

**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

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WE OPEN our remarks in this issue of the *Journal* on a note of sincere regret, which we feel sure is echoed by all members of the Club.

Under the rules of the Club, no President can hold the office for more than four consecutive years. Under this rule the Club must this year lose a President who, like his predecessors in the Chair, has given himself, his time and his energy, to the welfare of the S.R.G.C.

We must all regret that Colonel Dundas, in his fourth year as President, was affected by illness which greatly curtailed the activities he had pursued so enthusiastically. When he hands over to his successor he will do so with the earnest good wishes of all members for his speedy return to full health and a renewed joy in rock gardening. To his successor, whoever he may be, we would wish during his term of office the same support and loyalty in his work for the Club.

The year now passing has been in one way an outstanding one in the Club's history. After much deliberation and joint discussion, between the Royal Horticultural Society, the Alpine Garden Society, and our own Club, an agreement was reached whereby awards to meritorious plants could be made by a Committee representative of the three bodies at two of our Club Shows in Scotland. It is gratifying that in the first year of the new arrangement so many worthy plants were presented at both Edinburgh and Glasgow—and this after an exceptionally severe winter and spring. It lies with members to ensure that the same worthy standard is kept up each year. In this connection I would mention that the Club Secretary holds indices of all plants which have gained R.H.S. Awards to date and that this information may be had on enquiry by members.

We have been happy to note the marked advance in close co-operation with our sister body south of the border, the Alpine Garden Society. The fact that so many rock gardeners on both sides of the border are keen members of both bodies would seem to show that the two are to a great extent complementary and that there is room for both to progress in harmony and friendly co-operation.

This year the A.G.S. celebrated its 25th Anniversary, and in June published the 100th issue of its Quarterly Bulletin. This number contains many interesting articles on various aspects of rock gardening and is well illustrated with pictures by well-known plant photographers. We wish our sister Society all prosperity and every success in the years that lie ahead.

Here at home this year there was a time when the hearts of many members, and of show secretaries in particular, were decidedly low. A hard winter, followed by a ruthless spring, made the outlook for Club shows very mournful indeed and prophecies of failures were rife. In fact, Edinburgh in the end was able to report a record entry

and Glasgow a record attendance, while the only show cancelled was at Perth, and that for political reasons ; it coincided with Polling Day.

Since those far-off days of arctic spring we have experienced a period of semi-tropical summer drought which, rumour has it, has caused some members to wonder if Prickly Pears and Cacti might not prove more suitable for their gardens. Do not be alarmed and do not be rash. We are not so optimistic about future summers as to think but that in the end our moisture-loving Primulas and Meconopsis, our heaths and dwarf rhododendrons, will come into their own again.

On our own behalf as editor, and on behalf of all Club members, we thank all contributors to the *Journal*, and in particular we warmly thank those who have replied to various plant notes and enquiries in No. 16. In every case we have communicated the replies to the writers of the original notes or enquiries. We feel that this exchange helps in a very great way to foster the Club fellowship that since its foundation has been the aim of the S.R.G.C.

*August, 1955.*

## Seed Distribution—1955

MRS. DAVIDSON, Linton Muir, West Linton, Peeblesshire, has taken over the Management of the Seed Exchange from Mr. R. S. Masterton, who has resigned, and all seed should be sent to her at the above address and NOT to Mr. Masterton. As in former years, members are asked to send any good seed they can spare, properly named, not later than 31st October, 1955. Members should also notify of any late-ripening seeds likely to be available later so that they can be included in the Seed List.

## Outlying Districts

AT A MEETING of the Club Council in April it was proposed that, as in the present year, a sum of £30 should be allocated to provide lectures in outlying districts of Scotland. It was generally agreed that early notification of this decision was desirable in the hope that districts concerned could arrange to have these lectures early in winter before the hardest of the weather set in. After New Year frost and snow is liable to upset arrangements and make travel difficult. Will members in outlying districts please note and make early application !

## County Representative—Kirkcudbrightshire

MRS. M. E. McLELLAN, who has worked so strenuously as C.R., resigns her duties this month, but even in resignation has not relaxed her zeal for the welfare of her district. She has intimated that Miss E. M. H. King has consented to take over as C.R.

Notice of all Kirkcudbrightshire meetings will in future be published in the *Galloway News*—on the first Saturday of each month. Members are asked to take note of the change of C.R. and the new arrangement for notification of meetings.

## Ross-shire

MRS. MACDUFF-DUNCAN has been compelled owing to pressure of business to resign her appointment as County Representative ; she has done much good work. The Hon. Mrs. Campbell, Kinnock, Fortrose, has kindly agreed to take her place.

## East Lothian

We regret to say that Mrs. Peel, who has done so much for the Club in the county, has been compelled to resign her office as County Representative on leaving the county. East Lothian is fortunate, however, in that Miss Christian Nisbet, Stobshiel House, Humbie, has very kindly agreed to take over the duties of C.R.

## Annual Subscriptions, 1955-56

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

IN RESPONSE to many requests the choice of Christmas Cards to be available has been extended to include Figs. 10, 16, and 24, black and white (in Journal No. 14), Figs. 47 and 48 in colour (Journal No. 16), and Fig. 54 (in Journal No. 17).

In view of difficulties in handling odd quantities, each kind of card will be made up in dozens and half-dozens only and should be ordered accordingly. Orders should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer as soon as possible, and cash must accompany order. The cost is 6/6 per dozen, post free, including envelopes.

## George Forrest Medal Plants—correction

IT IS REGRETTED that there were four errors in the article on the above subject in *Journal* No. 16, April 1955. Corrections should be made in page 258 as follows :—

- (1) At the end of Primulaceae insert :  
     "Primula tibetica A 1952. Mrs. J. J. Boyd-Harvey.  
     Primula Wattii G 1952. Jack Drake."
- (2) At the end of Ericaceae insert :  
     "Rhodothamnus chamaecistus G 1949. Major and Mrs.  
     Walmsley."
- (3) Under Boraginaceae, after Mertensia coriacea, delete "E" and substitute "G."

21/5/55.

D. M. M-L.



## In Search of Native Alpines

By WINIFRED ROBERTSON

ON A SUMMER day, the barometer rising to a long anticyclone, our party arrived in Glen Shee. Two long days were spent over the hills and far away, where, on the wet schistose ledges of a vast corrie, grows a range of arctic-alpine plants found in Britain only on the Scottish mountains, a few in this habitat alone.

I and my party of six would like to thank Dr. and Mrs. Davidson, who first told me of this rich area, and listed for me some of their finds.

Also our very grateful thanks have been given to Mr. Grant Roger (Nature Conservancy) for the perusal of his Paper on the Flora of that district wherein he lists fully seventy species and varieties, subdivided under the headings : arctic-alpine, arctic-subarctic, and northern montane.

And we others were most grateful to Dr. Gibson for her patience and diligence when, in the evenings, undaunted by midges and other fierce carnivora, we spread ourselves and our treasures on garden seats to classify and identify. She it was who compiled our final authentic list which I append.

No root of any plant was lifted, save one tuft from acres of *Salix herbacea* which I was gathering for its particularly vivid sealing wax pods when it "just came away in me 'and, mum."

On the second day I left the others browsing round the corrie lip and walked a scree ridge to another summit. It was carpeted with *Loiseleuria procumbens*, and round a high "Jhuaran" the turf was spangled with *Caltha*, *Epilobium*, *Sax. stellaris*, and others of the corrie flora.

These were spread at one's feet. Spread before one's distant gaze was the whole Cairngorm chain shimmering in heat-haze. Violet shadows lay in the great void of Coire Etebachan, streaks of snow in the gullies of the Garracorries. And one could picture the Wells of Dee bubbling among their cushions of *Silene acaulis* and deep pink Thrift.

### PLANTS FOUND ON GLENSHEE HILLS, JULY 1955

<i>Alchemilla alpina</i>	<i>Saxifraga aizoides</i>
<i>Cerastium alpinum</i>	„ <i>hypnoides</i>
<i>Cochlearia alpina</i>	„ <i>stellaris</i>
<i>Coeloglossum viride</i>	„ <i>oppositifolia</i>
<i>Draba incana</i>	<i>Salix herbacea</i>
<i>Dryas octopetala</i>	„ <i>reticulata</i>
<i>Epilobium alsinifolium</i>	„ <i>lapponicum</i>
<i>Caltha palustris minor</i>	„ <i>lanata</i>



Gnaphalium supinum	Sedum roseum
Geranium sylvaticum	Sibbaldia procumbens
Loiseleuria procumbens	Silene acaulis
Lycopodium alpinum, L. Selago	Saussurea alpina
Rhinanthus sp.	Thalictrum alpinum
Parnassia palustris	Trientalis europaea
Polygonum viviparum	Trollius europaeus
Pyrola sp. no flower, probably media	Veronica fruticans
Polystichum lonchitis	„ alpina
Rubus chamaemorus	

Also another Veronica, blue and white, size of fruticans—a hybrid ?  
Also a dwarf Water-Avens, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch but with almost full-size flower.

## Western Natives

By G. B. BOVING

LAST YEAR, in an unguarded moment, the writer promised the Editor of the *Journal* that he would contribute a short article on the subject of iris species of the Pacific Coast. Not much has been written about these dainty flowers and the writer feels wholly inadequate to deal with the subject with only two years of practical experience to back him. Not less than twelve species are now growing in the Botanical Garden at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, where the writer has the pleasure to pass his waking hours. Six of the species flowered last year ; the remainder will, we hope, repeat the occasion this year. Many of these have been grown in the British Isles for a number of years and this attempt is surely that of carrying coals to Newcastle and even across the border to the north. It should be mentioned that, according to G. H. Lawrence, the Apogon Iris, to which this series belongs, include the following species :—

### *Iris bracteata* (Siskiyou Iris) :

Rootstock slender, stem slender, flattened, 2-3 dm. high. Basal leaves solitary, longer than the stem ; stem leaves 2-3, bract-like, flowers 2, yellow or cream. From the summit of the Coast Range in Southern Oregon as far inland as Grant's Pass. Type locality : Near Waldo, Josephon County.

### *Iris chrysophylla* :

By some authorities treated under *I. californica*. The difference between *I. chrysophylla* and *I. californica* is the elongated lanceolate stigma crest. Occurs in South-western to South Central Oregon. Variable flower colour, between white and pale yellow.

### *Iris Douglasiana* (Douglas Iris) :

The rootstock is stout, persistent leaf base, not fibrous, stems flattened, 25-50 cm. high, 2-3 leaves ; simple and 2-3 flowered, or

branching above 2-5 flowered. Basal leaves usually exceeding stem. Glossy green. Type locality : Monterey. This iris is very variable in colour, from pale yellow to deep purple.

A number of forms are recognized as follows : *I. Douglasiana* var. *bracteata* or, as it is termed in the trade, *I. Watsoniana*. This variety is characterized by its pale green foliage and smaller flowers which are purple in colour. Another variant is *I. D.* var. *altissima*, not now in commerce. Still others are *I. D.* var. *oregonensis*, and *I. D.* var. *alpha*. The latter variety can be recognized by its deep green foliage with large flowers of pastel shades, including yellows. In Oregon the iris will be found around Squaw Creek and Hunter Creek in Curry County.

*Iris Hartwegii* (Hartweg's Iris) :

Rootstock slender, stem flattened, 10-30 cm. high with 1-3 leaves. Basal leaves surpassing stem, bracts rarely nearly contiguous. Flowers 2, yellow with lavender veins or pale lilac with deep coloured veins and yellow medial portion. Type locality : Sierra Nevada, American River and in Plumas County, south to Kern County at an elevation of 2500-6000 ft.

*Iris innominata* :

Plant about 30 cm. tall with slender rootstock. Foliage abundant, dark green above, lighter underneath, sometimes violet-purple at base, apex pointed, bracts 2-3, nearly equal, broadly lanceolate to ovate when open. Flowers 2, brilliant deep yellow, petals delicately veined with purple, sepals without lines. Type locality : Rouge River near Wedderburn Ferry, Curry County, Oregon. *I. innominata* meets *I. Douglasiana* at this point and hybrids were found of a deeper yellow colour. *I. innominata* is, without doubt, the best iris of the Californicae series.

*Iris longipetala* (Long-petalled Iris) :

Stem 3-5 cm. high, 3-5 flowered ; leaves about as tall as the stem, bracts approximate foliaceous. Flowers bright lilac or white netted with violet. Good doer. Type locality : On open hills about San Francisco and also near the Petrified Forest in Somona County, San Diego County and in Kern County, on Leevining grade in Mono County, just over the Tioga Pass.

*Iris macrosiphon* (Slender Tube Iris or Ground Iris) :

Rootstocks slender, forming tufts, stems 3-20 cm. high, partially flattened. Basal leaves much exceeding the stem ; bracts linear-lanceolate. long acuminate ; flowers 1-2, bright blue-purple. Type locality : Corte Madera, Marin County. Cream to orange variants will also appear. Can also be found in the Cascades on both sides as far south as the Siskiyou Mountains.

*Iris Munzii* (Munz Iris) :

This iris, together with *I. Fernaldi*, are late comers. The general consensus of opinion is that *I. Munzii* is related to *I. Hartwegii* as well as to *I. tenax*. It does differ from both of these in leaves and floral parts. Colour of flowers varies from pale bluish-lavender to purple. Type locality : Tulare County in the foothills of the Sierras. Moisture loving. Might prove a good addition to our gardens.

*Iris missouriensis* (Western Blue Flag) :

Rootstock short, forming extensive patches. Stem 2-5 dm. high ; 1-2 flowered, leaves are green with purplish cast at the base, usually shorter than the stem. Flowers pale blue variegated. Type locality : Toward the source of the Missouri River. Definitely a moisture-loving species, clothing shallow, semi-inundated areas as well as side of river banks. This iris may be found in British Columbia, Canada, and in the eastern parts of Washington and Oregon.

*Iris Purdyi* (Purdy's Iris) :

Rootstocks slender. Stem 15-30 cm. high, slightly flattened. Basal leaves exceeding stem, laxly spreading, pale green in colour. Flowers 2, cream, with yellow veins on the claw and purple veins on the blade. Type locality : Mendocino County, around Ukiah as well as in Humboldt County, California.

*Iris Thompsoni* :

Rootstock thin. Stem 30-35 cm. tall, 1-2 flowers, blue-purple in colour. Plant caespitose in nature. Grows in association with *Pyrola* and *Arctostaphylos* on the edge of the Coast Redwood region. In comparing *I. Thompsoni* with *I. innominata* it will be noted that the former has a shorter perianth tube, narrowly lanceolate spathes, cauline leaves free for the greater portion of their length ; perianth segments smaller, slighter, more nearly spatulate. *I. Thompsoni* is taller than *I. macrosiphon* and has longer leaves, shorter perianth tube, and smaller flowers with style-crests. Type locality : Del Norte County, Douglas Park close to Smith River at about 500 ft. altitude. In Oregon it was first found at the summit of Pistol River Mountain in Curry County.

*Iris tenuis* :

Rootstock very slender, stems 20-25 cm. high with bract-like leaves. Basal leaves equalling or surpassing the stem. Flowers 2, white, lightly striped and blotched with pale yellow and purple. Type locality : Eagle Creek, a branch of the Clackamas River in Oregon.

*Iris tenax* (Tough-leaved Iris) :

Stems 15-30 cm. long bearing bract-like leaves. Basal leaves longer than the stem ; bracts foliaceous, lanceolate. Flowers solitary, bright lilac-purple, veined in another colour, sometimes white. There is also a yellow form under the name of *I. t.* var. *Gormani* (*I. Gormani*).

Many consider *I. Gormani* a distinct species. Both forms are grown at the Botanical Garden, U.B.C. Type locality : North California, along coast of New Georgia. The Indians are supposed to have used the leaves for making snares. In Oregon the iris may be found in the valley of Scroggins Creek in Washington County. It has also been met with in the Columbia River Basin south to the vicinity of Coos Bay. At Carpenterville and Brookings, natural crosses with *I. Thompsoni* are quite common.

Undoubtedly the foregoing description is somewhat dry in nature. However, it has been included in the text in order that the reader might have some distinguishing features to go by, be they ever so inadequate. I am indebted to LeRoy Abrams' "Illustrated Flora of the Pacific States" for the botanical descriptions. Additional information was obtained from iris growers living in Oregon and California.

In closing, may I offer a few hints as to their culture. Apart from two or three exceptions, such as *I. missouriensis*, *I. Douglasiana* and *I. tenax*, the majority of these species flourish on hillsides and screes in open semi-wooded country, more often than not associated with pines. They all like drainage, and a light fibrous open-textured soil will suit them well. Transplanting them to a different environment from that they originally enjoyed, I would urge the grower to choose the open ground. Any light soil may be enriched by the addition of compost or loam as well as bonemeal. Success will depend on the amount of baking they receive after their flowering period is past. Reduce watering from this point on. Our method in handling them is to transfer from seed pan into flats and from these to the open. The first move is usually affected when the plant is from 2-4 inches high, the latter as soon as new roots have formed. At this stage they are easy to move. Established plants on the other hand resent being moved. The dark green glossy period is fairly long, and the variation in colour sufficiently wide to permit the inclusion of at least some of them in the general planting scheme.

## You Can Help The Club

by

Mentioning the *Journal* or *Year Book* when you order anything from Advertisers ; it encourages them to continue advertising with us.

## Names

In the garden I'm appalled  
 At the names which things are called.  
 A Rose is just a Rose to me  
 And not a *Rosa* Hybrid Tea.

*Wahlenbergia hederacea*  
 Creeps about, is blue and gracey.  
 Who would know or who could tell  
 It's nothing but a chaste Harebell.

*Sagina glabra pilifera*  
 Really is a perfect terror.  
 Pull him out, don't let him seed,  
 Pearl-wort is a horrid weed.

And what of Daisies on the lawn?  
 I almost wished I'd not been born  
 To hear a visitor one day  
 Proclaim them *Bellis* in the hay.

In my cellar Mushrooms grow,  
 In profusion row on row,  
 But I doubt if they would like us  
 If we called them *Agaricus*.

Now, *Solanum tuberosum* ;  
 Surely everybody knows 'em.  
 Dig it up, remove the mud,  
 Cooked, it just becomes a Spud.

Carrots I can never grow.  
 I've called them names like so and so,  
 But now I shall be harsh and raucus,  
 Insulting them as merely *Daucus*.

*Ilex* is the stuff to cut  
 To decorate at Christmas, but  
 You would really be more jolly,  
 If, like me, you called it Holly.

To be a bard I make no claims.  
 I'm only trying to suggest  
 That, after all, the simple names  
 And simplest things of life are best.

## Some Plants of the Ligurian Coast

By J. C. DUNDAS

SORI, a picturesque little village, nestles in the steep hillside on either bank of a small river above the blue Mediterranean, 12 miles east of Genoa. Behind the village the ground rises, terrace after terrace, planted with olive trees and underplanted with vegetables. The villas on the hillside above and below the main Genoa-Rome road have, many of them, delightful gardens, and at the time of our visit the Wistaria and Judas Trees gave a wonderful display of colour. When an orange or lemon is wanted one just picks it in the garden, ripened in the sun. Higher up amongst the terraces small houses are dotted about, usually only approachable by mule track.

Some 500-600 ft. above sea level the terracing ceases and the terrain becomes more open, with Sweet Chestnut, Acacia, Mountain Ash (not the Scottish Rowan), a form of dwarf Laburnum, and other trees and shrubs dotted about the sides of the usually steep-sided valleys, while on the hill tops, in positions originally chosen presumably for defence, church-surmounted villages of white houses shine in the sun. And let me say here that for true friendliness and courtesy it would be difficult to beat their inhabitants.

