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About the Institute

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

Route 1 Box 24,
Pass Christian, Miss.,
6 April 1962

Mrs. M. S. Anthes,
123 Grandview Street,
Encinitas, California.

Dear Mrs. Anthes:

This is an intrusion and I do apologize, and then like the salesman at the door, keep right on!

My friend Mr. L. S. Hannibal of Fair Oaks, has told me that you have been in correspondence with him about his ideas re Soliel d'Or and its allies! This delights me, as here in the "deep south" we really should pay more attention to the tazettas and their progenies. I have had many for years here and have been buying as widely as possible of late but every so often there are reports of others who seem equally concerned and on that slender basis I am writing you.

I have from Mr. Hannibal, two of his special yellows which I hesitate to name, his compressa which he feels should be the type for all that pass as Grand Monarque and Mrs. Anderson has been good enough to let me have bulbs of the Bachmair and the one she had called Scilly Isles. This last is certainly "italicus" as I know it from European sources.

If you have samples of anything in this line that you would be willing to sell me, I should be even more in your debt than any money could repay. If this is entirely out of order, please do not tell me to go fly my kite! I inclose an addressed envelope to assist you!

Cordially,

B. Y. Morrison

m.

PS. I am not a dealer and do not intend to become one!

123 Grandview Street
Encinitas, California
18 July 1962

Dear Mr. Morrison:

When I mail this letter I shall mail you a box containing the following bulbs:

1 italicus type (Post Office)
1 Scilly White (from Gray)
1 Soleil d'Or type (Thanksgiving)
1 " " " (not-Red Guard)
1 " " "

Of the three types of Soleil d'Or, Thanksgiving is the most fertile and the not-Red Guard comes next. The ordinary one sets seed only occasionally.

For me the other two (Post Office and Scilly White) have not set seed.

This year I got 9 seeds from Grand Monarque x Forfar, none of which may be viable. They have shrunk badly which looks suspicious to me; however, I shall try again next year and perhaps I'll have better luck then. Considering that I pollinated only the one time, I'm quite pleased with the results.

I'd use poeticus pollen if I could—and would probably have more seeds to show for it—but I have wretched luck growing and blooming the poeticus tribe. To date I've not found the proper method for making them happy so that they always dwindle away in a few years.

And I have a few seeds of my very early paperwhite by poeticus pollen, p. praecox, which I had kept stored in the refrigerator from the season before. These seeds appear to be good. I certainly hope so for this would be a very attractive cross for southern California if I can manage it.

There were some other rather interesting crosses but at the moment I cannot remember exactly how they were made. I haven't removed the seeds yet from the drying trays and I can't quite remember what was hot news a few months ago!

If you'll plant Thanksgiving in a shady spot where the sun doesn't warm the soil, you should be able to have bloom in about 8 weeks from the time you give it its first watering. It is a very early one here. But of course here at any rate, all tazettas bloom by temperature and water. I suppose they do for you, too.

Best of luck in your gardening this year. Let us hope that this winter there will be no unseasonable freezes or floods!

Sincerely,

Mary H. Harker

Mrs. M. S. Anthes

what is the origin of the name of your town?

123 Grandview Street
Encinitas, California
17 March 1963

Dear Mr. Morrison:

All of the tazettas you sent me last fall have bloomed. Here is the report on their appearance:

compressa - Like the one I got from Alec Gray. Bloomed a bit later this year but may bloom earlier as it becomes acclimated.

"Miss Josie" - Similar to one I have grown for years that I got originally under the name of Grand Monarque, which of course it isn't. I have slides of all these tazettas, which I shall send you as soon as Hannibal returns 'em. You can compare for yourself!

odoratus - not at all like the one we grow here--at least this year. I have no slide of the California plant but will try to get one if possible. Ours looks very like canaliculatus, only taller.

White Pearl - Very much like the one I have as White Pearl. Seems to be the same thing--maybe just different clones.

In the box of slides I shall send you are six of a few tazetta seedlings with Thanksgiving as the seed parent, pollen parent unknown. Out of perhaps a dozen that bloomed this year only two were yellows. All the rest were white with a yellow cup. One of the yellows was a duplicate of Soleil; the other was deeper in colour and had a slightly ruffled cup. I have enclosed a picture of the different one.

Thought you, too, might be interested in the offspring from the supposedly sterile Soleil d'Or type. I didn't expect such an overwhelming number of whites in proportion to the yellows. Tho heaven only knows who the papas were! Next year there should be many more to bloom, and from the looks of the foliage of some of the seedlings some of the flowers should be quite different.

