

Moorea

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Narcissus 'Lady Moore'



FOREWORD

Firstly, I must express my sincere thanks to Anne James who collated all the articles, to Mary Forrest for editing and Mary Bradshaw for proof reading. Of course, an immense thank you to our authors who have so generously contributed of their time in writing the articles as without their knowledge, expertise and experience there would be no *Moorea*.

Recently a member asked me why the journal was called *Moorea*: thankfully I was able to give a reasonable answer if not a full explanation as described by Charles Nelson in the first edition. So, I thought it worthwhile to restate why the journal was given its name. Quoting from the 1982 first edition, Charles Nelson writes:

‘In choosing the title MOOREA for this journal, the Irish Garden Plant Society honours the unique contribution of the Moore family to horticulture and gardening in Ireland. David Moore (1807-1879) and his son Frederick (1857-1950), were the main promoters of Irish horticulture during their combined 84 years in charge of the Botanic Gardens at Glasnevin. However, Charles Moore (1820-1905) who worked at Trinity College Botanic Gardens, Dublin (like his brother and nephew) and later became director of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney, is also included in this dedication as is Phylis Moore (née Paul) who remains today a powerful memory to many Irish gardeners and who followed her husband’s example by giving good plants to those who could grow and preserve them. These four-people enriched our gardens in their several and diverse ways.’

(E.C Nelson, 1982)

I thought it interesting that, as today, preservation of varieties was very much in the mind of those 19th gardeners. I ponder on the challenge they had in disseminating information to fellow gardeners compared with today given our advantages of instantaneous global communications and internet resources. Yet we have different challenges: the loss of nurseries and specialist growers, the competition from a constant stream of new introductions, and the desire by gardeners to have the longest-flowering and most disease-free plants possible. Not necessarily better plants but more commercially available varieties are being promoted at the expense of many Irish cultivars.

The history of our Irish cultivars that classes them as heritage plants is not recognised as much as we, as a Society, would like. So, what classes them as a heritage plant? At its simplest it could be seen as an Irish bred cultivar and one that we want to preserve. But more than that – it is the legacy that has been left by our plant hunters, our botanic gardens, rose growers, daffodil breeders and all the Irish nurseries and private gardens now gone. It is important that the creations of our plantsmen and women are not lost nor the stories and connections forgotten.

We will all have our own connections to and memories of plants that make them special to us as individuals. A poignant illustration to me of a legacy left by one plantsman was the dedication of the *Escallonia* ‘C.F. Ball’ at Islandbridge War Memorial, Dublin. If you are not familiar with the story of Glasnevin’s Charles Fredrick Ball it is certainly one to follow up. However, it was concerning that there was difficulty in sourcing a plant for the occasion, and telling of the need for preservation.

It is not enough that we preserve the plants but we should know why we are preserving them and know as much about their history as we do about the plant. Consequently, it is journals like Moorea that contribute to the conservation of our heritage plants by recording and retaining the history of the plants, the places and the people. For some, however, their history has yet to start: we have new growers, new plant hunters, new and rejuvenated gardens, and new plants – Irish plants: plants that will become part of our history, become our heritage plants.

I will leave you with a quote taken from Heritage Irish Plants –*Plandaí Oidhreachta*

‘They are very much our plants, the plants of our island, of our gardens and of our people. They are special to us and we wish to grow and conserve them and to bring them to the attention of other gardeners so that they may also appreciate the wealth of plants which are a significant part of our heritage.’

(Paddy Tobin, 2016)

Best Regards and I hope you enjoy this 17th edition of *Moorea*.

Billy McCone

Chairman

Cover page: *Narcissus* ‘Lady Moore’ painted by Susan Sex

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MARY FORREST**FREDERIC MOORE - HIS SUPPORT FOR HORTICULTURE IN IRELAND AND BEYOND**

In the first issue of this journal, Charles Nelson explained how the title *Moorea* honoured the contribution of the Moore family, David (1807 – 1879); Charles (1820 – 1905); Frederick (1857-1949) and his wife Phylis, to botany and horticulture in Ireland and Australia (Nelson, 1982). Moore’s contribution to gardens and gardening is well recorded in Irish garden literature. His role in the development of the Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, their indoor and outdoor collections from 1879 – 1922 as Curator and later Keeper of the Gardens, is described by Nelson and Mc Cracken (1987) in *The Brightest Jewel*. Of his plantsmanship, J.W. Besant, Curator of the Botanic Gardens wrote ‘His eye was quick (to) out the really good plant, to assess its quality and appropriately appraise a telling garden effect’. (Besant, 1952). Moore also contributed both his expertise and plants, many new in cultivation, to gardens in Ireland. One example being Mount Usher and Moore (1952) recalled how he ‘kept them (Mount Usher) supplied with the names of interesting plants which I thought would succeed’. Moore had a long association with the Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland, being elected to Council in the 1890s, honorary secretary from 1906 – 1945 and President from 1945 – 1948 (Robins, 1979). In 1911 Frederick Moore was knighted for his services to horticulture.

What is less well known is Moore’s professional contribution to other aspects of horticulture in Ireland and beyond. Drawing primarily on reports in national and local newspapers and the horticultural trade press this article documents his contribution to the development of commercial horticulture, horticultural education, public parks and his support for allotments and local horticultural societies.

The Fruit Industry

Hon. Emily Lawless (1907) of Lyons House, Newcastle, Co. Dublin, wrote that the fruit and flower industries which were being fostered by the recently established Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction (DATI) ‘were vigorously helped forward’ by the Curator, Mr. Moore ‘both in the way of initiating industries of the kind at a distance, and of demonstrations carried on in the (Botanic) Gardens’. With the establishment of the DATI in 1901 schemes to promote agriculture and horticulture were introduced. A horticultural school was established in the Albert College, Glasnevin in 1902, where young men were trained in horticulture and fruit-growing. Moore remained in charge of this training until 1919 (Nelson and Mc Cracken, 1987, p. 201). In 1903 the Department introduced a scheme whereby farmers were given “modern” varieties for every old Irish apple they uprooted. So, called new varieties, Bramley’s Seedling, Annie Elizabeth, Gascoyne’s Scarlet and Golden Spire were trialled on seedling rootstocks by Moore at the Albert College. In 1906 Moore addressed the Committee of Inquiry into the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction and reported on the progress of fruit cultivation in Ireland (Anon., 1906). The

education of advisors was successful, by 1913 Mr. T.W. Russell, Vice-President of the DATI, could report that fifty-one of those trained in the Albert College were employed as instructors with county committees of agriculture (Anon., 1913).

Trade Associations

Moore was also supportive of trade associations. In 1912 he addressed the annual meeting of the Ulster Fruit Growers' Association held in Portadown, Co. Armagh, on the topic 'The cultivation of hardy fruits for market purposes in the eastern portion of the United States and Canada'. Moore had recently visited this region and in his lecture, he compared and contrasted production with that in Ireland. Also, resulting from this visit he gave a lecture to the Irish Gardeners' Association entitled 'Gardening in America' in which he told his audience that 'America was not the El Dorado for the British (*sic*) emigrant gardener' (Anon., 1912). An account by Byrne (2015) of this Association was given in the *Newsletter of the Irish Garden Plant Society*.

In 1906/7 The Irish Gardeners' Association and Benevolent Society initiated a series of lectures at the Royal College of Science in Dublin and established the Burbidge Memorial Library which was available to members. Also in that year Moore was President of the Association (Anon., 1907). In 1911, he spoke to the Association on the topic of 'Flowering' Shrubs which he illustrated with lantern slides taken by Mr. C.F. Ball, Assistant Keeper of the Botanic Gardens (Anon., 1911). In February 1909 Moore went to Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire) to address the recently formed Kingstown Gardeners' Society on the topic of 'Water in Gardening' (Anon., 1909).

Vegetables for Home Consumption

Allotments or 'plots' as they were colloquially known were established in Dublin by the Vacant Land Cultivation Society in 1910 (Forrest, 2011). Two years later speaking at the Annual General Meeting of the Vacant Land Cultivation Society in 1912, Moore considered that an Allotment Act, which would provide both land and fixity of tenure for ploholders was necessary in Ireland (Anon., 1912a). The Acquisition of Lands (Allotment) Act was eventually enacted in 1926. In 1916 he reported to the annual general meeting about the progress of allotments in Dublin (Anon., 1916). In 1917 due to concerns about the security of food supply the DATI and the Local Government Board supported the development of allotments for food production. Local authorities such as the Pembroke Urban District Council (the Ballsbridge area of Dublin) rented or provided land in their own ownership for allotments. In July 1917, a competition for ploholders was judged by Moore (Anon., 1917).

His adjudication duties were not limited to allotments. Moore was one of the adjudicators at the annual show of the Stillorgan and Foxrock Horticultural Society held in July 1911. He commented that he had not seen a better display of herbaceous plants (Anon., 1911a). In 1932, ten years after he had retired as Keeper of the Botanic Gardens, he and Lady Moore judged at the Annual County Fermanagh Flower Show held in Enniskillen. They were so impressed with the standard of exhibits that they presented additional prizes themselves (Anon., 1932). Moore was a member of the international jury at the Ghent Show held in

April 1923 (Anon., 1923). This Belgian international horticultural exhibition was first held in 1878 and continues to the present day.

Parks in Dublin

Moore's expertise was sought in the development of public parks. In 1915 the Cleansing Committee of Dublin Corporation offered prizes of £50, £10 and £5 for the design of a 55 acre public park on reclaimed slobland at Fairview, Dublin. The City Architect, Mr. C.F. Mc Carthy and Moore reviewed the submissions and awarded first place to the Waterford firm Messrs. Wm Power and Co. nurserymen and seedsmen. The plan included extensive sports fields, a children's playground, bandstand, boating lake and model yacht pond. The plan also included an avenue with four rows of standard trees running from Annesley Bridge to Howth Road. Much of the plan was implemented and the avenue has become a 'striking feature' of the Park (Anon., 1915 and Anon., 1915a).

In 1925 a proposal from the National War Memorial Committee to convert Merrion Square, into a memorial park to remember those who died in the First World War was presented to the Dublin Commissioners. Those preparing this proposal asked Moore to cost the maintenance of the park and had estimated a figure of £1200 per annum (Anon., 1925). While this proposal was rejected, Moore was involved in the development of a memorial park at another site at Islandbridge, Dublin.

The War Memorial Islandbridge, Dublin with a central lawn, war stone, memorial cross and circular pools, flanked on either side by sunken gardens was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens. He insisted that 'the garden be properly planted'. A Planting Committee comprising Sir Frederick Moore, Mr. J.W. Besant, Moore's successor at the Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin; Mr. A.F. Pearson, Assistant Superintendent of the Phoenix Park and Mr. Robert Anderson, the former Superintendent, was established. Moore (Anon.1937) reported that due to poor weather conditions it had been impossible to sow grass on the central lawn. However, 4,000 hybrid tea roses, other roses, *Griselinia* hedging and groups of trees had been planted with success.

While contemporary accounts in the newspapers and trade press have provided information about the contribution of Moore to various horticultural activities they have also thrown light on the many organisations and professional colleagues who benefited from Moore's expertise.

Acknowledgements

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LORD MILO TALBOT C.M.G., F.L.S.



The Talbot Botanic Garden at Malahide Castle, Malahide, Co Dublin is ranked among the best in Britain and Ireland for its collection of Southern Hemisphere plants particularly from Australasia and South America. The garden is situated 16 km north of Dublin City and is largely the creation of Lord Milo Talbot during the years 1950 - 1973. During this period, the ornamental garden of one acre (.4ha) had increased to 20 acres (8.4ha) at the time of his death.



Fig. 2

Malahide Castle

Today there are approximately 5,000 species and varieties of plants at Malahide indicating that Lord Talbot was a very keen plantsman, botanist and avid plant collector. Not only did he leave a garden but also a six-volume publication *The Endemic Flora of Tasmania*¹, which will live on and be a lasting tribute to his memory. This article examines how in a short period a novice gardener became one of the most respected gardeners, plant collectors and an authority on the Tasmanian or Antipodean flora of his time. Lord Milo Talbot was a quiet, shy retiring man. He was born Milo John Reginald Talbot on the 1st of December 1912 in London, the only son of Colonel the Honourable Milo George Talbot and Eva Joicey. Educated at Winchester College and Trinity College, Cambridge he read economics and history, graduating with a first in 1935. He entered the British Diplomatic Service in 1937, moving to the Ministry of Economic Warfare and he then served at the British Embassy in Ankara, Turkey He joined the British Legation in Lebanon and was Ambassador to Laos,

¹ Stone, M, Curtis, *The Endemic Flora of Tasmania*, 6 Volumes, Ariel Press, London, 1967-1978

South East Asia from 1954 to 1956. In 1948, he inherited from his cousin the Irish baronial estate at Malahide, Co. Dublin². (Fig 2) and became the seventh Baron Talbot of Malahide in the Irish Peerage and the fourth Baron Talbot de Malahide in the Peerage of the United Kingdom, a title that became extinct upon his death.

This estate was once part of a much larger estate of 600 acres (250 hectares) which was granted to Richard Talbot by King Henry 2nd in 1170 in recognition of his services in the conquest of Ireland. The entire property remained almost intact until the 19th century when parcels of land were sold for development reducing the estate to 300 acres (125 hectares). While Ambassador to Laos Milo inherited the family estate in Tasmania which the family acquired in the 1820s and named after the Irish ancestral estate. (Fig. 3)



Fig. 3

Malahide Tasmania

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Lord Talbot resigned from the British Diplomatic Service in 1956 to manage his estates that were at opposite ends of the globe. He was now free to indulge his hobbies, to travel which he did frequently, to collect seed, but more importantly he had time to develop and concentrate on his Irish garden at Malahide Castle. Despite taking a very special interest in the native flora of Tasmania and planting many Tasmanian species at Malahide, he did not create a native plant collection in their native country. He died in 1973 while on a cruise

² Stearn, W.T., A tribute to Lord Talbot de Malahide 1912-1973, *The Endemic Flora of Tasmania*, vol. 5, p.309, Ariel Press, London 1975

around the Greek Islands.

Lord Talbot admitted that he was an inveterate collector and, like so many collectors, his collections changed as he matured, but one which he held for many years was a stamp collection. His desire to have complete sets of a subject with the emphasis on rarity was a trait that he carried into plant collecting. It is notable that throughout the garden many genera are very well represented through their numerous species. His interest in stamps was waning just as he was inheriting the Irish estate and he wrote:

*"I inherited a house and with it a garden; and, perhaps more important still, they were in a climate favourable to growing many of the tenderer and less common plants. An interest in gardening developed and, inevitably, this took over the years increasingly form of collecting plants, especially the rarer and more delicate kind."*³

Lord Milo Talbot may not have collected the most profitable stamps, but the discipline he gained from his various collections meant that details of all plants in the garden were meticulously recorded on index cards giving precise information as to their origin, whether collected, purchased or received as gifts. The date that each plant was received, sown or planted as well as donations to friends, other gardens or institutions were all recorded. (Fig. 4 and appendix 1) In this respect he was to follow in the footsteps of previous Irish plant collectors such as Sir Hans Sloane of Chelsea Physic Garden, Lord Arthur Rawdon of Moira, Augustine Henry and Dr Patrick Browne who wrote *The Civil and Natural History of Jamaica*.⁴ Each had collected and kept meticulous records of his plants.

