Voices from the Past

Letters from Burbidge, Engleheart and others in the late 19th century.

“The Englishman of the Narcissi”
A story about Peter Barr

Copies of original correspondence given to The American Daffodil Society, Inc., by Matthew Zandbergen.

Mr. Zandbergen was a prominent Dutch bulb grower and friend to early daffodil hybridizers.
My Dear Barr

Herein I return your colored sketch of *Ajax Johnstonii* and “Achilles”.

Hartland’s “Ard Righ” or “Irish King” 1886 is his “Golden Dragon” 1885. His N. “minor Maximus” (No. 23 of his list) is either a big form of nanus or a form of *N. lobularis*.

I hope you had a good field day yesterday (Tuesday) and saw some little novelty among the kinds exhibited.

I shall be glad of a flower of anything distinct or curious.

Mild rains and sunshine daily here now and spring flowers growing like mad!

Faithfully yours,

F.W. Burbidge

Dublin
22.iii.86
91 Haddington Road, Dublin
19.xi.87

Dear Mr. Barr,

On the other side are a few *Corbularia* habitats as given in
Knuth’s “Enumeration” Salisbury, etc., but your plan is to find new
habitats as much or more than old ones.

What is the matter with Maw whom I understand from a
footnote to your letter is unwell?

Foster’s sketch and comparative study in parallel columns
is a capital plan of fixing on differences in nearly related vars.

Your
son should adopt this plan in his studies. *C. nivalis* is too big or a fair specimen. It is the smallest of all the Corbularias. His *C. bulbocodium* again by which *C. conspicuus* is intended I presume is too small. The great point is to draw the whole series from wild specimens if possible - as cultivated ones are apt to be big and [?] blethorai

Faithfully yours,
F.W. Burbidge

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**Corbularia cantabrica**—Spain, Biscay, Pyrenees
**C. serotina**—Pyrenees, Spain, Portugal, N. Africa (Tingis)
**C. conspicuus**—Spain
**C. tenuifolia**—Mountains of Biscay
**C. obesa**—Spain, Portugal, Tangiers
**C. turgida**—“wild near Tarbes” (Salisbury)
**C. monophyllus**—N. Africa, Oran, etc.
**C. citrinus**—Biarritz, etc.
**C. nivalis**—Portugal, etc.
My Dear Mr. Barr:

Brotero’s Narcissus of Flora Lusitanica are

1. *N. Pseudo Narcissus* = “Narcissus Trombeta”
2. *N. bicolor* = *N. trombeta de duas [?] cores*. He says there is a double var. of this ? at Topes.
4. *N. bulbocodium*—Lisbon, Coimbra & in South Portugal
5. *N. reflexus* = *N. triandrus albus*
6. *N. calathinus* = ? *N. odorus* as he says it is self yellow on Mont Herminii.
7. *N. tazetta* = “Narcisso de Inverno”
8. *N. jonquilla* = “Junquilho legitimo”

There are no figures in Brotero nor does he appear to have recognised any varieties except “double bicolor” after which you should inquire, and double jonquill (sic).

I return Wm. Threlfall’s letter. Many thanks. His conclusions are pretty much the same as mine.

Faithfully yours,
F.W. Burbidge
My Dear Barr,

Your letters to hand. The drawings registered or insured will reach you on Saturday next and I am very grateful for the sight of them. How about the leaves of Mr. Buxton’s hybrid Juncifolius x muticus? Are they flat (abscissus) or rushlike (juncifolius)?

No one here appears to know why the Daffodils and Corbularias of one district should be gold yellow and in another district sulphur yellow. It is as unexplainable as that of a red and a white rose budded on the same stock and fed by the same roots, but the foliage of each variety seem to vary in their chemistry. Hence [?] one with white and one with red blooms.

Mr. A.W. Tait sent me two forms of N. cyclamineus per post today, one having semi double flowers, the cup having two or three of its anthers changed into petals.

Kindly tell me what is the best map of the Narcissus district of Europe? Or of Spain and Portugal? Also its or their total cost. Maw ought to be a capital authority on maps, compass, etc., etc. Is his health restored? Mr. Tait promises me plants by steamer via Liverpool, the handiest way or route for him and I say if he addresses to me in Dublin care of “Slohe Parcel Express Co. Liverpool” they would bring them on to me? Is there any better or cheaper way than this?
I quite agree with you that the bulk of Narcissus are existent as wild species or varieties, or hybrids, somewhere in Western Europe. Of course early gardeners may have reared hybrids and seedling variations as John Evelyn Hill in his “Eden” and Miller recommend, but these die out so quickly if unattended and as a proof of this being so I know of no hybrid existing naturalised in Europe except in its original location or habitat. You will mark down every species and variety you find on a good map of course and add altitude and aspect (by the compass) as I told you in the primer I sent some time ago.