I've had a couple of jonquill hybrids bloom this year. Very like jonquilla but a much larger flower with wider parts. Rather attractive but nothing choice.

Incidentally, in the slides you will find a flower named "White Perfection". This is strictly my garden name for the clone and has no official standing. It appears to be similar to the Grand Primo group but fades to a clear white shortly after opening. The tazetta I call not-White Perfection is probably Grand Primo, or what do you think? I've never been able to get any bulb under that name. It seems to answer the description.

Did any of the bulbs I sent to you bloom? Or is it too early for bloom in your locality? I have made comparison slides of the various Soleils, if you haven't been able to see them in the flesh.

When you are finished looking at the slides, please return them as there are others I want to send them to.

Best wishes.

Mrs. M. S. Anthes
Mrs.

Mary Anthes

ans b/26/63

123 Grandview Street
Encinitas, California
22 June 1963

Dear Mr. Morrison:

Your letter just came and I shall sit right down and answer it before it grows moss. I know exactly what you mean when you say, "I have neither died nor absconded." I am so far behind with everything these days that once I put a letter in the URGENT--ANSWER IMMEDIATELY file it is likely to stay there for months.

The slides haven't come yet--probably will show up Monday--and without both numbers I can't be sure which is which, but in checking back thru my notebook, I'd say at a guess that the other flower with Soleil in the slide numbered 10 is Thanksgiving. My handwriting is wretched. I try to type everything so that people will know what I'm talking about!

The yellows did not take accurately, so that the too-yellow cup of Grand Monarque might be the same in Mississippi (Gad, what a name for a state!). I am still trying to find SOME film, or combination of film and filter, which will give yellow on the slide the same values that it has to the eye. No luck so far.

The name of not-White Perfection is one of my garden names. I have the two clones--one (White Perfection) that has the cup open very pale yellow and fade immediately to white; the other I call not-White Perfection and its cup holds the pale yellow color. The two flowers appear to be identical otherwise. I have thought that perhaps they were Grand Primo in a couple of its various forms but have not been able to get names on 'em.

Yes,, I believe your White Pearl and mineto be the same--just different clones.

Would you like a bulb of bertolonii? White Perfection, if I haven't sent it to you? Or anything else? It may be that I don't have it marked well enough to send, but if I know of your interest I promise faithfully to mark it next season and send you anything you'd like.

I shall be delighted to get the bulbs you are sending. Thank you so much. Barliae interests me greatly, as I have seen very few "different" whites. One of my friends raised Seventeen Sisters one year. As it bloomed here it looked like some seedling. Frankly, it is my opinion that most of the variants are merely seedlings--witness the appearance of my seedlings from Thanksgiving. Tho this bulb is probably not the same as the one you have as it was a so-called white--whiter than the not-White Perfection.

I have seen a tazetta that opens yellow and fades to white (perainth). Can't remember what name it was under. As I remember it was one of the larger flowered ones, too. About the size of Elvira.

On re-reading your letter--here, at least, the Grand Monarque-compressa group do not fade in the cup on opening. Nor do the China Lilies (Grand Emperor, etc.). The ones I suspect of being Grand Primo do fade, however. Come to think of it, the Grand Monarque group resembles the China Lilies quite a bit--more than they do Grand Primo. If I know what one IS Grand Primo!

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Let me suggest that you take up photography as your hobby and ease up on the gardening. During the time that I couldn't bend in the middle I decided to try my hand at picture taking, since it is much easier on an ailing frame, and I can wholeheartedly recommend it as a time-consuming, exasperating, perplexing, impracticable line of activity which is—to me, at any rate—a constant challenge. No picture is ever perfect. Each time I get the slides back from the processor I feel like kicking myself for the stupid things I've done. Tho perhaps you don't like trying to do the impossible. For me—c'est la vie!

For instance, today I've spent the better part of the day trying to take the anthers of *Leucojum autumnale* at about two or three times life-size so as to show how the anthers are formed. I had only one flower to work with and finally ended up mangling it so badly that I couldn't use it. My great big, clumsy hands! Of course, the whole thing would be a lot easier if I could see what I'm doing without a magnifying glass.

Another scape is on its way up so I have another chance. Hope I make the grade next time!

By the way, would you like any *L. autumnale*? I haven't had it very long and according to its name it hasn't any business blooming in June so I have no idea when it will go dormant, but it's bound to—sooner or later. Or is it like the rest of the leucojums—very upset as to the calendar, name-wise? I really know nothing of the leucojums. I've bought *vernum* and *aestivum* and they both turned out to be the same thing—several flowers to the head and spring blooming. That would make 'em *aestivum*, wouldn't it? Or would it?

