great generosity until she resigned and it was found that it then took a great deal of hard work to raise money to run the group, which previously must have been privately financed.

Mrs. Kelly continued in her position until early in 1953, when she resigned on going to live in Co. Durham after the death of her husband. Since then Mrs. Kelly continued to attend many of the group meetings, particularly the lectures at Belford, a journey of some sixty miles in each direction, and this must have meant a great effort to one of such mature years who, unhappily, suffered a great deal of ill health. She entertained the members at her new home at Chester-le-Street on one occasion, and gave her support to the formation of a junior group in Newcastle, where she frequently attended the meetings.

North-East England is very conscious of what they owe to this lady for the solid foundation upon which she built the group, and are very much the poorer for her passing.

D. C. PAPE

#### NORTH-WEST ENGLAND

ON SEPTEMBER 12th 1955 the garden at Helme Lodge was open to members of the Scottish Rock Garden Club and the Alpine Garden Society. A tea followed at Heaves Hotel; afterwards Mr. Reginald Kaye of Silverdale answered questions on alpine plants put to him by members.

On March 12th 1956 an exhibition of alpine plants sent by members was held at the Westmorland Horticultural Spring Show in Kendal.

On May 25th 1956, by kind invitation of Mrs. Walmsley-Carter, a "Garden Rally" was held at Tarn Rigg, Windermere.

C. CREWDSON, C.R.

## American Primrose Society

The QUARTERLY contains interesting and instructive articles on Primulas by well-known growers in U.S.A. and in Europe.

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## Book Reviews

"MODERN RHODODENDRONS," by E. H. M. Cox and P. A. Cox. (Thomas Nelson & Son, 21s).

In this age of an unceasing flow of publications on all sorts of subjects it is extremely refreshing to meet something so very different from the all-too-frequent combination of ill-informed text supplemented by a wealth of pretty, but often pointless, coloured illustrations.

E. H. M. Cox is well known to plantsmen for his wide knowledge of horticultural matters and his writings thereon. His son, P. A. Cox, has inherited the same love of plants and augmented a sound foundation of practical knowledge by a course of study at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh. *Modern Rhododendrons* will make enthusiasts look forward to further works from this able team.

With the enormous introduction of new species and the raising of so many fine hybrids during the last fifty years a good, authoritative book on Rhododendrons was greatly needed, and here we have it—a book with the personal knowledge and experience of its authors showing in almost every line; a book, too, written by growers not in the warm south or moist west but in the drier and colder conditions of east Scotland. The chapters on cultivation and propagation are full of sound, useful information. The sections on species—grouped in their series, and hybrids, are exceedingly readable and should be easily understood even by those unversed in botanical terms and distinctions. The merits of the plants are assessed from the standpoint of garden worthiness and general hardiness, with due emphasis given to foliage and habit of growth. Further sections on disease and insects, and a number of very useful lists of plants suited to various purposes, along with a very complete index, go to make a most comprehensive book at a very moderate price.

Miss Margaret Stones is to be congratulated on her fine illustrations whether in line or colour—so many colour illustrations can be so far from truth as to be practically valueless. The publishers have presented a book which is a fine example of good printing and production.

J. L. M.

"PLANT PROPAGATION": edited by A. G. L. Hellyer. (Amateur Gardening Picture Book Number 4). (pp. 60. Collingridge, 7/6).

The notion of publishing a book on propagation which did not *tell* how to do it but *showed* how to do it is obviously a good one and in this book the publishers have translated the notion into reality. The result is a very useful book for the new gardener.

There are some 140 photographs showing the various operations. The subject matter of the illustrations goes from sowing seeds to whip and tongue grafting, from herbaceous cuttings to lily scales. As is to be expected, some pictures are better than others, but generally each picture shows its operation quite remarkably well.

As this is obviously a beginner's book we think it would have been of profit to have included an appendix giving the most suitable method of propagating the commoner plants. That can, of course, be obtained elsewhere. In fact, this book will be used to best advantage to supplement a text book giving the methods of propagation.

The next best method of instruction to being shown by demonstration is the picture. This book is a pictorial instruction of how to perform the various methods of propagation; it is a good teacher.

