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THE CHARACTER BEHIND THE CAMELLIA OR THE PERSONALITY AND THE PICTURE

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LE CARACTERE DES CAMELLIAS OU. PERSONALITE ET IMAGE

CHARAKTER DER KAMELIE - ODER - DIE PERSOENLICHKEIT UND DAS BILD

IL CARATTERE DIETRO LA CAMMELIA O SUA PERSONALITA ED IL DISENGO

CARACTER DETIAS DE LA CAMELLIA - O PERSONALIDAT E IMAGEN

The naming of camellias after people has become increasingly popular with camellia lovers since their introduction into the Western world about 180 years ago. Eastern botanists rarely use peoples' names preferring to give a camellia the name of a locality or natural event. Quite often a legitimate oriental name was given an European synonym to honor or flatter a lady.

Seldom when camellia lovers handle a flower bearing the name of some person, do they think who was this person and why does it bear his or her name? Sometimes it has the name of the wife, the person behind the man — for with every good grower, there is usually a very patient and supportive wife.

Tradition has it that Buddha was the son of a king born some 500 B.C., not very far south of the great Himalayan range. The enlightened one, as he is referred to, gathered around him monks who followed his teaching and spread his doctrine. They established monasteries which spread throughout Asia, and to beautify these buildings, the monks collected camellias, magnolias, peonies, etc. Naturally they would have selected special forms and these they traded with other monasteries in China and over to Japan. Hence when European trading posts were established around the coast of the China Sea and obtained their first camellias for sending to Europe, the varieties sent were far removed, both botanically and geographically from the wild species.

Camellia 'Buddha' could not have been one of these as it is a *reticulata* x *pitardii* hybrid raised by Professor Tsai in Yunan and sent to Descanso Gardens in California where it was given its name.

Another camellia bearing a very famous Chinese name is 'Confucius'. Confucius was a philosopher and adviser to several governments, an advocate of righteousness and benevolence. The sayings of Confucius are

numerous, for example the golden rule "What you do not like when done to yourself do not do to others" and "Learning, undigested by thought, is labor lost; thought unassisted by learning is perilous". I consider this very appropriate to camellia hybridizing.

Camellia 'Confucius' is attributed to hybridizing in Yunan by Professor Hu who sent the seed to the U.S. where it was named and distributed. It has now returned to China as 'Kongfuzi'.

One Japanese character does have his name immortalized in the camellia world as well as in Japanese literature. Hikaru Genji, meaning bright Genji, was a prince of the Minamoto clan. He loved the fine things in life and enjoyed himself in one of the emperor's courts. He is recorded as having quite a lot of success with the ladies as well as having other adventurous exploits. Perhaps that is why camellia 'Hikaru Genji' has produced such a lot of beautiful offspring, too numerous to mention here.

Captain Rawes. Perhaps no man did more under most difficult circumstances to bring camellias into the western world. We know him best for this camellia *Reticulata* which bears his name. It is probable that an on-shore agent, one John Reeves, obtained, potted and packed plants for their long sea journey to England before handing them over to captains of the ships of the East India Company, of which Richard Rawes was one.

This sea captain has a very special place among American camellia greats through the small camellia, the so-called species '*Maliflora*', brought to England by him in 1816. *Hovey's Magazine* listed it in 1835. It was seen in the Woodruff garden in Pasadena and nurseryman Vern McCaskill propagated it and, not knowing its name, gave it the synonym of 'Betty McCaskill'. Most interesting is the connection of an oriental species, brought to the west by an English

sea captain listed by a Bostonian nurseryman, to turn up later in a Pasadena garden and be propagated on and distributed by a Californian. Camellias are truly international.