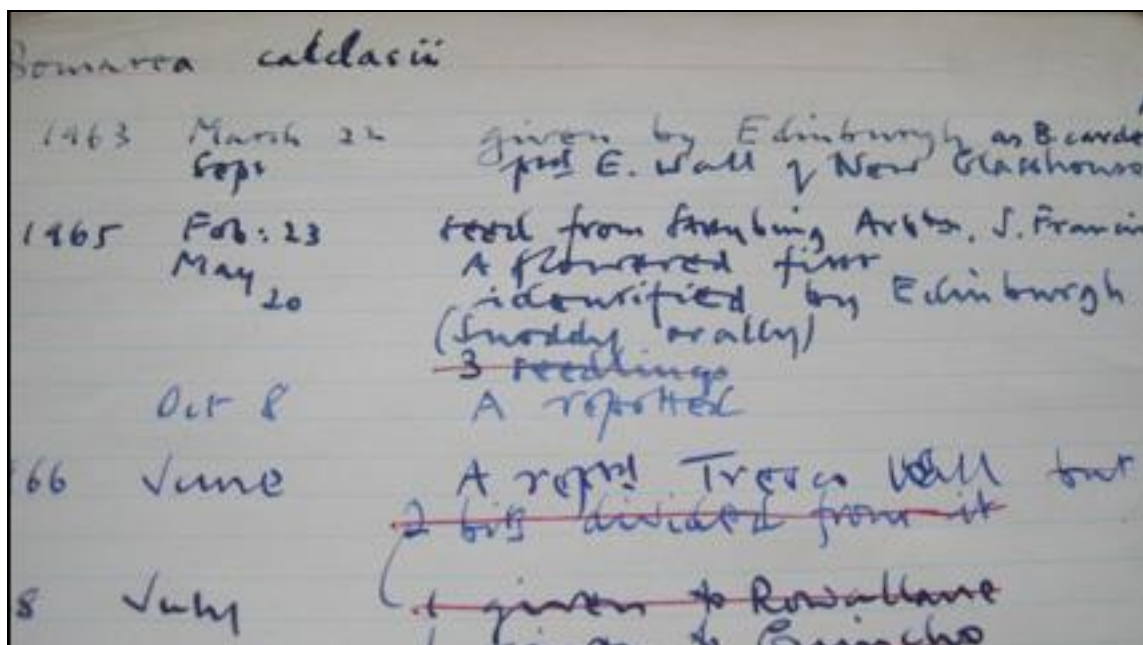


Fig. 4 Index card of *Bomarea caldasii* (syn *B. kalbreyeri*)

³ Stone, M., Curtis, Genesis, *The Endemic Flora of Tasmania*, vol.1, p.11, Ariel Press, London, 1967

⁴ Nelson, E.C., Dr. Browne's Firecracker, *An Irishman's Cuttings*, p.72, Collins Press, Cork, 2009

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was the era of the great plant hunters who travelled widely. Sir Joseph Banks (1743-1820) who sailed south of the equator with Captain James Cooke on the 'Endeavour' (1768 -71) to Australia; David Douglas (1799-1834) who travelled west to North America and Ernest Wilson (1876-1930) who travelled east to China. Great quantities of plants were collected; some were dried as specimens for herbaria and others sent to the great gardens such as Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the Royal Horticultural Society Garden, Wisley, England and many nurseries, in particular, the Veitch Nurseries. Plant collecting in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was a difficult undertaking, but by the mid twentieth century travel was much easier with greater access to more remote areas. Lord Milo Talbot travelled with colleagues on his plant trips. Seed and plants were gathered, but his chief aim was to secure plants that he considered would survive in the mild equable climate at Malahide Castle. One such collecting trip was a visit to the Chatham Islands where he accompanied 'a group of amateur naturalists sponsored by the Wanganui Museum'⁵. He was aware that Major A. A. Dorrien Smith of Tresco Abbey, the Scilly Isles, had been on the Island 60 years previously and collected more garden worthy plants such as *Corokia macrocarpa*, *Geranium traversii*, *Hebe dieffenbachii*, *Moyosotidium hortensia*, *Olearia chathamica*, *O. semidentata*, and *Senecio huntii*. Except for *Corokia* and *Olearia traversii*, the other species needed to be propagated regularly as they did not prove totally hardy. *Olearia traversii* has proved to be extremely hardy and great hedges of this plant will be seen along the Irish western seaboard, where it has shown itself totally resistant to Atlantic Gales. *Olearia semidentata* (Fig. 5) is known to have both pure white and pink forms Eventually, one plant of the pure white form of *O. semidentata* was found and dug up but did not survive. Other plants collected on this trip were *Astelia chathamica*, *Gentiana chathamica* and *Aciphylla traversii*. Today this type of collecting is not permitted under the 'Convention on Biological Diversity' where only limited plant collecting is permitted by foreigners to conserve the species but more importantly the biodiversity of the area.

Talbot also botanized in Chile. In an article entitled *A Dream Come True*,⁶ he writes of a trip that so many gardeners would love to have experienced. There, he encountered in their native habitats many species that grow happily in Irish gardens, such as *Nothofagus dombeyi*, *Desfontainia spinosa*, *Drimys winteri*, *Maytenus boaria*, *Lomatia ferruginea*, *Azara lanceolata* and *Puya alpestris* (Fig. 6). His listings so closely echoed the Malahide Plant Catalogue that the author wondered if in fact it was a trip to Chile or just a dream as he walked in his garden. A later article by Martin Gardiner of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, giving a similar listing confirmed the comprehensive Chilean plant collection at Malahide Castle.⁷

⁵ Talbot, M, *Royal Horticultural Society Journal*, XCV August 1970. pt.8, p.370-373, London

⁶ Talbot M. *A Dream Come True*, *Royal Horticultural society of Ireland Year Book*, 1963, p. 25, Dublin.

⁷ Gardiner M, Series of articles on the collaboration between Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and Chilean authorities, *Plantsman*, New series vol. 4, pt.4, p.193, RHS Media, Peterborough.



Fig. 5

Olearia semidentata

To accommodate Milo's growing collection of plants a new area of 16 acres (8 hectares) known as the 'West Lawn', (Figs. 7 & 7a) was developed. The area was an open expanse of lawn, to the west and north of the castle and included the main drive to the castle. The area was already bounded in parts by woodland but sections were left free to enjoy the views to the Wicklow Mountains and particularly the 'Sugar Loaf Mountain' to the south and views to the Irish Sea to the north. The design took the form of three large triangular sections, with two main grass rides. Each section was subdivided into several large beds. These very large beds were ideal for the larger shrubs as they could be grown to almost full height and spread without constant pruning. The boundaries were planted with *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* with *C. lawsoniana* 'Columnaris' at either side of the north end of the two grass rides. This allowed a view out to the sea from the Drawing Room of the castle. Several plants of *Olearia macrodonta* 'Major' were planted in the very large flower beds to give added shelter from the south-westerly winds. The soil is heavy alkaline clay so it precluded the growing of calcifuge plants. The loss of this group was unimportant as great collections of genera often overlooked in favour of their showier cousins were planted. Genera that were particularly well represented were *Deutzia*, *Philadelphus*, *Escallonia*, *Berberis*, *Euphorbia*, *Nothofagus*, *Eucalyptus*, *Hoheria*, *Myrtus*, and the genus *Olearia* of which he was particularly fond. Within the Walled Garden of 4 acres (1.6 hectares), slowly the vegetable sections decreased in size as he commandeered more and more of the Garden for less hardy plants.



Fig. 6

Puya alpestris

Lord Talbot was not just interested in creating a great botanical garden, but in trialling plants from the southern hemisphere to test their hardiness. He wrote several articles in the RHS Journals describing his success or failure with several species. The genus *Olearia* is native to New Zealand, Australia, Tasmania and the Chatham Islands and most of the species were believed to be too tender for the British Isles. Having experienced two very cold winters 1961/62 and 1962/63 when temperatures fell to -6°C he noted the species and varieties that survived the winters relatively unscathed.⁸

⁸ Talbot M, The genus *Olearia*, *Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland Year Book 1964*, pp.31-42 Dublin and RHS Journal vol. XC, pt.5, pp. 207-217 and pt. 6, pp. 245-250



Fig. 7

View of West Lawn (early 1950's)

Photo by Lord Talbot



Fig. 7a

View of West Lawn (1995)

Almost thirty years later when once again the temperature fell to -7°C the information was updated demonstrating the hardiness of over fifty species and varieties, given that all the species and varieties had been planted by Lord Talbot prior to 1973.⁹ In recognition of his great interest in this genus *Olearia* 'Talbot de Malahide' was named in his honour.

Other articles on the hardiness of plants included one on *Eucalyptus*¹⁰ in which a comparison was made between similar species growing at Malahide and Glendoick, Scotland. In both gardens, the seed had been donated by Mr Euan Cox thus ensuring a more accurate trial allowing for slight seedling variation. Despite the differing climates in both countries, the two gardens demonstrated that many species were much hardier than had been thought and that wind chill not frost was the biggest factor in the death of such plants.



Fig. 8

Bomarea caldasii (syn *B. kalbreyeri*)

Other articles¹¹ included one on *Anigozanthos preissii* from south-west Australia; *Geranium palmatum* from Madeira. *Bomarea caldasii* (syn *B. kalbreyeri*) from Columbia. (Fig. 8) a climbing member of the Amaryllidaceae was planted on a south facing wall and proved hardy, flowering freely and setting seed, so hardy that a request was made to have seed sent

⁹ James A, The Hardiness of the Genus *Olearia*, *Moorea* vol. 13, pp. 8-15, Irish Garden Plant Society, Dublin, 1998

¹⁰ Cox E.M.H. and Cox P.A., *Eucalyptus* in East-Central Scotland, pp28-31 and Talbot M., *Eucalyptus* at Malahide Castle, Dublin, Royal horticultural Society Journal, vol.88, pt. 1, Jan. 1963, pp.28-32, London

¹¹ Talbot M, *RHS Journal*, *A. preissii*, vol. XC111, pt. 11, pp.484-485, 1968; *G. palmatum*, vol. XV1, pt. 11, p. 484, 1966 and *B. caldasii*, vol. LXXXIX, pt. 12, pp. 499-500, 1964, London

back to Buenos Aires.

The Talbot Botanic Garden is renowned for its very fine plant collection and a tribute to the achievement of one man, but a more lasting memorial is the publication of the six volume *The Endemic Flora of Tasmania*¹² which was conceived and sponsored by Lord Talbot. His interest in Tasmanian plants sprung from their unusual characteristics so different from European plants. Realizing their vulnerability, a pictorial record would at least prove their existence. As with his hobby of collecting stamps to own complete sets, so too he wished to have a complete set of plant portraits of all the plants unique to Tasmania was the inspiration to commission a set of paintings by Miss Margaret Stones. She had painted many illustrations for Curtis' *Botanical Magazine* published on behalf of the Royal Botanic Gardens (R.B.G.), Kew. Eventually, the idea came to publish a complete set of the endemic plants of Tasmania just one hundred years after the publication of J. D. Hooker's *Flora Tasmaniae* (1855-60) with illustrations by Walter Hood Fitch (1817-92). Six volumes were published but Lord Talbot died just as the fourth volume was being printed and the final volumes were completed by his sister, The Honourable Rose Talbot. Nearly all the plants illustrated were painted from living material which came directly from Tasmania, either collected by Lord Talbot or members of local plant societies – the Society for Growing Australian plants (Tasmanian Region) and the Launceston Field Naturalists. As Margaret Stones was based at Kew, all material collected was carefully packed and dispatched by plane to her. Some material also came from Malahide, R.B.G Kew and several other gardens. The botanical and ecological text was written by Ms Winifred Curtis (1905-2005) who interrupted her writing of *The Students' Flora of Tasmania* to complete this project. The Flora echoed a similar production *Flora Graeca* illustrating the native flora of Greece, a set of ten volumes, it was sponsored by John Southcorp (1758-96) a botanist who held the Teraradian chair at Oxford.

Lord Talbot's contribution to the plant world is often not fully recognized, yet in *The Plantsman*, Eric Hsu lists Malahide, as one of the more important public gardens for the collection of Tasmanian plants, many of Lord Milo Talbot's introductions.¹³ Roy Lancaster in the RHS Journal January 2017 writes of *Diselma archeri*, a little-known Tasmanian conifer which Lord Talbot had introduced.¹⁴ He had the plant collected and forwarded to Kew who in turn forwarded material to Hillier who propagated it. A plant was returned to Malahide, but sadly did not survive. At the time of his death in 1973 he had amassed a collection of plants more than 5,000 taxa, a remarkable achievement for one man in less than twenty years.

¹² Stone M, Curtis W, *The Endemic Flora of Tasmania*, p.11, The Ariel Press, London, 1967

¹³ Hsu E, Plant introductions from Tasmania, *The Plantsman*, New series, vol. 8, pt.3, pp.179-180, RHS Media, Peterborough,

¹⁴ Lancaster R, *Diselma archeri*, *The Garden*, RHS, vol. 142, pt. 1, p. 42, RHS Media, Peterborough

Appendix 1

Olearia phlogopappa ^{var} *subrepanda* 144
 May 28 given by Trosser
~~May 21~~ ~~pld W. Wall & Gdn~~
 March 24 seed 1 collected in Ramshorn Range, NZ
 Feb 2 seed 1 collected in Australia (Parcupin Range, M^r Kozminko - Jan 245)
 Jan 10 dgs 1 collected by Pratima High
 Tommaso on Jan 3rd died
 March 6 dgs 1 collected by Pratima High
 c. 3750 ft, on Feb 24 died
 seed ditto
 9 seedlings (3,600 ft)
 5 seedlings
 A dead - anyhow incorrect

TBG Card index - *Olearia phlogopappa sub repanda*

Eucalyptus rubida 2
 1457 Jan 3 seed from Glandorick
 1460 10 8⁺ seedlings 5 died seedling
 April 15 1 pld this 1000m
 Sept 13 1 given to Shuckleson
~~24 12~~ 1 pld 1000m (New)
 2 given to Maskell
 winter 2 given to Webb (T.C.)
 62 Nov 26 1 given back by Webb (T.C.)
 63 June 21 pld for? (E. Foster)
 1 July 15 2 given by Kinteady
 Oct 26 1 pld W. Lawson
 died

TBG Card Index - *Eucalyptus rubida*

Appendix 2 List of cups won by Lord Talbot de Malahide at the Royal Horticultural Shows

RHSI Shows, 1961-68– Years won after cup name

Countess of Rosse Perpetual Challenge Cup – 1961.

Countess of Rosse presented this cup in 1949 as an amateur cup for the best display of three different varieties of hardy flowering shrubs

Awarded at the Spring Show for *hardy shrub flowers*, three vases tastefully arranged, one kind in each vase & each vase different (Rhododendrons & roses excluded).

Raymond Stephenson Perpetual Challenge Cup – 1961, 1963/64 & 1968.

Presented by Mr. Raymond Stephenson in 1929 for hardy flowers.

Awarded at the Spring Show in 1963 for 12 kinds of *hardy perennials grown in the open*, one vase of each and in 1968 for 3 kinds of hardy perennials (shrubs excluded) grown in the open (maximum size of vase 12"). This cup was sometimes called by mistake the Miss R.H. Shackleton cup in the show schedules because she had won it outright on a few occasions & represented it.

Tully Perpetual Challenge Cup: 1963/64 & 1968

Presented by the Tully Nursery, Kildare in 1911 for alpine plants.

Awarded at the Spring Show for bowl of *cut flowers of alpine plants (including dwarf shrubs)*. Arrangement not to exceed 12" in width & 9" in height. In 1968 it was presented for the most meritorious exhibit in the Alpines & Dwarf Shrubs section (17 classes).

Captain Riall, D.L., Old Conna Hill, Bray won the cup in 1921/23 & so won it outright. It was missing from shows from 1923/52 but reappeared in 1953 after it was presented by Mrs. Riall & referred to afterwards for a number of years as "Old Conna" Cup. However for those years the winners' names are on the Tully Cup.

Major Butler Perpetual Challenge Cup – 1967

Presented by Mrs. Butler of Priestown House, Co. Meath in 1931 for primula exhibits.

Awarded at the Spring Show for three pans of *hardy primulas*, each different.

Gabbett Perpetual Challenge Cup – 1968.

Presented by Mrs. Gabbett in 1950 for narcissi.

Awarded at the Spring show for six cultivars of *narcissi grown in the open* & selected from not fewer than three divisions, three stems of each.

Mrs. S. Hayes Perpetual Challenge Cup – 1968.

Presented by Mrs. S. Hayes in 1950

Awarded at the Spring Show for "*Choice*" *Rock plants* (Primulas & bulbous plants excluded), three pans.

Earl of Rosse Perpetual Challenge Cup – 1961, 1963/64

Presented by the Earl of Rosse in 1952 to the Rose Group for species roses.

Awarded at the Rose Show for *species roses*, three vases with at least three sprays to each vase, each vase different. Roses found wild in Ireland & British Isles excluded.

at the Summer Show influenced his winning of the RDS Cup. He also may have won some of the non-cup prizes.

deVesci Perpetual Challenge Cup -- 1968.

Presented by Frances, Countess deVesci in 1953 for award to the exhibitor of the best collection of fuchsias

Awarded at the Summer Show for *standard fuchsia*, three pots not exceeding eight inches, each different

Miscellaneous information

In the 1959 Year Book Lord Talbot was mentioned in the editor's notes under "Seen at the Shows". At the Spring Show relating to hardy shrubs his *Cytisus proliferus* was commented on & at the Late Spring Show relating to the "Table for non competitive exhibits" his *Pimelea ferruginea* was awarded a Cultural Certificate. He also won a 1st Prize for a vase of *Rosa xanthina spontanea*.



Malahide Castle

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mr. Kevin Halpenny, Senior Park Superintendent of Fingal Co. Council, Dr. Mary Forrest of UCD who informed me of the Article on Eucalyptus, Colette Edwards, Librarian, National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, The Royal Horticultural Society Librarians, The Administrator of Malahide Castle, the Librarians in the Swords Public Library and Ms Betty Dwyer, Archivist, Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland.

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'La Verna', Mountgorry, Swords, Co. Dublin.

PADDY TOBIN**IRISH HERITAGE PLANTS - PLANDAÍ OIDREACHTA**

An Irish Society of Botanical Artists (ISBA) was first mooted only as recently as 2012, when a group of botanical artists met, by invitation of the National Botanic Gardens at Glasnevin, and considered forming such a society. Officially formed in March 2014 society members quickly moved to undertake a major project illustrating an alphabet of native Irish plants. The exhibition – *Aibítir: The Irish Alphabet in Botanical Art* - was launched at the National Botanic Gardens by Dr. Shirley Sherwood and afterwards travelled to several other locations around the country where it received great praise. Buoyed by the success of its first major project, the ISBA greeted a suggestion that they might undertake a similar project to illustrate Irish garden plants with warm enthusiasm and, so, the *Irish Heritage Plants – Plandaí Oidhreachta* project was begun.

