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Exceptional English Primula

T. C. CLARK, Ascot Wood, Ascot, England

First of all I would like to report on a very fine hybrid Candelabra Primula grown by the Royal Horticultural Society in its Gardens at Wisley. P. Red Lake is a real bright red, and is probably a reselection from the P. pulverulenta Bartley Strain, very likely crossed back to the parent. At any rate it is a very vigorous plant in the true P. pulverulenta style, and I was fortunate enough to get sufficient seed to raise about 200 seedlings, which I hope will flower in May, '63. Until then I cannot be sure how true it will come, but whatever the colors I think they will all be first class.

Secondly; and this I think will interest the botanists among your members, I enclose a photograph of a superb plant of P. bhutanica, which was grown and shown several years ago by Mrs. Saunders, wife of the then Secretary of the Alpine Garden Society. (See front cover) P. bhutanica would appear to be a somewhat variable plant, as nearly all those I have seen, even those grown in Scotland where they normally grow much better than in the South, have had flat rosettes of leaves, and the flowers have been almost sessile, on very short pedicels. Apart from having what one might call almost normal Primrose proportions, Mrs. Saunders' plant seemed to be somewhat of a botanical oddity, as the stigma was completely extruded from the bud, well before the flower opened. This is well shown on the plant on the right of the picture, where there are three unopened buds. It receded, or perhaps did not grow any more, as when the flower was fully open it was in the position to be expected in any normal pin-eyed flower.

I have naturally been on the lookout for similar plants ever since, but have never seen another, either in this species, or in any other members of the Petiolares section.

NATIONAL AURICULA AND PRIMULA SOCIETY, Southern Section
Invites all Auricula and Primula lovers to join this Old Society Membership of $1.50 per year includes Year Book

Hon. Sec. Mr. G. Redvers Williams,
Mount Pleasant, Eastbury, Newbury, Berks., Eng.

THE ALPINE GARDEN SOCIETY
Has Over 160 Members In The United States Of America

Its Quarterly Bulletin, of nearly 100 pages, is generally recognized as one of the best specialist horticultural publications in the World.

Its Seed Distribution Scheme offers a choice of well over 2,000 kinds from which Overseas Members can annually select 15 packets (donors, 20 packets) of seed which in many cases is not otherwise procurable. There is always a good choice of primulas.

The Annual Subscription, dating from the 1st of January, is £1, payable to the Secretary, C. B. Saunders, Husseys, Green Street Green, Farnborough, Kent, England, but American members may find it more convenient to send $2.80 to Dr. C. R. Worth, Groton, New York, the Society's Hon. Assistant Secretary in the U.S.A., who is empowered to receive subscriptions and to issue receipts on behalf of the Society.

President's Message

Another Primrose Season is finished. The scattering of fall bloom on our auricula and polyanthus seedlings serves to whet my appetite with expectations of a better bloom season next spring with many new and exciting seedlings.

For the American Primrose Society I can report steady progress and a successful year although we fell far short of the goals I set for myself and the society. If we could renew our efforts and enthusiasm as our favorite primroses renew their bloom each spring we could accomplish miracles. Being human we find too many things of interest and time runs out on us before we can accomplish our goal.

Our membership has increased, the rules for naming auriculas have been revised for a more practical application, many of the society's business affairs have been reorganized to meet our current needs. In the process of development is a directory of A. P. S. accredited judges and a judging school in a package with slides and script that can be presented to small groups without the requirement of an accredited judge as instructor.

We still need more new members and young members to carry on and expand the activity of the society.

I am sorry to report no new primrose societies were organized or affiliated with the A. P. S. this past year. I do have hopes that Alice Hills Baylor, corresponding secretary, can provide the spark that will result in a New England Primrose Society becoming organized and affiliated. Mrs. Baylor's trip to the Seattle World's Fair turned into a Primrose Holiday. It was a wonderful experience to have her here for a regular board meeting, the Washington State Primrose Society picnic, and visits to many of our gardens and homes. Mrs. Baylor's visit was a morale booster for everyone concerned.

I wish that all of our members could become personally acquainted with each other. For my part I am trying to visit all of the affiliated societies to explain the workings of the A. P. S. and the two-way benefits of membership. So far I have visited five affiliated societies and made the acquaintance of many wonderful people. I may have a little trouble getting to a meeting of the Onandaga Primrose Society in Syracuse, New York. If not this year, maybe next. I don't know if the A. P. S. or I get the most benefit from these visits.

There is some unpleasant news I must give you. Mr. Norman Lawfield, The American Primrose Society British Representative, died recently after a prolonged illness. Our sympathies to Mrs. Lawfield. Mr. Lawfield has devoted much time and effort to the A. P. S. affairs in Britain. We will miss him greatly. For the time being our overseas members can carry on their business directly with the A. P. S. officers in the U.S.A.

How many of you made a new hand-pollinated cross or grew a new (to you) species primula this past season? The editor would appreciate information both good and bad on your results to form the basis of a possible future article for the Quarterly.

—Herbert Dickson, President

In Memorium
Members will be sad to learn of the passing of Mr. Norman Lawfield. For many years Mr. Lawfield has been our British representative and treasurer. We extend our deepest sympathy to Mrs. Lawfield.

From The Seed Exchange
Any member desiring a short, short list of gesneriads and bromeliads may have some on request at once, to Seed Exchange Director, Elmer C. Baldwin, 400 Tecumseh Road, Syracuse 10, N.Y.
HONORS TO OUR SEED COLLECTOR:

Life Membership to Elmer C. Baldwin

as reported by Dr. Raymond F. Piper
President of the Osandoga Primrose
Society of Syracuse, N.Y.

On a Sunday afternoon in early September I walked up the long Baldwin drive, flanked by a hundred feet of plant wonders. Their half-acre lot, on a steep hillside, consists of an informal arrangement of natural objects (rocks and scores of evergreens planted in 1930), of numerous irregular garden plots and a small fascinating greenhouse.

After a cordial welcome, I was led to the kitchen. There on a table before a window overlooking primula beds, Mr. and Mrs. Baldwin (Hilda) were busy separating good from empty lily seeds: the good seeds bounce when dropped! What benevolent persistence in providing friends with fine-quality seeds!

They had just returned from two weeks of seed hunting in Newfoundland. There the discovery of many plants which they had never seen before brought many exciting adventures.

