Marking Moments

Your newsletter from the
M&S Archive

Summer 2024

Summer is the time to get out in the garden, mowing the grass and weeding the borders.

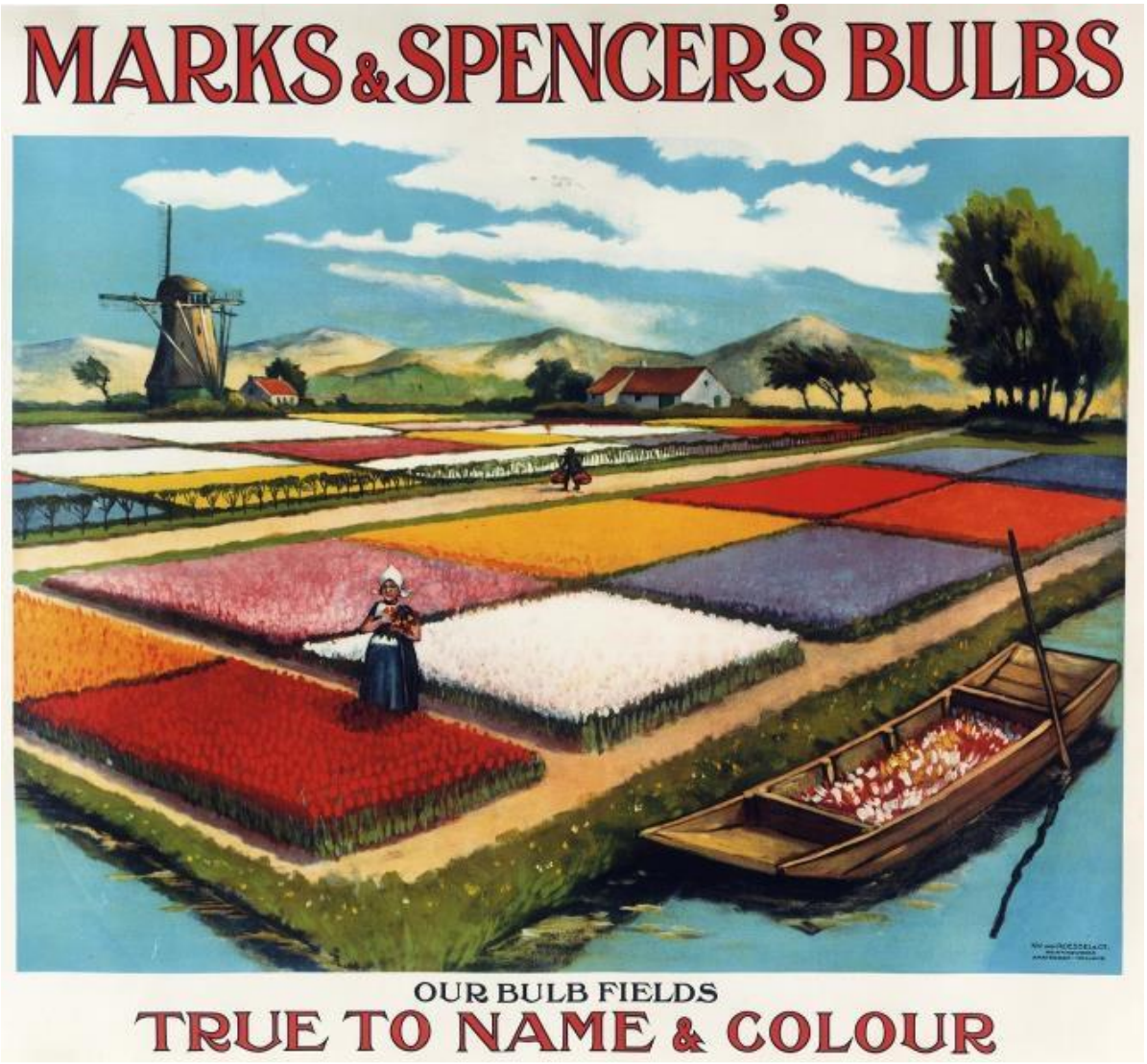
In this issue we take a look at gardening, flowers and the colours of summer.