I haven't offered you plant material heretofore, as I thought you probably had enough to do, but I have lots of some things that I shall have to toss out. Would you like any *Ismene narcissiflora*, *Chlidanthus fragrans*, *Pancreatium maritimum*, *Nerine filifolia*, *N. undulata*, *N. Pink Triumph*, *Habranthus robustus*, *H. brachyandrus*, *H. taxanus*, *H. andersonii*, many species *zephyranthes*, *Sprekelia formosissima* var. *superba*, which is evergreen, and another species ^{*Sprekelia*} collected from South America that goes dormant, *Moraea polystachya*, *Achimenes longiflora* major. And probably other things that I can't remember at the moment.

Well, it seems I'm down to just chattering. You are probably busy as the dickens and haven't time to listen while I go on and on. Do let me know if there's anything in the way of plant material that I have that you'd like.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Theophrastus', written in a cursive style.

Mrs. M. S. Anthes

123 Grandview Street
Encinitas, California
15 April 1963

Dear Mr. Morrison:

I've been waiting to hear what you had to say about the slides I sent before offering to send any more. I took a few of the yellow tazettas, tho the color was far from accurate and I'm not proud of the slides. They do, however, show the difference in size, etc. if you are interested in 'em.

I know what you mean about the weather. It really got cold here--froze a lot of the shrubs and apparently killed them. I've been waiting to prune, hoping that some of them will come out of it but I'm afraid that the *Grevillea thelemanniana* is a goner--and I had a particularly nice specimen, too. The princess flower (*Tibouchina elegans*) appears to be more hardy than the hibiscus. Funny, isn' it? I'd have thought that it would be the other way 'round.

From what Hannibal has inferred, I'd guess that my not-White Perfection was Grand Primo. The one I have similar to Miss Josie is quite prevalent here in southern California--perhaps it is some seedling or other which has been grown because of its vigor.

Incidentally, both my clone of *compressa* and the one which you sent me this year set some seed. As I remember it, only a pod or two apiece but the will is there and perhaps some other year (and with some attention) we could investigate their breeding possibilities.

My own time this season has been very much taken up with getting one of our houses ready to move out of. The accumulated junk of twenty years has had to be sorted, labeled, packed, etc. and as a result I haven't paid much attention to the flowers. There ought to be a law requiring everyone to clean out storage spots every five years or so, don't you think? Of course, everyone in the family has the instincts of a junk dealer, and even now, with the move breathing down the backs of our necks, various pretties are too precious to throw away. Phooey on the entire human race!

The *odoratus* you sent me and the form we have here are not like the Chinese Sacred that we grow. Our form is strictly a larger *canaliculatus*--tallee, I mean. Your clone has the small foliage of *canaliculatus* but the flower differed as you could see from the slide. Next year, tho, it may be the same as ours--flowers often vary more than that the first year down here. Of course, it is loaded with seed.

Obviously I'm too sleepy to type or spell. Guess I'd better wrap this up while I can still make it. Let me know if you are intersted in seeing the other slides.

Sincerely,

Maryne Antero

Mrs. M. S. Anthes

There must be other things. I just can't think of them at this instant.

Frankly, I've worked out in the yard today till I'm stupid. Some time ago I hurt my back; nowadays I do vigorous garden work only when my conscience hurts worse than my back. It did today. It doesn't now. Tomorrow I shall wrap my conscience in moth-balls and sit in the house and nurse my infirmities!

Would you like to have me send you pollen next fall? I probably have an earlier season for the tazettas than you: the small paperwhite starts to bloom about the middle of September to the first of October; Thanksgiving begins from the first to the middle of October; etc. Don't know when the autumn flowering ones will bloom--last year was their first season for me.

I so much enjoyed hearing from you. The tazettas have always been favorites of mine. If there is any way in which I can assist you, please feel free to call on me.

Sincerely,

Margie Anthes

Mrs. M. S. Anthes

123 Grandview Street
Encinitas, California, 92024
2 July 1963

Dear Mr. Morrison:

I have as much trouble with your handwriting as you have with mine. I can't tell whether you want me to send you those bulbs or not. There's nothing rare about any of 'em but bertolonii, and you could pass that on to someone else when you are thru with it, rather than send it back to me.

Or did I misunderstand you?

Also, I just remembered Habranthus juncifolius. Do you have that one? I could send you a bulb tho I'm not sure it would bloom. I raised a batch of seedlings, some of which have bloomed and some of which haven't. I suspect that the ones that haven't may be of the type that never will bloom and I haven't marked them in any way so cannot pick intelligently.

