SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CAMELLIA SOCIETY

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THE EARLY BLOOMING JAPONICAS

By William E. Woodroof

There is an ever-increasing interest in the early blooming varieties of the species Japonica, particularly in those which bloom before the first of January. The exact time of bloom of course depends to a great extent on weather and cultural conditions and on location. And it should always be borne in mind that the more sun a plant can assimilate, the earlier and more prolific its blooms.

It has been said from time immemorial that the early bird catches the worm, so let us take an autumn stroll down camellia lane and achieve the results obtained by that early bird. On this early stroll among the most beautiful of the evergreen shrubs we find the following:

1 **ALBA PLENA**

Pure white, Large, formal double. Medium, bushy, spreading growth with glossy, light green foliage. This variety was known as Old Double White in China and was taken from there to England by Captain Conner of the East India Tea Fleet in 1792, and brought to America by Michael Floy in 1800.

2 **AMELIA**

Red with coppery tint. Large, semi-double to loose peony form. Slow, upright, sturdy growth with rounded, glossy green foliage. This is a seedling of Gerbing Nurseries in Fernandina, Fla.

3 **ARAJISHI**

Dark salmon rose. Large, full peony form. Vigorous upright open growth with large, long, deeply serrated, dark green foliage. An old Japanese variety first listed in the United States by Domoto Nurseries of Hayward, Calif., in 1935. Also known as Aloha, Aka-Karako, and Pompenia Rubra.

4 **ARNALDA DE BRESCIA**

Rose striped white. Medium large, formal double. Medium, spreading growth with long, narrow, pointed foliage. Also known as Meigs Var., Silvery Pink, and is believed to be the same as Princepessa Clothilda.

5 **AUGUSTA WILSON**

Soft pink. Medium large, full peony form. Vigorous, upright growth with large, thick, rounded foliage. Propagated from an old plant in Mobile, Ala., belonging to Augusta Evans Wilson and named for her. Also known as St. Elmo, Ashland Pink, and Cabbage Head.

Southern California Camellia Society Inc.

ROSTER OF OFFICERS

6 BERENICE BODDY

Light pink with deeper pink under petals. Medium large, semi-double. Vigorous upright growth with medium size, deep green foliage. Introduced by Rancho del Descanso, La Canada, Calif., and named in honor of Mrs. Manchester Boddy. U. S. Plant Patent No. 605.

7 CAMEO PINK

Light pink. Medium, rose form double. Vigorous, compact, upright growth with medium size, deep green foliage. Said to be a sport of Duchesse d'Orleans.

8 CAPTAIN MARTIN'S FAVORITE

Deep pink splotched white. Large, formal double. Slow, symmetrical, upright growth with long, narrow, dark green foliage. A seedling of Magnolia Gardens, John's Island, S. C.

9 CARL ROSENQUIST

Rose red. Medium, rose form double. Vigorous, upright growth with medium size, dull green foliage. A California variety. Also known as Rosedale's Beauty.

10 COLLETII

Red blotched white. Medium, peony form. Slow, bushy growth with rounded, deep green foliage. An old variety listed by Verschaffelt in 1850. Also known as Colletti Maculata, Girard Debaillon, and Purpliana.

11 CONSTELLATION

Deep pink fading to blush in center. Medium, formal double. Medium, upright growth with medium size, medium green foliage. An original variety of Magnolia Gardens in South Carolina.

12 CORNIS FLORA

Light pink shaded with deeper pink. Small single. Vigorous, upright growth with medium size, deep green foliage. A seedling of Overlook Nurseries, Crichton, Ala.

13 CREPE ROSETTE

Deep pink veined red with white margined petals. Large, semi-double opening from a bud center. Medium,

(Continued on page 15)

EXPERIMENTS ON CAMELLIA NUTRITION[1]

By James Bonner

Introduction. The nutrition of plants is an old, fashionable, and much explored field of plant study. By far the greater part of the work done on plant nutrition has, however, concerned the important crop plants, while relatively much less has been done with ornamentals. Little, if any, work has been published on the nutritional problems of the Camellia. This report concerns an experiment undertaken to find out something about the nutrition of Camellias.

Plant physiologists distinguish between the major and the minor elements in plant nutrition. Major elements are those required by the plants in relatively large quantities and at relatively high concentrations, say 20 — 500 p.p.m. These include nitrogen, phosphorous, sulphur, potassium, calcium, and magnesium in addition to the hydrogen and oxygen derived from water and the carbon derived from the CO_2 of the air. The minor elements include those needed in small quantities and at low concentrations, say 0.01 — 1.0 p.p.m., and are copper, zinc, boron, manganese, and molybdenum. Iron is an intermediate case but is generally classified with the minor elements. The deficiencies most commonly met with in practice are those of the major elements and in fact nitrogen deficiency is far and away the most common nutrient deficiency found in our soils.

The objectives of the present work are three: First, it is desired to determine the deficiency symptoms of each element in the Camellia and to so describe them that each Camellia grower can recognize for himself if possible what deficiency if any his plants experience. Secondly, we wish to discover the optimum concentrations and balances between the various elements for growth of Camellias. Thirdly, we wish to work out quantitative relations which will enable us by appropriate chemical analysis to state precisely whether a given Camellia plant is receiving optimum nutrition.

Methods. For this work, as in all work on plant nutrition, the first step is to grow plants under conditions of controlled nutrition. For this purpose we grow plants in gravel, which supplies little other than mechanical support. The plants are grown in the greenhouse and supplied each day with a nutrient solution of known composition. In preliminary experiments as to the exact kind of gravel substrate most appropriate for Camellias it was found that a mixture of gravel and peat gave much better growth than gravel alone. In general organic matter seems quite helpful to the growth of Camellias. We do not know why this is. Experiments were also carried out to determine the optimum pH for growth of Camellias. Thus far we have found no large differences in growth over the range pH4 to pH8. This is contrary to the general belief that Camellias require an acid soil. As a gesture toward the common belief we have used a pH of 5.5 for all of the nutrition experiments.