2-9 **From the Archive** – Gardening related images through the years

10-15 **Have a Go** – Activities for you to try at home



The M&S garden at the Chelsea Flower Show, 2018



Shop sign, 1920s

In the 1920s M&S sold a wide variety of garden bulbs. This colourful sign shows a Dutch tulip field, it was hung in the shop to show customers where the bulbs came from. Customers could also buy grass seed for 3d per pound.

- What is your favourite flower?
- Have you ever visited the tulip fields in the Netherlands?



Shop display, 1920s

So many bulbs to choose from! This counter in a branch of M&S in the 1920s is piled high with bulbs. Each section has a sign giving the name of the flower and the price – some are 3d each, others are three for 1d. At the end of the counter are paper bags of grass seed ready for customers to pick up.

- Have you ever worked in a shop?
- Apart from bulbs and seeds, what else can you spot for sale?



The Garden Beautiful

can be made with

Marks & Spencer's Wonder Selection of

BRITISH AND DUTCH GROWN

BULBS AND ROOTS

IS THIS A RECORD?

Gladioli (large selection of colours and varieties), Anemones, Begonias, Lily of the Valley, Lilies (various) Dahlias, Peonies, Tritoma Delphinium, Phlox Iris, Hollyhocks Lupins, Spirea

TRUE TO NAME AND COLOUR

ON SALE EARLY IN JANUARY AT REMARKABLY LOW PRICES

GUIDES FOR GROWING GIVEN FREE

A TESTIMONIAL

Breckan-Brae,
7, Canberra Road,
Bexley Heath, Kent.
14.9.32.

Messrs. Marks & Spencer, Ltd.

Gentlemen,—

I thought that you might be interested in the enclosed snaps of remarkable sized gladioli grown this year in my garden at the above address.

The gladioli, which are pure white, were purchased with number of others, which are also of fine size, as bulbs from your Powis Street Shop, Woolwich, early last season and were placed in soil not previously cultivated, for some years at least. No fertiliser was used.

As you will see it is only about one inch short of 5 feet in height and has borne numerous blooms. I do not know the price paid but they were very cheap.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) S. C. Benton.

Copy of Prize Certificate.

CHARLTON KINGS
Horticultural & Poultry Show
Monday, Aug. 1st, 1932

FIRST PRIZE

Class No. 31 Pen No. 67
For 6 Vases Gladioli, 3 Spikes in each Vase
Awarded to Mr. S. C. Benton
D. T. HOOPER, Hon. Sec.

These Gladioli were purchased at
MARKS and SPENCER'S Store
(Cheltenham Branch)

Advert for bulbs, 1932

This advert for bulbs was printed in an M&S customer magazine in 1932. The advert features a letter from Mr Benton who bought gladioli bulbs at M&S - he won first prize at his village show after the plants reached five feet high!

- Have you ever entered anything in a village show?
- Have you ever won a prize?

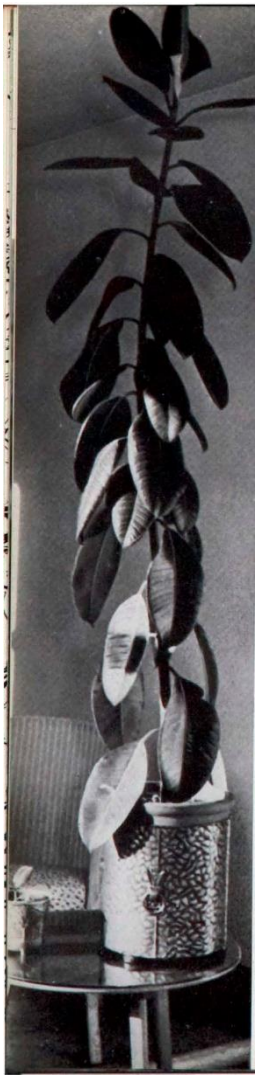


Apron, c1960

A wheelbarrow full of flowers decorates the front of this apron. The white panel creates a large pocket – perfect for keeping the essentials in! In 1955 aprons at M&S cost between 4s 11d and 7s 11d, and were promoted as ideal Christmas presents.

- Would anyone in your family have worn an apron like this?
- What would you keep in the pocket of this apron?