As with the *Aibítir* project, staff of the National Botanic Gardens were involved and the first meeting to discuss the project was held in Glasnevin with Brendan Sayers and Alexandra Caccamo, of the Botanic Gardens and also Chairperson of the ISBA at the time, along with Jane Stark of the ISBA (and later Chairperson) and Paddy Tobin, then Chairperson of the Irish Garden Plant Society.

Success brings confidence and it was quickly decided that this project should expand on the first and, along with an exhibition of the artwork, should include the publication of a book, a decision influenced by the popularity of the exhibition catalogue for *Aibítir* and the fact that Jane Stark had the experience and skills needed to design and prepare such a publication.

Among other aims, the Irish Garden Plant Society wishes to promote an interest in garden plants of Irish origin and to raise interest in them among Irish gardeners. Dr. E. Charles Nelson's *A Heritage of Beauty* has been the constant companion and immediate point of reference for anybody interested in such plants since its publication in 2000. However, it was felt that rather than refer back to the plants included there the emphasis should be on plants introduced since that date. The work of breeding Irish plants is not simply an historic activity but one which, thankfully, continues to be a vibrant and significant pursuit for many of our plant nurseries.

These thoughts guided us in our selection of plants for the project and we were delighted to find there was a more than ample range from which we could select. Almost seventy plants were chosen and allocated to artists for illustration. The sourcing and distribution of plants fell mainly to Brendan Sayers. Some were easily dealt with; plants in pots could be given to artists so that they would have them in their studios; bulbs, such as daffodils and snowdrops, could be lifted (even posted abroad) and grown on in the artists' own gardens but artists often had to travel to view their subjects – trees and large shrubs, for example. As the plants went through their seasons, the artists went through their lengthy process – and it has amazed me

just how lengthy a process it is – of preliminary sketches and studies, precise colour matching and mixing, development of composition on the page and on to final work. Each completed work marked progress and gave great joy and encouragement as we saw our Irish plants portrayed so beautifully.

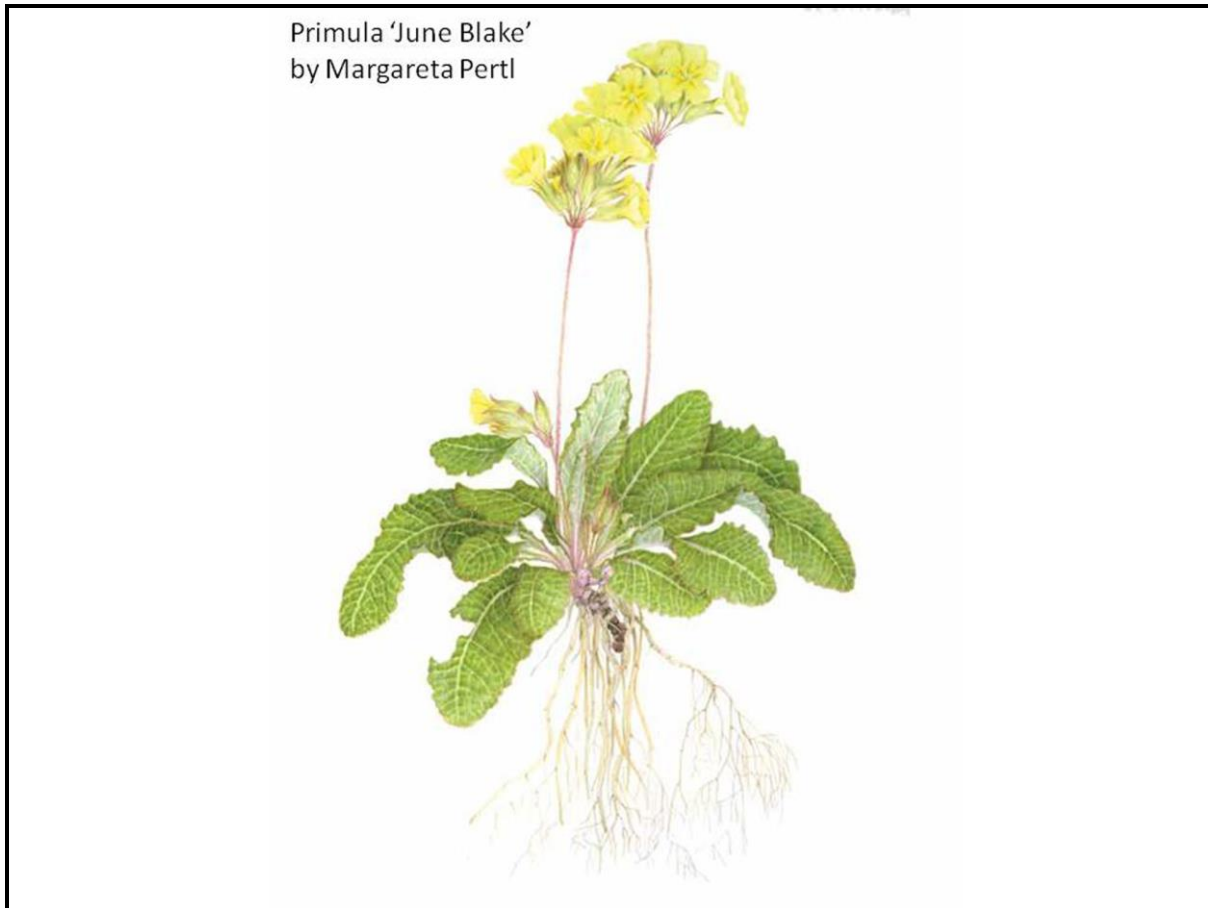


Fig. 1

For many years, Joe Kennedy has worked on breeding a range of primroses with traits valued by Irish gardeners for generations – good health, good vigour and a pleasing contrast between attractive flowers and flattering foliage. Pat FitzGerald, of FitzGerald Nurseries in Stonyford, Co. Kilkenny, appreciated the beauty of Joe's primroses and with the expertise of his nursery brought them to worldwide markets. It has been one of the great successes of Irish garden plants and, surely, an encouragement to others to follow suit. Many of the Kennedy primulas are illustrated in the book: 'Dunbeg', 'Carrigdale' and 'Claddagh' among them while there is also space for older treasured cultivars, such as 'Julius Caesar' and a thoroughly recent foundingling from June Blake's garden, *Primula* 'June Blake'. (Fig. 1)

Paul and Orla Woods, of Kilmurry Nursery near Gorey, have always realised there was an appreciation and market for good garden plants of Irish origin and have, after several years of trial and selection, introduced a delightful range of cultivars and provided several subjects for

the project - their two small *Agapanthus*, 'Kilmurry White' and 'Kilmurry Blue' along with their *Iris chrysographes* 'Kilmurry Black' were especially beautiful.

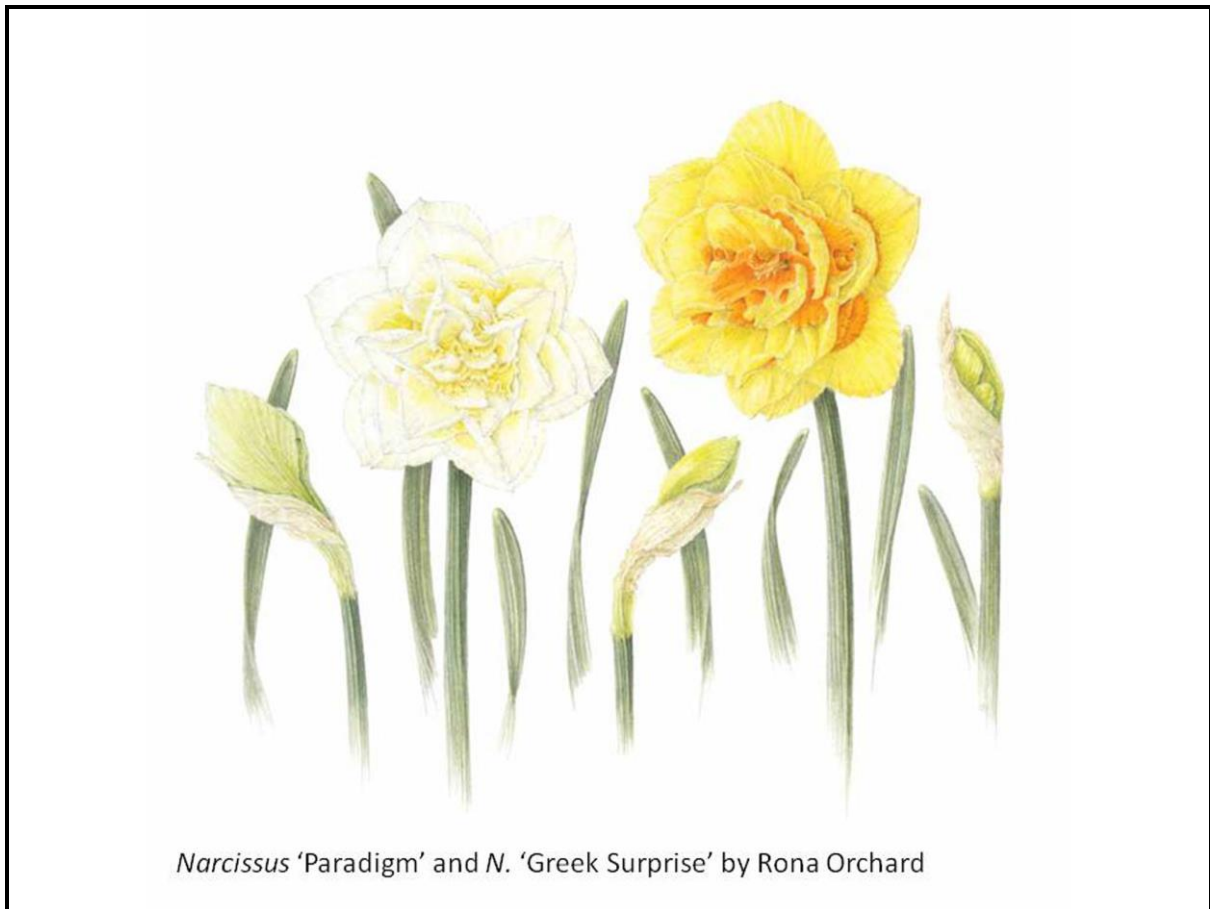


Fig. 2

Daffodils have always grown well in Irish conditions and there has been a strong and successful tradition of daffodil breeding. In his article, Brian Duncan recalled some of the great names of Irish daffodils – William Baylor Hartland in Cork, Miss Fanny Currey in Lismore, Co. Waterford, Guy L. Wilson in Broughshane, Co. Antrim, J. Lionel Richardson in Waterford, W. J. Dunlop, Tom Bloomer, Kate Reid from the Ballymena/Broughshane area of Co. Antrim and Sir Frank Harrison in Killinchy, Co. Down. Brian has continued this tradition and sees the mantle passing now to Niall Watson and other enthusiasts. There was no shortage of daffodils suitable for inclusion.

Despite many years of being out of fashion, dahlias have once again found a new popularity among gardeners. Thankfully, we have had enthusiasts who continued to grow and breed dahlias in those doldrum years. It was those who bred for show purposes who must most especially be credited with this work and, one of these, Alick J. Branigan, tells of his passion for dahlias which began in 1971 and continues to the present day. Marie de Lacy's portrait of his *Dahlia* 'Jim Branigan', named for his father, caught everybody's eye at the exhibition

with its vibrant red semi-cactus flowers. The work of other breeders is also described and several of their creations included in the dahlias selected for illustration.

Sweet Pea enthusiasts, Chris McAleer and Sydney Harrod have given us a selection of beautiful blooms which not only grace the show benches but also our gardens. Sydney named a series after Irish gardens – ‘Castlewellan’, ‘Glasnevin’ and ‘Rowallane’, for example, a group illustrated by Susan Sex while Chris’s ‘Bridget McAleer’ and ‘Josie’ show that the tradition continues and that Irish breeders continue to produce flowers of exquisite beauty.

There are many old Irish snowdrop cultivars which continued to be cherished by galanthophiles at home and abroad while we are also fortunate to have some recent introductions of similar status. Susan Sex has illustrated *Galanthus* ‘Cicely Hall’ and another of Primrose Hill origin, ‘The Whopper’ and Shevaun Doherty has painted two more recently named cultivars, ‘Lady Moore’ (Fig. 3) and ‘Longraigue’. Another Primrose Hill snowdrop, ‘Ruby Baker’, named for an English enthusiast, is illustrated by Loredana Geninazza while Mary McInerney gave us ‘Kildare’, a snowdrop found by the same Ruby Baker. Snowdrop enthusiasts take note of the smallest detail to distinguish one cultivar from another – and, at times, the differences are very small indeed – yet the artists captured not only the fine details of each plant but also individual vibes.



Fig. 3 *Galanthus* ‘Lady Moore’

Paddy Tobin

We don’t have a strong tradition of breeding iris in Ireland, but Charles Nelson recalled some significant and beautiful cultivars from Bertram Long who spent many years breeding bearded iris. His ‘High Command’, ‘War and Peace’ and ‘Killiney’ (Fig. 4) were especially admired and are among the few surviving examples of his work.

Trees and shrubs form the backbone of any garden and Seamus O'Brien presents us with a selection of the best of Irish origins. *Betula* 'White Light', a cross between *B. costata* and *B. utilize* 'Jacquemontii' made by the late John Buckley of Birdhill in Co. Tipperary is one of the most beautiful introductions of recent years and is wonderfully illustrated by Fionnuala Broughan's pencilwork. *Sorbus* 'Autumn Spire' was a seedling selected at Flannery's Nursery in Co. Kildare and its tidy columnar habit will make it popular in the smaller garden particularly while Yanny Petters' illustration shows that autumn is its best season. *Acer palmatum* 'Senkaki' may have changed name to 'Sango-Kaku' but the beauty of its butter-yellow autumn foliage and scarlet winter twigs remain as permanent as ever and Mary Dillon has caught this delicate beauty wonderfully. Although the garden is presently in a time of change, it is heartening to see that the breeding of outstanding rhododendrons continues at Mount Congreve Gardens in Waterford where Michael White, Garden Curator, has introduced another exceptional rhododendron, 'President Michael D. Higgins', named to commemorate a visit by the President and this plant was illustrated by Breda Malone.

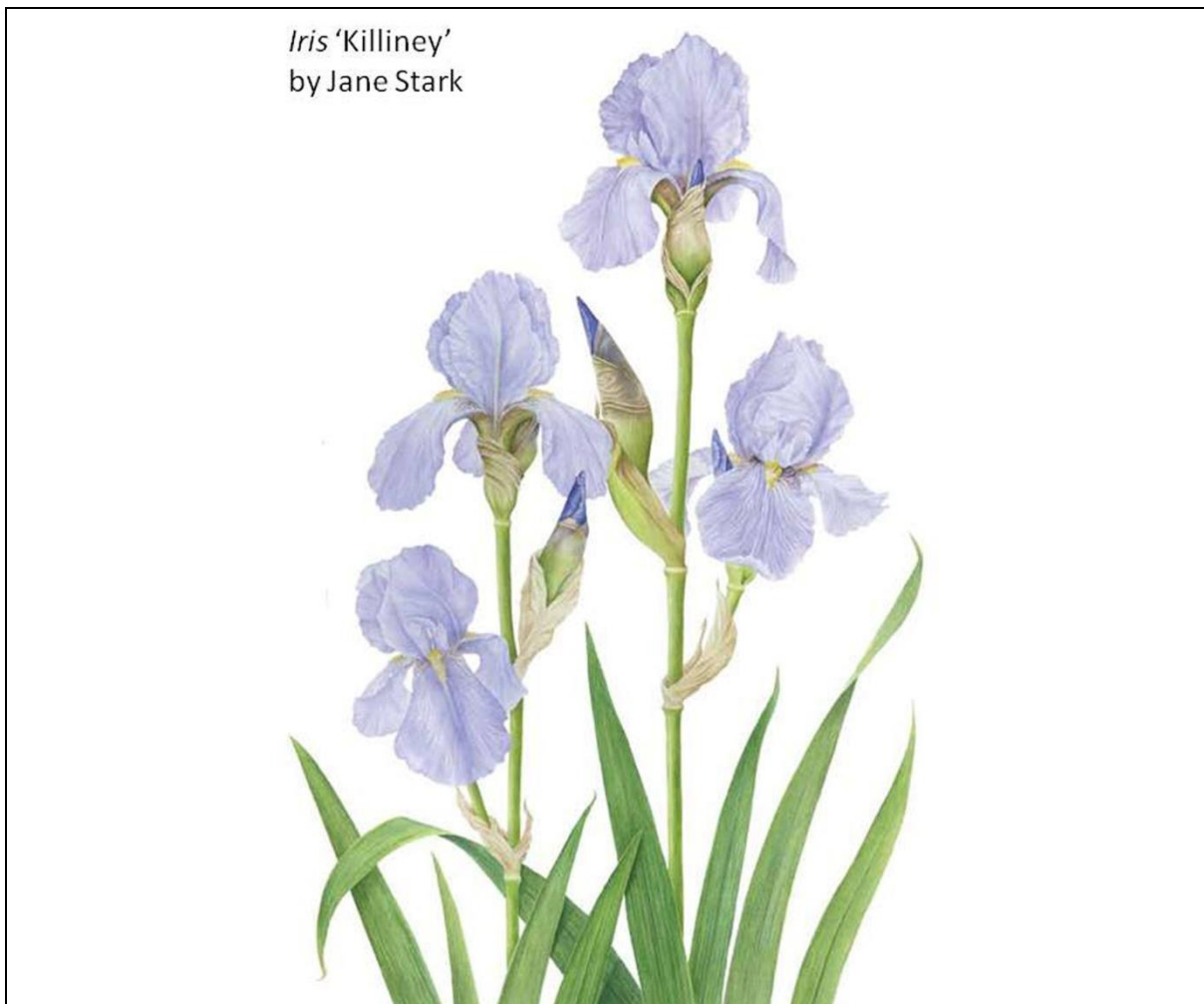


Fig. 4

Dr. E. Charles Nelson's Foreword outlines developments over the centuries in the recording, and portrayal of Irish plants from the etching of *Euphorbia hyberna* by Professor Johann Jacob Dillenius (1689 - 1747) which appeared in his two-volume work *Hortus Elthamensis* in 1732 to the work of artists such as Raymond Piper, Wendy Walsh, Deborah Lambkin, Daphne Levinge, Frances Poskitt and Susan Sex and now, of course, the many members of the Irish Society of Botanical Artists. Irish botanical art is enthusiastically and energetically alive and well and, through this volume, the beauty of Irish garden plants has been brought beautifully to a wide audience.

