Moorea

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ARISÆMA TRIPHYLLA

Moorea, Twenty-Five Years On

The publication of *Moorea* has been an important activity of the Irish Garden Plant Society since its inception twenty-five years ago. It has reinforced the Society's focus on the history and preservation of Ireland's plant heritage by recording both the history and the current state of gardening in Ireland. In our 25th year I am pleased that this, our 15th issue, covers such a wide range and is of such a high standard. I wish to thank the editor, her assistants and the contributors for their work. As well as providing information and entertainment for current readers, *Moorea* is a unique archive for future students and for anyone interested in Irish gardens and plants. *Floreat !*

We are very grateful to Anglo Irish Bank for its very generous financial support for this edition.

Dermot Kehoe, Chairman

MOOREA

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DEBORAH BEGLEY

AROIDS IN AN IRISH GARDEN: A GARDENER'S POINT OF VIEW

DRACUNCULUS vulgaris: in the mid 1990s those two words lured me into the fascinating world of aroids. As a child, I had braved many hours of self-inflicted, delicious terror, watching vampire movies, so I knew instantly that a plant bearing this evocative name would have to be investigated further. When the pages of the *RHS A-Z encyclopaedia of garden plants* fell open, my eyes were met with the sight of a lurid, yet strangely attractive-looking maroon coloured 'flower', a thing that looked as if it may have originated in outer space. It was love at first sight! As Deni Bown (2000) writes in *Aroids plants of the arum family,* 'Aroids are not the sort of plants you can be neutral about.' On research, each type seems stranger and stranger. Although aroids (members of the botanical family *Araceae*) vary greatly in appearance they all share the common hallmark of having a spathe and spadix inflorescence. The spadix is a poker-like protrusion, with clusters of tiny flowers, usually nestling at its base, whilst the spathe, a modified leaf, wraps itself around the spadix, with each genus taking on many bizarre guises, all managing to look as if they were dressing up for a Halloween party.

Arum cyrenaicum

Situated in the heart of the Golden Vale, 20 miles from Limerick and 7 from the Cork border, Terra Nova Garden is a frost pocket with winter temperatures dropping to -8° C. Below is a list of some of the aroids grown in my garden or glasshouse, an ever-changing list as the collection expands and inevitable losses occur.

Alocasia

Although this is a highly desirable genus that shows great potential for use in exotic planting with its exceptionally large, dramatic foliage, this has proved to be a particularly difficult genus to establish. An attempt to grow the giant taro, *Alocasia macrorrhiza,* failed miserably, which is frustrating as this is grown as a food crop in the tropics. A few species, including wild-collected *A. denudata* from Singapore, germinated successfully. As they hail from the tropics, getting them over cold winters has proved to be a major obstacle to success. Storing them in a frost-free greenhouse does not seem to be enough to keep them alive.

Amorphophallus

Some success was had with a small handful of the 200 species in this genus. *Amorphophallus konjac* has proved to be hardy here, surviving winter temperatures as low as -10°C. This is a very handsome plant, growing from an ever-increasing tuber that provides quite a number of offsets in a good year. Flowering has only occurred here twice in the past seven years, with the slugs making shreds of the maroon coloured blooms. Maybe they are attracted to the foetid smell. In early June the tuber produces a tall, solitary, green and white mottled leaf stalk that is topped by a much-dissected parasol of leaflets. This is a splendid addition to any plant collection in the open ground or pots. The white flowered *A. albus,* the pink flowered *A. bulbifer* and *A. napalensis* are also grown and are kept frost-free over the winter. Most *Amorphophallus* tubers have a horrible tendency to rot and are best kept bone dry in their dormant season. Once I was the proud owner of a football-sized tuber of the outrageously bizarre *A. paeoniifolius,* but alas it was potted up too soon, watered before it had started into strong growth and rot set in. Despite major surgery on the tuber and the application of copious amounts of green sulphur nothing would halt the march of decay. Very sad.

Arisaema

Arisaemas are my favourite of all plants and up to 50 of the 150 known species are grown here at any one time. Herbaceous plants grown from a tuber, the Indian, Chinese, Japanese and American species are all hardy enough to be grown outside in an Irish garden and although they are mainly woodland plants, best placed in dappled shade, they will survive in a more open situation. *Arisaema tortuosum* is such a variable species and I grow lots of them from seed from different sources, so have a good collection. A robust plant, reaching 50cm tall, the spathes are often green and the long upward pointing spadices are either green or dark purple. Some forms have beautiful mottling on the stems. *A. dilatatum* is a big plant in all senses of the word. Huge rough trifoliate leaves surround purple-flecked green spathes with spadices reminiscent of green elephant trunks. *A. candidissimum* is a very popular plant, considerably 'prettier' than other species. Pink and white striped spathes appear very late in the season. The mid-June emergence worries most gardeners who fear that it may be lost. It never is! The dinky little *A. kiushianum* is in a pot in my working greenhouse, not because it's tender, but in order to enjoy the chirpy little owl-faced thing at close quarters. It is difficult to leave this section without mentioning the May flowering *A. sikokianum*. This Japanese species is a showstopper; the black spathe has a pure white interior that is home to a dumpy club-shaped white spadix. Desired by everybody, this is a nurseryman's dream plant as it is notoriously short lived. Three years if you are lucky. Then you will be so smitten you will have to go back and get another one!

Arisarum

The 'mouse plant' *Arisarum proboscideum*, native to Italy and Spain, forms dense colonies of low-growing, dark green sagittate leaves. The 'mouse' part of the common name refers to the inflorescences that appear above the foliage in May. The plant produces an abundance of dumpy little brown and white spathes that have remarkably long whip-like tips, giving them the appearance of a nest of tiny mice diving for cover beneath the leaves. Pollinated by fungus gnats, the concealed spongy white spadix emits a faint mushroomy aroma to lure them in. Happy in my heavy clay, this charming little plant being summer dormant dies back to a cluster of very small rhizomes in July. There are two other species, *A vulgare* and *A. vulgare* subsp. *simorrhinum*, but they are not amenable to garden conditions and are grown in pots in a cold glasshouse.

Arum

This is a genus of tuberous perennials occurring from the Azores to western China and from Sweden to Morocco. There are 25 species of *Arum*, including *A. maculatum*, the familiar 'lords and ladies' of our hedgerows. Bearing sagittate-hastate leaves and stale, urine-scented inflorescences in late spring, this plant doesn't really makes its presence felt until it bears drumsticks of bright red berries in the early autumn. From one seedhead of an open pollinated group, this variable species is capable of producing many apparently different offspring. Some may have the classic plain, deep green leaves; whilst the foliage of others may be heavily spotted with black, a highly desirable trait to the arum collector! The spathes also vary greatly in both size and colour, coming in shades of pale greenish-white or yellow or dull pink or purple. A wild seedling in my own garden exhibits a strong purple flush, making it a very attractive addition to the collection. There is a yellow variegated form of *A. maculatum* named 'Painted Lady' that grows very weakly here, barely surviving from year to year, a problem encountered by most growers. The deservedly well-known garden plant, *Arum italicum* subsp. *italicum* 'Mamoratum' grows here with wild abandon, the birds doing an 'excellent' job of distributing the ripe seeds to every section of the garden. The handsome silver-veined foliage of this plant appears in early winter and the smelly greenish-white flowers arrive in April/May. This has produced some very striking progeny, and I now have colonies of plants that bear varying degrees of silver markings, including some with solid silver-centred leaves. I also grow other excellent named forms, *A. 'Chameleon'*, which has very attractive grey/green marbled leaves, and the creamy-yellow variegated *A.italicum* subsp. *neglectum* 'Miss Janay Hall'. *Arum concinnatum* looks remarkably like *A. italicum* subsp. *neglectum* 'Mamoratum' and is just as easy to grow. It is reputedly slightly tender, but mine survives quite happily under the canopy of a clump of *Gunnera*.

Early April is an exciting time in the arum calendar, as the highly desirable *Arum creticum*, starts to unfurl stands of long, spiky pale yellow buds. On opening, the spathes turn back on themselves, creating the enchanting 'turk's cap' effect. The much protruding, beaky, deep yellow spadix makes the sought even more memorable. Although the plant is renowned for its attractive scent, I am never able to detect it. If *A. creticum* is 'the beauty', then A. *dioscoridis* and all of its forms and varieties surely qualify as 'the beast'. Easy

to grow, these spectacular plants produce the strongest smell, described as a mix of dung and rotting meat, of the entire arum family. Big green inflorescences, heavily blotched in darkest purple are produced alongside the dark green leaves in April. Among other arums lurking here at Terra Nova, is *A. pictum*, the only autumn-flowering species. This produces dark purple, sail-like spathes, which emerge alongside the attractively veined, glossy leaves. It is grown in a warm spot in the garden, as its hardiness is not guaranteed. It also grows well in pots kept under glass. *Arum cyrenaicum* hails from the rocky scrublands of Libya, but has been happy to relocate to a warm spot in Co. Limerick. The long narrow spathe is an attractive pinky-purple that wraps itself peek-a-boo-like around the pink spadix. Because they are too tender too precious for the open garden, the following species are grown in pots under glass: *A. korolkowii*, *A. hygrophilum* and *A. palaestinum*. These are all destined for the garden once enough stock has been built up to experiment with them.

Arisaema candidissimum

Calla palustris

The 'bog arum' *Calla palustris* is an attractive summer-flowering aquatic aroid. This was originally introduced into the pond in baskets, but has since escaped and colonised the pebbly beach area. Mini drumsticks of red berries follow the diminutive white spathes.

Dracunculus

There are two species in this genus. Although it is very peculiar looking, *Dracunculus vulgaris* is a plant that most gardeners would enjoy growing. From the Mediterranean, it is very hardy and makes an early start into growth, shoving pointy snouts up through chilly January soil. By April it has reached a height of 1.5 metres. Mottled stems topped with pedate leaves become home to massive dark purple spathes in June, These smell horribly for about 24 hours, so need to be planted well away from the house! Summer dormant, it collapses into a messy heap by mid July. This is a plant with personality! *Dracunculus canariensis* raised from seeds in 1997 have yet to produce a flower. From Madeira and the Canary Islands, they were planted indoors and the creamy white spathe and spadix are eagerly awaited.

Helicodiceros

Twenty seeds of the very rare *Helicodiceros muscivorus* were sown in 1998. Germination was rapid, but alas flowering has not been. The 'dead horse arum', named because of its resemblance to the rear end of the named animal, lives on only a few islands in the Mediterranean. A very stinky, hairy spathe and spadix make it a flower to look forward to.

Lysichiton

Two species of 'skunk cabbage' are grown in the garden. The Asian species, *Lysichiton camtschatcensis* grows in a large basket on the ledge of a big pond. It produces robust, pure white spathes and big greeny-yellow club-like spadices that are followed by huge glossy, ovate-oblong leaves. The larger, yellow-flowered American species *Lysichiton americanus* is capable of forming huge colonies in boggy ground, as can be witnessed at Anne's Grove Garden, Castletownroche, Co. Cork. In this garden the plant is restricted to a pot submerged in a small wildlife pond.

Orontium aquaticum

Another aquatic aroid, this North American is slow to bulk up, but at last I have a presentable colony. The only species, *Orontium aquaticum*, is a strange looking thing as its spathes are invisible under the water level, leaving loads of slender, yellow-tipped white spadices poking up out of the water, these are joined by long glaucous leaves. It is grown in a basket that is submerged 30cm under water.

Pinellia

Known as the 'poor cousin' of the *Arisaema*, this is an utterly charming genus of plants. Pinellias are easily grown, in fact some gardeners might say too easily grown, although that is not a problem here. There are six species, all Asian, the most well-known being *P. ternata*, nicknamed 'the little green dragon' because of

its slender green spathes and long, upward pointing spadices. This trifoliate species has the unusual habit of producing bulbils in the base of the stalks and they drop to the ground forming large colonies. *Pinellia pedatisecta* which has much divided leaves and a long yellowish-green spathe with a concealed spadix is also grown. A favourite plant is the purple form of the normally green flowered *Pinellia tripartita*. The attractive leaves are divided into three parts and the inflorescence sits proudly above these displaying a very long, slender antenna-like spadix.

Sauromatum

The taxonomists have been busy with this plant lately. Known for years as *Sauromatum venosum*, some taxonomists have placed it in the genus *Typhonium*. Whatever, the 'voodoo lily' is an amazing and grotesquely amusing plant. Capable of producing a foul-smelling 30cm tall flower on a naked corm, this plant is great fun to share with children! It makes a good garden plant, totally hardy here for over 10 years now. The inflorescence is followed by a 50cm tall, single, green and brown mottled stem, which is topped with an interesting arrangement of dissected leaves. Good in the open ground, even better in a pot.

Spathantheum

Bought as a tuber in 2002 from Cotswold Garden Flowers in England, I am enjoying the large, handsome foliage of *Spathantheum orbignyanum*, a plant native to the Andes. Most of the tubers (it multiplies quite well) are lifted and over-wintered in a greenhouse. A few that have been left outside on a well-drained raised bed have come through two winters successfully. No blooms yet.

Symplocarpus

Fifty seeds of *Symplocarpus foetidus*, sown in October 1999 produced 42 newly germinated plants in October 2002. Not seeds for the impatient gardener, but due to the huge, deep questing rootstocks that this plant has, the only feasible way to propagate it. From boggy areas of North-east America, these plants are some of nature's wonders. Flowering early in the year, the owl-shaped spathes are able to push themselves up through frozen ground thanks to the little 'horn' on each head and to the heat generating spadix within. I am hoping to witness this phenomenon here in the winter of 2007/8.

Zantedeschia

Zantedeschia aethiopica is a great plant in its own right. Some pink-flushed forms in the collection, 'Glow' and 'Marshmallow Pink', are utterly divine and very well named. *Zantedeschia aethiopica* 'Pershore Fantasia' has green and yellow variegated leaves, but division of this plant tends to produce lots of reversion to plain green. Z. 'Green Goddess, is a lovely plant, its white spathes so heavily flushed with green as to almost obliterate the whiteness. A few years ago I raised a batch of plants from seeds named Z. *aethiopica* 'white speckled form'. These have grown into attractive plants, the leaves sprinkled with a generosity of white spots and green-tipped spathes. There are lots of 'callas' available in garden centres as dried tubers in the late spring. These tender plants make great specimens for summer pots. *Zantedeschia elliottiana* 'Mango' and 'Flame' are really good, but my *pièce de resistance* is 'Black Star'. An abundance of slender black spathes and black-rimmed leaves make this one to put on your 'wish' list.

My passion for aroids is obvious but not everybody is as smitten. A friend stood looking at an *Arisaema* in flower. He looked puzzled fro a few moments, then turned to me and said "But what's the point of it?" Over the years I have been amused to note other peoples' feelings on their first encounter with the more unusual aroids. Some stare in wonderment at nature's fantastical creation, whilst others ask, "What will it look like when it comes into flower?"

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MARTIN WALSH

HIMALAYAN WOODLAND PLANTS WITH MORE THAN ONE SEASON OF INTEREST

A well-planned woodland garden is both a magical and a dynamic place, with a continual succession of stimulating and varied tapestries. However, for many gardeners interest in the woodland garden begins to wane after the colourful displays of spring and early summer, which is a great pity, as there are many woodlanders that in addition to providing interest in spring and early summer extend the season of interest well into the autumn, and long after most of the spring ephemerals have retreated underground. Structure is as critical in woodland areas as it is in the rest of the garden, the selection of woodland plants that have been chosen for this article are nearly all architectural plants, as well as being flowering plants and in some instances produce attractive seed heads. They are all native to woodlands in the Himalayas, and I have been fortunate to observe each of them growing in their natural habitats in countries such as Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and Tibet. The 2002 Expedition to Bhutan and the 2005 Expedition to Tibet were organised by the Alpine Garden Society and took place at the height of the monsoon in July, whereas the 2000 Expedition to Nepal and the 2004 Expedition to Sikkim were privately organised for September, in order to study the autumn flora.

Undoubtedly the richest area for woodland plants in the Himalaya is the Royal Kingdom of Bhutan, which is largely due to the strict environmental policies of the Royal Bhutan Government, who have managed to maintain one of the highest forest coverages in the world, a very impressive 72.5%, in complete contrast to Nepal, where deforestation is still taking place at an alarming rate. Of necessity, woody plants have been completely omitted, as they would certainly warrant an article in their own right, as are most of the Himalayan woodland plants, which I consider are already well known, such as the classic Himalayan plant, *Cardiocrinum giganteum*.

Maianthemum oleraceum var *acuminatum*

Arisaemas are one of the most fashionable members of the *Araceae* family and some of the most attractive species are found in the Himalayas. My encounters with arisaemas to date would suggest that *Arisaema consanguineum* along with *A. jacquemontii* are two of the most widespread species in the Himalaya. In fact *A. jacquemontii* was so prevalent in Bhutan and Nepal that it could almost be classed as a weed. In cultivation it increases quite readily, but not so quickly that it becomes a nuisance. Both species are green flowered, but differ quite markedly both in their size and flower. In the case of *A. consanguineum* the flowers are borne beneath the umbrella-like foliage, whereas the flowers of *A. jacquemontii* are borne clear of the foliage.

The better specimens of *Arisaema consanguineum* grow up to 1m tall and it is a plant worth growing for its architectural qualities alone; it is also a marvellous plant for adding height where space is limited. The lower part of the stem is heavily mottled and the flower stem emanates from it about two thirds of the way up the stem. A peculiar feature of this arisaema is the drip-tip, which is found at the end of each leaflet, this is a thread-like extension of

the leaf that is also found at the tip of the spathe, when it can be often be of a much greater length. *Arisaema consanguineum* is a plant that exhibits great variation, both in terms of its foliage and flowers and in the range of habitats in which it grows. Surprisingly, it is not restricted to growing in shade and I've found it growing in a whole range of conditions including sun-baked slopes, as well as amongst low growing scrub and even on rocky slopes. All of the plants that were encountered in the Himalayas were green in colour; however several specimens in Yunnan in south-west China had spathes that were striped purple on the outside. This elegant species is as easy to grow as the more familiar *Arisaema candidissimum*, and it can also be very easily grown from seed. In Bhutan, it was found growing in woodland composed of evergreen oak, pine, etc. It grew through a carpet of a low-growing fern, creating a dramatic contrast in form and texture, a very attractive plant association that could easily be replicated in the garden.

On the other hand, *A. jacquemontii* is a much smaller plant in all parts and normally grows to between 30 and 45cm in height. The flower is borne well clear of the whorl of digitate leaves. Probably the most attractive characteristic of this arisaema is the fact that the green spathe is quite slender, it has white stripes, and in some specimens is flushed purplish brown, the upright spadix can sometimes be of a similar colour. Interestingly, it has recently been discovered to have anti-cancer properties (Grierson and Long 1983).

One of the wonderful things about seeing plants growing in the wild is that you get to observe the great variation that sometimes occurs in wild populations. A perfect example is *Arisaema propinquum*. Two forms of this plant exist - the larger form is so different from the smaller forms that it is almost difficult to believe that they are the same species. Both forms were encountered in Bhutan in a mixed forest of conifers and birch. The more typical form of *A. propinquum* has a spathe which is yellowish-green, and in some plants it has darker green stripes, while others have dark purplish-brown stripes. The tip of the spathe curves forward and protects the slender, almost threadlike spadix which in some specimens were over 45 cm in length. Like most arisaemas, this plant possesses striking foliage, which in this case is composed of very large trifoliate leaves (each leaflet over 40 cm long and 15 cm wide), and most of the specimens of this plant have margins that are normally crisped and flushed purplish-black. In West Sikkim, an area in thin silver fir forest was almost entirely dominated by plants of *A. propinquum*, with one particular specimen having leaf stems that were entirely inky black in colour. Undoubtedly the most spectacular plants of *A. propinquum* are the larger forms, and one gargantuan specimen that was found on the last day of the Jhomolhari trek in Bhutan had flowers which more closely resembled those of *Arisaema griffithii*. However, unlike *A.griffithii* the flowers are held just above the leaves. Also the cobra-like flowers are perhaps not quite as convoluted, but at over a metre in height and width this 'giant' would certainly create real impact in the woodland garden.

Unlike *A. propinquum*, the hooded flowers of *Arisaema griffithii*, which also grew in the forests of Bhutan with ferns and impatiens, are held on very short stems beneath its two rather large trifoliate leaves. The whole plant is no taller than 60 cm and the tip of the yellowish green spathe is heavily veined purplish-brown, and it folds back on itself so that it has two large earlike lobes, which gives it an appearance that is manifestly cobra like.

