

THE BULLETIN OF THE  
**HARDY PLANT**

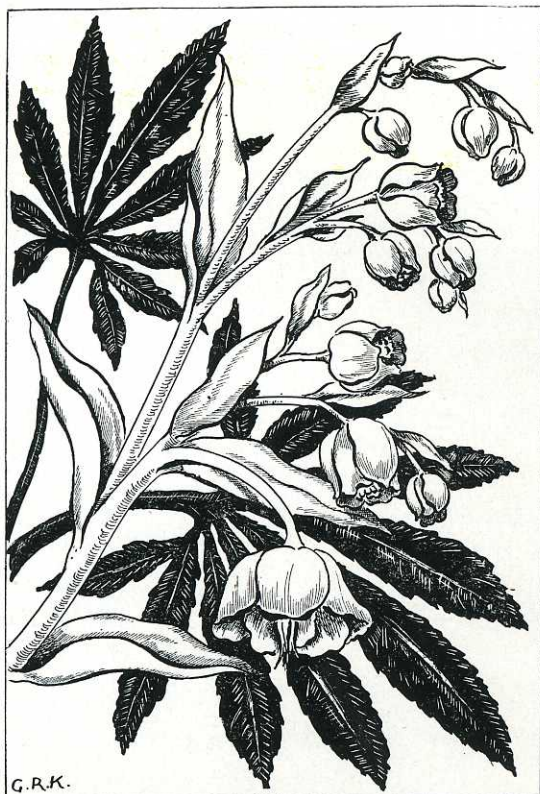
VOL I NO 4

SOCIETY

1958







## HELLEBORUS FOETIDUS

Many of our wild flowers are well worth garden room and *Helleborus foetidus* the stinking hellebore, or bear's foot is one of them. This plant thrives on chalky soils, but does equally well on clay soil. The drooping flowers are about an inch wide and the yellowish-green petals have a dull purple border. The flower stems are 1 to 2 feet high with dark evergreen foliage at the base. The name bear's foot is so called on account of the shape of its leaves, and foetidus from its smell. N.J.P.

*Drawing by G. R. Kingbourn.*

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*Our cover shows Digitalis Excelsior Hybrids, growing in the woodland at The Royal Horticultural Society's Gardens, Wisley.  
Photograph—Copyright Sutton & Sons, Reading.*

# THE HARDY PLANT SOCIETY BULLETIN

VOL I No 4

1958

EDITORIAL

## OFFICERS of the HARDY PLANT SOCIETY

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## AIMS OF THE SOCIETY

The aims of the Society are to further the culture and improvement of hardy herbaceous plants (excluding rock garden plants) and to stimulate interest in such plants both old and new.

## MEMBERSHIP

The yearly subscription (which includes the Society's Bulletins as published) is 12s. 6d. per year, or £1 for joint membership of man and wife, U.S.A. \$2.00. Life membership is £15. Membership also includes free entry to any shows which the Society may hold.

'PROGRESS IS THE DEVELOPMENT OF ORDER', said Anguste Comte, the French philosopher, who died in 1857—Now in 1957 on March 5, The Hardy Plant Society was born, and by its first birthday it had over 900 members. The Hardy Plant Society has developed and it has now achieved order for on March 15, at the Royal Horticultural Society, New Hall in the Lecture room 42 members unanimously adopted the Constitution, subject to a few minor amendments—which are with this bulletin and can be stuck in on page 8 of your copy of the Constitution.

During the year members can pay visits to various gardens both private and public. It is hoped that as many members as possible will take advantage of these visits (see p. 16).

Also note the announcement on page 17 about hardy plant classes which are to be held in the Royal Horticultural Society, New Hall on July 1 and 2, and September 16 and 17. Further particulars will be given about these classes at a later date. If any member has had previous experience in organising flower shows and has the time to help would they please let me know.

Mrs. Bloom, our first Honorary Treasurer who so valiantly took on this onerous task, has wished to resign, so we have a new Treasurer, Mr. J. Amos. All will, I know, wish to thank Mrs. Bloom for her good work in looking after the society's finances. To all those who have not paid their subscriptions for 1958, I say please let Mr. J. S. Amos of 180 Orchard Way, Shirley, Croydon, Surrey, have it without delay.

Hon. Secretary

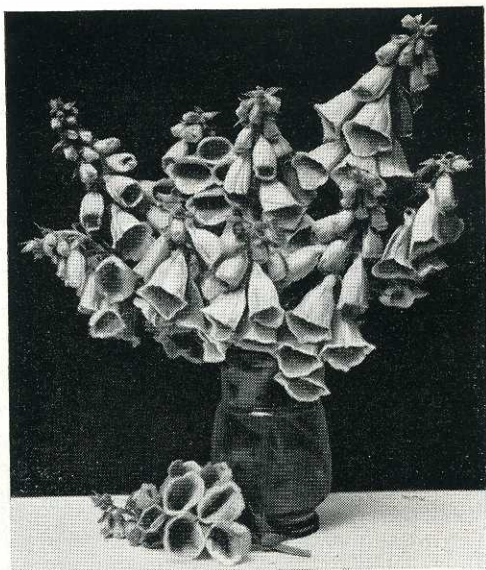


# THE FOXGLOVE FAMILY

A. P. BALFOUR  
F.L.S., V.M.H.

A hybrid foxglove raised at The John Innes Horticultural Institution, *Digitalis* × *mertoniensis*, it is 12-18 ins. high and has crushed strawberry coloured blooms.

Photo:—Copyright  
Sutton & Sons, Reading.



THE GARDEN FOXGLOVE is derived mainly from the native plant *Digitalis purpurea* and is grown in gardens in all parts of the country.

*Digitalis purpurea* is a very hardy plant and will grow in widely differing localities although it thrives best in open woodlands where there is moisture, abundant humus, and a well-drained, open soil. The common foxglove is almost too well known to require description. It is biennial, the open large-leaved rosettes, pale green in colour, being quite decorative in winter. In May they throw up their flower spikes sometimes 5 feet in height, and these come into full flower in June and July. The tubular flowers are borne all the way up the stem. They are mostly confined to one side of the spike which droops at the tip, making a graceful and attractive picture. The colour is pale-purple with an occasional white.