Every autumn they spend a week or two at Speculator, N.Y., on Lake Pleasant near the Adirondack Mountains. In this region an unusual wealth of plant life flourishes. On excursions from this town in various directions they find seeds of most kinds of native flowers in New York State. They search the roadside and along fences, in the edge of woods and in bogs. The Seed Exchange list of 1961-1962 included 71 native plants. In that list the Baldwins provided about 150 kinds, native and garden.

Mr. Baldwin’s interest in flowering plants was sparked about twenty-five years ago by a chance encounter with the seed catalog of Thompson & Morgan, Ipswich, England. It listed 4602 kinds of seeds, including 159 species and varieties of primulas. That such a multitude of flowers was available in inexpensive seed packets was an amazing discovery to him.

From this source he secured his first primula seeds. He anticipated the results with great excitement. He saw his first bloom in 1911. He liked them very much. His interest in primulas steadily increased. He experimented with many unusual species and accumulated many colored slides of them.

He discovered, however, that the mortality rate was very high. He became convinced that this sad result was due to his failure to provide the right conditions of growth. Consequently he went in search of information about the habitat, soil and climatic conditions required by the various species of primulas. He was disappointed to find that no one book or journal appeared to hold the answers to his many such questions.

Then with eager persistence and industry he and Hilda devoted two years, 1951-1956, to an intensive search for the multitude of facts they wanted. The outcome of these two years was "A Cultural Chart for Certain Species of the Genus Primula," published in 1957 by the American Primrose Society. (A copy of this chart, 16x20½ inches, is included in the membership in the Society.)

This chart specifies, in 41 columns, the “Growing Media, Soil Conditions, Situation, Exposure, Protection and Propagation” of 72 species of primulas under 18 sections. 21 numbered and lettered footnotes add other conditions and acknowledge the generous help of various individuals, especially of Robert Luther and the late Chester K. Strong.

The first two sentences at the bottom are: “The above cultural chart was suggested and prompted by the need for a ready reference on the culture of some of the more recently available species, in the hope of reducing the mortality rate in the hands of the less experienced grower. One very significant factor which became apparent early in the work was the relative importance of a knowledge of the plant’s natural habitat and surroundings.”

Three right-hand columns on Origin deal with the Location, Altitude in Feet, and Habitat of the 72 species. It is a striking fact that the listed species come from 18 regions of the Northern Hemisphere. 58 originated in 3 Oriental countries, notably: China, 21; Himalaya Mountains, 13; Tibet and borders, 13. 14 originated in the Occident: Alps 12; Italy 2.

Mr. Baldwin asserts that a few species of primulas exist in small quantities in eastern North America. He regards them as difficult to grow in the garden and considers them to be perhaps less interesting. He notes that Primula laurifolia has been collected in the Gaspe Peninsula of Quebec Province, and that in the Fish Creek area near Camden in central New York, Primula mistassinica has been found. These are miniature examples in the Farinosa section.

After his long experience Mr. Baldwin has largely given up experimenting with exotic primulas whose habitat and climatic conditions are difficult to realize in the Syracuse region. He continues to find greatest delight in growing the many wonderful varieties of two species that thrive in this section of the country with cold winters and 78 inches of snow; namely, Polyanthus auricula. The recent advances in form and color in these two species bring him great satisfaction.

Mr. Baldwin undertook the heavy task of the Seed Exchange in 1956. Since then he and his cheerful, indefatigable helper, Hilda, have completed four lists. They are now devoting much time to their fifth list. He reminds lovers of primulas to send him promptly each year as many kinds of seeds as they can, preferably by Oct. 15th, to facilitate the tedious business of processing. However, for the printing of the main list in December, he can accept seeds up to November 15th. He welcomes seeds after that date for a second and supplementary list. In the 1962 distribution he and Hilda prepared and mailed 5,602 packets from a list of 518 items. In many cases the number of seeds is so small that they must be counted by tens for just distribution.

The granting of life membership in the Society is evidently a much deserved recognition of the immense service he has carried out through the Seed Exchange for the benefit and delight of primula lovers around the world.

(Continued on next page)
Mr. Baldwin was born in Groton, Tompkins County, N.Y. His bread-and-butter occupation is auditor for New York State in connection with Workmen's Compensation Insurance.

He is a shy and modest person. I had to try the preceding facts from him by persistent questioning. While he refrains from personal accounts of his adventures with flowers, he is ever a very genial and benevolent person.

Hilda, however, is eloquent about their happy seed-hunting excursions into the beautiful countryside of New York State. She said, “We enjoy our trips immensely. But our experience is more than enjoyment. It is something mysterious, inexplicable, a kind of mystical delight.

“Elmer very much loves to see things growing, and wants to perpetuate them. (This explains in part his intense concern in the distribution of seeds of beautiful flowers through the Seed Exchange.) He likes to see beautiful things shared. One of the hardest experiences nowadays is to find more and more places where we once hunted treasures, now plowed up for new highways.

“Elmer is exultant when he comes upon some flower or plant which he has never seen before. He wants to find its name and place in the classification of plants. He doesn’t give up until he gets the right answer.”

Seed Exchange Notes

Elmer C. Baldwin, Syracuse, N.Y.

Through the interest and assistance of our members, we are preparing our 1963 list. In the past, some of our members feeling their gardens inadequate to furnish seed, and still wishing to contribute, have purchased seed commercially and made this their contribution. The seed is most acceptable yet this action is unnecessary.

Many of the items contained are indigenous and not to be found in the trade. Some few rockery subjects are present in very limited quantity and due to the scarcity, the packet may be small yet enough for a trial, which fulfills one of the purposes of the exchange, which is not to supplant the commercial grower, as a source of items available in the trade. His services must be used if we are to continue to have reliable sources for seed. The question often arises: should we or should we not have a seed exchange? Both positions are defendable and our only conclusion is: Moderation — and do not forget the serious grower! A friend recently wrote to two old and reliable growers for several rockery plants (seeds): one domestic and the other an English grower. The first had retired from business as it was at a “standstill.” The second replied: “...As the societies give seeds away free of charge, there is a negligible demand for them from seedmen and I no longer seek this business.”

