the Siberian IRIS

vol.6 no.3 Spring 1986



THE SIBERIAN IRIS

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Want to be useful?

Write the Chairman of the committee of your choice!



THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

It is with deep pride that I take office as President of the Society for Siberian Irises. The presidents before me have set very high standards that will be difficult to meet.

On December 15 we lost a good friend of Siberian irises and a member of our society. Dr. McGarvey was a charter member, hard worker, and leaves a huge void that we cannot easily fill.

This year has promise of being a banner year for Siberians. Three Siberians won the AIS Award of Merit last year and 13 won HMs. As you know, the AIS Board of Directors agreed with our recommendation and upgraded the Morgan Award to medal status. Nineteen eighty-six is the first year the Morgan-Wood Medal can be presented. Special thanks to Dave Silverberg and Region 19 for making the medal a reality. See the picture of this beautiful medal on page . The cost of the new medal was shared between SSI and Region 19. All of the work in dealing with the manufacturer was handled by Dave Silverberg. Dave, it is a real pleasure to have you on our team.

Our second book, an "encyclopedia" as Harry Kuesel calls it, will be printed this year. I am doing everything possible to have it ready at the San Jose National Convention. Everything seems to snowball on the encyclopedia. What originally seemed to be a simple task has grown to be a gigantic ordeal. What was estimated at 24 to 30 pages has grown by leaps and bounds to something that escapes definition at this time.

And now I want to thank Harry Kuesel for all of the help and guidance he has provided to send me off in the correct direction. Thanks again, Harry.

Regards,

Jim Foreman

1986 TREASURER'S REPORT TO MARCH 1, 1986

On hand, checking account......\$1975.95

Income

Dues income	\$ 1452.00
Book sales	654.61
Miscellaneous income	124.75
Interest income	297.19
Eastern auction (net)	700.00

Expenses

Printing	\$ 1220.84
Postage	593.22
Typing	308.45
Our share of medals	258.00
Copying	34.30
Extra deposit slips	2.30
Safety deposit box rent	5.00
Express and phone calls	95.98
Purchase C.D.	1000.00

Total expenses		\$3518.09
On hand (checking	account)	\$1686.41
		\$5204.50

On hand (certificate of deposit)......\$5000.00

GERMINATING SIBERIAN IRIS SEEDLINGS FOR EARLY BLOOM AND COLCHICINE-TREATMENTS--OR HOW TO FILL THE KITCHEN WITH OLD JARS AND OTHERWISE AMUSE YOUR GUESTS

Robert M. Hollingworth

A number of people have asked about how Judy and I go about germinating our seedlings and treating them with colchicine. Our approach is a bit unusual although really not so original in its details. Colchicine treatments are closely based on the methods described by Dr. McEwen for inducing polyploidy in Siberians (e.g., see C. McEwen, Sib. Iris, Vol. 2 (8), 286-290, 1968, and Bull. AIS No. 223, 20-23, 1976) with the addition of a suggestion from Bee Warburton on using Clorox to sterilize the seeds. Armed with advice from these oracles, we have developed our own methods, as follows. Although these are described in some detail, there are probably several steps which could be modified, simplified, and generally improved. But, the methods below have worked for us now over several years and seem to have stabilized into a routine approach that may be worth sharing with you. In our hands this method has led to a much lower incidence of infection during germination than the filter paper method described by Dr. McEwen.

- 1. Seeds are harvested in late July or early August just before the pods split. After leaving the pods to dry with good aeration for several weeks in the house, the seeds are removed and placed in glass jars (spice, baby food, preserve or Mason jars, depending on the number of seeds in the cross which should not be much more than one layer deep in the bottom). The jars are closed tightly and placed in the refrigerator (not freezer) from mid-September for about three months. The seeds at this stage are dry.
- 2. Early in January the jars are opened and half filled with diluted bleach (Clorox). The bleach is normal strength (5.25% sodium hypochlorite) diluted at a ratio of one part bleach to five parts tap water. This treatment sterilizes the seed surface and the container. It also may speed germination by increasing the permeability of the seed coat and possibly destroying germination inhibitors. After 12 to 24 hours, the bleach is drained off the seeds and they are washed two or three times with water that has been "sterilized" by boiling for about 20 minutes and cooling under a cover. The jar is left sealed and half full of water. Over the next week the sterile

water is changed every one-two days before finally draining until the jars are almost dry.