Of course all of the above arisaemas provide interest late in the season when they produce their attractive seed heads which are a brilliant red. In Tibet, we came across the small flowered *Arisaema flavum* growing close to the magnificent Potala Palace, in conditions that one would not normally associate with *arisaemas*. It was quite a revelation to see *A. flavum* flourishing in semi-arid conditions in an area dominated by artemesia and hippophae scrub. This *Arisaema* not only differs from the above arisaemas in the conditions in which it grows, but also in the size of its flowers which relatively speaking, are tiny, the length of the greenish yellow spathe is only 4 cm.

One of the most striking woodland plants encountered in the Himalayas is *Streptopus simplex*, which along with *Uvularia* has got to be one of the most beautiful members of the *Convallariaceae* family. It superficially resembles *Disporum* in appearance, but its flowers are much showier. It produces its white bell-shaped flowers at the end of rather long pedicels, which unlike several members of this genus are not kinked. In fact the bent pedicel gives this plant its common name 'twisted stalk'. *Streptopus* by and large are North American plants and usually represented in gardens by *S. amplexifolius*, which has relatively small greenish white flowers and I think it's fair to say its floral beauty is very much of the understated type, but compensates for lack of flower power by producing large and very showy red fruits in the autumn.

In flower, *Streptopus simplex* is a much more garden-worthy plant as its white, pink flushed flowers hang in a very graceful manner on 5 cm long pedicels beneath the leaves on a plant which varies in height from 60-120 cm. Sometimes the flowers actually drape themselves over the leaves, in such a manner that it appears the long pedicels are fused to the leaves. It was a common constituent of the woodland flora in Bhutan along with a superb species of *Maianthemum* called *M. oleraceum*. This *Maianthemum* was known until quite recently as *Smilacina oleracea*, but like the rest of the genus has now been reclassified as *Maianthemum* (Cubey 2005). This is a plant which exhibits considerable variation, both in stature and in the colour of the flower. Dan Hinkley considers it to be the Queen of all the species of false Solomon's seal (Hinkley 1999). The showiest form, *M. oleraceum var. acuminatum*, which in Bhutan grew up to 2 m tall, had ebony-coloured stems with attractive deeply-veined, lanceolate leaves and large terminal panicles of vibrant coloured flowers that were wine-red in colour. There is also a very attractive white form of this plant. Unlike the more widely cultivated *Smilacina racemosa* (now *Maianthemum racemosa*) its flowers are not scented. My next encounter with this plant was in Sikkim and as it was the autumn it had produced a colourful display of berries, which were almost as showy as the flowers. These were pink, slightly translucent berries that ripened to a brilliant red. Unfortunately both specimens that I sourced from reputable nurseries have produced disappointing flowers that were an insipid pink. Therefore it would be advisable to purchase it in flower to ensure you obtain a good colour form.

Meconopsis napaulensis

In clearings in coniferous forests in Bhutan where *Anemone rivularis*, *Iris clarkei* and *Arisaema jacquemontii* flourished, grew a distinctive and rather peculiar looking plant. *Panax pseudo-ginseng* is an herbaceous member of the *Araliaceae* and admittedly its relatively small globular umbel of greenish yellow flowers, which is ivy-like in appearance, is not overly showy. However, it does produce a wonderful display in autumn with bicoloured fruits that are red and black and it was one of the most striking autumnal plants in the forests of Sikkim. Male and female flowers appear on separate plants, the female flowers which are 3 cm across are more 'showy' at twice the size of those of the male. Indeed it would be a good plant to use to provide structure in the woodland garden and like its woody counterparts its foliage is highly ornamental, almost cannabis-like in appearance. Its leaves appear in the upper part of the purple coloured stem, which can grow up to 60 cm high, as a single whorl of digitate leaves that are composed of up to 7 leaflets. As far as I am aware *Panax japonicus*, which is a much more robust plant that grows up to 80 cm is the only other species in cultivation.

Trillium govanianum is a plant that is both rare in cultivation and in the wild. A single specimen was found growing in a shady bank in Bhutan with *Thalictrum*, ferns and *Oxalis* where it was in fruit, an ellipsoid berry that was deep cherry-red in colour. Its flowers consist of a whorl of six reflexed tepals, that are a greenish purple in colour and sometimes the outer three tepals are wider. The foliage consists of three ovate leaves, which are quite small at less than 10 cm in length and are held in whorls of three. It is a member of the *Trilliaceae* as is *Paris polyphylla*.

Paris polyphylla bears a flower that is primarily green in colour, which I know may not sound like the most exciting plant in the world. However, this remarkably elegant plant provides one of the longest displays in the woodland garden and it is one of the reasons why it is a particular favourite of mine. While *P. polyphylla* was in fruit in Sikkim, the most impressive specimens of this plant grew in the forests of Bhutan. It is a

handsomely structured plant with a lower whorl of 8-12 apple green, droopy elliptical leaves, which in the more robust specimens can measure up to 15 cm in length. The relatively large flower consists of a whorl of strongly recurved, leaf-like outer tepals, some 7.5 cm long, with the only colour in the flower being provided by the crown of long, yellowish-green, thread-like inner tepals, numerous yellow stamens and a very prominent, violet-coloured stigma. As I only grow one clone of this plant, my specimen of *Paris polyphylla* remains unfertilised and therefore the floral display lasts well in excess of three months, which is probably unmatched by any other woodland plant. When two or more clones are grown together, a wonderful display of shiny red fruits is produced. It is the most widespread of all the species of *Paris* and as it is also the most variable, it is certainly worth the effort to source a good clone of this plant and therefore it is probably wise to buy this plant when it is in full growth. The more robust clones can grow up to 90 cm tall, whereas the smaller ones can be as small as 30 cm tall. It is a plant that is valued for its medicinal properties as is *Podophyllum hexandrum*.

Even though it is slow enough to emerge in spring, once *Podophyllum hexandrum* appears it provides a sustained display, first with its cup-shaped flowers which are produced as the same time as the newly emerging foliage and later on in the autumn, when an plum-shaped fruit that is a brilliant red colour is produced. Its striking brownish foliage grows to just over 45 cm high, is probably at its most attractive when it newly emerges, as it is then that the purplish brown mottling is most pronounced. The flower varies in colour from pale apple blossom pink to white to what I consider is the best colour form - a deep rose pink, a colour form which occurs in Yunnan province in China.

Cautleya is yet another woodland plant with more than one season of interest, it is a close relative of the gingers, but it is hardier and more reliable at producing a display of berries in the autumn. The most commonly cultivated species is *Cautleya spicata* 'Robusta' which is a plant when it is well grown, can reach almost a metre in height. It has a large terminal spike of yellow flowers that protrude from red coloured bracts, which persists even when the flowers fade. Furthermore, its bold canna-like foliage creates great visual impact in the woodland garden for months. In Sikkim there were extensive drifts of it growing in shaded banks and in gullies with *Strobilanthes wallichii* and as it was the autumn they were covered in wonderful white berries with a blue bloom.

Cautleya gracilis is a plant which although similar to *C. spicata* is smaller in all its parts and is therefore perhaps a more graceful plant. Unlike *Cautleya spicata* it is probably best restricted to the woodland garden, as its quiet appeal would be lost in the open garden. Surprisingly, the great garden guru Graham Stuart Thomas did not consider it to be an exciting plant. It grows to about 40 cm and its flowers are much more orange in colour and its bracts usually lack the red colouring. In Bhutan it grew on moss-covered rocks, while the surrounding forest floor was carpeted in large drifts of *Hedychium* spp. It too produces attractive black seeds which are protected by a red fleshy coating.

While the next few plants do not produce colourful fruit in the autumn they do however contribute structure to the woodland garden after flowering.

The stately *Megacodon stylophorus* and *Swertia hookeri* are both herbaceous members of the gentian family. *Megacodon stylophorus* is a robust perennial that usually grows over a metre in height in dank woodland. However it is not restricted to woodland and can also be found growing in other habitats such as rhododendron scrub. Its large pale yellow flowers are bell-shaped, with a distinct hint of green and arise from the axils of the leaves on the upper part of the stout stem. Its bold foliage provides the same impact as those of *Veratrum* its lower leaves are heavily pleated and can be up to as much as 30 cm in length. The leaves of *Swertia hookeri* are superficially similar to *Megacodon* and out of flower could be mistaken for it. However the flowers, which are also bell-shaped, are smaller and are an unusual bronze-red colour and appear in whorls at regular intervals on a metre and a half tall stem, which is unbranched. For some bizarre reason, swertias are poorly represented in cultivation and while it must be admitted that not every *Swertia* is worthy of cultivation, *Swertia hookeri* is definitely a most garden-worthy plant and it was one of the most conspicuous plants in the cloud forests in the Everest region of Tibet.

Usually gardeners would not think of *Phlomis* as a woodland plant but several species were found growing in such conditions in Bhutan. *Phlomis breviflora* is quite a robust plant, as it can grow to over a metre in height. It is quite unlike the more familiar *Phlomis russeliana*, its foliage is perhaps its best feature, as the large cordate leaves are carried up the stem, and are quite big at over 20 cm in length, but become

progressively smaller in the upper part of the plant. The typical labiate flowers are also dissimilar and are relatively small but are a wonderful blackish-purple colour, and arise in whorls from the axils of the long stemmed leaves.

While *Meconopsis* are generally considered to be woodland plants, in my experience of observing *Meconopsis* growing in the wild the only true woodland species are *Meconopsis paniculata* and *Meconopsis napaulensis*, although they grow in light woodland they are not restricted to these conditions in the wild. While the flowers of *Meconopsis paniculata* are usually yellow in colour those of *Meconopsis napaulensis* vary from deep plum to pink and red and even pale lilac. Of course, one of the main reasons for growing these monocarpic poppies is the magnificent rosettes that they produce; these come into their own in the winter and are particularly beautiful with water droplets trapped in their hairy rosettes. In Sikkim there were superb specimens of *Meconopsis napaulensis*, the rosettes of which when measured were 60 cm across. One of the most spectacular sights during the 2005 Alpine Garden Society's Expedition to Tibet were the extensive drifts of *Meconopsis paniculata*, which flanked both sides of a stream as it flowed down a thinly vegetated slope. It is somewhat of a bittersweet experience when the plant flowers as it marks the imminent demise of the plant; however a spectacular display of a hundred plus poppy flowers provides some compensation.

No assemblage of woodland plants would be complete without ferns - few plants contribute as much to the woodland garden and out of the vast array of ferns that were encountered in the Himalayas I have selected two, both of which, although in cultivation, are not well known. *Osmunda claytoniana* bears a close resemblance to our native royal fern, *Osmunda regalis*, having the same cultivation requirements and is similarly easy to grow in a damp spot. However, it is a smaller plant that grows to a maximum height of 90 cm. It also has the same regal, shuttlecock form but differs in that the fertile fronds have two or three sets of sporing pinnae in the middle of the frond, and it is this distinctive characteristic that gives it its common name of the interrupted fern. In Bhutan there were gregarious clumps of it growing in damp clearings in forest along with equally expansive drifts of the purple-flowered *Iris clarkei*, orange *Euphorbia griffithii* and yellow *Salvia campanulata*. One of the most attractive ferns that grow in the forests of Bhutan is the mouse-ear fern, *Gymnopteris vestita*. In this case it is the shape of its pinnae, which gives this fern its common name. The most striking feature of this handsome fern is the fact that it is quite hairy as both the stipe and the underside of the pinnae are densely covered in pale brown hairs. It is a fern that grows to a maximum height of 30 cm and it requires good drainage as well as some winter protection in colder parts of the country.

Hopefully I have encouraged you to grow at least some of these remarkable plants which deserve to be more widely grown and which would undoubtedly transform your woodland garden into an area that is more than just a spring garden.

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GARDENING WITH NATIVE IRISH PLANTS

IN Ireland we are fortunate to be able to cultivate successfully a remarkable range of plant species from many different parts of the world. The mild winters, ample rainfall, short periods of frost, and long day length for much of the year provides us with a climate that is very 'plant-friendly'. The North Atlantic Drift brings warm Caribbean water to our shores, helping to raise our temperatures generally higher than we might otherwise expect for our latitude. All these factors combine to provide us with a veritable outdoor greenhouse, where left to its own devices the natural landscape would revert to cool lush 'rainforest' vegetation. It is therefore remarkable that Ireland has a relatively impoverished native flora - calculated by Webb (1983) as comprising 815 species.

The small number of species found as natives in Ireland is a result of our recent emergence from the last glaciation, during which most native plant species were probably eradicated. Natural recolonisation followed the retreat of the ice, but was shortly afterwards followed by the separation of Ireland from Britain and continental Europe, which halted the natural spread of many more species. Nevertheless, the potential for Ireland to gain many native species from Europe was relatively limited in any case. Compared to the huge diversity of higher plants to be found in many tropical regions, Europe's flora of some 12,500 species is quite small by comparison with 85,000 species in Latin America, 42,000 species in tropical and southern Africa and 50,000 species in tropical and subtropical Asia (Groombridge, 1992).

Since the earliest days of human colonisation in Ireland, our wild habitats have provided a suitable home for many non-native species. Any active observer of the wild flora cannot fail to notice that our roadsides, woodlands, hedgerows, grasslands and other wild places are often well populated with plants that owe their origins in Ireland to having originally been introduced deliberately or inadvertently over the last centuries. As Reynolds (2002) notes in her comprehensive catalogue of alien plants in Ireland 'Over the last 200 years or so, nearly as many alien plants have been recorded in Ireland as there are native taxa'. She documents records of c. 920 alien plant taxa recorded in the wild in Ireland.

The point of this article, however, is not to describe or comment on non-native plants, rather to highlight how it is notable that so few gardeners in Ireland are currently cultivating many native species, or are sufficiently aware how many deserve to be more widely grown. Despite an increasing interest in Ireland in growing 'wild flowers', this often means that well-meaning gardeners will invest in packets of mixed wild flower seeds, as likely as not made up of mixtures of native and non-native species, sometimes sourced from imported stock of species such as bluebells, poppies, foxgloves, corn cockle, cornflower, marigolds, chamomile and ox-eye daisies.

It must be pointed out that I am NOT advocating that gardeners collect Ireland's native plants for their gardens. Many native plants are severely diminished in range and population sizes and transplanting specimens to the garden can seriously threaten their ultimate survival. Although growing native plants from seed may often be a less damaging option, care needs to be taken only to collect and remove seeds from common species and then only a small proportion of the available seed from any population so as to avoid potentially damaging the ecological balance of recruitment of young plants into the plant populations that would naturally grow from such seed. Permission from the landowner should be obtained too. In any case a significant number of native Irish plants are protected by law in Ireland under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 (and various Government 'Flora Protection Orders'). It is illegal (except under licence) to pick, uproot, otherwise take, purchase or sell such species listed in the Order, or to wilfully alter, damage, destroy or interfere with their habitats.

It is not recommended either that Irish native orchids be considered as useful subjects for most gardeners. They are extremely difficult to raise from seed and this can only be attempted by specialists. When plants are dug up in the wild and transplanted most species will invariably decline and disappear after a few years. Unless you can obtain established nursery-grown stock of a few tried and tested Irish species that do well in cultivation then leave them well alone.

It is estimated that some 120 native plant species are threatened in Ireland and for that reason the National Botanic Gardens (NBG) Glasnevin has recently established an Irish Threatened Plant Species Conservation Programme. For reference, a list of Ireland's threatened plants is included in the Gardens' website www.botanicgardens.ie

The long tradition at Glasnevin of cultivating native plants in the collections continues. Notable natives grown for more than a century include *Trichomanes speciosum* (Killarney fern), which has its own dedicated greenhouse at the NBG, and the extinct Irish sedge, *Carex buxbaumii*. This sedge was originally discovered in Ireland in 1835 by David Moore (the distinguished early director of the Gardens). He found it on the shores of Lough Neagh in Co. Antrim and brought it into cultivation at Glasnevin sometime before it became extinct in the wild between 1886 and 1898.

The rest of the article is a personal view of some native Irish plants that I consider could be grown successfully in gardens. Some are already grown, others have never been tried as far as I am aware. A number are already common members of our garden flora. In many countries, notably Australia, South Africa and parts of the U.S.A., there is a growing movement promoting the cultivation of native plants. Often this is because they are particularly well suited to local climatic conditions and don't require irrigation using scarce water resources. However, in the Irish context I am not suggesting that the cultivation of native plants is preferable to growing plants from different parts of the world. Instead it merely provides a fascinating extra dimension for Irish gardening, as well as being a useful contribution to plant conservation and raising public awareness of native biodiversity.

Plants for the rock garden

There are several obvious native Irish plants suitable for the rock garden, including the common *Armeria maritima* (thrift or sea pink), *Juniperus communis* (juniper), *Dryas octopetala* (mountain avens), *Primula veris* (cowslip) and saxifrages such as *Saxifraga rosacea* and its Irish endemic subspecies from Co. Donegal, *S. rosacea* subsp. *hartii*. The beautiful little bulbous plant of the east coast of Ireland, *Scilla verna* (squill) should be ideal to naturalise on a rockery. Another native bulb, *Colchicum autumnale* (autumn crocus) can be grown too. Found only as a native plant in meadows in the Nore river valley, it is now threatened by extinction.

Amongst other plants suitable for the rock garden is one of Ireland's most beautiful alpines, *Silene acaulis*, a small cushion-forming tufted plant with pink flowers found only rarely in the wild in the mountains of the north-west in Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim, Donegal and Derry. *Meconopsis cambrica* (Welsh poppy) is grown in many rock gardens. While it can become weedy and even invasive at times, it is an attractive and useful plant for wilder cottage gardens. In the wild in Ireland it is a rare native, found in rocky places in some mountain ranges. It has also become established in the wild more frequently as a fugitive from gardens.

Several native ferns, such as *Asplenium scolopendrium* (hart's tongue fern), *Adiantum capillus-veneris* (maidenhair fern) and the *Asplenium ceterach* (rusty-back fern) are all excellent choices for rockeries and will thrive if planted in rocky crevices, even of a vertical rock face, just like they often grow in the wild. An attractive plant to naturalise in similar situations is the white-flowered variety of the common herb robert, *Geranium robertianum*. Its pure white flowers contrast well with the red stems and foliage so typical of this species. A close relative bloody cranesbill, *Geranium sanguineum*, is a hairy large red-purple flowered perennial geranium with deeply dissected leaves. It is found commonly on dry limestone banks and rocky places in the west, particularly in the Burren region of Co. Clare. In the rock garden it grows well in clumps rarely becoming over vigorous and is a useful ground-cover plant, flowering freely in July and August.

An Irish plant that deserves to be cultivated as a garden plant is a small crucifer *Cochlearia officinalis* subsp. *scotica*. This tiny tufted plant grows to form a tight rosette of dark green fleshy leaves and typical small white crucifer flowers with four paddle-shaped petals and attractive yellow green anthers in the centre. In the wild it grows on exposed rocky and gravel shores on the Atlantic coasts of Ireland, occurring as smaller and more distinctive forms the more exposed the situation. It is a variant of the more frequent common scurvy grass, *C. officinalis*.

A plant that I have tried and failed to grow is *Simethis planifolia* (the Kerry lily). In the wild it is only recorded in coastal heaths in south Kerry and west Cork. It is deep rooted and slow to establish but could probably be raised from seed without too much difficulty. Its white flowers, tinged with purple on the outside, are a delicate and beautiful sight during the few short weeks in summer when it is in flower. A similarly rare native is *Astragalus danicus*, found only on the Aran Islands. It is straightforward to cultivate and will reward the grower with attractive purple-violet flowers in early June borne in short round heads extending from its divided leguminous silky grey leaves. Less easy to grow well is *Otanthus maritimus* (cottonweed), a woolly white perennial that is almost extinct in Britain and Ireland. Formerly recorded in a few coastal localities in Kerry, Waterford, Wicklow and Wexford, it now persists only at a single site in the latter county. It grows well from cuttings, but in the garden situation I've failed to establish the large healthy colonies in which it looks its best when it is thriving in the wild.