This is a regrettable situation if it has been brought about by “free” seeds, and should—has been given serious thought in the compilation of this list. Among the primulas, we have several hard-to-find species as well as a rather extensive group in the Veratrum Section. It was necessary to purchase most of these commercially in order that we might make this as broadly representative of the genus as possible. As we mentioned earlier, the quantity of some may be small but it will furnish a test, and if more is desired another time, it may be obtained from the trade.

Gardening People...

enjoy gifts of plants, seeds, garden books, subscriptions to garden magazines, etc. With Christmas so near, do your shopping the easy way by ordering gift from our faithful advertisers. They will send them at the proper time for Christmas or, if plants are ordered, will send a card stating that they will receive this gift from you at the proper planting time in that area. Christmas greens and holly are also advertised in this issue. They arrive fresh for the holiday season. When you send your annual dues this fall include some gift subscriptions.

According to Cyrus Happy of Tacoma, winner of the 1962 Bamford Trophy for the best show auricula seedling at the National Show, the cross that produced this winner was a lucky one. Out of eighteen plants raised only two were selfs and two pin-eyed. The balance were all usable, good plants, all on the sturdiest side.

If any fault were to be noted as trait of the strain, it would be wideness of tube from the seed parent. They do not generally throw a lot of offsets (like the Klein pollen parent).”

“On pollinating edged auriculas,” states Mr. Happy, “I can only repeat that the pollen and the stigma are usually ready before the pip fully opens and must be used at that time.”

Mr. Happy also states that it is wise to have repotting tended to before winter dormancy sets in. He always uses a very light, gritty mixture with a lot of fiber visible. It is never on the acid side.

As for watering, water should never stand on the leaves, stems or crown, especially in winter; and the plants should never flag from lack of water. While excess water should be avoided, an open soil mixture and good drainage will prevent rot in the carrot. A little potassium permanganate in the water is a good way to discourage rottip.

The above tips from Mr. Happy, three times the winner of the coveted Bamford Trophy, were sent to the Quarterly to answer some of the questions that come in regarding the care of show auriculas.

Both photographs are of the 1962 Bamford Trophy Green Edge Show Auricula. The cross made to produce this beauty was Peter Klein's 1957 Green on Mrs. Torpen's Grey.

—Photographs by Cyrus Happy III.
Concerning Primulas

GRACE DOWLING, Seattle, Washington

Chapter I (continued from Vol. XX, No. 3)

PRIMULA OFFICINALIS — COWSLIP

The popular name of the cowslip is P. Veris or it is often listed as P. veris var. officinalis, but whatever its botanical name, the name cowslip has been known almost as long as history has recorded itself. The name may have come from an ancient Anglo-Saxon name; it has been found in old documents as early as 1592 and since then it has been featured all through the life and writings of British people. In olden times cowslips were used extensively in the practice of medicine and were important in many early legends.

The cowslip is more commonly found than the oxlip. It ranges from Northern Africa to Siberia and from Eastern Asia to Western Europe.

Cowslips and oxlips are so nearly allied that in practically every planting there will be specimens impossible to place definitely in either group. The cowslip, in most cases, has a one-sided umbel with nodding or drooping flowers, it is generally fragrant and the individual flowers are cupped, not flat, disk-shaped flowers. They are bright yellow with a tiny brilliant red or orange spot at the base of each petal. While both cowslips and oxlips have a papery calyx, the cowslip calyx often is much more pubescent, with fine, almost microscopic hairs covering it. The cowslip has not as great a tendency to change color as the oxlip, but in a planting of vari-colored oxlips many may be found that closely resemble cowslips.

The leaves of both oxlips and cowslips do not differ considerably from those of P. acaulis. A softer, gray-green color, a smoother or narrower leaf may tell the experienced gardener which is which.

Both the cowslips and oxlips frequently develop abnormal forms, many of which have been vegetatively increased. These varieties have always been highly prized by primula growers. Many have disappeared gradually and those that have survived are generally collector's pieces. There is one, however, that is fairly common as its habits have been sufficiently fixed to reproduce seeds, a good proportion of which come true to form. This is the quaint hose-in-hole, or hand-in-hand variety. The name hose-in-hole originally came from the resemblance of the calyx to the stockings worn by men in the Elizabethan age. The name hand-in-hand is more quaint and suggestive to the present age. The form is unusual, one flower growing from the center of another, making a chain of flowers, in fact, some new costume jewelry must have been copied from the style set by hose-in-hole or hand-in-hand. These grow easily from seeds and many colors are produced.

There is another form called Galligaskins, also associated with the hose worn in the sixteenth century. In these the ribs of the inflated calyx are more projecting and instead of the usual corolla there is a flower-like arrangement of green leaves, curled and wrinkled, from which a colored bloom emerges.

Jack-in-the-green, Jack-in-the-box, or Pantaloons are names given to still another abnormal form. In this the flower comes from a calyx bulging at the top instead of the middle, forming a funnel. Both flower and calyx are the same color and the ribs of the calyx each have a line of green.

Green primroses have no calyx, and the corollas, with the ordinary shape of a primrose corolla, is green. Occasionally a sport of Jack-in-the-green may not have the colored corolla coming from the green ruff, and this too is called a "green primrose."

Cowslips and oxlips have never been cross and recrossed with P. acaulis, the primrose and P. officinalis, the cowslip, until it is no wonder there is confusion in our gardens. This same difficulty has come through the ages. Parkinson and Gerard, in the sixteenth century, called the same flower now oxlip and then cowslip and since there has ever been a serious question whether P. elatior is a natural species or whether it originated as a cross between P. officinalis and P. acaulis.

A general feeling exists that the flowers of the oxlip are always horizontal, standing upright and facing the sky, but this is not an infallible rule. Oxlips are generally scentless and while pale yellow is the original color, they cross easily with polyanthus and P. acaulis producing many different shades of color.

The oxlip, like the cowslip, has an inflated calyx, papery in appearance, which bulges out below the corolla. The corolla is most often flat, not cupped, like the cowslip.

Bailey says the blossoms turn green when dry, but that fact will scarcely be of help as a distinguishing mark when they are in full bloom in the garden.

They bloom in April and May and are invaluable in wild, woody gardens where they will not corrupt the habits of finer primulas.

