



*Exotic blossoms in the University's horticulture greenhouses include the lady's slipper held by Professor James E. Smith, Jr., the large popular showy orchids, and the small Hawaiian-type orchids.*

## Orchids go to college

By Vivian Hansbrough

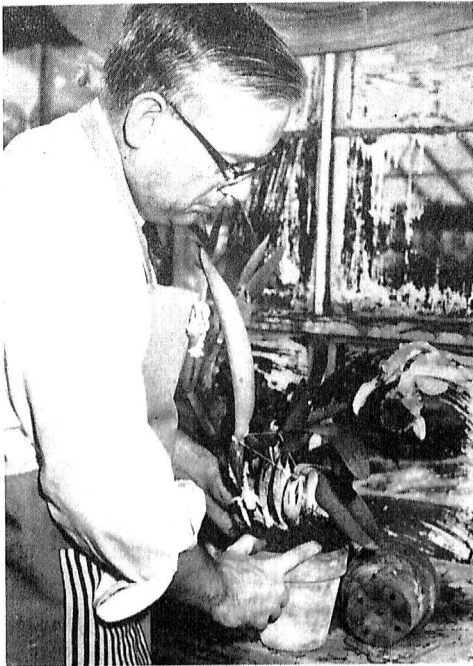
Professor James E. Smith has pets, and none of his pupils object. In fact, his students do most of the caring for his 350 pet orchids, growing in the horticulture greenhouse. Prospective florists learn the habits and vagaries of the delicately beautiful tropical plants in the greenhouse, where the temperature is kept from 62° to 65°, and where overhead pipes intermittently spray moisture into the air to maintain high humidity.

"This pot of small plants is called a community pot," Professor Smith explains. "It was potted in 1954, but the seeds came from a cross made by a student in 1949. So actually these little plants are 10

years old. When the growth becomes crowded, we separate the plants and put them in individual pots." He moves on to the next pot, and puts a hand behind a bulging bud.

On another table are several ambitious plants whose roots hang outside. "Just like my children, always running around barefoot," says Mr. Smith. Orchids like to hang their roots out in the open air, but they should be confined within pots for easier watering. When roots overhang, it is time to repot.

Each plant has two main sections, the back bulb and the lead. Carefully breaking the sections apart, Mr. Smith demonstrates repotting. The standard or-

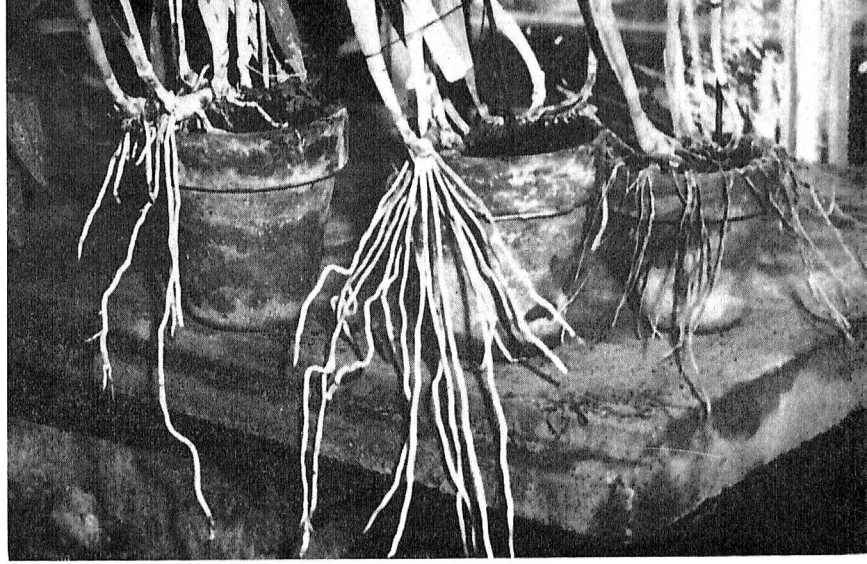


*Prof. Smith repots an orchid in the standard orchid pot with five holes for ventilation and drainage. He pulls the plant back against one side of the pot, and surrounds its roots with swamp fern root.*

*The "community pot" on left contains several young orchid plants, which will be separated and placed in individual pots like the one at right. Notice the bud, which is almost ready to open.*

chid pot has five holes in the bottom for ventilation and drainage. Roots of a swamp fern (*Osmunda*) make the best potting material, because they are loose enough to allow room for air and water, they take in water from the air, and they are resistant to decay. However, these fern roots are so tough that they are difficult to cut apart with shears. Pulling the lead plant back against the edge of the pot, Professor Smith fits fern root around the leggy roots of the orchid, and adds a generous drink of water. The blooming process will go on, with no setback because of the repotting.

Once a part of a plant blooms, it will not bloom again, but it will project two swellings, or shoot buds,



*Orchids like to hang their roots out in the open air, much the same as children enjoy going barefoot. When the roots overhang, it is time to repot the plants.*



near the base. One of these swellings develops into a new lead, which will bloom the next year. Sometimes both swellings develop into leads, and thus give double production.