- 3. The jars are kept closed at room temperature (65-75° days and 60° nights in our case) with typical kitchen lighting. The seeds begin to germinate within 7 to 10 days. Generally germination is well advanced within a month, but in some cases (particularly a few tetraploid crosses) three months may pass before germination begins—be patient. It is beneficial to rinse the seeds occasionally with sterile water, especially if the small amounts of residual moisture in the jars become brown or murky, or if the seeds start to dry out. After germination is established, the jars are placed around a 100-watt incandescent light bulb which is on 24 hours a day.
- 4. Most jars remain sterile under these circumstances, but a few will develop an infection-generally fungal. This can be cured in most cases by re-adding sterile water and shaking gently with a few grains of Benlate (benomyl fungicide). The Benlate appears to have no adverse effects on germinating seedlings, even in considerable overdoses. After a few hours, the fungicide suspension is removed and the seedlings washed once briefly with water and redrained. This can be repeated if necessary and should handle most problems.
- 5. At this stage, you can either move to the colchicine treatments or simply leave the seeds growing in their sealed system before planting up. In the latter case they will prosper for several weeks growing on the energy reserves in the seed. They can be conveniently transferred to flats when the shoot is one to two inches high. The method used to obtain early maturity in the seedlings has been described by Dr. McEwen (Bull. AIS, No. 203, 65-66, 1971).
- 6. Seedlings are planted out in plastic flats with preformed pots (Growing Systems Inc. or equivalent from Gloeckner Co., 15 East 26th Street, New York, NY 10010)—pots with a 1 7/8 inch top diameter that come 51 to a 12- by 20-inch flat work well. A typical peat moss-based semi-sterile soil mix (Jiffymix, Pro-mix etc.) which contains some starting nutrients and has a pH between 6.0 and 6.5 is used. Because we have hard alkaline water in our region (pH 7.7) we add a small amount of hydrochloric acid to lower the pH to about 6.5 when watering. Most places blessed with better water will not need to do this. Miracid or any other soluble complete fertilizer can be given every week or two to maintain good growth. We are fortunate enough to have a small attached greenhouse and this is where the seedlings are grown from February through to April, under the benches with additional fluorescent lighting. However, a heated basement with some

fluorescent lighting for plants should also work. The plants are moved outside to harden off in April for lining out in late May. By then with good growth they should be 6 to 10 inches high and in some cases are even throwing side shoots.

Colchicine treatments are conducted essentially along the lines described by Dr. McEwen. Germinating seeds are selected as soon as the radical is clearly elongated (about 5 mm) and are wrapped loosely together inside several layers of cheesecloth wetted with sterile water and kept inside the germination These seeds are inspected daily for the first signs of emergence of the tiny green shoot. At that stage they are transferred to small jars, colchicine solution is added (generally 0.04%), and the jar is closed and placed under the incandescent lamp for six to nine hours. The colchicine solution is discarded, the seeds are washed at once a couple of times in tap water, then soaked with two or three changes of water over the next 24 hours to remove the excess colchicine. After draining the last wash water, they are to be left, sealed in the jars, for two or three weeks before planting. Infection at this stage is extremely rare. This delay has several advantages over immediate planting—the larger seedlings are much easier to handle and plant, and it is easy to see which have been affected by the colchicine treatment by the stunted "onion—like" swollen shape of the shoot. If desired seedlings growing normally and lacking this clear effect can be discarded as unlikely to yield polyploids. Severe damage to the growing tip of the root will also be observable. We do not discard these root will also be observable. We do not discard these seeds routinely, but this might be desirable—or the root tip could be excised, perhaps leading to the regeneration of a more normal root with better growth potential. The treated seedlings are planted as described before, but in flats with smaller pots (96 per flat). Many will die, but eventually a normally organized shoot will appear in the survivors and growth will proceed. Many will show a degree of tetraploidy as judged by the plant's growth characteristics, pollen size, and ability to cross with established tetraploids. Some will be fully tetraploid. A point worth noting is that different crosses vary in point worth noting is that different crosses vary in their responses to colchicine. The cited amount of 0.04% is a good starting point, but by delaying the planting of the treated seedlings, one can observe the effects of the initial treatments. If too few seedlings are responding, a rise to 0.05% or 0.06% is needed; more frequently the effect is too extreme at 0.04%, with every seedling severely stunted and probable survival low. In this case 0.03% should be tried on later batches. We look for a concentration where perhaps 20% of the seedlings are unaffected while others are strongly stunted and deformed. This ability to check progress is even more important in

trying for tetraploidy with new types of irises; e.g., we are still looking for a low enough dose to treat I. tectorum seedlings which seem to be extremely sensitive to the toxic effects of colchicine.

Since colchicine is not routinely available and has some potential human toxicity (including possible carcinogenicity) which necessitates considerable care in its use, a more readily available and less toxic alternative would be useful. The herbicide Treflan (active ingredient of Preen) acts on plants in the same way as colchicine by preventing the separation of chromosomes at cell division. Seedlings poisoned with Treflan look just like the colchine-treated seedlings—with stunted, swollen shoots and root tips. We are currently running some tests with Treflan in this area and I will report back if anything promising results.