It has been a pleasure to have participated in this project; to have worked with the members of the ISBA and, especially, to have worked with Jane Stark as she coordinated artists, arranged the scanning of the artwork and prepared the text for printing. Her contribution was enormous. I was especially delighted to have been kept abreast of the works of Shevaun Doherty and Fionnuala Broughan as they developed over many months – this, I felt, was an enormous pleasure and privilege and I am very thankful to them and far better informed about the work of botanical artists. Charles Nelson spearheaded the formation of the Irish Garden Plant Society and continues to give his support generously and without hesitation. His support and encouragement for this project is greatly appreciated. A significant contribution from An Bord Bia, facilitated by Carol Marks, helped finance the project and we are most grateful for this.

Finally, at the hub of this project was Brendan Sayers. He was a moving force in the establishment of the ISBA, has been a force within the IGPS for many, many years and, once again, displayed his ability to bring people together, to facilitate their working together and to organise the many disparate and wandering threads involved in such a project. Brendan will disperse praise with generosity and particularly acknowledges the help and support he has received from colleagues at the National Botanic Gardens and from the Office of Public Works in general, but all involved in the project will acknowledge the central and essential role he has played in making this project such a wonderful success.

For me, it has all been a pleasure and a privilege.

Cois Abhannn, Riverside, Lower Gracedieu, Waterford

NEIL PORTEOUS

CIRCE 'THE PLANTRESS'
LADY LONDONDERRY'S APPROACH TO PLANTING AT MOUNT
STEWART



Fig. 1. 'Circe and the Sirens' by Charles Edmond Brock, 1925.

©National Trust.

Introduction

‘Mount Stewart is the only Irish Garden I know in which the Jacobean taste is revived in the stone and topiary ornament. But it is a protean garden, the number of styles which have influenced its maker is a constant source of surprise as is the manner in which exotic plants have been used in expressing them; the garden is thoroughly Irish in the wealth and range of its plant material and in the superlative growth of its trees and flowering shrubs’.¹

This article begins with Edward Hymes’s penultimate sentence. It was and is still the plants grown at Mount Stewart, Co. Down, that surprise and delight in equal measure. To date very few authors have tackled this subject. Much has been written concerning Lady Londonderry’s design influences, the garden’s idiosyncratic themes or even Lady Londonderry’s intimate and personal story. This article will look at the plants Lady Londonderry used and how she used them, sometimes to great exuberant effect. The archive at Mount Stewart is almost



Fig. 2

The Gardens Mount Stewart

© J.Maguire, Feb. 1991

¹ Hymes E. and MacQuilty W, Irish Gardens, *The Irish Garden*, ch.15, p. 158, MacDonald, London, 1967

complete. Her library, each year's expenditure tied up in ribbon or raffia: and most invaluable, nine garden notebooks charted her evolution as a gardener from 1922 to around 1955. It also includes invoices, her daughter Lady Mairi's photographs, slides and cine film. This material and a great wealth of family photographs are the primary sources for this article.

Lady Londonderry at Mount Stewart

Even today, the garden at Mount Stewart is strongly resonant of Edith, Lady Londonderry. It was her garden entirely — there was no architect involved. It is a feminine garden, personal and candid. An extrovert, Lady Londonderry was possessed of almost boundless energy. She was by nature fun, warm, charming and maternal. She loved children and looked after most of her grandchildren for extended periods. But there was also steel: determination, discipline, academic flair and a devoutness to round off her character. Of all human attributes, she valued courage. A committed suffragist, her greatest achievement was the foundation of the Women's Legion (Fig. 3) in the dark days of 1915, the year her husband Charles became the 7th Marquess of Londonderry. Lord Londonderry continued to see service in France and Lady Londonderry worked tirelessly organizing women in every walk of life to keep Britain's war effort as productive as possible. She was awarded a new honour in 1917, Dame of the British Empire (the first Military Dame), in recognition of her achievement.



Fig. 3. Lady Londonderry, Women's Legion c. 1916 © Rose Lauritzen

In 1919, Theresa, Edith's mother-in-law, died and she became the chatelaine of Mount Stewart among several other houses. There was an adequate supply of money; the family owned three collieries in Co. Durham. There was a place for Charles in the emerging Northern Irish administration as the first Minister for Education. Mount Stewart took on a prominence for Lady Londonderry and her family it had never previously enjoyed. There was a garden at Mount Stewart which Theresa had developed, but not of the 'modern type'² as Lady Londonderry would put it some years later, by which she meant planted with plants of known wild origin, wild provenance plants collected in remote parts of the world and assimilated into a 'picture'. One of Theresa's gardeners, Thomas Bolas, trained at Chatsworth in Derbyshire and became the head gardener at Mount Stewart in 1919. He is recorded as a 'Rosarian' in the 1911 census, living on the Mount Stewart demesne. Edith always loved scent and famously would not have a rose at Mount Stewart which did not possess a fine fragrance. A firm bond developed between Edith and Thomas and the garden had everything it would need to succeed. The dank large holm oaks shading the house were felled and twenty-one demobilised servicemen returning to Co. Down were employed to begin making Lady Londonderry's new garden.



Fig. 4. Lady Londonderry and Thomas Bolas — a portable labelling machine, post 1941. © Rose Lauritzen.

Lady Londonderry had gardened before, physically and intellectually, but in Scotland and the colder parts of eastern England — Lincolnshire and Co. Durham. She would have marvelled at the fast-growing Tasmanian blue gum, *Eucalyptus globulus*, growing apace at Mount Stewart. Lady Londonderry by acute observation became acquainted with Mount Stewart's unique micro-climate. What she needed now was a mentor — a plantsman who could show

² Marchioness of Londonderry, *The Gardens at Mount Stewart*, *Journal of The Royal Horticultural Society*, vol. 60, pt. 12, p.523, London, 1935

her what was possible. Sir John Ross of Bladensburg at Rostrevor House was an ideal choice. Edith was learning from the master. Sir John Ross had amassed a most extensive collection of exotic trees and shrubs in Ireland at Rostrevor on Carlingford Lough. There were over 2,500 different woody plants recorded in 1911.³ Not only could Lady Londonderry see and touch these plants, she might also gain propagation material, seeds, layers and cuttings. After Sir John died in 1926, Lady Londonderry was sponsoring the plant collectors of her day, George Forrest, Frank Kingdon Ward, Joseph Rock and many others. The huge correspondence to nurseries in the UK, Europe and the USA show a determined gardener trawling the world's horticultural industry for 'treasure'. This was Edith's *modus operandi*; the best from the horticultural trade and those plants garnered from the wild.



Fig. 5 Lady Londonderry at work with her great friend Duncan Morrison.
© Rose Lauritzen

In June 1922, Lady Londonderry made a visit to 'Fairyland', Rostrevor House, overlooking Carlingford Lough, Co. Down. In her memoir, *Retrospect*, Lady Londonderry recalled:

'I shall never forget the wonder and amazement of that visit . . . , in which Sir John initiated me into the many and marvellous trees, shrubs and plants from countries all over the world, that could, with knowledge and skill, be grown by the seaboard of County Down. It is due to Sir John's encouragement and knowledge and the help he gave me, together with countless shrubs of all descriptions, seeds and cuttings that he sent here, that the gardens at Mount Stewart contain so many tender and beautiful thing's. It was on this occasion that I made a terrible gaffe,

³ Private correspondence

never since repeated. After viewing a succession of marvellous shrubs I innocently remarked, “I have never seen such shrubs before. It might be the gardens at Kew.” The old man stopped dead, and in a strained voice exclaimed: “Dear Lady Londonderry, never mention Kew to me again. I can grow things here that Kew has never heard of”



Fig. 6 Lady Londonderry with *Rhododendron macabeianum*
c. 1955 ©Rose Lauritzen

When Sir John died in 1926, the role of mentor was assumed by an old family friend and friend of Sir John, Sir Herbert Maxwell, who gardened at Montreith, Whauphill, Wigtownshire, Scotland. Until his death in 1937, Sir Herbert and Lady Londonderry developed their passion for rhododendrons and lilies. He wrote:

‘The lust for lilies is a contagious disease as deadly as rhododendronitis, from which you suffer incurably already’.

Lady Londonderry’s passion for fragrant plants took her first to Rhododendrons and then to Lilies She loved the large showy Grandia subsection of Rhododendrons for their effect, but was drawn to the fragrant, wind tolerant Fortunea subsection, *R. decorum*, *fortunei* and *hemsleyanum*. The hard to place *R. auriculatum* should join these fragrant giants. Her gardener Thomas Bolas was experimenting with *decorum* x *fortunei* hybrids; *R. “The Marchioness of Londonderry”* and *R. “Thomas Bolas”*, still have a place of honour at Mount Stewart.



Fig. 7 Lady Londonderry with *Lilium auratum*, post 1941 © Rose Lauritzen

The first decade saw the most active period of her planting. In her 1927 article in *The Gardener's Year Book*, Edith, Lady Londonderry described the project and its method of implementation and contemplated a successful outcome:

‘A start has been made to plant the *Rhododendron* species in the woods, the idea being to carry this out extensively year by year. Amongst others there are plants of *Rr. falconeri*, *discolor*, *decorum*, *thomsonii*, *aucklandii*, *grande*, *sino-grande*, *roylei* and *lacteum*, with more of that series, while many thousands are being raised from Kingdon-Ward's and Rock's collections ... in the near future it is my intention to try as many as possible of the *Maddenii* series and the other

In Mount Stewart Gardens, there is A record of some suggestions made by Lord Aberconway of Bodnant concerning the Rhododendron Walk and a list made by Edith, Lady Londonderry. (Fig. 8)



Fig. 9 *Lilium giganteum* (*Cardiocrinum*), planted en masse in Lily Wood, post 1941
© Rose Lauritzen

By 1939 Lady Londonderry was developing an old piece of mature woodland shelter-belt with a view to planting the woodland margins and glades with her collection of lilies, Lily Wood. One of the luxuries of sponsoring plant hunters is that the garden received

periodically, an ‘embarrassment of riches’ in the form of copious amounts of seed of one type of plant or another. Edith’s head gardener, Thomas Bolas, had more success than most in coaxing this new material up to usable size for planting out in the garden. In both the Lily Wood and on Rhododendron Hill, Lilies, *Meconopsis*, *Echium* and *Rhododendron* surpluses were planted in drifts of a hundred or more plants for dramatic effect. Edith wrote there were over three hundred *Rhododendron magnificum* (*R. giganteum*) at Mount Stewart and these comprised three close-planted drifts of a hundred or more individuals, all raised from seed and planted three to four feet apart. She used the same principle with *Cardiocrinum gigantum*, *Meconopsis violacea* and *Rhododendron elliottii*.

Early Assays — The Italian Garden Parterres



Fig. 10 Hybrid Tea roses in the Italian Garden, c. 1925. © Rose Lauritzen

The first formal garden Lady Londonderry embarked on in 1921 was the Italian Garden. (Figs. 11 & 12) This large garden compartment has always been the most important at Mount Stewart and in many ways, was, and still is, ‘the shop window’. Here Lady Londonderry did what everyone who has gardened in England or Scotland and then moved to Ireland does, which was to try and impose something more convivial to those more continental climates and watch it disappoint. The plats of the Italian Garden parterre were initially planted with Hybrid Tea roses and under-planted with tulips. These plants are problematic at Mount Stewart. The soil of the Italian Garden is essentially a raised beach

deposited when the ice retreated from the last Ice Age. It is a sandy loam and comprises of some 80–85% sand. Roses are hard work in such a light soil. Tulips in theory at least should love the sand, but fall prey in Ireland to almost every hungry bird and mammal, from pheasants to rats. The initial planting around the garden appears to have been drawn from the best horticultural nursery stock. *The Garden Notebooks* show Lady Londonderry compiling lists of plants to populate the first formed garden compartments: The Italian, The Sunk and The Tudor Rose Garden (The Mairi Garden). By 1925, however, a few exotics were being planted.

It took a few years for Lady Londonderry to become familiar with, and gain the confidence to compose with, the exotics her new approach was generating. It takes around three or four years before such plants raised by seed or cuttings become woody enough to be expected to survive even a mild winter. By 1924/5, the plants would have become a talking point at Mount Stewart. The Mexican fiddlewood, *Citharexylum ligustrinum*, probably a gift from Sir John Ross at Rostrevor, still performs under the south-west wall of the Italian Garden. Another fragrant shrub from the Himalaya, *Luculia gratissima*, was also grown in the wings of the Italian Garden, propagated from a plant bought from Veitch's Nursery in 1922.

By 1925 it was apparent that the first planting of the Italian parterre was a failure and a new approach was required. *The Garden Notebook, 1922–7* shows Lady Londonderry's first designs in the form of annotated watercolours, detailing her ideas. This is borne out in the accompanying illustrations from the garden notebooks.



Fig. 11

Italian Garden, east side, 1925.

© Rose Lauritzen.



Fig.12

Italian Garden, west side, 1925.

© Rose Lauritzen.

Towards the Zenith

The first colour progression is best described as a sun-burst, radiating out from the central pool across the twelve plats of each parterre. On the east side, the colours resemble those of a sun-rise progressing from scarlet to orange, blue to silver and on the West side the colours resemble those of a sun-set: blood-red to pink, mauve to clear yellows and plum and mulberry hues. Each plat was sub-divided into areas and initially a plant was ascribed to that space, but it is clear from the following annotations that more than one plant was planted in each division giving the whole planting an elaborate, luxuriant effect. The first assay employed perhaps too much horticultural artifice to be readily sustainable; biennials like hollyhocks, stocks, antirrhinums and annuals like love-in-the-mist and sweet peas. Lady Londonderry thought that herbaceous borders comprised solely of herbaceous plants and bulbs were essentially dull, and she liked to mix them with flowering shrubs and standards. The standard plants she used were not the usual suspects. There were conventional subjects often used at the time, including glasshouse *Pelargonium*, *Fuchsia* and *Heliotropium*, but then there were standard *Artemesia*, *Metrosideros*, *Acacia*, *Psoralea*, *Azalea*, *Lavendula*, *Ceanothus* and *Lonicera*.

By 1929 the colour scheme was more or less similar, but instead of a radiation of colour, this design was fractal, more chaotic and sophisticated. The east side moved from scarlet, orange, plum, blue and silver; the west side progressed from blood-red, mauve, clear pink, clear yellows, blue and silver. In addition to the standards were standard roses and many more large shrubs were incorporated such as *Buddleja magnifica*, *Crinodendron hookerianum*, *Prunus cerasifera* 'Pissardii', *Embothrium coccineum*, *Wisteria sinensis* and *Hydrangea paniculata*. These plants appear to have been left in situ and on the light, hungry, droughty soil of the Italian Garden, would have thrived at the expense of the herbaceous tier below. Many of the

photographs of this period show a lack of a full herbaceous understorey as the shrubs made timber. The only way to manage this effect successfully is to remove the large shrubs and standards each year, whether they are hardy or not, so that the herbaceous layer can be managed; lifted, divided, fed and replenished. Only by doing so can the integrity of the design be maintained from one year to the next. But this option was never adopted in the Italian Garden, to its detriment. Lady Londonderry wanted the exuberant scale. She wanted the plants as large as they might grow in the Mediterranean. After all, the idea for Lady Londonderry was to transport the viewer to the gardens of Italy or Spain.