I wish I was a rich man. I would take you to Portugal in my yacht and land you on the coast near your proposed raids, etc. I and my wife intend going to Holland in April (end of) if possible to see the bulbs and get a rest for a week or so.

Buxton’s juncifolius x abscissus hybrid is curious and I am anxious to know what its leaves are like. If you knew (Crewe H. Harpur) send me 10 lines on him along with Maw with whom he went to Spain.

Faithfully yours, F.W. Burbidge
Dear Mr. Tait,

Your kind and welcome letter and box of Narcissi per post duly to hand this morning. I have been confined to the house more or less for the past two months with cold and chest troubles, but I am very thankful to say that nearly all the time I have been able to write and to draw so that the loss in some ways has perhaps been a gain to my narcissus book. Barr big-hearted and generous as ever has lent me his daughters’ drawings for the past two years, 153 species and varieties in all so that the copying and notes on them have taken some time. Amongst them are some drawings of the Oporto hybrids by Mrs. Tait and the little sketch of N. triandrus concolor of Coimbra pleased me much – it was like a little sketch by Turner, at least I thought it so. Ruskin might not have done so. I shall indeed be most grateful for any species or vars. of Narcissi you can send me either for drawing and drying as specimens - or as roots for growing.
Iris grow well here and *I. stylosa* and *I. reticulata cyaned* are now in flower, out of doors, also I have “at last” and for the first time a couple of flowers on *N. (Corbularia) monophylla* of Algeria.

Your *Nar. tazetta* (South Portugal) white perianth and chrome or orange cup is very like but smaller than *N. tazetta* as figured by Moggridge in his “Contributions to the Flora of Mentone” (plate 23) from a specimen gathered at Palazzo Arenza on the Riviera [sic]. He figures a 7-flowered scape. *N. tazetta papyraceus* is a very variable plant and it ranges from the tiny *Nar. jasmined* of Rudbeck’s rare “Campi Elysii” with flowers 5-7 on a scape this size ------->[drawing is 2-3/4 inches tall] to the large flowered *N. tazetta papyraced* with individual flowers nearly 2 inches in diameter.

The *N. cyclamineus* turning double is a curious thing.

I shall be very glad to get a packet (small) of Chrysanthemum seed from you if so be that you saved any this year or last.

Any Iris or Narcissus will be most welcome and any parcels via Liverpool addressed to me care of Slohe Parcel Express Co would reach me quite safely. You will not of course go to any expenses as to shipping or carriage as our people here gladly pay all such charges on contributions to their garden. Kindly tell me of any plants you would like to add to your own collection.

Faithfully yours,
F.W. Burbidge
Trinity College Botanical Gardens, Dublin
25.1.1888

Dear Mr. Tait:

Since I wrote to you yesterday, I have examined the semi-double form of *Narcissus cyclamineus* you were so kind as to send to me per post. It is very curious and interesting and I herein hope to enclose you a rough diagram of the flower, as it illustrates the first stages of doubling, and shows how both stamens and stigmas and style become changed into petaloid divisions [sic]. I never before met with such a perfect and beautiful example, and it is most instructive. I have also sent a copy of the diagram to our friend Mr. C. Wolley-Dod as he is so deeply interested in the doubling of the narcissi. I should be glad to hear the history of the individual plant you so kindly sent to me.

1. Is it a wild plant, or was it cultivated in your garden?
2. If cultivated, did it appear by accident, or had you previously observed its tendency to "double" in its wild habitat?
3. Is it the only semi-double variety you have seen, or is it one of a series?

In a normal flower you will find the style triangular in section thus------ and the stigma is always 3-lobed but when normal the lobes are brought close together (coherent or connate) by the adherence of the devisions [sic] of the style as at b------>

In Gladiolus the lobes of the style are coherent, but Schizostylis is, or was, placed in a separate [sic] genus because the style is thus divided [sic]------> and not thus ---- >

I have not seen a more instructive specimen than this, and I am anxious for you to know all about it as some slight return for your generosity, but the chances are you observed all this before you dispatched the specimen to me.

Faithfully yours,
F.W. Burbidge
Dear Mr. Tait:

Your box of Narcissi and your letter and packages of chrysanthemum seeds came safe to hand this morning and I am sincerely and gratefully obliged to you for your generous kindness.

Yes! I should say your little Narcissus is *N. minutiflorus*, but you query one form as possibly *N. jonquilloides*, but all sent represented the former kind. Both as you know have been figured in Willkomm's "Illustrationes Flora Hisp." but in case you should not just have his fascicles beside you, I have made you rough tracings of his figures of both species, and to his figure of *N. minutiflorus* I have added Herbert's first figure from the Amaryllidaceae and your own 4-flowered specimen and one or two of the single ones (solitary flowered scapes) to hand today.

