

BULLETIN

of the

AMERICAN ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY

Vol. 8

July - August, 1950

No. 4

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Dorothy Ebel Hansell, Editor

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THOSE OTHER DAYS

CLARA W. REGAN, BUTTE, MONTANA

IT is no uncommon trait in human nature to think warmly of the old days that have departed and speak disparagingly of those of the present. This is no less true of rock gardeners than persons in other activities of life. However it is a fact that in the early "thirties" more unusual, rare and interesting plants were offered the rock plant connoisseur than have been seen since those halcyon days. I still have in my possession a highly cherished hand-written list wherein such gems as *Campanula zoysii*, *C. raineri* and *C. waldsteiniana* were offered at very modest prices. Where can you buy them today at any price? Valuable saxifrages, brilliant primulas and species of *Dianthus*, little known and almost unheard of today, were quite common on lists of both American and Canadian rock plant specialists. The seed lists of European growers fairly bulged with offerings of the finest and most intriguing of alpine gems from Europe and Asia. It was only a question, when making out lists for additions to the rock garden, as to how long your strength and money were going to last.

There is one bright spot. We now have more of our own particular gems from mountain and desert than were seen twenty years ago. American gardeners have at last awakened to the beauty of our own flora and perceived its adaptability to the ordinary usages of culture in the garden and rock garden.

Other heartening signs are the spring catalogs. Looking through them I seem to notice a definite trend toward bringing back some of the before-the-war-years plants and mention of these brought up nostalgic memories of some delightful subjects—and some I would just as soon forget—with which I had experimented in that happy era.

I was fortunate enough in those days to engage in a seed exchange with the late Mr. F. Sundermann, of Bavaria, who sent me, most generously, seeds of many rare and unusual species. I was addicted to taking fliers from the seed list also, a pure gamble, hoping for something good, away from the ordinary run of standardized plants. My daring was oftentimes rewarded by an alpine gem; other times with a small horror that lived only to the day of its first blooming. Such was the story of *Arabis rosea* — as tight a rosette of flat velvety leaves as ever embellished the slopes of a rock garden or raised heavenly hopes in the heart of its owner. The inflorescence, alas, was a small bunch of palish magenta stars raised as flauntingly on a stiff six-inch stem as if it were something good and beautiful.

Alyssum idaeum was always found in all catalogs; and the harsh silvery leaves, covered with little nosegays of small mustard-flowers, made engaging mounds in many a rock garden. It scarcely seemed a cousin to the rampant Basket-of-Gold. (If you want something new in this relationship, there is now on the market seed of a hybrid with flowers of "old ivory", called *Alyssum saxatile* Dudley Neville.)

A. serpyllifolium, described by its name, was another wee charmer in this family and happily is still to be found in catalogs and in gardens. The one I liked best among the small fry was *A. montanum*, the roundish beaten-silver leaves being so very beautiful, and the whole aspect of the plant reminding me of an old gnarled and very dwarf shrub, which it really was. It was only four inches high, quite flat-topped, and covered at blooming time with large lemon flowers.

I had so many of these plants the year they bloomed, that the garden never was more gay and brilliant than with the lemon-over-silver effect mixed in with the ordinary blues and rose colors of other spring-blooming plants. Unfortunately, they either were biennial, a fault often found among the crucifers, or they exhausted themselves by an over-production of bloom, for they all died after flowering. Emboldened by the beauties of the race, I got a packet of *A. creticum*, hoping for another silvered gem. This was as ill-favored as the others were beautiful and, in short, was the story of *Arabis rosea* done in acid yellow. This year I have one named *A. bornmuelleri* which, from the long, lax, pubescent leaves, may be one of the larger types.

One of the most remarkable oddities ever to come out of a seed packet had me at first completely baffled. The name, in a stiff Teutonic hand, could not be unravelled when held at any angle or when squinted at through half-closed eyes in a determined effort at concentration. I then took Correvon's ROCK GARDEN AND ALPINE PLANTS, page by page, and when I got to "J" struck paydirt. There it was "*Janthe bugulifolia*, see *Celsia*." Seeing *Celsia*, I found it was a *Verbascum*, and the latter is a mullein in any language. The plant, when it grew to blooming age, produced flowers which bore out the slightly menacing, to me, implication of its name, for they were an evil blending of greenish-bluish-purple mixed with a metallic yellowish bronze. After an experience with *Celsia roripifolia*, I gave up mulleins for the rock garden.

Erysimum kotschyianum was a great triumph. True wallflower leaves, huddled on the ground, became a background in late spring for relatively large orange-yellow clusters of blooms, a fine little scree or crevice plant from the Orient. At the same time, I experimented with a relative from Colorado which gave round heads of brilliant red-purple, a really beautiful color, on stiff three-inch stems. Mr. Sundermann wrote that the seed of this plant had been sent to him twenty years before by the botanist Purpus. It is a biennial, or was for me, but *E. kotschyianum* lived for years. I now have seed of both and hope to see their gay blossoms two springs from now.

Ranunculus rutaefolius was a white blossoming buttercup with long deeply-cut leaves, not too unlike a fern leaf. It had dim-white flowers of thin texture and was not very beautiful nor a great success. It was just interesting to see that kind of buttercup.

Some people like *Inula acaulis* but it was never a favorite with me. A coarse huddle of leaves surmounted by coarse, small sunflowers is not my idea of a choice rock garden plant. It had the annoying habit of so many composites of developing fine full ray flowers on one side of the disk, which dwindled to nothing on the offside. In comparison to our own high-alpine, dwarf "sunflower", *Rydbergia grandiflora*, it is a dowdy weed.

Two rock plants from the mountains of Asia Minor are in plant lists once more. One of them, *Saponaria pulvinaris*, is as fine and dainty as the common *S. ocymoides* is large and rampant. The tiny, needle-like foliage and the small wine-colored flowers, that form a wreath around the edge of the mat, can best be appraised and admired from a kneeling position. It is, indeed, the very essence of what we want most in a high alpine. The other plant, *Dracocephalum botryoides*,

belongs to the Dragon's Heads and is a recumbent cushion of some six or eight inches. Its leaves are its only fortune, for the dull lavender-pink clusters of small flowers in no way match up to the beautiful, oak-like foliage, one-half inch long, which is covered with a down, so fine and soft that the whole mat has the appearance of rich turquoise velvet. It does not take on this appearance, unless planted in a sunny, dry place. Both plants are very hardy and long-lived.

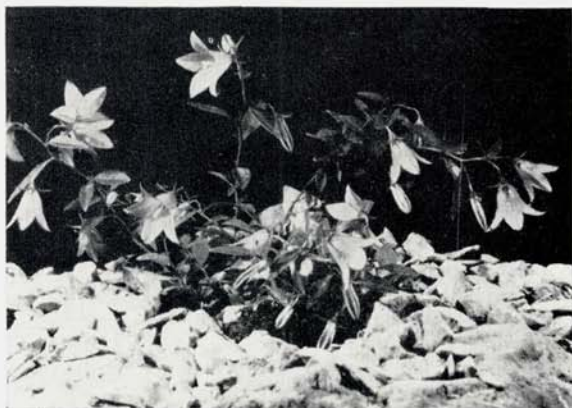
My very best and most surprising success came from the family of *Ononis*, the Rest-Harrows, shrubs of southern Europe - countries that border the Mediterranean Sea, where the sun shines warmly, and those to the east in Asia and in northern Africa. Certainly not good subjects for a garden on a Montana mountain, one would think. In this case, my brashness in trying to grow one of them was only equalled by my ignorance.