Results. The experiment to be described below is one in which forty-three different nutrient solutions are applied. All of the solutions have exactly the same concentration of total salts. In one set of nineteen treatments three different stock solutions are made up, the first containing calcium, magnesium, and potassium nitrate; the second calcium, magnesium, and potassium phosphate; and the third calcium, magnesium, and potassium sulphate. These three stock solutions all have exactly the same concentrations of calcium, magnesium, and potassium. They may be mixed in different proportions to yield solutions containing varying proportions of nitrogen, phosphorous, sulphur, and the exact proportions in which they were mixed for this experiment are represented diagrammatically in Figure 1. In exactly the same manner, nineteen further solutions were made in which the calcium, potassium, and magnesium are varied with constant concentrations of nitrate, phosphate and sulphate.

The experiment was set up in December, 1946, starting with approximately

1 This is a report on investigations carried out with the cooperation of the Horticultural Research Committee, Southern California Camellia Society. This work was made possible through the interest and cooperation of the Armstrong Nurseries, the Rancho del Descanso and Mr. Charles Jones.

350 very uniform plants of Julia Drayton.[2] Each nutrient solution was supplied to eight plants and the eight plants of each treatment were distributed through the greenhouse to minimize effects due to location in the greenhouse.

Figure 2 gives measurements of the heights of the tallest shoots of each treatment 18 months after the beginning of the experiment. We can see that the plants which received either no nitrogen, no phosphate, or no sulphate are smaller than those which received all of the elements. The optimum concentration of nitrogen corresponds to 22 — 36 p.p.m. in the nutrient, of sulphur 2 — 32 p.p.m in the nutrient, and of phosphorus 3 — 14 p.p.m. in the nutrient. So far as good vegetative growth is concerned nitrogen may vary over only a moderately small range while sulphur and phosphorus are much less critical. Nitrogen deficient plants were stunted and showed the yellow lower leaves generally typical of nitrogen deficiency. Phosphorus deficient plants were stunted, had dark, irregularly necrotic leaves and showed a marked tendency toward loss of the young leaves. Sulphur deficient plants could be distinguished only by their reduced growth.

With regard to calcium, potassium, and magnesium, it may be said in general that good growth is obtained with high calcium and magnesium and with low potassium, while low calcium and magnesium and high potassium is generally detrimental. Calcium and magnesium appear to be able to replace each other to a very considerable extent and in fact omission of magnesium altogether (the plants of course received small amounts of magnesium as impurities) resulted in excellent growth. Magnesium deficiency did not result in any clear-cut deficiency symptom and for this reason it seems very improbable that the beneficial effects sometimes ascribed to magnesium sulfate (epsom salts) are due to the correction of any deficiency. It is possible, however, that magnesium sulfate may benefit soil conditions.

2 These plants were very kindly supplied by Ed Arnesen.

With the exception of nitrogen and phosphorus deficiencies the major element requirements of the Camillia cannot be diagnosed merely by observing the plant. On the other hand it seems unlikely in view of the extremely small requirements, that deficiencies of sulphur, potassium, or magnesium will ever be met with under California conditions. Calcium deficiency which could conceivably occur in regions using softened Metropolitan Water District water should be corrected by addition of calcium sulfate (gypsum) to the soil, a practice advocated by the Metropolitan Water District.

It is generally difficult to accurately determine the amount of nitrogen or phosphorus available to the plant by the chemical analysis of the soil in which the plant is growing. Much more success has been achieved in recent years in diagnosing the nutritional status of the plant by analysis of the amounts of nitrogen or phosphorus present in the leaves. A nitrogen deficient plant will have little nitrogen present in the leaf, while a plant supplied with abundant nitrogen will have much nitrogen present in the leaf. We have analyzed leaves periodically from all of the plants in this nutrition experiment to determine (a) what forms of nitrogen and phosphorus are most suitable for analysis in the Camellia and (b) to discover what levels are high and what are low in the Camellia. It has turned out that the total nitrogen of the leaf on a dry weight basis is a good measure of the nitrogen status of the Camellia, the mature leaves of high nitrogen plants containing up to 2% nitrogen while similar leaves of low nitrogen plants contain 1% or less. The nitrogen level of the leaf is little influenced by season. Preliminary results with analysis of leaves from nursery grown plants have indicated that leaf analysis, which is simple and rapid, can reveal the need for nitrogen before any visible symptoms are apparent. Similar relations have been found with phosphorus, and leaf phosphorus analysis should prove a valuable aid in determining whether a given plant requires the addition of more phosphorus.

NUTRIENT TRIANGLES

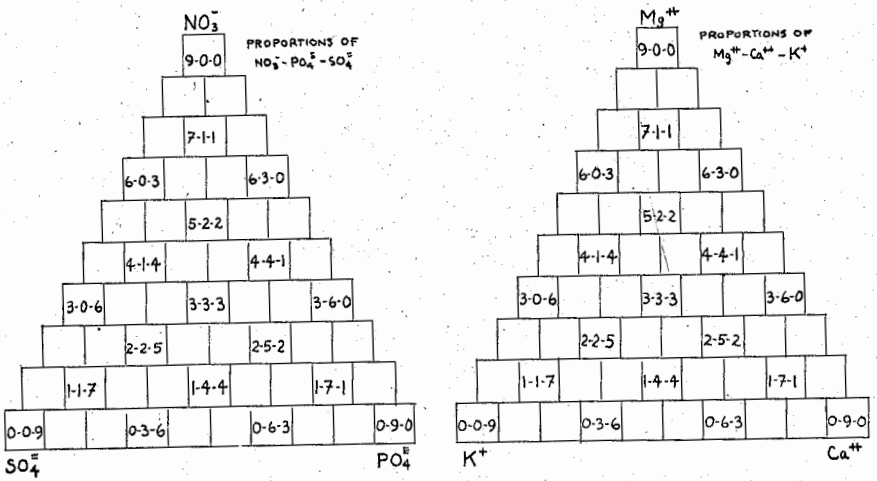
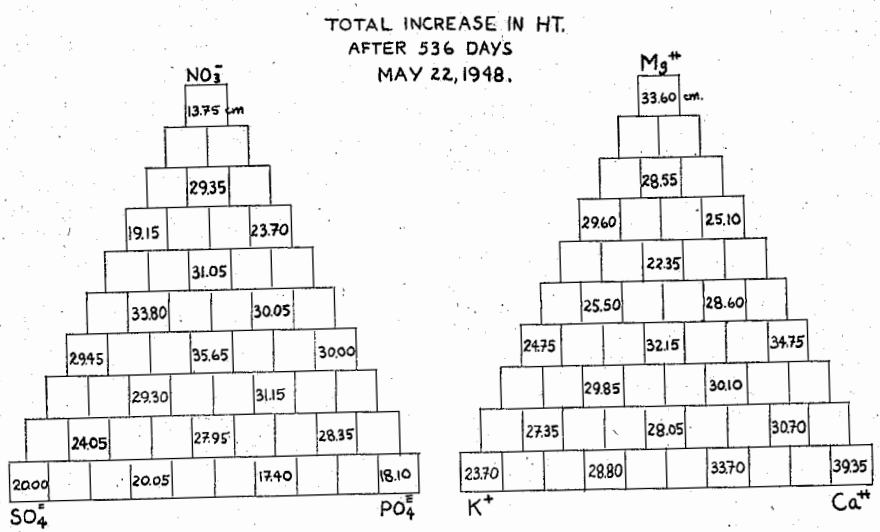


