

Instant Large-flowered Magnolias

by Sir Peter Smithers

The state of confusion in the *Soulangiana* and similar groups of Magnolias that can be expected to flower soon after planting—perhaps in the second year, possibly in the first—is such that there can be no hope of writing a definitive account of them at present. But having spent the last nine years collecting and planting this material, I feel it might be useful to set out in broad terms what is available, or becoming available, if one takes the trouble to search it out and plant it. Generally speaking, the nurseries and garden centres offer a list of Magnolias that is obsolete. When one plants a young tree that will increase in spectacular beauty for a hundred years, that is, I dare say, for the rest of the lifetime of any planter, it makes no sense to be content with the second best.

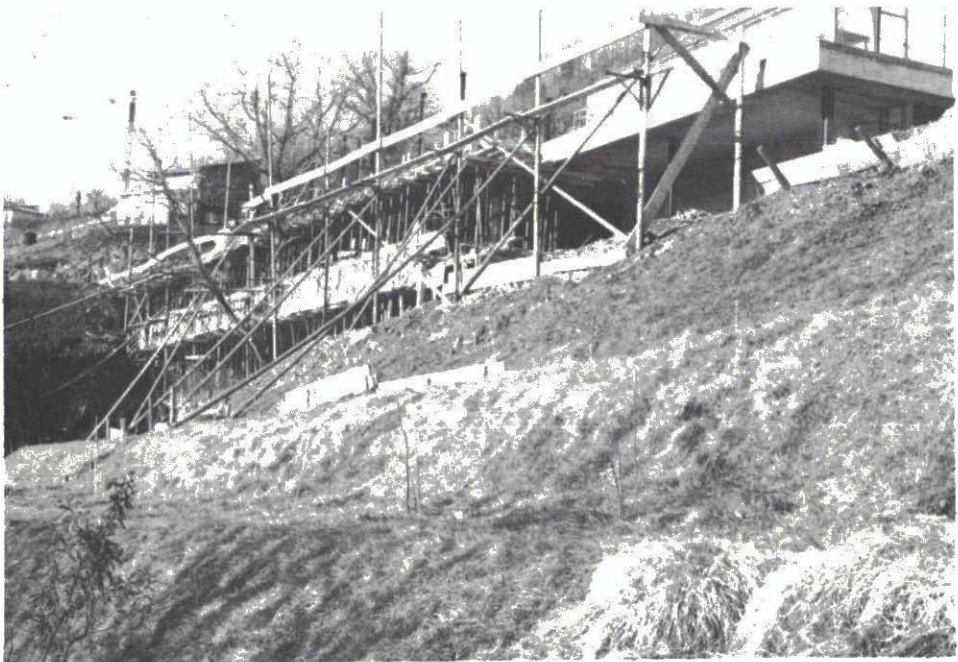
Leaving out some smaller flowered instant-blooming species such as *M. stellata* and its derivatives, there are, roughly speaking, four distinct hybrid groups and one species. The species is, of course, *M.*

denudata, which has recently undergone a taxonomic calamity in having the new name of *heptapeta* imposed upon it. Since I am no botanist but only an ex-lawyer, I confine myself on this score to saying that no court would interpret the wording of a document so as to produce the manifest absurdity of a name that is inaccurate and misleading as a description, based upon a drawing which is unrecognizable as a *Magnolia*, the whole proposed by a discredited botanist at a time when systematic botany was imperfectly understood. A lawyer will look to the general purpose and intent of a document and will endeavour to interpret it so as to accommodate them.

M. denudata

This species exists in a number of forms which have not been compared carefully side by side, but four are available in Europe and growing in my garden:

1. *M. denudata* of nurseries. This may be anything at all; one cannot be sure what one is getting.



Several magnolias were already planted during the 1971 construction of the Smithers house in Switzerland. *Magnolia* × *soulangiana* 'Burgundy' and 'Sundew' are in the middle foreground but are too small to be readily seen.