Most people think of orchids as only one type—the variety most in demand in flower shops—but there are thousands of types and hundreds of combinations of types. "Here is a slipper orchid," Smith says, and points out the slipper shape of a green and brown speckled blossom. Big two-toned orchids fit for a Cinderella ball are on the same shelf with miniature blossoms of "Hawaiian" orchids.

Does the greenhouse sell orchids? "No," Professor  
*continued on page 16*

## Ellison heads national society

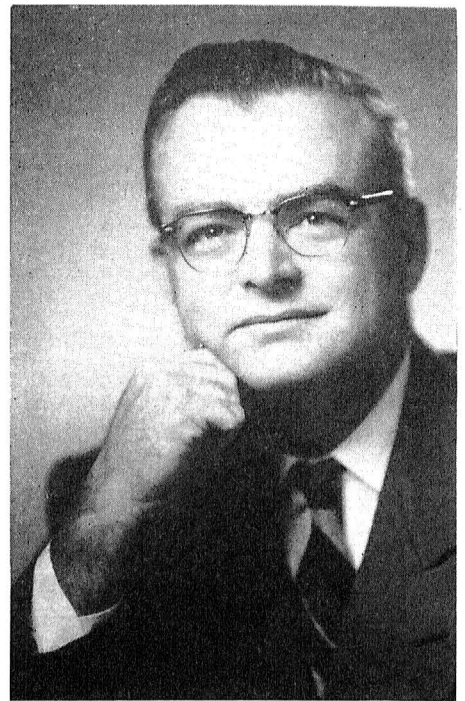
Samuel P. Ellison, Jr., professor of geology at the University of Texas, will become president of the 1400-member Society of Economic Paleontologists and Mineralogists in March.

Ellison was born in 1914 in Kansas City, Missouri. After graduation from the University of Kansas City, he came to the University of Missouri for graduate study, receiving an A.M. degree in 1938 and a Ph.D. degree in geology in 1940.

Dr. Ellison's experience includes five years at the University's School of Mines and Metallurgy at Rolla as an instructor and assistant professor of geology. For four years (1944-48) he was with the Stanolind Oil and Gas Company (Pan American Petroleum Corporation). In 1948 he joined the geology faculty at the University of Texas where he is now chairman of the department.

Ellison's publications include papers on petroleum geology, micropaleontology, paleoecology, educational techniques, and stratigraphy. He is a fellow in the Geology Society of America and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a member of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, Society of Petroleum Engineers, and Sigma Xi.

He has returned to the M. U. campus on several occasions and has given lectures to geology students and staff members here.



*Dr. Samuel P. Ellison, Jr.*

## Social work program expands

The University of Missouri School of Social Work has further expanded its program in the corrections field by the appointment of a new staff member especially responsible for the teaching and placement of students in field work to give them practical experience, according to Arthur W. Nebel, director of the school. The new staff member is Dale G. Hardman, formerly with the Utah State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and also the Utah State Industrial School at Ogden, who has been appointed assistant professor of social work.

A grant of \$10,831 for training in vocational rehabilitation has been given to the University by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Nebel will administer the gift, which includes a teaching grant of \$6,695, plus expenses of \$560. This will go to Paul Mengel, assistant professor of social work, for classroom teaching and supervision of student field work. The rest of the grant is for two graduate traineeships.

### *ORCHIDS GO TO COLLEGE*

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Smith replies, "except to florists occasionally. We are not competing with commercial business. If we have several blooms which a florist wants, we sell them to him and use the money for greenhouse supplies. We're not trying to make money. We're here to train future florists and nurserymen."

Growing orchids is a glamorous but minor portion of the work carried on by students in floriculture.

One boy completed a poinsettia project before Christmas. Two girls who are interested in design are growing carnations, using procedures followed by commercial florists. Two students work with roses; one has a year-around chrysanthemum project; one is experimenting with soilless gardening, using gravel and a nutrient.

Dr. Marlin Rogers is directing research in the flowering habits of snapdragons under different light treatments. The floriculture department is doing research on the keeping qualities of flowers, and is cooperating with the agricultural economics department in a study of standard grading of flowers. Other departments have projects on insect control and disease control which are closely connected with floriculture.

During the past 10 years, more than 100 students majoring in floriculture have been graduated from the University, and an equal number took courses to supplement their studies in other departments. More than half of the graduates are employed in the florist industry. Four of the graduates are girls who are continuing in floricultural pursuits.

At the present time, 15 students are training to be designers and flower shop managers, and 12 are studying landscaping and greenhouse management. In addition to prescribed courses in floriculture, they round out their programs with courses in business, journalism, art, and certain basic courses in arts and science.

Classroom lectures and discussion help to crystallize ideas for novice florists, who learn to practice in the greenhouse what their professors preach about plant culture.