THE RHODODENDRON HYBRIDISERS: MAGOR, MANGLES & McLAREN

Julian Taylor-Whall

The Rhododendron Hybridisers:

In the UK, the professional nurserymen may well have introduced the majority of rhododendron hybrids that now populate our major woodland gardens, but by and large, their crosses have been bettered by gems created by their own customers, especially those bred by the early enthusiasts, responsible for creating those very nirvanas, rhodophile cognoscenti such as Edward Magor, James Mangles, and Henry McLaren.

An array of photographs portraying many of their crosses - long-established specimen plants growing in the foremost rhododendron gardens of England, Wales and Scotland that are open to the public throughout the flowering season - are presented in this volume, along with a set of historical articles and appraisals, and a listing of all the registered combinations made by those three pre-eminent hybridisers, pairings that continue to florally eclipse their nearby neighbours.

THE RHODODENDRON HYBRIDISERS

Julian Taylor-Whall

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Edward Magor:

The Rhododendron Legacy of E. J. P. Magor.

by John M. Hammond.

An abridged version of *The Rhododendron Legacy of the Magor family of Lamellen, Cornwall: an historical perspective,* which herein focuses primarily on Edward Magor. The full text was originally published in the Royal Horticultural Society's Rhododendron, Camellia & Magnolia Group's year book for 2012, *Rhododendrons Camellias & Magnolias*.

Standing on the front terrace of Lamellen House in the early Spring and looking down the valley, with its banks clothed in a myriad of colours of bloom set against a host of shades of green, it is difficult to imagine that in 1900 this vista was open swathes of grassland with few clusters of trees. In the valley bottom, alongside the drive, the stream gathers momentum as it rushes downhill for three quarters of a mile to meet the River Allen, close by the Lodge and the entrance gates on the Wadebridge to Camelford road.

First appearances can be deceiving, as Lamellen is far older than the early-Victorian house would suggest. There is an entry for 'Lamdmanual' in the Domesday Book for at least one house on the site in 1086.[1] By 1280 this had evolved to 'Lamailwyn', meaning 'Valley of the Mills', and the 1698 date stone set in the western elevation of the present structure is from the earlier house built on the site by Samuel Furnis.

It is even more difficult to comprehend that Edward John Penberthy Magor, the quiet, reserved, unassuming English gentleman and founder of this peaceful garden, should become the mentor known as 'Mr Magor' to a brotherhood of early rhododendron pioneers in remote homesteads located in Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Vancouver Island, Australia, New Zealand and Germany. How was it that this rhododendron enthusiast came to the notice of other early rhododendron pioneers scattered across the globe? Why did he remain the focus of these pioneers for over 25 years before disappearing from the scene as quietly as he had arrived? Why, outside of his fellow rhododendron peers, have his endeavours remained unknown and are unrecognised in Britain?

Across the years, articles in several overseas publications have made reference to the support that the North American rhododendron pioneers received from a few gentlemen gardeners and institutions in Great Britain and Ireland in the years between 1918 and 1950. Key amongst the gentlemen gardeners was 'Mr Magor' of Lamellen; Lionel de Rothschild of Exbury and Charles P. Raffill of the Royal Botanic Garden, Kew. Key amongst the institutions was the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, the Royal Botanic Garden, Kew and Glasnevin Botanic Gardens, Dublin. Indeed, with the addition of John Guille Millais of Comptons Brow, J. C. Williams of Caerhays and Sir Edmund Loder of Leonardslee, the same individuals and institutions were the main supporters of the landed gentry in Great Britain and Ireland who were seeking plants or advice in regard to developing a woodland garden in the same timeframe. E. J. P. Magor, who is usually referred to as 'Mr Magor' in old articles and documents, and for continuity we will do likewise, was in his own way a remarkable, if unrecognised, pioneer who was active in the field of rhododendrons until the onset of the Second World War.

Given that it is around 70 years since the death of most of the key players in this story, it is unlikely that a definitive sequence of events that led to many of Mr. Magor's 'connections' will ever be known; however, there are now sufficient pieces of the jigsaw in-situ for a chronology to be outlined in detail. It is possible to be definitive, as a result of research work carried out at Lamellen and elsewhere, as to the sources of the rhododendrons that were raised in this plantsman's garden and the origins of the wild collected seed. Threads from other historical background notes have been woven in to the narrative as these provide a much clearer perspective of Mr. Magor's acquaintances, many of whom walk across the pages of this story and each in their own way were 'characters' in the Edwardian sense of the word, with influence in many spheres of life.

The Origins of the Lamellen Estate:

The Magor family originated from Mousehole Parish in West Cornwall, and were brewers - Reuben Magor and William Davey having founded the Redruth Brewery in 1742, using pure water from an old mine. By this date the town was hemmed in on all sides by extensive mining works engaged in large-scale tin production, the extraction of copper and small amounts of lead and silver.[2] Over the years 1790 to 1802 the brewery was reformed under the name of Magor & Davey Co, and was gradually moved to a new location in 1792 where much of its plant was constructed in 1802. Reuben Magor and Edmund Turner were also partners in a bank at Kenwyn, Truro, under the title of Messrs Turner & Magor, later Magor, Turner & Co. Penventon House, home of Reuben Magor's family, stood in its own grounds on the edge of the town, and in 1825 Elizabeth Ann Moyle, the only surviving child of Samuel Furnis's grandson John Furnis, and heiress of the Lamellen estate, married Reuben's son, John Penberthy Magor (1788–1862).[3]

Together they replaced the original Penventon House with a completely new Georgian mansion and the grounds were laid out as parkland and enhanced by additional planting of specimen trees. A second phase of expansion of the brewery commenced in 1834, and by 1841 the principle proprietor, John Penberthy Magor of Penventon, was one of the leading figures in the town, his business interests being one of the most extensive. Records indicate that the family had a long time interest in gardening, including orchids, and their connections with the Royal Cornwall Horticultural Society date back to at least 1838 when John P. Magor exhibited material of *Salvia patens* at a meeting in Truro. Around 1835 James Veitch, who had recently relocated his nursery closer to Exeter, had the foresight to realise that the key to his company's prosperity lay in the improvement of techniques for seed germination and cultivation. He lured a promising young man named John Dominy (1816–1891) away from a rival nursery with the aim of building up his 'team'. [16, 18]

Dominy turned out to be a wizard propagator and in 1842, just as the cases of William Lobb's seed collections in South America were spasmodically arriving at Topsham Dock at the head of the Exe estuary, he suddenly left James Veitch & Sons nursery in Exeter to work as Head Gardener for John P. Magor. James Veitch's frustrations at losing his best nurseryman must have been immense - he spent the next four years trying to get Dominy back. He eventually succeeded in attracting Dominy to work at the Coombe Wood Branch in 1846, but this episode serves to illustrate the considerable influence John P. Magor had in the gardening circles of Devon and Cornwall.

In the mid-1840s Elizabeth Magor inherited the Lamellen Estate from her father, John Furnis, the original house having been built by her grandfather, Samuel Furnis in 1698. Together, John and Elizabeth rebuilt the earlier house in the Picturesque Elizabethan Style and regularly stayed with their cousins, the Hext Family of Tremeer, to oversee the reconstruction. Work was completed in 1849.[13] Tremeer, 'just across the fields' from Lamellen, has benefited substantially in terms of plant material as a result of the continued relationship between the owners over the generations.

- above right -
Looking along the valley at Lamellen and over one of the ponds, in around 1900.
The photograph was taken prior to the development of the garden by E. J. P. Magor.

- below right -
Lamellen House from high up on the west bank above the Main Drive,
which then sweeps around in a long curve as it falls away towards the ponds.





When John and Elizabeth came to live at Lamellen the valley was mainly pasture and parkland, with clusters of trees, which is reflected in a fading photograph from around 1900 that depicts wide swathes of open grassed areas around the House.[12] There are few records of when the basic tree planting was actually carried out. The 'Flat-leaved Oak' (*Quercus sessiliflora*), that continued to be coppiced until around 1920, was the main component of the clusters of woodland and, prior to 1850, there were hardwood plantings of the Tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), Elm (*Ulmus campestris*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Lime (*Tilia europaea*), London Plane, Spanish Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), Red Horse Chestnut, Evergreen Oak (*Q. ilex*) and Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*). One of the latter, which blew down in around 1965, had 300 annual rings when counted. Plantings of softwoods, originally for windbreaks, consisted of Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*), Monterey Cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*), Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), Monkey Puzzle (*Araucaria araucana*), Larch (*Larix decidua*), and several species of Abies, Picea, Chamaecyparis, Thuja and many Irish Yews.[13] John P. Magor planted Lawson Cypress (*Cupressus lawsoniana*), Japanese Red Cedar (*Cryptomeria japonica*) and Hinoki Cypress (*Chamaecyparis obtusa*) in 1885.[12]

One of the first things that John and Elizabeth did on their arrival at Lamellen was to construct a new greenhouse for their large orchid collection, which continued to be a major interest amongst gentlemen gardeners in the Victorian era until the devastating winters of 1890/91, 1893/94 and 1894/5. These winters decimated the orchid collections in the massive greenhouses of the landed gentry, their heating systems being unable to cope with the severity of the persistent 'twelve week frosts'. After they had recovered from the shock of losing their orchid collections, many turned their attention to establishing a rhododendron collection instead.

In 1861 one of John and Elizabeth's daughters, Mary Ann, married John Thomas Henry Peter of Chyverton (1810–1873), but he died in 1873 and they had no children. John and Elizabeth's two eldest sons died prior to their father, who, on 5th July, 1862, himself suffered a heart attack and was found dead on a train when it arrived at St Kew Highway (the nearest station to Lamellen, on the London & South Western Railway line to Wadebridge and Padstow). Lamellen Estate then passed to his third son, Edward Auriol Magor. He married Mary Caroline Chilcott in 1873 but passed away in 1883 at the early age of 34, leaving three sons and two daughters. This led to the eldest son, Edward John Penberthy Magor, born 1874, spending much of his boyhood at Chyverton with his 'Aunt Mamie' prior to attending Harrow and Trinity College, Oxford.[13]

This historical background helps to explain just a few of the many complex family relationships that existed between the owners of the great houses and gardens of Cornwall; 'connections' that have endured down through the generations, despite changes of ownership.

The Development of Lamellen Garden:

Plantings of Rhododendron 'Russellianium' (*ponticum* x *arboreum*), also known as R 'Cornish Early Red', are a distinctive feature of the older Cornish gardens. Those at Lamellen date from prior to 1900, and were probably planted by John P. Magor in 1885 when he was planting trees.[4,12] Edward John Penberthy Magor (Mr Magor) started gardening at Lamellen in 1901, at which date his mother was still living in the house. He was inspired to cultivate rhododendrons by the sight of a plant of *R. grande* (then known as *R. argenteum*) in flower in the Temperate House, at the RBG, Kew in 1900.[14]

Mr Magor had dreams of inheriting the Chyverton estate from his Aunt Mamie, whose husband, John T. H. Peter, had died in 1873. His hopes were dashed when his aunt decided



E. J. P. Magor in the mid 1930s



E. J. P. Magor, *c.* 1910

to leave the estate to a distant member of the Peter Family, even though he was no relation of her husband's. Sadly, shortly after the aunt died in 1915, Chyverton was sold on by the inheritor.[13] The Holman Family bought the estate and subsequently created the now famous garden to the east of the house.

In 1901 Mr Magor, at the age of 27, had a clean palette to work with at Lamellen; this is borne out by a couple of faded photographs taken around 1900 depicting wide swathes of open grass around the House with clusters of mature trees. So the garden was made on land that had probably been used for open grazing.[12] Standing in an elevated position near the top of a small valley, the House looks out across the wide expanse of the garden as the valley sweeps around and then narrows on its way down to the Lodge and entrance gates. The soil is heavy loam for the most part, in some parts very shallow, and overlies slaty shale, except in the centre of the valley where there is blue clay underneath.

From the very start he was planting rhododendrons, purchased from Richard Gill of Tremough, James Veitch of Coombe Wood in Chelsea, G. Reuthe of Sevenoaks in Kent, T. Smith of Daisy Hill Nursery in Newry, V. N. Gauntlett & Co of Redruth (prior to the nursery moving to Chiddingfold, Surrey in 1906), R. Barclay Fox at Penjerrick, Jonathan Rashleigh at Menabilly, and even the dwarf Siberian species *R. camtschaticum, R. anthopogon* and *R. parvifolium* from Messrs Hegel & Kesselring of St. Petersburg in 1903. Between 1901 and 1906 Mr Magor travelled widely, visiting RBG, Edinburgh, RBG, Kew several times and Glasnevin Botanic Garden. His ledgers record the rhododendrons given to him by these institutions as well as plants that came from Mr Acton at Kilmacurragh in Ireland and Mr Daubuz at Killiow near Truro. Below the 'Farm Road' are several R. 'Boddaertianum' that came from Reuthe in November, 1908.[12]

Mr Magor kept meticulous records of all plant and tree acquisitions, including the locations they were planted and the date of their first flowering. Interestingly, *R. crassum,* a Forrest introduction of 1906, first flowered in Britain at Lamellen in 1914. Very early on, he realised the advantage of growing rhododendrons from wild collected seed and accompanied Reginald Farrer on his 1909 expedition to Switzerland to collect alpines. Farrer's expeditions to the European Alps were usually of a month's duration and the party 'travelled hard and far', an approach that was to be his undoing in later years. Farrer invited Mr Magor to join him on his first expedition to China in 1914 but he had recently married Gilian, and so, somewhat reluctantly, he let William Purdom go in his place.[12]

In 1912 Mr Magor inherited the Lamellen Estate, by which time he had made major steps in laying out the garden. Contrary to the widely held present-day perspectives, inheriting an estate in the early 1900s was not a recipe for an easy life. The estate encompassed a number of farms, houses, buildings, workers and tenants that generated a plethora of matters that needed to be attended to, in addition to his banking interests. Mr Magor was a very private individual in the time-honoured traditions of the Victorian and Edwardian eras, a world that most present day enthusiasts have great difficulty in grasping. In the course of Mr Magor's work in the Family's banking business he would have compartmentalised the transactions with each of his many 'customers' to maintain the levels of privacy and etiquette that were expected, and this approach spilled over in to his personal life. He also segregated his business interests from his home life, so that his gardening interests were, to all intents and purposes, taken forward in another world with a completely different 'set' of friends, even if it happened to involve some individuals that had accounts at the bank.

Gardening friendships in Victorian and Edwardian times tended to be formally maintained via correspondence, even if a friend happened to live relatively close by, and in this, Mr Magor was no exception. It is often forgotten that the Royal Mail provided a real public service prior to WWII, with multiple deliveries to, and collections from, businesses in the local towns each weekday. So it would not be unusual for a letter posted early in the morning on the way to the bank to be delivered in a local town the same morning and for a reply to be placed in the mail the same day. In this way there was an ongoing exchange of letters between John Charles Williams at Caerhays Castle, George Johnstone of Trewithen and Mr Magor. However, even the correspondence between individual friends was compartmentalised to avoid any inadvertent chance of causing offence by divulging personal information to a third party. The more detailed discussions took place through the social medium of a formal invitation to dinner, which provided an opportunity for a walk around the garden, an inspection of the greenhouses and propagation work, and for the exchange of plant material and seed.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s the status of a particular individual within the closed ranks of the landed gentry was not only judged on the size of the estate and the house[s] they owned, but also took account of the gardens and woodlands, together with the rarity of the plants and trees they contained. So, there was considerable competition to obtain desirable plant material and trees, including newly introduced species and new hybrids from both home and overseas. Even the rare plant material that happened to fall in to the hands of the key nurserymen of the day tended to find its way to favoured 'customers' amongst the landed gentry. The landed gentry expected to be waited on by lesser mortals; thus anyone who provided a service, be it at an individual or business level, was deemed to be 'in trade' and thus part of a lower class. So, those in trade or business, for example, owning or running a nursery, would not be countenanced in terms of being permitted to participate in the social life of the upper classes. But that said, the nurserymen kept themselves to themselves, in very much the same way as the landed gentry did. When the formation of a Rhododendron Society was mooted at Lanarth, Cornwall in March 1915, then founded at the Chelsea Show of May 1916, its original members were all gentlemen of means, and by invitation only. Amongst the 16 Founder Members, none of whom were nurserymen, was Mr Magor.

Mr Magor's Wild Collected Seed Acquisitions:

In 1899 Ernest Henry Wilson was chosen by Sir William Thiselton-Dyer, Director of RBG, Kew, to collect plants for James Veitch & Sons at Coombe Wood, Kingston on Thames. Charles P. Raffill, Assistant Curator at RGB, Kew, explained the background in a letter to Del and Rae James of Eugene, Oregon, dated 13th December, 1948:[7]

> 'The British firm of James Veitch and Sons, nurserymen of Chelsea, London, sent out to China my old and esteemed friend, E. Henry Wilson as a collector. We had both been employed at Birmingham Botanic Gardens and afterwards came to Kew as students. He was here at the Botanic Gardens, Kew in 1897 and I came in 1898. We both studied Botany together but he was a year in advance of me... We both passed advanced Botany courses and both of us intended to be Botanists but Wilson's funds ran short and he could not continue his studies, so he took a post with the great British nursery firm, James Veitch.'

When James Veitch began selling the rhododendrons raised from Wilson's 1899-1902 collections made in China, a handwritten listing of the plants that were available, dated 20th September 1907, was sent to Mr Magor.[12] Interestingly, Veitch's listing refers to the seed collection number and flower colour; no species names were used. From that year onwards Mr Magor received a listing, quoting the species (where known) and the collector's field number of each plant that would be available for that particular season. He reserved a

selection of plants each year that Veitch had new introductions available; these are itemised in his ledgers and were delivered to Lamellen in October or November of that year.[12] Some of these are still heathy plants today, notably W. 1523, the pink form of *R. calophytum*. Wilson continued to collect exclusively for Veitch on the 1903–1905 expedition and in total, Veitch raised 31 species of rhododendrons that were distributed under 49 seed numbers.

Wilson arrived back home in England in March 1905 and went immediately to Coombe Wood nursery to work on his collections. Ironically, his very success was to lead to the termination of his contract. Not only were his plant collecting expeditions deemed to be a great success, his success in raising the Chinese introductions, in collaboration with George Harrow at Coombe Wood, was to cause James Herbert concerns that Veitch's stock would flood the market. So it was that Herbert wrote to Kew on October 2nd, 1906:[18]

> 'After five years most satisfactory service Wilson's engagement is terminated with my firm… Very shortly there will be no work for him here… and I am taking the liberty of troubling you in the hope that during the next few months some suitable position may be open.'

Kew found him temporary work, but he soon took a botanical assistant's post, cataloguing collections from Asia for the Imperial Institute of Science in London. Meanwhile, he steadfastly swept aside all the advances of Professor Sargent of the Arnold Arboretum, Boston who was extremely keen to engage someone to collect in China on behalf of the Arnold Arboretum and an American syndicate of wealthy individuals. Sargent doggedly countered Wilson's refusals and, after protracted negotiations, he secured Wilson's agreement in September 1906 to make two further plant-collecting expeditions in 1907-1908 and 1910-1911.[22] Three English subscribers contributed to the 1907-1908 expedition, including J. C. Williams of Caerhays Castle, Cornwall who, between 1909 and 1911, distributed seed of 28 species under 35 seed numbers from Wilson's latter expeditions. Williams sent seed to Mr Magor. As was the case with later plant collectors, it is highly likely that Wilson would have been invited to dine or stay with the owners of major Cornish gardens who had purchased selections of plants raised from his seed by Veitch, or shared the distribution of his later seed collections. In this way Magor would have met Wilson and had the opportunity to discuss matters relating to the collection of seed and the methodology of raising plants. Inexplicably, these two men from entirely different backgrounds would, in the passage of time, become the key facilitators in this story.

Lamellen garden benefited enormously from Mr Magor's friendship with J. C. Williams, then Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall who, jointly with the RBG, Edinburgh, sponsored George Forrest's 1910-11 expedition to China. Mail and time-conscious traffic such as seed and plant material, carried by packet boat from the Far East and destined for delivery in England, normally entered the country through the port of Falmouth, as this was the most westerly safe harbour for the sailing ships to use. Mail, and other such traffic, was then shipped overland by road or rail. In due course the seed from Forrest's 1910-11 expedition arrived at Werrington Park, another estate owned by the Williams Family, at Launceston, on the border of Devon and Cornwall, and here J. C. Williams personally made up the packets of rhododendron seed and then distributed them to syndicate members and his friends. J. C. Williams also supervised the germination and plant cultivation at Werrington Park and initially the seedlings were planted out there rather than at his storybook castle at Caerhays. Mr Magor received seed of most of the species from this expedition and subsequently from the 1912-15, 1921-23 and 1924-26 expeditions.[12]

J. C. Williams was to sow seed of a different kind when, in 1915, he sent Mr Magor a copy of the newly published first edition of Bean's *Trees and Shrubs Hardy in the British Isles* with Walter Magor's name written on the fly-leaf, saying 'I hope the boy will make a gardener one day.' [13] Walter was then four years old.

With the arrival of Wilson's and Forrest's seed from China, Mr Magor ceased purchasing plants and concentrated on raising plants from seed. He regularly teased his wife about not going plant-hunting with Farrer in 1914; however, Sir George Holford sent him seed from the expedition and these were sown in early-1915.[12] Sir George Holford was a frequent visitor to Caerhays and J. C, Williams remarked that he was very discerning and difficult to please in terms of plant material.

By the time Mr Magor was sowing Farrer's seed, Great Britain was well entrenched in the First World War. Many well-known gardens were severely affected by the loss of all their younger garden staff to fight in the trenches, and Cornwall was no exception. By the time hostilities had come to an end many large gardens had become overgrown and, with the continuing shortage of gardeners in the post-war economy, some estates never recovered, a noteworthy example being Heligan. It would be 1927 before Mr Magor obtained the services of a proficient replacement gardener.[13]

Another friend, Captain W. H. Schroeder, who started to grow rhododendron species at Attadale, near Inverewe, Ross-shire in 1920, sent him seed from Rock's 1923-24 and 1925-26 expeditions.[12] The volumes of seed that Rock collected were immense and often contained consecutive numbers of the same species which tended to cause difficulties for the gardeners who were faced with raising the large number of seed lots.

In keeping with his banking background Mr Magor meticulously recorded in his ledger, under the title of Chinese Rhododendrons, the date he received each seed-lot, the collector's number, the name of the species (where known), the dates the seed was sown, germinated, potted on, the location and date that the seedlings were planted out in the garden, the date and colour of the first flowering and names of other recipients of the seedlings he had raised.[12]

With the large quantities of seed coming to hand, together with the need for assessment of the huge quantities of seedlings being raised of species material that had not been seen previously by the recipients, it was little wonder that the learning curve was immense. Names of many of the species were subsequently amended by Mr Magor in the ledgers over the years in the light of detailed correspondence that dates from 1916 with J. C. Williams and Professor Bayley Balfour (later Sir Isaac), Regius Keeper at RBG, Edinburgh who made the first attempts to classify these new collections from China. Following Balfour's death in 1922 the correspondence continued unabated with H. F. Tagg and Sir William Wright Smith at Edinburgh, both being instrumental in taking the identification and classification work forward. These correspondents were well aware of the possibility of hybrids occurring in the wild in areas where two species met, and of the resulting taxonomic difficulties or confusion. They were also concerned with the variation in a species caused by a wide geographical distribution with differing climatic conditions. That their doubts were justified, especially in the case of rhododendrons raised from Wilson and Forrest's seed, is well demonstrated by the revisions of many series in the genus in later years, as the following example clearly indicates.

By 1914 Sir Harry Veitch was 74 years old and, as there was no one to 'inherit' the Veitch dynasty, it was decided to wind up the Coombe Wood business. A huge clearance sale of nursery stock, which commenced on November 10th, 1914, resulted in many large lots being disposed of, ironically including most of Wilson's introductions. The auction at Coombe Wood ran on for ten days.[18] Prior to the sale Sir Harry Veitch invited a number of old friends and customers to have first choice of the specimen plants. Amongst other items,

Mr Magor purchased a plant of Wilson's under W. 1539. Seven years later, in 1922, he sent a flower to Sir Isaac Bayley Balfour for identification. Balfour, having shown it to Wilson, who happened to be in the Herbarium at the time, determined that it had not yet been described and named it *R. magorianum,* a hardy member of the Irrorata subsection.[14] Unfortunately, some years later it was reassessed as a possible wild hybrid.

Two huge and very old magnolias, *Magnolia campbellii* and *M. delavayi,* which stand close to the east side of the House, are almost certainly from Wilson seed, and are thought to have been purchased from Coombe Wood, possibly at the time of Veitch's 1914 sale. Given the collections of magnolias that graced the gardens of many of Mr Magor's local acquaintances, it is somewhat intriguing that he never acquired a collection himself. Perhaps the answer can be found in the winter of early-1917, one of the most severe prior to 1940, which killed outright a number of tender rhododendrons at Lamellen and would have decimated many early-flowering magnolias throughout Cornwall.

Mr Magor's Hybridisation Programme:

Hybridisation was a subject that fascinated many early gentlemen gardeners in Cornwall with an interest in rhododendrons, and Mr Magor was no exception. He commenced his hybridisation programme with cross #1 in 1905 and, having corresponded with Professor Bayley Balfour about the correct way of approach, he made primary crosses with the species. Most of his hybrids bore 'portmanteau' names made from the first part of the two parent species names, with the seed parent placed first, as recommended by Balfour.[12]

Few rhododendron enthusiasts realise just how much hybridisation work Mr Magor accomplished - by the time of his death his listing of crosses had reached #2044, probably a record for a British plantsman with no commercial interests. In comparison, Lionel de Rothschild made 1210 crosses in a 22 year period, so the average number of crosses per year was very similar. As a precursor of the approach used in more recent years, he planted the hybrids out on trial in the garden in groups of three with a view to keeping the best. A total of 100 crosses were named of which 80 were registered in Mr Magor's lifetime, over 20 others have been registered since and there are many others that should have been named.

At the turn of the century, like many of his peers in rhododendron circles, Mr Magor used in his hybridisation programme each Spring the flowerings of whatever newly introduced species came into bloom for the first time. Competition to be the first to create a stunning hybrid from each new species was intense and, inevitably, in relatively few years the process resulted in the production of a range of 'look-alike' hybrids. The first to raise a good looking plant with an attractive truss usually got to name the cross, and it was the accepted practice for the plants raised from the same cross in other gardens to assume the same name, unless the characteristics of the flowers were markedly different. Probably the best known of Mr Magor's hybrids are R. 'Damaris', R. 'Lamellen', R. 'Cinnkeys', R. 'Gilian', R. 'St. Breward' and R. 'St.Tudy'.

Lionel de Rothschild closely monitored Mr Magor's approach to hybridisation and a took a good many batches of his seedlings back home to Exbury. Whilst walking around Exbury on 21st March, 1938, Mr Lionel noted:

> 'A fine scarlet hybrid of MAGOR'S - 'Daphne' - with its curious double calyx is a pretty dwarf bush and makes a fine splash of colour against the dark fir trees.'

And, again on 5th April, 1938:



- opposite -
Gilian and Edward Magor at the front of Lamellen House, probably in the mid-1930s.

'*Haematodes* x blood-red *arboreum* of MAGOR was fully out with fine trusses of amazing scarlet. The plants I have are quite first class and are a great credit to the raiser.' [15]

This latter cross would appear to be unnamed whereas R. 'Daphne', a 1921 cross of R. 'Red Admiral' x *R. neriiflorum,* was named after Mr Magor's daughter-in-law and received an AM in 1933. Many of Mr Magor's crosses have been used by later generations of enthusiasts in their hybridisation programmes, including Dietrich Hobbie in Germany.

The Spring Meeting of the Rhododendron Society:

As late as 1925 membership of the exclusive Rhododendron Society numbered only 23 in total. Ernest H Wilson, who had been elected as an honorary member, commented that it was illiberal for the information being distributed to members to be classified as confidential. Lionel de Rothschild was a key instigator of discussions in 1925 as to the practicability of opening up the society to other gardeners who were requesting membership. In 1927 a new organisation under the title of the Rhododendron Association was formed [incorporated 1928] and was open to all who wished to join, subject to election. However, the original Rhododendron Society continued in being as a private organisation with a fixed membership, and from 1927 until the 1939 outbreak of hostilities, the key members of the Rhododendron Society gathered each Spring at Lamellen, the usual attendees being: [12]

Lionel N de Rothschild of Exbury, Hampshire; Henry McLaren of Bodnant, North Wales [later the 2nd Lord Aberconway]; Colonel Stephenson R. Clark of Borde Hill, Sussex; J. B. Stevenson of Tower Court, Surrey [attendee from 1929]; H. Armytage Moore of Rowallane, Northern Ireland [attendee from 1929]; Sir Frederick Moore [retired from Glasnevin, Dublin in March, 1922 and usually accompanied H. Armytage Moore]; Lord Headfort of Headfort, Southern Ireland [attendee from 1929]; Lord Stair of Castle Kennedy, South West Scotland [attendee from 1929]; and E. J. P. Magor of Lamellen, Cornwall.

Many of these attendees were given, exchanged or purchased large selections of rhododendrons whilst visiting Lamellen and other gardens in the area, and in this way plants from Cornwall, both species and hybrids, spread all over Great Britain and Ireland. Typical of the attendees, whose name may not be familiar, was Mr Magor's friend Lord Headfort (1878–1943), whose garden and arboretum at Headfort House, Kells, County Meath, Ireland had been laid out by him in the same time-frame as Lamellen. Lord Headfort sent Mr Magor seed from Kingdon-Ward's 1921, 1922 and 1924-25 expeditions.[12]

Distribution of Mr Magor's Plants in Britain:

The commentary on Mr Magor's wild collected seed acquisitions, hybridisation programme and the listing of regular visitors to Lamellen serves to emphasise that he was uniquely well placed to provide both plant material and knowledge from detailed 'hands-on' experience that dated from the time when 'Chinese Rhododendrons' first arrived in Britain. Mr Magor's ability to source material and act as a facilitator was greatly enhanced by fact that his immediate friends in the world of rhododendrons were the key figures of the era, so he was able to source plant material from collections in other major British and Irish gardens.

One of the most significant, and perhaps least known of Mr Magor's activities was his involvement in distributing both species and hybrids to 'gentleman gardeners' by the circulation of a 'List of Surplus Plants for Sale'.[13] This list was being distributed as early as 1918 and by the 1920s there was a 'network' in place whereby the landed gentry were able to sell or exchange surplus plants and thereby service each other's needs; however, it was not realised until recently just how large a volume was involved. Around 1915 John A. Holms, who was landscaping and developing gardens around the new mansion house on his Formakin Estate near Bishopton, Renfrewshire, became infected with an extremely bad case of rhododendronitis. Holms had already developed an insatiable appetite as a serious collector in the fields of antique furniture, works of art, tapestries and porcelain, so it was second nature to him to direct his organisational skills to acquiring rhododendrons. Holms was also a perfectionist and he meticulously recorded all his plant acquisitions for the development of the gardens around his new country house, and then later, in connection with the development of the major rhododendron garden he developed at an unlikely, undulating, rocky, woodland location called Larachmhor, at Arisaig on Scotland's West Coast. Holms classified Mr Magor as a 'Rhododendron Dealer', one of fifteen names in a listing that included all the 'key' nurseries of the day, which at first sight seems inappropriate. In the period April, 1918, to October, 1919, four batches of plants were ordered from Mr Magor and delivered to Formakin Estate, comprising in total 15 species and 4 hybrids. In contrast, between November 26th, 1926, and November 1930, ten batches of plants were supplied for Larachmhor Garden comprising 102 species, 90 small species seedlings, 64 hybrids (including some of Mr Magor's best crosses) and 32 small hybrid seedlings.[20] Many were large plants around 5 to 6ft high, costing up to £3 per plant; some were rare specimens costing up to £10 per plant; the minimum charge per plant was 5 shillings. Interestingly, Mr Magor's named hybrids were significantly more expensive than the species. These statistics provide but a glimpse of the scope of Mr Magor's propagation work, since Holms was just one of his many contacts who were seeking plants. What is of far more significance is the wide range of both species and hybrid material that Mr Magor had on offer in his listings each year. We can but wonder where he found the time to propagate single-handedly, or the nursery space to raise such a large inventory of plants at Lamellen. Will Haughton, the gardener, came to Lamellen in 1927, after service as a cook in the Navy, and lived at the Lodge with his wife. Mr Magor gave him explicit instructions never to touch any of the rhododendrons in the nurseries or the gardens, which he faithfully adhered to.[13]

Edward 'Walter' Moyle Magor, Mr Magor's son, had the unusual distinction of taking a degree in Botany at both Oxford and Cambridge, his thesis being *The Flora and Fauna of Bodmin Moor,* which remains an invaluable source of reference. Frustrated by his inability to find employment where he could use his knowledge of botany, he decided to escape the 1930s depression and follow his equestrian interests instead by taking a commission with the Indian Army - Poona Horse. Later he resigned from the services, married Daphne Davis Graham in 1939, and then succeeded in finding employment in the Indian Political Service.[10]

Mr Magor and the North American Rhododendron Pioneers:

A long, detailed article, published in 2004 - *Mr Magor and the North American Triangle: An Historical Perspective*[16] - provides us a goodly insight into the highly significant part that Mr Magor played in supporting the establishment of three geographically disparate rhododendron pioneers, and the following is a brief outline. Ernest Wilson was to play the role of an unremarked facilitator in this story, and thus brought together the four key players.

George Fraser emigrated in 1881 from Perthshire, Scotland, to Canada, and in 1886 eventually arrived in Victoria, on Vancouver Island, in search of land suitable for raising rhododendrons and heathers. He then purchased 256 acres of native bush in 1892 for $256

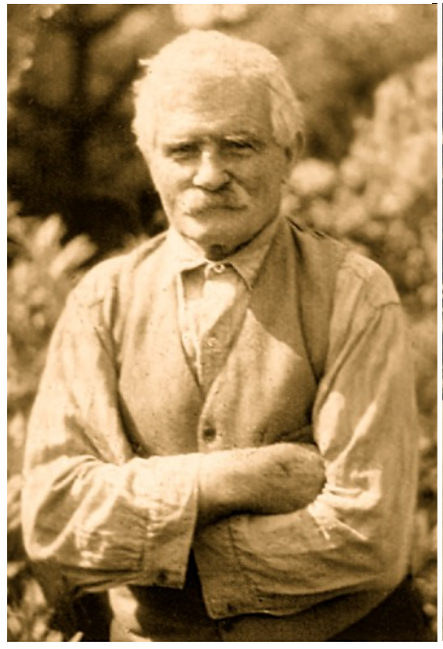
at the isolated frontier location of Ucluelet. He put up a shack and cleared nine acres of land to start a nursery, but even with a horticultural background as a head gardener, he had a hard struggle setting up in business as a nurseryman. In 1906 Fraser, who was seeking sources of rhododendron plant material, made contact with Ernest H Wilson, who was back at the RBG, Kew in a temporary capacity, but he was unable to help at that time. In April 1919 Professor Sargent arranged the appointment of Wilson as Assistant Director of the Arnold Arboretum and around this date George Fraser corresponded with Wilson at the Arnold Arboretum seeking to obtain seed.[8] This time Wilson could help and provided Fraser with a listing of names to contact in England as he would have been aware of J. C. Williams's distribution network based in Cornwall. Fraser struggled to get a positive response to his letters, but in the passage of time received a reply from a Mr Magor of Lamellen. So the first transatlantic 'connection' fell in to place and records suggest that seed was sent to Fraser in Ucluelet, BC, each year from around 1922.[12, 21]

In late 1919 Joseph Benson Gable, a nurseryman of Stewartstown, Pennsylvania, also made contact with Wilson at the Arnold Arboretum. Gable appears to have been searching for plant material and other nurserymen with an interest in rhododendrons, so Wilson put Gable in touch with Fraser, and so began a lifelong exchange of correspondence.[9] The continuing correspondence between Fraser and Gable served to underline the problems that Gable faced in raising seedlings that could survive the extremes of the East Coast climate. In the mid-1920s Fraser decided to 'introduce' Gable to Mr Magor by mail so the two could directly discuss the performance of seedlings raised in Pennsylvania from Lamellen seed.[8]

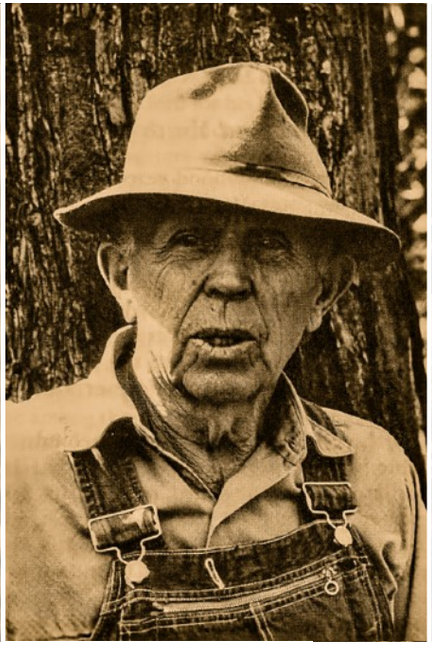
James Elwood Barto, born in Philadelphia, Pa, on June 14th 1881, was a US Naval shipyard specialist-carpenter by trade, having first enlisted in 1905. After the World War One armistice was signed, Barto travelled west to Oregon in 1920, having heard that certain lands were available to veterans for homesteading. Barto filed a claim for around 160 acres of land densely covered with Douglas Fir and interspersed with Oak, Maple, Alder, Wild Cherry and Red Cedar on the High Pass Road, ten miles west of Junction City. He returned home to Chicago, loaded his wife, kids and whatever else they could fit into an old chain-driven truck and headed back west to Oregon. As the family would later recall, this was a 2,700 mile nightmare of a journey and several weeks were to elapse before they arrived in Eugene in October, 1920. Barto found work in Eugene as a carpenter and at weekends he worked long hours at the High Pass Road property clearing timber and a heavy understorey of vine maple and other shrubs on a small area of land where he completed the erection of a temporary log cabin in June, 1921.[17]

Barto developed an interest in rhododendrons and azaleas whilst doing carpentry work at Raup & York's nursery in Eugene and learnt much of his cultivation methodology from the work of Raup, who provided him with seed to experiment with at the homestead. The seed germinated well in a tray placed on top of Mrs Barto's chicken incubator that was heated by a kerosene lamp. Barto was 'hooked' on rhododendrons. Around 1926 he contacted Mrs A. C. U. Berry, a plantswoman of wide-ranging interests, who was constructing a large garden in an uptown area of Portland, Oregon. Mrs Berry was well-connected in horticultural circles, was also a subscriber to a number of major plant collecting expeditions and she gave Barto a list of names to contact.[11]

This list included the contact details for Ernest H Wilson who in turn provided Barto with the contact details for George Fraser on Vancouver Island.[17] Barto wrote to Fraser, who in turn exchanged some thoughts in correspondence with Gable about the 'new kid on the block', prior to responding to Barto. In due course both Fraser and Gable came to realise that they both had difficulty in servicing the deluge of correspondence, queries and



George Fraser



Joseph Gable



James Barto

requests for specific plant material that Barto generated, so Fraser wrote to Mr Magor in early 1927 to 'introduce' Barto by mail.[8] This put in place the 'triangle' that became the North American end of the 'connection' that corresponded with Mr Magor. Records indicate that he sent seed to the USA every year from 1927 until 1940, mainly in response to requests for specific species seed, and he often enclosed additional material, including seed from his own hybridisation work.[9, 11] After 1930 pollen was also regularly sent in response to many requests and in some years, scions and seedlings were also forwarded.[17]

Reference has been made earlier to Edinburgh RBG's concerns arising from the doubtful status of herbarium specimens of, and seedlings propagated from, many of the early collectors numbers. Past articles and surviving correspondence suggest that both Gable and Barto were dedicated 'collectors' of rhododendron species rather than just traditional gardeners. Their correspondence indicates they exchanged seed of specific collector's numbers and sought to extend their own species collections whenever the opportunity arose. Records also suggest that they requested specific collector's numbers in their letters to Mr. Magor and other correspondents in Great Britain. Not surprisingly, the Gable correspondence contains a number of comments referring to the difficulties of identifying which seedlings were true to type and which were hybrids, which replicated the problems that faced British pioneers who were raising wild collected seed.[21]

The Difficult Thirties and Forties Signal the End of an Era:

Ernest H. Wilson and his wife Nellie were returning to their South Street, Boston home from a visit to their daughter in Geneva, NY State, on October 15th, 1930, when their car spun off the road and dropped 40 feet down an embankment near Worcester, Mass. Nellie was dead when she was pulled from the wreck and Wilson died of his injuries an hour later.[22] Tragically, this highway accident brought to an end the key role of facilitator that Wilson had played in this story since the turn of the century.

In the mid-1930s Eric Savill, Deputy Ranger of Windsor Great Park, began laying-out what are now the Savill and Valley Gardens and, as the work progressed, he began to seek donations of rhododendron plants for the gardens. Mr Magor was very pleased to let Eric have a good many of the foundation plants. Soon after the introduction of petrol rationing in 1940, Eric Savill, accompanied by Lord Strathcona, brought a 3-ton truck to Cornwall and filled it with rhododendrons from Caerhays Castle, Lamellen and Trewithen.[13]

In 1937 Koichiro Wada sent seed of *R. metternichii* var. *metternianum* from the Izu Peninsula in Japan, and in return plants were sent by Mr Magor. Dietrich Hobbie visited Lamellen shortly after Wada's seed arrived and he obtained a portion of that seed. Hobbie's tour of gardens in Cornwall made a lasting impression on him, and Mr Magor sent plants to him, which provided a great impetus to his work.[13] Boxes of un-flowered seedlings, both species and hybrids, were sent by Mr Magor to gardens throughout the British Isles for at least two decades prior to World War Two.

James Elwood Barto became very ill in early 1940 and sought admission to the Veterans Administration Hospital in Portland, Oregon where he was admitted for medical care in May, 1940. Sadly, he was found to have cancer and in June of the same year his home burned to the ground and with it his library and all his records. He passed away at the hospital on December 22nd, 1940.[17, 19]

With Britain deeply embedded in WWII, Edward John Penberthy Magor was never to meet the pioneers he had stoically supported, as he passed away quietly on 14th May 1941.[13] It was the end of an era; by the time the WWII hostilities had come to an end most of the overseas rhododendron personalities, who had maintained contact with Mr Magor, had also passed away. For two decades Mr Magor had been the catalyst by which large volumes of rhododendron seed, pollen, scions and plants, both species and hybrids, together with detailed advice on propagation and cultivation, had found their way to the North American pioneers. Though Mr Magor, in his lifetime, was never to realise the significance of his legacy, this unlikely pioneer was to influence and strike the imagination of later generations of rhododendron enthusiasts and gardeners on both the East Coast of the USA and across the Pacific Northwest.

The eloquent words of Joseph Gable in a letter dated January 8th, 1942, to Guy Nearing, another early rhododendron pioneer from Ridgewood, New Jersey, expresses the debt owed to Mr Magor by a good many early rhododendron enthusiasts:[21]

> 'Well our good old friend Mr Magor has passed on and I am sure if rhododendron lovers had any share in building up his future reward in the life to come he would not want. Letters from Australia, New Zealand, Chile, Japan and Germany that I can recall, all praised him for his disinterested generosity in helping them to obtain their wants. That he appreciated a little of this in return I well know for he once wrote me that out of the hundreds of recipients of seed, etc. from him I was one of the few who not only thanked him but reciprocated in kind. Nothing was too much trouble for him it seemed. If he did not have the seed I wanted himself he would go fifty miles to a neighbour's garden or send to Edinburgh Botanic or to Ireland before he would abandon the effort - and then apologise - a true old English gentleman.
>
> 'And I just had a Christmas note from Mr Fraser of Ucluelet, Vancouver Island, who first introduced me - by mail - to Mr Magor. So to these two men more than all the others - I owe my acquisitions in the first few years of my rhododendron growing.'

In his memory, the Cornwall Garden Society introduced the 'EJP Magor Memorial Cup' for rhododendrons. More recently, the American Rhododendron Society posthumously presented their most prestigious, and rarely given honour, the 'Pioneer Achievement Award,' to E. J. P. Magor at their National Convention held in Vancouver, WA, in May 2011. The citation notes that `...Mr Magor must have done more towards the start of Rhododendron growing in the USA and Canada than any other person in Britain. [23]

Lamellen Returns to Nature:

At the outbreak of WWII, Walter M. Magor had re-joined the newly mechanised Poona Horse and was sent to North Africa, where he was dispatched on dangerous reconnaissance missions to ensure that the important route to India via Iran remained open. [10] He returned briefly to Lamellen when his father passed away and his mother, Gilian, did not feel able to live on at Lamellen by herself, so the house was let for many years.

1,170 seedlings and young plants, 1-5ft (0.3-1.5m) in cold frames were listed in a large catalogue produced by Protheroe & Morris of London and sold off by tender with a return date of 31st July 1941. Many passed into good hands, including Lord Aberconway, Mr Balfour, RHS Wisley, John B Stevenson, Colonel Clark, Lord Strathcona and MP Williams. Will Haughton, the gardener, stayed on at the Lodge with his wife after Mr Magor's death, and did not finally retire until 1969. Mr Magor had never let him touch the rhododendrons, so he faithfully adhered to his instructions, and just kept the lawns, kitchen garden and drive tidy, scythed the brambles and bracken each autumn around the rhododendrons and, with Britain in the midst of WWII, the rest of the garden quietly went to sleep.[13]

George Fraser enjoyed his life in the small isolated community of Ucluelet and passed away on 3rd May 1944 after 50 years of raising rhododendrons and playing his fiddle at the community dances. And, like Barto before him, Fraser's correspondence that he had carefully kept over the years was all destroyed after his death in a fire at his home.[8] Mr Magor's ledgers and scrapbooks contain extensive plant records, articles and newspaper cuttings relating to plants and cultivation techniques, but very little in the way of correspondence. His family have suggested that to maintain confidentiality he may have destroyed correspondence that did not contain information of specific long-term interest.

Colonel Eric G. W. W. Harrison, later Major-General, had bought Tremeer in 1939, at which time the garden was derelict, but the intervention of WWII delayed its restoration and work did not begin to save the garden from ruin until 1947. It required a great deal of courage and vision for an amateur gardener to embark upon what was by any standards a major restoration project. Immediately prior to the onset of WWII he obtained a considerable number of plants from Mr Magor, and a further selection was obtained from Lamellen in the 1950s when Tremeer garden was being restored. In the passage of time this action would prove to be fortuitous, as otherwise some original plants would have been lost.[5]

Acknowledgements:

The author is particularly grateful to Jeremy and Felicity Peter-Hoblyn who have unstintingly responded to queries and provided access to fragile ledgers and old family documents from the Lamellen Estate records during research work to unravel a number of aspects relating to E. J. P. Magor, E. W. M. Magor and the development of the garden.

John Hammond is a garden historian and long standing member of the Rhododendron Camellia and Magnolia Group, and was Director at Large for the American Rhododendron Society for many years

- opposite -

The Pioneer Achievement Award of the American Rhododendron Society,
which was presented to Jeremy and Felicity Peter-Hoblyn by John Hammond at the Annual Congress of the Society in Portland, Oregon, in May 2011, now replicated in slate and stone at Lamellen.

THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Pioneer Achievement Award

Edward John Penberthy Magor

Edward John Penberthy Magor, 1874–1941, received seed from the early 20th Century plant collectors, and was a founder member of the Rhododendron Society in London in 1916. He regularly communicated with Sir Isaac Bayley Balfour of the RBG. Edinburgh in connection with the taxonomy and naming of the newly introduced species. He was one of the earliest to hybridize with the newly introduced species & made 2044 crosses of which 100 are named. From 1901 onwards he developed the renowned Lamellen Garden in Cornwall, which is now cared for by the third generation of the Magor Family.

Respectfully known as 'Mr. Magor', he was mentor to a brotherhood of early rhododendron pioneers including George Fraser, James E. Barto, Joseph Gable, Guy Nearing, Charles Dexter, together with pioneers in Germany, Chile, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. From 1922 until the onset of hostilities in 1939 'Mr. Magor' provided both plant material and knowledge from hands-on experience and he was instrumental in encouraging Lionel de Rothschild, and other key personalities, to respond to overseas requests for plant material.

For all these contributions to the plant world, the American Rhododendron Society is pleased to present its most prestigious honor, the Pioneer Achievement Award to

PRESENTED THIS *14th* DAY OF *May, 2011*

Edward John Ponberthy Magor.

THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
MEMBERS WORLDWIDE

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Sir Isaac Bayley Balfour

Naming Rhododendron Hybrids.

by E. W. M. Magor.

Being detained for other duties, I was unable unfortunately to attend Mr. Slocock's talk on the Breeding of Hardy Hybrid Rhododendrons on the first day of the Rhododendron Show last May (in 1964), and now that I have found the opportunity to read what he said in the Journal for October (1964) I realise how much I missed.

As he has linked my father's name with a system of naming hybrid Rhododendrons which showed their parentage, I think Fellows may be interested to know the origin of this system, now superseded by the 'Little Bert—'Conococheague' school.

The earlier system, followed by my father, Lord Stair, Lord Aberconway and Admiral Heneage-Vivian among others, originated from the Royal Botanic Garden at Edinburgh, as will be seen from the following extracts from letters that my father received from the Regius Keeper, Professor Isaac Bayley Balfour:

31.8.18. "I am strongly in favour of naming hybrids if possible by the combination method - that is a word coined out of a portion of the name of each parent. This is more satisfactory than either the popular English name, or the name in Latin form. Thus "prostigiatum" would carry out the intention in the case of your hybrid, and it is a name not likely to be absorbed by any other plant."

26.10.18. ". . . Now as to names. I must not mislead you, as I fear I may have done, to think that the termination of the name of the male plant should always be taken to add to the first part of that of the female in making up the name of the hybrid. The aim of the system is to get an indication of parentage in a name of as euphonious a form as possible. To take a typical case from Primula. Primula Marven is a well sounding name for a hybrid *P. marginata* X *P. venusta.* In the case of your *R. prostratum* X *R. fastigiatum,* I suggested *R.* "prostigiatum", for it sounds to me better than "prostfast". But now if you take the other hybrids for which you suggested names.

101 and 238. Why not decauck instead of decaucklandii

133. Why not Auckivor

129. " " Kewdec

179. " " Thomkings

190. " " Cinncrass

220. " " Campbut

180. " " Arbsutch

219. Lepidoboothii is good, but perhaps too like a specific name

178. Why not Cornsutch or Corsutch

183. " " Campylothoms

218. " " Oreocinn

232. " " Haemkings ?

"The great point to keep in view is that the name shall not be so like a specific one as to mislead, while at the same time parentage is indicated."

In practice, my father mostly used this system for interspecific hybrids, taking as a rule the first syllable of the name of each parent, the seed parent coming first. For hybrids between a species and a hybrid or between two hybrids, he had resort for the most part to the names of Greek ladies from Dr. William Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology.* In the interest of euphony, however, he occasionally also gave proper names to interspecific hybrids, such as 'Maya'.