The species I elected to try was the baby of the family, *Ononis cenisia*, and, as Mr. Corveon said of it, "A marvel for the sunny rockery." From a central root-stock frail branches spread out like the spokes of a wheel, quite prostrate, set with "silver-grey trefoils" and at the end of each branchlet were lovely, small sweetpeas of rose and pink, each on its own short stem. They grew only at the end so that the effect was that of a waxy, pink chaplet laid upon the brown earth. I do not remember any particular difficulty in raising the three plants I had and the winter must have been one of particular beneficence, for their only protection was the leaf mulch I usually put on in autumn. Grave fears as to the hardiness of the species has been expressed by several English writers. The plants died the year after blooming but it was a beautiful experience to have had a thing so lovely even for so short a time.

**LOW-GROWING
HYBRID
CAMPANULAS**

ROBERT M. SENIOR,
CINCINNATI, OHIO

Campanula wockei



THERE are probably over three hundred species of *Campanula* growing in the northern hemisphere. Some bear wide open, saucer-shaped flowers, some are bell-shaped, others have orifices that are almost closed.

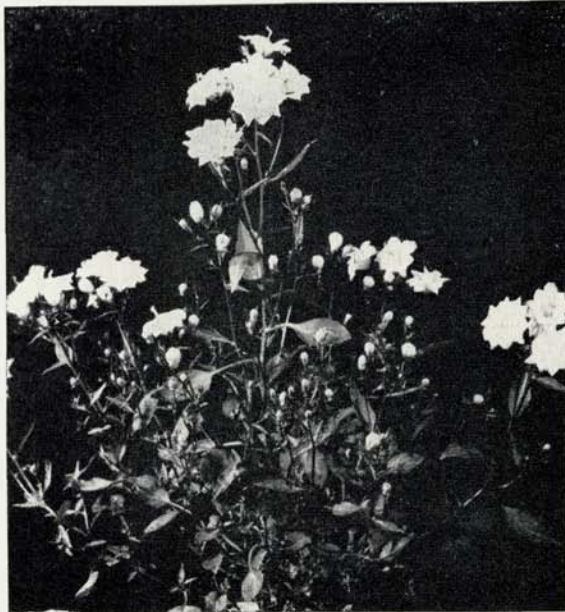
In addition to these, a large number of hybrids have been developed. Of these, probably not over two dozen have the outstanding qualities that one would expect to find in a hybrid, such as greater hardiness than either parent, more prolific bloom, or some other characteristic that lends distinction to the plant. As an example, take that charming hybrid, *C. haylodgensis semi-plena*, about five inches high, a cross between *cochlearifolia* and *turbinata*. The wide open violet flowers are semi-double and bear no marked resemblance to either parent. With me, it seems to be longer lived than *cochlearifolia*. Unfortunately, it bears no seed, so plants must be purchased.

In mentioning *C. haylodgensis*, I am reminded that the leaves have a slightly golden hue. For some reason unknown to me, I find that hybrid campanulas frequently possess this characteristic, so that when I see a campanula with leaves showing this color, I immediately suspect some hybrid strain. Indeed, I have frequently found that cotyledons of these hybrids have a distinctly yellowish cast, and sometimes when they are markedly yellow, they die before sending out any true leaves. I even have a hybrid where part of the leaf is almost white and part green, although neither of the parents had this characteristic.

Many of the hybrid campanulas bear no seeds, and among these I might mention *wockei* and *warleyensis*. Possibly if these were treated with colchicine, a change of chromosomes might result in the development of seeds.

When we read the catalogues of nurserymen, with a glowing description of some plant, we are apt to overlook the possibility that it might not thrive in our climate. This is also true of many campanulas. In the Ohio Valley, where we often have hot dry summers, many campanulas perish without considerable coddling, such as protection from the midday sun, inserting them in a cool crevice, and frequent watering. For example, *C. wockei*, the offspring of *waldsteiniana* and *tommasiniana*, is a delightful little plant, which the English nurseryman, Clarence Elliott, described as "a shower of wide open bells on four-inch stems". Although the plant may thrive in a climate where there is sufficient moisture in the summer air, in this section, even in a partly shaded scree, it generally has a somewhat bedraggled appearance at the end of the summer. Of course, in an alpine house or in a shaded coldframe, where the plants can be carefully tended, *wockei*, as well as practically all of the hybrids mentioned, should display their charms most effectively.

C. pulloides, a cross between *pulla* and *turbinata*, is an example of an offspring that, with me, is much hardier than *pulla* and, to my mind, even more attractive. It is less than four inches high, has somewhat drooping light purple flowers that are larger than those of *pulla*, and seems to have a greater tolerance for limestone soil than *pulla* has. This plant, like so many of these low-growing campanulas, seems to prefer a partly shaded position in the rock garden.

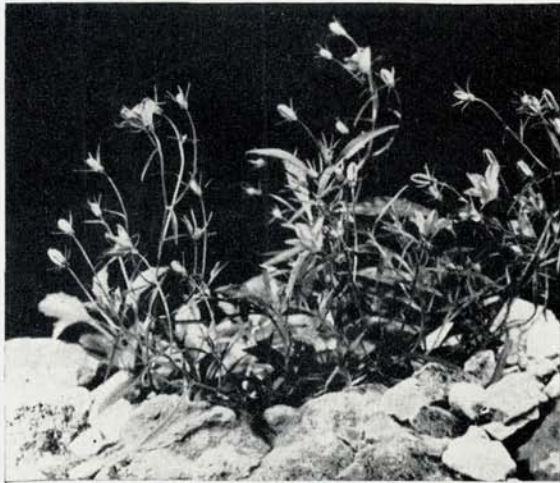


One of my favorite rock plants is *C. stansfieldi*, probably a cross between *carpatica* and *tommasiniana*. One authority describes it as "stems rising from graceful mats of foliage, and each carrying a single drooping wide-mouthed violet bell." Farer called it "a solid little deciduous bush." Though I understand it occasionally bears a few seeds, my plants have never done so.

Campanula warleyensis
alba semi-plena

Campanula kewensis

C. pseudo-raineri, a cross between *turbinata* and *raineri*, has been described by the English nurseryman, Ingwerson, as "wide silver-shaped flowers on short stems, over tufts of pretty, hairy leaves." It is a plant that is about three inches high. This is a hybrid that develops seed. My original plants were raised from seed secured from an English nurseryman.



However, I understand that plants can now be purchased in this country.

C. Fanny Senior, a *fragilis* hybrid, develops numerous decumbent stems, bearing scores of violet flowers. However, it bears no seed. Although it is not reliably hardy in this section of the country, it seems to endure summer heat much better than its parent. In the northwestern coastal region, where there is more moisture in the air and the summer nights are reasonably cool, I understand it thrives extremely well.

C. kewensis, a cross between *excisa* and *arvatica*, seems to have a fairly strong constitution. With me, it lived several years in a crevice with an eastern exposure. It is a tiny plant less than four inches high, with medium-sized, funnel-shaped, bluish-purple flowers terminating the thin wiry stems.

C. warleyensis originated many years ago in the garden of Miss Willmott, where it sprang up as a natural hybrid. Miss Willmott stated that it grew between plants of *rotundifolia* and *fragilis*. My plant has long since departed, but I had it for several years, and it was a delightful sight with masses of semi-double, wide-mouthed flowers.

C. halli is a pure white campanula about three inches high, and is probably a cross between *cochlearifolia alba* and *portenschlagiana (muralis)*. If it likes you, it will send out underground runners, and thus slowly increase in girth. Like its parents, it seems to do best in a crevice or rock wall, possibly with an eastern exposure.

I must mention one English hybrid (of which I have only seen pictures) which has been highly praised. This is *C. rotarvatica*, which, a few years ago, received an Award of Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. It is a cross between *rotundifolia* and *arvatica*, is about three inches high and, judging from the picture and description, is smothered with broadly funnel-shaped, somewhat lavender-colored flowers. Since this plant has not yet been seen in this country, some nurseryman should surely import it.