Some other native plants worth trying in the rock garden or raised beds could include *Trifolium occidentale* (western clover), *Anthyllis vulneraria* (kidney vetch), various *Alchemilla* species (such as *A. xanthochlora*, *A. filicaulis* and *A. glabra*), *Rhodiola rosea* (roseroot), *Antennaria dioica* (cat's foot or mountain cudweed) and *Achillea ptarmica* (sneezewort). *Wahlenbergia hederacea* (ivy-leaved bell-flower) is a very classy but tiny pale blue-flowered creeping perennial found only occasionally on river-banks and damp grassy places, mainly in the south and west. It would be a fascinating plant to try naturalising in a damp lawn.

Cold greenhouse plants

A range of smaller native species are very well suited to cultivation as cold greenhouse or cold frames subjects. If grown in pots or shallow pans they can be easily cared for and don't always require the soil conditions from which they are derived in the wild. The famous brilliant blue-flowered *Gentiana verna* (spring gentian) of Burren fame, can be grown is such conditions, but I have never maintained plants in cultivation for long. *Campanula rotundifolia* (harebell) is similarly worth trying in a pan too. Another useful subject is *Samolus valerandi* (brookweed) a member of the *Primulaceae* with small white flowers. It is a plant of muddy ditches and sea and lake shores. Rather overlooked as a garden plant, I have grown it successfully in a cold greenhouse in a shallow pan where it thrived on ordinary garden soil and flowered well in mid summer. Another unusual plant for similar conditions is sea lavender, *Limonium*, particularly *L. binervosum* found on gravel and rocky shores. Another plant I have always admired in the wild but never yet attempted to grow is *Blackstonia perfoliata* (yellow-wort). It is an erect annual plant with yellow flowers and blue-green leaves found on sandhills and gravel banks. It may well be that it, too, would grow well from seed and could be ideally managed in the cold greenhouse.

A native plant that can be grown as a curiosity in the alpine house is *Sibthorpia europaea*, the so-called Cornish moneywort. It is native to a small region in the Dingle Peninsula, Co. Kerry. It has delicate long prostrate stems and round leaves, with tiny flowers. When confined in a pot the plant will quickly fill it and then begin to hang down the sides like delicate curtains. It is said to be slightly frost sensitive. The blue-eyed grass, *Sisyrinchium bermudiana*, also grows well in cultivation and is suited to pot culture. It is found mainly in moist meadows in the west and in Kerry. *Ophioglossum vulgatum* (adder's tongue) is a small fern with an underground stem that pushes up its single olive-green leaves from below ground from which then develop its fertile spore-bearing spike. The adder's tongue fern grows extremely well in cultivation and will thrive in a pot or when confined in a soil pocket between boulders in the rockery.

Woodlands and hedgerows

In Ireland the natural 'climax' vegetation over much of the landscape would be woodlands had they not been largely removed for agriculture and settlement. It is not surprising, therefore, that a diverse range of species occur in the tree, shrub and herb layers of our woodland ecosystems. Of course a wide range of native tree species are already widely grown and find appropriate homes in most Irish gardens. These include *Ilex aquifolium* (holly), *Sorbus aucuparia* (rowan or mountain ash), *Sambucus nigra* (elder), *Crataegus monogyna* (hawthorn), *Betula pendula* and *B. pubescens* (birch), *Alnus glutinosa* (alder), *Corylus avellana* (hazel), *Taxus baccata* (yew) and the two native oaks *Quercus petraea* and *Q. robur*. Less common are *Euonymus europaeus* (spindle tree), *Malus sylvestris* (crab apple), *Cornus sanguinea* (dogwood) and *Viburnus opulus* (guelder-rose), several species of willow (*Salix* spp.) and the cherry species *Prunus padus* (bird cherry), *P. avium* (wild cherry) and *P. spinosa* (sloe or blackthorn), most of which occur in gardens that have incorporated previously wild hedgerows or field margins.

Several other native trees and shrubs with considerable garden merit are little grown, however. These include the thorny small tree *Rhamnus cathartica* (buckthorn) and *Frangula alnus* (alder buckthorn). *F. alnus* is extremely rare, occurring on a few limestone shores and on peaty fen banks. The magnificent and much-loved *Ulmus glabra*, our native wych-elm, is sadly diminished through Dutch elm disease and therefore probably of limited garden potential these days. *Populus tremula* (aspen) is also native and well worth growing - I think that it is the only Irish plant one can identify by sound! The rustling of its leaves in the wind is a delightful addition to any garden. Its only drawback as a garden plant is its tendancy to produce copious suckers. However if grown in the centre of a lawn these can be easily kept in check by the lawnmower.

Some useful smaller native shrubs for open (unshaded) locations in the garden include *Potentilla fruticosa* (shrubby cinquefoil), which is in any case a common garden plant. In cultivation it is represented by numerous range of cultivars with different growth forms, sizes and flower colours. As a native plant it is only found in rocky places that are seasonally flooded in north Clare and south-east Mayo. *Cytisus scoparius* (broom) can be extremely attractive in the garden, although relatively short-lived. Rather more interesting for the garden are the prostrate forms of this species (subsp. *maritimus*) that occur in a few places on coastal

cliffs in Cos Cork, Dublin and Kerry. Amongst the wild roses, few are easy to 'tame' as garden plants and most will not flower sufficiently freely to warrant inclusion in smaller gardens. However one exception might be the smaller white or pink-flowered *Rosa pimpinellifolia* (Scotch or burnet rose) that is quite widespread in the wild on sand dunes, rocky heaths and limestone pavements, especially close to the sea. *Artemisia maritima* (sea wormwood) is a rare native shrub that occurs on several muddy and rocky shores in the east and west. In the garden it can also be usefully grown.

In shady places under trees, many native spring flowers of Irish woodlands can be easily naturalised, including *Ranunculus ficaria* (lesser celandine), *Anemone nemorosa* (wood anemone), *Oxalis acetosella* (wood sorrel), *Primula vulgaris* (primrose) and the common bluebell, *Hyacinthoides non-scriptus*. Worth growing, too, on damp shady banks are the wild *saxifrages*, *Saxifraga spathularis* (London pride or St Patrick's cabbage) and *S. hirsuta*. I particularly like the hairy kidney-shaped leaves and the delicate hairy stalk of *S. hirsuta*. However, it is less frequently seen in gardens or in the wild than its hybrid with *S. spathularis (S. x polita)*. Another saxifrage, *S. granulata* (meadow saxifrage) is native to sandhills and pastures near the east coast but is now very rare and endangered. One of the largest known Irish populations of this species is growing in the arboretum in the NBG, Glasnevin. Although the origins of this population are not documented, it was probably introduced by David Moore. There is a specimen of this species collected by him in Derry in the 1830s in the National Herbarium at Glasnevin. The meadow saxifrage is quite a robust hairy perennial growing up to about 50 cm tall with small white flowers which come up year after year in the Gardens.

As ground cover plants in informal woodland garden settings *Luzula sylvatica*, (woodland wood-rush), *Hypericum androsaemum* (tutsan), *Lysimachia vulgaris* (yellow loosestrife), *Arum maculatum* (lords and ladies or cuckoo-pint) and *Carex pendula* may be grown. *C. pendula* is an attractive, robust tufted sedge with, as its name suggests, pendulous flowers borne on long stems. Another beautiful but very rare little woodland plant in Ireland with red-purple flowers is *Stachys officinalis* (betony). It is protected by law in Ireland but freely available within the nursery trade.

Lathraea squamaria (toothwort) is an extraordinary perennial member of the *Scrophulariaceae*. It grows as a parasite on the roots of various native trees such as hazel. It is entirely without green colour and survives purely on what it can gain from its host. It can be established in the garden - there are small populations growing well on several *Corylus* trees at the Trinity College Botanic Gardens, Dartry, introduced by D.A. Webb in the 1960s.

Herb and vegetable gardens

Native plants for the vegetable garden are quite limited. Nevertheless the real aristocrat of vegetables, *Crambe maritima* (seakale) is a native plant that sadly has become rare both in the wild and in cultivation. *Crithmum maritimum* (samphire) is another coastal plant, common on exposed rocks, that is collected and pickled in some European countries. *Beta vulgaris* (sea beet) can be grown as a vegetable, treated as one would spinach. *Asparagus officinalis* is also a native, found only rarely in some eastern coastal sand dune systems where it occurs as a prostrate variety, unsuitable for cultivation as a vegetable.

Angelica sylvestris (wild angelica) can be used similarly to its more commonly grown garden relative *A. archangelica* in salads and cooked as a vegetable. The common wild *Daucus carota* (wild carrot) is a relative of the garden carrot. It is a widespread plant of dry banks and pastures, particularly near the sea and on limestone soils. It was formerly used in Ireland as a medicinal plant to treat humans and stock (the root is boiled and mashed as a poultice for wounds and sores) (Allen & Hatfield, 2004). If you have ever tried digging a wild carrot for its root, it takes some imagination to believe that it is from this that the large orange root vegetable has been derived.

For the herb garden however, the Irish native flora provides a range of useful species such as *Ligusticum scoticum* (lovage), *Origanum vulgare* (marjoram), *Thymus praecox* (wild thyme), *Calamintha sylvatica* (calamint), *Symphytum officinale*, (comfrey) and *Rumex acetosa* (sorrel). Native wild mint species with aromatic foliage such as *Mentha arvensis* (corn mint) and *M. pulegium* (penny-royal) might also be grown. Penny-royal was formerly more widespread in Ireland, mainly in damp sandy habitats particularly in Co. Kerry. It has declined dramatically over the last century and is now both rare and endangered in Ireland and Britain.

Bog and water gardens

Water gardens are well served by having several aquatic and marginal aquatic native plants that can be grown easily and effectively. These include *Caltha palustris* (marsh marigold or king cup), *Butomus umbellatus* (flowering rush), *Osmunda regalis* (royal fern), *Mentha aquatica* (water mint) and *Iris pseudacorus*

(yellow flag iris). Other species worth evaluating include *Potentilla palustris* (marsh cinquefoil), *Menyanthes trifoliata* (bogbean) and *Lychnis flos-cuculi* (ragged robin), none of which I have yet grown. *Teucrium scordium* is a low-growing hairy perennial found only in Ireland on the shores of some of the river Shannon lakes. With its delicate pink-mauve spikes of flowers it is worth cultivating when confined to a pot and grown in semi-waterlogged conditions.

Growing in the ponds and lakes scattered throughout Ireland are *Nuphar lutea* (yellow water-lily) and *Nymphaea alba* (white water-lily), both of which should be standard for any larger garden pond. In the bog garden I have tried and failed to grow several species of butterwort (*Pinguicula vulgaris* and *P. grandiflora*) successfully. The latter was considered by Scully (1916) as Ireland's most beautiful wild plant. *P. grandiflora* has large violet flowers borne on 15 cm tall stems arising from the sticky insect-trapping yellow-green leaves. It is found mainly in Cos Kerry and Cork. *P. vulgaris* has smaller flowers and is considerably more widespread in the bogs and marshes of Ireland. It may be that both these species are only suited to the determined specialist carnivorous plant grower, (although I read that *P. grandiflora* can be grown well in a hollowed out crevice of a boulder, kept moist in summer but not too sodden in winter).

In addition to the *Arbutus unedo*, a range of native *Ericaceae* are suited to cultivation in bog gardens, on peat and in acid soils. *Vaccinium oxycoccos* (cranberry), a neat little plant with red flowers, can be grown in a peaty border but is probably best maintained in a pot or pan standing in water. In Ireland it is a relatively rare plant of the midland raised bogs. *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* (bearberry), a close relative, will grow in similar situations in the garden. It is found mainly on inaccessible moors and amongst rocks along the north and western coasts. Several species of *Erica* are more easily grown - including the common *Erica cinerea* (heather) as well as its rare native relatives, *E. ciliaris* (Dorset heath) known as a wild plant in only one location in Co. Galway; *E. erigena* (Mediterranean heath) our largest heath which grows to be a robust shrub up to 150 cm. tall and *E. mackaiana* (Mackay's heath) found in a number of restricted locations in the western half of Ireland. However, my favourite of the heaths is the large-flowered *Daboecia cantabrica* (St Dabeoc's heath) which is quite frequent in peaty habitats in Galway and Mayo and thrives in similar soils in the garden. A range of cultivated varieties selected from these Irish species are described by Nelson (2000), but the 'unimproved' wild forms are excellent garden plants and generally easy to propagate and cultivate.

In Ireland there are eight or nine species of Horsetail (*Equisetum spp.*). However most are too vigorous and unruly for the garden and should be avoided. The rare *E.* x *moorei*, known from several sites on the coasts of Wicklow and Wexford was introduced to the native plant area of the NBG some years ago, and is probably now unlikely ever to be eradicated.

The herbaceous border

The development of a native herbaceous border is probably one of the best ways to use a range of Irish herbaceous perennial plants, a forthcoming project at the NBG. A wide range of species could be used including *Aquilegia vulgaris* (columbine), *Digitalis purpurea* (foxglove), *Althaea officinalis* (marsh mallow), *Lavatera arborea* (tree mallow), *Eupatorium cannabinum* (hemp agrimony), *Campanula trachelium*, *Verbascum thapsus* (mullein) and *Trollius europaeus* (globe flower). The latter is found now only rarely in the wild, around several lakes mainly in the north-west, but well-known as an attractive and useful perennial border plant. Others worth evaluating are *Centaurea scabiosa* (greater knapweed), *Valeriana officinalis* (wild valerian), *Knautia arvensis* (field scabious) and *Pulicaria dysenterica* (fleabane). The handsome *Dipsacus fullonum* (teasel) and *Solidago virgaurea* (golden rod) are also excellent garden plants. Several non-native relatives of the golden rod are already grown in gardens, notably *S. canadensis*. In Ireland, *S. virgaurea* is quite variable and several attractive small forms can be found which retain their size in cultivation and could be used well in a rockery or the front of a herbaceous border.

Another beautiful native herbaceous plant for cultivation is *Sanguisorba officinalis* (burnet) best known from Mayo lakeshores. It is an extremely handsome herb with dark red flowers growing to about 100 cm tall. *Lythrum salicaria* (purple loosestrife) might also grow well in the garden although I don't know whether it would become weedy. Certainly in several parts of the world, notably in North America, purple loosestrife is an extremely dangerous noxious weed.

Several native seashore plants would do well too, including the crucifer, *Matthiola sinuata* (sea stock), formerly recorded in Cos Clare, Wexford, Kerry and Galway and now thought to be completely extinct in the wild. It grows as a slightly unruly tall biennial, but with its bluish-green foliage and lilac flowers it provides an attractive sight in the garden. Other seashore plants to consider include another crucifer *Cakile maritima* (sea-rocket) *Eryngium maritimum* (sea holly), the saltmarsh plant, *Aster tripolium* (sea aster) and the

rare *Lathyrus japonicus* subsp. *maritimus* (sea pea). *Mertensia maritima* (oyster plant) is one of the most critically endangered Irish plants confined to shingle shores on the northern coasts. It is a prostrate bluish-green perennial with blue to pink flowers. I've seen this grown well in several gardens in Ireland and elsewhere when kept in a sunny dry position and protected from slug damage.

For many years I have grown the rare native *Filipendula vulgaris* (meadow-sweet) as a border plant. It is smaller than its common relative, *F. ulmaria*, a common plant of Irish hedgerows and it has attractive more finely divided foliage and larger white flowers tinged with red. In the wild it is found only in a small area of north Clare and south Galway growing in rocky limestone pastures.

Another legally protected Irish rarity is *Inula salicina* (Irish fleabane), now restricted to a single site on Lough Derg, its last surviving wild locality in Ireland or Britain. It grows well in the garden and indeed is a species that will be an important component of the native plant conservation programme in the NBG. Amongst the native thistles, probably the only one worth growing is the *Carlina vulgaris* (Carline thistle), which is more compact, tidier and, dare I suggest, more attractive than its more rank and commoner relatives *Cirsium vulgare* (spear thistle) and C. arvense (creeping thistle), which are common pasture and garden weeds in any case. *Scrophularia nodosa* (figwort) and its rarer relatives *S. auriculata* and *S. umbrosa* will grow as robust and tall herbaceous perennials. Their reddish or greeny brown flowers are small and not very showy so each is of marginal garden value.

Finally, the Irish spurge, *Euphorbia hyberna*, is an extremely useful garden plant which is easy to maintain in cultivation. Once established it will form a robust clump with unbranched leafy stems and bright yellow flowers. In the wild it can be seen in a variety of habitats, commonly found in the south-west but very much rarer elsewhere in Ireland. Euphorbias contain a milky corrosive latex in their stems and leaves and *E. hyberna* is well known to be poisonous. Allen & Hatfield, (2004) report that as a joke a man in Galway was given the boiled root of the plant and 'ran up and down the street like a madman, and swelled so big that his friends had to bind him around with hay-ropes lest he should burst'. Such are the pleasures of cultivating and using Irish native plants.

Note: the scientific names used in this article follow Webb et al., 1996.

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BRENDAN SAYERS

DACTYLORHIZA 'GLASNEVIN VARIETY'

ONE of the stateliest *Dactylorhiza* to be found growing in Irish gardens is *Dactylorhiza* 'Glasnevin Variety'. A plant that grows over a metre tall, it has grass-green unspotted leaves. When flowering, in late May and June, as much as one quarter of the stem is packed tight with magenta flowers patterned with lines of a deeper shade. Much has been written about this plant and as stated by Charles Nelson in *An Irish flower garden* (1984), 'The history of *Dactylorhiza* 'Glasnevin' [sic] is confused, and at this time, I fear, never will be clarified'. Over the course of time, the history of its origin has been confused with that of a plant named *Orchis latifolia* var. *praecox* and in an effort to clarify the history of *Dactylorhiza* 'Glasnevin Variety', both plants need to be discussed. Recent genetic work on the plant also clarifies the origin of *Dactylorhiza* 'Glasnevin Variety'.

Orchis latifolia (Dactylorhiza incarnata) var. *praecox* was first described by its finder David Moore in 1864. Further mention was made in *The Garden* in July 1879 in an article on varieties of *Orchis latifolia*. The plant was 'a striking variety found by Dr [David] Moore some dozen years since in a meadow at the base of the Dublin Mountains' (Anon., 1879). It was noted as having a 'free tendency to seed, the readiness with which the seed germinates, and the precocity of the seedlings growing into flowering plants'. In June 1895 this plant was presented to the Royal Horticultural Society at a meeting held at the Drill Hall, James Street, Westminster, along with 'an exceptionally fine form with very large flowers' (Anon., 1895). Both plants received awards, 'the former receiving a Botanical Certificate and the latter an Award of Merit'.

In 1903, a report of a visit to the then Royal Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, mentions a plant of *Orchis latifolia* as the one that received an Award of Merit in 1895 'under the name of *O. latifolia* Glasnevin variety' (Anon., 1903). However in the *Orchid Review* of June 1918 the history of both plants becomes confused. It describes *Orchis latifolia* 'Glasnevin Variety' as the plant found by David Moore in the meadow at the base of the Dublin Mountains. However, *Dactylorhiza* 'Glasnevin Variety' is not an orchid indigenous to Ireland and does not have a free tendency to produce seed.

Dactylorhiza 'Glasnevin Variety' was ascribed to both *Orchis latifolia (Dactylorhiza incarnata)* (see Nelson, 1984, 1997) and *D. elata* (Piper and Nelson, 1987; Nelson, 1997, Nelson, 2000; Nelson & Sayers, 2001). The identification of the plant was based entirely on examination of its morphological characters. However, following recent molecular examination we have better information about its probable parentage.

In a molecular study of *Dactylorhiza* species, carried out at the Jodrell Laboratory of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, a sample of *Dactylorhiza* 'Glasnevin Variety' was examined. *Dactylorhiza* is a complex genus and many of the described species are of hybrid origin. The hybrids are often fertile and have the ability to successfully hybridise among themselves and their parents. DNA was extracted from a silica-gel dried leaf sample. Even though the sample of *Dactylorhiza* 'Glasnevin' and other clones of *Dactylorhiza* cultivated under the name *Dactylorhiza elata* were examined they 'proved to be of little value to this study'. Pillon et al. (in press) continue, 'The plastid haplotypes were sufficiently discriminating to allow "forensic" horticulture in the *D. elata* group. Apparently clonal clusters of plants labelled *D. elata* that have long been cultivated at the Royal Botanic Gardens [*sic*] Edinburgh (UK) and the National Botanic Garden [*sic*] Glasnevin (Ireland) have the D haplotype typical of *D. foliosa*, a commonly cultivated endemic from the isolated island of Madeira. These plants are more likely to be hybrids between *D. elata* and *D. foliosa* that were created in cultivation'.