‘The plants in the beds of the South Garden are encouraged to grow very big, and shrubs are made use of as well. Roses are growing into quite self-respecting trees, such as you would see in Spain. Clematis grows over and through the large bushes of Erica arborea and Prunus ‘Pissardii’ is covered with Tropaeolum speciosum. Clematis also looks lovely grown through standard trees of Wisteria. The shrubs lend themselves to this dual purpose; not only are they lovely when in bloom themselves in spring and early summer, but they display a mass of colour during the late summer and autumn months.’⁶

This final variation, c. 1934, reverted back almost to the first sun-burst scheme, but with a slightly different colour progression. The east side moved from scarlet to orange, with dark prune colours or mulberry and blues: the west from blood-red into pinks, pale yellows, mauves and purples with some outer silver-greys. It became even more elaborate with the addition of a further tier. Festoons of flowering climbing plants trained through the tall standards. In September 1934, the garden was flood-lit and photographed at night and the pronounced vertical plane the shrubs and standards attained is striking. Gardens were encouraged to undertake this spectacle to celebrate King George V’s Silver Jubilee.

Sadly, the planting in the Italian Garden did not survive the very harsh winter of January 1940 and many of the more tender plants were killed. Lady Londonderry in a nod towards war-time austerity planted bulbs as cut flowers in the Italian Garden plats. Many of her gardeners became embroiled in the war and the Garden could not be managed as it once was. Edith’s beloved head gardener, Thomas Bolas, retired in 1948 and returned to his native Derbyshire. His replies to her frequent letters have survived, where he respectfully responds to individual queries of where to find this plant or other. In these letters, there is a real sense of loss; loss of control of what was always an incredibly elaborate garden and loss of a loyal and vibrant companionship. Lord Londonderry was involved in a gliding accident at Newtownards airfield and never made a full recovery. He died following a stroke on 10 February 1949. Lady Londonderry sustained a further tragedy in the loss of her only son Robin, (Edward), in 1955. In the same year, she gave the garden into the care of the National Trust, mindful of the fate which befell her first gardening mentor’s garden, on Sir John Ross of Bladensburg’s death in 1926.

⁶ Marchioness of Londonderry, The Gardens at Mount Stewart, *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society*, vol.60, pt. 12, p. 525, London 1935



Fig. 13

The Italian Garden, west side, July 2014.

© NT

The Garden today

This year, Mount Stewart will welcome over 185,000 visitors, and an interpretation of Lady Londonderry's exuberant style is on display. The planting of the Italian Garden is exciting, although, it has to be said, not to everyone's taste. Lady Londonderry did not possess a conventional sense of taste. From her use of ordinary Portland cement instead of stone to her use of strong colour, Edith went her own way; but she would recognise her garden today. Not everything would be greeted with universal approval, yet she would be delighted at the courageous use of new plants, both the exotic and the banal. Lady Londonderry had deep pockets and in her plantings often moved on by starting a new approach with a different cast of characters. As it has been seen, she rarely went back to earlier ideas, excepting in the case of the sun-burst colour progression in the Italian Garden, albeit with minor variations.

Reading Lady Londonderry's spidery script in the garden notebooks and the lists of new

plants she had sourced year in year out, Mount Stewart had a much larger and richer plant collection than today. Like Lady Londonderry, Mount Stewart gardeners accept the generosity of fellow gardeners in bartering plants and seeds. This approach is already enriching Mount Stewart to the delight of visitors. Wild provenance plants are being sourced and modern plant collectors sponsored who will scour remote areas for the types of plant she would have delighted. Of course, there is much more paperwork involved today than in her day, but it is still possible.

The garden is expanding for the first time since c.1955. Global warming is the current driver, with sea levels in Strangford Lough rising by 1.9mm per annum. The garden is deliberately moving up hill away from the Lough towards the Walled Garden, where fresh ground-water will remain. The salinity of the ground-water is monitored in the low-lying regions of the garden and sea-flood defences have been maximised. In March 2014, the National Trust acquired the remaining 900 acres of the historic demesne. With it came the 8-acre Walled Garden, the power-house of Edith's gardening efforts. Within the Walled Garden is Lady Londonderry's new Rose Garden, c. 1927, which it is planned to restore and use to display a diverse collection of both modern and historic fragrant roses. New shelter-belts are being installed encircling the old, which were planted in the 1780s and are now fragmenting. These leaf-mould rich drumlins are perfect for new woodland gardening. For example, Peter and Kenneth Cox's collections of *Maddenia* section rhododendrons (many of which are richly fragrant), are being planted epiphytically in logs or tree stumps, just as they grow in the Himalaya. This idea came from Edith initially and then was the goal of Nigel Marshall, head gardener of Mount Stewart from 1969 to 2000. Elsewhere, new plants are being sourced and planted throughout the garden that will make their presence felt before too long. Having studied all the archive sources on many occasions, it is surprising how often a selected plant was thought to be new, only to find reference to it in Edith's notebooks of the 1920s. It is an encouraging thought that Lady Londonderry's unique gardening style is still alive and well in the twenty-first century.

Notes:

1. Marchioness of Londonderry. *The Gardens at Mount Stewart*, Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society, Volume LX, Part 12, P523, 1935.
2. Private Correspondence – current owner of a part of “Fairyland”, Rostrevor. His collection of 'hardy, half-hardy and very tender shrubs, trees and to a lesser extent, herbaceous plants, became one of the best known in Ireland, if not the United Kingdom', and in 1911 a comprehensive catalogue of the 'Trees and Shrubs grown in the Grounds of Rostrevor House' was published [University Press, Ponsonby and Gibbs].



Fig. 14

Rhododendron magnificum

© NT

National Trust, Mount Stewart, Portaferry Road, Newtownards, Co. Down

**BRENDAN SAYERS, E. CHARLES NELSON, DUNCAN DONALD &
DAVID CLARKE*****NARCISSUS 'LADY MOORE' AND AN ANNOTATED REGISTER***

On a bright late summer's day, 'Lady Moore', in the form of three small daffodil bulbs, emerged from an envelope left at reception at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin. They were a generous gift from the gardener Mary O'Brien who had sourced them from Croft16, a partnership set up by Kate and Duncan Donald who hold the National Plant Collection® of pre-1930 daffodils. Recorded in *A Heritage of Beauty* is the 'bold and handsome' white trumpet daffodil bred by Hogg and Robertson named 'Mrs. F. W. Moore' but there is no reference to a 'Lady Moore', because it is not of Irish origin. Undoubtedly this daffodil was named after Sir Frederick Moore's wife, Phylis (née Paul). He was Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, and was knighted in 1911 in recognition of his services to horticulture. Lady Moore was highly regarded as a plantsman and gardener, and there are other plants named after her.



Fig. 1

Narcissus 'Lady Moore'

Susan Sex

Narcissus ‘Lady Moore’ is described in the Croft-16 online catalogue as a small-cupped daffodil with:

“Perianth segments creamy yellow throughout on opening, maturing to milk-white tinged pale bright yellow at base. Corona a shallow, widely expanded, pleated bowl, conspicuously six-lobed. Beautifully scented, vigorous, late mid-season.”

The Royal Horticultural Society’s *Classified List of Daffodil Names* (1935) listed the variety as coming from W. Polman-Mooy, a Dutch breeder based in Haarlem, and it was registered in 1916. When shown at the Royal Bulb Growers Society’s exhibition in Haarlem, Netherlands, in 1923 it received an Award of Merit, and on 4 February 1924 a Forcing Award.

To delve further, the Glasnevin donations and purchases registers were consulted for Polman-Mooy. No entry was found and neither does the name feature in F.W. Moore’s correspondence while Director of the Gardens. There are, however, in the Library, copies of three editions of the Royal Horticultural Society’s *Classified List of Daffodil Names* for 1910, 1923 and 1931 that are stamped with “F. W. Moore” (1910) and “Sir F. W. Moore” (1923, 1931). The latter two, which post-date Sir Frederick’s retirement as Director of the Glasnevin Botanic Gardens, are unmarked other than for the name-stamp. The 1910 copy is heavily marked. The entries are variously ticked with ordinary and/or red pencil and annotated with initials of what was the source of the plants (Fig. 1). There is also an addition: ‘Irish Pearl’ from L.R. 23 [Lionel Richardson 1923] written in ink. Only some of these entries are dated. Inside the front cover is a list of daffodils and their sources in Frederick Moore’s distinctive handwriting (Fig. 2). The list includes *Narcissus* ‘Lady Moore’. At the end of the list, which is written in pencil, is a two-line entry in ink. The second line clearly reads “dwarf double Yellow Daff”, but the significance of the line above is unclear although it is most probably the year and source indicating the plant came from Mrs Harden Hughes. This corresponds with the entry (noted above) for ‘Irish Pearl’, also in ink, and its date, 1923. They probably refer to daffodils received at Willbrook, the Moore’s private garden in Rathfarnham, rather than Glasnevin. This suggestion seems to be confirmed by an entry by Lady Moore in her “Plants for Willbrook” list. On 24 October 1923, she recorded three roses received from Mrs Harden Hughes. However, Lady Moore’s notes do not contain any mention of the dwarf daffodil.

Narcissus ‘Lady Moore’ was once a popular daffodil and is referred to in the American Oregon Bulb Farms catalogue of 1930 as one of “the best novelties” and in their 1940 catalogue as having a “substantial flower remaining in good condition even where many other varieties “burn”; late but an excellent forcer”.

Royal Horticultural Society's Classified List of Daffodil Names, 1910
Table 1

Variety	Source	pen or ink
Ariadne	H&R	red pencil
Atlantis (H. Backhouse)	L.R. 23	red pencil
Avalanche (de Graaff)	L.R. 23	red pencil
Averil (P.D. Williams)	L.R.	red pencil/ordinary pencil
Baylor Hartland	R.B.G.	red pencil
Bernardino (Worsley)	L.R.	red pencil/ordinary pencil
Bianca (Engleheart)	J.B.P.	red pencil
Blackwell (Backhouse)	R.B.G.	red pencil
Buttercup (Hayden)	L.R. 23	red pencil
Capax		red pencil
Cassandra (Engleheart)	J.B.P.	red pencil
Centurion (Worsley)	L.R. 23	red pencil
cernuus		red pencil
Challenger (Crosfield)	L.R. 23	red pencil
Cossack (J.C. Williams)	L.R.	red pencil
Croesus (J.C. Williams)		red pencil
Dawn (Engleheart)	L.R.	red pencil
Diana Vernon	J.B.P.	red pencil
Diogenes (P.D. Williams)	L.R. 23	red pencil
Dosoris (P.D. Williams)	L.R.	red pencil
Duke of Bedford (Barr)	L.R.	red pencil
Elfrida (Pearson)	L.R. 23	red pencil
Ellen Wilmott (Engleheart)	J.B.P.	red pencil
Epic (Engleheart)	J.B.P.	red pencil
Firetail (Crosfield)	L.R. 23	red pencil

Florence Pearson (Pearson)	J.B.P./H&R 24	red pencil/ordinary pencil
Gloria Mundi (Backhouse)	J.B.P.	red pencil
Gog (Backhouse)		red pencil
Great Warley (Engleheart)	L.R.	red pencil/ordinary pencil
Hebe (Welchman)	L.R.	red pencil
Homespun (Engleheart)	J.B.P.	red pencil
Incognita (Engleheart)	R.B.G.	red pencil
Ivorine (P.D. Williams)	L.R.	red pencil
Judge Bird (Engleheart)	L.R.	red pencil
Kathleen (Gore-Booth)	H&R 24	ordinary pencil
Kingcup (Adams)	L.R.	red pencil
Lady Margaret Boscawen (Engleheart)	J.B.P.	red pencil
Lemon Queen (Engleheart)	J.B.P.	red pencil
Lord Kitchener (Mrs. R.O. Backhouse)	J.B.P.	red pencil
Lord Roberts (Barr)	L.R.	red pencil/ordinary pencil
Marigold (Engleheart)	R.B.G.	red pencil
Mrs. C.R. Hamilton (Hogg & Robertson)	H&R	ordinary pencil
Mrs F.W. Moore	RBG/H&R	red pencil/ordinary pencil
Mrs. G.H. Barr (de Graaff)	J.B.P.	red pencil
Mrs. Robert Sydenham (de Graaff)	L.R.	red pencil
nanus		red pencil
Pedestal (Crosfield)	R.B.G.	red pencil
Polly Eccles (Hartland)	J.B.P.	red pencil
Primrose Phoenix	H&R 24	ordinary pencil
Queen Maeve	L.R.	red pencil
Queen of the North (Barr)	L.R.	red pencil
Red Chief (J.C. Williams)	L.R.	red pencil
Ruby (Cave)	L.R.	ordinary pencil
Sir Lancelot (Barr)	L.R.	red pencil

Sirdar (Mrs. R.O. Backhouse)	L.R. 23	red pencil
Sunrise (Mrs. R.O. Backhouse)	L.R.	ordinary pencil
Undine (Engleheart)	J.B.P.	red pencil
Victory (J.C. Williams)	L.R.	red pencil
Weardale Perfection (Backhouse)	J.B.P.	red pencil
White Knight (de Graaff)	L.R. 23	red pencil
White Lady (Engleheart)	R.B.G.	red pencil
White Star		red pencil
Will Scarlet (Engleheart)	R.B.G.	red pencil

Notes for Table 1

1.H&R = Hogg & Robertson

2. The entry for 'Pedestal' has L.R. crossed out and replaced by R.B.G.

Table 2

Variety	Source
Miss Prim	D.
Eglinton	D.
Iliad	D.
Tall Large White	P.W.
[The] Fawn	P.W.
Hospodar	P.W.
Good Leedsii	P.W.
May Moon	E.A.B.
The Pearl	L.R.
Lady Moore	L.R.
H.C. Bowles	L.R.
Jacoba	L.R.
Spinster	L.R.
Maud West	L.R.
Maxine Elliott	L.R.
Jonquil x King Alfred	R.B.G.
Juliana	J.B.P.

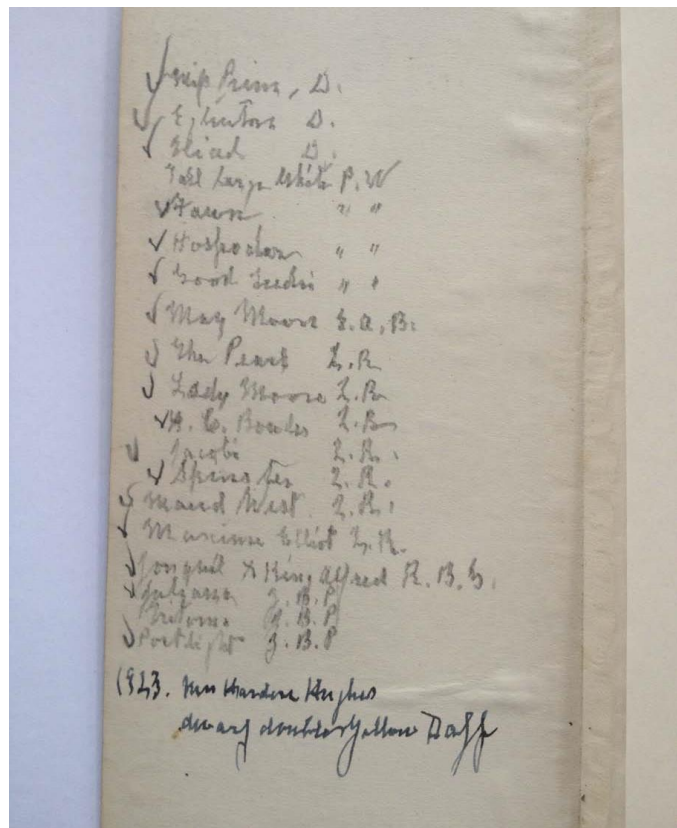


Fig. 2

Sir F. Moore's List

Tritoma	J.B.P.
Portlight	J.B.P.

Notes for Table 2:

1. The source marked D is for the Donard Nursery, Newcastle, Co. Down. Their 1924 Choice Narcissus catalogue listed the cultivars ‘Eglinton’, ‘Iliad’ and ‘Miss Prim’.
2. Mrs Harden Hughes lived at Ballyrichard, Mullinahone, Co. Tipperary, and received a plant of the auricula ‘Alexandra’ from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin in April 1921

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National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin 9

ROBERT MYERSCOUGH

THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY FROM THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY - GARDENING IN TUMULTUOUS YEARS

1916 should have been the year the Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland (RHSI) celebrated the first one hundred years of its existence. However, it was then considered that the Society had been founded in 1830, rather than 1816, as in May of that year a general meeting had been held, as a result of which new rules were adopted. 'From being a body run by the gardeners of the gentry it now becomes a body run by the gentry themselves' The first years of the Horticultural Society of Ireland, when it was run by and for their employed gardeners, were essentially expunged from the records by the gentry, who now governed its affairs. It was Lord Charlemont's gardener, Francis Hetherington, who convened a meeting at the Rose Tavern in Donnybrook, on 30th September 1816, who can be considered the true founder of the Society, and that the first meeting of the new body occurred on 1st January 1817. Thus, the RHSI has now celebrated its bi-centenary.

