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1904

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
 Washington, D. C.

# PEONY CIRCULAR

For Autumn 1904

## CHERRY HILL NURSERIES

T. C. THURLOW & CO. : : West Newbury, Massachusetts



This medal was awarded us by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society in 1893, when we exhibited seventy-five varieties at one time. Since then we have received, from the same Society, several Kelway medals, and the first prize every time we have competed for it.



**I**T is now over thirty years since the senior proprietor of these nurseries began to study and experiment with peonies. Great changes have occurred during this time. Almost all of the best varieties of that day would now be considered very common. About twenty-five years ago the late Charles M. Hovey of Boston—one of the foremost horticulturalists of his time—had a collection of peonies probably as good as any in the country. He imported from the best European nurseries; and some of his varieties were really magnificent. The old Festiva Maxima was as good with him as it has been since; but he had the misfortune which most of us experienced later, in that he got his varieties badly mixed; and often plants imported from different nurserymen, under the same name, proved to be entirely different varieties. He imported the variety Madame Breon, and we propagated and sold it by the hundred,—a dark purplish red flower, a good variety in its way, but not at all the Madame Breon of the present day.

About twenty-three years ago a Mr. John Richardson, of Dorchester, near Boston, then a man of more than eighty years, raised a number of seedling peonies which were remarkable in that they were for the most part late, vigorous, free-flowering, and fragrant. All the varieties, with one or two exceptions, were of a beautiful silvery pink, or varying from flesh to rose. In 1886 we procured the five of these varieties which he considered the best; and, in thirteen years, from one plant of each we propagated thousands, which we sold all over this country and in Europe; and we think that every plant sold was true to name. The varieties obtained from Mr. Richardson were: Dorchester, Grandiflora, Norfolk, Perfection, and Rubra Superba. These were all named by the late John C. Hovey, of Boston. One of the best varieties was Milton Hill, which, however, is rather hard to propagate, as it is very slow to increase in root growth. There are a number of other Richardson's Seedlings, but they are quite similar in color and habit to those already mentioned, and probably not as valuable for commercial flowers.

We have been thus particular in regard to the history of the Richardson's Seedlings because certain parties in England have listed several of them as their own seedlings. In justice to Mr. Richardson, this mistake should be corrected.

Five years ago, on account of the ill health of Mr. Thurlow, the entire stock of peonies was sold to a Chicago party. About that time, however, Mr. Thurlow's eldest son, Mr.

George C. Thurlow, concluded to go into the nursery business also, and we have been trying ever since then to get up a stock of the *very best* herbaceous peonies to be obtained anywhere. We ordered, generally in small quantities, from the leading nurseries in France, England, and this country, and quite largely from Japan. When they bloomed (in two or three years) we ordered more largely of those varieties which we considered the best for this section; but we had the misfortune, in several importations, to get varieties entirely different from those we ordered, and, in one instance, to receive a shipment badly mixed. Every variety, however, has been carefully examined this season, when in bloom, and notes were taken at the time as to the vigor, the size and color of the flower, the floriferousness, and lasting qualities as a cut flower, indoors. From these plants, proved this year, we send out this little list, and think that every variety will be true to name, and well adapted to this locality—for it is a singular fact that some varieties that do well in other parts of the country do not bloom well here.

Our prices may appear high, compared with those of some other dealers; but those who have been buying peonies freshly imported from Europe—little dried-up plants, which do not generally bloom under two years—will appreciate the value of home-grown plants. Our plants have, for the most part, been growing three years on our own ground; but some of the new and rare sorts will, necessarily, be small.

Our peonies are raised in a very simple way; any good loamy land, good enough for corn or vegetables, we consider good enough for peonies. We sometimes plow two furrows deep, and set the plants quite closely together. Our rule is to fertilize the land at least one season before planting the roots; and we never, under any circumstances, put manure or other fertilizer directly under or among the roots at the time of planting. For light land we consider *peat muck*—well exposed and decayed—the very best fertilizer for small peonies or other small plants. It produces an abundance of roots, which we consider of more consequence than extra large, often superfluous, roots.

We have no peonies to offer at *wholesale* this year, except the *Officinalis* and some of the more common sorts; of some of the newest we cannot supply them even by the dozen, but only singly.

We would urge all our customers to order their peonies early, as they make their root growth in the autumn, and it is desirable to get the plants well established before winter sets in, although we have never known them to be injured by frost. September is the best time for planting; but they can be moved even up to November, or *very early in April*, before the spring growth begins. If the planting is left until late autumn, a whole year's root growth, as well as a season's blooming, is lost.