With the exception of *rotarvatica*, I have raised at some time or other all the plants above mentioned and I can confidently assert, there is not one that, if grown successfully, would not grace any rock garden.

ROCK GARDEN PENSTEMONS

Some New, Some Old

AMEL F. PRIEST, PERU, IOWA

IN a recent issue of the BULLETIN, Dr. Carl Worth described some of the miniature shrubby penstemons which are gradually becoming available to gardeners. In addition, there are a number of others that are little known. Not all of them belong to the shrubby group, however, as several of the herbaceous members add charm and variety to the miniatures.

The diversity that is to be found among these dwarfs of the penstemon family is simply amazing. In foliage and manner of growth, some are so utterly different in appearance that it would seem almost impossible for them to be even remotely related. Yet when blooming time rolls around, all produce, each in its own individual pattern, the trumpet-shaped corollas followed by the sharp pointed seed pods which distinguish and set apart this family of plants from all others.

Most of the dwarfs have quite ornamental foliage and make attractive clumps or mats. Especially pleasing in this category is *P. linarioides coloradoensis*, already mentioned by Dr. Worth. In the garden here, the silvery grey leaves remain fresh all summer and even through the winter. The branches tumble along the ground or over rocks in a most satisfying manner.

Another very interesting little shrublet, new to gardens, is *P. thompsonae*. The tiny grey spatulate leaves, almost white in appearance, are more numerous towards the ends of the woody twigs and at first glance make one think of *Sedum*. The plants, little over an inch in height and as much as six inches across, produce their violet flowers on tiny erect spikelets. Coming to us from the wind-swept deserts of northcentral Nevada, the plants are hardy and unmindful of heat and drought.

For those who like to experiment with plants which try their gardening ability, *P. acaulis* issues a challenge. At least, all reports I have had were that it was miffy and temperamental, pining homesickly for its desert home. Several plants were scattered among members of the Society last August and perhaps some one may be able to wean it from the sand and sage it loves and misses so much. At home in the foothills of the Uinta Mountain Range in Utah, the little clusters of *acaulis* dot the landscape midst the sage in company with tiny phloxes and other tuffet forming plants. *Acaulis* resembles a tiny phlox, with filiform leaves less than one-half inch in clusters and each crown closely knit with the others to form a dense compact mat, varying in size with age of the plant. Some tuffets were observed as much as eight or ten inches across, but mostly they were two to four inches in width. *Acaulis* means stemless and that certainly is descriptive of this plant, for the seed pods were completely buried down in the crowns beneath the leaves and I had to search and scratch diligently to find them. This would indicate but a single blossom in a place, instead of a spike, but as there are many crowns in one of the tuffets, there could be several of the lonesome blue bells sitting gaily atop the green pancakes of foliage. It is probably not one of the exceptionally showy species but interesting and worthy of a trial in our gardens.

Penstemon exilifolius is another of those cushion makers but, unlike *P. acaulis*, it bears its white blossoms erect on slender airy spikes. It makes neat bright green mounds with its short grassy leaves, and reminds one of the cushion *Dianthus*. *Exilifolius* is common on the plains around Laramie, Wyoming, and new to gardeners - at least I have never heard of it in cultivation.

Penstemon laricifolius, of which *P. exilifolius* is a subspecies, replaces *exilifolius* farther west. The two are much alike in appearance, habit of growth and choice of situation, but *laricifolius* bears pink or lavender flowers instead of

white. The name *laricifolius* means leaves like a larch, while *exilifolius* means fine-leaved. In this respect, they differ from all other species.

Penstemon harbouri is a true alpine, at home on the rock screes above timberline where eternal snow is never far distant. Not a single plant was observed except on the rock slides where it grew abundantly. The partially decumbent stems were clothed with small round crinkley leaves which had already, in early September, turned a pretty red-purple; even the seed pods and stems were red. After quite a search one blossom was finally discovered and proved to be a clear lavender. The flowering stems were borne erect six inches or less, even though the foliage mat was at some times prostrate.

What a contrast, as one descends from the heights of Mt. McClellan in the Colorado Rockies, the home of *P. harbouri*, to seek out *P. paysoniorum* where it grows on the desert plains of Wyoming. *P. paysoniorum* belongs to the Glabri group of the family, but is one of the dwarfs attaining only six inches or less in the dry sandy wash, where it is found growing. Whether it will retain its dwarf stature in our gardens will have to be proven, as it is entirely new to cultivation. It bears typical Glabri leaves, dark green linear or linear-lanceolate in rosettes close to the ground. The short stocky stems were crowded with seed pods, indicative of great floriferousness. On one plant the first bloom spike was evidently cropped by a browsing steer, but the plant had thrown a second spike which was only budded and not opened. Judging from that, the flowers will be a medium blue and smaller than most of the Glabri.

Not so with *P. halli*, another of the dwarf Glabri, for its flowers are immense in proportion to the size of the plant. Even though it is a resident of high mountain peaks in the Colorado Rockies, where it dwells near timberline, it brings its neat dwarf appearance into our lowland gardens. *Halli* makes attractive rosettes of shiny, dark green leaves, and has a way of surprising suddenly with a bloom spike when seemingly yesterday it had none. In the early stages, the bloom spike remains curled up, protected and hidden somewhat by the basal leaves in the clump. Then, one day, it decides the frost-laden winds from the peaks are not going to swoop down upon it with freezing blasts, and so the bloom spike begins to unfurl and becomes erect, ultimately reaching six inches more or less. When the flowers open, they extend almost from the basal mat of foliage to the tip of the spike, and in an established plant there are several spikes, so that it gives a very good account of itself. Two plants in my garden had five or six spikes each. The flowers themselves are a rich, deep red-purple, while the white within the mouth and throat does much to enhance their beauty. *P. halli* seems a very satisfactory plant for



Penstemon exilifolius

Photo by R. C. Barneby

rock gardens. Here in the Midwest at least, it is permanent in a well-drained spot, protected somewhat by a large rock from the afternoon sun.

In the *Humiles* section, we have another beautiful and dainty performer in *P. virens*... It comes from Colorado and southeastern Wyoming where it clothes cut banks and gravelly hillsides on both slopes of the Continental Divide. *P. virens* makes a thick mound, piled high with numerous bright green lanceolate leaves. The flowering stems reach six to eight inches in height, possibly up to a foot. There are many flowering stems from an established plant, and the flowers are borne in an airy panicle effect.

Individually, the blossoms are small, but so numerous and evenly distributed as to produce a cloud of blue. One plant in the garden had pure blue flowers, a "self color" as the term is used in iris descriptions. In other plants only the petal lobes were blue with the corolla throat rose. This is a favorite and seems to be an easy doer, accepting lowland gardens with equanimity. Both *P. halli* and *P. virens* are jewels and deserve greater recognition and trial in our rock gardens.

Penstemon tolmiei is a rather charming member of the *Proceri* group. Like the others of this section, *P. tolmiei* is a mat former. The rootstocks are much branched with new side shoots rooting as they are extended along the ground, so that the mat is gradually enlarged. As this process is slow, there is no danger of the plant becoming a pest. The plants are well clothed with deep green lanceolate leaves. A well-established clump will throw innumerable flowering stems eight to twelve inches high, topped with small, compact, interrupted clusters of tiny flowers much in the manner of the Mint family. The flowers are a deep red-purple or blue-purple in color. *P. tolmiei* makes its home in the Cascade Mountains of Washington, and seems more agreeable to periods of heavy precipitation than do some of the desert species.