I suspect that both Herbert in 1837 and Willkomm at a more recent date figured wild, and perhaps starved specimens, at any rate the plants you so kindly forward me have larger flowers. I should say that *N. minutiflorus* and *N. juncifolius* are very near relations and no doubt the intermediates between the extreme forms will yet be found! So also in the case of Willkomm's *N. jonquilloides* which has to me quite a "look" about it, but I am only
judging from the figure as I never yet saw the plant. Mr. Baker in his new arrangement of the "Narcissus" in his forthcoming "Handbook of Amaryllidaceae" places N. jonquilloides under N. jonquilla, and I see he has also placed N. minutiflorus under N. juncifolius. I hope you may soon lay hands on N. jonquilloides. Herbert in "Amaryll" figured N. minutiflorus as Queltia pusilla from a specimen preserved in the Herbarium of Sir Joseph Banks found by Masson between Ayemonte and Huelva.

Barr starts to Paris today on his journey to your sunny land. He says he starts fully armed and equipped this time and like the hero of your Cervantes he means business and adventure.

N. cyclamineus now open here under a sunny wall near greenhouse. What a gem it is!

When next sending if you should have any N. triandrus blooming please send me a flower or two. Ours are late and I want the pollen of N. triandrus for hybridising purposes.

With all thanks believe me,

Faithfully yours,

F. W. Burbidge
hybrids between these parents which as Herbert asserts proved his “guesses at truth” to be correct.

Mr. Buxton’s hybrid *N. juncifolius x N. muticus* certainly has a *N. odorus minor* “look” about it, altho. quite different.

Now I of course neither affirm nor deny Herbert’s statement as made in his paper on “Hybridisation among vegetables” but I wish you would keep an eye on the question raised and from this point of view.

If ever you come across the curious title *Carragenaus*, and especially *C. dubia* as figured by Willkomm in Ill. Pl. Hisp. I shall be so glad to see it, as it may reveal something as to the morphology of the cup or chalice in Narcissi.

In a recent letter you mentioned “ringing” or circumvallation [*?] as a method of propagation. It is a very old Chinese and Japanese dodge also Indian and Malayan. The stem is lacerated or barked, and a joint of bamboo is split and bound together around the ring or fracture and then filled with earth. Another dodge I saw in Borneo was the partial breaking of a branch by bending it upwards, i.e. erect and a lump of wet moss is then bound around the wounded part. If you have not seen my “Cultivated Plants, their propagation and Improvement.” I shall be glad to send a copy for your kind acceptance.

I quite envy “Peter the Great” his sunbath in Spain while here on St. Valentine’s Day we were blowing our fingers and making ugly faces at “Jack Frost.” *N. cyclamineus* is a brave little chap nodding his head to everybody and he don’t seem to mind the cold a bit.

Faithfully yours,

F.W. Burbidge
“Rip van Winkle” is *N. minor* fl. pl. without a doubt—that is a double var. of the *N. minor* of modern gardens and not the “minor” of Redoute, or of the Alpes Maritimes.

I saw Brown’s so called seedling “double nanus” at the Nar. Conference, but I do not believe it is a double “nanus.”

You will want a section of Ajax to comprehend the sulphur colored kinds as distinct from the whites and the full yellows. Then you can pigeon hole “St. Brigid” *N. pallidus praecox* var. *N. Johnsoni* [sic] and other sulphur sorts like “Exquisite” etc. therein. It will never do to call the sulphur colored sorts whites. “St. Brigid” is quite different to “G. Jekyll” the bulb of the last var. being most delicate and that of St. B. a capital grower.

What you called *N. odorus minor* fl. pl. is really the double var. of *N. o. rugulosus* and is quite distinct in colour and leafage to *N. o. heminalis*. *N. heminalis* has darker blue green leaves and the flowers are of a richer yellow than in any
other var. of N. odorus. There are certainly two forms of N. o. rugulosus, a larger and a smaller.

Miss Agnes’ drawings were all sent back at your own request before you set out for Spain this year, and were acknowledged as received in King St.

The large paperwhite, bulbs of which you sent here for trial, is the larger N. papyraceus as figured by Moggridge in “Cont. to the Flora of Mentone” plate LXX. (You can see the book at Lovell Reeves who publishes it.) It flowers in December at Mentone. It is said to be very abundant at San Remo.

The old “totus albus” varieties are very variable, the best having flowers two inches across and 20 in a truss, and there are all variations between this and N. T. micrantha which bears 4-5 flowered scapes of flowers barely 1/2 inch diameter.

