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**YEAR BOOK
OF THE
HEATHER
SOCIETY**

1983

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THE HEATHER SOCIETY

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Gesellschaft der Heidefreunde

Pacific Northwest Heather Society

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Editorial

The letters that one receives from so many interesting people help to make the office of Editor the pleasant one that it undoubtedly is. For example, Albert Julian recently sent me a photocopy of a long article entitled "Among the Heather" by Uisdean MacGhilmhaoil. This was dated October 1863 and appeared, I believe, in *MacMillan's Magazine*. I should like to quote from one paragraph of this article, which seemed most apposite when I was considering some of the contents of this *Year Book*.

"The range of latitude (*sic*) of the heath tribe is eminently Atlantic or Western. It is found along a line drawn from the north of Norway along the west coast of Europe and Africa, down to the Cape of Good Hope Along this line, which is comparatively narrow, seldom running far from the coast, about four hundred distinct kinds are scattered, of which England and Scotland possess only three, and Ireland no less than six. That Australia and America have no heaths is a botanical aphorism. It is recorded of the first Highland emigrants to Canada, that they wept because the heathers, a few plants of which they had brought with them from their native moors, would not grow in their newly adopted soil".

Much has been learned about heathers in the 120 years since those words were published. This year Charles Nelson has written about William McCalla who was instrumental in increasing that fund of knowledge, albeit about 30 years before MacGhilmhaoil's essay. The process of learning goes on even today, and we have a report by David McClintock of an expedition he undertook with Charles Nelson and David Small which has redefined the distribution of McCalla's plant in Spain.

Not only has knowledge of heathers increased, but so has horticultural interest in growing them. The formation a few years ago of the Pacific Northwest Heather Society is evidence, if evidence was needed, that heathers now grow in North America. In this issue their President, Stuart Fraser, himself an expatriate Scot, writes about his experiences of growing them there.

Also in this *Year Book* we have contributions from Norway and South Africa, close to the two extremes of MacGhilmhaoil's inaccurate linear distribution.

In the 1982 *Summer Bulletin* Mrs. MacLeod wrote a tribute to Mr. Alfred Bowerman. He had been the second Chairman of our Society and his death should be recorded in the *Year Book*. However, it is out of no sterile sense of duty that I do this. The Society has been fortunate indeed in the three men who have held, and hold, the post of Chairman. Mr. Bowerman's special contribution was to guide the adolescent Society with tact, wisdom and, above all, kindness, and for that we owe him a debt of gratitude. It was a privilege and a pleasure to have known him.

From the Chairman.

Maj.-Gen. P. G. Turpin, C.B., O.B.E.
West Clandon, Surrey.

How often do we hear two or three of our members discussing a particular variety of heather and hotly disagreeing on its growth habit or even its colour! Sometimes, regrettably, this is due to the misnaming of a plant. Unfortunately this happens only too often; but the establishment of the Reference Collections should help to correct such faults. The truth is that heathers do show a very different habit when the conditions in which they grow vary.

Not so long ago a plant of *E. ciliaris* growing in the Devon colony on Dartmoor was measured as more than 6 feet tall, growing through the branches of a young

conifer. Plants raised from cuttings of the same plant never reach a height of 2 feet in a garden bed. *Calluna* 'Robert Chapman' may be a brilliant fiery red in February on a poor sandy soil, and yet only five miles away on the same date on a heavy clay soil its foliage may hardly show more than a brownish yellow. The slightest shade will prevent the golden forms of *E. carnea* or *E. vagans* 'Valerie Proudley' from showing their true colours.

Some cultivars are described as outstanding when grown in Holland and Germany. The same plants often appear quite moderate when grown in the different conditions of this country, and *vice versa*.

Differences of soil, climate, weather and the quality of light all have a profound effect on the habit of growth of heathers. Sometimes a heather found on the moors which looks most promising turns out to be a sad disappointment when grown in a garden. But the reverse is also true. Plants of *E. x williamsii* usually show to better effect in a garden than in the wild.

We are told that *E. tetralix* has its leaves growing in whorls of four and *E. ciliaris* in whorls of three. And yet it is not difficult to find the former with leaves in whorls of five or even six and the latter in whorls of four or more. Nature, in all her diversity, is a great trickster. 2,000 years ago the Roman poet and philosopher, Lucretius, wrote:-

"Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret"

(You may cast out Nature with a pitchfork, but she will always come back)

The same is still true today. However we may try to stifle Nature's diversity with precise rules and definitions, sooner or later she will assert herself with a new twist and confound the wiseacres and those who, in American parlance, are so aptly described as "closet botanists". So let us not be too dogmatic about the habit or characteristics of a particular heather. Let us be content to grow those varieties which do best in our own peculiar environment.

Annual Conference, Lancaster University, September 1982

Mrs. E. B. Petterssen, Skjoldtun, Norway

Emily Dickinson's "little Gentian - it tried to be a Rose" springs to my mind, sitting down to make the Conference report. The language problem alone should be enough to put a Norwegian member off such a task. Nevertheless, seeing everybody arrive gay and full of expectations, one feels privileged to be amidst this friendly group, and it is not easy to say "no" when asked.

Mr. and Mrs. F. N. Culley gave us a hearty welcome at the reception desk. Being the arrangement-committee on their own, the preparing-phase must have seemed endless, and I am sure they too were glad to see the Conference actually starting.

After a cup of tea, time to unpack and a lovely dinner, we gathered for the opening by our Chairman, Maj.-Gen. Pat Turpin. With his greetings to the 40 members present and a special welcome to the President of the Pacific Northwest Heather Society, Stuart Fraser of Oregon, we were ready for the first talk. This was by Geoffrey Yates, well-known author of the invaluable *Pocket Guide to Heather Gardening*. In keeping with the trend of this Conference towards geography, his talk was on "Heathers in Europe" and based on slides from a journey earlier in the year to Germany and Holland. They showed us how they use a restricted number of cultivars in mass plantings. New cultivars were given a fair trial period in the nurseries and only really outstanding improvements resulted in introductions to the market, the market being enviably enormous.

The second talk was "Heathers in Spain" by David McClintock. Spain offers many interesting botanical features for heather-enthusiasts, we were told. Together

with Dr. Charles Nelson and David Small, the latter with his specially designed mini mist-propagator fitted to the cigarette-lighter of the car, he drove there to study them, and in particular the new species *Erica andevalensis* of south-western Spain. They were amazed to see this plant only, growing on ghastly-coloured mineral-polluted tips and riverbanks. Certainly it possesses more than the frugal nature of a heather.

Saturday morning we were provided with a huge packed lunch and set off by coach to visit the Lake District. First stop was at Brockhole Gardens where we were free to make our own way around. The heather beds, of course, were at the centre of interest and the plants were in an excellent condition. The next stop was at The Lakeland Horticultural Society Garden, Holehird - a 2.4 acre garden maintained entirely by the members, and they provide a warden service as well. We were taken round by five wardens giving us the benefit of their first-hand knowledge. From the top of the garden we admired a magnificent view of the Lakeland hills. Before it was time to return to campus we made a visit to Hayes Nurseries, Ambleside - a well-designed garden centre.

The coach took us back a different route, making the most of an opportunity for a scenic drive. After dinner we met for another evening of talks.

“Cape Heaths in the Wild” by Don Richards took us to Hildeburg, South Africa. His slides showed us some of the 600 species from this part of the world. The many-splendoured beauty of these plants were breathtaking and we were happy not to be burdened with too many botanical names. From the fact that some were shown flowering in the snow, we expect some species may in time be available as garden plants in England.

The second talk - “Heathers in the Pacific Northwest” - was by Stuart Fraser. Heather is not a native plant, but interest in heathers as garden plants is growing. Stuart Fraser showed us slides from his

heather-plantings and some good American cultivars. Hopefully he will share with us the knowledge deriving from his cultural experiments.

Sunday morning we met for another busy day. Phillip Swindells, Superintendent of the Northern Horticultural Society's garden at Harlow Car must have had a very early breakfast in Harrogate, as he was ready at 9.15 to present us to "Heathers at Harlow Car". This garden has been chosen as the site for the northern reference collection of heathers, and in due time our Society's recommended list of cultivars will be demonstrated in a specially designed heather garden. A northern Wisley was the aim for this garden at the start in 1948 - and this has become a reality. We learned some of the history and policy of the garden and a slide-walk through it showed us that it is well worth an effort to visit it.

The A.G.M. was next on the programme. Thanks to our Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer it ran smoothly and we had time to start the Open Forum before lunch.

A very kind invitation from Mr. and Mrs. Don Richards to visit their garden was very popular and the hardy drive to Eskdale Green was no obstacle. From this fascinating garden many new heather cultivars originate. Cuttings were popped into polythene bags and interesting conversations took place in every twist and turn of the many paths. After a refreshing cup of tea we somehow managed to tear ourselves away for the return drive through the pleasant wilderness of this area.

After the evening meal we continued the Open Forum, with Pat Turpin, David McClintock, Daphne Everett and Stuart Fraser on the panel. Questions asked concerned *Phytophthora*, mycorrhizas, trimming, reversion, hairs on heathers etc.

To round up we all joined our Chairman expressing our thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Frank Culley for all their work. A remarkable feature of these week-ends is how well experts and beginners, professionals and amateurs

create an encouraging atmosphere in which any experience with heathers meets with interest. Arriving as a newcomer you leave as one of the gang. "Goodbyes" are happily supplied with "see you next year" as we leave.

Damage at Harlow Car During the Winter of 1981-2

T. A. Julian, Whaley Bridge, Derbyshire

The winter of 1981-2 which had the lowest recorded temperatures of the century, played havoc with the trials plants at Harlow Car. On Dec. 18th - 16.9° was recorded, and the mean temperature for December was -1.6°C. Temperatures dropped steeply again in January, but whereas the trials plot had a deep protective covering of snow in December, during the following month the plants were almost completely exposed to the elements. It is thought that the many losses and extensive frost damage can be attributed mainly to the severe conditions prevailing in January.

The appearance of the plot in late February was most depressing and my first impression was that little had survived other than the carneas. They were all flowering prolifically, albeit perhaps not quite to the standard of previous years. As the weeks went by the area gradually came to life and I can report now, in September, that many of the survivors have flowered. Happily they are likely to continue to be a source of authenticated cutting material for at least another year. In general dead branches and stems were found to be split near their bases. This type of damage was common to all species.

Casualties were heaviest among the cinereas. In the winter of 1978-9 also they were badly affected, but subsequently many of the plants recovered partially by producing new basal growth. This last winter there was very much more destruction and practically no fresh shoots have appeared from the roots during the summer.

Notes on the conditions of the plants of the various species follow:-

Calluna vulgaris

Of the summer-flowering plants the *Calluna* cultivars were least affected. Nevertheless a few succumbed and most of them had some dead shoots and leaves. With the exception of 'Minima Smith's Variety' all the dwarfs sustained significant damage. The plants that died were of the cultivars 'Alba Carlton', 'Beechwood Crimson', 'County Wicklow', 'Hibernica' and 'Orange Carpet'. Cultivars with seriously damaged plants are 'Argentea', 'Barnet Anley', 'Darkness', 'Serlei Aurea', 'Serlei Rubra', 'Silver Spire', 'Summer Orange', 'Underwoodii' and 'Winter Chocolate'. 'Barnett Anley', 'Beechwood Crimson' and 'Orange Carpet' plants were among the very few *Callunas* that sustained damage in the 1978—9 winter. The St. Kilda plants came through the winter unscathed.

Daboecia

D. cantabrica 'Alba Globosa', 'Bicolor', 'Porter's Variety', 'Snowdrift' and *D. x scotica* 'William Buchanan' showed no signs of their winter experience, but *D.c.* 'Atropurpurea', 'Eskdale Blonde', 'Eskdale Maggie', 'Globosa Pink' and 'Polifolia' all died and show no signs of regeneration.

D.c. 'Eskdale Blea', 'Hookstone Purple' and 'Praegerae' were severely damaged.

Erica arborea

Many of the stems of 'Alpina' collapsed due to splitting.

Erica australis

'Riverslea' was killed. There is no new basal growth.

Erica carnea

All the plants seemed to be unaffected with the exception of those of 'Sherwood Creeping' which had some split and discoloured stems.

Erica ciliaris

This species suffered severely. The plants of 'Stapehill' died, and the others show only small patches of life. Of these 'David McClintock' and 'Globosa' are in the best condition.