Belonging to the *Saccanthera* group is *P. heterophyllus* subsp. *purdyi*, a dwarf decumbent form of *P. heterophyllus*, discovered and introduced to gardeners by Carl Purdy as California Blue Bedder and later named in his honor. It is quite frequently used as an edging in California or to cover unsightly dry banks where other plants do not grow. *P. purdyi* is somewhat tender in colder sections, needing cover protection through the cold of winter. The plants make a very attractive low mound. The many stems and linear leaves of olive-green with a touch of bronze are ornamental in themselves, but when the stems are loaded with blue, purple or rose flowers, or combinations of two or all three colors, then the plants are spectacular.

Also of the *Saccanthera* but quite different in appearance is *P. diphyllus*, a subspecies of *P. triphyllus*. This is a subshrubby plant from western Montana that makes erect stems in the wild, or in young small plants, but in gardens tends to have trailing or decumbent stems, resulting in another of those mound-makers suitable for rock gardens. *Diphyllus* is one of the few penstemons with deeply cleft or pinnately toothed leaves. The leaves are dull green and color red-purple with the advent of frost. The flowers are borne in floriferous panicles and while small, make up for lack of size by their superior numbers. Petal lobes are blue with the throat just plain magenta. This trait might be considered a drawback, but I do not find it so, the green leaves and intense blue of the lobes tone down the magenta. The plant is long in bloom and with a few snips of stems before seed pods form, it might prove to be everblooming.

It seems highly unethical, when speaking of penstemons, not to mention two of the *Coerulei*, namely *P. angustifolius* and *P. nitidus*, with their breathtaking, heavenly blue spikes of flowers and pretty glaucous blue foliage. A third member of the family, closely related to these two, is *P. arenicola*, collected last summer in Wyoming. How it will perform in the garden remains to be seen. It is dwarf

and supposed to have dark blue flowers. Probably like the others it will be short lived and need renewing occasionally with seedlings, which are easy from seeds sown in the fall.

It is hard to give any hard and fast rules for penstemon culture so just remember this—the desert species are at home with burning sun, little moisture, or at least long periods without it, and intense winds, while the mountain species are apt to be more tolerant of excessive moisture conditions, but not muggy, soggy soil mediums. With respectable drainage and situations selected in the rock garden with a little thought of their distant homes, these plants should give a thrilling display.

PENSTEMON BEHAVIOR IN CALIFORNIA

(The following has been compiled from the second round robin circulating among members of the American Rock Garden Society in the state of California.)

MOST of my experience has been with the shrubby types of Penstemons, for they are best suited to the rock garden. Those of you who have collected these Penstemons have seen them growing in very hot, dry, exposed places, hugging or draping themselves over the rocks or in tiny crevices or pockets - and almost always with a northern exposure.

For all the Penstemons I have collected or grown, drainage has been the prime requisite. Next comes warmth. The richness of the soil does not seem to make too great difference as long as the roots can go deep and the talus can sift over them, renewing the fine soil that is on the surface as the talus gradually decomposes and becomes soil. This I suspect—that in the native talus there is a mineral varied as to the location of the mountains, which furnishes the penstemons with the food element they need. The shale, too, helps to conserve moisture, for it gathers the natural moisture in the air and the cooling rock and conserves it for the tiny roots which always form, when the penstemons send out shoots in the talus, or as they creep along the crevices. Then, there is the shedding of the tiny leaves which gradually decompose. All these things, I think, are important to the well-being of penstemons.

There have been some hectic discussions on germination of penstemon seeds. The treatment runs from vermiculite to redwood bark (Heaven forbid, for me) and up and down. For the alpine forms, I prefer the natural treatment and have had good results, even from seeds which have been laying around for three years. I realize that the natural process calls for being frozen from the time the seeds are dropped till the sun thaws the ground, and I follow it, in principle, as closely as I can with coffee cans and the freezing compartment of the refrigerator. I usually leave them there two to four weeks, then out they come into heat and sun and just enough moisture so they do not dry out. But they are *never wet*.

Here are some of the penstemons which have behaved well in my garden: *P. avidus*, *purdyi* Blue Bedder, *barrettae*, *cardwelli*, *crandalli*, *davidsoni*, *menziesi* and *menziesi serophyllum*. This is one of the choicest of all, almost unknown even in the Olympics where it is found. I had a plant a foot across that was eighteen years old and it was covered with huge-purplish mauve blooms. *Rupicola* is another fine species with mounds of silvery foliage surmounted by carmine-rose flowers, a cliff dweller and sensitive, but worth catering to its needs.

My own *Penstemon nelsonae* can be used at the base of the rock garden and is not too large as the leaves lay flat in whorls, from which a spike of sulphur-yellow blooms shoots up one foot to eighteen inches high. It is a slow grower, reproduced from root cuttings. I have never known it to set seed naturally, but it will grow

from seed. Botanically, it belongs in the section *Gracilis* Pennell and its nearest relative is *attenuatus douglasi* of eastern Washington and Idaho.

—Eloise L. (Mrs. Oscar) Nelson, Orick, Calif.

MY hope in penstemons centers in the new varieties I have raised or hope to raise from seeds received from the Seed Exchange of the American Rock Garden Society. I usually have better success with the seeds which need freezing, if I can get them sown early enough to get a freezing and weathering out in the open. My last batch of seeds remained a long time in a sealed jar in the refrigerator and then was planted in flats in the greenhouse in midsummer.

I like to resort to another of nature's method of cracking the seeds by a brush fire - so I pile excelsior and garden clippings on a screen and place this on the seed flats, igniting it with a match. The coarse refuse is easily removed by the screen.

Last year, I had a lot of *Penstemon cyananthus*, an upright to fifteen inches and a hard-to-beat blue color, with handsome broad leathery green leaves. There was also a good group of *confertus*, about the same height; the cream-colored flowers show a tinge of pink. These bloomed in four or five-inch pots.

P. hirsutus volunteers all over the place. *P. crandalli* is spreading nicely in the border, rooting everywhere as the stems creep like thyme. However, I've seen no blooms on it yet. The little group of *P. caelestinus* remains without perceptible growth through the year.

I gave up such penstemons as *rupicola*, *menziesi*, *davidsoni* and *cardwelli* years ago, as I never could get the plants established after being shipped from the north. I did get *P. rattani minor* to bloom nicely for a time, until it bore a crop of seeds and passed out after that accomplishment.

Mrs. Nelson is right, I think, in taking the rooted off-shoots of penstemons for growing on. I take the young growth of some kinds, dip them in hormone powder and have fine young plants from the cutting bench.

I shall never forget the acre or so of *Penstemon spectabilis* I saw three years ago in bloom in San Diego County in the spring, where a fire had passed through the brush a few years previously. The tall blue and purple-blue (with occasionally a beautiful soft pink) spikes, four to five feet tall, looked as if they were ready to be harvested for the cut flower market. Another to remember is *P. antirrhinoides*, a large rounded shrub to several feet, with yellow, fruit-scented blooms. It makes up for the sparsity of blooms by its perfume.

I collected seeds of *P. cordifolius* along the Redwood Highway a few years ago and they have grown nicely, but they are a little more particular as to drainage than some of the other penstemons. The flowers have the appearance of *Diplacus*, with the flaring lower lip. I picked up cuttings of a beautiful *Diplacus* in the Sierras near Downieville a couple of years ago. It is of rather dwarf habit with large, pale yellow flowers, being larger than the horticultural hybrid of Victor Reiter, of San Francisco.

For a long time, I have hoped for a section of dwarf penstemons, even if only in pots. I like to put the pots out in the sun and sink them up to the rim in sawdust to avoid too much watering.

—Harry E. Jacobs, San Carlos, Calif.