8. This method works well for germinating some other types of irises. We have had success using it with I. laevigata, I. setosa and I. tectorum, but not with Pacific Coast Natives or with Louisianas.

All this may seem picky and time-consuming. To some degree it is. Inducing tetraploidy necessarily involves more fiddling around than simply growing up seedlings. However, even for those who do just want to grow up a few seedlings from some bee pods (and isn't that how we all got started?), the "in-the-jar" method has something to offer. You can watch the whole process as it unfolds, and you will know at once what has and hasn't germinated; and if, like us, you have a limited area available for growing seedlings, you will know early in the spring just how many seedlings of what kind you will have for lining out and what space will be needed. Also, you will probably see the seedlings flower earlier. The percentage of plants raised in this fashion that flower one year after planting out (two years after the initial cross is made) varies with growing conditions but has ranged from 25% to 65% for us. This gives a terrific start in evaluating the next generation.

NEW BOOKS

Volume I, <u>Techniques for Plant Propagation and</u>
Breeding, by David Evans.

Volume II, Handbook of Plant Cell Culture (Crop Species), by William R. Sharp, David Evans and Yamata. \$45.00.

Macmillan, Front & Brown Streets, Riverside, New Jersey 08370; 866 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10022 (1-212-935-2000)

SOURCES FOR SIBERIAN IRIS

The following is a list of sources for purchasing Siberian Irises. This list was compiled by Anna Mae Miller due to many requests by members of the robins she directs. (Ed. note: If anyone can add to this list, drop me a card with name and address of source, and we will add it to the list.)

ADAMGROVE Eric & Bob Tankesley-Clarke Rt. 1, Box 246 California, MO 65018

AITKEN'S GARDEN 608 NW 119 St. Vancouver, WA 98685

BELLAGAMBA'S IRIS GARDENS 11431 Old St. Charles Bridgeton, MO 63044

BORBELETA GARDENS, INC. 15974 Canby Ave., Rt. 5 Faribault, MN 55021

BUSSE GARDENS 635 East 7th St. Route 2, Box 13 Cokato, MN 55321

CARROL GARDENS P.O. Box 310 Westminster, MD 21157

CHEHALEM GARDENS Tom and Ellen Abrego P.O. Box 693 Newberg, OR 97132

COOPER'S GARDENS 212 West County Road C Roseville, MN 55113

ENSATA GARDENS 9823 E. Michigan Ave. Galesburg, MI 49053 GEORGE C. BUSH 1739 Memory Lane Extd. York, PA 17402

HILLSVIEW GARDENS 22714 SE Borges Rd. Gresham, OR 97030

ILLINI IRIS
D. Steve Varner
RR 3, Box 5
N. State Street Rd.
Monticello, IL 61856

IMPERIAL FLOWER GARDEN 202 N. 4th St., Box 255 Cornell, IL 61319

JOE PYE WEED'S GARDEN Marty Schafer & Jan Sacks 45 Elm St. Bedford, MA 01730

LAURIE'S GARDEN Lorena M. Reid 41886 McKenzie Hwy. Springfield, OR 97477

McMILLEN'S IRIS GARDEN RR #1 Norwich, Ontario NOJ 1PO

MELROSE GARDENS 309 Best Road South AA Stockton, CA 95205

MILLER'S MANOR GARDENS Roger & Lynda Miller 3167 U.S. 224 Ossian, IN 46777

- continued on page 13



An Appreciation of Dr. William G. McGarvey

1904-1985

by Harry B. Kuesel

Dr. William G. McGarvey, Professor Emeritus, State University of New York (at Oswego) died on December 15, 1985. He was a native Pennsylvanian, who graduated from Ursinus College and from Temple University. He moved to Oswego, New York, in 1941 and became a pillar of the State University's Psychology Department for more than 30 years. He also was very active in AIS Region 2 serving as RVP and President of the Empire State Iris Society. He was also chairman of the AIS Syracuse Convention in 1958. He was an authority on judging standards for Siberian irises and also a past president of the Society for Siberian Irises.

With his wife Esther, Bill McGarvey helped maintain an iris booth at the annual New York State Fair and helped promote reblooming irises, especially those that rebloomed in early September when the fair was usually held. It was through this interest that he met Edwin Rundlett, who led an AIS Robin for many years. I first met Bill through this same robin in the mid-fifties. He started to concentrate on Siberian irises right after the 1958 convention, and registered 28 of them with the American Iris Society. He was always too involved in other activities to introduce them so I started to introduce them for him through Old Brook Gardens in 1963 and continued to work with him introducing Siberians until 1976 when I had to discontinue my commercial gardening activities.