Full-grown prize flowers must not be expected the first season after planting. The plant needs two or three years in which to get well established and do its best.

The time of blooming varies considerably with the different sorts. We had them this year from the twentieth of May until the twenty-fifth of June. For the benefit of our customers we have designated the earliest and the latest of those offered. The bulk of our peonies were in bloom, this year, about June 21; but it was a late season, and ours is a late location.

Small packages should always be sent by express. We pack in very light boxes, and all express companies will carry nursery stock at reduced rates.

We have also a large stock of Hardy Phlox, which can be sent at the same time as the peonies. If they are cut back well and planted in September, they often bloom again the same season.

**Terms.**—Cash with the order, or a satisfactory reference, from strangers. Dealers, and those having a good rating, need not send reference.

## SINGLE HERBACEOUS PEONIES.

### SERIES A.—75 cents each, except as noted.

Single Peonies generally bloom early.

**Adana**, rich pink and flesh; a free bloomer; quite early; large, \$1.00 each.

**Areos**, bright pink, semi-double. 50 cents each.

**Argus**, rich deep rose.

**Defiance**, brilliant crimson. 50 cents each.

**Diana**, deep rose.

**Emily**, beautiful soft rose pink; one of the best.

**Hermes**, rosy pink. 50 cents each.

**Hesperus**, deep pink, large and beautiful.

**Leucadia**, rich rose.

**Meteor**, bright, dazzling crimson; extra fine. \$1.00 each.

**Millais**, dark maroon.

**Mrs. Key**, tall; purplish crimson, yellow stamens.

**Prince Alexander**, very fine cherry color. 50 cents each.

**Queen of May**, delicate soft pink.

**Stanley**, rich, deep maroon-crimson, pure gold-colored stamens; a free bloomer; very desirable. \$1.00 each.

## DOUBLE HERBACEOUS PEONIES.

### SERIES B.—50 cents each, except as noted.

**Amalthea**, silvery flesh; early.  
**Artemise**, soft rose pink; fine.  
**Crimson Queen**, bright purplish crimson, vigorous.  
**Cyclops**, deep purplish crimson; brilliant.  
**Don Juan**, blood red or deep rose.  
**Duchess of Teck**, creamy white or pink.  
**Edouard André**, glossy crimson maroon; stamens golden yellow.  
**Emma**, white, tinged with purplish rose; large.  
**Euphemia**, large and vigorous; a good bloomer; pink, suffused with flesh; late.  
**François Ortegat**, purplish crimson; very showy. 35 cents each.  
**Henri Demay**, brilliant crimson.  
**Humei**, rosy white.  
**Humei Carnea**, peach, white center.  
**L'Esperance**, rose flesh, striped carmine.  
**Louis Van Houtte**, brilliant satiny crimson; fine form.  
**Madame Ducel**, large, globular flower, glossy rose-lilac, shading to white.

**Madame Lebon**, purplish crimson, or cherry colored. 35 cents each.

**Marechal Vaillant**, violet rose; vigorous; late.

**M. Boucharlat**, large, rosy pink, petals edged white; late.

The *Officinalis* varieties are of European origin, and are of a different sort from the others, which are mostly from China. They bloom very early—about the third week in May—and are very desirable for cut flowers. The plants are dwarf.

**Officinalis alba plena**, pink, changing to pure white.

**Officinalis rosea plena**, rich rose; a fine bloomer.

**Officinalis rubra plena**, the old-fashioned, early red variety; a brilliant, deep crimson. 25 cents each.

**Pottsii**, purplish crimson; showy. 25 cents each.

**Prince de Talindyke**, violet red; showy.

**Queen Emma**, fine rosy pink; full and floriferous. 35 cents each.

**Reevesii**, rose flesh, center petals red.

**Tenuifolia flore pleno**, one of the *Officinalis* group; a very brilliant crimson, almost scarlet; foliage beautifully and delicately cut; very early.

### SERIES C.—75 cents each.

**Abotis**, flesh, sulphur center; anemone-flowered.  
**Acanum**, large purplish red.  
**Anæmoneflora Rubra Plena**, a deep, glossy crimson; very showy.  
**Dorchester** (Richardson's), a beautiful soft pink, or cream color tinted pink; fine form; rather dwarf.  
**Festiva Maxima**, always popular, and one of the very best, although not new; pure white, center petals splashed carmine; large.  
**Floral Treasure**, fine bright pink; a good bloomer, and fragrant.  
**Galene**, white, crimson center; very fine.  
**Golden Harvest**, rose guard-petals, yellow petaloids, tufted pink center.