These hills are really the foothills of the Appenine Mountains, the spine of Italy, and rise within no great distance from the coast to 2,500 ft. and further inland to greater heights, snow being visible even in early May in some of the corries at heights of 4,500 ft. or over.

It would be difficult to picture a more lovely setting. When we were there 4 years ago, in February, even in an exceptionally bad season the climate was in comparison with England delightful, and this year for three of the four weeks we were there (April 11th to May 10th) we breakfasted on the terrace with the thermometer at 9 a.m. standing at over 70 degrees in the shade. The afternoons were often too hot for exercise. At night we watched the fireflies lighting up the trees in the gardens and olive groves and listened to the roar of the frogs croaking.

One would have thought that the flora of this comparatively low-lying region would be of little interest to rock-gardeners, but in spite of the fact that we were unable to make long expeditions afoot to higher levels we found a number of attractive plants, the majority below the 1,000 ft. contour, Orchidaceae being particularly diverse, and incidentally lovely to look at.

The following is a list of the majority of the plants seen, with notes about a few of them. In some cases I should not like, in spite of the help of two local books, to guarantee the accuracy of the plant names given, the "orchids" being especially difficult to distinguish with certainty.

- Cistus salviaefolius*, over 500 ft. on open ground.
- Cistus monspeliensis*, „ 500 „ „ „ „
- Genista pilosa*.
- Cytisus trifolius* (probably).
- Spartium junceum*. (N.B.—Is not hardy in W. Perthshire).
- Erica arborea* (or, I think, *stricta*) circa, 1,000 ft., white flowered.
- Thymus vulgaris*. This Thyme in little bushes covered with masses of pink flowers, all over the hillsides above the olive groves, scented the whole countryside.
- Euphorbia*. There were numerous varieties, two of interest ; the first a bush some 18 ins. to 2 ft. high with inflorescence of a really clear yellow without the usual more or less greenish tinge ; the second a low bush with sweetly scented flowers. I was unable to identify either.
- Helianthemum*, yellow-flowered ; *tuberaria* probably.
- Smilax aspera*. Everywhere in the terrace walls.
- Trifolium alpinum*.
- Lathyrus clymenum* (?).
- Linum*, blue, probably annual, (?) *viscosum*.
- Scilla italica*, only found in one spot.
- Gladiolus segetum*, on terraces among the vegetables.
- Arisarum vulgare*.
- Muscari comosum*, a weed on the terraces.
- Anemone stellata*, mauve inside, white on undersides of flower. Not common.
- Anemone nemorosa*, about 2,000 ft.
- Erica carnea*, over 2,000 ft. One plant had a very good pink inflorescence, the length being similar to that of *E. c.* “*Springwood*.” The one rooted cutting I brought home is at the moment looking very sick !
- Jasione montana*.
- Allium triquetrum*, white. I know this also grows in Guernsey.
- Allium paniculatum*, white or pale pink, rather attractive, but, I expect, invasive.
- Campanula trachelium*, only one plant seen at highest level of terraces.
- Orchis provincialis*, pale yellow, red spots on lip. Peculiar to Liguria.
- Orchis Morio*, green-winged orchis.
- Orchis purpurea*, dark purple, almost black in bud.
- Orchis maculata*, spotted orchis.
- Gymnadenia conopsea* (?), pink, scented.
- Serapias cordigera*, a very pretty chocolate flower.
- Serapias neglecta* (?), only two chocolate flowers per stem, less pretty than *cordigera*.
- Ophrys apifera*, the Bee orchis.
- Ophrys aranifera* (?), the Spider orchis. Identification probably correct.
- Cephalanthera sp.*, a lovely white, possibly *ensifolia*, not common.
- Aceras anthropophora* (probably), green-winged orchis with red lips.
- Orobanche epithimum* or *cruenta*, a well-known brown parasite.



*Limodorum abortivum*, another parasite. The whole plant, 1 to 2 ft. high, is more or less purple, no leaves but purple scales up stem, flowers are large in a long spike, violet or white with darker markings on lip. Individual flowers remind one of small iris flowers. A striking plant which I have never seen before.

*Hypochoeris uniflora*, composite, yellow with outer petals brown. I would like to have this in my garden.

*Anthericum liliago*.

Lastly, a plant to which I could not even fit its genus. Its radical leaves are in a flat mat like that of *Dianthus deltoides*. From this spring thin stalks with lanceolate leaves, opposite. At the extremity of the stem, which is usually some 4 ins. long, is a raceme of pink flowers not unlike a *Lychnis*. It grew everywhere among the rocks over 1,000 ft.

## A Small Rock Garden

AN ACCOUNT OF ITS PLANTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR  
—Continued

By DAVID LIVINGSTONE

IN THE last two issues of the *Journal* I described my small rock garden in Edinburgh and gave an account of the plants that had come into bloom by the end of June last year. The story is continued here and, as would be expected, the number of plants in bloom in the second half of the year was very much less than in the preceding six months. I was on holiday in July and there is therefore no detailed record of plants which flowered during that month. It will suffice to say that on my return the rock garden was gay with rock roses, hybrid *Dianthus* and campanulas mainly. *Gentiana septemfida*, that fail-me-never rock garden plant, was also in flower. It seems to do well in almost any situation and in any kind of soil. If one is limited to one Gentian, then this is the one to grow.

5th August :

A very tiny *Astilbe* from Japan showed its pale pink flowers today. It is *A. glaberrima* var. *saxatilis*, which is growing quite freely and with no special attention. It is usually suggested that the *Astilbes* should be planted in moist spots or shady places in a peaty or leafy soil, but this one appears to be quite happy in the ordinary soil of the rock garden and in full sun.

9th August :

*Gentiana hexa-Farreri* is the first of the autumn flowering Gentians to bloom this year. It is, as one would suspect from the name, a hybrid between *G. hexaphylla* and *G. Farreri*. It is a lovely compact plant mid-way between the parents. In the early stages of its growth

in the spring one might be tempted to think from its foliage alone that it was a Saxifrage. This Gentian and all the other autumn-flowering Gentians that I have are in full sun. They are planted in a good peaty soil and in the lower parts of my rock garden which, of course, dry out less quickly than any other part. As with all these Gentians it is best to keep lime away from them and to ensure that they have an abundance of water in the growing season. The situation should, however, be well-drained so that they are not growing in stagnant soil. *G. hexa-Farreri* and a good number of like Gentians are easily propagated in late March. The plants on being lifted will be found to fall easily into several pieces and each if planted will form and become flowering plants by the autumn. If the weather is congenial and the soil in good working condition this division could be carried out any time after the end of February. But it should not be delayed beyond the middle of April and the later the operation is the more difficult it becomes to establish the little plants.

#### 11th August :

My only *Viola*, *aetolica* var. *saxatilis*, has come into bloom rather later than usual, no doubt on account of the wet and cold summer we have had. It has small yellow flowers on stems that rarely exceed two inches. Its growth is prostrate and it is growing in that part which receives some little shade in the late afternoon. It is not long lived ; in fact I doubt whether it is perennial at all. It sets seeds freely, however, and a fresh batch of plants can be raised easily each year. If allowed to do so it will cast its seeds around the growing site and these will germinate and continue the race. It is a very pleasant little thing and would no doubt be more popular if it were longer lived. But, as I have said, there is no difficulty in raising it from seed.

#### 13th August :

A form of the European Bog Gentian, *G. Pneumonanthe*, *Styrian Var.*, is showing its deep blue flowers speckled by greenish spots. This one is an upright grower, carrying a number of flowers on a stem which, with me, reaches up to 9 to 12 inches. As its common name implies, it likes a moist location. But my plant thrives and flowers in the same conditions as those given to the asiatic Gentians, i.e. in a lower part of the rock garden in a peaty soil in full sun. It is easily propagated from seed.

#### 14th August :

I am particularly pleased to be able to record today the flowering of a *Campanula* from north-west America. It is the rather choice *C. lasiocarpa*, which I raised from seeds sown in early March. It is dwarf in growth and produces comparatively large flowers of a delightful pale blue. It is most unlikely that it will encroach on other plants. I have read that it does best in scree or in the Alpine house, but here it seems perfectly happy in a sunny spot in the ordinary soil of the rock garden.

## 23rd August :

One of my special favourites, *Astilbe simplicifolia*, is showing its feathery sprays of very light pink, almost white, flowers. Its leaves are beautifully notched and assume autumn tints at this time. They make a beautiful picture with the fairy-like flowers dancing above them. This is another small treasure from Japan, growing only about 6 to 8 inches high. It likes a peat or leaf mould soil with plenty of moisture and partial shade. Given these requirements it will give no bother. As it dies down in the late autumn and comes again in Spring early flowering bulbs may be associated with it to fill in around the bare ground in February or March.

## 27th August :

*G. Macaulayi*, one of the most popular hybrid asiatic Gentians, has opened the first of its many blue trumpets. Given the conditions suggested earlier in these notes this variety never fails to delight. It may be divided easily in early Spring.

## 29th August :

A further two asiatic Gentians have arrived on the scene today—*G. sino-ornata praecox* and *G. Drake's Strain*. The former is little different from the well-known *G. sino-ornata*, but as the varietal name indicates is earlier in flower. This is of particular advantage in backward seasons because it sometimes happens that *G. sino-ornata* has only begun to flower when it is struck down by frost. *G. Drake's Strain* has, I think, from its appearance, *G. Farreri* blood in it. It is with me close and compact in its growth and the not-too-large trumpets are somewhat akin in colour to *G. Farreri*. It is a fine little Gentian and very well worth a place in the smallest rock garden where conditions suitable to all these autumn flowering asiatic Gentians can be given.

## 31st August :

Late flowering rock garden plants are most welcome and *Sedum Ewersii* with its grey leaves and rose coloured flowers gives a welcome change from the blue of the Gentians. Any exposed dry spot in the rockery suits it well but one has to be careful that it does not outgrow its allotted space in the smaller rockery.

## 2nd September :

Perhaps because I received my plant late in the season *Androsace lanuginosa* has only now come into flower. Normally it could be expected to bloom in June. This one comes from the Himalayas and sends out long trailing stems of grey-green woolly leaves. Its flowers, pale pink with a red eye, are borne in little cluster heads. This plant should be given a well drained position in the sun where its sprawling stems will tumble over a rock.

## 4th September :

I have awaited today's event with eager anticipation. *G. "Inverleith,"* a hybrid between *Farreri* and *Veitchiorum*, was raised at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, by Mr. W. G. Mackenzie, who is now Curator of Chelsea Physic Garden. I think there is little doubt that this is the finest of all the autumn hybrid Gentians. If it has a fault, and I'm not sure that it is a fault, it lies in its sprawling growth. How breath-taking are the very large clear blue trumpets which are carried five or even six to each procumbent stem—a characteristic of *G. Veitchiorum* itself. This variety is often to be seen with its big trumpets fully expanded even in inclement weather, an added advantage in a Gentian. Mr. Mackenzie was awarded the Corry Memorial Cup by the Royal Horticultural Society for introducing this hybrid and well he deserved it. In my experience this variety does not divide as easily as some of the others and it is best propagated by young growths taken as unrooted cuttings in early Spring.

## 9th September :

*Genista pilosa*, a British native broom, which likes a sunny exposure and a light soil, is in flower once again. It makes a flat mat of tiny little leaves and usually flowers in May or early June.

## 10th September :

The dark purple trumpets of *G. Veitchiorum* opened today. This is a very fine plant and is of a much darker colour, with a good hint of purple, than some of the other Gentians. It flowers freely, having up to seven trumpets on the one trailing stem. It may be divided in March. I have known this species to flower from August right up to Christmas.

## 15th September :

*Sedum cauticum*, with its red flowers over grey-purple foliage making a bright patch of colour. This is another very welcome late flowering plant to break up the blues of the Gentian. It is easy in any well-drained spot in full sun. The foliage before the flowers appear is decorative in itself. It dies down in winter and small early-flowering bulbs may be associated with this Sedum.

## 22nd September :

The plant in flower today is doubtfully named. I am told it is *G. cachemirica* but might be *G. Loderi*. The plant is of neat habit, sending out grey-green, indeed almost silver, foliage on sprawling stems, on the ends of which are borne the upturned bright blue flowers. The trumpet is short and the petals more reflexed than most of these Gentians, with a ring of hairs around the inner part of the tube. It seems to delight in a sunny position with its stems resting on a rock. Perhaps I should add that my plants are in their first year and that in 1955, their second year, they came into flower much earlier, about the 15th of July, to be precise.

30th September :

Another hybrid Gentian, *G. Bernardii*, which has *G. Veitchiorum* as one of its parents, is in bloom. It has a fine flower almost the same dark purple as *Veitchiorum*, but the plant seems to have rather a poor constitution, or at least I should say that mine appear to have a poor constitution. They always look a little sickly and have almost a tinge of brown about the green of the foliage but they never fail to give a goodly quantity of flowers. The poor foliage does, however, detract from the value of the plant in my garden.

2nd October :

A strong growing form, or is it a hybrid, of *G. Farreri* is in flower today. It is not quite the pale-greenish blue of *G. Farreri* and has dark purple stripes running longwise along the tube. It is a very good plant nevertheless.

10th October :

The tiny blue goblets of *Crocus speciosus* "Oxonian" have appeared just above a silvery mat of *Raoulia australis* which I have growing over the crocus bulbs. It makes a lovely picture and I only wish that the flowers lasted a little longer. This is, in my opinion, the best form of this autumn flowering crocus.

24th October :

*Cyclamen neapolitanum album* has made a belated appearance. Whether on account of the poor season I know not, but it should have been sporting its small butterfly flowers ere this. It is thriving in the partial shade of a Rhododendron and is growing in a leaf mould soil. Once planted this little cyclamen should be left undisturbed apart from a light annual top dressing of leaf mould. When it is happy it will seed and produce youngsters all around.

27th October :

This is one of the few fine days of a wet stormy autumn and five or six species and varieties of Gentians, *Crocus speciosus*, Dianthus and rock roses are making a fine display.

The Gentians continued to give a display right up to the early days of December and very soon afterwards the new cycle of flowering was taken up by *Primula gracilipes*. I am conscious as I complete these notes that my diary has not been kept as faithfully as it might. I have failed to record the flowering of a good number of plants, such as *Gentiana sino-ornata*, *G. orva*, *Rhododendron camtchaticum*, *Menziesia lasiocarpa*. Nor have I mentioned the evergreen shrubs such as *Chamaecyparis*, *Picea* and *Thuja* which help to lend character to any rock garden whether large or small. I hope I have, however, by these notes, made it plain that even a rock garden of small dimensions such as mine may be made a place of interest throughout the year and give joy to its owner and visitors alike.

## A Garden Comes of Age . . . LeBlanc Gardens Part 2

By LEO M. LEBLANC

PROCEEDING down the glade we turn left, just as we pass the hedge of holly, and enter the Camellia Garden ; a good collection is here, so as to have bloom over a long season. The west of this area is planted with a wind-break of *Chamaecyparis Lawsoniana*, now over thirty feet in height, giving nice protection to the Camellias. Passing through this garden we enter upon a path that leads into the Fern Garden, much of which is in the early stages of planting. It is our intention to have a good selection of the English sorts and also of the species that are indigenous to our own States. Rhododendrons furnish the border on the east, while the trees mentioned above continue on from the Camellia Garden to give wind and sun protection for the ferns on the west.

From the Fern Garden the walk continues past the shade houses that are used for small nursery stock and thence proceeds through the lower section of the Sunken Garden. The first planting on the left is a nursery area, set aside for a sales room as it were, for azaleas. The beds are laid out in a large 'H' and are used for separate plantings of *R. Schlippenbachii*, *R. calendulaceum*, the Mollis hybrids, and a collection of various coloured forms of Kurume hybrids. On the right is the Rock Garden with its mixed plantings of dwarf azaleas, heather, low-growing conifers, a group display of *Andromeda polifolia*, a few specimens including a nice plant of *Erica arborea*, and a good tree of *Cornus florida var. rubra*. Next to the nursery plot of azaleas on the left is the Rose Garden with a division lattice fence for the climbing kinds. The roses extend up the slope to the top of the Upper Terrace, on the south of the Residence. Thus far we have made a complete circle of this part of the Gardens, having passed through the Sunken Garden, we have walked up a gentle slope of lawn and thus arrived on the south side of the Upper Terrace.

A paved area on the south of the Residence is bordered with beds used for dwarfish things and our collection of alpine plants from our many trips into the Mountain regions of the Coast.

A path leads from the Upper Terrace, on a level grade, above the Sunken Garden, southwards through an arched opening in a very high hedge of English Laurel, and thence into the Shelter Garden, so termed because it is enclosed on all sides by plantings of Pine, Spruce and *Thuya plicata*. With full exposure to sun being available in the center of the garden, heather, both winter and summer blooming sorts, was used to good advantage, being planted in large beds. Here too is a nice bed devoted to the growing of some of the very low-growing Rhododendrons ; one in particular is of delight to everyone, *R. radicans* ; when planted in mass display it does have a lovely effect. The

primrose family is quite well represented, these being used in the shade areas ; also *Gentiana acaulis* is planted wherever possible, we love the beautiful blue of its flowers. The pink shades of the Kurume Azaleas are grouped in borders to give added colour, and with them we have used many other plants to provide interest. Among the trees represented in this Garden are several Magnolias, *M. denudata*, *M. grandiflora*, *M. liliflora*, *M. Sieboldii*, *M. x Thompsoniana*, and *M. x Veitchii*. A nice specimen of *Styrax Obassia* is here and also *Parrotia persica*. Several plants of *Embothrium coccineum* are used to give effect in later years, these are still small ; also there are many other plants that are in their growing years that will give added pleasure in years to come.

As we pass through the beds of heather a path leads us to some stone steps that descend to a lower level, and through an opening in the *Thuya plicata* wind-break on the west of the Shelter Garden, we pass into the Magnolia Garden. This is quite new, and the trees are small ; being sheltered from wind in this area, we have planted several *M. macrophylla*, mainly because of the very large leaves, also we have a collection of some of the *Magnolia Soulangeana* hybrids. Represented also are some other trees to give attraction, namely, *Acer Davidi*, *Acer Forrestii*, *Acacia saligna*, *Aristotelia racemosa*, *Eucalyptus rostrata*, and a small grouping of *Grevillea robusta*.

Flanking this garden on the west and part of the north are the propagating houses, built in the form of an 'L.' The small part of the 'L' is the hot house, the entrance being in the east end. As we pass through this building, 10 ft. × 20 ft., one may see that it is used as a starting place for seeds and cuttings ; the beds are heated by electric cable. Walking through this house we enter next the potting room, and from this room we descend to a little lower level and into the greenhouse proper. This building is 30 ft. × 54 ft. and is used for the purpose of carrying plants that are tender through the winter, and also for growing on of the transplants and the rooted cuttings from the Hot House.

From the greenhouse we emerge upon the drive that has continued on from the parking area. Crossing this drive we proceed west, down a grass-covered glade of nice width that is planted on either side with specimens and groupings of evergreens and conifers. Among some of these are the very beautiful native Dogwoods, *Cornus Nuttallii*, *Abies nobilis (procera)*, *Cedrus Deodara*, a good tree of *Larix decidua*, and also a beautiful specimen of *Abies concolor*. This glade is over two hundred feet in length and is the entrance to the Cathedral Garden, so named for the large statue of Christ that is surrounded by tall conifers. Several years ago this beautiful statue was given to us by a very dear person ; it was made by Italian craftsmen in Chicago. We erected a suitable base of stone work for the statue, grouped conifers about and arranged a pool in the foreground for waterlilies. It is a very restful garden, one that all of our visitors enjoy. An added attraction is a bit of a rill that goes singing and dancing on its way, just beyond the stone base on the west side.