This article looks at the Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland, as it existed at the turn of the twentieth century, and how it reacted to the changing circumstances of the first two decades, a period that brought war and rebellion, which rocked the established order.

As the new century dawned, all seemed peaceful in Ireland, the status quo of society was unquestioned by most citizens, but this was to change dramatically within two decades. Ireland at the turn of the century was still an important element of the United Kingdom, Dublin was the second city of the Empire; Queen Victoria was to make her last visit to the city, as Queen of Ireland at the beginning of April 1900. She had been Patroness of the RHSI since 1838, the year of her coronation. Upon her death in January 1901, her son Edward VII was proclaimed King of Ireland. He willingly accepted the role of Patron of the Society. It is worth noting that the Society's 'Royal' prefix came about, not by a royal charter, but because the monarch had granted it her royal patronage, but any future change of name would require royal assent.

The Society's Report for 1906 opens with the statement, 'Although from a financial point of view the year 1906 has been a disastrous one, showing a loss of £124 17s 2d (€8,390) on the work of the year, your Council can report that the interest in the Society, and the high quality of the Exhibits have been fully maintained.' The total membership was 344, but it was felt that 'the membership might be increased, if more enthusiasm were shown by those belonging to the Society in inviting others to join, a perennial cry of membership based organizations.

The Irish International Exhibition opened in Dublin's Herbert Park on 4th May 1907, running until November that year, and attracting an astonishing 2.75million visitors. Despite the major horticultural element, the 1907 report of the RHSI Council makes no mention of any involvement.

Patron:	
HIS MAJESTY THE KING.	
Vice-Patron:	
HIS EXCELLENCY THE LORD LIEUTENANT.	
President:	
THE RIGHT HON. LORD ARDILAUN, D.L.	
Vice-Presidents:	
<p>HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ABERCORN, C.B.</p> <p>THE MOST NOBLE THE MARQUESS OF LONDON- DERRY, K.G.</p> <p>HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, P.C., K.G.</p> <p>RT. HON. THE LORD ASH- BOURNE.</p> <p>RT. HON. LORD IVEAGH, D.L.</p>	<p>RT. HON. THE EARL OF MEATH. SIR JOHN NUTTING, Bart., D.L.</p> <p>RT. HON. HEDGES EYRE CHATTERTON.</p> <p>JOHN JAMESON, D.L.</p> <p>COL. THE HON. C. F. CRICH- TON.</p> <p>MAJOR DOMVILE, D.L.</p> <p>J. HUME DUDGEON.</p>
Council:	
<p>GEORGE WATSON.</p> <p>JAMES M'DONOUGH.</p> <p>HUGH CRAWFORD.</p> <p>J. WYLIE HENDERSON.</p> <p>Rev. CANON HAYES, M.A.</p> <p>EDMUND D'OLIER.</p> <p>HAMILTON DRUMMOND, J.P.</p> <p>W. F. GUNN.</p> <p>F. W. MOORE, M.R.I.A.</p> <p>GEORGE M. ROSS, M.A.</p> <p>HENRY P. GOODBODY.</p> <p>EDWARD KNOWLDIN.</p> <p>ROBERT ANDERSON.</p>	<p>DAVID HOUSTON, F.L.S.</p> <p>W. J. MITCHISON.</p> <p>C. M. DOYNE, D.L.</p> <p>ERNEST BEWLEY.</p> <p>Captain LEWIS RIALI, D.L.</p> <p>Lieut-Col. SIR JOHN ROSS OF BLADENSBURG, K.C.B.</p> <p>D. L. RAMSAY, J.P.</p> <p>JAMES ROBERTSON, J.P.</p> <p>JAMES MCKELLAR.</p> <p>REGINALD T. HARRIS, M.A.</p> <p>SIR ERNEST CECIL COCHRANE, Bart.</p>
Hon. Secretary:	
F. W. MOORE, M.R.I.A.	
Treasurer:	
THE ROYAL BANK.	
Secretary:	
WALTER KEATING, Junr.	
Offices:	
5 MOLESWORTH STREET, DUBLIN.	

Fig. 1 78th Annual Report of the RHSI, 1908

The page from the 1908 Annual Report, reproduced here, (Fig. 1) sets out the order of precedence that existed within the Society at that time. The Crown granted its patronage, members of the aristocracy and the gentry favoured it as president and vice presidents, and other gentlemen made up the Council. It was an all-male administration. Of particular note is the name of the Hon. Secretary, F. W. Moore, M.R.I.A., later Sir Frederick Moore, an Honorary Member of the Society, who was Curator of the National (then Royal) Botanic Garden at Glasnevin.

The RHSI at that time also had a category of 'Practical Annual Members', the head gardeners of some of the great estates, such as Hillsborough, Kenure Park (now demolished), Curraghmore, Castletown, Killadoon, and Powerscourt. But also, there were the gardeners of such properties as Sutton House, and Glencormac, Bray - both Jameson family properties, Farmleigh, belonging to the Guinness family, as well as substantial houses in Blackrock and Monkstown, County Dublin. Their employers presumably paid the annual subscription of 10 shillings and sixpence.

The 1908 Annual Report included a list of prizes to be awarded at its shows. The Spring Show would be about the second week in April, and the Autumn Show and National Sweet Pea Society's Provincial Show, on 5th August. To encourage exhibitors, return tickets to Dublin on three railway companies' lines could be obtained at a reduced fare, on production of a voucher signed by the Secretary. Members, and holders of Members' Tickets, would be admitted to the shows half an hour before the public.

Show Com: July 15. 3.205

Members present Messrs J. McDonough, W. F. Spence,
E. Bewley, with Mr. G. M. Ross presiding.

Minutes of last meeting read and signed.

Letter from Mr. C. H. Carter, Hon. Sec. Nat. Sweet Pea
Society, read.

Tenders for staging from Messrs T. C. Martin; Brooks
Thomas; and Mr. J. S. Mason, were considered;
Mr. Mason's tender for stepped staging, at 6 per foot
run, as per sample basket, and details furnished;
and for plain lattice 8 x 4, at 6 per foot run, being
the lowest, was accepted.

Letters from Messrs Lagers, Wild, Kearney, Brough,
and O'Leary, accepting request to act as Judges
except Mr. Wild, unable to attend, in whose place
Mr. Kearney is substituted.

Sec. was instructed to engage the String Band of
the Royal Irish Constabulary for the show.

Catering, and Tea arrangements, on the motion
of Mr. McDonough, were put in the hands of Mr. Bewley.

Advertising was considered, it being decided that Mr.
Bewley should see Mr. Allen and arrange with
him for large posters.

Sec. was instructed to arrange with Mr. J. J. Healy
for supplying window cards, and also notices for
mans.

Pieces of Admission were fixed at 2/6 from ...

Fig. 2 Minutes of Show Committee, July 15th, 1908

The Show Committee met on 15th July, comprising four members, as recorded in beautifully handwritten minutes. Tenders for staging had been sought from some still familiar firms, Messrs. T.C. Martin; Brooks Thomas and Messrs. J.S. Mason. The latter won the contract for

stepped staging, as per a sample trestle, at 6d. a foot, and for flat tables, 8ft. x 4ft. also at 6d. a foot. The Secretary was instructed to ‘engage with the Royal Irish Constabulary’. The prices of admission were ‘fixed at 2/6d from 2 o’clock till 5, tickets purchased the day previous to the day of the Show being 2/-, and from 5 o’clock to 7 o’clock 1/-.’¹

At a meeting five days later, chaired by Frederick Moore, estimates for booklets were considered, and the tender from G.F. Healy, Printer, of 23, Lr. Ormond Quay, at £5 for 5000 copies was accepted. Part of the explanation for the printing of so many copies lies in the decision that 1,500 copies were to be distributed to the Dublin Seed-houses for circulation, and 500 copies to the Autumn Show, the balance to be kept in the office for distribution as required. The quantities are impressive. That meeting also instructed the Secretary to write to ‘His Excellency, the Lord Lieutenant asking if he would be graciously pleased to open the Show at 3 o’clock, with the hope that Her Excellency will also be able to attend.’²

Among the advertisers were the renowned firm of Pennick’s Nurseries, Delgany, which invited a visit to ‘The Ideal Spot’ at 400ft elevation, and accorded itself the ‘Repute and experience of a century’. They grew roses, and fruit trees, but specialised in hardy flowering shrubs and rhododendrons, claiming that ‘the uncommon suitability of soil and aspects (situated 400ft above sea level); also scientific transplantation, without forcing, produces eminently healthy and hardy growth, and extra vitality that no Lowland Nursery can impart.’³ There is a photograph of a luxuriant *Cordyline australis* growing in the nurseries, ‘which carried twenty-eight inflorescences, which is quite unprecedented’. The Nursery is long gone but many rare trees and shrubs still growing in what is now Kendalstown Rise, happily preserved by the planners before the new estate was built in 1990. The author can testify to the excellent growing conditions, having gardened there for fifteen years!

Many of the advertisers in the Annual Reports represented English and Scottish companies. Ransome’s Lawn Mowers, of Ipswich; Green’s Lawn Mowers, of London; John Smith, of Stratford-on-Avon who, under the ‘Distinguished Patronage of H.M. The King and the Imperial Department of Agriculture’ advertising beautifully produced labels, are examples. Tomlinson & Hayward Ltd, Lincoln, produced dubious chemicals by today’s thinking, a fumigant for glasshouse to kill insects and pests, priced at 1/- for 2,000ft space, up to 7/6 for 20,000ft space; they also produced ‘Eureka’ weed killer to ‘save weary weeding’.

Henry Eckford, Seed Specialist, of Wem, Shropshire, the Sweet Pea specialist advertised packets at 1/- each. The variety ‘Henry Eckford’ is still available from Plant World Seeds. (This dazzling fragrant flower was the first uniquely coloured, really bright orange sweet pea bred by the famous sweet pea breeder Henry Eckford in 1906). The current price is €1.81 per packet.

¹ R.H.S.I, Minutes of Sub Committees, 1908-1950, *RHSI Archives*, Dublin

² IBID

³ IBID

Advertisements. 95

NOT "MADE IN GERMANY"

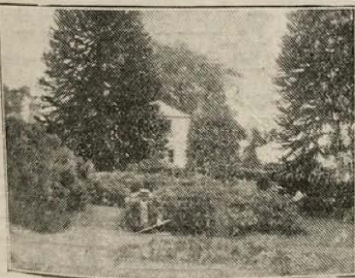
but Grown at 500 ft. Elevation in
Ireland of "Droughtnought"
hardiness,

CHOICE FLOWERING SHRUBS
Blooming in rotation throughout Year.

Roses,

✦

Fruit
Trees



Hedge
Plants

✦

Ruskin says:—"Every man should plant a tree"
(FROM PENNICKS).

GENERAL NURSERY STOCK.
100 per cent. better than elsewhere.

PENNICK,
DELGANY, NEAR DUBLIN.

Please mention this Report when corresponding with Advertisers.

Fig. 3 Advertisement from the RHSI Annual Report for 1910

The well-known firm of Mackenzie & Moncur, Ltd., Hothouse Builders, Heating and Ventilating Engineers, of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and London also advertised. Mackenzie & Moncur started in business around 1850. During the second half of the 19th century they manufactured and constructed hothouses throughout Scotland and in various parts of England. In many instances, they provided the heating systems for these hothouses. The firm was taken over in the 1970s. Its clients included members of the Royal family. They had many other large contracts all over Great Britain and Ireland, and were known as the 'Rolls Royce' of greenhouse builders. Recently, at Killruddery House, Bray, County Wicklow an example of an early 20th century sunken greenhouse, originally constructed by Mackenzie & Moncur between 1900 and 1911, has been restored by Denis Roe of Trinity Woodworking, working

with a team under the supervision of Finola Reid, Historic Gardens Consultant.

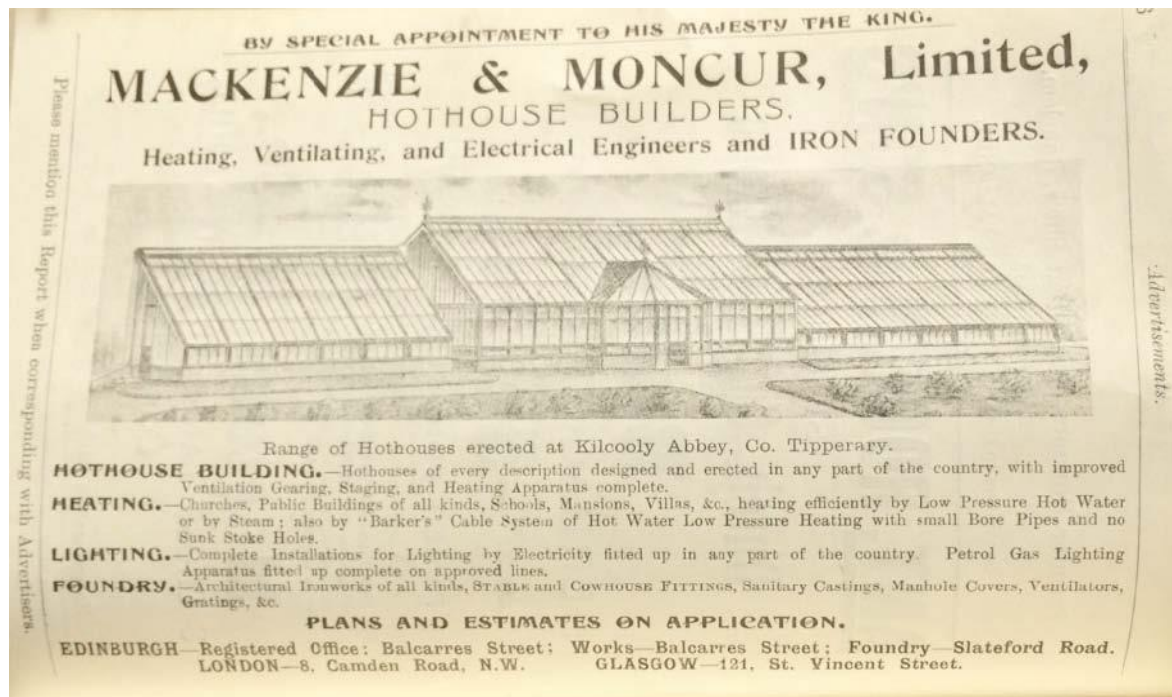


Fig. 4 An advertisement from Mackenzie & Moncur, Ltd, showing a range of hothouses at Kilcooly Abbey, Co. Tipperary

In 1909 the Society was able to hold its Spring Show in the Royal Dublin Society's Arts and Industries Hall, in conjunction with the Spring Show, the RDS allowing the use of the hall without charge and granting £50 towards expenses. This relationship was to continue for many years, until the RDS Spring Show ceased. The following year, the Society proposed to hold, in addition to the Spring Show in April, at Ballsbridge, a Summer Show in early July, for Roses, Herbaceous plants, Flowering plants, Fruits and Vegetables, to take place in Merrion Square, the weather proved to be "decidedly inimical to Roses". An Autumn Show was held in late August, in the grounds of Lord Iveagh's Dublin residence, for Sweet Peas, Dahlias, Carnations etc., which turned out successfully. The organisation of these shows fulfilled the Society's objectives in promoting horticulture. Numerous prizes in a wide variety of classes were awarded.

Not only were there public events, such as the seasonal shows, the 1909 report refers to another aspect. 'Interest has been afforded to the Council meetings by exhibits of Cut Flowers and specimens of uncommon Shrubs from Mr T. Smith, Newry, (Daisy Hill Nursery); Mr J. Hume Dudgeon, 'Merville', Booterstown, (where Col. Dudgeon would run a famous riding school after World War II); Miss Ross, Dalkey; Col. the Hon. C. F. Crichton, 'Mullaboden', and Mrs. Andrew Jameson, 'Sutton House.' "This is a revival which it is hoped will be continued and extended and the Council would like it to be more widely known that anything of exceptional merit sent in for inspection will receive Certificates where such

can be worthily awarded”.⁴ One can imagine how diverting for Council members the inspection of these horticultural delicacies must have been!

The Society’s 81st Annual Report in 1910 recorded ‘Relative to the events of the past year, the respectful expression of sympathy and condolence voted by your Council to His Majesty King George V, and to Queen Alexandra, on the death of King Edward VII, who since his accession had graciously honoured the Society by a continuance of the patronage so long accorded by Queen Victoria, were duly acknowledged and recorded, and the Council have much pleasure in notifying that application to King George V for a continuance of Royal favour has obtained His Majesty’s consent to become Patron of the Society’. Clearly the flowery language illustrated the Council’s hearts were not beating in rhythm with the mood of some of their fellow citizens.