PRIMULA ELATIOR — OXLIP

There is one comparatively small locality, Bardfield, in England, and another in Normandy in France, where P. elatior, the oxlip, undefined, is supposed to grow. In all other localities it has been crossed and recrossed with P. acaulis, the primrose and P. officinalis, the cowslip, until it is no wonder there is confusion in our gardens. This same difficulty has come through the ages. Parkinson and Gerard, in the sixteenth century, called the same flower now oxlip and then cowslip and since there has ever been a serious question whether P. elatior is a natural species or whether it originated as a cross between P. officinalis and P. acaulis.

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Jackanapes on Horseback

Also known, in the sixteenth century, as the Francicke, Fantastick or Foolish Cowlip. Parkinson's description of his Jack-a-napes on Horseback reads, in part: "... it beareth at the toppes of the stalkes a bush or tuft of small green leaves, with some yellow leaves, as it were pieces of flowers broken, and standing among the green leaves ..." Reproduction of this sixteenth century form is from an enlarged water-color painting copied from a hand-tinted plate in Parkinson's herbal by Mrs. Richard E. Pearson of Portland. It appeared in Vol. 9, No. 3 of the Quarterly.

The Double Greene Feathered Cowslip

Reproduced from Paradisi in Sole Paradisi Terrestris by John Parkinson, Apothecary of London, 1629. "Flowers are many standing together at the toppes of the stalkes, but farre differing from all these kinds, for every flower standing upon his owne stalke, is composed of many very small and narrow leaves, without any huske to containe them, but spreading open like a little rose, of a pale yellowish green colour, and without any sent at all, abiding in flower, especially if it stand in a shadowie place out of the sunne, about two months, almost in as perfect beauty as in the first weeke." From Vol. 9, No. 4.
PRIMULA JULIAE AND JULIANA HYBRIDS

It is hardly believable that P. Juliae, a diminutive immigrant from the Caucasian Mountains, could, with her numerous progeny, make a place, which, if left vacant, would be impossible to fill with anything approaching her beauty and charm.

As recently as 1911, P. Juliae was brought into garden cultivation. She loved all her new homes and showed by her immediate complaisance that garden treatment was exactly what she desired. Being a little wanton, it was only a year or so until offspring began to emerge in every direction, and today P. Juliae, herself, is being eclipsed by her children.

Every season appears P. Juliae hybrids, named and unnamed, at least some of them blooming every month of the year, until we wonder how gardens ever grew without this strain of primulas.

The first P. Juliae in cultivation in England was grown in the Oxford Botanic Garden from seeds, which went the description “an ordinary purple primrose with heart-shaped leaves.” As no “ordinary” primrose has heart-shaped leaves, there was suspicion from the first that this might be something different. Mr. Clarence Elliott, in his account of the debut of P. Juliae, declares “this was a happening of the first magnitude in gardening history.”

The plant of P. Juliae has a peculiar vegetative habit of reproduction. A stolen-like root runs along underground producing new plants and, in time, forming a large mat. The new crowns may be cut away from the original plant, and as these growths increase rapidly, the planting can be more than doubled in one year.

While the leaf of P. Juliae is heart shaped, the leaves of hybrids may take the shape of those of P. acaulis or P. polyanthus or whichever type of plant may have been the other parent of the hybrid. The leaves vary in the most interesting manner; many have a redish vein and stem; others a pale green center vein. These colorings and the different shapes of leaves, all give an unusual appearance to a planting of mixed varieties.

P. Juliae, herself, is a gorgeous, vibrant, uncivilized, magenta color, but the hybrids, which are called P. Juliae Hybrids, vary in color from white, through pink to deep purple, a range from which any one may choose the color he most admires. Using P. Juliae and many P. Juliana hybrids in a massed planting of many colors is something to see.

The general form of most of the P. Juliae Hybrids is larger and the texture of the leaves has lost much of the attractive, fine-grained character of the original P. Juliae. This is a pity, for the dwarves of small-leaved P. Juliae is one of its greatest charms. Pam and Morton’s Hybrid repeat many of their Caucasian parents’ traits, but Wanda, one of the latest and most useful, is as large as many plants of P. acaulis.

The blooms vary in accordance with the habits of the primulas with which P. Juliae has been crossed. If one of the parents is a polyanthus, the plant may have a hunchback type of flower, but often some of the flowers on a P. Juliae hybrid, such as Wanda, have both types, the primrose type and the polyanthus type. Frequently the primrose-like blossoms are the first to come and the second blooms are in the form of an umbel.

To the hybridizer, P. Juliae is a gift from Heaven. Many times, with no help other than the insects, seedlings are found that are outstanding, and with hand pollination there is no end to the collections of fine kinds that may be produced. Present efforts are being made to increase the variety of colors and to establish floriferous dwarf plants with the eyes of P. Juliae.

Nearly every grower has his own list of the “best” P. Juliae hybrids. Many of my favorites are unnamed and I find, for one reason or another my allegiance may change from year to year. Wanda, E. R. Ames, Gloria because it blooms all winter, cause perennial enthusiasm.

P. Juliana Wanda grows in long ribbons, tying many of my primula beds together. At the height of its season, in April, a myriad of blooms makes me unconscious of any leaves. It has one defect; it fades badly, changing its color to a washed-out, nondescript, unpleasant shade. However, it is so gorgeous at its best, it is easy to forgive it for growing old unpleasantly. Wanda always has a few blooms in November, December and January. P. Juliana Dorothy grows sweetly under a native azalea along a woodland path. It is a deep cream, a polyanthus type with small leaves and a bright, happy disposition, Gloria and E. R. Janes begin blooming in November and bloom constantly through the winter. The blooms get terribly washed with our winter rains, at times they look almost transparent, nevertheless there is almost always a tiny bouquet in my living room and because of the short winter stems are placed in a shallow glass ash tray.

E. R. Janes, unusual and beautiful, has much orange pigment in the color, similar to many azaleas. Also there are clear pink hybrids and many, so-called crimsons and scarlets; I love them all and the radiant magenta ones especially. The latter are charming planted in a mass near Daphne mezereum and heather (Erica carnea), making a group planting, or near an early blooming, dark red Helianthus orientalis. They are especially interesting near ferns, the opening fronds of the ferns seeming to control the barbary color of the primulas. For one who likes strong colors, a small planting among ferns, about five plants of magenta P. Juliana hybrids and a fairly small plant of early-blooming, deep blue pulmonaria, is a picture to think about when the primula season has long gone.