Bill was very interested in applying Mendel's genetic theories and decided to work with Siberian irises because they were all diploid at the time he started, and he could more accurately predict the results. He was one of the first breeders to recognize that the basic reason Siberian irises showed no significant improvement in form for so many years was that they selfed very readily and the bumble bees always seemed to get there first. So he started a carefully planned line breeding program with Siberians, and Dewful, which won the AIS President's

Cup in 1970, was a direct result. It also went on to win the Morgan Award that same year. Perhaps the high point in his iris career is shown in the portrait showing him standing behind the President's Cup and displaying Dewful, Ego, and Super Ego, all Morgan winners shortly after he received this award, the first time ever given to a Siberian iris.

Bill was the first breeder to plan a program to develop pink Siberians by intercrossing White Swirl with red lines from Royal Ensign. His Augury was the first Siberian to even get close to pink, and it received the Morgan Award, followed by Pink Haze, a better pink, a few years later.

Then tragedy struck when Esther McGarvey died in 1977. Bill was griefstricken. But his will to live, and develop better Siberians was restored when he met and married Elsie in New Smyrna Beach, Florida, and he was back breeding better Siberians again. His very plush maroon red, Jamaican Velvet, was one of the best Siberians at the AIS Indianapolis convention last year.

Bill McGarvey was a very thoughtful, considerate, and friendly person who made his mark in the iris world, and we will miss him greatly.

Appendix: William G. McGarvey's Siberian Irises

(28 registrations, 22 of which have been introduced to date)

AUGURY, r. 1973, introduced Old Brook Gardens, 1974
BLUE BURN, r. 1965, introduced Old Brook Gardens, 1968
BLUE CHANTEUSE, r. 1975, introduced McGarvey, 1977
BLUE WILSON, r. 1972, introduced Old Brook Gardens,
1972

DEWFUL, r. 1965, introduced Old Brook Gardens, 1967 EARTHSHINE, r. 1969, introduced Old Brook Gardens, 1975

EGO, r. 1965, introduced Old Brook Gardens, 1966 ESTHER C.D.M., r. 1981, introduced McGarvey, 1982 FORETELL, r. 1969, introduced Old Brook Gardens, 1970 FORREST SCION, r. 1970, introduced Old Brook Gardens, 1970

GULLS WAY, r. 1975, introduced McGarvey, 1982 ID, r. 1965, introduced Old Brook Gardens, 1969

JAMAICAN VELVET, r. 1983, introduced Borbeleta Gardens and McGarvey, 1985

JANE BONSAL, r. 1975

JEWEL OF HAPPINESS, r. 1973

KING's FORREST, r. 1965, introduced Old Brook Gardens, 1969

LYDIA WINTER, r. 1976, introduced McGarvey, 1979

MAGGIE SMITH, r. 1976, introduced McGarvey, 1979

NELLIE E., r. 1963

PINK HAZE, r. 1969, introduced McGarvey, 1980

PINK SNOWTOP, r. 1969

RED PASSION, r. 1973, introduced Old Brook Gardens, 1974

ROANOKE's CHOICE, r. 1975, introduced Old Brook Gardens, 1976

ROBBIE RAYMOND's RED, r. 1983

SUPER EGO, r. 1965, introduced Old Brook Gardens, 1966 TEMPER TANTRUM, r. 1969

WING ON WING, r. 1969, introduced Old Brook Gardens, 1972

YANKEE DOODLE BOY, r. 1976, introduced McGarvey, 1979



Sources for Siberians....cont. from page 9

OLD DOUGLAS PERENNIALS Mrs. Ronald F. Miller 6065 Old Douglas Road Kalamazoo, MI 49007

PLEASURE IRIS GARDENS 425 East Luna St. Chaparral, NM 88021

SHIRLEY POPE Pope's Perennials 39 Highland Ave. Gorham, ME 04038 THE IRIS POND Clarence Mahan 7311 Churchill Rd. McLean, VA 22101

TRANQUIL LAKE NURSERY 45 River St. Rehoboth, MA 02769-1395

TSI ACCEPTING ADVERTISING

The Siberian bulletin will be accepting horticulturally related advertising with its Spring bulletin.

Acceptance of submitted advertising will be at discretion of the editor.

All advertising submitted must be camera-ready (blackand-white only!). If original art is to be returned, a self-addressed, stamped envelope of proper size must be enclosed with ad. The rates are as follows:

		• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	
Half page ad	$4\frac{1}{2}$ " x $3\frac{1}{2}$ "	•••••	\$30.00
Ouarter page	ad 41" x	1 3/4"	\$20.00

If you have any questions about advertising, please contact the editor before sending any art!

Note: Any photos to be used in ads should be shot at 75-line screen.