2. *M. denudata*, Japanese clone. This is the plant referred to in Neil G. Treseder's new book, 'Magnolias' (p. 83) as being introduced to cultivation by Mr. K. Wada. It has now flowered for eight years in my collection and I can recommend it without any reservation. Compared with the plants commonly available in the trade, it is more floriferous, and the blooms have a more solid and a more elegantly sculptured texture. (Treseder Nurseries, 1970)

3. *M. denudata* 'Purple Eye'. This is the plant referred to in Treseder (p. 84) as being a seedling from Caerhays, given to the Veitch Nursery at Exeter. It has flowered for eight years in this garden. The flowers are very large and bowl-shaped, with a purple flush externally at the base as well as internally in the centre of the flower. Compared with the pure white 'Japanese clone' it is less floriferous, though the very large flowers are spectacular as individuals. Its growth is also less rigidly treelike. I share the view that the original Caerhays seedling was a hybrid, and think that this *Magnolia* would best be referred to as *M. × 'Purple Eye'*. It is certainly worth a place in any garden if space is available, but if space is limited I would prefer to plant one of the Gresham Blondes (see below), perhaps 'Rouged Alabaster', which blooms about the same time as Purple Eye, or 'Sayonara', blooming a week later. Although my experience of the Greshams is shorter, they promise to be much more treelike in growth than 'Purple Eye' and the flower quality is

somewhat better. I also think that they will prove more floriferous when older. (Hillier Nurseries, 1970)

4. *M. denudata* 'Forrest's Pink'. The plant which came to me under this name is very exciting indeed. To my eye it appears to be a variety of *M. denudata* as described by Treseder (p. 83). But what a pink! It has none of the purplish hints which are to be seen even in the best *Soulangianas*. Having examined it very carefully in bloom alongside of my best plants of that cross—'Sundew' and its parent 'Picture' (if indeed they are *Soulangianas*: see below), 'Burgundy', 'Lennei' and 'Verbanica' (true), 'Rustica Rubra', 'Grace McDade', et al.—I can state that it is a clearer, truer pink than any of them. Treseder accurately describes it as an "overall pink effect when viewed from below." As my plant is only in the third year of blooming I have to do some acrobatics to get this effect, but the half-opened bloom viewed from the side appears at a distance to be a solid pink rather than flushed pink. Treseder states that the Caerhays tree is "more arborescent" than the type, if indeed the white form be the type. Mr. Julian Williams of Caerhays Castle, who was good enough to write to me about this plant, also stresses that his particular specimen is much underrated as a tree. He is, however, by no means certain as to its origin. He states his uncle, J.C. Williams was disappointed in the first seedlings of *M. 'Diva'* at Caerhays because they did not come true. "One of the best of his first raising had the label



Eight years later in 1979, *M. × soulangiana* 'Burgundy' (left) is a riot of bloom. 'Sundew' (right) is shown, three years earlier, in 1976.



*Specimen of Magnolia denudata
'Japanese Clone' in Smithers garden.*

'denudata' put onto it. This does look like a natural hybrid of 'Diva' and Soulanguiana—quite unlike both plants—and this may be the plant to which Treseder refers."

On the other hand, I recall seeing in literature, though alas I do not now find the reference, that E.H. Wilson once remarked that in the wild many plants of *M. denudata* were pink, and that the white form was better known only because, for many centuries (according to Treseder, since the Tang Dynasty), the white form had been selected for cultivation in temple gardens. All of this is no doubt interesting and may one day be resolved, but meanwhile here is an absolutely first class 'instant' Magnolia of a fine clear pink colour, not perhaps quite up to 'Diva', but far purer in shade than anything else available amongst plants blooming when three feet high. It certainly ought to be propagated and distributed. (Treseder Nurseries, 1976)

The Older Soulanguiana Hybrids

As these are quite well known and frequently though inaccurately described, I shall do no more than record those which, in my opinion, are worth growing still, even in the face of more modern rivals:

1. 'Lennei.' Its deep purple colour and late blooming entitle it to a place, but it is reluctant to make a treelike specimen, and here, at least is a floppy grower. In my opinion this will be superseded by some of Pickard's F₂ 'Picture' seedlings.