FIG. 1

FIG. 2



$(NH_4)_2SO_4$ — 38.40 cm
UREA — 40.20

H_2O — 19.25

HOAGLAND'S SOL. — 31.45
30.60

The present experiment in Camellia nutrition is being continued to determine the effects which each deficiency has on bud set and flower quality. These findings will be reported during the coming year.

RESEARCH REPORT

In a recent letter to the Directors of our society, Dr. Walter E. Lammerts, Chairman of the Horticultural Research Committee, made the following report.

'At the last meeting of the Research Committee of the Southern California Camellia Society, it was unanimously agreed that the following budget be submitted to the Board of Directors:

'That $1,200.00 of the $1,500.00 set aside for use by the Horticultural Research Committee be allocated to Dr. James Bonner, Biology Department, California Institute of Technology. This money is to be used by him to continue the nutrient and pH experiments, and to hire a student to initiate the experiments on methods of prolonging the life of the cut camellia flower.

'$300.00 has been allocated for general purposes such as the purchase of photographic supplies and plant materials to be used in research.

'We, on the Horticultural Research Committee, are very appreciative of the interest and confidence in our work which the allocation of this fund indicates. We are finding the time we spend, considering the many problems connected with the successful growing of camellias, is most stimulating and worth-while, and now that more regular publication of a society magazine is assured, we will, from time to time, have various reports and articles of interest to submit.

'From the work we have seen under way and about to begin at the California Institute of Technology, we are sure that no better use of the funds, so generously appropriated by the Southern California Camellia Society, could be made.

'From time to time we will, of course, report on the results achieved by the use of this money.'

The first results of the current research program are to be found in Dr. Bonner's article in this issue.

THE EDITORIAL

Camellias—A Background for Living

It was my good fortune to visit a couple the other day who had truly made camellias a background for living. The shelves in their home were crowded with fine old camellia books, the walls covered with magnificent color prints, and the garden filled with camellias of every shape, size and form. They had done things to this shrub that I had never seen before, interesting, exciting things. But far more important was what the Camellia had done to them.

I somehow felt that it had become an integrating force in their lives, an important factor in their personalities. They were growing these plants purposefully, wholeheartedly, without regret or reservation. And the very vitality of their interest seemed to set them apart. Perhaps interested people are always more interesting.

Ever since that visit I have been thinking about the intangibles of our hobby, wondering if there isn't more to growing camellias than meets the eye. Might we not allfind a greater measure of happiness, faith and understanding from working and living with our plants?

What can camellias do for us? I once knew a man who learned the meaning of patience as he waited ten years for a seedling to bloom, and another who discovered humility in considering the infinite complexity of a single flower. And are not the placing of a scion and the rooting of a cutting essentially acts of faith? Who can perform either miracle unaided by powers beyond himself, or having witnessed them come away unmoved?

Some people are troubled by the changeability of human nature, the fickleness of fortune, the instability of life; and yet do we not treasure this same quality of variation in the Camellia's bloom as something exciting, stimulating, desirable?

This was not meant to be a sermon, but it is good sometimes to forget the price of things and consider instead their value.

CLAUDE CHIDAMIAN

TEST GARDEN TOPICS

By David W. McLean

Camilla Bradley, Editor of *Home Gardening for the South,* arrived from New Orleans on July 14th. President Reeves and Editor Chidamian had advance information of the event and had planned several camellia activities for the distinguished visitor. First on the list, a visit to the Huntington Botanical Gardens and a trip through the Camellia Test Garden.

At midmorning on the 15th the trio picked up this Scribe, who rated the party as Chairman of the Test Garden Committee, and made their way to the Horticultural Administration Building of the Botanic Gardens.

First a visit with Curator Emeritus William Hertrich and Curator Ronald B. Townsend, in Mr. Hertrich's office. A half hour of fascinatingly interesting conversation. True, the talk quickly got out of bounds for mere camellia fanciers. It ranged from camellias to orchids, to succulents, to flowering and other trees, to shrubs rare and temperamental, indigenous to far parts of the world but susceptible to being coddled into accepting living conditions in New Orleans and San Marino. Don't know how Prex. Reeves was impressed, but this listener enjoyed it thoroughly—especially Miss Bradley's Southern Accent (Yes, Mr. Editor, we used the capitals purposely).

Finally, with Mr. Townsend as guide, the visiting quartette set out for a hike through the gardens. And a hike it was. All of the fifty-odd thousand growing things in the garden which had escaped mention in the Curator's office now came in for individual attention, and they proved surprisingly pretty and interesting under the discussion carried on by horticulturists Bradley, Chidamian and Townsend.

Through bordered paths, under towering trees planted by Bill Hertrich thirty, forty, fifty years ago, we came to the close-packed outdoor cymbidium bed, one of Hertrich's 'first' in Southern California. Then on to the 'home' camellia gardens, now part of the public Botanic Gardens planted many years ago, but since augmented by more recent additions. Here stood the original importations and the new varieties originated in the Huntington Gardens before the Test Garden ever came into being.

Here too were seedlings springing up like weeds under the large camellia trees; here were two varieties of *Camellia saluenesis,* of which more in a later report; here too, some interesting points about grafting on large understock, of which more later. Rapid-fire was the discussion between Miss Bradley and Mr. Townsend concerning deviations of leaf form and growth habit of given varieties as grown here and in the South. Mr. Townsend, too, hails from New Orleans where he was Superintendent of the Stern Estate; and as we went on through the Botanic Gardens and into the sacred precincts of the Test Garden, we became impressed with the fact that the new Curator has an interest, a love for camellias second only to that of William Hertrich himself. A certain disquiet we had felt about the future of the Test Garden, in view of the active Curatorship passing into new hands, was quietly laid to rest.

