

Prologue to 1920

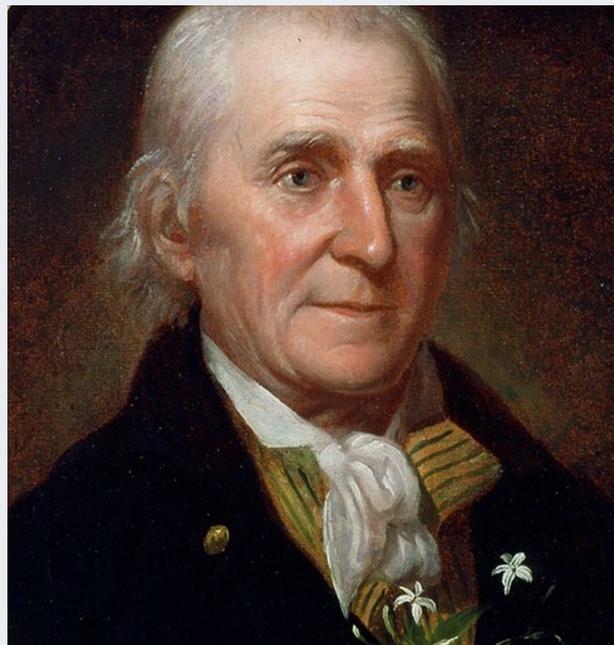
The history of the American Iris Society actually begins before the Society was formed in 1920. The jargon of the society, its culture, and its major heroes all came before the first actual meeting. The goals and purposes of the society were very much in evidence before any bylaws were set to paper or any motions made. This section speaks to the history that allowed a new born society to be fully fleshed out within the first months of its inception.

1727

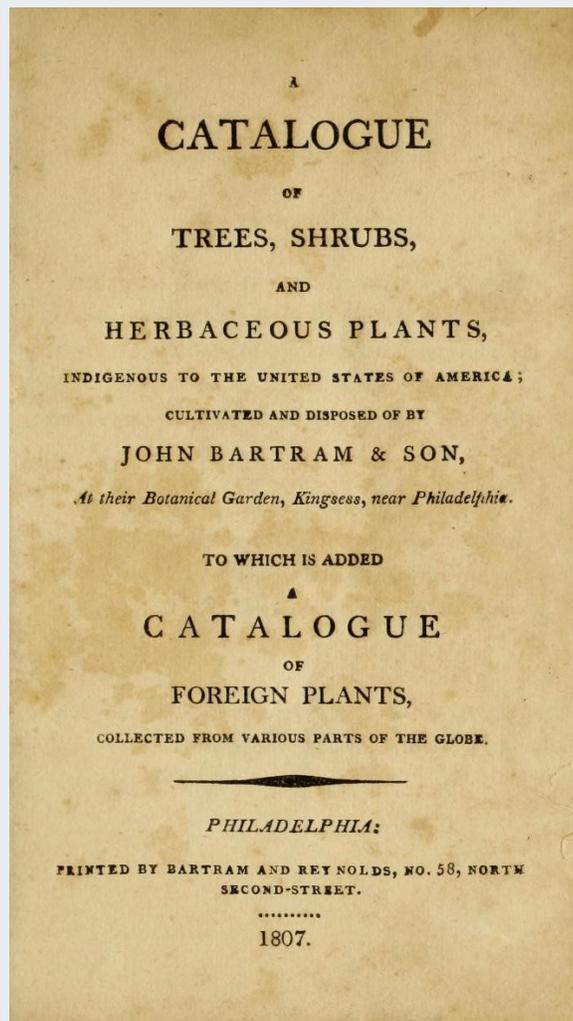
Beginings of Iris collections

Before the Revolutionary War, gardeners in North America had their old favorite garden plants shipped to them from Europe, while Europeans were enthralled with the new American plants, including new Iris being discovered in the colonies.

As early as 1727 John Bartram the elder was creating the Kingsess Botanical Garden, on the banks of the Schuylkill River in Pennsylvania. America's first botanical garden, this repository of plants began with the encouragement and financial support of his good friend Benjamin Franklin. Through John Bartram's collecting trips it became a major source of American plants for Europe and supplied Linnaeus with his American Irises. Around 1760 Bartram was supplying plants to over fifty great estates in England at about 5 guineas a box (roughly \$950 today) and the King of England issued him a stipend of 50 pounds (equivalent to about \$9,500 today) After his death his sons carried on the nursery and botanic garden.

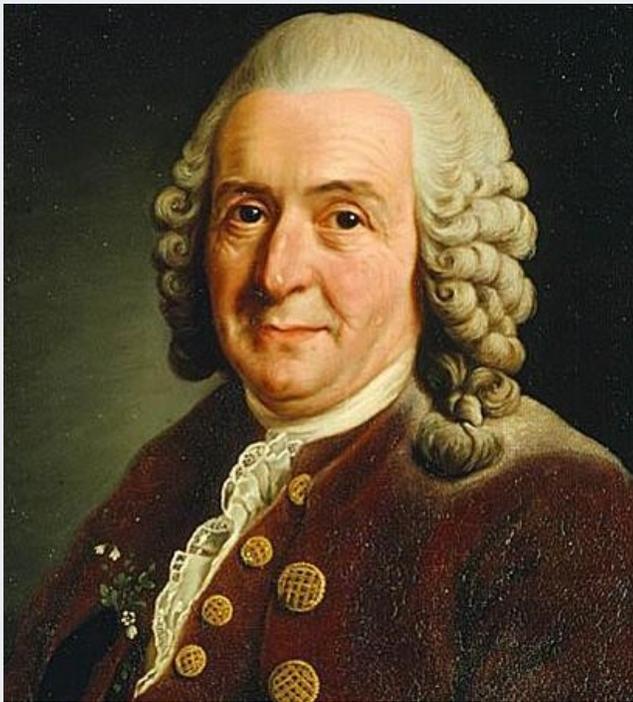


John Bartram: Early plant explorer and nurseryman: He is often considered the first American botanist and the father of American Botany

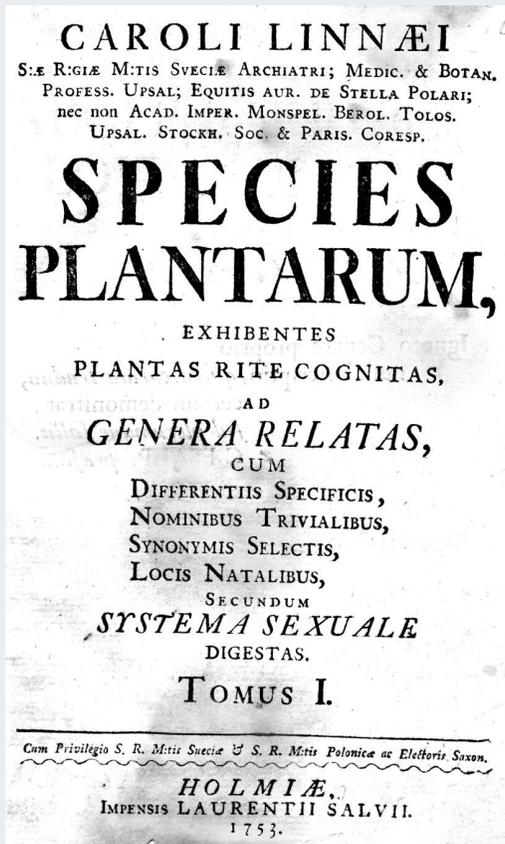


First American plant Catalog

The Bartrams Catalog was possibly the first American plant catalog eighty years later (1807) offered the following exotic irises: pumila: susiana; Florentina; Sambucina; germanica siberica; ochroleuca; persica; pavonia; xiphioides xiphium ; lutea; variegata; and the following domestic; versicolor; virginica; verna; cristata; hexagona;



Carl von Linné: (Linnaeus)



1753

A system of naming

Before 1753 there were many systems for naming but none seemed very satisfactory. Then a young botanist Carl von Linne proposed a scandalous method for organizing plants. At the time ,sex was not spoken of in polite company. But Linne proposed organizing plants by the numbers of their sexual parts, the ovaries, stamens, etc. Iris had three stamens and one ovary were all included together under Triandra Monogyna. It seems obvious today that the sex organs would have something to do with relationships, but not before Linnaeus. It worked better than anything before to bring together plants that seemed related and this scandalous system spread like wildfire. Along with it, he also proposed using a binomial naming system that made it much simply to provide each plant with a unique name. Thus we had the birth of the Genus Iris. In Linnaeus' Species Plantarum (1753) he described 18 species of Iris.

Obviously you cannot build an iris society on only 18 species but by 1914, a hundred and 111 years later there were then 117 species in Dykes Monograph. Between 1753 and 1920 there averaged a new species every year. They were discovered often several at a time, with none in some years. Today, we are still describing new species at about the same rate. There have been times when the Iris society was requested to fund explorations for new iris and smugly turned them down thinking they knew all that there were, But it was invariably proven wrong. Fortunately there have also been AIS funded explorations that have brought new iris into cultivation. Today there are now about 300 accepted species and increasing.

1787 →

The Age of Botanical Art:

Before an Iris Society could be formed, a Large number of people needed to know about Irises. In the middle of the nineteenth century a new type of serial magazine arose. In these Magazines featured a color portrait rendered from a specimen that often had bloomed for the first time in a cooperating gardens. This was followed by a botanical description and some of the other information known about it: often its source and how it was obtained and of course any available information on its culture. The most prestigious of these and possibly the first was Curtis's Botanical Magazine. It is often referenced as Bot. Mag. with a T. and a number representing the table number of its image. By 1920 Bot. Mag had figured 8,873 plants 107 of these were Iris.



. Curtis's spawned other similar magazines. Some of these early Botanical Magazines were:

- Curtis's Botanical Magazine (1787---Today)
- The Botanist's Repository (1797-1807)
- Edward's Botanical Register (1815-1847)
- The English Flower Garden (1823-1829)
- Annales des Flores et Des Pommes (1832-1847)

Bot. Mag. has also the honor of being the longest continuing journal of this type and is still published yearly today. In 1929 an American clone called Addisonia began publishing but was only able to sustain a subscription base for # years, during which time ## plates were published of American Irises.

1805

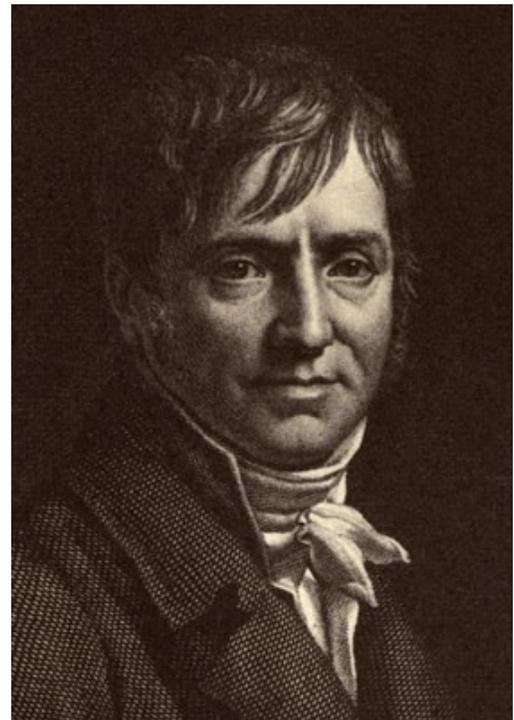
Redoute's *Les Liliaceae* was published in parts between 1805 and 1816. Napoleon's wife Empress Josephine so loved Iris and Roses that she commissioned the best botanical artist of the day Joseph-Pierre Redoute to paint life size portraits of each of the plants in her garden. He painted 39 plants in the genus Iris and presumably hers would have been one of the best collections in Europe. At the time Thomas Jefferson expressed the notion that the greatest act a person could do for their country was to introduce a new useful plant species to cultivation. His thoughts in America echoed in the mind of Josephine and when she hired Redoute to document her collections.



Les Liliaceae depicted almost 500 liliaceous plants and the large folios very done life-size. It gives us a great insight into what was available to great estate gardens in that time period. Although a magnificent work there are a couple of minor flaws. Redoute drew the line drawings but to mass produce a number of these books assistants were needed to hand color the drawings. Each book could have some variation from the next depending on the assistant. For example the first Iris depicted, is Susiana. It appears a darker purple than in real life. Even then we had the same type of problems with color that we have with today's photography.



By François Gérard - <http://www.gogmsite.net/empire-napoleonic-and-roman/subalbum-empress-josephine/1806-josephine-closeup.html>, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=22036136>



Redouté, Pierre-Joseph (1759 - 1840)

1812-1848

Early Catalogs:/Nurseries

Early plant catalogs were essentially lists with minimal descriptions and no images. They hardly were an inspiration to create Iris collections. Yet by 1848 there were at least 80 different irises available through various catalogs.