These hybrids have no preconceived ideas of special diets. They like any kind of rich soil with plenty of water. Shade is nice, but half shade will do almost as well. Seeds may be purchased under several different trade names, and there is no reason why every grower may not attain something different and fine. The seeds germinate irregularly, some coming at once and some waiting a year or so.

If a gardener must pick one type of primula to grow exclusively, P. Juliae and her hybrids are certainly worth considering.

Editor’s note: Much good hybridizing has been done with the Julias in the past twenty years, particularly at Barnhaven. Check your index under Florence Levy for articles in back issues.

Dr. Mathew Riddle has also introduced many lovely forms as the result of his work with Julias. Vol. 8, No. 3 has two good articles on the Julias. Mrs. Lou Roberts’ article Primula Juliae and Hybrid Juliana Forms, in Vol. 2, No. 3, is excellent.

(Chapter II, the Candelabra Section, will begin in the winter issue).

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1962 Fall Quarterly

AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY
A. P. S. Dues Statement

The statement enclosed in this issue of the Quarterly is meant to ease the load of our new treasurer, Mrs. Tait. This is the only statement that will be sent until after January 15, 1963 when your dues are delinquent. Please fill it out now and mail it to the treasurer. Extra spaces are included for gift memberships.

In past years a blank was printed in the Quarterly but we found that members did not wish to cut anything out of their magazine. This is a new idea to save time, postage, and addressming bills. It will be successful only if the members cooperate. We know that you will not wish to miss the first issue of the 1962 Quarterly which contains the Seed Exchange list.

Some confusion has existed in past years regarding the time of dues payment. If a new member joins in the Fall of the year he is sent the back issues for that year . . . and his dues are payable again November 15th. This is the only way we can keep the records from becoming cumbersome.

Overseas Members

Overseas members are asked to please send their annual dues directly to the A.P.S. treasurer, Mrs. Lawrence G. Tail, 14015 84th Ave. N.E., Bothell, Wash., U.S.A. Dues of one pound are now payable and are delinquent Jan. 15, 1963. It is no longer a problem to send such an amount to America.

Mr. Dan Bampford . . . has been too ill this past year to answer the many letters received. In a dictated letter to the Quarterly he states that as soon as he can sit up in bed he will answer his correspondence. We wish him a quick recovery.

A P. S. Dues Statement

Doings of an Amateur

MARIE JACKSON, Salem, Oregon

For two years now four plants with luxurious leaves have been flourishing in that flat marked "Florinda Weiatoni". I was quite satisfied to be able to report that I had fulfilled the request of President Dickson and brought something different to bloom stage! All I have to report is that I now have four foxglove of a different variety for the wild hillside!

A small planting marked "marginata" was scheduled for discard—but look now—the plants are showing nicely this spring, so now I'm wondering what I may have dumped too hastily in the past. Lesson—patience and good identification are rewarding.

Some long while ago I visited Linda Eickman's garden at Newberg. Such a charming person she was and so helpful to me—a rank amateur with primroses. Later on, after she was gone, I had a number of plants from the last of her seed. I've managed to keep them going—collecting seed and "fooling around" with hybridizing between them and some Vetterle stock with their robust growth habit and lovely colors. This year I have some seedlings from these crossings which are just now blooming—late. (Written the last week in May). I see several very interesting variations—all in the pink shades, some deep and some pale and one in particular a ruffled, doubly affair with sturdy stems and husky leaves clearly indicating its parentage with Vetterle. Of course I'm hoping for seed too. My most choice cross is only now showing a bud—a semi-double pink bi-color of Vetterle crossed with a soft Eickman clear pink.

Until the past two years I've always experienced excellent success with the Vetterle-Reinelt seed, but now it doesn't seem to germinate so well and a definite weakness is noted in the plants. This past winter's cold has taken a large toll of my young plants. Slugs, too, have had their day for I was careless about baiting.

If a plant seems particularly good, I let it set its own seed. In order to strengthen the Eickman strain I cross it with a suitable (to my notion) Vetterle plant and collect seed.

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including many species of primulas—unobtainable elsewhere.

The Scottish Rock Garden Club

AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY

Page 125
Primroses in Iowa

Fourth years of loving and growing primroses on the banks of the Mississippi and in Iowa is the experience of Mrs. John S. Dow.

Eve Dow, Davenport, Iowa

Of all the primroses I love my acaulis most. Perhaps because they were my first. Many years ago at "Treetops," our home on the banks of the Mississippi, I grew my first acaulis of seed from Sutton's, England. Since we had virgin soil under oaks, walnuts and hickory nuts, the primulas practically became naturalized in the hillside wild garden and in the rock garden below.

Now, back again in the city with a postage stamp garden and soil always in need of building up, it is another story. To make matters worse the city recently took a slice off my property, taking most of my shade trees. Many of my primulas were lost in spite of lath and screens. With the help of myosotis allowed to run, and the filling out of the new hedge, shade is being restored somewhat.

The last couple of years I have grown a very fine P. acaulis. Seed is from Kent, England. Flowers are large on sturdy plants. My cold frame is now filled with young plants.

Lady Greer, a stalked juliana, is a great favorite of mine. So clean and eager to multiply, it forms a fine mass of cream color growing below the mauve azalea very early in the spring.

One of the earliest to bloom is the tiny species juliae, forming a fine mat of small, shiny, dark foliage against a nice piece of reddish granite all year.

P. kisoana this season has outdone itself with huge, furry stemmed leaves, perhaps because of the shade offered by the before mentioned myosotis, so easily pulled when no longer needed.

The cashmerianas transplants are in a permanent place in the garden.

The little frondosa seedlings are doing well in a temporary bed of lime stones to protect and shelter them. Years ago I had them in the rock garden. Very early in the spring they looked like tiny cabbages covered with golden meal. As the leaves developed they were white on the underside. The pink flowers are in loose heads.

Then there is the cortusoides, also many julianas.

The very convenient P. sieboldii is beautiful in May; convenient because it goes dormant in summer. I use it in a bit of wild garden where it is not disturbed and can multiply by means of underground runners.

This spring a lovely candelabra volunteer of royal purple appeared. It may be from last year's Japonica Miller's crimson though of a richer color.

Finest of all primulas to me is the auricula. To quote Farrer—"Of all alpines most precious and universal and easy and hardy is primula auricula."

At one time I grew them in pots in the cold frame, hoping to find a show. Then one fated winter I lost them all. In the garden they are safest for me. For those who have real shows no doubt a cold house is best. I have one show seedling.