The Test Garden itself was found to be in fine condition. Moreover, it was a scene of great activity. The paths were spick and span, the hillside clean and dotted with new grafts. These had, in addition to jars and leafy branches for protection, a circle of hardware wire cloth a couple of feet high. 'Why the rabbit wire?' we asked. 'That's just what it is,' replied Mr. Townsend. 'Rabbits cruise through this canyon occasionly, chased by dogs. Neither have their minds on camellias; either, hitting a new graft, can be pretty hard on it.'

We also passed plants grafted a year or two ago, covered with large crates and packing boxes. 'Why on earth . . . ?' we started to ask. Then we noted a long ladder reaching up in mid air from the ground. Following this aloft, we saw some forty or more feet above, a man strapped to the ladder which in turn was hooked to one of the grand old oaks. Pruners were at work! With man power

again available, the Test Garden is being combed, manicured and its big trees barbered. Through it all, nothing is spared to guard the camellias.

As we approached the Japanese Lake we made a switch-back to a path at a higer level and returned to the point of our entrance. This amazed Scribbler saw varietal names he had never even heard of, saw other plants marked only by serial numbers, and large plants of collector's items carrying names he recognized as tagging a few choice two-bit sized plants in his own collection.

Along the public Botanic Garden road, past large seedlings and the mother plant of the variety 'Anne Galli,' we came to the rustic grape arbor. Miss Bradley exclaimed when she found it was made of concrete. Mr. Townsend explained that Mr. Hertrich had seen natives making such an arbor in South America many years ago. The South Americans refused to tell him how it was made, but allowed him to stand and visit with the natives who were doing the work. Returning home, Mr. Hertrich taught a Mexican gardener the art. The grape arbor still testifies to the skill of both Bill and the gardener. 'We still have the gardner,' explained Mr. Townsend, 'he is now in his seventies.'

From this point we looked down across the Japanese Water Garden to the tea house, which will shortly be removed. 'Let's go down into the lower end of the canyon,' said the Curator. 'Didn't know there was one,' said this Scribe. Passing under a suspended chain, we penetrated an uncleared jungle where more large camellia trees lorded it over ferns and undergrowth, the whole covered by a thick canopy of oaks. And lo, here too we saw recent grafts! 'This,' explained Mr. Townsend, 'will eventually be opened as part of the Test Garden.'

Back up the hill, across wide lawns and through the Rose Garden, stopping repeatedly while Miss Bradley spotted some rare shrub or tree and Mr. Townsend told its story, we finally came to the cafeteria building.

Originally the plan had been to have luncheon at Pierre's, in San Marino. It happens, however, that the Huntington has a new Director, Dr. Wallace Sterling, former Edward S. Harkness Professor of History and Government at the California Institute of Technology. Perhaps you have heard news commentaries on C.B.S. by a Dr. Sterling. This is the same Dr. Sterling. Finding that this party was to visit the Huntington, the Doctor arranged to have luncheon served in the reception room of the cafeteria. Moreover, he was there himself to act as host. The party was joined by Mr. Roy T. Thompson, President of the Pacific Camelia Society, and by our own Carl Tourje, who recently secured 140 scions of Australian varieties for the Test Garden. Dr. Reeves, who had left to attend professional duties, rejoined us, and a most pleasant social hour was enjoyed.

Your Test Garden Chairman was privileged to sit next to Dr. Sterling and found him deeply interested in the Botanic Gardens and the Test Garden. One feels that under his direction and the immediate management of Mr. Townsend, and with the continuing counsel of Mr. Hertrich, the Huntington Gardens, one and all, are in the best possible hands.

Luncheon over, Editors Bradley and Chidamian enthusiastically discussed with Curator Townsend a whirl through the Cactus Garden, a looksee at the Art Gallery and Library, then a trip to the Rancho del Descanso. With a deep sigh, this unaccustomed hiker bid them Godspeed and trundled home, tired but happy.

The Test Garden is going on—to bigger and better things.

FACTS AND ODDITIES

When the camellia reached its height of popularity in France during the 1840's, no Parisian dandy of the time considered himself decently dressed unless he wore a camellia in his jacket.

According to the symbolic meaning or 'language' of flowers, a red camellia means *innate worth,* a white camellia *perfected loveliness.*

THE CAMELLIA ROUND TABLE

The best way to learn more about camellias is to talk to people experienced in growing them. To begin this series of round-table discussions we have asked three leading collectors to discuss the very basic question posed by Mr. Frazee Burke in the last issue of the Bulletin: *How did I ever get into this camellia business in the first place?*

THE EXPERTS

Chairman: Mr. Frazee Burke, First Vice-President of our society.

Mr. Roy T. Thompson: President of the Pacific Camellia Society, Glendale. Camellia collector and hybridizer.

Mr. Bert Hummel: Camellia enthusiast par excellence.

The Interested Observer: A dyed-in-the-wool camellia fan who needs no introduction to readers of this bulletin.

THE QUESTION

Burke: Well, gentlemen, you know the question. How *did* you get started in camellias?

Thompson: One morning 21 years ago I happened to be looking through the *Downtown Shopping News* when I noticed an ad by the Germain Seed Co. They were advertising single camellia plants at $1.98 each. I went down and bought one of the two-year-old plants without asking the name or color. It later turned out to be Christmas Cheer.

I didn't know anything about camellias except that they were supposed to be very hard things to grow. With some misgivings I planted it outside our dining room window and waited for the worst. But it grew so well that the next year I bought three more plants from Armstrong Nurseries, a Purity, Rosita, and Pink Perfection. That first plant, by the way, now has a trunk 4 inches in diameter and a height and spread of 12 feet.

Burke: I guess that ought to have convinced you that they aren't so hard to grow. What about your story, Hummel?

Hummel: I can still vividly remember the first two camellias I ever saw, two Pink Perfections just loaded with blooms in front of a little bungalow on E. 4th Street in Los Angeles. That was 35 years ago, but I didn't do anything about it for a long time.