As so often happens when a wild plant is brought into cultivation in our gardens, keen gardeners noticed variations from the original form both in

colour, size of flower and habit of plant, vigour and so on. The most interesting of these were carefully selected and bred true, thereby greatly increasing the value of the plant for garden purposes.

In addition to our native foxglove many other species of *Digitalis* are to be found in Europe, W. Asia and N. Africa. Some of these species are well worthy of a place in the connoisseur's garden, while others have been crossed with *D. purpurea* to form beautiful new garden plants.

A full list of the best of the garden varieties, species and hybrids is given below.

*D. purpurea gloxinoides* The Shirley was first raised by the Reverend Wilks and has been improved by selection since. The extra-large flowers are borne on vigorous spikes and have a beautiful range of colours consisting mainly of shades of pink, rosy-purple and white, all the plants being richly spotted with dark-brown blotches.

*D. purpurea* Pure White is a handsome, vigorous variety, very attractive

Some typical spikes of the Excelsior strain of foxgloves, which have a remarkable range of colours from pink to pure white and cream.

Photo:—Copyright Sutton & Sons, Reading.

in patches in the woodland, especially when it can be caught by sunshine. A fine strain of this was raised by Mr. Dalrymple of Bartley and breeds true.

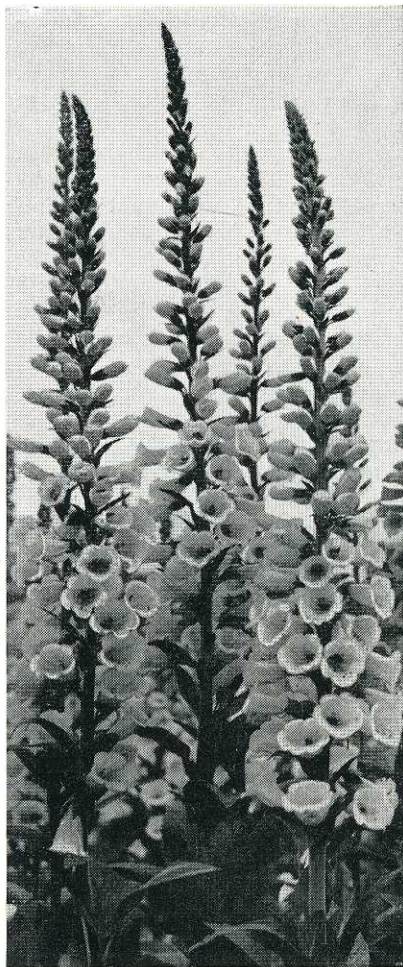
*D. purpurea* Sutton's Giant Primrose—a very beautiful variety with flowers pure-primrose-self associating perfectly with seedling belladonna delphiniums, especially as they flower exactly at the same time. This was first offered in 1904 and is of obscure origin.

*D. purpurea* monstrosa strain carries spikes terminated by large petunia-like flowers and produces mixed colours.

Sutton's Rose, Pink and Cream Shades—This attractive mixture, well described by the name, was raised by crossing a good strain of The Shirley with Sutton's Primrose.

Sutton's Apricot—This is a selected strain of *D. lutz* or *lutzii*. *D. lutz* received an A.M. from the R.H.S. when shown by the late Sir William Laurence, Bt. on June 15th, 1926. It was stated to be a hybrid between *D. purpurea* and *D. lutea*. Sutton's Apricot is a vigorous growing strain of this hybrid. The plants throw tall slender spikes, the colour of the flowers is unique being a soft apricot pink. This is one of the most attractive garden varieties.

Since the war a distinct mutation in *D. purpurea* arose in the U.S.A., a pure white form known as Hyacinth-flowered. The spikes were pure-white, not very vigorous with the flowers borne evenly all round the stem and standing horizontal instead of drooping. This was crossed with the existing varieties of foxglove at Sutton's nurseries resulting in the production of the strain known as Excelsior hybrids. The spikes are very vigorous, in fact this is by far the most vigorous strain in existence to-day—spikes



8-10 feet high having been reported from gardens. The spikes remain upright even to the tips, giving a quite distinct appearance to the plant, the tall, bold, vigorous spikes almost resembling *eremurus*.

This habit is very distinct from the smaller more graceful drooping spikes of the wild woodland plant and its garden varieties and the two should always be kept quite apart in gardens. Another feature of the Excelsior strain is the remarkable range of colours,



including some good pinks. In addition to this fine mixture there is a pure white and cream available, named Excelsior White and Excelsior Cream respectively.

*D. × mertoniensis* is a hybrid, (*D. ambigua* × *D. purpurea*), raised by the John Innes Horticultural Institution. The rather shiny ovate lanceolate leaves reflect *D. ambigua* and the shortish spikes reach a height of 12-18 inches with wide bells of crushed strawberry colour—a distinct shade in foxgloves. The plant is a short-lived perennial.

Other species worth growing in gardens are *D. ambigua*, 2-3 feet, small yellowish flowers mottled with brown;

*D. lutea*, 2 feet, yellow flowers in many-flowered one-sided racemes; *D. orientalis*, tall woolly spikes, 3-4 feet, densely covered with small globular flowers with a prominent lip, off-white in colour with rusty reticulation. This is useful in the wild garden and in unusual decorating.

Sow all varieties in May or June in the nursery garden for flowering the following year. The seed is very fine, therefore sow very thinly and only just cover. Transplant into nursery lines as soon as seedlings can be handled, and plant out into flowering positions in the autumn. The ideal is a well-drained moist soil with abundant humus.

## IRIS INNOMINATA

David Barton

*When reading this interesting article, readers should bear in mind that Mr David Barton, one of our members, lives in British Columbia.*

WHOEVER COINED the phrase, "The iris is the poor man's orchid", might have been thinking of *Iris innominata*, which is generally considered the most easily grown and colourful of all the species. *Iris innominata*, which still holds on to its paradoxical name meaning, "not named" is found growing in a rather remote and wild part of the state of Oregon. Curiously enough it appears to be equally well at home in moist shady places as well as on dry sunny banks or rock outcroppings. This species was only brought into cultivation and recognized botanically as recently as 1928.