Further investigation revealed that 'Glasnevin Variety' is probably a result of the interbreeding of *D. foliosa*, *D. fuchsii* and *D. incarnata* (M. Fay, pers. comm.): it is a complex hybrid and not a clonal selection of *D. elata*. The exact origin of this Irish plant will probably never be discovered.

The earliest established name for this plant was 'Glasnevin Variety', so the word "variety" must be retained within the cultivar name (Nelson & Sayers, 2001); its inclusion does not contravene the *International code of nomenclature for cultivated plants*, 2004.

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Introduction and notes by Jennifer Woods

MOUNT STEWART IN 1952: A HORTICULTURAL APPRENTICESHIP

MOUNT Stewart gardens, now in the care of the National Trust, lie on the east shore of Strangford Lough north of Greyabbey in Co. Down. They are maintained by a staff of eight plus volunteers and cater for well over 100,000 visitors annually. In addition they are a venue for weddings and corporate functions and have a series of educational activities for schools.

Paddy Woods

In 1952, however, the estate was still the home of Edith, Lady Londonderry, who had been responsible for the visionary planning and running of the garden since the end of the First World War. It supported a garden staff under the head gardener George Graham. The journal, a 7" x 4" notebook which my husband kept during the first nine months of this 18 month apprenticeship, paints a clear picture of the daily tasks in the propagating department of a large private garden in the mid-twentieth century; before the days of polythene or plastic when seed boxes were hand made, old remedies were still in vogue and Christian names were the prerogative of family and friends. While a daily journal was kept a selection of entries, demonstrating the range of tasks undertaken by an apprentice and his observations about plants are included.

Extracts from the journal are reproduced more or less verbatim: some quaint spelling of a nineteen year-old is left unless interrupting the flow. This applies in particular to the common name of plants. Latin names are shown in the convention of the time. Everything considered worthy of comment is enlarged upon in the notes at the end.

* 1932–2004: see IGPS *Newsletter* 17: 13–15 (2005).

Monday 21st January 1952

Started working this morning Mount Stewart. My section being in the propagation part. The propagation is carried on in the greenhouses and in frames. There are about six houses all together at the moment and three of these are in constant use, two of these being heated by a boiler and the other heated by paraffin lamps during the night.

Today I removed the chrysanthemum stools from pots, keeping the best stools for cuttings. These were placed in boxes, and covered with sand and soil and labelled. The ground on which the pots had been standing was then given a dressing of bone meal and wood ash followed by horse manure containing seaweed. This was all dug in, the manure being pushed into a trench and covered by the uncovered soil, so on to the end of the digging.

24th January (Thursday)

Opened the frames as usual this morning and after breakfast, started replanting and root pruning peaches. There are four peaches in the house - (i) Peach Peregrine. (ii) Nectarine Pinapple also (iii). (iv) Peach Barrington.

The (i) + (iv) trees were moved while the other two were just dug round and root pruned. The purpose of lifting trees however was not actually for pruning but to put slates under the roots. This keeps the tap root in check and therefore, with the pruning encourages more fibrous roots. The root pruning is done by making a horizontal cut. This encourages the new roots to grow out horizontally, and checks the growth of the tree thus encouraging better fruiting. The trees were all planted by the afternoon, and the rest of the day I did odd tidying jobs including lighting the paraffin lamps and closing the frames. In the morning I

omitted to mention - putting the tomatoe seedlings on a bench near the windows of the greenhouse. The seeds were sown on 14/1/52 and were Harbinger and Early Market (Suttons). The seeds also included Carnation Vanguard, Gazania hybrids.

29th January (Tuesday)

Thawing slightly today with some rain in the afternoon. Still making boxes, I have to make 50 - made 17 today.[1] Sims sowed seeds and repotted cinerarias and orchids (Strelitzia regina).

After work went to a meeting of Bangor Horticultural Society where Mr Stewart was showing a film on cloches and two on dahlias.[2] I went with Mr. Graham and Archie.[3] The film on dahlias was made for the Dahlia Growers Society. This recently formed society pledges to do all in their power to ensure that their stock is perfectly virus and disease free, and in the event of disease in any of the plants - even in all the stock, to destroy them and start afresh. Because of this, Dahlias have now risen to a very high standard and anyone buying dahlias from any firm or person who is a member of the society is sure of good, strong healthy plants. The virus is often carried on Arum lilies and can be passed on to the dahlias and on to tomatoes by thrips, and possibly also by greenfly, knives (in the course of making cuttings), or by fingers while disbudding. The disease appears on the leaves as pale spots or blotches. Culture. The tubers are placed in boxes in Jan./Feb. partially covered so that eyes are still exposed. Shoots 4" or 5" long taken with two fully developed leaves at top. Bottom heat of 60 to 70(F facilitates rooting. This if not available in a greenhouse could be obtained in a hot bed of manure prepared in a cold frame. Rooting medium can consist of = parts of coarse sand, granulated peat. Chesunt compound applied to this soil two days before planting will help to prevent damping off. Transfer to 3" pots when well rooted in loam and leaf mould (3 to 1) with a little sand and bone meal. Potted into 6" pots in May, plant out then in the beginning of June. Plant firmly without breaking root ball, stake and tie loosely. It is preferable to have the stake in position before planting. Several important points with cloches were:- (i) Have in position at least 14 days before planting. (ii) close the end of the cloches with something to keep draught and wind out and secure well.

1st February (Friday) 1952

Quite a heavy frost last night, the sun shone brightly all day although the temperature was low. I turned the glass on the seed pans, but Mr Graham informed me that the glass should be wiped with a cloth to remove the moisture when being immediately replaced or preferably left off the pans for about an hour to allow the glass to dry and the soil to air, thus preventing any formation of mould. I have not enough wood to finish the boxes, so I commenced to make new boxes out of the lids of boxes. This meant taking the lids off, removing nails and burning the contents of the boxes (packing material and paper). Sims sowed more seeds today, from Thompson and Morgan and continued repotting *Primula obconica*[4]. Paid today - £7.7.6.

7th February (Thursday)

I removed the soil from the sterilizer and turned the glasses over as usual on the seeds, as well as opening the lights which are also over the seeds. Seeds of Eucalyptus oblique have started germinating, they were sown on 25/1/52 taking thirteen days to germinating. I then dug three holes for peaches, planting two small trained peaches (Hale's Early and Waterloo) before dinner time, and a big standard after dinner. I closed the frames over the cuttings having first opened them before twelve, having given them about two and a half hours airing. Sowed French beans in the pots prepared yesterday. There were two varieties - The Prince and Hawlmark Canadian. Before finishing for the day made cuttings of Coleus, these are highly decorative plants with coloured leaves. They grow from cuttings very easily. Also made cuttings of chrysanths grown from seed.

11th February (Monday)

Emptied old mustard and cress boxes and sowed fresh seed. Pinched sweet pea plants at the second bud. The varieties are Air Raid Warden 18 plants; Royal Purple 21; Mrs. C. Kay 13; Model 6; Hawlmark salmon pink 12; Pinky 17; Welcome 15; Mrs. R. Bolton 20; Mrs. A. Searles 14; Chieftain 16; Sybil Henshaw 18; Blue Bird 16. Covered dahlia tubers, so as to get cuttings later, in 2 boxes with peat. The boxes were placed in the warm house. After dinner prepared compost for seeds - anterhinnums. Moved soil in from outside into the warm greenhouse, to dry it.

18th February (Monday)

Starting from now on at 7am. Lit the stove in the new potting shed, took lit coal from the big boiler in order to do so. Moved bulbs from frames where they had been put after forcing and put them in the cool

greenhouse. Some of the primulas have germinated and have been placed up on a shelf nearer the light, and some others although not as far on, have had the glass removed from them. Early in the morning went to Mr McGivern and pruned under him for the rest of the day[5]. We are pruning apple trees.

James McGivern

28th February (Thursday)

Much milder this morning but cloudy all day and promising rain. We continued preparing the beds and completed all the beds before 5.30. They were planted with Schizostylis Mrs Hegerty and S. Coccinea, also Watsonia Angustifolia. Two of us cut eight bunches of heath for sale to Dicksons in the afternoon.

4th March (Tuesday)

Rain last night and threatening showers during the day with a little rainfall. Up to dinner time there was very bright sunshine. We planted five peach trees and for the rest of the day worked at a raised up bed surrounding a cherry tree. We had to remove sods from the top and two small conifers of about 7 feet. These were later removed and planted somewhere else. The wall of the bed was taken down, and the weeds removed and then rebuilt again. Before stopping I went down to the house with Mr Graham in the van. We took cinerarias, cyclamens, primula malicoides, aconites and tulips. Her ladyship returns tomorrow so the floral decorations will re- continue in the house again.

17th March (Monday)

Watered plants in the house behind the bothies, and sprayed the peaches. Moved tulips into a frame in the shade outside, they won't come out quite so quick. Worked the rest of the morning down at the big house where Sims arranged vases of narcissi and we moved fuchsias and geraniums from the summer houses into a greenhouse beside the house. They are in big pots and have been badly hit by the frost. After dinner I brought a dozen and a half narcissi down to the house and continued with the plant removing. For the rest of the day I continued planting out the cabbages into the frame.

26th March (Wednesday)

Frost this morning but warm and clear the rest of the day. I went straight down to the big house and worked from then right on to dinner time. Rhododendrons, red and pink, were used, some placed in two pound jam-jars on the mantelpieces and surrounded with moss and others in different type vases and basins. After dinner watered yound [?] plants and pollinated all the peaches the last of the indoor trees being in bloom now. I also watered pot plants in the frames and all the plants in the conservatory. The man came to take measurements for constructing greenhouses and for the airing of the conservatory. I helped him and Mr Graham to measure. I have to go straight down to the house tomorrow and help to clear up.[6]

4th April (Friday)

Cloudy all day with wind rising towards evening. Pricked out the rest of the begonias - *Begonia semperflorens* (Kathe Teicher ?).[7] Watered the seeds in the frames and recovered some which had come to the surface. Tidied up the soil compost from the back of the hot house and filled a pan with fibrous soil for cucumber plants.

11 April (Friday)

There was quite a bit of rain this morning but turned sunny in the afternoon. Prepared a seeding compost 2-1-1 (soil, peat, sand) & fertilizers. This was for sowing cactus seeds - 2 mixed packets one from Wisley and one from Harle's and the third - crassula sarcocaulis - from Six Hills Nursery.[8] Continued with the boxes, wed and watered the tree seeds in the top garden. Paid £7.15.10.

14th April (Monday)

Very warm and sunny all day with sudden change to slight drizzle at about 7.30.

Delivered weather report, returning to do usual morning routine including watering most of the

transplanting boxes and bulbs. Lifted plants for Lady Marie there were 300 in all 50 of each variety (2 of cauliflowers and 4 cabbages).[8] I was quite busy up to the middle of the day with watering, looking after the boiler and the airing of the houses. Due to the mildness of the temperature I was able to keep all the air on to 8pm.

15 April (Tuesday)

Duller this morning with slight rain in the morning. Watered the frames in the yard, and all the plants in the houses behind McGiverns. Filled the water tanks in these houses, the big tank in the lean to house taking all the afternoon with a hose led into it. Heeled in plants from Daisy Hill Nursery, watered peach trees and tomatoes, and removed transplanting boxes out from the medium house into the frames.[10] More seeds were sown today including celery and ipomea of different varieties.

17th April (Thursday)

Took my day off and with the help of Brian and Stuart Johnstone put in staging in one side of the greenhouse and made a better path in it.[11] Put in a few cuttings of *Grevillea rosmarinafolus* and a Camellia.

24th April (Thursday)

Continued pricking out during the morning, in the afternoon unpacked and labelled plants from, Hilliers, The Alpine Nurseries - Inverness-shire and Six Hills nurseries.[12] Most of the plants are for the rock garden, and were just left in two boxes ready to be taken down to the gardens. The larger shrubs were heeled in and watered. There were also several dozen strawberry plants (alpine - Baron Solemacher). These were planted along a sunny border in the rose garden.

28th April (Monday)

Flower pots arrived this morning (2", 3", 4" + 5"). Two thousand four hundred and twenty altogether. Watered seed frames and put shading on the lights. Pricked out fourteen Campanula pyramidalis from the frames to bring on in the house in the yard. Fed the plants with liquid manure. Moved boxes into frames and some plants. Pricked out more antirrhinums, stopping early to spray hydarangeas in the houses and frames in the yard. The rhododendrons were sent off to the R.H.S. Show today by plane.

29th April (Tuesday)

Watered French beans and hydarangeas, moved the tomatoes into the conservatory. Weeded lettuces in the lean-to greenhouse and the cutting frame. Prepared compost for sowing freesias and marigolds as well as vegetable marrows. These were all sown by the afternoon. Made several boxes for the freesia seeds. Collected moss down near the lake for putting round the plants for the house. The lady is coming home tomorrow so plants of schizanthis, calceolarias, tulips and orchids. The rhododendrons received 5 first and a third.[13]

Wednesday (14th May)

Finished pricking out erigeron hybrids into box. Watered antirrhinums in one of frames in top garden. Made compost for planting out about 30 rhododendron seedlings. Moved boxes and pans out of the end of a frame in the yard and put cyclamens in it also moved tresine [?] plants out of the same greenhouse.[14] Put geranium and cuphea plants in conservatory having first staked and tied the cupheas. After dinner continued moving plants. This time from the lean-to into the yard. The schizanthus plants were moved to the conservatory the calceolarias and Primula obconicas to the medium house and the boxes containing the rhododendron seedlings to the north face of the wall behind the yard. Rolled up a tarpaulin which we had been drying in the middle of the yard and as it was 4 o'clock finished for the day in order to go to Belfast.

Bill Simms

27th May (Tuesday)

Watered frames and houses in middle garden, also giving the primula obconicas a spray over in the top garden. Pricked out the rest of the celery, in all about 1,100 plants. The first variety was golden self blanche, following with matchless red, white and pink. Made up a pricking out compost and transplanted asters and marigolds. Watered houses and frames before finishing for the night.

28th May (Wednesday)

Watered all frames, both in yard and in top garden. Pricked out marigolds and annual delphiniums. Shifted liliums and pelargoniums into the vinery and conservatory respectively. Watered arthropodiums before dinner time and after took them out of their pots and put them into the van in which they will be taken to the swimming pool round which they will be planted.[15] Shifted plants and boxes from the medium house into the yard and from the hot house into the medium. Watered frames in the yard again and houses.

29th May (Thursday)

Watered frames in yard and did the usual watering of houses. Watered tomatoes in hot house. Dumped French beans and then in the room which we had made yesterday put turves down running about 2 feet out from the wall and half length of house. Horse manure was spread on this and then piles of soil (rough turves, horse manure, sand, superphosphate and bone meal) were spaced out. Cucumber plants were planted in these. Tidied up the house, weeding the orchids, and removing broken glass. Weeded some plants out in the frames, while Bill repotted Celosias, watered some plants again.

3rd June (Tuesday)

Watered tomatoes in big house and cut dead wood of pelargoniums in same house. Potted more plants and lifted more anterrhinums. Prepared more compost and potted out embothriums, berberis, alstromaria and pricked out cynoglossums and nicotiana. Watered frames at top garden and what ever needed watering in houses.

Saturday 7th June

Watered frames and seeds in top garden and all the other plants in the houses as well as feeding hydarangeas, liliums and tomatoes with Thompsons fertilizer which was then watered in.[16] Watered the cuttings and tomatoes in lean to in yard. Took side shoots off almost all the remaining plants.

10th June (Tuesday)

Lifted 160 magic carpet anterhinnums and after watering usual plants, continued wiring and staking tomatoes on the remaining bed. Lifted gazanias, charieis [?] and fifty anterrhinums little gem. Watered violas for lifting after dinner - two hundred all together. After lifting these I continued staking the tomatoes - completing them and clearing up before stopping time. Moved frames off the last bedding out plants pricked out.

19th June (Thursday)

As the Princess Royal is coming this weekend the flowers are being completely changed. I had to go down to the big house this morning to help Bill. The containers of flowers were made up with primula obconicas, hydrangeas and calcalarias. Completed weeding the back border and then went up and weeded delphiniums and aquilegias which were pricked out earlier on and which had got very dirty. They will stand on for another season as they won't flower till next year. Watered tomatoes in the conservatory and other plants needing attention.

21st June (Saturday)

Straight down to the house after airing houses and giving the copper prunus to Mr Graham to bring down in the van. Carried fresh P. obconicas in for a container in the Skin Hall and put the prunus round the humea pots by means of several pieces of cord and twigs stuck in it and in the soil at the top. Brushed up leaves and rubbish round the plants in the flower room and put some unneeded plants in the small greenhouse outside. Came up and finished the watering etc which had been carried on by the kitchen foreman and assistant till we got back.

27th June (Friday)

Watered all the frames especially in the top garden in preparation for the weekend and as it turned out very

warm today, also watered the cutting and plants behind the wall. Moved rhododendron seedlings out to the frames vacated by the primulas, which were finally put out today, and gave the rhododendron seedlings a watering with Condy's fluid, to remove moss or liverwort on the surface.[17]

2nd July (Wednesday)

Bunched sweetpea first thing this morning during which, there was a continual shower of rain to about 10 oclock. The sweet pea was mixed in colours - 12 in a bunch and ten of these in a large bunch. Two pieces of asparagus were put in with each small bunch. Took more shoots of the tomatoes in the lean to and then started on the plants in the conservatory. Watered some plants in my greenhouses as well as the tomatoes.

5th July (Saturday)

Watered all frames at top garden, all houses and tomatoes. Sprayed the cuttings and watered plants behind the wall, and did all other jobs as per usual on a Saturday morning. Special care will have to be taken of the embothriums as odd ones have been dieing off, due possibly to too damp soil and strong sun on them. I will just spray them over a few times during the day. The cucumbers will also require spraying.

11th July (Friday)

Gave potash to a few plants in the conservatory which were not finished yesterday. Watered all tomatoes again filled the tanks and watered plants in the frames in the top garden. Brushed out the houses, fed and watered the pots of campanula pyramidilis and all the other seedlings and plants behind the wall. Disbudded a few tomatoes and tied them up. This finished work for today and until Tuesday morning.

17th July (Thursday)

Did a little watering this morning and weeded some more of the primulas. Continued potting geraniums finishing all the plants, including ones with scented foliage, out of the conservatory. Moved lights off one of the frames in the yard which has some plants in pots and meconopsis seedlings pricked out in boxes. Potted bulbs and prepared another compost for fuchsias which we will do tomorrow. Sprayed the peaches, and watered some chrysanthemums in the yard.

18th July (Friday)

After usual morning duties started to pot up the fuchsias grown from cuttings at the beginning of the year. They were put into six and seven inch pots. I staked them and put them in the space left by the freesia boxes. Brushed up the rubbish and did some watering. Payed £8.16.10.

30th July (Wednesday)

Watered pots up in frames at top garden, finished tying the chrysanthemums. Pulled tomatoes from both houses for selling at Bangor to Smith and Mclures.18 Hoed weeds off ground for standing chrysanth pots on. Raked off the weeds and left them in a pile on the path. Took hydrangeas from greenhouse in the yard and cut them back for next year. Also took the hydrangeas from the lean to in the middle garden and after cutting them back (some were left as there were good flower buds formed for next year) moved them up to the top garden where they were placed in a frame. Watered plants in houses.

4th August (Monday)

Watered tomatoes in the conservatory and hot house also other plants in my houses. Weeded a bit at some of the primulas. Sowed fresh mustard and cress seed and threw the old lot out. Staked gladiolas and watered what plants needed attention before finishing. Bill sowed some seeds, and collected seed of *Primula chungensis, lichiangensis* and *pulverulenta* Bartley strain.[18] He also pricked out seedlings of gentians and other plants which had been behind the wall.

13th August (Wednesday)

Weeded a little bit at the frames. Pricked out seedling Daboecia azorica & Menziesii Praegerii into small pots and put them with the other heaths. Washed about eight or nine big pots (10") for callas (under the name Zanbedescka Alba - Naculak) [*Zantedeschia alba-maculata*] Sent three begonias down to the big house.

18th August (Monday)

Watered tomatoes in hot house carrots in top frames and plants in other houses and frames in the yard. Brought acacias eucalyptus and other plants over from the lean to in the middle garden to be potted up.