When I moved to my present place in Glendale about 10 years later I decided to have a shade garden. The oak tree I planted then from an acorn is now 18 inches in diameter, and at about the same time I planted my first camellia, Eureka Variegated. Then followed a Pink Perfection and two or three others.

It was not until about 9 years ago that I really got camellia fever. A camellia society was organized in Glendale with about 50 members and I decided to join too. There I met Bill Huested, who taught me how to graft, and many other camellia fans. Need I say more?

Burke: That's enough for now. We'll hear the results of your dangerous associations later. And now what about the old Observer?

I.O.: I can't dig back as far as these fellows, but I can tell a pretty fair story

When I moved to Glendale from Chicago in 1933, I discovered that the house diagonally across the street from us had been sold a few months earlier to another Chicagoan. Since both he and I were retired, we had plenty of time to putter with plants and to admire the 50 or 60 specimen camellias in his garden. Then too, just below his place one looked down into the Markham Estate with its 600 foot walk bordered with Francines and Elegans. I just couldn't help being impressed.

The following year my neighbor introduced me to Mr. Joshua Youtz, and I purchased my first camellias from that pioneer camellia fancier. I bought Daikagura, Herme, Belgian Red, Julia Drayton, Feasti, and a few others.

That's all there is to it. But what about you Burke? You started all this, what's your story?

Burke: My story is somewhat like yours, because a neighbor got me started too. I used to play golf on my weekends and if I ever thought about plants and trees it was as potential hazards on a course, certainly never as a hobby.

One Sunday about 11 years ago as I got home after my game, the fellow liv-

ing next door came over and told me excitedly that he was going to the nursery to buy a camellia. 'What in the world is a camellia,' I said. 'Come along and find out,' he answered.

We went to a little Japanese nursery on Pico at Arlington in Los Angeles and my friend pointed to a little Pink Perfection in bloom and said, 'That is a camellia, beautiful isn't it?' Well, I didn't want to be outdone so I bought one too.

In the next few years I bought another Pink Perfection and a Eureka and started to putter in the yard. Then I heard about Carter's Camellia Gardens in Monterey Park and I bought a few more plants there, selecting early, midseason, and late blooming varieties.

My golf game began falling off. I kept buying more plants until my collection reached 50 varieties, all the plants my garden could hold. My neighbor moved away, but I was so busy with my camellias I hardly noticed.

The only problem I have now is to make space for the other 50 varieties I'd like to have. Is it that way with you, gentlemen?

Thompson: Well I have about 100 varieties now, but my big problem is to handle the 700-800 hybrids I have developed. You see, that original Christmas Cheer plant began seeding about 5 years after I planted it, so I decided to hand-pollinate and make the crosses myself. I had been hybridizing daisies, coreopsis, etc., so I merely transferred my interest to developing better camellia seedlings.

Burke: Well, Hummel, we're ready to hear the rest of your story now. Tell us what those Glendale camellia bugs got you into.

Hummel: I only have 150 varieties and about 1000 plants on a 50 foot lot.

Burke: There's a house and garage on that lot too, isn't there? And what about those 45 specimen tubs I saw on your front porch?

Hummel: All right, I admit I need an acre or two, but you're just jealous because you can't find out how I get them all on my lot. You'd give anything to get some more on your place.

Burke: Don't think I'm not working on it.

I.O: You boys must think you'll reach the Millennium when you get 300 varieties. I got up to 175 at one time and just made up my mind to start weeding them out. I'm down to 125 now and am going to keep on sifting them until I have an irreducible minimum of perfect camellias.

Burke: You just have more will power, that's all. But what are your favorite varieties? Which ones would you select if you could only have a dozen at most?

Thompson: Francine is my prime favorite and I won't go any further. I like them all, even my old Christmas Cheer.

Hummel: Here I go, just say when. Red formal: Glen 40 and Col. Firey. Loose red: Adolphe Audusson and *C. reticulata.* Variegated: Tea Garden and/or English Donckelari, Flame Variegated, and the Descanso seedling FG2, 'Carl Tourje.' White: It's hard to beat old Alba Plena or White Crane. Pink: It's a toss-up on Debutante or Pink Ball, High Hat, Mrs. Howard Asper, and English Magnoliaeflora.

Burke: That's enough. You've really got it bad haven't you, though I'll agree on most of those. I especially like Alba Plena, Debutante and High Hat. And you'll never find better producers than Pope Pius, Daikagura and Purity.

I.O: Chandleri would head my list then Debutante, Alba Plena, Daikagura (for early bloom), Gigantea, and at least one of the Donckelaris. I would also put in Duchess de Cases as one of the loveliest and daintiest, and Aurora Borealis.

Burke: What are the 'musts' on your list for this coming season?

Thompson: I've got my eye on those varieties Mr. Domoto exhibited at our meeting in the Shakespeare Club last season, particularly Oniji and Shin Akebono. Kenny and Mrs. Howard Asper are also on the list, but I ought to add that I will be very partial to any good single or Sasanqua that comes along.

Hummel: I definitely agree with you on Domoto's Shin Akebono, but the one I really want won't be released for a few

(Continued on page 13)

CAMELLIA SASANQUA

By Claude Chidamian

Camellia Sasanqua, a delicately beautiful species of camellia, has waited more than a century for the recognition which it has lately begun to receive in England and America. In earlier years, the overwhelming popularity of the fully double, strictly formal varieties of *Camellia japonica* left little room for the simple beauty of the single and semi-double types. The prim, stiff, solid blooms of Alba Plena, Lady Hume's Blush and a thousand others like them, somehow typified the stolid refinement of the Victorian era. In the informality of our own times, however, we have come to appreciate the single and semi-double forms of *Camellia japonica,* particularly if the blooms are as large as dinner plates. But we have not yet learned to recognize the beauty of these same forms when they appear in the smaller, delicately fragile blooms of *Camellia Sasanqua.*

In Japan, where mere magnitude or symmetry of form have never been criterions of floral beauty, the Sasanquas have always been favored above all other camellias. This native species, growing wild in the mountains of Kyushu and Shikoku and in the Luchu Islands, has been cultivated by the Japanese for centuries and is more frequently encountered in gardens and public places than *C. japonica.* [1]