From this area we enter our new addition to the Gardens, our Little Arboretum of three acres.

The drive that we have formerly mentioned swings past the greenhouse and a shade house that is connected to it, dips by a beautiful specimen of *Cedrus Deodara*, and forks; the left-hand turn takes one up a gentle slope, past the Shelter Garden, through the exit gate and back onto the County Road; the right turn escorts the visitor beneath very old and stately-trunked Gravenstein apple trees, to the place where we emerged from the Cathedral Garden.

Using the drive as a walk, we are led through plantings of *Pinus nigra*, (we now have represented in the Gardens over thirty species of Pine), past a beautiful bed of *Cistus ladaniferus*, var. *maculatus* backed by a few groups of *R. Schlippenbachii* and having a background of *Pinus nigra*. On the left of the drive are two large ponds; these are connected by a narrow channel and over this point a rustic bridge has been built, the rails of which have been used to train vines of *Wistaria*. The blue sorts are planted; these have very long pendant clusters, making a nice effect with the water scene. The plantings about the ponds have not been completed as yet; however, we do have large beds of Mollis Azaleas that are in, some Birch and Dogwood and a weeping Crab apple, while on the North-west side we have a large planting of white flowered rhododendrons and a grouping of *R. Schlippenbachii*.

Continuing on the drive, one is brought to a great circular planting of *Sequoia Wellingtonia (gigantea)* and bordered by deciduous azaleas. The sides of the drive will be planted with groups of *Abies*, a mixture of *Acers*, and scattered *Larix* here and there, with groups of *Pinus* of several sorts. On the south, set in from the drive, a good planting of *Arbutus Menziesii* has been made, and in full sun and exposure is a large bed of *Daphne Mezereum*.

Having reached the end of our present labours we return to the Residence and the Upper Terrace. Our tour of the Gardens has been completed, but I am conscious that no words can duly describe any garden. To have listed all of the hundreds of plants that have been assembled here would have resulted in a plant dictionary and would have been annoying for readers. However, in some future article I should like to write of the many Alpines that we grow.

The Gardens as they are today are a fitting tribute to my late beloved father, and my constant companion, the Queen of the Gardens, my mother. It is due to their untiring enthusiasm and through their encouragement that the Gardens are the joy they are today; good parents are always a source of inspiration to their children.

The past twenty-one years have been enjoyable, interesting, and pleasant ones; we have worked with a purpose in mind, and many of our plans have been completed. The future ever provides a challenge, and we look to it with new visions of things to accomplish; but while

we have enjoyed the past, and the future holds much promise of things to come, it is the present that is providing us with so much happiness in our Gardens—being amongst plants that we have watched grow from seedlings, and marvelling at the growth and beauty that has taken place down through the years ; it is a thrilling experience. Perhaps it is because one who tends growing things becomes more humble as the years are added to his body and his soul absorbs more of the spiritual values of life, that his garden becomes to him a place of such happiness and rest.

It is my hope that the members have borne with my ramblings, and that when visiting the States they will come to Washington, to a garden near Kent. A welcome hand is out ; come in and wander at leisure through the many little gardens within LeBlanc Gardens.

## Sempervivums

By J. G. COLLEE

THE SEMPERVIVUMS or House Leeks are an immense genus of succulent rosette-forming plants. They are of the easiest culture and some of the varieties grown today elicit praise wherever they are shown. They are at all times most decorative and they grow in places where it is almost impossible to grow anything else. The cobwebbed varieties especially defy description, so beautifully fashioned are their threads of gossamer which decorate the tops of their rosettes.

They are often found growing at an alarming rate in the rhones of old country cottages or the ramparts of an old castle. If the reader visits Scotland's only lake, the Lake of Menteith, on the island of Inchmaholm, he will find many Sempervivums decorating the tops of the wall of the old monastery. They grow there in profusion provided the Skullcaps—*Scutellaria*—or the *Erinus alpinus* have not completely ousted them from these places. This island and the surrounding country is a paradise of flowers all the year round, and the whole setting is magnificent.

But to get back to the Sempervivums ; they are not to be noted for their flowers. Their colours are indeterminate in tone and in some cases rather bizarre. Their culture is of the simplest, but the site must be fully exposed to the sun and air. They insist on good drainage and if there is any stagnation at their roots they simply waste or wither away.

Sempervivums will grow excellently in the normal soil of the garden. Mix some old rotted manure, well broken up, with three times its bulk of rich light loam and your plants will well repay you for this little extra care. Do not ram the mass into a tight hard lump and expect your plants to bore their way through this as if they were trying to break up a concrete block. It is good to keep them in pans outdoors, if you are going to exhibit them. This keeps them within bounds and also makes certain that the names are not lost. Have the rosettes just above the level of the top of the pot or pan so that the plant can obtain

the maximum of sunshine with a free circulation of air round the base of the plant. Remember that a little extra care in the initial stages will ensure good specimens and that your entry marked "Sempervivums" will then have a good chance of entering the prize list, provided you have not gone to the other extreme and spoiled their character by over-feeding. Watering should be done by immersion if at all possible when they are grown completely in pans. Try and keep the moisture from gathering in the rosettes.

As mentioned before, this is an immense genus of plants and the lists available are very confused. These omit to give accurate descriptions of the plants, and classify them simply as indoor and outdoor. There is little or no definite classification, so that the novice is left completely in the dark as far as size or growth of plant is concerned. A confused state of nomenclature exists and it is best to make a collection from varieties either seen in someone's garden or by specimens shown on the showbench. The following varieties are worthy of being incorporated into any collection, either for show or simply for garden decoration. The Arachnoid, or Spiderwebbed varieties as they are called, are a necessity in any group. *Sempervivum arachnoides* is easily grown and when fully matured makes a notable exhibit. It will grace your table or if kept to the Alpine House will assuredly be a centre of attraction. The *minus* variety of this plant is repeatedly winning prizes at the shows of our club. A lovely red variety is *S. arachnoidum Stansfieldii*, which has large reddish rosettes and an outstanding web. It has the added commendable asset that it is an easy "do-er"! *S. Laggeri* is a similar variety but it has smaller rosettes. Another arachnoid is *S. arach. tomentosum*, but this variety becomes somewhat leggy and is not so neat as some of the others aforementioned. The web in this variety, however, is very dense and therefore very white.

Pride of place among the green varieties must surely go to *S. tectorum* from Val Minera, which has a rosette fully three inches in diameter. The colour is green with reddish tips and these tips are very pointed and indeed sharp. It is like the ordinary garden *S. tectorum* which can grow to such huge dimensions outside on rhones or in old-world gardens. *S. tectorum triste* has large reddish brown rosettes and must be included in any collection. A variety known as *S. nevadense* has neat flat rosettes of medium size, green in colour, and with the outer leaves flushed with scarlet when exposed to the open air. This colouring unfortunately disappears when grown inside. *S. arenarium* is one of the smallest species grown. It has tiny half open rosettes of light green leaves which are tinged with red on the outside. It seldom flowers and is very hardy. To finish this small selection would be impossible without including one other red variety and this one must find a place in everyone's garden. It is *Sempervivum montanum rubrum*, which can truly be described as a mahogany red form. It makes a lovely plant and will certainly uphold the name "Ever-living."

## Miniature Gardens—Some Suggestions

By "I. C. and Co."

LIKE ANY other form of art, miniature gardens arouse much controversy. At an exhibition of modern art or a Scottish Rock Garden Club show, the remark may often be heard "I could have done better myself." Tastes differ widely, but one would have to be a follower of the Surrealist school to admire the siting of a bog primula on the peak of a miniature mountain or the nightmare vision of fat Dutch crocuses overtopping the miniature tree under which their corms are planted. Those with more naturalistic tastes shudder at a petiolarid primula surrounded by house-leeks or at dwarf rhododendrons, ericas, encrusted saxifrages and dianthus all apparently flourishing in the same soil. There are bound to be gardens which delight everyone, some which appeal mainly to the purist, and others almost childish in conception, but if the owner is pleased the main purpose is achieved. On the other hand, for the show bench, some basic principles of good planning should hold.

Mr. Clarence Elliott, in the 1930s, probably did more than anyone else to popularise the old stone trough, and it is still the most prized setting for a miniature garden, although, with so few in existence and fewer still being made today, there are not enough to go round to satisfy the demand of all who would like them. There are, however, many ways of creating attractive and practical little gardens if only some imagination is used and nature is allowed time to mature the raw outlines. This maturing is every bit as important as a good trough, the plants should blend softly towards or into one another; no miniature garden is ready for display which has a newly-planted, almost bedded-out appearance. Patience is needed both for the initial planting and in waiting for nature to do her work.

Good substitutes for the old stone trough can be made with a little ingenuity. In the first place you can make a new one yourself out of soft sandstone, the only tools needed are a hammer and a stone chisel, but if stone-masonry is not your *métier*, concrete can be used in various ways with good effect.

Hyper-tufa, mentioned in the Alpine Garden Society Bulletin (Vol. IV, page 316), is made of 1 part sand, 1 part cement and 2 parts dry peat. The author recommends it to be mixed to the consistency of thick cream and poured into a mould, previously formed in damp sand for which a real rock has served as model, wooden pegs being fixed so that, when removed, holes are already formed to make pockets in which to grow little plants. Mr. A. Duguid, of Edrom Nurseries, Coldingham, has made some very attractive troughs with Hyper-tufa, using it mixed to a firm consistency, easily handled, like modelling clay (see Fig. 49). The base is made first (inserting wooden pegs to form drainage holes), and allowed to harden. Next the sides are built up a few inches at a time, letting each ring harden before adding

another, as with coiled pottery. Just enough hyper-tufa is mixed, at a time, to complete as much wall as will stand without sagging. Small troughs may be completed in one day, but for larger ones it is better to take two or three days to avoid collapse of the walls. A rough irregular finish can be given, or bold modelling, for the material has of itself a crumby texture. It is lighter in weight than ordinary concrete (a great advantage for the show bench), and stands up well to weather. Anyone can make it up in the back-garden (or the kitchen, for that matter !).

The usual concrete mixture of three parts sand to one part cement, cast in a rectangular wooden mould, is seldom really pleasing without a certain amount of touching-up of the hard outlines. A stiffish mixture is easier to manipulate. Two boxes, one inside the other, leaving a wall space approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches according to the size of trough, can be used just as they are or with the bottoms knocked out and the base laid directly on the earth. Again, use wooden pegs to form drainage holes in the base and, unless the concrete is to be very thick and not to be moved, reinforce the sides and bottom with wire-netting. Pack the sharp angles of the corners with gravel or sand, gradually fill in the walls, dropping some gravel, coarse sand or chippings into the outside edge all the way up, finish off the top with a scattering of the same material (coarse chicken grit is very useful), and allow to set. If the outside of the mould can safely be removed before the concrete is quite dry, a good texture can be achieved by brushing the surface with a stiff yard-brush or a fibre pan-scrubber. The packed sand in the corners will come away leaving a rounded angle and the top edge can be gently trimmed. If the concrete has set absolutely dry and hard, the outlines should be carefully rounded with a steel rasp or an old chisel used very, very gently (see Fig. 50).

A certain amount of colour can be introduced with powder-colour ; dark-brown, dark-green or ochre, used sparingly, will give the most natural tones and alleviate, to some extent, the rather dead grey of cement.

Round or oval troughs can easily be made with two old enamel washing-up bowls or old buckets or zinc baths. Any mould not made of wood should first be lined with newspaper to prevent the concrete sticking.

Before planting up any concrete trough, first soak it with a solution of permanganate of potash to neutralise the cement. Fill it to the brim, and overflowing, before removing the drainage pegs, or immerse it completely, or water it several times with a good strong solution, allowing it to dry between each application to ensure maximum absorption.

To encourage the quick growth of lichens, pour milk all over the outside or rub it with turf, soil and manure. The dirt can be roughly washed off, but enough staining will remain to hasten the pleasing patina of maturity.

Rugged-looking troughs, although top favourites, are not the only suitable containers for miniature gardens, just as the natural rock-garden is out of keeping with certain formal types of houses. Geometrically neat troughs can be very effective in the right setting and, with well chosen plants, are just as attractive, in a more sophisticated way, as the former. Use a finer sand to mix with the cement.

An old brown glazed sink can be used, as it is, canting it slightly towards the drainage hole. Place a large crock over the hole and a lot of smaller ones over the whole bottom. Trailing plants or little recumbent shrubs will soon obscure the edges.

A white sink, while acceptable to plants for a home, must be "hushed." Give it a coating of cement all over the top and outside, roughing the surface well and casting some small gravel at it while wet. This disguise will last for years. It may be necessary to make a key for the cement by chipping the glazed surface first with a sharp instrument.

Wooden boxes, no matter how soundly made, are really not suitable. The essence of a miniature alpine garden is its illusion of permanence, an illusion incompatible with wood. In the case of window boxes made of teak, oak or elm, the purely aesthetic aspect may have to be a secondary consideration if it is a case of have a wooden window-box or do without a miniature garden. In any case so little of the box is seen from inside the room that its importance is greatly reduced.

Pottery vessels, if large enough, and with drainage holes, make very attractive smaller gardens, particularly for use in the alpine-house or on a window ledge, and they can be brought indoors for short periods for decoration or to please the heart of a bed-bound gardener.

Besides trough gardens, very effective and practical miniatures can be made by building directly on the soil, using for the "frame" slabs of stone on edge, buttressed with a little cement between and behind. These gardens may be any size from a few inches to a few feet and can be constructed of any flat stone. They have the added advantage of extra depth, congenial to deep-rooting plants, and do not dry out so readily as a trough garden on a pedestal. A series of miniatures like these make splendid nurseries for plants needing special care or to present a variety of alpine pictures. The Misses Logan-Home, who open their lovely garden at Silverwells, Coldingham, in aid of the National Trust for Scotland, have a fine collection of this permanent type of miniature garden, as well as others, bordering the sweep of the drive, acting as a solid finish, in which are housed many treasures.

Almost the same soil mixture as for the open rock-garden is best for the little gardens, but double the drainage ingredient and increase the nutrient a little—two parts loam, one part peat, one part coarse sand, one part chippings with a sprinkling of superphosphate (about one teaspoonful to a half-biscuit tin), and mix thoroughly. John Innes Seed Compost can be bought ready to use and is the most practical

way to obtain a small quantity of the right type of soil. It is quite good without any addition but is better if more drainage material is added in the form of broken-up flower pots, chippings or poultry grit. When using the latter be careful to obtain flint grit for the lime-haters. Shell or limestone grit is only useful for those plants such as encrusted saxifrages and dianthus, etc., which like lime. A little fine, well-rotted compost is also good to include if you have it. Too poor a mixture in such a confined space is a mistake. Some charcoal scattered over the bottom layer of crocks helps to keep the soil sweet. Vary the soil content, according to whether the plants are lime or peat lovers, by the addition of lime or more peat or leafmould. Never mix the two kinds in a confined space.

Creating a miniature garden is not quite the same as making a scale model, but it does bear some relationship, so keep in mind that there is a "tree line" on the higher mountains above which grow carpeting plants only. A rocky knoll at a lower altitude could, of course, be topped with trees. If bog and scree plants are used in the same trough some natural division, such as a sharp cliff, should come between the two groups.

Before planting, carefully plan what the garden is to be—valley, cliff, slope, bog, dry hilly place, scree or even hill and bog; above all, avoid a plain pudding hummock. It is surprisingly easy to arrive at just that form unless a planned effort is made *not* to have it. If you are using stones, practice placing them in different ways to see how best they help the contour.

Choose plants which, in themselves, suggest a particular type of terrain, restricting them to a very few and relying on their contrast of flower, foliage and ultimate form to create the picture. Too many treasures squeezed into a small space destroy the illusion of a real garden in miniature and result only in a heterogeneous collection of colour and the unquiet indication of a future fight for *Lebensraum*. In small sinks or troughs it is not always possible or desirable to simulate hills and valleys for the display of treasures such as cyclamen species, miniature bulbs, *Kabschia saxifrages*, *Campanula Zoysii*, etc., but if the surface is finished off with a liberal sprinkling of chippings or gravel the plants look well established and happy. The chippings fill in bare spaces with interesting texture and also help to slow down evaporation. A short length of metal tubing, perforated if possible, inserted during construction, and finishing level with the soil surface, makes a good channel to carry water direct to the roots. A tiny pot does almost as well. Try to obscure it with herbage.

Ultimate choice of plants must rest with individual fancy and whether the garden is to be of all-the-year-round interest or to display a few special treasures. A small general garden might include *Cupressus obtusa* var. *compacta argentea nana* (silvery, 8 inches), *Narcissus minimus*, *Dianthus musalae*, *Sedum Middendorffianum*, *Sempervivum*



*arachnoideum* and *Saxifraga minima*. Special pictures might be *Juniperus communis* growing through silvery *Raoulia australis*, or *Narcissus cyclamineus* with *Cyclamen neapolitanum*, or several campanulas like *C. Sartori* (prostrate and pale pink cup), *rotarvatica*, dark purple-blue bell, 3 inches, *Raineri*, sessile, large purple cup, *cochlearifolia alba*, 3 inches, white bell, and *Kewensis*. 3 inches, pale blue bell.

A bed of peaty soil, covered with two or three inches of sphagnum moss, kept very moist (and it is not difficult owing to the retentive nature of the moss), will grow pinguiculas and droseras.

Attractive bog gardens can be made in pottery bowls. The best way is to don gum boots and, taking the bowl with you, walk right across a mountain bog collecting and planting as you go. Sphagnum moss in different colours of bright green and brilliant red provides the base. Grass of Parnassus, Bog Asphodel, Bog Pimpernel, Cranberry in flower or berry, Bog Cotton, Pinguiculas, Sundews, Quaking Grass and Sheep's Fescue make a lovely nostalgic collection to take back to the town and give several months of great pleasure.

Before showing a miniature garden, trim off excessive or disproportionate growth and go over the whole thing with tweezers removing any dead or discoloured foliage or flowers.

Some helpful books are :

- "Alpines Without a Garden," Laurence D. Hills.
- "Miniature Gardens," Laurence D. Hills.
- "Miniature Gardening," Anne Ashberry.
- "Japanese and Miniature Gardens," Leslie Woollard.

## Weather

When I sat shivering by the fire one snowy winter's day,  
My brother, in Tasmania, was busy making hay ;  
His letters told of "sweltering heat,"  
But I had chilblains on my feet.

When I am picking roses here he'll write of cold and rain,  
And say he fears that winter time is really back again ;  
But that is life—without a doubt—  
Taking the good things turn about.

There's night and morning, joy and pain, sharp cold and  
summer heat,  
And all must drink their portion of the bitter with the sweet.  
But when this is a nasty brew,  
'Tis wise to add some laughter too.

RUTH M. HINDER

## Dwarf Conifers—Part 2

By ROGER WATSON

*Cupressus obtusa*, the "Hinoki" of Japan, has given us many dwarf forms, which used to be known under the name of *Retinospora*, but this name is not much used today, as it caused much confusion, plants from several genera being found under it.