Erica cinerea

Of the 48 cultivars in the trials collection, all the plants of 27 cultivars died, and there were deaths among several others. The surviving plants are in a sorry state; in many instances a few stems only showing signs of life. There were heavy casualties also with *cinerea* plants in the display beds in the adjoining gardens of the Northern Horticultural Society.

Erica erigena

As expected, this group of plants suffered very severely. 'Alba', 'Brightness', 'Coccinea', 'Glauca', 'Hibernica', 'Nana', 'Rubra', and 'Superba' were killed outright.

Erica lusitanica

All top growth was killed. New shoots are now appearing from the base.

Erica mackaiana

'Plena' hardly survived the winter. There are only one or two stems which show signs of life. 'Dr. Ronald Gray' had died before the onset of winter.

Erica terminalis

'Thelma Woolner' shows no sign of damage.

Erica tetralix

With the exception of 'Afternoon', 'Alba Praecox' and 'Salmon Seedling' all plants showed some damage. 'Melbury White' was affected more than the others.

Erica umbellata

All plants died.

Erica vagans

This is yet another group where practically all the plants suffered considerable damage. The exceptions

were 'Lilacina' and 'Viridiflora' which had few scars. Plants that did not survive were of 'Diana Hornibrook', 'Fiddlestone', 'George Underwood' and 'Mrs. D. F. Maxwell'.

Erica x darleyensis

Only 'Darley Dale' and 'Norman R. Webster' showed no signs of damage. 'Rosea' was only slightly affected. 'Arthur Johnson', 'George Rendall', 'Jack H. Brummage' and 'J. W. Porter' were severely damaged, and others showed considerable freeze-splitting in their centres.

Erica x stuartii

'Irish Lemon' was not damaged, but 'Stuartii' has large dead areas.

Erica x veitchii

The top growth was killed and there are no signs of revival.

Erica x watsonii

'H. Maxwell' is almost unmarked and 'F. White' shows few signs of damage. 'Dawn' and 'Gwen' have substantial areas of dead branches.

Erica x williamsii

'Gwavas' and 'P. D. Williams' were affected only slightly.

How The "Dead" Came To Life Again

B. G. London, Taverham, Norfolk.

Having had a hard job to finish pruning my summer-flowering heathers by the end of March, in 1981, last year I started on 1st February as the weather was fairly mild. On 22nd and 23rd we had very hard frosts. The tree heaths 'George Hunt' and 'Exeter' had their trunks split to ground level. 'Riverslea' had some split branches but did not suffer too badly, and 'Albert's Gold' was

untouched. Despite the frosts all the summer plants were pruned by 2nd March.

March started off fine and warm, but after about ten days it turned cold and wet. The last ten days of the month were again dry and mild. April started very cold, with hail showers. It then turned very dry, and soon I noticed that most of my *Callunas* had lost all their foliage and looked like up-turned broom heads.

In a bed of *Calluna vulgaris* 'County Wicklow', 'Elsie Purnell', 'J.H. Hamilton', 'Peter Sparkes', 'Ruth Sparkes' and 'Tib', only 'Ruth Sparkes' did not suffer defoliation. All the green-foliaged *Callunas* suffered, the double-flowered ones worst. Though 'Anthony Davis' in the shade was defoliated, it was not in the open. The "silvers" and "golds" were affected in patches.

The dry weather persisted but, like others, I thought "This is April - must rain soon". The trouble was that of the 61 days of March and April we had only ten showery days. Soon I noticed that the large bushes of *Daboecia cantabrica* 'Alba', 'Polifolia' and 'Purpurea' and the smaller ones of 'Bicolor' were also getting bare.

I seriously wondered whether to dig up all the dead-looking heathers and replant, but then, thinking I would have to rearrange all the plants if I did, I decided to wait and see what happened.

I was too busy at that time to go round the garden with the hose, so in the evenings I mixed up some Phostrogen in a watering can and dashed round giving the "dead" heathers a dose of that. However, walking round the garden two days later with my glasses on, I bent down to pick out a weed and noticed tiny green shoots appearing low down on 'Elsie Purnell' and some of the others; so out came the hose, and realising there

was hope at last, I watered the garden until it was too dark to see.

Very slowly after that a patchwork of foliage started appearing on all the *Callunas*. Wearing a leather glove I found by gripping the dead-looking branches those that were really dead crumbled and I could clear them away.

The last one to show signs of life was *Daboecia cantabrica* 'Polifolia', which, at the end of June, I was about to dig up, when at the base and half way up the branches I saw signs of life. All the *Daboecias* made a remarkable recovery, because, by the beginning of August, except for a few odd small patches, they were fully clothed and flowering.

By early September, tree heaths 'Exeter' and 'George Hunt' had grown up 18 ins and 14 ins respectively from their bases, and *C. v.* 'Peter Sparkes', 'Elsie Purnell', 'H.E. Beale' and 'Pink Beale' had covered up the few bald patches with budded spikes up to 15 ins long.

The only really dead ones I had to dig up were two 'Anthony Davis', two 'County Wicklow' and one 'Robert Chapman'.

At the time of writing, 10th October, amid lots of rainy days, the double-flowered *Callunas* look really beautiful, and with the *Daboecias*, *vagans*, some *cinereas*, *ciliaris*, *tetralix* and *E. x watsonii* still flowering, passers-by tell us they think our garden looks the best it has ever been.

Even a bush of *E. erigena* 'Brian Proudley' is showing odd spikes of white flowers and *E. x stuartii* 'Irish Lemon' seems to have been flowering all the year.

I am really pleased that I allowed my heathers to rise from the dead.

Over-Wintering Cape Heaths - an Addendum

John Moore, Dibden Purlieu, Hampshire

In the 1982 *Year Book* I wrote of my experiences in over-wintering Cape Heaths. Since then we have experienced a very severe winter and some further comments may be of interest.

As previously the plants were grown in pots or in the border of a PVC clad greenhouse, with others in pots in a glass greenhouse. Neither house was heated during the past winter. Thus, some heaths (*Eric blandfordia*, *E. cerinthoides* var. *barbertona*, *E. cruenta*, *E. discolor*, *E. doliiformis* and *E. mauritanica*) were over-wintered without heat for the first time. Minimum air temperatures of -5°C and -6°C were recorded in the PVC and the glass greenhouse.

Losses were higher than in previous years, especially amongst the plants in the glass greenhouse. Generally the pattern of previous experience was repeated, but there were some differences.

E. baccans (6 losses from 6) and *E. hirtiflora* (3 from 4) were again the least hardy, although a pot of self sown *E. baccans* seedlings beneath a larger plant survived. The majority of *E. curviflora* (4 from 5), *E. mammosa* (6 from 7) and *E. x hyemalis* 'Dusky Maid' (10 from 12) died; *E. doliiformis* (2 from 2) and the single plants of *E. cerinthoides* var. *barbertona*, *E. mauritanica* and *E. patersonia* were also lost.

In the category of intermediate hardiness appeared to be *E. blandfordia* (2 losses from 3), *E. formosa* (1 from 3), *E. glomiflora* (3 from 5), *E. gracilis* (1 from 2), *E. diaphana* (2 from 3), *E. peltata* (12 from 20) and *E. verticillata* (5 from 10).

All of the larger (0.75 - 1.5m) pot grown plants, which are now several years old, survived, including *E. bauera*, *E. caffra*, *E. canaliculata*, *E. cruenta*, *E.*

curviflora, *E. glandulosa*, *E. mammosa*, *E. speciosa* and *E. x hyemalis* 'Dusky Maid'. *E. caffra* and *E. cruenta* in particular have remained completely unscathed, and of the above only 'Dusky Maid' and, to a lesser extent *E. curviflora*, suffered significant frost damage. Previously younger plants of *E. bauera*, *E. curviflora* and *E. mammosa* had been lost. In addition several large seedlings of *E. glandulosa* all survived, whereas in 1978-9 mature plants of *E. glandulosa* had been lost. It was also noticed that the more vigorous growth of *E. canaliculata* growing in the border of the PVC clad greenhouse was more susceptible to split stems. Two large plants subsequently suffered "die-back" in the spring, one eventually dying. Other smaller pot grown plants successfully over-wintered, including *E. discolor* (1), *E. selaginifolia* (2), *E. speciosa* (6) and the hybrid 'Snowfall' (1).

Of the plants retained with some frost damage some subsequently recovered during the year, but a number of the more severely affected were discarded, in particular *E. mammosa*, *E. peltata*, *E. verticillata* and the hybrid 'Dusky Maid'. Some further losses were attributed to cultivation problems such as drying out. One of the *E. doliiformis* suffered a progressive "die-back" during the spring and subsequently died.

Therefore although the final "count" was about 45%, the actual survival could have been somewhat over 50% - similar to the winter of 1978-9.

Clearly, most Cape Heaths stand a chance of surviving a normal winter when grown with some protection in the absence of heat, as concluded previously, but the added information leads to slightly different conclusions on the hardiness of individual species where numbers and time grown permit a fairly definite assessment. *E. caffra*, *E. canaliculata*, *E. cruenta*, *E. glandulosa* and, possibly, *E. speciosa* appear most likely to survive without significant loss, while *E. baccans* and *E. hirtiflora* are the most severely affected. Most of the remaining species that I have grown

appear to be of intermediate hardiness, the percentage survival being dependent on the severity of the winter.

Ericas and Dryness on the Transvaal Highveld

J.E. Crewe-Brown, Randburg, Transvaal

We have often wondered how our South African Ericas would react to longish spells of dryness in soil and air conditions. This winter (May to August), for the first time in nearly twenty years of growing our Ericas, we became painfully aware of the answer.

For a long time now, we have held the view that we could pick *Erica* blooms in our garden at any time of the year, and have not been aware that this reputation could be applied to any other flowering plant. This year we began to doubt the tenability of our viewpoint.

It is not without a sense of horticultural bereavement that you see large Ericas slowly dying before your eyes for want of water. The fact that you have made provision, over the years, for storage of borehole and rain water, which has seemed adequate, but has proven otherwise in a season of exceptionally low rainfall, offers scant consolation.

You are aware, however, and this bolsters your ingrained enthusiasm, that losses and failures can be compensated for by renewal and time - the raising of seedlings to replace lost plants and waiting for them to take their place as worthy successors to those of their kind, who have gone before and left special memories.

Perhaps, you say to yourself, this is the natural law you must accept, if you are to participate happily in the processes of horticulture and the laws of nature which largely dictate their course. But it isn't easy.

Our rainfall locally averages thirty inches a year, and the rainy season stretches from mid-October to mid-April, over some six months of summer weather. Last season we had seventeen inches and have felt the

shortage acutely. Our indigenous evergreen trees, such as wild olives, wild buddleia and karee, have looked most unhappy and several of the exotic ones from Australia have surprisingly dried out and died. This has not happened to us before.

What water we have had available in dams and tanks, has been issued carefully on the basis of priority requirements. The younger *Erica* plants have been mulched and watered adequately, but the large and older ones, often reaching a height of five feet, could not be given any water.

The reaction of some kinds to dryness, compared to others, has been interesting. *E. bauera*, *E. baccans*, *E. diaphana* hybrids and *E. cyanthiformis* have been least able to cope. *E. versicolor*, *E. glandulosa*, *E. canaliculata*, *E. cerinthoides* and numerous hybrids * have managed better.

A surprise has been the behaviour of some ten European *Erica* cultivars and two of *Calluna*, obtained from England as rooted cuttings which have been grown for fifteen years as an experiment. The original list contained *Calluna vulgaris* 'Camla', 'H.E. Beale', 'Mair's Variety', 'Peter Sparkes' and 'Serlei Aurea' and *E. australis*, *E. carnea* 'Eileen Porter', 'Heathwood', 'Springwood White', 'Vivellii', *E. cinerea* 'Atrorubens', 'Coccinea', 'Eden Valley', *E. x darleyensis* 'Arthur Johnson', *E. erigena* 'W.T. Rackliff', *E. tetralix* 'Con Underwood' and *E. vagans* 'Mrs. D.F. Maxwell'. Apart from *E. australis*, I do not, unfortunately, know what the names are of those which have survived. The *Ericas* have developed into circular dome-shaped bushes of fifteen inches in height and four feet in diameter. They have not been watered other than by rain, but have survived. European *Ericas* have, we believe, been described as moisture-loving plants!