We shall see. At Treetops my auriculas grew in a wall-like setting in the upper edge of a small pool which was halfway down to the lower level and large pool. In such a position they are safe, fastening their off-shoots in the crevices so water cannot lodge in the crowns.

For forty years I have grown and loved primulas and I can think of no happier hobby.

Primroses in a natural rock garden. All photographs sent by the author.
My Visit To The Northwest

ALICE HILLS BAYLOR, Johnson, Vermont

My trip to the beautiful Northwest Country enriched me far beyond the anticipation before take off by jet from Montreal the morning of August 9th. Flying over Lakes Huron and Superior across our Sister Country to the north where fertile wheat fields lay below into the Lake Country where water seemed like bits of broken glass set in virgin forests, rivers with spouting waterfalls; vaulting over the snow-capped Rockies and slipping along waterways into Vancouver, B.C., was a delightful six hours.

At the airport to meet me was our editor and my hostess Nancy Ford (who had come up from Seattle), Susan Watson, and Margaret Boyes. We visited Queen Elizabeth Park, a beauty spot developed from an old rock quarry. Plants hung from the sheer cliffs and paths wound among flower beds on the floor of the quarry. A commanding view of the three Sparks massed mountains as great as the park is located on a high promontory. We drove through the city and lunched at a tower dining room which gave us another view of the city and waterways.

Our first garden visit was to Alpenglow Gardens where Mr. Frank Michaud was expecting us and for the next three hours we were in a wonderland of plants. The front rock garden is filled with rare alpines and the heathers gave a rainbow showing. We inspected his nursery beds, the propagating houses and his home grounds. The most fascinating group to me were the dwarf evergreens, some silver-tipped, some with gold flecks or lacelike foliage. His bonsai trees were the most beautiful I have ever seen. The real treat of our visit, however, was being with Mr. Michaud, a gentleman and a seasoned gardener.

Our next garden visit was to the charming home garden of Grace Conboy, editor of the Canadian Primula and Alpine Society Bulletin and newly elected A.P.S. board member. Here on a steep incline are rare collected plants and many she has raised from seed. She is most knowledgeable in the identification of plants and is most interested in the native plants of Western Canada. Heathers and Andromeda gave strength to the design with prostrate alpines trailing from crevices.

After tea with Grace we went to the home of Mr. and Mrs. James Watson where their new chalet-type home is built in a grove of pines. Their garden is, without a doubt, the most unique, serene and unusual I have visited. From their pet bogs they have unearthed century-old stumps with roots which have been used to create mounds of many shapes. Earth has been packed between the graceful roots to make pockets in which are planted Primulas, Campanulas, Gentians, dwarf evergreens, alpines and ferns. At the base of these mounds are small pools to reflect the plantings above. Paths wind gracefully through the garden and where there is no grass, the entire area being blanketed with ground cover.

At five in the afternoon the Watsons drove Nancy and me to Victoria with the pleasant interlude of a boat trip. The sunset trip threaded between islands of sheer, rocky shores and tree-covered hills with the gulls leading the way into the harbor.

The following day in Victoria was delightful. It is a city of flowers with hanging baskets from light poles and homes surrounded with gardens. We visited Lobronner's Nursery where Gentians bloomed in masses around bold rock formations and Campanulas hung from crevices; where lakeside plants flourished and water-lilies lay upon the surface of the pond; where tufa rocks held bonsai trees and where their potted alpines were sunk in frames filled with sand. Reluctantly we left.

We launched on the "Princess Pat," a shoreboat boat, and dined on clam chowder and baked salmon. Several members of the Canadian Alpine Society joined us. After lunch we visited the alpine garden of Mr. and Mrs. V. Ahier. This is an exquisitely planned garden; one of the loveliest I have ever seen.

A pool surrounded by evergreens and a planting of Heathers is located on the low side of their front home grounds. A path edged with Rhododendrons takes one to the rear of their home where a rock ledge rises 15 to 20 feet and extends approximately 100 feet back to a wooded area. A stream comes from a deep crevice and splashes into a large pool. Ferns grow in the cool moisture-laden grotto while above is a most magnificent prostrate pine, its branches spreading over at least a thirty-foot drop. It is like a green waterfall. A path takes one along the foot of the ledge where small alpines grow in great profusion and where one crosses a footbridge to the garden beyond. The greenhouse is surrounded by espalier fruit trees and there is a lath house filled with exhibition plants in tufa and bonsai bowls. This garden is a cool retreat created by a master plantsman.

We visited the terraced garden of Mr. and Mrs. D. G. F. Barton which commands a view of distant hills. Eunymus, Heathers and Astilbes predominate the foot of the terrace with stretches of Iris, Daylilies, and Delphiniums planted on a lower level. An apple orchard stretches far below. Mrs. Barton served tea and we had a most enthusiastic conversation with our charming host and hostess.

We reluctantly said goodbye to the Watsons, who had shown us such a delightful time, and boarded the Princess boat for Seattle. Grace Conboy joined us aboard and was with us for the next four days.

We docked at Seattle at nine-thirty amid a city of lights and took the monorail to the Fairgrounds to see the display of lights around fountains and buildings. There at the Oregon State exhibit building we met George Schenk who designed the front planting and the pool and waterside planting within the building. Evergreens which he had brought down from near timber line formed the background with native plants at their feet. It was a bit of my own garden which we were invited to see after our trip to Portland.

(To be continued)

To and From

(The Directors’ Meeting, Portland—July 11, 1962)

GRACE CONBOY, South Burnaby, B.C.

As the going and coming extended over a four-day period, of meeting so many A.P.S. members and fine garden folk—and the pleasure of seeing so many interesting gardens—we thought other modest A.P.S. members would like to hear about it and our lovely Pacific Northwest.

Possibly meeting Mrs. Alice Hills Baylor (our special visitor from Vermont) and renewing the acquaintance of our editor Nancy Ford in Vancouver, B.C., plus the invitation to join them in Victoria and travel via C. P. ferry to Seattle on the Friday evening, sounded just too pleasant a change to pass up. Mrs. Baylor had spanned the continent via T.C.A. jet from Montreal to Vancouver in a very few hours. We did not realize that “Sky Hook Farm” in Vermont was so near to Montreal, making this method of passage the most practical. Nancy had come up from Seattle to meet her guest and, following a flexible thoughtfully planned schedule (Mrs. Susan Watson) of visits around the Vancouver area, they left for Victoria the same evening. Here they were able to see some of the lovely gardens of Victoria and enjoy meeting many of the Victoria Rock and Alpine Club members.