2. 'Lennei Alba.' No relation that I can see of the foregoing, it is a very fine Magnolia indeed in this garden. A self ivory bloom of good size and fine substance, freely produced on a treelike plant. It is also a good seed setter. It may in due course be surpassed

by some of the Gresham Blondes and just possibly by some of the 'Picture' seedlings such as Mr. Wada's 'White Giant.' But to date all of these have a slight purple flush at the base except for 'Manchu Fan' (Gresham). For the moment then, 'Lennei Alba' reigns unchallenged. (Pickard Nurseries, 1969)

3. 'Verbanica.' If one can obtain the true plant, this is a very beautiful Magnolia indeed. It is a very pretty pink though not so clear a colour as 'Forrest's Pink' (above), has an elegant vase-shaped bloom very well held, is floriferous and blooms very late along with 'Lennei' in this garden. This is quite a list of virtues. I cannot yet say what its tree-making capacity is, but it looks promising, being at present a pretty, symmetrical pyramid twelve feet high. (Pickard Nurseries, 1973)

4. 'Brozzoni.' This is the old-established late-blooming companion of 'Lennei,' in predominantly papery white with purple shadings from the base. The flowers are large in that they have long petals making tall upright blooms, but somewhat 'thin' in impression. It makes a good upright tree and is floriferous. Nevertheless, it only just earns a place in my garden. Flowering at the same time exactly, 'Grace McDade' is far superior as a flower, though admittedly in a rather different category of colour and form and also perhaps less tree-like in growth. (Treseder Nurseries, 1970)

I have tried out 'Rustica Rubra', 'Triumphans', 'Alba Superba', Alexandrina', and some others less well known, but do not consider that any of them merit inclusion in a collection if what I had was the right thing, though any of them in full bloom would still be a splendid sight.

Some newer Soulanguianas:

1. 'Burgundy'. A medium sized bloom, a good bright solid pink colour externally with strong bluish undertones, immensely floriferous, growing vigorously into a great rounded specimen, this is at present one of the three most impressive 'instant' large-flowered Magnolias in our garden. Its blooms seem quite weatherproof. Even heavy snow did not destroy them, though our snow is rather warm stuff. As a spectacle in the garden it far outclasses any of the older Soulanguianas, and is rivaled here only by 'Picture' and 'Sundew' (below). Treseder states that it 'may' have originated in New Zealand, is 'believed' to be a 'Picture'

seedling, and was introduced by the Clarke Nursery in San Jose in 1943. However, I think he is mistaken in this and prefer Mr. Pickard's account of it as having a "originated in the Cartwright Nurseries by Zorg under the name 'Purpleana' and is mauve pink, not deep purple. Juvenile leaves are bronze purple." This description fits my plant better than that in Treseder, though the account in the Magnolia Checklist seems to support Treseder's description. It is possible that we have two plants here. However that may be the one in my garden fully merits a First Class Certificate and Award of Garden Merit [Royal Horticultural Society Awards]. I do not for one moment believe that it is a 'Picture' seedling, though the diversity of progeny now coming from 'Picture' makes it impossible to exclude the idea entirely. (Pickard Nurseries, 1969)

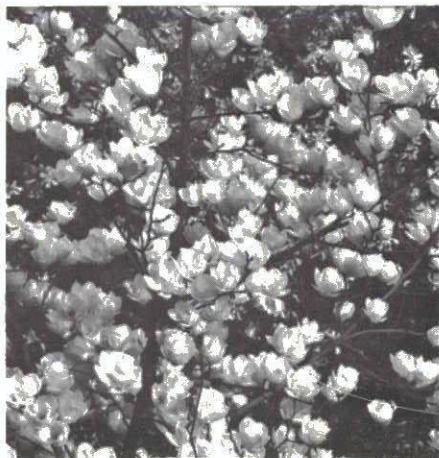
2. 'Grace McDade'. For its late blooming, massive, goblet-shaped flowers of tremendous texture, and gorgeous pink and cream colouring, this Magnolia is a great acquisition. Its fault with me seems to be a reluctance to adopt a treelike form, though this amounts only to a degree of reluctance which can be overcome, it seems, by careful culture. In this garden, contrary to what is stated in Treseder (p. 171), it blooms very slightly before 'Lennei', with 'Brozzoni', and the flowers are as described above, not "white with slight purple shading." This lovely flower was named for Mrs. Clint McDade. So far it is a rather reluctant seed-bearer here. (Pickard Nurseries, 1969)