The H. barchyandrus is the small one. The big one I cannot get to grow here, tho I raise a pot of seedlings every year. They do fine in the pot and then die off when planted out. The big one came directly from Brasil and is at least twice as large in all respects except for the foliage. I really don't like it as well--it looks sort of overweight and blowsy--but until I can get it to grow, it is choice in my eyes!

The bulbs came yesterday. Thanks a lot. I shall be very much interested to see the flowers and to see if they differ from the ones grown here.

And I'm VERY much interested in the all yellow from Ruby, S.C.

Have you ever heard of a double paperwhite? Several years ago a salesman from one of the Holland bulb firms got lost on his way to see me, took the wrong turning and ended up somewhere out in the tules. As he was turning his car around at the dead-end road, he saw what he believed to be a double paperwhite. He told me about it, saying that he considered digging it up but that he had no shovel in the car and that furthermore he couldn't decide whom to ask permission of, since no house was near. He felt that it would not be wise for him to be picked up by the police for stealing flowers when he was in this country as a guest and in addition didn't speak the language very well.

Well, shucks, I'm no guest; I speak English very well; and I have lots of shovels! So he gave me directions for finding the spot, but apparently he WAS lost--completely--as I couldn't locate the area at all. I drove around for ages, casing all the obscure spots within a 10 mile radius but finally had to give up.

Now ordinarily I'd pay no mind to the report of a double paperwhite, but this man was in the narcissus business and ought to know what he'd seen. (So many people really don't LOOK at things, don't you find? They see what they expect to see.)

I'm still hunting for a double paperwhite!

As to our tazettas being seedlings, perhaps I haven't made myself clear. I did not mean to imply that the farm ladies, themselves, raised the seedlings (tho in California that is a distinct possibility) but that the bulbs they originally planted were hybrids.

It is my understanding that the tazettas we raise in this country came originally from the Mediterranean countries. Since the climate in southern California is very much like that of their native land, it seems to me that gardeners would treat them much the same here and that the plants would respond in a similar manner.

Once tazettas are planted here, they are never moved. They are likely to stay down 10, 15, or 20 years in one spot. Since they seed like crazy and the seedlings bloom in short order, it is likely that the most vigorous seedlings would take over the clumps. And while the flowers are not identical to the parent plants, they vary—often—only slightly so that the imposition might not be detected.

I have had paperwhite bloom the second year from seed and Soleil the third. Assuming that the clump is established, the seeds can fall down to the holes left by the dying foliage, germinate, and grow on till either the parent plant crowds them out or vice versa.

If this hypothesis be true, then the English and Dutch, collecting from the Mediterranean area, would have brought back the most distinctive clones and have given them names. Since the climate in England and Holland is far from optimum for tazettas, the fact that the plants wouldn't breed true from seed would not be discovered. To my mind, that is the most important factor—species MUST be raisable from seed.

In fact, the climate of England is so wretched—tazetta-wise— that the English were delighted when they could get bloom at all, and seeding was something else again. I am always amused at the 6-year interval allowed by the English for the maturing of tazetta seedlings.

This idea isn't so outrageous as it sounds at first hearing. The regular narcissus (named daffs) seed so vigorously here that I feel it unwise to leave my daff planting unmoved for over three years. Since the seeds are round and round and round. Oh, phooey! My typing!!!! Now, again. Since the seeds are round and roll easily, volunteers are constantly coming up out of the same hole that the named variety is planted in. If I let them get too big or if I plant every bulb, including the little ones, in no time at all I'd have a real mess on my hands.

All of which makes narcissus collecting something of a chore. One runs out of room in short order. I have about decided to grow only two or three varieties of each of Classes I, II, and III and cast out all the others. Only trouble is that I'm very fond of the red-cupped 2a's and how can I do without Nirvana, Polmesk, Stoke, Dreamlight, Fairy Tale, Silver Salver, etc.? So to date I have merely toyed with the idea. I am waiting to see if masterly inactivity will solve my problem for me.

Had a most interesting seedling open this morning. Several years ago, amongst a batch of bulbs received from Argentina, were three bulbs which I assume to be rhodo-^{flowered} phialas, as their leaf-growth habits are identical. Two of the bulbs were pink, one white. None of the bulbs has ever increased for me but of course I selfed the flowers and hoped for the best. This morning an F₁ seedling of the pink opened, apparently identical to its parent. Which would make it a species if the other seedlings follow suit. Am enclosing some slides. They are remarkably true as to color. Also received an interesting brick red rhodo in the same lot, and this is definitely a rhodo. Earlier than bifida or spathacea and bigger. Would you like one of these or do you grow the rhodos?

Sincerely,
Maryne Antles