Publications

Back issues: All back issues will be \$1.50 each if available. Some of the early issues are no longer available. The Judging Standards should be ordered from the A.I.S. Checks for all publications, payable to the Society for Siberian Irises, should accompany all orders. Send to the Publication Office, Mrs. Ruth Wilder, 802 Camellia Road, Anderson, SC 29621 except for SIBERIAN IRISES, by Currier McEwen, which should be ordered from Mr. Julius Wadekampen, 15974 Canby Lane, Route 5 Fairibault, MN 55021. Price for this, by mail, is \$7.00 including postage and handling.

— From the Archives —

HISTORICAL NOTES

Currier McEwen

Recently I became interested in learning who the hybridizers of Siberian irises have been and something of their interests and practices. This article is the result. Except as noted below, the data presented in the two tables were derived from a detailed study of the Check List of Siberian irises, compiled by Peg Edwards and her helpers, which was published in four installments in The Siberian Iris Vol. 3, numbers 1, 2, 3 and 5, from the Spring Issue of 1970 to the Spring issue of 1972. Peg Edwards has confirmed that, with the exception of possible oversights, this first Check List includes all Siberians of record through 1960 and also most of those registered between 1961 1960 and also most of those registered between 1961 and 1970, but not all. I have therefore obtained the additional information needed to round out that decade from the lists of registrations in individual issues of The Siberian Iris and by consulting Peg Edwards. Only bona fide listings of recognized cultivars as shown in the Check List in capital letters have been counted. In the tables I have included all breeders and Siberians of record through 1900 as a group but after 1900 have listed them by decades. Table I gives the names of the hybridizers and, in parentheses after each name, the number of registrations* separately for 28 and 40 chromosome cultivars and tetraploids, and those from 'wide crosses' between 28 and 40 chromosome ones or between Siberians and irises of other series. The parentheses also show, by K, those from crosses for which both parents were known. If there is no K or indication of chromosome number in the parentheses these cultivars were of the 28-chromosome group and the parents were not known. I must emphasize that I have included among the cultivars of known parentage those in which the registration data show the parents as seedlings and not as named plants when it is clear that the hybridizer knew and selected the seedlings As an example I refer to the registration of many of his unnamed seedlings as parents and they are shown in the Check List merely as seedlings. However, it is known (2) that he used only seedlings which he selected as good parents for his purpose; in other words they were not 'bee' or 'natural' crosses.

In Table II the information in Table I is given in numerical form and in addition the percent of

hybridizers using known parents for all or some of their crosses, and the percent of cultivars derived from such crosses are recorded. It should be noted that in the data regarding hybridizers in this table those making wide and tetraploid crosses usually are included also in the columns for those working with 28- or-40 chromosome Siberians or both, with the result that adding all numbers for a given decade gives a figure larger than that in the 'Total No.' column.

Early History--McGarvey (1) has suggested that since most species of Siberian irises are native to Asia it is probable that the use of Siberians as garden subjects started there. However, we have no records to confirm this. The first Siberian iris species of record is I. sibirica, named by Linnaeus in 1753, followed by the other 28 chromosome species, I. sanguinea which was called I orientalis by Thunberg in 1794 and given its present, correct name by Donn in 1811. The other eight species, or presumed species, which comprise the 40-chromosome group of Series

 $\it Hybridizing \ Practices--$ The Check List reflects the fact that the establishment of the American Iris Society as the official agency for registering Siberian Irises did not occur until 1920 or very soon thereafter. Prior to that, cultivars were merely named and, sometimes, introduced. Indeed some listed after that date were introduced but never registered and others were registered several years after their Sibiricae followed between 1849 and 1933. Excluding these species, 17 Siberian irises are listed in the Check List as known before 1901 in association with the names of eight men. All of the 17 named cultivars were of the 28-chromosome group and probably all were selected or collected clones and not the result of planned hybridizing. The earliest of the 17 was SIBIRICA ALBA, recorded in 1809, but the name of the pioneer responsible for it is not listed. Next was the dwarf *I. sibirica* named ACUTA by Wildenow in 1813. This was followd by HAEMOTAPHYLLA (Fischer) in 1825, by NERTCHINSKIA (Lodd), a form of *I. sanguinea*, in 1832, and by TRIGONOCARPA (noted by Braun, Koch, and Bouche), a clone of *I. sibirica*, in 1853. Following a lapse of another 20 years, a new group of cultivars is recorded. Chief among them are those of Van Houtte who named six, including NIGRESCENS, in 1875 and '76, and of Dammann who named EUTERPE in 1874 and LEUCANTHA in 1894. The list concludes with COREANA. collected selected or collected clones and not the result of and of Dammann who named EUTERFE In 1674 and LEUCANTRA in 1894. The list concludes with COREANA, collected by Leichtlin in 1886, GEORGE WALLACE introduced by Wallace in 1894, and last but certainly not least the lovely white form of I. sanguinea, SNOW QUEEN, collected by Barr in 1900. It is noteworthy that plants bearing the names of at least four of these are still in commerce, namely ACUTA, NIGRESCENS, GEORGE WALLACE and SNOW QUEEN. and SNOW OUEEN.

introduction. By 1930, however, the practice of making introductions only after registration was well established.

