

SNOW FLURRY

(Clara Rees — 1939)

THE EDITORS

PURISSIMA	}	ARGENTINA	}	CATERINA	}	<i>I. cypriana</i>
X		CONQUISTADOR		<i>I. mesopotamica</i>		<i>I. pallida</i>
THAIS				JUNIATA		
				<i>I. mesopotamica</i>		

The interest which gave impetus to this article stems from two sources. We became interested in George Warner's plea to keep in the gardens those "oldies" which in time have proved their ability to produce high class irises, and in his list of worthy parents. At the same time, we had determined that with an article on Clara Rees and SNOW FLURRY in the making, we would give some emphasis to white tall bearded irises in the January Bulletin. We began to check back on the pedigrees of whites, using as the basis of the study those whites which had won the DYKES, the AM, the CLARA REES CUP or had garnered a large number of votes in this competition, and whites which appear often in today's gardens or in the literature, including the 1967 Popularity Poll. We thus selected a list of 24 white irises for careful pedigree study.

While we knew, in an off-hand way, as many of us do, that SNOW FLURRY is a direct parent of two Dykes Medal winners, BLUE SAPPHIRE and VIOLET HARMONY, that it appears in the pedigrees of other Dykes winners, and is part of the line of many other award-winning irises, we were a little overwhelmed at how often it does appear. And parenthetically, we began to wonder how great the odds were that such an iris as SNOW FLURRY ever should appear. But that is another story.

In another article in this Bulletin Les Peterson has made an appraisal of SNOW FLURRY as a parent of whites, and it is not our purpose to duplicate his fine efforts, but rather to analyze the data from another direction.

SNOW FLURRY is the maternal parent of five white irises which have won the AM award: CELESTIAL SNOW, FLUTED HAVEN, NEW SNOW, SNOW GODDESS and TRANQUILITY. One cannot help but observe that in each case GLORIOLE appears on the other side of the pedigree. In the case of CELESTIAL SNOW the name GLORIOLE appears four times and CAHOKIA twice. FLUTED HAVEN, the most recent Rees Cup winner, brings in GLORIOLE through CLOUD CASTLE.

SNOW FLURRY also is the grandparent of five AM white irises. In the pedigree of PIETY, GLORIOLE appears again, along with WINTER CARNIVAL three times, GREAT LAKES twice and AZURE SKIES once. POET'S DREAM shows up with SNOW FLURRY and GREAT LAKES blood through REHOBETH. The 1967 AM winner GOODNESS also stems from REHOBETH, and shows GREAT LAKES twice in its makeup, along with CHIVALRY and MISSOURI.

WEDDING BOUQUET again shows the SNOW FLURRY-GLORIOLE influence, as does CLIFFS OF DOVER, but CAHOKIA is introduced into its bloodstream.

SNOW FLURRY also is the great-grandparent of five AM winning white irises. The 1967 Dykes Medal winner, WINTER OLYMPICS, with Dykes Medal winners ELEANOR'S PRIDE, BLUE RHYTHM, HELEN MCGREGOR, GREAT LAKES (twice) and SIERRA BLUE in its lineage, also brings in again REHOBETH and GLORIOLE. CURL'D CLOUD shows GLORIOLE, AZURE SKIES and CAHOKIA in its bloodline. CAHOKIA and GLORIOLE appear at least twice each in the makeup of IRISH LINEN. ARCTIC FLAME doubles up in its SNOW FLURRY background, as well as doubling up on its NEW SNOW-GLORIOLE and pink ancestor influence. HENRY SHAW, the first winner of the Rees Cup, shows PURISSIMA at least six times in its background, along with GLORIOLE, CAHOKIA, JANE PHILLIPS, HELEN MCGREGOR and GREAT LAKES.

SNOW FLURRY also is the great-grandparent of four whites which have won AMs. ARCTIC FURY, the 1967 AM winner, from HENRY SHAW, shows an intriguing assembly of the bloodlines of PURISSIMA, GLORIOLE, SPANISH PEAKS, JANE PHILLIPS and GREAT LAKES. BILLOWING SAILS shows much the same influence. CHRISTMAS TIME doubles up on SNOW FLURRY and GLORIOLE influence through NEW SNOW, but equally significant is that on the other side of the pedigree it is from a white sport of MAY HALL. WHITE PRIDE again traces back to the SNOW FLURRY, GLORIOLE, CAHOKIA and SPANISH PEAKS lines.

These are nineteen award winning irises of relative recency, and one cannot escape the conclusion that SNOW FLURRY crossed with certain bloodlines produces white irises of exceptional merit. Not that we would recommend a breeding program based on pedigree study alone; the irises used in the hybridizing program also must show those qualities the hybridizer seeks as the ultimate; but it would seem that the lesson is plain that the genetic structure of these bloodlines is capable of bringing into the third and the fourth and the fifth generations those qualities we seek.

What of the other five irises? In some cases the records are incomplete, but we would guess that in a couple of cases SNOW FLURRY does appear in the pedigree. SWAN BALLET comes from SPANISH PEAKS, with AZURE SKIES and SHINING WATERS on the other side of the pedigree. THE CITADEL shows up with GLORIOLE (twice) through CLOUD CASTLE and SENSATION (which also appears farther back in the bloodlines of many of these we have listed above), and JANE PHILLIPS and GREAT LAKES. PATRICIA CRAIG, on one side of the pedigree, shows an intense doubling and redoubling PURISSIMA, CHIVALRY and GREAT LAKES bloodlines through SLEIGHRIDE.

We were unable to trace in any authentic way the background of CHRISTMAS ANGEL and FROST AND FLAME.

As we look quickly at the pedigrees of leading blues, we are aware that the same tendencies are apparent, but that is another time and another story in another Bulletin.

Perhaps some day one of our leading hybridizers, with years of experience in making iris crosses and the study of pedigrees, can improve on this rather superficial study by pinpointing the contributions each of these ancestors has made for the improvement of the genus and go back even farther in the analysis of significant parents.