Magnolia × 'Picture' & Progeny

Under this heading are several plants described by Treseder under *M. × soulangiana*. The origin of 'Picture' is discussed at some length by Treseder (p. 175). He states that Mr. K. Wada discovered this plant growing in the garden of Kaga Castle, Kanazawa, Japan, about 1930. The description there quoted from Mr. Wada corresponds exactly with the plant in my garden: Mr. Wada says without quoting any authority that it is a *denudata* cross with *liliflora*, and Mr. Treseder thinks it likely that a *Soulangiana* cross occurred in China and Japan long before it was made in Europe. I have seen a letter from the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture to Mr. Pickard which states categorically that 'Picture' (Nishiki Mokuren) was imported into Japan

and is not of Japanese origin. In spite of Mr. Wada and Mr. Treseder, the plant in my garden exhibits floral characteristics that lead me to think it has other elements in its breeding than those suggested. The very marked cup-and-saucer form of the blooms, an unfailing and conspicuous feature of the tree, is not found in any *Soulangiana* that I have ever seen or heard of, and seems to me to suggest *M. campbellii* blood, which would also account for the immense size of the blooms and their uncharacteristic colour compared with other *Soulangianas*. It is interesting to see that Mr. Wada himself finally came to the view that *M. campbellii* is involved in 'Picture.' (Treseder, p. 175) On the other hand the reddish colour is undershot with purple to some degree, and the buds have the curvature characteristic of *M. liliflora*. If the plant was imported into Japan, it could have come only from Europe or from China. In 1930 it would have been difficult though not impossible for such a hybrid with *campbellii* blood to come from Europe to Kaga Castle, and Mr. Pickard believes that this did indeed happen. I have no opinion on the subject, but feel that until its parentage is elucidated, 'Picture' and its progeny should not be listed under *M. × Soulangiana*.

1. 'Picture'. In my garden this has grown with vigour but not with conspicuous treelike characteristics. It is a rigid, strong, very large bush with a tendency to crossing branches. The immense blooms completely



Flower clad tree of *M. × soulangiana* 'Lennei Alba' in Smithers garden.

hide the whole thing when in flower, and show a fine contrast between the reddish pink of the outside of the petals and the white inside. Mr. Treseder speaks of an occasional 14 inch flower. I have seen nothing like this but 11 inches is normal and 12 inches common. A curious feature of *M* × 'Picture' is that so far none of its progeny that I have seen in bloom has produced a flower of the same character, the *F*₂ seedlings being much more globular in flower shape, whereas *M* × 'Picture' is closer to some Gresham Brunettes (see below) which have *campbellii* and *liliflora* blood, than to anything else I know. (Pickard Nurseries, 1969)

2. The Pickard *F*₂ 'Picture' seedlings. Mr. Pickard raised 120 seedlings from 'Picture' *F*₂ seed, of which he retained and offered for sale about 24. In the spring of 1976 I planted three of these: one selected for self deep reddish pink colour, one selected for purity of white colour, and one 'flushed.' The plants grew with immense vigour in 1976, 1977 and 1978, so much so that no blooms were produced. I do not doubt that if fed and encouraged less they would have bloomed in 1977. However, they showed strong apical dominance, and a firm determination to grow into single-stemmed trees. At the opening of the 1979 season they stood about 12 feet high and showed bud on two of the three. The opening of these blooms was quite a sensation!

PP4 'Ruby' bloomed in the Soulangiana main season, with immense self reddish purple blooms, very near in colour to 'Lennei,' but considerably larger, and with a very thin white picotee edging. The immense substance of the flowers gave them a long life, and they had the normal 'Picture' diameter of about 11 inches when fully open. It is difficult to know what this plant will produce when older: normally the bloom improves in quality as the plant matures. But as of now it is in my opinion by far the best available Magnolia in this colour. However, I have not seen PP25 'Garnet' which Mr. Pickard thinks even better in this class.

PP14 'Opal' has not yet flowered with me, so I cannot comment on it. But it is described by Mr. Pickard as "white with faint flush."