America's First Catalogs

Bartram's Garden (Kingsess Botanic Garden began about 1727; first catalogue 1807;

Thorburn Nursery began about 1802;

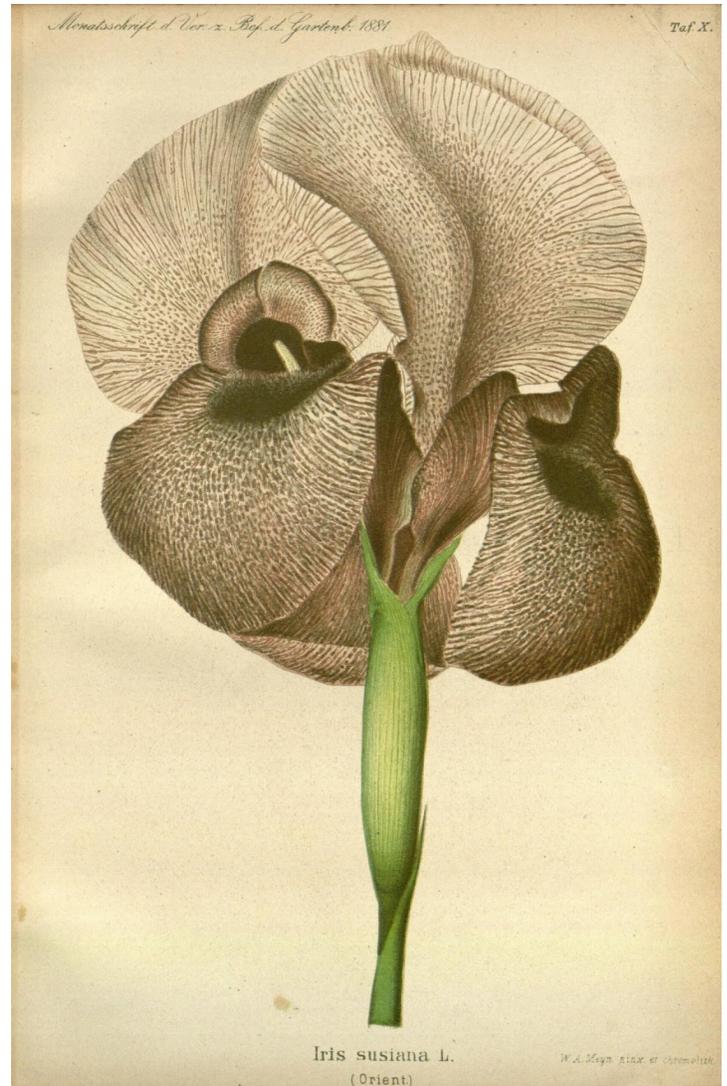
Prince Nursery (Linnaean Botanic Garden) began about 1812, By 1830 they were listing 30 Spanish Irises and 20 English Irises by 1837 besides these two bulbous Irises and additional 70 other irises were being offered, mostly species 19 of which were bearded Irises. In 1854 18 named varieties of germanicas were added, but in only 6 more years (1860) the number had increased to 100 varieties.

Hovey Nursery began 1834 By 1873 The began offering plants of Japanese Irises grown from imported seed. In 1877 they offered a variegated Iris (possibly *Iris japonica*) Aside from mixed collections of English or Spanish or Japanese Iris they seemed to have little Iris Interest.

Dreer Nursery began 1838

Ellwanger & Barry began 1840

Peter Henderson Nursery established 1848



Iris Susiana L.

Almost all of the early plant catalogs offered *Iris susiana* if they offered any Iris. Remarkably one of the oldest Irises in cultivation, *Iris susiana*: "The Chalcedonian Iris (*Iris Susiana*) was brought from Constantinople to Vienna and Holland in 1573. It takes its name from Susa, in Persia."—*Floricultural Cabinet* 1842. This means that for almost 450 years an "impossible to grow" oncocyclous has been in cultivation. Today archeologists still have not found the town of Susa and no wild populations of *Iris susiana* are known, but it still persists in cultivation. It remained popular in catalogs until supplies were cut off from Europe by the 1930 USDA Quarantine.

1840-1850

The first cultivated varieties and Europe's Iris Renaissance

Von Berg of Germany and De Bure of Paris circa 1820 began naming cultivated varieties from the bee crosses appearing in their gardens. Von Berg did not introduce his selections to commerce but De Bure is noted for the first named and introduced cultivar which he named 'Buriensis' after himself. It was said to be a plicata similar to the later 'Madame Chereau' but larger with more rosy markings outlining the white flower. De Bure, although considered only an "Amateur", was said to have the largest collection of Irises in France in 1848. "The World of Irises" credits De Bure for setting in motion the train of events that led to all present-day Iris Societies.



'Aurea' and 'Thorbeck' from The Garden-1897

De Bure's work inspired Jacques, the horticulturalist famed for introducing the Bourbon Roses. Perhaps his only surviving cultivar is 'Aurea' (1830). Jacques in turn inspired Lemon.

Lemon was noted for growing thousands of seedlings. He did not bother with hand pollination and was quite happy with the work his bees produced. Nonetheless in 1840 he put Irises on the map by offering for sale 100 varieties.



'Mme Chereau was probably one Lemon's best loved Irises that survives today..

For a decade, 1840-1850, Lemon continued to offer 100's of irises for sale each year. By 1850 hybridizers began to despair that there seemed to be little improvement.

Lemon Irises



IRIS GERMANICA.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. <i>Sylphide.</i> | 4. <i>M. Patou.</i> |
| 2. <i>Alice.</i> | 5. <i>Sisla.</i> |
| 3. <i>Duchesse de Nemours.</i> | 6. <i>Popote.</i> |

Walters, 1861

Genet, 1861

Lith. de Bouché, Paris



1. IRIS de Boismilon.

2. IRIS M^{me} Rousselon.

3. IRIS M^{me} Lemon.

4. IRIS Jacquesand.

5. IRIS Conqueror.



Annic Bricogne pinx.

Vialo sc.

Iris Germanica variés:

1 Isaure, — 2 Odette, — 3 Priana, — 4 Idiop, — 5 Madame Lemon.

1841

It is easy to think of Bearded Irises as the dominant Irises in gardens today but in 1841 not only were most catalogs only offering collections of 25 germanica varieties, they were also offering collections of 25 English Iris Varieties and 25 Spanish Iris varieties. Indeed at the time the flowers of English Iris were much larger than their bearded cousins. In 1841, James Carter's Nursery offered 50 named varieties of English Iris and if you began collecting them you could easily have 200 named varieties by the end of the decade.



The English Irises have suffered from a great deal of name confusion. During the 1840's they were usually called *Iris xiphioides* but later it was decided that they had been named earlier *Iris latifolia* and that name had priority. Recently an even earlier name *Iris Jaquinii* now is the currently accepted name.

Even the common name English Iris is incorrect. The Floricultural Cabinet noted in 1841: "The flower called the English Iris (*Iris Xiphioides*) first began to be cultivated about the year 1511, having been found, by the Dowager Duchess of Portland, on the

river side, near Fladbury, in Worcestershire. It was originally only of a deep brilliant blue, but has since sported into every gradation of almost all colours, and has become shaded and mottled in a most beautiful manner. Since these changes have taken place, it has come into some repute as a florist's flower.

We know now that it grows wild in the Pyrenneses Mountains of Spain and no one knows how plants got to England. The other Bulbous Iris from Spain are still referred to as Spanish Irises.

1850-1880

Notable Quotes:

Gardeners' Chronicles—1866 William Robinson notes; "It may be safely stated, that among all the plants now in cultivation, there is not a single genus more beautiful or more neglected than the Iris. They have not the brilliancy of Lilies, it is true, but for beauty and delicate variety of exquisite colour, they infinitely surpass them."

The Garden 1872—"Important flowers that may be justly termed " old garden favourites," are now either lost altogether or comparatively neglected. Among these the Iris stands in the first rank"

What happened to Iris?

During this thirty year period, 1850-1880, perhaps relatively little was happening in the world of Irises that would greatly impact the creation of an iris society! Or more likely, some very subtle developments were occurring that laid a groundwork for an explosion of Iris interest in the four remaining decades between 1880-1920.

By 1860 Iris growing in Europe declined due somewhat to the Franco-Prussian War. The United States was involved in its own civil war. (April 1861-April 1865). Life in the Northern States was relatively uninterrupted, and westward expansion of pioneers continued until about 1890 when sadly it was declared that the West was won. A new mindset began to take hold. Queen Victoria reigned in England between 1837 and 1901. During her reign The British Empire was rapidly expanding and plant exploration seemed to represent the importance of the empire by recording new worlds through their new plants.

The Rise of Weekly Newsletters:

In order to report on this new influx of species a new set of journals arose. Three of these in particular

would stir the hearts of gardeners on a weekly basis. They were:

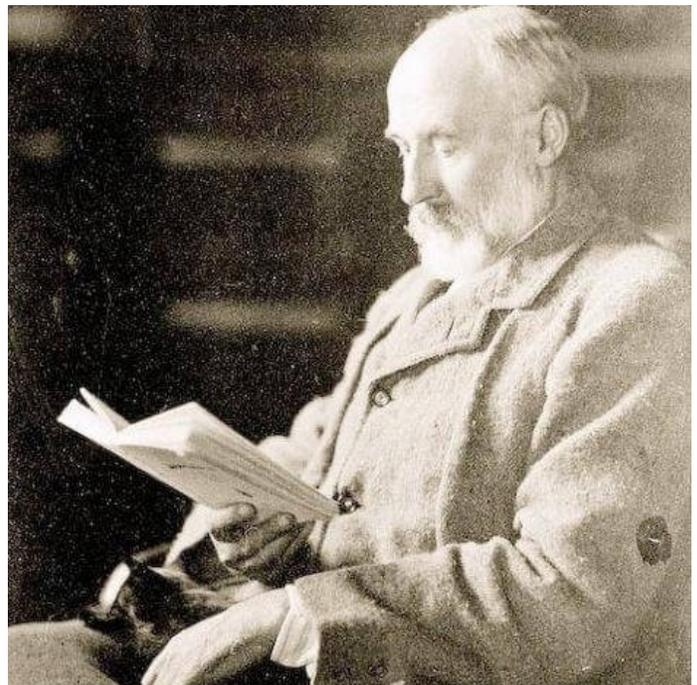
Revue Horticole (beginning in 1829)

The Gardeners' Chronicles (beginning in 1844)

The Garden Illustrated (beginning in 1872)

Some other noteworthy new journals included Gartenflora began in 1852 by Eduard Regel, and Gartenwelt (gardener's world) in 1896.

By 1880 these journals would begin having articles on Iris on a regular basis, keeping the Iris grower engaged with the Genus.



William Robinson 1838-1935

Robinson started the weekly journal the garden illustrated in 1872. He was an advocate of informal and wild gardens.. He wrote the English Flower Garden in ### and the Wild Garden in ####. One of his disciples was Gertrude Jekyll. His was a strong proponent of Hardy Herbaceous Borders and cottage gardens.

Important resources:

1854

1852

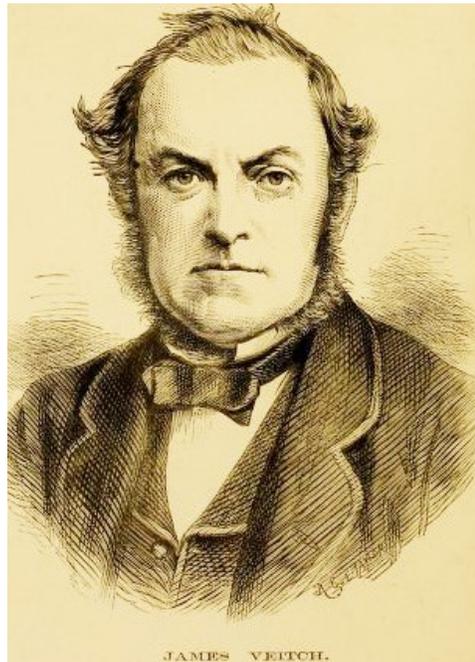


Eduard August von Regel: In 1853 he became Director of St. Petersburg botanical garden. He produced the monthly journal *Gartenflora* starting in 1852. He was a collector and explorer. He sent his son Albert Regel to Turkestan in 1858 and Albert sent back a new bearded iris which Regel named *Iris albertii*. The section of Desert Irises called *Regelias* are named after Eduard. He was noted for collecting and growing many plants and liberally distributing them to other specialists and institutions. Michael Foster undoubtedly received plants from Regel.