MY own experience with penstemons was extremely limited until coming here. In England, I grew for some years a shrubby hybrid supposed to be between *P. newberryi* and *davidsoni*, named Six Hills Hybrid. It was the most floriferous plant in the garden. I grew it in gravel soil in crevices between rocks placed in the

form of a bulky outcrop and it over flowed the whole block, never getting more than ten inches tall. In similar conditions, I also grew *P. cristata*, a very prostrate dwarf which was slow and tidy. It seems to me to be the *P. davidsoni* that I know now. I also had one called *P. roexlii*, which I am sure was not correctly named and was *P. newberryi*; and *P. scouleri*, with a white form. All these grew in the same conditions, gravel with rocks and some crushed limestone, in all the sun I could muster over there. They had frost and snow over them in winter and lasted as long as I had that garden.

Here, at the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, we are trying to grow *P. newberryi* and *davidsoni* but cannot treat them as you do in the north. Our summer sun would burn them right out. We have them in the shade of Live-Oaks, on rock outcrops, with the soil mixed well with crushed rock and sand, as much as we could get in, for the bed in which this arrangement was placed is very solid adobe. It is interesting to note those which were farthest out from the shade of the Live-Oaks have already passed out of the picture, but some still carry on and are looking quite fit at the moment (January 27, 1950). I hope we manage to bring them into bloom next summer.

For a real discussion, the best I can offer is a treatise on *Penstemon* which the Garden is publishing shortly, written by the superintendent, P. C. Everett. This will relate the experience of growing penstemons here over a period of twenty-five years and will cover mostly the southern species, since they are best suited to cultivation in this area. It will also include a list of all the known species and varieties of California penstemons under their latest names as given by Dr. David Keck. Of course, the material discussed will cover species which cross into the borders of the neighboring states.

For the rock garden in general, as well as for penstemons in particular, Mrs. Nelson's prescription of sun, starvation and severe drainage is unquestionably sound. Some of the bigger-growing penstemons will get along quite satisfactorily in heavy soil, even adobe, but most do better with good drainage. *PP. centranthifolius. catoni* var. *undosus*, *spectabilis* and *hertophyllus* var. *australis* all seem to do well in heavy soil here, but they do not like too much water.

I was very much interested in Mr. Jacobs' remarks about *P. antirrhinoides* being scented. It grows freely around here, is native in these hills and flowers well, but neither I nor any member of the staff had noted the scent. The only "officially" scented penstemon we have listed is *P. palmeri*, a desert species which grows up to six feet tall and has, in its California forms, rather pale pink flowers. There is a form over the Nevada border which has deep pink flowers, better worth growing than the California forms.

—Edward K. Balls, Anaheim, Calif.

A REVIEW OF LITTLE DAFFODILS

ELIZABETH LAWRENCE, CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

I have never achieved my ambition to have in a single season a succession of little daffodils from November to May, but over a period of years I have had them in bloom each of those months. Once I managed to get a bulb of *Narcissus serotinus* from Drew Sherrard in Portland, Oregon, in order to have bloom in October, but the wretched little thing never bloomed at all, and I have never seen it listed again.

The only little daffodil that has ever bloomed for me in the fall came from Robert Moncure of Alexandria, Va., under the formidable name of *N. bulboco-*

dium clusi foliosus. It bloomed in November or December and persisted for a number of years. I have an idea that I would have it yet, if I had not been so careless with the trowel. Such treasures should always be in a tiny rock pocket all to themselves. *N. b. monophyllus* is more difficult, and never persisted for more than two or three years. It blooms in January or February, according to the season. *N. b. citrinus* blooms next. It is more easily established than the white forms, but it increases little. *N. b. conspicuus* blooms last of all, at the end of the daffodil season. The deep yellow flowers and the shiny rat tail leaves are very plentiful, and the bulbs increase rapidly. This is the easiest of all of the little daffodils.

N. minimus, the tiniest of the trumpets, bloomed once very early in February, and then disappeared forever. *N. minor*, which blooms in March, is larger and more persistent, but less attractive. The flowers are of a durable substance and stay in bloom for two weeks. *N. lobularis* blooms early in March on six-inch stems. The small trumpets are lemon-colored and the perianths are creamy.

There is so much confusion about the white trumpets that there seems little use in describing them, but all are lovely. I have had three entirely different ones sent to me as *N. moschatus*. "The botanists of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century," Peter Barr says in the BULLETIN OF THE ALPINE GARDEN SOCIETY, March 1935, "appear to have applied the name *moschatus* variously to the white trumpet daffodils known as *albicans*, *cernuus* and *tortuosus*." In old gardens hereabouts, there are a number of white trumpets of varying sizes and shapes that come into bloom any time between early February and the middle of March. I love them all, but I have not found all of them easy to grow. They may grow in wide drifts in one situation and disappear completely when they are transferred to another garden.

The *cyclamineus* hybrids are too overpowering for the rock garden, with the exception, perhaps, of Beryl and Le Beau. Beryl blooms rather late, usually early in April. It shows its *cyclamineus* inheritance in its drooping flowers and reflexed petals, and its *poeticus* inheritance in its short, colorful cup. The petals are pale yellow at first, but they become creamy with age. The stem is eight inches. Le Beau is taller, with an exaggeratedly long narrow trumpet and petals turned all of the way back. It blooms in February with the early ones.

The tiny, almost transparent flowers of *N. triandrus albus* are the most appealing of all, but, as Sir William Lawrence says, "Angels' tears are liable to be spilled." The smaller *triandrus* hybrids are the cream of the rock garden daffodils. This year I had from Mr. Heath, Hawera, a *triandrus-jonquilla* hybrid for which I have long been searching. It blooms at the end of March, producing two or three nodding flowers to a scape. The pale flowers are the color of winter sunshine. The cup is small and bowl shaped, and the winged petals turn back toward the stem. Mr. Heath sent me also April Tears, which is similar to Hawera, but smaller, of a deeper yellow, and more lavish with its blossoms. The rare and beautiful J. T. Bennett Poe came to me this spring from Carl Krippendorf from his collection in Milford, Ohio. More like the Queen of Spain (but smaller) than Angels' Tears, it is as pale and as delicate as sea foam, and entirely different from all other daffodils.

The *jonquilla* hybrids are mostly too big for rock gardens, but Tullus Hostilius and White Wedgewood should, perhaps, be let in, and Lintie is definitely a flower of the rocks. Tullus Hostilius is very sturdy and long lasting, and has a very long period of bloom, beginning early in March. The flowers are of the trumpet type, but the color is jonquil-yellow. White Wedgewood is similar in shape, but the starry perianth is creamy white and the trumpet is yellow. It blooms late in March or early in April, and very freely. The stems of both of these are

about twelve inches. Lintie blooms early in April. The shimmering yellow petals are round like those of the Poets' Narcissus and slightly reflexed, and the short, fluted cup is rimmed with orange. It is only six inches tall. All three have two flowers to a stem.

A number of jonquils found in old gardens in the south are suitable for rock gardens. The earliest one that I know came to Chapel Hill from Williamsburg and is said to be *N. jonquilla simplex*. It is not the variety *simplex* as I know it, a tall flower that blooms much later. The sweet yellow flowers bloom on short stems at the end of February or in March, when the foliage is short, too, and fine. Later, the stems grow to eighteen inches and the foliage gets coarse. This is the earliest jonquil that I know of. The latest is also a small one. Mr. Heath found it in an old planting in Virginia and lists it as Helena. This year, it bloomed for me on the ninth of April. It is even more perfect for the rock garden than the early one, for it never gets taller than seven inches, and the foliage is fine, sparse and inconspicuous, although it lengthens to twenty inches after the flowers fade.