If this large flowered N. papyraceus can be obtained “true” as you sent it to me it will be a great improvement on the Dutch stock which is good, bad, and indifferent, i.e., mixed.

I wonder you keep on at what Haworth said. He said a good deal but I defy anyone to be certain of what he meant. Baker (see Bot. Mag. [?] 7012) thinks N. johnstonei [sic] may be the Oileus hexangulaus of Haworth, an opinion with which I cannot at present agree.

What novelties have you found? Any larger whites?

Faithfully yours,
F.W. Burbidge
Dear Mr. Barr,

Kindly let me see Miss Agnes' drawings of Narcissi made this spring and I will look through them and return them promptly.

Willie or Rudolph wrote for a specimen of a hybrid you sent me and I returned what I thought was it, but they said it was not the thing and sent it back to me. If Miss Agnes painted it, I shall no doubt be able to recognize the specimen if you mark the drawing and I will then send it back to you.

You really must come over to Ireland next spring and see our "Irish Daffodils," which flower a month earlier here than with you near London. "White Minor" (Irish) is a nice thing a little like Nelson's "nana albus" but a much stronger grower.

You may rest assured that N. odoratus plenus is the double form of N. o. rugulosus. I am now nearly sure that all our large white Ajax of gardens are...
cultivated forms or phases of the *N. moschatus* of Val d’Arras which is extremely variable. and becomes much taller and larger after a year or two of garden culture. *N. poeticus verbanus* [sic] (followed by division sign) is also quite growing out of character here being taller with larger flowers.

A batch of Da....? mixed Italian *poeticus* I saw in flower this spring were extremely interesting and variable. Some forms [*?] *N. p. poetarum* from Italy bloomed at Cork in March in open air.

What has become of Mr. Leo Maw?

I wrote to Dulan & Co. about the narcissus book and they seemed willing to entertain it, advising that I and Maw should join our forces, but this a big man like Maw might not like to do.

You do not tell me what new narcissi you found in your travels this year! What is *N. asturicus*?

Let me have the drawings for a day or two.

Faithfully yours,

F.W. Burbidge
Probably some of our readers may recollect having seen during the months of April and May last, whether in this capital or whether in some other part of the Province—traveling on foot and accompanied by a servant—a knight errant, whose strange attire attracted attention even among us, accustomed as we are to the eccentricities of dress peculiar to foreign tourists.

Very baggy knee-breeches, leggings of yellow leather and black boots adorned with great nails, a jacket after the fashion of a blouse, collarless, wide, crossed with multifarious pockets in every direction, confined by a belt, the whole of a grey tone matching the beard and hair of the owner, and a handsome and fine fur cap of the shape formerly worn by waggoners and even now occasionally met with in the mountains during the winter, constituted the attire of our personage, who, to a fair stature and natural elegance, added the special attraction of a smiling countenance, and particularly that of the intelligent glances of his blue eyes, incessantly moving behind their gold-rimmed spectacles. Field glasses and a multitude of pocket books, papers, and guides, peeping out of his innumerable pockets, completed his outward appearance.

Behind him respectfully marched his companion, a servant of as vulgar an aspect as can be found anywhere, carrying
rolled up under his arm the map of Asturias of the never to be forgotten Schuttz [?].

"Who are these two individuals?" asks the inquisitive reader.

The first is known in Asturias and Galicia as "the Englishman of the Narcissi," the second is a Frenchman, a native of Gavarnie in the Pyrenees, a soi-disant interpreter, whose chief characteristic is his knowing English hardly at all, Spanish even less, and his own mother-tongue only so far as the bad patois of the Landes and Western Pyrenees. So much for the Squire, who by the bye, seemed a stupid lout, better pleased to travel as a gentleman and get his daily wages than to remain at Gavarnie waiting to be employed as a guide by some one of the strangers who come to see the natural amphitheater formed by its mountains and which has made the place famous.

The Englishman's conversation justified the favorable opinion which—in spite of his dress—must surely have been formed by those who saw Mr. Peter Barr, for such is his name, and he inhabits No. 12 King Street, Covent Garden, in London.

Having once solved the only doubt which troubled him on beginning a conversation, namely, what language could his interlocutor understand, he began to talk to me in his own. Imagine to yourselves an express train, and you will be able to form some slight idea of it. It was absolutely impossible to follow him, and yet this was the least fatiguing part of the business. Having once explained the object he had in view, he began a torrent of questions, and a pulling out of note-books, and a jotting down in this place and in that, and requests for me to write down what he could not understand or what he could not spell in our language; and if by chance any matter, however out of the way, were touched upon, he instantly copied and made notes of it—and all this did not prevent his returning at once to the subject of
paramount importance to Mr. Barr at that period—namely—Narcissi!