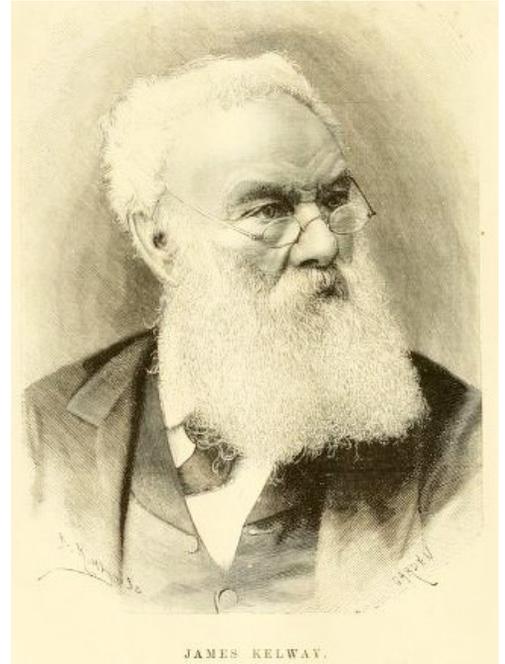
Louis Van Houtte: Director of the Belgian Botanic garden. 1854 Publishes "Flore et des Serres de jardin L'Europe. He also had a nursery offering in 1881; 54 species, 25 English, 10 Spanish, and 13 Siberian, 41 Japanese & 64 Germanicas

1850*



James Veitch

1863



James Kelway

1873



Max Leichtlin started offering plants from his Baden Baden garden. He continued until 1905. *Iris leichtlinii* was named for him.

MID 1860'S

A NEW LANGUAGE

In the mid 1860's Peter Barr and sons were offering over a hundred bearded Iris cultivars. Obvious it was convenient to create categories for these irises and Barr assigned them to different Iris species. Amoena, Neglecta, Plicata, Sambucina, Squalens, Variegata, and Pallida. All but the last two were later designated hybrids and not species at all. But several of the names stuck as designations of color forms.

1865



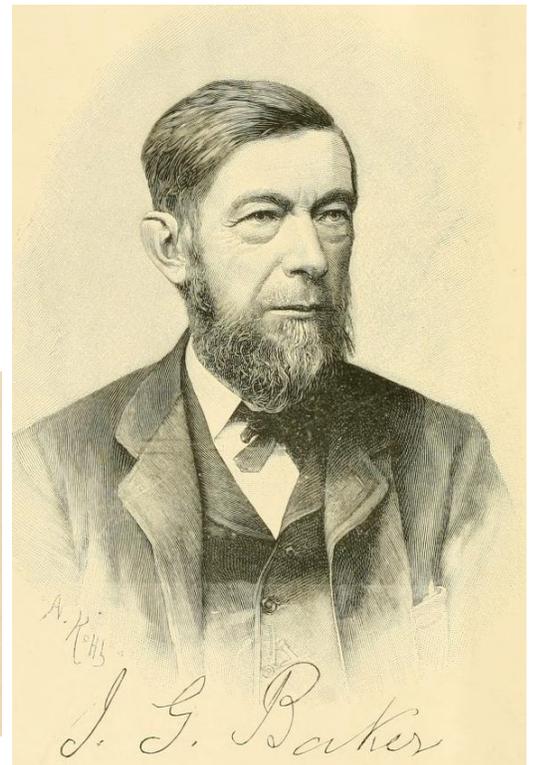
Henri Leveque Vilmorin (1843-1899): The house of Vilmorin had been established before 1745 and continued through a long line of Vilmorins. By 1865 they had developed a long list of Irises.



It has been stated that Thomas Hogg was the first importer, of Japanese Irises and his collection given to Doctor Thurber, then Editor of *The American Horticulturist* — was introduced into the trade shortly after 1869, the approximate date of importation. Others give the credit not to Hogg, but to Hallock & Thorpe of Queens, L. I. But whichever came first, both were early and widely disseminated collections, for the beauties of this new flower speedily captured the gardeners. The terrible confusion still existing in the nomenclature of this species originated at that early date through the re-naming and the translating of Japanese names.



1876



John Gilbert Baker published his outline of the Genus *Iris* in *The Gardeners' Chronicles* of 1876. was in charge of the Kew Herbarium from

1877

Goos & Koeneman begin there Iris work

Goos & Koeneman, Niederwalluf am Rh. Germany. Famous nursery specializing in Irises, Peonies, Dahlias, etc. Best known in America for such Iris seedlings as 'Lohengrin'(TB-1910), 'Loreley'(IB-1909), 'Iris King'(IB-1907), 'Rota'(IB-1924), Folkwang,'(TB-1925), etc. Goos and Koenemann were among the first true breeders of iris, and among the only to work in dwarfs. The nursery was destroyed in World War I. but catalogs returned in 1920.



Iris 'Loreley'

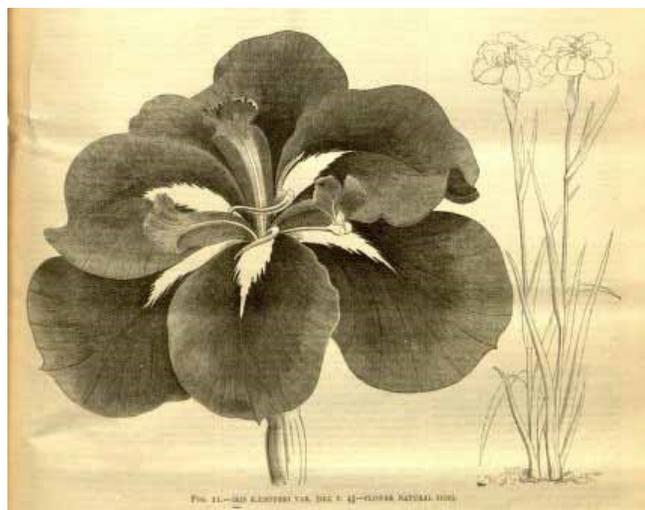


It hard to say that G & K produced the first MDBs and SDBs because those terms were not in use. They refered to crosses between *Iris pumila* and "Germanicas" as *Pumila Hybrida*. These were begun in 1899. The hardest to produce was a good white but in 1912 they offered what they viewed as a superior white with Iris 'Schneecuppe'



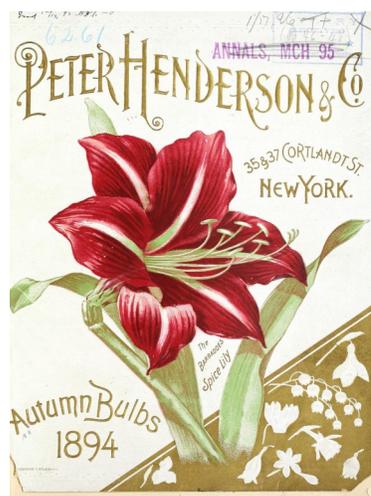
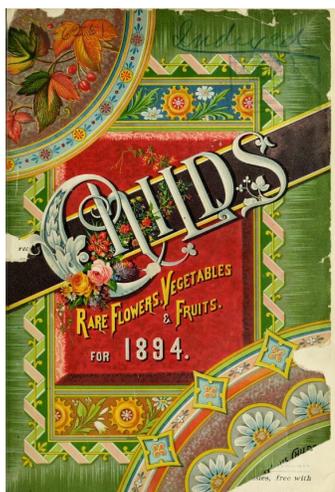
1881

Louis van Houtte celebrated the new resurgence of Japanese Irises into Europe. While Germanicas were declining Japanese were ascending. His 1881 catalog offered 41 of his own named selections compared to 64 Germanicas. Note all of them were “3-petaled, singles”. But in 1874 the six petaled Japanese had already been reported in *Gardeners’ Chronicles* with



the illustration of the variety 'George Henderson'

In America Japanese were making their way into the trade but it would not be until about 1890 that they became as desired as Germanicas. Louis Child's began promoting them and by 1894 several of the large American catalogs were listing as many or more Japanese than Germanica. The following plates give an idea of what the earliest introductions looked like.





3240

3246

3239

3244

3241

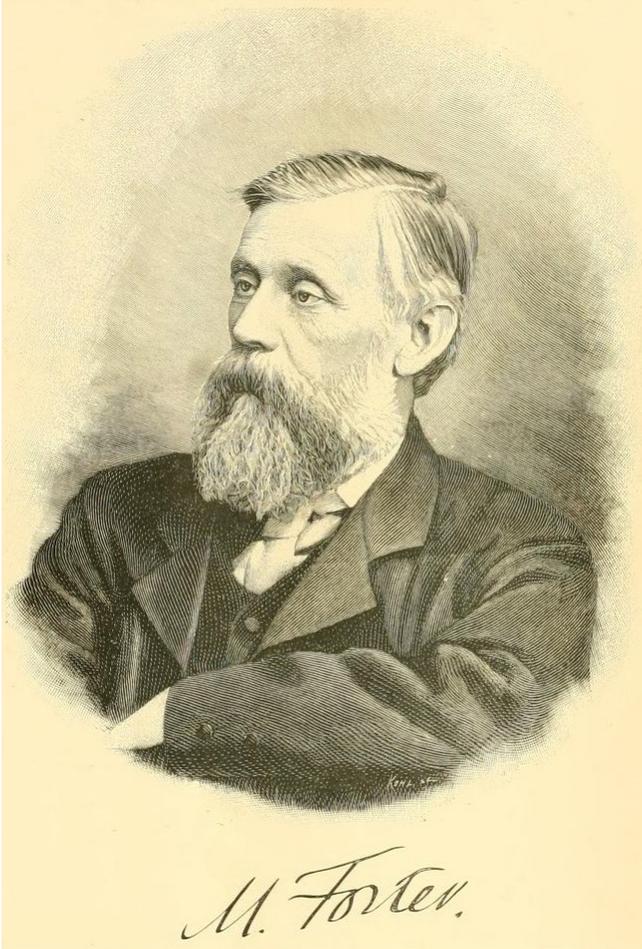
Iris Kämpferi

Varietates 'L. Van Houtte'.

- 3244 Benjamin Davies.
- 3239 Dos Santos Viana.
- 3241 James Eckersley.
- 3240 Jos. Broome.
- 3246 Mad. Langaard.

Del. Lill. & grav. in Hortus Van Houttei.

1881



In 1881 Michael Foster wrote his first report on Iris in the *Gardeners' Chronicles*. This Cambridge professor of Human physiology would become well known as the Leading authority on irises.

Foster approached his investigations into Iris with mind of an experimental scientist. He could well be one of the first Experimental taxonomists. When he noticed that the species known as *Squalens*, *Sambucina*, *Lurida* and *plicata* seemed to share traits common to both *Iris variegata* and *Iris pallida*. He theorized that they might well be hybrids of those two. To prove his point he made crosses between the two species and sure enough the offspring produced plants with the entire range of colors attributed to these other species that were now known to be hybrids.

.The highest award presented by the British Iris Society is the Foster Memorial Plaque. It is even more prestigious than the Dykes Medal. So who was Sir Michael Foster. The short answer is he was the first scientist to engage in experimental taxonomy. This led to the later work of his student William Ricketson Dykes. But his botanical accomplishments although enormous, are overshadowed by the fact he was also a member of parliament and even more so that he was the foremost Human physiologist of his day and wrote the text that trained many physiologists in subsequent years. Although it would be nice to think his work in Botany earned him his knighthood, it was undoubtedly given for his work in medicine as physician and professor.

1886

Garden Nomenclature

Foster was noted for his diverse crosses between species. He proposed a naming system for the seedlings from these crosses taking a part of each species name and cobbling it together. For example. *Iris paradoxa* crossed with *Iris sambucina* would yield "PARSAMB". Often these were treated like cultivar names, but Foster himself had them mean all the seedlings from that cross not just a particular clone. His "group" names were in many cases grandfathered in to current checklists. But the International code forbids cultivar names made up of a portmanteau of species names. This is wise since species names change but cultivar names are absolute. His group names are still used today for groups but not cultivars.

1889

Foster gives Lecture on Iris at the Royal Horticultural Society

In this seminal lecture Foster pointed out that there were but a few true Germanicas in cultivation and newly collected from Asia Minor. These included 'Asiatica', 'Amas', 'Sivas' which he had just recently become available.. He addressed what he called so-called germanicas that were really not related to Germanic but were hybrids involving *Iris variegata* and *Iris pallida*. Since at the time chromosomes were yet to be discovered he could not have known that he essentially was separating the diploid "tall-bearded" from the tetraploid "tall-bearded. No one at the time realized that this was the beginning of the tetraploid revolution in hybridizing of the tall-bearded irises.

Foster also pointed out that most bearded irises did not like damp conditions which most gardeners at the time thought they were water irises like *pseudacorus*.