*C. obtusa ericoides*. The fixed juvenile form, which used to be known as *Retinospora ericoides*. It is rare in cultivation. Very slow growing with stout upright branches, and stiff narrow foliage, which is a lovely glaucous blue grey in summer, and purple in winter. It is said to be slightly tender.

*C. obtusa nana*. An extremely slow-growing form, especially if on its own roots, with very dark, almost black-green foliage. A good pot plant, or specimen for trough garden.

*C. obtusa nana aurea*. A compact slow-growing form of the above with golden-green foliage, which colour is retained throughout the year.

*C. obtusa nana gracilis*. A quicker-growing plant than *C. obtusa nana*, which is often supplied for the slower-growing one, with bright green foliage twisted in cup-like formation. A beautiful form, which will eventually reach five feet in height, but will take a great many years to do it.

*C. obtusa var. kosteri*. A rather rare plant which originated in a Dutch nursery, and is an intermediate form between vars. *nana* and *pygmaea*. Usually seen as a grafted plant, and grown thus it develops into an umbrella-like plant, with branchlets growing almost horizontal and brownish green foliage twisted into cup-like sprays. Very slow-growing, and a distinct and good dwarf conifer.

*C. obtusa var. pygmaea*. Another slow-growing form, with almost horizontal branches, building up in time to a broader than high bush, with shining brown-green foliage. Rare in cultivation.

*C. obtusa var. coralliformis*. An abnormal branched form, with slender overhanging branches which become tangled and congested, and adpressed foliage: dark green with a brownish tinge. An unusual plant, and very distinct.

*C. obtusa tetragona aurea*. This is not really a dwarf form, but grows so slowly and is so distinct that it can be used in the rock garden. Forms a plant of upright branches, thickly set with golden *C. obtusa* foliage. It is said to transplant badly, so should always be obtained in pots. A green form of this type was recorded but is apparently lost.

*C. obtusa var. caespitosa*. A very tiny tufted plant, extremely slow-growing, which makes a bun-shaped and bun-sized plant of dense deep green foliage. A gem for a pan, as my twenty-five-year-old plant of this form is about nine inches in diameter and about four inches in height.

*C. obtusa juniperoides compacta*. This is another extremely slow-growing plant, forming a tiny ball of congested shoots, and rich green

foliage. My plant of this form at ten years of age is about the size of a golf ball. Also good for pan culture.

*C. obtusa intermedia*. A somewhat looser plant than *C. obtusa caespitosa*, but very dwarf and slow-growing, making a bun-like bush of deep green foliage. Again good for pan culture or troughs.

Of. *C. obtusa* vars. *minima*, *contorta*, and *spiralis*, it is early to write, as my plants are quite young, but they already are showing distinct characteristics. All three forms are very desirable and are in cultivation, but scarce.

*C. pisifera squarrosa intermedia*. A slow-growing, rounded bushling, with both juvenile and intermediate foliage, which is very dense, and glaucous grey-green. A good pan plant.

*C. pisifera squarrosa minima*. The smallest of this form, making an extremely slow-growing bun-like plant of very dense tiny grey-green foliage. Also a gem for pans.

*C. pisifera nana*. A well-known and popular form, making a perfectly round mound of dense blue-green foliage. Very slow-growing and very desirable.

*C. pisifera nana aurea variegata*. A similar plant to above, with the foliage speckled and tipped bright golden yellow.

*C. pisifera filifera aurea*. A curious form with bright golden thread-like foliage produced on arching slender branches. It is much slower growing than the green form, and keeps its golden colour all the year. Usually listed in catalogues as *Thuya filifera aurea*.

*C. thyoides andleyensis*. This plant is sometimes listed as *Retinospora leptoclada*. A dwarf form of the "white cedar," slow-growing, but eventually a good-sized tree, with adult foliage, glaucous in summer and a deep purple in winter. Pyramidal in habit.

*C. thyoides ericoides*. A juvenile foliage form of slow growth, and conical in habit, with glaucous green heath-like foliage, which turns a lovely violet purple in winter. A good pot specimen as the winter foliage colour is very attractive in the Alpine House.

*Cryptomeria japonica* var. "*Bandai Sugi*." A slow-growing abnormal branched form, with both long and short branches and blue-green needle-like foliage, making a very irregular shaped upright bush.

*C. japonica* var. "*Jindai Sugi*." A rare form in cultivation, making a very slow-growing pyramid of dense habit, with deep green needle-like foliage. My old specimen of this form seems to have reached the limit of its growth at about two feet, but keeps healthy and is always an object of interest.

*C. japonica* var. *knaptonensis*. An extremely rare plant in cultivation, said to have originated as a "witches broom" on *C. jap. alba variegata*. It forms a tiny slow-growing bush of dense shoots, which carry white foliage. It is rather susceptible to cold winds but is a most desirable plant. Good as a pan specimen.

*C. japonica* var. *pygmaea*. A slow-growing rounded bush of short crowded branches, and branchlets congested into whorls like cocks-

combs, with blue-green foliage. The whorled habit is not apparent on young plants, but develops with age.

*C. japonica* var. *vilmoriniana*. A rare form, very slow-growing, with crowded branchlets with closely adpressed brown green foliage, making a dense round bush. Good as a pan plant, or a trough garden specimen.

*Juniper chinensis expansa variegata*. A form of *J. chinensis* of fairly recent introduction of semi-prostrate habit with mainly juvenile foliage: blue-green in colour, with on some of the branches nearly the whole of the foliage variegated creamy white. I think this plant will be rather free growing, but is very pretty and striking where it can be accommodated.

*J. communis* var. *prostrata*. A prostrate form of the common Juniper which is slower growing than most prostrate forms of this family, with sharp pointed foliage, deep green above, and glaucous beneath. Forms a perfect mat of growth. Sometimes found under the name of *J. saxatilis*.

*J. communis* var. *Hornibrookii*. A distinct prostrate form, which was found in Ireland, with deep green foliage. Will follow the contours of the ground or rocks but is rather quick-growing.

*J. communis compressa*. The well known and well loved "Noah's Ark" Juniper which must be known to all rock gardeners. A perfect miniature column of grey-green, which is quite indispensable for a trough garden. Rather susceptible to cold winds.

*J. communis* var. *cracovica*. A fairly free-growing form, making a narrow conical tree with blue-green foliage. My specimen of this is about four feet high and about one foot in diameter at the base. The "Polish" Juniper.

*J. communis* var. *echinaeformis*. I include this extremely rare form as a matter of interest. It is one of the "elite" of dwarf conifers, forming a dense rounded bush of dark green tiny leaves, and is very slow-growing. I have seen the plant, but never possessed it, having never been able to obtain this elusive treasure. It is extremely difficult to propagate, hence its rarity. If any of my readers can help me obtain a plant of this, I shall be grateful indeed.

*J. conferta*. A Japanese plant sometimes listed as *J. littoralis*, forming a prostrate mat of bright green prickly foliage. A good ground cover, as it spreads quickly and due regard should be given to this when planting.

*J. horizontalis* var. *glauca*. A good form of the North American counterpart of *J. sabina*, making a prostrate mat of narrow steely blue foliage. A beautiful plant, but spreads rather quickly, as do most prostrate forms of juniper.

*J. squamata* var. *Meyeri*. A very beautiful semi-dwarf of *J. squamata*, with wonderful glaucous blue foliage. It can be kept fairly dwarf by consistently pinching out the leading shoots and is well worth this attention on account of the lovely colour, which is maintained all the year.

(To be continued)

## Hardy Heathers—Part 4

By NORMAN WEBSTER

### SELECTION OF VARIETIES—THE BEST TWO DOZEN

PASSING now to my selected list, I shall deal with the varieties individually, as I regard this as the crux of this series of articles. I again follow the seasonal order of flowering.

*Erica carnea* "Eileen Porter" is the earliest of all the winter flowering group, bridging the gap between the late Callunas and the ordinary run of carneas, and also has a very long flowering period : colour is rich carmine. Except that it is slower growing and more dwarf, it resembles *Erica carnea praecox rubra*, from which it is probably a sport. The flowering period given in catalogues is October to April, and this is literally correct. What the catalogues do not disclose is that it can be damaged by early frost, the only carnea I have ever known to suffer in this way. In 1952 a sharp frost in early November tarnished the flowers so much that they did not recover that winter ; and my plants shed most of their leaves. Another thing the catalogues do not reveal is that it is extremely difficult to propagate by any method. Plants that do strike take three years to reach saleable size. "Eileen" is therefore no favourite with nurserymen : in fact, one of them, while admitting the good points of the plant, said he heartily wished the lady did not exist !

*Erica carnea* "King George." There are no reservations about this one. While not so early or so long flowering as "Eileen Porter," it is in every way a more reliable plant ; and, being easy to propagate, has the added advantage of being one of the cheapest of heathers. The colour is a good mid-red. Its normal flowering period in Scotland is December to March, while in the South of England I have seen it show colour at the end of October.

*Erica carnea* "Springwood White." If I could grow only one form of carnea, this would be it. An incredibly willing grower, it roots whenever its stems touch the ground, and so is as near to a "runner" as we have among heathers. Its foliage is a pale but vivid green all the year round ; its pure white flowers are produced in great profusion from February to April, when the lengthening days and warmer sun draw to it innumerable bees. The interlacing stems form such a dense mat that weeds have no chance. If only we had a contrasting pink form of equal merit, our winter colour problems would be solved for all time. There is a "Springwood Pink," but, although it is said to have originated in a Scottish garden, it is with me just another carnea, with none of the magnificent vigour of the white. In fact I find it hard to credit that there is any connection between them.



*Photo.—M. I. H.*

Fig. 49.—Trough made of hyper-tufa. (See page 310).



*Photo.—G. Cowie.*

Fig. 50.—Miniature gardens in concrete troughs. (See page 311).



*Photo.—R. Eudall.*

Fig. 51.—*Cassiope x Muirhead*. (See pages 333 and 338).



*Photo.—R. Eudall.*

Fig. 52.—*Primula edgeworthii alba*. (See pages 333 and 338).

*Erica hybrida Darleyensis*. Originating as a chance seedling in the Darley Dale Nursery in Derbyshire at the beginning of this century, this fine winter flowering heath is a hybrid between *Ericas carnea* and *mediterranea*. Which particular forms were the parents of the original seedling is not known. It grows up to eighteen inches high, produces its rosy purple flowers with great freedom, and is completely hardy under the most exposed conditions. An "improved" form called "George Rendall" has been introduced recently, but I fail to see the improvement. *Darleyensis* itself is a very variable plant, and there is an early flowering form which I think deserves to be separately named: it shows colour well before Christmas, whereas the normal form flowers from February to April. In 1952 Mr. Arthur Johnson of Conway, Wales, a great heather expert, obtained an Award of Merit from the R.H.S. for a form named after himself, which he believes to be a hybrid between *Erica carnea* "Ruby Glow" and *Erica mediterranea hibernica*. It has longer flower sprays and the colour is nearer to a rose pink. My own belief is that, with some thirty varieties of *Erica carnea* available for hybridizing with at least a dozen forms of *Erica mediterranea*, this natural cross must have happened many times, and the variations in *darleyensis* can be traced back to the various possible crosses. This view is confirmed by the appearance in my own garden of a self-sown seedling which proved to be a white form of *darleyensis*. It is a very vigorous plant with a long flowering period, and grows taller than any *carnea* or the normal *darleyensis*, presumably because in its case the *mediterranea* element is stronger. Another white seedling of *darleyensis* type has appeared more recently in Jack Drake's nursery at Inshriach, but it is quite a dwarf plant, not much bigger than *Erica carnea* "Snow Queen."

I think I have written enough to show that the name "darleyensis" covers a group rather than a single plant, and that we may yet see many more variants.

Turning now to the tree heaths, which bloom in early spring, my first selection is:

*Erica lusitanica*, sometimes called *codonodes* or the Portuguese Heath. It can reach as much as ten feet, although it takes very many years to do it, so only in its youth is it a plant for the small garden. I include it because of its magnificent plumose habit, its vivid green foliage, which I sometimes think is the best in the whole heather family, and that is high praise. In a sheltered spot it will flower with great freedom, the white flowers faintly touched with pink and delicately scented, the pink colour being more pronounced in the bud.

Of the many forms of *Erica mediterranea* I have chosen "Brightness," a comparatively recent introduction from Ireland. Unlike the rather diluted pink of the type, "Brightness" is a good clean red. It is also of a stature more suitable to the smaller garden, seldom exceed-



ing two feet. With me its freedom of flowering is almost a fault, and it is the only heath I have ever known to flower itself to death.

*Erica mediterranea* "W. T. Rackliff" is generally regarded as a white form of *E. m. glauca* or *hibernica*, but it may possibly be a hybrid, and belong properly in the "darleyensis" group. In any case it is an absolutely first-rate plant of dense, bushy habit, growing about two feet high, and flowering with great freedom. Another merit, rare among the tree heaths, is that it begins to flower when only two years old, and I have never known it to suffer as a result of this precocity.

*Erica stricta* or *terminalis*, also called the Corsican Heath, is my last selection from this group. This is one of the few heaths which can be used as a low hedge up to six feet in the south of England, but more likely three to four feet in north Scotland. It can be lightly clipped into shape without damage. The Corsican Heath is useful in association with other tree heaths because its flowering period is quite different, from July until late Autumn. The colour is pale rose, a pastel shade if ever there was one.

From the considerable number of Cross-Leafed Heaths available, I have chosen *Erica tetralix alba mollis*, because it combines beauty of flower and foliage with a long flowering period. The leaves are silver grey, the flowers large and clear white, and are borne continuously from June to October.

A suitable companion plant is *Erica tetralix* "Silver Bells," which produces its silver pink flowers over an equally long period. It is a little inclined to straggle and is resentful of trimming, which is best done in late spring, when risk of severe frost is past.

*Erica vagans* "Pyrenees Pink" is the form of Cornish Heath I like best. It is a quality plant of compact habit, a contrast to most of its fellows, which, as the botanical name implies, are inclined to wander. The colour is a clear bright pink with no hint of cerise.

We now approach the Bell Heathers of Scotland, which offer a wonderful range of varieties, with new ones coming along every year. Among novelties which I have, not yet tested fully are *Erica cinerea* "Cevennes" with flowers of lilac pink, borne continuously from June to October; and "Shepherds' Warning," found by Jack Drake on the moor near his nursery, and almost orange in colour.

I choose first *Erica cinerea alba major*, found occasionally as a wild plant on our Scottish moors, and very much rarer than the "Lucky" White Heather, which is, of course, a *Calluna*. White Bell Heather is a robust plant exceeding fifteen inches with me, and producing its flowers in terminal clusters often from June to October. It is naturally ragged in habit and needs to be kept well trimmed. Some growers find

it shy to flower, and I believe it needs to be established for a couple of years before it gives of its best.

In *Erica cinerea* "Eden Valley" we have one of the gems of the whole collection, and a plant it is impossible to overpraise. It was found by Miss Gertrude Waterer on the moor near her home in Cornwall in 1926, exhibited to the R.H.S. in 1933, when it gained an Award of Merit. To any mind it deserves a First Class Certificate. The foliage is the pale vivid green of early spring grass ; the bells are bicoloured, lavender on the upper part, shading to white at the tip. The plant is often so smothered in flower that the foliage is hidden. Its habit is semi-prostrate, but it will grow upright if given some twiggy support. This is a plant which repays pretty severe cutting back, either immediately after flowering or in spring : it seems to flower entirely on the current year's growth. I may mention that Miss Waterer has found several other lovely forms of Bell Heather which are not in cultivation, and has been kind enough to send me plants, which I hope to see flower in 1954. Miss Waterer tells me that the original plant of Eden Valley still survives and flowers freely, kept short as it is by sheep and rabbits : a wonderful tribute to the longevity of heathers, and also to the value of cutting back.

*Erica cinerea* "Rose Queen" produces its rosy pink flowers in great abundance from midsummer onwards. The flower sprays are exceptionally long, sometimes exceeding nine inches. This plant associated well with the White Bell Heather already mentioned.

(To be continued)

## The Gardener's Wife

He does not tell her of his love, but talks of blight and weeds  
 Of compost, corms and cucumbers, of sulphates and of seeds,  
 And speaks, while he contentedly sits puffing at his pipe,  
 Of alpines on the rockery, or peaches nearly ripe.  
 Then he goes on to mealy bugs ; pruning of cordon trees ;  
 Manure, and sprays, and winter wash ; aphid and turnip fleas.  
 And she is happy for she knows this gentle, shy old man  
 Is saying that he loves her, in the nicest way he can.  
 And though he seldom kisses her, for that is not his way,  
 So often dewy rosebuds lie beside her breakfast tray.

RUTH M. HINDER

## A Miracle

A MIRACLE has happened in our garden. It began two years ago, but has been perfected during the two succeeding summers. I had laid out the top right-hand corner of the small square which is our rock garden as an "Alpine Lawn," sloping down to the rocks below in a series of steps. In the middle was (and is) our Almond tree, around which we plant out each year the finished ex-indoor daffodils, etc., which continue to bloom admirably. That is not the miracle, however.

The original idea was to carpet the "lawn" with thymes and dwarf Veronica. These all died. (That was not the miracle either).

But in early spring scores of seedlings sprang up on the upper stretch. "Ha! Chickweed!" said I. But they did not look quite like chickweed. Now, usually I keep any strange seedlings out of curiosity. I kept these. Presently I had to admit that they looked uncommonly like Maiden Pinks. But whence? And how? Had they been imprisoned in the gritty rubbish I had dug up from the back-kitchen floor and used on this patch? The matter was finally settled when, on returning from holiday, we found one withered flower-stem which had undoubtedly been a Maiden Pink. That was the beginning of the miracle. I had completely forgotten about a packet of mixed *Dianthus deltoides* which I had received in the seed distribution, the residue of which I had broadcasted over the garden. Here they were, infinitely happier than the few I had raised with effort in the frame. And here they stayed.

Last year there were pinks everywhere, in a bewildering variety of colour, from pure white to deepest crimson. But this year: let me try to describe it. The miracle really starts from a corner where I had set some plants from Beachy Head, in Beachy Head soil. As is usual, the more important of these failed. The rampion rampaged not. The lovely dwarf *Campanula* lost its charm with increased length. The suspected gentians became merely suspicious memories. But just now there are scores and scores of scarlet pimpernel, shining in the hot sun as gay as any alpine treasure. Flanking them are the first of the pinks, mainly white. Then come some deep crimson ones, mixed up with blue *campanula* and set off by a clump of late pinky-white saxifrage. Behind them, in the "dell," are more maidens, mostly of a lovely deep pink, with patches of blue veronica and golden tormentil, and my one orange primula standing sentinel beyond, the whole against a background of varied heath green. To the left the purple *Sisyrinchium*s, open gratefully in the sunshine, while further left still the pinks hold undisputed sway—crimson, deep pink, middle-pink, pale pink, white—hundreds of them. That is the miracle.

E. L. L.

Urmston, Manchester.  
July, 1955.