* The hybrids mentioned here are some that Mr. Crewe-Brown has bred from *E. cerinthoides* var. *barbertona*, *E. diaphana*, *E. glandulosa*, *E. mammosa*, *E. pinea*, *E. versicolor* and *E. vestita*. In a letter he writes "It seemed

wise to use species which did well in our area and which, because of their comparatively large individual blooms, were easy to hybridise”.

In the winter, our natural grass, mostly of a thatching-grass nature, dries completely and is highly combustible, while the roots remain moist and alive. Veld fires are the frequent result of someone's carelessness with cigarette ends and unquenched matches. In a fire we experienced in June last, in a section of our garden obscured by granite outcrops, a fire burnt merrily for an estimated hour, incinerating among other things, nine average sized *Ericas*. In one instance, an hybrid *cerinthoides* was destroyed, but within three weeks little green shoots appeared from below ground level from the plant's woody base.

We are inclined to forget that *Ericas* are immigrants to the Witwatersrand, six thousand feet above sea level. The nearest area where they grow naturally is in the Drakensburg range, two hundred miles to the east, but most come from the Cape Province to the south and south west, over seven hundred miles away, and there the rainfall is a winter one.

We have no knowledge of their drought resistance in their natural habitat, but in our garden, which is a wild-flower garden, they have this season, suffered the following drought damage:-

- a) The dying-back of one or more branches,
- b) The drying out of tips of branches,
- c) The slow greying or browning of foliage and subsequent demise.

Our garden, of eight acres, was unimproved farm land twenty years ago. It has natural forest and massive granite boulders interspersed with patches of slightly acid soil, gritty to the touch. We have asked ourselves whether or not it is better to grow *Ericas* from areas which are comparable to ours and also to breed from such species. There are many species in existence, but not so many from areas where soil and climate are

closely similar to ours. Several hybrids bred by us from robust parents, have encouraged the thought that here is a field for rewarding results. But it does take time.

It is now mid-September. The ground is dry and the air holds no moisture. But the spring has come in a flash to the willows, the poplars and the bog oaks. Soon the rain will start with a fanfare of heavenly rumblings and we shall be looking with delight at the rejuvenated foliage and the clear-colour blooms of our *Ericas*. We shall then be seeing the generous flowering of contented plants and the forming of seed capsules filled with masses of viable seed. Gone will be the doubts and forgotten the failures. The fascination of growing a truly intriguing evergreen plant will be with us once again.

Confessions of a Heather Addict

William W. Coull, Montrose, Tayside

I am hooked. I need my daily fix. I cannot kick the habit. There is a danger that it could lead to the break-up of my marriage. What am I to do?

Who would think that three short years ago I was a normal middle-aged man, keen on my regular game of golf and prepared to keep the garden no more than tidy? Heather was something that grew on the hills of Scotland and nowhere else.

Then I acquired a piece of ground adjoining my house. I built a new lounge and dining-room with picture windows which looked out on a sweeping corner site. It was too large, this piece of ground; it frightened me. "How am I ever going to look after it?" I asked. "I'll help" said my wife. "What about my golf?" I asked. "Get something that's easy to look after" she replied, "shrubs or something". She bought me a book of garden plans. "Why not try heather"? it advised. I ordered two tons of broken concrete slabs and laid it out on two levels. The slabs, with the rough edges showing, made an excellent dry stone wall.

The semi-circular lower level was sown with grass. The higher level was planted with roses, a bargain

collection of shrubs, and in one part, about six square metres, about twenty mixed heathers and four dwarf conifers.

“Why didn’t you put a border with roses right round it?” said my mother-in-law.

“Because everyone else has that” I replied.

People would stop and admire the garden. They would ask me what was what. I was green and did not understand the importance of keeping the name tags. The heathers prospered but I did not know what most of them were.

I spent more and more time in the garden mainly weeding. I noticed that the heather patch, as well as looking prettier, needed less attention than the rest.

I ordered more heathers by post and planted them among the shrubs. I didn’t water them and many died.

Then I paid a visit to a heather specialist’s nursery 16 miles away. It was a turning point in my life. I arrived at his place on a beautiful sunny afternoon in August. He has the driveway laid out in beds of heather of every conceivable shade. For a moment or two I could not speak, overcome as I was with the sheer beauty of the place.

I bought £25 worth that day. My wife was annoyed and my mother-in-law said I was nuts. She said “You could have had a lot of roses for £25.”

Over the last year I have paid a few visits to gaze in wonder at that lovely display. Regardless of season, I stand enthralled and end up buying a few more heathers, trembling with excitement until I have them safely planted.

But a greater thrill was to come - propagation!

I read that you could actually propagate heathers from plants you already possessed. I bought two propagators, filled the trays with sand peat mixture,

took cuttings in June and spent my spare time watching them grow. I still can't believe that this is legal.

My wife came into the potting shed after I had put the cuttings in the trays. "That's 150 heather plants I've got" I said. "Why are you whispering?" she asked. I realised that I was tense and excited, almost breathless. "Think of the value of them" I said. "If they grow" she replied. She always bubbles with enthusiasm over anything I do.

A few weeks later I joined the Heather Society and read Geoffrey Yates's *Pocket Guide to Heather Gardening*. He recommended Perlite for rooting. The next time I purchased a few plants from my heather supplier I casually asked if he had any Perlite for sale. "Are you to be propagating?" he asked. Now, on reflection, I am sure he asked the question kindly, with genuine interest and concern, but in the state of mind that I found myself, racked with guilt, hesitant and unsure, it felt like an inquisition.

"Are you to be propagating?" he asked again. "Well, no, not really - nothing like this - that you have here, well naturally not" I stammered. "Just a few - you know - give them a trial. They won't grow of course -".

"Why not?" he asked. "It's easy - make sure you don't take cuttings that are too big" he advised. I couldn't believe it. He was actually telling me how to propagate. He was wrecking his own business. After seeing his driveway display I thought he had a spark of divinity - now I was sure he was next to God himself. He could not be more helpful.

I now have over 200 cuttings busy rooting away like mad. I look at them all at least twice a day, removing the covers from the propagators, reading the name tags on them, counting them and smiling to myself.

I am worried about my obsession. It can lead to trouble. Lost in thought one night, my wife asked, "What is on your mind?"

“Shirley,” I replied absentmindedly. She looked at me daggers drawn - “Shirley? Was that the fast-looking piece you were dancing with at the golf prize-giving dance?”

“*Calluna vulgaris* ‘Shirley’ ” I corrected her, “Blooms August and September - 45 cm with good white flowers.”

My golf has suffered too, but who cares?

My mother-in-law said to me the other day, “You know, I think your heathers and conifers are lovely - much better than roses. Could I have some of your cuttings when they are ready?”

But the greatest praise of all was given yesterday by my wife who came up to me, hugged me and said, “I think the way you have contrasted the ‘Foxhollow’ with the ‘C.D. Eason’ and the ‘Knaphill Pink’ and used the summer foliage of ‘Silberschmelze’ as a backdrop shows a touch of genius.”

Perhaps she is becoming hooked as well!

Heather Gardens No. 9

Cannizaro Park.

Maj.-Gen. P. G. Turpin, West Clandon, Surrey.

Who would expect to find a heather garden on the edge of Wimbledon Common? And yet, there, on a south-facing slope, in Cannizaro Park, between the Common and the Golf Course, is one of the most colourful plantings of heathers that can be found within the boundaries of Greater London.

Cannizaro Road runs across the Common from Parkside to Westside Common. Less than 100 yards north of where these roads meet is the entrance to the

Park, which has a rich collection of plants to interest the botanist and the garden-lover. This Park was first brought to my notice by an excellent article in *The Garden* in January 1981 by Mr. J. G. Berry, Deputy Director of Parks of the London Borough of Merton, the authority now responsible for the upkeep of the garden. I first visited the Park at the end of July 1981, when the Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*) was looking at its best, great swathes of lilac, pink and magenta, planted in generous profusion on the sunny south-western slopes. The long flowering racemes were clear evidence that the light acid soil above a sand and gravel sub-soil provides exactly the right well-drained conditions required by this species of heather.

The Park was named after Francis Platemone, Duke of Cannizaro, its Sicilian owner in the early nineteenth century. Later the property passed into the hands of E.K. Wilson, who did so much to develop the garden between 1920 and his death in 1947. In 1948 the house and garden were sold to the Borough of Wimbledon to safeguard its future. Since then the gardens have been greatly improved and developed and, in spite of rising costs and staffing difficulties, have been splendidly maintained by a dedicated band of gardeners for the enjoyment of the public.

The Park is some 34 acres in extent and contains a great variety of horticultural treasures, many of them described in the article by Mr. Berry. There is something for everybody, from bamboos and grasses to the brilliant spring colour of Magnolias, Azaleas and Rhododendrons and the fiery autumn tints of Acers, Parrotias, Nyssas, Fothergillas and many others. At all times of the year there is something to see and to admire.

The heather garden covers 1½ acres of sloping ground, leading at its eastern end to a Belvedere with columns and a balustrade which acts as a focal point when the garden is approached from the west and provides a platform from which the whole setting can be viewed from the other direction. There are no winter-flowering heathers in this garden and the emphasis is on

summer and autumn flowering species, mainly *Calluna vulgaris* and *E. cinerea*, which make a colourful display for more than three months. The best time to see the heathers is from the middle of July until the end of September.

E. cinerea is the most spectacular species, because of the great wealth of flower which the large groups of each cultivar carry. The brilliant purple of 'P.S. Patrick' sets off the gentler colours of three different rose-coloured varieties - one of them 'Rose Queen' - and the long spikes of pale lavender flowers of 'Hookstone Lavender'.

The double Callunas are well represented. At the western end large patches of 'Alba Plena' and 'J.H. Hamilton' mingle together and elsewhere groups of 'County Wicklow' and 'Radnor' (labelled 'Miss Appleby') show their delicate pink double flowers. At the end of August and during September the long racemes of 'H.E. Beale', 'Elsie Purnell' and 'Peter Sparkes' are quite enchanting. The golden foliage of 'Gold Haze', with its white flowers, and 'Robert Chapman' and 'Golden Feather' have been interplanted with 'Serlei' and other green-leaved cultivars to good effect. 'Alportii' and 'Alportii Praecox' have been used to provide stretches of crimson colour, and other groups of lighter-coloured cultivars help to make up a carpet of colour to follow the Bell Heather.

Of the other genera and species, *Daboecia cantabrica* is represented by the cultivars 'Polifolia', 'Alba' and 'Praegerae', *E. ciliaris* by the dark-flowered 'Mrs C.H. Gill' and a few plants of 'Stoborough' and the hybrid *E. x watsonii* by 'Dawn' and 'H. Maxwell'. In addition there are six or seven varieties of *E. vagans*, including 'Mrs. D.F. Maxwell', 'Lyonesse', 'St. Keverne' and 'Holden Pink', to carry the flowering season well into the autumn. Among the more recent plantings I noticed *E. terminalis*.

To avoid creating an impression of a two-dimensional landscape, a number of trees have been left

growing among the heathers - an Oak, Scots Pines and Birches - and a few groups of columnar Junipers have been planted. Three small specimens of *Cupressus glabra* 'Pyramidalis' have been placed at the eastern end.

The borders of the heather garden have been planted with an interesting collection of trees and shrubs which form a good background for the groups of heathers and help to create a harmonious whole. The bright colours of heathers require a green setting to help tone down their general effect. If this is not provided by mown lawns, suitable trees and shrubs make an excellent substitute.

Although the heather garden is within a stone's throw of the boundary of the Park and the adjacent built-up area, hardly a house or roof-top can be seen, and the illusion is created of a garden set in peaceful rural surroundings.

Cannizaro Park is open to the public through the year, including week-ends, (from 7.30 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. in August and September). I am sure that no garden-lover will be disappointed in what he will find there.

Heathers in the Pacific Northwest *Stuart Fraser, Lebanon, Oregon, U.S.A.*

Approximately 1,000 miles of continuous coastline in the Pacific Northwest is ideal for growing hardy heaths and heathers. With a high winter rainfall creating good acid soil conditions, all the European heaths and heathers can be grown with varying degrees of success.

In California, most heathers are confined to the coastal range where the moderating influence of the Pacific Ocean keeps the summer temperatures down. I know of two people in the Sierra Nevada mountains who are trying to grow heathers, but they are limited in the number of varieties they can grow and they need a great deal more care to survive well. Oregon, Washington and British Columbia, west of the Cascade

Mountains, offer a much more moderate climate and it is here that probably more than 250 cultivars of *Calluna* and the hardy *Ericas* are grown.