I joined Nancy and Alice on the Seattle-Victoria ferry and our trip together commenced, a memorable one, for we met so many wonderful people.
and saw gardens we had looked forward to visiting . . . but had not anticipated doing so with such hospitable, newly met garden friends. The ferry trip through the Gulf Islands was disappointing, as a mist spoiled the view, but it was a pleasant one. Mr. Ford met us in Seattle and our first evening wound up with a surprise trip to the Century 21 Fairgrounds to see the night lighting effects.

Beth Tait was over early the next morning to drive us to Portland and the Board meeting where I enjoyed meeting members who hitherto had just been names in the Quarterlies.

That evening we decided to visit Mr. and Mrs. Bellis at *Karnhaven* and see first hand the place we had read about for so many years. *Karnhaven* is nestled by its stream in a very woody area. Much labour has obviously been expended to carry it from the wild. Rich soil, high shade and great patience have given birth to the rainbow beauties produced here, to be grown in the far corners of the world. Following a trip to the old Richard, up hill, where next year's primrose children flourished under aged fruit trees, a roomful of people gathered for a delightful session of reminiscing in the cozy *Karnhaven* quarters.

A group of nine of us had stayed over until Sunday at adjoining auto courts. Needless to say we had no difficulty in sleeping.

Sunday morning the Agees joined us bright and early for breakfast in the Floyd Keller cabin. (11 of us!) Wonderfully hospitable people! — then we were on our way.

First to Mrs. A. C. U. Berry's simply marvelous place. We were quite a few but Mrs. Berry, spry as a cricket, I'm sure enjoyed showing us many of her treasures. July is certainly not the best time to visit her garden with her superb collection of *Rhododendrons*, visibly fatening buds for next Spring's display. A garden such as hers, so meticulously and thoughtfully laid out, to encompass needs of such a varied collection of Alpine plants and *Primulas* has much of interest at any season. Rare creatures flourish for this knowing little lady, making one's often fruitless efforts seem so inadequate.

Many lessons were to be learned in careful observation of her successful methods. Her Petaloes collection was ridiculously luxuriant looking, *P. Clarkii*, still blooming sparsely, came up as stray seedlings just anywhere! Tiny *P. minima* and many others of the Europeans, formed delightful minute crowns, nestled in their scree chippings. Beautiful summer flowering *Campanulas* in various shades of lush blues, were making the start of a marvelous show to come. A lovely large flowered dwarf Platycodon, dainty *Campanulas*, innumerable tiny cushion alpines, just so many precious things, it would take much more than a few hours to really see all of Mrs. Berry's garden. I'm so happy that we were able to show this wonderful garden to Mrs. Baylor.

Some of our party had to return to Seattle but the remaining Richard, back to Tacoma with the Kellers. After a quick lunch and peak around their nice little place we returned to Seattle and Nancy Ford.

Monday dawned another fine day and we spent the morning admiring Nancy's fine collection of *primulas* and *auriculas*, which gave promise of some good show material for next year.

Afternoon saw us heading along lovely Lake Washington out to Mercer Island to see another very excellent collection of *Rhododendrons* at Mrs. John Minor Blackford's place. Such a pretty garden, in a quiet way, at an off-bloom time, so many delightful little paths through luxuriant large *Rhododendrons* and *Azaleas* with their many companion plants—drifts of *candelabras*, *Iris*, *Hellebores*, delicate ferns, heathers and good weed choking ground covers of *Kinnikinnik*, *Ajuga*, *Gaultherias*, etc. Mrs must be a dream of a garden when spring rolls around. Sorry we missed meeting the wonderful gardener who keeps such a trim and cherished garden.

That evening we visited the wonderful Alpine Garden of Mr. George Scheck at Bothell. Being particularly endowed to Alpine and Evergreen trees, this garden certainly will always stand out as something special. It was getting late, and our first impression of the lovely wide patio with ledge of beautiful Bonsai trees silhouetted against a background of Mount Ranier and the soft toned evening sky, will long remain with us. High atop a hill, this garden, exposed to drying winds and full sun—but with an ample water supply (probably underground irrigation scup) simulates conditions Alpine plants can feel at home in. The artistic placement of drifts of sheltering Alpine Firs, in several locations, really made it a true Alpine garden. So very many difficult subjects were flourishing down the gentle slopes which were studied here and there with large shapely rock outcroppings. This was just one more garden one could not possibly digest in a brief hour.

A quick visit to Beth Tait's, and little remaining light to really appreciate the wonderful plantings of fresh, crisp primroses, all neatly set out beneath her lath houses. A meticulous gal, Beth—had the feeling a weed didn't show a nose around her garden.

All the foregoing has returned with me for winter contemplation in my Canadian home. The hospitality of American gardening friends leaves a warm feeling to cherish. So many pleasant memories on our trip with Mrs. Baylor—and the many A.P.S. folks we met together.

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**AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY**
People and Flowers

Mr. Albert Merle Sutton...

of Seattle, Washington is the new editor of the Quarterly Bulletin of the American Rock Garden Society. He will be assisted by several of the prominent botanists and plants people in that area in an endeavor to continue the excellent work of the Bulletin with a possibility of even expanding its contents. We all wish him well and hope that A.P.S. members not familiar with this publication will subscribe. Their Seed Exchange contains many primulas and choice rock garden plants. Membership is $3.50. Send dues to the Secretary, Mr. E. L. Totten, 1220 Everett Place, Henderson, N.C.

"Concerning Primulas"...

has caused much favorable comment from members everywhere and Mrs. Grace Dowling, the author, has received many notes of thanks from members for her charming book and the colored cover which she so generously gave us for the summer issue.

Mrs. Walter Bond Brown...

of 144 E. Portland Ave., Scottsdale, Arizona, is our only Southern and a very new one from Arizona. She joined A.P.S. after a visit to the Northwest and the World’s Fair. She is determined to grow primroses in Scottsdale, where the weather is anything but ideal, if she has to stand with a hose in one hand and a fan in the other. Such determination is commendable and if any members would care to send her plants to speed her on the way it will be interesting to hear how she succeeds.