1890

The first Spuria hybrids

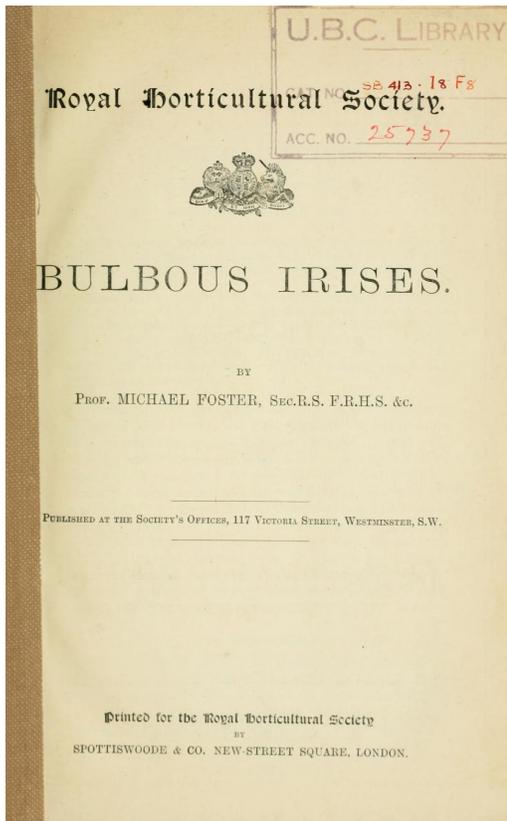
Although *Iris monnieri* is now considered a hybrid that was discovered in the garden of Monsieur Monnier, Foster was the first to actually experiment with spuria hybridization

Foster crossed *Iris Monnieri* with *Iris spuria* And using his naming convention got 'Monspur'. He crossed *Iris ochroleuca* with *Iris aurea* and got 'Ochraurea'. Thus Foster paved the way for hybridizers of the future.



1892

Probably because he had a very chalky soil in his garden Foster became enamoured with the small bulbous irises. By growing seed and plants imported from Asia Minor he was able to sort out the various species and provide detailed descriptions. He published *The Bulbous Irises* in 1892 from a lecture given to the Royal Horticultural Society.

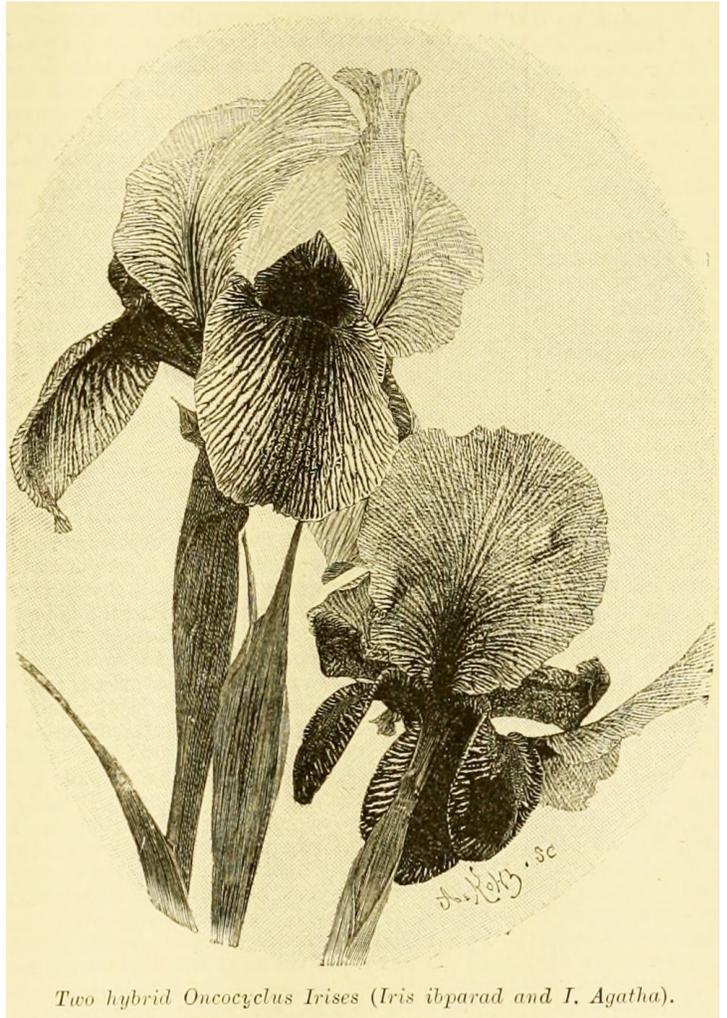


1894

A new Class of Irises: Regeliocyclus:

Following Foster's lead C.G. Van Tubergen Ltd. offers the first Regeliocyclus 'Agatha'.. Because they were hybrids between the Oncocyclus and Regelia irises they offered the exciting possibility of a wider tolerance of growing conditions and made it possible for more people to grow these unusual forms.

C.G. Van Tubergen Jr., Later C.G. Van Tubergen Ltd., Zwanenberg Nurseries, Haarlem, Holland. Established about 1881. Bulbgrowers specializing in daffodils, Tulips, and Irises. Breeders of Regeliocyclus Irises. One of the most famous nurseries in the world, bringing into cultivation all sorts of rare plants and having such a remarkable collection that it has been known among the trade as "The Museum."



Two hybrid Oncocyclus Irises (*Iris ibparad* and *I. Agatha*).

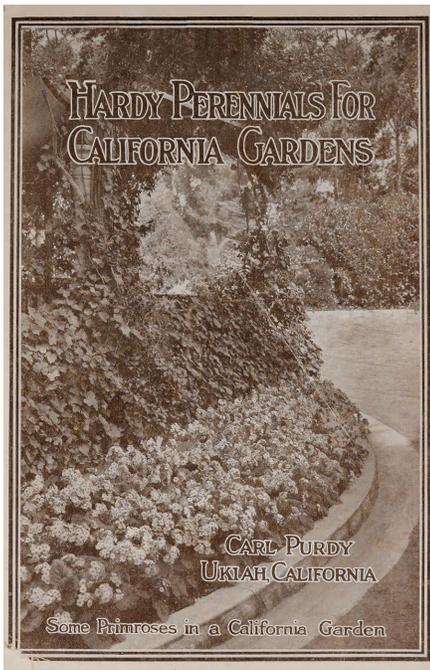
Mr. John Hoog received the Veitch Memorial Medal in 1924 for his work in introducing so many fine plants to cultivation.



Nouvelles variétés d'Iris Regeliocyclus
1. *Arctura* - 2. *Jan*

1896

Around 1896 there was yet another group of Irises being introduced to American Gardeners. Botanist Sereno Watson was describing *Iris Tenuis* (1888) and *Iris bracteata*. J.N.Gerard writes in *Garden & Forest*, 1896—"California Irises. Failure to establish *Iris Hartwegii*, *I. Macrosiphon* and, perhaps, other California Irises, has been so general that it will interest gardeners to know that Herr Max Leichtlin has lately taken them in hand and solved the problem of their successful cultivation, so that now " they grow like weeds " in his garden. He says that " plants are received in Europe from their native quarters quite fresh and healthy-looking, but I have treated such plants several times and they always died. My experi-



ence is that they cannot be successfully moved unless they are in full vegetation. We must grow them from seed and not touch the seedlings before they have formed a solid root-stock; after this, and when movement to again grow has begun, they can be safely handled and transplanted like other Irises; in May in Ba-

den-Baden. They want sunny quarters. This spring I had plants with twelve or twenty flowers open at one time in all shades of ochre and cream. They are very striking plants."

Carl Pudy (1861-19##) describes in "Garden & Forest a new native from Ukiah California *Iris macrosiphon*. Wister (1921) noted "It was during this period that Mr. Carl Pudy of Ukiah, California, discovered and brought into cultivation many of the exquisitely lovely Californian species which are now well known in Europe, but have not been successfully cultivated as yet in the colder regions of the United States.Purdy was probably a seed



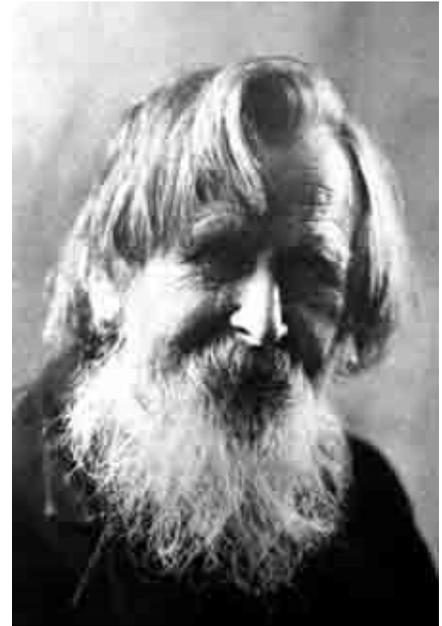
source for Leichtlin. Purdy's Nursery specialized in Native California Bulbs/Seeds and later had extensive Iris listings Wister considered him as one of the pioneer Iris nurseries. Purdy also attended the first meeting of the American Iris Society. Sereno Watson named the California species *Iris purdyi* in his honor.



Iris purdyi, collected Mt. House Rd, Mendocino County, California
Photo Credit: Kenneth Walker

1897

Queen Victoria dies: The Victoria Medal of Honor (VMH) is created, given to honour 63 horticulturalists living in Britain, one for each year of her reign. New ones may be added when a previous recipient dies..



1902

New Class of Irises “Dwarf Bearded”

Issued catalog in 1902

William John Caparne (1855-1940) is credited with originating a new class of Iris; the Intermediate, which blooms between the dwarf and tall bearded classes. Caparne was also a well respected landscape artist and was commissioned by Sir Michael Foster to paint portraits of all known garden irises of that day. Some of these portraits remain in the archives of the Royal Horticultural Society. In 1936 Caparne was awarded the Foster Memorial Plaque by the British Iris Society. The highest award for miniature dwarf bearded iris (the Caparne-Welch Medal) is named in honor of Caparne and Walter Welch, the founder of the Dwarf Iris Society. Caparne introduced many irises, only a few of which are grown today. The most common of these is probably the MDB 'Bride'.

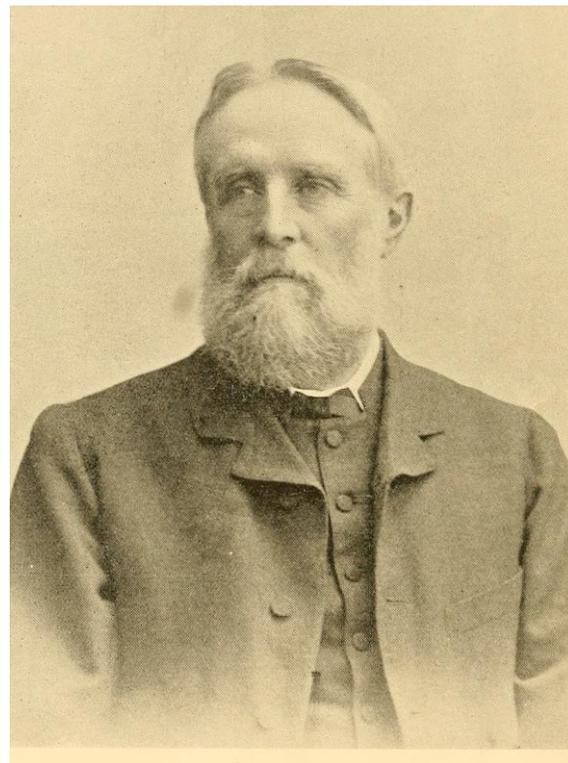
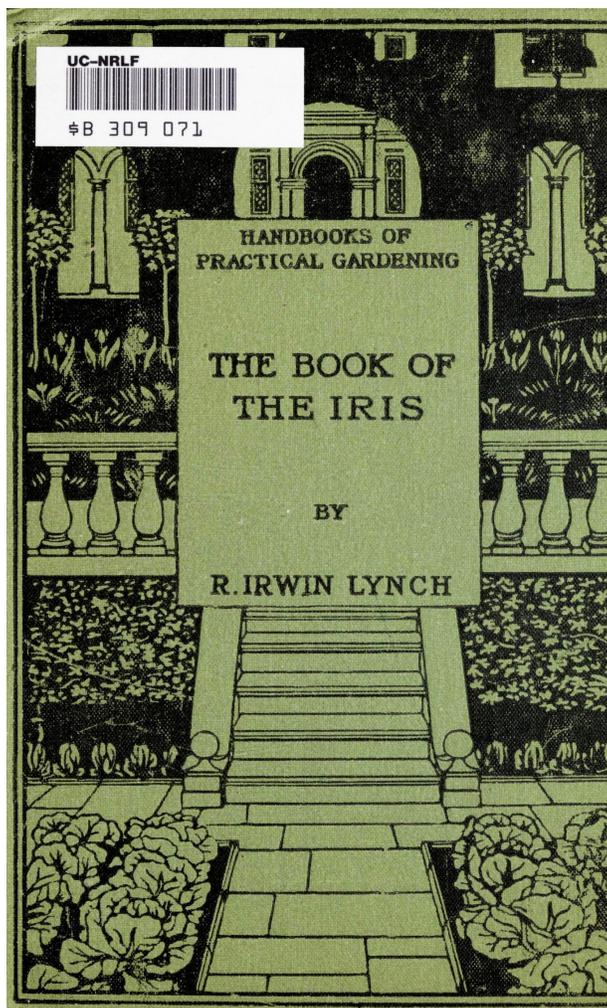


c. Nancy McDonald



1904

Irwin Lynch publishes *The Book of the Iris*



Rev. Henry Ewbank

Within *The Book of the Iris* a large chapter on the growing of oncocyclis Irises was written by the Reverend Henry Ewbanks. His success in growing these irises inspired others to give them a try.