Washed pots and staked some of the acacias and eucalyptus. Took the plants back and put them in the carnation house. The plants included Sophora, Ruta, Leptospermum laevigatum, Prostanthera Rotundifolia, Erythrina Crista Galli compacta, Polygala virgata, Magnolia sinensis, Abeliophyllum distichum, Ceanothus Austro-montana, Actinidia coriacea, Eucalyptus - Ficifolia, Subcrenulata, Regnans Pauciflora, Rulida, [?] Cinerea, Maculosa, Gigantea and stuartiana. Acacia Baileyana, Melanoxylon, Longifolia and Buxifolia. I started to prepare a piece of ground at the beech hedge for putting about 2 doz. fuchsias in. Watered chrysanths, tomatoes in the conservatory, and frames in the yard.

26th August (Tuesday)

Watered chrysanthemums, freesias and carrots this morning, also other plants in lower frames and houses. Finished layering the carnations, having to make new pegs several times and finally clearing up stems and old flowers. The frame of the new greenhouse is now completed and the joiner is now putting ventilating gear in the conservatory. Washed several seed pans for cyclamen seed and some pelargonium seed from the South African Botanical Gardens. Weeded practically all the freesias in the frames and did some watering in the yard and to a few chrysanthemums.

3rd September (Wednesday)

Watered chrysanthemums and all the houses, including those in the yard as Sims wasn't able to get up at the usual time. Completed plunging the hydrangeas also weeding the nerines and mecanopsis, completely covering the remainder of the frame with ashes and plunging the other plants (leptospermum, callistemon, cornus and some other plants). Watered all these plants, all my houses and the frames in the yard.

10th September (Wednesday)

Watered all the houses, and the carrots in the frame. Weeded more of the primulas. Shifted load of leaf mould from the yard, and put beside the potting shed. Started to empty the water tanks in the conservatory. Brought the rest of P.Obconicas to the top frames and covered them with lights. Watered some primulas and some plants in houses.

11th September (Thursday)

. . . The journal ends abruptly. Did Paddy lose it? If he did then it surfaced again as the final pages of the notebook contain illustrated notes taken when attending a botany course (which looks very much as it was targeted at gardeners) at Bangor Technical College from 19th November 1952. Perhaps September 1952-August 1953 will yet be found! August 1953 is when he joined the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh as a student and where he was to spend the rest of his career first on the three-year horticultural course and thereafter on the staff of the herbarium.

Acknowledgements

For help in various ways I am indebted to:- Frances Bailey (N.T., Rowallane), Leslie Bisset, Lady Mairi Bury, Christopher Dingwall, Willie Duncan, Vicky Graham (RHS Library, Wisley), Roz Griffith/Helen Harrison (N.T. Mount Stewart), Graham Hardy (RBGE Library), Margory and Stewart McFarlane, Nigel Marshall, Marshall Morrison, June and Mike Snowden, Bill Tait and Peter Woods.

[1] Before plastic seed trays wooden boxes of various sizes could be bought from commercial sources though often they were assembled on site either from cannibalised old market fruit boxes or from wood precut to size and also available from suppliers.

[2] 'Mr. Stewart' possible Jack Stewart, Horticultural Advisor to Co. Down who had given Paddy early encouragement to pursue a horticultural career.

[3] Mr Graham George Graham, head gardener at Mount Stewart, which he left in 1958 to become head gardener at Powys Castle in North Wales retiring in 1970. He had come from Castlewellan, Co. Down. 'Archie' Archie Graham, son of George Graham

[4] 'Sims' W.G. (Bill) Sims. Greenhouse foreman and part-time house staff: had come from Wynyard, the

Londonderry's estate in Co. Durham. He gave Paddy his copy of Bean's *'Trees and Shrubs Hardy in the British Isles*. 'Thompson and Morgan' seed merchants of Ipswich whose first catalogue appeared in 1855. Still extant.

[5] 'Mr McGivern' James McGivern, garden staff

[6] A hunt ball took place in the house on 26th March.

[7] *Begonia semperflorens* 'Kathi Teicher' is listed in Buxton, Checklist of Begonias (American Begonia Society, 1957) carmine.

[8] 'Wisley': garden of the Royal Horticultural Society. 'Harles': probably Kenneth Harle who ran a cactus nusery at Lower Basildon, north of Reading, Berkshire. 'Six Hills': nursery at Stevenage Hertfordshire founded in 1907 by Clarence Elliot (1881-1969).

[9] 'Lady Marie': Lady Mairi Bury, youngest daughter of Lord and Lady Londonderry after whom the 'Mairi Garden 'is named.

[10] 'Daisy Hill': nursery at Newry founded by Paddy's great-grandfather Thomas Smith in 1886. See Alan Grills in *Moorea* 10: 1-10 (1993) and E.C. Nelson and Alan Grills, *Daisy Hill Nursery*, NIHGC (1998) Closed in 1996.

[11] 'Brian and Stuart Johnstone': Brian Woods, Paddy's younger brother, and Stewart Johnston, a friend.

[12] 'Hilliers': well-known Hampshire nursery founded by Edwin Hillier in 1864. Still extant.

'The Alpine Nurseries Inverness-shire': probably Jack Drake's nursery at Inshriach near Aviemore, founded just before the second world war. He was soon joined by John Lawson, who ran the nursery until 1999. Now under new ownership but still extant.

[13] 'Rhododendrons - RHS Show': reports in the *Gardeners' Chronicle* (May 10 1952 p. 162) and the *Rhododendron Yearbook* show that first prizes were gained in class 2 'truss of three species - *Rhododendron fictolacteum, R. hodgonsii, R. macabeanum* which made imposing, well chosen trio and was one of the outstanding exhibits of the show (Lanning Roper in *Rhododendron Yearbook* 1952 p. 103); in class 18 for a single truss of *R. fictolacteum*; class 19 *R. hodgonsii*; class 23 *R. macabeanum* and in class 44 'for outdoor species of series Edgeworthii' a large spray with about 20 trusses of *R. bullatum*. A close third was awarded for two leaves each of six rhododendrons in class 84 'one of the most interesting of all' - *R. sinogrande, R. falconeri, R. fictolacteum, R. hodgonsii, R. magnificum* and *R. macabeanum* 'all of which were fine lustrous green and perfect form'.

[14] 'tresine plants' Iresine plants- possibly copying fron a badly written label. *Iresine herbstii* was used to plant the Red Hand of Ulster in the Shamrock garden (*Lady Londonderry in Mount Stewart* p. 20 1956).

[15] The swimming pool was situated between the main road and Strangford Lough outwith the estate walls. It is now disused and overgrown.

[16] 'Thompson's Fertiliser' - devised and marketed by William Thomson (1814 - 1895) gardener to the Duke of Buccleugh at Dalkeith before founding his own vineyard at Clovenfords near Galashiels. Used as a base fertiliser before the introduction of the John Innes range.

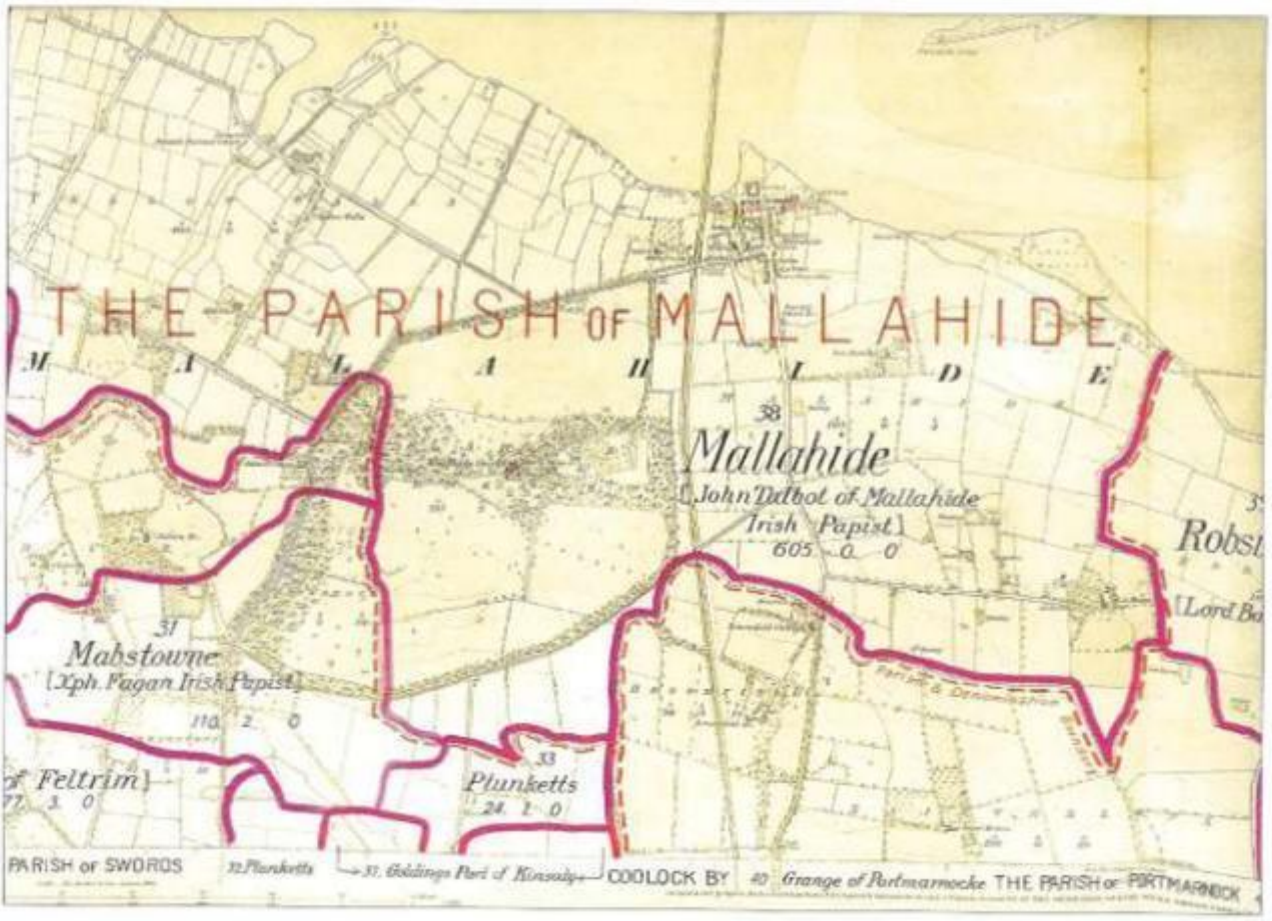
[17] 'Condy's Fluid' - an anti-algal preparation based on Potassium permanganate.

[18] 'Smith and Mclure' - Smith and McClure, grocers in and around Bangor. No longer extant.

[19] Primula pulverulenta 'Bartley's Strain' - pink flowered strain, still available, raised by Huw Dalrymple at the Bartley Nurseries, Southampton in the 1920's.

ANNE JAMES

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF MALAHIDE DEMESNE



Down Survey of 1650's superimposed on early ordnance survey map

THIS is a study of the physical landscape changes of Malahide Demesne that have taken place under the stewardship of the Talbot family from the late twelfth century to 1976 when Hon. Rose Talbot sold the estate to the local authority – Dublin County Council, now Fingal County Council. A landscape according to the *Oxford Dictionary* is a visual picture of a view or a scene. This paper is a discussion of the physical components; the rock, the soil, the water and above all the plants that have helped to shape the landscape of Malahide.

Little documentary evidence is available for the earlier centuries and that which is available is mainly cartographic. The first available maps that reliably detail what actually occurs on the ground are John Roque's map of County Dublin in 1760, the 1801 survey map of Malahide Demesne by Brownrigg, Longfield & Murray, John Taylor's map of 1816, the 1851 survey map of Lord Talbot's Demesne by Clarges Greene & Son, Dublin, and the ordnance survey maps of 1837 and 1937.

The parish of Malahide lies ten miles north-east of Dublin city on the coast, and extends to just over 600 acres. The rock formation is limestone formed during the carboniferous period. The climate is mild maritime in character, with mean summer temperatures of 14.4 degrees centigrade and winter temperatures of 4.8 degrees, with an annual average of 3.9 hours of sunshine.[1] The rainfall at Malahide demesne has shown an average of 709mm over a ten-year period from 1990. The soil is a brown podzol and is most suitable for arable farming. The land is slightly undulating with one small hill to the east of Malahide known as 'Malahide Hill'.

The Talbots were a Norman family who claimed as their ancestors the Talbots, Barons of Cleuville, in the country of Caux. In 1475 Richard Talbot was granted the lands of Malahide, amounting to 600 acres, by King Edward IV by a grant of the Manor of Mullaghide in the County of Dublin.[2] This grant also confirmed on the 'said Thomas Talbot, his Heirs or Successors' 'Admiral of the seas', 'at the town, creek, or arm of the sea of Mullaghide aforesaid, in our County of Dublin, in our land of Ireland, from Muldowne, to the Watermill of the said Thoomas'. The first documentary evidence to show the exact location of these lands was the survey by William Wright in 1655. This formed part of the Down Survey, which Cromwell had instigated. He appointed William Petty as the Chief Surveyor of Ireland to ascertain all the land that was held by Catholics. Petty and his team completed the survey in just less than two years. By superimposing the Down Survey map on the 1837 six-inch ordnance survey map, the extent of the Talbot lands is clearly identifiable. The area comprised the townlands of Malahide, Mabstowne (Mabestown), Hamonstown and Balregan, the latter two merging to become the present townland of Yellow Walls. In effect, the Talbots owned the entire parish of the present village of Malahide from Seatown in the west, the Malahide estuary to the north, Robs Wall to the east and Mabestown to the south. It shows that a rectangular strip of land corresponding with the present woodland block along the western boundary of the demesne from the old quarry site (just north of the Swords Road entrance gates) south to the Dublin Lodge was not within their boundary. It belonged to Fagan of Feltrim and Fagan of Mabstowne.

No woodlands were recorded for Malahide even though trees were recorded at Malahide in the Down Survey of 1654.[3] Malahide parish is described as follows: 'The soyle thereof is arable, meadow and pasture. It contains the town of Malahide with Harystowne all forfeited, there is a good stone house therein with orchards and gardens and many ash trees'. The accompanying survey map of William Wright showed Malahide Castle represented by a house symbol with trees surrounding it. A survey map of the estate in 1801 shows a linear belt of trees lining the perimeter of the demesne and a large belt running east/west along the drive to the castle. A smaller belt of trees is sheltering an orchard on the northern and eastern sides of the walled garden. However, the 1801 Longfield map indicating the proposed route for the turnpike road from Malahide to Coolock does not indicate any perimeter planting along the western boundary of the estate while it does show some planting on the opposite side. Yet Archer's statistical survey of Dublin of 1801 states that the demesne was 'well wooded, highly improved, and laid out with great modern taste'.[4] Analysis of the maps dated between 1801 and the present day shows an extensive block of woodland that has remained relatively unchanged in 200 years. No records of the Talbots availing of the Dublin Society's premia for tree plantings that were given to landowners between 1741 and 1808 have yet been found. However, tree planting may have taken place without such support. In 1830 in a letter from Robert Talbot to John Talbot, Robert states 'He is doing a good deal of planting at Malahide'.[5]

Dalton[6] records that Feltrim, a townland between the Malahide and Swords, was well covered in furze and brushwood. Obviously this timber was not of sufficient girth to warrant 'woodland status' and merit official recognition. Milton writing some text to accompany an engraving of Malahide Demesne dated between the years 1783-1794 describes the wooded estate as follows: 'The whole is founded on a limestone rock. There is a good deal of old wood surrounding it, particularly some oak, ash and beech trees, of a very large size. The manor is extensive ... .'

Lady Isabel Talbot, wife of Lord Richard Talbot de Malahide, 5th Baron, wrote in her diary of October 1913 that while writing a letter she happened to glance out of the small drawing room at Malahide Castle upon a grass meadow, and saw a very ancient yew tree that she considered to have stood for hundreds of years.[7] Cattle grazed around this tree and she mentions an incident involving the death of a calf from eating the leaves of the yew. She states 'it had eaten of the forbidden tree, and died in consequence. Its body was blown up to unearthly dimensions'. Gurney also mentions that it was customary for everyone to meet in the drawing room at three o'clock for a walk around the demesne. They started from the walled garden and went down through the beechwoods to the Dublin lodge. Isabel in her garden diary mentions the removal in October 1913 of some enormous dead beeches along the main drive (today known as 'Keegan's Avenue').[8]

Richard Talbot's first settlement, a motte and bailey, was situated to the south-east of the present castle on farmlands known today as 'The Grange'. This site has been preserved to the present day. The term 'bawn' (meaning the enclosure surrounding the motte) has been preserved in the name of the small housing estate adjacent. Standing on the top of the motte one can command fine views of the surrounding countryside, which would have been of importance to Richard and his followers to note the arrival of any enemies.

Before the end of the twelfth century, he had commenced building a tower house adjacent to an old abbey. There is no early description of this house as to its size or form until the Civil Survey which notes 'There is upon ye premises a faire Stone house slated with Severall other Office houses Slated some Ash trees about the house for Ornament'. A note in the Down Survey shows a picture of the 'court' and it also states that there is a good garden and fine orchard. For many centuries Malahide Castle was known as Malahide Court. The first map of Ireland to show Malahide Castle survives as a photostat copy, in the manuscript section of the National Library of Ireland, of a map of the coast of Ireland from Carrickfergus to Dublin dated c. 1580. The stylised annotations show Malahide (spelt Melahyd) and the nearby Swords (spelt Shoerdes) Castle.

James Talbot, later to be the 4th Baron, interested to learn of the history of the estate, wrote to his father and aunt asking if they could recall their memories of the estate during their time at Malahide. James Talbot, the 3rd Baron, in his reply enclosed a sketch (not to scale) of the house as he recollected it to be in 1775, showing it to be square and indicating its position in relation to the ruined church.[9] A paved courtyard was located to the east of the house with outoffices, stables, barn and a prison and a kitchen garden to the south. The castle at that time was formerly known as 'The Court'. The house and buildings had originally been surrounded by a strong medieval fortification consisting of a deep ditch with a high wall and moat. He states that the moat was probably without the wall. The entrance to the castle was on the east side protected by a drawbridge, portcullis and barbican. A walnut grove is indicated to the south-east of the garden. The Talbots lost their lands to Miles Corbet under the Cromwellian settlement of Ireland, regaining them at the restoration of Charles II. When John and Catherine Talbot returned to Malahide from Connaught, one of Catherine's first acts was to order the demolition of the outworks and the defences of the castle, alleging to her son and heir Richard that she was resolved that Malahide would never serve as a stronghold to invite the residence of an usurper. This description is verified by John Rocque's map of 1760 which shows a tower house, the church in ruins to the east and a garden to the south - the east well planted with trees. Thomas Milton in descriptions accompanying an engraving of Malahide Demesne completed sometime between 1783 and 1794 wrote: 'What is here represented was the manor-house and the keep or Donjon, which, with the chapel, now a ruin, the prison, several other buildings, the bason, and a large tract of ground, was formerly surrounded by a wall, and rampart flanked with towers and by a deep moat filled with water'. This echoes James Talbot's recollections of 1775, which indicate that the moat was on the outside of the fortification. The present dip in the ground on the west side of the castle was not, I believe, a moat but simply intended to keep the soil and thus dampness away from the ground-floor rooms.

Mrs Fitzgerald (the 3rd Baron's sister) stated in her letter that there were outward walls and towers in a ruinous state.[10] 'The only surviving tower was incorporated into the present walled garden which garden was made by her father from the stones of the fortification'. This tower - a barbican tower believed to have been built in the fourteenth century has had many uses over the years, which helped in its preservation. The upper loft was at one time used as a dovecote, though the niches are now filled in with bricks. At a later stage it was used as an apple loft. The ground floor room was subdivided and one area used possibly for bees in winter. The four rows of niches are similar to bee boles; the upper two rows, being smaller than the lower two, could have used to store the wax, a very important commodity for the castle. In Ireland bees were often housed in cold rooms over the winter to ensure that they hibernated and thus survived. The fortification circled the Court and outoffices and part of it still remains in the old ditches that are clearly visible to the south of the present castle, to the north of the 'West Lawn' garden and to the east and west through the woodland The Talbots, on regaining possession of their property after the Restoration, set about destroying the fortifications to reduce the attractiveness of the estate to any future usurper. At this time in England a new landscape movement was also taking place, opening up views of the surrounding country from the house and merging these view with the garden thus unifying the design. In order to have their views yet prevent the cattle walking all over the garden a deep ditch was dug, vertical on the garden side and retained by a stone or brick wall, with a sloping bank on the field side. It has been suggested that visitors on first viewing this new landscape exclaimed 'aha', hence the term 'haha'. The old fortification along with the canal was adapted to form this haha. Other sections of the ditch that were part of the old fortification will be found running through the woodland area west of the castle, north along the West Lawn garden and along the part of the eastern and southern boundaries to the walled garden. This latter section has a double ditch, the significance of which is not known. A second haha was constructed in about 1846 along the back avenue, which had been the main road into Malahide village. With the construction of the new toll road in the late 1700s it had ceased to function as a road. However, the opening of the railway

in 1844 meant that once again it was restored to its former significance since many visitors to the castle now travelled by rail and this was the nearest entrance to the estate.