* * *

An Oversight...

of credit to the National Auricula and Primula Society (Southern Section) in the Summer Quarterly for their kind permission to reprint Mr. Ralph Balcom’s article “Experiences in Breeding for Double Auriculas.”

Primula tayloriana...

Mrs. Cicely Crewdson of Helme Lodge, Kendal, Westmorland, has sent this photograph and the following account of this interesting plant:

“Seed of this lovely species was collected in Tibet in 1938 by Ludlow, Sheriff and Eliot, and I was fortunate enough to have some seed under the number L and S 13250. This seed germinated well and ever since I have struggled to keep this species in my garden in Westmorland.

Having at first plenty of seedlings to play about with I was able to try them in various positions, but though seeming very easy at first, as the years rolled on I found this pretty little primula was temperamental and capricious, in fact "cloy and hard to please," and there was one winter when I had only one plant left. I find the only way I can increase it is by division as I can never obtain any seed, but it is easily divided after flowering.

Now—as I write (July 1962)—I have about a dozen healthy-looking plants which I have repotted in a mixture of leaf-mould, loam, peat and sand.

Primula tayloriana belongs to the Farinosae section, and the colour of the flower is lavender. (Mineral-violet according to the official colour chart.) Collected at over 10,000 feet this primula was named in honour of Dr. George Taylor (now Sir George Taylor).”
Growing Suggestions
Rooting precious offsets

A cutting of an especially choice auricula presents a problem during the fall of the year. The best time to make cuttings in the spring, of course, but occasionally a plant suffering from root needs immediate first aid.

One method is to use a 3-inch pot, properly crocked, into which extra drainage material is added to fill one-third of the pot. One-half inch of potting soil is added and the pot is filled to the usual level with a mixture of very sharp sand, fine peat and soil, the sand forming one-third of the mixture. The mixture should be moist, but not soggy.

Insert cuttings, which have been trimmed clean with a razor and dipped in sulphur or rooting hormone, near the edge of the pot. Place the smaller pot in a larger pot and fill the space between with wet peat. Place a glass jar over the pot with the cuttings, shade it from the sun and wipe the inside of the jar occasionally to remove excess moisture. After about a month of keeping the outer pot wet remove the glass and keep it off if there is no sign of wilting. Do not rush to repot.

Denticulata Rot

One member reports that her P. denticulata literally turned to mush last summer. Experts say that these plants should never be watered while the sun is shining on them even though they are wilting badly. Very early morning or late evening is the only safe time to water. Crowded denticulas are more subject to rot than those that have ample air circulation around their crowns. Many of the older leaves can be cut off in late spring to allow more space between plants. If rot does occur in the crown it should be cut out severely and the root ends surrounding the crown brought up to the surface. They will form new plants in most cases. False blooms that appear in the fall should be cut off and the wound sprinkled with sulphur. They will often bloom again in the late winter or early spring. Clean up all decaying leaves from your denticulata plants in late fall as they can cause crown rot. They also harbor slugs if left around the plants.

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Charcoal — Yes or No

Much controversy arises about the use of charcoal vs. sulfur for treating wounds in plants or bulbs, also about the value of charcoal in soil. The following note appeared in the 1950 Year Book of the National Auricula and Primula Society of England. The following note appeared in the 1950 Year Book of the National Auricula and Primula Society of England.

We quote in part: "In a division of a hothouse in Munich a bed was set apart for young tropical plants, but instead of being filled with tan, as usually the case, it was filled with powdered charcoal. The plants quickly vegetated and acquired a healthy appearance, in fact surpassed in vigor and general luxuriance planted in the common way. Several of them, of which I shall only specify the common Thunbergia alata, threw quite astonishingly; the blossoms were so rich in color, likewise I affirmed they had never seen such a specimen. They surpassed very quickly those cultivated the common way. An addition of 1/2 charcoal to vegetable mold appeared to answer excellently for gloxinia. Aactus planted in equal parts of charcoal and earth attained double its former size in a few weeks."

"Cuttings of different genera took root in it well and quickly. Pure charcoal acts excellently as a means of curing unhealthy plants.

"The action of charcoal consists primarily in its preserving the parts of the plants with which it is in contact, whether they be roots, branches, leaves, or pieces of leaves, unchanged in their vital power for a long space of time, so that the plant obtains time to develop the organs which are necessary for its further support and propagation.

"Charcoal possesses the power of absorbing carbonic acid and ammonia from the atmosphere which serve for the nourishment of plants.

"Charcoal is being used at the present day in several ways horticulturally, but these new uses, discovered over a hundred years ago, have been lying dormant during this entire period. However, we recall that Mendel's discoveries started to rot or is bruised. The powder simply absorbs the surface moisture and forms a coating from the air while the tissue is healing. However sulphur does the same with better assurance plus being an active fungicide.

Beliefs and superstitions continue and persist, such as planting according to the moon phases, which are handed down from one generation to another and accepted through some personal experience. The envious doctor drew conclusions from what he saw. The "vigor and luxuriance" he observed might have been curdled by the use of other media which insured equally efficient drainage.

But what he failed to see . . . the most important . . . were the fertilizers.

No, his discovery was not overlooked or forgotten but discarded for better results—George B. Funnell.

"The value of charcoal in potting soils. The ammonia present in these very dilute solutions is readily absorbed by the roots and utilized by the plant. Carbon dioxide is absorbed from the air by the leaves and is not needed by the roots."

Charcoal is frequently used in the soil under the assumption that it purifies and sweetens, but the meaning of this statement is vague. The association of mystic properties with charcoal may be due to its use for filtration of water after the water has first passed through a sieve of sand. This is supposed to remove unpleasant odors and tastes but it has not been shown that the substances so removed are a detriment to plant growth.

"Charcoal does not disintegrate in the soil. Its pores soon clog and whatever "purifying" or "sweetening" properties it possesses are soon exhausted. It is very commonly used, especially in potting, yet a search fails to find any horticultural authority recommending it. Bailey's Encyclopedia mentions it in only one respect: "an excellent material for supplying pot-drainage, none better."

Powdered charcoal is sometimes used to cover the exposed tissue when a bulb is cut in two or applied when a tuber starts to rot or is bruised. The powder simply absorbs the surface moisture and forms a coating from the air while the

To Fry Primrose Leaves in March with Eggs . .

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