It is found in a fairly wide range of colours from cream through shades of lavender and wine to bronze and apricot and the flower stem is seldom taller than eight inches. During the last few years a new strain has been developed by Dr Mathew C. Riddle of Portland, Oregon. Dr Riddle, who is a director of the American Iris

Society and extremely well known among primula and iris hybridists, has collected just about all the colour forms there are in the wild. Over the years he has hand pollinated many plants and has developed a strain that has a far wider colour range. He has even improved the form and size of the flower, but without spoiling its beauty and daintiness.

In its wild state it has to compete with a mat of other plants which naturally causes its growth to be stunted, but in cultivation the flower stem is usually 12 to 15 inches and the foliage is evergreen. The flowering period, here in British Columbia, starts, as a rule, in late April and lasts for a month or more depending on weather conditions. A very hot spell will shorten the season of bloom considerably unless some of the plants are being grown in partial shade. Actually the plants give the greatest show of bloom if they are grown in full sun,

This lovely species, *Iris innominata*, is easily grown from seed, and many beautiful forms can be raised, varying from lavender through to orange, apricot and yellow.

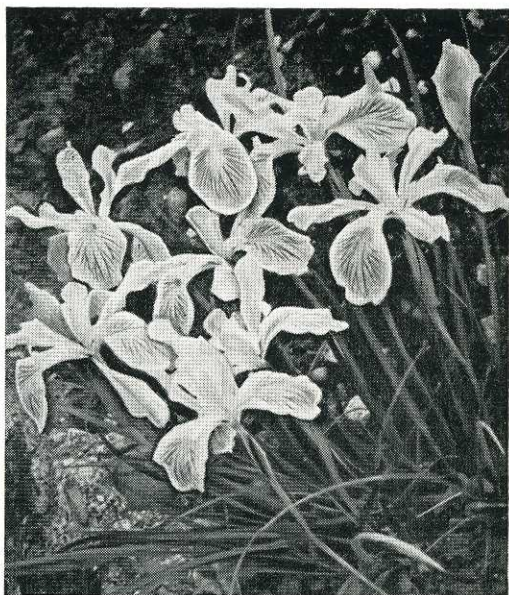
Photo:—H. Smith.

but they will tolerate some shade and so extend the season.

We have some clumps that are nearly three feet across and have not been moved for four years; last year some of them had well over two hundred blooms each. It is interesting to note also that they are growing in quite the poorest soil we have and they get some shade from an enormous tree of *Arbutus menziesii* some sixty feet high and only twenty feet away. Furthermore, they get very little attention during the year, which shows very clearly that they are not fussy plants.

*Iris innominata* and other western natives (sometimes called the Californian group) will not tolerate poor drainage. What they really appreciate is a loose gravelly soil with a reasonable amount of humus. No member of this group likes animal manure or lime, and all artificial fertilizers should be avoided.

Care must be taken to divide the plants at the right time of year otherwise they will most certainly die. In this southern part of Vancouver Island which has a climate comparable to the south of England, but not so wet, we find that early spring is the very best time for division and replanting. This can be done, but not always so successfully right after they have flowered. However, it is often then quite warm and very dry and unless precautions as to copious watering and shading are taken, there are bound to be losses. It is far better



to divide in the very early spring just as the plant is beginning to make new growth and in that way be sure of complete success.

Some books recommend dividing in the autumn; this may be all right in some localities but it does not work here as the ground is usually in a very dry state and the plants dormant. There must be signs of new growth for plants to withstand the shock of such a major surgical operation. It is a good thing to divide old clumps after they have been in one place for more than four years as by that time they are not, as a rule, producing such a prolific crop of flowers as the younger plants. It is usually possible to tear them apart by hand and that method is preferable to using a knife.

Plants come very easily from seed, sown preferably in the autumn, either in open ground very thinly in rows six inches apart, or better still in boxes. I prefer the latter method, using a mixture of one third loam,



one third sharp sand, and one third horticultural peat. The seed should be sown thinly, as germination is usually close to 100 per cent and it should be just covered with fine soil lightly pressed down. Then the box is covered with a sheet of glass or plastic to protect it from downpours of rain and inquisitive birds. Germination starts in the spring and by that autumn the seedlings should be about four inches high.

Some books recommend that the little plants be put out in their permanent positions when they are only two inches high. However, from practical experience I have found that this is too risky and it is better for the seedlings to remain in their box until spring; then when they are planted out they immediately start into growth and there is no transplanting shock at all. One can expect these seedlings to flower the second spring from date of sowing.

For those who have nothing but an uncharitable clay soil and poor drain-

age, but would like to grow these lovely plants, I would suggest that a specially prepared bed, preferably raised, and one that had been designed to provide very good drainage, is well worth the trouble. A packet of seed from a reliable grower (there is one in East Anglia who took all the seed we could spare this year) will provide a fine number of plants and they will take no longer to flower from seed than a great many other hardy perennials.

Considering how easy these plants are to grow and how rewarding, it is rather surprising that one does not see them more often in gardens, and I can only suppose that it is because they are not well enough known. There are far too many conservative gardeners who are frightened to try something they have never seen. It is my earnest hope that the Hardy Plant Society will do much to break down these old barriers and make for less duplication and more diversity in members' gardens.

## HARDY PLANTSMEN PAST AND PRESENT

AMOS PERRY, F.L.S., V.M.H.

*There is no-one better qualified to write about the late Amos Perry, than his daughter-in-law, Frances Perry, F.L.S., who herself is also an acknowledged authority on hardy plants and water plants.*

THE LATE AMOS PERRY came of a long line of nurserymen for his father, grandfather and great-grandfather before him were all growers of hardy plants. The family came from Exeter and seem to have long made the name Amos peculiarly their own, for it has carried on (usually through the eldest son) right through the years.

Amos Perry's father, Amos Isaac Perry, was intended for a change of vocation and for a time became a schoolmaster in the West Country.

But he too hankered to grow plants and after a series of changes came in the mid-19th century to Tottenham, where eventually he became a partner in the famous firm of T. S. Ware.