**Grandiflora Rubra**, very large and floriferous; dark purplish red; a very showy flower.

**Labolas**, dark velvety crimson.

**Madame Méchin**, very dark, brilliant cherry color; stocky.

**Pearl**, white, shading to rose flesh or pink; fine form and flower.

**Plutarch**, deep crimson; stamens golden yellow; large and showy.

**Rubra Superba** (Richardson's), dark crimson, of fine form, and very fragrant; a vigorous grower and free bloomer; very late.

**Thisbe**, a fine, soft rose pink.

**Torquemada**, a fine peach-colored variety.

**Zephyrus**, blush, central petaloids sulphur-colored.

### SERIES D.—\$1.00 each.

**Duc de Wellington**, soft creamy white; fine shape.  
**Etta**, bright dark rose; vigorous and a free bloomer; late.  
**Grandiflora** (Richardson's), silvery pink; large flower; very fragrant; late, extra.

**Habid**, deep pink; large and showy.

**Helena**, white, inner petals yellow.

**Jeanne d'Arc**, soft rose, center white, tinted carmine; very fine.

**La Tulipe**, large oval flower, white, laced crimson; late.

SERIES D.—\$1.00 each. (Continued.)

**Madame Costé**, flesh pink; center petals white, tinted flesh; very early.  
**Madame Geissler**, very large; rose pink, shading to white or delicate flesh.  
**Madame Vilmorin**, deep rose; very fine.  
**Marie Lemoine**, creamy white; fine compact flower; dwarf plant; very late.  
**Prince George**, a bright glossy crimson, or purplish red; flower very lasting.  
**Princess Irene**, guard-petals rose, petaloids yellow, slightly blotched red.

**Princess Maude**, white, red tips.  
**Queen Victoria**, creamy white; broad guard-petals; compact center, with a red blotch on central petal; an extra fine variety.  
**Thurlow's Double Red**, winey red, of a shade not often found in a peony; large, and of fine form.  
**Venus**, a delicate flesh pink; beautiful compact flower; extra.

SERIES E.

The following varieties we have fully tested, and have found to be of sterling merit; all prize-takers. \$1.50 each; the set of 12, \$16.00.

**Baroness Schroeder**, flesh, changing to white; not new, but still scarce; vigorous, and a free bloomer.  
**Bridesmaid**, listed by Kelway as a single variety; with us it has become semi-double. Flower white or delicate flesh, of the most exquisite form and beauty.  
**Couronne d'Or**, pure white, stamens gold; of fine form, and very valuable as a late white variety.  
**Félix Crousse**, large, claret-red flower, globular, with a tufted center; late.  
**Lady Beresford**, large, soft blush pink; petals tipped with carmine.  
**Lady Carrington**, flesh, very fine; fragrant.

**Madame de Verneville**, a very valuable new peony; globular form; white, center petals tipped carmine; very fragrant; vigorous, and very floriferous.  
**Madame Loise Mère**, beautiful flesh pink, petals edged with crimson; large flower; late.  
**Marquise de Lory**, an old variety, but still one of the best; light flesh, stamens golden yellow; one of the most deliciously fragrant of peonies, reminding one of the water-lily.  
**M. Dupont**, white, petals striped carmine; a well-formed lasting flower, rather late; will become very popular.  
**M. Emile Gallée**, clear shell pink, of medium size and fine form; late.  
**Ville de Nancy**, winey crimson; very large and full; late; very lasting as a cut flower.

We have a lot of peonies, somewhat mixed, but all good kinds, which we will sell at a bargain — 25 cents each.

TREE, OR MOUTAN PEONIES.

These form in time shrubs of five or six feet in height, and when in bloom are "truly magnificent." They are hardy, and yet do better for a slight protection in winter. With us the Tree Peony does best on dry, well-drained soil, made deep and rich by trenching, rather than on moist land. We can supply over fifty varieties, largely Japanese sorts, without names, and the **Banksii**, the old standard variety, at \$1.00 each. All are large, blooming plants.

At the Rose and Strawberry Show of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, June 21 and 22, 1904, we exhibited 108 varieties of peonies. Of that exhibition the *Weekly Florists' Review* (Chicago), in the issue of June 30, 1904, says:—

"There was a remarkable display of peonies, the finest ever seen in Boston, and far outclassing that held in New York, both in numbers and quality. For display of not less than thirty named doubles, competition was keen, T. C. Thurlow winning, followed by A. H. Fewkes, The Means Estate, and Geo. Hollis."

N. B.—Visitors are always welcome during any week-day, but our grounds are not open to visitors on Sunday.