Where I live in the Willamette Valley of Oregon, summer temperatures are somewhat higher, and can reach over 100°F for a few days at a time and it is necessary to irrigate to get good growth.

I had very little success with *Erica tetralix*, which I suspect dislikes our higher summer temperatures, until I planted a few plants at the bottom of a north slope in almost pure peat. The turn-around was almost dramatic and I now have some very happy looking cultivars of this heath. *Ericaciliaris* has not done well with me and most of my cultivars of this species have either succumbed to disease or the weather.

The Puget Sound area of both Washington State and British Columbia has the most attractive climate of all for growing heathers. Seattle itself is a fairly large city and I am glad to note that in recent years more and more heathers are being used not only in private houses but also in public and commercial plantings. Vancouver, British Columbia, a similar sized city to Seattle, has a considerable number of plantings of heather in their public parks, and the best of these to my mind is the Van Dusen Botanical Gardens with very extensive groupings of *Calluna* cultivars, *Erica* cultivars and their hybrids.

One of the restrictions on growing heathers well is the ever present danger of the destructive fungus *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, which has an extremely wide host range, and has now established itself extensively up and down the west coast. When higher summer temperatures predominate and excess water is present, it has been recorded that a plant can be lost within three weeks of the onset of the disease.

The secret here is perfect drainage, and I have found that by mounding all my planting areas, I can minimise the losses from this devastating disease. *Rhizoctonia*, root rot, is becoming more prevalent, but so far has not

been much of a problem. In the early stages, the symptoms of this disease are not unlike *Phytophthora*, and a laboratory test is the only way to find out which is the culprit. Whatever the cause of the decline, maintaining the health of the plant and not putting it under stress will go a long way to fending off either of these diseases.

One insect pest that has become a nuisance in recent years is the root weevil, the larva of which will attack heather roots and the cambium layer around the collar of the plant, causing sudden death when the warmer spring days arrive. The damage is easily discernible upon uprooting the plant.

Mention should be made of the beneficial mycorrhizal fungi that inhabit the roots of established heathers. These are not only much more efficient food gatherers than the roots they inhabit, but also go a long way towards keeping the door closed to pathogenic fungi such as *Phytophthora* and *Rhizoctonia*.

For a number of years I have been planting out groups of heather in a wild area that gets neither watered nor weeded in the summer. Growth has naturally been slower due to water stress during July and August, but by the same token, *Phytophthora* incidence is nil and some of the Callunas have even thrown seedlings!

It is secretly gratifying to visualise some future botanist stumbling upon a natural looking heath in the wilds of Oregon and wondering how it got there.

William McCalla, discoverer of *Erica mackaiana*

*E. Charles Nelson, National Botanic Gardens,
Glasnevin, Dublin.*

Erica mackaiana is a singularly inappropriate name for this inhabitant of western Ireland and northern

Spain! James Townsend Mackay (1775-1862), curator of the botanic garden of Trinity College, Dublin, who is commemorated, was a reputable and competent botanist, but he did not notice the heather during his rambles in Connemara in 1830. The person who first found it was William McCalla, son of the innkeeper in the tiny village of Roundstone.

William McCalla's father was a Scottish Presbyterian soldier who had emigrated to the west of Ireland. Roundstone was founded in 1820 by Alexander Nimmo, a Scottish engineer, so it is likely that William was born (c 1814) in Scotland. He seems to have had a tolerably good primary education, and was later trained by the Education Board for "the purpose of taking charge of a school in Connemara." In 1834 he published a short note in the *Dublin Penny Journal*, in which he said that the flowers, mosses and seaweeds of Connemara were left "heedlessly to decay without the knowledge of a botanist." He reported a plant of white-flowered *Daboecia cantabrica* "on the side of a mountain, remote from any of its own species." William thus began to rectify the lamentable state of botanical knowledge, and in the following year was asked to fill a vasculum with *Erica erigena* for John Curtis, the English entomologist.

In September 1835 the Cambridge botanist, Charles Babington (1808-1895), was in Connemara. He probably stayed at McCalla's inn. William, then aged 21, showed him *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* and *Erica erigena* on Errisbeg and later they trudged across the boggy moorland to Craiggamore to look at a heather which William had noticed in the winter. It had a "very singular leaf". Babington collected specimens, some of which he left at Trinity College for James Mackay. On his return to Cambridge he studied the heather and decided that it was a good species. Babington proposed calling it *Erica biformis*. However, William Hooker published a note about it, based on information received from Mackay, and suggested naming it *E. mackaii*.

Babington was not pleased, but the two botanists later agreed on the name *E. mackaiana* - the suffix *-anus* was at that time used to signify that the person commemorated was not the discoverer of the species, rather that the name was given merely as a compliment.

The Horticultural Society of Ireland awarded William McCalla a silver medal in 1836 for the discovery of the new species.

By October 1835, William was working in Dublin. He received some instruction in botany from James Mackay, but he also studied mineralogy and conchology. On 7th November 1836, he joined the Irish Ordnance Survey as a "civil assistant" to the Survey's botanist, David Moore. Seven months later McCalla was dismissed. Apparently he passed on some specimens collected for the Ordnance Survey to William Thompson and Charles Babington. David Moore was hurt by this, and later wrote that McCalla lacked "a due sense of honourable and faithful motives."

After this affair McCalla was employed by John Scouler, professor of geology and mineralogy to the Royal Dublin Society. He collected zoological and geological specimens for Dr. Scouler for almost three and a half years. In 1841, Scouler decided to send McCalla to New Zealand to collect herbarium specimens and seeds. Initially McCalla was enthusiastic and even wrote to Sir William J. Hooker asking for advice. Dr. Thomas Coulter, who had travelled in Mexico and California between 1824 and 1834, provided McCalla with tips on drying and pressing plants in the field, and on collecting seeds. Scouler even booked a passage to New Zealand for his collector. However in the autumn of 1841, McCalla caught a cold while collecting seaweeds near Dublin. About Christmas his condition was no better and Scouler told Hooker that his protégé "has impaired himself by being constantly wet for he was always in water collecting algae." In March 1842, after further delays, Dr. Scouler abruptly cancelled the New Zealand expedition. He complained that William's "incurable

procrastination and his cowardice have worn out my patience. He made it a point to do nothing today which could be deferred until tomorrow and to do nothing himself which there was a chance of someone else doing for him."

Having recovered from his ill-health, William was engaged late in 1842 to collect specimens for a new botanical society that was being set up in Dublin by David Moore and others. The society never got off the ground. McCalla probably returned to Connemara and continued collecting seaweeds. Even if his motives were somewhat suspect at times, he was regarded as a competent collector and he gained a good reputation for his work on marine organisms especially algae. In 1845 he read two papers to the Royal Dublin Society (these have been discussed in detail in 1981, by Alan Eager and Maura Scannell). The first one was presented following the award to McCalla of a silver medal for the first volume of his *Algae Hibernicae* - a series of pressed and mounted specimens of marine algae bound as a book.

In 1846 another heather came to William's notice. Thomas Bergin, secretary to the Dublin-Kingstown Railway Company, collected a strange species near Roundstone. He showed it to William who confirmed that it was *Erica ciliaris*. This was the first time the species had been found in Ireland, and the beginning of its erratic history in Connemara - but that is another story!

We do not know much of what happened to William after this. He published a second volume of *Algae Hibernicae* in 1848 and occasionally attended meetings of the Royal Dublin Society. It is recorded that he was schoolmaster at Ballynahinch, near Roundstone. These years were not easy, for the Potato Famine was at its height in 1846 and 1847 and areas like Connemara were particularly hard hit. In the spring of 1849 William contracted cholera and died. He was buried in the graveyard of the local Presbyterian chapel and his family erected a memorial to him which still survives. The plain

slab, supported by four rough-hewn pillars, bears the inscription:

To the Memory of Mr William McCalla A.E.B.S.* of Roundstone the Author of *Algae Hibernicae* and other works of merit He gained considerable notoriety by his botanical discoveries in this locality He died of Cholera on the 2nd of May 1849 deeply lamented by his parents and acquaintances.

Acknowledgements

This paper is based on a number of articles by the author including "William McCalla - a second 'panegyric' for an Irish phycologist", *Irish Naturalists' Journal*, 1981, Vol. 20, pp 275 - 283, and "Historical records of the Irish Ericaceae, with particular reference to the discovery and naming of *Erica mackaiana*", *Journal of the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History*, 1979, Vol. 9, pp 289-299, as well as the paper by Alan Eager and Mary Scannell, "William M'Calla (c. 1814-1849) phycologist; his published papers of 1846", *Journal of Life Sciences of the Royal Dublin Society*, 1981, Vol. 2, pp 109-135 which includes facsimiles of McCalla's papers.

There is considerable variation in the spelling of McCalla's surname. He used the form adopted here on his letters, although he used M'Calla on the title-page of *Algae Hibernicae* and elsewhere.

* Associate of the Edinburgh Botanical Society (elected 1840)

Iter Hispanicum Ericaceum

David McClintock, Platt, Kent

On 27th June 1835, Michel-Charles Durieu de Maisonneuve * (1796-1878) found in the mountains of northern Spain a new heather species.

On 2nd September of that year, M'Calla showed Charles Babington a new heather which he had found in July near his home in Connemara, western Ireland.

In 1836 J. Gay wrote in *Annales des Sciences naturelles* (p.125) "*eodem anno 1835 simul in Hibernia et in Asturiae summo monte del Pero detecta*" (it was discovered in the same year 1835 at the same time in Ireland and in Asturias on the top of Monte del Pero). 147 years later, *E. mackaiana* had been recorded only in N. Spain and W. Ireland.

Four specific names have been published for these heathers, but the only correct one for both is *Erica mackaiana*.

In August 1980, Major Magor, Dr Nelson and I collected in W. Ireland 27 sets of cuttings of *E. mackaiana*, *E. x stuartii* and *E. tetralix* of varying forms and intermediacy. But in order to hope to estimate how good a species the enigmatic *E. mackaiana* was and how it related to the others, we had to see it in Spain.

In 1980 *E. andevalensis* was described and illustrated as a new species from mine tips in the Huelva province, in the extreme S.W. of Spain, where the authors had first noticed it in 1974. It had been recorded there, as *E. tetralix*, in 1858-9 and specifically on a mine tip in 1867-8. From a herbarium specimen sent to us it looked like *E. mackaiana*, so we felt we must add this

* Durieu was an officer who had fought in the French army in the Peninsular war, in the south of Spain, but was on half pay and wanted to see the north of the country. He faced considerable difficulties in his travels there with bad weather, atrocious roads and, not the least, a civil war which was being waged at the time.

very considerable extra to our trip. What was this doing 600 miles from any other known colony of *E. mackaiana*, in a different climate and habitat, and in an area well to the south of where *E. tetralix* was proved to grow?

There was another puzzle. Why were none of the hybrids of E. tetralix recorded from Spain - no stuartii, no E. x watsonii, no E. x williamsii?

The 1982 Expedition

In July 1982, Charles Nelson, David Small and I set off to get to know these three species as they grew in Spain. But in the course of our journey, we also saw, often in great plenty, variety and superb form, *E. arborea*, *E. australis* (and its form *aragonensis*), *E. ciliaris*, *E. cinerea*, *E. erigena*, *E. lusitanica*, *E. scoparia*, *E. umbellata* and *E. vagans*, as well as *Calluna* and *Daboecia cantabrica*. Spain is the rival of Ireland in the wealth of its hardy heathers. Its only ones we did not see were *E. multiflora* and *E. terminalis*, which occur only in a small area of the S.E.

The trip was greatly helped by David Small erecting in the back of his Talbot Rancho a mist propagating unit with 64 pots, into which cuttings could be inserted soon after they were taken. In all he made some 1,300 of them, from 88 gatherings, some of which had rooted before we got home; since then, practically all have. He also drove us all the 3,500 miles in his car, which proved very suitable for our purposes. Much of the success of the trip was due to his skills and meticulous planning with Charles Nelson. We also made about 200 gatherings of heathers for herbaria. These have a special label, headed *Iter hispanicum* 1982, echoing Durieu's *Iter asturicum* published in 1836, and the *Iter hispanicum* made by C. C. Lacaita and A. J. Wilmott (later Deputy Keeper of Botany at the British Museum) in 1927 (in a 1913 chauffeur-driven Wolseley, lasting 16 weeks).