A glance at Table I shows that most hybridizers through the years have registered only one or two cultivars and that single registrations usually were of plants resulting from natural crosses. This suggests that those registering them were not deeply involved in hybridizing Siberians but had planted seeds from some 'bee-set' pods and had been pleased with one or two of the seedlings. On the other hand, many growers were obviously seriously devoted to developing new cultivars. Among these were Perry and Gersdorff, each of whom named 49, and Mrs. Cleveland who introduced 47. No others in the period covered by this tabulation have come near those records but Wallace and Kitton each registered 21, Preston 20, McEwen 17, McGarvey 14, Spender 11 and Spofford 10; and eight others from 5 to 9. Gersdorff's record is particularly interesting because although he registered 48 only 2 of them appear to have been introduced.

Whereas the hybridizing efforts of most of those named in the Check List were very brief, some extended over two or three decades. Notable in this regard, as shown in Table I, were Cleveland, Dykes, Perry, Preston, Scheffy and Wallace.

Interest in 28 and 40 Chromosome Siberians—Table II shows that the 28 chromosome Siberians have been used far more than those with 40 chromosomes. Dykes named three cultivars involving 40-chromosome species in 1914 and Perry introduced 19 from 1922 to 1927 but thereafter only a very small fraction of those introduced yearly were of this type until those of Maurice Kitton and Doris Hansford in England in the 1961 to 1970 decade. A total of 435 cultivars is shown in the Check List through 1970. Of these, 342 or 80% were of the 28-chromosome group and only 20% were 40-chromosome Siberians.

The Use of Known Parents vs. Natural Crosses—The results of this analysis were particularly surprising to me. I had long assumed that the early hybridizers used only known parents but that later this practice tended to be ignored until the 1960s when the importance of making planned crosses was again realized. As shown in Table II the parents used for crosses were listed for none of the nine cultivars recorded for the decade 1901-1910, and for only three, or 11%, of the 28 listed for 1911-1920. Similarly only one (12%) of the eight hybridizers of that decade used known parents, and that one was Dykes. Subsequently (see Table II) the percentage of hybridizers using known parents increased steadily from about 25% for the

period 1921-1940 to 33% for 1941-1960 and 55% for 1961-1970. Moreover, as shown in Table II, the percentage of the resulting cultivars after 1920 varied surprisingly little and amounted to close to 50% or more of all cultivars listed in each of the subsequent decades.

It is interesting to note in the tables that crosses of known parents have been used far more often for the 40-chromosome group than for the 28-chromosome Siberians. As examples, both Dykes and Perry (see Table I) listed the parents used for their 40-chromosome crosses but not for the 28-chromosome ones, and this was true of other hybridizers also. In numerical terms 40% of the 342 28-chromosome Siberians registered between 1900 and 1970 had both parents listed whereas this was true of 82% of the 52 registered 40-chromosome ones. One may speculate that this difference in practice was due in part to the fact that in making the crosses of the 40-chromosome group the earlier hybridizers were consciously using different species and wanted to know if they would be compatible whereas the 28-chromosome crosses were usually made with familiar plants or seedlings. One would expect that Dykes and Perry as well as other hybridizers in later decades must have used known parents for their crosses of 28-chromosome cultivars just as they did for their 40-chromosome ones, but if so they were not recorded.

Waxing and Waning Interest—Table II illustrates also the varying degrees of interest in hybridizing Siberians since the turn of the century. Both the number of hybridizers and that of registrations rose steadily to a peak of 34 hybridizers who registered 123 cultivars in the 1931-1940 decade. Probably because of World War II, the numbers dropped sharply to 9 hybridizers and 20 registrations from 1941 to 1950. In the past two decades the numbers have gradually increased but by 1970 were still below the peak years.

Wide Crosses--This term is used for hybridizing efforts using species or subspecies which do not readily cross. For our purpose these can be considered under two headings: 1. crosses of 28- with 40-chromosome Siberians, and 2. those of Siberians with irises of other series. The first now of record was EETA, a seedling named by Dykes about 1914 although the exact date was not recorded, from a cross of I. sibirica x I. wilsonii. Three more of these crosses between 28- and 40-chromosome Siberians were recorded by Perry in 1922 and 1924 using compound names made up of the two species as follows: CHRYSOBIRICA, CHRYSOBIRICA GLORIOSA and CHRYSOBIRICA PURPUREA. Using the same system of naming, Wallace registered SIBULLEYANA in 1934. Two years earlier

Spender registered HELICON, a cross of a seedling from *I. chrysographes* by one derived from the 28-chromosome cultivar EMPEROR; and in 1943 he registered the hybrid AEGEA derived from the reverse cross. No further hybrids from crosses between 28- and 40-chromosome hybrids were noted until the 1960s when Kitton registered MOONSCAPE and McGarvey, FORETELL. The latter is of particular interest because it differs from the others named above in being fertile. Kitton also reported one from a cross of *I. forrestii* by ERIC THE RED (3) which was fertile but he lost it and it was not registered.