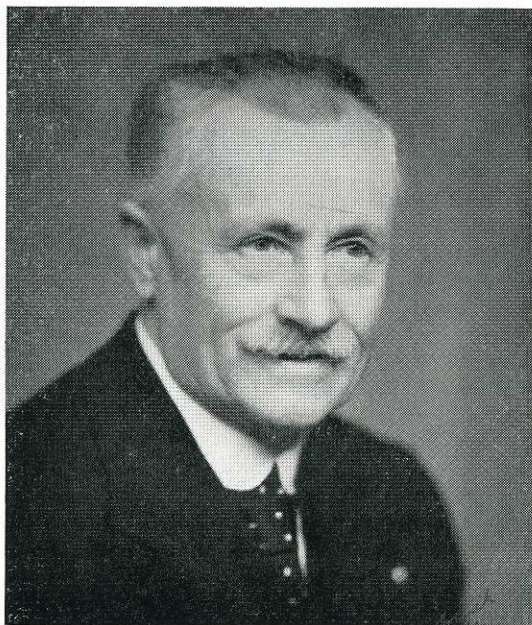
The Amos Perry of this biography however was born at Tottenham on August 8th, 1869, and right from early boyhood knew that horticulture was to be his vocation. A love of flowers seems to have been an inherent trait which he must satisfy and he used to say that he never felt the slightest urge



Amos Perry, F.L.S., V.M.H., was born at Tottenham on August 8, 1869, and died on August 21, 1953.

to adopt any other calling. Consequently, after leaving Tottenham Grammar School, his father had him apprenticed—he was not yet partner to T. S. Ware of Hale Farm Nursery. At that time this was one of the largest general nurseries in the country and stretched for some miles along the marshes adjoining the River Lea at Tottenham. Many famous nurserymen served their apprenticeship at Ware's, including the late T. Reuthe of Keston, and the Dutch B. Ruys of Dedemsvaart and Van Santen.

Here Amos Perry worked through the several sections, until training completed he became foreman of the bulb department. Here it was that the joys and fascination of growing miscellaneous rare bulbs first revealed themselves and he never lost the urge for growing them all through his long life.



About this time he regularly attended Covent Garden market and there met the great carnation specialist George Beckwith. On the latter's inducement he decided to leave Ware's and start in business on his own account as a carnation grower. This was about 1889. Eventually his father joined him and in 1890 the two secured four acres of land at Winchmore Hill and procured from Beckwith 1500 large forced plants of border carnations, old plants 5-6 ft. high in some cases but packed with layers. This was the start. It is interesting to note that the consignment included plants of Mrs. Frank Watts (named after the wife of one of the pioneer growers in the Scilly Isles), a variety which was in great demand and at that time considered to be the best white carnation ever introduced.

It was the Perry's intention to grow carnations for the wholesale trade, but

Amos Perry, as a young man in the old nurseries at Winchmore Hill about 1897.



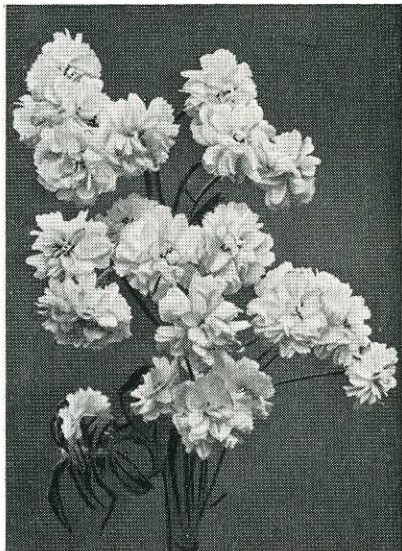
meantime they were gradually acquiring a collection of miscellaneous bulbs and eventually the latter claimed prior interest. In later life Amos Perry seems to have turned entirely against carnations. Several times at Chelsea or the R.H.S. Hall I was given carnations but he would not travel home with them. They had to come with someone else or in the van later. 'He wouldn't be seen with such rubbish.

Early collections of bulbs came from such men as the late Max Leichtlin of Baden Baden, Louis Van Houtte of Ghent, De Graaff of Holland and Dr. Regel of St. Petersburg, a famous gardener then in control of the finest collection of plants in Europe.

About this period also they received a large consignment of plants from the Chilean Andes, collected by a French political refugee. Many were seen for the first time in Britain. They included *Tecophilea cyanocrocus* and its variety *T. leichtlini*, *Placea ornata* and various stenomessons.

In 1890 Amos Perry first met George

Yeld. This grand old man of hemerocallis fame was even then interested in the genus and his enthusiasm sparked a flame which the younger man was never to lose. The two remained friends and correspondents for years, and in 1922 Yeld selected a *H. thun-*



ABOVE—*Achillea ptarmica* Perry's White, it received an Award of Merit H.R.S. in 1912.

LEFT—*Papaver orientale* Mrs. Perry, opened its first rose-pink bloom in 1906, and received an Award of Merit, R.H.S., in the same year, and a Silver Gilt Floral Medal in 1912.

Photo:—Amateur Gardening.

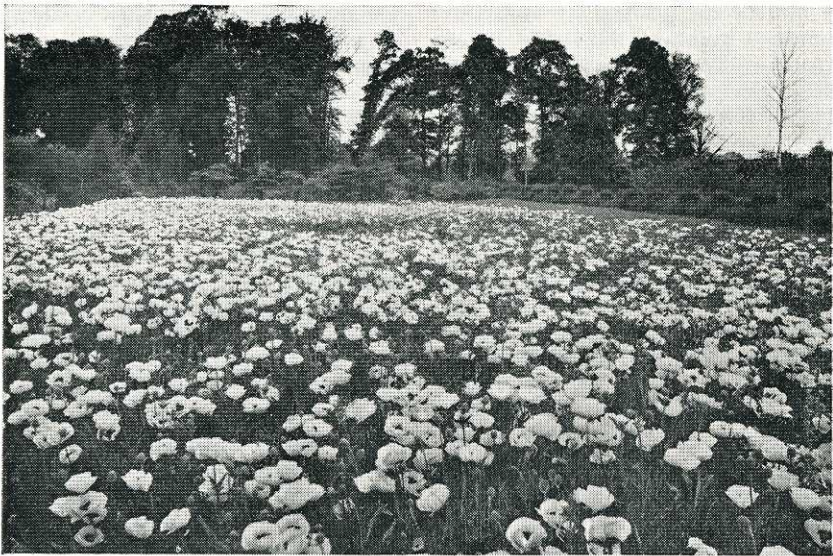
*bergii* × *cypriana* seedling from the thousands then flowering at the Enfield Nurseries (to which they moved in 1903). This was named George Yeld and is still a popular variety.