This diminutive flower *Camellia forest* is named in honor of one of the giants of plant collecting. George Forrest was a Scot who collected in Yunan, southern China, over 28 years, some of his expeditions spanning over a three year period. His introductions of new rhododendrons dwarf all other collectors. His contributions to the camellia world include the single, or species type camellia *Reticulata*. Up until this time, botanists had concluded that *C. reticulata* 'Captain Rawes' was the specie. Forrest also sent back the first and many naturally occurring variants of the species *saluenensis*. Having personally travelled through the more civilized parts of the area, where he collected, one can imagine the dangers and hardships which he incurred over the many years. At one stage he was hunted for eight days by blood thirsty bands of Lama bandits. He hid by day and battled his way through wild mountainous country by night. This was in the area where the mighty Mekong, Salwein and Irrawaddy rivers cut deep gorges between 14,000 ft. ridges. George Forrest died of a heart attack at the conclusion of the collecting trip after which he had planned to retire. His grave in Tenchong on the Yunan-Burma border was desecrated by followers of the notorious Gang of Four. It is now a cornfield.

Gillian Carlyon of the Cornish and New Zealand family of gardeners must be rated as one of Britain's most successful hybridizers. She was the sixth generation descendant of William Carlyon, the developer of the great Cornish garden, Tregrehan. This camellia cultivar 'Edward Carlyon' is one introduced by Gillian, it has been described as a weeping form of *C. 'Donation'* and was named to honor the founder's son Edward. His son, George, rather disgraced himself by falling in love with the estate game keeper's daughter—hardly socially acceptable in those days. He took off rapidly to New Zealand—I suppose as far as possible. He established his family successfully there. George's grand-son, Rupert, with his family, as heirs, returned to Tregrehan in 1935 but tragedy soon struck. He died on war service and later his son was killed in a motor accident in Africa at the age of 28. Family fortunes declined, no doubt aggravated by having to meet British death duties twice in rapid succession. On Miss Carlyon's return from the Women's branch of the Royal Navy after World War 2, she embarked upon restora-

tion of the neglected garden. Over 40 years she built a thriving nursery business selling over 100,000 cuttings per year. Her enthusiasm for camellias was not just for profit, but hybridizing was a great joy to her until her untimely death at age 62. She was greatly encouraged by her friend of many years, Mrs. Christian Lamb, who is with us today. One of Gillian Carylons favorite camellias and said to have inspired her, was *C. 'Leonard Messel'*, one of the famous Messel family responsible for the creation of that classic English garden, Nymans's Sussex. *C. 'Leonard Messel'* a hybrid between *C. reticulata* wild form and *C. Williamsti* 'Mary Christian' is of 1958 registration—the first successful cross of this type recorded. When talking of early hybridizing mention must be made of *C. 'J.C. Williams'* recorded as the first *C. saluenensis* x *C. japonica* hybrid. The man whose name it carries, spent two to three hours each evening recording the work being done in Caerhays, the garden which he controlled. About 1930 he had collected all his scattered notes into one book and was taking it to London by the night train. His attache case containing 50 pounds, but more importantly his book, was stolen from his sleeper and his life work of recording lost.

James Saumarez (1757-1830) was born in Guernsey, Channel Islands. In his naval life, he ultimately reached the rank of Admiral and for his successes in the Napoleonic Wars was raised to the peerage as Baron de Saumarez. The camellia *C. 'Lady de Saumarez'* honors them both. Fernao de Magalhaes, a Portuguese sea captain who sailed for the Spanish is better known to the English speaking world as Ferdinand Magellan. He does not need a camellia to immortalize his name. Donna Herzilia de Magalhaes of Oporto is a descendent of this famous man so perhaps this connection will help you in remembering the longest name in the nomenclature book.

In France, honors were bestowed upon the ladies of prominent soldiers and celebrities by having camellias named after them. Andre de Massena, he became one of Napoleon's most trusted marshals—Eugenie de Massena I presume to have been his wife. Wives, apart from having camellias named after them, do not appear to have been sufficiently important to be mentioned in history.