Iris ewbankiana was named in his honor by Michael Foster.



1907

Sir Michael Foster Dies 1907

Foster's notes and plants were transferred to his protégé, W.R. Dykes.



William Rickatson Dykes. Dykes carried on Foster's tradition of publishing articles on Iris regularly in the *Gardeners' Chronicles*, the *Garden and revue Horticole*.

The Biography of W.R. Dykes

From the *British Iris Society Annual*, June 1926

William Rickatson Dykes, M.A; L.-es L., V.M.H. the second son of Alfred Dykes was born November 4, 1877. He was a botanist, horticulturist, schoolmaster, plant breeder, author, and the foremost authority on Irises. He first went to City of London School, and then to Wadham College, Oxford. There he took honors in classical schools. Later at the University of Paris he was L-esL.

While studying at Cambridge he met Sir Michael Foster, and through him became interested in the study of the iris family. He was an apt pupil and Sir Michael was a quali-

fied teacher. He visited Sir Michael at Shelford, and carried on his work with increasing impetus and interest. It has been generally written that Sir Michael left Mr. Dykes his material on iris. But in the introduction to "The genus Iris", Mr. Dykes says "My greatest debt of all is due to the late Sir Michael Foster, who encouraged me to undertake the investigation into the whole genus. My acquaintance with him was all too short, but it was long enough to make me appreciate that generosity with which he placed his knowledge and his plants at the disposal of those who followed in his footsteps. At his death there passed into the hands of Miss Willmott of Warley Place about a dozen rough notebooks, containing accounts of some of the Irises that flowered in his garden at Shelford and illustrated by accurate pencil drawings of the flowers. These notebooks have been most kindly lent me by Miss Willmott, and I owe much to the insight into Foster's methods which I have derived from the perusal of them. Here and there... The notes have given unexpected help in clearing up difficulties... Except in a few cases of this sort, Foster's notebooks have been of little direct value for the reasons already explained, but I have endeavored to acknowledge my debt whenever I have derived any information from them."

So valuable as the Foster notebooks were in part, it was comparatively small in amount to the material which Mr. Dykes himself collected. He became the world's leading authority on iris, and was a worthy successor to Sir Michael.

His insatiable curiosity led him to obtain a wide knowledge of many other plants, but his chief interest was in the lily, Iris, and amaryllis natural orders. He also did much work with tulips, and his knowledge of them was comparable to his knowledge of iris.

For over 16 years, from 1903 to 1919, he served as master in a boys' school at Charterhouse, one of the largest and best known of the English schools. Here, busy with school routines and handicapped by a modest income, he carried on his study of irises, and won world-wide recognition. He was also a very successful and clever gardener, growing many rare species and plants to perfection under conditions that were far from ideal. His garden at Godalming was on high ground with sandy soil. He had a special insight into his flowers' requirements and knew how to provide what they needed. In *A.I.S. Bulletin* 19 an article is ."

reprinted from "The Book of Arrangements" published by the Royal Horticultural Society In 1926. Concerning Mr, Dykes, it says, "First and foremost, William Dykes was his own gardener. To collect the seed himself and to bring the plant safely through the cycle of its life to seed-time again was his great joy. To his first love, the genus iris he was always true, but he loved all plants and could appreciate the florists' flower just as well as some rare or new species

In the same Bulletin in an article, "The Late W.R. Dykes" R.W, Wallace wrote, "His ambition was to collect seeds, either when on a journey or by correspondence wherever Irises grow, raise the plants, and study them closely from the seedling stage until they grew, flowered, and seeded again. He could tell off-hand minor differences between species as to shape of seed or seed pods, and whether the foliage was round, ribbed, or flat. He could discourse at length on the history of every species, and the habitat of all known irises. He obtained seed of the true *Iris Filifolia* from Spain. He visited Dalmatica and Austria at Easter time, where he saw all the various types of *Iris pumila* in flower, and *aphylla*, *variegata*, etc. He made the trip in the interests of a well known horticulturist who was very keen on species and nothing else. Dykes solved several problems for him. At one iris meeting he talked about iris species all around the world speaking entirely without notes. He told little facts relating to one or other of the species, clearly showing his deep and intimate knowledge of his subject."

In 1920, Mr. Dykes was appointed to the Secretaryship of the Royal Horticultural Society, and it was necessary for him to leave Godalming and live nearer London. He had to give up his garden, and made arrangements for nearly all of his collection to be moved to Percy Murrell's Nursery at Orpington In Kent. He retained only a few rhizomes each of some seedlings, planting them on a small plot of ground at the John Innes Research Station at Merton, Surrey. From the *Gardeners' Chronicle*. Vol. 68, August 14, 1920, the following is taken concerning the sale of some of Mr. Dykes' collection, "Irises brought together by Mr. W.R. Dykes at Godalraing. Mr. Dykes taking up residence nearer London and unable to secure a suitable garden for his iris collection consequently must dispose of most of his

plants. Will retain his new hybrids and his unflowered seedlings."

It is thought that at Merton, He was not perhaps so happy although the authorities were very kind to him. But he felt the ground was John Innes' and not his own. In 1924 he married Katherine, who also made a name for herself as an iris hybridizer. It was a happy marriage, and they had their own garden at button Green near Guilford. His garden was his greatest joy. Here he planted over 30,000 tulip bulbs. Every spare minute he had was given to working out plans for his new garden. About this, Lesley Lyttleton Chubb wrote, "Always an early riser he was to be seen every morning in the garden, number book in hand. So matter what the weather might be, there was always something which had to be attended to or looked up. The breakfast bell would call appealingly to deaf-ears, and he would stroll in smiling and be surprised to see the lateness of the hour."

Mr. Dykes served as Secretary of the Royal Horticultural Society from 1921 to 1925. He devoted his remarkable abilities whole-heartedly to the maintenance of the Society as a moving force in horticulture. He gave unsparingly of his high abilities and characteristic energy. In an article in *A.I.S. Bulletin* 19, taken from the "Book of Arrangements, published by the R.H.S. in 1926, it says, "... he placed his great knowledge of plants unreservedly at the service of the Fellows of the Society and other lovers of gardening who were genuinely seeking information. All the details of the Society's great shews at Chelsea, at Holland Park, and at Vincent Square were his personal care; during the last six months he devoted infinite pains to the plans and drawings for the new hall of the Society."

Honors were bestowed upon him. He was awarded the Veitch Memorial Medal for his monograph "The Genus *Iris*" in 1924, and the Victoria Medal of Honor in November, 1925. But not all his botanical theories were accepted as facts in his time, and in some instances he has been proven wrong. But in most cases he was right. Jean Stevens in "The Iris and its Culture" says, "Dykes considered *flavissima* had many features in common with the small *regella* iris. But this was determined to be true until the 1930's." No detail was too minute to escape him. As an

example Mr. Dykes drew attention to the fact that water-loving irises have tiny black spots in the leaves, and are visible by holding the leaf against a strong light. In the leaves of *pseudocorus* these black spots are readily discernible."

W.R. Dykes was also a prolific author. In 1909 he began to plan and work on his monograph, "The Genus *Iris*". He worked on it for 5 years. In a long drawer he kept hundreds of cards arranged in alphabetical order. On each of these was detailed history of an iris which he had collected and grown, and from these cards he wrote his book. Of this monograph has been written, "This great monograph is a fitting tribute to our common Master's (Foster's) memory. As Mr. Dykes himself would be the first to allow, such a book could not have been attempted without the labour's of the leader to whose memory it is dedicated."

He also wrote articles for the "Gardener's Chronicle" and other publications. In 1911 he published "Iris" written during a long weekend. In 1924 he published "The Handbook of Garden Irises". In the preface to this book Mr. Dykes wrote, "The present volume is intended for gardeners, though it is hoped that the information as to the distribution of the various species, the speculations as to their affinities and the botanical details will prove no less welcome than the hints as to their cultivation, which are the results of an experience of some twenty years." In the A.I.S. Bulletin 19, Percy Murrell says of this book, ... is a model of what a book should be - full of accurate information and reliable cultural instruction based upon practical knowledge and experience."

He carried on correspondence with many botanists and gardeners, including Grace Sturtevant. He also translated from the French, Professor Lorette's book on pruning fruit trees, and at the time of his death was working with Mr. R.C. Notcutt in writing a popular book on flowering shrubs.

In A.I.S. Bulletin 19, Mr. A.J. Bliss wrote of him, "He was insatiable for information of every sort about *Iris*, and his correspondence must have been enormous. His energy was amazing, no less than his patience in working out a classification tangle, but I was most of all impressed by his thoroughness. He was never satisfied with hearsay or second-hand information. His aim was to see every species in

its living state, and if possible to grow it from seed, not only to see what range of variation it might display, but also to experiment in cross-fertilization with other species for indications of affinity, and so far as it was possible, he carried out this ideal for "The Genus *Iris*."

Much has been written about the character of Mr. Dykes. The following quotations are taken from A.I.S. Bulletin 19, published in April 1926, as a memorial to Mr. Dykes, Percy Murrell wrote "... whose outstanding virtues were his transparent sincerity, honesty of purpose, and enthusiasm in all he did. W.R. Dykes was a typical Englishman, rather reserved with strangers, and one who certainly did not suffer fools gladly. A hard worker, modest to a fault regarding his own achievements, he was always delighted to place his knowledge and experience freely at the service of those who sought his advice and assistance. Many years of his life were spent among boys at Charterhouse, and those of us who were fortunate to be admitted to the privilege of his friendship will probably recall him best as a man who was in all essentials a great-hearted lovable boy, possessed of a keenly developed sense of humour, a witty and interesting companion, with a joyous appreciation of the simple pleasures of life. We shall remember him with real affection, and a poignant regret that he should have been taken from us so soon and under such sad circumstances."

From a short article headed "Various notes" are the lines, "One can imagine the eagerness with which he hurries to his garden plots, the welcome with which he greets a new acquisition as the deserved reward of a long seeking in correspondence with far-flung friends, the anticipation that marks the plans for a visit to Sir Michael Foster or for a prospecting trip in new fields. Painstaking care was required for such work as his and yet it was with a sort of boyish enthusiasm that he would talk and write on irises. His was the inquiring type of mind, always seeking, never quite satisfied perhaps... in his many letters one can appreciate his delight in coming upon some new or odd bit of information... It was not in his nature to think that the work on irises would ever be complete." Murrell also wrote, "A new joke was almost as great a joy to him as a new iris."

In AIS Bulletin 7, there is an account written by Mr. Wister about his European visits in 1922. In company with Mr. Wallace, Mr. Bonnewitz, Mr. Wassenberg, and Mr. Dykes he visited the Cayeux Nursery. About their return journey to Paris he wrote, "The ride back to Paris was long and hot and we at once began to argue as to where we should have luncheon, for meals in France are important ceremonial occasions and not to be snatched at a quick lunch counter. Mr. Dykes who knows Paris very well said he would take us to a good restaurant that was cheap and we got off at the end of the car line at the Hotel de Ville and proceeded to walk. We proceeded under a system of turning to the left at the first corner and to the right at the next one. Mr. Dykes promised each time that it was just around the corner. Mr. Wallace afterwards described the trip as the longest walk he had ever taken in his life, but finally we did end up at the restaurant where we had a most excellent meal."

Further on in the article he wrote that he talked to Mr. Dykes about Goldcrest and Richard II, saying he "discussed Iris breeding and talked freely about the future development of Iris." He saw a large number of Dykes' seedlings at Orpington, shown to him by Mr. Murrell. He said, "most of them under number and some of them exceedingly fine. The only named ones I noted I had seen before at Chelsea, they were Sapphire, an earlier Goldcrest, Cretan and Ariadne."

Pesel and Spender in "Iris Cultivation for Amateurs" tell about Mr. Dykes telling a group of people that it was easy to have an iris bloom on every day of the year. To the disbelievers he gave short answers. They wrote, "Dykes when he was sure of his facts, as he nearly always was about Irises, had a pretty short way with incredulity, or with credulity for that matter."

In the Dykes Memorial issue of the Annual of the Iris Society, June 1926, Marion Cran wrote, "He was to be seen at all the shows, the small fortnightly shows at Vincent Square and the great summer and autumn shows at Chelsea and Holland Park. His broad, burly frame moved in a leisurely way among the exhibits. He might be smiling just broadly like a merry schoolboy, or cross as Good Friday's bun just as the moment might take him; for he was a man

of strong personality who made no attempt to disguise his emotions.

Some people thought him irascible and difficult; but my own memories are those of great kindness and much sympathetic help. We would spar from time to time when he had occasion to become the botanist arguing with impatient ignorance, or worse still, when he detected signs in me of a roving vision given rather to searching for the sentiment and story behind a flower than to a microscopic study and record of detail and anatomy. But we always ended laughing; and when it came to matters of serious help there was no limit to his patience, his sense and courage."

