

Articles on Engleheart's daffodils



32 New Daffodils

Horace and King Alfred

It is a most opportune arrangement that bulbs for the spring should be planted in the autumn; that just when the evenings grow cold and cheerless there is a bulb catalogue to hand, with its vision of new life and beauty.

The dreary dankness we have just drawn the curtains to hide becomes a host of waving daffodils, and if we sit down by the fire with the Royal Horticultural Society's Daffodil Year Book we shall find there more daffodils than ever we dreamed of. To the 6,000 varieties on the official list, 32 new ones were added by August this year.

Their history is told in this handbook. Here, for instance, is the story of *Horace*, whose creator, the Rev George H Engleheart, is responsible for many of our most beautiful daffodils. He has lived to see *Horace* and the others sell in their tens of thousands, and he is now 82.

Mr John Kendall, on the contrary, who raised the very popular trumpet daffodil known as King Alfred, died without having seen it bloom.

(The Children's Newspaper October 14, 1933)

Excerpt from 1936 Daffodil Yearbook

Development of the Narcissus During the 19th Century

– A Review by Violet Niles Walker

Every item dealing with the evolution of the modern daffodil is a story of absorbing interest. Probably no flower has ever undergone such radical changes in development of form and colour over so comparatively short a period, as has been accomplished in the case of the daffodil.

The greatest of this group, and indeed of succeeding groups, for he is still living, is the Rev. George Herbert Engleheart. To him we owe such fine garden varieties as *Sea Gull*, *Oriflamme*, *Horace*, *Albatross*, *White Queen*, *Beacon Laureate*, *Will Scarlett*, etc. And few, even among latest triumphs, can outclass the giant *Leedsii Tenedos* or the White Trumpet *Beersheba*. *White Rose*, a pure white double daffodil is looked upon by many as his finest achievement.

The late Mr P. D. Williams very truly said that "Engleheart developed the daffodil to the high standard that exists today".

The Gardening Parsons of England

Extract

The Rev John Lawrence says in his introduction to *The Clergyman's Recreation*: "There are some sports and exercises not suitable to a divine soul - so gardening is a very agreeable and commendable recreation. I thank God this sort of diversion has tended very much to the ease and quiet of my own mind; and the retirement I find therein has helped me to set forward many useful thoughts upon Heavenly subjects. I cannot but encourage and invite my Reverend Bretheren to the love of a Garden, having myself reaped so much fruit from it – both in a figurative and literal sense."

Let us take a casual glance into the lives of some of these men who, not content with being super peasants, became outstanding leaders in horticulture and botany.

At the same time they were true to their Christian calling, attending to the needs of their parishioners in every way, visiting the infirm and fighting for the tights of the downtrodden.

..... So down to more recent times we have to thank the Rev George Engleheart, Rector of Dinton, who in the past 20 years has been awarded no fewer than 48 prizes by the Royal Horticultural Society for his narcissus creations – such as well loved names as *Firebrand*, *Beason*, *Oriflame*, *Will Scarlett*, and *Horace*.

(The Times, (London, England) Wednesday, Feb 12, 1964 pg. 12)

Flowers of the field

Extract from Annie Bullen

Wiltshire VIEW January 2011 (pages 44-45)

Annie Bullen sings the praises of the vicar who bred a beautiful daffodil then named it after the scene of a bloody battle near Jerusalem.

January and February are the months we gardeners try to skip over lightly, the cold buffers between winter and the lengthening days of spring; the months that dreams are made in. And in the spirit of skipping on lightly and dreaming, I make no apology for thinking ahead to daffodils in general and one most beautiful daffodil in particular, that was bred by an Anglican priest who spent his life in Hampshire and Wiltshire.

Daffodil experts and enthusiasts know that the top award at the RHS daffodil show every year is the Engleheart Cup, awarded for the best dozen daffodil cultivars raised from seed. It is awarded in honour of the Reverend George Herbert Engleheart who lived in the Hampshire village of Appleshaw before retiring to Dinton, where he was known as the "daffodil maker", in 1902. I don't know what his sermons were like, but over 50 years he bred more than 275 most glorious daffodils.

Of these, the particular favourite daffodil in my mind is the oddly named '*Beersheba*', developed in 1923 when the Rev Engleheart was in his early sixties. Some say that when this creamy whit daffodil, with its long slightly flared and crimped trumpet was bred, its creator named it for Beersheba near Jerusalem, where a bloody battle was fought in 1917 during the First World War. He might have ministered to war victims injured in that campaign. Whatever the reason for its naming, it is a daffodil that has survived – plants are still to be



found in Appleshaw gardens and in the fields and woods near his Dinton home, Little Clarendon, now owned by the National Trust. And this year there is a move in Appleshaw to make *Beersheba* more of a feature in the village, in tribute to its creator who was awarded the Victoria Medal of Honour in 1900 by the Royal Horticultural Society for his work. Another RHS honour, the Veitch Memorial Medal, was given to him in 1926.