E. andevalensis

We drove from Santander to Valverde del Camino in Huelva province in the extreme S.W. of Spain in 1½ days (with stops en route), and spent two days in the Andevala district, visiting the localities where *E. andevalensis* had been reported. These extended in a 50 mile arc from Alonso and Tharsis in the south-west, to San Telmo in the north and on to Riotinto and Nerva in the east. The remarkable thing about all these sites was that the plant not only grew on those toxic mine wastes, but thrived there, often in zones where no other plant was to be seen, or at best only occasional others - *E. australis* was one, very scarce, companion.

The bushes were unlike our *E. mackaiana* in habit, in that they were much stouter, stiffer, erecter, to three or even four feet tall and as much wide if given the chance - naturally many were much lower. But these had thicker stems than we ever see in Ireland or in our gardens. In detail however, they seemed to differ in no important way from either Spanish or Irish *E. mackaiana*.

But, we felt, no plant is likely to grow only on mine tips, so where had it come from? Eyesight from the road, reinforced by field glasses, suggested it was by the river Odiel, which flows through the area down to the coast at Huelva town; and so it did. Not only did we see it in several places lining its course, usually in plenty, but in one of them it was in thickets, for a mile or more, right across the shingle. The plants will have been totally submerged when the river was in spate, but in July we walked dry-shod among them and even across the river in places. Dr Nelson tasted the water, which was discoloured, and found it salty, which would account for this heather practically alone being able to withstand the copper and other pollutants. We suppose that the plant will have always been here, in an otherwise native situation, but had emerged as the only one, or by far the dominant one, thanks to its tolerance of the toxicity.

Not only did we find glandular plants, which alone had been described, but one eglandular one. There may have been others, but we did not search closely for this. There was a small range of colours, all shades of H1, and in one small patch were five whites, also new to science. One otherwise normal plant had a single shoot, a sport, going straight up well above the rest of the bush. The leaves varied somewhat in colour too. A brief summary of these finds will be appearing in the Spanish journal *Lagasalia*.

E. mackaiana and *E. tetralix*

In the north, we were much helped by the company for three days of Dr Maria Isabel (Mabel, pronounced Marbelle) Fraga Vila and her husband, Eduardo (towards the end, with their delightful five-year old son, Andres). En route to and from the south we had passed through little suitable country, but had seen some heathers, notably *E. tetralix*, very sparingly, looking like our own forms of it, in the Sierra de Gredos and near Verin by the north Portuguese frontier. But north of Santiago de Compostela (with its most remarkable cathedral and other buildings), it was different.

Dr Fraga Vila, who lectures at the University of Santander, had just completed a first class thesis on *Calluna* and *Erica* in Galicia, so she knew where to take us, and did, which was a great advantage and pleasure. We are delighted that she is now a member of our Society. Her husband, a soil scientist at the University, was of unfailing kindness too.

In the course of visiting numerous localities, we saw that both *E. mackaiana* and *E. tetralix* usually grew stout, stiff and erect, like *E. andevalensis*. We saw no eglandular plants of either, indeed *E. tetralix* was quite often striking in its robust growth with prominent glandular hairs on the largish grey leaves. It remains to be seen if it retains this habit in this country. But we did see both species lowlier and with thin stems, much as we know them.

We noted that the habitats seemed not the same as ours. There was usually moisture at least not far down, and sometimes a lot of it, but the plants were practically never in peaty bogs, the habitat we associate them with. We did once see *E. mackaiana* in a peaty moor at about 2,000 ft. very like an Irish one, but there was no sphagnum and no *E. tetralix*. *E. tetralix* was also to be seen in apparently quite dry spots, but these may have been wet in winter.

We have a map in preparation indicating the known localities for *E. mackaiana*, from Punta Candelaria and Cabo Ortegale in the N.W. corner to Cabezon de la Sal, just west of Santander in the east, a distance of some 200 miles. This extends appreciably its published range.

Hybrids

We had been told that the reason why there was no *E. x stuartii* was that the parents never grew together. It is true that they have nearly separate areas, roughly, *E. mackaiana* to the north, and *E. tetralix* to the south, of the main mountain ranges, but we saw them together in at least four places. *E. ciliaris* and *E. tetralix* grew together, sometimes in quantity, but with no sign of their hybrid; and *E. vagans* was at least within easy bee distance of *E. tetralix*, without their having apparently crossed. Why?

Discussion

One guess is that these Spanish plants have a different genetic make-up, which prevents them hybridising. The barriers to such out-breeding are subtle, and we are in no position to say just what may be preventing this. But, especially with *E. mackaiana*, the great isolation from other colonies of the species must be relevant, causing it to adapt slightly differently.

A purely personal theory is that *E. mackaiana*, which is very closely related to *E. tetralix*, ultimately derives from it. Its genes happen to have combined in a way that produces *mackaiana*-like forms (on other

occasions they may have produced *E. x stuartii* and other intermediates between these taxa, if these have not also arisen from mutual inter-crossing, or even from mutation). These genes happen to have done this independently in Ireland and Spain, no doubt in ages long past. The fact that there are differences between the three main Irish colonies and among the Spanish plants is explainable by slightly different gene combinations, and also no doubt by subsequent modification to suit the differing environments. In this connection, we did confirm the fact that Spanish plants of all three relevant species produced seedlings.

This suggestion eliminates the perplexing "distribution" of *E. mackaiana* - how did it "get" to Ireland from Spain, or vice-versa? It is in fact an example of parallel evolution. A similar hypothesis has been proposed for other plants with apparently widely disjunct distributions, for example microspecies of hawkweeds. But this is an as yet unproven idea, for which firm evidence will be difficult to obtain.

But some evidence, we hope, may emerge from observing the Irish and Spanish cuttings as they mature, crossing them, if we can. Furthermore Dr Nelson took soil samples, some 39 of them, which may provide clues. Both *E. mackaiana* and *E. tetralix* seemed to be calcifuge, as with us. When they were growing in an alkaline area, their precise spot, often small, looked different, judging by the accompanying vegetation; or at least the plants managed to get a feeding root into an acid pocket.

White flowers

Nowhere is there any published record of a white form of *E. mackaiana* in the wild. So I was amazed to be sent in 1981 by Dr Fraga Vila, without comment, a white umbel. She took us to the place, where there had been two plants, but we could not re-find them. However we had, before that, spotted a large one on a roadside; and before we left Galicia we had seen no fewer than eight, more than we saw white forms of any other species. But

none were east of Galicia, where indeed *E. mackaiana* is much scarcer. Their growth form seems similar, as large often as plants of normal colour. Will they grow as large in cultivation?

Other Heathers

E. vagans showed itself constantly the most lime tolerant of all the heathers we saw, frequently growing where no others did, and accompanied by many plants typical of chalk or lime soils.

Unexpectedly, the next most tolerant species seemed to be *Daboecia*, followed, possibly, by *Calluna*. It may be that the Spanish races of heather are adapted to stand rather more lime than ours - we even saw such a typical plant of basic soils as Quaking Grass with them on several occasions, but soil samples will help over this, with the pH. We have cuttings of various heathers from limey situations, but only time will show if the plants really can grow well with any appreciable lime in the soil.

We saw various variations, and have cuttings of many of them. But it remains to be seen if they keep their special characters as they grow on. Among these were - *andevalensis* with pale, dark and white flowers, erect shoots and lighter green leaves; *arborea* with yellowish young shoots and perhaps dwarf *australis*, possibly with pale flowers (but most plants were long over, so we could not see good colour forms), with yellowish foliage and apparently dwarf; *ciliaris* white, pale and bicoloured flowers and yellowish leaves; *cinerea* in a range of colours, e.g. H1, 8, 9, 11 and 12 and various forms of white, with yellow and variegated leaves, some of these as seedlings, some as sports; *mackaiana* with pale, dark, narrow, large and globose corollas, yellowish, lime-green and bright green leaves and large stout plants; *tetralix* with dark, lobed, bicoloured and white corollas, yellowish leaves and stout growth forms; *umbellata* with paler and darker flowers. The white form is very rare. We were taken to a place where it was known, but the flowers had long faded. The anandrous form, with no

stamens, just the style protruding, was in several places and for sure is overlooked; *vagans* had white flowers, once with orange anthers; *Calluna* white flowers, very grey, hairy foliage, and once a vigorous orange sport; *Daboecia* white too, at least three times, and flowers of varying shades of H1, some very rich, one pinker. In addition, galled plants were collected on various occasions, but only on *arborea*, *ciliaris*, *scoparia* and *vagans*.

France

David Small drove us from the Picos de Europa to St Malo, 700 miles, in two days. This included botanising on the first morning, still in Spain, spending 15 hours with friends near Arcachon and another three with Mme Triscos, our member at Biscarrosse near by, who showed us her local heathers and other good plants. We stopped for lunch and to shop, and caught the boat, but only just!

This is only a summary of all we saw and did. Plenty of work is in store working out all we noted and collected.

[All three of us should be considered as joint authors, for all have approved the text. That my name alone appears is because - 1. The theory in the discussion is mine alone and Dr Nelson is not convinced by it, and 2. Both colleagues deserve warm thanks, which could hardly have been expressed if their names appeared as authors!]

R.H.S. AWARDS

Calluna vulgaris 'Kinlochruel'.

This outstanding double white *Calluna*, which occurred as a sport on 'County Wicklow' was awarded a Certificate of Preliminary Commendation on the recommendation of Floral Committee "B" on the 2nd of September 1975, when it was exhibited by Mrs. E. J. Montgomery of Kinlochruel, Colintrave, Argyll.

It received an Award of Merit when it was exhibited by Mrs. E. M. Bezzant to the R.H.S. Joint Rock Garden Plant Committee at Glasgow on the 20th of September 1980 "as a flowering plant for the rock garden".

Finally it received a First Class Certificate when Mr Fred Hunt of Invergowrie exhibited it to the same Committee at Edinburgh on the 11th of September 1982. The following was the citation describing the plant:-

"Plant exhibited was compact with many stems which were prostrate, 255 mm x 430 mm, densely covered in hundreds of pure white 6 mm double flowers and numerous buds. Flowering stems 180 mm with typical *Calluna* leaves."

P.G.T.

A Correction *E. x watsonii* 'Morning Glow'.

Maj.-Gen. P. G. Turpin, West Clandon, Surrey.

The late Mr W. S. Dobson, of Edinburgh, who was a great heather enthusiast, introduced a number of very good cultivars, which he collected during his travels in Scotland during the 1950s and 1960s. The early-flowering white *Calluna* 'Murielle Dobson', which he named after his wife, was found not far from his home just outside Edinburgh, in the Pentland Hills, on Black Hill in about 1953, only about three miles east of Caerketton, where Mr. Ponton, then of Kirknewton, subsequently found the plant which he named 'Caerketton White', another early-flowering *Calluna*.

The *Callunas* 'Lewis Lilac' and 'Joseph's Coat' and *E. tetralix* 'Hailstones' were found in the Uig area of the west coast of the Isle of Lewis. Among his finds was a heather which was first named *E. tetralix* 'Sunrise' by Mr Ponton, but later changed to 'Morning Glow', the

name chosen by Mr Dobson himself. Specimens were sent, under both names, to the Harlow Car Heather Trials. The Report of the Trials described 'Morning Glow' as having "golden/pink tips in May".

In September 1980 Miss Janette Dobson gave me some cutting material of 'Hailstones' and 'Morning Glow' from her father's plants during the Heather Society Conference in Edinburgh. The rooted cuttings of 'Morning Glow' showed bright yellow tips on the young spring growth - the characteristic noted in the Harlow Car Trials Report - and when they flowered they had all the appearance of *E. x watsonii*, both in the shape of the corollas and the loose arrangement of the umbels. In addition, they had the typical short appendages on the anthers. Comparison with *E. x watsonii* 'F. White' showed no discernible differences between the two clones. Specimens were then compared with the plant still growing in the Dobsons' garden and with herbarium specimens which Mr Dobson had originally sent to Mr McClintock. All of these proved to be identical.

There appears to be no doubt that 'Morning Glow' is a plant of *E. x watsonii* and almost certainly the same as the cultivar 'F. White'. It can only be assumed that, at some time, the material brought back from the Isle of Lewis got mixed with the cultivar 'F. White'.