J. T. AITKEN

"THE ENGLISH FLOWER GARDEN": William Robinson. 16th Edition by Roy Hay. (pp. x and 723. John Murray. 42/-).

The first edition of this classic book on flowers was published in 1883, and this latest edition—the sixteenth—is edited by Roy Hay, Editor of *Gardeners Chronicle*, and several equally distinguished assistants, including Mr. Will Ingwersen.

The book is in two parts. The first part deals generally with garden layout and design and runs to about 180 pages. The remainder is an account in alphabetical order "containing the Flowers, Trees, Flowering Shrubs, Evergreens and Hardy Ferns for the Open-air Flower Garden in the British Isles with their Cultivation and the Positions most suitable for them in Gardens," which gives some idea of the wide range of the subject matter. From bulbs to grasses, from alpine to shrubs, all are here, scarce a word wasted, yet the descriptions are ample; habit, requirements, hardiness, propagation—all are dealt with. The book is well indexed and there are fifteen pages of appendices of selected lists of plants, e.g. Shrubs for Informal Hedges, Plants for Boggy Pool Margins, Alpines for Crazy Paving, etc.

When Robinson first appeared his ideas on garden design were revolutionary and he is perhaps the father of modern "natural" garden layout. This is a book which has had great influence on the British style of gardening. An up-to-date edition of such a work is of considerable worth. It is not cheap, but it is value indeed for the money—would that all gardening books were so good value! For those whose interest in flowers is in the least non-specialised, this is a book to consult again and again.

J. T. AITKEN

"ANEMONES," by Roy Genders. (pp. 123. Faber, 12/6).

"Jumbo-size corms are of no use," says Mr. Genders, and continues by pointing out that the small "pea" size corms, whose price is many times cheaper, are the healthy, vigorous ones which the knowledgeable grower will use. The 8-9 cm. sizes are likened to extinct volcanoes; the 2-3 cm. size is the optimum one; and any size larger than 5 cm. should be avoided—that is Mr. Gender's rule.

This book has been written mainly for the commercial grower—the man who can plant at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre which will require about 10,000 corms. But for all his emphasis on commercial cultivation, the author has not neglected the amateur grower and those who wish to grow upon a small scale only. The role of the anemone in garden decoration is fully discussed and the final two chapters of the book deal with species anemones. The advice given on soil preparation, siting, etc., for the commercial grower is just as apt for the chap who has to scale it all down to a square yard or so.

There are parts of the book where we wished that anemone growers were handier at pruning and where we wished there had been time for a little more erudition. This, however, is an essentially practical book and is a worthwhile contribution to the garden bookshelf.

J. T. AITKEN

"HARDY HEATHS," by A. T. Johnson. (pp. 127. Blandford, 10/6).

This is a revised edition of Mr. Johnson's book on Heaths which, as he states in the introduction, has been written expressly for amateurs.

The subjects are introduced by an account of their natural habitat and the soil and climatic conditions obtaining there. Thence the author progresses to the types of soil and situation suitable for the various varieties of heaths in the garden. There are chapters on propagation, planning



a heath garden, and the uses of heaths in the garden. Thereafter the author deals by way of a short note upon each, with a very large number of heaths and allied shrubs.

Mr. Johnson is an enthusiast who communicates his enthusiasm. His book is full of worthwhile information and intelligent ideas.

The illustrations and the index are disappointing. It is a pity that better pictures could not have been procured, for many are not up to the standard of the text.

The gardener interested in heaths or searching for winter flowering plants will find this a useful book.

J. T. AITKEN

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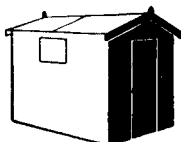


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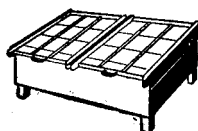
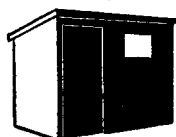


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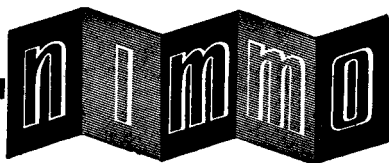


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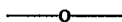
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