Bromley's Rubber Plant, 1960s

This huge rubber plant lived in the staff room at the M&S Bromley store in the 1960s. Elsie, the store cleaner dusted the plant's leaves every day, and made sure it was well watered. It grew to such a height that it was featured in a staff magazine in 1962, Sales Assistants joked about cutting a hole in the ceiling so the plant could keep growing!

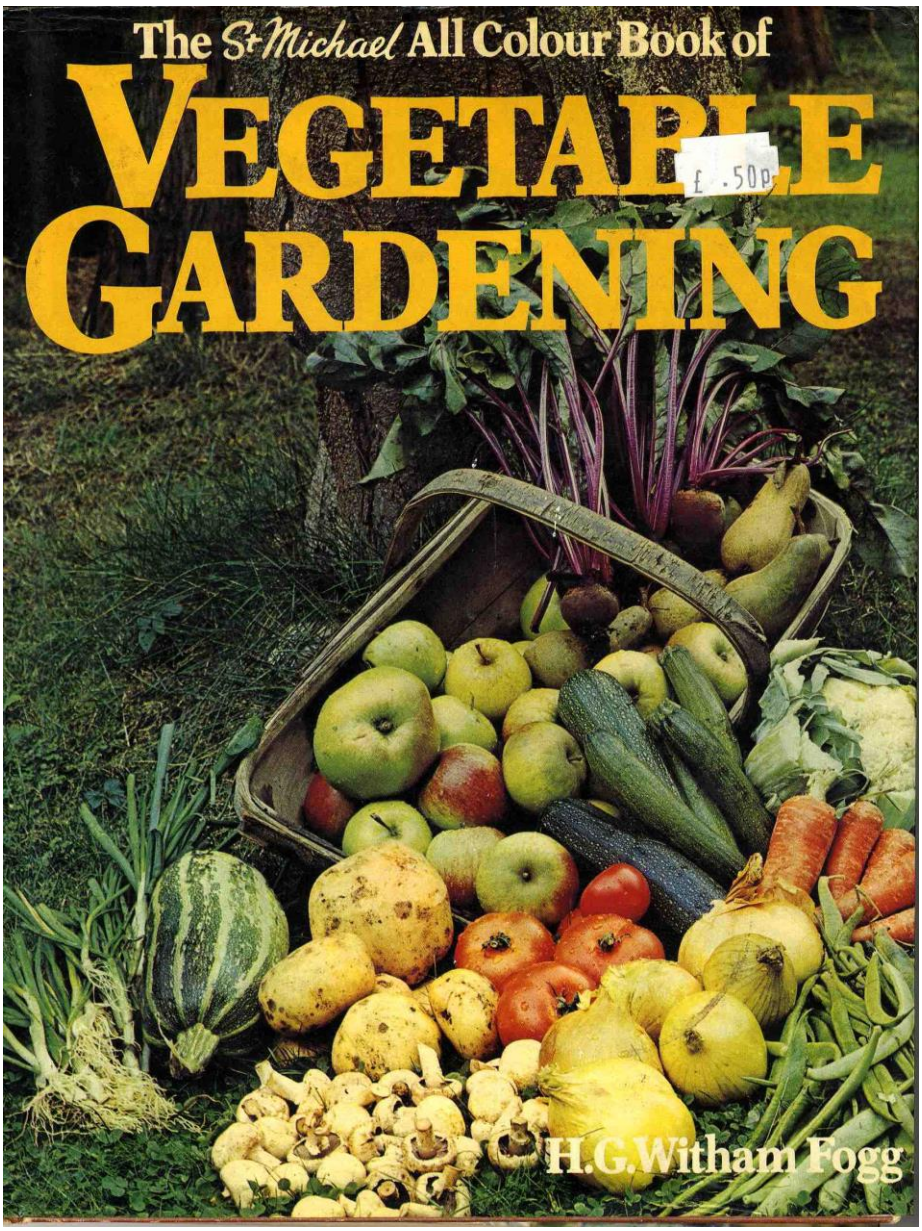
- Do you have a favourite houseplant?
- The plant lived in the M&S staff room – what was your first place of work?



Bulb packaging, 1980s

This packet of 100 bulbs was sold at M&S in the 1980s. It would have been sold in the Autumn as customers would need to plant the bulbs before the first frost.

- Can you think of any flowers that are out at the moment?
- Which is your favourite time of year? Do you prefer the Spring flowers? Or perhaps Autumn leaves?