The cultivars 'Sunrise' and 'Morning Glow', which have previously been listed as *E. tetralix* should now be regarded as synonyms of *E. x watsonii* 'F. White'. Miss Dobson and The Registrar, Mr David McClintock, are in agreement with this.

The name of the cultivar *Calluna vulgaris* 'Sunrise' is in no way affected.

***Erica* 'Jack Stitt'**

A. W. Jones, West Camel, Somerset.

This cultivar arose as a seedling in the garden of the late Lt.-Col. J. H. Stitt at Drumcairn, Blairgowrie, Perthshire before 1972. It was given to Geoffrey Yates,

and it was he who named it. He had introduced it into the trade by 1977.

The plant blooms between January and May and has H12 (heliotrope) flowers.

In 1978, in the fourth edition of *Pocket Guide to Heather Gardening*, Yates put 'Jack Stitt' into the *E. x darleyensis* group because of the bright red new growth which had first attracted him to it. He wrote "... in six years it has remained no more than 20 cm high ...".

The plant is thus less than half as tall as most mature *E. x darleyensis* cultivars, and indeed it has the habit of a compact form of *E. carnea*.

Careful examination of the plant during the winter reveals that, in contrast to *E. x darleyensis* cultivars, there is no vestige of any colour other than green in the foliage. The dark brown anthers are fully exerted, which is a characteristic of most *E. carnea* cultivars that is not shared by *E. x darleyensis*. Examination of the pollen of 'Jack Stitt' shows that it is more than 95% fertile.

The correct designation for this cultivar is therefore *Erica carnea* 'Jack Stitt'.

New Acquisitions

J. Platt, Ulnes Walton, Nr. Leyland, Lancashire.

(For the seventh successive year Jack Platt has produced his list of cultivars which he has acquired during the past year. I am indebted to David McClintock, Maj.-Gen. Turpin and Geoffrey Yates for supplementing the information that Jack has provided on some of the cultivars. However, we still seem unable to give a Heather Society Colour Chart number for every cultivar, and that is to be regretted. The names of colours are often imprecise and the colour chart should be used when describing plants.

As in previous years, where appropriate, references have been given for earlier publications of the names - for

example (P.G., p 33) - *Pocket Guide to Heather Gardening*, 1978, 4th Edn. p 33.)

Calluna Vulgaris

'Amy' Aug. - Oct.

This small dome-shaped cultivar with bright green foliage and mauve (H2?) flowers, arose as a seedling in the garden of Mrs Amy Doncaster at Chandlers' Ford, Hampshire about 25 years ago. It was propagated and named by the late J. W. Archer, then of "Doone Valley", Farnham, who also sent material to Smith's nursery in Darley Dale and they assisted with its distribution. Despite the fact that it has been in cultivation for some time I do not know of any mention of the name in print.

'Cheesewring' July - Aug

This cultivar has dark green foliage and white flowers which appear quite early in July. It was found near Cheesewing, a stone circle on Bodmin Moor, by I.H.J. Dungey of Felsburg Nurseries, Liskeard in 1978.

'David' Aug. - Sept.

David Brien, son of R.J. Brien of Pitcairngreen, Perthshire found this plant, which has an upright habit, orange foliage and mauve (H2?) flowers. It was introduced by R.J. Brien.

'Kirsty Anderson' Aug. - Sept.

This cultivar arose as a seedling, thought to be from 'Bud Lyle', in the nursery of Delaney and Lyle at Alloa in 1973. It has an upright habit and pale golden foliage with red flower stems. It flowers profusely and the raiser describes the flower colour as "heliotrope pink". Could this be H12? (P.G., p.32, *Heather Society Year Book*, 1979, p 55)

'Mazurka' Aug. - Sept.

Originating as a sport on 'Carmen', which was itself a sport on 'Barnett Anley', it was found by Mr. A. Vrugink of Epe. The flowers, which are very freely borne, are H13 (crimson), the foliage is bright green and the habit broad. It was described in our sister journal *Ericultura* No 40 in December 1980.

'Miss Muffet'

This came about as a sport on 'Humpty Dumpty' found by Mr J. Richards, a nurseryman from Malvern. It shares the habit of its parent. The foliage has attractive cream tips in the spring

and it carries a few white flowers. It is a very promising plant and is already available from nurseries as far apart as Cornwall and Lancashire.

'Red Fred' Aug. - Sept.

This occurred as a seedling in J. N. Anderson's Broadhurst Nursery at Grampond near Truro. It was found close to 'Fred Chapple', which was thought to be one of its parents. It has an upright habit with light to mid-green foliage. It takes part of its name from the red new growth which persists well into the summer. The flowers are lilac pink (H11?).

Daboecia cantabrica

'Cupido' June - Oct

This plant was found as a seedling in the nursery of P. Bakhuyzen and Zonen of Boskoop in 1972. Some plants were distributed as 'Praegerae Select'. It was renamed 'Cupido' in 1979. It has dark green foliage and a prostrate habit. The flower colour is variously described as "rose pink" or "magenta rose" but it is probably H14 (magenta) c.f. 'Praegerae'. (*Ericultura*, 1978 (Dec.), No 32)

Daboecia x scotica

'Red Imp' June - Oct.

Rinus Zwijnenburg who found this plant, thinks it is a seedling from 'Jack Drake'. It was introduced in 1977. It has a neat, upright habit and dark green foliage. The flowers are ruby red (H5?).

(*Ericultura*, 1977, No 28)

Erica arborea

'Spring Smile' April - May

In about 1972 Kinus Zwijnenburg of Boskoop collected this plant from the wild in Spain. He introduced it in 1979. It has light green foliage. In early winter it has fresh pinkish yellow shoots. The buds are tinged with pink and open to reveal white flowers. It seems rather tender.

(*Ericultura*, 1979 (Dec.), No 36)

Erica carnea

'Christine Fletcher' March - April

R. V. Rogers Ltd. of Pickering, Yorkshire introduced this cultivar. It has light green foliage and a spreading habit. The flowers are H16 (shell pink). It has also been distributed as 'Christine' and 'Christine Seedling'.

'January Sun'

This cultivar arose as a golden foliage sport on 'Winter Beauty'. It is slower growing and more compact than 'Westwood Yellow'. It appears in Bressingham Gardens catalogue for 1982-1983.

Erica cinerea

'Golden Charm' July - Sept.

This cultivar originated as a seedling in Clive Benson's garden. It has golden foliage which shows bronze tints in the autumn. The flowers are magenta (H14?). The habit is neat and compact and it eventually forms a dense low mound.

'Iberian Beauty' Aug. - Sept.

Mr C. Brighton of Berkhamstead found this on cliffs near Santander in N.E. Spain. It was introduced into the trade by Mr P. J. Foley of Holden Clough Nursery, Bolton by Bowland, Lancashire in 1981. The plant has a very distinctive prostrate creeping habit and deep (H2?) mauve flowers.

Erica vagans

'White Dancer'

This plant carries good clear white flowers over dark green foliage. It was introduced by Mr J. N. Anderson of Broadhurst Nursery, Grampond, near Truro.

Registration of Heather Cultivar Names

David McClintock, Platt, Kent

In *The Heather Society Bulletin*, No 15, Spring 1972, I wrote "What being a Heather Registration Authority means". It now seems appropriate to reprint an updated version of that article.

1. a) The job of a Registration Authority is to register.
- b) It is also expected, in due course, to publish and maintain a standard list of cultivars.
- c) It is not the job of an R.A. to conduct trials,
- d) nor to judge if one variety is distinct from another or more meritorious
- e) nor to prevent anyone publishing legitimately a plant name: indeed it cannot.
2. But the R.A. can, and will:-
 - f) Accept for registration suitable names submitted to it with the details specified in para 34 of our *Guide* (and others set out on the registration form which is available from

me) and after the appropriate fee of £1 has been paid.

- g) Reject names not in accordance with the *International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants - c.f. para 32 of our Guide.*
- h) Reject names too similar to existing ones.
- i) Decide which of alternative published names for the same plant shall prevail - *c.f. paras 35 & 36* - hence the importance of knowing precisely the origin of all cultivars.

3. Other advantages of registration are:-

- j) The assurance that the name chosen has not already been used.
- k) The assurance that the plant is not already known under another name.
- l) The assurance that the name does not contravene International Codes.
- m) Adding further to the authority of the R.A., and so further assisting it in trying to bring order to the welter of names.

I am doing my best to keep a note of all names I see or hear of, but am always glad of help with this and to be told new names and details of plants they represent.

It would help a great deal if members, and in particular nursery-men, would send me regularly copies of all their catalogues (with date of issue) and other relevant printed papers with names of cultivars, thus evidencing legitimate publication. These will all be eventually passed to the Lindley Library of the R.H.S."

We intend to publish annually in our *Year Book*, a list of all the names which have been registered since the previous list.

The pathetically few names that have been registered since the first, in August 1976, are, in chronological sequence -

Erica cinerea 'Nova' by W. A. Cadman, Inverness, Scotland.

Calluna 'My Dream' by G. J. Cookes, Fenny Drayton, Warwickshire

- E. ciliaris* 'Burfitt's Dwarf' by Miss J. Burfitt,
Lytchett Matravers, Dorset
- Calluna* 'Kinlochruel' by Mrs E. J. Montgomery,
Lochgilphead, Argyll, Scotland
- E. cinerea* 'Nellie Dawson' by S. Dawson,
Wakefield, Yorkshire
- E. vagans* 'Valerie Smith' by S. Dawson,
Wakefield, Yorkshire
- Calluna* 'Isobel Frye' by M. G. Frye, Dawe
Heath, Essex
- E. erigena* 'Ewan Jones' by A. W. Jones, West
Camel, Somerset
- E. arborea* 'Albert's Gold' by D. J. Small,
Creting St Mary, Suffolk
- E. ciliaris* 'Egdon Heath' by Miss J. Burfitt,
Lytchett Matravers, Dorset
- E. cinerea* 'Godrevy' by D. J. Small, Creting St
Mary, Suffolk
- E. cinerea* 'John Ardron' by D. A. Richards,
Eskdale, Cumberland
- Calluna* 'David Platt' by J. Platt, Ulnes-Walton,
Lancashire
- E. tetralix* 'Ruth's Gold' by J. Platt, Ulnes-
Walton, Lancashire
- E. carnea* 'Westwood Yellow' by J. Hall,
Windlesham, Surrey
- Calluna* 'Cottswood Gold' by Maj.-Gen. P. G.
Turpin, West Clandon, Surrey
- E. cinerea* 'Harry Fulcher' by D. J. Small ,
Creting St Mary, Suffolk
- E. cinerea* 'Maginess Pink' by Mrs B. D.
Maginess, Broadstone, Dorset
- E. cinerea* 'Daphne Maginess' by Mr B. D.
Maginess, Broadstone, Dorset
- E. x watsonii* 'Cherry Turpin' by Maj.-Gen. P. G.
Turpin, West Clandon, Surrey
- E. cinerea* 'Alfred Bowerman', by Mrs M.
Bowerman, Coldwaltham, Sussex
- E. cinerea* 'Champs Hill', by Mrs M. Bowerman,
Coldwaltham, Sussex

E. cinerea 'Heather Bank', by Mrs M. Bowerman,
Coldwaltham, Sussex

E. cinerea 'Jersey Wonder' by D. McClintock,
Platt, Kent.

Article 4 of the *International Code* states "the registration of cultivar names is of the greatest importance for nomenclatural stability". I know that it seems a chore, one more thing to have to do. I know that the form looks daunting, but nobody is expected to fill in more than they can. I know that it costs £1, but this is worth it for the satisfaction of knowing one has done the right thing, and that the cultivar is officially recorded with its details, and that its name should not be used elsewhere; and the forms, certificates etc. cost the Society quite a bit.

Registration does indeed matter. There are other groups where those concerned register their new plants as a matter of course. Will all our members please follow their example by always, automatically, setting about registering each new cultivar they think worth naming, and encourage nurserymen and others who are not yet members to do so too.

"Book Reviews"

Heather Culture

The Heather Society, 7 Rossley Close,
Christchurch

50p (plus 25p postage)

The Society's leaflet pack on Heather Culture was prepared with the aim of providing an inexpensive guide to heathers and heather gardening.

The leaflets *How to Choose Heathers*, *How to Grow Heathers* and *How to Propagate Heathers* are indeed a comprehensive guide, but they are basically

written for the beginner to heather gardening, and are ideal for giving to friends, selling to customers and those attending talks and lectures on heathers.