But other hardy plants also claimed interest. I have never met a man—or woman—with such a keen eye for a plant. During his years as a nurseryman no fewer than 173 plants\*

\* A number which does not take into account First Class Certificates and other awards from Societies at home and abroad.







For nearly fifty years *Papaver orientale* Perry's White has held its own. Here is a field of this famous Oriental poppy at the Hardy Plant Farm, Enfield. This variety received an Award of Merit, R.H.S., at the International Exhibition in 1912.

submitted to the Royal Horticultural Society received an Award of Merit. These were not always raised by himself it is true, but they were, however, introduced or reintroduced or discovered by him.

His tastes were catholic. Water-plants, hardy ferns, perennials, rock plants, bulbs and chrysanthemums; he was interested in them all. His enthusiasms were lively and infectious. As one interest palled another took its place—rubellum chrysanthemums, tropical fish, underwater oxygenators, lilies, insectivorous plants. He had a great capacity for work and would read far into the night. Saturdays and Sundays he was still amongst his beloved plants; even holidays were taken far from haunts of man. Into the Arctic wastes, Lapland and Russia he went looking for plants. At 3 a.m. one day, starting a trip across a Lappish lake the boatman wearily said, 'We had one other Englishman here once—he also was mad—his name was Kingdon-Ward'.



Ever since *Catananche coerula major* received its Award of Merit, R.H.S. in 1935, it has been a favourite border plant and cut flower.

Photo:—J. E. Downward.

Yet the end justified the work. And amongst some of the better known plants which originated in the Enfield Nurseries are *Linum* June Perfield (1934); *Erigeron* Amos Perry (1910); *Achillea ptarmica* Perry's White (1912); *Coreopsis grandiflora* Perry's var. (1920); *Anthemis tinctoria* Perry's var. (1929) and Roger Perry (1937); *Monarda* Mrs. Perry (1929); *Catananche caerulea* major (1935) also *c. caerulea alba*; *Chrysanthemum rubellum* Clara Curtis (1938); *Hemerocallis* Margaret Perry (1920) and Pink Lady (1940); *Iris hybrida* Margot Holmes (1927); *I. sibirica* Perry's Blue (1916) and Marcus Perry (1930); *Papaver* Mrs. Perry (1906), Perry's White (1912), Lord Lambourne (1920) and Marcus Perry (1942).

In his professional life he was a member of the following standing R.H.S. committees. Floral B, Cory Cup Committee, Iris Committee, Lily Committee and Alpine Committee. He was awarded the V.M.H., also the Veitch Memorial Medal and was Founder Patron of the Guild of Trade Horticulturalist.

His home life too was a happy one. He married twice and had eight children and during the last years of his life retired to Thorpe le Soken in Essex. Here to the very end he preserved his interest in hardy plants. He died on August 21st 1953.

## Midget Borders

Alan Bloom

A DEFINITION of a midget or miniature border may not be amiss, since for some the terms might be new. To say that these are scaled-down models of the traditional 'herbaceous border' is by no means adequate because a midget is best planned to be approached and viewed from both sides.

The main object of a midget border is of course to use a concentration of dwarf perennials in a small area, without loss of variety or without any sacrifice of colour-blending and the grouping effects of the larger border.

Obviously certain border favourites, such as tall delphiniums, lupins, kniphofias and michaelmas daisies have to be excluded. But there is still an astonishing variety left from which to select, and those whose gardens have limited open space can adopt the idea of the midget with confidence. A good many subjects normally classed as rock plants are quite suitable for midget borders. There is no rigid demarcation line between rock plants and border perennials. It is entirely a matter of adaptability, and the majority of so-called rock garden plants will flourish without the aid of rocks. They can be quite as well associated with taller subjects.

This then is the idea. Perennials more usually planted near the front of a full-scale border, can be used to the rear in a midget one. Although usually regarded as rock plants dwarf campanulas, helianthemums, aubrietas, dianthus, veronicas and a host of others are quite suitable as frontal subjects. They will match in quite suitably with almost any border plant, so long as nothing tall or ungainly is selected. A greater planting density in both variety and quantity per square yard of space is possible, but the inclusion of over robust or tall kinds would upset the plan and spoil the effect.

A midget border can be of any shape. I firmly believe that the best effect is obtained by island sites—rectangular, square, round or semi-circular. They can of course be of quite informal shape as well, so long as this blends with the surroundings. A group of shrubs of informal outline makes a perfectly good backing for an



informal midget border, provided it is not too close against it. Overhanging branches or invasive tree roots are to be avoided, and generally the more open the site the better. Most perennials prefer sun, but it is possible to make a selection—members will have read of this in the last bulletin—to cater for shade as well as for varying types of soil.

I would say that five square yards is about the smallest area for a midget border in order to achieve some sort of continuity and colour scheming. If more than about fifteen square yards it becomes near to a full-scale border, though so much depends upon width. A full-scale border needs to be five or six feet wide at the very least, if only one-sided. But a double-sided midget can be anything from three to six or even eight feet wide. With any island border, the tallest subjects are best placed about in the centre. But if the

heights of the tallest kinds are limited to half the width, one cannot go far wrong. With a midget it is better perhaps to keep below this yardstick, using nothing over two feet high in a border from four to five feet wide.

The same grouping rules apply to midgets as to full-scale borders. For the best effect three plants of a kind in a group should be the minimum, though those whose taste is firstly for variety need only have one or two of a kind. Planting density is largely a matter of preference too, as well as economics. But on the midget scale, one can vary density from seven plants down to five plants per square yard for all but the smallest sites.

In these days of limited time and space for many gardeners, the midget border has much to commend it. It opens out possibilities for a large section of people to indulge in perennials in a new and exciting way.

