

Autumn Twilight (G. Percy Brown '45)

M. Lowe, Virginia

Isarians have raised questions concerning Autumn Twilight's description and dating since its listing in Lloyd Austin's catalog. During the 40s, 50s and 60s this iris was widely grown and was a significant parent in reblooming iris hybridizing. It was not registered until 1971 and the listed introduction date and color description disagreed with some catalog data. This fostered speculation that a 1948 G. Percy



Libby Cross

AUTUMN TWILIGHT
IN LIBBY CROSS' VIRGINIA GARDEN

Brown registration, *August Twilight* was actually the iris sold and grown under the name, *Autumn Twilight*. As the chronology of these irises is complicated, a timetable of events will detail their story.

Mid 30s-early 40s: Dr. G. Percy Brown hybridizes the seedling that will be selected and named *Autumn Twilight*.

1945: *Autumn Twilight* is introduced to commerce through in-garden sales in G. Percy Brown's Barre, Massachusetts, *Everblooming*

Iris Garden.

1948: A seedling is selected, named *August Twilight* and registered. *This iris was never used in breeding nor offered for sale in 14 years worth of Brown's catalogs.* However, it may have been sold from Doc Percy's garden. (Doc Percy—the name used by iris friends.)

The parentage of this iris is listed as September Skies X Autumn Sunset.

Late 40s-early 50s: Lloyd Austin offers *Autumn Twilight* in his catalog, *Iris Color Guidebook*. Austin always listed pedigrees, when available. No pedigree was ever given for *Autumn Twilight* in Austin's catalog.

1952: Doctor G. Percy Brown issues his first *Iris Sale List*.

1953: G. Percy Brown offers a small, printed flyer or catalog, listing all his introductions and a few originations of others that did well in his garden. In this catalog, *Autumn Twilight* is listed with an introduction date of 1945 and is so listed in all subsequent catalogs through 1967.

1960: Lloyd Austin features a color photograph of *Autumn Twilight* in his catalog.

1971: Because of *Autumn Twilight*'s wide distribution and importance in breeding, Doc Percy is urged to register it.

1971: *Autumn Twilight* is duly registered with a parentage of: (Autumn Sunset X September Sparkler) However, Doc Brown, age 82, was then living in an apartment and did not have access to his records, thus at least two mistakes were made in the registration. The first is the listing of the introduction date as 1958 rather than the correct 1945. Second, the description of color is listed as: "S. brownish yellow; F. light yellow" instead of the correct description in Doc's '53 catalog: "S. brownish yellow; F. light yellow and lavender." The '55 catalog had an slightly expanded version: "S. brownish yellow; F. light yellow and pinkish lavender."

1971: A complete listing of G. Percy Brown introductions is listed in the March 1971 *Reblooming Iris Reporter*, edited by Edwin Rundlett. (This newsletter was started by Rundlett prior to formation of the Reblooming Iris Society and was a large factor in generating interest sufficient to make

possible a Reblooming Society. When Rundlett gave up the editorship, he requested that the name be changed and it was: from *The Reblooming Iris Reporter* to *The Reblooming Iris Recorder*.) The data given for *Autumn Twilight*'s pedigree was obtained from correspondence between Edwin Rundlett and Dr. Brown and agrees with that in the registration submission and the 1971 *R & I*. The date of introduction and color description listed in the *Reporter* article is in agreement with that in Doc Percy's catalogs.

1971: Dr. G. Percy Brown is awarded and receives the 1971 AIS Hybridizer's Medal.

1971: Doctor G. Percy Brown dies in December 1971.

1975: Lloyd Zurbrigg compiles the Reblooming Iris Societies' 1976 *Reblooming Iris Checklist*. Lloyd speculates that the 1948 registration *August Twilight* was in error and the 1971 registration *Autumn Twilight* was made to correct this error.

Early 1990s to present: Libby Cross has grown and distributed *Autumn Twilight* since the mid 60s. A picture of her AT illustrates this article and is indistinguishable from the *Autumn Twilight* photo in Lloyd Austin's catalog. A question of Libby's in an earlier *ROOTS* kicked off this investigation and a write-up from Libby furnished the framework around which the facts are organized.

Conclusion: *Autumn Twilight* was introduced in 1945, however conflicting date and color information has been published in catalogs, articles and the AIS *R & Is* and *Check Lists*. Two errors in the '71 registration can be shown using early G. P. Brown and L. Austin catalogs.

The most credible interpretation of the '48 registration would be that it was a seedling that never went further. We can be reasonably sure that there is, and has been, only one *Autumn Twilight*. Further, it is nearly certain that the cultivar pictured in Austin's catalog and growing in gardens today, is *Autumn Twilight* and is traceable from the late 40s to the present. 🌱

This article was made possible by help from Libby Cross, Keith Keppel, Scott Jordan and Sharon McAllister.

MBL

Treasurer's Report

September 1, 1996 to March 1, 1997

September 1, 1996 Funds in

SSFCU HIPS Checking Account\$12,959.26

CREDITS

Dues Deposited\$1,681.00
 Sale of Publications\$476.00
 Interest\$67.50
 Slides\$60.00
 Donation\$00.50
 Rhizome Sale\$136.48
 Teller Waiting\$2.00
 TOTAL\$2,423.48

TOTAL CREDITS\$15,382.74

DEBITS:

Membership\$267.72
 Slides\$33.87
 Rhizome Sale (53 Refunds)\$950.26
 L. Harder (Rhizome sale exp.)\$301.83
 N. Barnum (Fall 96 *ROOTS*)\$1,853.46
 Publications director expenses\$72.94
 Order for checks\$12.00
 Transfer to CD Life membership\$600.00
 Transfer to CD\$4,000.00
 Insufficient funds check\$5.00
 Dunn Rite Print. (*Bulletin 112*)\$810.84
 TOTAL DEBITS\$8,907.92

March 1, 1997

Funds in SSFCU HIPS

Non-taxable Checking Account.\$6,474.82

Funds in SSFCU HIPS

Non-taxable Savings Account\$36.91

Funds in SSFCU HIPS

Life Members CD\$3,569.66

Funds in SSFCU HIPS

CD (sale monies)\$4,054.07

TOTAL\$14,135.46

Verona M. Wiekhorst

Verona M. Wiekhorst
 Treasurer