Various garden forms of *C. Sasanqua* were undoubtedly carried by priests and traders to the large cities of China, for it is from the vicinity of Canton that the first plants of this species were taken to England early in the 19th century. The Abbe Lorenzo Berlése in his *Monographie du Genre Camellia* (Paris, 1837) gives the date 1810 for the introduction of the single white form, and 1826 for the double pink type called *C. Sasanqua rosea plena,* or *multiflora.*[2] This latter variety was later found to belong to another species, *C. maliflora,* and still later Sasanqua introductions from China were identified as belonging to the closely related Chinese species *C. oleifera.* All this confusion has led some observers to suggest that the true *C. Sasanqua* did not reach Europe until 1869, going first to France and then to England in about 1879.[3] This conclusion seems unnecessarily cautious, however, for we are now quite certain that the *Camellia Sasanqua flore simplice,* known as 'Lady Banks' Camellia,' was brought to England from Japan in 1811.[4]

The varieties of *C. Sasanqua* in America today are all of very recent introduction. Although a few plants of this species were grown in 19th century American collections, they were probably only kept as botanical specimens and no particular attention was given to their cultivation. In recent years, however, largely through the efforts of two American growers, the number of Sasanqua varieties has been increased to stand second only to *C. japonica.* More than

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[1] It is interesting to note here again that *C. japonica,* despite its name, may not be a native of Japan at all but was probably brought to that country from China and Korea by Buddhist monks early in the Christian era.

The Japanese in early times showed very little interest in developing new varieties of *C. japonica.* Some years ago Dr. E. H. Wilson, the noted authority on Asiatic plants, offered a strange but simple explanation for the Japanese attitude toward this camellia:

'In Japan the Tsubakki was regarded with superstitious awe by the warrior or Samurai class. The color of the flower is red and it has a bad habit of falling off at the neck almost as soon as its petals are expanded. The color suggested blood to the Samurai and the fallen flower a human head severed from the body, and so to those who lived by the sword the Tsubakki symbolized their probable fate by decapitation. One sees the plant in Japanese gardens today and one or two distinct varieties are grown, but the Japanese really favor another species, *C. Sasanqua.*'

[2] Lorenzo Berlese, *Monography of the Genus Camellia.* Tr. by Henry A. S. Dearborn (Boston, 1838), pp. 96,97. Berlese's second date is not generally accepted and may be a typographical error. William Beattie Booth describing *C. maliflora,* 'The Apple-Blossomed Camellia,' in *Illustrations and Descriptions of . . . the Natural Order Camellieae* (London, 1831) writes as follows: 'It was first brought to this country, in 1816, by Captain Richard Rawes, who presented the original plant to his relation, Thomas Carey Palmer, Esq. of Bromley, in Kent, in whose choice collection it flowered in 1818, and was afterwards published in the Botanical Magazine, as a vriety of Camellia Sasanqua; hence it has been cultivated, and is usually known by the name of the Sasanqua Rosea, or Palmer's Double Sasanqua Camellia; but from that species it has been lately separated by Mr. Lindley, in the Botanical Register, f.1078, who has applied to it the very appropriate name we have here adopted.'

[3] J. R. Sealy, 'Species of Camellia in Cultivation.' *Jour. Royal Hort. Soc.,* LXII (August, 1937), 360-362.

[4] William Beattie Booth in *Transactions Hort. Soc. London,* VII (1830) describes the introduction as follows: 'Introduced in 1811 by the Honourable Court of Directors of the East India Company, in the *Cuffnels* by Captain Wellbank from Japan.'

fifty of the finest Japanese varieties were brought into this country some years ago by Mr. E. A. McIlhenny for his famous Jungle Gardens collection at Avery Island, Louisiana. To these have been added a number of very fine American seedlings developed chiefly by Overlook Nurseries in Crichton, Alabama. On the West Coast, Toichi Domoto and Coolidge Rare Plant Gardens have introduced many popular Sasanquas. There are now more than 100 named varieties of this species in American collections.

C. Sasanqua is the earliest bloomer of the camellia family, the flowering period being from September to January. Thus it comes into bloom at a season when other shrubs in flower are scarce and before most varieties of *C. japonica* have begun their full display. In colder sections of the country, this early blooming habit saves the Sasanqua blooms from frost injury, and in all areas it extends the camellia season by several months.

In their native state the Sasanquas are found growing as rather open, twiggy, picturesque shrubs to a height of eight or ten feet, with much smaller foliage than *C. japonica.* The branches when young are slender, reddish and hairy, and the plants have a rampant, horizontal growth which later develops into a bushy compact specimen. The cultivated varieties of *C. Sasanqua,* on the other hand, have several distinct forms of growth. Some are openly branched and spreading, others quite upright, and still others definitely pendulous or weeping in habit. There is considerable variation in foliage too, some varieties having leaves as large as those of *C. japonica.* The dried foliage of certain varieties is distinctly aromatic and frequently added to tea to increase the bouquet. A decoction made from the leaves is also used by Oriental women to wash their hair. Oil extracted from the seeds of *C. Sasanqua* is used for many domestic purposes.

The blooms of the horticultural varieties also differ widely from the wild stock. The small, single white flowers of the species have been bred to produce larger blooms in every shade and tint from pure white to deep carmine, and floral forms developed embracing single, semi-double, double and peony types. Although there are a few variegated varieties and some which are exquisitely shaded from lighter to darker tones, the Sasanquas are relatively stable plants and do not sport as readily as the japonicas.

The primary usefulness of the species lies in its beauty and adaptability as a garden shrub. Picturesque growth habits, bright glossy foliage, exquisitely delicate blooms, an abundant early-flowering—all blend to give softer tones to landscaping. In addition, the Sasanquas seem better adapted to growing in sunny places and in colder locations than most varieties of *C. japonica.*

Although the Sasanquas may be used just as the japonicas in border, background, specimen, or foundation plantings; they are even more valuable in certain unique treatments. The upright forms are especially beautiful when grown as a high natural hedge. Such a hedge when once seen in bloom will never be forgotten and may serve as a thrilling substitute for the ever-present Privets and Eugenias. The openly branched and spreading varieties may be put to the same use when made dense and compact by judicious pruning, but they are best adapted to espalier work. Applying original or established patterns, the long pliant braches are easily silhouetted against a wall or trellis. The trailing and sprawling habits of the pendulous varieties make them ideal ground cover subjects in front of taller shrubs. These same plants may also be used in rock gardens, in hanging pots or baskets, and trimmed or grafted to form weeping, tree-shaped standards. The Sasanquas may be used liberally in every garden to help accentuate the general landscape design.