Registrations of hybrids resulting from crosses between Siberians and irises of other Series have been somewhat more numerous. Perry named two: LONGSIB, from I. longipetala x I. sibirica in 1925, and MARGOT HOLMES, from I. chrysographes x I. douglasiana in 1927. He also recorded a successful cross of SNOW QUEEN x I. hartwegii. Williams recorded LILLABELLE, from EMPEROR by I. versicolor in 1934 and Simonet registered ORIENTOSA from I. sanguinea x I. setosa in 1938. Two have been recorded as being hybrids between Siberian and Louisiana irises, namely CLARET, of Mrs. Wiswell in 1966, and GERALD DARBY, registered for Mr. Darby by Coe in 1967. However, Mrs. Wiswell subsequently reported that CLARET was from two 28-chromosome Siberians (4) and the registration was corrected accordingly. I believe some question has been raised also about the parentage of GERALD DARBY. One more such wide-cross hybrid, HOLDEN CLOUGH, was registered in 1970 by Patton as 'probably from I. chrysographes by I. pseudacorus.' This conclusion regarding its parentage was based on its physical characteristics but is merely conjectural because it was the result of a natural cross.

By far the greatest interest in hybrids from wide crosses has been in the so-called Cal-Sibes. The first of these, MARGOT HOLMES, which has been referred to above, was awarded the first British Dykes Medal in 1927. There was a long lapse of time before the modern interest in them developed, largely through the efforts of Jean Witt, Leona Mahood and Lorena Reid on the West Coast. Three were registered from 1966 to 1970, SWIRLING MIST by Witt and FAIR COLLEEN and SPACE CHILD by Mahood. In those crosses it seems natural that the Siberian parent has been a 40-chromosome cultivar since the Californicae also have 40 chromosomes. Only one cross of an iris of Series Californicae by a 28-chromosome Siberian has been registered, namely ROYAL CALIFORNIAN, from I. douglasiana x CAESAR'S BROTHER, by Lenz in 1955.

Tetraploids--The final topic which I will consider is that of tetraploid Siberians. The nature of tetraploidy and methods for inducing it are dis-

cussed elsewhere (5,6). The first one, registered as TETRAFOR by the late Max Steiger in 1964, was induced with colchicine from a clone of $I.\ forrestii$. Unfortunately it was lost during his long illness. At the same time McEwen (5) was developing tetraploidy in plants of the 28-chromosome group. The first of these colchicine-induced cultivars bloomed in 1962 but none was registered until 1969 when the level of second generation tetraploidy, i.e., seedlings from crosses of induced tetraploids, had been reached. Only three were registered by 1970 but more have subsequently been added.

I have little doubt that I have made errors of commission and omission in this report and will appreciate being informed of any mistake.

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3. 4.

5.

6. April 1974.

*In the early decades, cultivars were merely listed ones or had been introduced but not registered.

TABLE I. Hybridizers of Siberian Irises by Decades.

Barr (1); Braun, Koch & Bouche (1, listed);
Dammann (2); Fischer (1); Leichtlin (1); Lodd
(1); Van Houtte (6); Wallace (1). Probably Before 1901 most, perhaps all, gave names to selected or collected clones and did not make crosses.

1901-10 Barr (4); Perry (1); Van Wavern (1); Vilmorin (2); Ware (1).

1911-20 Dykes (K:40chr-2,Wl); Barnewitz (1, listed); Cleveland (9); Farr (1); Fryer (2); Drelage (1); Perry (16); Royal Tottenham Nurseries (1).

1921-30 Peckham (K:1); Norgan (K:1); Preston (K:15, Not:4); Perry (K:40chr-29,W6, Not:28chr-4);

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Berry (1); Birchfield (1); Bralliar (1);
Cleveland (22); Correvon (40 chr-1); Dykes
(3); Freeborn (1): Goos & Koenemann (1);
Koehler (1): Millet (1); Perry (28chr-4,
40chr-1); Simonet (1); Smith (28chr-1, 40chr-
2); Sturtevant (1); Ward (1-collected);
Wallace (2); Waterer (1).