Walter Magor's article was part of the *Rhododendron Notes* section of *The Rhododendron and Camellia Year Book 1966,* published by the Royal Horticultural Society in November, 1965.

Addendum:
'Euphonious' means 'pleasing to the ear', though E. J. P. Magor - clearly hooked - may have missed that useful tidbit of information from Sir Isaac - pictured opposite in his pre-Harry-Potter dark wizard outfit - as the registrations for tongue-twisting gems such as 'Callirhoe', 'Campxen' and 'Cilkeisk' illustrate, though the one most commentators currently agree takes the biscuit is 'Smirnauck'.

The really sad thing is that the adoption of these ghastly contractions as epithets condemned some simply remarkable hybrids to obscurity or worse. Fortunately, few other rhodophiles boarded this cumbersome bandwagon, though John Dalrymple at Castle Kennedy, Algernon Heneage-Vivian at Clyne Castle, Henry McLaren at Bodnant, and Lionel de Rothschild at Exbury, all flirted with the concept but to nowhere near the same degree, and predominantly chose 'fancy' names for their hybrid introductions rather than Sir Isaac's abominations.

Suffice it to say, condensed formula naming never became flavour of the month for most breeders and over time a clear nomenclature dividing line was established by default, with the botanists given free reign over the species appellations in the scholarly language of ancient Rome and its empire, but kept well clear of anything that might later populate the pages of the *IRRC.*

Rhododendrons at Lamellen.

by E. J. P. Magor.

As Reference No. 14 from John Hammond's 2012-published historical overview indicates, Edward Magor submitted an annual account of all the goings-on at Lamellen to the members of the Rhododendron Society, with his transcript including concise morphological details on all the rhododendrons that had flowered for the very first time in the garden that year. These case studies appeared in thirteen of the fifteen volumes of *The Rhododendron Society Notes 1916-1931,* and updated versions are reproduced in sequence herein, with modern-day nomenclature and decimal points replacing yesteryear's botanic denominations and imperial measurements. Copious filament, style, stigma, stamen and lobe detail has been removed, but gluttons for such punishment can read or freely download the full and unexpurgated Magor expositions from the RCMG website at:

https://www.rhodogroup-rhs.org/publications/books/rhodo-soc-notes/

1916:

The garden is situated some six miles from the north coast of Cornwall, about nine miles from Tintagel. It is a narrow wooded valley facing north-west, and sheltered from the east by rising ground above, and to some extent from the prevailing north-west wind by a high hill intersecting its mouth.

The soil is a heavy loam for the most part, in some parts very shallow, and overlies slaty shale, save in the centre of the valley where there is blue clay underneath.

Rhododendron culture here owes its inception to a sight of *R. grande* in flower at the Temperate House, Kew, in the year 1900. The collecting of many Sikkim and other species from various sources followed, and first attempts at hybridisation were made in 1905. In this, in the raising and culture of seedlings, in a continuous supply of Chinese and other seed, I owe more than I can say to the kindness and generosity of Mr. J. C. Williams.

The best plant in the garden is *R. keiskei,* which is about 0.5m high and 0.8m. across. It is a Japanese evergreen plant of compact habit, and pale yellow flowers like those of *R. triflorum;* but it blooms much earlier, usually in February.

R. veitchianum and *R. nuttallii* are not hardy here, and I fear that *R. moulmainense* is hopeless. But of other tender varieties, *R. championae, R. dalhousiae, R. edgeworthii* and *R. ciliicalyx,* have so far survived against a wall; and in the open R. 'Countess of Haddington', R. 'Fragrantissimum', R. 'Sesterianum', R. 'Exoniense', *R. boothii, R. maddenii, R. calophytum,* and *R. formosum*. The Chinese forms of *R. maddenii* and *R. edgeworthii* - *R. crassum* and *R. bullatum* [now synonymous] - seem to be hardier than their Sikkim relatives.

During the great gale of November, 1915, a very large elm tree fell on several of these sweet-scented varieties and on my only plant of *R. hookeri,* and severely damaged them.

The following species flowered here for the first time this year: *R. irroratum* from Tali; *R. adenogynum* (F 5871), a fine flower on a dwarf plant - *R. thomsonii* and *R. arboreum* set fine pods of seed to pollen from this; *R. adenopodum; R. longesquamatum;* and *R. trichostomum* (F 11246), a small-leaved high alpine, which is a most attractive little plant with flowers resembling a daphne.

R. augustinii (W 4238), flowered for the second time, and is the most beautiful lavender blue I have seen.

R. prostratum (F 5862), flowered again, and I have a number of seedlings from it crossed with *R. fastigiatum,* but it is yet too early to see whether the cross has taken.

The most noteworthy of the hybrids raised here are as follows: *campylocarpum* x *griffithianum* [*Aucklandii* to Mr Magor], usually with a pale lemon flower, but one plant this year produced flowers of a curious pink tinged with yellow; *discolor* Houlstonii (W 648) x *griffithianum* (Caerhays seed); *ciliatum* x *keiskei* (to flower in 1917); *grande* hybrid [*argenteum* to Mr Magor] x *fortunei; griffithianum* x *edgeworthii* [*bullatum*] (this has a poor constitution); *maximum* x *discolor* Houlstonii; *ambiguum* x *keysii* (to flower in 1917); *keiskei* x *arboreum;* 'Kewense' x *decorum; keiskei* x *lutescens;* 'Cornubia' x *sutchuenense; cinnabarinum* x crassum; *zeylanicum* [the *Kingianum* form to Mr Magor] x 'Mrs. Kingsmill'; *arboreum* x *sutchuenense; arboreum* x *campylocarpum; glaucophyllum* x boothii; *lepidotum* x *boothii; keiskei* x *fastigiatum;* 'Mrs. Butler' x *augustinii; decorum* x *fictolacteum* (Verrieres seed, and a poor lot, which may not survive); *yunnanense* x *cinnabarinum;* and *campylocarpum* x 'Mrs. Butler'.

Seedlings of *R. wightii,* from seed kindly sent by Miss Mangles, are growing well, though slowly.

Seedlings of *R. ungernii* (Tregrehan seed), proved difficult to raise, being very liable to damp off, as also were seedlings of *R. lanatum* (Caerhays seed).

Notable hybrids here from other sources are:- Blood-red *arboreum* x *thomsonii* (Caerhays); 'Loderi' (Leonardslee), though I fear this is dying; *smirnowi* x *fictolacteum;* 'Kewense' x *fictolacteum;* 'Harrovianum' x *lutescens* (all from Verrieres).

Some parts of the garden are very damp, and many plants rot at the root and die, chief among them this year being the only plant of *R. longistylum* (W 1204). The use of moorland peat, since discontinued, would seem to be responsible for many of these deaths.

Rabbits attack a number of rhododendrons here, especially when first planted. *R. rupicola* (F 6865), always a difficult plant, has been the worst sufferer, but they will also eat *R. virgatum, R. lanatum, R. hirsutum, R. ferrugineum,* R. 'Tenellum', *R. serpyllifolium, R. trichocladum, R. fastigiatum, keiskei* x *arboreum, ciliatum* x *keiskei,* and *R. rubiginosum*.

1917:

The hard winter did a certain amount of damage in this garden. and several plants of the following species were killed: *moulmainense, edgeworthii* [including *bullatum*], *maddenii* and *crassum*; whilst among the injured, but surviving, were plants of all the above, and *boothii, dalhousiae, zeylanicum* [including *Kingianum*], 'Lady Alice Fitzwilliam', 'Countess of Haddington', and *R. virgatum*.

Section Choniastrum, represented by *Rhododendron moulmainense* appears to be almost hopeless here, whilst *bullatum* and *crassum* do not seem much hardier than their Himalayan representatives, *edgeworthii* and *maddenii.*

Rabbits have again attacked several species in addition to those I mentioned last year; such as *yunnanense, cinnabarinum* x *maddenii, prostratum, brachyanthum, zaleucum, stenopetalum, indicum* and *augustinii.* Plants of *augustinii,* with stems as thick as an ordinary pencil being bitten off short, and a batch of seedlings of *yunnanense* over 0.5m high being in some cases eaten to ground level.

But the three best plants of *prostratum* suffered most, although inside wire-netting; for a half-grown rabbit devoted himself to these, and ate almost every leaf on them in two nights, leaving untouched *fastigiatum, flavidum, hippophaeoides,* etc., which were all round them; when with the help of my wife's Pekinese - our only surviving dog - I succeeded in shooting him. About this *prostratum* there seems to be something particularly tasty, for, besides rabbits, it is eagerly devoured by small green caterpillars, which, by the way, seem fond of many Rhododendron seedlings in their first stages. Whilst on the subject of caterpillars, I have noticed two other types enjoying the foliage of my Rhododendrons: one



Looking down on the garden from the front terrace

a very beautiful creature, green with black between two of the segments and tufts of pale yellow hair on its back. This I believe turns into the pale Tussock Moth (*Orgygia pudibunda*), and has been very numerous this year. The other is a much worse pest, an ugly olive or yellowish-brown animal, which is perhaps the caterpillar of the large yellow-underwing moth (*Tryphoena pronuba*). It feeds entirely at night, and will make great havoc in a bed of seedlings. I well remember my first encounter with one of these three or four years ago. I had noticed in one of my frames that a seedling was disappearing every night, and tried to catch the offender at various times as late as midnight and as early as 6 a.m. without success. At last, going up about 2.30 a.m., I found a new plant attacked and a leaf half underground, and digging round with a large pruning knife found my friend on the end of it, and the depredations ceased.

Two supposed varieties of *Azalea indica* [-???-] sent home by Forrest, bloomed for the first time; one a straggling plant with very pale rose flowers, three in a truss: the other much more compact and of a rather fastigiate habit, with pink spotted flowers in threes in the axils of the leaves all the way up the stem, after the fashion of *R. racemosum*. Forrest's note on the seed packet was "RHODODENDRON RACEMOSUM FORMA? Plant of 5-feet, Chutong Hills" but it certainly is not *racemosum* and is probably a new species.

Among other Rhododendrons flowering here for the first time were the following: *ciliatum* x *keiskei* white tinged with pink on the outside, about 5cm. across and something like *ciliatum,* but the habit of the plant shows the influence of *keiskei* very plainly, being quite prostrate. A charming plant for the rock garden, hut unfortunately I have only raised three plants of it.

R. habrotrichum (F 9048), had one flower in a cold frame, which opened about April 22nd, 16 to l8 flowers in the truss, blush-white with a blotch of crimson at the base inside the three upper segments.

Several plants of *ambiguum* x *keysii* flowered, all extraordinarily like the pollen parent, but rather wider in the mouth and some weeks earlier. Rather a curiosity than an acquisition.

R. moulmainense (F 5530) also flowered from seed sown in 1911. The plant was in a cold frame, those in the open having been killed or cut to the ground by frost. The flower was about 6cm. across, white with a large blotch of orange-yellow on the upper segment, and from memory I should say that it was very like the flower of *R. stamineum.* I wish I were sufficiently a botanist to describe the flower buds, which were quite unlike those of an ordinary Rhododendron. They were at the extremity of the branch in the axils of the topmost three or four leaves and were larger and more pointed than the leaf buds. The same phenomenon has appeared on my plant of *R. championae* and I am curious to see whether flowers will be produced in this case also.

About the next I am a little diffident. It is supposed to be *augustinii* x *edgeworthii,* but there is very little trace of *bullatum* except that it is distinctly sweet-scented, and the flowers have rather more substance than in *augustinii.* Also the leaves are larger and more hairy, and there is hair on the young stems.

R. brachyanthum (F 6777) is a very dainty little plant, with smallish leaves, dark green above and very glaucous beneath, rather reminding one of those of *R. glaucophyllum* but the flowers are yellow, unspotted, in a loose truss of five or six, and each flower gives the impression of neatness.

Several seedlings of *R. hippophaeoides* (F 12623) flowered. This is a small-leaved high Alpine, and has little trusses of six to nine flowers, lavender-blue in colour, but there is considerable difference in their shade and one of them was exceedingly beautiful, more of a clear porcelain-blue and with a longer stalk to the truss, whereby the flowers were better displayed. So far it has more or less the habit of *R. flavidum*

R. primuliflorum (F 5866) flowered in August; a very dwarf compact plant, but it has small mean white flowers on the lines of *R. anthopogon*. It is, however, possible that the spring blooms will be better.

R. lepidotum had one flower, and is hardly as attractive as Hooker's plate makes it, being a rather dull yellow with brown spots, instead of white with green ones.

R. discolor Houlstonii Group (W 885) flowered for the second time - the first being in 1912 - opening on July 8th, when almost everything else was over; six to nine flowers on a truss, blush-white with pink buds, pinker on the outside, and with a large blotch of crimson in the interior, shading off all round to yellow and then to blush, and slightly scented. In another plant the flowers were pinker and the crimson blotch less pronounced.

On Rhododendron No. 104, *caucasicum* x *campylocarpum* developed an imperfect flower in August. It is a good yellow with red spots and the plant has an excellent habit. It developed a good pod of seed to *R. adenogynum*.

In October, a rogue very near to *R. trichocladum* flowered. It has smaller leaves and small yellow flowers, three or four in a truss, about an inch across. Professor Balfour tells me that it is *R. xanthinum* [now synonymous].

Also in October, *R. neriiflorum* (F 6780) produced a beautiful flower. It is a small growing plant with a loose truss of twelve flowers, unspotted, with a rather narrow tube opening out at the mouth, and of the same colour as the lighter varieties of *R. thomsonii.* The calyx is the same shade as the corolla and the flower rather waxy. It should be a good plant with which to hybridise, and bring purity of colour into some of the hardy hybrids.

I do not know whether a list of the plants flowering in the later months of the year is of any interest, but such as they are here it is, though it must be understood that they were often isolated flowers and by no means so good as those produced in the Spring.

August: *intricatum* (F 12623); *hippophaeoides; anthopogon; keysii;* 'Gowenianum'; *retusum* (indoors); *adenogynum* - some plants pinker than others; *primuliflorum; scintillans* (F 10035); and *caucasicum* x *campylocarpum.*

September: *rupicola* (F 5865); *flavidum;* and forms of *fastigiatum.*

October: *trichocladum; oreotrephes; neriiflorum; oreodoxa;* and *lepidotum.*

November: *oreotrephes; fastigiatum;* and *lapponicum.*

December: *lapponicum; dauricum;* and *mucronulatum.*

With regard to seedling hybrids:

In the *lepidotum* x *boothii* lot, from seed sown in 1916, the pollen parent has come through strongly, and the leaf is very distinct, contrasting with a few plants of apparently pure *lepidotum,* which are among the seedlings. *R. glaucophyllum* x *boothii,* of which there are but two plants, sown in 1915, are also very distinct, and came through last winter's frost in the open undamaged. So also did *griffithianum* x *edgeworthii* [*bullatum*] and here again there are but two plants albeit 0.3m. high from seed sown in 1903. R. 'Mrs. Butler' x *augustinii* is another cross poorly represented in point of numbers, but in which the influence of the latter is clearly visible; yet this seems to have an indifferent constitution and may prove worthless. The old plant of *R. hookeri,* badly broken by the falling elm in 1916, has at last succumbed to its injuries, and I should be grateful if any member of the Society could tell me of a nurseryman who stocks it, for it is a beautiful thing, which I should like to replace.

Commander Millais in his most interesting book mentions a supposed cross between *R. triflorum* and *R. augustinii* - unlike either parent - in the garden at Trewithen, I fear on my authority. I saw the two or three plants of it again the other day, and am convinced that there is a mistake in the record of the cross and that it is really one between *maddenii*

and *cinnabarinum*.

1919:

The seed-capsules of several species of rhododendrons have peculiarities which are interesting, and have doubtless been noted by the botanist, though they may not have attracted the attention of the ordinary gardens. Those of *R. schlippenbachii,* for instance, are very thick and woody, whilst the seeds are large and comparatively few in number. They germinate well, however, and during the first season outstrip in growth any with which I am acquainted; but the difficulty with them comes later, and I have found many of the small plants die off for no apparent reason. I am inclined to think that the species is very susceptible to drought, at any rate until three or four years old.

R. camelliiflorum makes plenty of large seed pods, which however contain a lot of chaff and comparatively few good seeds. The capsules of *ciliicalyx* are remarkably thick and woody, and there is not much seed, but this may have been accounted for in the pod under examination by the fact that it had been fertilised with *moupinense* pollen.

January 5th:

Today I found three beautiful flowers on a plant of *R. zeylanicum.* It is curious, despite the resemblance in leaf, that this species has for so long been confused with *R. Kingianum,* for that plant flowers some months later, and has a much smaller truss of more tubular flowers, of a much darker and richer shade of crimson.

Second week in March:

A flower opened on a plant which came under the number Wilson 1872, and should therefore be *R. watsonii,* but is not. It is a shrub with an erect habit, and there are nine flowers to the truss, 5.7 by 6.4cm., seven-lobed, very pale rose with two small faint lines of red spots in the interior. A first flower, and not a good one, which got partially destroyed by frost, when it was half out. The plant looks as if it may prove to be one of the *oreodoxa* varieties.

Second week in April:

R. pachypodum [now synonymous under *R.ciliicalyx*] (F 13512) [which is in fact *R. sulfureum*], clear butter-yellow, without the green tinge which there is in *boothii,* five in a loose truss, the exterior covered with brown glands. The plant is hardy, but I hear the flowers are susceptible to frost. This species has the curved style peculiar to *boothii, trichocladum, glaucophyllum,* etc.

Also *R. scabrifolium* (F 11072), four in a truss, white, tinged pink. The flower is not very attractive, and the plant is not supposed to be too hardy, but the leaves are very distinct and at once attract attention.

Fourth week in April:

A pot plant of R. 'Lepidoboothii' flowered in a cold frame soon to be followed by others out of doors. Five to ten in a loose truss, openly campanulate, yellowish-white, tinged with pink and green, especially on the outside, interior spotted with greenish-brown. To my mind a pleasing little flower, contrasting well with the brown leaves of the young shoots derived from *boothii*.

A straggling, flat-growing plant of unknown origin, though raised from seed here, and which Prof. Bayley Balfour says is *R. virgatum* Franchet. [technically, *R. oleifolium*, which is now synonymous] but which differs from Forrest's *virgatum* in having pure white flowers and a much less erect habit, and also in flowering some weeks earlier. The authorities at Kew say that Forrest's plant is Franchet's *oleifolium*, but I can hardly believe that these two are one and the same species. The flowers were pure white, single in the axils of the leaves, campanulate, unspotted, and five lobed.

W 1539, a species yet unnamed [now designated a natural hybrid, *R.x magorianum*], six flowers in a loose truss, pale violet-rose with a dense spotting of crimson, and a blotch of crimson at the base, five lobed, campanulate.

Another plant of Wilson's of which the number is lost, but which may be a variety or natural hybrid of *strigillosum* seven in a loose truss, pale violet-rose, campanulate, unspotted, but with a blotch of crimson at the base, five lobed.

R. stenopetalum 'Linearifolium' (W 7794), violet-rose, four in a loose truss, calyx green divided to the base, and almost as long as the corolla, four lobed and deeply cleft, spotted on two segments with crimson, openly campanulate.

R. 'Keiskarbor' (*keiskei* x *arboreum*), white, shaded old-rose, with a blotch of crimson at the base, and two short lines of crimson spots, narrowly campanulate, 10 in a truss.

One of a batch of rogues which came among seed marked "R. TAI.IENSE - Tali Range 12,000 feet". I believe these to be a natural cross between *haematodes* and *neriiflorum,* as the leaves in about a dozen plants show every gradation of tomentum, and colouring from one species to the other. Ten in a truss, blood-red, unspotted, waxy, rather narrowly campanulate, five lobed. Compared with *neriiflorum* the flower is rather larger, of more substance and more fleshy, rather longer in the tube, not so deeply cleft into segments, and the colour is even more brilliant.

Second week in May:

R. mollicomum (F 10347), flowers in two's in the axils of the leaves, pale-rose, five-lobed, tubular campanulate.

Third week in May:

R. indicum 'Macrostemon' (W 7862) [W 7709, from the 1914-15 expedition to Japan, is the only collection Wilson made of *R. indicum*], solitary flowers on a dwarf compact plant, lilac-rose with red spots on the upper segments, five lobed, openly campanulate. This plant has set large pods of seed to the blue *R. augustinii* (W 4238).

Fourth week in May:

R. yunnanense ssp. *tatsienense* (F 11299), pure white with orange spotting on the upper segments, four in a truss, five-lobed, campanulate. This is almost deciduous.

Last week in May:

A rhododendron flowered of which Forrest's description is "Rhod. sp? Tali range. 6-10 feet. Flowers? Open thickets, 11,000 feet". And the flower is as follows: lemon-yellow (*Repertoire de Couleurs*) - which means that it is as yellow as *boothii,* but brighter - 3 to 5 in a truss, five or six-lobed, unspotted, campanulate. Prof. Bayley Balfour believes this to be *R. aureum* Franchet.

Third week in September:

R. forrestii var *forrestii* Repens Group (F l3259). It is an absolutely prostrate plant and climbs like ivy, with a single scarlet-crimson flower, 3.8 cm. long, tubular-campanulate. I have put its pollen on to *adenogynum* and *flavidum,* but fear it may be too late in the season for them to ripen seed.

Also *hippophaeoides* x *fastigiatum,* sown February, 1918, produced its first flower. The plant has the habit of *fastigiatum,* but the flowers are the palest possible lavender, almost white, and a group of the plants should look very pretty.

The hot summer followed by rain has brought a good many species into flower, and at the time of writing (September 21st), there are blooms on *adenogynum, fastigiatum, rupicola, flavidum,* and a white hybrid from this, *lapponicum,* 'Prostigiatum' *forrestii* Repens, *hippophaeoides, ponticum, cephalanthum, primuliflorum, keysii, anthopogon,* and *hippophaeoides* x *fastigiatum.*

Amongst this year's seedlings, caterpillars have again been very troublesome, at first,

a lot of small green ones, and now many tiny dark olive-green, which feed under the leaves, and when they drop are almost indistinguishable from the soil, and are thus difficult to catch. Some seedlings, which were not numerous, they have entirely destroyed.

1919-1920:

October 13th, 1919:

R. saluenense (F 12968)*,* flowered for the first time. Flowers in two's at the termination of the branches, bright magenta, campanulate.

The frost of early November, 1919, destroyed the flower buds of most of the sweet-scented rhododendrons and many of the *griffithianum* hybrids, but curiously enough R. 'Countess of Haddington', usually the first to suffer, flowered fairly well. One plant only of *R. edgeworthii,* and that against a wall, flowered; and no *R. maddenii,* whilst their Chinese forms *bullatum* and *crassum* bloomed very well, entirely in the open and without protection.

January 14th, 1920:

One of the large-leaved Subsection *Grandia* species, differing in both leaf and form from what is usually grown in Cornwall as *R. grande,* came into bloom. Of this beautiful thing I sent a flower to Prof. Sir I. Bayley Balfour, but have not yet heard what it is. Frost destroyed any hope of seed.

February 26th:

With regard to F 13512 to which the name *R. pachypodum* was given [now *R. ciliicalyx*]. I have just heard from Edinburgh, where I had sent a flower that "it is a much better thing than *pachypodum,* being the true *R. sulfureum* Franchet . . . a rare species". It is certainly a very charming plant, of dwarf habit, with clear yellow waxy flowers; but it remains to be seen if it will cross with anything which has not the curious crooked style peculiar to *boothii, glaucophyllum, lepidotum,* etc., and so far I have only got these species to mate with each other.

In his description of the Maddenii series of Rhododendrons in the Edinburgh Notes, Vol. XII, No. 56, Mr. Hutchinson gives F 13512 as *pachypodum,* and this is now proved to be wrong; the other number he gives is F 11547, and Mr. J. C. Williams tells me that under this no seed came, wherefore the question arises as to whether the true *pachypodum* is in cultivation at all; which question I hope that someone will be able to answer in the affirmative. Whilst I am on the subject of this description of the Maddenii series, I may say that the illustration of *R. lyi* [again, *R. ciliicalyx*], by no means does the flower justice, for it is a fine large bloom. almost indistinguishable from that of *R. veitchianum,* when grown under glass, though I am bound to say that it is somewhat smaller in the open. The plant itself is certainly one of the hardiest of its series, since two of my plants stood the hard winter of 1916-17 in the open and away from a wall without injury, when many other plants were killed.

January and February were very mild indeed here and at the end of the latter month fully 40 Rhododendron species and hybrids were flowering in this garden, but a frost early in March browned most of them. Curiously enough four plants of *R. sulfureum* in a very shady place, where they get no sun until late in the day kept their flowers quite intact, which emphasises the value of protection from the morning sun after a frost.

At the end of March, the Hon. H. D. McLaren sent me from Bodnant, in N. Wales, a flower of *R. wasonii* Rhododactylum Group, one of Wilson's introduction, I believe, though I don't know the number. It appears to he a dwarf-growing hardy plant with deep green oval leaves 7.6 x 28cm., ending in a sharp point, and covered on the under side with a dense cinnamon tomentum. There are seven flowers in a loose truss, white with lines of pink on the outside, which are more in evidence in the bud stage, campanulate. The plant resembles *R. taliense* F 6772 and W 1804 [*R. wiltonii*], but so far as one can judge from the leaf does not appear to be identical with either.

1st week in April:

R. 'Euthom' ('Empress Eugenie x *thomsonii*) flowers, 14 in a rather loose truss, a light shade of carmine fading into pink, copiously spotted on the upper segments with crimson. This appears to be the same thing as the plant sent out by Gill, of Tremough garden, as "pink Thomsonii"; whilst the plant he sent out as "white Campylocarpum" seems both from leaf and flower to be a rather small var. of 'Campauck' *var*. 'Mrs. Kingsmill'.

1st week in April:

A truly magnificent variety of R. 'Campauck' flowered, 8 in a loose truss, darkest shade of crimson-red (*Repertoire des Couleurs*), 7.6 x 9.4cm., faintly spotted on the upper segment. I am at a loss to account for the colour of this flower, for *campylocarpum* was its seed-parent, and *griffithianum* the pollen-parent. Had the cross been the reverse way one would have concluded that *thomsonii* pollen had got on to *griffithianum;* but this was not the case, nor I imagine can two separate pollens influence one ovum. I have named this plant 'Gilian' after my wife.

3rd week in April:

A plant which is probably a natural hybrid from F 5874 flowered [*R. yunnanense* ssp. *hormophorum*]. It was raised from Chinese seed under F 5874, but both leaf and flower show distinct signs of *R. rubiginosum*. Flowers in groups of 4 to 6, usually two groups at the apex of the shoot, campanulate, blush-white spotted crimson on the upper segment.

Also 'Ambkeys' (*ambiguum* x *keysii*) in a better form than previously; flowers in 4 or 5 groups of 2 to 5 bells at the apex of the shoot, orange outside fading to yellow at the mouth, tubular campanulate, interior yellow with two lines of red spots.

Also 'Oreocinn' (*oreotrephes* x *cinnabarinum*), 7 in a loose truss, rather tubular campanulate, but opening widely at the mouth, pale violet-rose, with two lines of brownish-yellow in the interior. This was one of the most pleasing flowers in the garden, and considerably more attractive than 'Yunncinn' (*yunnanense* x *cinnabarinum*) which was in flower at the same time, and which may be described as follows: 9 in a loose truss, rather tubular campanulate but opening widely at the mouth, violet-rose darker on the outside, with two lines of reddish-brown in the interior.

2nd week in May:

R. apodectum F 9054, 3 flowers in a truss, orange-red densely spotted with brown, 6 lobed, narrowly campanulate. Calyx the same colour as the corolla, large, deeply cleft, and varying in length of lobes. This bears a close resemblance to the orange form of *dichroanthum,* but so far *apodectum* has only shown 3 flowers to the truss, whereas *dichroanthum* sometimes has 7; the leaf of the present sp. is also a trifle smaller, the veins in it are less conspicuous than in *dichroanthum,* and it flowers about a fortnight earlier.

Whilst on the subject of *dichroanthum,* a group of seven is very pretty here at the present time - May 24th - 4 of the plants being in flower and have 3 or 4 flowers on each. A plant of *lacteum,* planted in the middle of them is going from bad to worse and will have to be moved, whilst they are the picture of health, whence one may gather that whilst *lacteum* must have shade and moisture, *dichroanthum* and its allies will stand a dryish place and plenty of sun.

Another pleasant flower is a very pale variety of *R. oreotrephes* (F 5873), which is almost unspotted. and a better colour than the type. I have self-fertilised this and hope to save seed of it.

2nd week in June:

R. hypolepidotum (F 13302), 3 or 4 in a truss, 5-lobed, sulphur-yellow unspotted, campanulate. A pretty little flower on a dwarf plant.

R. heliolepis (F 8938), 6 in a truss, violet-rose, spotted yellowish-brown 2.5 x 2.8cm. R. E.[F] (my mark) "aff. *brevistylum*", 7 in a truss, violet-rose, spotted yellowish brown, campanulate. To the ordinary gardener these two are the same thing, but the botanist may find differences.

2nd week in September:

Several seedlings of *R. rupicola* ssp. *chryseum,* which I owe to the generosity of Mr. Gerald Loder, flowered for the first time. This is a dwarf plant of Section *Lapponica* and is described by Prof. Balfour as the Yunnan form of the Szechwan *R. flavidum,* from which it differs in the more scaly leaf, and in having flowers a shade darker yellow.

1921:

The hard frost in December, 1920, did not do much harm here, some plants of *R. ciliicalyx* and *R. moulmainense* in the open alone suffering.

January and February were very mild, and some 25 species and hybrids flowered during the former month; but later there were several rather severe frosts, and the new shoots of many plants were blackened; a thing which has not happened for several years.

Owing to the wet summer of 1920, there are but few new flowers to report; the first was *R. traillianum* (F 5870), during the first week in March; flowers white, spotted with crimson in the interior of the upper segment; 12 or more bells in a fairly compact truss, 5-lobed, campanulate, 3.8 x 3.8cm.

Last week in March:

R. vernicosum (F 5881). Flowers, Neyron rose red, 11 in a truss, spotted sparingly on the upper segment with a darker shade of the same colour, 7-lobed, broadly campanulate 4.6 x 7.6cm., the style yellowish-pink and clothed with minute red hairs. As the flower matures the style turns red throughout its length, and so far as I can judge from a partially frosted flower - for I sent the other, which was a perfect one, to Edinburgh whilst in bud - this should prove a good plant.

At the end of April several plants of what I take to be a natural hybrid of *neriiflorum* and *haematodes,* raised from Chinese seed, and which I have named tentatively R. 'Neriihaem' flowered. I fancy I mentioned this last year, but this year shows it to be a very fine thing, dwarf, very floriferous, with larger flowers than *neriiflorum,* and equalling or surpassing that species in its brilliancy of colour. A plant of the same lot, which flowered later, had lovely cherry-red flowers.

During the first week in May one of Forrest's forms of *Azalea indica* flowered [now *R. simsii* Mesembrinum Group (F 7832)], which he collected in 1912. It has been unprotected in the open for several years, and seems fairly hardy. Flowers in two's at the end of the shoots, 3.8 x 5.7cm., 5-lobed, openly campanulate, Turkey red, with some reddish-brown spots on the three upper segments, and a shading of reddish-purple on the uppermost. A vivid flower. Also a natural hybrid of *R. caucasicum* 'Stramineum', 12 in a rather loose truss, 5-lobed, campanulate 5.1 x 6.6cm., very prettily imbricated, violet old rose fading to blush, with a strong blotch of crimson extending into crimson spots on the upper segment. A very pleasing and refined flower, which I have named R. 'Aglaia'.

Also R. 'ASCOT BRILLIANT' x *griffithianum,* named R. 'Thalia', 10 in a rather loose truss, 5-lobed, broadly campanulate, 5.8 x 8.1cm., mauve-rose, with a heavy crimson blotch extending to spots on the upper segments. A nice flower.

Fourth week in May:

One of a batch of No. 298 *oreotrephes* x *augustinii* (W 4238). Five in a truss, palest light lilac (*violet de cobalt*) with a few spots of greenish-brown on the upper segment, very broadly campanulate, 3.3 x 6.4cm. It is curious that the colour in this is so faint, but I am inclined to think that when the bush gets bigger it may be very pleasant to look at.

Early in the summer I was planting some biggish seedlings out of one of the nurseries, and in digging the pits for them found that *Davidia involucrata* is emphatically not a tree to plant among Rhododendrons, as its thick white roots extend near the surface of the ground for a long way on all sides. When first I had it I tried it in a dry place where it did not thrive, so it was moved to a north aspect in a wood, where it is now growing rampantly and has evidently got what it likes. Another plant on low ground near the stream facing north-west had all its new shoots cut by frost in April this year.

Among the seedlings just mentioned as planted out of the nursery several plants of *R. lanatum* and one of *R. pholidotum* were completely stripped by rabbits - the latter recovered, but all the former were killed.

The drought dealt severely with us, a good many plants 1.2 to 1.5m. high in one of the nurseries being killed, and a certain number of seedlings both in the frames and nurseries. Lack of labour and lack of physical strength made it impossible to water as much as was needed, and in the case of the small things moles accentuated the damage.

When the rain came in late August and September, besides the small species, *R. xenosporum* [a rogue that germinated in a tray of *adenogynum*], one bush of *haematodes,* and two or three of *adenogynum,* flowered profusely; whilst R. 'Nobleanum' and even R. 'Praecox' had some flowers in mid September. *R. lacteum* (F 6678) seems especially susceptible to sun and drought, and I lost three plants, as well as one of my two plants of *R. forrestii* var. *forrestii* Repens Group.

In the frames there are two lots of seedlings, which should produce yellow flowers, namely *ciliatum* x *boothii* and *triflorum* x *xanthostephanum* - in both cases the cross has certainly taken.

1921-1922:

We had very severe frost during the first week in November, 1921, the ponds being frozen over, and this, following continuous warm weather did a good deal of damage. A good many seedlings suffered, and several plants of *R. elliottii* ssp. *facetum* were killed outright, whilst the rest were badly cut. It 1s only fair to say, however, that they were in what proved to be a frost hole. After this we had a comparatively mild winter, though there was sharp frost in the third week in March.

This week *R. cyanocarpum* (F 6776) flowered for the first time, but was spoilt before it was fully open - a good-sized blush-white flower-of rather fleshy consistency.

R. 'Atalanta' (*thomsonii x arboreum*) suffered the same fate, but from the two bells which came out some account of it is possible: 10 flowers to the truss, 3.8 centimetres by 5.1 centimetres, 5-lobed, campanulate, geranium-red, with darker spots on the three upper segments.

These were followed in the third week of March by Rhododendron No. 175 'Cornsutch' ('Cornubia' x *sutchuenense*), a plant with large leaves, up to 23 centimetres long; 15 in a well-shaped truss, 5.1 x 6.4cm., 5-lobed, rather widely campanulate, carmine-purple, with a dark blotch at the base of the upper segment, breaking into spots as it ascends.

Second week in April:

R. floccigerum (F 12889), but the flower was unfortunately frosted though one or two bells developed: 6 in a loose truss, 3.3 x 3.6cm, rather narrowly campanulate, at first carmine-lake, 5-lobed, unspotted, but with rather deeper colour at the base of the flower. A small flower of a very attractive colour.



Looking across the lower pond towards the rill

In the first week in May, *R. calostrotum* (Farrer 1045) showed its first flowers. They were in twos on long pedicels at the end of the shoots, 5.1 x 2.5cm., 5-lobed, salver-shaped, bright magenta, spotted with brownish-crimson on the upper segments. Not a good colour, but of remarkable size for the plant, which is itself a close-growing compact little thing with very glaucous leaves.

R. 'Caubut' (*caucasicum* 'Stramineum' x 'Mrs. Butler') also opened this week. Eight bells to the truss, 7-lobed, white shaded yellow in the interior and spotted with green on the upper segments, 8.4 x 5.1cm., broadly campanulate. A very nice flower on a low-growing plant.

And lastly, *R. discolor* Houlstonii Group (W 648), eight flowers to the truss, 10.9 x 6.4cm., very widely campanulate, 7 or 8-lobed, pale violet-rose, with three slender lines mixed green and dull crimson in the interior of the upper segments with shadings of darker colour outside.

Third week in May:

Rhododendron No. 145, a seedling from *campylocarpum,* 10 in a loose truss, 6.4 x 4.3cm., campanulate, pale yellowish-pink, with a blotch of red at the base.

Also Rhododendron No. 220 'Campbut' (*campylocarpum* x 'Mrs. Butler') 10 in a loose truss, 7.6 x 5.6cm., very pale yellow, 5 or 6-lobed, with a dense spotting of crimson at the base of the upper segments. An attractive flower.

Another plant of the same batch had flowered, slightly tinged with pink and an even more pronounced spotting of crimson deepening into a blotch. And a third had deep rose-pink flowers with the same crimson spotting as the first and a rather larger corolla, 10.2 x 5.8cm.

Rhododendron No. 116, a seedling from a bought plant, reputed *campylocarpum* x *thomsonii* produced pure white flowers with three small crimson blotches at the base, and the shape and size of *campylocarpum.*

R. 'Glaucoboothii' (*glaucophyllum* x *boothii*) closely resembled R. 'Lepidoboothii' formerly described, but the flowers were rather pinker, the spotting was brownish-red instead of green and the pedicels shorter; also the plant has larger leaves.

Fourth week in May:

Rhododendron 'Pontauck' (*ponticum* x *griffithianum*), 14 in the truss, 7.6 by 5.7cm., pale violet-mauve, with a slight greenish-brown spotting. A bush of this covered with flowers is most agreeable in colour, especially at a distance.

R. 'Konigdis' ('Konig Carola' x *discolor*), 16 to the truss, lilac-white, deeper in bud, 8-lobed, 9.4 x 5.6cm., openly campanulate, with a large blotch of crimson and spots of the same colour on the upper segments. A fine flower, but I hoped it would have been later.

R. No. 235 'Soulbut' (*souliei* x 'Mrs. Butler'), eight to the truss, blush-white, tinged pink outside and pink in bud, with broad crimson spotting on the upper segments, 6 or 7-lobed, 7.1 x 4.1cm., broadly campanulate, style greenish with minute red hairs.

R. 'Goldsworth Yellow' (*caucasicum* x *campylocarpum*) sent me by Mr. Slocock, 12 to the truss, pale yellow densely spotted with greenish-brown on the upper segments and tinged pink on the outside, 5-lobed, campanulate, 6.9 x 5.1cm. A nice flower, well worth growing.

Another plant of R. 'Konigdis', which flowered during the first week in June, gave me a pleasant surprise in that its colour was heliotrope - the lightest shade, but one in the *Repertoire de Couleurs* - all the segments being spotted at the base with olive-green, the spotting being most pronounced in the upper ones. This is a nice cool-looking flower and in colour resembles some varieties of *R. augustinii.*

Also R. No. 269 'Brachsoul' (*brachycarpum* X *souliei*), 11 in a loose truss, 5.1 x 3cm., 5-lobed, very widely campanulate, almost salver-shaped, light rose shading to white, darker on the outside, the upper segment thickly spotted with crimson. The influence of *souliei* is seen in the shape of the corolla, but the flowers are somewhat spoilt by the excessive length of the pedicel.

The reminder which has just come in from the Honorary Secretary tells us that it is desirable that the size of some of the best plants should be mentioned, so I am putting down a few of the most noteworthy in this garden, though it has not been going long enough to provide anything of outstanding stature. So far, *R. keiskei* is 0.7m high and 1.5m across; *R. oreodoxa* var. *fargesii* is 2.4m by 3.4m; *R. adenopodum* 1.4m by 1.8m; *R. sinogrande* 1.8m, and its largest leaf is 66 centimetres long including petiole; *R. moupinense* 0.76m by 1.4m; *R. ciliicalyx* 0.9m by 0.9m; and *Eucryphia cordifolia* 7.6m by 3m.

Another item, which may be of interest, is the appearance of a new species here. I had bought at Coombe Wood several years ago a plant of Wilson's under the number 1539, and on sending a flower to Sir Isaac Bayley Balfour, he, having shown it to Wilson, who happened to be there at the time, determined that It had not yet been described and named it *R. Magorianum* [now *R. x magorianum*]. It is a hardy member of Subsection *Irrorata*, 11 flowers to the truss, corolla funnel-shaped, 3.5cm. long, pink and white at the margin of the lobes, with a deeper tinted blotch and a few spots.

1923:

We had a very mild winter, and the first week in February produced flowers on a Rhododendron which came here from Coombe Wood under the number Wilson 1435. There are two or three plants of the same species at Caerhays, but so far the name is undetermined. I sent flowers to Sir Isaac Bayley Balfour in 1919 and again to Professor W. Wright Smith this year. The latter's verdict is that he cannot bring it into line with any form of *R. strigillosum;* that it comes extraordinarily close to the type of *R. pachytrichum* collected by David near Moupin in its leaves and indumentum, but its flower is quite distinct; and that it has got to be treated as a very distinct variety of *R. pachytrichum* or as a new species closely allied to it. As to the flower, it is compact, 16 to the truss, 4.6 x 4.6cm., campanulate, 5-lobed, carmine purple first shade (*Repertoire de Couleurs*), with a black blotch at the base of the interior, unspotted. As a cut flower the colour is not altogether satisfactory, but in the wood a well-clad bush with 30 or 40 flowers out is very striking. At the same time there was a first flower on another plant of Rhododendron No. 175 'Cornsutch' ('Cornubia' x *sutchuenense*). This has the same large foliage as the one mentioned last year, but the colour was a clear crimson pink, spotted on the three upper segments with dark crimson; 12 to the truss, 6.4 by 7.6cm., 5-lobed, widely campanulate. A good flower.

Near the end of February a plant of Rhododendron No. 236 ('Ivery's Scarlet' x *bureavii* (W 1769)) which I have called 'Ivorhaem' [at the time, Mr Magor understood the cross to be 'Ivorianum' x *haematocheilum,* the latter now *R. oreodoxa*], flowered for the first time. Ten to the truss, 3.6 by 3.8 cm., campanulate, 5-lobed, deep lilac rose blotched with crimson at the base. The style is much exserted and a good deal longer than the filaments. I cannot say that this flower is an improvement on either of its parents.

The second week in March brought the flower of a rogue that I raised from Chinese seed, though unfortunately, I forgot to put on its label any indication of the number of the species with which it came. The leaves are rather leathery, 11.4 centimetres long by 3.2 to 3.8 centimetres across. Flowers 16 to the truss, white tinged pink, especially when in bud, spotted crimson throughout and with a large three-fold blotch of deep crimson at the base;

6-lobed, campanulate, 4.5 x 5.1 cm. Prof. Wright Smith was puzzled by this and so far it has no name. It looks like one of the Section *Irrorata* species. About a month later several seedlings of *R. x monosematum* flowered and one of them was pure white.

In 1911 Mr. J. C. Williams gave me a pod of seed - *R. discolor* Houlstonii Group (W 648) x *R. griffithianum* - and some of the plants resulting had their first flowers this season. There were eight flowers in a typical *griffithianum* truss, white, flushed pink with a thin blotch of crimson at the base: 5-lobed, campanulate, 7.6 by 10.2 cm. The leaves are intermediate between the two parents, being 28 centimetres long including a 6.4cm. peduncle. A fine flower but somewhat indeterminate in colour.

During the third week in April a flower appeared on Rhododendron No. 438 ('Countess of Haddington' x *edgeworthii*), which I have named Rhododendron 'Ione' after my eldest daughter. This charming flower opens pale primrose but turns white with age and the plant is intermediate between the parents in leaf and form of flower. There were three bells to the truss, rather longer and with a broader tube than R. 'Countess of Haddington'.

Early in May two *R. souliei* hybrids flowered and they led me to have a higher opinion of this species as a parent than heretofore.

R. 'Soulbut' (*souliei* x 'Mrs. Butler') had 7-9 flowers to the truss, blush white or pink with a heavy crimson spotting in the interior, openly campanulate, 5 or 6-lobed, 4.7 by 7.6cm., the style yellowish and coated with minute red hairs.

R. 'Soulkew' (*souliei* x 'Kewense') had 10 flowers to the truss, pink in bud, blush white when open and shaded pink outside, fleshy, openly campanulate, 5 or 6-lobed, lobes deeply cut, 5.1 by 9.4cm., style yellowish and with a few minute red hairs. This was a particularly charming flower of very delicate colouring.

Then came a rogue from the seed box of Wilson's *R. galactinum*. Prof. Wright Smith pronounces this a new species, probably of Subsection *Grandia* and has suggested the name *R. peregrinum* [now recognised as a natural hybrid]. It is a shrub of good habit, with thick ovate lanceolate leaves, 18 by 6.9cm., light green above and coated beneath with a thick light brown tomentum. Branches stout. Flowers about 14 to the truss, 7-lobed, white with crimson blotch and spots, campanulate, 4.3 by 5.8cm.

For the first time also *R. argyrophyllum* (W 4275) flowered, 10 flowers to the truss, pure white spotted light crimson within, 6-lobed, campanulate, 2.8 by 2.5cm. A neat little flower.

Second week in May:

R. 'Cinnkeys' (*cinnabarinum* x *keysii*) produced flowers. Its leaves are very like those of *keysii,* but more glaucous and glandular beneath. Flowers fleshy, twice the size of *keysii* and in the best forms a brighter deeper red, tubular, but opening more at the mouth where the red shades into yellow. As in *keysii* there are apt to be two or three trusses at the end of the shoot, each truss containing 8-11 flowers. These are 4.1 by 1.8cm. A remarkable flower.

At last after many years *R. longesquamatum* flowered, during the first week in June. Twelve flowers in the truss, pale violet rose, darkest on the outside and deeper coloured in bud, with a large crimson blotch in the interior, 6-lobed, campanulate, 3.8 by 5.8cm.

1924:

This season has been the most unsatisfactory I ever remember. The summer of 1923, with its lack of sun and deficient rainfall, resulted in the formation of but few flower buds, and on top of this we had continuous frost all through the early spring. Following on a very wet winter there was an extraordinary and most lamentable scarcity of bloom. Very many rhododendrons had no flower at all, and of those which had, the inflorescence was very often poor and had apparently been half frosted in the bud.

Drought, frost, and possibly an unlucky moment chosen for planting out wrought havoc with the seedlings of *R. elliottii* ssp. *facetum* and *R. protistum,* some of which were killed outright and others cut to the ground.

The first event of any interest was the flowering of Farrer's 1047, a near ally of *R. rupicola,* but of an even darker colour, and distinguished from it by a most conspicuous dotting of glands on the exterior of the corolla. The leaves are larger than those of *R. rupicola,* and the glands beneath browner and more prominent. I sent the flower to Professor Wright Smith, who said that Sir Isaac Bayley Balfour had provisionally named it *R. propinquum,* but probably thought it a form of *R. rupicola,* which has 8 to 10 stamens, whereas this has but 6. And he complicated matters for me by adding that Forrest's plant (F 5865), which I had always known as *R. rupicola,* was not that species.

With regard to this, however, it is possible that the bit of F 5866 I sent for comparison may not have been from the original seed, and if this be so, my plants may be natural hybrids with *R. fastigiatum* [which would appear to be the case for both Farrer 1047 and Forrest 5865 and now classified as *R. rupicola* var. *rupicola*].

During the first week of May in a cold frame my only plant of R. 'Brachbooth' (*brachyanthum* x *boothii*) flowered. Nine flowers to the truss, campanulate, butter yellow, of rather a green tinge with a few darker spots, 2.5 by 3.8cm., lobes rather deeply cut and narrowing to a triangular point, 5-lobed, with the curved style of *R. boothii* and its allies. Leaves ovate lanceolate up to 15.2 centimetres long, the young foliage glandular and of a beautiful red brown. Pedicels over 2.5cm., calyx prominent and triangular like the lobes of the corolla, with both glandular.

About the same time several plants of R. 'Lindbull' (*lindleyi* x *edgeworthii*) blossomed. Flowers up to 6 in a truss, 9.4 by 10cm., white, sweet-scented, yellow at the base of the corolla. Leaves intermediate. A nice flower.

Also *R. carneum,* 3 or 4 in a truss, very pale pink, 5.1 x 6.4cm., rather deeply cut lobes. Unfortunately a tender plant, those planted out being all killed, whilst the one which flowered was in a cold frame.

Soon after this R. 'Soulking' (*souliei* x *zeylanicum*) made its initial effort. Ten flowers in a well-shaped truss of a luminous shade of crimson pink, 5-lobed, campanulate, 3.3 x 6.4 cm. The plant has striking foliage, leaves thick dark green, ovate-acuminate, 12.7 x 6.4cm., very deeply veined, midrib often tinged pink. A satisfactory hybrid.

About the same time came Forrest 17920, one of the Subsection *Heliolepida* species [*R. rubiginosum*]. Flowers in groups of 4 or 5 at the end of the shoots, there being sometimes 4 or 5 groups. Widely campanulate with deeply cut lobes, 5-lobed, violet-rose, 4.3 x 6.4cm. Not a particularly attractive flower.

The summer which followed was very wet in the west country, with the result that it was possible to plant out seedlings almost the whole time; but to counterbalance this advantage the growth of weeds was appalling, so that one had enough to do to prevent them being smothered. During the first week in October there was a first flower on my one plant of *R. prostratum* x *R. saluenense*. This was almost identical with that of the pollen-parent, but a trifle darker, and without the spotting which distinguishes that species. At the same time *R. lutescens* began to flower, and I noticed two blooms on *R. thomsonii* with the promise of more to follow in the near future.

1925:

The first event of real interest this year was the flowering early in April of G. H. Johnstone's hybrid, *caucasicum* 'Stramineum' x *neriiflorum.* I had noticed the little plant 15 centimetres



Looking across the Lower Pond and back up the valley, with the Main Drive just visible on the extreme left

high in the nursery bed with a bud on it, which something had partially eaten, so I took it up and potted it. Owing to the injury and the fact that it was a first flower on a seedling, its merit cannot be finally judged. But it is a very pretty little flower of a distinct and charming shade of pink. The influence of *R. neriiflorum* is visible in the leaves, and still more so in the very remarkable calyx.

There are, then, in the specimen described, 6 flowers to the truss, these 5-lobed, campanulate, 3 x 3.8cm., with deeply cut lobes; the colour is deep, clear rose-pink (*Repertoire des Couleurs,* shade 3), with a few very inconspicuous spots. And the calyx is most remarkable. Exactly the same colour as the corolla, it extends sometimes almost to the top of this, yet it is very irregular and deeply cut. One of the beauties of the flower is that it has a flush of deeper colour on the exterior.

At the same time bloomed two plants introduced by Forrest - I'm ashamed to say, in their original seed-pans. One of them, F 21344 [*R. intricatum*], has flowers like *R. fastigiatum,* but with a pink style. They are lavender-blue and in fives at the end of the shoots. The plant seems more erect in growth and the leaves are much longer and narrower.

The other, F 21487, both in flower and leaf resembles *R. scintillans,* but the single bloom in the box was almost white, with just the faintest tinge of blue. *R. scintillans,* however, has sometimes very pale flowers, and this species may hereafter produce darker ones. It flowered again in the autumn, and was pronounced to be *R. scintillans* forma [now confirmed to be *R. scintillans*].