**Will Ingwersen**

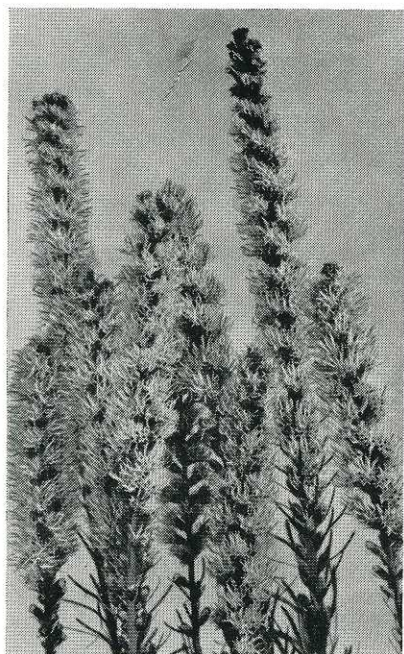
## The Genus *Liatris*

*This is, we hope, the first of a series of articles dealing with separate families.*

THE GENUS *LIATRIS* belongs to the natural order *Compositae*, which is the largest family of flowering plants and contains more than 800 genera and more than 13,000 species, ranging from herbs to shrubs and even trees and widely distributed throughout the temperate, tropical and arctic regions of the world. *Liatris* itself is a small genus of about 16 species, all perennial herbs, confined in their natural distribution to North America. Not all the known species are in cultivation in this country, but those which are, and at least some of the species not generally met with outside botanical gardens, are easily grown hardy plants for the flower border, flourishing in any moderately good, well drained

soil and open, sunny positions. For the interest of apiarists they are all said to be good bee-plants. The origin of the generic name seems to be unknown, and they are designated, apart from their botanical names, by several attractive names, such as 'Kansas gayfeather', 'blazing star' and 'button snake-root'.

Their erect spikes of closely packed flowerheads strike an unusual note in the border during late summer and autumn, and most of them have the unusual characteristic of developing the topmost flowers before those lower down on the spike open. The flowers last well in water when cut, and they may also be dried with considerable success and used for winter



The species *Liatris scariosa*, meaning dry or shrivelled, was introduced from Canada and the U.S.A. in 1739. It has cyclamen purple flowers.

Photo: Amateur Gardening.

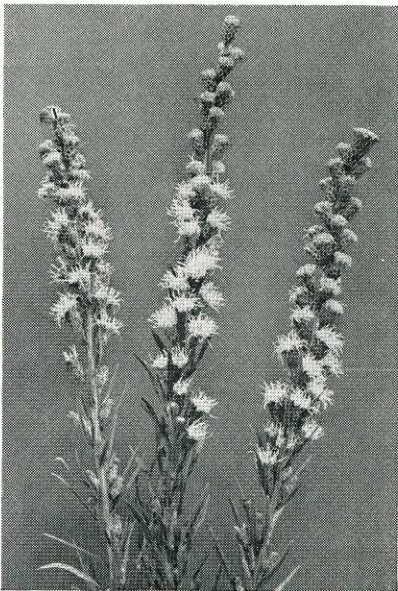
decorations. Those marked with an asterisk in the alphabetical list which follows below are the ones most likely to be found in nurserymen's catalogues.

The basal leaves are narrow, almost strap-shaped, dark green in colour and form a loose rosette arrangement close to the ground. The flower stems are also clothed with leaves, which may be alternate or scattered in their arrangement, and taper and become narrower as they ascend the stems. Propagation is easily effected by division, preferably in the spring, or by sowing seeds in the case of the species. Named garden varieties, which are few in number, are either sterile or do not produce offspring true to type and must be increased vegetatively.

*L. callilepis*. \*I am unable to discover a reference to the meaning of this specific epithet, but from my dis-

treasingly scanty knowledge of Greek I should imagine it might be translated into "beautiful scale", in which case it might well refer to the involucreal scales which are noticeable features in the inflorescences of the *liatris* species. This is one of the earliest to flower, usually blossoming from July to September, and bearing the spikes of bright carmine flowers on stems which vary in height according to soil and growing conditions from 1½ to almost 3 feet.

*L. cylindracea*. This species was first introduced to this country from Eastern N. America in 1811, but remains almost unknown in gardens. There may be a good reason for this as it does not appear to be a particularly attractive plant, the flower heads being small, and not very generously produced. The colour is pink and the stature dwarf, the stems seldom exceeding a foot in height. It flowers in September.



This spike-like species, *Liatris spicata*, has reddish-purple flowers on 2 ft. high stems. It is a native of E. & S. United States.

Photo: Amateur Gardening.



*Liatris 'Kobold' ('Gnome')* is said to be an intermediate cross between the species *spicata* and *callilepis*.

Photo: Amateur Gardening.

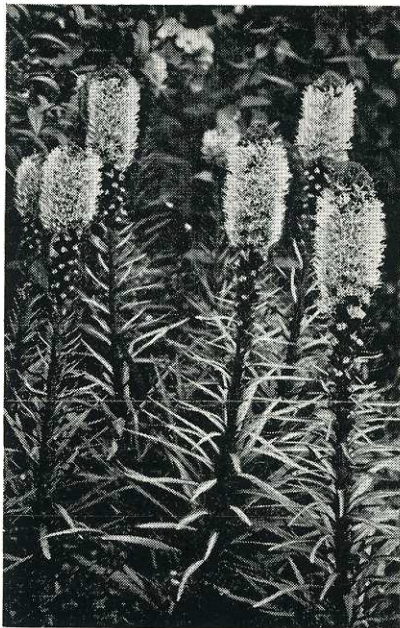
*L. elegans* (elegant). This was introduced in 1787 from the S.E. United States, and would appear to be a species well worth growing. It is a tall growing plant, attaining as much as four feet under favourable conditions, with flower spikes which may be more than a foot in length. The flowers are purple, and borne in late summer and autumn.

*L. graminifolia*, (grass-leaved). This came from E. North America in 1838. The leaves are narrow and sharply pointed and the rich purple flowers are carried in dense spikes on two to three foot stems, usually in early September. Two varieties of this species have been described, one *L. g. dubia* and the other *L. g. pilosa*, but neither appears to be in cultivation.

*L. pumila* is a name which may be met by those making a collection of liatris species, but it is only a synonym for a dwarf form of *L. spicata*.

*L. pycnostachya*,\* (densely-spiked). This is one of the best known species and has been confused in gardens with *L. callilepis*. It adds yet another to the list of vernacular names and is sometimes referred to as 'cat-tail gay-feather'. It was introduced from the central United States as long ago as 1732. It flowers from August to October in favourable seasons and the crowded purple flowers are carried on erect stems often four feet tall. If grown in wet, cold soil the roots are apt to rot during the winter.