"I leave London," he said. "I travel about for some months. I collect information and botanical, geological and mineralogical specimens; I divide them among the friends who devote themselves to each of these specialties, and after awhile, I begin again."

"And you do not take part in scientific review or publish some work?" asked I.

"I am thinking about it and will keep you informed," replied he.

Probably I should have forgotten the naturalist had I not received a letter from him a few days since.

Among other things he says, "Before leaving England I expected to find sulphur-colored Narcissi from Bordeaux to the borders of Asturias and Galicia, and thenceforward, following the coast line,—pale yellow and white ones. My explorations from Oviedo to Oporto have confirmed this expectation, as those between the first-named place and the French frontier had already done. I observed that the sulphur-colored present themselves invariably on chalky soils, disappearing on all others. On the other hand, on the Galician granite and hard rocks in general, only pale or white ones are to be seen. Climate cannot have produced this distinction; as to the soil on which they spontaneously grow, it was of the same character throughout, namely, the yellowish clay of the upland pastures; hence, not being able to account for the variety of color in Narcissi by the nature of the soil, are we to attribute it to the sub-soil?

If in your mountain excursions you could make observations and send me specimens, together with the name of the place, the nature and geological formation of the ground, you would not only do a personal service to myself, but to science as well."
Further on he adds, "At Busdongo the Narcissi are pale yellow, with sulphur and white or whitish petals on the hard rocks. At Villanin there are some of 'Sarminoso' color." (This word is quite unknown to me and I cannot find it in the dictionary; can it be a misprint for 'carminoso'—carmine tinted?) "After leaving Oviedo I took the high road along the coast, and at Tapia I saw the last sulphur specimens; at Vivero and Jubia I began to see the whitish kinds, and then they continued through Corunna, Vigo and Monforte as far as Oporto."

I remember that about twelve years since, I stumbled in Oviedo upon another naturalist, a German, who came all the way from Berlin for the sole purpose of confirming or rectifying some doubtful botanical data concerning a plant described in Wilkomm's Flora as occurring at Manjoza and near the fountain of Fozanalde. That I could understand, for an important work was in question, and I knew that in Berlin there are practical men capable of undertaking commissions of the kind. In Mr. Barr's work, however, I failed to see,—why deny the fact?—any scientific object whatsoever, and I looked upon it as a species of monomania. But I now suspect it to have a very real commercial importance, very much in keeping with the character of the sons of Albion; this idea is suggested to me by the recollection of something I have read recently, and by an article published by the said Mr. Barr in "The Pall-Mall Gazette" of the 23rd of last month, under the title, "The Price of Orchids."

If my memory does not play me false, Narcissi have recently been brought into fashion in England by politicians who employ them as emblems of a political group or party, and who wear in the coat...
buttonhole a Narcissus of a color previously agreed upon.

Hence, beyond all doubt, the necessity for procuring these flowers, and it is evident that their high price in the market is quite a sufficient motive for the English to move heaven and earth and to try to acclimatize and reproduce them in their own country. It is true that the sale of flowers, bulbs, etc., which goes on in the capital of the United Kingdom is something enormous: Mr. Henry Stevens bears witness to the fact that millions of orchids have passed through his hands, obtaining for instance the collection of Mr. John Day of Tottenham for the sum of £10,000 (or a million reales!!). In order to procure these plants all the countries of the world are laid under contributions, especially India and S. America.

The Narcissi are to be found in a more circumscribed area, but since precisely those which are most esteemed are to be found growing wild in Asturias and Galicia, and since we have no lack of persons who are fond of cultivating and propagating flowers, we recommend the subject to them; they may find it to their advantage to communicate with Mr. Barr, and also to devote a few days in April and May to gathering these flowers, being firmly persuaded that their time would not be thrown away.

Thus is it that the ancient naturalists, those true martyrs to science, who, at the cost of infinite suffering,—many perishing in the quest,—opened out new horizons to the Geographical botany of the world with no other stimulus than glory,—often in scant measure,—have come to be succeeded by these others more in harmony with our modern life. And while those enriched herbaries difficult to study and useful only to a limited number of persons, these, by encouraging the cultivation of plants, (which in every latitude constitute the best ornament of the earth,) in places where they may
best be admired, realize rich profits, but we cannot doubt that they likewise render a service to humanity, by teaching it more and more to know and admire the works of the Creator.
Dear Sir:

Very many thanks for your letter of the 19th duly received and for the specimen flowers of a semi-double var. of *N. tazetta*, something like “Double Roman” (*N. cypriss fl. pl.* of Haworth as figured {single form} in Sweets Fl. L...?, ii series). It is most interesting to me as being in all probability a wild double form and I should like one bulb at the, to you, most convenient season.