## A Week in the Cascade Mountains—Part 2

By LEO M. LEBLANC

LOOKING for additional scenes of the surrounding mountains we spent some time clambering up one of the steep slopes on the southeast side of the lake, finally coming out upon a projecting rocky out-cropping far above a narrow, winding ribbon of green valley. Upon every niche and crevice of the walls, up and down sweeping curves of easier descent, were grouped black companies of trees. From our elevated position the behaviour of the forest was most interestingly observed, for while all over the gentle undulations of the more level country sweeps an unbroken covering of trees, one finds upon reaching the canyon precipices, that they stand out in bold groups upon the brink, and that they seem to climb all over the more ragged and broken surfaces of granite; it is only the most smooth and abrupt cliffs that are bare. One of the most amazing feats to be observed in such a study is to come upon a family of pines that have secured a foot-hold on a narrow shelf by twisting their roots into a crevice and seemingly to thrive on no soil from which the roots may drink up moisture and absorb the slowly dissolved mineral particles; yet they seem to live by breathing alone, moist vapors from the streams in the valley below and the elements of the atmosphere affording them the substance of life. I believe that no one can study from an elevated lookout the length and depth of one of these great mountain canyons without asking himself some profound geological questions. Certainly the erosion caused by water and ice, and the inherent qualities of rocks themselves, seem to be the causes that helped produce the forms of our mountain canyons and valleys.

Our vista point also provided a study of the vegetation, and the rapid change that takes place as one drops down the slopes of the Cascades and enters Eastern Washington. For here that noble tree, *Pinus ponderosa*, known as the yellow pine, and also the Larch, *Larix occidentalis*, take the places of the Firs, Hemlocks, and Thuyas, of the Western slopes.

Bringing our eyes back to rest on the valley floor, we could visualize what a wonderful feeding area it must be for wild game, for it appeared to be clothed with lush grasses. Unfortunately we were not to see much of the creatures that make the forest their home.

Finally, having satisfied our inquisitive minds as to what the heights had to offer us, we descended the slope and soon we were back at camp. The rest of the day and the next we spent fishing. We had decided that our fourth day would be employed climbing one of our neighbouring mountains.

The evening before our climb we went over our plans and sorted over the gear we should need. After our supper we prepared our lunches too, thus all would be in readiness for an early start in the

morning. As the silver disc of the moon rose in the heavens we noted clouds were sweeping up from the southwest. There was no doubt about it, a change of weather was due, the day had been hot, a stiff breeze had blown throughout the daylight hours and with the approach of evening it had increased in volume ; one could feel in the atmosphere the gathering of a storm.

The sun appeared over the horizon in the morning adorned as a ball of fire, the entire eastern sky flamed with colour : it was a beautiful but awesome spectacle ; the streaming rays of firey light flashed over the snow-capped peaks and cast a weird light upon the lake waters. Surely such a display was an omen of an approaching mountain storm ! After our breakfast we made sure of "guy ropes" and tested the tarpaulins and tent, to make certain that we had everything secured ; all seemed to be in good order. Having completed our camp chores, we loaded our pack sacks, made sure our climbing ropes were in good condition, and with a nod of assurance to each other we set off for the day's climb.

Retracing our steps to the top of the ridge to the location from where we had branched from the Crest trail, we set a course of due south, and had good walking for about two miles ; this we covered in quick time. Upon reaching the top of the next ridge we had to leave the Crest trail ; turning right, we began our climb.

For the next hour and a half we walked among labyrinths of alpine garden and wildernesses of erratic boulders, scattered clusters of dwarfed trees, consisting of alpine fir and hemlock, by-passing small pond-basins that had been filled by melting snow, while old ice-fields lying about in sheltered areas forced us to abandon our route at times, for they were too steep and slippery for safe climbing. The way became increasingly more difficult ; many of the immense blocks of granite were often twenty and thirty feet high. These we were obliged to crawl over and around, clutching at any bit of a tree that happened to have a good foot-hold, its feet firmly anchored in some small crevice ; all the while we could hear far below us the subterranean gurgle of streams.

At about noon we had climbed above this pile of large boulders, looking down we could see the alpine gardens we had crossed and the mass of upheaval that we had just laboured through, and what a completely disordered assemblage it was, a monument to the force of power that had created it.

Before us now was a precipitous, northern slope, that seemed to shout defiance to any and all climbers. Extending up this steep side, *Cassiope Mertensiana* had taken up permanent residence, presenting a beautiful picture with its carpet of white bells. Ranging our eyes over this tapestry, we looked up at the out-cropping of granite that made up the summit. The huge mass of distorted crags reminded me

of something out of Dante's *Inferno*, for it seemed that some of the immense forms were bent over to see the better what manner of creatures were approaching their lofty domain.

The profound scenery all about us was most impressive and for a few brief moments we took stock of what there was to enjoy, glad of the opportunity to rest. Here we could study the fine sculpture of cliff and crag, and watch the shadows as they played tag on the range of mountains that stretched far into the distance on our right. As we drank deeply of the magnificent vistas spread out before us, we also noted the storm clouds as they climbed the sky on all fronts; the friendly sun was becoming dim, and light was turning to that awesome yellow that seems to precede a storm. To the east an angry dark mass hung heavily above the Range and occasional bursts of lightning could be seen, while the faint rumbling of thunder was heard; it was high time that we renew our climb, attain the summit, photograph what we could, make our descent, and return to camp before a storm should overtake us, for we knew from previous experience the violent outbursts that occur on the mountains from such a disturbance of the atmosphere.

(To be continued).

## Plants and Problems

### SOME PLANTS THAT ARE OR WERE IN MY GARDEN

A MEMBER living in southern England writes :

I was interested in the article by "A ONCE WAS" in the April *Journal*.

I have grown *Leucojum roseum* for a few years from seed. I grow them in the Alpine House or cold frame and rather doubt whether they would succeed in the open, although in a warm summer I get many flowers on *L. autumnale* out of doors. *L. roseum* flowered with me from seed in, I think, 3 years.

*Ranunculus calandrinoides* does well with me in the Alpine House. After the leaves have died down I dry it off completely and re-pot in July/August, when the little dry stick comes to life and the great leaves are up within ten days. An annual miracle.

I grow both *Phlox adsurgens* and *mesaleuca* (but it's got a new name now) in a double wall, the former in a half-shady position and the latter in full sun. They have very good drainage, and the mixture above them is equal parts of medium loam, leaf-mould and granite chips. Top dressing is done annually with the same mixture, so the proportion of granite chips increases steadily.

I am interested in the behaviour of that admirable rock plant, *Geranium Farreri*, this year. I have it in various soils and positions—by far the best plant is in a limestone scree ; the next best is in a double wall ; the next best in a pan which was sunk in sand in the open all winter ; the worst of the lot are two pans that were carefully protected from rain but not from frost all the winter !

The *Journal* is admirable, and I enjoy it immensely. It is a pleasure to receive it, and it is read and re-read for a long period.

Yours, etc.,

Surrey, May 1955.

A MEMBER

### CALYPSO BULBOSA—A LETTER FROM VANCOUVER

Dear Mr. Mowat,

I have been reading the latest number of the *Journal* while flying from Vancouver to Cranbrook, a small town nestled between the Rocky Mountains and the Selkirks in south-eastern British Columbia. From the great snowfields below me I doubt if our native alpinists will be setting much seed this year. However, I intend to try for seed in August and will send the results to the Club.

I note the request on p. 274 for the name of the small pink orchid on southern Vancouver Island. It is *Calypso bulbosa*, a real gem, growing abundantly in the mossy forest floor beneath the fir, hemlock, and spruce forests over a very wide range in southern British Columbia. It is perhaps most abundant at sea level along the east coast of Queen Charlotte Island, but grows also to 3,500 feet or more on Vancouver Island and elsewhere. As its name implies, it is a bulbous species, the bulb developing in moss just on the soil surface ; to bury the bulb is to kill it.

Congratulations on an interesting *Journal*.

Sincerely yours,

IAN McTAGGART COWAN.

Vancouver, B.C., June 1955.

### CALYPSO BULBOSA—A LETTER FROM SO. BURNABY, B.C.

Dear Mr. Mowat,

I must start this letter by telling you how much I have enjoyed my membership of The Scottish Rock Garden Club. I have gleaned much useful information from the *Journal* in attempting to satisfy the demands of some of the temperamental but lovely things we gardeners try to grow successfully. Which comes to my reason for writing. In the April (No. 16) *Journal* just received I was browsing through "Plants

and Problems.” The little “Slipper Orchids” that R. M. speaks of are one of those that *demand* the proper conditions or do not survive. The name is *Calypso bulbosa* and they are one of our most beautiful wild flowers, but I very much fear that in a few years there will no longer be any at the rate people dig them up, and they inevitably die unless given the proper conditions. They will do best grown under coniferous trees. The small bulb sits in the mossy needle mulch with the feeder roots reaching down for nourishment into a moist, often red clay type of soil. They seem to do well only in just these conditions, though I have grown and bloomed them for three years in a very well rotted stump until they didn’t appear again after one very wet season. They usually are blooming in April and May and go dormant through the summer—and so need to be kept on the dry side then. The little heart-shaped leaves move into growth in the early fall and stay evergreen throughout the winter. I am growing some in crockery pans to control the moisture and will keep them in the cold frame through the wet winter season so as to have some control over the moisture. They are certainly quite hardy, as the ones I now have were collected from a wooded area near Copper Mountain in the B.C. interior, which gets quite cold in the winter. There they were growing in lovely groups and drifts beneath spindly evergreens—a picture to warm the heart. A good drainage is essential for success with them. I fully believe that slugs and mice have some part in their mysterious disappearance too !

Going on in the “Plants and Problems” I was very interested in “L. W.’s *Iris innominata*. Some years ago I got seed from Walter Marx of Oregon. This year I have a lovely range of colours in this beautiful small iris. My range runs from cream, black-veined, to buttercup yellow—some pencil-veined and some selfs, some brownish on the ends of the falls, some mauve, and some lovely blues to deep blues and pencilling. Its lovely colour range is really something. I have always understood that this iris is one that objects to being moved. Once established it resents disturbance and in fact will often die when purchased from a nursery. For this reason it is best raised from seed.

Speaking of “L.W.’s Roscoeas—how long does one have to wait for these beauties to bloom ? This is my third year from seed : so far they have not made an appearance, but I’m hoping it will be with flowers this year.

While I am writing I guess it would not be amiss to mention some of the Primulas which are blooming for the first time with me. I was down through my black birch woodland garden this evening and noticed that *Primula Waltoni* has at last favoured me with its tall stems of sweetly perfumed rose-rust bells. The *alpicolas* are just starting to break, too. I do enjoy their delightful perfume on the quiet evening air. *Pp. nutans* and *hyacinthina* are almost over : I have not noticed that these have nearly as much perfume as the belled types. The lovely



*Meconopsis betonicifolia* are fluttering like lovely ballerinas beyond my bed of *Primula Sieboldii*, which has been very beautiful but is going off now. *Pp. Veitchii*, *litchiangensis*, *saxatilis*, and a stately 'candelabra' of a salmon-copper have all delighted me this year. *Primula japonica* is almost a weed in my peaty woodland soil ; it seems to come up everywhere and in a lovely colour range ; I will send in some seed for the Exchange this year. I have another of our native orchids out just now—the dainty *Cypripedium pubescens*—yellow, with reddish brown curled petals on the top and sides ; *Cypripedium spectabile* is just coming into bud.

I am wondering if anyone could give me a source of some of the lovely native British orchids, as they seem to do well for me.

Sincerely yours,

S. Burnaby, British Columbia,  
June 1955.

(Mrs.) GRACE M. CONBOY

### CALYPSO BOREALIS

(Extract from letter dated 17th July 1955)

"I ENCLOSE a color slide of *Calypso borealis*, one of our most difficult-to-keep woodland treasures. I have grown it for years—from childhood, when I kept it several years in a shady spot in pure duff from under Douglas Fir trees, where it grows naturally. I find it a favorite of China pheasants, slugs, etc., and it may be naturally short-lived, but it can be kept several years. It is well worth trying and I have had a few self-sown seedlings and quite often it produced seed for me, but one would need special conditions to germinate it, I fancy. It used to be quite abundant in certain localities in Oregon and Washington and still is in a few communities where it is not picked (and pulled up in the process). I collected some this spring where a road was about to destroy one of the last stands of it round here.

It is one of the so-called "protected" wildlings, except where it will be destroyed, but such rulings are hard to enforce. Education and individual conscience are the only enforcement, I believe. If you think it good enough you may add this to the Club's slide collection, unless they already have it. I thought it gave a true idea of color and form, so thought you might like it."

(Signed) L. H. GEE

*Editor's Note* : By a coincidence this letter was written and posted before receipt by the writer of *Journal* 16 containing "R. M.'s" enquiry.

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER FROM MRS. M. L. PATERSON,  
TASMANIA, TO HON. PUBLICITY MANAGER

"I AM FINDING the S.R.G.C. a great help in this direction (getting seed of bulbs) and I am most appreciative of the wonderful seed distribution. . . . I do value the information contained in the *Journals* and I feel that Club members get wonderful value for their subscriptions."

August 1955.

CELMISIAS IN THE ROCK GARDEN

SOME OF THE *Celmisias* are quite suitable for the rock garden, and add interest after the spring flowers are over.

In my garden I have had *Celmisia gracilentia* for a good many years. This was described by Mr. D. Wilkie in the R.H.S. Journal in May 1948. It is perfectly hardy, and did well with me on a ledge in the scree, but unfortunately rabbits seem to have a special fancy for it, and having once discovered it they returned again and again, so I am having to put some protection round it.

I have also in the garden a *Celmisia sp.*, bought under this name as having been grown from New Zealand seed. This species has grey-green leaves with a coating of white wool beneath. This plant flowers very freely throughout the summer, and in fact late into the autumn. It is very hardy and does well in full sun.

A *Celmisia* which is proving difficult to get to flower is *Celmisia coriacea stricta*, but it is a particularly interesting plant as well as being somewhat unusual looking. It has silvery gold leaves, sometimes I think they are all gold and in another light they look silver. This plant may eventually grow too large for the place where it is planted, but it looked so very unhappy after our severe winter and has now completely recovered that I shall not risk moving it yet. This species has not flowered here.

My latest acquisition is *Celmisia argentea*. I am delighted to have it. It forms a tight cushion of stiff pointed leaves almost like an Androsace. A photograph of this species in Sampson Clay's "Present Day Rock Gardening" shows how attractive it is and how lovely it must be in New Zealand.

July 1955.

CICELY M. CREWDSON

A HINT TO THE HOUSEWIFE GARDENER

COOKING and gardening ; how can one combine the two and avoid turning the former into a burnt offering ? When working in the garden I personally forget all about time.

The answer I find is to take my "Pinger" into the garden, set so as to give me time to get back to the kitchen at the time required.

Roxburghshire.

E. D. S.

## FOUR SEASONAL PLANTS

WHAT FOUR plants would you choose as your rock garden plant for the four seasons ?

Mindful of the many lovely flowering bulbs in the spring, without hesitation I choose *Saxifraga Irvingii*, exquisite when covered with its multitude of shell pink flowers on a March day. *Saxifraga Irvingii* brings back to me memories of the late Averill Hall of Harrogate, great plantsman and friend of Reginald Farrer, who gave me my first plant of the true *S. Irvingii*.

Summer for me is a "must" for a primula, and what better than *Primula nutans*, first found by Delavay but introduced by Forrest to the gardens of this country ? Few can resist its sweetly scented, powdered, lilac flowers swaying over its pale crinkled leaves.

Autumn's representative would be Erigeron "Elstead Pink," neat and compact, cheerful and trouble free—producing its dainty pink daisies from July onwards, until frost brings its beauty to a close.

Winter, and the 'carnea' heaths must be first choice—easy and cheerful, flowering throughout the dull days in shades of crimson, pink and white. *Erica carnea Vivelli* probably is the best of them all, with deep red flowers over bronzy-green foliage.

Those are my choice—*Saxifraga*, primula, erigeron and heath—what would your choice be ?

ALEX DUGUID

## Review of the Year

by

THE PRESIDENT

I VERY MUCH regret that owing to illness early in the year I have been unable during my fourth and last year of office to carry out my duties as President as, in my view, they should be.

The membership of the Club has again risen steadily and is now in the neighbourhood of 2,700. Increased membership means not only wider-spread interest in the Club's activities and objects, but also a larger income with which to increase the facilities and advantages which the Club can offer to its members. Financially the year has also been satisfactory, so far as can be judged at the time of writing (July), and that in spite of inevitably heavier expenditure.

All our Shows were successful and the standard of exhibits well maintained. I must, however, leave Show Secretaries to give detailed accounts of them as I was only able to be present at Dunfermline, which was for the first time a Club Show instead of a District one, and showed, I thought, distinct promise.

It was most unfortunate that the Rhododendron Show, which was to have been staged in Edinburgh by the Gardens Committee of the National Trust for Scotland in connection with our Show, had to be cancelled at a late hour owing to the severe frosts. Even our Show was in danger of having to be cancelled for the same reason, owing to a very small entry of plants a week before its date. Super-human efforts on the part of the Show Secretary, coupled with a magnificent response by members to his appeal, in the end saved the situation and I understand that the Show was ultimately better than ever. Those overworked individuals, the Show Secretaries and their helpers, deserve our best thanks.

The Club stand at the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society's Show at Edinburgh was much admired. Thanks are due to Mr. James Robb, who staged it, to the Members who lent plants, and to those who attended on the stand during the four days on which the Show was open. Sixty-eight new members were enrolled.

The Royal Horticultural Society's Joint Rock Garden Committee was reconstituted at the beginning of the year to include members of the R.H.S., A.G.S., and S.R.G.C. For the first time in history, so far as I am aware, the Committee met outside London at our Edinburgh and Glasgow Shows. We welcome this departure from precedent, not only as affording members of all three Societies in Northern England, Scotland and Northern Ireland a better opportunity of bringing forward plants for consideration, but also as permitting plants of real merit to be shown which for various reasons would never be likely to appear before the Committee in London.

Details of the Committee's awards in Edinburgh and Glasgow are given at pp. 333 and 334.

The *Journal*, under Mr. Mowat's able Editorship, has, it is generally agreed, continued to improve. We can, I think, honestly say that it is now one of the leading publications dealing with rock garden plants and of value to experts and novices alike.

I am convinced, as I have said before, that the *Journal* is one of the main sources of the Club's appeal to members, especially to those overseas and those in this country living far from Show centres.

The Club Christmas Card, issued in 1954 for the first time, proved popular beyond all expectations and will be repeated this year. It, incidentally, provided funds for the coloured plates in this year's *Journals*.

County activities continue to prosper in many parts of Scotland and in Northern England. If only we could make these universal throughout Scotland it would be a great gain to members of the Club. Our thanks are due to those County Representatives who have laboured hard in their areas to organise local activities, to those who have lectured at meetings, and to those who have opened their gardens to

members. Dr. Henry Tod gave lectures in the far north under the scheme by which the Council allocated £30 to facilitate lectures in distant parts of the country. These were much appreciated and were productive of a number of new members.

The Seed Exchange was again operated by Mr. Masterton. Our thanks are due to him, his helpers, and to those members who sent in seed. I could wish that more members would send in seed of worthwhile plants, even in very small quantities. There must be many who could and I appeal to them to do so this year.

The Slide Library makes progress under Dr. Davidson's guidance, but it will take time to build up a really good library. I hope that any member who can do so will help.

To convey the thanks of the Club to its Office-bearers has been a feature of the President's Review for many years, but I do feel that this should be no formal matter. I wonder whether our Members in general appreciate just how much time and labour (all taken from leisure hours after a full day's work) is involved, especially on the part of the Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Editor. Speaking personally, I can only say that without the devoted and loyal assistance which I have received from the Office-bearers individually and as a team during the past four years, I could never have carried out my duties as President.

Finally, as this is my swan-song, may I thank all the Members of the Club for their forbearance and help during my four years of office. I have been able to do less than I would have wished. I feel that it is essential for the President, in addition to taking the Chair at Council meetings and dealing with the day-to-day problems that arise between meetings of the Council, to be able to attend Club Shows, and during the year to visit areas to which he is invited—and they are many—to meet members at local gatherings and get to know their ideas and wishes. I fear that I have not been able to do this as much as I could have liked.