Mrs Fitzgerald also mentions being told of an underground passage ending a long way out of the castle but now unknown. By chance the author found the tunnel while surveying the plant collection in the garden, on making enquiries about its significance was informed that this was a section of the tunnel from the castle exiting just beyond the present garden. Both entrances have now been filled in. The tunnel was most probably used as a safety route to and from the castle during times of troubles as it lies to the rear of the castle away from the main route. In many estates tunnels were constructed under avenues where there was a right of way, so that workers or pedestrians could not be seen from the main windows of the great house.

The first reference to gardens in the demesne appears in the Civil Survey of 1654. It describes Malahide Castle as follows: 'There is a good stone house therein with orchards and gardens and many ash trees with other outhouses in good repair'. Mrs Fitzgerald writing on 18 February 1861 states 'There was a garden under the south wall of the castle'.[11] James Talbot, the 3rd Baron, in his letter of 21st October 1846 enclosed a sketch indicating the kitchen garden to the south.[12] There was a yew terrace (avenue) nearly opposite the Oak Room and a walnut grove is indicated to the south-east of the garden. It was the 3rd Baron's father who pulled down the remains of the wall and it is probable that he used the stones for the construction of the present walled garden. He also had the stables and farm buildings constructed which form the present courtyard.

An orchard was first shown on the 1801 map by Brownrigg, Longfield and Murray to the south and east of the walled garden and this appears again on the 1851 map by Clarges, Greene and Son. According to the 1869 25" OS map the orchard had been transferred to within the walled garden and the old orchard planted with mixed woodland. The walled garden unlike other walled gardens does not follow the typical cruciform design and has at the southwestern corner a natural pond which was remodelled in the mid 1900s. Only the north wall has been faced in brick and it is believed that the purchase of 2,000 red bricks from the Portmarnock Brick Tile Works in 1884 for £3.15s.0d. and a further 2,000 the following year were used for this purpose.[13] Brick is a good conductor of heat and it is much easier to nail the branches of the fan or espaliered fruit trees into brick rather than into stone. The number of walls that were faced in brick gave an indication of the wealth of a family. The very wealthy would have east, west and north walls faced in brick, while the south wall, which was north-facing was rarely if ever faced in brick. Other than this wall there is no other large area where red bricks have been used on the estate.

It is interesting to note that a wages sheet for the gardening staff in 1898 shows that the foreman was paid £5.10s.0d. per month,[14] the head gardener received 3s.0d. per day and other men were paid 2s.0d. per day. Four men were employed on a regular basis. The pond within the walled garden was first shown on the 1801 estate map and remained unchanged until altered by Milo Talbot in the 1950s. The freestanding stone wall known today as the Tresco Wall first appears on the 1851 map, but its purpose is not known. Evidence of ornamental gardening appears on this same map showing a formal garden in the south-west corner of the garden consisting of a series of symmetrical flowerbeds known today as the Rose Garden.

The ornamental garden was extended considerably with the arrival of Lady Isabel Talbot (née Gurney) in 1902. She kept a garden diary that recorded details of all works carried out in the garden. Her first entry for 1902 was as follows: 'When I arrived at Malahide in January I found the garden in its winter state. There was no glass whatever, and a few geraniums were kept alive in the tool house. The edge of the pond was falling in, and big chains and stone posts had fallen in besides. The herbaceous borders were too bare to see what was in them, and the rest of the garden, though fairly neat, was unkempt and wanted thorough digging over. The most beautiful effects were in the box hedges. As we were away nearly all the summer and autumn, until November, I could arrange nothing whatever, but that month, Nov. 1902, we began to pull the garden together, to lay down grass, plant roses, and herbaceous plants'.[15] She was later to bemoan in 1903: 'The box hedge by the greenhouse was cruelly cut and nearly died'. However a note in 1905 states that the hedge had recovered. Though Lady Isabel states that there were no glasshouses, the estate map of 1869 shows a lean-to glasshouse in the area known as The Haggard, which obviously had fallen into ruin. Lady Isabel Talbot had two glasshouses constructed, the Peach House and the Ivy House. One year's work was compared with another and in due course this large walled garden became a paradise for herself and her many friends. At this time the garden was kept locked according to long-standing custom.

The layout of the garden remained unchanged until the arrival of Lord Milo Talbot, who inherited the estate from his cousin in 1948. Milo became a very keen plant collector travelling widely, collecting seeds and building up a plant collection in excess of 5,000 species. He placed a particular emphasis on southern hemisphere plants particularly Australasian and South American. His first plantings were made in the West Lawn (originally called the Back Lawn), which now extend to twenty acres. The more tender species were planted on the south-facing walls of the walled garden gradually extending the collection along all the borders of the garden. He had the Cambridge House and two Dutch Houses constructed to accommodate his rapidly-increasing plant collection. He was acknowledged as a very fine gardener and botanist. So important were his plant-collecting expeditions that a special section of a glasshouse in the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, was dedicated to his plants. Talbot had a particular interest in the flora of Tasmania, where he had a second estate, and sponsored and edited the production of the six-volume *Endemic flora of Tasmania*, which is acknowledged as one of the finest florilegiums produced.xvi The County Council has continued to add to the plant collection. The olearia collection in the Talbot Botanic Garden has been designated a National Collection® by the National Council for the Conservation of Plants. and Gardens[17]. In 1993 the Council acquired a very fine Messenger Victorian conservatory which was erected at the end of the main walk in the walled garden.

The first record of ponds on the demesne appears on the 1801 map of Brownrigg, Longfield and Murray, one in the parkland to the south of the castle surrounded by native flora and the other in the walled garden. Both ponds have survived to the present day. Shooting was a favourite pursuit at Malahide Demesne. The pond undoubtedly attracted waterfowl and may have been shot over. Yourell's well was first mentioned on the 1837 OS map. In addition, James Talbot in a letter dated the 21 October 1846, mentions that there was a well in the old garden from which the moat was probably supplied with water.

The 1801 survey map of the demesne by Brownrigg, Longfield and Murray shows the fields numbered and named for the first time including the Five Acre Field, Path Field and the Pond Field. On the 1851 survey map by Clarges Greene and Son, the field names have changed. The field names used on the 1851 survey map were Lady Acre, Back Lawn (now known as the West Lawn), Night Fields, Furzy Field, Hill Field, Pigeon Meadow and Yourells Meadows. The name Furzy Field indicates that it was colonised with furze or gorse.

The limekiln was first marked on the 1801 map. The building remains in a derelict condition. The quarry first recorded on the 1801 map is now disused and covered with dense vegetation. The flooded workings can still be seen. The icehouse was first recorded on the 1851 OS map. A search was made for this structure but no trace of it has been found.

The first indication of the road system in the Malahide area can be seen on John Rocque's map of 1760, just prior to the construction of the turnpike road. The main road from Dublin is seen dividing at Kinsealy Church. One section turns right down Kinsealy lane and heads north through the demesne this area is known as 'Bullock Lane', to the right of the church in ruins and then following the present laneway, known as the 'Back Lane' to the village. The second section travels west by the Feltrim road, veering to the right through Streamstown and entering the present Demesne at 'La Mancha'. It crosses in front of the Court (the Castle) and merges with the road from Kinsealy road at the old church. In a painting by Francis Wheatly accompanying notes by Milton in 1783, one can see a rider on horseback crossing in front of the Court.[18] John Talbot in his sketch of the Court 1775 and the immediate environs indicates this road to the south of the fortification and the canal. When the then Dublin County Council acquired the demesne, to facilitate visitor traffic Bullock Lane was realigned and upgraded to become the main avenue into the grounds.

Between 1780 and 1801 the Dublin to Malahide turnpike road was realigned and extended in a north-easterly direction from the Swords entrance forming a complete new road into Malahide village and defining the western and northern sides of the demesne.[19] It is interesting to note that this is the only boundary that has a section of the estate that is walled. Along the proposed line on this map there is no indication of woodland on the eastern side in Malahide demesne though at the south-western section there are four narrow linear fields, which are currently planted with woodland. However, a belt of trees along the line of the road is shown on the Brownrigg, Longfield and Murray estate map of 1801. This may be the planting that Robert Talbot spoke of in his letter to his brother John. Hedges delineate the other boundaries. The present-day Back Road that links the Dublin road to the Church road, Malahide is first seen on Taylor's map of 1816 but there is no record of it on the 1801 estate survey map. This road defines the southern

boundary of the demesne. The railway defines the eastern boundary. A network of paths is shown on the 1837 OS map running through the main woodland block in the demesne. An additional woodland path appears on the 1937 OS map along the southern boundary. From 1976 the former Dublin County Council constructed a more extensive network of paths.

The landscape changes that took place in the Malahide area were gradual. Over one lifetime they were were minimal, yet over several generations were extensive. Today, should the first Richard Talbot return it would be difficult for him to recognise the parish of Malahide that he was granted the tithes of in 1170.

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LONG-DISTANCE LANDSCAPING: ROBERT MOLESWORTH'S LANDSCAPE OF BRECKDENSTON, SWORDS, CO. DUBLIN

ROBERT Molesworth (1st Viscount Molesworth 1656-1725) spent many years of his life in England, directing from a distance the creation of his early eighteenth-century garden. The many letters he wrote to those charged with creating, maintaining and overseeing his estate in his absence, reveal him to be a businesslike, somewhat arrogant man. They also describe the difficulty and frustration of creating landscape by proxy. Many letters are concerned with planting his landscape, others with providing it with the correct personnel. The landscape design of Breckdenston has been described elsewhere, what follows is a return to aspects of its management hitherto but partially explored - its provisioning with both plants and people.[1]

The distant fields proved greener than the reality of Breckdenston.[2] Returning infrequently from England, Molesworth was rarely satisfied with what had been accomplished in his absence. When visiting in 1703 Molesworth found it a 'great pity' that the yews 'were all planted in so bad a place ... and where ye Ash trees drop on them continually'.[3] Writing for 'word how ye new planted and other trees everywhere were put out this season & whether ye new Orchard be yet as it should be' in 1712, he complained that they had 'allways had ye ill luck to plant pitifull small trees there'.[4] Landscape design was easier in the breach than in the daily observance and design intentions proved difficult to delineate by letter. The many fishponds, which were located at Breckdenston's southern reaches, were identified somewhat tediously in writing. When Molesworth's wife Lettice had been 'all over the Decoy & fish ponds' she wrote conscientiously that 'ye pond above ye square one is as dry as there had never been water in it & that unfinished pond wherin ye put ye tench ye brought from ye bottom pond is very near dry'.[5]

Molesworth, a great plantsman, went to considerable trouble to send many trees and other plants from England by sea. Precious cargoes did not always arrive safely however, and in 1695 Molesworth worried that his wife had not 'received safely the box of seeds' because she did 'mention nothing of it '. He had also 'not a word of your bedding &c. which went by long sea,'[6] Lettice's local 'Moore ye seeds man' informed her that one shipment had been 'all spoil'd' but she could not tell 'whether he says true or not' and her husband was to 'assure yr seedsman there' that she 'never got any of them'.[7] Others could poach out of parcels in transit, and when Molesworth received a bill of 12 pounds and 12 shillings 'for Hunter's share of ye gardiner's account' in 1695, he vowed that he would 'not pay him till he makes good ye 60 Dutch Elms which you say we wanted of our parcell.' Molesworth probably intended to buy the missing elms himself at Kew for he wrote that 'as soon' as he would 'get Hunter's note' he would 'take a journey to Kew to my Ld. Capell's gardiner."[8] The great London nurserymen of London and Wise were patronised by Molesworth[9] and he also kept an ear to the ground for news of any nursery sales, writing in 1716 that he had heard 'of a great sale of trees of all sorts at Twittenham by a gardener who is breaking up or dead lately'.[10]

Once safely in Ireland the trees and other plants could still be sold on by others. In 1698 Molesworth was 'sorry to hear that Woods sold some of my firr trees about the country for I was most fond of that parcel' and such redistribution may have encouraged him to grow his trees from seed by 1701: 'I am glad your beech seed comes up so well. There is a salesman in Dublin where you may get more, & hornbeam seed too.'[11] In 1704 he took care to ' recommend ye acorn field to' Lettice's care, where there had been ' a fine sight of young oaks in it last summer', but warned that 'if it be not well seeded at least twice during this summer ... we must never expect to have a tree there'.[12]

Once the parcels arrived their correct identification was no simple matter. To her husband's irritation Lettice confused pinks with carnations in 1696: 'As to the carnation seed you speak of, there are no other than that box of pinks, as you call them ... but they are choice carnations all of them, as the gardiner here tells me, not ordinary pinks.' The many unnamed gardeners could confuse issues still further, and

Molesworth had to write to clarify that 'that box that the gardiner here sent my gardiner was a box of tulip & other roots about autumn last.'[13] Once in situ the plants did not escape Molesworth's watchful gaze:

> *There are some young trees in the crabb orchard of severall kinds which you must order to be planted out next Season..ye great Trees overshadowing now too much, severall of them are Platanus trees must be carefully planted in ye nursery, as also the layers of ye other Platanus trees must be taken off and planted & ye layers of ye mulberry trees ye young white figg trees must be planted against the walls in vacant spaces.*[14]

Most of the imported trees were intended for Molesworth's elaborate web of avenues, and elms were the tree of choice. When the Irish 'Elms to be had' were 'so small' Molesworth told Lettice to 'let them alone if they be not as thick as my wrist & 10 or 12 feet high'. He promised to send 'over about 200'[15] from England. Lettice's 'project of planting out limes in the back avenue going to Swords' was only green-lighted 'since we have no store of Elms'.[16] Elms were not only used for avenues however. Creating microclimates was a matter of considerable concern and elms were particularly popular for reinforcing and building up hedgerows, In 1704 Molesworth longed 'to know how all the Elm trees which were planted on the topps of our new Ditches everywhere do thrive'.[17] Clumps were planted in particularly exposed locations and in 1709 Lettice was instructed to plant 'a sufficient clump of trees in that bleak North East corner of yr Cherry Orchard to make a thick grove there'.[18] Ditches or 'borders' were dug to improve the drainage in the vicinity of avenues and in 1709 Molesworth hoped that Lettice had 'dug a border in [the] front Avenue all along where ye 2 rowes of Beeches were felled' which he thought would 'make all the trees there thrive much better'.[19]

Edlington (the Molesworths' estate in Staffordshire) became something of a touchstone for Breckdenston, although the inferior seat within the family hierarchy. 'With ye building of one or two brick walls' at Edlington in 1704, Molesworth hoped to 'make it as fine and neat as any thing in England'.[20] Molesworth's interest in fruit production was directly reflected in his brick walling projects. Instructions to the gardener to 'inoculate for us some of his best fruit this year Peaches and Nectarines that we may preserve and increase ye kinds'[21] logically preceded his1709 project to build '200L in walling' in order to 'wall in all ye Gardens including both the Ash Groves and then we shall keep fruit.'[22] 'The best south wall was '12 feet in height'; a substantial construction.[23] Bricks were required to build these walls and to create the optimum environment for cultivating fruit. They may have been made on site, thereby reinforcing the estate's character and reputation as a self-sufficient entity. Some ten years later he wished 'heartily' that his 'purse would stretch to ye making of Bricks' as they had 'once made bricks at the 'bottom of ye furry field and ye top of ye Avenue leading towards ye Decoy.'[24] While Breckdesnton shows indications of the later English natural landscape style, garden walls remained essential for a productive landscape. English influence was dominant at Breckdenston, although French and Dutch influence was never long absent, acknowledged at times in a backhanded manner.[25] Other precedents established at Edlington were quickly observed at Breckdenston. In 1712 Molesworth wrote that he never planted 'a quickset hedge' in Edlington where he did 'not put in an oak plant every 4 or 6 foot'. 'That practice' had 'made such stately timber hedgerows as may be seen at Edlington & most parts of this country.'[26] Breckdenston was expected to follow suit.

Gardeners grow in significance over the corpus of the letters, perhaps reflecting an acknowledgement by Molesworth of the part other people played in the formation of his landscape. Nick the gardener, who became the Molesworths' principal gardener at Breckdenston, was probably himself transplanted from England in 1709, bringing 'vines, yewes and other trees' with him.[27] The barrage of instructions, which followed him by letter, may have made him happy to escape receiving them in person. In 1714 he was to 'prune our acorn park according to directions & to mind his planting and grafting'. The gardener's job extended to ensuring that the new 'tench to stock ye 2 field ponds' survived and prospered. Molesworth requested confirmation of the 'one single carp that Nick has had a vision of in our ponds or many?', remarking that he would 'trust to none of his [Nick's] second sights'.[28] Cleanliness was next to godliness and Nick's nurseries were to 'be kept clean else the young trees will never thrive.' His 'strawberry bedds' were soon 'not in ye order nor number that they should be'.[29] and he was chastised for 'screen[ing]' gravel 'so fine that little besides ye Earth can home to our walks'.[30] Nick lived on the demesne, as revealed by Molesworth's inclusion of 'ye gravel pit all round by Nick's'[31] in a lengthy description of the estate's parameters. As flowers became more significant in the Breckdesnton gardens, Molesworth acknowledged that by 1712 they were 'now grown to be the chief ornament', and requested 'great multitudes of flowers without being overchoice in the kinds' and with 'as much roots as earth in every border.'[32] Predictably enough, Nick failed to please, and another letter was duly despatched with instructions for Nick to 'plant all his borders with grass pinks without those filthy intervalls.'[33]

Cracks in the relationship were beginning to show by 1713 when Molesworth sent his wife a 'book of fine gardening' with which he 'intended to have instructed Nick (had he continued good with us) so as to have made him a perfect artist'.[34] Molesworth liked to send both Lettice and Nick gardening books, and in 1720 Lettice was advised to 'consult Bradley and Lawrence' for 'the right dressing and pruning of y[ou]r vines'.[35] Whether 'the perfect artist' consulted these tomes is unclear. Lettice Molesworth (who probably was more familiar with Nick's faults than was Molesworth) was also sceptical of Nick's hydraulic abilities. Having 'order'd Nick to come to town yesterday to shew him' Molesworth's 'last letter concerning the high walls of the Canall' she had come to the conclusion that it would 'never be adviseable to trust him altogether in so great an undertaking'.[36] Another gardener was employed in 1716 to keep the nurseries 'well stockd and Regular : not scattered in small inconsiderable parcells up and down as hitherto but as ... in ye Nurserymen's grounds about London'. Breckdenston contained many waterworks and one of the gardener's new skills was to 'learn to draw up ye Sluices that we may not be surprized by ye floods at any time when Nick may be in a drunken fitt'. Having apparently developed a drink problem, Nick was not however completely demoted. Molesworth would still 'suffer nobody but Nick to make or contrive any passage over by ye great Ponds to the other side'.[37] By 1720 Molesworth was in London 'trying' to get Lettice 'a Dutch gardener for fruit flowers and kitchen garden' thereby 'leaving to Nick his province of setting out works, which he likes better than this low mechanical direction.'[38] As Nick had 'cut the hedges in ye wilderness on one side 2 foot shorter than the other', a more conservative employee was no doubt required.[39]

Plants, people and projects were enmeshed in this North Dublin landscape. Much of what was planted had lost as much again on the way, and other gardeners seem but sidekicks to Nick's leading turn. Even as the estate's design approached Molesworth's dream of a self-sufficient model protestant environment, its animal and vegetable occupants were affected by the vagaries of fortune. The true significance of Molesworth's epistles lies not only in the story of early eighteenth-century landscaping, which they magisterially convey, but also the influence of happenstance and personality on its creation.