I was glad to see your writing for I had thought several times about you during this late dispute and wondered if you were inconvenienced thereby as I am afraid all English residents in Portugal have been more or less. I hope things are better now and that all may be settled in an amicable manner or losses to innocent individuals will be deplorable.

Our friend “Peter the Great” has at last removed from Tooting to Long Ditton near Hampton Court—alluvial soil on a dry and warm gravelly bottom,
Does the Merodon or “Narcissus Fly” trouble your cultivated bulbs in Oporto? It is bad here in hot summers.

With many thanks,

Faithfully yours,

F.W. Burbidge

whereon he hopes to grow his bulbs and delicate stock better than formerly.

This is the earliest season I ever remember. N. (Ajax) *minimus* open on New Year’s Day in open air and now N. *cyclamineus*, N. *bulbocodium* (of Portugal), N. *pallidus praecox* and N. Regina Margherita are in bloom also.

There is to be a four-day show and conference on *Narcissi* held by RIFTS at Chiswick on April 15, 16, 17, & 18th next and most of us are down for papers but I am quite disappointed not to see your name, as your papers from the native habitats of so many kinds are singularly interesting and I hope you will send a few notes at least on that occasion.

All our bulbs of “Double Roman” this year are cup double only v. my plate XXXIII, and not double in cup a permittis also as in pl. XXXIV, and I think the same bulbs may vary in this manner from year to year. The “old masters” figure both phases as if they were different plants. Does the merodon or narcissus fly “double pour culted bulbs in Oporto”? It is bad here in hot summers.

With many thanks,

Faithfully yours,

F.W. Burbidge
Dear Mr. Barr:

Thanks for the bulbs, which shall be duly planted as you direct, and progress shall be reported. I will not trouble you with a long letter, but will call your attention only to one point—as to the origin of *N. Leedsi*.

In your letter you say “it is doubtful whether Leeds & Backhouse had *N. montanus*.” There is no doubt whatever that Leeds both had the plant and worked with it.

In your catalogue you remark that *N. Leedsi elegans* is figured in “Gardeners Magazine of Botany.” Now Leeds in his notes, which were printed with the figure, expressly states that *N. montanus* crowns with both long & short tubed kinds. He also says he has seeds from
N. montanus crossed with pollen of N. P. angustifolius. And Leeds says in the same notes that he has “3 crops from N. montanus crossed with both long and short-tube kinds.”

He also says he has seedlings from N. bicolor crossed with N. montanus.

He calls N. montanus “Tros poculiformis” but there is no doubt but what he means montanus—indeed he sometimes calls it montanus.

I wonder you have not noticed the curious similarity in bulb between Leedsi type and montanus—the bulb is peculiar in both cases and the likeness unmistakable.

When I show you my flower from ornatusc x montanus you will see in a moment it is Leedsi—

My seedling like Stella came in a batch of seedlings labelled and recorded as “Early Ajax x poeticus.” In my first year or two I did not take such accurate trouble as I do now, but sowed seed more in mixed lots, and therefore cannot tell you the precise Ajax used. But the poeticus must have been angustifolius or ornatus. I never work with angustifolius now, but did at first.

Yours truly,
G.W. Engleheart
My Dear Mr. Tait:

Many thanks for the specimens you so kindly sent me on the 3rd of January which came quite safely and fresh as when they left you.

They look very like *N. papyraceus*, and are not *N. canariensis* of Herbert.

If you can send me *N. dubius* in flower at any time, I shall be glad to have a specimen.

Our friend Barr kindly sent me bulbs from near Nismes, but I cannot induce them to flower. It grows thereabouts on hills along with *N. juncifolius* which it indeed somewhat resembles in stature and tenuity. Herbert never saw this plant true, I feel sure.

*N. viridiflorus* is another narcissus that defies my attempts at culture. True I have flowered collected bulbs, but the flowers were inside them when they left their home in Spain.

Have you in your vineyards any variety or forms of vines with highly coloured foliage? I am trying to get up stock of a few of the best coloured leaves...
Ever since I saw the vines in Italy draping and festooning dwarfed olives and maples like the above sketch, I have felt how beautiful they would be grown for ornament alone in our climate where even Miller’s Burgundy only ripens once in ten years or so. Vilinorin tells me there are five or six vines that colour well in the French vineyards, including one—Tinturier, which I think you sent to Chiswick RHS gardens.

If you have cuttings or eyes to share of any vigorous kinds that colour well, I should be glad of them. We could starve them in old lime rubble and so get them to colour well, perhaps in this dull climate.

We are all going wild here now over Vitis Coignetiae (=V. rugosa = V. amurensis) a hardy Japanese vine that colours well, said to be a form of V. Labrusced.

Are any of the American cults. vars. of native vines any use to you in Portugal either as stocks for grafting V. vinifera upon, or as fruiting vines?