I wish my successor as President, whoever he may be, and the Club all good fortune in the years to come.

JAMES C. DUNDAS

### *Have you managed to get it yet?*

If it is a plant or seed you want, try one of our small advertisements *vide* page 358.

It works—it produced *Anchusa caespitosa* for one member.

## Royal Horticultural Society

### JOINT ROCK GARDEN PLANT COMMITTEE

THE COMMITTEE met at the Scottish Rock Garden Club Show at Edinburgh on 12th April 1955, Colonel F. S. Stern, O.B.E., M.C., F.L.S., V.M.H., in the Chair, and nine other members present.

The following awards were made :—

#### *Cultural Commendation :*

To Major and Mrs. Knox-Finlay, Keillour Castle, Methven, Perthshire, for fine pans of *Cassiope* 'Muirhead' (see Fig. 51) and *Primula Edgworthii alba* (see Fig. 52).

To Mr. J. F. Reay for a fine pan of *Cassiope lycopodioides* (see Fig. 53), exhibited by Mrs. J. D. Cawley, Glen Aln, Alnwick, Northumberland.

To Messrs. Jack Drake, Inchriach Nursery, Aviemore, Inverness-shire, for well-grown pans of *Primula sonchifolia* and *Primula aureata f.* (see Fig. 54).

#### *Awards of Merit :*

To *Primula sonchifolia* (P.C. 1931) (see Fig. 55), as a flowering plant for the Rock Garden and alpine house, from Messrs. Jack Drake, Mr. and Mrs. Renton, Maj.-General and Mrs. Murray-Lyon, Dr. Henry Tod, and Major and Mrs. Knox-Finlay.

To *Anemone pulsatilla alba*, from Mrs. J. D. Cawley (see Fig. 56).

#### *Preliminary Commendation :*

To *Primula boothii*, from Major and Mrs. Knox-Finlay.

#### *Other Exhibits :*

There were 21 other exhibits from 12 Members.

The Committee again met at the Scottish Rock Garden Club Show at Glasgow on 10th May 1955 ; Dr. G. Taylor, D.Sc., in the Chair, and nine other Members present.

The following awards were made :—

#### *Cultural Commendation :*

To Messrs. Jack Drake, Inchriach Nursery, Aviemore, Inverness-shire, for fine pans of *Soldanella montana* and *Primula glabra*.

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

To Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Renton, Branklyn, Perth, for two plants of *Meconopsis simplicifolia*, Bailey's form.

*First Class Certificate :*

To *Soldanella montana* (A.M. 1939) as a flowering plant for the rock garden and alpine house from Messrs. Jack Drake, Inshriach Nursery, Aviemore, Inverness-shire.

*Award of Merit :*

To *Dryas octopetala* and *Cytisus ardoinii* as flowering plants for the rock garden from Maj.-General and Mrs. Murray-Lyon, 28A Inverleith Place, Edinburgh.

*Other Exhibits :*

There were 16 other exhibits from 10 Members.

Details of other exhibits at both Committee meetings can be found in The Supplement to the Royal Horticultural Society's Journal, Part I, 1955.

The *Cassiope* 'Muirhead' and *P. sonchifolia* shown at Edinburgh were particularly fine specimens.

The *Soldanella montana* shown at Glasgow in an 8-inch pot had scores of flowers on it. It well deserved its *C.C.* and *F.C.C.*

The *Dryas octopetala* shown at Glasgow which received the *A.M.* was the Sutherland form (collected by Dr. Duncan Morison), with small leaves and much larger flowers than usual.

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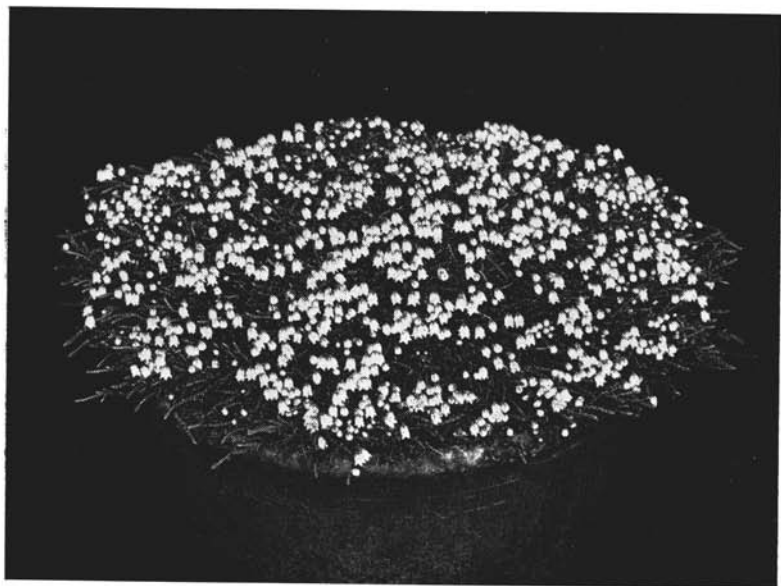


Fig. 53.—*Cassiope lycopodioides*. (See page 333). *Photo.—R. Eudall.*



Fig. 54.—*Primula aureata* form. (See page 333). *Photo.—R. Eudall.*





*Photo.—R. Eudall.*

Fig. 55.—*Primula sonchifolia*. (See page 333).



*Photo.—R. Eudall.*

Fig. 56.—*Anemone pulsatilla alba*. (See page 333).

## Show Reports

### HADDINGTON COUNTY SHOW

September, 1954

HADDINGTON County Show was held in St. Mary's Church Halls on Saturday, 18th September 1954. This Show has now been held for four years and each year has shown a considerable rise in the number of entries. This year the total was 200, compared with 160 last year, which is quite a satisfactory increase. It is gratifying to note that of this total 50 entries were in the section for members who had not previously won more than three First Prizes, leaving 150 entries in the Section open to all members. In spite of the trying season there was a fine display, though perhaps the standard was not quite so high as in the past.

The Chairman drew attention to the increasing membership of the Club and to the flourishing and energetic state of the East Lothian Group. He recalled the history of the Show and how it had been frowned upon in certain quarters at one time but was to be made into a regular Club Show next year. The Chairman then called upon Mr. John Hunter Blair, who has strong ties with East Lothian, to formally declare the Show open.

Mr. Hunter Blair in a delightful and amusing speech mentioned the fame of Scottish gardeners in the past and the proud place of East Lothian in the cultivation of the soil. He then drew attention to the increasing number of gardens in this age of specialisation and scientific knowledge. He gave us the comforting thought that although increased knowledge did not necessarily bring more happiness, this did not apply to gardening. The best definition of happiness was to have something to do, something to love and something to hope for. In a rock garden one always had something to do, on any day and in every season, then surely one had something to love and something to hope for. In declaring the Show open Mr. Hunter Blair congratulated the group on its efforts and wished it well in the future.

Mr. Hunter Blair was then thanked for opening the Show by Provost Fortune, who has always so ably assisted us at our Shows. The proceedings on the platform terminated with Mrs. Peel, our County Representative, calling for votes of thanks to General Murray-Lyon and Provost Fortune.

Apart from the many excellent Autumn flowering Gentians in the three classes set aside for them, the following plants were exhibited among others: *Androsace imbricata*, *Crassula sarcocaulis*, various *Campanula* species, *Calamintha alpina*, *Calceolaria tenella*, *Colchicum*, *Cyclamen neapolitanum*, *Dianthus Boydii*, *Erodiums* and *Ericas*, *Eriogonum ovalifolium*, *Erigeron aureus*, *Fuchsias*, *Haberlea*, *Helichrysum marginatum*, *Omphalodes Lucilliae*, *Paronychia argentea*,

*Parnassia palustris*, *Phyteuma Scheucheri*, *Polygala Chamaebuxus purpurea*, *Raoulia australis*, *Silene acaulis*, *Saxifraga baldensis* and *cochlearis minor*, *Shortia grandiflora*, *Scutellaria indica-japonica*, *Satureia montana alba*. Sedums and Sempervivums, and *Teucrium subspinosum*. The flower arrangements and the miniature gardens were as delightful as usual and there were several excellent sketches and photographs, to say nothing of the exhibits in Section III.

The Premier award, the Peel Trophy for the best plant in the Show, was won by a wonderful plant of *Gentiana Veitchiorum* shown by Mrs. Peel. The Special Prize for the best plant in Section I was won by G. S. Burrows, North Berwick, with a beautiful plant of *Sedum cauticum*, while that for the best plant in Section II went to C. W. Sanderson for *Cyclamen neapolitanum*.

The Show was very fully and excellently reported in the Local Press. Two trade firms from Berwickshire gave us excellent support with most beautifully arranged stands. The Edrom Nurseries, who have had stands at Haddington in the past, has as usual a delightful display most tastefully arranged. Messrs. Newstead Nurseries were newcomers whom we were very glad to welcome and of whom we hope to see more in the future ; their stand was most pleasing and they had some *Cyclamen neapolitanum* that I fear aroused envy in the writer.

C. W. S., *Hon. Show Secretary.*

## DUMFRIES

AFTER SUCH a severe winter and lateness of season it was only to be expected that entries would be below usual at Dumfries this year, but what we lacked in quantity was made up by the very fine quality of exhibits shown in Section I and the trade and non-competitive groups.

Lady Buchanan-Jardine of Lockerbie opened our Show, and in the absence of the President was introduced by Major Walmsley. The Countess of Liverpool proposed votes of thanks to the Chairman and Committee.

The Forrest Medal for best plant in Show was won by Dr. and Mrs. Henry Tod, Seafield, Roslin, Midlothian, with a pan of *Kelseya uniflora*, a rare N. American plant of Rosaceae family.

The Club Bronze Medal was withheld this year.

“Best Hardwood Plant in Show” was won by Henry Archibald, Carnwath.

“Best Softwood Plant in Show” was won by Norman Brown, Dumfries.

“Best Castus or Succulent in Show” was won by Mrs. MacMillan, Southwick, Dumfries.

Lewis Challenge Trophy for Beginners Section confined to local counties was won by Mrs. Kennedy, Fairfield, Kippford, Dalbeattie, with double primroses.

Entries in Beginners Section, II, was very disappointing, only 3 members entering, but Section I was the strongest we ever had, with a lot of sixes and even eight and nine entries in popular classes such as Primulas. In the miniature garden section a Far Eastern garden equipped with temple, pagoda, and Japanese items, shown by Mr. Robertson, Dumfries, created a lot of interest. Miss Dickson, Woodhouse, Dunscore, Dumfriesshire, showed a number of interesting photographs taken from her garden, in which Liliiums, Meconopsis and Primulas, etc., were to be seen in a very fine condition. Mr. F. L. Ingall, Corsock House, Castle Douglas, gave a small display of cut blooms of Rhododendrons.

The Crichton Royal Gardens, Dumfries, put up a table of choice alpine in pots which made us all envious : they usually have something not seen in the rest of Show and were awarded a Large Gold Medal for this display—Sedums, Sempervivums, choice Primulas, Kabschia, Saxifrages, Ramondas, Haberleas, miniature Tulips, Fritillarias, etc.

Miss Dickson also provided pans of miniature Narcissus and bulbs suitable for the rock garden and some lovely Amaryllis in pots.

Messrs. Longmuir & Adamson, Holywood, Dumfries, were awarded a Large Gold Medal for a built-up rock garden, a feature in which they specialise. Dwarf shrubs, heathers and alpines figured prominently here with lovely Xmas Roses, despite the lateness of season. Azaleas and Daphnes, dwarf Thuyas and retinosporas, many double primroses and Kabschia type Saxifrages, with several forms of *Anemone pulsatilla*, were also on view.

A newcomer this year, awarded a Gold Medal, was the display of alpines and cut bloom from Knockdolian Gardens, Girvan, Ayrshire. They had cut bloom of narcissus, many bulbous plants suitable for rock garden in pans, Primulas and Saxifrages in variety, and the American "Reinelt" strain of large-flowered polyanthus, which were much admired. A vase of "Homoglad" (*Homoglossum* x *Gladiolus*) in bloom, probably the first to be seen in Scotland, was exhibited here. As usual, Messrs. Harper & Sons, Stranraer, provided the most colourful exhibit with cut bloom of Narcissi and Hyacinths on a 26-foot long stand for which they were awarded a Large Gold Medal. Hyacinths which were outstanding : "Crown Princess Margaret," pink ; and "Carnegie" white ; and "Mount Hood," still the largest white trumpet narcissus on view, but every vase on this stand was almost perfect.

Blacklock & Farries, Dumfries, showed a large selection of gardening books to suit all purposes, while "Floracrafts," London, had a nice stand of flower brooches.

“Sesame Products,” West Calder, Midlothian, gave us a new display, and received a Certificate of Merit for same.

The Crichton Royal Gardens provided floral decorations for staging, and to all persons who helped to make the Show a success I on behalf of the Club say “thank you” gratefully.

R. FORBES, *Hon. Secretary.*

## EDINBURGH

THE 1955 Edinburgh Show was held in the Music Hall, George Street, on 12th, 13th and 14th April 1955. After such a severe winter, which lasted so long, it seemed unlikely that there would be enough entries to “make” a Show, and the Show Secretary sent out an S.O.S. for entries to any members who did not usually exhibit at Edinburgh. The response was wonderful and, as a result, this year’s Show was the biggest we have had to date.

Entries in all sections were increased, and the increase in the Novices’ Classes was particularly satisfactory. The Show was opened by Sir Compton Mackenzie, who also awarded the Club’s Medals and Trophies. As the President was unable to be present through ill-health, the Show Secretary presided.

The Forrest Medal was awarded to *Cassiope x Muirhead* (see Fig. 51), shown by Major and Mrs. W. G. Knox Finlay. This was a really beautiful plant in perfect condition and magnificent flourish, but the competition for the Medal, as for most of the major awards, was very close.

The entries for the Corsar Trophy were of excellent quality, the Trophy being won by Mr. A. D. Reid with *Rhododendron crebreflorum*, *Arctericia nana*, *Vaccinium nummularia*, *Cassiope lycopodioides* (see Fig. 53), *Primula allionii alba* and *Pachystima canbyi*. Mr. and Mrs. Renton were close runners-up with *Primulae sonchifolia* and *hyacinthina*, *Epigaea asiatica*, *Saxifraga x Irvingii*, *Paraquilegia anemonoides*.

This year there was a large entry for the Carnethy Medal, which was won by Major and Mrs. W. G. Knox Finlay with *Cassiope x Muirhead* (see Fig. 51), *Primula edgeworthii alba* (see Fig. 52) and *Cyclamen coum album*. The second prize was gained by Mr. and Mrs. Bell with *Primula bhutanica*, *Sanguinaria canadensis fl. pl.* and *Daphne rupestris*.

The Primulas in the Show, which are usually very good, were this year quite exceptional, and I think they shook our visitors from the South considerably. It was striking that *Primula sonchifolia* (Fig. 55), which some years ago was an automatic winner of the Forrest Medal merely by its appearance in fine condition on the Show bench, was this year shown by a number of exhibitors, proving that it is not only a fine plant but a good garden one as well. Other unusual plants which appeared on the benches were *Bryocarpum himalaicum* in beautiful condition ; *Kelseya uniflora* in full flower ; a number of very fine pans

of *Pleione*, both *pricei* and *formosanum*, and another "ground orchid," *Dendrobium monile album*.

The classes for silver-leaved plants were also good, one very fine plant being *Helichrysum frigidum* in full flower, shown by Mr. Stewart Mitchell. The classes for Saxifrages, Sedums and Sempervivums were all well-filled and with very good plants, and the bulb classes attracted entries of a good standard, and perhaps the best standard in the latter group was reached by the Erythroniums.

Some very good Drabas were on show, but the date was wrong for both Gentians and Rhododendrons. One very satisfactory thing about this Show was that the entries in the Novice Classes were well up, and the standard of the exhibits was much better on the average than in recent years. In this section there were some very fine Kabschia Saxifrages exhibited.

The Floral Decoration classes were better than in previous years and this may have been due to the award by Mr. R. B. Cooke of the Kilbryde Cup for this section. It was won by Mrs. Boyd-Harvey with a beautiful exhibit done entirely with white flowers.

The entries for Section IV were also up and the standard was good.

It was very unfortunate that several of the Trade had to cancel their stands and we very much missed Mrs. Laing, who had to cancel owing to personal reasons; this was, I think, the first time that she has not been with us since the very early days of the Club's Shows.

This year another new Trophy was available for competition. This was the Bhutan Drinking Cup, presented by one of our Founder Members, Mr. R. E. Cooper, to be awarded to the best species *Primula* on show at each Edinburgh Show. As previously noted, the standard of the *Primulas* this year was exceptionally high and the best was shown by Mr. Jack Drake—a really magnificent plant of *Primula sonchifolia*, so it won the new cup. Mr. Drake had a fine exhibit of *primulas*, *androsaces* and *saxifrages* which was awarded a Large Gold Medal. The parallel Medal for Cut Flowers was awarded to Messrs. Harper of Stranraer for *Narcissi* and *Hyacinths*.

The Edrom Nurseries got a Large Gold Medal for an exhibit of *Primulas*, *Tulips*, *Saxifrages* and *bulbs*, and Lt.-Colonel Stitt won a Gold Medal for a stand with some very fine *Kabschias*, backed by *polyanthus* and *heaths*. Mr. Jeffrey's stand had *Primulas* and some very good shrubs, especially *Rhododendrons* and other *Ericaceae*.

Mrs. Sturrock and Miss Crawford each had a stand displaying an interesting range of pottery, and Grant of West Calder, whom we used to know as the Lavex Co., had their useful range of sands, peat and potting mixtures, which they seem to increase and improve each year.

We were very glad to have an exhibit from the Royal Botanic Garden this year. This contained some very interesting plants; among them were *Primulae forrestii*, *redolens*, *sherriffae* and *normann-*

iana. They also showed some dwarf Narcissi, *Gagea lutea* and some very fine plants of *Pleione pricei* and *P. formosana*.

It was unfortunate that the Scottish Rhododendron Show had to be cancelled owing to the season, but it was really astonishing how many plants *did* reach the Show bench, considering the winter we had come through following on one of the worst "summers" we can ever have had.

HENRY TOD

### ABERDEEN

ONCE AGAIN the Annual Show was held in the Music Hall, the dates being 21st and 22nd April. The Show was an unqualified success and the Committee were pleased to find that an increasing number of entries were forthcoming from the quarter from which they are at all times welcome, namely the beginner in rock gardening.

A good turn-out was obtained for the opening ceremony by the Lady Provost, Mrs. Graham, who was introduced by Dr. Tincker of the North of Scotland College of Agriculture.

The Forrest Medal went to Lt.-Colonel Stitt for a large pan of *Lewisia Tweedyi* and the Bronze Medal went to one of the stalwarts among our members who has supported the Show for a few years back, each time with some well-grown specimens. Mr. Youngson uplifted the prize this year with exhibits well up to his usual standards.

Two awards of merit were given, one to Mr. D. Middleton from Kinaldie and the other to a very representative display from the Cruickshank Botanical Gardens.

Amongst the Trade exhibitors were : Messrs. Edrom Nurseries, Jack Drake, Mrs. McMurtrie, Springhill Nurseries and Lt.-Colonel Stitt.

A special prize was awarded to Mrs. Morison of Fairgirth. This was for the best specimen of a plant native to Scotland, and was awarded to a good specimen of *Dryas octopetala*.