Also at this time flowered a seedling *R. thomsonii* with large, very dark red blooms, 7 to the truss, and remarkable in having on the upper lobes a heavy black spotting.

April 20 produced a pleasant surprise in the flower of Rhododendron No. 314 ('Dr. Stocker' x *campylocarpum*), a plant with nice intermediate foliage and a flat truss of 6 primrose flowers, resembling R. 'Mrs. Kingsmill' in shape and size, but more distinctly yellow. They measured 5.1 x 7.6cm., and the colouring was somewhat more pronounced on the exterior. A very beautiful flower, to which I have given the name 'Damaris' after my youngest daughter.

During the third week in May there was at last a flower on *R. taliense* (F 6772), which was sown in 1911. Eleven bells to the truss, white with a distinct yellow tinge and a strong spotting of crimson on the upper lobes. The shape of the corolla - 5-lobed, 4.3 x 6.4cm. - was peculiar, being rather broadly campanulate and swelling out below the lobes, which were but little divided and prettily crimped at the edges, with the calyx almost non-existent. I only found the flower when nearly over, and therefore couldn't send it to be verified.

Another flower was that of R. 'Campkew' (*campylocarpum* x 'Kewense'), and in this there were 8 to the truss on rather long pedicels, creamy white with crimson spotting, 5.3 x 7.6cm., 5-lobed campanulate. The leaves favour *campylocarpum* in shape, but are much larger. Quite a nice flower.

Soon after a low-growing, spreading rogue from Chinese seed, but from which box there is no record, made its initial effort. The leaf is dark green above and has a thick, smooth cinnamon tomentum beneath, is about 7.6 centimetres long by 3.2 across, and is ovate-lanceolate. Flowers 9 to the truss, violet-rose with spotting of the same colour but darker, 5-lobed 4.3 x 5.1cm., the lobes rather deeply cut and very precise and regular. The calyx is small and deeply cut. I sent this to Edinburgh for identification, and it proved to be the true *R. balfourianum* Diels.

First week in June presented us with the first flower of R. 'Brachdis' (*brachycarpum* x *discolor*). Fourteen to the truss, blush with yellow-green spotting, 5 to 7-lobed, 5.3 x 7.6cm., campanulate. A pretty flower of delicate colour, with the refinement of *R. brachycarpum* and the size of *R. discolor,* but I'd hoped it would have been later.

Fourth week in June there was a first flower on a plant I bought years ago at Coombe Wood. It is low and spreading in habit, with stout branches, and leaves oblong-lanceolate in shape, clad beneath with a thick brown, spongy indumentum, 11.4 x 4.3cm., including a short petiole of hardly 1.3cm. The flowers, 8 to the truss, are 5-lobed campanulate, rather swollen in the tube, 4.3 x 5.8cm., deep lilac-rose darker on the outside, with a strong dark crimson spotting on the upper lobes. This I sent to Edinburgh, where it was identified as a very fine dark form of *R. wasonii*.

Second week in July came a first flower on a plant for which I am indebted to Mr. L. de Rothschild. It came under the number F 21506, described in the *Field Notes* as being of the Cephalanthum series. This, however, is obviously *R. lapponicum,* and a good one at that. For there are 6 or 7 flowers to the truss of a rich blue purple, whilst the imbedding of the base of the filaments in a sort of fine wool gives the appearance of a white eye. The individual flowers are very widely campanulate, 3.6cm. across. On referring the flower to Edinburgh, it is said to be *R. russatum*.

Two more Subsection *Lapponicum* species bloomed in September, and were identified as follows: *R. impeditum* (KW 4456) [now classified as *R. x lysolepis*], but not a very good one as to colour, if one may judge from an autumn flower; and *R. telmateium* (KW 4102).

So far as my chance observations go, there is promise of a remarkable lot of new flowers on species and hybrids for next spring, *pace* the weather. And I hear the same in other quarters.

Can anyone tell me what exactly is the small, fat, white grub with a yellow-brown head, which gets into the seed-boxes and eats the Rhododendron roots; and also if any means has been discovered of dealing with it before it is too late?

1926:

The frost in November killed my two plants of *R. kyawii,* and proved that *R. megacalyx* was very much hardier than was supposed. February and March were mild, and produced many new flowers.

R. 'Campirr' (*campylocarpum* x *irroratum* F 5851) was one of the first, and rather favoured *R. irroratum* in colour and size of flower, but there was a little yellow in the blush-white, and more substance and fewer flowers to the truss than in the best forms of *irroratum*. It was, however, frosted when half out, and may be better another year. R. 'Adenarb' (*adenogynum* x *arboreum* Album), which has a thick tomentum beneath the leaves, favouring sometimes one parent and sometimes the other, had white flowers, 9 to the truss, shaded pink on the exterior and boldly spotted with crimson on the upper segments, with a blotch of the same colour at the base, 6.4 x 6.9cm. Quite a nice flower. The habit of the plant is good, stocky, well clad, and rather spreading. F 21375 flowered profusely at 15 to 23cm. high, in groups of three in the axils of the leaves, violet-rose in colour. This is *R. cuneatum*. F 21339 and F 22092, which has smaller, narrower leaves than *R. racemosum,* and smaller flowers, is *R. hemitrichotum*.

A seedling received from the R.H.S. labelled 240, No. 28, is *R. intricatum* forma. It is lavender-blue in colour, and is peculiar in having but 4 lobes to the corolla, which is larger than the type. A seedling raised from my old plant of *R. fittianum* had very pretty little flowers coloured rose Neyron red 2nd shade, and proved to be a natural hybrid with *R. glaucophyllum*, several plants of which are growing near its parent.

Rhododendron No. 822 'Hipsal' (*hippophaeoides* x *saluenense*), a dwarf branching plant, had 11 flowers to the truss, purplish-mauve (*Repertoire des Couleurs*), 2.5 x 3.8cm.,

openly campanulate. A very nice flower, and quite a large truss for so small a plant.

R. thyodocum [*R. baileyi*], flowered for the first time, and is white, and to the ordinary gardener looks near to *R. primuliflorum,* but has larger flowers and a few more to the truss.

R. brachystylum (KW 3097) [*R. trichocladum*], had one flower, and that of a much darker yellow than *R. trichocladum,* in which series it comes, darker even than that of *R. sulfureum*.

Rhododendron No. 446 'Soularb' (*souliei* x *arboreum* Blood-red) was another newcomer, 17 bells to a well-shaped truss, deep cerise 3rd shade, paler towards the base, which itself is much darker, unspotted, 4.3 x 5.8cm., campanulate. A pretty flower.

Rhododendron. No. 447 'Xenarb' (*R. x xenosporum* x *arboreum* Blood-red) [the natural hybrid is a seed pan rogue with dense rusty-red indumentum, which germinated in a tray of *R. adenogynum*], 11 in truss, also deep cerise but rather paler than the above, and usually with a few faint spots; 5.1 x 6.4cm., campanulate.

R. hunnewellianum (W 4248) bloomed at last, 10 to a truss, blush-white with the faintest tinge of yellow and pink spotting on upper segments; 5-lobed, campanulate, 5.6 x 7.6cm. With this flower and the white under-leaf it is a pretty shrub in the wood.

First week in April:

KW 4023. A little truss of about 7 flowers, pale yellow, 5-lobed, these very deeply cut and crimped at their edges, almost salver-shaped, 2 x 3.8cm. An upright growing Subsection *Lapponica* species which promises to be a very pretty thing. Sent to Edinburgh and pronounced to be *R. muliense* [now *R. rupicola* ssp. *chryseum*].

R. fulvum, 17 to the truss, pale violet-rose with deep crimson blotch at the base, campanulate, 3.8 x 5.1cm., 5-lobed, calyx minute. The flower hardly comes up to the beautiful foliage.

R. uvariifolium had about 20 flowers to the truss, blush, heavily spotted with crimson on the upper lobes, 5-lobed, campanulate, 3.8 x 5.1cm. Another rather disappointing flower; but it came out during inclement weather, and may be better another time.

R. morii, 11 to the truss, white with a blotch breaking into a heavy spotting of crimson, 5-lobed, campanulate, 5.1 x 6.4cm. A most pleasing flower, and the plant, which seems quite hardy, was very floriferous.

For a while after this, time and opportunity were lacking, and several first flowers, which merited mention, were omitted; chiefly perhaps those on four self-sown seedlings I dug up in the wood. These were large, white or pale yellow with red spots, and came in for some admiration at the Society's Show in London, when several friends asked me to put down layers for them. This I confess I have not yet had time to do. The plants may be a natural hybrid between *campylocarpum* and 'Kewense'.

The first and second weeks in June produced long-delayed flowers on R. No. 124 (*maximum* x *discolor*), 17 to the truss, pale lilac-rose with a dense spotting of yellow-green on the upper lobe, 5-lobed, rarely 6, campanulate, 5,1 x 8.9cm. A really good flower, and valuable for its lateness. *N.B*. The drop of honey at the base is pink, which has a curious effect on the green spotting.

R. saluenense was in full flower again this month.

Also in June *R. megacalyx* had its first blooms, out of doors and unprotected. A very fine thing indeed, and well worthy of the XXX in Mr. Forrest's *Field Notes*. White, sweet-scented, and very large, with a curious protuberant lower lobe, reminding one of a labiate. I may say that I crossed this with *R. cinnabarinum* roylei Group 'Magnificum' and four fat pods of seed resulted.

KW 3776 (in part) was another newcomer. Five or six in the truss, white with a yellow blotch and not very large. I sent it to Edinburgh, where it is thought to be *R. ciliicalyx*.

Some old plants, 5 feet high, which I had thought to be *R. scottianum,* flowered, white, 3 in a truss, and not nearly so fine as that sp. These have been identified as *R. supranubium.* Apparently all the *scottianum* have been killed except one pot plant, and this I have planted out under a north wall [both now made synonymous under *R. ciliicalyx,* providing the former has a tapered rather than impressed style].

Some small seedlings flowered, were sent to Edinburgh, and named as follows: F 20648 is *R. yunnanense* ssp. *tatsienense* [although the current consensus regards it as a natural hybrid of *tatsienense*]; F 21344, is probably *R. hippophaeoides* forma., with a short style and flowers smaller than the type - this may be due to starvation [now determined to be *R. intricatum*]; and F 21487, is *R. scintillans*.

I asked last year for the name of, and help in coping with, the white brown-headed grub which gets into one's boxes of Rhododendron seedlings and eats the roots. No response being forthcoming, I sent specimens to the *Gardeners' Chronicle,* and was told that the grub was that of a weevil, probably belonging to the genus *Otiorhyncus*. One or two species are common in greenhouses, and, being night feeders, usually escape notice. The adult insects should be searched for at night with a lantern and caught in a tin containing paraffin. Secondly, vaporite might be mixed with the soil, which must not be used for a week or two afterwards.

Now, this is not really very helpful advice: can anyone better it? My experience this year has been that if the damage is noticed early enough, the seedlings may be saved by being taken out of the box and replanted, when all the grubs can be killed. Moreover, in the course of transplanting I have once or twice found that plants have been attacked, possibly by only one or two grubs, and have recovered by themselves, though of course considerably checked. The moral of the whole thing is that seedlings should not be left too long in the boxes; and although this always happens here from lack of labour, other gardens are probably more happily situated. We had very hard frost at the end of October, one of the ponds being frozen over, and many of my seedlings were badly cut.

1927:

To commence with such new flowers as there were:

During the second week in April No. 811 R. 'Hebe' ('Neriihaem' x *williamsianum*) produced two flowers on a 6-inch plant, five in a loose truss, 5-lobed, campanulate, deepest shade of rose pink (*Repertoire des Couleurs*), unspotted, calyx very irregular and the same colour as the corolla. A pleasing flower, which should be effective as the plants grow up. In the same week No. 581 R. 'Thomwilliams' (*thomsonii* x *williamsianum*) made its initial effort. Same colour as above, 6 in loose truss, 5-lobed, campanulate, 5.1 x 6.4cm., unspotted, calyx minute. A dwarf spreading plant with orbicular auriculate leaves.

Last week in April, R. 'Kewxen' ('Kewense' x *R. x xenosporum*) was partially frosted, but had about 12 bells to the truss, 7-lobed, very openly campanulate, violet-rose with some ochre spotting on upper lobe, 6.4 x 8.9cm., calyx minute. Promises to be a fine hybrid.

A disastrous spring. On the second day of the Cornwall Spring Flower Show we had a severe frost, which not only ruined the flowers in bloom but spoilt many in bud and most of the new shoots as well.

Judging from the London Show, Sussex suffered less than Cornwall, and even Werrington in the north of this county appeared to be less hit than we were. Thereafter the wet summer was favourable, good growth was made, and the constant rain rendered it possible to keep on planting out during the whole season.



R. ‘Cornish Cross’ by the driveway in front of the House



The outfall from the Upper Pond entering the Lower Pond

And the weeds grew too, so that by October I had perforce to tear them up by hand to prevent them decaying on the seedlings and infecting them with fungus. A sad story of lack of labour!

For the rest, this year's seedlings have made better growth than ever before, partly maybe through the use of peat-moss litter as recommended by Mr. de Rothschild, the use of which makes it advisable to sow early and prick out betimes - and this again was only possible because I had less seed than usual; and partly through the sage advice of Mrs. Stevenson, who, arguing that Rhododendrons had very fine roots, counselled less firm planting than is usual. Acting on this I have lost fewer after pricking out than heretofore.

There is, so far as I have had leisure to see, a very fair promise of bud for next spring, though a lot of untimely blooms now is bound to spoil it. As an instance, a big bush of *thomsonii* has in mid-October several well-opened flowers, and every bud showing colour.

Lastly, I may mention that just as *Merodon equestris* attacks *Hippeastum,* so the species of *Otiorhyncus,* which eats the roots of Rhododendron seedlings, is also partial to Primulas, for I've just found a pot of *P. Forrestii* killed by it.

1928:

Second week in February R. 'Adenarb' (*adenogynum* x *arboreum* blood-red) produced its first flowers. A large rounded truss of 17 flowers, 5.1 x 7.6cm., campanulate, 5-lobed, crimson-carmine (*Repertoire des Couleurs*), darker spotting on the upper lobes. Leaves 14 x 4.4cm., dull green above. substantial greyish tomentum beneath, stiff, leathery, on a short peduncle, 2.5cm. A stiff sturdy little bush, rather spreading in habit, and there were 4 flowers on a 0.6m specimen - a satisfactory hybrid. *R. adenogynum* also produced a nice hybrid with *arboreum* Album, formerly described; but when its pollen was put on *R. thomsonii,* the resulting hybrid, though of good habit and foliage, had flowers of a somewhat unsatisfactory colour.

First week in March:

R. 'Callirhoe' ('Dr. Stocker' x *arboreum* Blood-red) had a rounded truss of 20 flowers, 5.1 x 6.4cm., campanulate, 5-lobed, rose Neyron red 3rd shade. A prettily waved and shaded flower, darker on the exterior, and with crimson spotting over a lighter background on the upper lobes. Quite a nice thing, and better than others of this cross which have flowered previously.

At the same time a plant of 'Dr. Stocker' x *campylocarpum* bloomed, sister to the yellow previously described, and named R. 'Damaris'. Rounded truss of 11 flowers, 6.4 x 8.3cm., campanulate, 5-lobed, rose Neyron red 1st shade. A well-filled truss, faintly spotted, but of a pleasant colour.

A few days later the *irroratum* rogue, which had its first flower in 1923, and was then described, flowered for the second time. It appears to be quite hardy, and the white pink-tinted flower with a threefold blotch of deep crimson at the base is most attractive. A flower sent to Edinburgh, examined by Professor Wright Smith, Mr. Forrest, and Mr. Tagg, was pronounced to be *R. agastum,* or very near it [now *R. x agastum*].

Then came first flowers on R. No. 497 'Neriiarb' (*neriiflorum* x *arboreum* blood-red), 12-14 flowers in a flat-topped truss, 5.1 x 5.7cm., 5-lobed, campanulate, clear red - a trifle darker than R. 'Shilsonii', style and filaments lighter then corolla. Leaves intermediate between the two species. A good hybrid, which flowered at 2 feet high.

On 10th and 11th March we had severe frost, the ponds being partially frozen, and all Rhododendron flowers ruined.

Just before the frost I picked a flower of R. No. 358 'Campirr' (*campylocarpum* x *irroratum* F 5851), which had been frosted before it was well out in 1926. There are 16 flowers to the truss, and the groundwork is cream shading to white, spotted with crimson on the upper lobes, and delicately tinted pink. Not so showy as some, but beautiful in a quiet way.

Fourth week in March a natural hybrid from *R. scintillans,* perhaps with *R. augustinii,* flowered in the seed pan. Flowers in threes, 2.5 x 5.1cm., very broadly campanulate, almost salver-shaped, pale heliotrope. A very delicate shade, and if the plant attains any size it should be very pretty.

Beginning of April, a Rhododendron near *lukiangense,* as identified at Edinburgh, 7 to the truss, 5.1 x 6.8cm., campanulate, 7-lobed, pale violet-rose, calyx minute. A poor flower, but the plant was not in good health.

First week in April:

R. No. 226 'Cauking' (*caucasicum* 'Stramineum' x 'Mrs. Kingsmill'), bloomed for the first time. 10-12 flowers to the truss, 5.1 x 6.4cm., broadly campanulate, 5-lobed, cream with crimson spotting on upper lobes, calyx minute. A pretty flower of the same colour as the best *caucasicum* 'Stramineum' x *campylocarpum,* but the individual bell is larger and more upstanding.

And soon after R. No. 192 'Arbcamp' (*arboreum* Album x *campylocarpum*), 10 flowers to the truss, 4.2 x 6.4cm., campanulate, 5-lobed, creamy-white, with faint shades of pink, crimson spots on the three upper lobes and a blotch of the same at the base, calyx minute. A delicate and attractive flower of good substance.

We had some periods of drought this summer, but did not suffer severely, a few recently planted seedlings only being killed.

In October a bush raised from Chinese seed, which I believe to be a natural hybrid, *neriiflorum* x *haematodes,* about 0.8m. high by 1.8m. across, had 21 flowers out, and this after having flowered well in April.

1929-1931:

For 1929:

The winter of 1928-9 was not so severe in Cornwall as in most parts of the country, and never were the ponds completely frozen over, so that the damage done was not great. *R. carneum,* on a south wall and partially shaded, split its bark and gradually died to within about 30 centimetres of the ground, but the lower shoots seem healthy. Several of the more tender species were frosted in bud, but there were no other bad casualties. During the last week in March KW 6273 flowered for the first time in a frame. The flowers so far were solitary, 3.2 x 5.1cm., salver-shaped, 5-lobed, cream-coloured, and deeper at the centre. This I sent to Edinburgh, and Prof. Wright Smith told me that it was *R. leucaspis* and it had already been given an A.M. at the R.H.S [in 1929, to a plant from the same collection, shown by Lionel de Rothschild].

Next came R. No. 619 'Melissa' ('Ascot Brilliant' x *arboreum* Blood-red), and as might have been expected, it is a good red, 12 to the truss, and with a slight spotting of darker colour on the upper lobes.

Early in April R. No. 582 'Daphne', named after Lady Weymouth. Parentage *arboreum* Blood-red x *thomsonii* x *neriiflorum* [actually, 'Red Admiral' x *neriiflorum*]. A remarkable hose-in-hose flower of a brilliant red, a trifle darker than *R. neriiflorum,* 7 to 9 in the truss, 5.1 x 5.1cm. There were three flowers on a little bush 0.5m. high.

Another plant of R. No. 358 'Campirr' (*campylocarpum* x *irroratum*) flowered, a sister to the one mentioned last year and an improvement on it. Pale yellow, heavily spotted, with dark crimson on the three upper lobe and little blotches of crimson at the base. A very

pretty flower.

The first week in April gave us the first flower of R. 'Clio' (*R. x xenosporum* x 'Gilian'). Carmine lake, deeper on the outside, with two lines of darker spots at the base of the upper lobe, 12 to the truss, 5-lobed, campanulate, 5.1 x 7.6cm. A beautiful flower of a rather distinct colour.

At the same time flowered R. No. 404 from seed of *R. adenopodum* picked at Caerhays. The leaf has not the characteristic tomentum of the species, but the flower has the same distinct shape and colour and a heavy spotting of crimson on the upper lobes. It is a little larger than the true species.

In the last week in April R. No. 470 'Euking' ('Empress Eugenie' x 'Mrs. Kingsmill') bloomed. Pale yellow with some faint red spotting on the upper lobes, 10 to the truss, 5-lobed, campanulate, on rather long reddish pedicels, 5.1 x 6.4cm. A very nice flower.

At the same time came KW 3042, deep rose, with darker spotting at base, growing fainter as it neared the lobes, 11 to the truss,. 5-lobed, campanulate, 4.2 x 5.1cm., the corolla deeply divided. A lax truss and not an exciting flower. This differs in foliage from others under this number [*R. glischrum*], and Prof. Wright Smith thinks it is a natural hybrid.

Last week in May R. No. 189 *smirnowii* x *griffithianum,* a pure white flower 6.4 x 10.2cm., campanulate, 5-lobed, seven to the truss on long pedicels. A pretty flower and should be hardy. Rather large leathery leaves without tomentum.

Third week in June R. No. 550 *souliei* x *discolor,* pink in bud, fading to white, with a large blotch of crimson at base, 7.6 x 11.4cm., 7-lobed, openly campanulate, 8 flowers to the truss, the style yellowish with minute red glands or hairs. A distinguished hybrid, which should be even better under more favourable conditions, and valuable for its late flowering.

In August came a stray flower of F 27715, described as a white form of *R. valentinianum.* It was, however, a clear yellow with numerous red glands on the outside, and since it is a comparatively large flower on a dwarf plant with shiny ovate leaves, it should, if it proves hardy, be a plant with a future.

The dry summer has not affected this garden very adversely, though a certain number of seedlings recently planted from boxes perished. For we had a little rain at times, and the valley faces north-west and so does not get all the sun. However, there are flower-buds on a good many new species and hybrids, so that, frost permitting, next spring should be interesting.

In September I had the pleasure of seeing Lord Digby's garden at Minterne in Dorsetshire, fortunately situated on green sandstone, though surrounded on all sides by chalk. There are some very fine cedars and gigantic beech trees in the shrubbery, and some good specimens of the beautiful *Picea morinda.*

The chief Rhododendron is a magnificent *R. falconeri* about 25 feet high, and there were many good bushes of *R. thomsonii* and several of *R. campylocarpum.* Besides these there were a certain number of smaller Chinese Rhododendrons and many of Forrest's and Rock's seedlings. Maples, some well-grown young cherries, and a lot of Azaleas, brought by the owner from Japan, must be a lovely sight in the spring. Like most of our gardens, however, it was somewhat overcrowded, and there was more shade from the beech trees than could be good for the other plants.

Lord Digby is greatly interested in Rhododendrons, etc., and one hopes that some day he will join the Society and write in its journal his own description of the garden.

For 1930:

We have not had a severe winter, but a very stormy one, including several gales, the worst I have known for years. About thirty trees were blown down in the garden alone, though happily not many Rhododendrons were damaged.

The last week in March produced the first flower of R. 'Cleopatra' (*arboreum* Blood-red x *thomsonii* x *sutchuenense*) [actually, *arboreum* Blood-red x (*thomsonii* hybrid x *sutchuenense*) according to the *IRRC*], 12 to the truss, 5-lobed, 6.4 x 7.6cm., crimson, with a few darker spots on the upper lobe. A fine big flower, but crimson rather than red. The plant has fine foliage.

Also KW 6279, one of the Subsection *Virgata* species, flowers pale pink in the axils of the leaves, forming something of a truss at the top of the shoot. Dr. Stapf tells me that this is *R. oleifolium* [*R. virgatum*].

First week in April R. No. 184 *haematocheilum* x *barbatum* [*oreodoxa* x *barbatum*], had its first flower. Crimson-pink, unspotted, 20 bells in a shapely *barbatum* truss, 3.8 x 5.1cm., unspotted, 5- or 6-lobed. A nice flower.

Another first flower was an unknown species, a rogue among other seedlings. Mauve-rose, the darkest shade, 21 flowers in a round truss, darker on exterior, unspotted, but with a threefold blotch of deep crimson at the base, 5-lobed, rather narrowly campanulate, 3.8 x 5.1cm., calyx minute. This has not yet been named.

There was also an imperfect flower on *R. beesianum,* clear blush in colour, with a small crimson blotch, 5-lobed, rather broadly campanulate, 20 to the truss, 4.4 x 5.1cm., calyx minute. I imagine that a perfect flower would be more proportionate to the size of the foliage.

For 1931:

So far, until 22nd February, a mild winter, and the early form of *R. grande* has been out a fortnight, and much better than ever before, quite a hundred flowers out at once. The ordinary variety not yet showing colour.

The pink form of *R. sutchuenense,* an old Coombs Wood plant, is also flowering all over.

The third week saw two new flowers. *R. sutchuenense* x *R. ririei,* a big, rather flat truss, pale violet-lilac in colour, with a certain amount of crimson spotting on the upper lobes, and the interior base of the corolla deep crimson-purple, 13 flowers to the truss, 5-lobed, campanulate, 7.6 x 8.9cm. The foliage is obovate lanceolate and somewhat similar to that of *ririei,* but larger.

The other was *fargesii* x *arboreum* Blood-red, violet-rose of the darkest shade. A good full rounded truss, containing 20 bells, 6-lobed, openly campanulate, with many darker spots on the upper lobes. 5.1 x 5.7cm. A small growing plant with leaves rather like *fargesii,* but stouter, and showing the influence of *arboreum* in the brighter colour and better truss. Some of the hybrids should produce redder flowers.

Then came the frost of the second week in March, the worst March frost for sixty years according to the papers, 16 degrees being reported from Penzance. Every Rhododendron in flower and many in bud were ruined, *moupinense, leucaspis,* and *ciliicalyx* being cut even in a cold frame.

When it was over, R. *barbatum* x *sutchuenense* produced its first flowers, some of them being slightly injured. The colour was deep rose pink of the darkest shade, with a great blotch of crimson at the base of the upper lobes, thinning out into scattered spots. A good rounded truss a little flattened at the top, 16 bells, campanulate, 5.6 x 6.9cm., 5-lobed. This is a fine hybrid.

It is probable that for once the west country suffered more severely from the frost than the north and east. *R. lacteum* was frosted in the bud, as was *grande* and *sinogrande,*

which should have bloomed for the first time here.

We have had a very wet and sunless summer, and many of the crosses made failed to mature seed, nor is there much promise of flower for next spring. Quite a number of plants have rotted at the crown, presumably from too deep planting in our heavy soil; and recently, having got a few Rhododendrons from the west of Scotland, I was struck by the enormous superiority of the soil in which they had been grown to anything they get here. The lesson appears to be that one must add a lot of stones when planting, more leaf-mould and granite gravel, and above all plant shallow. Even in the frames many seedlings went off, including, unfortunately, a good few *lacteum,* and I believe that this was owing to a heavy top-dressing I gave them in the spring with intent to avoid watering and without anticipation of so much rain.

Lastly, I may mention that a plant of F 10974, the supposed crimson form of *R. fictolacteum,* flowered here this year and was identical with the type. Perhaps the seed was picked from a crimson variety, and it may be that some of the other plants raised will yet flower as described.

- below left -
Looking back along one of the paths that radiate from the top of the Main Drive in the spring of 2001.
The Upper Terrace, cut into the hillside, forms a relatively level access pathway along most of its length and is home to a large and diverse collection of both species and hybrid rhododendrons, intermixed with magnolias and other companion plants.

- below right -
Looking down the Main Drive from Lamellen House as it sweeps around the valley floor towards the ponds.
Remnants of the rapidly growing *Pinus radiata* shelter-belt stand at the top of the bank, whilst the blood-red *R. arboreum* came from "Smith of Penjerrick in October 1909 and was planted in the 'New Clearing' by the Upper Terrace".





The Lepidote Registrations:

Amkeys
ambiguum X *keysii*
Flower Colour: Orange-yellow

Augfast
augustinii X *fastigiatum*
Flower Colour: Blue-mauve
Flowering Time: April
Height: Semi-Dwarf

Auredge
xanthostephanum X *edgeworthii*

Blue Tit
impeditum X *augustinii*
Flower Colour: Mauve-blue
Flowering Time: April
Height: Semi-Dwarf

Brachbooth
brachyanthum X *boothii*
Flower Colour: Butter Yellow

Brachlep
brachyanthum X *lepidotum*

Cilaspis
ciliatum X *leucaspis*
Flower Colour: White

Cilbooth
ciliatum X *boothii*

Cilkeisk
ciliatum X *keiskei*
Flower Colour: White

Cinncrass
cinnabarinum X *crassum*
AM 1935
Flower Colour: Creamy-white

Cinnkeys
cinnabarinum X *keysii*
AM 1935
Flower Colour: Red-yellow
Flowering Time: May
Height: Medium

Cinnmadd
cinnabarinum X *maddenii*

Dalbull
dalhousiae X *edgeworthii*
Flower Colour: White

Fasthip
fastigiatum X *hippophaeoides*
Flower Colour: Lavender-white

Glaucoboothii
glaucophyllum X *boothii*
Flower Colour: Pinkish

Hipsal
hippophaeoides X *saluenense*
Flower Colour: Purplish-mauve
Height: Dwarf

Ione
'Countess of Haddington' X *edgeworthii*
Flower Colour: White

Keiskarb
keiskei X *arboreum*
Flower Colour: White-rose

Keiskrac
keiskei X *racemosum*
Flower Colour: Pink

Lepidoboothii
lepidotum X *boothii*
AM 1919
Flower Colour: White-yellowish-white-pink
Height: Low

Lindbull
lindleyi X *edgeworthii*
Flower Colour: White-yellow

Maddchart
maddenii X *hormophorum*
Flower Colour: Lilac-white

Oreoaug
oreotrephes X *augustinii*
Flower Colour: Lilac

Oreocinn
oreotrephes X *cinnabarinum*
Flower Colour: Pink-violet-rose
Height: Tall

Prostsal
prostratum X *saluenense*
Flower Colour: Pink-violet

Prostigiatum
prostratum X *fastigiatum*
AM 1924
Flower Colour: Purple-violet-purple
Flowering Time: April
Height: Dwarf

Roylmadd
maddenii X *cinnabarinum* Roylei 'Magnificum'
Flower Colour: Carmine Lake
Flowering Time: May
Height: Medium

Saint Breward
impeditum X *augustinii*
FCC 1962
Flower Colour: Sea Lavender Violet
Flowering Time: Mid April-May
Height: Medium

Saint Tudy
impeditum X *augustinii*
AM 1960 & FCC 1973
Flower Colour: Violet
Flowering Time: Mid April-May
Height: Medium

Sulfmeg
sulfureum X *megeratum*
AM 1940
Flower Colour: Greenish-yellow

Triaur
triflorum X *xanthostephanum*
Flower Colour: Yellow

Yunncinn
yunnanense X *cinnabarinum*
Flower Colour: Violet-rose
Flowering Time: Late April-May
Height: Tall

R. ‘Augfast’

R. ‘Augfast’

R. ‘Augfast’

R. ‘Cinnkeys’ AM 1935

R. ‘Cinnkeys’ AM 1935

R. ‘Cinnkeys’
cinnabarinum X *keysii*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H5 Late April-May 3m x 2m

Only two clones of R. ‘Cinnkeys’ have officially been registered - the original 1917 cross by Edward Magor, which has a red tube but yellow lobes; and the wholly scarlet hybrid of a 1931-vintage pairing by Lord Edward Digby, which was christened ‘Minterne Cinnkeys’ - yet several other gardens must have made the pairing and introduced their copies into commerce as a much wider variance in flower colour can be observed in gardens up and down the country.

Apart from Lionel de Rothschild’s contribution.

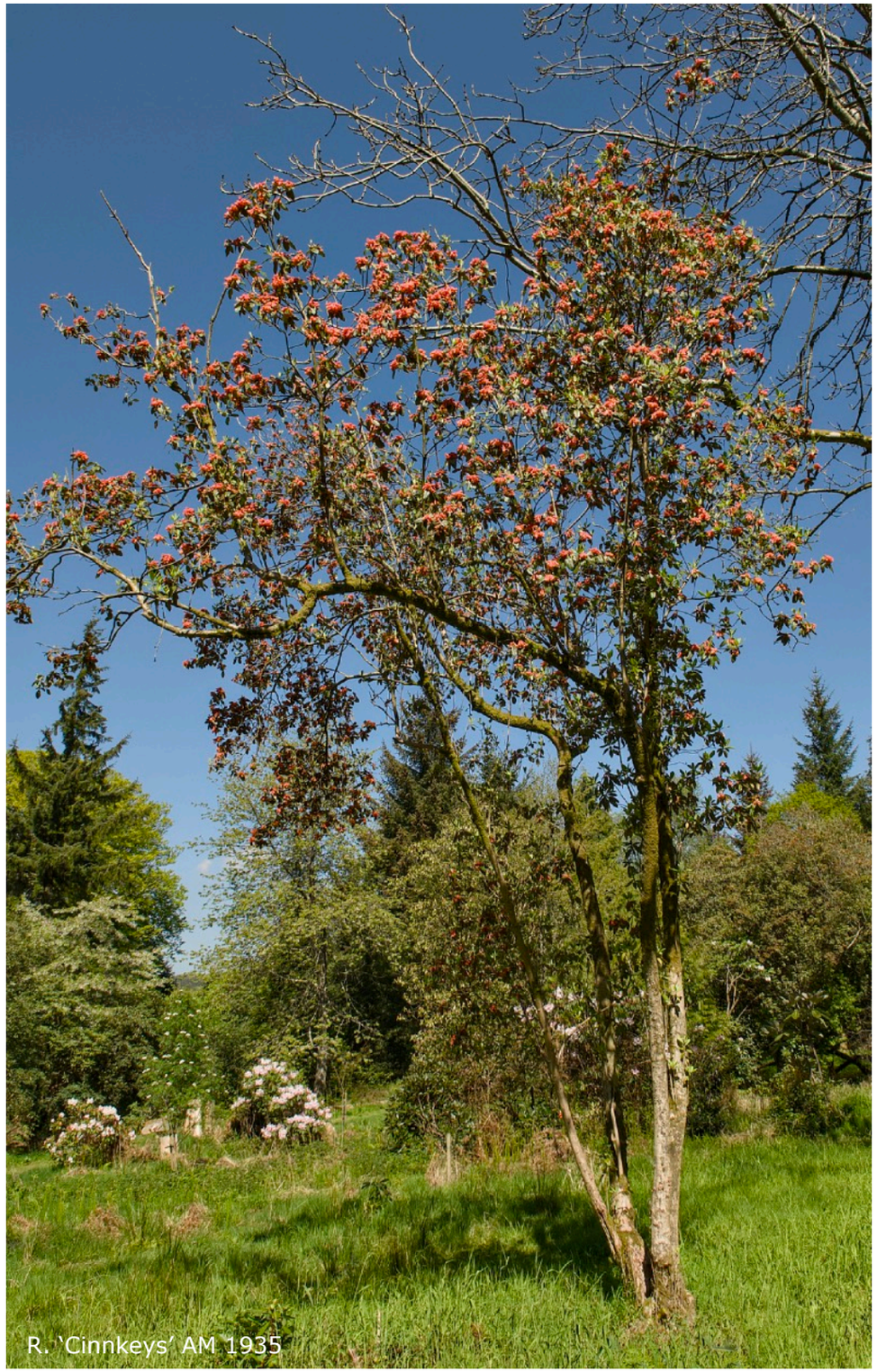
Which in his New Forest woodland fairyland bears an ‘Exbury Cinnkeys’ moniker.

All the others however, falsely lay claim to the original epithet.

True, one or two of these could be mislabelled plants of the pollen parent with larger, less narrowly tubular corollas, especially where the yellow tone is restricted to just the very tip of the lobes. But many display blooms where that hue has ventured much further down the length of the tube. The ultimate height and spread of some specimens has also far exceeded the figures given above and the even more modest values often quoted in expert texts: the huge bush photographed at the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens is one example; another, several specimens at Muncaster Castle Gardens, which have attained small tree status, being at least 8m in height, with multiple trunks and one forming a graceful umbrella-shaped dome.

The habit of ‘Cinnkeys’ is indeed upright, with the dark green or grey-green, glossy ovate leaves clustered at the branch tips. Its flowers begin to expand from terminal and axillary buds towards the end of April - ‘Minterne Cinnkeys’ in mid May; ‘Exbury Cinnkeys’ in late May - with the individual trusses of 5 or 6 tubular corollas, often more, combining into vast pendent arrays. The hybrid is free-flowering from a young age and mature plants redefine the definition of floriferousness with their sheet of bloom, Lord Digby’s version boasting an even more crowded truss, which sometimes holds 30 individual tubes, though the majority of inflorescences are less densely populated. These are coloured nasturtium red inside, scarlet on the outside, the pigmentation paling towards the apex with just a hint of yellow at the very extremities of the lobes. The rumour mill has it that the pollen parent was actually *R. keysii* var. *unicolor,* now Unicolor Group, rather than the unadulterated form of the species.

Note should also be made of the hardiness value, the -15°C minimum rating a bottom limit below which specimens have been reported to succumb, Peter and Kenneth Cox detailing the loss of a plant in the woodland garden at Glendoick when the temperature fell just three degrees lower (*The Encyclopaedia of Rhododendron Hybrids,* Batsford, 1988). Worse, the cross is somewhat susceptible to the powdery mildew fungus, though not to the same extent as its seed parent.



R. ‘Cinnkeys’ AM 1935

R. `Cinnkeys' AM 1935

R. ‘Cinnkeys’ AM 1935

R. ‘Cinnkeys’ AM 1935

R. ‘Prostigiatum’ AM 1924

R. ‘Prostigiatum’
prostratum x *fastigiatum*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H6 April-early May 0.3m x 1.5m

R. ‘Prostigiatum’ is a *prostratum* x *fastigiatum* cross made by Mr. Magor in 1916.

Except the *IRRC* lists the seed parent as *R. saluenense* ssp. *chameunum* Prostratum Group. For in the 1996 Edinburgh Revision of Genus *Rhododendron, R. prostratum* was sunk under that taxon though maintained horticulturally under the RHS ‘Group’ system. Regrettably, the synonymy imposed by the botanists took no account of the fact that *R. prostratum* was actually a tetraploid with 52 chromosomes, while both *R. saluenense* ssp. *chameunum* and *R. saluenense* ssp. *saluenense* were diploids with 26. And that presents a problem. Because more recent scientific evidence, documented, for instance, in the article *Understanding Polyploidy: Insights into the Evolution and Breeding of Azaleas,* by Thomas Ranney and Jeff Jones - https://www.azaleas.org/wp-content/uploads/azalean/30/4/articles/Understanding_Polyploidy.pdf - has shown that out in the wild, a tetraploid cannot successfully breed with its diploid parent and that any seed from such a mating that does germinate will result in a sterile mule, a triploid with 39 chromosomes. Therefore the tetraploid must now be regarded as a new species, an ‘abrupt speciation’ to quote Ranney-Jones. This also being the case for that ‘potential’ triploid. So in consequence, *R. prostratum* has here and in earlier works (*Temperate Rhododendrons,* Volume 5) been returned to its original specific status (with updated field reporting also requiring that varietal rather than subspecies ranking to be applied to *chameunum* and *saluenense*).

The Ranney-Jones paper states that ‘it is possible to hybridise across ploidy levels’, especially if using different parental species, but ‘success is generally low and the resulting hybrids will most likely be sterile or highly infertile’. In the case of R. ‘Prostigiatum’, the diploid *R. fastigiatum* was successfully used to pollinate the tetraploid *R. prostratum,* but the number of seedlings that Edward Magor actually managed to germinate from the pairing would probably have been totalled on the fingers of one hand. Moreover, not a single hybrid to date has been registered with ‘Prostigiatum’ listed as one of its parents, or present in the mix of such contributors, even though the dwarf shrub combines the best features of both parents.

As to those attributes:

Its leaves are tiny - bright green and glossy ovals or ellipses no more than 8mm long by 5mm wide, lepidote both above and below, the scales pale grey at first then turning cinnamon-brown with age. The foliage cloaks a twiggy, compact shrub that is rarely more than 0.3m high even when mature, but which spreads out considerably further. It is also very slow growing. Covering most of this mound for a week or two in April are a phalanx of deep purple flowers, the corollas just 2.5cm across and held in pairs or trios, the exserted stamens and style flushed purplish-red. But the blooms are quickly shed, which is one of the hybrid’s few faults.

‘Prostigiatum’ was introduced in 1924 and immediately secured an Award of Merit from the RHS. It is the perfect subject to feature in a rock garden, especially if a raised-up nook is available to bring the shrub closer to eye level. And for once, E. J. P. Magor’s use of the condensed naming formula to generate his epithets does not induce waves of nausea when the combination is spoken out loud.

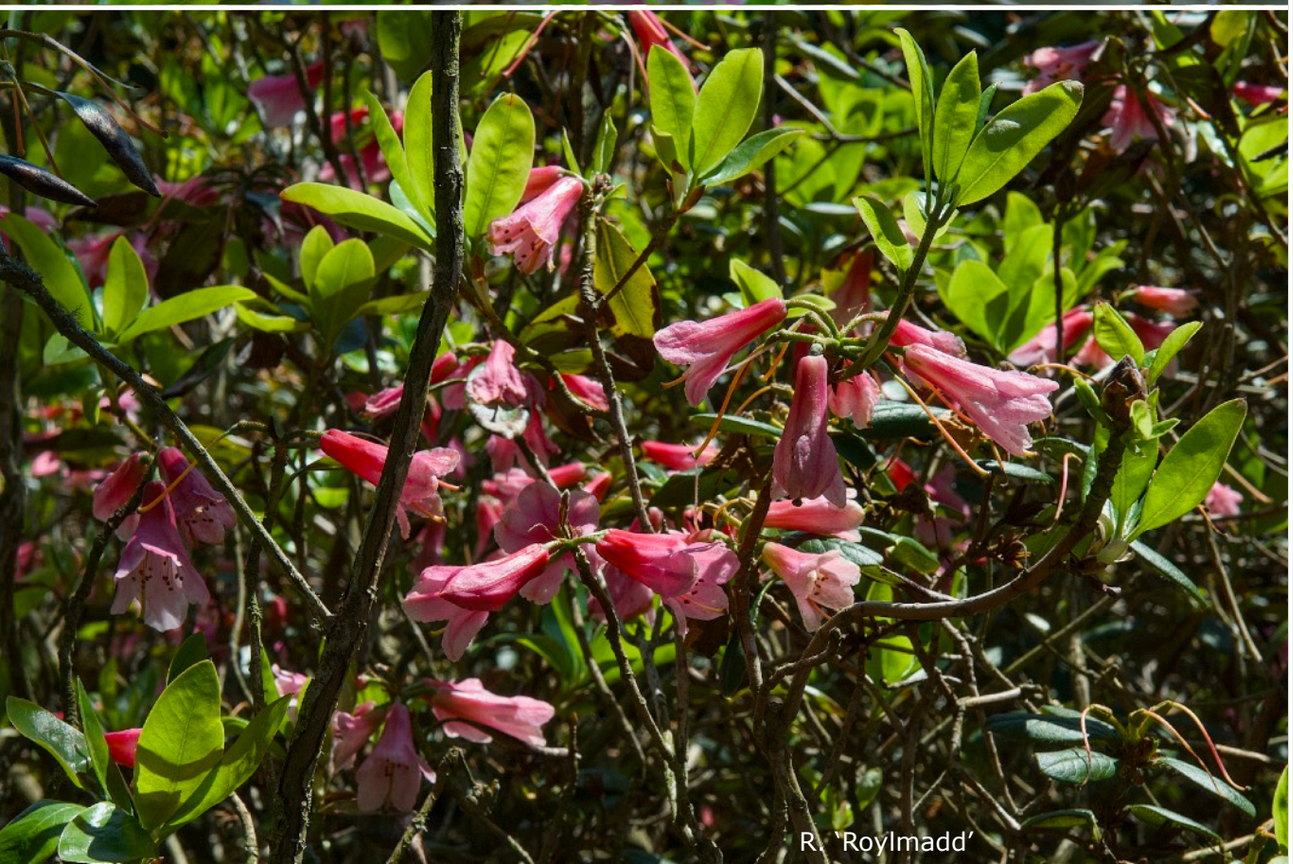

R. ‘Prostigiatum’ AM 1924

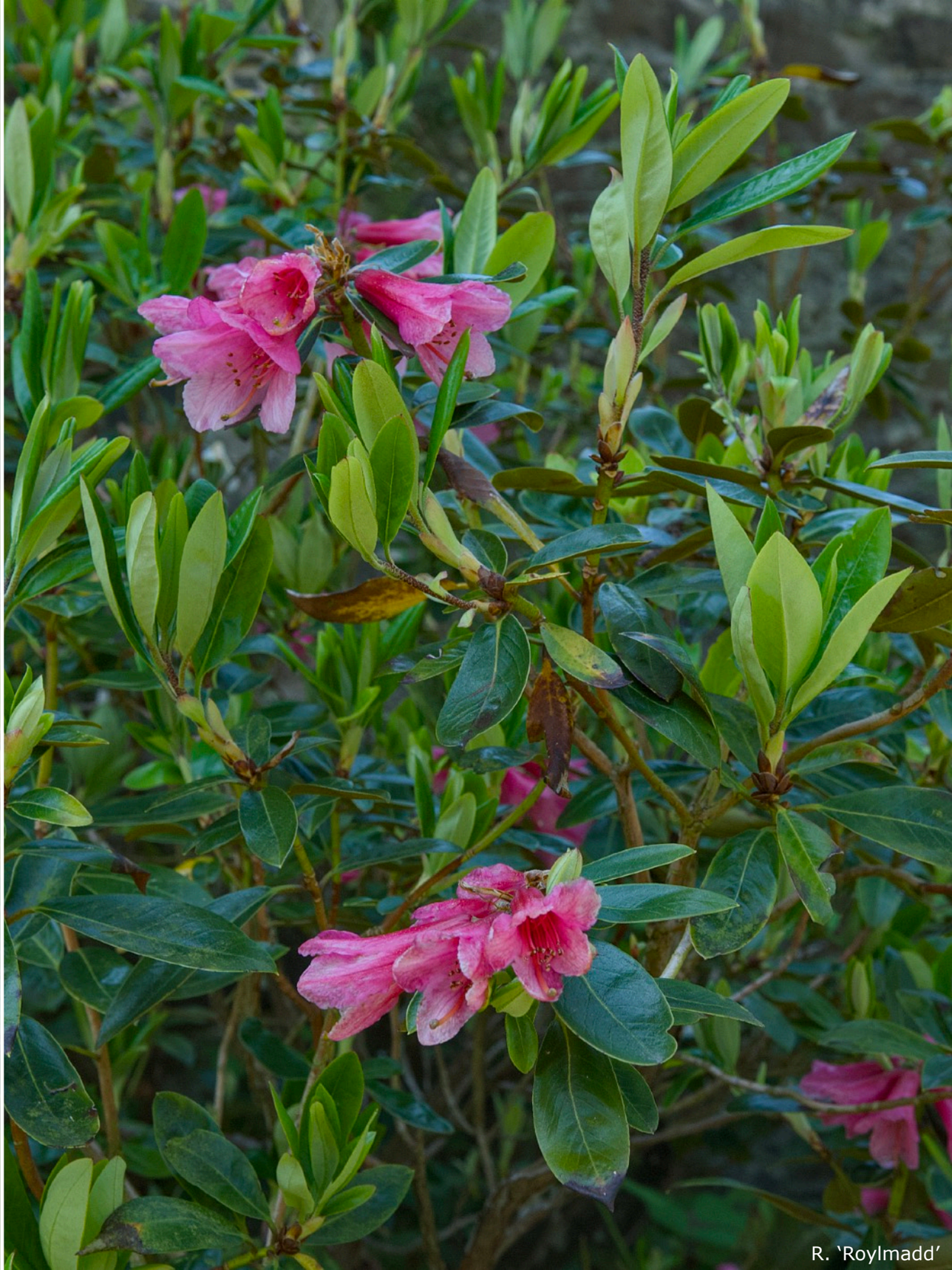
R. 'Prostigiatum' AM 1924

R. ‘Prostigiatum’ AM 1924

R. ‘Roylmadd’


R. ‘Roylmadd’


R. ‘Roylmadd’


R. ‘Roylmadd’



R. ‘Saint Breward’ FCC 1962



R. ‘Saint Breward’ FCC 1962

R. ‘Saint Breward’ FCC 1962

R. 'Saint Breward' & R. 'Saint Tudy'
impeditum x *augustinii*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H6 April-early May 3m x 3m

Three separate hybridisers have crosses from an *impeditum* x *augustinii* pairing logged with the *International Rhododendron Register and Checklist:* two from the UK in the 1930s, J. C. Williams with 'Blue Tit', and E. J. P. Magor with 'Blue Tit (Magor)'; and one from the Pacific Northwest in the 1960s, Frank Fujioka with 'Vibrant Violet'. Such a parental combination has probably been made by no small number of other rhodophiles as well, but it was the keen eye of Major-General Eric Harrison that picked out the award winners from a group of seedlings grown as a hedge that would otherwise have probably passed into obscurity if not oblivion.

Walter Magor, son of the renowned E.J.P., takes up the story:

> 'Shortly before the Second World War, Lieutenant-Colonel (later Major-General) Eric Harrison bought Tremeer in north Cornwall and started to plant rhododendrons, mainly obtained from over the hill at Lamellen. J. C. Williams had made the dwarf hybrid 'Blue Tit' (*R. augustinii* x *R. impeditum*) in 1933. My father had liked it so much that he made the reverse cross and planted a hedge at Lamellen. When General Harrison returned to Tremeer after the war, the hedge was not thriving. With my mother's permission, he took many cuttings from it, from which he raised 'St. Breward' and 'St. Tudy', both of which have since been awarded the F.C.C. after trial at Wisley.'
> *A History of Rhododendrons,* Walter Magor, *Journal American Rhododendron Society,* Volume 44, Number 4.

The *IRRC* entry for the original Caerhays 'Blue Tit' indicates that a 'lavender form of *R. impeditum*' was used to mature the seed, with *R. augustinii* supplying the pollen as in the Magor pairing, this combination being accepted by other expert authors (Peter and Kenneth Cox, for instance, in their *Encyclopaedia of Rhododendron Hybrids*).

'Saint Breward' opens its blooms from both terminal and axillary flower buds, these combining to form tightly-packed globular trusses of up to 26 individual corollas, each one shallowly-campanulate in shape, 5-lobed, around 3cm long and up to 6cm across at the mouth. Their hue is a bright violet-blue, shading darker towards the margins, the former tone also lightly flushing the stamen filaments, but not the style, which is pale pink. The dark green, matt leaves are lanceolate-elliptic through elliptic in shape, acute at the apex, around 5cm long and between 1.5 and 2.5cm wide respectively. The shrub is a strong grower, forming an upright dome, reflecting the genetic combination, with mature bushes attaining a height and spread of 2m after twenty years or so and the oldest specimens topping 3m and extending-out even further.