In describing a group of friends watching Mr. Dykes as he was about to plant an iris and noticing he was being watched, Marion Cran wrote, "Flushing and cross, all hot and bothered again in a moment, he scabbled a hasty hole in the ground and 'heeled' his treasure in. We followed once more, rather chidden, as if we had been found invading an intimacy. Back among the blooms he was again the laughing radiant creator. But that glimpse of the man, shy and sensitive, was to me an illumination which has never passed."

On December 1, 1925, W.R. Dykes died in a hospital following a motor accident. His work had only begun, for he was on the threshold of greater achievements as demonstrated by his glorious yellow seedling which was named for him. His death was a shock and a loss to the entire world of gardeners. But his name has become a household word, for at a meeting of the British Iris Society held on June 16, 1926 it was resolved to award a medal to the hybridizer of the outstanding iris variety of each year in memory of Mr. Dykes, thus the Dykes Medal has become the highly coveted, highly prized award dreamed of by all hybridizers. It is the highest award in Irisdom, and its name, Dykes Medal, keeps his name alive and warm in all our hearts

1907



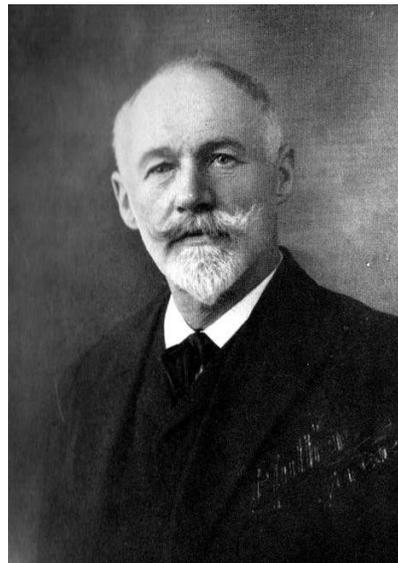
Miss Ellen Willmott (1860-1934)

Warley Place, England. Gardener and Author, Collector of rare plants. Author of the Genus *Rosa*, Her Garden was originally that of John Evelyn, the diarist. The first women fellow of the Linnean Society, she received the Victorian Medal of Honor in 1897, she and



Iris willmottiana; photo by Ken Walker

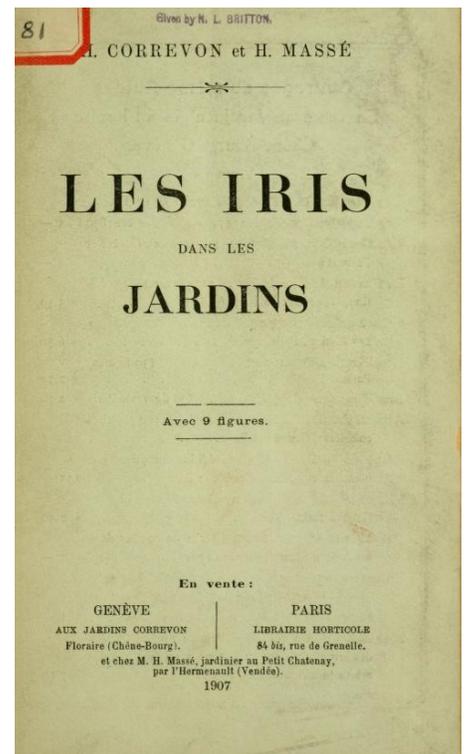
Miss Jekyll being the first recipients. She also received the Geoffroy St. Hilaire Medal of the Society of acclimation de France, and the Peter Barr Memorial Cup in 1918. She inherited a fortune which she spent on funding plant explorations and collections and in the end died a pauper. She was noted for her lavish gardens and used Juno Irises as bedding plants. A new species was named for her; *Iris willmottiana* and *Iris warleyensis* for her garden., along with a TB cultivar 'Miss Willmott' a good white of its time.



Henri Correvon (1854-1939)

was considered the world's greatest specialist upon Alpine plants of Switzerland. Author of many botanical and gardening books including one on Iris (in French) in collaboration with H. Massé. His son and grandson were associated with him

in the nursery and his alpine gardens were deservedly famous. He created the Linnaea Alpine Garden at Bourg Saint Pierre...and received the R.H.S. Veitch Memorial Gold Medal in 1924." [AIS Check List 1939]

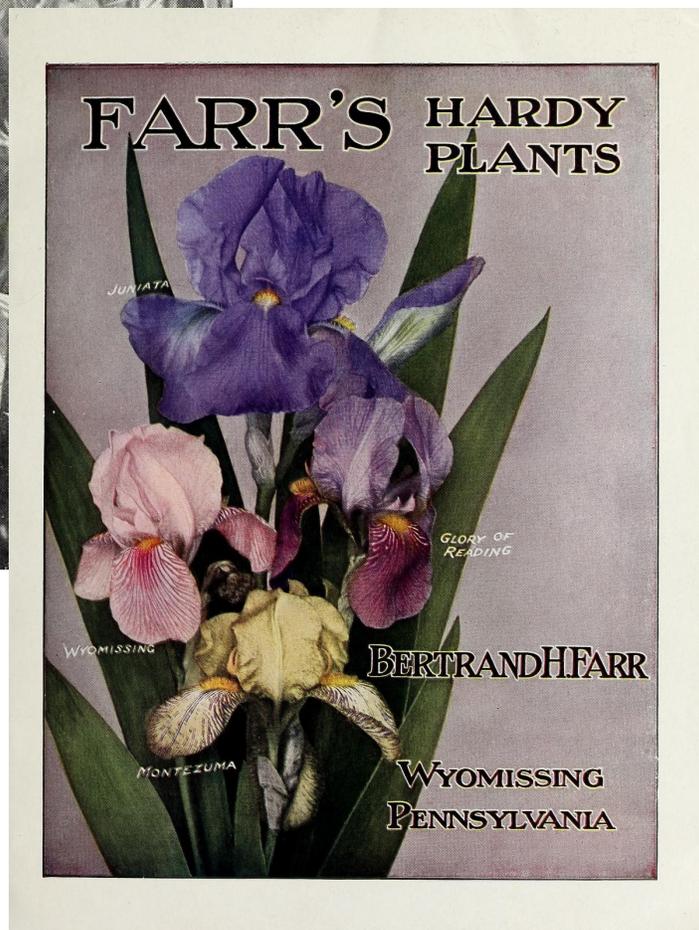


Correvon, Henri et Massé, H : Les iris dans les jardins, Floraire Nursery, Geneva, Switzerland 1907

1908

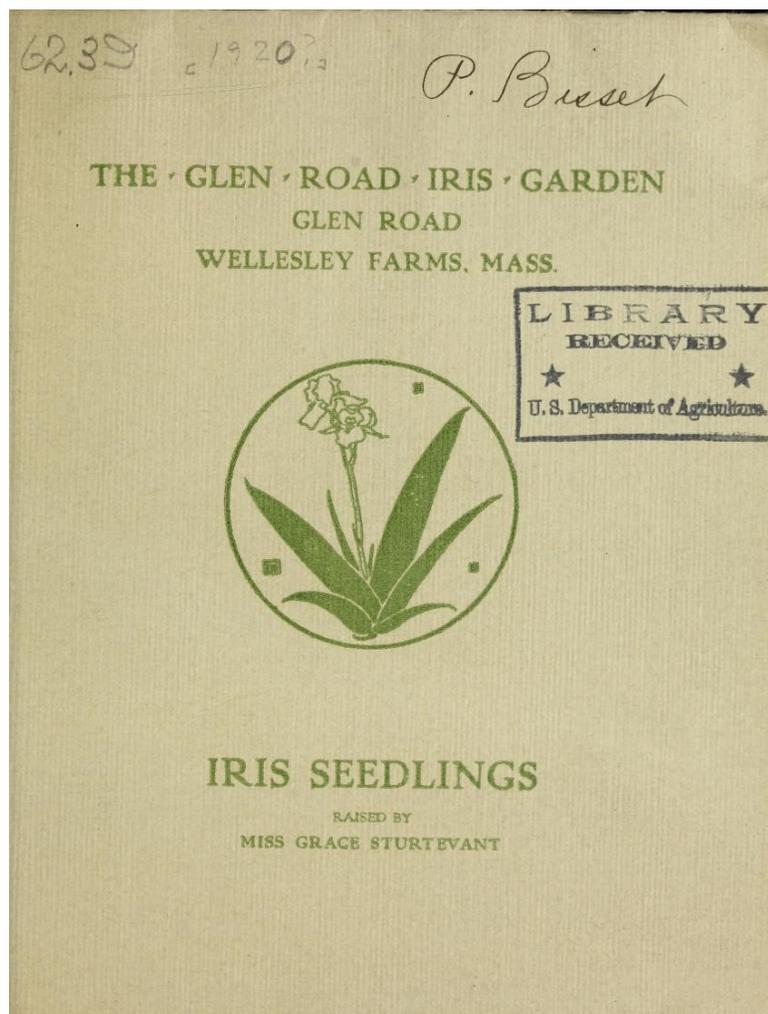
Bertrand Farr

Bertrand H. Farr (1863-1924), Wyomissing Pa. Farr Nurseries Co., Weisser park, Pa., (moved there from Wyomissing in 1925). Mr. Farr was a native of Vermont but lived a great part of his life in Iowa and the final part of it in Pennsylvania. A student of music in his youth, he established a music business in Webster City, Iowa. Later, moving to Reading, Pa. he became interested in horticulture, specializing in Peonies, Irises and Lilacs. He established a nursery and sold his music business in 1908. Mr. Farr was the first in the United States to take up seriously the breeding of Irises, the first introductions being made in 1909. He imported whatever he could obtain that was thought to be good, and at the time he died, had possibly the largest collection in the United States (about 1200 varieties). President of the American Peony Society for 8 years, director of AIS 1920-1924.



1909

Miss Grace Sturtevant, (1865-1947), Glen Road, Wellesley Farms, Mass. Daughter of first Director of the N.Y. Experiment Station at Geneva, N.Y. Illustrated his botanical studies. Graduate, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. She moved to Wellesley in 1901. Interested in gardening from 1894, she began breeding Irises in 1909 and exhibited in 1915, winning the Silver Medal of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society in 1917. She established a small nursery, Glen Road Iris gardens, and helped to found the A.I.S. The Gold Medal of the M.H.S. was awarded her in 1924 for producing new varieties, of which some of the best known are 'Mother Of Pearl', 'Shekinah', Queen Caterina', 'Airy Dream', 'Rose Madder', 'B.Y.Morrison' etc. She has been



1910

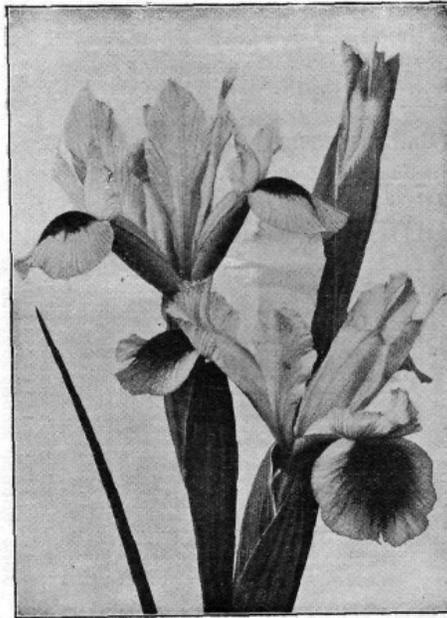
A totally new class of Irises was added to the irisarians garden. Van Tubergen scored again with their innovative breeding. These new irises were called "Dutch Iris" and were hybrids involving *Iris tingiana* and tother Spanish species *I. filifolia*, *I. xiphium*, etc.

The Dutch Irises soon began replacing the Spanish and English irises. In the trade especially because they were more vigorous and bloomed a fortnight or more before the others. Today the Dutch Irises are the most economically important irises, far exceeding tall-bearded in yearly sales, despite the fact that amybe only 50 varieties are still available.

For the first 30 years of its existence the American Iris Society registered these bulbous irises until the KAVB took over "Bulbs".

Thomas Hoog the descendent of van Tubergen gave them the scientific name of *Iris x Hollandica* and they can be shown under this name at Iris shows. . The have proven themselves superior as cut flowers.