PP7 has not been named by Mr. Pickard since on further consideration he decided not to propagate it! When it bloomed with me this year it produced two enormous



Inner bud of Gresham hybrid M. 'Heaven Scent' in Smithers garden.

flowers of 11¼ inches in diameter, white ground and striped, rather than flushed with a strong reddish purple colour. In my opinion this is one of the most spectacular flowers to open in my garden to date.

From this limited experience of Pickard *F*₂ 'Picture', I was convinced that here were plants which though quite different in character from the Gresham hybrids, could certainly challenge those splendid hybrids for first place in the garden. It was therefore no surprise to hear that the royal garden at Windsor Great Park, and the Royal Horticultural Society's garden at Wisley, has each requested a complete set of Mr. Pickard's seedlings, about 18 clones in all. The future availability of these plants to commerce is therefore assured after Mr. Pickard's very limited stock is exhausted (and it is now going fast). I have myself ordered the rest of the series, a further 12 plants in fact, and shall grow them on in this favourable climate so as to arrive at a judgment about them rather quicker than they will be able to do at Windsor or Wisley. Suffice it here to say, that this is garden material of the very highest order, which, in my opinion, like the Gresham hybrids, contains *M. campbellii* blood in "instant blooming" habit.

3. *M* × 'Sundew.' This is an earlier 'Picture' seedling selected and introduced by Mr. Pickard. The description in Treseder is misleading: "very large white fragrant flowers up to 10 inches in diameter and

flushed pink at the base." In fact the predominant colour of the flowers now with me in their ninth year of blooming, is pink, as may be seen from the cover picture of the Royal Horticultural Society's 1978 edition of "Rhododendrons and Camellias with Magnolias," taken in my garden. The flowers, as noted by Treseder, show an unusual buff or slightly orange overcast to the pink exterior of the petals. Planted in 1970 my tree is now about 28 feet high with a sturdy upright framework, and is clearly going much higher. It was impossible to count the blooms this year, and after trying to calculate the number I gave up; it would be in excess of 1,000. This, then, is a magnificent garden plant with all the virtues, flowering in the main season, average flower size about 10¼ inches, of great beauty of form and colouring, a fast grower, profuse bloomer, treelike and fragrant to boot. It is becoming available in commerce in advance of Mr. Pickard's other introductions. As there is not reason to suppose that 'Sundew' is of *Soulangiana* origin, it is best referred to for the present as *M. × 'Sundew.'*

4. Wada's 'Picture' seedlings. Mr. Wada has himself made a number of selections from seedlings of *M. × 'Picture.'* Of these, 'White Giant' and 'Picture Superba' have reached me via Treseders. In two years both have grown with a vigour similar to that of Mr. Pickard's *F₂* plants, but I cannot yet say anything about their floral performance since they are still engaged in setting up a treelike framework. It looks, however, as though we shall have our first flowers in 1980, since there have been precocious blooms this July from which, however, nothing could be deduced. Wada's 'Snow White' (*salicifolia × denudata*) is also under trial here and, according to Mr. Wada, is a very large flowered instant bloomer; but this of course has nothing to do with *M. × 'Picture.'*

The Gresham Hybrids

Here we get into much deeper water! I do not have access to the late Mr. Gresham's stud book, but must begin by saying that to refer loosely to the "Gresham Hybrids" will no longer serve our purpose. What are generally included in that term are his two quite distinct races of hybrids from *M. × veitchii*, namely those with *M. liliflora* and those with *M. × soulangiana* 'Lennei Alba.'

The latter are evidently of more complex parentage, and the two races are entirely distinct in the garden. Gresham himself referred to the 'Lennei Alba' descendants as "buxom blondes" and the *liliflora* descendants as "svelte brunettes." Having known a number of svelte blondes as well as buxom brunettes, I shall refer to the two races simply as the Gresham Blondes and the Gresham Brunettes.

This, however, is not the end of the matter, for Gresham also raised a number of hybrid Magnolias of quite different parentage, using various forms of *M. campbellii*. 'Maharanee' is now established in this garden from the Gossler Nursery, and Mr. Wada has, it seems, been growing a number of Gresham *campbellii* seedlings for a considerable period. Until it becomes clearer what material survives, it is impossible to suggest any names in this group. For the purpose of this article, none are 'instant bloomers.'