A H6 hardiness rating confirms that 'Saint Breward' can be planted in any UK garden where the soil is right for rhododendrons and its free-flowering nature will provide a sheet of bloom each spring. Only one negative has been reported, a susceptibility to leaf spot (evident at the apex of the foreground leaf in the righthand photograph on page 54).

The epithet is borrowed from a small village close to both Tremeer and Lamellen.

'Saint Tudy' is also named for a small Cornish village, this set to the west of Bodmin Moor and actually the locale where Lamellen Gardens resides. Introduced in 1961, a year before 'Saint Breward' was unveiled to universal acclaim and a First Class Certificate, 'Saint Tudy' had first been exhibited in the spring of 1960, but only secured an Award of Merit. Its own RHS First Class Certificate would come in 1973, following trials at Wisley.

Technically, 'Saint Tudy' differs from 'Saint Breward' in having a more compact, lower-growing habit, with slightly smaller flowers that form a domed-shaped truss of up to 15 rotate-funnel-shaped corollas, 5cm across at the mouth rather than 6. The hue of the blooms is stated to be 'brilliant violet, paling towards the throat, some flushed strong purple' in the *IRRC* as compared with 'sea lavender violet, shading darker towards the margins' for 'Saint Breward', but 'deep violet-blue' basically covers both. The leaf blades of the AM-awarded plant are also smaller, to just 4cm long by 1.3cm wide.

However, and as was perhaps inevitable, the two clones have been thoroughly mixed-up by the gardening trade, so if your 'Saint Tudy' is looking down on your 'Saint Breward', a label switch is probably advisable. Moreover, if 30-year-old plants are the same height and hovering around the 2m-mark, opt for the former, or the latter if 3m has been breached. Thankfully there are no reports of either 'Blue Tit' or 'Blue Tit (Magor)' being shuffled into the pack as yet, but the odds against such occurring in the future are of a likely similar order to a certain former KGB Lieutenant Colonel ever loosing an election as the President of Russia.



R. 'Saint Tudy' AM 1960 & FCC 1973

R. ‘Saint Tudy’ AM 1960 & FCC 1973

R. 'Yunncinn'

R. ‘Yunncinn’

R. ‘Yunncinn’

R. 'Yunncinn'
yunnanense x *cinnabarinum*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H5-6 April-May 3.5m x 6m

'Yunncinn' is simply stunning. A mature bush pushing towards 4m in height with a spread of 6m covered from head to toe in a blaze of pink will stop you in your tracks and take your breath away. For the sheer opulent sweep of bloom is one of the unalloyed joys of the rhododendron flowering season.

Edward Magor's 1916 *yunnanense* x *cinnabarinum* pairing is probably the best hybrid either of these two species have ever birthed and in combination, an improvement on both parents. Moreover, unlike the vast majority of *R. cinnabarinum* crosses, 'Yunncinn' is not an out-and-out magnet for the powdery mildew fungus, though equally, neither is it totally resistant. Yet a quick check of the RHS online plant finder will show that not a single specialist nursery currently holds stock of the hybrid, despite the fact that rooting cuttings is a cinch provided the stems have not begun to brown.

Contained within the hybridiser's 1920 submission for *The Rhododendron Society Notes* is the following description:

> 'Nine corollas in a loose truss, rather tubular campanulate but opening widely at the mouth, violet-rose, darker on the outside, with two lines of reddish-brown in the interior, 3cm x 5cm, filaments and style violet-rose to white, stigma greenish, stamens light brown'.

Yet Magor believed the cross inferior to another of his 1916 pairings, an *oreotrephes* x *cinnabarinum* hybrid, and wrote that the 'Oreocinn' blooms were 'one of the most pleasing flowers in the garden and considerably more attractive than 'Yunncinn', which was in flower at the same time'. Up-close and allowing for individual taste that may be so, but their creator never saw a fully mature specimen swathed in thousands of blooms, a sight that would probably have changed his mind. And in an unscientific corroboration, fewer specimens of 'Oreocinn' will be found in the UK's rhododendron gardens today, than those of 'Yunncinn'.

Both plants have of course been lumbered with an Isaac Bayley Balfour combo epithet, and while not the most unpronounceable formulations of the bunch, the adoption of such appellations likely went a long way to putting the kibosh on their desirability when competing against the likes of 'Elena' or 'Youthful Sin' - hybrids from Lionel de Rothschild and Henry McLaren that reversed the parentage equation - or with the likes of 'Rose Mangles' and 'Lady Chamberlain'. But imagine the 'Yunncinn' cognomen replaced with 'Pink Explosion' or some other catchy handle: one suspects that its position on the rhododendron popularity chart would be far higher than its current place.



R. 'Yunncinn'

The Elepidote Registrations:

Arbad
cinnamomeum X *adenogynum*
Flower Colour: White-pink

Arbcalo
cinnamomeum X *calophytum*

Arbcamp
campylocarpum X *cinnamomeum*
Flower Colour: Creamy white

Arbking
cinnamomeum X 'Mrs Kingsmill'

Arblact
cinnamomeum X *lacteum*

Arbsutch
arboreum X *sutchuenense*

Artemis
cinnamomeum X *griffithianum*
Flower Colour: White

Atalanta
'Werei' X *thomsonii*
Flower Colour: Geranium Red

Barbsutch
barbatum X *sutchuenense*
Flower Colour: Rose-pink

Bianca
'Sir Charles Lemon' X 'Mrs Kingsmill'

Brachdis
brachycarpum X *discolor*
Flower Colour: Blush Yellow

Brachsoul
brachycarpum X *souliei*
Flower Colour: Rose

Butkew
fortunei X 'Kewense'
Flower Colour: Pink

Callirhoe
'Doctor Stocker' X *arboreum* (Blood Red Form)
Flower Colour: Purplish-pink

Calypso
'Gilian' X 'Smithii'

Campbut
campylocarpum X Sir 'Charles Butler'
Flower Colour: Yellow

Campdis
campylocarpum X *discolor*

Campirr
campylocarpum X *irroratum*
Flower Colour: Yellow

Campkew
campylocarpum X 'Kewense'
Flower Colour: Creamy-white

Campxen
campylocarpum X 'Detonsum'
Flower Colour: White-yellow

Cauapo
caucasicum X *apodectum*
Flower Colour: Apricot

Caubut
caucasicum 'Stramineum' X 'Sir Charles Butler'
Flower Colour: White-yellow

Caucamp
caucasicum 'Stramineum' X *campylocarpum*
Flower Colour: Yellow

Cauking
caucasicum 'Stramineum' X 'Mrs Kingsmill'
Flower Colour: Cream

Chloe
'Boddaertianum' X *faberi*

Cleopatra
arboreum X *thomsonii* hybrid x *sutchuenense*
Flower Colour: Crimson

Clio
'Detonsum' X 'Gilian'
Flower Colour: Carmine Lake

Cornsutch
'Cornubia' X *sutchuenense*
Flower Colour: Carmine-purple

Cyrene
'Sir Charles Lemon' X *lanatum*
Flower Colour: White

Damaris
'Doctor Stocker' X *campylocarpum*
Flower Colour: Canary Yellow
Flowering Time: Early May
Height: Medium

Damophyle
'Damaris' X 'Detonsum'
Flower Colour: White
Height: Tall

Daphne
'Red Admiral' X *neriiflorum*
AM 1933
Flower Colour: Crimson

Decauck
griffithianum X *decorum*
Flower Colour: White

Detonhaem
'Detonsum' X *haematodes*

Dicharb
dichroanthum X *arboreum*
Flower Colour: Apricot
Flowering Time: April
Height: Tall

Dichdiap
dichroanthum X *diaprepes*

Dione
neriiflorum X 'Cornsutch'
Flower Colour: Carmine Lake

Eithne
neriiflorum X 'Red Admiral'
AM 1937
Flower Colour: Crimson-scarlet

Eucamp
campylocarpum X 'Empress Eugénie'
Flower Colour: Cream

Euking
'Empress Eugénie' X 'Mrs Kingsmill'
Flower Colour: Lemon-yellow

Euthom
'Empress Eugénie' X *thomsonii*
Flower Colour: Carmine-pink

Fargarb
oreodoxa var. *fargesii* X *arboreum*
Flower Colour: Violet-rose
Flowering Time: Mid March
Height: Tall

Fargcalo
oreodoxa var. *fargesii* X *calophytum*

Fargsutch
oreodoxa var. *fargesii* X *sutchuenense*
Flower Colour: Blush

Felicity Magor
fulgens X *arboreum*
Flower Colour: Crimson

Fulgarb
fulgens X *arboreum*
AM 1937
Flower Colour: Rosy-crimson
Flowering Time: Late March-April
Height: Tall

Gilian
thomsonii X *griffithianum*
AM 1923
Flower Colour: Cardinal Red

Guepier
caucasicum 'Cunningham's Sulphur' X *lacteum*
AM 1961
Flower Colour: Chartreuse-green

Haembarb
barbatum X *oreodoxa*
Flower Colour: Rose-pink

Hebe
'Neriihaem' X *williamsianum*
Flower Colour: Rose-pink

Hermione
'Gilian' X *arboreum*
AM 1941
Flower Colour: Crimson-blood-red

Hesperia
'Detonsum' X 'Empress Eugénie'

Hilaria
arboreum X 'Barclayi'
Flower Colour: Crimson
Height: Tall

Hill Ayah
discolor X *facetum*
AM 1965
Flower Colour: Rose Madder
Flowering Time: Late June
Height: Tall

Iphigenia
haematodes X 'Red Admiral'
Flower Colour: Red

Irrifarg
irroratum X *oreodoxa* var. *fargesii*
Flower Colour: Blush

Irrir
irroratum X *ririei*

Ivornerii
'Ivery's Scarlet' X *neriiflorum*
Flower Colour: Red

Jo
'Boddaertianum' X *argipeplum*

Kewarb
arboreum X 'Kewense'

Kewdec
'Kewense' X *decorum*
Flower Colour: White

Kewxen
'Kewense' X 'Detonsum'
Flower Colour: Violet-rose

Kingking
zeylanicum Kingianum X 'Mrs Kingsmill'

Kingthom
'Mrs Kingsmill' X *thomsonii*

Königdis
discolor X 'König Carola'
Flower Colour: Lilac-white

Lacs
lacteum X *sinogrande*
Flower Colour: Cream

Lacsino
lacteum X *sinogrande*
Flower Colour: White-cream

Lamellen
campanulatum X *griffithianum*
Flower Colour: White-mauve

Lamellen Damaris
'Doctor Stocker' X *campylocarpum*
Flower Colour: Yellow-green
Flowering Time: April
Height: Tall

Logan Damaris
'Doctor Stocker' X *campylocarpum*
AM 1948
Flower Colour: Greenish-yellow
Flowering Time: April
Height: Tall

Maya
sutchuenense X *ririei*
AM 1940
Flower Colour: Mauve
Flowering Time: March
Height: Tall

Medea
'Red Admiral' X *sutchuenense*
Flower Colour: Crimson

Melissa
'Ascot Brilliant' X *arboreum*
Flower Colour: Red
Flowering Time: March
Height: Tall

Merops
caucasicum 'Cunningham's Sulphur' X *lacteum*
Flower Colour: Sulphur Yellow

Nausicaa
calophytum X 'Gill's Triumph'

Neriiapo
apodectum X *neriiflorum*
Flower Colour: Orange-red

Neriiarb
neriiflorum X *arboreum*
Flower Colour: Red

Neriihaem
neriiflorum X *haematodes*
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Nicola Newman
'Cornubia' X *sutchuenense*
AM 1989
Flower Colour: Reddish-purple
Flowering Time: January-March
Height: Tall

Nobleanum Lamellen
caucasicum 'Stramineum' X *arboreum* (Blood Red Form)
Flower Colour: Rose-pink
Flowering Time: January-March
Height: Tall

Orbicarb
arboreum X *orbiculare*
Flower Colour: Carmine

Rotundarb
orbiculare X *arboreum*
Flower Colour: Carmine

Smirnauck
smirnowii X *griffithianum*
Flower Colour: White

Soularb
souliei X *arboreum*
Flower Colour: Cerise

Soulbut
souliei X 'Sir Charles Butler'
Flower Colour: Blush-white-pink

Souldis
souliei X *discolor*
Flower Colour: Blush-pink-white

Soulkew
souliei X 'Kewense'
Flower Colour: Blush-white-pink

Soulking
souliei X *zeylanicum* Kingianum
Flower Colour: Crimson-pink

Sutchbarb
barbatum X *sutchuenense*

Sutchcalo
sutchuenense X *calophytum*

Sutchrir
ririei X *sutchuenense*
Flower Colour: Violet-purple
Flowering Time: Mid March
Height: Tall

Thalia
'Ascot Brilliant' X *griffithianum*
Flower Colour: Mauve-rose

Thomaden
thomsonii X *adenogynum*

Thomdeton
thomsonii X 'Detonsum'

Thomking
thomsonii X 'Mrs Randall Davidson'

Thomwilliams
thomsonii X *williamsianum*
Flower Colour: Rose-pink
Flowering Time: April
Height: Low

Tretawn
calophytum X *cinnamomeum* var. *cinnamomeum*
AM 1976
Flower Colour: Purplish-pink

Ungerio
ungernii X *facetum*

Wayford
calophytum X 'Gill's Triumph'
AM 1957 & FCC 1976
Flower Colour: White

Xenarb
'Detonsum' X *arboreum*
Flower Colour: Cerise

R. ‘Arbsutch’

R. ‘Arbsutch’

R. ‘Arbsutch’
arboreum x *sutchuenense*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H6 Late March-April 6m x 4m

Names, as everyone knows, are important.

So regardless of a hybrid’s beauty of foliage or flower, in the vast majority of cases, when a new cross is lumbered with a tongue-twister or some other less than memorable epithet, it will fail to find favour with the gardening public.

Edward Magor of Lamellen in Cornwall was without doubt a master hybridiser, but when it came time to christen those crosses, his practice of truncating then butting together the parental monikers was seriously flawed, despite the modus operandi being conceived and championed by the leading rhododendron-savvy botanist of the day, Sir Isaac Bayley Balfour. As a result, just a handful of his creations are known by anyone who is not an avid rhodophile and these - think ‘Damaris’ or ‘Saint Breward’ - are the ones that abandoned that custom or in the case of the latter, were named by others post their creator’s demise.

R. ‘Arbsutch’, which is far from the worst example of such nomenclature inanity, falls into that passed-over category simply on account of its appellation. And that is criminal. For the plant itself is nothing less than stunning and displays the best features of both its parents.

The leaves are long: dark green daggers; elliptic-lanceolate in silhouette, fairly stiff and often with a V-shaped profile; and they remain on the shrub for 2 to 3 years, filling the gaps between the branches. In form, mature specimens will adopt a tree-like stance and typical umbrella-shaped profile if given room enough to develop freely, and they are robust growers. The flowers appear early in the season, March into the first week of April, so like the foliage, need the protection of a woodland shelter-belt, but seen at their best, the reddish-pink, near football-sized blooms, are quite literally, breathtaking. The tubular-campanulate corollas, held in large trusses of 10 to 20, are heavily spotted purplish-red on all the lobes, with a still darker blotch in the throat, and although the overall pigmentation fades to a purplish-pink, the tone is still strong, not washed-out. Flowering is often prolific, but as with either parent, famine usually follows feast, especially if a plant’s energy is wasted producing seed.

Outwith the specimen growing at Muncaster Castle Gardens in West Cumbria - where many more Magor crosses will be found thriving and lighting up the various woodland glades and terraces - mature plants that are still graced with a label are absent from most of the great rhododendron collections open to the general public during the flowering season, as also, are the plants themselves.


R. ‘Arbsutch’

R. ‘Arbsutch’

R. ‘Arbsutch’



R. ‘Ascot Brilliant’ x *arboreum* Blood-Red

R. ‘Ascot Brilliant’ x *arboreum* Blood-Red

Hardiness	Flowering Period	Height & Spread
H4	March	15m x 6m

With a habit that is near columnar from some aspects, this ‘Ascot Brilliant’ x *arboreum* cross has benefitted from Muncaster’s mild climate and plentiful rainfall to soar upward, totally dwarfing the other mature rhododendrons gathered around its base. Flowering occurs in March, sometimes extending into early April, the scarlet to red corollas with a speckling of darker spots on the upper lobes, held in tight, balled trusses, and several hundred of these will usually open each year, while every so often outside influences and the growth cycle align and the plant becomes a sheet of flame from base to tip.

Visiting rhodophiles will find this colossus at the top of the hill behind the castle, in the angle of the V-shaped junction where two principal paths meet.

Stuck into the ground close to the trunk is a label suggesting the plant is actually *R. arboreum,* but don’t let the champion status of the clean bole - some 77cm thick when last measured by The Tree Register - fool you, as it has them and others. For high up, almost out of reach, and fairly well hidden, is another label - the cast-iron original - denoting the parentage in capital letters: ASCOT BRILLIANT X ARBOREUM BLOOD RED. Two issues of *The Rhododendron Society Notes* - Volume 2, Number 3, published in 1922, and Volume 3, Number 2, from 1926 - credit such a cross to Sir Edmund Loder (1849-1920) and indicate that first flowering occurred at Exbury in 1922, with Lionel de Rothschild naming the hybrid ‘Harry White’, for the highly respected Sunningdale nurseryman and hybridiser.

However, the seed and pollen parents appear to have been quoted in reverse in *The Notes,* because the *IRRC* entry details the ‘Harry White’ pairing as being *arboreum* (blood red form) x ‘Ascot Brilliant’. And in that case - assuming Sir John Ramsden’s metal label follows convention and was not also transposed - the Muncaster plant would in fact be a seedling from the same pairing that produced R. ‘Melissa’, which was made at Lamellen in 1921 and entered as Cross No. 619 in the Stud Book. ‘Melissa’ flowered for the first time in 1929 and ‘as might have been expected is a good red, 12 to the truss, and with a slight spotting of darker colour on the upper lobes’ to quote Mr. Magor from Volume 3, Number 5, of *The Notes,* covering 1929-1931.





R. 'Ascot Brilliant' x *arboreum* Blood-Red



R. ‘Ascot Brilliant’ x *arboreum* Blood-Red

R. 'Ascot Brilliant' x *arboreum* Blood-Red

R. ‘Cornsutch’

R. ‘Cornsutch’

R. 'Damaris', R. 'Lamellen Damaris' & R. 'Logan Damaris'

'Doctor Stocker' x *campylocarpum*

Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread

H5 April-early May 3m x 4.5m

R. 'Damaris' is a 'Doctor Stocker' x *campylocarpum* pairing made by Edward Magor in 1918, which he named for his youngest daughter and introduced in 1926. The honorific stems from the Celtic goddess of fertility 'Damara', Hellenised around the time of the BC/AD switch, with its first historically-noted personage a Greek convert to Christianity who lived in Athens around 55 AD.

The rhododendron so christened has an open, flat flower truss of six corollas that are broadly campanulate in shape and primrose-yellow in colour. They shade to ivory-white at the lobe margins, are without spots or a blotch, and are each around 5cm long, flaring to 8cm wide at the mouth. Leaves are ovate through narrowly-ovate in shape, dark green and shiny, but held for just one year, which can give a mature shrub a sparse appearance when devoid of bloom, the upright-ascending habit not helping. A second clone, 'Lamellen Damaris', although only formerly named and registered in 1989 by Edward's son Walter Magor, was actually - as noted in the pages of the *IRRC* - the plant distributed under the grex/group/pride name. It has a flower truss of 6 to 10 corollas, these bright yellow-green in colour dimming to pale yellow-green, and comes with leaves that are more oblong-elliptic in shape.

A third clone also exists, which is superior to the two introduced from Lamellen and indeed today, is the only member of the pride available commercially, even from the specialist nurseries. Yet its apparent hybridiser, Kenneth McDouall of Logan House, near to Stranraer, in southwest Scotland, is not credited as such in the *IRRC*.

The brothers McDouall - Kenneth (1870-1945); and Douglas (1872-1942) - were avid gardeners who filled their estate's grounds (now divided into two as Logan Botanic Garden and Logan House) with the exotics then arriving in the UK from an array of plant hunters scouring South East Asia for new species. And as anyone who has visited either garden will attest, rhododendrons took pride of place, the near frost-free climate of the woodland perfect for their cultivation. Kenneth McDouall wrote several published articles about the garden during the 1920s and 1930s, with many eminent visitors also extolling its virtues in the horticultural press. One of those callers at the garden gates was a gentleman by the name of John Guille Millais, who included a list of pairings made at Logan by McDouall in the second volume of his book *Rhododendrons and the Various Hybrids* (Longmans, Green & Co, 1924). Of the dozen crosses listed, one is *R. campylocarpum* x 'Doctor Stocker', on paper the reverse of the Magor combination, but seed and pollen parent may have been inadvertently switched in the reporting or the telling, for at the time such detail was not given the same import as today.

Volume 3, Number 2, of *The Rhododendron Society Notes,* which went to the printers in 1926, contains a short listing of hybrid rhododendrons with their parentages. 'Damaris' is included, the parentage given as 'Doctor Stocker' x *campylocarpum,* and an accompanying note states that 'the same cross raised and shown by K. McDouall, received an AM at the RHS in 1925'.

Yet Kenneth McDouall's name is totally absent from the 1544 pages of the 2004 Second Edition of the *IRRC,* so no selections from the combinations listed by Millais were ever named or introduced by their creator, at least formally. However, the name of another member of the Rhododendron Society, indeed, the editor of *The Species of Rhododendron,* published in 1930, and creator of an equally impressive rhododendron fairyland at Tower Court, his home near Ascot, does appear: John Barr Stevenson. In this context, he is given credit for the introduction of 'Damaris Logan' in 1948 - now officially a synonym of 'Logan Damaris' as per the *IRRC* entry - scooping an Award of Merit from the RHS in the process. Stevenson presumably saw the clone in flower and secured a branchlet or two for grafting.

'Logan Damaris' - just like 'Lamellen Damaris' - also has greenish-yellow corollas, although their tone is described by some authors as lemon-yellow, others as Dresden Yellow. They are without spots or a blotch and held in a domed-shaped truss composed of 12 funnels. The leaves are elliptic in shape and up to 12.5cm long.

Two other registered hybrids originate from the Magor pairing of 1918: 'Cornish Cracker' and 'Cream Cracker'; introduced by Major-General Eric Harrison of Tremeer in the mid 1950s. As with the 'Logan Damaris' entry in the *IRRC,* no hybridiser is detailed, but given the two gardens are quite close to each other in north Cornwall and the rhododendron planting at Tremeer was begun with stock from Lamellen in the late 1930s (Walter Magor, *A History of Rhododendrons,* in the *Journal American Rhododendron Society,* Volume 44, Number 4, paragraph 9 from the bottom), such is likely to have been the case. The cross was also duplicated by Lord Swaythling in the 1940s - 'Townhill Damaris' - as well as by the Hillier Nursery (clone unregistered, but sparsely spotted crimson), while Sir James Horlick introduced his own facsimile 'Golden Drop' in 1931, and Michael Haworth-Booth 'Goldilocks' in the 1970s.

Which brings us to an article on page 58 of the 1992 RCMG yearbook, *Rhododendrons with Camellias and Magnolias No. 44.* In it, Walter Magor writes that Kenneth McDouall duplicated the Damaris cross around 1938, Eric Harrison ten years later in 1948. However, this account clashes with his own 1990 *JARS* article in respect to Harrison, and with Millais and the 1926 *Rhododendron Society Notes* entry in regard to McDouall, so its accuracy must be challenged. That the *IRRC* entries for 'Cornish Cracker' and 'Cream Cracker' were not updated prior to the 2004 reprint is testament to this view. But should the oversight in the entry relating to 'Logan Damaris' be corrected? And Kenneth McDouall be credited for both crossing and raising the hybrid? Especially as the entry in *Bean's Trees & Shrubs* confirms this to have been the case?

Well…

Maybe. If another, far more likely possibility, didn't exist.

One unremarked by any of the sources above.

That the Logan House plant could have arrived in a consignment of species and hybrid rhododendrons despatched from Lamellen via Edward Magor's annual 'List of Surplus Plants for Sale', after which the wires of historical reportage somehow got crossed.

Credence for just such an eventuality might also explain why Kenneth McDouall never personally claimed the rhododendron as his own, or indeed, wrote of his hybrid breeding programme in any of the contributions he submitted to *The Rhododendron Society Notes*.

And an answer to the conundrum may be tantalisingly close, for in the near future, the geneticists may be able to show which of the 'Damaris' clones originated from Lamellen, via their DNA chains, and which were crossed elsewhere using a slightly different clone of *R. campylocarpum.* But until that day dawns, and most likely after it too, Edward Magor should be listed as the hybridiser of 'Damaris', 'Lamellen Damaris' and 'Logan Damaris'.

Regrettably, all the forms of R. 'Damaris' have foliage that is inclined to chlorosis, with leaf spotting a minor problem too, and although now supplanted in the yellow-flowering rhododendron league tables by 'Crest', 'Hotei' and several others, the Edward Magor hybrids, or McDouall, Harrison and Stevenson introductions, all remain stunning additions to the rhododendron cannon.

R. ‘Damaris’



R. ‘Damaris’



R. ‘Damaris’

R. ‘Damaris’



R. ‘Logan Damaris’ AM 1948



R. ‘Logan Damaris’ AM 1948

R. ‘Logan Damaris’ AM 1948




R. ‘Daphne’ AM 1933


R. ‘Daphne’ AM 1933


R. ‘Daphne’ AM 1933

R. ‘Daphne’ AM 1933

R. ‘Dicharb’

R. ‘Dicharb’
dichroanthum x *arboreum*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H5 Late March-April 10m x 4m

There are several labelled specimens of this *dichroanthum* x *arboreum* cross scattered throughout the woodlands at Muncaster Castle Gardens in Cumbria, all mature, small trees, between 8 and 10m high. There is also one plant overlooking the start of the Georgian Terrace Walk, in full sun, which was only around 3m high and wide at the time of writing, indicating that the others have struggled upwards due to competition with the surrounding conifers and beech trees rather than any inborn desire to attain such a stature. However, they are all slightly different from one another, the result of seedlings being distributed rather than vegetatively produced clones.

The pairing was made at Lamellen during the spring of 1924, the hybrid named and introduced in 1936, with its flowers officially denoted as apricot. But as the photographs show, while that may be true at a distance, up-close there is a far wider mix of colour, with salmon-pink predominating and orange the opening hue of at least one shrub.

The corollas of the ‘Dicharb’ cross seedlings are tubular-campanulate in shape, widely flaring at the mouth and distinctly 5-lobed. Their pink tone pales to a creamy-white down the centre of the lobes and there is strong veining throughout, with five darker coloured nectar sacs arranged around the base of the throat, concentrating the stamen filaments into a tight ring. The calyx lobes are large, deeply divided, stand proud of the tube and usually share the same colour, though one clone offers creamy-white lobes in contrast, a match with the banding of its petals. The compact truss is flat-topped to rounded, composed of between 8 to 12 individual corollas, with the whole ensemble slightly one-sided, though no less attractive for being so.

Foliage is narrowly elliptic-ovate, dark green and somewhat glossy, averaging 15cm long, but without an abaxial indumentum. The leaves are held for two, sometimes three years, giving ‘Dicharb’ a bushy demeanour, albeit above 6m or more of bare trunk where the plants have been drawn-up. Recent storms have impacted the canopy at Muncaster, bringing down major trees and letting in a lot more light, and the rhododendrons have responded accordingly, becoming natural standards atop weirdly angled poles.

Of course, lumbered with its shudder-inducing epithet, ‘Dicharb’ was never going to take the rhododendron nursery trade or the buying public by storm, but nonetheless, it is a decided gem.



R. ‘Dicharb’

R. ‘Dicharb’

R. ‘Dicharb’



R. ‘Fargarb’

R. ‘Fargarb’
fargesii x *arboreum*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H5 February-March 8m x 6m

Amazingly, only one hybridiser has registered a named cross that combines *R. oreodoxa* var. *fargesii* with *R. arboreum* - Edward John Penberthy Magor, of St Tudy, in Cornwall. He made the match in 1920, with the former species taking on the role of seed parent, and although an ‘Arbfarg’ combination has yet to be registered with the *IRRC,* the progeny from just such a combination can be found blooming in the Winter Garden at Exbury, an almost certain Lionel de Rothschild pairing that has lovely pink-paling-white flowers, spotted darker within, which reflect the genetic contribution of *R. fargesii*. Its reverse cross flowered for the first time at Lamellen in the third week of February, 1931, and Mr. Magor described his union in Volume 3, Number 5, of *The Rhododendron Society Notes,* writing that the blooms were ‘violet-rose of the darkest shade’, with the inflorescences opening to form:

> ‘A good full rounded truss, containing 20 bells, 6-lobed, openly campanulate, with many darker spots on the upper lobes, 2 x 2¼ inches [5cm x 5.5cm], filaments and style paler than the corolla, stigma cream, stamens 12-14 brown. A small growing plant with leaves rather like *R. fargesii,* but stouter, and showing the influence of *R. arboreum* in the brighter colour and better truss. Some of the hybrids should produce redder flowers.’

And indeed they did, as the seedlings planted at Muncaster Castle in Cumbria can attest. Here, ‘Fargarb’ will sometimes be in full bloom just ten days into the year’s second month and equally, the genes of *R. arboreum* did not restrict their dominion to just the flower buds, for these West Cumbrian shrubs are most definitely not ‘small growing’, but tree-like in habit. For instance, one specimen, sheltered but growing in near full sun, is around 6m tall and domed shaped, while those in the woodland, umbrella-shaped, and the tallest, drawn-up by the surrounding conifers, 10m or more. And they are a fabulous sight when bedecked in a host of backlit luminous globes, the display extending well into March if weather conditions remain favourable.

In addition to the named selection (planted on the righthand side of the Main Drive), three unchristened clones are also shown, along with their locations, the differing colour variations in their flowers clearly evident.

R. 'Fargarb'

R. ‘Fargarb’

R. 'Fargarb'



R. *fargesii* x *arboreum* - the Church Wood clone



R. *fargesii* x *arboreum* - the Castle Gate clone



R. *fargesii* x *arboreum* - the Church Wood clone



R. *fargesii* x *arboreum* - the Castle Gate clone



R. *fargesii* x *arboreum* - the Hilltop clone



R. *fargesii* x *arboreum* - the Hilltop clone

R. ‘Fulgarb’ AM 1937

R. ‘Fulgarb’
fulgens x *arboreum*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H4 Late February-March 6m x 4m

If February stays mild along West Cumbria’s Irish Sea coast, which is often the case, then Edward Magor’s *fulgens* x *arboreum* cross will be in full bloom in the woodland at Muncaster Castle ten whole days before pictorial calendar pages need to be turned and moreover, the sight of those blooms will be scintillating: hundreds of backlit red globes, incandescent against a backdrop of sentinel conifers.

The ‘Fulgarb’ pairing was made in 1920 and the resulting seedlings took ten years to flower, being named and introduced in 1930, though strangely, no mention of such is made in Mr Magor’s annual *Notes from Lamellen* write-up in *The Rhododendron Society Note*s (Volume 3, Number 5).

Held in dense globular or dome-shaped trusses, averaging 15 tubular-campanulate corollas each, the blooms are rosy-crimson in hue, with darker spotting on the dorsal lobes. Five nectar pouches, arrayed around the base of the throat, force the stamens and style into a tight central cluster. The foliage is elliptic through oblanceolate in outline, flat or convex in profile, with recurved margins. Dark green and glossy above, the leaves show a thin indumentum below at first but this is not persistent. Each blade is between 12.5 and 15cm long, with the majority only held for one year, though a well-branched habit somewhat mitigates the consequent open aspect.

The specimens at Muncaster, dotted throughout the woodland, are each slightly different from one another, the result of sister seedlings being distributed rather than grafted or layered plants. Those at the top of the hill have been drawn-up by the surrounding shelter-belt trees and are near double the 6m height figure quoted above. That assessment applies to the best specimen to be found in the grounds, the named plant growing in a more open locale on the left of the Main Drive when walking to the castle from the entrance gate. All however share a trait common to many rhododendrons, both species and hybrids - every so often, conditions coalesce to give the flower buds some extra oomph. And then, not only are more produced, but the resulting blooms are larger, their hue more vibrant, and while a normal year will see a modest or even spectacular display, when ‘Fulgarb’ is fully charged, the pageant is literally effervescent.

Mr. Magor apparently repeated the pairing in 1928 using a different form of *R. arboreum* - the original cross had used pollen from a blood-red clone and his son, Major Edward Walter Moyle Magor, introduced ‘Felicity Magor’ - named for E.J.P.’s granddaughter - during the 1950s.



R. ‘Fulgarb’ AM 1937



R. ‘Fulgarb’ AM 1937

R. ‘Fulgarb’ AM 1937

R. ‘Hebe’

R. ‘Hill Ayah’ AM 1965

R. ‘Hill Ayah’ AM 1965

R. ‘Lamellen’

R. ‘Nausicaa’

R. ‘Nausicaa’

R. ‘Souldis’

R. ‘Souldis’

R. *sutchuenense* x *ririei*

R. *sutchuenense* x *ririei*

Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread

H5-6 Late February-March 6m x 4m

Edward Magor's pairing of *R. sutchuenense* with pollen from *R. ririei* was made in 1919 and it produced a group of medium-tall, umbrella- and dome-shaped trees that bore dark green oblong-lanceolate leaves midway between the two species. Their flowers are described as pale mauve-purple, with the display opening very early in the season, and one of those seedlings has been registered as 'Maya', which was introduced in 1933 and became the recipient of an Award of Merit in 1940. Mr. Magor is also the only person to have logged the reverse cross with the *IRRC,* his *ririei* x *sutchuenense* combination (also made in 1919), saddled with the far-from-palatable 'Sutchrir' for its epithet.

The plants featured here, growing in the woodland gardens at Muncaster Castle, have *R. sutchuenense* as their seed parent and could included 'Maya' in their number, but none are so labelled and all show subtle differences within the group, though each tree exhibits a quiet, demure beauty, when adorned in shades of pinkish-mauve. Regrettably, few visitors to the castle and its grounds will ever see them so, given their precarious bloom time.



R. *sutchuenense* x *ririei*



R. *sutchuenense* x *ririei*

R. *sutchuenense* x *ririei*

R. *sutchuenense* x *ririei*

R. *sutchuenense* x *ririei*

R. *sutchuenense* x *ririei*



R. ‘Thomdeton’

R. ‘Thomdeton’
thomsonii x ‘Detonsum’
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H5 April-May 3m x 4m

R. ‘Thomdeton’ is a 1921 pairing that placed pollen from *R. x detonsum* onto the style of *R. thomsonii.* Scroll forward two decades and a selection from that now long-ago germination was finally named and introduced, with even the usual vomit-worthy Bayley-Balfour epithet combination for once producing an appellation that almost rolls off the tongue.

Given the parentage, it is doubtful the shrub took that long to open its first bloom, but no mention is made of the cross in any of the yearly submissions Mr. Magor penned for *The Rhododendron Society Notes* and nor will anything other than the bare bones entry in the *IRRC* be found in any other publication or from an Internet search. And that is a shame, for ‘Thomdeton’ is a stunner, as can quickly be surmised.

The blooms are deep strawberry-pink in tone when they first open, paling to a softer pink, with around ten funnels carried in an open to flat-topped truss on pinkish-red flushed pedicels. The corollas are five-lobed with decidedly frilly margins, the dorsal bearing a fan of darker spots and speckles that coalesce to form a solid blotch at the base. In contrast, the style is creamy-white throughout its length, as is the stigma. Foliage is medium-sized, the leaf blades oblanceolate in shape, mid to dark green in tone, glabrous, held on quite long, drooping petioles. Retained on the bush for up to three years, the leaves provide an adequate, but not dense cloak across the framework, this task frustrated by the long inter-nodal growth. Mature specimens are clearly free-flowering, the upward-ascending branches developing into a 3m high dome with a slightly wider spread.

Quietly beautiful, this is yet another knockout Lamellen hybrid that has now all but disappeared from the face of the earth.



R. ‘Thomdeton’

R. ‘Thomdeton’

R. ‘Thomwilliams’




R. ‘Thomwilliams’


R. ‘Thomwilliams’


R. ‘Thomwilliams’

James Henry Mangles:

Obituary - James Henry Mangles.



It is with very great sorrow that we have to record the death of our valued friend and correspondent, James Henry Mangles.

After a painful illness, he died at his residence, Valewood, Haslemere, on August 24, at the early age of fifty-two years. Courteous and urbane, with extensive knowledge and full sympathy with horticultural pursuits, Mr. Mangles accession to the Council of the Royal Horticultural Society a few years ago was hailed with satisfaction by those cognisant with the wants of the Society and the capabilities of the new Councillor. Short as has, unfortunately, been his connection with the Society, Mr. Mangles amply fulfilled the wishes and expectations of his friends. He was full of energy and sympathetic zeal, he enlisted an extraordinary number of recruits; in numerous and varied ways he endeavoured to stimulate the flagging vitality of the Society. To him were principally due the two successful evening meetings held last year at the rooms of the Linnean Society. To him among but a few, we looked forward in the hope that his influence and zeal would sooner or later extricate the Society from the impasse into which, by force of circumstances, it has been driven at South Kensington. To him we looked to take a prominent part in finding a new place of meeting for the Society, and in reorganising its affairs on a broader and more distinctively national basis. But these hopes are sadly dimmed by his death; and, so far as he is concerned, we can only look back with mingled sorrow and gratitude.

As a horticulturist, Mr. Mangles speciality was the Rhododendron. He was as much interested in the latest crosses of a Waterer or a Davies, as in the discoveries of Hooker in Sikkim, and of later explorers in Sumatra. No labour was too great, no distance too remote, to present an obstacle to him when a Rhododendron was to be seen. He made them, in fact, the study of his life. It is to be deplored that his knowledge to a large extent dies with him. He published but little save in the form of occasional contributions to the journals, and we are not aware whether he has left any manuscript record of the results of his numerous experiments in hybridising the species. Visitors to the Royal Horticultural Society will remember the ample collection of noble specimens that he was in the habit of bringing to the Society's meetings, and the members of the Scientific Committee had frequent occasion to admire the full knowledge of species possessed by him and the valuable illustrations of hybridisation which he submitted to them. To the last, we believe the agonies of a painful illness were partially alleviated by the inspection of specimens brought for naming or other purposes by his gardener. Those species which required some slight protection were grown in long canvas houses with straight sides and ridged roof, which he called his cathedral houses, and from which the canvas blinds could be removed at will. The plan answered admirably, as the specimens he showed amply testified, and the plants even when out of bloom show the beauty that always characterises vigorous growth. From those houses came the numerous specimens of which we have been privileged to give illustrations from time to time, including that published to-day, and which we little thought, at the time he brought it to us, would have to serve in some sort as a tribute to his memory.

Reprinted from *The Gardeners' Chronicle,* New Series, Volume 22, September 6th, 1884.

- *opposite* -
James Henry Mangles.
The captioned photograph from the book *Tennyson at Aldworth - The Diary Of James Henry Mangles,*
written by J. H. Mangles and published in 1984 by Ohio University Press, Athens, Ohio.

James Henry Mangles.

by G. W. E. Loder.

James Henry Mangles was born in 1832. He was the eldest son of Charles E. Mangles, Chairman of the London and South Western Railway, and he also occupied a seat at the Board of that Company for some years.

His cousin, James Mangles, a captain in the Royal Navy, studied the Swan River plants, and was a friend of Lindley. The genus Mangelsia (now merged in Grevillea), is named after James Mangles and his brother Robert, who also introduced many West Australian plants.

James Henry Mangles studied for the Bar but did not practice. He settled at Valewood, near Haslemere in Surrey, and became an ardent gardener. He was elected a Fellow of the Linnean Society on April 24th, 1874, and served for a few years on the Council of the Royal Horticultural Society, where he did much useful work. He died at Valewood, after a painful illness, on August 24th, 1884, at the age of 52.

Mangles devoted himself chiefly to Rhododendrons, and took a special interest in hybridising. He must have begun his hobby at an early age, for in the article dated July 19th, 1879, he states that nearly 20 years previously Sir William Hooker one day at Kew gave him some pollen from a scarlet *arboreum,* then in the Temperate house, with which he made "his first very hackneyed experiment in Rhododendron hybridising," by applying it to *R. ponticum.* He continued his work for many years, and though he met with failures, time has shown that he was abundantly successful. It is melancholy, however, to have to record that he lived to see very few of his hybrids flower. One was 'Alice Mangles' (*griffithianum* x *ponticum*), which he exhibited in 1882. It is unfortunately not possible to trace the parentage of many of his hybrids, but a perusal of the following articles will show that he operated chiefly with Himalayan species, and especially with *griffithianum*. He was greatly encouraged in his work by his friend Mr Anderson-Henry of Edinburgh, also an enthusiastic hybridiser, and he never missed an opportunity of visiting gardens in all parts of the country where Rhododendrons were cultivated. At Valewood he erected shelters or houses with removable canvas roofs, which he called his "cathedral houses," and in these he kept the more tender plants. At his death these became the property of his brother, Mr H. A. Mangles, who removed them to Littleworth Cross, near Farnham, and on his dying in 1908, they were left to his sister, Miss Mangles, who has not only cultivated them with assiduous care, but has added largely to the collection.

On August 13th and 14th, 1911, a very destructive heath fire occurred between Aldershot and Guildford, which destroyed some 2,000 acres of vegetation; it reached Littleworth and approached to within 50 yards of the house, which was in great danger; as it was, a part of the garden was destroyed, including many Conifers and rare Rhododendrons.

The remainder of Mangles' collection was left at Valewood in the possession of his daughter, Mrs Daffarn, who takes great pride in them.

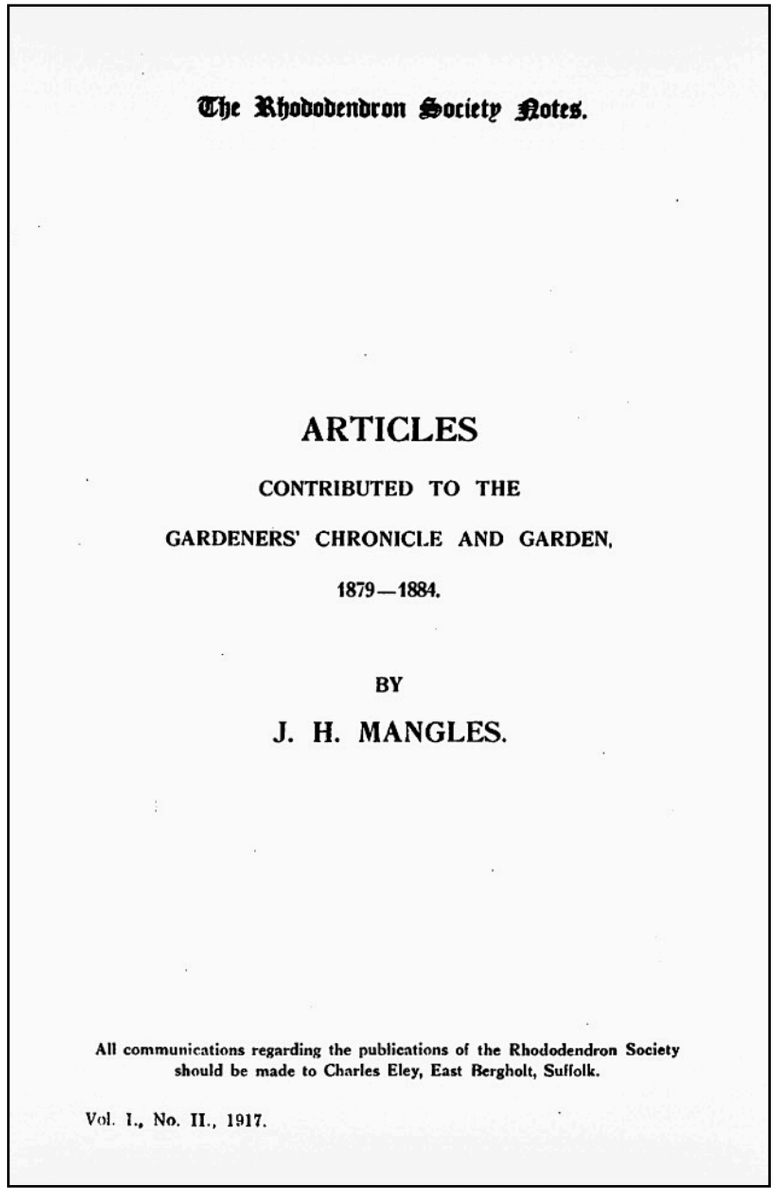
It is not the purpose of this short sketch to attempt a description of the many fine Rhododendrons at Valewood and Littleworth. Amongst the hybrids are 'Glory of Littleworth', 'Littleworth Corallina', 'Clara Mangles', 'Isabella Mangles', 'Daphne Daffarn', 'Margaret Spence', 'Miss Stillman', 'Cleopatra', and 'Rose Queen', some of which have from time to time been exhibited at the Shows of the Royal Horticultural Society; they must be seen to be properly appreciated.

All Rhododendron lovers will join in a tribute of gratitude to the memory of one whose name will always be associated with devoted work in connection with the cultivation of that genus.

Addendum:

The second edition of *The Rhododendron Society Notes* (Volume 1, Number 2), published at the end of 1917, was devoted entirely to a set of reprinted articles on rhododendrons that James Henry Mangles had written for either *The Gardeners' Chronicle* or *The Garden* magazines between 1879 and 1884, the year of his death. Of such import were these texts regarded that even thirty years after Mangles' passing, no less an authority than Sir Isaac Bayley Balfour was asked to review the reporting and contribute notes where appropriate.

The issue began with a short biography of the man J. G. Millais had famously dubbed "the High Priest of the Rhododendron cult", which was written by Gerald W. E. Loder, and is reproduced here, with the nomenclature updated to reflect the current classification.



The Rhododendron Society Notes.

ARTICLES

CONTRIBUTED TO THE

GARDENERS' CHRONICLE AND GARDEN,

1879—1884.

BY

J. H. MANGLES.

All communications regarding the publications of the Rhododendron Society should be made to Charles Eley, East Bergholt, Suffolk.

Vol. I., No. II., 1917.

The Mangles Gardens at Littleworth Cross and Valewood.

by J. G. Millais.

Reprinted from Volume 1 of *Rhododendrons and the Various Hybrids* (Longmans, Green and Co., 1917), with the nomenclature updated:

Littleworth Cross, Seale, near Farnham, Surrey.

A fine collection of the seedlings as well as some of the old plants of Rhododendron that the late Mr J. H. Mangles possessed at Valewood are now at Littleworth Cross, the residence of his sister, Miss Clara Mangles. This lady has with great love and care preserved all the best specimens, so that we are now able to see the results of her brother's work, and it is not too much to say that it is remarkable.

Whilst gardeners in the mild counties of the west have little to be proud of if they succeed with difficult subjects, the same cannot be said of those who possess gardens in the Home Counties where the vagaries of climate are a constant source of difficulty to growers of Rhododendrons. In the heath and green sand country of Farnham there are frequent late frosts and droughts to spoil the blossoms and growth, and, to maintain the plants in good health, attention in the shape of covering and watering has to be employed, so that to achieve a garden in bloom and full of good things as I saw at Littleworth on April 30th and again on May 5th means no small labour, knowledge and care. One good asset is the soil, which is a generous mixture of sand and peat and quite suitable to these plants. There are two greenhouses at Littleworth in which are stored large plants of choice species and hybrids that are in most cases not possible to grow out of doors in Surrey. In the first are some *R. edgeworthii* and great bushes of fine hybrids with a delicious scent that, although the parentage is unknown, are probably *R. cinnabarinum* x *R. maddenii*. These exist out of doors as well, but are not yet proved hardy. In the large greenhouse are immense plants of *R. griffithianum, R. grande,* and a remarkable specimen of *R. hookeri,* probably the largest in England, which have touched the top of the house at a height of about 22 feet. The *R. hookeri* was in flower on April 30th, and had much larger trusses than the specimen I saw in the open at Penjerrick three weeks earlier. Close to the house and in the open was an old specimen of *R. x wightii* that was not in the best of health and had grown very slowly.

Here the visitor passes into the woodland and is at once struck by a magnificent specimen of the lilac-pink form of *R. falconeri* about 15 feet high and in full bloom (April 30th). At the side of the walk is an interesting Rhododendron, R. 'Agnes Beaufort', a hybrid raised by Mr Mangles and very similar to R. 'Loder's White' (probably the finest hybrid he ever raised). Scattered through a wood of Scots firs are many of these hybrids of Mr Mangles' raising, notably *R. grande* x *R. arboreum,* a fine pink and quite distinct from the rose hybrid of similar parents possessed by Mr J. C. Williams. The Littleworth plants show the characters of each species very distinctly and seem to be quite hardy. Other good things are *R. grande* x *R. niveum* and *R. griffithianum* hybrids, R. 'Agnes Mangles', R. 'B. Griffith' (large pink), R. 'Littleworth Pearl', R. 'Littleworth Beauty' (fine foliage and white flowers), R. 'Mrs Randall Davidson', and many others that are not named. R. 'Glory of Littleworth' is a striking cream and brown hybrid in which an Azalea has been used as one parent and has been much admired at the RHS Shows.

In another corner of the wood are several large plants of *R. thomsonii, R. barbatum, R. hodgsonii,* and others of the large-leaved section, but they do not look in the best of health and seem to suffer from a lack of moisture. The principal plantation of Rhododendron is situated in a cosy corner of the fir wood, and here forty or fifty large plants of hybrid *campanulatum* and *griffithianum* are grouped in masses. Perhaps the most striking Rhododendron is a brilliant reddish-scarlet hybrid with a very large truss that is as yet unnamed, and a named hybrid dark scarlet, R. 'Nero'. It is one of the best early reds I have seen and is an excellent garden plant for gardens of medium temperature.

In this group two Rhododendrons call for special notice. The first is a hybrid of *R. hookeri* and closely resembling that species. It has grand crimson flowers, but always flowers too early and so almost invariably gets cut. The other is a large plant of *R. x wightii* that for a long time was the only specimen plant in England. It resembles *R. falconeri* ssp. *eximium* in foliage, but has delicate yellow flowers in a tall somewhat uneven truss. I cannot say that in flower it bears much resemblance to Hooker's description and figure of *R. wightii,* and it is possible that the variety grown at Littleworth is not the true form. The plant at Littleworth is 9 feet high, 25 yards round, and carried some twenty flower trusses on April 30th 1915. The leaves seem to be similar to small specimens I have recently imported from Sikkim.

Valewood, Haslemere, Surrey.

This, the former of home of Mr J. H. Mangles, contains a fine collection of hybrids given to him by Mr Luscombe of Coombe Royal, and seedlings that he himself raised. Many of these have grown to a great height, and all the hybrids of *R. griffithianum, R. fortunei,* and *R. thomsonii* with garden hybrids seem to be flourishing. The old plants of R. 'Luscombei Splendens' and R. 'Luscombe's Scarlet', *R. thomsonii* hybrids, R. 'Broughtonii', and *R. arboreum* hybrids have grown to 15 and 20 feet in height and were covered with their fine flowers on May 5th.