*L. scariosa*,\* (dry, shrivelled). This was introduced from Canada and the U.S.A. in 1739. A tall growing species with cyclamen-purple flowers in late summer, it is best grown in the variety *L. s. magnifica* (synonym 'September Glory') the flower spike being very full and richly coloured.



There is also a variety named *L. s. alba* (synonym 'White Spire') which is a striking and handsome plant. These do best in rather dry soil and the tall stems usually need support.

*L. spicata*,\* (spike-like). This is from the E. and S. United States, The stems seldom exceed two feet in height and it is a species which will grow well in moist soil and is earlier flowering than some others. The reddish-purple flowers are very striking, and there is a variety *L. s. alba* with pure white flowers, and another, *L. s. montana* (synonym *L. pumila*), which is even more dwarf than the type and has stems only a foot in height.

*L. squarrosa*, (overlapping leaves). A species introduced from the E. United States in 1732. The stems are tall, reaching between two and three feet in height, and the closely-packed flowers of bright purple are quite showy, although the plant is not often encountered in gardens. There is a recorded variety, *L. s. intermedia*,

with which I am not acquainted, rather shorter in stature, with narrower leaves and rose-purple flowers.

Out of alphabetical order comes L. 'Kobold', which is supposed to be a hybrid between *L. spicata* and *L.*

*callilepis*. It is intermediate in appearance between the two species with fine, fully formed flower spikes. The plant which may be encountered under the name of L. 'Gnome' is probably synonymous with this.

## Gardens Open to Members in 1958

THROUGH THE KIND permission of various owners and authorities the following list of private and botanic gardens, nurseries and public parks, will be open to members of The Hardy Plant Society to visit. In some instances a small charge is made in respect of certain charities, in others there will be no charge. Where specific dates are

given it is hoped that as many members as possible will endeavour to pay a visit and at the same time take the opportunity of meeting other members of the society. Would members please show the member's ticket when visiting any of the gardens or nurseries. All gardens will be open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

### ENGLAND

#### Berkshire

June 7, June 8, July 26, July 27, September 27, September 28.

Thomas Carlile (Loddon Nurseries) Ltd.,  
Carlile's Corner,  
Twyford, Berks.

July 19

John Waterer, Sons & Crisp Ltd.,  
The Floral Mile,  
Twyford, Berks.

#### Gloucestershire

June 21

Robert Berkeley, Esq.,  
Berkeley Castle.

#### Norfolk

June 28, July 26, August 23, September 20.

Alan Bloom, Esq.,  
Bressingham Hall,  
Diss, Norfolk.

#### Shropshire

June 7, June 28, July 19, September 27.

Bakers Nurseries Ltd.,  
Bonningale Manor,  
Albrighton,  
Nr. Wolverhampton.

#### Somerset

June 21.

Mrs. Margery Fish,  
East Lambrook Manor,  
South Petherton.

June 25 (Wednesday).

Blackmore & Langdon,

Tiverton Hill Nursery,  
Bath.

August 9.

John Scott & Co.,  
The Royal Nurseries,  
Merriott.

#### Suffolk

May 31, June 14, July 12,  
Sir Cedric Morris, Bt.,  
Benton End,  
Hadleigh.

#### Surrey

September 20

Geo. Jackman & Son,  
(Woking Nurseries) Ltd.,  
Woking, Surrey.

#### Sussex

June 22.

Col. Sir Frederick Stern,  
\*Highdown, Littlehampton Road,  
Goring-by-Sea.

\* 2-7 p.m., Admission 1/6d., cars 1/-.

#### Worcestershire

Edward Webb & Sons Ltd.,  
\*The Nurseries,  
Wychbod,  
Nr. Worcester.

\*Monday-Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

#### Yorkshire

July 12.

\*The Northern Horticultural Society,  
Harlow Car Gardens,  
Harrogate.

\*No charge but there is a box for donations.



## SCOTLAND

\*Royal Botanic Garden,  
Edinburgh.

\*Any time—No Admission Fee.

\*Saughton Park,  
Edinburgh.

\*Any time—Daylight to Dusk.

May 17

Lt.-Col. A. N. Balfour,

\*Dawyck  
Stobo, Peebleshire.

\*No Charge but contributions to charities are welcome. 11 a.m.—5 p.m.

August 16.

The Countess of Haddington,

\*Tynninghame,  
Dunbar,  
East Lothian.

\*2—7 p.m.

August 23.

Mrs. James Clark,  
Ravelston House,  
Blackhall,  
Edinburgh.

August 30.

The Carnegie Dunfermline Trust,  
Pittencrieff Park,  
Dunfermline.

Park Superintendent: Mr. J. C. MacIntyre.

The Duke of Roxburghe,

\*Floors Castle,  
Kelso,  
Roxburghshire.

\*Every Wednesday afternoon—No Charge but there is a box for donations to local charities.

August 31.

Mrs. Purvis-Russell Montgomery,

\*Kinross House,  
Kinross.

\*2—7 p.m. Admission 1/6d., cars 2/6d.

## WALES

Denbighshire

August 16.

Lord Aberconway and The National  
Trust,

\*Bodnant Gardens,  
Taly-cafn,  
N. Wales.

\*1.30 p.m. to 6 p.m. Admission 2/-.

## HARDY PLANT CLASSES

The Executive Committee has appointed a Show Committee to arrange classes for hardy plants, and during 1958, classes will be held in The Royal Horticultural Society's New Hall, in conjunction with R.H.S. fortnightly meetings. These will take place on Tuesday, July 1, 12 noon to 6 p.m. and Wednesday, July 2, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, September 16, 12 noon to 6 p.m. and Wednesday, September 17, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. H.P.S. green membership tickets will admit members to these two fortnightly shows. Further details about these classes will be circulated to members at a later date.

## Extracts from the Post

### PLANTS I LONG TO HAVE

Sir,

I have been meaning to write the following notes ever since getting the Hardy Plant Bulletins.

I think that the society could perform a very useful function in publishing the wants of gardeners for plants which have disappeared from catalogues.

