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INTRODUCTION

This informative book is published by the North American Gladiolus Council. They hope that it will answer the questions of the average grower and inspire him or her to make maximum use of this most versatile and beautiful flower. In no way does it pretend to be a scientific treatise, but an informal discussion of the ways of enjoying gladiolus.

The information comprised in this issue is due to the assistance of many gladiolus contributors and original material from various books published previously on gladiolus. Each chapter has been updated or rewritten for this publication. A special thanks goes to the many who updated each chapter. Their expertise will be used and appreciated by all gladiolus enthusiasts.

The pictures included in this publication were furnished by: Alex Summerville, Cliff Hartline, Carl Fischer, Ed Frederick, Bryan Hibbard, Andy Tygrett, Miles Labrum, Mel Schrimpf and Diana Langshaw. We greatly appreciate their thoughtful and very useful contribution.

Learned Botanists firmly believe that the earliest reference to the gladiolus was in the Bible. In their opinion. Lilies of the Field were actually gladiolus. Old Greek legend tells of two brothers who fell in love with the same young woman. Neither would concede to

the other. Their brotherly love gave way to intense hatred until it reached a point where they vowed to fight each other to the death. Both were fatally wounded in the battle. In the final moments, they plunged their swords into the ground. So the legend says, from that very spot grew the first two gladiolus plants, with leaves like little swords and blood red flowers marked in their hearts with white splashes from the girl's tears.

On a happier note, what is written in the following chapters expresses the knowledge and efforts of many. We can only trust that it will bring to many readers, new and old, a fuller experience with our "Glorious Gladiolus."