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[20] R. Molesworth to L. Molesworth, 17 June 1704, N.L.I., P 3752.

[21] R. Molesworth to L. Molesworth, 11 June 1707, N.L.I., P 3752.

[22] R. Molesworth to L. Molesworth, 12 July 1709, N.L.I., P 3752.

[23] R. Molesworth to L. Molesworth, 8 April 1710, N.L.I., P 3752.

[24] R. Molesworth to L. Molesworth, 8 April 1710, N.L.I., P 3752.

[25] R. Molesworth to L. Molesworth, 8 December 1698, N.L.I., P 3752: 'If ye frenchman have skill enough to lay out an icehouses (as his daughter says he has) I woud have it on ye hillside over ye tuckmill.'

[26] R. Molesworth to L. Molesworth, 16 July 1712, N.L.I., P 3752.

[27] R. Molesworth to L. Molesworth, 8 August 1709, N.L.I., P 3752.

[28] D.A. Chart, editor, *Clements Mss., Historic Manuscripts Commission report on various collections*, vol. viii (1913), p. 275, Jun 17, 1718, London

[29] R. Molesworth to L. Molesworth, 25 February 1714, N.L.I., P 3752.

[30] R. Molesworth to L. Molesworth, 18 February 1719/20, N.L.I., P 3752.

[31] R. Molesworth to L. Molesworth, undated, N.L.I., P 3752.

[32] R. Molesworth to L. Molesworth, 3 May 1712, N.L.I., P 3752.

[33] R. Molesworth to L. Molesworth, 25 February 1714, N.L.I., P 3752.

[34] R. Molesworth to L. Molesworth, 23 June 1713, N.L.I., P 3752.

[35] Richard Bradley was a prolific writer of gardening books in the first half of the eighteenth century, with such publications as *The artificial gardiner* of 1717 to his credit.

[36] L. Molesworth to R. Molesworth, 12 June 1714, N.L.I., P 3753.

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MARY FORREST

GARDENING IN EARLY 20TH CENTURY DUBLIN

REPORTS of horticultural shows throw light on gardening activity in a locality at a particular time. Such shows attract competitive and non-competitive exhibits from private gardens, allotments and the horticultural trade. Two publications *Irish Gardening* and *Irish Life* carried regular reports of such shows and they indicate a lively gardening scene in early 20th century Dublin.

Irish Gardening was published from 1906 to 1922. It had a subtitle of *'a monthly educational journal devoted to the advancement of horticulture in Ireland'*. It was illustrated and contained articles about gardens and gardening by head gardeners, horticultural advisors and garden owners. The first editor was David Heuston, a lecturer in the Royal College of Science of Ireland and the editor of *School Garden Monthly*. It was then edited by C.F. Ball, Assistant Keeper of the Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, until he joined the British army; he later died of injuries sustained in World War 1. The final editor was J.W. Besant, Curator of the Botanic Gardens. It ceased publication in 1922. In many ways it was the Irish counterpart of the English publication *The Gardeners' Chronicle* with articles about many aspects of gardening, rockeries, trees and shrubs, roses, herbaceous borders, on fruit and vegetable production and trade information. *Irish Life* was a social and personal type of magazine, published on a monthly basis. It included a gardening section and with *Irish Gardening* carried reports of horticultural shows. Edward Knowldin F.R.H.S. was a frequent contributor to both publications, writing gardening articles, reporting on flowers shows and visits to gardens and nurseries. He was head gardener at Carton Estate, Co. Kildare. He was honorary secretary of the Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland (1908-31) and of the Irish Forestry Society.

Society shows

The Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland (RHSI) held three or four shows a year; other societies in Dublin had one show, usually held in late summer. The Spring Show was usually held in conjunction with the Spring Show of the Royal Dublin Society (RDS). In 1910 Messrs Hogg and Robertson presented a new daffodil seedling *Narcissus* 'Mrs. F.W. Moore' (Ball 1910). An exhibit '*Irish Gardening* educational exhibit' with *Dendrobium, Cattleya, Odontoglossum, Anthurium* and *Gloxinia* was mounted by that publication. Plants were from the stove (tropical) house of Mr. Ernest Bewley, Danum, Rathgar, chairman of the Directors. At the Society's Spring Show in 1915, Captain Riall showed vases of hardy cut flowers with *Magnolia stellata, Rhododendron arboreum, Acacia dealbata* and *Erica arborea*, an indication of the range of shrubs cultivated at Old Conna, Bray, Co. Wicklow.

The 1910 and 1911 Autumn Shows of the RHSI show were held in Lord Iveagh's grounds (now Iveagh Gardens) in St Stephen's Green, Dublin. There were classes for groups and collections of plants, dahlias, begonias, gladioli, sweet pea, fruit and vegetables. There were also competitive classes for forestry, nurseries and plotholders (see below). The shows were social affairs, the Lord Lieutenant and Lady Aberdeen were in attendance, a band played and people strolled in the gardens (Anon. 1911). The correspondent reported that 'the Dublin public are taking more interest in their horticultural society than they have done for some time'. Profits made at the Autumn Show in 1915 were used for the Dublin Fusilier war prisoners and for sending fruit and vegetables to the Fleet (Anon. 1915a).

The RHSI also held a Winter Show with competitions for fruit and vegetables, chrysanthemums and hardy berried plants. Exhibitors came from different parts of the country and displayed apples, pears, grapes, peaches and nectarines and a varied selection of vegetables. In 1907, for instance, Mr John Jameson, St Marnocks, Portmarnock, Co. Dublin, won prizes for chrysanthemums, a 'decorated table', and 18 dishes of apples. The chief prize for fruit had been won by St Marnocks for a second year in a row and the correspondent congratulated the gardener, Mr Mc Kellar. Other competitors entered 12 dishes each of cooking apples and single dishes of apples and pears (Anon. 1907).

Terenure and District Horticultural Society held an annual show. The main competitions were similar to other flower shows, with classes for hardy cut flowers, roses, sweet peas, fruit and vegetables. In 1917 the Show was held under the auspices of the Joint V.A.D. Committee for Ireland, which received the net proceeds (Anon. 1917). In 1919 it was held on 1 August and clashed with a national peace holiday. That

year it was held in Bushy Park, Terenure, and attracted 180 competitors with 618 entries (Knowldin 1919). Sir Frederick Shaw of Bushy Park won many prizes at RHSI shows for vegetables, flowering shrubs and potted plants.

In 1909 the Stillorgan and Foxrock Horticultural Society held a show on 23 July at Stillorgan Convalescent Home. There were 44 classes of entries, cut flowers, fruits, and vegetables (Knowldin 1909).

The tenth event of the Kingstown Horticultural Society was held in 1918 in the Peoples' Gardens, Dún Laoghaire. The Honorary Secretary was Dr Mac Donald, Principal of the Municipal Technical School. Mr F.A. Miller, Windsor, Monkstown, won a challenge cup for roses presented by Mr R. St George Lyon. Most of the challenge cups in the competitions in Dublin were presented by garden owners or nurseries, for example the Lord Ardilaun Challenge Cup for a dahlia competition and Messrs Drummond for a display of 12 annuals at RHSI shows. In the Kingstown Show, Lord Powerscourt won a prize for his sweet peas presented by the Kingstown Picture House (Knowldin 1918).

Dundrum Horticultural Society held its 1919 show in the Carnegie Library, Dundrum (Knowldin 1919). Local competitors included Judge Bird of Churchtown House and Mr F.V. Westby of Roebuck Castle, both of whom also exhibited at RHSI shows. The name Canon Kingsmill Moore of Cedar Mount, Dundrum, occurs in lists of prizewinners in RHSI autumn shows of 1915 and 1917 for hardy ferns and in the Terenure Show of 1919 where he exhibited violas and hybrid tea roses. Kingsmill Moore was later to contribute to the magazine *My Garden* (see E.C. Nelson in this volume).

Allotments

Classes for allotment owners and plotholders as they were also known became a feature of several Flower Shows in the city in 1917 and succeeding years. The Vacant Land Society was founded in London in 1908. It had 60 acres under its control with 500 men and women with plots (Ball 1910a). Three years later a similar society, the Vacant Land Cultivation Society, was formed in Dublin (Anon. 1910). The Society had an address at 20 Kildare Street, Dublin 2. Three parcels of land were found by a committee and divided into allotments. They were worked by 'ordinary city labourers'. And the committee gave them free use of the allotment, tools, and seed to the value of 6d. The allotments were located at the Coombe, on the site of an old brewery (8 plots); at Clontarf (11 plots); and at Pigeon House Fort, 5 acres owned by Dublin Corporation (now Dublin City Council). The Vacant Land Cultivation Society held its first annual general meeting in the Mansion House, Dawson Street, on 11 July 1910. A £50 grant from Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction (DATI) was to pay the salary of a horticultural advisor in the following year. In 1916 the Society asked landowners to give land which would be returned at short notice. An acre would provide eight allotments which would be used to grow vegetables (Anon. 1916). No further information has come to light about this Society.

At the RHSI Autumn Show in 1917 prizes were awarded to allotment holders from Model Farm Allotments, Glasnevin; Comfrey Field Allotments, Glasnevin; Bushy Park, Terenure; Greenmount Allotments, Harolds Cross; and Fairbrother Fields, Donore Avenue (Knowldin 1917). At the 1919 Autumn Show, there were 210 entries from plotholders (Knowldin 1919). On 8 August 1917 Sir T.W. Russell (Vice-President of the DATI), in his address at the Terenure and District Horticultural Society Show spoke of the importance of allotments in the provision of food. In that year the DATI had introduced a food production policy. His name also appeared in lists of prizewinners at RHSI and Terenure shows of the period.

Rathmines Urban District Council gave prizes for its plotholders but the entries were disappointing (Anon. 1917). In 1919 there were nine events for allotment gardeners, with competitors from Bushy Park allotments and Merrion Road plots (Knowldin 1919). The Herald Cup, given by Bray Urban District Council, was won in 1917 and 1918 by Tivoli Allotment Gardens, Kingstown (Dún Laoghaire) (Knowldin 1917; Knowldin 1918). This was a competition for allotments run by a plotholders committee. Over a score of fields and areas of allotments joined the competition. Other competitors were from Herbert Park, Ballsbridge, and Bushy Park, Terenure. Points were awarded according to the code for cottage and allotment gardens issued by the Royal Horticultural Society (London). Knowldin (1918) recalled that he had judged the Bushy Park plots and the secretary of the local plotholders was preparing for a night vigil against raiders.

Nurseries in Dublin 1900-1920

The show reports also listed nurseries (see Table 1). Some exhibited over many years, some less so. Several companies had nurseries in the suburbs and retail outlets in the city centre. They exhibited a wide range of outdoor hardy stock. In 1915 Watson and Sons of Clontarf (later of Killiney) showed hardy flower and alpines, dahlias and bedding roses at the RHSI Autumn Show. The correspondent in *Irish Gardening* (Anon. 1915b) wrote 'for hardy flowers and alpines occupy the foremost place in the mind of the gardening public now'.

NAME OF NURSERY	ADDRESS	PLANTS ON DISPLAY
Bradshaw's	Artane Nurseries	
Browett & Sons	Kingstown (now Dún Laoghaire)	Plants Decorative material
Alex Dickson & Son	Dawson Street, 50 Essex Street, Dundrum, and Oakley Park, Blackrock	Hardy fruit trees Roses
Drummonds and Sons Ltd.		Fruits, flowers and plants
Edmondson Bros	Dame Street	Bulbs and fruit.
Ellis	Rathgar Nurseries and Grafton Street, Dublin	'furnishing plants'
Hogg and Robertson, Holland in Ireland,	Rush, Co. Dublin.	Bulbs, gladioli, flowers
R. Jameson & Sons	Royal Nurseries, Sandymount	Floral designs
Sir J. Mackay	Dublin	
Ernest Mills	Rose Villa Nurseries, Terenure	Roses and tomatoes
C. Ramsay and Son	The Royal Nurseries, Ballsbridge	Fruits, plants and floral designs. Roses, carnations herbaceous phloxes
Rowan and Co.	Capel Street, Dublin.	
W.S. Ryland,	Grove Nursery, Stillorgan	Violas
Wm. Watson and Sons	Clontarf and Killiney	Herbaceous plants, apples, bedding roses, alpines, dahlias

Table 1. List of the horticultural trade who exhibited at horticultural shows in Dublin in the early 20th century.

Trade exhibits were not confined solely to nurseries, some gardening schools also prepared displays. Displays of fruit, vegetables and flowers from the Irish College of Gardening and St Gatiens were exhibited at the annual shows of the Terenure and District Horticultural Society in 1917, 1918 and 1919. An exhibit from the Irish College of Gardening for Women mounted at the Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland's Dublin Show, held in Lord Iveagh's gardens in 1917, was awarded a bronze medal. These schools along

with Hazelbrook Market Gardens, Terenure and School of Market Gardening, Charlemont, Marino were established in the period 1916-1919 to educate women who wished to work in horticulture (Forrest and Ingram 1999).

Irish Gardening also carried short reports of the activities of horticultural trade organisations of the period, namely the Irish Seed and Nursery Trades Association; Dublin Seed and Nursery Employees Association; Irish Gardeners Association, Kingstown gardeners Association, Association of Horticultural Instructors and Ulster Fruit Growers Association. Knowldin commented that a speech would 'repay perusal' the same can be said about the pages of *Irish Gardening*.

References

Anon. (1907) 'Shows Dublin Fruit Show'. *Irish Gardening* **II** : 212.

Anon. (1910) 'Vacant land cultivation'. *Irish Gardening* **V** : 108

Anon. (1911) 'Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland'. *Irish Gardening* **VI** : 143-144.

Anon. (1915) 'Spring Show RHS Ireland April 14 and 15'. *Irish Gardening* **X** : 74-75.

Anon. (1915a) 'Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland Autumn Show'. *Irish Gardening* **X** : 138-140.

Anon. (1915b) 'Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland Autumn Show Dublin August 24th 1915'. *Irish Gardening* **X** : 155.

Anon. (1916)'Allotment gardens for workers'. *Irish Gardening* **XI** : 172-173.

Anon. (1917) 'Terenure and Districts' Show '. *Irish Gardening* **XII** : vi.

Ball, C.F. (1910) 'Current topics'. *Irish Gardening* **V** : 66 - 67.

Ball, C.F. (1910a) 'Current topics'. *Irish Gardening* **V** : 115.

Forrest, M. and Ingram, V. (1999) 'The education of a lady gardener'. *Garden History* 27 (2) 206-218.

Knowldin, E. (1909) 'Current topics'. *Irish Gardening* **IV** : 89.

Knowldin, E. (1917) 'The garden'. *Irish Life* **22** (6) 280 - 281.

Knowldin, E. (1918) 'The garden'. *Irish Life* **26** (6) 231 - 232

Knowldin, E. (1919) 'The garden'. *Irish Life* **30** (2) 67- 68.

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E. CHARLES NELSON

IRISH CONTRIBUTIONS TO MY GARDEN: AN INTIMATE MAGAZINE FOR GARDEN LOVERS

(JANUARY 1934-DECEMBER 1951)

My Garden was owned and edited by Theodore Alfred Stephens and was published in England continuously every month for 17 years. Initially the twelve parts were divided into three annual volumes (four parts per volume), but from volume 22 onwards, six parts formed a volume. The page size was small, 71/4 x 43/4 inches (bound volumes are trimmed to approximately 7 x 45/8 inches), while the relatively large type-size that was usually employed made it easy to read. To begin with, each part comprised 160 pages, but this was reduced especially during the Second World War when paper was scarce. There were advertisements at the front and the back of each issue, and sometimes a few were interspersed with text towards the end. The monthly parts had separate title-pages listing the principal contents, and each volume had cumulative indexes.

'An Italian garden'; a 'Kodak snapshot' from My Garden September 1937

Tigroney, Co. Wicklow: 'The beech hedge that surrounds the garden'; with Miss Winifred Wynne; from My Garden October 1934.

The contents followed a consistent pattern. There was an editorial by Theo Stephens followed by perhaps 15 articles. Snippets of poetry or pertinent quotations often filled spaces that would otherwise have been empty. Occasional articles were illustrated with black-and-white photographs and sometimes line-drawings; some issues contained colour plates, sometimes tipped-in. A few of the contributors were 'regulars': Arthur Tysilio Johnson, of Conwy in north Wales, was probably the most prolific.

As for Irish contributors, Sheila Pim (1909-1995) was the principal author. In the following bio-bibliography, articles by other Irish-based authors are listed, sometimes with a note about the content. It is possible that other Irish authors were included but have not been recognized. Authors' addresses were never given, so their identification depends either on their inclusion in standard biographical sources, or on the content of the articles themselves. A few authors clearly were not based in Ireland, but were occasional visitors; their

Tigroney, Co. Wicklow; from My Garden October 1934

articles are listed when they explicitly relate to Irish gardens.

Irish content of *My Garden*

The first Irish contribution, in the fourth issue (April 1934), was by Mary Harding about whom little is known: the last of her 40 articles was published in 1949, so she was the longest-standing Irish contributor. Notable contributors included Lady Londonderry, the actor Cecil Monson, and the horticulturist and plantsman Dr Keith Lamb, still going strong.

There are also some note-worthy photographs in the early issues - these are listed separately below. One 'Kodak Snapshot' is misleadingly entitled 'An Italian garden' - it shows the Italianate pool-garden on Ilnacullin (Garinish Island) at Glengarriff, Co. Cork. What makes it of unusual interest is the cluttering array of statuary, columns and vases which are around the pool; these are also seen in a photograph looking in the opposite direction that is reproduced in Malins and Bowe (1980). The *My Garden* image must date from the early- to mid-1930s, and shows the pond with clumps of rushes around the edge (Figures 1 & 2). The photographs accompanying Cecil Monson's articles provide glimpses of several significant gardens; the photographs of Winifred Wynne's garden at Tigroney (Figures 3 & 4), Co. Wicklow, are notable.

Ilnacullin, May 1998 (photograph ECN).

References

Malins, E. and Bowe, P., 1980. *Irish gardens and demesnes from 1830*. London: Barrie & Jenkins.

BIO-BIBLIOGRAPHY

BARLEE, Annette

Mrs Barlee lived in south County Dublin (Foxrock and Dundrum) in the 1930s; she grew primroses, advertised them for sale in *My Garden*, and issued at least one catalogue of primroses for sale; *On our hill* (1941: Dundalk; Dundalgan Press) was reviewed in *My Garden* **24** (99): 241 (1942) (a second edition was published in 1949); she wrote children's books including *The bunnies of Bunkham Hall* [1944], *Fairy flittings* [1944], *The magic window* [1944], *Sloopy the sea serpent* [1944], *Toy town* [1944], *Woodland revels* [1944], *The runaway engine* [1945], *The silver dot* [1946], *Mr Owl, house-agent* [1947], *Mr String sees the world* [1947] and *Tales of other lands* [1949]; her husband, John, published *Birds on the wing* (1947).

Double primroses in an Irish garden. **15** (57): 18-20 (September 1938).
Some easily-grown primroses. **16** (62): 195-196 (February 1939).
Fuchsias on our hill. **16** (64): 485-486. (April 1940).
Results from packets of seed of *Primula vulgaris* and *elatior* hybrids, including *P. vulgaris* fl. pl. **19** (75): 293-294 (March 1940).
Irish cottage gardens. **20** (78): 127-129 (June 1940).
Making a primrose garden. **21** (82): 177-181 (October 1940).

EDWARDS, Mary C. (Mrs)

Given references to Kerry in her 1938 article about *Pinguicula* I suggest this author may be the sister of Lady Gordon - hence Mary C. Leeson-Marshall. The family home was Callinafercy House, Milltown, Co. Kerry. She was familiar with Lismore but was not resident in Ireland.

Flowerhill. **6** (21): 83-84 (September 1935) [Miss Ussher's garden, Lismore, Co.Waterford].
Ballyin. **11** (44): 564-565 (August 1937). [Lismore, Co. Waterford; Dean of Waterford's house, subsequently restored by Lady Gordon (Edith Susan Leeson-Marshall; d. 1945), wife of Sir Home Gordon (her garden in Kerry described in *The winds of time*, 1934).]
Pinguiculas. **15** (57): 70-71 (September 1938).

FLEMING, Revd Canon L.R.