Many small-leaved or scented varieties now included in the species are probably misplaced as were the scented variety Appleblossom, now identified as belonging to the species *C. saluenensis,* and the small-leaved but scentless variety Betty McCaskill, which is now recognized as the old *C. maliflora* of Lindley.

Although the Sasanquas seed freely and the fast-growing seedlings are especially favored for use as understocks in grafting, the real possibilities of hybridizing the species remain unexplored.

If the exquisite colors, delicate texture, and the early free-blooming habits of this plant can be transmitted to the other species, a whole new race of camellias will result. But the Sasanquas have much to offer just as they are. They only await our long delayed recognition.

ROUND TABLE

(Continued from page 10)

years yet. It's that brilliant Rancho del Descanso seedling FG2, 'Carl Tourje,' that I mentioned before. There's one camellia worth waiting for.

I.O.: Well, while you're waiting, I'll take the variegated Ville de Nantes as they have it in the South, Elizabeth Boardman, Eleanor Hagood, Mrs. Howard Asper, Crepe Rosette, Mme. Hahn, Colletti Maculata, and Martha Brice.

Burke: My 'musts' for the coming season include all the Donckelari strains and seedlings: Lady Jane Grey, Elizabeth Fleming, King Lear, Ville de Nantes, etc. I also have Mrs. Howard Asper and the Audussons high on my list.

But, gentlemen, I have one last question to ask. If you had to choose a hobby over again, would it be camellias?

I.O: That's like asking if we'd change our minds about our children. Of course it would be camellias again. Container grown camellias are the perfect hobby plant.

Hummel: The old Observer here took the words right out of my mouth.

Burke: But Hummel, didn't I see a few cymbidiums at your place the other day —a few hundred perhaps?

Hummel: Cymbidiums and camellias are so unlike in every respect: form, flowering, and appeal, that they cannot compete with one another. They make excellent companion plants. If I ever wanted to be a nurseryman, I would handle nothing but camellias and cymbidiums.

Burke: Maybe you've got something there, Bert. What do you think, Thompson?

Thompson: Camellias alone satisfy me fully. I would definitely choose them again.

Burke: I'm glad we all agree on this last point. Camellias are not only a hobby but they offer relaxation as well. No plant gives so much for so little care. There is something going on all the time and the results are always unpredictably beautiful and satisfying.

REGISTRATION OF NEW CAMELLIA VARIETY

At its recent meeting, the Board of Directors of the Southern California Camellia Society, upon recommendation of the 1947 Registration Committee, Anne Galli, Chairman, authorized the registration of the new camellia variety MAY SWANSON, originated by Eugene E. Swanson of Pasadena.

The MAY SWANSON is a seedling of unknown parents; the original plant is seven years old, tall, and of average rapidity of growth. It blooms in February and March.

The leaf has a fine, leathery texture, oblong with serrate margins and pronounced veining; it is from 3½ to 5½ inches in length and 1½ to 2 inches in width; its top is dark green and its reverse side light green. The petiole length is 7/16 of an inch.

The blossom is of anemone form and opens from round buds which are dark brown on the outside. Its color is red, of Novelty Boutonniere type, the bloom being from 2 to 3½ inches in size and having 15 to 18 petals.

The MAY SWANSON is being propagated by the C. S. Jones Nursery in Pasadena and will be available to the trade in 1949. A plant has been offered to the California Test Garden by Mr. Swanson.

David W. McLean
Chairman, Test Garden
and Registration Committee

EARLIEST BLOOM SURVEY

Amateurs, collectors, nurserymen—we would like to know about your first camellia bloom this season. Just address a postcard or letter to the Editor with the following data: Variety, age, in container or ground, lath or open, exposure, date of first fully opened bloom. The results will be published.

EARLY JAPONICAS

(Continued from page 2)

compact growth with medium size, light green foliage. From Middleton Gardens, South Carolina.

DAIKAGURA RED

Deep pink to rose-red sport of Daikagura Variegated. Also known as Shangrila.

DIAKAGURA VAR.

Bright rose-pink splotched white. Large, peony form. Slow, compact growth with large, serrated, dull green foliage. An old Japanese variety first listed in U. S. by Toichi Domoto in 1932. Also known as Kiyosu and Idaten Shibori.

DIAKAGURA WHITE

A predominantly white sport of Daikagura with small rose-pink dots. Warratah White is sold in some sections under this name.

DEBUTANTE

Light pink. Large, full peony form. Vigorous, upright growth with large, heavily serrated, light green foliage. Said to be a seedling of Magnolia Gardens, South Carolina. Also known as Sara C. Hastie.

DELECTISSIMA

White dashed with wide pink stripe. Large, single. Vigorous spreading growth with medium size, medium green foliage. From Magnolia Gardens also.

DIATARIN

Light rose-pink. Large, anemone form with very long petals. Vigorous, upright growth with very large, heavy, deep green foliage. A Japanese variety reported first in the U. S. in Washington State.

ELEANOR OF FAIROAKS

Variegated form of Vedrine. Deep ruby-red marbled white.

FAVORITA

Light pink. Very large single. Vigorous, upright growth with large, dark green foliage. A seedling of magnolia Gardens. Also known as Cannon Ball.

FIMBRIATA

White. Large, formal double with fringed petals. Slow, bushy, spreading growth with medium size, glossy, light green foliage. Introduced to England from China in 1816. Related to Alba Plena. Also known as Alba Fimbriata and Alba Plena Fimbriata.

HENRY MIDDLETON

Dark red. Very large, semi-double with four rows of petals. Medium, upright growth with large, glossy, slightly twisted, deep green foliage. From Middleton Gardens, South Carolina.

HIGH HAT

Pale pink sport of Daikagura. Introduced by Coolidge Gardens, Pasadena, Calif.

IMPERATOR

Light red. Large, loose peony form. Vigorous, bushy growth with medium size, dull green foliage. An American variety. There is also a French variety with the same name.

JAMES HYDE PORTER

White striped red. Large, loose peony form. Medium, spreading growth with medium large, deep green foliage. A seedling of Dr. W. G. Lee of Macon, Georgia, and named for one of the first directors of the American Camellia Society.