The former Province of Berry is steeped in history from before the reign of Clovis and at one time, by reason of a royal marriage, became English territory. The title of Duke de Berry was usually given to the second son

of French kings, in this instance it was Charles X's. The Duke was assassinated leaving his beautiful widow, Caroline, pregnant. The Duchess de Berry gave birth to a son and on the death of Charles X in exile, he became the legitimate pretender to the throne of France as Henri V.

That camellias were so important in French social and intellectual life is born out by the fact that one of the copies of *Verschaffelt's Nouvelle Iconographie es Camellias* was from Empress Josephine's own library. It is now in the American Camellia Society's Library at Masse Lane. Also it is recorded that Empress Josephine grew many camellias at Malmaison, employing English gardeners. During the Napoleonic Wars, these personnel plus plants were allowed through the British blockade, provided they were destined for the Empress's garden.

Another fragment of international camellia history is the story of G.F. Seidel, a nurseryman botanist, who had been conscripted into the German army and was billeted near Malmaison during the campaign of 1814-1815. On returning home, he stuffed his knapsack with small camellia plants. Within two years he was offering camellias for sale and the nursery became one of Germany's most famous for over 100 years. The beautiful *C. 'Otome'* of Japan or *C. 'Pink Perfection'* of America has another synonym, *C. 'Frau Minna Seidel'*. Which one of this famous camellia family was she?

In Nantes a nursery was established in 1862 by Henri Guichard. After his death in 1911, his widow and daughters carried on the business as Guichard Soeurs. They exhibited widely in Continental Europe and at Chelsea. In 1955 it was taken over by Claude Thoby who controls it to this day. He is of course one of the I.C.S. directors for France.

To the Antipodes, and as I could not find a camellia named after a prominent South African, it is to Australia where camellias arrived in 1836.

One of the best known Australian camellias is *C. 'E.G. Waterhouse'*, a founder of the Australian Camellia Research Society and the International Camellia Society. He was a language professor at the University of Sydney where he had gained first class honors in French and German. He did postgraduate work in Paris. Whilst he was there, he was asked to lecture in French on how English was pronounced in Australia - no mean task! Before retiring he added Italian to his language skills and at the age of 80 started studying Japanese so that he could better

cope with the sorting out of the camellia nomenclature mess of his day. He died in 1977 at the age of 96.

Walter Hazelwood, the gentle giant of Australian camellias, was a retiring, generous man, who was always ready to help when called upon. He was a great advocate of tree planting for parks and in combating pollution before it became fashionable to do so. He and his brother created one of the great nurseries of the Southern hemisphere. He was a co-founder of the Australian Camellia Research Society, a foundation member of American Camellia Society. He was awarded medals by the French and Italian governments for his services to horticulture in these countries — a true international. He died in 1980 at the age of 95. Alec Jessep, the last of the founding fathers of the Australian Camellia Research Society, died only last year a week before his 99th birthday. He spent much of his working life as Director of the famous Melbourne Botanic Garden. He was President of the A.C.R.S. for the first 10 years of its existence, when it made dramatic growth.

Less than a year before, he died he spoke articulately at the A.C.R.S. Annual Dinner and presented the six medals which he had been awarded for his lifetime's work in horticulture to our Society. These are now housed in the study of Professor Waterhouse's old residence Eryldene, the spiritual home of camellias in Australia.

Camellia research and hybridizing in Australia did not stop with the founders. One person very active in this field and in importing new species into the Western world is Bob Withers, receiver of the highest awards of the Australian Societies of Lilliums, Rhododendrons and Camellias. He is very ably assisted by his wife Hari, that dynamic Egyptian-born Greek who is with us today. Bob proudly named a camellia in her honor.

Camellia 'Thomas Walter Savige' was originated by his son Thomas J. Savige who is a world figure in camellias. For the last 10 years he has worked on camellia nomenclature culminating in his book *The International Camellia Register*, now at the printers. This work continues on the incomplete research of Dr. Ralph Philbrick who was sponsored by the Longwood Foundation. Tom has not enjoyed such support. It has been a labor of love for the future of camellias.