I have from two different sources a small jonquil which is listed as *N. j. citrinum*, but I can see no difference between this and *N. tenuior* which is one of the best of the jonquils, free-blooming, delightful and growing anywhere.

The other species of the jonquil group have always proved difficult, except for *N. gracilis* which is too big for the rock garden. "I planted a dozen or so of *N. juncifolius* about fifteen years ago, but they have gradually dwindled away, and I saw only two or three blooms this spring," Mr. Krippendorf wrote. Fifteen years sounds to me like a mighty long time for little jonquils. I planted this small species twice, but it never held out for more than the season.

DWARF FORMS OF SCOTCH PINE

BERNARD HARKNESS

BUREAU OF PARKS, ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

CARRIERE'S var. *nana* of *Pinus sylvestris* seems to be the accepted name at the present time for the dwarf Scotch Pine represented in the Rochester collections. Hornibrook appears to describe under this name another form distinguished



Pinus sylvestris nana in Durand-Eastman Park



Pinus sylvestris watereri in Durand-Eastman Park

by leaves set far apart; short, straight and glaucous (DWARF AND SLOW-GROWING CONIFERS, Ed. 2). I have never checked Carriere's original description. The plants here go back to an original importation from Veitch, the English nursery firm, in 1903, as the *nana* variety. John Dunbar held them to be the var. *pumila* of Beissner and mentions our plants in Bailey's CULTIVATED EVERGREENS. The description of var. *pumila* as a "dwarf globose bush" in all of Bailey's books differs from Hornibrook's description of it as "an open, round bush of ascending branches", from which he considers the var. *watereri* to be scarcely distinct. Rehder's MANUAL OF CULTIVATED TREES AND SHRUBS, Second Edition, omits mention of var. *pumila* and describes var. *nana*, Carr. as a "low dense and round bush with thick, very twisted leaves". Such is the merry-go-round of nomenclature recorded for our plants.

Two plants of the 1903 introduction grow side by side in Highland Park, and in 1931 they were recorded as being two feet and three feet tall, respectively. Shortly after this measuring, the three-foot plant burst its bounds and shot upwards, at the same time extending its branches. At this date, it has slowed down in growth but stands eight feet high and has an entirely different character from its neighbor, now only four feet high with a stout trunk and stubby branches close-set with foliage. In a favorable growing site at Durand-Eastman Park, plants propagated from the Highland's specimens are six feet in height, though keeping a good dense growth. These plants regularly bear cones which are "nana" in form.

Beissner's var. *watereri* is a handsome plant but one requiring more space than many rock gardens would provide. Arthur Slavin, in Bailey's CULTIVATED CONIFERS, stated that five feet is the usual size of an adult specimen. That is not correct for plants in good growing conditions as these plants measured in the early 1930's grew rapidly until 1938 when they were ten feet high. Then occurred the levelling

off of maturity and little addition in height can be found today, though there undoubtedly has been an increase in girth, a phenomenon not unusual in maturity, until our finest plant has a spread of twelve feet.

1951 SEED LIST

The plan, inaugurated this year, of issuing the complete list of seeds in January, has proved so satisfactory that it will be continued hereafter. Therefore, please send donations of seeds to the Seed Exchange Director, Miss Madeleine Harding, 348 Walnut Street, Brookline 46, Mass., so they will reach her not later than January 10, 1951. If it is not possible to send all seeds by that date, kindly notify Miss Harding before January 10th of the availability of seeds at a later date so that they may be included in the January seed list.

The distribution of seeds among the members of the American Rock Garden Society has become a major project, involving considerable time and labor. Kindly minimize the work of the Seed Exchange Director by clearly marking the names of the seeds on the packets, cleaning the seeds as much as possible of pods, chaff, etc., and forwarding them promptly.

SIXTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING

Over one hundred members from Maine, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Virginia and Canada walked through the beautiful rock garden and woodlands of Mrs. Clement S. Houghton, Chestnut Hill, Mass., and were her guests at luncheon, prior to the annual business meeting which was called to order by Harold Epstein, president, at two o'clock on Saturday, May 20th.

The report of the Nominating Committee (Mr. P. J. van Malle, Mrs. H. D. Thomas and Mr. Kurt Baasch) was accepted and the following slate duly elected to office on motion of Mr. H. Lincoln Foster, seconded by Mr. Clarence Lewis.

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| President: | Mr. Harold Epstein, Larchmont, N. Y. |
| Vice Presidents: | Mr. Leonard J. Buck, Far Hills, N. J. |
| | Mrs. C. I. DeBevoise, Greens Farms, Conn. |
| | Mrs. Harry Hayward, Scarborough, Maine |
| | Miss Elizabeth Gregory Hill, Lynnhaven, Va. |
| | Mr. Brian O. Mulligan, Seattle, Wash. |
| | Mr. Arthur Virgin, N. Y. C. and No. Hatley, P.Q. Canada |
| Secretary: | Mrs. Dorothy E. Hansell, Summit, N. J. |
| Treasurer: | Mrs. Alex D. Reid, Mountain Lakes, N. J. |
| Director to fill Mrs. Reid's unexpired term till May 1951: | Dr. C. R. Worth, Groton, N. Y. |
| Directors to serve till 1952: | Mr. Walter D. Blair, Tarrytown, N. Y. |
| | Mrs. J. Mortimer Fox, Bedford Hills, N. Y. |
| | Mrs. J. M. Hodson, Greenwich, Conn. |
| | Mrs. C. S. Houghton, Chestnut Hill, Mass. |
| | Mr. Edgar Totten, Ho-Ho-Kus, N. J. |

Miss Madeleine Harding, of Brookline, Mass., volunteered to serve as director of the Seed Exchange.

On motion of Mr. Clarence Lewis, seconded by Mr. Walter D. Blair, a resolution expressing appreciation of the splendid services rendered the Society by Mr. Epstein was drawn.

Mr. Epstein, in accepting another term as president, said it was his great am-

bition to see more men join the American Rock Garden Society and participate in its activities. He was delighted to note the presence of so many men at the annual meeting and hoped he could accept it as a good omen. He called attention to the remarkable growth and accomplishment of the Men's Garden Clubs, indicating that the women no longer could claim all the glory in this direction, and also spoke of the therapeutic value of gardening, citing as an example the talk he gave at the Northport Veteran's Hospital where 2,000 mental patients are treated.

Mr. Epstein announced the forthcoming visit of W. E. Th Ingwerson, noted plantsman and explorer and honorary life member of the American Rock Garden Society, and that a dinner would be held in his honor in New York City the week of June 12.

Mr. Walter Blair, on behalf of the Board of Directors and members of the American Rock Garden Society, made the presentation of a framed scroll to Mrs. Houghton, which reads:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS

The American Rock Garden Society, assembled in its 16th annual meeting on this 20th day of May 1950, at Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, senses a great debt owed by it to

MRS. CLEMENT S. HOUGHTON

Charter-Director of the Society, its President from May 1936 to May 1940, and its Hostess today,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

that the Society express to her not only its thanks for her present hospitality but, as well, the esteem in which she is held by it as an unfailing source of inspiration, leadership and counsel, as a distinguished rock gardener and advocate of alpine gardening in the broad community of horticulture and, above all, as a gracious lady;
AND BE IT RESOLVED, FURTHER,

that she be this day elected as the Society's first

HONORARY PRESIDENT

and that this Resolution be presented to her suitably enrolled.

Harold Epstein, President

Dorothy E. Hansell, Secretary

At the conclusion of the business meeting, the members left for South Sudbury where they spent several hours going through Garden in the Woods under the direction of Mr. Charles Curtis and Mr. Richard Stiles, its owners. They were charmed with the natural beauty of the place and the remarkable collection of native plants.

THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

On May 5th, your secretary witnessed the presentation to one of its officers, Mr. Leonard J. Buck, vice president and life member, of a coveted award. This was the gold medal of the National Association of Gardeners. It was presented to Mr. Buck at a meeting of the Northern New Jersey Branch of that organization, held at "Allwood", Far Hills, for his contributions to horticulture and in particular for his outstanding rock garden, testimony of his artistry in this phase of gardening.

This announcement is, perhaps, an unusual way in which to begin the Annual Report of the Secretary, but after one has written so many reports of this nature, she feels that the members must grow weary of hearing the same things - and may she confess that she has, on occasion, groaned to herself, "Oh, it's time for that report!" To be able to make known to the members an honor that has recently been conferred upon one of us is, indeed, a very happy introduction to a brief review of the past year in the American Rock Garden Society.

I wish it were possible to portray, through this report, the heights of pleasure and depths of despair to which your secretary ascends and descends over the problem of membership. During the early part of March, she was informed of the passing away of several members; the first two weeks in April, she seemed to be deluged with resignations (actually, there were twelve). But the reasons for resignations were distressing - two because severe injuries sustained in accidents made gardening forever impossible, three because of selling home and moving to apartments, and the rest ill health or retirement. And there was also the unpleasant task of removing names for non-payment of dues. Do you wonder that your secretary wondered what was happening to the Society's membership?

Then, on April 14th, a Saturday of all days, six new members were received. Her spirits picked up and have continued to soar, cheered by the promptness with which members have been paying their dues and new members have been coming in. We have now passed the 600 mark.

Trans-atlantic mail from the British Isles and the continent and trans-Pacific mail from New Zealand and South Wales have given zest to correspondence. This is the outcome of the pleasant relationship established with the Alpine Rock Garden Society and the Scottish Rock Garden Society, whereby their members are becoming acquainted with our organization and ours with theirs through the medium of exchange advertising in the respective publications. Gardeners beyond our shores are really interested in our plants - some of them appear to know more about them than we do ourselves.

The Society has continued its efforts to attract the attention of those who are deeply interested in rock gardening. An advertisement in the new magazine, *Popular Gardening*, brought in 18 members. The best methods, however, are the exchange advertisements with the two societies already named and the American Primrose Society, and the inclusion of our leaflet in the catalog mailing of a reputable concern. Mr. Carl Starker, of Jennings Lodge, Oregon, cooperated in this respect this year. Mr. Walter Kolaga, of Mayfair Nurseries, Hillsdale, N. J., who performed this service last year, inserted the leaflet in mailing his catalog to new inquiries.

The Bulletin, I believe, has satisfactorily held its own. We should like to see a few more advertisements in its pages, and we would welcome contributions of articles and photographs from members. A plea by the Editor is being made in the May-June issue. Without this cooperation from members, it is difficult for the Editor to prepare a stimulating Bulletin six times a year.

The regional groups have enjoyed such an interesting year that I requested the regional chairmen to submit reports which I could present at this meeting separately, rather than incorporate them in the Secretary's Report. Our New England Group has been especially active, involved in the preparation of a prize-winning rock garden exhibit at the Boston Show and in entertaining us on the occasion of the annual meeting. This group also deserves a round of applause for enrolling 16 members. The Main Unit is also coming to life again. At a meeting held at the home of its chairman on April 29th, plans were laid for future meetings and three new members received. Since then 6 more members have been enrolled. The Middle Atlantic Group has had some splendid talks at its monthly meeting, including the March meeting which is, of course, the Society's annual luncheon in New York City. The Northwest Group holds dinner meetings and gets together for trips practically the year round, but the officers do not, evidently, take kindly to writing letters or reports. However, I was relieved to learn from one of its members that the Group is very active, meeting regularly. (From Mrs. Roberson's letter and a letter received later from the secretary, Mrs. N. D. Hall, I have compiled a report.) We are proud

of the progress being made in California and of its fine round robin, as indicated in its chairman's report.

The Seed Exchange's report, presented by its director, Mr. H. Lincoln Foster, will impress members with the number of packets distributed. Complimentary comments have been received about the new packaging and the efficient manner in which Mr. Foster, ably assisted by Mrs. Foster, has handled this activity.

And now it is my sad duty to give you the names of deceased members. Two passed away before our last annual meeting but this was not made known to the Secretary until after that event, so their names are included here. Honorary life members: Viscountess Byng of Vimy, Sir Frederick Moore; life member, Mr. Clement S. Houghton, Chestnut Hill, Mass.; sustaining member, Miss Blanche Baker Hill, Lynnhaven, Va.; active members, Mrs. Gladys France Baker, Kirkland, Wash.; Miss Annie Rae Blanchard, Melrose, Mass.; Mrs. Ernest B. Dane, Chestnut Hill, Mass.; Mr. James McGregor, Milton, Mass.; Mr. J. Horace McFarland, Harrisburg, Pa.; Mr. Glenn Osterhout, Seattle, Wash.; Mr. Garrett M. Stack, Guilford, Conn.; and Mrs. William H. Taylor, of Gloucester, Mass., and Yonkers, N. Y.

REPORT OF THE CALIFORNIA GROUP

During the past year members of the California Group of the American Rock Garden Society under the direction of Mrs. Nelson of Orick, California, participated in a round robin letter. So far two rounds have been completed, the first one on shrubs and bulbs for the rockery, the second one on penstemons. The third one on phlox is on the way to completion.

Because our membership is so scattered over the state the value of our robin has been twofold. We have had a chance of becoming acquainted with other members as well as the opportunity of trading experiences, and best of all - asking questions of those most qualified to answer. Packets of seeds are included from which we are entitled to take a pinch. Offers to share bulbs and plants between members adds to the interest.

Of our twenty-four members (the largest in California since the Society has been founded), nine members are taking part at present in the robin. A meeting for robin members has been planned for the fall.

Recently, six new members have been added to the Society. On receiving the name of a new member I write a letter of welcome and explain the purpose of the robin, enclosing a card for reply—giving each member the opportunity of accepting or rejecting - also the chance to make suggestions.

With this small beginning we hope in time to form the nucleus of a stimulating plan for all those interested in rock gardening in California.

Virginia (Mrs. Coulter) Stewart, Chairman

NORTHWEST GROUP

There is plenty of activity in the Northwest Group, although you are not informed about it. For instance, at the meeting on April 27th, the members toured the Arboretum, at least the sections showing the most bloom. At the dinner held at the Meany Hotel, Mr. Brocklan showed slides and talked of the years when he was a naturalist at Ranier National Park. An earlier meeting also included a tour of the Arboretum, followed by visits to several gardens in Broadmoor, a residential area. Dinner was served at the home of one of the members and then Mr. and Mrs. Brian O. Mulligan showed slides. Most of the monthly meetings, by the way, are dinner meetings.

On May 27th, a guest from the East addressed the Northwest Group - Mrs. J. Norman Henry, of Gladwyn, Pa.

In June, 1949, an overnight trip was made to the Cascade Mountains when many fine plants were collected. This June, an overnight trip will be made to Snoqualmie Pass, provided the snow melts in time. It has been cold and damp in this part of Washington this spring, and snow is still deep in the mountains. The Group is also planning a trip to the Olympic Mountains in July.

In August, the annual Salmon Barbeque will be held at the home of one of the members. So, you see, we do put in a busy and enjoyable year.

At the time of the death of E. L. Reber, the Group voted to send money to the Arboretum in his memory. Since then, we have gathered additional funds from old-time members, friends and business associates and hope to have sufficient to make a really fine memorial planting, probably of dwarf Rhododendrons.

