

# Col. J. C. Nicholls, 1874-1961

Colonel Jesse Crook Nicholls, a well-known iris hybridizer a generation ago, died in Ithaca, New York, July 25, 1961.

During the thirties and early forties, Colonel Nicholls introduced approximately 50 varieties. The Award of Merit was conferred on his VALOR (1936), RED VALOR (1943), and MARY E. NICHOLLS (1949). For eleven years RED VALOR was listed in the Symposium, forerunner of the present Popularity Poll, and it was awarded the Rome Gold Medal in 1940.

Varieties introduced by the Colonel which received the award of Honorable Mention are: BLACK BANNER, BLUE GLOW, RED ROBE, SMOLDER, STORM KING, SUNMIST, and WEST POINT. Among other introductions were CABALLERO, CRYSORO, and MATA HARI.

He was a recipient of the AIS Hybridizer's Medal in 1941, the year it was instituted. In 1932, he served as regional vice-president for AIS Region 2.

In *Half Century of Iris* (1954), by McKee and Harrison, Colonel Nicholls is mentioned as one of the first American hybridizers to use the DOMINION strain in his hybridizing. Reviewing what was then known about iris chromosomes in Numbers 47 and 48 of the *Bulletin*, published in 1933, Nicholls was the first American hybridizer to call attention to the significance of chromosome number in iris breeding.

He was also a prominent hybridizer and introducer of peonies and a writer on horticultural subjects.

Colonel Nicholls was a graduate of West Point (1899). He became a specialist in heavy weapons and ammunition and commanded the Picatinny Arsenal, 1915-1918. After service in France in 1918, he was retired with a disability in 1920. Later, he was restored to active duty and served as professor of military science and tactics at Cornell University.

He is survived by a daughter and four sons, and four grandchildren.