Valewood lies in a deep valley to the south of Haslemere, and is admirably protected from the east, south-west and west winds. It is at most times cool and moist, and there is plenty of water. The woods above the house have become a jungle of *R. ponticum,* and doubtless hide many good hybrids placed there for shelter by the late owner, and the present owner, Mr W. Daffarn, is only now trying to evolve some order out of the chaos.

Below and on each side of the house the choice Rhododendrons have in most cases plenty of room to display their beauties. Throughout clumps and at the sides of walks we come everywhere on seedling hybrids from *R. griffithianum*. All are not, however, of equal merit, and I thought the two best plants in the garden were R. 'Isabella Mangles' (20 feet high), a grand rich satin pink with fine large up-standing trusses, and a wonderful rich red *R. griffithianum* hybrid somewhat cramped in a large bed by the house. This is a plant of quite remarkable beauty, and is at present unnamed. Below and to the left of the house is situated the largest *arboreum* hybrid I have seen outside of Cornwall. It is fully 30 feet high and of immense proportions.

The Mangles Garden Today.

by Pamela Gordon.

In 1976 I wrote about the restoration of the Mangles Garden at Littleworth Cross in *Rhododendrons 1976 with Camellias and Magnolias,* p. 13. and I described how the major part of this most historic garden was saved from extinction. For those who did not see this article, the story is as follows: Harry and Clara Mangles were brother and sister of the well-known James H. Mangles who, when he died in 1884, bequeathed to them many of the species and hybrids he had grown in his garden at Valewood, Haslemere, and which can still be seen at Littleworth Cross.

After Harry Mangles died in 1915, his sister cared for the garden and showed at the RHS in London. After her death, the estate was bought by R. E. Horsfall (a member of the Rhododendron Association); he continued to add to the collection and grew many fine deciduous azaleas. In the Second World War, the house was requisitioned and the gardens neglected. In 1947, the house and grounds were divided up and sold in separate lots.

It was then that my mother-in-law, Mrs Douglas Gordon, knowing all about the garden from her parents, who had been friends of the Mangles, stepped in and bought 4ha (10 acres) of unwanted woodland in order to save the rhododendrons. For the next ten years, with the help of a Polish evacuee, she cleared away the thickets of brambles, gorse and seedling trees. It must have been exciting for her to find in all this wilderness so many of the plants described by J. G. Millais in his book *Rhododendrons* published in 1917. In 1958 my husband bought half the house and in 1960 another 6ha (15 acres) of woodland, since when our family has continued to restore this most beautiful garden.

The last 16 years have been a struggle to keep open the path and cope with the devastation of the 1987 and 1990 gales. However, nearly all the hybrids mentioned in J. G. Millais' book are still growing - well over one hundred years old and 6m (20ft) tall, but flower well each year. Of the species mentioned by J. G. Millais, only *R. falconeri* (which won the McLaren Cup in 1990) and *R. x wightii* are still thriving. But there are two enormous plants of *R. fortunei* - one raised from seed sent back by Sir Joseph Hooker in 1853 and the other from seed sent back by Robert Fortune. There are groves of seedling *R. fortunei,* some better than others; one particularly fine one with a compact, clear pink sweetly smelling truss, I have registered and named 'Sue Gordon'. There is also a very large *R. barbatum* with particularly large and fine foliage, but sadly all the other species mentioned by J. G. Millais must have perished with the temperate house, for all that is left of that are the foundations.

Mangles used *R. griffithianum* as a parent for many of his hybrids. Probably the finest of these is R. 'Beauty of Littleworth', still highly rated in modern catalogues. Another, only recently identified, is R. 'Rose Newcome', rather similar to R. 'Beauty of Littleworth' but flowering several weeks earlier and having a more pronounced mauve tinge with no spotting. Its name was discovered when we visited a nearby garden once belonging to the Newcome family, related through their mother, Rose Newcome - hence its name.

From an article in the *Gardeners' Chronicle* of 1879, we know that Mangles used pollen from a scarlet *arboreum* at Kew. This may account for a splendid red hybrid which still sported its original label 'The Lady Florence'; it flowers from early March well into April; its habit is similar to *R. arboreum,* as are its leaves and trusses. Another hybrid similar in habit with its original label, R. 'Mary Power', is worth mentioning; it flowers at the same time as 'The Lady Florence', but is coral pink.

No less interesting is his *R. grande* cross; when shown by my mother-in-law in 1961, it received an Award of Merit and the clonal name 'Fulbrook'. Unfortunately its other parent is not known. The pinky mauve trusses are large and show well above the handsome dark leaves. although one of the plants of this hybrid was rather smashed in the gale, it is making a good recovery.

John Bond has taken scions of all these Mangles hybrids and there are now two large beds of these young plants growing in the Savill Gardens. Thanks to his generosity, there is a young 'Mangles Garden' growing at Littleworth, and Wisley also has the complete set. I am happy to think that, due to Mrs Douglas Gordon's foresight, these historic plants are now perpetuated. It is perhaps interesting to note that at Littleworth they mostly survived the cruel frost of April 1990 without getting bark-split, and (fingers crossed) have not so far fallen victim to the dreaded powdery mildew.

Though everyone knows of the Mangles azaleodendron, R. 'Glory of Littleworth', very few may have seen his other azaleodendron - the delightful scented pink R. 'Joy's Delight'. I have been able to propagate one or two plants from the original shrub.

Not only rhododendrons were found in the wilderness in 1947. The deciduous azaleas, perhaps planted by R. E. Horsfall, included a particularly large group of Knaphill azaleas, with R. 'Nancy Waterer' and a tall little-known R. 'Donald Waterer'. My mother-in-law introduced many modern rhododendron and azalea hybrids, and many Kurumes; she raised many hundreds of evergreen azaleas from cuttings which are now grouped around the wood. She was particularly attracted to the double Ghent and Rustica flore plena azaleas, and she planted several groups of these delightful hybrids. Alan Hardy has been able to name most of these and I hope he will be able to re-introduce them into other gardens.

Amongst other trees and shrubs planted by Mrs Douglas Gordon were some fine large specimens of *R. yunnanense, R. davidsonianum* and a white form of *R. augustinii* ssp. *chasmanthum,* to name but a few.

The garden suffered dreadful damage in the gales of 1987 and 1990; in all 110 trees were uprooted and fell onto the shrubs beneath. Several of the Wilson-collected plants (except for *R. micranthum*) were badly smashed and together with *R. argyrophyllum, R. hunnewellianum* and *R. augustinii* have had to be cut back hard; they will hopefully make decent plants again in the future. All the originals of *R. cinnabarinum* were decimated and most had to be grubbed out. This area is now planted with my own hybrids, with an edging of Kurume azaleas.

Two big trees to fall, obliterating a large area, gave the opportunity to replant with something other than rhododendrons: autumn colour and spring-flowering shrubs contrast with the surrounding rhododendrons. I have selected *Pieris, Berberis, Cottoneaster, Fothergilla* and *Kalmia.* To give some height I have chosen *Sorbus, Acer capillipes* and *Eucryphia glutinosa.*

I am told that the wood is improved by being thinned. At first I was angry but now I think I agree, while remaining nervous that the frost will lie longer and the sun burn the leaves.

This, then, is the story. Since my husband died, it has fallen to me alone to keep it going. I hope the garden and its founders will remain in the thoughts of all rhododendron lovers. James, Henry and Clara Mangles were among the earliest pioneers in the art of hybridisation and it is my earnest hope that they should not be forgotten.

The text above is a slightly abridged version of Pamela Gordon's article, missing the paragraph that details her own hybrids. It was first published in the RCMG year book *Rhododendrons with Camellias and Magnolias 1993.*

Hybridising Rhododendrons.

by James Henry Mangles.

The Gardeners' Chronicle, **July 19th, 1879:**

Nearly twenty years ago I walked with Sir William Hooker through the gardens at Kew, and in the Temperate House he gave me some pollen of the finest scarlet *R. arboreum* there, with which I made my first essay in hybridising. This *arboreum* variety was, and is, notable for the size and colour, and also for the specially bold and martial habit of the stamens, which, like bayonets, seem to threaten an intruder. As there was nothing else at the moment available, the pollen was applied to flowers of *R. ponticum*. So potent was its influence that, although I used none of the nice precautions now deemed indispensable (excision of the anthers and careful isolation of the plants), the cross was effected, and many seedlings raised, all of which show *arboreum* blood strongly in their foliage. Several have bloomed, and so far prove the prepotency of the Indian (perhaps because the pollen-parent) over the Pontic race. Others, and these the greater number, still refuse me a single blossom, but they are large and hearty plants. This, my first and very hackneyed experiment in Rhododendron hybridising, set me thinking about the geographical distribution and probable alliances of the different species of the genus. The Himalayan and Nilgherry *R. arboreum* breeds easily and freely (nay, perhaps prepotently) with the Pontic, and with the American Catawba species, and, I believe, with *R. maximum,* from America also. But try it with some of the "scaly" species, and the attempt will often be an utter failure, although many of these "scaly" species are geographically its close neighbours. Close neighbours, however, rarely interbreed with fertility; for, if they did so, they would be very apt (Primrose and Cowslip case notwithstanding) to disappear. But to return to the *arboreum* crosses above mentioned, they produce thoroughly fertile offspring. I have somewhere read that Mr. Standish reported that many of these reproduced themselves quite truly, and my own experience is nearly the same.

This fact has often made me doubt whether the parents should be specifically distinguished at all. Such a question, however, is a question for the future, but one which we must keep open. If the Pontic and American species breed so freely with *R. arboreum,* why not, thought I, with other Indian species, at all events with those "unscaly" species, which do not seem to hail from the Malayan Archipelago? Procuring, then, the pollen of *R. griffithianum* and applying it, I watched the capsules swelling with portentous speed, outstripping those fertilised by the seed-bearers' own pollen. Moreover, the capsules, when ripe, were full of good seed, which in oft-repeated experiments freely germinated and grew, leaving to me only the patient (in Rhododendron raising the almost pathetically patient) part of waiting for a blossom.

Thus instructed on the subject, I soon detected some similar seedlings in the gardens of the Lawson Company three years ago. The foliage they bore told me their tale; but Mr. Scott, their raiser, has since, after an absence of seven years, returned to vouch for their ancestry, and to see many of them bloom for the first time

When I was in Edinburgh, in the May of this year, I examined the batch growing in the open garden, with many trusses half, and one fully expanded. The plants seemed quite hardy, and the numerous blossoms which I have since received were very perfect and unscathed by frost.

The parents are stated to be *R. griffithianum* (pollen-parent) and R. 'John Waterer', a so-called "hardy hybrid" (seed-bearer); and knowing both parents very intimately, I have no doubt whatever that the statement is correct.

The calyx and the scent, and the diminished stamens - which, by the way, are full of pollen - as well as the larger flowers and the looser truss, bespeak unmistakably the pollen-parent, which in the case of alleged hybrids is the parent to be always specially doubted.

Quite apart from their beauty, I think these seedlings deserve notice in your paper, as tending possibly to throw some light on the subject of Rhododendron alliances, in such a "confronts" (?) of the species as Dr. Beccari thinks so desirable.

I hope that Mr. Scott has tested their fertility *inter se* [between and amongst themselves]; for R. 'John Waterer', being a hybrid between *R. arboreum* and probably *R. catawbiense* (Mr. Waterer cannot inform me precisely), these seedlings, it will be observed, unite the blood of three species. R. 'John Waterer', is a very late blossoming, deep crimson variety; and be the parentage what it may, the crimson colour is derived from *R. arboreum,* and the hardiness and late habit, etc., from another type (*R. catawbiense* ?).

The late habit was very properly selected to correct the early tendency of *R. griffithianum,* with only partial success however, for the blood of *R. arboreum* uniting with that of *R. griffithianum* (both precocious) has apparently compelled the seedlings to bloom much earlier than might have been anticipated from the tardy habit of R. 'John Waterer'. I would advise all Rhododendron lovers, who do not know *R. griffithianum,* to lose no time in examining Sir Joseph Hooker's book, and better still, to visit Kew next May, in which month *R. griffithianum* is generally in bloom there. Magnificent, however, as is the portrait, taken from blossoms in their native land, it is scarcely worthy of the plant as since grown in England. Nor does the description quite do justice to its merits; for instance, it is called "scentless" whereas *The Gardeners' Chronicle,* of May 18th, 1878, very properly describes the flowers as "of the richest fragrance".

Again "flowers from three to five together in a truss" are far below the standard.

Your issue, quoted above, describing flowers grown by Mr. Boscawen, says: "it is difficult to find an adjective sufficiently expressive of the majestic loveliness of the flower. The truss consists of nine flowers, each on a delicately frosted or primrose stalk, and having at the base a large pink calyx and a broad open bell-shaped corolla five inches and more across; of a clear white colour".

Mr. Boscawen's plant, as I understand, grew and flowered in the open air (but in Cornwall), and I, 600 feet above the sea, and far more to the North, have found the species, in some senses, hardy. During the past winter I adopted the plan of breaking off and examining the buds every week or two. The autumnal and winter frosts had no ill effects; all went well till Easter, but then the too precocious buds, though scarcely showing they were swelling, received within the fatal and blackening stroke.

It is curious to observe how Mr. Scott's seedlings vary from nearly white to a deep rich crimson. For my own information I have made an elaborate note of all the peculiarities, but I need not trouble you with it here.

Suffice it to add that the pollen-parent by no means asserts a universal supremacy; although, as it contributed one-half of the blood as against one-fourth each of the two other factors, such a result might have been expected. The habit of the plants is compact and bushy, the size of the flowers midway between the parents, the scent fainter than that of *R. griffithianum,* but very perceptible. If these seedlings prove to be as hardy southwards as they have shown themselves to be in Edinburgh, they will be real beauty-acquisitions to all Rhododendron cultivators, beyond their interest from a scientific point of view.

The moral of this paper is that there is much to be done and much to be learnt in the cultivation of my favourite plant.

The cross which I have celebrated may have been (perhaps by Mr. Luscombe, or perhaps by Mr. Boscawen), effected elsewhere, but, I would use it merely as an illustration,

of the deep and varied interest which gathers around these floral experiments. How many subjects have been glanced at which might provoke to unending thought and observation a whole army of Rhododendron growers, or, indeed, earnest cultivators of any plant. As we advance, Nature is always presenting fresh problems for solution. So much the better, provided we arm ourselves with intelligent and industrious research, and German concentration, to meet the emergency.

***The Gardeners' Chronicle,* August 2nd, 1879:**

The "pray do" with which you responded to the proposal in my first (I have now arrived at my sixth) paper, to relate some of my own hybridising experiences, as well as the following passage from the pen of Mr. Thiselton-Dyer, must be my excuse for again troubling you. Mr. Dyer, in your issue of February 2nd, 1878, alluding to Mr. Parkman's communication on Lily hybridising, called it "an excellent example, which it is much to be wished that other hybridisers would follow", and he added that "they should record for the benefit of science the results of even their unsuccessful attempts". In the spring of last year, I was hybridising with many Rhododendrons, and among others, using a plant of *R. formosum* as seed-bearer. *R. formosum* is well known as a white scented variety, not hardy, and found by Sir J. Hooker growing in the Khasia Mountains at the low elevation of 2,000 feet (see *Himalayan Journal*). It is said to be nearly allied with *R. veitchianum,* from Moulmein, whose splendid fringed blossoms charmed so many at the shows of the year, and also with *R. championae,* which was "found growing abundantly among rocks in a ravine at Fort Victoria, Hong-Kong", in 1849 (see *Botanical Magazine,* t. 4609), but of which I know nothing further, and should be glad of information. On the above-mentioned plant of *R. formosum* I touched flowers (in pairs, which are far better than single flowers tor detecting errors), with pollen of *R. arboreum, R. molle,* R. 'Princess Alice', *R. glaucophyllum, R. griffithianum, R. maddenii, R. falconeri, R. edgeworthii,* R. 'Duke of Edinburgh' (one of Messrs. Veitch's new strain), and R. 'Amoena', *R. luteum,* and *R. indicum* [or *R. simsii*]. Two pairs only of the capsules swelled, viz., those touched with the pollen of *R. edgeworthii* and *R. maddenii.*

The rest fell off about a month after the corollas. As to the cross with *R. edgeworthii,* I felt but little interest, for I knew that it had been effected long ago, and that R. 'Sesterianum' and others were the result; but the cross with *R. maddenii* appeared to me novel. It promised also to be useful, considering the extreme beauty of the species, and the following very correct description of it in Regel's *Gartenflora:* "Scheint zu den sehr dankbar blühenden Arten zu gehören, indem unsere 2 Fuss hohe Pflanze auf der Spitze jedes ihrer 3 Aeste eine Blumendolde trägt" [which translated reads - "it seems to be one of the very rewarding flowering species, as our 2-foot-tall plant bears a flower umbel at the tip of each of its 3 branches"].

The four capsules continued to swell during the summer and autumn, and in October it was difficult to detect the smallest difference between them. They had attained a full size, and seemed to ripen gradually during the winter months, still maintaining apparently perfect equality. At the end of January of this year, the two *R. edgeworthii* capsules dehisced, and were found to contain an abundance of plump well-ripened seed. The two *R. maddenii* capsules kept closed, turning brown at the apex, seeming to ripen downwards.

On February 1st these last were gathered and opened. They contained chiefly what I may call (as Mr. Parkman does) chaff; but in one capsule I found one, and in the other two abnormally inflated and tailed seeds, which seemed still unripe. On the same day the whole contents of these two *R. maddenii* capsules were sown, that is to say, were laid, as is usual with Rhododendron seed, on the surface of peat soil, the pots being covered with panes of glass. On February 22nd the contents of one of the *R. edgeworthii* capsules were sown also, and both lots were kept under precisely the same conditions in a greenhouse.

On March 16th the *R. edgeworthii* seeds were seen with the aid of a lens to be sprouting, and the radicles to be descending into the soil. On April 28th the plumules were distinctly showing, and now, at the end of July, the young plants are pricked out, some of them bearing three or four leaves besides the cotyledons.

Meanwhile the *R. maddenii* seeds for seven weeks made no sign; but, whereas the chaff was soon covered with mildew and disappeared, the three seeds retained a living, though somewhat rotten appearance,

On March 22nd two of them were observed to be protruding radicles, and the third soon followed suit. Early in April, however, two rotted off without further progress, the other living on, but advancing very slowly in growth.

On May 9th what served for cotyledons was fully expanded, and this proved to be a cornucopia-shaped sort of cup, thick and succulent as in some of the Hepaticae. The cup lived on to the present time, with little or no apparent growth, and without the smallest sign of a plumule; indeed it seems obvious that there is none. I shall continue to guard and watch this abortion, although I have not the faintest hope of its further development. I need scarcely add that I have repeated the experiment this year with pollen of *R. maddenii*.

At the present time I have many well-swelled capsules on two plants of *R. formosum,* and I await the result with curiosity.

The above is a very fair example of the disappointment which often awaits the hybridiser; but, let me add, a good illustration also of the very interesting phenomena which hybridising enables him to study. The effect of foreign pollen on the capsule and seed of the female parent is often remarkable, stimulating one or both up to a certain point, and yet very imperfectly, or not at all, effecting fertilisation.

The pollen of *R. falconeri,* for instance, has a most astonishing effect on some of the other Rhododendrons. For several years I have watched the process with increasing wonder. In about half of the time usually required the capsules, stimulated by this pollen, swell and continue swelling until they have attained a large size. Then they ripen as rapidly as they have swelled, but generally contain only chaff, or at best, much chaff mixed with a few perfect seeds. Other foreign pollen seems to act in a different way. The capsules swell hopefully, but, instead of chaff, the cells contain long leathery bodies, which would seem to be abnormally developed placentas, while the ovules have not been developed at all, not even into chaff. The effect on the ovules is well illustrated by the *R. maddenii* cross I have detailed above, and reminds me of what I have often seen in the capsules of crossed Lilies - all chaff, with the exception of one or two bloated, unripe, and ill-shaped seeds. Your readers are probably aware of the many interesting remarks on the subject by Gaertner and other writers, but each writer has dealt with his own class of plants, and each class has probably its own peculiarities, so that it is dangerous to generalise too much from particular instances.

With regard to Rhododendrons, almost a volume might be written on the various influences of various pollens. Mr. Anderson-Henry is quite right in saying that some pollen seems to burn or poison the stigma to which it is applied; other pollen burns as it goes, and yet fertilises. Some works slowly and yet more effectually than the speedy worker, and some seems to require frequent application to the stigma to produce any result. Perhaps the most curious observation I have made so far is the tendency of the pollen of one Rhododendron placed on another Rhododendron, to produce seedlings with three instead of the normal, number of cotyledons.

The Azaleodendron Registrations:

Glory of Littleworth
AM 1911
Flower Colour: Milk White
Flowering Time: Early May
Height: Tall

Joy's Delight
Flower Colour: Purplish-red-pink
Height: Medium



R. ‘Glory of Littleworth’ AM 1911

R. ‘Glory of Littleworth’

Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread

H6-7 Late April-May 3m x 5m

In the various editions of *Trees and Shrubs Hardy in the British Isles,* the book’s original author, W. J. Bean, describes the multitude of azaleodendron hybrids as basically having ‘ugly foliage’ that is ‘tolerated only because of their striking flowers’. Writing those words, one suspects a picture of ‘Glory of Littleworth’ was floating before his mind’s eye: stunning blooms let down by an atrocious habit and leaves that at winter’s end are often so ravaged they should be pulled off by hand yet cling on, ragged, worn and in tatters, disfiguring the whole shrub.

Evolution designed the thin and flimsy blades of the deciduous azalea species to be shed in the fall, so a shabby and threadbare appearance towards the end of their life is immaterial, especially given the blaze of autumnal colours that they often produce as an amende honorable. But by incorporating such a lack of substance into a leaf held for twelve months or more, that wrack and ruin is preserved. Yet ‘Glory of Littleworth’ is widely planted in UK gardens up and down the entire country; the most popular azaleodendron despite this visual despoliation: because of those scintillating corollas. That are sometimes produced with such abandon as to rival the best Knap Hill or Exbury strain azalea.

James Henry Mangles is now officially credited with making the cross - earlier sources, published prior to the Second Edition of the *IRRC* in 2004, had suggested it was raised by his brother Henry Albert (1833-1908) - but as is often the case with a Mangles pairing, any parental details are completely lacking and the date of conception can only be stated as being prior to the hybridiser’s death in 1884.

However, a spec sheet for the plant is available:

‘Glory of Littleworth’ has hemispherical flower trusses composed of 15 to 18 corollas that are tubular-funnel-shaped, 5-lobed, 4.5cm in length by 6cm across at the mouth, and scented. They are creamy orange tipped pink in the bud and open milky white with a large, heavy, copper-orange blotch on the dorsal.

When the leaves first expanded, the somewhat shiny glaucous-green, or matt and blue-grey foliage, is quite appealing, the large lanceolate, oblong-lanceolate or elliptically-shaped blades up to 13cm long and 3cm wide. But at maturity they are twisted and bent, as if balled up, crushed and crumpled. Or torn, shrivelled and browned.

The shrub’s habit is sparse and leggy, with specimens usually, but most times ostensibly, in poor fettle, barely clinging-on to life. That they do so, slowly forming multi-stemmed domes 3m high and sometimes double that in width, the ascending framework of branches supporting a mass of bloom in May, year after year, confirms that that outward appearance is to some extent an illusion, though the experts all agree that the challenges of long-term cultivation are demanding.



R. ‘Glory of Littleworth’ AM 1911

R. ‘Glory of Littleworth’ AM 1911

R. ‘Glory of Littleworth’ AM 1911

The Lepidote Registrations:

Hethersett
cinnabarinum X *maddenii*
AM 1962
Flower Colour: Yellow

Peach Queen
cinnabarinum X *maddenii*

Rose Mangles
cinnabarinum X *maddenii*
Flower Colour: Rose-pink
Flowering Time: May
Height: Tall

Rose Queen
cinnabarinum X *maddenii*
AM 1904
Flower Colour: Rose-pink

Souvenir de Littleworth
cinnabarinum X *maddenii*



R. ‘Hethersett’ AM 1962

R. ‘Hethersett’ AM 1962



R. ‘Rose Mangles’

R. ‘Hethersett’ & R. ‘Rose Mangles’
cinnabarinum x *maddenii*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H4-5 May. 2.5m x 4m

Because of its association with the ‘Lady Chamberlain’ pride, the 1920s J. C. Williams hybrid ‘Royal Flush’ is probably the best known *cinnabarinum* x *maddenii* clone. Others include George Johnstone’s ‘Full House’ and Edward Magor’s ‘Cinnmadd’. But they were all repeat crosses. For the first rhodophile to make the pairing was James Henry Mangles, though when exactly he transferred pollen to style is not known. His brother Harry (*d.* 1908) and sister Clara (*d.* 1931) moved many of the plants from their brother’s Valewood estate to their own nearby home in the Parish of Seale and Sands - then called Hethersett, but now known as Littleworth Cross - shortly after James’ death, in order to preserve as much of his hybridising work as they could, and that relocation included the progeny of this pairing.

In *Rhododendrons and the Various Hybrids,* J. G. Millais reports that the seedlings of that *cinnabarinum* x *maddenii* cross were grown-on in the cool greenhouse at Littleworth Cross for many years; indeed, they were around fifty years of age when the second edition of his book was published in 1924, which means the match was most likely made in the 1870s. The largest specimens were then around 2.5m tall and some had been named: ‘Rose Mangles’, with rich pinkish-red blooms; ‘Primrose Queen’, whose pale yellow flowers would be awarded an AM in 1962 under the name ‘Hethersett’; ‘Peach Queen’, yellowish-pink; and ‘Souvenir de Littleworth’, rose-pink becoming paler. Millais writes that the corollas of the non-yellow members of this quartet were ‘a brilliant scarlet colour to half-way down their exterior’, and that all had leaves that were ‘somewhat similar to *R. cinnabarinum* but longer and not so blue in tint’, their habit ‘somewhat straggling and loose, breaking from the base in several main stems with many upright shoots’. He advises that ‘the plants are somewhat tender in the Home Counties although perfectly hardy in the west’, which mirrors the currently accepted rating of -12ºC.

A fifth selection, ‘Rose Queen’, whose rose-pink corollas are tinged orange at the base of the throat, was not listed by Millais even though it had been gifted an AM in 1904. Yet of the five, only one has been distributed commercially: ‘Rose Mangles’. And that, as the photographs evidence, is an absolute cracker.

R. ‘Rose Mangles’

R. ‘Rose Mangles’

R. ‘Rose Mangles’

The Elepidote Registrations:

Agnes Beaufort
griffithianum hybrid
Flower Colour: White

Agnes Mangles
griffithianum hybrid
Flower Colour: Purplish-red

Alice Mangles
griffithianum X *ponticum*
FCC 1882
Flower Colour: Purplish-pink

Anthaea
griffithianum hybrid

B. Griffith
griffithianum hybrid

Beauty of Littleworth
griffithianum hybrid
FCC 1904
Flower Colour: White
Flowering Time: Early May
Height: Tall

Cecil Mangles
Flower Colour: White-purplish-red

Clara Mangles
griffithianum hybrid

Daphne Daffarn
griffithianum hybrid
Flower Colour: Rose-pink-white

Dawn
griffithianum hybrid
FCC 1904
Flower Colour: Cerise Pink

Dawn's Delight
griffithianum hybrid
AM 1911
Flower Colour: Pink
Flowering Time: May
Height: Tall

Dulcie Daffarn
griffithianum hybrid
Flower Colour: Pink

Early Pink Pearl
griffithianum hybrid
Flower Colour: Purplish-red

Edith Preston
griffithianum hybrid
Flower Colour: White
Flowering Time: Late April
Height: Tall

Emily Mangles
griffithianum hybrid
Flower Colour: Purplish-red

Evelyn Adair
Flower Colour: Purplish-red

Florence Paget
hookeri hybrid
Flower Colour: Red

Fulbrook
grande X ?
AM 1961
Flower Colour: Phlox Pink
Flowering Time: April
Height: Tall

George Hardy
griffithianum X *catawbiense*
Flower Colour: White
Flowering Time: Late May
Height: Tall

Gertrude Jekyll
AM 1904
Flower Colour: Purplish-pink

H. J. Mangles
griffithianum hybrid

Harry Mangles
AM 1904
Flower Colour: Rose-pink-scarlet

Hilda Spencer
Flower Colour: White-pink

Isabella Mangles
griffithianum hybrid
Flower Colour: Purplish-red
Flowering Time: May
Height: Tall

James Mangles
Wightii hybrid
Flower Colour: White

Lady Florence
hookeri hybrid
Flower Colour: Red

Lilian
griffithianum X *catawbiense*
Flower Colour: Purplish-red

Lisa Stillman
griffithianum X *catawbiense* hybrid
Flower Colour: Red

Littleworth Corallina
AM 1911
Flower Colour: Lilac-rose
Height: Tall

Littleworth Flush
Flower Colour: Purplish-red

Littleworth Gem
Flower Colour: Red

Littleworth Hybrid
grande hybrid
AM 1914
Flower Colour: Sulphury White
Height: Tall

Littleworth Pearl
griffithianum hybrid

Littleworth Pink
Flower Colour: Purplish-pink
Flowering Time: May
Height: Tall

Littleworth Puffin
Flower Colour: Reddish-purple

Littleworth Star
griffithianum hybrid

Littleworth White
Flower Colour: White

Loder's White
cinnamomeum var. *cinnamomeum* X *griffithianum*
AM 1911
Flower Colour: White
Flowering Time: May
Height: Tall

Mabel Combe
Flower Colour: Purplish-red-white

Marian
Flower Colour: White

Mary Power
Flower Colour: Purplish-pink

Maurice Daffarn
Flower Colour: Red

Michael Chapman
hookeri hybrid
Flower Colour: Red-pink

Mrs Ellice
griffithianum hybrid
Flower Colour: Purplish-pink
Flowering Time: May
Height: Tall

Mrs Fitzroy
hookeri hybrid

Mrs Frank Mangles
griffithianum X *catawbiense*
Flower Colour: Red

Mrs Henry Agnew
grande X *cinnamomeum* var. *cinnamomeum*
Flower Colour: White-pink

Mrs Kingsmill
griffithianum X *campylocarpum*
AM 1911
Flower Colour: Milk White
Flowering Time: Mid April-May
Height: Tall

Mrs Mangles
Flower Colour: Violet-white

Mrs Onslow
hookeri hybrid

Mrs Randall Davidson
griffithianum X *campylocarpum*
Flower Colour: Cream-pink

Paul Chapman
hookeri hybrid
Flower Colour: Red

Rose Newcome
griffithianum hybrid
AM 1957
Flower Colour: White-purplish-red
Height: Tall

Stellatum
griffithianum hybrid

Valewood Pink
AM 1934
Flower Colour: Purplish-pink-white

Violet Adair
griffithianum hybrid

Violet Paget
griffithianum hybrid
Flower Colour: White

Violet Streatfield
Flower Colour: Purplish-pink-white


R. ‘Alice Mangles’ FCC 1882


R. ‘Alice Mangles’ FCC 1882


R. ‘Alice Mangles’ FCC 1882

R. ‘Alice Mangles’ FCC 1882

R. ‘Beauty of Littleworth’ FCC 1904

R. ‘Beauty of Littleworth’
griffithianum hybrid
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H6-7 Late April-May 4m x 6m

For much of the second half of the 19th Century, James Henry Mangles was considered the ‘High Priest of the Rhododendron Cult’ - at least, according to J. G. Millais, who dreamed up the accolade. Mangles has sixty-three elepidote and lepidote rhododendron hybrids and two azaleodendron crosses registered against his name in the 2004 edition of the *International Rhododendron Register and Checklist,* shrubs that still hold their own against many of today’s floral concoctions, be that on a showbench, or in any number of the UK’s woodland gardens. For plants such as ‘Dawn’s Delight’, ‘George Hardy’, ‘Loder’s White’ and ‘Mrs Kingsmill’ - to mention but four - were, like ‘Beauty of Littleworth’, the result of pairings made with the-then newly discovered *R. griffithianum*. And despite only being introduced from Sikkim in 1850, this was a species that Mangles knew instinctively would gift his hybrids a beauty to set them apart from the plethora of *ponticum-catawbiense-maximum-arboreum* fabrications that had dominated the first half of the century and that were, in the main - then and today - good only for the bonfire.

His writings on the matter, published primarily in *The Gardeners’ Chronicle,* confirm such, though despite repeated references in otherwise erudite texts, the *Floral Calendar* of 1839 vintage did not issue from his pen, but from that of another: his father; an ex-Royal Navy officer, traveller and amateur botanist; whose name happened also to be James Mangles (1786-1867). His son knew that the tougher constitutions of those ‘near-ironclads’, along with other hardier species would, when bred with Hooker’s ‘Aucklandii’, produce offspring to marvel at and plants moreover, which could be grown outdoors across a far wider spread of gardens. And history has shown he was right.

The full parentage of ‘Beauty of Littleworth’, like many of the crosses James Mangles made, was either not recorded or the details have been lost, but it is clearly a pairing of *R. griffithianum* pollen with either *R. campanulatum* or a hybrid of such. Officially though, only the former is credited in the official *griffithianum*-hybrid tag. Regardless, the conical trusses of up to 18 white flowers spotted purplish-red on the upper lobes, opening from pink buds, could really be nothing else.

They open in the last week of April and persist through much of May, but often prove too heavy for the branches to support, so end up inverted or side-on. This has a permanent effect on the plant’s habit, turning an already leggy demeanour into a bent and straggly mess. Yet vigour comes to the rescue, the sheer size of a mature specimen making the sprawl of its construction immaterial.

Mangles gardened at Valewood near Haslemere (now a nursing home), but following his untimely death at the age of 52, much of his rhododendron collection was moved to Littleworth Cross, then the home of his brother Henry Albert Mangles (1833-1908). ‘Beauty of Littleworth’ however, was spotted and raised by his younger sister Clara (1846-1931). She shared the estate with Henry and named the hybrid for its new abode, winning an FCC award when the blooms were exhibited at an RHS flower show in 1904.

Today, huge specimen plants of ‘Beauty of Littleworth’ (or ‘Littleworth Beauty’ as many a garden label will proclaim) can be found in woodland gardens up and down the whole of the United Kingdon, the largest - according to Peter and Kenneth Cox, writing in their *Encyclopaedia of Rhododendron Hybrids* - growing at Corsock House, in Dumfries & Galloway, southern Scotland.


R. ‘Beauty of Littleworth’ FCC 1904

R. ‘Beauty of Littleworth’ FCC 1904

R. ‘Beauty of Littleworth’ FCC 1904



R. ‘Daphne Daffarn’



R. ‘Daphne Daffarn’

R. ‘Daphne Daffarn’

R. ‘Dawn’s Delight’ AM 1911

R. ‘Dawn’s Delight’ AM 1911

R. ‘Early Pink Pearl’

R. ‘Early Pink Pearl’

R. ‘Emily Mangles’

R. ‘Emily Mangles’
griffithianum hybrid
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H5 Mid May 3m x 3m

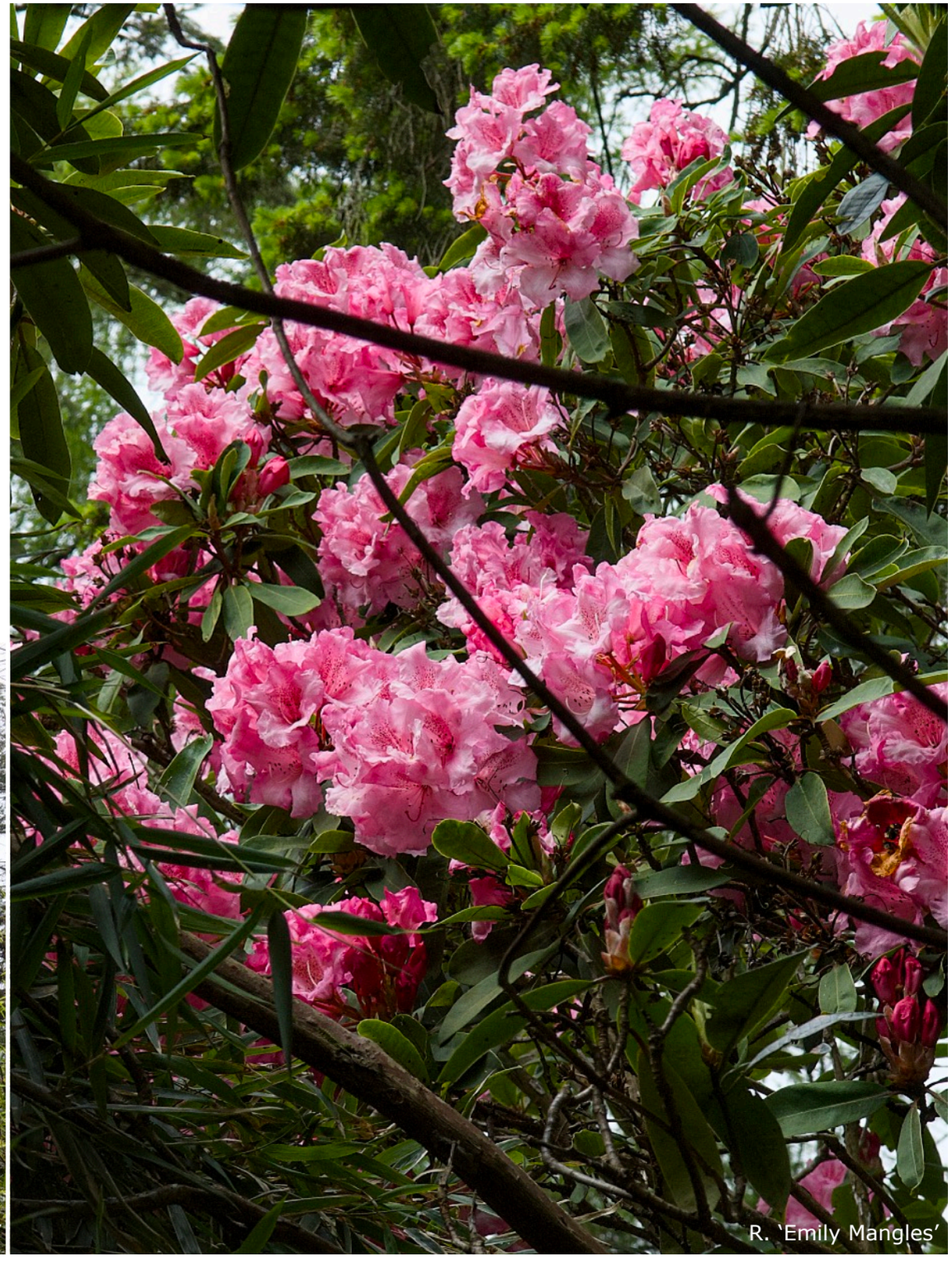
Walking on the wild side in the grounds of Muncaster Castle in mid May will, if passage through several abundant clumps of bamboo still remains possible without recourse to a machete, reveal a specimen of ‘Emily Mangles’ - though most visitors passing along the main drive will troop-by oblivious of this historic *griffithianum* hybrid on their port side. Up close, an old metal label will be found attached to one of the stems, and this not only confirms the plant’s epithet, but also effectively discounts the revisionist crimson blotches of some previous accounts, the corollas matching exactly with the description published in the two-volume Second Edition of the *IRRC,* this text collated from an original specimen that grew at Littleworth in the 1980s.

Those blooms are composed of between 9 and 14 corollas, which are held in a loose, open-topped truss, each 7cm long by 8cm across, and of a broadly tubular-funnel shape. They open from vivid purplish-red buds, that hue persisting, but paler on the outer surface of the tube. The dorsal lobe is spotted darker.

The leaves are elliptic, up to 17cm long and a third that in width, flushed dark matt green and held for one or two years, but doing little to mask the open framework of bare branches below.

The hybrid was also known as R. ‘Polly Peachum’, now officially a synonym, this appellation borrowed from a character in *The Beggar’s Opera,* written in 1728 by John Gay and Johann Christoph Pepusch, though why the need for such was ever thought necessary eludes comprehension.


R. ‘Emily Mangles’


R. ‘Emily Mangles’

R. ‘Emily Mangles’

R. ‘Emily Mangles’

R. ‘Fulbrook’ AM 1961

R. ‘Fulbrook’ AM 1961

R. ‘Fulbrook’ AM 1961

R. ‘Fulbrook’

grande x unknown

Hardiness	Flowering Period	Height & Spread
H5	April	7m x 5m

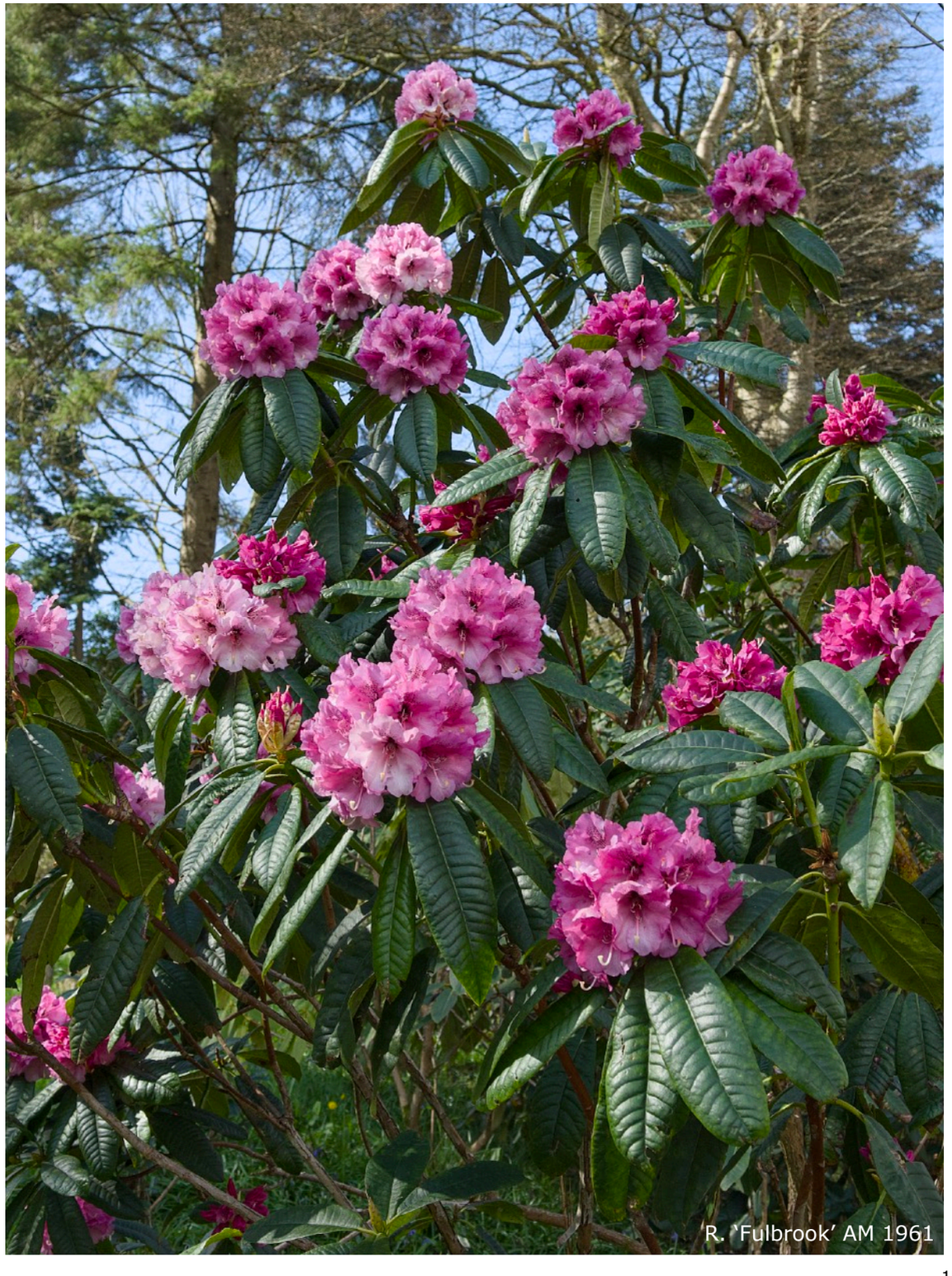
The full parentage of ‘Fulbrook’ is unknown, though *R. grande* is recorded as being the seed parent and such detail is above average for a James Mangles hybrid. Regardless, the plant is stunner.

Mauve-pink corollas, 7-lobed and campanulate in form, 5cm long by up to 4.5cm wide, with a fan of maroon speckles on the dorsal lobe and a darker blotch in the throat, are held in a dense globular truss of 12 to 14 bells. The buds open in April and the blooms are set against long, dark green leaves, elliptic in shape and convex in profile, which are each held for three, sometimes four years and admirably cloak the framework of branches. These are stout, easily supporting the blooms without bending or arching, this despite quite long internodes and a vigorous upright and ascending habit.

Whatever the chosen pollen provider might have been, hybrid or species, it upped the hardiness rating from the -10ºC tolerance of a high-elevation-collected *R. grande* to one that allows the cross to succeed in areas where winter temperatures might fall as low as -15ºC, perhaps even a touch lower. This means sheltered east coast gardens could see a specimen thrive providing night-time spring frosts in April or May were not a recurrent problem and the foliage was protected from strong winds. A full sun siting in Northern England and Scotland that also meets these constraints would see flower bud production maintained and a not too leggy demeanour develop; gardens in the southern counties will need dappled shade at a minimum to protect the leaves from scorching and the blooms from blanching.

Although James Mangles made the pairing, ‘Fulbrook’ was actually named and introduced by Violet Ida Gordon née Streatfeild (1886-1968), her chosen epithet the name of her childhood home, an Edwin Lutyens-designed house located not far from Littleworth Cross where many of the Mangles rhododendrons were moved shortly after their creator’s death in 1884. As a teenager and young woman, Violet had often visited Littleworth and was familiar with the rhododendron collection in the woodland, so when her son purchased much of the estate in 1947, she was soon supervising the reclamation, and ever since, the Gordon family have continued to guard and maintain this unique treasury of plants.

‘Fulbrook’ was christened, exhibited and introduced in 1961, winning an Award of Merit from the RHS in the process.



‘R. ‘Fulbrook’ AM 1961

R. ‘George Hardy’
griffithianum x *catawbiense*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H5-6 Late April-May 4m x 3m

Most authors and sources rightly give James Henry Mangles the credit for crossing R. ‘George Hardy’ at Valewood, his home near Haslemere, sometime before 1884, the date of his death. Yet beyond that simple fact, few can agree on much else: W. J. Bean or his ghostwriting successors opting for a ‘believed to have been raised’ in *Trees & Shrubs Hardy in the British Isles*; while J. G. Millais reports that it was put into commerce by the Waterer Nursery at Bagshot around 1905 (*Rhododendrons and the Various Hybrids,* 1917).

The parentage of ‘George Hardy’ has also been called into question, with the *IRRC* listing giving it as *griffithianum* x *catawbiense,* whereas others opt for the reverse cross, or settle on *ponticum* x *griffithianum,* or as in Bean, pair *R. griffithianum* with ‘some hardy white’ (*Trees & Shrubs,* 8th Edition, 1976, and online). All, however, are agreed that the hybrid is far better known as the parent of the John Waterer and Sons’ R. ‘Pink Pearl’ and the Koster Nursery’s R. ‘Mrs Lindsay Smith’ or R. ‘Betty Wormald’, than as a garden plant in its own right despite being easy to grow, tolerant of full sun even in the south and eye-catching when in bloom. ‘Pink Pearl’, it should be remembered, was crossed in the 1880s and a shoulder-high flowering specimen photographed at Bagshot under the watchful eye of their nurseryman-bodyguard Charlie Rose around 1890, so ‘George Hardy’ had an antecedence long pre-dating 1905, though of course its actual parenting role was not officially confirmed until 1950, nurserymen of the time being as tight lipped about their parenting choices as members of the UK’s various intelligence services were about their occupation and sometimes nefarious deeds.

Morphology-wise, the base upon which its flowers are set is a foil of dark green: the glossy leaves elliptic through oblanceolate in shape; each about 14cm long by 5cm wide; those foliage whorls arrayed over an upright dome that on a mature plant might be anywhere between 2.5 and 4m high, and a little less across. This framework has a bushy mien despite the sometimes long internodal growth, for the blades are held for three years, occasional longer.

Specimens of ‘George Hardy’ are free-flowering from an early age and usually sport a flower bud at each branch tip. The corollas, rosy-coloured as they first begin to swell, are blush-pink fading to white when fully expanded, with a spray of crimson spots on the dorsal lobe. Their profile is funnel-campanulate, each trumpet 6 or 7cm long and often 10cm across at the mouth, gathered into a dense, conical truss of between 12 and 14 individuals. In contrast, the style is sometimes flushed crimson along its entire length, though more usually, from where it bends upwards towards the stigma.

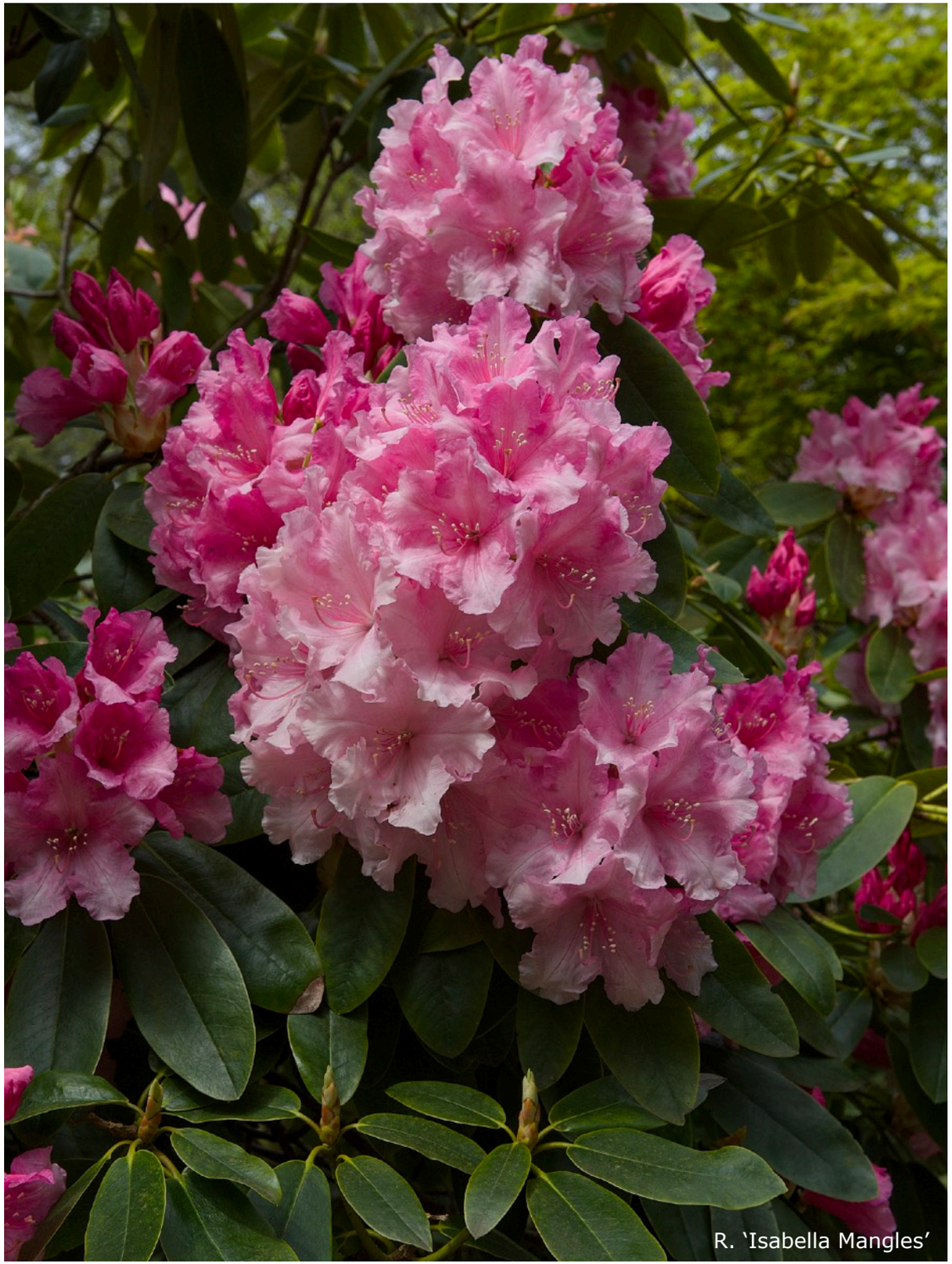
R. ‘George Hardy’ is more often found in older, turn-of-the-century collections, where in pre-Millennial splendour it will be found to have a quiet, simple beauty that far outshines the brash, orange melds that are the garden centre staples of today.