Iris hispanica, continued.				p.1000. p.100. p.10.				p.1000. p.100. p.10.			
No.		\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.	No.		\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.
1570	Cajanus, large clear yellow, extra.....	4 50	- 60	- 15		1588	Louise (Coquette des Blanches), white and light blue.....	2	40	- 15	
1571	Chrysolora, large bright yellow, early.....	2 50	- 40	- 15		1589	Lusitanica, yellow and white, very early.....	10 50	- 30	- 30	
1572	Darling, dark blue.....	2 20	- 40	- 15		1590	L'Unique, dark blue, falls pale blue.....	6	- 70	- 30	
1573	Excelsior, fine blue.....	4 25	- 60	- 15		1591	Mia, bright blue.....	3 50	- 50	- 15	
1574	Filifolia, large blue, early.....		5 50	- 70		1592	Midley, light blue.....	2 50	- 40	- 15	
1575	" mixed light and dark blue.....	12 50	1 50	- 30		1593	Philomela, pale blue.....	2 75	- 40	- 15	
1576	Flora, white and soft blue tinged, large flower.....	22 50	3 50	- 40		1594	Queen of the Netherlands, fine blue.....	2 75	- 40	- 15	
1577	Geal, Gordon, dark blue.....	3 50	1 30	- 30		1595	Queen Wilhelmina, best white, new.....	8	- 80	- 30	
1578	Giant, pale yellow, large flower.....	28 50	3	- 45		1596	Reconnaissance, bronze, very fine.....	6 50	- 80	- 30	
1579	Glory of Holland, dark orange yellow, large flower.....		- 50	- 20		1597	Snowball (Blanche Fleur), fine white, slightly tinged blue.....	3 50	- 50	- 15	
1580	Hercules, dark bronze.....	8	- 1	- 20		1598	Solfatara, large dark blue.....	4 50	- 60	- 15	
1581	King of the blues, fine blue.....	3 75	- 50	- 15		1599	Sophia Jaffis, sulphur yellow.....	4 75	- 60	- 15	
1582	King of the Whites, pure white.....	8	- 1	- 20		1600	Souvenir, soft pale blue.....	6	- 80	- 20	
1583	La Charmante, pale bronze.....	11	- 1	- 30		1601	Sweetheart, pale yellow and white, nec.....	9 50	1 20	- 30	
1584	La Nuit, dark blue.....	8	- 1	- 20		1602	Sweet Lavender, pale blue.....	11	- 1	- 30	- 30
1585	La Tendresse, white, yellow tinge.....	2 50	- 40	- 15		1603	Thunderbolt (Goldcup), bronze brown, extra large.....		- 2	- 35	
1586	Leander, deep yellow, sweetscented.....	6	- 80	- 30		1604	Walter T. Ware, pale primrose yellow.....	6 50	- 80	- 20	
1587	Longfellow, pale blue.....	3 75	- 50	- 15							



DUTCH IRIS.

DUTCH IRIS.				p.1000 p.100 p.10.			
No.		\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.
1605	Finest named varieties.....	45	- 4	80	- 60		
1606	" mixture.....	26	- 2	80	- 40		

DUTCH IRIS.
A new race of early large flowering Iris, blooming fully a fortnight in advance of Iris hispanica.

DUTCH IRIS.				p.1000 p.100 p.10.			
No.		\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.
1607	Albert Cuyyp, very tall variety, glistering white, yellow blotch.....	11	- 1	30			
1608	Ant. Mauve, soft lilac blue.....	9 50	1 20				
1609	David Teniers, pale lavender, falls citron yellow, tall grower.....	45	- 4	80	- 60		
1610	Frans Hals, soft yellow and blue, large flower and robust grower.....	22 50	2 50	- 40			
1611	Gabriel Metsu, pearl colour, orange and soft blue.....	16	- 1	80			
1612	Hackaert, falls dark blue, standards bright blue, extra choice.....	4	- 60				
1613	Hobbema, falls yellowish white, standards white, blue shade.....	8	- 1	-			
1614	Jan de Bray, brilliant yellow, extra.....			3 20			
1615	Jan Steen, flowers of a clear yellow and glistering white, faintly shaded sulphur yellow, dwarf growing.....	4	- 60				
1616	Joh. Vermeer, falls bright blue, orange blotch, standards purpleblue, very large flower.....	8	- 1	-			
1617	Judith Lyster, soft blue, very refined flower.....			6			
1618	Paulus Potter, pale blue and cream color, flowers very large.....	4	- 60				
1619	Pieter de Hoogh, very large flowers, soft pearly blue, conspicuous orange blotch, extra choice variety.....	16	- 1	80			
1620	Rembrandt, one of the best and showiest varieties of a magnificent deep blue; with large orange yellow central blotch; very substantial flower.....	24	- 2	60	- 40		
1621	Saenredam, falls soft yellow, standards pale lavenderblue; not so tall as the other varieties.....	6	- 80				
1622	Van Everdingen, white and yellow, flowers of largest size.....	20	- 2	80	- 40		3 20

IRIS "REMBRANDT."

ON June 10 we received a consignment of Iris flowers from Mr. C. G. Van Tubergen, junr., Nurseryman, Haarlem, with the information that they represented a new strain of bulbous Irises which he proposed to designate "Dutch" Irises. These have been raised from crossings of early-flowering Xiphiums, such as *filifolia*, *tingitana*, *lusitanica* and others. Mr. Van Tubergen claims that his varieties, whilst resembling *Iris hispanica*, flower at the least a fortnight earlier than ordinary varieties of the Spanish Iris. The flowers opened at Haarlem on June 1 to 3, but it is said to be usually June 20 before *I. hispanica* blooms in Holland. The flowers sent by Mr. Van Tubergen are of large size, and have unusually thick segments. The plants are described as being of robust habit. The variety which Mr. Worthington Smith has sketched in fig. 2 is called Rembrandt. In this flower the outer segments of the perianth are rich, shiny purple with an orange-coloured blotch above; the three, inner, erect segments are also purple but of less deep a shade. This is but one of many varieties received from Mr. Van Tubergen. It is sufficient to say that whilst the flowers show differences in size, they vary in colour, from white, or nearly white, to the rich purple seen in Rembrandt. As we have said, the point claimed for them is that they bloom earlier than the present race of Spanish Irises. We do not think they have yet been cultivated in Britain.



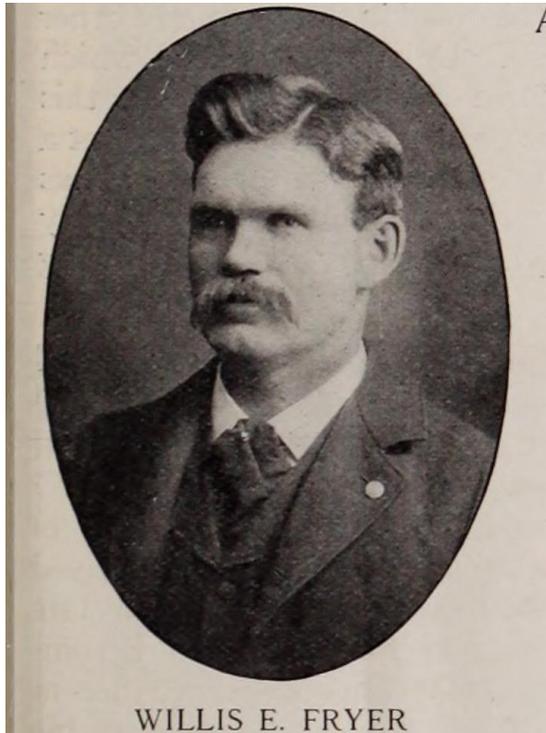
FIG. 2.—IRIS "REMBRANDT," REPRESENTING A STRAIN OF EARLY-FLOWERING BULBOUS IRISES.

1910

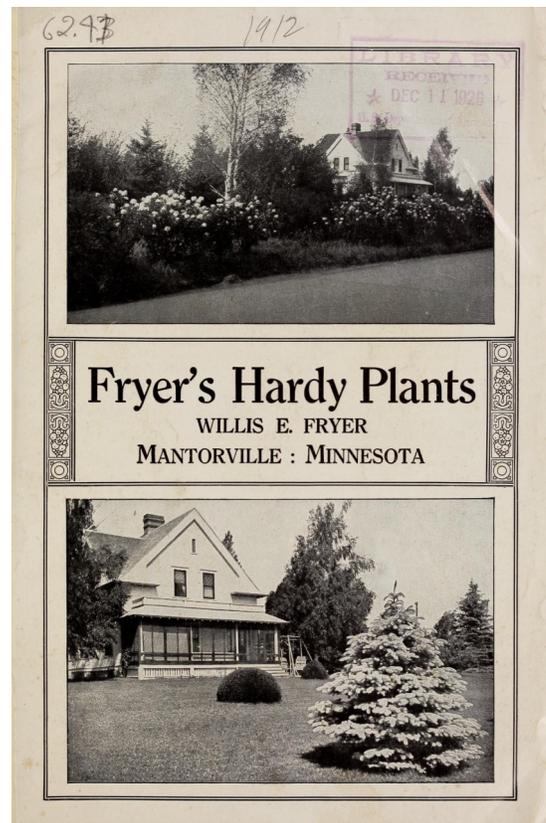
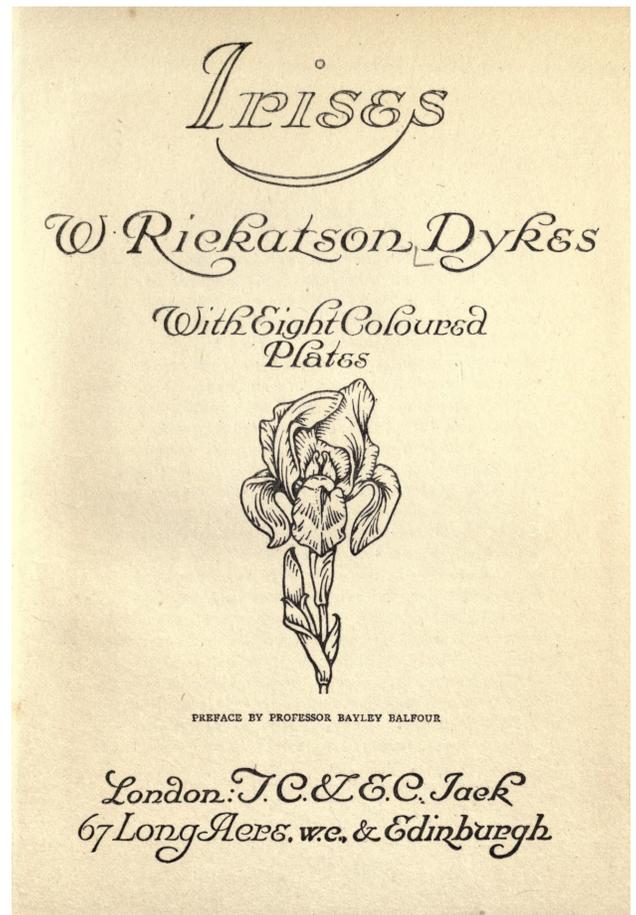
Dykes publishes his first book on Irises

1912

1912 Willis Fryer publishes First Catalog



Wister writes in the 1921 The Gardening Magazine "In the last three years the American who has sent the most varieties into the trade is W. E. Fryer of Mantorville, Minnesota. Mr. Fryer tested more than five hundred named varieties in his severe climate, and finding many of them below his expectations, he set about raising seedlings, of which he has named forty or fifty. One of his newest varieties, "Magnificent," secured an Honorable Mention at the Minneapolis Iris Show last year."

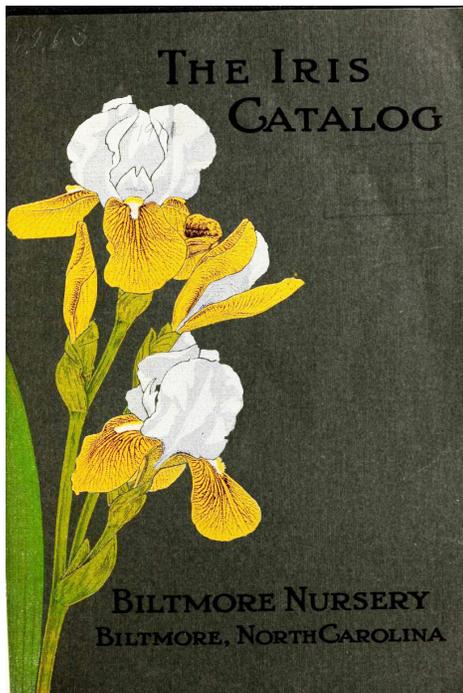
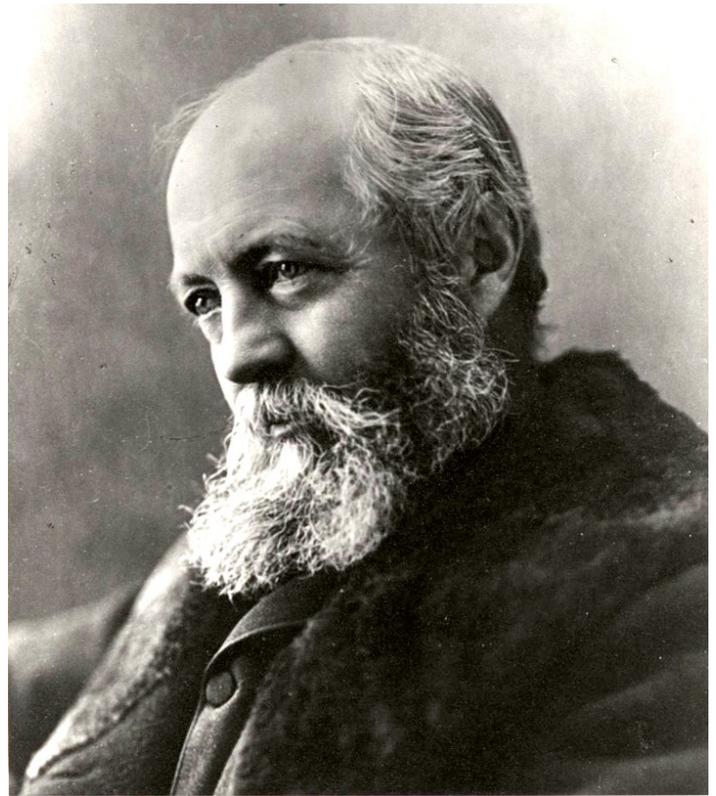


1913

How many Irises Are There?