Wishing you health and prosperity during 1894.

Faithfully yours,
F.W. Burbidge
Dear Mr. Barr:

Kindly excuse my not having replied to yours of Jan. 25th before this date.

I am very glad to hear you are off to Majorca etc. in May. It is a little late for the rush of spring bulbs and things but better late than never.

Mrs. [?] Fanny Geoghegan who brought home the true Helleborus lividus told me that a Duc de ________? is boss of Majorca and he and his people know the flora well.

“Man wants but little here below” but the best of everything is quite good enough for me. Alas! I do not know what is best in the Balearic Isles, but you have eyes and will see what you will see, and scrape up the most worthy.

In any case see the Livid Hellebore at home, and tell us of its natural conditions, etc.

Sancho Panza in Don Quixote says “One thing is looked for, and another is found” and so you in tracking the Hellebore will see lots of things no doubt. P.B. always told me that he found the local apothecaries knew the botany of any district better than most people, so go in and ask for some triple peppermints, or anything, and then tap them
Where there's a will there's a way!! as the policeman said to the cook!

Joking apart, I hope you will have a good time and good luck among the flowers, etc. of the islands.

Yours ever faithfully,
F.W. Burbidge
Portuguese Narcissi

May 20, 1931

Dear Mr. Barr:

I am very glad to hear that you are so much better, your recovery is evidently only a question of time and fortunately you have the summer before you. I never heard of narcissus Miss Hutcheson, as you know there was one called Mrs. Buchanan but I do not know its parentage. The Baron's letters from your father and others regarding narcissus were sent to your firm I believe by the Baroneza. I used to have some very good pulchellus bulbs which were sent to the Baron by Mr. Wolley Dodd, the cup was pale cream—constricted at the edge—and the long perianth segments were deep primrose. They did not increase and they finally died of old age and a wet summer. *Pulchellus* is evidently rare in this country, much more so than the pale yellow *concolor*, the really gold *concolor* is also rare. *Concolor* is usually found in red (?) clay the color of Devonshire soil. I have never heard of *N. juncifolius* being found by any of my friends. In the Baron's notes on the narcissii of Portugal, he says that he has received specimens from E. Portugal of *N. jonquilloides*. He says that he has received a specimen from Southern Portugal of *N. gaditanus* that it is said to grow in Southern Portugal but that he had never visited the locality. Several varieties of *triandrus* x *bulbocodium* hybrids have been found lately where the two species grow together, in poor soil they are usually like the enclosed very bad painting; this year some fine ones were found on a mountain. I have lent my grid flower drier to the owner of the bulbs hoping that they may flower next year. The collection of pictures of varieties of *N. triandrus* consists of photographs—natural size—colored by hand. Unfortunately nothing will induce the owner to show them or copy them or to allow anyone else to do so. There does not seem to be any botanist here to whom one can apply for information. I am trying to find out the name of the Professor of Botany at Coimbra University. My brother's friend Dr. Henriques, a former Professor, was really interested in narcissus but some just go on with their routine work. I wish that I could have been of use to you. I am however too old to see about these things properly and can only collect odds and ends of information. Do not trouble to return the sketch of hybrids. With best wishes for your speedy recovery.

Yours sincerely,
Rosalie S. Vivian
Narcissus

List from *Flora de Portugal* by Antonio Xavier Pereira Coutinho

*Bulbocodium* and *nivalis*, Also *x pseudonarcissus N.* and *x triandrus*, *cyclamineus*, *gaditanus*, *intermedius*, *jonquilla*, *biflorus*, *odorus*, *tazetta*, *tazetta papyraceus*, *tazetta panizzianus*, *intermedius*, *triandrus*, *reflexus*, *serotinus*, *scaberula*, *scaberulus*, *minutiflorus*.

He does not mention *pulchellus* or *concolor*.

★★★
Dear Mr. Barr:

I am sending Simmonds a memorandum, on a separate sheet, of the spelling of Campernelle, so that he can hand it to Chittenden and the Council. Proper names in Italian can end in -ella or -elli, but cannot end in -elle.

Your account of my daffodil raising is pretty correct. I went to Appleshaw in 1881, having up to then lived in a small house with no garden in Leicester. For the first few years I worked at re-making the hybrids made by Herbert and Dötting, a few wild, in the Leeds, Backhouse and Nelson collections acquired by your father. When I showed a few flowers at RHS, and they attracted attention, I turned to the raising of garden flowers. I had also raised many interesting and pretty things by various crosses between the corbularias, triandrus, juncifolius, etc., but these proved “cold house” plants and too troublesome to keep. You may remember, for instance, that I reproduced triandrus pulchellus exactly by a cross juncifolius x triandrus.