The Society by 1912 had grown to 468 members, and the ‘Practical Members’ were now being listed alongside the Members, identified by asterisks. This included affiliated societies. The first mention of a Society Affiliated with the RHSI was in 1909, when Athboy Daffodil and Home Industries Society was listed. The annual fee was 10/6. By 1912 there were ten such societies; in 2017 the number exceeds sixty.

By 1913 the Spring and Autumn Shows had become part of the social calendar, and were well supported by members, exhibitors and the public. The show results, as well as the Annual General Meetings, were fully reported in the newspapers. The shows permitted both amateur and professional to exhibit, the winners receiving cash prizes, and in many cases silver trophies, generously donated by leading members. Many of them remain in the Society’s collection today.

In 1913 the membership would decline somewhat to 462, and in the fateful year of 1914 it declined further to 449. Of this membership, the majority would have employed gardeners, and in the case of the owners of the ‘big houses’ gardening teams under principal or head gardeners would have been the rule. Despite the ravages of the Great War, which devastated the ranks of the gentry, and their employees alike, many continued to employ professional gardeners until the Second World War changed the economic landscape.

For 1914, arrangements for three Shows were put in place. The Spring Show was to take place by arrangement with the RDS on April 15th & 16th, when a total of 75 classes would be on offer. A Summer Show, replacing the Winter Shows of previous years was planned for July 10th, with 60 classes, to take place by generous permission of Viscount Iveagh, K.P. in his St. Stephen’s Green Gardens, (today’s Iveagh Gardens). This would be followed by the Autumn Show on August 25th, again in Lord Iveagh’s gardens, with no less than 105 classes, of which 35 were for Sweet Peas. However, at a Special Council on August 11th, Capt. Riall moved that owing to the existing crisis the Autumn Show should be abandoned, which was seconded by Alderman Bewley and passed. While the members of the Society were engaged

⁴ RHSI, 79th Annual Report, 1909

in their gardening, and the organisation of the Shows, events would not leave them untouched.

Despite the cancellation of the 1914 Autumn Show, which had been arranged to coincide with the Dublin Horse Show, which was also abandoned, the Council decided to plan a full schedule for 1915. The Marquis of Headford, much of whose tree planting survives to this day on the now broken-up estate, was elected President. ‘Your Society is to be congratulated on having secured as President a nobleman who takes a keen interest in gardening, and in the welfare of the Society’, but unfortunately the ‘Society was at present unable to have the advantages of his advice and guidance as Lord Headford has been away on active service....’⁵

The Annual Report for 1915 also noted that the Society had suffered and would continue to suffer along with other kindred Societies, under the heavy stress and strain imposed by the war. This had impacted on the membership numbers, with subscriptions dropping below what might have been expected. This meant that the finances did not permit the running of the Winter Fruit Show, which had to be abandoned. On a brighter note, the Spring and Autumn Shows were considered to have been most successful from the exhibitors’ and spectators’ point of view. Later, a Fête was held in the interests of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers’ Prisoners of War Fund, and the Irish branch of the Vegetable Products Committee, raising the sum of £125 19s. 8d., (over €15,000 in today’s currency).

In February 1915, Mr J. Lionel Richardson, Prospect House, Waterford was elected to membership. He was one of the premier daffodil breeders of his era. He was a successful exhibitor at RHS, London and Midland Daffodil Society shows, and issued his first catalogue in 1922. A descendant recently donated his large collection of medals to the RHSI.

A flyer was produced in 1915, seeking new members, to help maintain the ‘premier and oldest Horticultural Society in Ireland’. Various ticket concessions were offered, but also membership afforded the attraction of free admission to The Walpole Gardens, Mount Usher, on all days except Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. Membership was ‘wonderful value’ for £1.1s. (one guinea). Today, more than a century later, the RHSI is proud to have Mount Usher as an RHSI Partner Garden.

Interestingly, and not surprisingly, under the prevailing circumstances it was practically impossible to fully prepare a prospective programme for 1916, ‘even in the peaceful field of horticulture’, but arrangements were made for the Spring Show, in conjunction with the RDS; that was as far as they could plan, little knowing what would transpire in that fateful month. The Show was planned for Wednesday 26th and Thursday 27th April; the Easter Rising occurred on Monday 24th, with Martial Law declared in Dublin on Tuesday 25th April 1916.

⁵ R.H.S.I. Annual Report, 1915

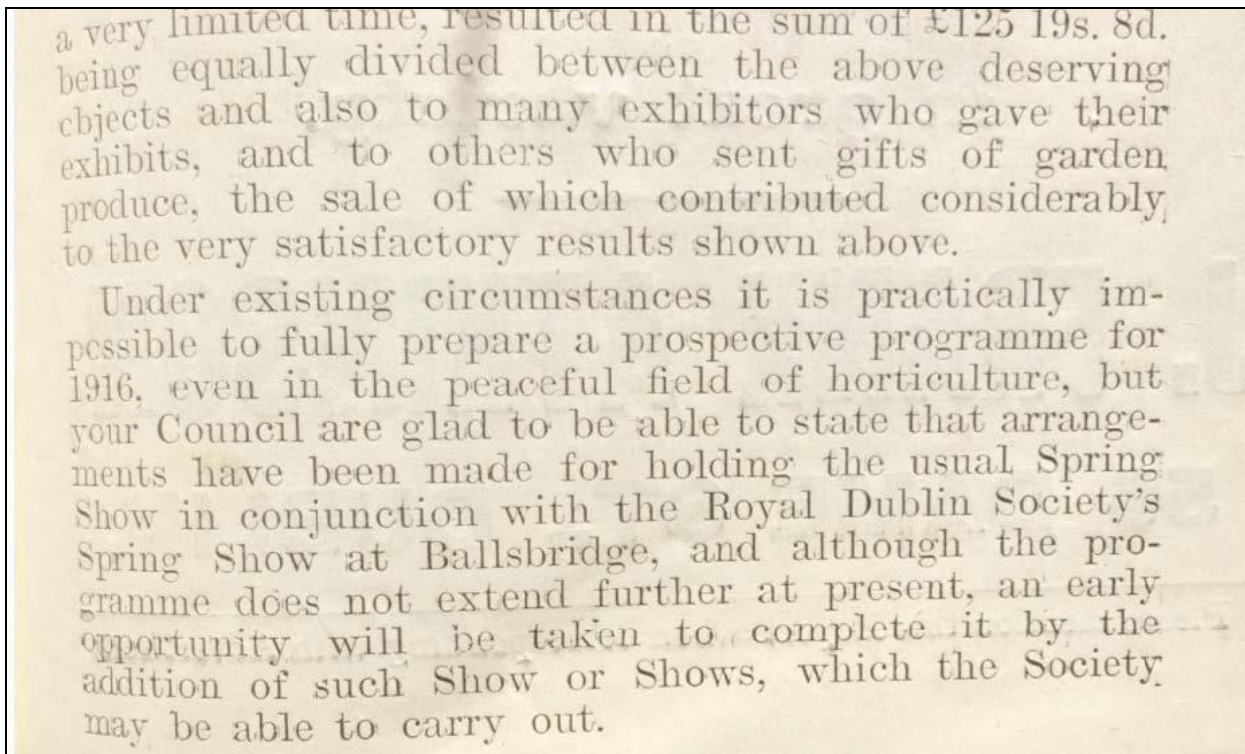


Fig. 5 The ill-fated plans to hold the Spring Show at the RDS in 1916 are mentioned in the Annual Report

The Express newspaper reported the Annual General Meeting that year, which took place at the Society's offices at 5 Molesworth Street.⁶ The Society recorded that 'The Spring Show, was actually held, but sadly interfered with by the rebellion which broke out on Easter Monday'. The combined Shows, (including the RDS show), in fact, were paralysed as far as public patronage was concerned. Council expressed sympathy with those exhibitors from a distance, some of whom had blooms cut and packed. As it was, the opening day saw a very excellent, if comparatively small, display contributed by exhibitors chiefly from the south side bounded by Bray. It was gratifying to note that these exhibitors managed, although under extreme difficulty, coupled with some danger, to remove their property from the premises, which were taken over by the military.

The Society's records, once again, convey a sense of the personal, so often erased from memory in the broad sweep of history. At the Council meeting of May 12th, a vote of condolence was proposed to Mr D. L. Ramsay on the loss of his son, Lieut. Allan Ramsay, during the rebellion in Dublin, which Sir Frederick Moore undertook to convey. Mr Ramsay, a Council member, was owner of the Messrs. Charles Ramsay & Son, The Royal Nurseries, Ballsbridge, Dublin, holders of the Royal Warrant as purveyors of flowers to His Majesty. The National Archives contain a letter from him, to the Property Losses Committee, dated 27th October 1916, in which he begs 'to remind you of my Claim for damage done to 46, Northumberland Road' and enclosing A/c for same, the claim being for £31.3.10, of which

⁶ The Express Newspaper, 16th December, 1916

£29.12.8 was deemed payable. The firm had other claims: Seed looted from the British & Irish Steam Packet Company's stores, and plants destroyed by fire in the Metropole, Imperial and Wynn's Hotels. The horticultural world was not immune to the devastating consequences of the uprising.⁷

Another outcome of events could not have been anticipated at the planning stage in the previous year. At the same meeting, that of May 12th, the Secretary reported that Mrs Edmund Darley had called to protest against the Arts and Industries Hall being taken up for the Flower Show from the wounded soldiers further stating that members of the Automobile Club, who had supported the R.H.S.I. by membership would not continue to do so, and would influence friends to the same end. The complaint seems to have been taken on the chin. The arrangements had in fact been agreed between the organisations in advance, and at their meeting the previous month the Council had approved a request from Mr Ed. White of the Automobile Club asking if Ladies might collect for the wounded Soldiers fund within the flower show premises, which was accepted, subject to the RDS approval, so they obviously held the higher moral ground.

For the moment, the rebellion had been quelled, but the war was not over in Europe. Political activity in Ireland was at a high, but the R.H.S.I. ruling body was more concerned with the war effort. An undated, late 1917 or early 1918, Special Sub-Committee was convened under Lord Headford's chairmanship, regarding the Aerial 'Defense' League to supply ash timber when it was decided 'to recommend that the R.H.S.I. should send a circular letter to its members and principal landowners in the County pointing to the urgent requirements of ash timber for aeroplane work', a far cry from today's war planes.

In March 1918, it was decided to form a sub-committee of Arboriculture, following a recommendation from Viscount Powerscourt, to deal with economic forestry, and with ornamental trees and shrubs. By December, recognising the work done by the sub-committee, it was resolved that the name of the Society should be changed to add the word 'Arboricultural', subject to the necessary approvals. This entailed obtaining the consent of the monarch, as will be seen in the letter from the Chief Secretary's Office, dated 21st February 1919. (Fig. 6)

In April 1918 Lord Powerscourt generously offered a site for a garden at Enniskerry, but his offer was put on hold for consideration after the war. It would be another 93 years before the Society had its first garden, situated at Russborough, County Wicklow.

What came to be known as the Great War was over. But, there was one final thing for the Society to complete. A War Horticultural Relief Fund had been set up, with the purpose of aiding the restoration of the 'gardens, small-holdings and orchards of our French, Belgian and Serbian Allies devastated by the German invaders'.⁸ After deducting the expenses for printing, advertising, postage, a balance of £80. 16s. 6d. was sent to Sir Harry Veitch, the

⁷ Centenaries.national archives.ie, Property Losses (Ireland) Committee

⁸ R.H.S.I. Minutes, Feb. 20, 1919

the extraneous circumstances that affected it. The intervening years, between 1918 and 1950 deserve further investigation. Records of a century of significant changes should yield valuable insights into the social history of Ireland, and how the RHSI evolved to meet the circumstances. However, in the latter half of the twentieth century, in fulfilment of its role as a registered charity dedicated to promoting ‘the knowledge, skill and practice of horticulture and arboriculture in Ireland through the provision of courses, seminars, exhibitions and general public lectures for educational purposes’, the RHSI moved away from organising flower shows, and focused on a wide range of activities aimed at improving the gardening knowledge and skills of its members, and interested members of the public. In 1980 the Society published the book on *Irish Gardening and Horticulture* to document the history of gardening in Ireland. This was to celebrate the 150th anniversary as an amateur society (taking the year 1830 as the founding year). It was generously sponsored by the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust, The Ireland Fund and Society members.

In recent years, the Society has offered a programme of events each year, which includes Floral Art demonstrations by leading practitioners, Day Tours to individual gardens around the country, the annual Seminar at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, and expertly organised tours at home and abroad, both to the UK and continental Europe. A return to the tradition of exhibiting flowers, to promote greater skills among growers, and to inform a wide public, has taken place. In June 2006, the first show was the Sweet Pea Display which took place in the Garden Heaven Show at Purchestown. In 2008 the RHSI and the Parks Department of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Co. Council jointly presented The Anglo-Irish Bank Sweet Pea Showcase in the Orangery in Marlay Park, Rathfarnham and it continued there until 2013. In 2014, it was held in the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, and in September 2015 a Dahlia show was held, at which some of the RHSI’s collection of silver trophies are awarded and draw large attendances. Both shows have continued to the present day. It is hoped to extend shows to other classes in the future.

Perhaps the most important recent development has been the implementation of the long-held desire of the Society to have its own garden. In the autumn of 2011, a licence was obtained from the Alfred Beit Foundation, for the walled garden at Russborough, to be renovated and run by members on a voluntary basis, for public benefit, as RHSI Garden Russborough. This work has been supported by generous donations and grants, enabling the reinstatement of paths, and espaliers, and the construction of a log cabin in 2016 to provide a centre for the volunteer gardeners, and for workshops and talks. A Rose garden featured very prominently during the time Sir Alfred Beit and his wife lived at Russborough. In recognition of this a much smaller version of the rose garden is planned for one of the quarters in the southern section of the garden. A second plan has been drawn up for a garden of Irish garden plants in collaboration with the IGPS, and awaits development.

Among the festivities celebrating the 200th anniversary in 2016, a Garden Party was held in the Walled Garden for the societies’ members and friends, a beautiful sunny day which added much to the enjoyment on the day. A Gala Celebration held in September in the RDS was the high point of the year. An all-day/evening event featured talks by Jenny Murphy - Floral

Art Demonstration, Dan Hinkley - 'From Shadow to Sun – Making Windcliff', Roy Lancaster, CBE 'A Life of Plants', and Monty Don 'Gardens of Europe'.



Fig. 7

Walled Garden in 2011

© R. Myerscough



Fig. 8

Aerial Photograph of Walled Garden 2016

© Russborough Management

The backdrop of the Palladian mansion and its demesne provided a dramatic setting for the first ever RHSI Russborough Garden Show, which took place on 29th of July 2017. This show advances the Society's remit to 'hold, licence, supervise and regulate plant, flower, vegetable and other horticultural or arboricultural shows or competitions, in the cultivation or propagation of plants and in the art of flower arrangement'. This will be an ambitious undertaking, aimed at placing the RHSI at the forefront of Irish horticulture for the next century and beyond.

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All material for this article is from the Archives in the RHSI office in Laurel Lodge Marlay Park, Rathfarnham, Dublin except where noted.

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MICHELINE SHEEHY SKEFFINGTON

AN ALIEN IMMIGRANT? THE STORY OF MACKAY'S HEATH
ERICA MACKAYANA IN IRELAND

Mackay's heath *Erica mackayana* was discovered in the same year (1835) in Ireland and Spain and named after a Scotsman (James Townsend Mackay) living in Ireland (then Curator of the Trinity College Botanic Garden in Ballsbridge), though it was first found in Connemara by another Scotsman, William McCalla (Nelson 2011). It was brought into cultivation that year and is popular with gardeners as it propagates well from cuttings.

As one of a number of west of Ireland plant species which have unusual geographical distributions (Webb 1983), *E. mackayana* is of particular interest because outside Ireland, it is found nowhere else but in northern Spain. Several other species have similar unusual disjunct distributions, being rare in Ireland (or Britain) and with their main centre of occurrence on the Iberian Peninsula, especially in northern Spain and Portugal. Many are heathers, which is not surprising as those regions share a similar oceanic climate to that of Ireland, with moderate temperatures and year-round rainfall. Such a regularly moist climate is conducive to the formation of peatlands, the main habitat for heathers. In northern Spain and Portugal these are largely heaths — shallower and drier than the lowland blanket bogs that abound along the Irish Atlantic coast. In these regions heathlands came about largely through human activity (Webb 1986) and have long formed a significant part of the cultural landscape of northern Spain (Fagúndez and Izco 2016), as indeed all peatlands have in Ireland.

Species with this kind of disjunct distribution are sometimes called Hiberno-Lusitanian. But even among the Irish and British heathers, the Lusitanian element is itself not easily defined. Nelson (2011), in his book *Hardy heathers from the northern hemisphere* only uses this term in reference to *E. mackayana*. As Lusitania is the old Latin name for a region roughly equating to modern Portugal, this term is often used in the broader sense referring to the Atlantic regions of the Iberian Peninsula as in this case, since *E. mackayana* does not in fact occur in Portugal. There are other heathers that are uncommon in these islands and have a south-western distribution in Europe. They include the Dorset heath *Erica ciliaris*, Cornish heath *E. vagans*, Mediterranean or Irish heath *E. erigena*, and St Dabeoc's heath *Daboecia cantabrica* (Nelson 2011). The first two, as their common names suggest, occur mainly in south-west England, as well as in western Ireland, western France and Spain. But the last two, though in Ireland, do not occur in Britain and *Daboecia* is even rare in France, being virtually confined there to the Basque country (Dupont 1962; www.tela-botanica.org).