It is hoped that members will take heart from the success of this Show and give added support to the 1956 Show, which will be held in April 1956.

W. MITCHELL, *Hon. Show Secretary.*

### GLASGOW

THIS YEAR'S Show in the McLellan Galleries on 10th and 11th May was most successful. All previous records for attendance and money taken at the door were eclipsed. So many entries were received for the Rhododendron Section that an extra gallery was booked to house them.

The Show was opened by ex-Lord Provost Thomas A. Kerr of Glasgow, who in a most felicitous speech referred to the innate love of

flowers we all possess but which lies dormant in some of us, to be awakened by the activities of such an association as the Scottish Rock Garden Club.

This year entries were down and the quality of exhibits, apart from the leading prize winners, was below standard.

Special awards were as follows :—

George Forrest Medal was won by Jack Drake, Aviemore, with an outstanding pan of *Soldanella montana*.

The Dr. W. Buchanan Memorial Rose Bowl was won by R. S. Masterton, Aberfeldy, with *Glaucidium palmatum*, *Ranunculus obtusipatula*, *Rhodothamnus Chamaecistus*, *Sax. Andersonii*, *Androsace hirtella cylindrica*, *Phyllodoce nipponica* : the *Glaucidium* and *Rhodothamnus* were particularly good. Second, H. Archibald, Carnwath, who had good plants of *Nomocharis Mairei* and *Ranunculus obtipatula*.

The Henry Archibald Rose Bowl was won by W. Urie, Turnberry, with *Daphne collina*, *Oxalis enneaphylla rubra* and *Gaultheria sinensis*, and General and Mrs. Murray-Lyon were second with *Rhodo. camschaticum*, *Phyllodoce empetriformis*, and a very good form of *Dryas octopetala*. The same exhibitors were first in the class for 3 pans new or difficult plants, with *Liparis makinoana*, *Sax. Andersonii* and *Cypripedium montanum*.

Other winners were as follows :—

For one rock plant native to Scotland : Dr. Davidson, West Linton, was first with a nice pan of *Primula scotica*.

In the classes for Saxifrages, Mr. Darling, Port Glasgow, was first in the 2 pan class for *Ss. Biasoletti* and *Ferdinandi Coburgi*, and Dr. Gibson first in the single pan class with *S. Griesbachii*.

Mr. Biggart, Kilmacollm, was first in the 3 pan class for Asiatic Primulas, with *Pp. muscarioides*, *nepalensis* and *aureata*, and again for 1 pan Asiatic with *P. aureata*. In Class 14 Mr. Todd, Bearsden, was first with a nice pan of *Primula frondosa*. A nicely flowered pan of *Gentiana verna angulosa* gained a 1st prize for Mrs. Henderson, Renfrew, in the class for 1 pan Gentiana. For 2 pans *Lewisia* Dr. Gibson was successful with *L. brachycalyx* and the seldom-seen *nevadensis*.

In the class for 1 pan Diapensiaceae Mr. Archibald took 1st with a very fine pan of *Schizocodon macrophylla*. In the class for Campanulaceae Mr. Urie took first with a good pan of *Campanula pilosa* very well covered with buds. In the classes for dwarf Rhodos. James Taggart, Helensburgh, took 1st in the 2 pans class, with *R. glaucum* and *R. cantabile* and 1st in the 1 pan class with *R. orthocladum*. In Class 48, for 1 pan Ericaceae, excluding Rhododendrons, Mrs. W. Robertson, Edinburgh, took 1st with a good pan of *Cassiope selaginoides*.

The novice classes were very poorly supported, but there were some very nice pans on show. Mrs. Keir, Bridge of Weir, won the



Bronze Medal for the most points in this section. Mr. Ian Watson was 1st in the class for 3 rock plants, with *Primula* "Rufus," a pan of mixed *Rhodohypoxis*, and *Cassiope lycopodioides*. For 1 pan bulbous plants Mrs. Garrick, Milngavie, took the chief award with *Fritillaria pyrenaica*. A very dainty container of various rock plants gained 1st prize for Miss Thomson, Milngavie.

In Section IV Mrs. J. Davidson, West Linton, was first with a very nicely arranged bowl of cut flowers, rock plants, in Class 83. In the Narcissi classes the chief honours were shared by Miss M. N. MacFadzean, Troon, Mr. Archibald and Mr. Lamont.

The prize for most points in the Rhododendron Section was won by J. F. A. Gibson, Glenarn, Rhu.

A Large Gold Medal was awarded to Jack Drake of Aviemore, for his outstanding display of rock plants in pots. He also received a Certificate of Merit for a pan of *Omphalogramma elegans*.

William B. Boyd, Barrhead, also received a Large Gold Medal for his built-up rock garden.

Thomas Harper & Son, Stranraer, also received a Large Gold Medal for their display of daffodils, tulips and hyacinths.

A Gold Medal was awarded to the Edrom Nurseries, Berwickshire, and they also received a Certificate of Merit for a very fine specimen of *Meconopsis integrifolia*. Messrs. Dobbie & Co., Edinburgh and Glasgow, also received a Gold Medal for their stand of tulips.

Other nurserymen whose stands were prominent and did much to make the Show colourful and interesting were :—

Messrs. Bannatyne & Jackson, Hamilton ; The Kennishead Nurseries (D. A. Wintersgill), Thornliebank ; The Castlehill Nurseries (Miss Mary Guthrie-Smith), Helensburgh ; Colonel J. H. Stitt, Blairgowrie, and Knockdolian Gardens, Colmonell.

Among Sundriesmen, prominent as always, was Lavex, Soil Specialists, West Calder, and Messrs. Jackson & Son (Booksellers), West George Street, Glasgow, the Rozalex Co. from Manchester, and Floral Handicrafts from London.

The Glasgow Branch of the National Society of Cacti and Succulents staged their usual display.

In the Rhododendron Section (Section V) entries were so numerous that, as already mentioned, an extra gallery was rented to stage the same. There were 26 classes and in every class there was strong competition, e.g. in Class 121 (Triflorum Series) there were 22 entries. Mr. J. F. A. Gibson of Glenarn, Rhu, was the most successful competitor and won the prize for most points. Other successful competitors were Mary, Duchess of Montrose, of Brodick Castle, Major I. A. Campbell, Arduaine of Oban, Mr. Michael Noble, Strone, Argyll, Mr. E. H. M. Cox of Glendoick, Perth, Mr. A. G. Kenneth, Ardrishaig, Argyll, Major W. G. Knox Finlay, Keillour Castle, Perthshire, and Mr. and Mrs. Hally Brown, Craignahullie, Skelmorlie, Ayrshire.

For future Club Shows in Glasgow the Show Secretary has been promised a handsome Silver Cup to be awarded to the competitor who gains most points in this section.

ROBERT J. C. BIGGART	}	<i>Joint Show Secretaries.</i>
EDWARD DARLING		

### DUNFERMLINE

WARM SUNNY weather greeted Dunfermline Show in the Music Pavilion, Pittencrieff Park, on 3rd and 4th June. Competition was good in most classes and the standard was high.

The George Forrest Medal was awarded to 3 fine specimens of *Rhodododendron ledoides* shown by Maryfield Nurseries, Leslie, on their attractive stand which also gained them a Large Gold Medal.

The Robertson Challenge Cup in Section I was won by Mr. C. G. Halley with fine plants of *Wahlenbergia Pumilio*, *Sax. ledoides*, and *Linum arboreum*; Mr. Halley also won the Carnegie (Dunfermline) Trust Trophy for most points in this open section.

In Section II Mrs. Buchanan, Guardbridge, won the Bronze Medal for most points in this section. The Institute of Quarrying Quaich for most points in Section IV (confined to Fife members) was won by Mrs. A. W. Wilson, Dunfermline.

The prize for the best plant in Section I was awarded to Mr. Stewart Mitchell, Dundee, for a very fine specimen of *Androsace spinulifera*, and for the best plant in Section II to Mr. A. Duncan, Newport, for *Penstemon Newberryi erectus*, while in Section III it went to Mrs. Wilson for *Wahlenbergia serpyllifolia major*. Other plants which caught the eye were a fine plant of *Asplenium viride*, good plants of *Dianthus Musalae*, a sulphur form of *Delphinium nudicaule*, and many fine Saxifrages, while in both Sections I and IV dwarf conifers were strongly represented by very fine specimens.

The prize for the best Vase of Cut Flowers was won by Miss Somerville for a beautiful arrangement of Solomon's Seal and Lily of the Valley.

There was the usual heavy competition in the Children's Section, and here mention must be made of the 1st and 2nd prize-winners in Miniature Gardens from Dunfermline High School; they were outstanding and might have competed successfully against adults at many a Show. Equally outstanding was a miniature Stone Trough which was placed 1st from Camdean School, Rosyth.

Gold Medals were awarded to the stands of Edrom Nurseries and Colonel Stitt. The Hon. Show Secretary thanks all those members of the Trade who supported the Show by their presence.

## PENICUIK

THE MIDLOTHIAN and Peebles County Show was held on 5th March 1955, in St. Mungo's Hall, Penicuik, along with the Penicuik Horticultural Society's Bulb Show. The weather was, if anything, worse than in 1954, for severe frost and snow had started in January and were "still going strong." As a result, the County entries were very few, less than half the total, since most of the Members' gardens were still deep in drifts. The total entry was 38 from 11 exhibitors—in all, 58 pans on the bench—a most creditable effort for such a season.

The standard of the exhibits was very high and the Judge, Mr. James Robb, had considerable difficulty in deciding in many of the classes, so close was the competition. The bulb classes were strong in both the restricted and open sections, notable pans being shown in the open class by Mr. Dudgeon, Mrs. Maxwell Davidson and Miss Harvey. Good plants of *Cyclamen coum* were shown by Mrs. Errington and General and Mrs. Murray-Lyon, while the Show Secretary, in the restricted, and Messrs. Baillie & Adams in the open, had good pans of *Kabschias*.

The County Members were unable to produce any exhibits of Asiatic Primulas (they were all still buried or frozen-in !), but General and Mrs. Murray-Lyon, Professor Grahame and Mr. Baillie all had *Petiolarids* in their full beauty.

The Show Secretary had an unusual plant in *Dendrobium monile album*, a Japanese Ground Orchid in full (but very small !) flower. Just how hardy this will prove to be remains to be discovered.

We were delighted to have Mrs. Laing with us, bringing an exhibit of *Kabschias* and other early plants through the drifts from Hawick, a really gallant effort, and we were glad that the Lavex Co. were able to come this year ; last year illness caused a cancellation of their exhibit of compost and plants grown so well therein. The Edrom Nurseries, however, had to cancel as they were still deeply buried in snow, which was a pity.

There was a good attendance of our Members as well as those of the Penicuik Society, and our classes aroused considerable interest. Our hosts' Bulb Show was, as usual, of a very good standard, and the writer particularly appreciated all that they did to make things easy for him—and the hall was most pleasantly warm, a most welcome detail !

Altogether it was a most enjoyable afternoon, and the support in the Open Classes was most gratifying to the County Show Secretary.

HENRY TOD.

## County Activities

### ABERDEENSHIRE and KINCARDINESHIRE

LECTURES : Four meetings were held last session and all were well-attended. Our speakers were Mr. F. G. Sutherland, Mr. D. Livingstone, Maj.-General Murray-Lyon and Mr. J. L. Mowat, and their informative talks were both enjoyed and appreciated. The newer members of the Club were particularly indebted to Mr. Livingstone for making available for distribution lists of plants which the beginner could hope to grow successfully.

At the invitation of Professor J. R. Matthews, many of our members attended a lecture by Dr. A. E. Porsild, Chief Botanist, National Museum of Canada, on the Alpine Flora of the Canadian Rocky Mountains, which was held in the Botany Department of the University on 31st January 1955. The lecture was copiously illustrated with kodachrome slides illustrating both general features of the landscape and individual plants. Many of the views were magnificent. This region might well add to the number of rock garden plants.

GARDEN VISITS : On 11th May members were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Cozens-Hardy at Waterton House, Bucksburn. The rock garden which was created by our hosts and looked after by themselves was greatly admired. Interesting features were (a) the arrangement of troughs, and (b) the placing of small trees (such as *Acer palmatum rubrum*) to give an effect of height. Mention may be made of specimens of *Omphalogramma vincaeflora*, *Daphne retusa*, *Tulipa tarda* and dwarf Narcissi amongst many plants in flower.

At the invitation of Professor Matthews a visit was made to the Cruickshank Botanic Garden on the evening of 1st June. The rock garden was at its best and reflected great credit on Mr. Sutherland and the garden staff. Drifts of *Lithospermum diffusum* "Grace Ward" and groups of *Lewisia Howelli* were greatly admired as were also specimens of *Celmisia Hookeri*, *Penstemon humilis* and *Berberis coralina compacta*.

On both these visits there was an attendance of over 80. We appreciate the privilege of visiting these gardens and are further grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Cozens-Hardy and Professor and Mrs. Matthews for their generous hospitality in providing refreshment to such large companies.

At the time of writing we have one further visit on our programme. This is to the garden at Knockomie, Forres, of Mr. Norman Webster, in the early autumn to see heathers and gentians.

J. STIRLING, C.R.

## ANGUS

FIVE WINTER meetings were held, the final one being a Group Show as in recent years.

The session was opened on 1st November by the C.R. showing his latest colour transparencies, many taken in members' gardens. This was followed on 6th December by Major W. G. Knox Finlay's talk on "Autumn Colour," beautifully illustrated by slides taken at Keillour Castle. Sir William Dunning, who accompanied Major Finlay, gave a short talk on "Colour Photography," on which he is an expert. Mr. Kenneth C. Corsar's illustrated lecture on "Primulas" on 7th February 1955 was designed to interest members in species not usually grown by ordinary gardeners, and was much appreciated. Mr. John T. Renton's splendid colour cine-film of Branklyn drew our largest attendance on 7th March, and it was good to see the lovely pictures with movement as well. Our Group Show followed the usual lines and the support was most encouraging, being a thoroughly satisfactory evening. Mr. J. L. Mowat was again Judge and Commentator, and personally makes a meeting of this kind a success.

Only two garden visits were arranged, but both of exceptional interest. On 21st May 1955 we went to Ascreavie, Kirriemuir, where Major and Mrs. George Sherriff gave us a warm welcome, which was so different from the weather that day. Outstanding amongst many fine plants we saw were *Meconopsis simplicifolia* and *integrifolia*. A large selection of Primulas, including *tsariensis*, *macrophylla* and *chionantha*. The Petiolarid Primulas were over or past their best, as was *P. Jonarduni*, but *P. pusilla* was still to come and had self-sown seedlings on the peat blocks around. A clump of *Corydalis cashmeriana* was perhaps the most striking show of all, being of a marvellous deep blue seldom seen.

We went to Branklyn, Perth, on 1st June, where the usual friendly welcome awaited us from Mr. and Mrs. John T. Renton, and it was a great treat to see this famous garden again. A very short selection from the many plants of note included *Ranunculus Lyalli* in very fine form, *Meconopsis Cookei* and *Delavayi*, a most interesting *Stellera* (Lowndes 913), *Omphlagramma vinciflora*, a delightfully marked golden *Iris innominata*, and a large flowered Soldanelloid Primula (P.S. & W. 3535).

We are deeply grateful to our lecturers and to the owners of these fine gardens for their kindness in making such activities possible and so furthering the objects of our Club.

STEWART MITCHELL, C.R.

## AYRSHIRE

THE AYRSHIRE Branch has had a very active year and the programme of lectures was carried through very successfully, while the visits to gardens were extremely favoured by the weather.

The first lecture was by Mr. Martin in place of Dr. Fletcher, who was unwell at the time of the meeting. This was a most interesting lecture and, after outlining plant life of the past, we were told that future generations might be living on Algae instead of steak and onions. This at the present time does not seem attractive.

Our second lecture was on Bulbs. Our lecturer, Mr. Harper, was unable to come, so Dr. Dovaston of Auchencruive kindly undertook the task. His lecture was beautifully illustrated by his own coloured slides of bulbs, mostly growing in his own garden. His talk and advice on bulbs was of the greatest interest and very much enjoyed by all present.

In December Major Walmsley showed us his slides of his garden and told us about how it was made and the many interesting plants that grow so luxuriantly in the mild air of Galloway. The audience was transported from the cold of December into spring and high summer for the space of the lecture and were thrilled by Major Walmsley's talk.

We had no meeting in January, so February was our next meeting, when Mr. Gibson from Glenarn, Rhu, gave us a lecture on Rhododendrons and Azaleas. He told us about their cultivation, flowering times, habitat, and discovery, and which species had done best at Glenarn. Many of the largest plants there had been sent home by Hooker many years ago and so were fully grown and a wonderful sight when in flower. The Club hope to visit Glenarn when it is open next year.

Mr. and Mrs. Renton came to us in March with a lovely film of their garden at Branklyn, Perth. This was quite a masterpiece, and we are very greatly indebted to them both. The film and the running commentary were very much enjoyed and we were spurred on by this lecture to greater efforts in our own gardens.

Our next meeting was an expedition to Logan Gardens on 18th April. Between 40 and 50 members and friends enjoyed this visit to a lovely and interesting garden and we were greatly indebted to Mr. Hambro for his permission. The weather was glorious.

Our Public Meeting took place in the Boswall Hall on 22nd April. Mr. Adam Stainton showed us the film of the Nepal Expedition of 1954-55, of which he was a member. This was a thrilling lecture as it was so recent, and we were shown pictures of all the new and lovely plants found but which are not yet in cultivation in this country. They showed the expedition march, the country where the plants were found, and the methods used to bring them home. The audience were

very appreciative and we were most indebted to Mr. Stainton for lecturing to us.

On 18th May five members made a trip to Brodick on a rather stormy day, but the Castle gardens were quite lovely and delighted us all and everything went off well.

Mrs. Kennedy of Doonholm invited the Club members to an evening in her rock garden in June. This was a wonderful invitation and a great many members availed themselves of this opportunity. It was a perfect evening and the rock garden was at its best and full of interesting plants. The Rhododendrons and Azaleas were in full glory and the evening was rounded off by a cup of tea given us by our kind host and hostess.

Our Annual General Meeting was held in Young's Tea Rooms in June, when a small number of members attended and suggestions for next season's lectures were aired.

*C.R.*

### **BERWICKSHIRE**

THE BERWICKSHIRE Group of the S.R.G.C. held two meetings, when there were items on the programme a little out of the ordinary which may be suggestive to other groups. One was a "Magazine Afternoon" when each member was asked to bring in writing a short paragraph not exceeding 400 words on some plant of interest, some problem or difficulty, or even just a written question. These were read and discussed. For example, one member read a short article on the wild flora of a wall facing N.E. Another member submitted an article on a choice rock garden plant for each of the four seasons. This gave rise to lots of discussion.

The other meeting of special interest was one to which the County Librarian was invited as a guest. He brought a selection of books from the County Library of special interest to our members and he gave a very interesting talk on the service offered by the Library, the possibilities of new books being added on the suggestion of members, and on the method of obtaining through the Library special books and even expensive, rare, and out-of-print books.

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

### **CLACKMANNAN and KINROSS**

THE GROUP membership has increased during the year.

In March Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Renton of Branklyn, Perth, came to Kinross and gave us a most interesting talk, illustrated with their wonderful colour film, on their beautiful garden.