Althea Shapiro, chairman of the village flower and produce show committee is also organising the annual plant sale at Appleshaw on Easter Sunday, 23 April. She is hoping to use the money raised not only for the church restoration, but also to buy in *Beersheba* bulbs for distribution in the village.

'George Engleheart was hugely important in the daffodil breeding world,' she says. 'He lived at Rosehill here in the village and that garden and a few others, including the manor, have clumps of *Beersheba* daffodils. We should be proud that we have this distinguished plant breeder as part of our village history, which is why we are trying to make everyone aware of the beauty of the daffodils that he produced.'

Other daffodils bred by George Engleheart, who was born in 1851 and died in 1936, include '*Bath's Flame*', '*Seagull*', '*White Lady*' and '*Actaea*', the latter one of the many *Narcissus poeticus* hybrids that he developed. These and many other Engleheart cultivars are still available from specialist bulb suppliers.

Every village in Hampshire's Test Valley owns a tapestry panel showing the life and history of the parish. Prominent in the bottom right hand corner of Appleshaw's panel is a finely worked group of white Beersheba daffodils.

Appleshaw, Redenham and Clanville News

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Daffodils

As we come to the end of the summer fruits and vegetables in our gardens and allotments, it is time to start thinking of autumn planting, and I would like to remind you that this year marks the 75th anniversary of the death of Rev George Engleheart. He was born in 1851 and lived for a few years at Rosehill, Appleshaw, before retiring to Dinton. During his lifetime he bred more than 275 varieties of daffodils and became known as "the daffodil maker". In addition, in honour of him and his achievements, the top award at the R.H.S. Daffodil Show is the Engleheart Cup. There are still some of his cultivars in the gardens around Appleshaw but the Flower Show committee thought it would be nice to plant some of his most famous (*Beersheba*, *Albatross*, *Baths Flame*, *White Lady* and *Lady Margaret Boscawen*) around Appleshaw, Redenham and Clanville in memory of this remarkable man. Money raised by the Plant Sale, which was originally the Daffodil and Spring Flower Show (started in 1931 by the Rev Engleheart's niece), will be used to purchase 300 daffodils from Ron Scamp in Cornwall – a many times gold medal winner at The Chelsea Flower Show.



Australian Newspaper reports on “Engleheart”

The Flower Garden by “Viburnum”

Extract

Poetas Narcissi.

Although wonderful progress has been made in the world of daffodils during the past ten or fifteen years, there has been no more important or far-reaching break than that obtained by the Rev. G. H. Engleheart when he successfully crossed *Poeticus ornatus* with the best forms of *Narcissus tazetta*, of which *Paper White* and *Grand Monarque* are, perhaps, the best-known examples. The result of this cross was an important race of Narcissi with the hardiness and fragrance of *ornatus* and the free flowering properties of the Tazetta type.

Narcissus Brighteye.

This beautiful Narcissus, which was so well shown by Robert Sydenham, Limited, on several occasions last year, belongs to the *Poeticus* section, and as its name implies has a particularly bright yellow eye, with bright orange edging. The petals are broad and of good substance, overlapping well, so as to form a symmetrical flower of great beauty. It measures 3 1/8 inches in diameter. This variety, in common with many other excellent new sorts, was raised by the Rev. G. H. Engleheart.

(The Mercury (Hobart, Tasmania : 1860-1954) Wednesday, 10th January, 1934 (Page 4))

The Doyen

The doyen of the cult is the Rev. George H. Engleheart, now 82, and with an impressive number of our most beautiful daffodils to his name as their creator.

A statement showing how great and far-reaching was the work done by him is told by Major Arthur Dorrien-Smith, of Tresco, Scilly. Engleheart created the daffodil *Horace*.

Horace reached the zenith of its fame in the flower market, and in general popularity, in 1919, when on April 16, 11,718 bunches were sent from these gardens to Covent Garden. George Munro returned a cheque for the consignment of £811 7s.

Mr P.D. Williams, the great Cornish grower, gives point to this by adding: “Now *Horace* was first shown in 1907, and I remember seeing the stock, of about 10 bulbs, growing with Engleheart that year. Major Dorrien-Smith (in 1919) owned only a portion of the whole stock”

(Western Mail (Perth, WA : 1885-1954) Friday, 27th March, 1914 (Page 12))