R. ‘George Hardy’

R. ‘George Hardy’

R. ‘George Hardy’

R. ‘George Hardy’



R. ‘Isabella Mangles’

R. ‘Isabella Mangles’
griffithianum hybrid
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H6 Mid April-May 5m x 4m

‘Two years ago I had the pleasure of visiting the garden of Mr H. A. Mangles at Littleworth, Tongham, Surrey, where there is an exceptionally rich collection of Rhododendrons, among them being many hybrids raised by his brother, the late Mr J. H. Mangles, of Haslemere. There are many Griffithii crosses among them, and it is to be hoped that they may be multiplied and distributed. The finest of these hybrids, however, is still in the garden of Mrs J. H. Mangles, at Valewood, Haslemere, where it is represented by an enormous, well-furnished bush about 12 feet high, which, when I saw it in May two years ago, was truly magnificent, almost every branch bearing a large, well setup head, racemose, as all the Griffithii hybrids are, the flowers well-formed, and their colour a beautiful soft pink. It is named Isabella Mangles.’

William Watson, Curator of the Royal Botanic Garden, Kew, wrote those words in 1902 for an article on hybrid rhododendrons published in *The Gardeners’ Chronicle* (Series, 3, Volume 31, page 368). Another doyen of the genus, John Guille Millais, also waxed lyrical and rated the hybrid highly, yet ‘Isabella Mangles’ has to date not engendered such rapture in the members of the RHS Floral Committee responsible for either the Award of Merit or the First Class Certificate. To their enduring shame: for the cross is no less beautiful than ‘Alice’, ‘Betty Wormald’, ‘Countess of Derby’ or a host of other lesser confections upon which they have bestowed their munificence. It was also the hybrid James Mangles named for his wife - Isabella Sarah Mangles (1838-1909) - the significance of which also speaks volumes. But clearly, not to them.

The shrub is a well-branched, perfectly proportioned dome, filled with shiny, dark green leaves. Each blade is oblong through elliptic in shape, up to 23cm long and 8cm wide, glabrous above but with a thin cloak of hairs below, held for two years, with a few leaves extending their tenure into a third season. The flower truss is flat-topped or rounded, composed of between ten and twelve widely funnel-campanulate bells, each around 6cm long by 8cm across, five-lobed, the rounded margins of which are slightly frilly. The corollas are vivid purplish-red in the bud, the tone lightening to rosy-pink as they fully expand, the hue darker on the outside. A creamy-white mottling then begins to spread across the whole, restricted at first to the edges of the dorsal lobe and along the veins, but in time transcendent, the blooms almost completely milky just before they are discarded and fall. Yet throughout the colour transformation, the stamen filaments and style remain flushed with pink, the anthers ivory-white.

Another Kew alumnus, W. J. Bean, confirms the hybrid’s status as ‘one of the finest creations of James Henry Mangles’, suggesting that the shrub is ‘the result of crossing *R. griffithianum* with some hardy hybrid’ (both quotes sourced from the online edition of *Trees & Shrubs Hardy in the British Isles*). If so, this would certainly account for the widely assigned -20ºC hardiness rating. Moreover, 5m-tall mature specimens of this *griffithianum* hybrid do not invert their flower trusses through 180º or slew them across the ground in a tangled melee because the branchlets are not strong enough to bear their weight, as a certain AM and FCC-awarded commercial standard is wont to do. Something else a certain floral committee might bear in mind?

R. ‘Isabella Mangles’

R. ‘Isabella Mangles’



R. ‘Isabella Mangles’



R. ‘Isabella Mangles’



R. ‘Lady Florence’



R. ‘Lady Florence’



R. ‘Lisa Stillman’



R. ‘Lisa Stillman’

R. ‘Lisa Stillman’

R. ‘Lisa Stillman’



R. ‘Littleworth Gem’

R. ‘Littleworth Gem’

Hardiness	Flowering Period	Height & Spread
H5	April.	5m x 4m

‘Littleworth Gem’ is a true stunner. Bred by James Mangles at Valewood, his Surrey home, sometime before 1884, it was only registered with the *IRRC* a century later by Lady Pamela Adam Gordon, née Bowhill, then resident at Littleworth Cross, formerly Hethersett. This was the house built by Harry Mangles in 1873, to which many of the rhododendrons from nearby Valewood were transported and replanted after his brother’s death. That property is now split between Valewood House and Valewood Coach House, with many old specimen rhododendrons still remaining at both sites, especially the latter, where the wooded hillside has a host of gnarled old plants, so it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that a few more ‘new’ Mangles rhododendrons might yet await discovery.

This Mangles hybrid has fabulous red flowers, which are carried in an open-topped truss of eleven, funnel-shaped corollas. The deepest hue is on the outside and around the lobe margins, the middle of the petals and the throat paling towards reddish-pink, with even a streak of white running down the centre line of each lobe after a week or so. A few brownish-red spots will also be found on the dorsal, but these are hardly noticeable.

The foliage is glossy green above with a thin to sparse indumentum of golden-brown hairs below, the blades oblong-oblanceolate in shape, with some leaves convex in profile, others concave, still others flat. Habit is upright and spreading, a mature bush basically an open criss-cross of branches that bend if the weight of the flowers is too much.

The parentage of ‘Littleworth Gem’ is unknown, but one glance at a shrub in full flower screams Subsection *Thomsonia*. Two species would have been available to Mangles at the time: *R. hookeri,* discovered and introduced from Bhutan by Thomas Booth in 1849; and *R. thomsonii* itself, discovered in Sikkim by Sir Joseph Hooker, also in 1849, with seed returned to Kew the following year. Both were flowering in UK cultivation when Mangles was making his crosses between 1860 and 1884, indeed, the parentage may be a straight pairing of the two, the pink in the blooms coming from the genes of *R. hookeri*. For there is absolutely no trace of that other Mangles favourite, *R. griffithianum,* in the morphological mix, nor any hint of input from a member of Subsection *Arborea* or Subsection *Barbata,* which would be evidenced in the leaves.

R. ‘Littleworth Gem’

R. ‘Littleworth Gem’

R. ‘Littleworth Gem’



R. ‘Loder’s White’ AM 1911

R. ‘Loder’s White’

cinnamomeum var. *cinnamomeum* X *griffithianum*

Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread

H5-6 Late April-May 6m x 12m

Mystery, doubt and confusion surrounds the history and origin of R. ‘Loder’s White’, more so perhaps than any other hybrid within the genus. Equally, its parentage is most definitely not that officially detailed in the pages of the *International Rhododendron Register and Checklist,* whose text denotes a *cinnamomeum* x *griffithianum* pairing - a combination reluctantly accepted and repeated here, as it is in countless other sources. If the cross were a no-hoper few would care, but ‘Loder’s White’ remains one of the finest rhododendron hybrids created by the hand of man.

As John Guille Millais so eloquently confirmed a century ago:

> ‘No one who loves beautiful flowering shrubs can pass a plant of ‘Loder’s White’ in flower without halting to admire it, for there is a quality about the exquisite flowers, set off so superbly by the dark foliage, that places it quite in the first rank of good things. Moreover, it is perfectly hardy and sets its young growth after flowering, and when frosts are usually a thing of the past’.

The quote comes from the first tome of *Rhododendrons and the Various Hybrids,* 550 copies of which were published in 1917 by Longmans, Green and Co., with other excerpts featuring in the paragraphs below. Those volumes today change hands for quite silly sums of money (my two came from Japan and the postal charge alone was enough to shock), for these are weighty publications in both senses of the word. However: setting the sly swipe at Sir Edmund Loder’s other fabled rhododendron hybrid aside - Millais accurately sets ‘Loder’s White’ on a pedestal only fractionally below that of ‘Loderi’ - the botanical facts and figures are long established and repeated here before the conundrums and enigmas that otherwise cloak the shrub are explored.

R. ‘Loder’s White’ is hardy and vigorous. It can be grown in full sun or dappled shade, and attains a height of 6m with a spread approaching double that figure if left unchecked. The domed framework of branches is densely covered from head to foot in dark green leaves, the blades elliptic through elliptic-ovate in shape, with somewhat recurved margins, their dimensions at maximum 20cm long by 7.5cm wide. Both the adaxial and abaxial leaf surfaces are glabrous. Flower buds begin swelling in early May, sometimes a touch before, with the trusses first tall, tightly-packed ellipses of mauvish-pink, before the corollas open pure white, edged pink at first, the dorsal lobe dotted with a few crimson spots. In shade, or when the weather has been heavily overcast, the primary hue remains to suffuse the funnels for several days, though eventually it recedes. Twelve corollas on average are carried in each conical truss, widely flared trumpets 6cm in length and up to 10cm across at the mouth, the lobe margins frilly, the tube of the style and the stamen filaments white, the anthers brown and the stigma reddish-brown. A bouquet of sweet perfume might even be detected up-close. Juvenile plants become free-flowering at five years of age, mature specimens producing so much bloom the foliage is near completely obscured. And the corollas are very long-lasting, though they can bruise in heavy rain or if knocked against twig, leaf or each other by strong gusts of wind. Hardiness is sufficient to allow the shrub to be planted anywhere in the UK where rhododendrons succeed, the leaves lost if temperatures plunge below -18ºC, but replaced the following season, with adult through old and mellow specimen plants rarely killed outright or unable to grow from the stump if a once-in-a-lifetime cyclical disaster does strike - a possibility whose likelihood the vagaries of climate change has exacerbated.

That faculty on its own suggests that R. 'Loder's White' is not a first generation hybrid of *R. griffithianum,* though clearly the species is most definitely present in the mix. A lack of any leaf indumentum indicates that *R. arboreum* ssp. *cinnamomeum* var. *cinnamomeum* was also not a fifty-fifty partner in the procreation process. The mauve-pink tone of the swelling flower buds however, hints that 'Loder's White' had input from *R. ponticum,* and indeed Frederick Street, author of many books on the genus, writes in *Rhododendrons* (Cassell, 1965), that 'it seems much more likely that it could be another seedling from the 'Alice Mangles' cross', which was a *griffithianum* x *ponticum* hybrid introduced by James Henry Mangles in 1882. However, Street then reports the leaf as having a 'definite resemblance' to that of the *catawbiense* hybrid 'Album Elegans', a plant of pre-1847 vintage originating from the Waterer nursery at Knap Hill, though it has been suggested that that hybrid might be a straight selection from the species.

William Watson, curator at Kew and author of *Rhododendrons and Azaleas* (T. C. & E. C. Jack, Edinburgh, 1911), believes 'Album Elegans' was paired with *R. griffithianum* to produce R. 'Manglesii', which we know was raised by J. Veitch & Sons, although the rumour mill contends that it could have been crossed by either Veitch or Mangles.

Watson's book goes on to state that:

> 'Forms of R. Manglesii are now known under such names as 'White Pearl', 'Princess Juliana', 'Gauntlettii' and 'Loder's White'.

Regrettably, the *IRRC* entries for those five hybrids show not one, but a quintet of combinations:

'Manglesii' being a *griffithianum* x *catawbiens*e hybrid, with 'Album Elegans' one of the possibilities for pollen provider;

'White Pearl', which is now known to be a synonym of 'Halopeanum' and so a *griffithianum* x *maximum* cross;

'Princess Juliana', an Otto Schulz creation made at the Royal Porcelain Factory in Berlin, with the parentage denoted as *griffithianum* x Unknown Hardy Hybrid;

'Gauntlettii', *griffithianum* x *arboreum,* but an F1 pairing so already discounted;

And of course 'Loder's White' as detailed above - *cinnamomeum X griffithianum* - which to again quote from Street, is basically 'the official guess', and 'a bad one at that' according to Bean's *Trees & Shrubs*.

As you would expect, J. G. Millais also has a view on the matter:

> 'Wandering through Miss Mangles' garden at Littleworth Cross one day, I came on a *griffithianum* hybrid named 'Agnes Beaufort'. It is nearly identical with 'Loder's White' and probably a seedling of the same strain'.

The mirrored characteristics shared between 'Agnes Beaufort' and 'Loder's White' are a 12-flowered truss with open campanulate, 5-lobed, white corollas, which are at first flushed deep purplish-pink around the edges and on the mid-veins. Unfortunately however, the dorsal spotting is green to yellowish-green and the leaves are bigger, oblong in shape, glossy above and with a scattering of brown hairs below. So as a seedy private investigator in a Shane Black buddy noir might mumble: close, but no cigar.

A more recent stab at the parentage was made by the authors of *The Encyclopaedia of Rhododendron Hybrids* (Batsford, 1988), with Scottish doyens Peter and Kenneth Cox opting for an (Album Elegans x *griffithianum*) x White Pearl combination. No exposition was offered on how this coalescence had been reached, while the standard combination was also given as an alternative possibility.

Compositionally then, the coals are still heating in the fire, where they will remain until the geneticists get involved one day in the future.

As to the hybrid's place of succour, that surely would appear to be crystal clear from the epithet: Leonardslee and Sir Edmund Loder.

But in fact the plant is not Loder's white.

Step forward Mr Millais:

> 'Shortly before his death, Mr Mangles sent his friend Frederick DuCane Godman a waggon load of plants of his own and Mr Luscombe's raising. These included a small plant of what is now known as 'Loder's White'. Mr Godman, thinking the plant tender, placed it in the cool greenhouse, where it grew and flowered abundantly until it became too large for this position. Mr Godman then gave branches to Sir Edmund Loder, who made numerous grafted plants, some of which he placed in the open garden at Leonardslee, where he found it to be perfectly hardy. Subsequently, Sir Edmund gave plants to his friends in Cornwall, and they, thinking he had raised it, christened it 'Loder's White'. This magnificent Rhododendron is without doubt the chief triumph achieved by Mr J. H. Mangles, and it seems hard that a man, who devoted the latter part of his life to urging the claims of *R. griffithianum,* its hybrids and other Himalayan species, should not have lived long enough to see it in all its glorious beauty'.

James Henry Mangles, the 'High Priest of the Rhododendron Cult' according to John Guille Millais, needs no further introduction.

Mr Luscombe, on the other hand, was John Luscombe of Coombe Royal, Kingsbridge, Devon, whose own hybrid creations include R. 'Devoniense', R. 'Luscombei', R. 'Luscombei Splendens', R. 'Luscombe's Sanguineum' and R. 'Luscombe's Scarlet', to name but five seedlings all derived from a single *fortunei* x *thomsonii* cross. It is known and documented that he also made other pairings beside this from plants grown from the seed he received from Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker's expedition to Sikkim in the early 1850s, but the details of such have been lost, with no other registrations found under his name except for one, that of 'Coombe Royal', a pink-flowering, AM-awarded plant introduced by the Exeter branch of the Veitch Nursery in 1900. This was *R. griffithianum* crossed with what J. G. Millais describes as a 'garden variety'. He then adds that 'it is much finer than 'Manglesii', having better flowers, truss and foliage'. And of course, John Luscombe might well have paired it with another rhododendron to produce the F2 combination needed to achieve that -18ºC hardiness rating assigned to 'Loder's White', as well as the shrub's ability to send out new shoots from a stump.

So even though James Henry Mangles is officially given the credit, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility to construe that the 'Loder's White' seedling on that packed horse-drawn waggon from Valewood to South Lodge may well have been an onward delivery from Coombe Royal and thus have deeper West Country roots than just its name.

And that is the convoluted story of 'Loder's White'.

R. ‘Loder’s White’ AM 1911

R. ‘Loder’s White’ AM 1911

R. ‘Loder’s White’ AM 1911

R. 'Loder's White' AM 1911

R. ‘Mabel Coombe’

R. ‘Mabel Coombe’

R. ‘Mrs Ellice’

R. ‘Mrs Ellice’

R. ‘Mrs Ellice’

R. ‘Mrs Ellice’

R. 'Mrs Kingsmill' AM 1911

R.‘Mrs Kingsmill’ AM 1911

R. ‘Mrs Kingsmill’ AM 1911

R. ‘Mrs Kingsmill’ AM 1911

R. ‘Mrs Kingsmill’
griffithianum x *campylocarpum*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H5 Mid April-early May 4m x 6m

Without mentioning ‘Mrs Kingsmill’ by name, John Guille Millais, in the first volume of his *Rhododendrons and the Various Hybrids* appraisal of the genus, wrote disparagingly of the *griffithianum* x *campylocarpum* pairing:

> ‘This hybrid was raised at Kew in 1898, and bears cream flowers not of any great merit. Sir Edmund Loder and Mr J. H. Mangles have also raised and flowered hybrids of a similar parentage, but at present the results are not very successful. Several unflowered seedlings are yet to be proved.’

He also described another Mangles hybrid he had seen, although at the time he believed it had resulted from a *campylocarpum* x *griffithianum* pairing:

> ‘Creamy white flowers of larger size and more substance than the first parent. The leaves are large, dark green, and handsome. First made many years ago by Mr Mangles at Valewood. I saw the plants in flower at Littleworth Cross (here named R. Mrs Randall Davidson) in May 1915. They were certainly very beautiful Rhododendrons.’

According to their *IRRC* entries, both of the Mangles hybrids actually derive from the combination where *R. griffithianum* was the seed parent. This means they are genetically different from crosses where the reverse was the case - the three ‘Penjerrick’ hybrids bred by Samuel Smith, for example, and with which ‘Mrs Kingsmill’ has previously long been associated - for it is now known that an individual cell’s organelles - their chloroplasts and mitochondria, to list just two - are solely the gift of the female parent, and given the tasks they carry out - respectively, photosynthesis and supplying cellular energy - are somewhat critical to that plant’s existence. And differ in their efficiency from one species to another. Which could result in less robust growth and poorer flowers.

Millais also mentions that an *arboreum* Album x *campylocarpum* cross with a tree-like habit raised by Mangles, the pairing later duplicated by Sir Edmund Loder, E. J. P. Magor and J. C. Williams, was also ‘sometimes called Mrs Kingsmill’, but if his recollection is correct and not the result of wires getting crossed, the shrub was never introduced as such.

The true ‘Mrs Kingsmill’ has a lax, open truss of from five to seven campanulate corollas, each 6cm in length by 8cm in width at the mouth. They are milky-white, tinged cream in the tube, with pink flushing around the lobe margins at first but otherwise unmarked. And up-close, they may indeed be no great improvement on the pollen parent and a step or two down from the flamboyance of Hooker’s ‘Aucklandii’ form of *R. griffithianum*. But en masse, when a wall of bloom 4m or more tall and 6m across greets onlookers, it would be churlish not to be rocked back on your heels.

Several authors report pale yellow forms of ‘Mrs Kingsmill’ are also in circulation, so more than one clone may have been distributed under the epithet chosen by Miss Clara Mangles, sister of the hybridiser, in 1911.

Tangentially, the flowers of ‘Mrs Randall Davidson’ - at least on the specimen growing at RHS Wisley (opposite on page 189) - would fall under JGM’s ‘not of any great merit’ category rather than the beautiful blooms the owner of those initials saw on his 1915 wander around Littleworth Cross.



R. ‘Mrs Kingsmill’ AM 1911



R. ‘Mrs Randall Davidson’



R. ‘Mrs Randall Davidson’



R. ‘Mrs Randall Davidson’

R. 'Violet Paget'
griffithianum hybrid
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H5 Early-mid April 6m x 4m

As previously mentioned, J. G. Millais describes visiting both of the gardens where crosses bred by James Mangles were established in the first volume of his book *Rhododendrons and the Various Hybrids,* writing that:

> 'The following *griffithianum* hybrids were raised by the late J. H. Mangles, and are now large bushes at Littleworth Cross, Tongham, Surrey, the residence of his sister Miss Mangles. In some cases the original plants are at his old home at Valewood, Haslemere, where I have seen most of them in flower. Nearly all the pink varieties, such as Violet Paget, are plants of great beauty'.

But at some stage over the decades that followed, the tags on the plants somehow got swapped, as the entry in the 2005 edition of the *IRRC* makes clear:

> 'Some earlier descriptions of 'Violet Paget' give the flowers as pink; the description above is of plants now so labelled in, and distributed from, Mangles' old garden'.

That narrative reports white, 5-lobed, funnel-shaped flowers in a domed but open-topped truss of around eleven corollas, each bloom between 5 and 6cm long by 7 to 8cm across at the mouth, spotted pale yellowish-green on the dorsal, the calyx gripping them pale yellow-green and irregular lobed to 0.9cm. Large, oblanceolate-shaped leaves nearly 16cm long by 5.5cm across, very dark green and glossy above, compliment the flowers.

However, an addition to the *IRRC* description should detail the flush of pink on the dorsal lobe, at its most distinctive when as a streak of colour it paints the outer rib of that uppermost petal.

Many of the James Mangles hybrids are named for female members of his immediate family, here however, the epithet appears to be an honorific for the writer Vernon Lee, an ardent feminist who dressed à la garçonne and who wrote supernatural fiction and works on aesthetics under the pseudonym Violet Paget.


R. 'Violet Paget'


R. 'Violet Paget'

R. ‘Violet Paget’

Henry McLaren:

Henry Duncan McLaren, 2nd Baron Aberconway (1879-1953).

by Patrick M. Synge, M.A., F.L.S.

It has become traditional in the horticultural world to associate the name of the late Lord Aberconway and the gardens at Bodnant with the cultivation of Rhododendrons, and his achievements in this field certainly equal those of any of the great growers of the century.

The position of the Bodnant gardens with the natural dell and its river and the blue mountains sprinkled with snow in the distance make a natural setting for a woodland garden of unparalleled beauty and visitors to Bodnant in the spring months will long remember the lovely effects obtained, gardening on a scale such as probably no other private individual can indulge in today. Each weekend, walking constantly round the garden with his gardener and often a party of friends, Lord Aberconway directed and planned his plantings and crosses with indefatigable energy. Many will remember with pleasure among the great days of their life the tours round Bodnant gardens led by him.

Hybridisation at Bodnant followed certain definite lines and the one which Lord Aberconway, working in conjunction with his son, the present Lord Aberconway, and with his successive head gardeners, the late Mr F. C. Puddle and his son Mr C. E. Puddle, pursued furthest was the production of deep red hybrids, largely originating in crosses with *R. griersonianum,* 'the Bodnant bloody reds' as they have been affectionately termed. Probably the one he was most proud, is 'Elizabeth' (*forrestii* Repens x *griersonianum*) F.C.C. 1943, a very free flowering bush with flowers of a deep blood-red colour, and of a modest size so that it is suitable for every Rhododendron garden, however small. Another merit of R. 'Elizabeth' is the ease with which it can be propagated from cuttings.

Lord Aberconway also used *R. griersonianum* as a parent for crosses with larger growing species and out of these came such fine plants with deep red flowers as 'Laura Aberconway' (*griersonianum* x 'Barclayi'), 'Matador' (*griersonianum* x *strigillosum*) and 'Gretia' ('Portia' x *griersonianum*), while among those with lighter coloured flowers were 'Vanessa' ('Soulbut' x *griersonianum*), surely one of the most beautiful pastel shaded Rhododendrons yet raised, 'Fabia' (*dichroanthum* x *griersonianum*) and 'Sunrise' (*griffithianum* x *griersonianum*). Another very lovely plant growing only to a few feet in height was 'Winsome' ('Humming Bird' x *griersonianum*) which many will remember from the exhibit at Chelsea in 1950 when it received an Award of Merit.

He was pleased that all these hybrids were considerably hardier than some of their parents and would grow well in gardens where such plants as *R. griffithianum* and *R. griersonianum* would not survive. They were also much more free-flowering and thus were developed two most valuable garden characteristics which had not always been prominent in their parents. Another character of these hybrids is the early age at which they flower.

The raising of dwarf-growing hybrids, which would be suitable for the rock garden or the small garden, was another very successful part of the Bodnant programme and one which will undoubtedly benefit the smaller gardens which are being made now, and which are likely to be made in the next few decades. In addition to 'Elizabeth', there are 'Ethel' ('F. C. Puddle' x *forrestii* Repens) F.C.C. 1940 with flowers described as a 'rich shade of light crimson-scarlet' and with a coloured calyx of the same shade; 'May Morn' ('May Day' x *beanianum* pink form) A.M. 1946 with flowers of a delicate coral pink colour and 'Rufus' (*forrestii* Repens x *sanguineum*).

Two early flowering Rhododendrons of very great merit were raised at Bodnant namely 'Cilpinense' (*ciliatum* x *moupinense*) with pale pink flowers, and 'Choremia', the latter a cross between *R. haematodes* and *R. arboreum* and producing a large truss of very brilliant waxy-red flowers. It received a F.C.C. when shown in February, 1948. Another even more brilliant red, perhaps the strongest scarlet yet raised, is 'Welkin' ('Eros' x *haematodes*) which also received a F.C.C. at Chelsea, 1952 and was figured in the Society's Journal. This hybrid showed well the petaloid calyx often derived from *R. haematodes* or *R. dichroanthum.* 'Welkin' also has a beautifully shaped bell, a character which it may have inherited from 'Penjerrick', through 'Eros' and 'Amaura'.

Lord Aberconway was also very interested in a range of hybrids which he raised from *R. haematodes;* he considered this to be a fine parent and greatly admired the brilliance of colour which it transmitted to its offspring as well as the heavy calyx which it passed on to its hybrids although itself being without it. In addition to 'Choremia' and 'Welkin' there were 'Aspansia' ('Astarte' x *haematodes*) A.M. 1945, 'Phoebus' ('F. C. Puddle' x *haematodes*) and 'Vega' ('Fabia' x *haematodes*).

Other notable red hybrids from Bodnant include 'Redwing', 'Portia' and 'Cardinal' (*arboreum* x 'Barclayi') F.C.C. 1937; some of these have grown to a great size there. In addition there were a number of very fine hybrids with flowers of lighter shades such as 'Hiraethlyn' (*haematodes* x *griffithianum*) and 'Elros' ('Eros' x *elliottii*) A.M. 1948, an attractive plant with rosy salmon-pink flowers.

Lord Aberconway was particularly fond of Rhododendron 'Penjerrick' and often remarked that he knew of no other Rhododendron to surpass it for beauty of form. He was able to obtain a number of plants from the original cross and these are planted freely at Bodnant. Rhododendron enthusiasts will remember especially the 'Penjerrick' walk on the hillside beyond the river where one walks under a whole series of big bushes of varying colour forms. It is so arranged that one does not see it from a distance, but suddenly arrives at one end, an unexpected surprise and undoubtedly one of the great features of the garden. When once Lord Aberconway had decided that a particular plant was unusually good, he would plant it freely and always advocated this as one of the principles of good gardening. The lavish planting at Bodnant of 'Penjerrick', 'Loderi', 'Redwing' and 'Elizabeth' among the Rhododendrons, of certain Magnolias, Eucryphias and the 'Norquinco' form of *Embothrium lanceolatum* pay abundant tribute to the success of this principle.

The Rhododendron species were not neglected, and especially prominent are such charming plants as *R. williamsianum* and the freely flowering ring of this Rhododendron encircling a small pool is an attractive feature. In April the plantings of the deciduous Azalea species such as *R. albrechtii* and *R. schlippenbachii* below the house and the groups of *R. augustinii* as well as the fine specimens of *R. davidsonianum* are of unusual beauty. There are some very richly-coloured forms obtained from breeding together the two best forms he could find of *R. davidsonianum* and it is surprising how much improvement the best of these show over the commonly accepted plants of the species. The same improvement has been attained also in the case of *R. albrechtii.*

Other lines of hybridisation led from *R. concatenans* to the beautiful orange bell-flowered 'Conroy' which was shown at Chelsea in 1950 to receive an Award of Merit, and from the yellow form of *R. cinnabarinum* and the orange form of 'Royal Flush' to 'Bodnant Yellow', a F.C.C. plant with yellow flowers with corollas of a thick waxy texture. Lord Aberconway always maintained that it should be regarded as a separate hybrid from 'Lady Chamberlain' since he had used a different form of 'Royal Flush' from that used for 'Lady Chamberlain' and his fine plant certainly justifies its separate name, since it is very distinct and he rightly regarded it as one of the plants of which he was most proud. Lord Aberconway also raised one of the best dwarf blue-flowering Rhododendrons in 'Bluebird' and he considered, probably rightly, that it was the purest blue of that range of hybrids.

Another plant of great beauty at Bodnant is the white-flowered R. 'Sir Charles Lemon', a form of *R. arboreum,* with the bright, rust-coloured indumentum on the undersides of the leaves. This grows particularly well at a point of vantage near the front door.

The tender Rhododendrons were not neglected and many will remember the beautiful bowls of 'Javanese hybrids' from Bodnant often to be seen on the President's table for his speech at the Annual General Meetings as well as the enormous flowers of R. 'Tyermanii' on the wall of the big conservatory at Bodnant or in vases at the Rhododendron Show. In the frames of tender Rhododendrons and against the wall of the frame yard, protected in cold spells by thick canvas curtains, were a number of beautiful hybrids raised from yellow flowering species and these included 'Chrysaspis', 'Chrysomanicum' and several others which had accentuated the depth of colour and freedom of flower of their parents. Unfortunately, however, they had not in this case attained any much greater hardiness.

The Camellias at Bodnant were a feature in which Lord Aberconway took an ever-increasing interest during the later years. *Camellia williamsii* 'J. C. Williams' was one of his favourite plants and he once wrote that he regarded it as one of the best shrubs ever introduced to our gardens, a judgement with which many may well agree. The plant of *C. reticulata semiplena* against the house was unusually prodigal with its flowers and confirmed well Lord Aberconway's contention that in order to flower Camellias freely they should be planted where they could get some sun and not always with a north aspect.

Lord Aberconway imported from America a set of the forms of *Camellia reticulata* derived from those in the Temple Gardens of Kunming and took an especial interest in these, anticipating that they would make very notable additions to our range of Camellias.

Both Rhododendrons and Camellias, particularly those which could be raised from cuttings, were propagated very freely at Bodnant and often with great skill in the case of some of the more difficult species. Lord Aberconway was most generous with gifts of plants to his visitors, often inviting them to make a list of their desiderata, and few came away without some little plant, while to such gardens as Wisley and the Great Park at Windsor he sent very large consignments of his best hybrids.

In addition to Rhododendrons Lord Aberconway was particularly interested in white Cypripedium hybrids in which he made most notable advances both in quality of form and size, in the pale yellow Clivias and also in Hippeastrum hybrids which he often showed at Chelsea.

The Rhododendron Show always owed much to Bodnant Rhododendrons and Lord Aberconway liked to enter in as many classes as he could and always carried off a large share of the awards. These were not won, however, without hard work and on the afternoons before the show, aided by members of his family, he could always be found on the dais of the hall selecting and arranging specimens for the various classes from a great mass of material which often filled the whole area of the dais. The success in recent years of the Camellia Shows and the Camellia and Magnolia Conference was also largely due to his enthusiasm for these two genera.

In the 1952 edition of the Rhododendron Handbook the stud list includes no fewer than 298 hybrids raised by him while in Table III there are a further eight distinct varieties of previously registered hybrids, and these, of course, must represent only a small proportion of those actually raised and either subsequently discarded or not yet shown or named.

Lord Aberconway also was a constant and enthusiastic supporter of plant hunting expeditions particularly those to Western China and the triangle between China, N. Burma and Tibet, and that beautiful species *R. aberconwayi* was fittingly named after him, having been collected by one of the Chinese collectors whom he took over when George Forrest died. Many other species were first shown and introduced from plants at Bodnant.



- *opposite* -
Henry McLaren in 1905.

It is good to think that the great garden at Bodnant, the mature achievement of over fifty years of planning and selection and raising of plants will be maintained through the Gardens Committee of the National Trust due to the foresight and generosity of Lord Aberconway, while an ever-increasing number of the Rhododendrons raised at Bodnant are being distributed throughout the gardens of the world. Rhododendron lovers owe an unpayable debt to the four great giants among the Rhododendron raisers of the last half century, Mr Lionel de Rothschild, Mr J. C. Williams, Mr J. B. Stevenson and Lord Aberconway, and it is unlikely that their achievements in Rhododendron growing can ever again be equalled or surpassed, although new varieties will doubtless continue to come and go.

Patrick Synge's appreciation of Lord Aberconway and the rhododendrons at Bodnant was originally published within *The Rhododendron And Camellia Year Book 1954.*

Addendum:
Henry Duncan McLaren was born on April 16th, 1879, in Richmond upon Thames, the son of Charles McLaren, 1st Baron Aberconway, and Laura Elizabeth Pochin. Educated at Eton between 1892 and 1898, he obtained a Master of Arts from Balliol College, Oxford, and in 1903 became a barrister at Lincoln's Inn. In 1906 he was elected as a Member of Parliament for West Staffordshire as a Liberal, and served as Private Under-Secretary to the President of the Board of Trade, David Lloyd George, until 1908. In 1910, he stood for his father's old seat of Bosworth and replaced him, but then left politics in 1922, succeeding his father as the 2nd Baron Aberconway in 1934.

He married Christabel Mary Melville Macnaghten (1890–1974), the daughter of Sir Melville Macnaghten and Dora Emily Sanderson, on July 19th, 1910, at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, London, with whom he later had five children.

Out in the wider, non-horticultural world, Henry McLaren was not just a politician, but a notable British industrialist, chairing companies that were owned by both sides of his family, most notably the engineering and shipbuilding firm John Brown and Co, and the Tredegar Iron and Coal Co. In 1915 he founded the Design and Industries Association, and served as that organisation's first chairman.

Towards the end of his political career, he built Aberconway House in Mayfair as his principal residence, only later inheriting the family estate at Bodnant, which had originally belonged to his maternal grandfather.

He died in Hiraethog aged 74 on May 23rd, 1953.



- right -
Henry McLaren in later life,
photographed in the gardens at Bodnant alongside R. 'Elizabeth'.

- page 55 -
An archive photograph of Bodnant Hall.



Rhododendrons at Bodnant.

by Lord Aberconway, C.B.E., LL.D., D.Sc., V.M.H.

When the Bodnant gardens were originally laid out by my grandfather in 1875 and the following years, it was not thought that Himalayan Rhododendrons would be successful, and therefore he planted only a certain number of the hardy garden hybrids.

Among those hybrid Rhododendrons 'Ascot Brilliant' and 'Lady Eleanor Cathcart', both now of very large size, still hold their own in beauty with many of the modern hybrids.

Rhododendron planting at Bodnant on any scale really began in 1909, when Wilson's earliest Chinese Rhododendrons had been raised by Veitch and were being distributed. In that year a first planting of Chinese and Himalayan Rhododendrons was made - the two types being mixed so that if one did not succeed the other might takes its place.

Both types, however, succeeded admirably in spite of the fact that in a few cases in the early plantings unsuitable ground was chosen. In one place notably there was a bed of clay, with springs in it, which kept it always wet, covered by a very thin top soil; but in this Rhododendrons curiously enough did excellently, the roots spreading, however, only in the top soil and in the annual top dressing, the roots being limited in depth to a few inches.

While some of the Himalayan Rhododendrons suffered occasionally from spring frosts, Wilson's Chinamen always did splendidly. The very great majority of them were never injured even by a zero frost in winter [0°F or -18°C], and were only affected by a very late and unexpected frost in spring. The climate at Bodnant is not mild, as, although the estate is close to the sea, the coast is east of Anglesey, and the warm Gulf Stream affects it comparatively little.

15° to 20° of frost [-8°C to -11°C] is experienced most winters, while in the last few years we have had as much as 34° [-19°C]. Spring frosts are, as usual, erratic, but we do not often have one after the beginning of May.

When this Rhododendron planting began, certain flowering plants of leading hybrids were also acquired, among them a substantial number of that most lovely of all Rhododendrons 'Penjerrick'. At the same time came also large plants of *R. arboreum* x *R. barbatum,* of 'Barclayi' (which has proved quite hardy at Bodnant), of 'Cornish Cross' and of 'Loderi' with its most excellent variety 'King George'. Certain large plants were added of R. 'Luscombei' x *R. griffithianum,* of *R. thomsonii* x *R. fortunei,* and of the Leonardslee form of 'Shilsonii', a form that I have always thought superior to the original cross in which the parentage is reversed. In all these the late Lady Aberconway took the very keenest interest.

Subsequently, seedlings from Wilson's later expeditions were obtained from the Arnold Arboretum and elsewhere. While from the earlier of Forrest's expeditions there were raised seeds generously presented by Mr. Reginald Cory, who had helped in organising their collection.

Shares were subsequently taken in the seeds from Farrer's, Kingdon-Ward's, Rock's and Forrest's later expeditions, while on the death of Forrest, his collectors were employed by me for three or four years collecting seeds in China for Bodnant. The successful raising, by the skill of Mr. Puddle, of thousands of plants from these many expeditions gave to the garden the great majority of the hardy Rhododendron species that have been introduced into cultivation.

Of these species, those which, on the whole, have given most pleasure as garden plants have been *R. orbiculare,* of which we were fortunate enough to have a good deep coloured form; *R. williamsianum,* where again we had a good pink form with a quite



- *opposite* -
The Dell, Bodnant Gardens, photographed in the mid 1940s.

exceptionally large flower; the two Triflorums, *R. augustinii,* which shows to such advantage in a shady place, and *R. davidsonianum.* To these one might add two of the forms of *R. wasonii,* which have always been most attractive, the yellow form and the form called Rhododactylum, both with beautiful leaves and the latter with pink and white striped flowers. Two forms of *R. pachytrichum* have been outstanding nearly every year, one with pink flower buds which turn to white as the flowers fade, and the other with scarlet buds, which turn to a fine pink, though with a touch of purple in it. *Rhododendron insigne* is largely represented inasmuch as seedlings of this species survived a journey across the Atlantic from the Arnold Arboretum in a way that other seedlings did not. *R. calophytum,* though a somewhat shy flowerer, and *R. haematodes* have also been of great beauty in the garden, and with them must be named Kingdon-Ward's 'Orange Bill' [*R. cinnabarinum* ssp. *concatenans*].

It was not until the year 1920 that the work of hybridising Rhododendrons first started at Bodnant. Here there were available the skill and taste of the head gardener, Mr. F. C. Puddle, long an experienced hybridiser of orchids.

One of the earliest hybrids made was R. 'Cilpinense' (*ciliatum* x *moupinense*), which received an Award of Merit in 1927. Soon a small plant of *R. griersonianum* flowered at Bodnant. This was used as a parent with Magor's 'Soulbut' (*souliei* x *fortunei* 'Mrs Butler') to make R. 'Vanessa'. This proved a very good hybrid, which received an F.C.C. in 1929; the colour inherited from *R. griersonianum* and the beautiful shape of the flower from *R. souliei* makes it outstanding even among the later hybrids. some of the plants were of a paler colour with a dash of cream in them ('Vanessa Pastel').

The possibilities of *R. griersonianum* as a parent were recognised at the start, and a large number of hybrids of it were made in the early years, including 'F. C. Puddle', A.M. (*neriiflorum* x *griersonianum*), and 'Fabia', A.M. (*dichroanthum* x *griersonianum*). Certain of the crosses first made were with some of the paler Rhododendrons, giving a number of what were then known as 'art shades'.

Later on, by forcing indoors plants of *R. griersonianum,* hybrids were secured with some of the early reds, such as R. 'Barclayi', making 'Laura Aberconway', F.C.C., with *R. strigillosum* making 'Matador', F.C.C., and with 'Arthur Osborne' making 'Toreador', A.M. At the same time 'Portia', A.M. (*strigillosum* x *neriiflorum* Euchaites), 'Red Wing', F.C.C. ('Barclayi' x 'Shilsonii'), and 'Cardinal' F.C.C. ('Barclayi' x *arboreum*), were made.

From these crosses there resulted plants of good habit with shaped flowers of various shades of scarlet - the outstanding one among them being 'Laura Aberconway'.

Unexpectedly enough, the *R. griersonianum* hybrids had two striking and useful characteristics - they were very hardy, and they flowered most freely and very early in life. As an example, a cross was made between *R. griersonianum* and *R. calophytum* - the latter a plant which does not flower to any appreciable extent for the first twenty years of its life - but in the bed of the seedling hybrids about half showed flower buds in the first three or four years from seed.

Two other parents were used freely - *R. griffithianum* and *R. haematodes.* These gave us 'Sunrise', F.C.C. (*griffithianum* x *griersonianum*), 'Hiraethlyn' (*griffithianum* x *haematodes*), 'Choremia' A.M. (*haematodes* x *arboreum*), and R. 'Aspansia', A.M. ('Astarte' x *haematodes*). *R. fortunei* and its allies *R. decorum* and *R. discolor* were very little used as parents because in some of the offspring the centre of the flower has poor colouring with greenish-yellow markings, which is not the case when *R. griffithianum* is the parent.

As the original hybrids flowered, the work was carried on and further hybrids were made from them such as 'Dorinthea', F.C.C. (*griersonianum* x 'Hiraethlyn'); 'Radiance', ('Vanessa' x *griersonianum*); 'Gretia', A.M. ('Portia' x *griersonianum*); 'Welkin', A.M. ('Eros x *haematodes*); 'Charmaine' ('Charm' x 'May Day'); 'Ouida', A.M. ('Astarte' x *griersonianum*); 'Siren', A.M. ('Choremia' x *griersonianum*); 'Felicity', A.M. ('Radiance' x 'F. C. Puddle'), and others.

There were also two special branches of hybridisation which we followed up.

The first was an endeavour to obtain plants with flowers of an orange or a yellow tint. It was often found that in hybridising Rhododendrons the yellow of the parent was very apt to vanish in the offspring. Success, however, was achieved in the good orange 'Fabia Tangerine' (*dichroanthum* x *griersonianum*) and in 'Bodnant Yellow', F.C.C., while a pleasing type of cream colour was obtained in 'Clotted Cream', A.M. (*auriculatum* x 'Neda'), 'Cowslip', A.M. (*williamsianum* x *wardii*) and 'Peace', A.M. (*rigidum* x *concatenans*).

Attempts were also made to get a good yellow by using certain Rhododendrons on the borderline of hardiness, and 'Valpinense', A.M. (*moupinense* x *valentinianum*), 'Chrysaspis', A.M. (*chrysodoron* x *leucaspis*), and 'Valaspis', A.M. (*valentinianum* x *leucaspis*), were the result.

They require a little protection, however, and although pretty little shrubs, the yellow colour is only pale.

The second branch was an endeavour to produce free flowering dwarf Rhododendrons in scarlet and pink colours. *R. forrestii* Repens Group and *R. aperantum,* both hardy and charming in themselves, are in most cases shy flowering. In their hybrids, however, while the dwarf habit is to a great extent kept, in almost all cases flowers are most freely produced.

Of these crosses 'Elizabeth', F.C.C. (*forrestii* Repens x *griersonianum*), is one mass of scarlet flowers every year, and the same applies to 'Ethel', F.C.C. ('F. C. Puddle' x *forrestii* Repens), while of the pinks 'Charmaine' A.M. ('Charm' x 'May Day'), and 'Dainty', F.C.C. ('May Day' x 'Elizabeth'), are equally free flowering. In difficult times small Rhododendrons for small gardens may be appropriate.

The arrangement and re-arrangement of all these Rhododendrons provided constant problems. They required, when small, a well trenched bed, although when they grew to a fair size and the roots were shaded by foliage, they quite held their own in isolated holes in semi-woodland ground. Even planted in trenched beds, however, they did not do well in the North Wales climate under trees. They liked to be clear of the branches and the roots of the trees, but were quite content to be on the shady side of them.

On the other hand, they did quite well in fairly sunny situations, although as sunny situations were essential for most other shrubs, the Rhododendrons had chiefly to take their place in some shade.

It was always rather a struggle to control the invasion of rapidly growing seedling plants so skilfully raised by Mr. Puddle and to prevent them from filling those places in the garden where other plants than Rhododendrons appeared more suitable. It was not desired that the garden be limited to Rhododendrons, nor could its size be unduly increased, so to find room for newer Rhododendrons great care had to be taken to eliminate those hybrids and species which were of inferior merit. In the slaughter 'Pink Pearl' for one disappeared entirely.

Above all, in all the planting, every endeavour was made to place and group the Rhododendrons so that they helped the general garden design.

The garden at Bodnant is well suited to Rhododendrons and not only from the point of view of its soil, but also by its situation and its contours.

The three sloping lawns round the house, shaded with large forest trees, have each of them beds of Rhododendrons on one or on two sides. In two cases, these beds are formed as rock gardens by the placing of large rocks fallen ages ago from a near-by cliff.

The Rhododendrons on these rock gardens, although all dwarf or semi-dwarf kinds, have grown so rapidly that the rocks are now practically covered. The other beds have Magnolias, and in one case the upright Cherry, planted among the Rhododendrons.

All these Rhododendrons get a fair amount of sun and some wind from the south-west.

One lawn is bounded by formal terrace walls, and on another side of the house walled terraces stretch down the hill. No Rhododendrons are planted on these walls or terraces.

The portion of the garden that is best adapted to Rhododendrons is perhaps the Dell, a valley just below the main garden, some 120 feet deep [37m], with an abrupt oak-clad slope on one side. The flat floor of the valley is planted with a collections of conifers, now over 100 feet high [30m], and the more gentle slope on the far side has a permanent planting of a few large Larches and Corsicans below and scattered Cypress and Cherries above, all approaching 100 feet in height.

The oak-clad slope is too dry for Rhododendrons; the floor of the valley is for most part taken up by the Conifers and a stream, although there are one or two plantings of Rhododendrons at the sides. The more open places on the more gentle slope have proved admirable places both for Rhododendrons and Azaleas.

The formation there is very stiff boulder clay with 1 foot to 18 inches of good soil over it [0.3 to 0.5m]. It is probable that rainfall on the hill above percolates over the top of the impervious clay and is available for the roots of trees and Rhododendrons lower down the slope.

The upper part of the slope was originally planted with close *Rhododendron ponticum,* between the Cypress and Wild Cherries. Parallel paths have been made along the slope on each side of which the *R. ponticum* has been cut back, leaving space for better Rhododendrons. In all cases, however, a background of *R. ponticum* has been left, which greatly enhances the beauty of the plants in front of it by giving them a quiet and shapely background. On this hillside is the main collection of R. 'Penjerrick'.

The Dell itself has two tributary streams running into it. One is steep and has been edged with rocks on which grow again dwarf Rhododendrons and Primulas. The other stream is larger and more gently falling. It was thickly planted by my grandfather for perhaps fifty yards on each side [50m] with Yew among older forest trees. The poorer of the forest trees were cut away and two-thirds of the Yews, leaving a background of the latter for shelter and appearance.

This tributary valley is given up almost entirely to Rhododendrons. Many of the first planting of species and hybrids have attained a large size, while between them grow smaller plants of those raised more recently.

This part of the garden, confined as it is to Rhododendrons, can be ignored when the plants are not in flower, although it is perhaps a mistake to regard Rhododendrons merely as flowering plants, for many of them are quite the most beautiful of evergreens.

Finally, one should emphasise how much interest and beauty has been added to the garden by gifts of plants from gardening friends.

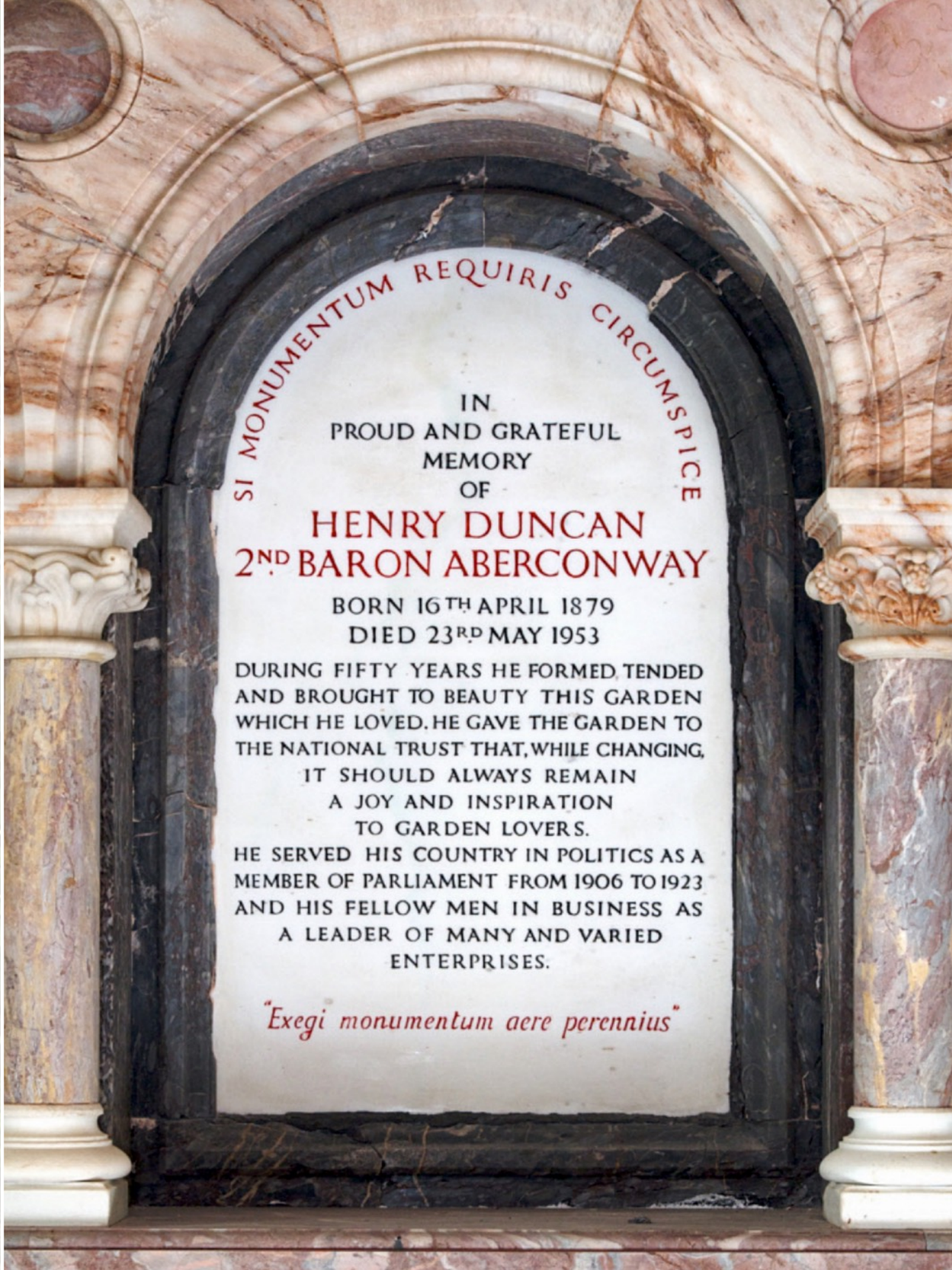
Henry McLaren's portrait of the gardens he created at Bodnant was originally published in *The Rhododendron Year Book 1947.*



- opposite -
Henry Duncan McLaren, 2nd Lord Aberconway - a formal portrait in oils.