I was always very bad at keeping notes, but I think Seagull and Albatross were the first flowers I showed at RHS. My first bit of strong red was Mars, brilliant but poor in form. Will Scarlet made a sensation for color. It came from a large form of muticus, collected by Mr. Wolley Dod, x poet. poetarum. My first good white Ajax was White Queen. Later on my White Emperor was the foundation of many of the present fine whites. I raised many batches from M.J. Berkeley x C.J. Backhouse. These were very early, tall and vigorous, mostly loose petalled, but running through a large range of yellows with
some reds. W. Ware bought most of these for early market bloom, but they perished by eelworm after his death. The poets were my chief interest: I worked all available forms into my strain—all that your father had, some red-eyed forms from the Pyrenees, collected and given me by Mr. Jas. Alter of Shepton Mallet, one or two from old gardens, etc. Horace was one of my first, *oration x poetarum*. Secrett has all these, but eelworm took a few very fine ones of my later raising.

I wish I had worked more with Maximus. I had several as good as or better than Magnificence, and Leak had from me one he calls Forerunner, earlier still. I lost many in the devastating first years of eelworm. Of recent years, with comparatively few plants, I have concentrated on whites and the pink coloring. Perhaps Easter Morn, which Secrett had from me, is the best example, but I should have some of advanced pink coloring in my unflowered seedlings.

I cannot say whether Leeds & Backhouse made second generation crosses, but they had time to make them. I have always supposed that they (or one of them) obtained Herbert's plants, but I failed in my hunt to ascertain what became of Herbert's material.

I raised the first garden hybrid of *triandrus*, Snowdrop, which still exists with Mr. J. C. Williams, untouched where it was planted some 35 years ago. And I suppose my Buttercup was the first garden hybrid of *jonquil*.

Mr. P. D. Williams has had a good [?J of this information from me: he also is writing for the new Year Book.

Yours sincerely, George Engleheart
October 12, 1933

Dear Mr. Barr:

Thank you for letting me see the "Sir Watkin" correspondence which I return. I never had much to do with the flower or its history; so far as I remember, someone, probably Mr. Wolley Dod, gave me a bulb or two on its first appearance, and I heard that Dicksons of Chester had bought it all, or as much as they could get, for 1200. I rather doubt this amount. It was not useful to me in my work, for I couldn't get it to seed and its pollen gave no results.

You should certainly write an article on it for the next Daffodil Year Book. I have told Chittenden that he will probably have some difficulty in getting contributions for it, as most of the specialists have already given their experience or knowledge.

Now as to the origin of Sir W. That Pickstone raised it is out of the question, and putting all the evidence together I am strongly of the belief that it was a flower of very ancient introduction into Wales. Take the parallel case of the white trumpet daffodils. These were recovered from old gardens in England and Ireland, nearly always near the sites of monasteries or other religious "houses." I myself obtained cernuus from an old garden in Amesbury, where there was once the famous abbey, and I got double cernuus from a spot still named "Chantrey" Copse in a Wiltshire wood, and the remains of a Chantrey or isolated chapel are still there. Wales was full in medieval times of monasteries etc., and it is quite probable that at the Dissolution under Henry VIII, when the sites lay desolate, the flowers cultivated by the monks still lingered and found their way into cottage and other gardens. The monks cultivated them chiefly for their medicinal uses, real or supposed, and you probably have heard that the Chartreuse liqueur is said to contain daffodil juices. Anyhow I am quite prepared to believe that nearly all the daffodils found in England, Wales, or Ireland by the earliest writers such as
Parkinson and other "herbalists" were importations in this way. I think it much more likely that Sir W. was a natural Spanish or Portuguese hybrid, say between Maximus or other large wild Ajax and poeticus, than that it originated as a cross made in England. I put Tenby out of consideration; it is too small and poor of constitution. As to Maximus, I think it is a truly wild form from the Spanish peninsula, because there is a chain of similar forms running from minor up to it. It was probably picked out as a striking flower and got into semi-cultivation where Mr. Wolley Dod found it.

We have to remember that no daffodil except *N. pseudonarcissus*, the Lent lily, is truly wild in Britain; all others were imported, first (most probably) by the religious orders, then from Holland when interest in them as garden flowers began.

It has been held by some that the Leek, the emblem of Wales, was really a daffodil, and it is much more probable that the emblem, as that of other countries, was a flower rather than a kind of "stinking" onion!

Yours sincerely,
George Engleheart

P.S. I had Maximus from Wolley Dod, from Trinity College, Dublin, and from Hartland. After some seasons with me all looked much alike. I crossed it with the early flowering kinds, spurius, H. Irving, etc. that I had from your father's lists. Magnificence and Forerunner came out of this, and I still have one here, fine color and early.