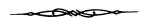
1931-40 Christie (K:28chr-1, 40chr-1); Craigie (K:4);
Gage (K:1, Not:1); Gersdorff (K:48); Loat
(K:40chr-1); Morgan (K:1, Not:3); Preston
(K:1); Spender (K:W-1, Not:28chr-1); Wallace
(K:40chr-6, W-1, Not:28chr-11); Chugai (1,se-
lected); Cleveland (16): Foerster (2); French-
Allen (1); Jennings (1); Kellogg (2); Kelway
(2); Nesmith (2); Nichols (1); Perry (2,se-
lected); J. Sass (1); Scheffy (3); Sturdevant
(2); Tennant (1); Vilmorin (1); Wade (1,se-
lected); Washington (3); Waterer (3); Wayman
(2); Whitney (1); Yeld (1).

1941-50 Craigie (K:2); Spender (K:28chr-2, 40chr-
2,W-1); Whitney (1); Auten-Schroeder (1);
Clevenger (1); Hall (1); Scheffy (6); Stone
(1); Wallace (1).

1951-60 Hodson (K:2); Hutchison (K:5); Kitton (K:1);
McCashin (K:1); Shinkle (K:1, Not:1); Stol1
(K:7); Cassebeer (3); Edwards (2); Kitton (2);
Marx (2); Neel (40chr-1); Steiger (1);
Streibach (1); Wheeler (1).

1961-70 Brummitt (K:6); Hager (K:2); Kitton (K:28chr-
10, 40chr-8,W-1); Knock (K:2); McCord (K:1);
McEwen (K:28chr-3, 40chr-2,T-3, Not:28chr-7,
40chr-2); McGarvey (K:28chr-10, 40chr-2,W-1,
Not: 40chr-1); Randall (K:1); Sensenbach
(K:1); Steiger (K:7-1, Not:28chr-1); Van de
Water (K:1); Varner (K:2); Wiswell (K:1,
Not:2); Ziepke (K:1); Carlson (1); Cassebeer
(5); Darby (W-1); Delany (2); Harder (1);
Mahood (40chr-1, W-2); Mize-Ruggles (40chr-1);
Patton (W-1); Peck (1); Reinhardt (1); Rich
(1); Spofford (10); Witt (40 chr-1).
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Numbers of registered or introduced cultivars for each hybridizer are shown in parentheses. 28chr means 28-chromosome group; 40 chr--40 chromosome group; W--wide cross; T--tetraploid; K--both parents known; Not--one or both parents not known. If K is not stated parents were not known; if chromosome number is not stated, the cultivars are of the 28-chromosome group.



It was rewarding to see a couple of items on our irises in the Fall 1985 issue of TSI. May I take a few moments to clarify a point or two about the reports? Jewelled Crown (82J2A19) is a colchicine—induced tetraploid with a deep "red" color, a strong gold and white blaze, and unusually flaring and ruffled parts—in fact the iris pictured at the top of the back cover of the Fall issue. Elsewhere in that issue it is described as white—not so, as you can see. A number of people have made nice comments about it and asked when Jewelled Crown will be introduced. As an induced (first generation) tetraploid we will have to make sure that the ploidy level is stable and that it doesn't revert to a diploid with time. So far it has looked good, but it will need a couple more years to make sure. The fact that it is proving excellently fertile both as a pod and a pollen parent for tetraploids is encouraging in this regard.

We were also excited to find that one of our siberian seedlings had won the first Melrose Cup. This is given for the best beardless seedling on the Region 14 (Pre-Convention) tour. The iris that won is another red, Lady Vanessa (2J2B8), a diploid sibling of Jewelled Crown. It is particularly satisfying that a Siberian was the first iris to receive this Award. The real accolades should go to the two hybridizers who provided the parents for this cross--Currier McEwen for Ruffled Velvet and Steve Varner for Showdown. With that kind of start it's hard to miss.

Bob and Judy Hollingworth

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Editor's Corner



I am finally managing to get this issue of TSI out and in the mail to you. It has been quite a struggle. It is only after much thought and considerable regret that I must resign as editor of TSI, after the Fall issue. TSI requires much more time than the typing of a page of copy, as some of you may know, and with the purchase of a 40 acre farmette in need of repair, road construction requiring relocation of over 600 iris this year and the balance next year, increasing responsibilities at work (50 miles away), as well as the normal interruptions, there just isn't time left over for TSI.

I have enjoyed the many letters I have received concerning TSI, offering support, comments and information.

I urge those of you who may have something of interest for TSI, to send it to the editor! It will make much less wor for the future editor if she doesn't have to write to you begging you for something to put in TSI.

I will still be looking for good slides of the following Morgan award winners: Tycoon, Eric the Red, Tropic Night, Blue Brilliant, Pirouette, Velvet Night, Dewful, Halycon Seas, Vi Luihn, Butter & Sugar, Steve Varner, Ann Dasch. Anyone who has a good slide please contact me so we can finish up the color section. Thank you.

Carolee



'DREAMING YELLOW' - Parent of 'Butter and Sugar'