of Watson and Wiesener. It's the plant itself that counts.

In the second place, *M. × watsonii* (or *wieseneri*) apparently is extremely cold hardy. It thrives at North Manchester, Indiana, where it has repeatedly withstood temperatures down to 0° F. and survived occasional lows to -18° F. It also has done well at Barnes Arboretum near Philadelphia where there are similar winter lows. But the abnormally cold winter of 1963 did it in at Brookville, Pennsylvania, in David Leach's garden. Although you are not likely to find this classic hybrid at your neighborhood garden shop, its cold hardiness appears to make the extra effort needed to obtain it worthwhile.

In the third place, *M. × watsonii* (or *wieseneri*) has been cultivated for over a century for good reasons, chief of which is the surpassing beauty of its flower. Even though I haven't seen the actual flower, I have great expectations from having seen pictures of it and from all I've heard and read about it.

For gardening and ornamental purposes, *M. × watsonii* (or *wieseneri*) seems an improvement on both its parents, at least in the western hemisphere. The flower, with its prominent rosy-crimson stamens and its 9 to 12 white and cream tepals, excels *M. hypoleuca* in beauty. It is a shrub or small tree and is said to begin flowering sometimes when only a foot or so high, whereas *M. hypoleuca* may take a dozen years or more to come to flower as it goes from seeding to tree size.

The flowers of *M. × watsonii*—*wieseneri* are twice the size of the comely *M. sieboldii* and the stamens
more prominent. But the biggest advantage is that the flowers face
upright in the manner of M. hypoleuca
instead of downward or sideways as do
flowers of M. sieboldii and others in
Section Oyama. The fragrance of M. ×
watsonii-wieseneri was described by
Hooker as resembling Calycanthus and
by Millais as approximating ripe
pineapples. Whoever is right, or even if
our subject's fragrance is somewhere
between, one can't go wrong with a
smell like that.

My M. × watsonii-wieseneri is about
3½ feet tall and is on its own roots. It
was a housewarming gift from the
Hetzers (Little Lake Nursery) when I
moved to this small acreage about 2½
years ago. It has not yet flowered, and
thus may not be typical of other
specimens. One reason it has not
bloomed may be that its top has been
chewed out twice by an adventuresome
pony that belongs to a neighboring
farm, and seems to feel the need to
express himself and to do most of his
grazing outside his own bailiwick.
Unfortunately, I have not yet got all
my farm fencing pony-proofed. This
"topping" appears to have caused
additional sprouts or stems to come
from the rootball, and there are now 4
or 5. I dote on it so much, or rather on
its promise, that I have given it one of
the most conspicuous spots in my yard,
though it probably would do better if
it had more wind protection. The wind
here often tugs mightily at the roofs of
the buildings, rattles the windows
regularly, sometimes tears limbs off
larger trees, and blows garbage cans
right out of sight if they aren't
weighted or tied down.

From what I have read it appears
likely that M. × watsonii (or wieseneri)
is a garden type hybridization that has
taken place in Japan and could
possibly happen in other countries
where the two Japanese parents are
planted together, since both flower at
about the same time in late spring or
early summer.

Thus, it is on the same order as M. ×
thompsoniana (M. tripetala × M.
virginiana), which was produced by
chance in an English garden by its
American parents in 1808, though these
parents do not seem to have been as
promiscuous as the Japanese: the only
other known hybridization by these
U.S. Magnolias was carried out
deliberately several years ago by Joe
McDaniel as a kind of test to confirm
the parentage everybody had previously
presumed. From his hybrids, Joe
McDaniel selected one he calls M. ×
thompsoniana 'Urbana,' which differs
in a few respects from the 1808 hybrid.

Perhaps I am not the right person to
be extolling the beauty and virtues of
M. × watsonii (or wieseneri) since I
have not seen the flower and have not
yet got to the point of relishing a pony
roast. But I see and hear it praised on
every hand, and it seems appropriate
and even obligatory to suggest that if
you live in a climate that's difficult for
many Magnolias it might be well to
take a good look at this beautiful,
exotic, and venerable hybrid. It could
be for you.