- page 59 left & right -
Two memorials to their creator, in the gardens at Bodnant.


THESE TERRACE GARDENS
WERE DESIGNED BY
HENRY DUNCAN 1ST LAREN
1905


SI MONUMENTUM REQUIRIS CIRCUMSPICE
IN
PROUD AND GRATEFUL
MEMORY
OF
HENRY DUNCAN
2ND BARON ABERCONWAY
BORN 16TH APRIL 1879
DIED 23RD MAY 1953
DURING FIFTY YEARS HE FORMED, TENDED
AND BROUGHT TO BEAUTY THIS GARDEN
WHICH HE LOVED. HE GAVE THE GARDEN TO
THE NATIONAL TRUST THAT, WHILE CHANGING,
IT SHOULD ALWAYS REMAIN
A JOY AND INSPIRATION
TO GARDEN LOVERS.
HE SERVED HIS COUNTRY IN POLITICS AS A
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FROM 1906 TO 1923
AND HIS FELLOW MEN IN BUSINESS AS
A LEADER OF MANY AND VARIED
ENTERPRISES.
"Exegi monumentum aere perennius"

The Lepidote Registrations:

Alcesta
lutescens X *burmanicum*
AM 1935
Flower Colour: Creamy-yellow

Amba
racemosum X *burmanicum*
Flower Colour: Yellow

Argiolus
augustinii X *concinnum* Benthamianum
Flower Colour: Purplish-blue

Bluebird
intricatum X *augustinii*
AM 1943
Flower Colour: Veronica Violet
Height: Low

Bluestone
'Bluebird' X *augustinii*
Flower Colour: Violet
Height: Medium

Bodnant Yellow
cinnabarinum X 'Royal Flush'
FCC 1944
Flower Colour: Butter Yellow

Bouquet
davidsonianum X 'Peace'
Flower Colour: White

Chan
'Lady Chamberlain' X *xanthocodon*
Flower Colour: Orange-yellow

Chrycil
chrysodoron X 'Cilpinense'
Flower Colour: Lemon Yellow

Chrypinense
chrysodoron X *moupinense*
Flower Colour: Yellow

Chrysaspis
chrysodoron X *leucaspis*
AM 1942
Flower Colour: Greenish-yellow
Height: Dwarf

Chrysomanicum
chrysodoron X *burmanicum*
AM 1947
Flower Colour: Greenish-yellow

Cilpinense
ciliatum X *moupinense*
AM 1927 & FCC 1968
Flower Colour: White-rosy-pink
Flowering Time: March-April
Height: Low

Cinnandrum
cinnabarinum Roylei X *polyandrum*
Flower Colour: Peach Pink

Cinnandrum Tangerine
cinnabarinum Roylei X *polyandrum*
AM 1937
Flower Colour: Apricot-rose

Comely
concatenans X 'Lady Chamberlain'
Flower Colour: Orange-yellow

Conroy
concatenans X *cinnabarinum* Roylei
AM 1950
Flower Colour: Orange-rose
Flowering Time: Early May
Height: Medium

Danube
augustinii X *concinnum* Benthamianum
Flower Colour: Purplish-blue

Fine Feathers
'Cilpinense' X *lutescens*
Flower Colour: White-pink-yellow
Height: Low

Fine Feathers Primrose
'Cilpinense' X *lutescens*
Flower Colour: Yellow
Height: Low

Florescent
'Oreoroyle' X *xanthocodon*
Flower Colour: Plum

Isabel
maddenii X *maddenii*
Flower Colour: Rose
Flowering Time: April

Lemon Bill
rigidum 'Album' X *concatenans*

Lind-dal
lindleyi X *dalhousiae*
Flower Colour: White

Luminous
'Lady Rosebery' X *concatenans*
Flower Colour: Orange-red

Moth
megeratum X *boothii* Mishmiense
AM 1955
Flower Colour: Lemon Yellow

Peace
rigidum 'Album' X *concatenans*
AM 1946
Flower Colour: Creamy-white
Flowering Time: Late March-April
Height: Tall

Rover
'Oreoroyle' X 'Royal Flush'
Flower Colour: Rose-pink

Royalty
'Youthful Sin' X 'Royal Flush'
AM 1968
Flower Colour: Purplish-pink

Seta
spinuliferum X *moupinense*
AM 1933 & FCC 1960
Flower Colour: White-crimson
Flowering Time: February-March
Height: Medium

Silver Ray
megeratum X *boothii* Mishmiense

Valaspis
valentinianum X *leucaspis*
AM 1935
Flower Colour: Yellow
Height: Semi-Dwarf

Valpinense
moupinense X *valentinianum*
AM 1943
Flower Colour: Greenish-yellow

Waterfall
cinnabarinum X crassum (Cooper's Form)
AM 1971
Flower Colour: Purplish-pink

Xanroy
cinnabarinum Roylei X *xanthocodon*
Flower Colour: Orange-red

Yama
'Yunncinn' X 'Lady Chamberlain'
Flower Colour: Yellowish-plum

Youthful Sin
cinnabarinum X *yunnanense*
AM 1960
Flower Colour: Rhodamine Purple

Yucaba
cinnabarinum X 'Yunncinn'
Flower Colour: Plum



R. 'Bluebird' AM 1943

R. ‘Bluebird’ AM 1943

R. ‘Bluebird’

intricatum x *augustinii*

Hardiness	Flowering Period	Height & Spread
H6	April	1m x 2m

Crossed in 1930 and introduced seven years later, R. ‘Bluebird’ is the Bodnant equivalent of the Magor and Williams ‘Blue Tit’ hybrid, though it uses *R. intricatum* as the dwarf seed parent instead of *R. impeditum*. The official description speaks of ‘rich blue’ or ‘electric blue’ flowers and the award clone does indeed display corollas infused with a pigmentation that comes close to the hyperbole, though other clones have been distributed commercially that are distinctly more mauve (as the photographs show and this despite each plant bearing an ‘AM 1943’ addendum to its label).

Henry McLaren’s hybrid carries its flowers in trusses of 7 to 10, the corolla lobes less deeply divided than ‘Blue Tit’, each with a rounded apex and wavy margins. The leaves are ovate, to 4cm long, dark green, and unfortunately prone to chlorosis and leaf spot, to a far greater degree on some of the clones than on the two ‘Blue Tit’ hybrids mentioned above. Adequate light levels and good drainage will alleviate the problem to a degree, with the plants performing best in the south even though their hardiness rating shows they are suitable for all but the coldest of UK gardens.



R. ‘Bluebird’ AM 1943



R. ‘Bluebird’ AM 1943

R. ‘Bluestone’

R. ‘Bluestone’

R. ‘Chrysaspis’ AM 1942

R. ‘Chrysaspis’ AM 1942

R. ‘Chrysomanicum’ AM 1947

R. ‘Chrysomanicum’
chrysodoron x *burmanicum*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H3-4 March-early April 1.7m x 2m

R. chrysodoron features in a number of the crosses made at Bodnant, with *R. burmanicum,* on this occasion, providing the pollen, though Henry McLaren’s choice of partner does little if nothing for the hardiness rating. So away from Gulf Stream-moderated sites on the west coast, even if planted in southern gardens with mild microclimates, the flower buds of ‘Chrysomanicum’ are likely to be frosted if temperatures dip just a fraction below zero after they begin to swell, while in moderate to hard winters all will probably be lost regardless of dormancy and the shrub will also suffer bark-split or branch dieback. Severe and prolonged cold spells will certainly finish-off a plant. So the delightful primrose-yellow blooms will only be found outdoors in a few well-sheltered venues in the UK.

The hybrid is planted much more frequently in places such as Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania, as well as in gardens along the Pacific coast of North America, indeed wherever the climate allows it to thrive. For R. ‘Chrysomanicum’ is without doubt one of the best low-growing yellow-flowered hybrids available, highly rated by both connoisseur and breeder alike.

The flowers are carried in trusses of eight funnel-shaped corollas, each around 4cm long and 5cm across, greenish-yellow with darker shading and speckling towards the throat. The leaves are elliptic in outline, dark green and shiny above, lepidote below, and carried for two years or more. The bark is mahogany-coloured and peeling. Habit is spreading and compact, but while the shrub’s height will be low in dappled shade, with short internodes, in gloomier locales a more open and drawn-up structure will develop, with elongated growth. Unfortunately the latter tends to be the norm in the UK, even in west coast gardens as winter’s chills require a denser set of defences in order to be held at bay. But on the bright side, longer branches equals more peeling bark.


R. ‘Chrysomanicum’ AM 1947

R. ‘Chrysomanicum’ AM 1947

R. ‘Chrysomanicum’ AM 1947

R. ‘Cilpinense’ AM 1927 & FCC 1968

R. ‘Cilpinense’ AM 1927 & FCC 1968

R. ‘Cilpinense’

ciliatum x *moupinense*

Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread

H4-5 March-early April 1.5m x 2m

For once, the tongue-twisting, unpronounceable, Bayley-Balfour chop-and-join condensed-hybrid-naming formula - followed to distraction by Edward Magor and to a far lesser degree by Henry McLaren - has delivered an epithet that is not only lusciously epigrammatic, but matches the beauty of the plant it labels: ‘Cilpinense’. Of course, we could equally have been lumbered with the far less erudite ‘Ciliatinense’, so the grateful thanks of millions should be extended to Lord Aberconway’s English teacher.

That *ciliatum* x *moupinense* parental combination has here produced a cross with white-flushed-rosy-pink flowers, carried in trusses of two to three tubular-campanulate-shaped corollas, each around 4cm long and slightly wider across at the mouth. They open moreover a month later than the earliest *R. moupinense* clones, in March rather than February, still early and requiring protection from overnight frosts, but not the hopeless case the pollen parent presents for most gardeners. And the fact that the hybrid remains one of the most popular ever introduced confirms that in spades, the sheer profligacy of bloom underpinning the case. The domed habit too is perfect for today’s smaller garden plots, a semi-dwarf to low twiggy bush, taking ten years to top 1m, and ultimately spreading to 2m wide. The leaves are glossy dark green above, with scattered, golden-brown scales on the underside, the foliage broadly elliptic to near orbicular in shape and with sparsely ciliate margins, and though only held for one year, an otherwise open and bland cross-hatching of branches is relieved by a peeling and mahogany-coloured bark.

Prospective purchasers should note that once they begin to swell, the flower buds are frost sensitive, so if hit, much of the display will be lost before the corollas have even ventured past their protecting scales. Equally, strong sunlight will quickly bleach the blooms, so a position in at least dappled shade is essential. But too much shade or in northern gardens, not enough sun, will lead to a much more open structure and fewer inflorescences. Those negatives apart, the hybrid is far easier to cultivate than either of its parents.

Admirers of ‘Cilpinense’ need also to be aware that several clones have been distributed, these bearing paler flowers and smaller corollas than the award-winning plant, so select accordingly when the potted juvenile is in bloom.



R. ‘Cilpinense’ AM 1927 & FCC 1968

R. 'Cilpinense' AM 1927 & FCC 1968

R. ‘Cilpinense’ AM 1927 & FCC 1968

R. ‘Cilpinense’ AM 1927 & FCC 1968

R. ‘Conroy’ AM 1950

R. ‘Conroy’

concatenans x *cinnabarinum* Roylei

Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread

H5 Early May 2.5m x 3m

At the time this cross was made in 1937, its two progenitors were regarded and classified as individual, separate species, so the parentage would have originally been recorded as *R. concatenans* x *R. cinnabarinum* var. *roylei*. Post publication of the Edinburgh Revision papers (the late James Cullen’s reassessment of the lepidote rhododendrons appearing in 1980), both taxa were consigned to the synonymic ignominy of an RHS Horticultural Group, namely *R. cinnabarinum* ssp. *xanthocodon* Concatenans Group and *R. cinnabarinum* ssp. *cinnabarinum* Roylei Group, a distinction that even today remains unrecognised by the botanic authorities. Recent field study evidence however, has allowed the former to be reawakened from obscurity as *R. cinnabarinum* ssp. *concatenans,* although it means that the status of Lord Aberconway’s pairing has been reduced to an intraspecific hybrid. Yet that matters little to the gardeners who still judge ‘Conroy’ a jewel.

The flowers are held in a pendulous truss of six, with each tubular-campanulate corolla 5cm long and almost as wide at the mouth. They are fleshy, deeply lobed and orange flushed rose in colour. And mature bushes are amply speckled with such.

The leaves are oblong-lanceolate in shape, glaucous, around 7cm long, and densely scaly beneath. That they are only carried for one year does not detract from the overall appearance, despite the upright habit.

Regrettably, like most hybrids derived from *R. cinnabarinum,* ‘Conroy’ is susceptible to both rust and the powdery mildew fungus, though it is not as prone as some of the ‘Lady Chamberlain’ clones, which are now a rare sight in most rhododendron gardens. Spraying is an option, but if the choice of a planting site well away from any known carrier of either disease is available, this is probably the best approach, with good light and air circulation essential. In northern climes along the UK’s west coast, plant in full sun; in the south, opt for light dappled shade; while gardeners inland and along the east coast will need to take into account the H5 winter hardiness rating.

Any number of suitable candidates were available to associate with the epithet had an honouree for an honorific been sought - sports stars, actors, writers, even politicians - but yet again it is another formulaic condensation, though thankfully, this time, with a degree of pizzazz.



R. ‘Conroy’ AM 1950

R. ‘Conroy’ AM 1950

R. ‘Conroy’ AM 1950

R. ‘Fine Feathers’

R. ‘Fine Feathers’

R. ‘Lemon Bill’

R. 'Lemon Bill' & R. 'Peace'
rigidum x *concatenans*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H5 April-early May 2.5m x 2m

Before the nomenclature and synonymic ministrations of the 1996 Edinburgh Revision were applied, Henry McLaren's cross would have been listed as *caeruleum* Album x *concatenans*. After it, as *rigidum* x *xanthocodon.* But at the time of the classification upgrade - the Subgenus *Rhododendron* revision, written by Doctor James Cullen and published in Volume 39 of *Notes from the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh,* during 1980 - China's hillsides were completely closed to Western scientists, so the fact that the *R. concatenans* population was actually geographically separated on the ground from the distribution of *R. xanthocodon* was a fact that remained unknown to him and other experts until May 1995, when permission was finally granted for a group of Western rhodophiles to visit the Doshong La in Tibet. Chip Muller and Keith White described the expedition in Volume 50, Number 3, of the *American Rhododendron Society Journal,* which went to print in the summer of 1996.

Reporting on the final ascent of the pass, they wrote that:

> 'Our eyes were on the cliffs, searching for the glaucous leaves or apricot-yellow flowers of *R. concatenans*. Searching for a half hour, we wondered if the plant was now extinct. There! Well up on the cliffs - and in flower! Three of us scrambled up, much as Kingdon-Ward had done, to photograph the prize with great difficulty. Imagine our surprise when, just around the next corner, the rest of the group found *R. concatenans* growing practically by the trail. There were hundreds, if not thousands of plants, growing in a narrow band at 11,800 feet for about a half-mile. There is no doubt that the plant, "species" or not, is growing well, in an isolated population on the south side of the Doshong La'.

The botanical leader of the party was Kenneth Cox, and the following year, a second trip was mounted, the team this time also including his father, Peter Cox. Those two renowned Scottish rhododendron experts would later write that:

> 'After fairly extensive study of the large populations of this species in Pemako, it is clear that this is a stable and uniform taxon with no overlap with typical *R. xanthocodon*. Indeed it is probably more closely related to ssp. *cinnabarinum* Roylei Group and should be given at least varietal status'.
> *The Encyclopaedia of Rhododendron Species,* Glendoick Publishing, 1997.

Botanically, varietal status is only assigned when taxa with marginal morphological differences grow intermixed; when they are geographically distinct, subspecies ranking is awarded. Consequently, as the fifth volume of *Temperate Rhododendrons* (pp. 80-81) first set out, *R. cinnabarinum* ssp. *concatenans* is recognised here.

Henry McLaren actually registered two clones from his cross: 'Lemon Bill' in 1943; and the AM-awarded 'Peace' in 1946. The latter has creamy-white corollas faintly flushed pale rose on the outside, while the former is flushed pale yellow on the reverse, as well as on the dorsal lobe. Labelled plants at Bodnant Gardens, Lord Aberconway's estate in North Wales, may well still preserve this distinction, but elsewhere the 'Lemon Bill' clone appears to have been the only one distributed: regrettably, with an ID tag declaring it to be 'Peace'. That is true for the plant at Hilliers, which appears in the photograph on this page, and those on pages 228 and 229, as well as the specimen at the Savill Gardens in Windsor Great Park (page 226), and according to *Bean's Trees and Shrubs* the 'very beautiful plant at Kew growing in full sun by King William's Temple'.

Seven or eight pendent corollas will be found in each loose truss, the funnels around 4cm long and wide, but flower bud set will be much reduced if a shrub is placed in anything more than the lightest of dappled shade, even in southern gardens, for Kew's chosen placement is no accident. Of course, the delicate hues will avoid being quickly bleached in a more shaded locale, but any chance of a mass display will be lost, as the images of the plant at Hilliers - on the cusp of too shady a site - confirm.

Habit is upright rather than spreading, with mature clones peaking at around 2m in height, their diameter rarely extending beyond this figure. Foliage is elliptic in shape, deep green and glossy above, with a patina of brown scales below, the blades noted for being far less susceptible to powdery mildew than most other Subsection *Cinnabarina* crosses. But though fungus-free, they are only held for one year, so the branch framework beneath is very much on display.


R. 'Lemon Bill'

R. ‘Lemon Bill’

R. ‘Lemon Bill’

R. ‘Seta’ AM 1933 & FCC 1960

R. ‘Seta’ AM 1933 & FCC 1960

R. ‘Seta’

spinuliferum x *moupinense*

Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread

H5 February-March 3m x 3m

Probably the most popular and widely planted cross featuring either species used in the combination, ‘Seta’, Henry McLaren’s *spinuliferum* x *moupinense* hybrid was paired in 1928 and introduced in 1933 after winning a showbench Award of Merit from the RHS. It later secured a First Class Certificate in 1960 despite the fact that it can only be successfully grown in a minority of UK gardens. Not because the hybrid lacks hardiness, as the H5 rating means it can cope with winter lows down to -15ºC, but because ‘Seta’ begins to open its fabulous blooms in February, or sometimes even earlier if the weather is mild, and then, during March, sends out its new growth. And as each and every rhodophile will know, February and March are Jack’s favourite times to strike, ruining the flowers and writing-off the young shoots if temperatures drop below zero.

Hit any time after the buds begin to expand or when the corollas have fully unfurled, then only the floral display will have been lost for that year, which is the good news. For in the grand scheme of things it is no great shakes. But if the vegetative buds are struck year after year after year and the frost is heavy enough to not only decimate the immature branchlets, but cause bark split as well - because the sap will be flowing - then the shrub itself will be lost. So a sheltered woodland site with few penetrating spring frosts is an absolutely essential requirement for outdoor cultivation unless local conditions can provide an alternative: the Gulf Stream-moderated woodland gardens along the UK’s west coast, or those favourable locales along England’s southern shores; a temperature uplift provided by a major urban conurbation; or, if you garden alongside a significant river estuary, millions of litres of slightly warmer seawater rushing in close-by to take the edge off any cold snap every twelve hours. All should prove sufficient to permit the hybrid to thrive and allow the blooms to light-up your world in possibly the year’s dreariest month. For without a doubt, ‘Seta’ is an out-and-out one-of-a-kind gem.

The flowers open from both terminal and axillary buds, with up to seven tubular-funnel-shaped corollas carried in each emerging upright cluster. Individually just 3.5cm long and 2.5cm across at the mouth, they are produced in such quantity that a mature bush will be turned into a pink-and-white dome of colour. They are either white or pinkish at the base, shading to crimson or deep pink on the lobes, or striped deep pink on the outer surface, the hues dependent on which clone has been purchased and planted, the award-clone or that distributed commercially by the nursery trade. Equally, the stamen anthers could be chocolate-coloured, with the style greenish-white and topped by a crimson stigma, but more often not.

The foliage is quite stiff, the blades lanceolate through ovate to elliptic. Each could be up to 4.5cm long by 2.3cm wide and will usually have recurved margins and be slightly ciliate-hairy. Dark green above and matt, below they are puberulous and covered with golden-brown scales.

As a young plant, R. ‘Seta’ is upright and sparsely branched, though free-flowering if grown in enough sun. With age however, the habit gets much better, as the shrub ‘bushes-up’ and develops into a 2m high and wide erect, but straggly clump. So poise and decorum are decidedly lacking, but when adorned head to toe in the most glorious outpouring of colour February in the UK is ever likely to see, minor quibbles about the supporting framework can be given the short shrift they truly warrant.



R. ‘Seta’ AM 1933 & FCC 1960

R. ‘Seta’ AM 1933 & FCC 1960

The Elepidote Registrations:

Abessa
'Laura Aberconway' X 'Elizabeth'
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Adlo
'Adonis' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Pink

Adonis
'Vanessa' X 'Sunrise'
Flower Colour: Pink

Adota
'Adonis' X 'Coreta'
Flower Colour: Red

Adrastia
williamsianum X *neriiflorum*
Flower Colour: Pink

Adrean
'Adrastia' X *beanianum*
Flower Colour: Red

Alan
'Ethel' X 'F. C. Puddle'
Flower Colour: Red

Alcibiades
'Hiraethlyn' X 'F. C. Puddle'
Flower Colour: Turkey Red

Alesia
'Portia' X *meddianum*
Flower Colour: Crimson-scarlet

Allure
'Fabia' X 'Dante'
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Alre
'Alan' X *forrestii* Repens
Flower Colour: Red

Alvinda
'Ivery's Scarlet' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Rose-pink
Height: Tall

Amasun
'Amaura' X 'Sunrise'
Flower Colour: Rose

Amata
'Adrastia' X 'F. C. Puddle'
Flower Colour: Red

Amaura
griersonianum X 'Penjerrick'
Flower Colour: Pink

Amazor
'Amaura' X 'Azor'
Flower Colour: Pink

Anita
campylocarpum X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Yellow-rose

Apar
aperantum X arboreum
Flower Colour: Red

Aperemia
aperantum X 'Choremia'
Flower Colour: Red

Aperme
aperantum X *meddianum*
Flower Colour: Red

Apodeno
'Eupheno' X *apodectum*
Flower Colour: Vermilion

Ardis
forrestii Repens X 'Werei'
Flower Colour: Red

Arma
forrestii Repens X *dichroanthum*
Flower Colour: Orange-scarlet

Artus
'Amaura' X 'Fabia'
Flower Colour: Red

Aruna
'Penjerrick' X 'Wightii' (natural hybrid)
Flower Colour: Yellow

Aspansia
'Astarte' X *haematodes*
AM 1945
Flower Colour: Red
Height: Semi-Dwarf

Aspansia Ruby
'Astarte' X *haematodes*
Flower Colour: Red

Asta
forrestii Repens X *chaetomallum*
Flower Colour: Red

Astarte
dichroanthum X 'Penjerrick'
AM 1931
Flower Colour: Rose

Astel
'Astarte' X 'Elizabeth'
Flower Colour: Red

Asteno
'Astarte' X 'Eupheno'
Flower Colour: Red

Astos
'Arthur Osborn' X 'Astarte'
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Astrow
'Astarte' X *hookeri*
Flower Colour: Red

Autumn
'Clotted Cream' X 'Fabia'
Flower Colour: Orange

Bartia
'Barclayi' X 'Portia'
AM 1948
Flower Colour: Turkey Red

Beacon
'Arthur Osborn' X 'Fabia'
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Beada
beanianum X 'Ouida'
Flower Colour: Pink

Beatrice
'Choremia' X *meddianum*
Flower Colour: Pink

Bella
'Shilsonii' X *griffithianum*
Flower Colour: Rose

Bianca
herpesticum X *campylocarpum*

Endeavour
cinnamomeum var. *cinnamomeum* X *lacteum*
AM 1983
Flower Colour: Yellowish-white
Flowering Time: March-April
Height: Tall

Blush
'Ouida' X *aperantum*
Flower Colour: Pink

Bodnant Beauty of Tremough
arboreum X *griffithianum*
Flower Colour: Rose-pink
Height: Tall

Bodnant May Day
griersonianum X *haematodes*
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Bodnant Sunrise
griffithianum hybrid

Bodnant Thomwilliams
thomsonii X *williamsianum*
AM 1935
Flower Colour: Rose-magenta
Flowering Time: Late April-May
Height: Low

Brass Rubber
auriculatum X *griersonianum*
AM 1978
Flower Colour: White-purplish-pink

Calrose
calophytum X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Cerise Red

Caman
campylocarpum X *beanianum*
Flower Colour: Red

Camilla
'Penjerrick' X 'Loderi King George'
AM 1944
Flower Colour: White

Capriole
'Etna' X 'Jacquetta'
Flower Colour: Red

Cardinal
arboreum X 'Barclayi Robert Fox'
FCC 1937
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Careth
'Ethel' X 'Cardinal'
Flower Colour: Red

Carnival
'May Day' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Pink

Carola
'Ouida' X *williamsianum*
Flower Colour: Pink
Height: Tall

Cavalier
'Radiance' X *facetum*
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Challenger
'Chanticleer' X 'Sunrise'
Flower Colour: Rose

Chandon
'Adonis' X 'Chanticleer'
Flower Colour: Pink

Chaneta
'Coreta' X 'Chanticleer'
Flower Colour: Red

Charm
forrestii Repens X 'Shilsonii'
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Charmaine
'Charm' X 'May Day'
AM 1946
Flower Colour: Blood Red
Height: Low

Cheerful
'Cyclops' X 'Elizabeth'
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Cheronia
'Rose Perfection' X *orbiculare*
Flower Colour: Rose-pink

Chiron
'Barclayi' X *haematodes*
Flower Colour: Red

Choremia
haematodes X *arboreum*
AM 1933 & FCC 1948
Flower Colour: Crimson-scarlet
Flowering Time: March-April
Height: Tall

Circe
'F. C. Puddle' X 'Humming Bird'
AM 1942
Flower Colour: Blood Red
Height: Semi-Dwarf

Clansman
'Euryalus' X *zeylanicum*
Flower Colour: Red

Clotted Cream
'Neda' X *auriculatum*
AM 1942
Flower Colour: Yellow

Cora
'Coreta' X 'Eudora'
Flower Colour: Red

Cordan
'Coreta' X 'Dante'
Flower Colour: Red

Cordelia
'Arthur Osborn' X 'Loderi King George'
Flower Colour: Red

Coreno
'Coreta' X 'Eupheno'
Flower Colour: Crimson

Coresia
'Penjerrick' X 'Cornish Cross'
Flower Colour: Pink

Coreta
'Loderi' X *zeylanicum*
FCC 1935
Flower Colour: Crimson-scarlet

Coreum
'Cornish Cross' X *arboreum*
Flower Colour: Red

Corma
chaetomallum X 'Choremia'
Flower Colour: Red

Coronis
'Corona' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Rose

Corros
'Cornish Cross' X 'Eros'
Flower Colour: Red

Corsa
'Choremia' X *sanguineum*
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Cowslip
williamsianum X *wardii*
AM 1937
Flower Colour: Yellow-pink
Flowering Time: Late April-May
Height: Low

Creeping Jenny
griersonianum X *forrestii* Repens
Flower Colour: Red
Flowering Time: April-May
Height: Dwarf

Cresca

Cyclops
'F. C. Puddle' X 'Neriihaem'
Flower Colour: Red

Dacia
'F. C. Puddle' X *scyphocalyx*
Flower Colour: Orange-red

Dainty
'May Day' X 'Elizabeth'
AM 1942 & FCC 1944
Flower Colour: Red

Dante
dichroanthum X *facetum*
Flower Colour: Yellow-red-orange-vermilion

Decora
'Radiance' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Pink

Delius
'Ouida' X *elliottii*
AM 1946
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Desna
'Medusa' X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Orange-red

Dignity
'Glory of Leonardslee' X *thomsonii*
Flower Colour: Rose-red

Dimity
'F. C. Puddle' X 'Penjerrick'
Flower Colour: Rose

Domino
'Barclayi' X 'Dignity'
Flower Colour: Red

Dorinthia
griersonianum X 'Hiraethlyn'
FCC 1938
Flower Colour: Red

Dragon
'F. C. Puddle' X *haematodes*

Dryad
forrestii Repens X *hookeri*
Flower Colour: Red

Edusa
'Penjerrick' X *campylocarpum*
Flower Colour: Yellow

Elizabeth
forrestii Repens X *griersonianum*
AM 1939 & FCC 1943
Flower Colour: Red
Flowering Time: April-May
Height: Medium

Elna
'Etna' X *elliottii*
AM 1949
Flower Colour: Yellowish-pink

Elrise
elliottii X 'Sunrise'
Flower Colour: Red

Elros
'Eros 'X *elliottii*
AM 1948
Flower Colour: Rosy-salmon-pink

Elsie Phipps
souliei X 'Penjerrick'
Flower Colour: Yellow-pink

Elvus
elliottii X 'Venus'
Flower Colour: Red

Erebus
'Fabia' X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Eridusa
'Medusa' X *facetum*
Flower Colour: Red

Eriozor
'Azor' X *facetum*
Flower Colour: Red

Eros
'Amaura 'X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Pink

Erso
'Erebus' X *souliei*

Ethel
'F. C. Puddle' X *forrestii* Repens
FCC 1940
Flower Colour: Crimson-scarlet
Flowering Time: Early May
Height: Semi-Dwarf

Etna
'Fabia' X 'Vanessa'
Flower Colour: Magenta-red

Etos
'Eros' X *thomsonii*
Flower Colour: Red

Euchelia
forrestii Repens hybrid
AM 1935
Flower Colour: Crimson

Eudora
facetum X 'Vanessa'
AM 1988
Flower Colour: Purplish-red

Eulo
'Eudora' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Pink

Eupheno
griersonianum X *sperabile*
Flower Colour: Red

Euryalus
'Nereid' X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Red

Eventide
griersonianum X 'Sunrise'
Flower Colour: Pinkish-rose

Fabia
dichroanthum X *griersonianum*
AM 1934 & FCC 1989
Flower Colour: Yellowish-pink-orange
Flowering Time: May
Height: Medium

Fabia Tangerine
dichroanthum X *griersonianum*
AM 1940
Flower Colour: Red-pink
Flowering Time: May
Height: Medium

Fabiola
'Fabia' X 'F. C. Puddle'
Flower Colour: Red

Fabionis
'Adonis' X 'Fabia'
Flower Colour: Rose

Fair Maiden
'Coreum 'X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Red

Fairy
'Fabia' X 'Jacquetta'
Flower Colour: Red

Falvia
campylocarpum X *wardii*
Flower Colour: Yellow

Fame
'Metis' X 'Fabia'
Flower Colour: Orange-red

Fascinator
forrestii Repens X 'Hiraethlyn'
AM 1950
Flower Colour: Carmine-Turkey Red
Height: Semi-Dwarf

F. C. Puddle
neriiflorum X *griersonianum*
AM 1932
Flower Colour: Reddish-scarlet
Flowering Time: Late April-May
Height: Medium

Felicity
'Radiance' X 'F. C. Puddle'
AM 1942
Flower Colour: Porcelain Rose

Fiesta
'Eros' X 'F. C. Puddle'
Flower Colour: Red

Figaro
'Coreta' X 'Solon'
Flower Colour: Red

Fire Finch
'Jacquetta' X 'Radiance'
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Flash
'Fabia' X *scyphocalyx*
Flower Colour: Orange-red

Gladiator
'F. C. Puddle' X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Grandex
eximium X *sinogrande*
Flower Colour: Yellow-pink
Flowering Time: April
Height: Tall

Greeting
'Chanticleer' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Red

Gretia
'Portia' X *griersonianum*
AM 1946
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Harmony
'Vega' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Pink

Heca
campylocarpum X *herpesticum*
Flower Colour: Yellow

Hecla
thomsonii X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Red

Hera
haematodes X 'Jock'
Flower Colour: Scarlet-red

Hiawatha
'Adrastia' X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Carmine

Highlander
'Adonis' X *zeylanicum*
Flower Colour: Rose-red

Hiraethlyn
haematodes X *griffithianum*
Flower Colour: Rose-red

Hopeful
'F. C. Puddle' X *hookeri*
Flower Colour: Red

Hyperion
'Cardinal' X *forrestii* Repens
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Ingre
griersonianum X *insigne*
Flower Colour: Pink

Insun
'Ingre' X 'Sunrise'
Flower Colour: Pink

Istria
'Astarte' (Aberconway) X *griffithianum*
Flower Colour: Pink

Jack the Ripper
'Erebus' X 'Jacquetta'
AM 1949
Flower Colour: Red

Janus
griersonianum X 'Venus'
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Juno
'Amaura' X 'F. C. Puddle'
Flower Colour: Pink

Kenneth
'Hiraethlyn' X 'Elizabeth'
AM 1949
Flower Colour: Geranium Lake

Lancer
griersonianum X *hookeri*
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Largo
'Astarte' X *neriiflorum* Euchaites
Flower Colour: Red
Height: Low

Latona
dichroanthum X *souliei*
Flower Colour: Cream-pink

Laura Aberconway
griersonianum X 'Barclayi'
AM 1941 & FCC 1944
Flower Colour: Geranium Lake
Flowering Time: May
Height: Tall

Leda
apodectum X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Vermilion

Liberty
'Eupheno' X *barbatum*
Flower Colour: Red

Lifeguard
arboreum X 'Lancer'
Flower Colour: Red

Lodabia
'Fabia' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Rose

Lodetta
'Jacquetta' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Scarlet-rose

Lotis
'Metis' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Orange-red

Lustre
'Dante' X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Lycia
'Vanessa' X *elliottii*
Flower Colour: Scarlet-red

Madeleine

Marinka
'Solon' X 'Rapture'
Flower Colour: Rose

Matador
griersonianum X *strigillosum*
AM 1945 & FCC 1946
Flower Colour: Turkey Red
Flowering Time: April-May
Height: Tall

May Morn
'May Day' X *beanianum*
AM 1946
Flower Colour: Pink

Mayros
'Eros' X 'May Day'
Flower Colour: Red

Medusa
scyphocalyx X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Orange-yellowish-pink

Menippe
'Erebus' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Pink

Mera
'F. C. Puddle' X 'Ouida'
Flower Colour: Pink

Merlin
arboreum X 'Eupheno'
Flower Colour: Red

Metis
griersonianum X *herpesticum*
Flower Colour: Orange-red

Mikado
griffithianum X 'Cornish Cross'
Flower Colour: Rose

Milady
'Rosefinch' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Rose-pink

Mimulus
'Anita' X 'Rapture'
Flower Colour: Red

Minstrel
forrestii Repens X 'Neriihaem'
Flower Colour: Red

Morning Star
'Sunrise' X *williamsianum*
Flower Colour: Pink

Mureum
barbatum X 'F. C. Puddle'
Flower Colour: Red

Neda
dichroanthum X *caucasicum* 'Cunningham's Sulphur'
Flower Colour: Orange-pink

Nerissa
'Choremia' X 'Neriihaem'
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Nocturne
'Laura Aberconway' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Red

Nymph
forrestii Repens X 'Largo'
Flower Colour: Red
Height: Semi-Dwarf

Oberon
'Barclayi' X 'Thomwilliams'
Flower Colour: Rose

Oedipus
'Eros' X 'Jacquetta'
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Orestes
griersonianum X 'Shilsonii'
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Oriana
'Coreta' X 'F. C. Puddle'
Flower Colour: Red

Orion
'Phoebus' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Rose-pink

Ortiga
'Euryalus' X 'Sunrise'
Flower Colour: Rose

Othello
'Arthur Osborn' X *facetum*
Flower Colour: Cardinal Red

Ouida
'Astarte' X *griersonianum*
AM 1936
Flower Colour: Rose-pink

Pageant
'Calrose' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Pink

Palla
'Pallidum' X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Neyron Rose

Pallidum
griffithianum X *williamsianum*
Flower Colour: White-pink

Pandora
'Fabia' X *facetum*
Flower Colour: Orange-red

Paragon
'Loderi' X 'Red Ensign'
Flower Colour: Rose

Penllyn
orbiculare X *griffithianum*
Flower Colour: Shell Pink

Pera
'Ethel' X 'Penjerrick'
Flower Colour: Rose

Persephone
floccigerum X *forrestii* Repens
Flower Colour: Orange-red

Perseus
'Jacquetta' X 'Vanessa'
Flower Colour: Rosy-salmon-pink

Phantasy
'Erebus' X 'Eudora'
Flower Colour: Red

Phico
'Phidias' X 'Cowslip'
Flower Colour: Cream-pink

Phidias
'Astarte' X 'F. C. Puddle'
AM 1938
Flower Colour: Red

Phisun
'Phidias' X 'Sunrise'
Flower Colour: Rose

Phoebus
'F. C. Puddle' X *haematodes*
Flower Colour: Scarlet-Blood red
Height: Medium

Phryne
campylocarpum X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Cream

Pimpernel
'Eros' X *arboreum*
Flower Colour: Red

Pioneer
arboreum X 'Arthur Osborn'
Flower Colour: Red

Pixie
forrestii Repens X *apodectum*
Flower Colour: Orange-red

Portia
strigillosum X *neriiflorum* Euchaites
AM 1935 & FCC 1947
Flower Colour: Crimson-scarlet
Height: Tall

Pyramus
'Doncaster' X 'Loderi'

Pyrope
'Exminster' X 'Cornish Cross'
Flower Colour: Red

Radiance
griersonianum X 'Vanessa'
Flower Colour: Rose-pink

Radiant Morn
F'abia' X 'Sunrise'
AM 1951
Flower Colour: Porcelain Rose-Geranium Pink

Ramillies
'Ethel' X 'Redwing'
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Rapture
griersonianum X *zeylanicum*
Flower Colour: Porcelain Rose

Red Brocade
'F. C. Puddle' X *arboreum*
Flower Colour: Red

Red Dragon
thomsonii X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Scarlet
Flowering Time: April-May
Height: Tall

Red Ensign
'Cardinal' X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Rose-red

Red Hackle
'Chanticleer' X 'Redwing'
Flower Colour: Red

Red Queen
'Gill's Crimson' X 'Barclayi'
AM 1980
Flower Colour: Red

Redskin
'Dante' X 'Eudora'
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Redwing
'Shilsonii' X 'Barclayi'
FCC 1937
Flower Colour: Carmine-scarlet
Flowering Time: March-early April
Height: Tall

Rembrandt
'Dante' X 'Sunrise'
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Remus
forrestii Repens X *beanianum*
Flower Colour: Carmine

Reparm
forrestii Repens X *parmulatum*
Flower Colour: Rose

Rhapsody
'Dorinthia' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Rose

Rhythm
aperantum X *forrestii* Repens
Flower Colour: Red-rose

Romance
elliottii X 'Jacquetta'
AM 1966
Flower Colour: Geranium Lake-Oxblood Red
Height: Tall

Rona
'Cornubia' X *barbatum*
Flower Colour: Red

Rosalind
thomsonii X *oreodoxa* var. *fargesii*
AM 1938
Flower Colour: Rose-pink

Rosefinch
'Bella' X *griersonianum*
AM 1939
Flower Colour: Rose-blush

Ruby Gem
'Charm' X *haematodes*
Flower Colour: Red

Ruddigore
griersonianum X *delavayi*
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Rufus
forrestii Repens X *sanguineum*
Flower Colour: Red

Ruth
'Ethel' X 'Barclayi'
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Salome
'Queen Wilhelmina' X *griffithianum*
Flower Colour: Rose-red

Salus
'Arthur Osborn' X 'Coreta'
Flower Colour: Red

Satire
'Radiance' X 'Coreta'
Flower Colour: Red

Satyr
'Choremia' X *strigillosum*
Flower Colour: Red

Saxa
'Azor' X *griersonianum*
Flower Colour: Salmon-rose

Sentinel
'Barclayi' X 'Eupheno'
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Sidonia
'Rose Perfection' X *fortunei*
Flower Colour: Rose-pink

Simplicity
'Loderi' X 'Solon'
Flower Colour: Red

Siren
'Choremia' X *griersonianum*
AM 1942
Flower Colour: Scarlet
Flowering Time: April-May
Height: Tall

Snowden

Snowy River
ririei X *niveum*
AM 1974
Flower Colour: Purple
Flowering Time: April
Height: Tall

Solon
'Astarte' X 'Sunrise'
Flower Colour: Rose

Sundor
'Dorinthia' X 'Sunrise'
Flower Colour: Salmon-scarlet

Sunrise
griffithianum X *griersonianum*
FCC 1942
Flower Colour: Pink
Flowering Time: Late May
Height: Tall

Symphony
'Arthur Osborn' X 'F. C. Puddle'
Flower Colour: Red

Talisman
'Chanticleer' X 'Ramilies'
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Thais
'Euryalus' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Pink

The Moor
'Arthur Osborn' X *facetum*
Flower Colour: Red

Tomahawk
'Choremia' X *hookeri*
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Toreador
'Arthur Osborn' X *griersonianum*
AM 1942
Flower Colour: Currant Red-Turkey Red

Torsun
'Sunrise' X 'Toreador'
Flower Colour: Rose-red

Trafalgar
'Eros' X 'Luscombei'
Flower Colour: Rose-pink

Treetops
arboreum X *griffithianum*
AM 1981
Flower Colour: White-purplish-pink
Height: Tall

Trojan
'F. C. Puddle' X 'Shilsonii'
Flower Colour: Red

Troubadour
arboreum X 'Toreador'
Flower Colour: Blood Red

Valda
'Latona' X *haematodes*
Flower Colour: Rosy-red

Valiant
'Astarte X *chaetomallum*
Flower Colour: Red

Vanessa
'Soulbut' X *griersonianum*
FCC 1929
Flower Colour: Pink
Flowering Time: June
Height: Medium-tall

Vanessa Pastel
'Soulbut' X *griersonianum*
AM 1946 & FCC 1971
Flower Colour: Cream to Shell-pink
Flowering Time: June
Height: Medium-tall

Vanity
'Vanessa' X 'Dante'
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Vanity Fair
'Vanessa' X *facetum*
Flower Colour: Strawberry-red
Flowering Time: Late May-June
Height: Medium-tall

Vanven
'Vanessa' X *venator*
Flower Colour: Red

Varna
'Camania' X *williamsianum*
Flower Colour: Yellow-rose

Vasco
aperantum X *stewartianum*
Flower Colour: Red

Vega
'Fabia' X *haematodes*
Flower Colour: Scarlet

Venco
venator X 'Coreta'
Flower Colour: Crimson-scarlet

Venus
'Amaura' X *facetum*
Flower Colour: Red

Vestris
griersonianum X *orbiculare*
Flower Colour: Rose

Veta
'Etna' X *venator*
Flower Colour: Rose

Viking
'Solon' X 'Chanticleer'
Flower Colour: Rosy-red

Vivid
'Humming Bird' X 'F. C. Puddle'

Voltaire
'Eros' X 'Loderi'
Flower Colour: Red-pink

Wayfarer
'Chanticleer' X 'Phidias'
Flower Colour: Red

Welkin
'Eros' X *haematodes*
AM 1946 & FCC 1951
Flower Colour: Geranium Lake-Delft Rose

Wilbar
'Barclayi' X *williamsianum*
Flower Colour: Rosy-pink
Height: Medium

Wilfred
'Phidias' X *williamsianum*
Flower Colour: Pink-cream-yellow-orange-red

Winsome
'Humming Bird' X *griersonianum*
AM 1950
Flower Colour: Purplish-pink
Flowering Time: Late April-May
Height: Medium

Yeoman
forrestii Repens X 'Choremia'
AM 1947
Flower Colour: Turkey Red
Height: Semi-Dwarf

Yolande
scyphocalyx X 'Eudora'
Flower Colour: Dawn Rose

Zampa
'Daphne' X 'F. C. Puddle'
Flower Colour: Red

Zenobia
'Eros' X 'Arthur Osborn'
Flower Colour: Red



R. ‘Amaura’

R. ‘Amaura’


R. ‘Anita’


R. ‘Anita’


R. ‘Anita’

R. ‘Anita’

R. ‘Charmaine’ AM 1946


R. ‘Charmaine’ AM 1946


R. ‘Charmaine’ AM 1946


R. ‘Charmaine’ AM 1946

R. ‘Choremia’

haematodes x *arboreum*

Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread

H5 March-April 5m x 7m

The ‘Choremia’ cross was first made at Bodnant in 1927, the 2nd Baron Aberconway, Henry McLaren, placing pollen from a blood-red form of *R. arboreum* onto the stigma of an equally rubicund *R. haematodes*. Scarlet-crimson corollas were the result, held in tightly packed domed or ball-shaped trusses that are displayed in profusion from the middle of March onwards, which - in tandem with the H5 hardiness rating - restricts where the hybrid can be grown successfully. The Coxes at Glendoick, near Perth in Scotland, report that frost killed their specimen in the winter of 1981-2 and that previously it had suffered badly from bark split and root rot (*The Encyclopaedia of Rhododendron Hybrids,* Batsford, 1988), so for similar east coast gardens or venues inland where the temperature will drop even lower, the waxy inflorescences will have to be eschewed.

Along the west coast or in the south however, the hybrid is a stunner, lighting up the woodland for three weeks or more, but potential buyers should treat the ‘medium’ height caveat that appears in most descriptions with scorn. For if the genes of *R. haematodes* were supposed to curtail the small-tree nature of *R. arboreum,* they failed miserably. Also, there are a number of clones in commerce and although one of these might be reluctant to push above 2m, all the long-established specimens encountered to date and pictured here, have doubled that figure easily, and in combination, produced with an even wider spread.

Out of flower ‘Choremia’ displays fine, elliptic-lanceolate-shaped leaves that are dark green and somewhat glossy, each with a slivery-grey coating of indumentum along the underside. The blades are often held for three years, so fully clad the domed structure of even a mature specimen, with barely a gap in the mantle visible.

‘Choremia Tower Court’ is a duplicate crossing made by John Bar Stevenson and his wife Roza sometime before 1950, though the *IRRC* entry only presumes this to be the case. Habit, flowers and foliage are a near mirror, but the flowering period is a week or so earlier and so far, other hybridisers have only used the Bodnant clone in matings of their own.

Equally perplexing is the origin of the epithet, for the only non-rhododendron search engine hit is a 1997 ironic novel on the television industry by the Italian author Guillermo Blanco, which of course was still sixty plus years from publication when ‘Choremia’ was introduced in 1933. In Galician, which is an Ibero-Romance language also known as Galego that comes from the Galicia region of northwestern Spain, the word means to sob, weep or cry - whether in joy or despair is not indicated in the Wiktionary entry - but certainly, the former would be an understandable response to the hybrid’s first blooming.



R. ‘Choremia’ AM 1933 & FCC 1948

R. ‘Choremia’ AM 1933 & FCC 1948

R. ‘Choremia’ AM 1933 & FCC 1948



R. ‘Choremia’ AM 1933 & FCC 1948



R. ‘Choremia’ AM 1933 & FCC 1948

R. ‘Choremia’ AM 1933 & FCC 1948

R. ‘Choremia’ AM 1933 & FCC 1948

R. ‘Cowslip’ AM 1937

R. 'Cowslip'

williamsianum x *wardii*

Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread

H5-6 April-early May 1.5m x 2.5m

Pairing *R. williamsianum* with *R. wardii* was never going to result in 'the next big thing' hybrid-wise, but Lord Aberconway's 'Cowslip' has nonetheless quietly slipped into virtually every rhododendron collection in the country.

The epithet references the yellow-flowering *Primula veris,* the common name of which is of course 'Cowslip', presumably because both have the same suffusing hue. Except this is not the case: for the rhododendron's inflorescences are pink in the bud, and in fact open ivory-white with just the lightest hint of pink tingeing the bells. Plus they have a few short dashes of crimson-red flaring from the base of the dorsal lobe. However, a number of clones are in commerce and some of these are 'said' to venture closer to the pale primrose-yellow of the official description, but in gardens up and down the country, labelled plants conform to the text found in *Bean's Trees & Shrubs,* rather than to the 'official' narrative of the *IRRC*. Lionel de Rothschild's mirror of the pairing - R. 'Oxlip' - does eventually end up with white flowers from buds that are deep rose opening to pink, so any conspiracy theory claiming wholesale substitution would fall at the first hurdle, while the more recent R. 'Mary de Mezey' has purplish-pink blooms.

Or could it be that only the Award of Merit clone is primrose-yellow?

And has never ventured past the gates at Bodnant?

Certainly the written portrait in *Trees & Shrubs* also accurately notes that the style is glandular to the tip and topped-off with a dark red stigma; that the foliage is broadly oblong-elliptic, rounded at the apex and cordate at the base (two rounded lobes forming a sinus). The leaves are also mid green in colour and matt, and both the petioles and the pedicels are stained red, the latter also being sticky. Habit is stated to be compact and fairly dwarf, which is true for the first ten years or so, but older specimens gradually move from the low into the medium height category, retaining their close-knit framework while spreading wider than they grow tall.

Even better, in April through to early May - frost-free conditions pertaining - those mature shrubs of 'Cowslip' are literally awash in lax, 5-flowered trusses: demure, understated, and yet achingly beautiful. How else could it have become one of most widely planted rhododendrons in the whole pantheon?