Margaret Davis has the rare honor of having three flower cultivars named in her honor; an iris, an azalea and, of course, this superb camellia. She was the founder of the Garden Clubs of Australia, an organization of 20,000 members. This camellia is a sport of

the old *C.* 'Aspasia Macarthur' (not a real person), of 1850 registration, but it was not the first offspring of the sporting lady. As early as 1898 *C.* 'Lady Loch' was listed as a tribute to the support given to horticulture by this Victorian Governor's wife. Australia's only native rhododendron *R. lochiaie* also honors her. *C.* 'Aspasia Macarthur' did not stop sporting with these accomplishments. Her latest was introduced and named *C.* 'Jean Clere', by the wife of Richard, I.C.S. director. This takes us to New Zealand where camellias thrive better than in most parts of the world and the name 'Jury' springs to mind immediately. The two great but independent hybridizers, Les and Felix, have taken out many world-wide honors. *C.* 'Mona Jury', named after the wife of Les is just one of the many introduced, with *C.* 'Debbie', *C.* 'Anticipation', *C.* 'Elise Jury', *C.* 'Water Lily' etc., and, of course, *C.* 'Wilbur Foss'. Wilbur noticed this superb bloom in the trial area of Les Jury's garden. At this time Wilbur was President of the Camellia Society of Southern California. Apparently Les did not think the bloom worthy of registration, but due to the enthusiasm of Wilbur and his wife Helen, he did so. Every year when it blooms in our garden, it reminds us of our late Californian friend and of his wife. This could take us on the United States but a little more of New Zealand first. Ben Raynor named *C.* 'Wayne Raynor' after his wife. His interest in camellias is said to have started when he considered some old camellias were in the way in their new garden. He pruned them with a chain saw and shifted them with a front end loader. To his surprise, they survived and so decided, this practical man, that camellias were for him. His collection of camellias grew to thousands as his farm shrank.

Dr. Brian Doak pioneered the crosses of the previously considered sterile *C. reticulata* 'Capt. Rawes' with *C. saluenensis*. He named this one for his wife 'Phyl Doak'. The camellia which bears the name of 'Dr. Brian Doak' was registered by Betty Durrant. She, in turn, has this camellia named in her honor. It was bred, as you may have guessed, by Dr. Doak, another *C. saluenensis* 'Capt. Rawes' cross.

Whilst speaking of the Durrants, Betty and Tom, these two people have been and still are giants in the camellia world. Tom was involved in getting the Yunan reticulatas into New Zealand direct from China, contributes world wide to camellia publications, and was editor of the *New Zealand Camellia Bulletin* for years. He was a very successful farmer after a distinguished army career and in his retire-

ment is as active as ever. He and his wife hybridized extensively. It's doubtful if the camellias which carry their names do these outstanding camellia personalities justice.

Yvonne Cave's name is synonymous with good camellia photography which has appeared on the front covers of many camellia publications. This camellia bears the name of her late husband Harry, a very prominent New Zealand camellia plantsman, but his name goes down in the book of records as the cricket captain whose test team made the least runs in any international test match. New Zealand went all out for 39. It must also be noted that the seed parent of *C. cv.* 'Harry Cave' is none other than *C. cv.* 'Bob Hope'. We could say *C.* 'Bob Hope', is the mother of *C.* 'Harry Cave' - strange things do happen in the camellia world! This latter camellia named after the English born film star who made his name not only in American but world wide. He is a true international bringing joy and family style entertainment to millions. However let us slip back in time to about 1830. At this time C.M. Hovey, nurseryman and editor of *Hovey's Magazine*, was doing much to popularize and sell camellias to those near and far, as well as importing and evaluating seedling.

Among his contemporaries was one Col. Thomas H. Perkins — a pity a camellia does not bear his name today. These gentlemen with Marshal Wilder and Samuel Sweetner exhibited frequently at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and are credited with bringing most of the European varieties to Boston between 1830 and 1860.