1. The Gresham Blondes. The following have bloomed in my garden:

a. 'Rouged Alabaster.' An extremely large bowl-shaped white flower flushed purple at the extreme base of the petals. A strong treelike grower and free bloomer which also sets seed (open pollinated). The flower diameter is about 12 inches and the plant bloomed at a height of 4 feet. This bloom outclasses any other Magnolia that I know of in its colouring, the size and quality of the flower being that of *M. campbellii alba*, but without the cup-and-saucer habit and with the purple base. On our tree, very rapidly grown to about 15 feet, the blooms are so heavy that the branches tend to hang down with their weight. As the tree matures this will probably right itself. (Hillier Nurseries, 1976)

b. 'Sayonara.' The bloom of this clone is difficult to distinguish from that of 'Rouged Alabaster,' though I think that the immense globular semi-open flower is even more beautiful in form. However, it flowers consistently one week later than the former. It is early to tell, but so far the growth is a little slower and a little less treelike. Like 'Rouged Alabaster' it stands far ahead of any other flower of this kind which I have yet seen, though it remains to be discovered whether amongst the Pickard *F₂* 'Pictures' there may be something comparable. (Hillier Nurseries, 1976)

c. 'Manchu Fan.' This is, in fact, a "svelte

blonde"! A much smaller flower, beautifully sculptured and poised, in self white. Were it not for the robust proportions of the tree and leaves, it might be taken for a good form of *M. denudata*. In this garden it flowers with 'Sayonara,' but this may be because it has a slightly shaded position. (Hillier Nurseries, 1976)

2. *The Gresham Brunettes*. It might be thought that these plants, replacing *M. × soulangiana* 'Lennei Alba' with the much less robust *M. liliflora* as parent, would in general be smaller in all their proportions. This, however, is not invariably the case. The following have flowered with me:

a. 'Royal Crown.' This plant, named with the well-known American attachment to monarchical institutions, is a strong treelike grower, with very large flowers the exterior of which are of a self reddish pink. The buds are tall and candle-like, as are the two following brunettes when in bud, and remain tightly closed for some time. They finally open to reveal very sharply contrasting white inner surfaces and at some points of their development display a cup-and-saucer form. This is the most spectacular of the Gresham Brunettes, with flowers 12 inches in diameter, freely borne and also borne in a second crop in July here. The unopened buds display the curvature characteristic of the *liliflora* parent. In a way this plant challenges comparison with Pickard's 'Ruby,' but the two are so entirely different in character that one should have both. Acquired in 1976 as (like all our Magnolias) a very small plant, it flowered that year, and has done so every year since. (Hillier Nurseries, 1976)

b. 'Raspberry Ice.' To my mind this is nearer the colour of strawberry ice, but it is a very beautiful Magnolia. The colour of the candle-like buds is a delicate pink with lilac or almost lavender overtones and a stippled effect. The buds remain closed for a long time, thus greatly prolonging the display on the tree. When the bloom finally opens to a V-shape, it is about 9 inches in diameter. It is a very late bloomer, ten days after the midseason 'Royal Crown', and entirely distinct in colour besides being more bushy in habit and probably a smaller ultimate tree. (Hillier Nurseries, 1977)

c. 'Heaven Scent.' This is the smallest bloom of the three Brunettes to flower so far, but is extremely elegant. Similar in colour to

'Raspberry Ice,' it is an even tighter flower in bud, and finally opening only to a narrow v-shaped flower. The glossy reddish-brown spathaceous bract in which the bud is enveloped after discarding the perules is, on examination, a thing of great beauty. It is recorded in the Society's literature that this was Col. William Dodd's favourite Gresham, on account of its long-lasting flower and fine fragrance. The fragrance here was not exceptional, but the plant has great character. In fact all three of these Brunettes are quite distinct from one another and all merit garden space. This is a very late bloomer in my garden. (Hillier Nurseries, 1976)

We are also growing 'Peppermint Stick,' a Gresham Brunette, but as this is a new acquisition I cannot say anything about its performance.