J. J. PRINGLE SMITH

Bright red. Very large semi-double with four rows of rounded, indented petals. Vigorous, upright growth with large, rich, glossy, deep green foliage. From Middleton Gardens, South Carolina.

28 **LADY RUTH**

Variegated sport of Rose Glory. Rose-pink and white. A California variety.

29 **LIBERTY BELL**

Pure white. Large, semi-peony form. Vigorous, semi-upright growth with medium size, smooth, medium green foliage. A long season bloomer. A seedling of Overlook Nurseries, Circhton, Ala.

30 **LINDSAY NEILL**

Dark red marbled white. Large, semi-double to loose peony form. Slow, spreading growth with large glossy green foliage. Original plant imported from England, probably in 1840's, and planted at Mott home in Columbus, Ga. propagated and distributed by Mr. Lindsay Neill. Probably has an older name.

31 **MADONNA**

Delicate pink pencilled and speckled rose. Medium, formal double. Medium, compact growth with light green foliage. An old variety probably of Italian origin. Also known as Anna Frost and Comte de Gomer.

32 **NOBILISSIMA**

White with yellow shading. Medium, full peony form. Vigorous, upright growth with medium size, light green foliage. Originated in Ghent, Belgium, 1834. Also known as Fostine.

33 **OCTOBER JOY**

Deep wine-red. Large, loose peony form. Vigorous, upright growth with large, dark green foliage. Seedling of Gerbing Nurseries.

34 **PINK BALL**

Soft pink. Medium large, full peony form. Vigorous, compact, upright growth with large, glossy, light green foliage. Probably of Japanese origin and first imported into California.

35 **PINK PERFECTION**

Shell pink. Medium, formal double. Vigorous, upright growth with light green, glossy, rounded foliage. A Japanese variety known there as Uso-Otome. Imported to Germany and listed there as Frau Minna Seidel in 1893. Commonly known as Pink Perfection in U. S. Also known as Goishi.

36 **PRINCE ALBERT**

Clear pink marbled white. Medium large, peony form. Vigorous, compact, upright growth with light green foliage. An old variety believed to have been brought to Europe from China. Also known as Concordia, Ellen McKinsey, Normandy, and Gomez.

37 **PRINCESS IRENE**

Rose pink. Large, semi-double with bell-shaped petaloids among petals. Medium, upright growth with large, heavy, dark green foliage. An original Magnolia Garden variety.

38 **RED HIBISCUS**

Deep pink to bright red. Large, semi-double. Vigorous, upright growth with stiff serrated foliage. A seedling of Overlook Nurseries of Crichton, Ala.

39 **ROBERT NORTON**

White with one or two narrow pink stripes. Large, semi-double. Medium, bushy growth with medium size, obtuse, leathery foliage. A seedling of Overlook Nurseries.

40 **ROSEA PLENA**

Rose pink with dark veins. Medium large, formal double. Vigorous, compact, upright growth with large, veined, deep green foliage. An original Magnolia Garden variety.

41 **ROSE GLORY**

Light rose-pink. Large, semi-double. Medium, compact, upright growth with medium size, medium green foliage. A California variety.

42 **STAR OF BETHLEHEM**

White. Medium, star shaped semi-double. Low spreading, bushy growth

with long, narrow, dark green foliage. A seedling of Gerbing Nurseries.

TINKY LEE

Soft rose pink. Large, formal double. Vigorous, upright growth with medium large, medium green foliage. A seedling of Dr. W. G. Lee of Macon, Ga.

VEDRINE

Ruby red. Large, semi-double to loose peony form. Vigorous, upright, spreading growth with sharply pointed, twisted, dark green foliage. Propagated from an old plant at Lafayette, La. Named Vedrine by Mrs. Mary Swords of Debaillon. Also known as Ruby Glow, Mehl's Red, Margaret Lawrence, and Bolen's Pride.

WHITE EMPRESS

White. Very large, semi-double with fluted petals. Vigorous, compact, upright growth with large, dark green foliage. A seedling of Overlook Nurseries.

WHITE HIBISCUS

White. Large, single to semi-double with long, narrow petals. Medium, upright growth with long, narrow, crinkled foliage. A seedling of Overlook Nurseries

WHITE QUEEN

White, Very large, semi-double. Vigorous, compact, upright growth with thin, curled, deeply serrated foliage. A seedling of Overlook Nurseries.

YOHEI HAKU

White. Large, formal double to peony form. Medium, spreading growth with medium large, rounded, pointed, dark green foliage. A Japanese variety. Also known as September Morn, Albatross, Shiro Byoshi, and Shiro Daikagura.

I hope you have enjoyed the beauty of your early stroll. But remember that a camellia is like a human being and needs praise, love and encouragement to produce for you at the proper time and in the proper manner the most beautiful and exquisite flowers the wonders of nature have ever displayed. So, sit down, relax, and have a heart to heart talk with the Queen of evergreen shrubs.

Did You Know?

Middleton Place near Charleston, South Carolina, supposedly has the honor of being the first garden in America to grow camellias. A century and a half ago, the legend says, André Michaux brought four plants to Henry Middleton and planted them on the grounds himself. Of these, three are still living.

The reason for the camellia's lack of fragrance was told many years ago in a poetic allegory by the Belgian writer Robert Corvelisse.

Once Vulcan caught the goddess Venus in an intimate situation with the god Mars. Venus' son, Cupid, hearing the scandal severely criticized his mother, who became so angry at his words that she wished him terribly punished. She immediately gave orders to the Graces to whip Cupid with rose branches so that the thorns might tear his flesh.

The little Cupid was awaiting his punishment with fear and anxiety when Flora, moved to pity on him, begged Zephyr to fly to Japan and gather the branches of the rose without thorns, known to the gods by the name of *Anacanthis* and to men by that of Sasanqua, with shining leaves and flowers not unlike the true rose. Zephyr returned in a twinkling loaded with flower-covered branches which were greatly admired by the Graces who adorned themselves with the blooms.

Cupid was thrashed as a mere formality and without any pain; but Venus who found out everything that had happened, hated the camellia and to punish it took from it all fragrance and at the same time had it exiled to an uninhabited island, unknown and distant.

The order of the fair goddess was strictly obeyed for a great many years, so that not until the beginning of the 18th century was this flowering shrub known again.