R. 'Cowslip' AM 1937



R. 'Cowslip' AM 1937

R. ‘Cowslip’ AM 1937

R. ‘Cowslip’ AM 1937

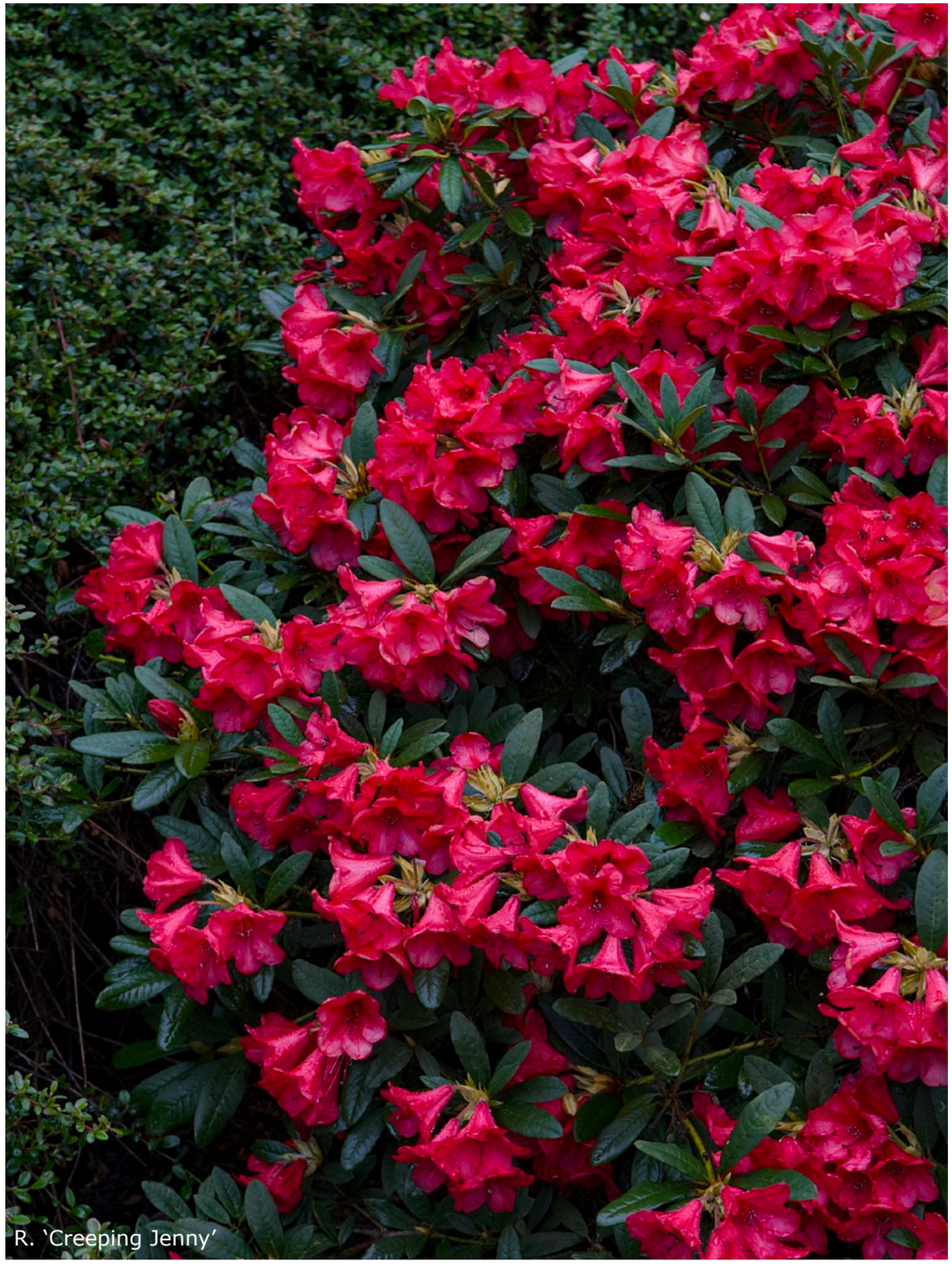
R. ‘Creeping Jenny’
griersonianum x *forrestii* Repens
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H5-6 April-early May 0.6m x 3m

‘Creeping Jenny’, Henry McLaren’s choice of epithet for his *griersonianum* x *forrestii* Repens cross, references *Lysimachia nummularia,* which is also commonly known as ‘moneywort’, a vigorous, evergreen perennial, just 5cm high but capable of spreading for hundreds of metres over damp ground thanks to its stems rooting wherever they touch the soil. The branches of ‘Creeping Jenny’ have a similar faculty, though the extent of the hybrid’s colonisation drive is rather less exuberant, the land grab confined to low-value single digits. So the shrub is perfect for covering a lawnmower-unfriendly low bank. If that is located in a sunny site, then the plant’s habit will be mound forming, with the outermost branches prostrate to procumbent and the overall height 0.3 to 0.6m; in shade however, the hybrid will be much more upright, hitting 1.5m or so, with far fewer sagging stems.

The flowers are of course red, and absolutely perfect campanulate bells, half-a-dozen to each truss and produced in such profusion that they can sometimes completely obscure the foliage. This is ovate-elliptic in shape, mid green and matt in colour, held for two or three seasons so giving the hybrid a very bushy mien.

Rhodophiles will know that the parentage of ‘Creeping Jenny’ reverses that registered for McLaren’s ever-popular ‘Elizabeth’, with both pairings originating from Bodnant in the 1930s, so although the leaves and corollas of ‘Jenny’ are slightly smaller, oftentimes, the overall outward appearance of the two is distinctly similar despite the genetic coding along the DNA chains, as well as the cell organelles, being different, with Repens exerting much more of an influence on the habit as pollen provider than as seed parent.

Two problems need highlighting: first, susceptibility to the powdery mildew fungus is high, so position plants away from any known carriers if possible; second, if the hybrid is grown in full exposure in southern counties the leaves can sometimes burn on the hottest days, so dappled shade will be a necessary requirement. The H5-6 rating allows plants to be grown successfully across the whole of the UK, but without a protecting blanket of snow they will suffer injury or death in the coldest winters if temperatures drop below -18ºC.


R. ‘Creeping Jenny’

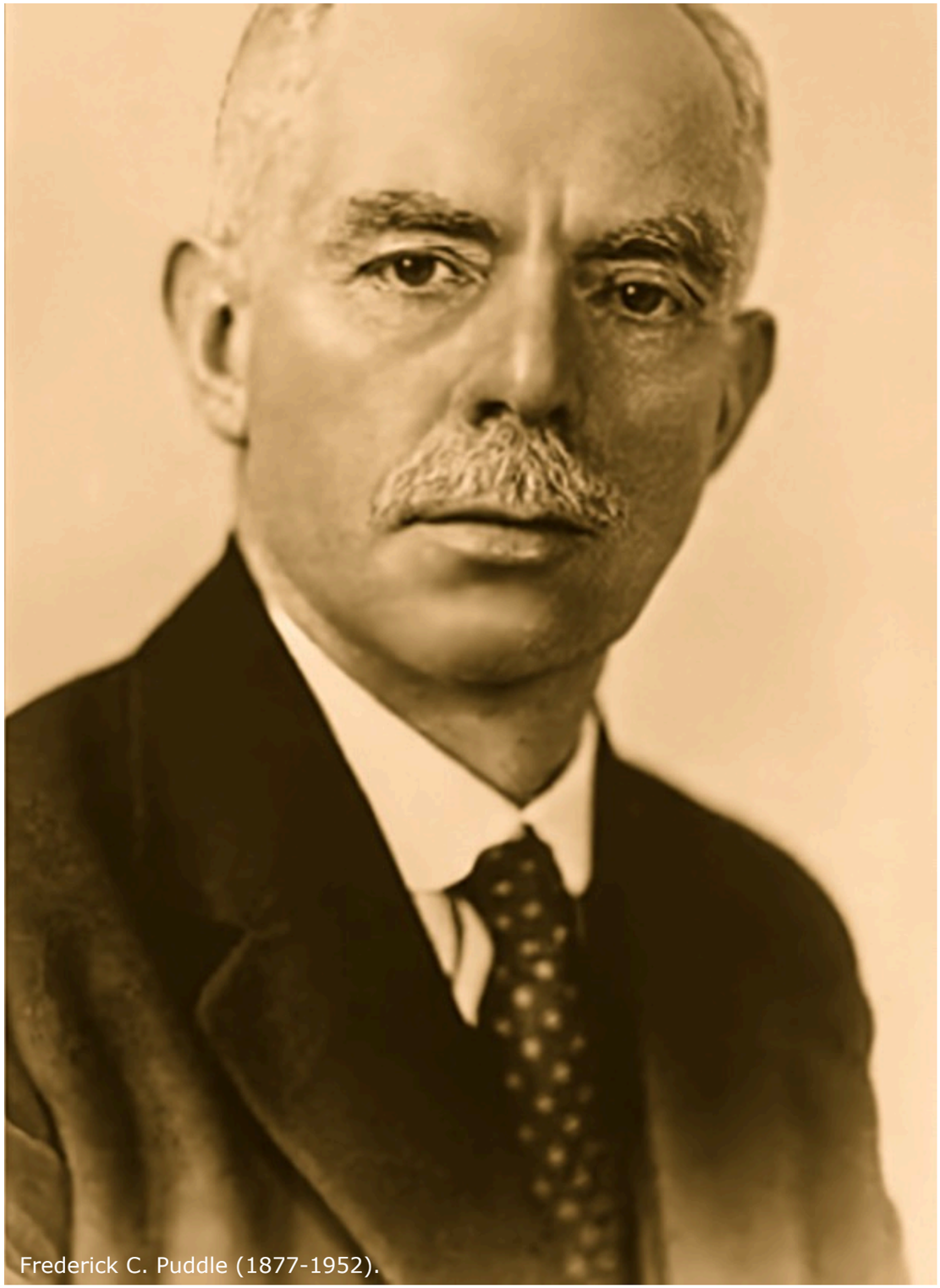
R. 'Creeping Jenny'

R. ‘Creeping Jenny’

R. ‘Creeping Jenny’

R. 'Dainty' AM 1942 & FCC 1944

R. 'Dignity'



Frederick C. Puddle (1877-1952).

R. ‘Elizabeth’

forrestii Repens x *griersonianum*

Hardiness	Flowering Period	Height & Spread
H5-6	April-early May	2m x 3m

‘Elizabeth’ is the quintessential rhododendron hybrid. Introduced in 1939, the shrub has likely become the most widely planted member of the genus in the UK - if the wholesale escape of R. ‘Superponticum’ into the wild is overlooked - and that popularity extends equally to a legion of professional propagators, for cuttings are very easy to strike. So in the decades before micropropagation became the norm, that fact, probably more than the stunning red flowers and perfect deportment, assured the take-up of ‘Elizabeth’ at virtually every professional nursery in the country, as well as a worldwide distribution to wherever rhododendrons are grown across the globe. Which means that today, long-established and newly-planted specimens of Henry McLaren’s 1933 pollination of *R. forrestii* Repens by *R. griersonianum* will be found in literally millions of small suburban gardens.

Of course, the hard work that went into raising the cross was the province of Frederick C. Puddle and his staff. Puddle, Lord Aberconway’s head gardener between 1920 and 1947, does not have a single rhododendron registered in his name, though he is eulogised in the honorific for a *neriiflorum* x *griersonianum* cross released by Bodnant in 1932. Yet it was without doubt his expertise that germinated the wild-collected seed of Forrest and Kingdon-Ward, then grew the plants to flowering size, as well as nurturing the pairings devised in association with his employer.

Few rhodophiles will be unfamiliar with the attributes of ‘Elizabeth’, but just in case:

Mid-green and matt ovate leaves, 5cm long by 2cm wide, held for two to three years, cloak a rounded, compact, low bush to 1m high when grown in full sun, double that, with a more open framework, when planted in shade. A spread of 3m or more after twenty years is not unusual. The broadly campanulate corollas are scarlet-red in tone and carried in trusses of 5 to 9, and there will be many, many trusses - for a flower bud will form at the tip of each and every branch on even very young plants. So when they open en masse early in April, every single leaf will often be completely hidden by the blooms.

Outwith the protection of a woodland environment therefore, or placement close to the exterior walls of a house, if night-time temperatures drop low enough to produce a late spring frost, which is almost guaranteed so early in the season, then the flowers will be decimated and bark split lead to branch dieback or, if really severe, the demise of a whole plant. At the other end of the year, ‘Elizabeth’ not only has a tendency to open some of her flower buds in the autumn, so diminishing the main spring display, but worse, to then send out more new shoots, which an October or November frost will most certainly ruin. Staying with the negatives, weevils and the powdery mildew fungus find the leaves irresistible, with the latter an especial problem that thwarts even expert growers.

At least two clones of ‘Elizabeth’ are in circulation, matched with the award citations, the 1943 FCC plant having slightly larger flowers than the 1939 AM clone, and of course, a more refined distribution, which almost goes without saying, though most specimens in public gardens will bear labels claiming to be both. Genetics has shattered the illusion that ‘Creeping Jenny’ can be considered part of the same pride, grex or group, although the reversed-parentage cross will be stated as being such in much of the classic literature still available in print or online. The mitochondrial and chloroplast cells certainly know better, but remain mum on the subject.

R. ‘Elizabeth’ is named for Henry McLaren’s eldest daughter, the Hon. Elizabeth Mary McLaren (1911-1991), rather than - as many would presuppose - our recently deceased monarch.

R. ‘Elizabeth’ AM 1939 & FCC 1943

R. ‘Elizabeth’ AM 1939 & FCC 1943

R. ‘Elizabeth’ AM 1939 & FCC 1943

R. ‘Elizabeth’ AM 1939 & FCC 1943

R. ‘Elizabeth’ AM 1939 & FCC 1943

R. ‘Elizabeth’ AM 1939 & FCC 1943

R. ‘Erebus’

R. ‘Erebus’


R. ‘Fabia’ AM 1934




R. ‘Fabia’ AM 1934


R. ‘Fabia’ AM 1934

R. ‘Fabia’ AM 1934

R. ‘Fabia’ FCC 1989

R. ‘Fabia’ FCC 1989

R. ‘Fabia’ & R. ‘Fabia Tangerine’
dichroanthum x *griersonianum*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H5 May-early June 2m x 3m

Eight gardens to date have registered hybrid crosses that were the result of pollen from *R. griersonianum* placed onto the style of *R. dichroanthum,* with the pride currently comprising nine individual clones, though there are probably countless others still to be tallied as the appeal of combining these two species is almost atavistic. But if you appraise relatively mature specimens of those various offspring from a distance, all appear basically the same, although to quote W. J. Bean writing in *Trees and Shrubs Hardy in the British Isles,* ‘no two plants are exactly alike in colour even when raised from the same seed-pod’. Closer inspection will also reveal that they differ in habit, leaf colour and shape, and the number of corollas present within the inflorescence.

Henry McLaren set the ball rolling, making his pairing in 1927 and exhibiting ‘Fabia’ seven years later in 1934, the plant scooping an immediate Award of Merit from the RHS in the process. The FCC would come half a century later, but the two award plants are slightly different, as the photographs indicate. The premier introduction has a loose, open flower truss composed of nine funnel-shaped corollas, each 6cm long and wide, with a large, colour-co-ordinated calyx, the lobes of which can extended to 3cm, and their colour is officially described as yellowish-pink shaded orange in the throat. Except the plant that received and is commercially traded as the AM clone has scarlet flowers shaded orange. Plus pale brown spotting on all the lobes. With the leaf shape elliptic through oblanceolate, each blade up to 11cm long but just a third that in width, dark green and matt above, with a suede-like fawn indumentum below.

‘Fabia’ is able to tolerate full sun even in southern gardens, though a dappled shade placement would be a better planting site option even though the compact habit will persist whichever choice is made, despite the thiner branches becoming somewhat lax in time. Ultimate height varies, with some clones never straying above 1.2m, while others ascend up to 2m, which once again poses the question of just what was distributed by Bodnant back in the 1930s.

An acknowledged second selection from the McLaren pairing, ‘Fabia Tangerine’, was introduced in 1940. This also secured an AM from the awards committee and is considered by many to be the better clone. Here, the flower colour is paler than its sister, with the base soft vermilion, the lobe margins shaded pinker, and the throat yellowish-pink.

Embley Park, Exbury, High Beeches, Minterne, Tower Court and Wisley all duplicated the combination and introduced their own versions of the cross, with a ‘Fabia Waterer’ also available, though its provenance is unknown.



R. ‘Fabia Tangerine’ AM 1940

R. ‘Fabia Tangerine’ AM 1940

R. ‘Fabia Tangerine’ AM 1940

R. ‘Fabia Tangerine’ AM 1940

R. ‘F. C. Puddle’ AM 1932

R. ‘Hecla’

R. ‘Laura Aberconway’ AM 1941 & FCC 1944

R. ‘Laura Aberconway’ AM 1941 & FCC 1944

R. ‘Laura Aberconway’ AM 1941 & FCC 1944



R. ‘Laura Aberconway’ AM 1941 & FCC 1944

R. ‘Laura Aberconway’
griersonianum x ‘Barclayi’
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H5 May-early June 4m x 6m

In 1895, Laura Elizabeth McLaren, née Pochin (1854-1933), inherited an estate from her father set above the River Conwy in north Wales: Bodnant. An ardent horticulturalist, as well as an activist for women’s rights and founder of the Liberal Women’s Suffrage Union, she soon set about transforming the borders and terraces of her new property, working primarily with her son, Henry Duncan McLaren (1879-1953). She became a Dame in 1911 when her husband, Charles Benjamin Bright McLaren (1850-1934), was ennobled as the 1st Baron Aberconway.

Ten years earlier, in 1901, Laura McLaren had entrusted the full day-to-day maintenance of the grounds to her son and despite early advice from their then head gardener that Himalayan rhododendrons would never succeed at Bodnant, from 1908 they were planted in quantity throughout the woodland (*The Rhododendron Story,* Cynthia Postan, 1996). And they became Henry McLaren’s consuming passion.

A self-taught master hybridiser, in 1933 he took pollen from the Penjerrick hybrid ‘Barclayi’ and paired it with the best clone of *R. griersonianum* growing in the grounds. Fast-forward to 1941, and the sole selected seedling from that mating scooped an Award of Merit from the RHS and three years later, a First Class Certificate. McLaren named it for his mother - R. ‘Laura Aberconway’.

Mature specimens of the cross now top-out at around 4m in height, through they spread wider and can be quite straggly bushes if not grown in sufficient sunlight. Their leaves are quite thick and coriaceous, lanceolate in shape and dark green in colour, retained for two, sometimes three years. Bloom time is early May onwards, the flowers gathered in loose trusses of nine corollas, each funnel around 6.5cm long, the lobes unfurling to 9cm across at the mouth with slightly wavy margins. Though appearing red from a distance or when brilliantly lit by the sun, their hue is actually Geranium Lake, courtesy of the seed parent, and in full raiment the shrubs are a splendid sight. They have but one drawback: winter hardiness; which is only rated down to -15ºC; so east coast gardeners will need to provide a well-sheltered niche to guarantee long-term success.

Unfortunately, a second drawback has also emerged as like many Bodnant hybrids in commercial circulation there are at least two shrubs posing as ‘Laura Aberconway’ - the true plant, with flowers as described above; and an imposter, graced with blooms far redder in tone. Labelled specimens of the pretender will be found in several well-known collections, indeed one garden has both the charlatan and the real McCoy separated by less than 60m, each with a lovely laser-engraved tag. Inspecting the blooms up-close and in shade will reveal which is which.

R. ‘Matador’

griersonianum x *strigillosum*

Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread

H5 April-May 3m x 4m

‘Matador’ is a *griersonianum* x *strigillosum* pairing made at Bodnant in 1931 that was named and introduced in 1945, when it won an Award of Merit, going-on to scoop an RHS First Class Certificate the following year. The same cross was also made at Exbury, with Lionel de Rothschild’s chosen selection having a more open habit, leaves that follow the seed parent - so displaying darker green blades with a thin buff indumentum beneath - and wide-open funnel-campanulate flowers, brilliant scarlet in tone.

Observationally, from the foliage, it would appear that the Aberconway award clone won the distribution competition, with the majority of garden specimens showing a distinct drip tip and mucro at the leaf apex, an impressed midrib, and an abaxial surface near glabrous at maturity. The blades are narrowly oblong-elliptic in shape, up to 16cm in length by just 4cm in width, supported on quite hairy petioles. The branchlets too are distinctly hirsute, and persistently so, characteristics that again reflect its *R. strigillosum* heritage.

The McLaren corollas are turkey-red in hue, with a broadly funnel-shaped profile, but not quite as open-mouthed as the Exbury plant, their dimensions being 6.5cm long by 7.5cm across, and these are carried in a loose, open-topped to dome-shaped truss of 7 to 12 trumpets. Each is spotted and speckled darker across the upper lobes, with five black nectar pouches at the base of the throat. Stamen filaments, style and stigma are red, the anthers black.

Dappled shade and the shelter provided by a surround of trees are the key cultural provisos, these restricting where R. ‘Matador’ will succeed, with specimens found thriving along the west coast and in the south, but all too often not really happy in some east coast gardens, one exception to that rule being a plant growing in the woodland at Glendoick.



R. ‘Matador’ AM 1945 & FCC 1946

R. ‘Matador’ AM 1945 & FCC 1946



R. ‘Matador’ AM 1945 & FCC 1946

R. ‘Matador’ AM 1945 & FCC 1946

R. ‘Medusa’

R. ‘Medusa’




R. ‘Orestes’


R. ‘Orestes’


R. ‘Orestes’



R. ‘Rapture’

R. ‘Rapture’

griersonianum x *zeylanicum*

Hardiness	Flowering Period	Height & Spread
H3-4	April	6m x 4m

Two rhododendron enthusiasts, contemporaries, and both then resident in North Wales, have made and registered a *griersonianum* x *zeylanicum* pairing: George Henry Caton Haigh, and Henry Duncan McLaren, 2nd Baron Aberconway.

Caton Haigh’s hybrid is the well-known ‘Gwillt-king’, his sole entry in the *IRRC,* which has turkey-red flowers and heavily-indumented rugose foliage on a medium-tall shrub to around 3m high and wide. The pairing was made at Portmerion, probably in the early 1920s and introduced in 1938. It is by far the more popular of the pair and received an Award of Merit in 1952.

On the other hand, McLaren’s ‘Rapture’ has porcelain-rose blooms and narrower, more *arboreum*-like leaves, which are also indumented below, but not as densely, though these are carried on a shrub that can attain small tree status in time, topping 6m in height and 4m in width. This pollination was made at Bodnant in 1927 and the hybrid introduced in 1950, but as indicated already, it is a rare find today in even the largest rhododendron collections, which is a shame, for a mature specimen in bloom, is a floral delight. There is an outside chance that the pollen provider may have been ‘Kingianum’, a form or hybrid of *R. zeylanicum* grown from seed collected by Sir George Watt in Manipur, India, during 1882, though of course, the botanists now consider the former to be synonymous under the latter, the sunken epithet only maintained via RHS Group status.

A lack of hardiness is the reason both hybrids are not far more widely grown, the H3-4 rating given here for McLaren’s ‘Rapture’ setting winter minimums to between -5 and -10ºC and so restricting locales where it can be successfully cultivated to mild sites along the west coast, the mildest of mild south coast gardens, plus many of the woodland estates of Cornwall and Devon in southwest England.

R. ‘Rapture’

R. ‘Rapture’

R. ‘Red Dragon’

R. ‘Red Dragon’
thomsonii x *griersonianum*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H4 Mid April-early May 6m x 4m

‘Red Dragon’ is one of the Bodnant ‘reds’ that should be far better known and much more widely grown than is currently the case, though with the shrub only reliably resilient down to -10ºC - or at best, possibly -12ºC in mid-winter (midway towards H5) - potential new planting sites will be restricted to those venues located along the west coast of the UK, plus the mildest locales in southern England, so the cross effectively mirrors the outdoor distribution of the similarly cold-averse Exbury ‘reds’.

Henry McLaren’s pairing, made in 1931, is a *thomsonii* x *griersonianum* combination, which while avoiding the even more tender *R. elliottii* that was often favoured by his horticultural and hybridising rival Lionel de Rothschild for his fiery-flowered creations, does nothing to up the toughness. The flowers however, are another story entirely:

They are carried in open through flat-topped tiers of up to ten large funnels per truss, the corollas brilliant scarlet-crimson in tone, widely 5-lobed, the dorsal trio heavily spotted darker. Stamen filaments and style are flushed scarlet to match; the medium-sized rimmed rather than lobed calyx, similarly hued; and the fairly long yellow pedicel holding each trumpet also tinted crimson above. Mature specimens will therefore be a blaze of colour from mid April onwards.

The leaf blades are nearer those of the pollen provider in shape than the seed parent, dark matt-green ellipses, flat or sometimes convex in profile, pointed at the apex, rounded or tapering at the base, with just a hint of a fawn tomentum on the underside. They are only held for one year, occasionally two, but the well-branched superstructure is adequately clothed nonetheless. Habit varies between a very large shrub 6m or more wide but only 4m high, or a small tree that reverses those dimensions, the choice of which is dictated by the planting site and its surrounds.

‘Hecla’ - featured on page 281 - is a sister seedling, named and introduced two years earlier in 1941, with tubular-funnel corollas that have much more obvious spotting on the dorsal lobes, their hue nearer crimson-red.

T. C. Thacker, at his Knowle Nursery in Warwickshire, possibly made the pairing slightly in advance of the Bodnant mating, introducing the rose-red selection he named ‘Charles H. Pattman’ in 1938.

Henry McLaren’s choice of appellation must surely reflect the high regard he had for his hybrid, for the ‘Red Dragon’ epithet is of course borrowed from the national flag of Wales - *Y Ddraig Goch* - and most certainly not the mahjong tile, or William Blake’s series of biblical paintings. And it has absolutely no connection with Francis Dolarhyde or Thomas Harris, apart from the fact that a mature shrub in full bloom would certainly be reflective of the amount of blood shed in that American novelist’s fabulous tale of murder and mayhem. The visual impact of ‘Red Dragon’ therefore, when bedecked from head to toe with bloom, is nothing less than stunning, which makes the lack of any RHS floral exhibition award decidedly puzzling. For at Muncaster in early May, right alongside the main entrance gate, the massed mature plantings are simply spectacular.


R. ‘Red Dragon’

R. ‘Red Dragon’

R. ‘Red Dragon’

R. ‘Red Dragon’

R. ‘Red Dragon’

R. ‘Red Dragon’

R. ‘Red Dragon’



R. ‘Redwing’ FCC 1937

R. ‘Redwing’

‘Shilsonii’ x ‘Barclayi’

Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread

H4-5 Mid March-early April 5m x 5m

Crossed in 1927, ‘Redwing’ emerged from a combination that matched the pollen-providing Samuel Smith hybrid ‘Barclayi’ with his near-neighbour Richard Gill’s ‘Shilsonii’. The former shrub is only hardy down to -10ºC, so despite the -18ºC H5-6 rating for the seed parent, their progeny will likely only tolerate lows down to around -12ºC before succumbing to the cold. Consequently, and like many of the other superlative red-blooming rhododendrons originating from Bodnant, Exbury, Lamellen and elsewhere, ‘Redwing’ can only thrive in the mildest of British gardens, such as at Brodick Castle on the Isle of Arran, where the fine specimen featured can be found growing in all its glory. But you will need to visit in mid March to marvel at the glowing globes, for ‘Redwing’ flowers in concert with the early bloomers from Subsection *Grande,* which is another reason most other UK gardens eschew its cultivation outdoors.

The balled trusses of near blood red flowers - deep carmine-scarlet is their official *IRRC* designation - are formed from between ten and eleven funnels, each 4.5cm long by around 8cm across, the corollas devoid of a single spot, speckle or other blemish, with even the nectar pouches forgoing black for a slightly darker crimson. Those blooms are set against a foil of matt, dark green leaves, oblong through elliptic in shape, the blades individually 11.5cm long by 5 to 6cm wide. The plant has been given an open position at Brodick, with ‘Redwing’ here developing into a domed shrub around 5m high and wide, but a more protected and shadier site would likely see it opt for small tree status.

The hybrid was gifted a First Class Certificate by the Royal Horticultural Society when it was introduced in 1937.

R. ‘Redwing’ FCC 1937

R. ‘Redwing’ FCC 1937

R. ‘Redwing’ FCC 1937

R. ‘Ruddigore’

R. ‘Salus’


R. ‘Siren’ AM 1942

R. ‘Siren’

‘Choremia’ x *griersonianum*

Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread

H4-5 April-early May 2.5m x 4m

Were he still alive, Henry McLaren should hang his head in shame for concocting ‘yet another of these red hybrids far too tender for average gardens in the UK’.

Or perhaps not:

For ‘Siren’, the result of a ‘Choremia’ x *griersonianum* pairing, is simply an out and out cracker despite the -12ºC H4-5 hardiness rating.

The quote comes from the Cox-authored *Encyclopaedia of Rhododendron Hybrids* (Batsford, 1988) and there are many other lines of text that could be lifted from the book’s 300 pages that are similarly disparaging. Their sentiment can basically be summed-up as: if it can’t survive at Glendoick, it isn’t worth growing. There is of course a rather obvious geographic fallacy to that argument, one that falls into the tail-wagging-the-dog camp, as a glance at any map of the United Kingdom will quickly make evident. Moreover, it was long ago discovered that the Earth revolves around the Sun, not the reverse. So although ‘Siren’ will likely be absent from gardens to the north of the Firth of Tay or anywhere else with a climate similar to that of eastern Scotland or harsher, Lord Aberconway’s AM-awarded 1942 introduction will thrive at any number of locales along the entire length of the UK’s western seaboard, as well as in the southern counties - the Savill and Valley Gardens in Windsor Great Park, for instance, where both establishments boast fine specimens – and even in some lower-latitude sheltered horticultural venues bordering England’s supposedly frigid eastern fringes. A good rule of thumb? If *R. ciliatum* prospers in your collection - as at Ray Wood, Castle Howard, in North Yorkshire - so too will ‘Siren’.

Ten through thirteen funnel-campanulate corollas feature in each of the shrub’s loose, flat-topped to rounded trusses, these scarlet in colour, with a smattering of darker spots on all the lobes. Of waxy substance, each is up to 6.5cm wide at the mouth. The corolla tube is quite broad throughout its length, even at the base, where an irregularly lobed calyx will be found with petals close to 4cm long, giving a near hose-in-hose effect, these matching the flowers in hue. Stamen filaments, style and stigma are also tonally coordinated, though the anthers are contrasting black punctuation marks. The blooms are set against narrowly-oblong, dark green leaf blades, individually around 16cm long, somewhat shiny above with quite deeply impressed veins, covered below by a thin, pale, not-quite beige indumentum. If the shrub has a fault, it is that most of the leaves are only carried for one year, leaving much of the supporting framework on display. At Brodick, placement in a sheltered spot in full sun has resulted in a well-branched, dome-shaped specimen, however, for those who garden much closer to Land’s End, a niche in dappled shade will need to be provided.

The *IRRC* ‘Siren’ entry details - for reasons unknown - deep yellowish-pink flowers, which given the parentage, would appear to be a temporary mental lapse or a significant colour vision failure on the part of whomever completed the registration form.

R. 'Siren' AM 1942

R. ‘Siren’ AM 1942

R. 'Siren' AM 1942



R. ‘Snowy River’ AM 1974

R. ‘Snowy River’ AM 1974

R. ‘Sunrise’ FCC 1942

R. ‘Sunrise’

griffithianum x *griersonianum*

Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread

H4-5 Late May-June. 4m x 4m

The pairing of *R. griffithianum* and *R. griersonianum,* made by Henry McLaren at Bodnant in 1926, was never going to win any awards for hardiness, but ‘Sunrise’ did eventually secure an FCC from the RHS in 1942, nine years after its introduction. If the specimen growing at Muncaster Castle Gardens in West Cumbria is typical, the delay was probably due to inclement weather, for the blooms quickly bleach in the sun and fare equally badly in anything heavier than the softest drizzle, with the corollas also shed early, before they are really over. But catch a mature shrub when its sheet of bloom has just opened and the sight will stop you in your tracks.

Deep pink in the bud, the flowers, when fully open, are heavily flushed moderate pink over a creamy-white base, with the dorsal lobes especially saturated. The darker hue quickly fades however, sometimes over the whole corolla, at other times remaining for a while as a distinct pale pink band around the lobe margins. Reports that several different clones of ‘Sunrise’ exist and have been commercially distributed may be exacerbated by these changing colour patterns, which vary year by year, but are consistent across the whole shrub, though previously documented practice herein would confirm Bodnant’s predisposition to holding on to their award winners (a custom adhered to like super glue by any number of other well-known horticultural venues). Six to eight funnels, each with five perfectly proportioned and rounded lobes, comprise each loose and open truss, and the stamens and style are flushed deep pink in harmony with the opening colour gambit.

The foliage is elliptic in shape with pointed tips and tapering bases, mid to dark green in tone above, glabrous below. Retained for two years, the blades provide a dense cloak over the top half of the branch framework, but are defeated lower down by the tree-like upright and open habit that requires a position in full sun to prevent a decline into straggliness. In the southern counties, placement in dappled shade is probably the best compromise between preserving the flower colours and achieving a good form.

As already mentioned, a lack of winter hardiness restricts ‘Sunrise’ to garden locales where temperatures do not fall lower than -12ºC. Reports indicate that hardier forms of the hybrid may exist, but to date, these have not been encountered by the author.

‘Sunrise’ was used extensively in pairings made by Henry McLaren in the 1930s and early 1940s, but has not been picked up by other hybridisers.



R. ‘Sunrise’ FCC 1942

R. ‘Sunrise’ FCC 1942

R. ‘Sunrise’ FCC 1942

R. ‘Vanessa’ FCC 1929

R. ‘Vanessa’ FCC 1929



R. ‘Vanessa’ FCC 1929

R. ‘Vanessa’ & R. ‘Vanessa Pastel’
‘Soulbut’ x *griersonianum*
Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread
H4-5 Mid May-early June 2m x 4m

Henry McLaren’s ‘Vanessa’ is a ‘Soulbut’ x *griersonianum* pairing that was made in 1924 and shown just five years later. It was, in fact, the very first *R. griersonianum* hybrid to be exhibited at an RHS flower show. George Forrest’s find, made on the mountains of the Shweli-Salween Divide in western Yunnan, had only been introduced into UK cultivation during the closing months of 1917, and the species only began blooming in British gardens during 1923, so Lord Aberconway and his team at Bodnant were extremely quick off the mark to make the match. Whether the pollen came from the FCC-awarded clone of *R. griersonianum* that Lionel de Rothschild and Thomas Lowinsky had jointly exhibited in 1924, or from specimens growing at Caerhays and Borde Hill, which had also flowered that year, or was from plants established in his own garden, is not known, but ‘Vanessa’ immediately secured McLaren a First Class Certificate on the day of her public unveiling in 1929. However, to set the historical record straight, it should be noted that the cross had actually opened its first flower bud the year before and pollen from those corollas had been applied back onto *R. griersonianum,* which resulted in the hybrid ‘Radiance’.

‘Vanessa’ holds her blooms in an open, somewhat drooping truss containing around seven to nine funnels on quite long, distinctly sticky stalks. Each corolla is around 7cm in length and close to 8cm across when fully expanded, soft pink in tone, the throat deeper hued than the lobes and with a set of dark, crimson-coloured nectar pouches encircling the ovary. The base of the dorsal lobe hosts a short fan of spots and speckles, this sometimes split into two halves, while the stamens and style are gathered into a tight central cluster, the latter glandular to the tip. The leaves, held perpendicular to the stems on petioles flushed red or purple, are oblong-oblanceolate in shape, dark green and shiny, up to 17cm long, and retained for up to two years.

The plant’s habit is compact, though not dense, with mature shrubs hovering around the 2m-high mark and having a similar radius. Flowering is prolific from an early age, but as usual, several clones have been distributed and in this case, the experts are divided over which is which, with the FCC form said to be heavily spotted by some doyens, lightly spotted by others.

And then there is ‘Vanessa Pastel’.

The *International Rhododendron Register and Checklist* entry for this hybrid has it being paired in 1930, the year after Henry McLaren won big with ‘Vanessa’ and six years after ‘Soulbut’ first received a dollop of *R. griersonianum’s* pollen. Many more plants of the species would have flowered in the UK by then, including - probably - some from Forrest’s 1924/25 gatherings. As well, three specific colour variations of the species were also being grown: geranium-scarlet; carmine-vermilion; and rose. Despite that however, most expert authors regard ‘Vanessa’ and ‘Vanessa Pastel’ as selections originating from the same seed pod, although given that added impetus of the former’s straight-to-FCC status, it could also be highly probable that a second match was made at Bodnant using a different clone of *R. griersonianum*. This is reflected in the ‘more unusual flowers’ found on ‘Vanessa Pastel’, plus the fact that it ‘roots easily’, while the opposite is true for ‘Vanessa’, which is ‘quite hard to root’ (all three quotes come from *The Encyclopaedia of Rhododendron Hybrids,* written by Peter and Kenneth Cox, and published by Batsford in 1988).

Hardiness too is different, ‘Pastel’ being slightly less robust, with Peter’s son Kenneth reporting that it often suffers bark split (*Rhododendrons & Azaleas: A Colour Guide,* The Crowood Press, 2005).

However, neither text conclusively separates the two, but tipping the scales in favour of that second pollination is the fact that 'Vanessa Pastel' was not named or introduced until 1946, a fate unlikely to have befallen a seedling germinated in 1924 when throughout the 1930s Henry McLaren was in a highly competitive, albeit friendly, awards race with the owners of Exbury, Lamellen and elsewhere.

'Vanessa Pastel' usually has a total of just eight trumpets in each truss, but these cream flushed shell-pink blooms are larger, some 9cm across at the mouth, when completely unfurled. They are also stained scarlet at the base of the corolla both inside and out, and blotched red at the base of the throat, with this breaking up into a much heavier fan of spots and speckles, which may sometimes divide-out into two distinct rays. The foliage is smaller, narrowly elliptic in shape and just 11.5cm long, mid green in tone and matt. But habit, ultimate size and floriferousness are near mirrors of 'Vanessa', as is the number of clones in circulation.



R. 'Vanessa Pastel' AM 1946 & FCC 1971



R. 'Vanessa Pastel' AM 1946 & FCC 1971

R. ‘Vanessa Pastel’ AM 1946 & FCC 1971

R. ‘Vanessa Pastel’ AM 1946 & FCC 1971



R. ‘Vanity Fair’



R. ‘Vanity Fair’

R. ‘Vanity Fair’

‘Vanessa’ x *facetum*

Hardiness - Flowering Period - Height & Spread

H4 Late May-June 2.5m x 3m

After the straight-to-FCC success of ‘Vanessa’ in 1929, it was almost inevitable that Henry McLaren would pair his award winning *griersonianum* hybrid with a host of other species, as well as the best of his own crosses. In fact, as detailed above, that process had begun in 1928 when the hybrid first-flowered, just three years after germination, pollen from the single set of corollas quickly being transferred onto a receptive *R. griersonianum* style, the backcross resulting in ‘Radiance’, which was introduced in 1936.

Yet the Royal Horticultural Society’s approbation, via its Floral Awards Committee, appears not to have upped the number of pairings excessively: ‘Fabia’ was next to receive the lady’s largesse in 1930; *R. elliottii* and *R. facetum,* plus R. ‘Sunrise’ all provided pollen in 1932; a reverse cross was made onto *R. facetum* in 1933; ‘Vanessa’ hosted *R. venator* and R. ‘Dante’ in 1934; and pollinated R. ‘Jacquetta’ in 1935. To produce, respectively, ‘Etna’, ‘Lycia’, ‘Vanity Fair’, ‘Adonis’, ‘Eudora’, ‘Vanven’, ‘Vanity’ and ‘Perseus’, none of which could be said to have taken the rhododendron world by storm. And of the nine, only the blooms of ‘Eudora’ and ‘Vanity Fair’ will likely be found outwith Bodnant today.

On the latter rhododendron, these open deep red in tone, a set of six to eleven tubular-funnel-shaped corollas carried in an open and quite lax truss, which then pale to strawberry-red. All five lobes are quite heavily spotted brown, but this only becomes really apparent at the base of the throat, where a ring of five nectar pouches encircle the cluster of stamens and style. The leaves are dark green and matt, with a distinctive yellow midrib, elliptic in shape and retained for up to two years, so giving the medium-sized bush a fairly dense outer cloak.

Lack of hardiness is probably the main reason why ‘Vanity Fair’ has not been more widely planted, as its *R. facetum* heritage requires a site where winter lows never stray below -10ºC.

The epithet is likely to have been borrowed from the Thackeray novel rather than the discontinued British magazine famous for its withering caricatures.

R. ‘Vanity Fair’

Photographic Acknowledgements:

Mirroring the earlier volume in this series, details of where each of the plant portraits was photographed is set out below, along with the website details of those collections visited. Thanks is again extended to each establishment for allowing images taken in a private-use capacity, to be reproduced here. Gratitude is also due the institutions, organisations and individuals who allowed the portrait photographs of historical and noted figures associated with the genus to appear alongside the text.

Key: AL - above left; AC - above centre; AR - above right; BL - below left; BC - below centre; BR - below right; L - left; R - right.

American Rhododendron Society:
https://www.rhododendron.org/
p. 17 ARC - Joseph Benson Gable, photograph published in *Hybrids and Hybridizers: Rhododendrons and Azaleas for Eastern North America,* edited by Philip A. Livingston and Franklin H. West, and published for the ARS by Harrowood Books, Newtown Square, Pennsylvania, in 1978; p. 17 ARR - James Barto, the photograph featured in Part One of the article *The Life and Work of James Barto,* by Carl H. Phetteplace, M.D., published in the *Quarterly Bulletin of the American Rhododendron Society,* Volume 14, Number 2, April 15th, 1960.

Arduaine Garden, Oban, Argyll:
https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/arduaine-garden
p. 57; p. 124; p. 125 - R; p. 126; p. 127; p. 144; p. 145; p. 267 - R; p. 268

Benmore Botanic Garden, Argyll:
https://www.rbge.org.uk/visit/benmore-botanic-garden/
p. 58; p. 59; p. 60; p. 61 - R; p. 255 - AR; p. 256; p. 282; p. 283; p. 284; p. 285 - L; p. 293 - L; p. 294; p. 295.

Brodick Castle Garden, Isle of Arran:
https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/brodick-castle-garden-country-park
p. 210; p. 211 - R; p. 212; p. 213; p. 214; p. 216 - R; p. 248 - R; p. 249; p. 251 - R; p. 304 - L; p. 305; p. 306; p. 307; p. 310 - L; p. 311; p. 312; p. 313.

Exbury Gardens, Hampshire:
https://www.exbury.co.uk/
p. 5; p. 101; p. 104; p. 105; p. 231; p. 233; p. 244 - L, AR, BR; p. 245; p. 251 - L; p. 257; p. 265; p. 266; p. 281; p. 334 - BL.

Glendoick Gardens Ltd, Perth:
https://glendoick.com/
p. 193; p. 246; p. 247 - AL, BL, R; p. 259; p. 260; p. 261; p. 325.

John Hammond:
p. 11 BL - Lamellen House from high up on the west bank above the Main Drive, which then sweeps around in a long curve as it falls away towards the ponds; p. 31 - looking across the Lower Pond and back up the valley, with the Main Drive just visible on the extreme left; p. 34 L - R. 'Cornish Cross' by the driveway in front of the House; p. 34 R - the outfall from the Upper Pond entering the Lower Pond; p. 37 BL - looking back along one of the paths that radiate from the top of the Main Drive in the spring of 2001. The Upper Terrace, cut into the hillside, forms a relatively level access pathway along most of its length and is home to a large and diverse collection of both species and hybrid rhododendrons, intermixed with magnolias and other companion plants; p. 37 BR - looking down the Main Drive from Lamellen House as it sweeps around the valley floor towards the ponds. Remnants of the rapidly growing *Pinus radiata* shelter-belt stand at the top of the bank, whilst the blood-red *R. arboreum* came from "Smith of Penjerrick in October 1909 and was planted in the 'New Clearing' by the Upper Terrace".

Pam Hayward:
p. 23 - looking down on the garden from the front terrace, photo taken in 2005; p. 28 - looking across the lower pond towards the rill, photo taken in 2005.

Inverewe Gardens, Poolewe, Wester Ross:
https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/inverewe
p. 42; p. 138; p. 140; p. 141; p. 217; p. 218; p. 222.

Lakeland Horticultural Society, Holehird Gardens:
https://holehirdgardens.org.uk/the-society
p. 49 - R; p. 50.

Logan Botanic Garden, Stranraer:
https://www.rbge.org.uk/visit/logan-botanic-garden/
p. 52; p. 53 - AL, BL, R.

The Magor Family & Lamellen Estate:
https://www.lamellenestate.co.uk/
p. 11 AL - looking along the valley at Lamellen and over one of the ponds, in around 1900, the photograph taken prior to the development of the garden by E. J. P. Magor; p. 12 L - a photograph of Mr. Magor, probably taken in the mid-1930s; p. 12 R - a photograph of Mr. Magor taken in around 1910, at around the time when he was laying out the garden; p. 15 R - Gilian and Edward Magor at the front of Lamellen House, the photograph was probably taken in the mid-1930s; p. 19 - the Pioneer Achievement Award of the American Rhododendron Society, which was presented to Jeremy and Felicity Peter-Hoblyn by John Hammond at the Annual Congress of the Society in Portland, Oregon, in May 2011, now replicated in slate and stone at Lamellen.

Muncaster Castle Gardens, Ravenglass, Cumbria:
https://www.muncaster.co.uk/
p. 7 - R; p. 43; p. 44 - R; p. 45; p. 65; p. 66; p. 67 - R; p. 68; p. 69; p. 70 - L, BRL, BRR; p. 71; p. 72; p. 73; p. 84; p. 85 - R; p. 86; p. 87; p. 88 - L; p. 89; p. 90; p. 91; p. 92 - AL, AR, BL, BR; p. 93 - L, R; p. 94; p. 95 - R; p. 96; p. 97; p. 106; p. 107 - BL, R; p. 108; p.109; p. 110; p. 111; p. 130 - L; p. 131; p. 132; p. 133; p. 148; p. 149 - BL, R; p. 150; p. 151; p. 152; p. 153; p. 154; p. 155; p. 203; p. 250; p. 252; p. 253; p. 296; p. 297 - R; p. 298; p. 299; p. 300; p. 301; p. 302; p. 303; p. 316; p. 317 - R; p. 318; p. 319; p. 334 - AL, AR.

The National Trust, Bodnant Garden:
https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/wales/bodnant-garden
p. 195 R - Henry McLaren in 1905, from a family photograph published online within the article *The McLaren Family of Bodnant Garden;* p. 197 - an archive photograph of Bodnant Hall; p. 200 R - Henry Duncan McLaren, oil painting; p. 201 L - a fountain head dropping into a pool on the Lily Terrace, designed by Lord Aberconway with the rectangular stone plaque bearing the inscription: "These Terrace Gardens were designed by Henry Duncan McLaren 1905"; p. 201 R - one of the arch-topped niches set into the walls of 'The Poem', this designed by Henry Davis Pochin (1824 - 1895), and inscribed: "In Proud and Grateful memory of Henry Duncan 2nd Baron Aberconway"; p. 264 L - Frederick C. Puddle (1877-1952).

Nymans Garden, Handcross, West Sussex:
https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/nymans
p. 172 - L; p. 174; p. 175; p. 219; p. 230.

Ohio University Press, Athens, Ohio:
https://www.ohioswallow.com/
p. 118 R - James Henry Mangles, the captioned photograph from the book *Tennyson at Aldworth - The Diary Of James Henry Mangles,* written by J. H. Mangles and published in 1984.

Ray Wood, Castle Howard, North Yorkshire:
https://www.castlehoward.co.uk/visit-us/the-gardens/the-woodland-garden
p. 80 - L; p. 82 - L, AR, BR; p. 83; p. 114; p. 224; p. 225; p. 323 - BL, R.

Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh:
https://www.rbge.org.uk/visit/royal-botanic-garden-edinburgh/
p. 20 R - Sir Isaac Bayley Balfour; p. 48; p. 51.

Royal Botanic Garden, Wakehurst Place:
https://www.kew.org/wakehurst
p. 56 - BR; p. 215; p. 258 - R.

Royal Horticultural Society, Wisley:
https://www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley
p. 196 R - Henry McLaren in later life, photographed in the gardens at Bodnant alongside R. 'Elizabeth', the image published in *The Rhododendron and Camellia Year Book 1954;* p. 198 R - The Dell, Bodnant Gardens, photographed in the mid 1940s, the image published in *The Rhododendron Year Book 1947;* p. 189 - AL, BL, R.

Savill Garden, Windsor Great Park:
https://www.windsorgreatpark.co.uk/en/experiences/the-savill-garden
p. 54 - R; p. 77; p. 78 - L, R; p. 79; p. 136 - AL, BL, R; p. 137; p. 146; p. 147; p. 164 - L, R; p. 165 - L, R; p. 166; p. 167; p. 168 - L; p. 169; p. 170; p. 171; p. 177; p. 178; p. 179; p. 182; p. 183; p. 190 - AR, BR; p. 191; p. 204; p. 205 - BL; p. 208; p. 209; p. 226; p. 262; p. 269; p. 292 - L, AR, BR; p. 314; p. 315.

Sir Harold Hillier Gardens, Ampfield, Romsey:
https://www.hants.gov.uk/thingstodo/hilliergardens
p. 1; p. 9; p. 39; p. 40; p. 41; p. 46; p. 47; p. 80 - R; p. 81; p. 98; p. 99; p. 100; p. 112 - L, BR; p. 113; p. 117; p 128 - R; p. 129; p. 139 - R; p. 142 - L, R; p. 143; p. 156 - R; p. 157; p. 158; p. 159; p. 160 - L; p. 161; p. 162; p. 163 - L, R; p. 184; p. 185; p. 186; p. 187; p. 188 - R; p. 206; p. 207; p. 220; p. 221 - R; p. 227 - R; p. 228; p. 229; p. 242; p. 243; p. 254; p. 255 - BR; p. 270; p. 271; p. 272 - BL, R; p. 273; p. 276 - R; p. 277; p. 278; p. 279; p. 280; p. 286 - R; p. 287; p. 288; p. 289; p. 290; p. 291; p. 309; p. 320; p. 321; p. 322 - L; p. 324; p. 326 - AL, BL; p. 327; p. 334 - BR.

Trelissick Garden, Feock, Cornwall:
https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/cornwall/trelissick
p. 263.

Ucluelet Municipal Archives:
https://ucluelethistory.ca/
p. 17 ARL - George Fraser, photograph courtesy of the Ucluelet Municipal Archives.

Valley Gardens, Windsor Great Park:
https://www.windsorgreatpark.co.uk/en/experiences/the-valley-gardens
p. 54 - L; p. 55; p. 74; p. 75; p. 102; p. 103; p. 115 - L, AR, BR; p. 176; p. 180; p. 181; p. 205 - R; p. 223; p. 232 - R; p. 267 - L; p. 272 - AL; p. 274; p. 275; p. 308.

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About the Author.

Julian Taylor-Whall was born in Lowestoft at the end of November, 1957. He received a grammar school education before embarking on a three-decades-long career with the BBC at Television Centre. During that time he worked on many of the now classic shows made in the production facilities there, the studios at Lime Grove and Elstree, and at the Television Theatre.

He retired early in 2008, moving to a small village in West Cumbria, just outside the Lake District National Park.

His interests include landscape and plant photography, music, film, writing, and of course, the cultivation of rhododendrons. His previous multivolume treatise on that genus can be freely downloaded at:

https://www.rhodogroup-rhs.org/publications/books/temperate-rhododendrons.

- above -
Atop Great Gable, a self portrait against cloud.

- back cover images -

R. 'Emily Mangles'	R. 'Fulgarb' AM 1937
R. 'Anita'	R. 'Isabella Mangles'