As the Gresham Blondes and Gresham Brunettes are preserved in large numbers in the collections of the Gloster Arboretum and at Mr. Tom Dodd's nursery at Semmes, Alabama, there is no reason why they should not be further selected and propagated. The plants in my garden are the earliest selections, made by Gresham himself and sent to Hilliers nursery at Winchester, England. It seems to me likely that some hybrids at Gloster and Semmes which have



Half opened flower of Gresham hybrid *M. 'Raspberry Ice'* in Smithers garden.

taken longer to flower may perhaps have a greater percentage of *M. campbellii* blood, and that they may well provide some exciting surprises. When I visited these two collections in 1978 I felt very strongly that they ought to be photographically recorded, and I understand that some transparencies were indeed shown at the Society's St. Louis meeting, but that these pictures were taken in evening light. In fact it is important to photograph Magnolias between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. if possible, so as not to exaggerate the red in the resulting pictures. Since these two collections, together with Mr. Pickard's F₂ 'Pictures' and Mr. Wada's 'Picture' selections, probably contain the finest instant-blooming large flowered Magnolias in the world today, it would be well worth while to take considerable trouble to record, compare and propagate the Gresham collections. This ought to be done on a systematic rather than a haphazard basis, and would be a suitable piece of work for financing by any of the trusts or institutions interested in the plant introduction field.

Although reluctant to write about a plant which I have not yet bloomed, I conclude this paper with some observations on *M. × 'Iolanthe'*. Gresham, in his "blondes," has provided us with "instant" *campbellii alba* to the extent that any instant product can really approach the original. But his "brunettes" are not "instant" pink *campbellii*. Though large and splendid and purplish pink, the character of the bloom is so altered by the *M. liliflora* blood that the *campbellii* genes are only to my eye discernible in 'Royal Crown,' and even in that blossom there is an angular beauty which sets it quite apart from the *campbellii* parent.

Now 'Iolanthe,' which arrived in this garden in April 1978 from Treseder Nurseries as a foot-high propagation, has, besides its 25 percent *campbellii* blood also 25 percent *sargentiana robusta* in its makeup. Pictured but not described in AMS XII/2 p. 8, the 10-inch bloom seems to contain clear characteristics of both distinguished parents, and relatively little of the 'Lennei' inheritance. Felix Jury, who made this cross in New Zealand, certainly laid down an interesting foundation for future hybridizers, bearing in mind the value of the *campbellii/sargentiana robusta* relationship in many plants arising by design or accident in Cornish gardens. 'Iolanthe,'

which is, I believe, currently also growing in some U.S. gardens, was therefore received here with the greatest excitement, which increased substantially when it began to grow. After a suitable pause following planting, 'Iolanthe' made a basal growth from the minute propagation, which proceeded to grow 153 cm. before finishing up in the first week of October. This was a single unbranched cane with large leaves.

This year it has to date (6th August) put on 90 cm. at the apex, but has also produced 13 laterals ranging from 50 to 70 cm. The plant shows strong apical dominance, and none of the bad straggly habits of the 'Lennei' parent. Its form is now conical, and it already makes, after 14 months with us, a substantial presence in the garden. When will it flower? It is reported from New Zealand to have bloomed in four years from seed, than which it would be difficult to expect more in the way of instant performance. Probably if we had grown it slower we might have seen a bloom this year. The form we can already see from the AMS picture, and the growth I now believe will be a satisfactory tree-like habit. Treseder states that the colour is "lighter" than 'Lennei,' but is it pink, or only another purple? Any observations from American growers of this plant would be very welcome.

Across the Seed Counter

"Perry Narten has done a heck of a good job this year with the magnolia seed counter. Processing the orders and sorting and mailing the seed was a single-handed effort and he mailed out some 1400 packets of seed to AMS members. We all owe him thanks for an almost superhuman effort which surely took much of his time and energy." — Harold Hopkins, in Robin No. 1.

Quick Flowering From Seed

"Oz Blumhardt, New Zealand, wrote a few weeks ago that his *M. liliflora × M. campbellii* hybrids have set bloom buds and they are just under 3 years from seed. Isn't that fantastic! I hope my three plants of the same cross and vintage will set seed this fall." —Ginnie Melnick, in Robin No. 1.