Vegetable Gardening, 1980s

Books on gardening, cookery and DIY were bestsellers at M&S in the 1980s. This book gives instructions on when to plant different vegetables and how to harvest them. People who bought the book may have had their own garden, or an allotment.

- Have you ever grown your own vegetables?
- What are your favourite fruit and vegetables to eat?



Chelsea Flower Show, 2018

This photo shows the M&S stand at the Chelsea Flower Show. The display was inspired by flower markets at Columbia Road and Borough Market in London. The garden featured tulips, scented stocks, hydrangea, peonies and sunflowers and won a Gold Award.

- Have you ever been to the Chelsea Flower Show?

Have a Go... Quiz

Find the answers to these gardening themed questions on the next page

1. Can you name the herbs in the popular song ‘Scarborough Fair’?
2. The RHS holds a flower show at Tatton Park, which is in what county?
3. What colour rose is associated with Yorkshire?
4. What is the name for the art of sculpting hedges?
5. Complete these butterfly names:
    - Red _____
    - Cabbage _____
    - _____ Lady
6. A dibber is useful for what?
7. Which flower do you most associate with the Netherlands?
8. The spice saffron comes from which flower?
9. Often called England's greatest gardener, what was Capability Brown's given first name?
10. Geoff Hamilton and Alan Titchmarsh have been presenters on which television programme?

Have a Go... Quiz

Answers

1. Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme
2. Cheshire
3. White
4. Topiary
5. Red Admiral, Cabbage White, Painted Lady
6. Making a hole in the ground for planting seeds, seedlings or bulbs
7. Tulip
8. Crocus
9. Lancelot
10. Gardeners' World

Have a Go... Arranging flowers

Pick your favourite vase from this page, cut it out and stick on to a piece of paper or card, leaving room for flowers. On the next page you'll find some flowers to fill your vase with.





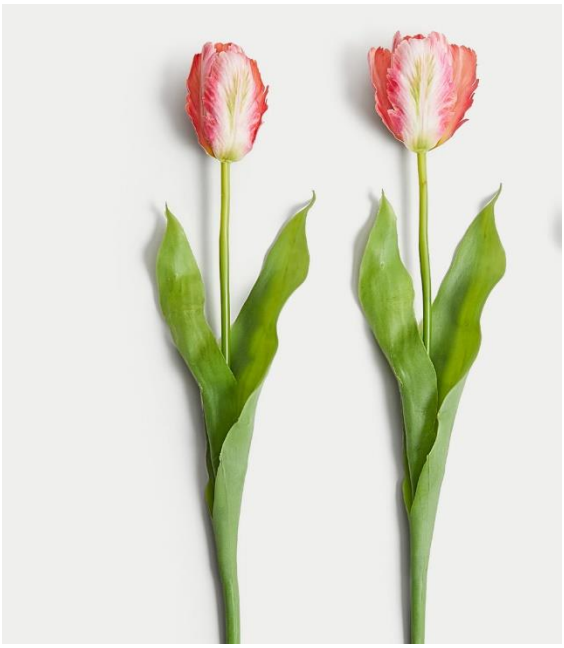




Have a Go... Arranging flowers

Choose your favourite flowers to fill your vase with.









Have a Go... Arranging flowers

Choose your favourite flowers to fill your vase with.









Have a Go... Wordsearch

Find as many of the gardening words below as you can. Don't forget, the words might go diagonally, or even backwards!

D K N N A A C K C Z M H D W H F F Q
E R E J S B R V Y M F U E P O R D Q
F E B B I M I J W P B Z L W U E L A
Y R Y J R O S E M A R Y P E S E C L
H A C O R N F L O W E R H E E S U L
D A F F O D I L S G Q Z I D P I T O
X R P Z L S G S E E D S N I L A T T
V O H E G P T L E C D S I N A O I M
N B I E O S W W Z J Y E U G N G N E
X I E L W N T R O W E L M Q T B G N
Q N G H I K Y X W O R M S G S I E T
B V E Y T P H O E H O S E P I P E R

Allotment
Cornflower
Cutting
Daffodils
Delphinium
Freesia
Hoe
Hosepipe
Houseplants
Peony
Robin
Rosemary
Seeds
Trowel
Weeding
Worms