How to Choose Heathers deals in brief with the basic decisions to be made concerning soil, size of planting, the contrasting effects of different foliage colours, height variations etc., followed by the Society's Recommended List. This list has been carefully chosen to include the best cultivars, be they outstanding old varieties or newer introductions of proven garden-worthiness. Using the Society's Colour Chart it is possible to plan your new heather plantings bearing in mind bloom colour, foliage colour, height and flowering period before purchasing your plants! The list is comprised of 67 heathers from 13 species to give all year round colour.

How to Grow Heathers is full of valuable information. Here is all you need to know about soil types, the use of peat, tips on planting, how to cope with weeds and the recommended practice of trimming heathers every year. A leaflet full of facts to be kept for reference.

How to Propagate Heathers is a must for those who would like to extend their heather plantings cheaply. After reading the clear and apparently simple method for taking cuttings, how can any moderately keen heather gardener fail to "have a go".

Single sets of leaflets can be obtained from either our Administrator or our Treasurer, but they will also be pleased to supply quantities to nurserymen and those planning to give talks.

D. H. J.

Maj. Gen. P. G. Turpin

The Heathers of the Lizard District of Cornwall

The University of Bristol, Department of Botany,
Woodland Road, Bristol BS8 1UG. £5

This is Report No 2 of the University of Bristol's Lizard project, 40 or so pages with 15 real photos, some in colour. The gay one on the title page is by Gen. Turpin. This is the richest area in Britain for heathers and our Chairman makes the most of their history and variations - thus there are 5½ pages on *E. vagans*, 3½ on *E. x williamsii*, all right up to date, plus important and interesting new details about *E. ciliaris* and *E. x watsonii*. There are large maps by Dr L. C. Frost showing the distribution in each 1 km square of each of the seven species and hybrids, related to the rocks and soils, while another shows how the heathy areas have shrunk since 1908.

Even those who do not get lured to this lovely area will find this a fascinating account; those who go there will find it essential. The job has been very well done.

D.McC.

(A copy of this Report can be borrowed on application to the Chairman, Maj.-Gen. Turpin, Cottswood, West Clandon, Guildford, Surrey GU4 7UW with 75p for postage and packing.)

The Conservation of lowland heathland

The Nature Conservancy, Interpretative Branch,
Altringham Park, Shrewsbury, 1981

12pp, 13 colour photographs, 4 line drawings and 2 maps

ISBN O 86139139x

This well produced booklet gives a brief account of the origin and distribution of lowland heaths in the area to the south of the oft quoted line from the Wash to the Bristol Channel. The account of the heathland flora and fauna is of necessity extremely cursory, occupying as it

does a mere two pages. However, the photographs and drawings of plants and animals go some way to making up for the paucity of other information.

The section on threats to heathland is equally brief but is probably the most interesting part of the booklet. It lists the major and the minor, factors that are leading to destruction of heathland. It also explains how fragmentation is as important as the overall reduction in area in threatening the continued existence of some species. Examples of both fragmentation and reduction of area are given for Dorset and Breckland. It is shown that the pace of disappearance, or "reclamation" as the N.F.U. would call it, is accelerating, and the prognostications on the future of lowland heath are gloomy.

On a more hopeful note, there is a brief section on how heaths may be managed in the interest of conservation.

Even those who spend more time looking at heathers in their local garden centre than in their native surroundings owe a debt to our heathlands. Everyone who owns to that debt should make the small sacrifice in time that is required to read this booklet. A wider appreciation of the threats to our wild places will help those who are fighting to save them.

A. W. J.

Famous Heather Nurseries - Famous Heather Names. Part 2.

*Mrs Daphne Everett, Stourport on Severn,
Worcestershire*

George Osmond, Archfield Nurseries

George Osmond began his career in horticulture at Wisley, from where in 1923, as I mentioned in the first part of this article, in the 1982 *Year Book*, he went to work for the firm of Maxwell & Beale, who were the foremost heather nursery at the time. Here he worked as propagator and remembers that he propagated the first

cuttings of *Erica vagans* 'Mrs D. F. Maxwell' and 'Lyonesse' when they were sent back from the Maxwells' honeymoon. His own name-sake *E. cinerea* 'George Osmond' he found growing near the Maxwell & Beale nursery, and it was named after him by the firm in 1929, some time after he had left. Mr Osmond recalls that when Maxwell & Beale put their new *ciliaris* x *tetralix* hybrid 'Dawn' in the R.H.S. Great Autumn Show for an expected award, Mr Beale blamed him for its failure, as he had left some of the dead blooms on the plant. Mr Osmond contended however that this showed what an outstandingly long flowering period it had.

After a year at Broadstone George Osmond left and went to Barr's of Taplow. In 1926 his father bought him a 4¾ acre field at Wickwar in Gloucestershire and he started his own nursery, where he grew alpines, herbaceous plants and a few heathers. The nursery prospered but, with the coming of war, the next six years were spent "wandering around eleven countries" as he nicely puts it.

After the war he started again from scratch and began to take heathers more seriously; he now grows about 100,000 a year. His is a limestone area and he tells me that by growing his stock plants in about 9 inches of peat, even the lime-haters thrive, which might be of some consolation to all those living in limey areas who feel that they cannot consider growing that favourite *Calluna* or *cinerea* among their carneas and winter hybrids.

Whilst on holiday in Dorset, George Osmond found a lovely clear pink (H7) *E. ciliaris* growing to a height of three feet in a gorse bush. He took some cuttings and the resulting plant was named 'Corfe Castle' which was near where the plant was found. He fears that the original plant has probably been lost, as so much of the heath has now been ploughed.

A few years ago a member of George Osmond's staff noticed two golden-foliaged *Calluna* seedlings growing about an inch apart in his stock beds. They were both grown on and one eventually became 'Wickwar

Flame', named after the village where the nursery is situated; the other became 'Bunsall', after the adjoining hamlet.

George Osmond is still very actively concerned with his nursery, which grows a wide range of plants in addition to heathers.

J. W. Sparkes, Beechwood Nurseries

The nursery of J. W. Sparkes was started at Beoley in Worcestershire, on a piece of land with a bungalow on it which his father had bought in 1924 as a holiday home for his family. Mr Sparkes Senior worked for Birmingham Parks Department, so it was natural that they should put the land to good use. They kept goats and hens, and grew a few plants until, in 1929, when son Peter was five years old, J. W. Sparkes left Birmingham for good to begin his life as a full time nurseryman.

His first interest was in alpines which he used to take to Birmingham market in a carrier on the front of his bicycle, together with soft fruit in season. It was a chance remark, made to him by someone in the wholesale market, which brought heathers to J. W.'s attention and he first grew them for the cutflower trade, getting up at 4 to cut and box the blooms for market every week.

The first *Calluna* of Mr Sparkes's own raising was a double mauve (H2) sport from 'Alba Plena' which he named 'Joan Sparkes' (1950) after his daughter. The yellow foliaged 'Ruth Sparkes' (1958) was named in honour of his mother and a deep pink (H7) sport from *Calluna* 'H. E. Beale' was called 'Peter Sparkes' (pre 1957) after his son. Lesley Sparkes (*E. carnea*, pre 1955) is a grand-daughter, Joan's daughter, and was a sport from 'King George'. Ann Sparkes (*E. carnea* c. 1955) is the name of two of Mr Sparkes's sisters-in-law and was a sport on 'Vivellii'.

Calluna 'Carole Chapman' (by 1966), 'Janice Chapman' (pre 1966), and the very well known 'Robert Chapman' (pre 1962) commemorate the three children

of Charlie Chapman, who was at that time a director of the firm of J. V. White at Birmingham wholesale market. Charlie Chapman is now the managing director of Mack and J. V. White, and Robert Chapman has his own wholesale florists business in Birmingham's Smithfield market. I note that in the 'Appreciation' of J. W. Sparkes by H. L. Nicholson in the 1982 *Year Book* he says he was told that 'Robert Chapman' was named after "the little lad who pushed the barrow in the market", so presumably Robert had to start at the bottom. Mr Sparkes told me that he had a white-flowered golden *Calluna* which he intended to call "Betty Chapman" but as far as I know he never did.

Joy Vanstone (*Calluna*, pre 1963) was the wife of Jack Vanstone who was another director of J. V. White. The late Elsie Purnell (*Calluna* by 1954) and her husband, the late Ralph Purnell (*Calluna*) of Solihull were prominent members of the Alpine Garden Society.

One of J. W. Sparkes's most striking introductions was a golden foliage *Calluna* with crimson (H11) flowers which was named after Sir John Charrington, the then Chairman of the Heather Society, by Mr Sparkes. A plant was presented to Sir John at a luncheon at Wisley in 1966 in honour of his 80th birthday. A report and photograph appear in the *Year Book* for 1966.

'Hugh Nicholson' (*Calluna*, 1966) has been on the Committee (which later became the Council) of the Heather Society since its inception.

Apart from all the people J. W. Sparkes immortalised there are many more cultivars which, with his keen eye and vivid imagination he named most aptly: *Calluna* 'Beechwood Crimon', 'Beoley Gold', 'Beoley Elegance' (one of the cultivars he used for cut blooms for the market), 'Blazeaway', 'Fairy', 'Flamingo', 'Gnome', 'Gnome Pink', 'Gold Feather', 'Gold Haze', 'Gold Pat', 'Guinea Gold', 'Humpty Dumpty', 'Lambstails', 'Late Crimson Gold', 'October Crimson', 'Orange Queen', 'Prostrate Orange', 'Red Haze', 'Salmon Leap' (named for him by the Past President of the Heather Society, Mr

F. J. Chapple), 'Silver Knight' (so named because it stands up straight like a knight in armour), 'Silver Queen', 'Spring Cream', 'Spring Torch', 'Summer Orange', 'Sunset', 'Winter Chocolate', *E. cinerea* 'Snow Cream' and *E. vagans* 'Birch Glow'.

J. W. Sparkes died on the 8th April 1981 at the age of 86. When I visited him and his son Peter just a year before this, Mr Sparkes had been practising on the same old bicycle with the carrier on the front that he had used all those years before, with a view to using it for his shopping, to save petrol. He proudly showed me the medal he had for being one of the "Old Contemptibles" of the 1914/18 war, and said he had had to lie about his age in order to join up. He told me that he had been out of heathers recently but was thinking of taking them up again - not at all bad for 85?

W.E.Th.Ingwensen, Birch Farm Nurseries

Walter Ingwensen was born in Hamburg of Danish parents in 1885. His father was a prosperous wine importer and Walter, as the eldest son, was destined to enter the business. Walter however had an intense love of plants and left home to spend several years working in various nurseries on the continent before eventually coming to England, where he married and started his first alpine nursery in Croydon.

In the 1914/18 war Walter was interned as an enemy alien as he had no identity papers, and his nursery was closed. After two years in detention he was released and took charge of the rock garden at Wisley for the remainder of the war. Afterwards he was a partner in nurseries at Stevenage and Letchworth, and in about 1926 he started his present nursery on the estate of the great Victorian gardener William Robinson at Gravetye Manor.

In 1928 while searching for bulbous plants in the Minho mountains of Portugal, Walter Ingwensen came across a fine-leaved *Calluna* which caught his attention

as something unusual. He dug the plant up and sent it back to England. It proved to be an exceptionally late-flowering *Calluna* with graceful lilac flower spikes up to 18 inches long. He named it 'Elegantissima', but as there was already a white 'Elegantissima' of Dutch origin, it has now been given the name of its finder 'Walter Ingwersen'. This was written up in the 1980 *Year Book*.

In about 1929, Miss Anne Moseley found a tiny *Calluna* growing in a crevice in serpentine rock in Cornwall. She gave the plant to Mr Ingwersen who described it as "being so covered with short grey hairs that it scarcely looked like a heather". The plant was named 'Sister Anne', which was the pet name given to Anne Moseley by her own sister, although Anne was incidentally a nursing sister.

While on a visit to Mr McClintock's garden, Bracken Hill, in the late 1960's, his son Will noticed a prostrate grey *Calluna* seedling by the drive, and took cuttings. Later he was selling these as "Grey Carpet".

run by his elder son Will, and a younger son by a second marriage, Paul. They grow a great variety of plants at their Gravetye Nursery, which they are at pains to point out is not a garden centre, and they exhibit at most of the R.H.S. Shows.