Turning to Mr Pike's notes in the first bulletin, p. 19: *Chamaelirium carolinianum* and *Stenanthium robustum*, these used to be offered very cheaply before the war in Dutch bulb lists. *Boltonia asteroides* used to grow in an old garden near here—and though I haven't been to look at it lately—I am pretty sure it will still be there, so hope I may be able to supply some.

Now for Mr Noël Prockter on barbarea: I have grown single, double and variegated, and think the last the only one worthwhile and am surprised that it does not get a mention!

If anyone can tell me where the true forms of the following can be obtained I should be grateful and there should be no difficulty in finding an acceptable exchange from this garden: *Polygonum sphaerostachyum*—the true plant is ruby-coloured and nodding and was seen quite often just before the war. A violet form of *Prunella grandiflora*, with dark purple tinted leaves was also seen before the war. Other plants I am interested in obtaining again are *Tradescantia canaliculata* (syn. *T. reflexa*), *Erysimum ochroleucum* and *Solanum torreyi*.

H. CORNISH TORBOCH,  
Penrith,  
Cumberland.

#### WHAT DO MEMBERS WANT?

Sir,

Having just sent off my subscription for 1958, I feel I must write and state my disappointment in the first three issues of the bulletins. Doubtless, like many others, my reason for joining the society was to find out more about hardy plants. I am not interested in exhibitions, for a border plant is, after all, for the border, and I have no desire to put my plants elsewhere. When growing sweet peas, chrysanthemums, etc., for exhibition, the site they are grown on is no thing of beauty, and I've no inclination to see borders in a similar state. The bulletins instead of being a source of information, has turned out to contain exactly the same sort of article, containing the same general, elementary information as I find in any of the weekly gardening papers.

Surely a specialist society should specialise? Members would not have joined the society if they were not deeply interested in these plants. My idea of a bulletin is one that takes a group or family, or part of a family of plants, and describes everything about

them, origin, introduction, hybridization, varieties, in fact, every possible piece of information available.

This is the line taken by the specialist societies dealing with individual flowers—why cannot this be done with our plants? I admit that this is a formidable job, but imagine the result—every bulletin would become a collector's piece—and what a mine of information each volume would be!

M. R. CUNNINGHAM,  
Sunbury-on-Thames, Surrey.

Sir,

Do you think it would be possible to have the time of shows extended into the evening, also to hold any lectures in the evenings or Saturdays, and not like the R.H.S. have everything during a weekday afternoon?

(Mrs) LILIAN ALLUM,  
London, N.20.

#### PLANTS I ENJOY

Sir,

How correct Mr Prockter is regarding *Brunnera macrophylla* (syn. *Anchusa myosotidiflora*) See Hardy Plant Bulletin, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 7. I have had it growing in my garden for years, although it does not like a dry season it soon becomes its bright and cheerful self again after a good refresher. Some of the recent *Anchusa italica* varieties fold up on me after their second year.

Picture an old walled-in garden in which grows *Salvia sclarea* Vatican variety, with white flowers flushed lilac, an arresting plant of great beauty; and nearby *Lactuca plumieri*, with its many branched sprays of frilled, aster-like, purple flowers, with *Cephalaria tartarica*, growing straight and tall by its side—its creamy primrose flowers toning so beautifully with its neighbour.



A surprise plant is *Althaea armenica*, unlike the hollyhock as we know it—this desirable plant grows to about 4 ft., has ivy-shaped leaves and long slender stalks with a single pink flower, rather like a mallow. The whole growth is dainty with its many sweetly scented flowers. The miniature seed pods certainly are like the ordinary hollyhock but there the resemblance ends.

*Chrysanthemum parthenium*, fever

few, has returned to a few gardens. Its 2 ft. high double white flowers remind me a little of double daisies. It appears happy in all weathers.

How seldom one sees the yellow gypsophila-like sprigs of the spring-flowering *Isatis glauca*. A most useful plant flowering so early. A vase of *isatis* flowers and munstead purple honesty flowers are a joy.

B. DEIGHTON,  
Effingham, Surrey.

## CHANGES IN PLANT NAMES

THERE IS PERHAPS no subject connected with gardening that causes more discussion than that of plant nomenclature. Many must have experienced changed names of plants when reading old books or studying catalogues, these changes can be both annoying and confusing. Below then is a list of some such changes. \**Pyrethrum* is one of those cases where the incorrect generic name has become so fixed by common usage that it is recognised as its generic name except by the pedant and purist.

OLD NAME	PRESENT NAME
<i>Agrostemma coronaria</i>	<i>Lychnis coronaria</i>
<i>Anchusa myosotidiflora</i>	<i>Brunnera macrophylla</i>
<i>Asphodelus luteus</i>	<i>Asphodeline lutea</i>
<i>Bocconia cordata</i>	<i>Macleaya cordata</i>
<i>Brittonastrum mexicana</i>	<i>Agastache mexicana</i>
<i>Dictamnus fraxinella</i>	<i>Dictamnus albus</i>
<i>Dielytra spectabilis</i>	<i>Dicentra spectabilis</i>
<i>Dracocephalum virginianum</i>	<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>
<i>Funkia</i> (species)	<i>Hosta</i> (species)
<i>Nepeta mussini</i>	<i>Nepeta faassenii</i>
* <i>Pyrethrum carneum</i>	} <i>Chrysanthemum coccineum</i>
<i>P. roseum</i> and <i>P. atropurpureum</i>	
<i>Pyrethrum parthenium</i>	<i>Chrysanthemum parthenium</i>
<i>Rudbeckia newmanii</i>	<i>Rudbeckia speciosa</i>
<i>Salvia virgata nemerosa</i>	<i>Salvia superba</i>
<i>Saxifraga cordifolia</i>	<i>Bergenia cordifolia</i>
<i>Senecio clivorum</i>	<i>Ligularia clivorum</i>
<i>Spiraea aruncus</i>	<i>Aruncus sylvester</i>
<i>Spiraea filipendula</i>	<i>Filipendula hexapetala</i>
<i>Spiraea palmata</i>	<i>Filipendula palmata</i>
<i>Statice incana</i>	<i>Limonium incana</i>
<i>Statice latifolia</i>	<i>Limonium latifolia</i>

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