Mrs. Neill D. Hall, Mrs. L. N. Roberson

THE MIDDLE ATLANTIC REGION

The season just closing has been a very enjoyable one, in spite of the difficulty in procuring speakers for our seven scheduled monthly meetings. Dr. Edgar T. Wherry opened the season with a very interesting illustrated lecture on "Our Native Phlox". This was followed by another very unusual illustrated lecture by Guy G. Nearing, "How Nature Decorates Her Rocks". His colored slides were excellent and much interest was shown in the subject. Our December meeting was another of the ever popular "Stump the Experts" sessions. This time the experts were E. Alexander, Guy G. Nearing and P. J. Van Melle. None of the questions were held over to be answered next year.

Miss Alys Sutcliffe gave a very interesting talk at our January meeting on "Bulbs for the Rock Garden". This was Miss Sutcliffe's first appearance before our group. Another new and most interesting speaker before our group was H. Lincoln Foster, who spoke to us in February on "Dwarf Shrubs for the Rock Garden."

The annual luncheon of the Society was held in the Essex House during International Flower Show Week, at which time we were addressed by T. H. Everett on "Rock Gardening". Dr. Carl R. Worth closed the season in April with his illustrated lecture on the "Flora of the Utah Mountains".

It has not been an easy task to procure seven speakers each season and I am sure that among those who have always remained listeners, there are a number who would make equally as good speakers. Why not let us hear from some of the "just plain rock gardeners" during the next season? To you camera enthusiasts, it is hoped you will get many good shots this season, reserve a few of the best and tell us about them at one of our future meetings. The Horticultural Society of New York has been most generous in providing quarters in which our meetings are held and for this generosity and the many courtesies extended to us, we all say "Thank you."

Edgar L. Totten

NEW ENGLAND REGION

A calendar of monthly meetings was prepared by the executive committee and sent to each member. The aim of these meetings was to cover as wide a range as possible of the problems and materials connected with rock gardening.

On March 16th Stephen Hamblin discussed "Rock Garden Shrubs beyond the Ordinary". He illustrated his lecture with specimens which he passed out for examination. Members brought in lists of shrubs for discussion and criticism as to their suitability for rock garden plantings.

"Wild Flowers for the Rock Garden" was the topic for the April meeting.

This was in charge of Will Curtis and was illustrated with kodachrome slides. At the close of the lecture a sale of rock garden plants, donated by the members, netted the group \$32.70.

The May meeting was held jointly with the Gardeners' and Florists' Club. Alexander Heimlich gave a very fine lecture on "Rock Garden Construction" illustrated with kodachrome slides. Members brought rock garden plants for display which were sold after the meeting. The Group realized \$73.37 from the sale.

In June, the members visited Fernglen Gardens at Antrim, N. H.

In September, Mrs. Lucien B. Taylor spoke on "Rock Garden Plants for Summer Blooming" illustrated with specimens. Members brought lists of ten plants that each had found best under his or her conditions.

Our president, Harold Epstein, gave a talk on "Rock Gardens" illustrated with very beautiful kodachrome slides, at the October meeting.

In November, we had a symposium led by Will Curtis; subject - "Rock Gardening where Water is Available". Plans were laid for the staging of a rock garden exhibit at the spring flower show of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. Mr. Curtis was elected to take charge of the exhibit, assisted by Mr. Heimlich. Others on the committee were Mrs. Clement C. Houghton, Mrs. Lucien B. Taylor, Stephen Hamblin and Miss Mabel E. Turner.

At the January meeting Mrs. Harry Hayward gave a most scholarly talk on "Primulas" illustrated with beautiful kodachrome slides. All of the specimens shown were raised and photographed by Mrs. Hayward in her own garden. The New England Group is indeed fortunate in having such an authority on primulas as a member.

Needless to say, the crowning achievement of the year was the very fine rock garden exhibit, largely due to the untiring efforts of Mr. Curtis.

As we look back over the year we can see many gains, both intangible and tangible. A growing interest in rock gardening and a bringing together for mutual help of those who have caught a glimpse of the meaning of this most interesting of all forms of gardening have been noted. This type of gain has been hard to measure. From the tangible point of view we have gained seventeen members, making the total membership 92. Looking at the financial side, we started the year with \$32.25 in our treasury; we ended with \$793.43.

Mabel E. Turner

THE SEED EXCHANGE

The comments of the members of the Society would seem to indicate that the new method of handling the seed for the Exchange had met with general approval. This new method of having all the seed listed on a grand list made it easier for the members to estimate their wants and to make all their requests at one time.

Moreover, this method did make it somewhat easier for the director to gauge the amount of seed to distribute to each one who asked for a particular variety and to give preference to those who had made contributions. It was also less time consuming to be able to fill 20 packages of the same kind at the same time. The number of different species offered and the number of requests have reached such proportions that any system which is time saving is a blessing. The director regrets that he was unable to write a personal letter to each contributor or to answer the many interesting and entertaining letters which came with requests for seed.

In all, there were 345 different kinds of seeds offered. These were contributed by 53 donors from 22 states and 3 foreign countries.

There were 111 requests for seed from 27 states and 5 foreign countries. 1557 packages of seed were asked for, and in only a very few cases had the supply been exhausted.

H. Lincoln Foster, Director

TREASURER'S REPORT

May 1, 1949 - May 1, 1950

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Balance on hand May 1, 1949 | | \$ 647.99 |
| Income | | |
| Dues | \$2677.82 | |
| Plant Sale | 40.50 | |
| Advertising in Bulletin | 341.27 | |
| Back issues of Bulletin | 57.00 | |
| Binders | 3.00 | |
| Annual Luncheon | 196.00 | 3315.59 |
| | | <hr/> |
| | | \$3963.58 |
| Expenditures | | |
| Bulletin | 983.61 | |
| Annual Luncheon | 199.14 | |
| Seed Exchange | 43.33 | |
| Saxiflora (postage) | 7.78 | |
| Postage | 109.01 | |
| Telephone and telegrams | 16.05 | |
| Printing (other than Bulletin) | 65.00 | |
| Refund on back issue | .50 | |
| Salary | 549.00 | |
| Stationery | 113.70 | |
| Medals | 26.40 | |
| Regional allotments and meetings | 81.27 | |
| Bank service charges | 10.96 | |
| Miscellaneous | 4.40 | 2210.15 |
| | | <hr/> |
| | | \$1753.43 |
| | check not returned | 2.49 |
| | | <hr/> |
| Balance in bank April 30, 1950 | | \$1755.92 |

Mrs. George F. Wilson

TWO MEMBERS EXHIBIT AT LOCAL SHOW

A rock garden arranged by Edwin T. Wyatt of Valhalla, N. Y. and 200 potted rock garden plants displayed by Frederic V. Guinzburg of Chappaqua, were stellar attractions at the Chappaqua Garden Club's sixteenth annual flower show held May 20 and 21, in the Horace Greely school auditorium, Chappaqua.

Pinus montana and dwarf spruce provided the background for a naturalistic rock ledge with a pool in Mr. Wyatt's exhibit. The choice of rock garden plants which blended from pale into deeper mauve to pinkish tones achieved a casual, yet harmonious effect of great natural charm. Among them were *Trollius europeus*, *Thalictrum minor*, *Daphne cneorum*, *Phlox subulata* Blue Hills and Fairy, *Azalea vaseyi*, and species of *Sedum*, *Sempervivum*, *Saxifraga* and *Epimedium*.

Mr. Wyatt has had rock gardens in the annual flower show in the White Plains County Center for fifteen years. The April, 1950, issue of "HOUSE BEAUTIFUL" carried a picture of one of his rock gardens as an illustration of an article by the magazine's Garden Editor, entitled "What is Beauty in a Garden."

Mr. Guinzburg's 200 potted rock garden plants included 160 species and varieties of *Sempervivum*.

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