Rector of Timoleague. There are advertisements in *My Garden*, e.g. **7** (27): 469, for plants signed 'Fleming, Rectory, Timoleague, Cork'; in **7** (28): 642 the advertisement read 'Mrs. Fleming, Rectory, Timoleague, Cork, has high-class Rock Herbaceous plants ... List.'

Overhanging trees as my wife views them. **1** (2): 191-192 (February 1934).
Excellent herbs. **1** (3): 351-352 (March 1934).
Up the garden walk. **2** (6): 191-192 (June 1934).
The garden as a breakfast adjunct. **2** (8): 589 (August 1934).
My garden stall. **3** (11): 328 (November 1934).
The garden-as a remembrancer. **7** (27): 422 (March 1936).
'So she went into the garden ...'. **8** (30): 228 (June 1936).
The lord of flies. **8** (32): 581-582 (August 1936).
The incomplete gardener. **10** (37): 113-114 (January 1937).
The rectory wall. **10** (38): 159 (February 1937).
Garden garb. **11** (44): 512-513 (August 1937).
- see also LORD, M.T.

HARDING, Mary

Seemingly resident in Kerry, but no information can be traced about her. Her articles are more stories, the principal characters in them being Paddy and Bridgie, and they often refer to primroses.

My Irish garden. **1** (4): 537-539 (April 1934).
My Irish garden. **2** (6): 208-210 (June 1934).
My Irish garden. **2** (7): 406-409 (July 1934).
My Irish garden. **2** (8): 510-512 (August 1934).
My Irish garden. **3** (10): 244-246 (October 1934).
My Irish garden. **3** (12): 495-497 (December 1934).
Mrs Hegarty. **4** (13): 29-30 (January 1935).
My Irish garden 'In the evening and in the morning'. **4** (14): 231-233 (February 1935).
The dawn of summer. **4** (16): 547-548 (April 1935).
My Irish garden. **5** (19): 382-384 (July 1935).
Ranunculus. **5** (20): 588-589 (August 1935).
My Irish garden. Paddy's little home. **6** (24): 528-530 (December 1935).
The golden wedding. **7** (26): 191-193 (February 1936).
My Irish garden. **7** (28): 589-593 (April 1936).
My Irish garden. **10** (37): 41-43 (January 1937) [primroses].
My Irish garden. **10** (38): 191-193 (February 1937).
My Irish garden. **12** (46): 232-233 (October 1937).
My Irish garden. New neighbours. **13** (52): 497-499 (April 1938).
My Irish garden. **13** (49): 45-46 (January 1938).
My Irish garden. **15** (60): 521-523 (December 1938).
My Irish garden. **21** (77): 45-47 (May 1940).
My Irish garden. **22** (86): 171-172 (February 1941).

My Irish garden. **23** (96): 471-472 (December 1941).
My Irish garden. **27** (116): 113-115 (August 1943).
My Irish garden. **28** (121): 63-64 (January 1944).
My Irish garden. **28** (124): 339-341 (April 1944).
My Irish garden. Looking ahead to winter. **28** (126): 527-528 (June 1944).
My Irish garden. **31** (139): 63-64 (July 1945).
My Irish garden. **33** (155): 508-509 (November 1946).
My Irish garden. **33** (154): 345-347 (October 1946). [ivy].
My Irish garden. **33** (155): 508-509 (November 1946) [Anthemis 'Grallagh Gold'].
My Irish garden. **33** (156): 637-638 (December 1946) [holly].
My Irish garden. **34** (159): 321-322 (March 1947) [primroses].
My Irish garden. **34** (160): 407-408 (April 1947) [potatoes].
My Irish garden. **35** (166): 407-408 (October 1947).
My Irish garden. **36** (172): 412-414 (April 1948).
My Irish garden. **37** (176): 177-178 (August 1948).
My Irish garden. **39** (190): 341-342 (October 1949) [Anthemis 'Grallagh Glory'].
My Irish garden. **39** (191): 519-520 (November 1949).

HOLMPATRICK, Lady

Lady Edina Dorothy Hope Conyngham (18 October 1888-13 April 1964); married, and divorced, Sir Thomas Ainsworth; then married (1925) Hans Wellesley Hamilton, 2nd Baron Holmpatrick (1886-1942); lived at Abbotstown House, Castleknock, Dublin; in the 1930s she presented the Holmpatrick Cup, as a fundraising golf trophy, to the National Council for the Blind of Ireland; the name 'Lady Holmpatrick' occurs in James Joyce's novel *Finnegans Wake* (1939): '(One still hears that pebble crusted laughta, japijap cheerycherrily, among the roadside tree the lady Holmpatrick planted and still one feels the amossive silence of the cladstone allegibelling: Ive mies outs ide Bourn.)'

An Irish wild garden. **3** (12): 500-504 (June 1934) [contains photographs].

HORNIDGE, E.

Not identified; perhaps a Hornidge of Ballymore-Eustace, Co. Kildare?

In Erin where the gentian grows. **13** (49): 97-99 (January 1938) [The Burren].

JARVIS, C. S. (Major)

Major Claude Scudamore Jarvis CMG, OBE (1879-1952); he evidently served for a time with the British army in Ireland; wrote many articles for My Garden but only one with slight Irish content.

Gardens I have made. 1 - Ireland and Dorset. **32** (145): 19-24 (June 1946).

LAMB, Keith

Dr J.G.D. Lamb, horticulturist and plantsman, now living at Woodfield, Clara, Co. Offaly; co-author of *A history of gardening in Ireland* (1995).

Gardening under beech trees. **30** (138): 523-524 (June 1945).
Trough gardening. **31** (142): 355-358 (October 1945).
On old gardening books. **31** (143): 459-462 (November 1945).
Plants in disguise. **32** (147): 263-266 (March 1946).
Scented alpines. **34** (157): 68-70 (January 1947).
Rare relations. **35** (166): 421-423 (October 1947).
Lost treasures. **37** (177): 226-228 (September 1948).

LONDONDERRY, Marchioness

Lady Londonderry, Edith Helen Vane-Tempest-Stewart (née Chaplin) (3 December 1879-23 April 1959), wife of 7th Marquess of Londonderry; created garden at Mount Stewart, near Newtownards, Co. Down.

Christmas in the garden. **19** (74): 171-177 (February 1940) [photograph on p. 170].
Mount Stewart in war-time. **22** (87): 227-234 (March 1941).
To kinsman across the sea. **23** (94): 271-274 (October 1941).
Rhododendrons at Mount Stewart, Newtownards. **28** (124): 313-316 (April 1944).

LONGFIELD, L. (Major)

Not identified. Creagh Castle is at Doneraile Co, Cork.

Creagh Castle. **4** (16): 516-323 (April 1935) [includes 4 photographs; refers to Mrs Bucknall and her strain of anemones].

LORD, Martin T. (Revd)

Rector of Timoleague, succeeding Canon L.R. Fleming (see above) in 1943.

The rectory garden. **32** (146): 128-129 [about Timoleague rectory].

McGEE, S. T.

Not identified.
The shamrock. **7** (28): 549 (April 1936).

MONSON, Cecil Geoffrey

Actor, chiefly associated with the Gate Theatre, Dublin; died 1974; keen primrose grower who raised new cultivars including 'Doctor Molly'; also wrote under *nom-de-plume* 'C. S. Marsh' (but not in *My Garden*); of Annaghloy, Boyle, Co. Roscommon; son of Frederick John Monson, Castle Moate, Cloughran, Co. Dublin.

Old-fashioned flowers. **2** (6): 246-247 (June 1934).
Brackenstown Gardens. 2 (8): 502-505 (August 1934) [Swords, Co. Dublin, home of Mrs Page Croft; with photographs].
Tigroney, Avoca, Co. Wicklow. **3** (10): 192-197 (October 1934) [Miss Winifred Wynne's garden; with photographs].
The Pakenham Hall Gardens Pakenham Hall [Tullynally], Castlepollard, Co. Westmeath. **3** (11): 371-374 (November 1934) [photograph of hedges].
The gardens at Ballawley Park, Dundrum, Co. Dublin. **4** (15): 356-360 (March 1935) [Mr & Mrs Louis Smith; includes two photographs].
A garden that I know of. **5** (17): 43-44 (May 1935).
Sutton House, Sutton, Co. Dublin. **5** (18): 260-262 (June 1935) [Mrs Jameson].
In search of something. **5** (19): 406-408 (July 1935) [Connemara; photograph of Roundstone harbour].
Three gardens. **6** (21): 63-65 (September 1935) [London gardens].
A matter of treatment. **6** (22): 190-192 (October 1935) [gentians].
A garden with a sense of humour. A garden that believes. **10** (40): 492-495 (April 1937) [Montalto, Co. Down; Lady Clanwilliam's design].
A palace garden. **15** (57): 45-47 (September 1938) [Palace of San Anton, Valetta, Malta].

MOORE, Canon H. Kingsmill

Revd Dr Henry Kingsmill Moore FLS; Principal, Church of Ireland Training College (now College of Education), Dublin; educationalist; fern enthusiast; published *Joys of the garden, month by month* (Dublin & Cork, 1936) from which 'Damp-proof method of striking chrysanthemums' was reprinted in *My Garden* **25** (108) (December 1942); wrote articles on ferns for *British fern gazette*, *Irish gardening*, and *Bulletin of the Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland*.

The charm of our native ferns. **19** (74): 192-194 (February 1940).
Native ferns. **19** (75): 253-255 (March 1940).
Ferns some beautiful varieties. **19** (76): 432-434 (April 1940).
Tender shrubs and the great frost. **21** (77): 97 (May 1940).
Isles of the Saints. The Aran Islands, Co. Galway. **22** (83): 260-262 (November 1940).
Abelia chinensis and Eupatorium. **22** (86): 184-185 (February 1941) [letters to the editor].
The winter aconite. **23** (91): 13-14 (July 1941).

O'HORAN, Eily (fl 1939-1949)

Author; also contributed to *Chamber's Journal* (e.g. December 1939).

Poor Sarah's garden. **36** (170): 179-182 (February 1948) [Clonmacnois].
The peach. **37** (175): 67-72 (July 1948) [The Grange, Coole].
Ripe gooseberries. **39** (188): 135-138 (August 1949).

O'HORAN, Padraig (*fl* 1945-1955)

Poet, his contributions all being poetry: also contributed to *Argosy* (1949-1955); *Roadways of the heart* (London, 1943); *Bright-winged piper* (London, 1945).

Ballerina. **35** (163): 70 (July 1947).
The little rains. **35** (165): 247 (September 1947)
When morning lifts her golden throat. **35** (November 167): 483
The blithe April bough. **36** (172): 358 (April 1948)
Early summer morning. **37** (175): 26 (July 1948).
Wind voices. **40** (193): 86 (January 1950).
Quiet green world. **40** (197): 496 (May 1950).
The rain's bright silver imp. **41** (201): 282 (September 1950).

PACK-BERESFORD, Hugh D.

Of Dublin; the Pack-Beresford family lived at Fenagh House, Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow, and Tansy, Howth, Co. Dublin; he refers to the Howth garden.

Phygelius capensis. **28** (124): 368 (April 1944) [letters to the editor].
Treatment of cactus. **30** (135): 268 (March 1945) [letters to the editor].

PAGE, John Courtney

Secretary, National Rose Society.
The late Samuel McGredy. An appreciation. **4** (13): 86-87 (January 1935).

RICHARDSON, Helen Katherine (Mrs)

Daffodil breeder; née Shekelton (1903-11 December 1978); 'Mr. Lionel Richardson, who delegated the task of writing this article to his wife ...'*; after his death continued breeding daffodils.

Daffodils. **8** (32): 539*-544 (August 1936) [photographs 'Kenmare' and 'Kilsheehan'].
New daffodils. **30** (135): 229-230, 233-238 (March 1945).
New daffodils. **36** (117): 293-297 (March 1948).
Daffodils, new and old. **40** (195): 247-254 (March 1950).

SLINGER, Leslie Snowdon

Nurseryman (6 November 1907-19 November 1974); son of William Slinger; continued father's enterprise, Slieve Donard Nursery, Newcastle (County Down); introduced many new plants; bred shrubs, especially *Escallonia*.

The hardiness of shrubs. **15** (58): 216-217 (October 1938).
A new shrub. **16** (61): 42-43 (January 1939).
The Eucryphias. **17** (68): 459-462 (August 1939).
Pernettya mucronata. **25** (103): 23-25 (July 1942) [mentions 'Bell's Seedling'].
Ceanothus austromontanus. **25** (105): 209-211 (September 1942).

SLINGER, William

Nurseryman; born Yorkshire (1878); died Newcastle, Co. Down (19 April 1961); proprietor of the Slieve Donard Nursery; had a great interest in roses; attended first show in 1903, staging 'Ulster' (awarded premier bloom in nurserymen category).

Who wants the old roses? **29** (130): 339-343 (October 1944).
Who wants the old roses? - a final word. **30** (135): 267 (March 1945) [letters to the editor].

STEVENS, K. Claire

Not identified.

The horse chestnut. **9** (34): 186 (October 1936).

STRONG, L.A.G.

Leonard Alfred George Strong (1896-1958) was a novelist, journalist and poet; born in Plymouth of a half-Irish father and Irish mother.

The fuchsia hedge. **16** (62): 61-66 (February 1939).

WEST, Katherine

Not identified.
Maria Edgeworth on child gardeners. **38** (186): 582-586 (June 1949).

Photographs

Castlewellan: *Davidia*. **13** (52): 516 (April 1938).

Echium pininana in Donegal. **16** (63): 368 (March 1940).

Headfort, summer borders. **13** (49): 66 (January 1938).

'An Italian garden' [Ilnacullin]. **12** (45): 51 (September 1937).

Mount Stewart. **14** (53): 64 (May 1938); 17 (67): 373 (July 1940).

National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin **16** (63): 342 (March 1940).

Tippitiwitchet Cottage, Hall Road, Outwell, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, PE14 8PE, UK.

JOSEPH KENNEDY

REMINISCENCES OF AN IRISH PRIMROSE BREEDER

THE 'Little Old Primrose Ladies' of Ireland are generally given credit for the raising and maintaining of the old cultivars and there is certainly truth in this. One lovely lady who fitted into that category for me was Mrs Holmes of Knockmoyle Lodge near Omagh. I met her in 1981 when she told me that she had been collecting old primroses for more than fifty years, as had her mother-in-law for fifty years previous to that. We had proper afternoon tea and then a walk around her beautiful garden. Tucked away in every nook were little gems, not just old primroses but old plants of every kind and each had a connection to some old friend of bygone days. This to me was real gardening. Mrs Holmes was over ninety years old at that time but earlier she had a little 'back garden nursery' where she sold extra plants from her garden. She showed me her primrose list with all the old varieties on it priced at sixpence and ninepence each. This was how the old types were handed down and it made sense to only divide the vigorous kinds for sale.

During the Second World War my mother used to drive around to all her friends in a pony and trap bringing lots of bits of plants as gifts and bringing home lots of other bits in return. I was a child then and always went with her, sometimes as far as thirty miles or more. She was a farmer's wife in Co. Carlow and loved her garden. She gave me a little patch to grow things in and I remember searching a wood on the farm to find the pink version of the wild primrose for my plot. I did not know that those were quite uncommon and have never seen any since.

There were no garden centres then and very few proper nurseries. There were 'back garden nurseries' like that of Mrs Holmes. I have catalogues of a wide selection of primroses from Mrs Emmerson of Limavady and I am sure that there must have been other small nurseries all over Ireland. Even the big nurseries were very different then from the garden centres of today in that they grew their own plants. I remember spending a memorable afternoon forty years ago with Harry Bryce, who was the head propagator at the famous Slieve Donard nursery, and being shown 'behind the scenes' work there. Years later I was to be part of a great television programme about plant breeders, presented by Charles Nelson for RTE, in which Harry Bryce featured. It was called 'A Growing Obsession' and was co-produced by Carmel Duignan. Later Harry was given honorary membership of the Irish Garden Plant Society.

Dr Molly Sanderson of Ballymoney, Co. Antrim, was greatly interested in primroses and grew a wide variety of them. She used to visit my garden in Ballycastle in the early 1980s to drool over my primulas. I had more than one hundred different species and hybrids growing at the time. She did advise me to enjoy

them, as a time would come when they would no longer be happy with me. This happened in her own garden at Ishlan and later in my own. A build-up of toxins in the soil eventually makes it unpleasant for primroses. Rather than see them unhappy I stopped growing them in the soil and took to growing them in fresh soil in pots. I later moved to a new garden. Molly and her husband Noel used to drive in the Circuit of Ireland Car Rally and she continued to drive in that fashion afterwards. So it was that her friends, in a discreet conspiracy, arranged that I should drive them and her to all meetings and functions in her later years. Cecil Monson named one of his hybrids 'Dr Molly' for her. She introduced me to the American Primrose Society and there I found amazing enthusiasm, particularly in the Pacific Northwest. This enthusiasm stemmed from the work done by Florence Bellis in the 1930s. It would be strange not to mention Florence when primrose breeding is written about as she did such good work. She trained as a concert pianist in the 1920s but because of the Great Depression she became homeless and almost destitute. She was allowed to move into a leaky old barn in an orchard in Oregon. There was no furniture or light, just orange boxes and straw, but she brought her two pianos. She sent to Sutton's Seeds in England for primrose seeds and sold the seedlings. She also started to hand pollinate some of them to get better colours. She introduced other strains into her programme and had fantastic success. She wrote very flowery descriptions of these and sold the seeds far and wide. This was the start of the famous Barnhaven primroses. Later Florence wrote a book called *Gardening and beyond*, published by David and Charles, expounding her philosophy on gardening and life and primroses. I did correspond with her in her later years and she was well versed in Irish primroses.

Florence Bellis had a considerable influence on me when I started breeding primroses in the 1970s. I used some of her strains and spent several years seeing 'what would happen if'. My interest spread to the beautiful Asiatic primulas and to the European auricula types. Thousands of seedlings were produced each year and it was very exciting to look forward to new hybrids flowering for the first time. I never sold plants as I didn't want the hassle involved and probably 95 percent or more wound up on the compost heap. The Asiatic petiolarid types were particularly beautiful and I produced some really wonderful hybrids. The Alpine Garden Society in Belfast and in Dublin asked if I would put on a display of primulas at their shows. I did this for many years and they generated a lot of interest. The National Botanic Gardens in Dublin also put on some terrific displays of alpines at those shows. It always struck me as a 'little bit Irish' that either one of us might win a gold award or a silver award each year as these displays were scheduled as non-competitive.

I eventually gave up breeding both the Asiatic and the European types as they proved to be too hard to keep going longer than two or three years. During those years I had been giving talks on primulas all around the country and had asked people if they knew of any old primroses that, maybe, their parents or grandparents grew and if they could get me a 'wee piece'. I got lots of these and decided that I would concentrate on breeding from these very old types to incorporate longevity and hardiness into my hybrids. I was not interested in breeding primroses for the bedding plant trade - the continental breeders have done wonders with those in recent years. I thought that perhaps new strains of the old Irish primroses would be interesting. So in recent years I have concentrated on new strains of the dark-leaved types, also small mat-forming stoloniferous types, better Jack-in-the-greens and hose-in-hose and anything worthwhile that arises. All of these stem from the old stock that I picked up all over Ireland. I was never keen to name plants although I did name a couple early on, a blue double 'Glenshesk' and a wine single 'Knocklayd'. Later I named 'Maisie Michael' and 'Dark Rosaleen' after friends. I feel that a plant should be considerably better, considerably different and have longevity before it merits a new name. I have some now that should merit a name and to be 'released' to the public. I am not sure exactly how best to do this. I do know that breeding is my only interest and that I prize my isolation greatly. I have just turned seventy, but luckily have very good health so I intend to breathe and to breed primulas for as long as I can.

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THE Irish Garden Plant Society was formed in 1981 to assist in the conservation of garden plants, especially those raised in Ireland. It also takes an interest in other aspects of the preservation of Ireland's garden heritage.

This journal is devoted to papers ion the history of Irish garden plants and gardens, the cultivation of plants in Ireland, the taxonomy of garden plants and reports of work carried out by the Society and its individual members.

The editorial committee invites contributions from members of the Society and others. Please contact the editors for a style sheet to assist you in preparing your paper and then submit manuscripts on disc or typed on A4 sheets, double spaced and on one side of the sheet only, to the Editors Moorea, Irish Garden Plant Society, c/o National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin 9 Ireland.

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