This seems like a simple question. But the fascinating and complex story it entails has been the primary task of the Iris Society from its beginning to this day.

We can begin our story with Frederick Law Olmsted. He is no doubt America's most famous landscape architect having established his fame with the design of Central Park in New York City in 1853. He produced many great plans including the Emerald Necklace around Boston and the design of the Vanderbilt Es-



tate of Biltmore in NC in 1895. We can be assured that Olmsted knew Irises because Biltmore offered an Iris catalog in 1911 of 106 varieties including bearded and beardless. He no doubt encountered much frustration with Iris names and was at the head of a committee formed in

1915 by the American Association of Nurserymen and Ornamental Growers' Association to standardize plant names; In 1917 The American Joint Committee for Horticultural Nomenclature produced a report saying:

"One of the most serious difficulties the American Joint committee has had to encounter is the duplication of names caused by the re-use of established names for new introductions, or, in some cases, the remaining old varieties; in fact, these mischievous

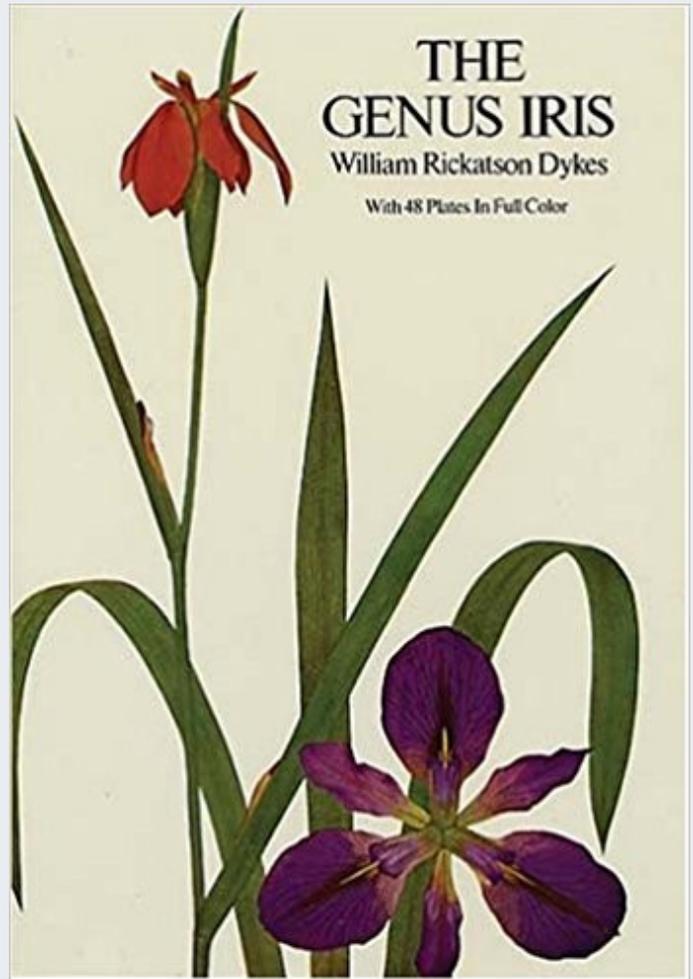
practices have caused a large part of the chaos in common names of plants which now exists in American horticulture. The duplications doubtless occur more as a result of ignorance than deliberate intent to deceive. The genus Iris is a conspicuous example of this bad practice."

Olmsted became the head of Landscape architecture in The Harvard School Graduate Design in 1913. Two of his promising students would be John Wister and Robert Sturtevant. No doubt both were already aware of the problems with Iris. Wister owned with James Boyd the Iris Nursery 'Movilla Gardens' and Sturtevant was the brother of one of the premier iris hybridizers in America, Grace Sturtevant, so they immediately started making lists of Irises, were interrupted when they had to go off serve in the war effort.

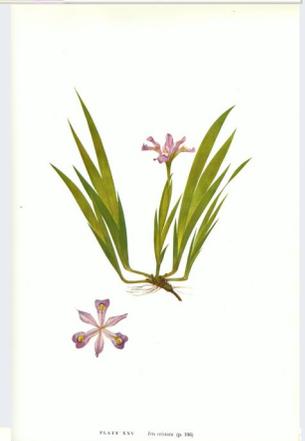
1914

In 1914 Dykes published his famous monograph on Irises. To say this was a landmark event would be an understatement, It would not be until 1991 with publishing of Brian Mathews The Iris that this reference would have any real competition. Perhaps it gained favor so quickly because of the 47 beautiful color plates of Irises by F.H.Round, along with one of seeds by Miss R.M. Cardew and 30 line drawings by C.W.Johnson. Besides giving the a great summation of the botanical knowledge to date it also included many personal observations on culture because Dykes had grown so many in his own garden..

The Genus Iris provided the definition of Iris for the first 75 years of the American Iris Society.



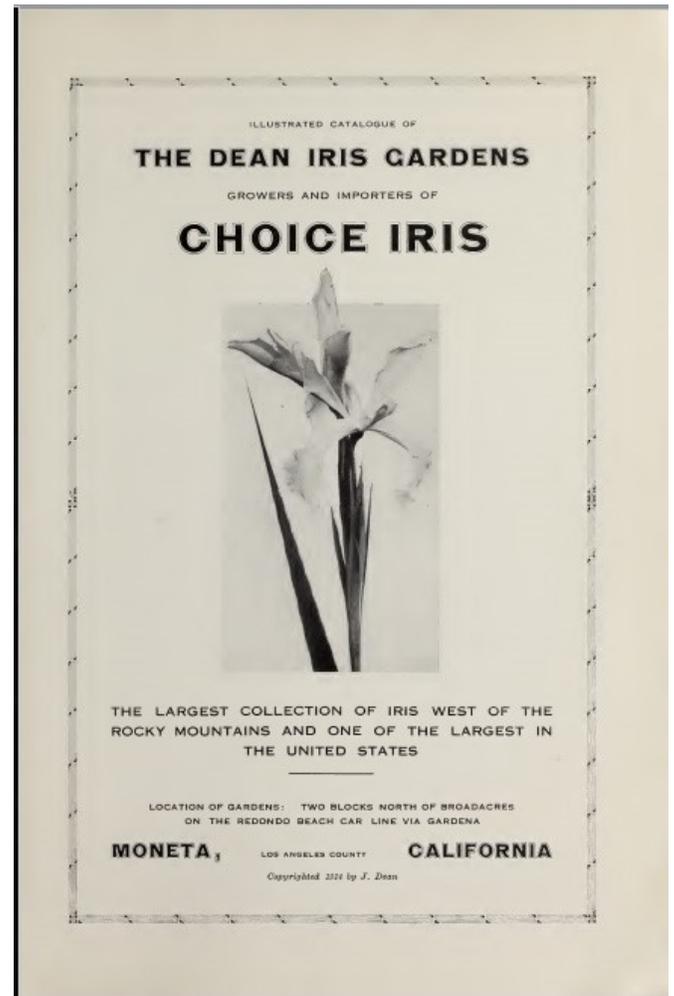
In this Dykes added several new terms to the Irisarians vernacular. Pogon (bearded Irises), Apogon (beardless Irises) and Evansia (crested Irises. Despite the fact that these are no longer accepted Botanical terms they remain part of irisarian's jargon.



1914

Janette Dean

Started The Dean Iris Gardens in 1909 but issued her first national catalog in 1914. Her catalog sorted the germanicas by the Barr color classes. By 1914 she was one of the largest grower of Irises in the country and certainly on the West Coast. She gave many lectures to Horticultural Societies and was a strong promoter of all types of Irises. Wister (1921) noted she was the first in America to bring over the Millet and Denis hybrids



Dean's catalog continued until the name was changed in 1925 to Southern California Iris Gardens under the new ownership of C.S. Milliken.

Mrs Dean was one of the few to offer Evansia irises, Pacific Coast Native Irises, Dwarfs, as well as many other species including oncocyclus and regeliocyclus.

1915

Even though the idea of tetraploid and diploid was not understood at the time we can suspect that most or all of Farr's irises were diploid. Since he had not started using 'Amas' as a parent. Nonetheless the enormous diversity of varieties he was producing and offering stimulated more and more interest in irises. When Grace Sturtevant began using the tetraploid *Iris cypriana* the larger flowered seedling increased the interest even more. In 1915 Farr still offered many Japanese varieties. At the time it probably not understood that they needed acid soil. As more and more Iris lovers were living West of the Appalachians the native Acid soils were less



Farr's New Seedling Irises, grown at Wyomissing

- | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1. Blue Jay | 4. Nokomis | 7. Mt. Penn | 10. Anna Farr |
| 2. Louis Trowbridge | 5. Iroquois | 8. Mary Gray | 11. Navajo |
| 3. Windham | 6. Mary Garden | 9. Quaker Lady | |



Farr's New Seedling Irises grown at Wyomissing

- | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Hiawatha | 4. Juniata | 7. Hugo | 10. Wyomissing |
| 2. Minnehaha | 5. Pocahontas | 8. E. L. Crandall | 11. Aletha |
| 3. Chester Jay Hunt | 6. Montezuma | 9. Pauline | 12. Red Cloud |

1919

Invitations to Join

If it had not been evident years before it certainly was now that the world needed an Iris society. Societies most of the major garden plants already had formed:

- The American Peony Society (19##)
- The Rose Society (19##)
- The Daffodil Society (19##)

Having returned from the war John Wister, Robert Sturtevant, and B.Y. Morrison chose to waste no time. They began writing articles calling for an Iris society in every journal that would help. They enlisted Harry Gleason (Asst. Director of the New York Botanical Garden as Secretary pro-temp to write letters of invitation to hundreds of horticulturalists. Over 400 letters went out. Here were some of the responses:

Iris Society to be Formed

THE many suggestions that have appeared from time to time in THE GARDEN MAGAZINE that Iris lovers might get together and form an association have culminated in action; and a meeting of those interested is called for January 29 in the Museum of the New York Botanical Garden. Dr. H. A. Gleason is acting as secretary and will be glad to communicate with any one who may be interested. The keen interest in the Iris assures a good attendance and delegates are coming even from California. It is suggested that a trial ground for Irises be established in connection with the New York Botanical Garden.

Mr. A. C. Hall, of Pennsylvania, confesses to an interest in the check list, the standard description, and standards Of excellence ; Mrs. Samuel H. Taft, of Cincinnati, writes: I will try to be a creditable member and know many who will join ; Mr. Mohr writes from California, An Iris section in each Botanical Garden would be a great help and create interest ;" these are but a few Of the many suggestions that have come in to us who are working for the society.

Mr. A. J. Bliss, the foremost breeder of the Iris in England, writes under date Of October 2nd :

Mr. Wister wrote to me that he was pretty sure they would succeed in forming an Iris Society. I hope so, but I quite agree with you that " * " it should certainly be international, and an annual journal and records and illustrations are quite possible in fact can be done very well. I should hope also that it would take up the work of registration of varieties with the power to judge, and so (as far as its authority goes and it should be unquestioned if rightly and fairly managed) be able to weed out obsolete and inferior ones. " ' Also I should like to see the classification tackled by a really wide and representative body such as the Iris Society would command."

This is a comprehensive program but the developments are much along these lines. Later he writes:

I shall be very pleased to do all I can to help. Do not hesitate to tell me anything definitely that I can do. I shall be glad to do my bit."

We have taken him at his word and I think that when our correspondence on standards of excellence, form Of description, and definition of descriptive terms is considered and acted upon by the proper committee, his work will receive its due credit. The article on classification in the December 20th issue of The Garden (English) and notes on registration in The Gardeners Chronicle will be of great assistance as well.

Mrs. Dean, of California, wrote in late September:

Do the French and English have Iris Societies? (They have not) If so, we could form one, and all three combine into an international. Conditions are so different on this coast that we would be up against it with trial grounds in the east. It would practically be Of little benefit to us, and I too am not so sure about trial grounds. * * Mr. Mitchell of Berkeley has been anxious to have a society formed in this state, and also suggested a trial at Berkeley at the University. I have not encouraged it much. but now there is prospect of an organization to cover the whole field, perhaps it can be worked out satisfactorily."

A NEW SOCIETY IS FORMED!

1920