The world famous Arnold Arboretum, founded in 1872, under the auspices of Harvard University, had as a guiding start, Professor Charles S. Sargent. Under him, a most extensive and aggressive plant and seed collection program was conducted, benefiting not only his homeland, but the world in general. His special interest was China, Japan and the south east of the United States. Strangely the latter area had been neglected for over 70 years. He remained director of the Arnold until his death in 1929 at the age of 86.

Referred to by the late Ken Hallstone as "the man who never did anything halfway", the camellia which carries the name of 'Frank Pursel' bears this out. Frank was made a Fellow of the A.C.S. for his outstanding hybridizing efforts. Added to this, he was a successful business man, a strong supporter of his camellia societies, a talented musician and a loyal and caring friend. What better memorial to such a man as this magnificent

camellia *C.* 'Frank Pursel' and this bloom of *C.* 'Jean Pursel' his loving wife. The name Guilio Nuccio, like so many of his family is synonymous with Camellias in California and, indeed, the whole world. Guilio migrated to California from Northern Italy and it was his two sons, Joe and Julius, who established the present nursery business. They are highly selective in their new introductions. 10,000 seeds are sown each year and exceedingly few of these are ever released to the public annually — sometimes none - occasionally up to five. No wonder when they do introduce a new cultivar, it has to have the merit of the camellia they named in honor of their father. *C.cv.* 'Guilio Nuccio' represents their search for perfection.

Mr. Camellia, or Dave Feathers, originated and registered this camellia in honor of his friend, Milton Brown. "Brownie's" outstanding war service earned him the Silver Star, followed by the Medal of Merit awarded him by the U.S. Government. He came to Fort Valley as administrative head of the A.C.S. and served in that capacity for thirteen years. His efforts did not stop there. He was a great administrator with almost boundless energy for every organization with which he came in contact, his church, the Chamber of Commerce, the Boehm Collectors Guild, his local Camellia Society and the list goes on. His activities in our International Camellia Society naturally led him to becoming a Vice President and he attended many I.C.S. conferences as well as being involved in the bringing of Chinese botanists to Masee Lane and assisting in getting *Camellia chrysantha* into the Western world. To sum up the meritorious like of Milton Brown in such a short space of time is of course impossible, but those who knew him are richer for the privilege.

To follow the latter gentleman is no easy matter. I have chosen Milo Rowell, Advocate General to Douglas McArthur in Japan and who was basically responsible for writing the Japanese Constitution which appears to be serving that country very well today.

I refer to the hard working Annabelle Lundy Fetterman. Breaking tradition, she became the first woman to preside over the American Camellia Society, a position for which she was ideally suited, as her love of camellias is long standing and her capacity as a business woman without question. She was rated No. 8 chief executive of North Carolina's top 100 — no mean feat.

The generosity of the Lundy Fetterman family matches her business competence, the large bequests to Campbell University and to the A.C.S. are well known. I'm sure

there are many others. To be a guest in her home is a great privilege and joy. Her warmth exudes everywhere. Annabelle is a member of many camellia societies world-wide. She fulfills her father's motto, "Service above all. He profits most who serves best".

Ann Blair Brown is another one of our present day leading ladies of the Camellia world. Widely travelled, a diplomat by nature and an exceedingly hard worker, both as support to her late husband and after his all too early death, in taking over his position as executive director of the American Camellia Society. We all owe a great deal to Ann Blair Brown. Her task is not easy but the A.C.S. continues to make great progress through her efforts in association with the changing executive of the society which she represents.

In my allotted half hour it has, of course, been quite impossible to pay homage to all the camellia characters whose names adorn flowers. To finish I have chosen this bloom because it is named after a lady who epitomizes the spirit of this convention, warm southern hospitality at it's best. Indeed Vi Stone, that generous Southerner, a widely travelled director of the I.C.S., hybridizer and one who shares her good fortune with all those around her. If asked who has the most friends in Louisiana and in the I.C.S., a lot of people would say Vi Stone - for to know her is to love her.