G. Underwood, Hookstone Green Nurseries

George Underwood, with his brother Leslie, started his Hookstone Green Nursery about 1936 and what Maxwell & Beale did for many other species of heathers the Underwoods did for *Erica tetralix*.

E. tetralix 'L. E. Underwood' is named after Leslie and was found c. 1937 by a man walking his dog on the common near West End, Woking. He thought the apricot (H6) flowers to be rather unusual and took it along to the nursery.

An extra brightly coloured *tetralix* caught the eye of George's wife, Constance, while she was walking near her home in 1938. She brought it home with a few roots attached and it was planted out in the nursery. With the advent of war, the plant was forgotten, and it was not until 1945 when the ground was being cleared that the plant was re-discovered among the weeds and given the name of its finder of seven years before 'Con Underwood'.

In 1951 Constance and George's son found at Cuckoo Valley, Chobham Ridge, the darkest *tetralix* known so far; it was named 'Ken Underwood' after him. His wife Daphne found the *tetralix* which has her name in the same area in 1953. My own favourite, *E. tetralix* 'Hookstone Pink' was found on Bagshot Common, also in 1953.

George Underwood has an attractive pink (H8) *vagans* named after him and *E. vagans* "Hookstone Rosea' also came from this nursery; the latter is thought to be a seedling from 'Mrs. D. F. Maxwell'.

Several *cinerea* cultivars came from the Hookstone Green Nurseries. It is said that the bronzy gold 'Ann Berry' was found by the lady of that name, a cousin of the family, who used to work on the nursery. An alternative version says that it was found by a retired policeman, Con Underwood's brother-in-law, a Mr. Berry. 'Hookstone White' was found by Con Underwood on Chobham Ridge in 1936. 'Sandpit Hill' and 'Hookstone Lavender' were also introduced by the Underwoods.

Calluna 'Hookstone' was collected at Hangmore Hill by Con in 1935, and the bud-blooming *Calluna* 'Underwoodii' by George while sheltering from a shower on Chobham Ridge in 1936. *Calluna* 'Rosalind, Underwood's Variety' came from Underwood's nursery and *Daboecia cantabrica* 'Hookstone Purple' also did, before 1963.

Hookstone Green Nurseries were sold in 1972. Con, Daphne and Ken still live in the Woking area but

they have now retired from professional horticulture. However, one of the Underwoods's daughters married John Kampa (*E. carnea*, pre 1974) who carries on the family tradition at Conifers Nursery, only a short distance from Hookstone Lane.

Jack Drake, Inshriach Nursery

Jack Drake started his working life in London, but office life was not for him and to the dismay of his family he decided to make his career in horticulture. It was considered then, and sometimes even now, that you only went into horticulture if you were not bright enough to do anything else.

He did a short apprenticeship with Walter Ingwersen, and in 1938 started his own nursery at the family's small estate of Inshriach. As with so many of the nurseries about which I have written, the war came along and put a stop to everything until 1945.

Alpines were, and still are, Jack Drake's first love, which developed, he thinks, from his lifetime enjoyment of walking and climbing in the mountains and hills. However, living and working in heather country, as he did, he soon found himself collecting, and being presented with, unusual heathers. He decided that it would be good for business to have a genuine local "lucky white heather" and with this in mind he set off to have a day in the hills. However, after walking no more than 300 yards from the nursery, he found a lovely white *Calluna*, smothered with flowers, which was taken back and propagated. Shortly after this the R.H.S. enquired whether he had anything of merit to submit for trial at Wisley, and on the second time of asking he sent his "lucky white heather". To his surprise it first got a Highly Commended and it eventually won an Award of Merit and was named 'Drum Ra' after the place where it was found.

Jack Drake also found *Calluna* 'White Mite' at a height of more than 3,000 feet on Sgoran Dubh in the Cairngorms; he said that it looked like a white pocket

handkerchief lying on the ground as it was only two inches tall. Sad to say, when it was grown in more congenial conditions, it grew to six inches, not quite such a "White Mite" after all.

There has been some controversy about 'White Glow', which Jack Drake insists is a *carnea* found by him as a white sport on *E. carnea* 'Ruby Glow' but which the botanists say is definitely hybrid. This was discussed in the 1979 *Year Book* and *The Garden* for May 1980.

Calluna 'Inshriach Bronze' was named by a then employee, Magnus Ramsay, now head gardener at Threave Horticultural College. It was found in Inshriach Forest, close to the site of an Osprey nest, (the only time an Osprey ever nested in the locality). *Calluna* 'Torogay' was sent to the nursery as cuttings in about 1969 by Miss M. Laird of Ledbury, who found it on North Uist and named it after her old family home. *Calluna* 'Mullardoch', named after a hill in Wester Ross, was given to Jack Drake in about 1970 by the late Dr Murray of Edinburgh. It has also been called 'Dr Murray's White'.

Erica cinerea 'Lilian Martin' was found close to the nursery by Mrs Martin of Kingussie, a floral artist. She sat on it while picnicking. Another found in the same way was *E. cinerea* 'Honeymoon', which was collected from a hollow on top of a huge rock six or seven feet high near Lochinver by J. R. D. Trotter, one time Treasurer of the R.H.S., the year after his honeymoon in 1927. Jack Drake thinks that there may be more than one form of this cultivar in circulation.

A friend of Jack Drake, William Buchanan of Bearsden, gave him some *Daboecia* seedlings to grow on, which he had found in his garden in a bed of *Daboecia azorica* and *D. cantabrica*. Three of these were at first called *Dazorica x polifolia* nos. 1, 2 3. No.2 was discarded, but No.1 became *Daboecia x scotica* 'William Buchanan', and No.3 became 'Jack Drake'. The naming of this last cultivar was described in the *Year Book* for 1975.

Jack Drake has now retired, but the nursery still thrives, and he still takes a keen interest in his alpine plants.

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Next year I hope to continue this series of articles and bring the story up to the present. In the meantime I must thank George Osmond, the late Mr J. W. Sparkes and Peter Sparkes, Will and Paul Ingwersen, Daphne and Ken Underwood and Jack Drake who all contributed items of interest which I feel it would have been a great pity to have lost.

An early attempt at Plant Ecology

J. C. LOUDON'S,

The Magazine of Natural History.

Volume 3, 1830 410 - 419

William Thomson, "Remarks on the Relation subsisting between Geological Strata and the Plants most frequently found growing on their superincumbent Soils."

"The heaths are found most luxuriant where granite or other primitive rocks are found. These plants, as their names imply, are found always on bog soil; and, as the component particles of that earth may be taken as similar everywhere, yet it cannot be denied that the heaths of different contiguous hills are extremely different both in kind and degree.

Red Heather (*Erica cinerea*) is the only species found for miles together on the greywacke of the Isle of Man; *E. Tetralix*, the only species for several hundred yards on Blackstone Edge; *E. vulgaris* is the only species for miles on the granite of Goatfell, in the Isle of Arran. Each of these species may be found in sufficient quantity wherever bog soil is found; but they may reasonably be claimed by those districts only, where, with equal climates, they are produced in greatest luxuriance: and few observers of the common features of a landscape can have failed to notice the great diversity of character in

these universal natives of our moors, in the different geological arrangements of the country.

Few can have omitted to notice the total want of them on bog whose substratum is chalk or mountain lime; and many have been delighted with their abundance and surpassing beauty in the primitive ranges of Wales and Scotland. The ling of Pont Aber Glas Llyn, near Beddgelert, yields to none in the richness of its flowers; and that of the granite range of *Avan(sic)*, in the Firth of Clyde, is often 3-4ft. in height, arborescent, and erect, like the finest specimens of Cape Heaths cultivated in our green-houses. The poor natives of that island make an economical substitute for hemp from its twigs; and the roots, occasionally thrown out of the soil by the fury of the mountain torrent, are 2" in thickness, and capable of a high polish, being nearly as hard as ebony."

(I must thank Mr R. J. Clevely, the compiler of the Index to the *Year Book*, for sending me this extract.)

Recent Writing on Heathers, 1982

Anon. Brightening up bleak mid-winter. *Walton & Weybridge Star*, 21st January 1982, No. 36

A commendation of the winter-flowerers.

Anon. Heidelandschaft im eigenen Garten. *Mein schöner Garten*, 1982, No.2, pp 36 - 41.

Curt Brose's garden near Bremen, nicely illustrated.

Anon. Zwanzig Sorten Besenheide. *Mein schöner Garten*, 1982, No.9, pp 70-5

Kurt Kramer's garden and nursery. His chosen 20 sorts, grouped by flowering time, are 'Aurea', 'Tenuis', 'Tib', 'Boskoop', 'Carmen', 'Crimson Sunset', 'Darkness', 'Gold Haze', 'J. H. Hamilton', 'Golden Carpet', 'Heidezweg', 'Mullion', 'Silver Knight', 'Sonja', 'Radnor', 'Silver Queen'; 'Annemarie', 'Elsie Purnell', 'My Dream' and 'Peter Sparkes'.

Anon Ein Garten in Norderstedt. *Mein schöner Garten*, 1982, No.10, pp 24-7
The Schröders' garden near Hamburg, also well illustrated.

Anon. Choice Heaths. *Amateur Gardening*, 9th October 1982, p 10.

Two good paragraphs.

Anon. When should I prune heathers? *Garden Answers*, 1982, Vol.1, No.9, p 38
Standard advice.

Anon. Ein Heidegarten blüht das ganze Jahr. *Mein schöner Garten*, 1982, No.12, p 47.

If the ground is suitable or properly prepared.

Baxendale, M. All-weather heathers. *Amateur Gardening*, 4th December, 1982

Sound advice, and lists six nurseries. pp 24-5

- Bezzant, L. *Calluna vulgaris* 'Kinlochruel'. *Bulletin Alpine Garden Society*, 1982, Vol.49, No.4, p 344
A description following its Award of Merit.
- Bloom, Adrian. A plant for all seasons. *Amateur Gardening*, 9th October 1982, pp 32 - 3
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- Bahnemann, K. Untersuchungsmethoden zur Blütenbildung bei *Erica gracilis*
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Microtone techniques.
- Bärtels, A. (in) *Gartengehölze*, 1981, Ulmer *Andromeda* p 250; *Bruckenthalia* pp 260 - 1; *Calluna* pp 262 - 5 (63 tabled), *Daboecia* p 292, *Erica* pp 299 - 303 (34 tabled). Other references on other pages. Fine photographs too.
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- Cox, D., Year-round interest from your heather garden. *Garden News*, September 1982, Vol.4, pp 12 - 3
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- Damann, H. J. & Kircher, F. Miniaturlandschaften im Heidegarten. *Gartenpraxis*, 1982, No.9, pp 8 - 11
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- de la Rochefoucauld, B. *Erica x darleyensis* Bean cv Margaret Porter. *Bulletin de l'Association des parcs botaniques de France*, 1982, Vol.5, pp 26 - 7
The plant that started him on heathers.
- Desbarbieux, C. Visite au domaine des bruyères. *Plantes de Montagne*, 1981, No.120, pp 221 - 3
Comte de la Rochefoucauld's garden, visited by La Société des amateurs du jardin alpin on 10th May 1981.
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- Eldridge, T. On the heath. *Amateur Gardening*, 28th August 1982, p 27
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A most thorough work, publishing for the first time the chromosome numbers of *E. australis*, *E. umbellata* and, in effect, *E. scoparia* - all $2n=24$.
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There have also been excellent articles in our contemporaries, *Ericultura*, *Der Heidegarten* and *Heather News*.

NURSERYMEN MEMBERS

* Further details in our advertisements. We thank these members for the support which they give to the *Year Book*.

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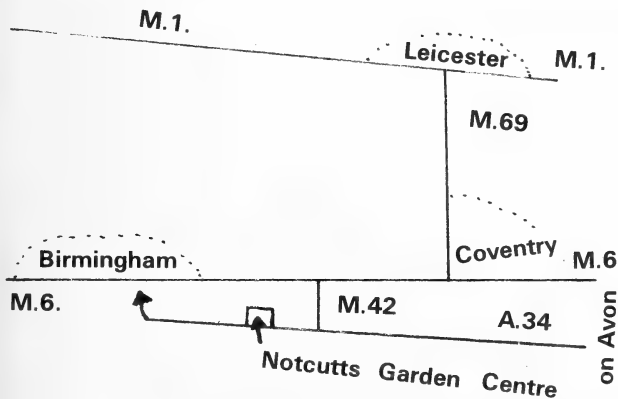
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