*D. ANDERSON, C.R.*

## DUNBARTON, GLASGOW and RENFREWSHIRE

ATTENDANCE of members at our monthly meetings increased so much that a larger room was booked for the winter session. At some meetings more than 100 members were present, and any increase in attendance next Session will present us with a problem difficult to solve.

To all speakers who addressed our monthly meetings we acknowledge our indebtedness, and fully appreciate that the success of these meetings was largely due to their efforts.

This year we visited gardens in widely separated parts of the country. On Saturday, 28th May, a party of 50 visited the spacious gardens at Lochinch, belonging to the Earl of Stair, and many of the company accepted the Countess of Stair's invitation to see round the house after she in person had shown us the gardens in the immediate vicinity.

On the afternoon of Saturday, 11th June, some 70 members visited the gardens of Dr. Gibson, Mrs. Garrick and Mr. W. Macgregor at Milngavie. At Bearsden we stopped for a sumptuous tea supplied by the local lady members. To Dr. M. L. Dean and her many assistants we give sincere thanks. To defray expenses a collection was taken and Dr. Dean, as a result, donated almost £12 to the branch funds. After tea we visited one of the loveliest gardens in the Glasgow area, belonging to Mrs. A. M. Carlow, Sonachan, Camstradden Drive, Bearsden.

On Saturday, 25th June, we set out at 8 a.m. for Drake's Nursery at Aviemore. Two members from Belfast were in our party of over 50 who explored every nook and corner of the nursery as far as possible in the limited time at our disposal. It was agreed by all that the visit was really worth the long journey of 300 miles from Glasgow and back.

Next winter our meetings will again be held in Rosalind's Tea Room, 33A Gordon Street, Glasgow, on the first Monday of each month, commencing in October at 7.15 p.m. and carrying on to April, 1956. In January, however, we shall meet on the second Monday.

The opening Talk in October will be given by Mr. Stewart A. Howat of Bannatyne & Jackson, Hamilton, on "The Gardens at Wisley."

Mr. J. F. A. Gibson, Glenarn, Rhu, will talk on "Rhododendrons Suitable for the Rock Garden" in November.

Dr. James Davidson, West Linton, will talk on "Alpines met with this year somewhere in Europe," in December.

E. DARLING, C.R.

## EAST LOTHIAN

EAST LOTHIAN has once more followed its established policy of holding monthly meetings at different towns and villages in the County. During the winter three lectures were given by Dr. Henry Tod, Dr. James Davidson and Mr. David Livingstone. A Members' Discussion Meeting was held and there was an exhibition of members' slides.



For the first time there was a County Annual General Meeting, at which, among other business, suggestions were invited for future activities.

The Bring and Buy Sale of plants was once again a great success. Although its primary purpose is to exchange surplus plants, a useful sum was raised towards the running expenses of the County and of Haddington Show.

This year a further money-raising effort has been made. Now that Haddington is an "Open" Show, it was felt that all members would like to contribute towards the cost of two silver trophies for award at the Show. To this end a bridge drive was held, and any members not able to attend gave their support by donations.

Three visits were paid to gardens during spring and early summer—on one occasion to gardens in Haddington and Gifford, and later to some of those in North Berwick and Dirleton. An invitation to visit Edrom Nurseries again was accepted with much pleasure.

Besides competing at their own Show, East Lothian members have sent plants to Penicuik, Dumfries, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dunfermline. It was particularly gratifying that at Haddington and Edinburgh, the classes in Section II (novices) were very well filled by East Lothian entries. Some of the successful competitors in those classes were still young enough to be at school. They are to be congratulated on their successes and to be envied for the whole lifetime of rock gardening which lies ahead of them.

L. C. B. H.

## EDINBURGH

MEETINGS will be held on the *second* Tuesday evening of each month in The Scottish Tourists Board's Hall, Rutland Place (West End of Princes Street), Edinburgh, 1. Doors open 7.45 p.m. for 8 p.m. prompt. An announcement will be inserted in the *Scotsman* on Monday, 10th October 1955 *only* if the new premises which are in course of preparation are not ready in time for our first meeting.

*Tuesday, 11th October 1955 :*

"A recent Swiss visit—colour records of some alpiners in their native habitats," by Duncan M. Morison, M.D., F.R.C.S.Ed., and Major-General D. M. Murray-Lyon, D.S.O., M.C. Illustrated in colour.

A sale of plants will be held. Members are asked to support this effort to raise money for Edinburgh Group Funds, by bringing surplus plants and by buying freely.

*Tuesday, 8th November 1955 :*

“Peat Wall Gardening,” by A. Evans, Esq., D.H.S., Assistant Curator, Royal Botanic Garden. Illustrated in colour.

*Tuesday, 13th December 1955 :*

“Propagation of Alpines and Allied Plants,” by Alex. Duguid, Esq., Edrom Nurseries, Coldingham.

W. R. ADAMS, C.R.

### FIFE—EAST

THE WINTER session opened in October with a “Discussion Evening and a Sale of Surplus Plants” which brought in sufficient funds to finance the rest of the session.

“Autumn Colour at Keillour”—a talk by Major Knox Finlay and illustrated by beautiful colour slides—was given to a good attendance of keen members on Friday, 5th November. Discussion followed to a late hour, and one outcome is that it is hoped to arrange a visit to Keillour in October to contrast the garden then with its appearance in June.

An illustrated talk in Kirkcaldy on 8th December was very poorly attended. Several members travelled from St. Andrews on very bad roads, but the local response was poor.

In January Mr. Stewart Mitchell gave a most interesting talk in his own informal, friendly way, and illustrated with his own fine colour slides, on various interesting plants seen in his own and other members’ gardens. A talk by Mr. Mitchell never fails to appeal to members and questions and discussion always come freely.

Mr. James Aitken in February gave us a wonderful talk on “Scottish Mountains and their Plants,” and his colour slides were truly magnificent in their scenic beauty. An enthusiastic audience packed the lecture room, some having to find seats on the floor, but all forgot their surroundings as Mr. Aitken took us climbing with him through the Grampians to our native plants in their natural settings.

In March was our ever-popular “Judging Competition,” and in May a highly successful “Coffee Morning and Bring and Buy Sale.”

On the evening of 9th June a bus party of members visited the garden of Mr. and Mrs. Renton at Branklyn, Perth. The weather was perfect to look round the treasures of this wonderful garden. Many species of *Meconopsis* were at their best, *Nomocharis* were approaching their best, and the whole garden was full of interest : so full of interest that Mrs. Renton could hardly drag members from the garden to partake of her generous hospitality before the return journey home. We were all sorry to see that a sharp nip of late frost the previous night had done damage among the buds and blooms of several of the rhododendrons.

J. L. M., C.R.

### FIFE—WEST

WE THANK the speakers who gave us of their time and experience to give to us most interesting, exciting, and varied talks during the winter months and came to Dunfermline in spite of the most appalling weather. This weather, as well as a lot of illness, affected the attendances on several occasions.

Major-General Murray-Lyon spoke on "Screes," illustrating with slides of rock plants.

Dr. H. Tod gave an illustrated lecture on "Plants at Haddington Show."

Dr. C. I. Smart spoke on "Some Shetland Plants and Plant Collectors."

Mr. James Aitken gave a beautifully illustrated talk on "More Scottish Mountains and Their Flora."

Mrs. Rosemary Howard lectured on "The Flowers of Kilimanjaro."

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

### INVERNESS-SHIRE

ON 6TH APRIL an interesting lecture with slides was given by Dr. Henry Tod in Inverness, entitled "Rock Gardening—Why and How." This was much enjoyed by quite a good gathering of members.

Two points of interest which emerged were :

1. When buying dwarf conifers make sure they really are dwarf varieties and not just seedlings of tall trees. Also where possible always try to obtain plants on their own roots and not grafted. Grafted plants often grow far too strongly.
2. When building a peat wall or bank, make sure that the peat blocks you use are firm and hard. Otherwise the structure will soon disintegrate. Peat blocks which have been cut and stacked for burning are good.

JACK DRAKE, *C.R.*

### KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE

KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE members held their meetings as follows :—

*September 1954* : Mr. M. M. MacDonald (C.R. for Dumfriesshire) gave a helpful and seasonable talk on "Tidying up the Garden for Winter, with references to plants needing special protection."

*In November*, at Castle Douglas, Mr. Moyes (then County Horticultural Adviser) talked on "Conifers and Shrubs suitable for the Rock Garden."

In *January* 1955 the meeting at Colvend was helped and greatly entertained when Mrs. Agnew, Gatehouse-of-Fleet, told of her personal trials and difficulties in the making of her garden ; this was followed by an equally helpful and practical talk on "Peat Walls" by Miss King, Barnbarroch House.

In *March* a meeting was held in Kirkcudbright, when Mr. Robert Glass of Townend Nursery gave a most interesting "Reading" of his own Reminiscences on Gardening over the last 50 odd years, which was much appreciated.

In *April* a very pleasant, though small, event took place when Mrs. Penman of Rockcliffe personally invited those members to her garden (which was most attractive) who had been present four years before when the late Mr. Anderson—then Horticultural Adviser for Kirkcudbrightshire, constructed and partly planted her Rock Garden.

In *May* an enjoyable visit was made to Mr. and Mrs. Ingall's garden at Corsock House, Castle Douglas, this garden being famous for its wonderful Rhododendron Species.

In *June* a visit to Mrs. Blackett-Swiny's garden at the "House-on-the-Shore" Arbigland, was much appreciated ; this garden is unique in its position on the Solway, and on account of the beauty of flowers, shrubs and trees.

In *July* there was a visit to Miss King and Miss Paton, Barnbarroch House, to see their fine Peat Garden, also 5 or 6 troughs containing lovely and rare plants, as well as interesting flowers and shrubs.

All Meetings and Visits were helpful and greatly enjoyed.

The next Meeting will be in September when a Bring and Buy Sale of Plants will be held in Colvend.

In *April* I again staged 50 plants at the Kirkcudbrightshire Spring Flower Show, representing the S.R.G.C. Many plants were lent by members.

As these will be my last notes as C.R., I would like to thank all members of Kirkcudbrightshire for their very great help and co-operation at all times.

M. E. McLELLAN, C.R.

### LANARKSHIRE

COUNTY members within a fair radius of Glasgow regularly attend the meetings held in Rosalind's Tea Room, 33A Gordon Street, Glasgow, at 7.15 p.m. on the first Monday of each month, from October to April.

Will members who may find it more convenient to attend meetings in Hamilton or Lanark please write to me, so that arrangements may be made to hold meetings in these centres.

Laurel Villa, Bishopbriggs.

G. F. LAURIE, C.R.

## PERTHSHIRE

MR. A. EVANS lectured on "Peat Walls" in October, and Mr. Mowat on "Showing and Preparing Plants for Exhibition" in March.

For the season 1955-56 two lectures have been arranged. 8th November : Mr. E. H. M. Cox will describe his Western American trip. 12th March : Dr. Fletcher will talk on "The Royal Horticultural Society's Gardens at Wisley."

On 2nd June members spent a delightful evening at Branklyn as the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Renton.

Following a shocking winter, with protracted drought and very damaging late frosts before their visit on 18th June to Mr. R. S. Master-ton's garden at Cluny House, Aberfeldy, Perthshire members were most agreeably surprised by the wealth of display of very interesting plants in very good condition despite the enormous difficulties of the season.

*Calceolaria Darwinii* bore several blooms and was growing happily in the scree, and nearby were two well-developed plants of *Androsace imbricata* in the moderate protection afforded by an overhanging slab. *Incarvillea compacta* and *Paeonia Woodwardii* were much admired, as also was a robust plant of the rare *Primula Kingii*. *Piptanthus nepalensis* showed no signs of having suffered from the bad winter.

M. E. Cox, C.R.

## WIGTOWNSHIRE

WINTER meetings were held in Newton Stewart and we are grateful to the talented lecturers for their talks and discussions with us. Each lecturer projected the most lovely coloured slides to illustrate his subjects and it makes one realise the advantage of having a skilled photographer on these occasions. Undoubtedly garden lectures are greatly enhanced by such life-like illustrations and artistry. We would like to take this opportunity of thanking Dr. Eric Dovaston of Auchencruive, Major Alan Walmsley of Culderry, Mr. Rye of Lochinch Gardens, and Mr. Taylor of Wisley, now at Logan Gardens.

At the end of March Sir Thomas and Lady White very kindly opened their garden and a Bring and Buy Sale was organised by local members for the Club. The garden was gay with many early flowering shrubs, a great variety of *Primula*, notably *P. bhutanica*, which seeds itself at Torhousemuir, and early heaths, etc. Later, in May, the Club also visited the Crichton Royal rock garden at Dumfries ; here there was a varied display of rock plants, particularly *Ramondas*, *Lewisias*, *Primulas*, etc. We are very grateful to Mr. MacDonald for showing the members round.

On 10th August a small S.R.G.C. stand was erected in the flower tent at Stranraer Agricultural Show on the occasion of the visit of

Her Majesty the Queen and H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh. Plants shown included *Rhodohypoxis*, *Lapeyrouisia cruenta*, various summer Gentians, *Cyananthus*, *Campanulas*, and heaths in variety. The very colourful display was much admired by everybody and we would particularly like to thank Knockdolian and Culderry Gardens for their help.

LOUISE WALMSLEY, C.R.

### NORTH-EAST ENGLAND

A MEETING was held at the Blue Bell Hotel, Belford, on Monday, 20th September. The programme for 1955 was discussed and Mrs. Bunsell's beautiful rock garden and peat wall were visited.

Lectures were held at the Blue Bell Hotel, Belford, as follows :—

Tuesday, 12th October : Lt.-Colonel C. H. Grey, D.S.O., F.L.S., unhappily was indisposed and the County Representative read his paper on "Bulbs for the Rock Garden." An animated discussion followed. On Saturday, 6th November, Mr. Reginald Kaye gave a talk on "Rock Garden Plants," illustrated with magnificent coloured slides.

On Monday, 29th November, Mr. R. S. Masterton gave a most interesting talk on "Propagation." After some fine coloured slides showing plants and views in Mr. Masterton's garden at Aberfeldy, and illustrations of methods of taking cuttings, the second part of the lecture consisted of a demonstration of seed sown and taking cuttings. This was considered the most helpful lecture for beginners that this group has had and even the most advanced members found much to interest them, such as the method of taking internodal cuttings illustrated with *Akebia quinata*.

On Monday, 4th April, Mr. Euan H. Cox gave a talk on "Dwarf Rhododendrons." This was illustrated with a magnificent colour film. Later he showed numerous fine coloured slides. Such a large selection of dwarf rhododendrons was shown that it was hard to single out any for special mention, but in the very dwarf class fine plants were shown of *Rhododendron repens* and *Rh. camschaticum* and beds of a new Ludlow and Sheriff very dwarf azalea in Windsor Great Park were very beautiful.

Only three garden visits were arranged, the first taking place on Tuesday, 17th May, when Mr. R. B. Cooke's garden at Kilbryde, Corbridge, was visited. Unhappily, it was a very cold day and only eleven members were present : this was a most disappointing number in view of the celebrity of this well-known garden. Mr. Cooke was a delightful host, as always, and the many wonderful plants in the garden and greenhouse gave great pleasure. Among the many rare plants under glass, many new primulas were noted and, in the garden, the numerous varieties of cassiope, including large plants of *C. wardii* in

full bloom caused much comment. There were many fine displays among the rhododendrons and *Rh. albrechtii*, *Rh. crebeflorum* and *Rh. charitopes* deserve special mention. On the rock garden *Corydalis cashmeriana* was making a brave display. The seedlings from the joint British Museum and R.H.S. Expedition to Nepal provided more interest. Finally, a visit was paid to the old quarry.

On Tuesday, 21st May, a visit was made to Coukland Castle by kind invitation of Lady Aitchison. *Daphne rupestris grandiflora* was making a fine display on the troughs and then the walled garden was visited. Here were rare shrubs, numerous ericas grown by a new method, and lay-out in mounds of moss peat, and many interesting clematis. Mention should also be made of a fine batch of *Mimulus* "Whitecroft Scarlet." Afterwards the party of about 35 members went on to the County Representative's small garden at Grindon Corner. This consists almost entirely of rock beds and stone troughs, of which there are twenty. There was a large clump of *Cypripedium calceolus* in bloom and several plants of *Omphalodes luciliae*, showing that calcareous plants do best in this garden. Self-sown seedlings of *Linaria alpina* in shades of purple and pink were everywhere.

Lastly, on Tuesday 14th June, a visit was paid to Mrs. Cawley's delightful rock garden at Glen Aln. Again about 35 members were present. This little rock garden has been beautifully laid out in a natural setting and the stream running through the centre greatly enhances it, with its banks planted with primulas. There were many interesting plants, numerous *Cypripedium spectabile* just coming into flower. Other notable plants were *Daphne verlotti*, *Gentiana lutea*, and *Phlox douglasii* and *depressa*. On the peat wall *Lithospermum prostratum album* was making a brave show. Many flourishing plants of Himalayan gentians gave promise of a fine display in Autumn. In the afternoon the party went on to Howick Hall and, in the absence of Countess Grey, were shown round by the head gardener. *Meconopsis betonicifolia* and *grandis* were very fine in the rhododendron wood, as was the Bartley Strain of *Primula pulverulenta*. *Pieris forrestii* and *Magnolia wilsoni* were also at their best. Rhododendrons were too numerous to mention, but one *Rh. griffithianum* was making a fine splash of colour, as was *Rh. cinnabarinum roylei*.

It is proposed to hold an afternoon meeting at the Blue Bell Hotel probably on Thursday, 22nd September, and later four lectures.

D. C. POPE, C.R.

### NORTH-WEST ENGLAND

ON OCTOBER 5th 1954 Mr. Alfred Evans of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, gave a lecture in the Town Hall, Kendal, on "The Construction and Planting of Peat Walls." About 40 people came.

CICELY M. CREWDSON, C.R.

## Book Review

“**ROCK GARDENING**,” by G. K. Mooney, published by Messrs. W. H. & L. Collingridge, price 3/6.

The author in his introduction emphasises that this book is intended only as an elementary handbook for beginners, and as such it fulfils its purpose. The remarks on construction are both encouraging and helpful, and avoid that dogmatising which can be so discouraging to a novice. Next comes a short chapter on special forms of rock gardening, in which he touches briefly on the construction of scree, dry wall, and lily pond, illustrating his directions with line drawings. A chapter on the alpine house is followed by one on propagation in which, after giving hints on frame construction, the author passes on to propagation itself—by seed, division, and cuttings.

A chapter on bulbs and corms follows, and no doubt in any list of names we all have our own ideas : some may feel that good, easy do-ers are omitted, while some plants mentioned may prove difficult to a beginner. But then, so much depends on one's part of the country. Short lists of dwarf conifers and shrubs (one feels that *Erinacea pungens* is hardly a beginner's plant) are followed by a general list of rock plants, and the booklet ends with a useful glossary of specific terms. The print is in clear type and line diagrams and illustrations help to explain the text and should prove helpful to those taking up rock gardening from scratch.

J. L. M.

### NATIONAL AURICULA & PRIMROSE SOCIETY (NORTHERN SECTION)

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**1956 ALPINE FLOWER TOURS.** Following on this year's tour to St. Luc in the Swiss Valais, accompanied by Mr. John S. L. Gilmour, M.A., F.L.S., similar tours to other Continental centres are being planned for 1956. Details will be given in the Year Book, or on application to **Fairways & Swinford (Travel) Ltd., 10 Hanover Street, London, W.1.**

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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 Mrs. D. E. Hansell, 19 Pittsford Way, Summit, New Jersey, U.S.A.

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