E. mackayana, the focus of this paper, is absent from *both* Britain and France and, outside Ireland, is restricted to the northern fringe of Spain. In Ireland, it is more widespread than *Erica ciliaris* or *E. vagans* which occur at only one site each (Nelson 2011), but it, too, is uncommon, having only been found in six locations, all in lowland blanket bog, along the western Irish seaboard (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1 Location of *Erica mackayana* in Ireland. L. Nacung is in Co. Donegal; Nephin Beg and Bellacorick in Co. Mayo; Roundstone Bog and Carna in Connemara, Co. Galway; Caunoge in Co. Kerry (Sheehy Skeffington and Van Doorslaer 2015). At all sites, it is found with its hybrid with *E. tetralix*, *E. x stuartii*. Image of Ireland from <http://www.tela-botanica.org/bdtfx-nn-21098-repartition>. Accessed 17th December 2017.

Although lowland blanket bog is widespread in the west of Ireland, this species only occurs in these widely-spaced, localised and remote sites. Even stranger, *E. mackayana* rarely if ever sets seed in Ireland, though its pollen is sufficiently viable for its hybrid with cross-leaved heath *E. tetralix*, *E. x stuartii*, to be frequent at all sites where *E. mackayana* occurs (*E. tetralix* is abundant on all Irish blanket bogs).

In the Iberian Peninsula, *E. mackayana* is common on heathlands in the Galician and Cantabrian mountains of northern Spain (Nelson and Fraga 1983). It also occurs right on the coast, especially on exposed headlands in a mosaic of heathers and gorse, such as western gorse *Ulex gallii* (Fig. 2). It would probably have been more widespread in the past, when heathlands were extensively managed for grazing in Galicia (Fagúndez and Izco 2016). Surprisingly, the hybrid *E. x stuartii* is very rare in Spain, even where *E. tetralix* does occur with *E. mackayana*, which is not often (Nelson and Fraga 1983, Fagúndez 2006).



Fig. 2a



Fig. 2b

Fig. 2a Heathland at Cabo de Peñas, just west of Gijón on the coast of Asturias, northern Spain a) *Erica mackayana* (rust colour) with *E. vagans* (pink), *Ulex gallii* (light green) and *U. europaeus* (bottom right); 2b *Erica mackayana* (mostly faded) with *E. ciliaris* (foreground) and a few spikes of *E. vagans* in foreground.

Unusual Irish local distribution pattern

When the Irish populations of both *E. mackayana* and *E. x stuartii* were carefully mapped by PhD student Lieveke Van Doorslaer in the late 1980s, their unusual local distribution pattern became clear for the first time, notably on Roundstone Bog in Connemara, where they are by far the most widespread. There the species is more or less confined to peat banks, whether artificially or naturally cut, so is easily found on old hand-cut turf banks or round lakeshores. These better-drained habitats more closely resemble the heaths of northern Spain than the wetter bog surface. The hybrid too is found on peat banks, but also in wetter, more open bog,

where its other parent, *E. tetralix*, is abundant, and it has spread much further than *E. mackayana*. This pattern, whereby the more abundant hybrid occurs at some distance from, as well as near *E. mackayana*, is repeated at all six sites (Sheehy Skeffington and Van Doorslaer 2015). This is because *E. mackayana* only spreads vegetatively, aided by mechanical propagation such as turf cutting, whereas the hybrid, which results from the transfer of *E. mackayana* pollen to the flowers of *E. tetralix* (and not the reverse, Webb 1955, Mugrabi de Kuppler *et al.* 2015), occurs largely as a function of the distance travelled by its pollinators (including bumblebees) over the bog where *E. tetralix* is abundant. The larger bumblebees are known to travel 3 km or more from their nests (Goulson 2014) which could well be located on drier islands in the middle of the bog, thus accounting for the occurrence of the hybrid >2 km from *E. mackayana*. In Donegal, the hybrid has recently been found north of its known occurrence, in cut-over bog some 3 km from Lough Nacung, to which *E. mackayana* is largely confined (Sheehy Skeffington and Sheppard 2015). As the hybrid also readily propagates vegetatively, it can, once established, easily spread in disturbed sites.

The inability of *E. mackayana* to set seed in Ireland may be because, since it is at the northern end of its range, the climate is unsuitable, or it might be due to some self-incompatibility that prevents genetically similar plants from producing seed. Webb (1955), who never saw seedlings in the wild or in cultivation, suggested the Irish populations may be of one 'biotype', making them self-incompatible. This could arise through the Irish populations becoming somehow stranded at the edge of the species' range, or it could be because it has been introduced as single individuals at each site from whence it spread clonally from shoots. Genetic work so far is inconclusive regarding the species' Irish native status (Nelson 2011) and more extensive such study on both Irish and Spanish populations is required.

How and when might *E. mackayana* have arrived in Ireland?

Although *E. mackayana* has mostly been considered native to Ireland (e.g. Webb *et al.* 1996; Nelson 2005; 2011), and has been singled out by Irish botanists as one of the 16 or so native Irish species that do not occur in Britain (Praeger 1934; Webb 1983), it is likely, in fact, not to be native. The native status of a species that is restricted to six small areas of blanket bog, in a country where this habitat is very extensive (NPWS 2008) and that can only spread vegetatively, is open to question. To be considered certainly native, it would need to have arrived of its own accord in the millennia immediately following the retreat of the last Ice Age (begun ca 15,000 years ago) and before people arrived in Ireland. During that Ice Age most, if not all of Ireland was covered in ice and nowhere was there suitable habitat for heathers. Recent research (e.g. Edwards and Brooks 2008; Clark *et al.* 2012) has cast doubt on the classic theory that after the Ice Age, plants and animals re-colonised Ireland from the continent via land-bridges from Britain. But regardless of the routes taken by plant colonisers, fossil pollen evidence shows that Ireland had a deciduous woodland cover by about 9,000 years ago, so the majority of our current flora became established before the arrival at about that time of the first (Mesolithic) peoples (Mitchell and Ryan 1998). Once human beings were making regular trips to Ireland, it is likely that many new plant and animal arrivals came with them. Plants thought to have been brought in by human beings

before 1500 are referred to as archaeophytes and those introduced after that date are neophytes (Williamson *et al.* 2008).

One recent revelation from the animal world suggests that the banded snail *Cepaea nemoralis* may have arrived in Ireland with Mesolithic peoples as early as 8,000 years ago (Grindon and Davison 2013). Another mollusc study provides reasonable evidence for traffic of organisms, deliberate or not, between northern Spain and Ireland (Reich *et al.* 2015). It is therefore likely that human beings were also responsible for helping some plant species make the large leap from the Iberian Peninsula to Ireland. One ‘Hiberno-Iberian’ heather, *Erica erigena*, which is confined in Ireland to Mayo and west Galway, has a fossil pollen record that was found to only date back to the 15th century (Foss and Doyle 1990). Those researchers proposed that this species had been brought from northern Spain to Ireland possibly by pilgrims returning from Santiago de Compostela in Galicia. The alternative suggestion to human transport of ‘Lusitanian’ species to Ireland is that during the last Ice Age there was dry land not covered by the ice, somewhere west of Brittany that acted as a refugium and stepping-stone for plants such as *Daboecia cantabrica* to arrive in Ireland without landing in Britain (Beatty and Provan 2013). But *Daboecia* would have had to leap-frog over south-west Ireland to arrive in its current only location of West Galway and Mayo, as indeed would the less-widespread *E. erigena*.

There is so far, no Irish post-glacial pollen record for either *Daboecia* or *E. mackayana* (though putative *E. mackayana* fossil leaf records from about 8,000 years ago in Roundstone Bog are discussed in Sheehy Skeffington and Van Doorslaer 2015). Pollen records are difficult to obtain as most Irish Ericaceae produce small amounts of pollen, which in turn is hard to identify even to genus.

Though it is so far not possible to date the arrival of *E. mackayana* in Ireland, or to prove that it was brought by peoples coming from northern Spain, there is much circumstantial evidence for trade and traffic from Iberia to Ireland since earliest times (Quinn 2005). More specific documentation of this trade can help us arrive at a rough date, or dates when *E. mackayana* might have come to Ireland.

The largest population of *E. mackayana* in Ireland is on Roundstone Bog. This is so much larger than the other sites, with species and hybrid spreading far into the bog, that it seems likely its arrival there pre-dates the other sites. This site is near the Errisbeg population of *E. erigena* and supports the only population of ca 12 plants of *E. ciliaris* in Ireland (now also acknowledged as a non-native — Curtis 2000). Perhaps the Roundstone Bay area was a port of call *en route* to Galway in the 15th century, the time when *E. erigena* seems to have first arrived in Ireland. It is known that from the early 15th century, trade existed between northern Spain and Ireland, when a lot of Spanish and Portuguese wine, as well as iron from the Cantabrian mountains, came to the ports on the west coast, especially Galway (O’Sullivan 1943; O’Neill 1987). It would only require for some ships to put in and drop cargo at Roundstone on the way, for the heather to be brought to the area, possibly as packing or as seeds that fell into or attached to containers.

Ships might also have stopped off along the Irish coast in mediaeval times for returning pilgrims. Thousands of pilgrims, many of them Irish, travelled to Santiago de Compostela in mediaeval times (Cunliffe 2001) and accounts state that they were required not to trade in either silver or gold.²⁹ This last implies that pilgrims did trade in goods, probably to pay their way and this would include bringing goods back for sale at home. Spanish fishing boats also regularly fished Irish waters for centuries and were subject to piracy by the Irish (O'Neill 1987). Therefore, it is not hard to imagine that Spanish goods found their way ashore by many routes in mediaeval and earlier times, not all of them via the conventional ports.

Smuggled goods

The Roundstone area (including the other *Erica mackayana* site at Carna) was not so remote in the past, since sea traffic in Galway Bay predominated long before road access was possible. But the Donegal, Mayo and Kerry sites are not situated near a major late mediaeval port such as Galway and the *E. mackayana* populations are less extensive. If, as I suspect, *E. mackayana* were to have arrived in Connemara in mediaeval times, then it probably arrived later at the other sites. These sites are all situated on old routes traceable inland from secluded coves. For example, the Mayo *E. mackayana* sites are both on routes leading from the coast to Ballina and/or Castlebar two early main destinations for trade in the region (M. Gibbons pers. comm.); the Nephin Beg site is in the only significant gap in that mountain range and is next to an old drovers' route (now part of the Bangor Trail). The strategic position of the sites has led us to suggest that *E. mackayana* may have been brought ashore and inland with smuggled goods, not least because the possible start of the route inland to the Kerry site is still known locally as the Smugglers' Path (Sheehy Skeffington and Van Doorslaer 2015).

Smuggling only became widespread in the 18th century and continued for over a hundred years — ample time for seeds to be inadvertently introduced. Smugglers wishing to avoid open seas where they would be more visible to coastguard ships, would choose entrances to bays sheltered from view from more frequented parts of the coast. Achill would provide such a screen from sight within Clew Bay (Fig. 3).

An early 19th-century account tells of a smuggling ship anchoring at the entrance to Blacksod Bay and having her cargo ('kegs and cases' including tobacco) discharged very rapidly by 'a hundred boats' to apparently pre-destined recipients (Maxwell 1832). Subsequently the goods would have been brought inland via the least exposed routes and the way through the mountains of Nephin Beg is an obvious route to Ballina. It may be that in the west of Ireland such goods were off-loaded in the shelter of mountains to be sorted for sending on to the target trade centres. Nephin Beg and Caunoge in Kerry are the first mountainous areas to be encountered along a route inland from a secluded cove (Valentia Island in Kerry would serve to hide smugglers' boats in the same way as Achill Island in Mayo). Accounts in Britain tell of smuggled goods being brought on foot or horse-back inland along remote tracks and of their later re-packaging to conceal their illicit origin (Platt 2011).

²⁹ Documents in the Museo do Pobo Galega in Santiago de Compostela refer to this restriction on trade by pilgrims

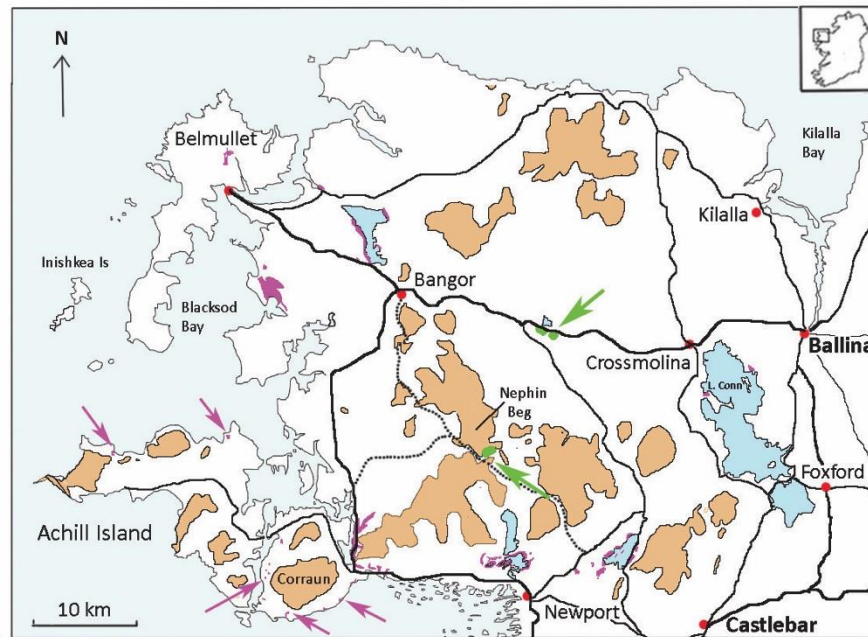


Fig. 3 North Mayo indicating both *E. mackayana* sites (bright green; arrowed); the Bellacorrick site is to the north-east of Nephin Beg. Main roads are shown, as well as the relevant old routes from the coast through the mountains (dotted lines). The location of all the *E. erigena* sites in the area (magenta shading; minor sites arrowed) is also shown (from Foss *et al.* 1987). The areas of distribution are slightly exaggerated to help visibility. Brown shading denotes land over 200m. Lines and contours drawn from O.S. 1/2" map sheet 6.

Figure 3 also shows all the Co. Mayo sites for *E. erigena*, aside from one on the northern shore of Killary Harbour; its only other site in Ireland is at L. Nalawney on Errisbeg, south of Roundstone Bog in Connemara (Foss *et al.* 1987). As *E. erigena* readily sets seed in Ireland, it would have spread further at each site than *E. mackayana*. But its occurrence is still very localised, especially for a peatland species growing in a region that is dominated by blanket bog. Like *E. mackayana*, it favours disturbed habitats such as cut-over bog, lake-shores, and along streams (Foss *et al.* 1987). It is known to occur east of the Corraun peninsula only since the 15th century (Foss and Doyle 1990). It cannot be a coincidence that both it and *E. mackayana* occur near each other in both Mayo and Connemara. However, they may have arrived by different modes and at different times. *E. erigena* is not common along the north coast of Spain, but it is near A Coruña, the landing port for Santiago de Compostela (Fig. 4) and around two other nearby towns that were also pilgrimage destinations (J. Fagúndez, pers. comm.). Therefore, pilgrims would have passed through heathlands where it occurred and could well have brought it with goods on their return journey to Ireland. *E. mackayana*, on the other hand, is closer to the northern coast of Galicia and further east (Fig. 4) so there is less possibility that it was brought by pilgrims and therefore may not have arrived in Mayo at the same time.



Fig.4 Distribution of *E. mackayana* and *E. erigena* in the Iberian Peninsula, from www.anthos.es. Key cities and ports on the northern coast are indicated. NB, though *E. erigena* has a wider distribution than *E. mackayana*, it is not near the coast at most of its Mediterranean sites.

Conclusion

E. mackayana is the most unusual of the Hiberno-Iberian heathers in that, outside northern Spain, it only occurs at six sites in the west of Ireland, where it does not set seed, but spreads vegetatively. This unusual distribution, coupled with its poor reproductive ability, leads one to believe it has been introduced into Ireland, probably with the importation of goods from northern Spain. Since it does not spread fast (producing no seed), the sites where it occurs indicate where it may have first arrived. This appears to be different to *E. erigena*, which although still very localised, occurs more widely and is more coastal in distribution. It is also clear that both species would have had ample opportunity to be brought from northern Spain to the west coast of Ireland, via pilgrims, as part of mediaeval trade, or through the more recent smuggling of goods such as tobacco and spirits from the Iberian Peninsula. Genetic studies tracing geographical affinities of the populations of *E. mackayana* and its hybrid *E. x stuartii*, may shed some light concerning the location of the source populations for this species in Ireland.

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