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◦ Camellia Hybrid BONNIE MARIE

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COVER FLOWER

C. saluenensis hybrid "BONNIE MARIE"

(Plant Patent #1801)

BONNIE MARIE is a 4 to 5 inch incomplete double with large, wide, fluted petals, phlox pink in color, being two shades deeper at the base of the petals. The center is composed of short, golden stamens and phlox pink petaloids, interspersed with upright, fluted petals. The coloring is elusive and subtle as the reverse side of the petals has a definite suggestion of salmon, while the texture resembles that of the "glass beaded" *reticulatas*. The flowers are long lasting, even when cut.

The plant is upright, bushy and vigorous and, in the words of Mr. Sam Hjort of Thomasville, Georgia, has "a most beautiful foliage." This hybrid will stand full sun except in areas of very low humidity—or full shade.

Buds are set at almost every leaf axil on the current year's growth, starting to

bloom from the tip down. This feature gives the plant a mass blooming effect over a long period of time. Blooming season will vary according to conditions—in central California from about mid-November until about April; in Georgia, and that area, from about January to May, blooming intermittently.

BONNIE MARIE is considered to be one of the finest introductions to date in the new hybrid camellias, an All-America Selection for 1960. It was tested throughout the "camellia belt" and performed well under all conditions, indicating it can be grown successfully in any area where normal temperatures do not fall below 10° F. The blooms are "weather resistant" in that they will not spot from protracted rain.

—Vernon R. James, originator.

CAMELLIAS FROM CUTTINGS

Charles Puddle, Bodnant Gardens, England

The propagation of camellias from cuttings is, in my opinion, the most advantageous method of vegetative increase. A camellia on its own roots displays its true garden value without showing the false rapid growth and unnatural habit often associated with young grafted plants. Cuttings may take longer to develop and flower but they usually make up their initial lack of growth within five years and as mature specimens they are more reliable than those which have been grafted. The danger of diseases being transmitted from the root-stock does not arise and self-colored varieties do not produce mottled flowers through virus infection. At the moment flower variegation appears fashionable in certain camellia growing areas. Every self-colored novelty is immediately grafted in the hope that a variegated form will arise. I believe, however, that this is only a passing phase, for surely there are sufficient good camellias without introducing what are after all merely diseased versions of the original.

The technique of rooting camellias has many successful variations, and the wise propagator will adopt the system which is most suitable to the local conditions and the facilities available. In Britain, the propagation of camellias from cuttings is usually carried out in glasshouses with heated propagating beds, for although camellias do root in cold frames, they are often rather slow. I propose to describe the method used at Bodnant which is based on the old traditional principles of propagation with certain modern improvements.

A span roof glasshouse some twelve feet wide is fitted with brick propagation beds four feet broad on each side of a central path. The brick walls are four feet high, the rear wall being an inch higher so as to give a slight fall in the covering glass. Heating is by oil fuel and thermostatically controlled. Through each propagating bed run six two-inch hot water pipes evenly spaced some ten inches below the top of the brick wall. These are covered with slates and coarse drainage,

and the rooting medium consisting of two parts coarse sand and one part sterilized peat is well firmed to a depth of four inches. When completed there is a three inch clearance between the rooting medium and the covering glass. The maximum amount of light is obtained by using sheets of glass of a convenient width, laid across the top of the two brick walls, rather than the conventional frame light. Any shading which may be necessary is provided by lath blinds on the outside of the glasshouse.

The propagating year begins in late May when the glasshouse is thoroughly cleaned and the rooting medium completely renewed. The first cuttings are inserted in June and replaced by others in August-September, November-December, and finally February-March. Thus a minimum of three, and in most cases four batches of cuttings is taken from the propagating beds each season. The treatment of each batch varies, especially regarding the bottom heat required, the thermostat being set at 65-70° in June, falling to 55-60° by November. Once the cuttings are in there is very little maintenance except for the removal of excessive moisture from the covering glass and watering, which is never needed more than once a week.

Cuttings are always selected from strong healthy plants, and are gathered in plastic bags. The lower leaves are removed, four being left on each cutting, and only in the larger leafed varieties are they trimmed. A long diagonal cut is made at the base of the cutting—within reason the longer the cut the better for the larger wound results in the production of a greater number of roots. It matters little whether this cut is made through a node or not. No hormone rooting aids are used and the cuttings are inserted with a dibble and well firmed and watered in. Only when stock is in very short supply are leaf bud cuttings used.

Within six weeks many varieties are rooted and ready for potting. This must be done with great care so that the roots are not damaged, otherwise losses can be high. A mixture of three parts sterilized peat, one of loam and one of coarse sand is used, and 3 or 3½" pots, depending

upon the quantity of root. When potted the plants are placed in a shaded glasshouse lined with polyethylene, and the temperature is maintained at 60-65°. They are gradually hardened off, and in about a month transferred to cooler conditions in a well lighted house. Cuttings taken before September are normally in 5" pots and are often eighteen inches in height by the following May.

There is, of course, much variation in the ease with which camellia varieties root from cuttings. I am sure that all camellias can be produced from cuttings on an economical scale for it is only a matter of experiment to find the optimum conditions for a species or cultivar, if at first it proves difficult. A great deal also depends upon the growth and situation of the stock plants, and if this can be controlled so much the better. The correct time for insertion of cuttings is, however, most important and is a matter of practice and keeping accurate records from year to year. Normally, early-flowering varieties are the first to be taken in June, but by the time November is reached almost any variety can be inserted with an equal chance of success. There are, however, a few varieties which are best taken at this time, when the wood is completely ripened.

The propagation of cuttings by traditional methods could be said to be old fashioned in these days of mist propagation and other modern aids. Yet it is results that count, and having checked carefully the published and private results of those using mist, I am certain that our percentage of good one-year old plants is very much higher than that given by the newer methods. In many cases a hundred percent success is secured, and even with the more difficult species and cultivars our percentage is approaching this figure.

My advice to all camellia enthusiasts who propagate from cuttings is to keep accurate records, experiment and find the causes of failures, develop a keen sense of observation, and once a sound system has been evolved leave it unchanged unless you are absolutely certain that improvements are going to be real, both in practice as well as in theory.

OUR CAMELLIA "NEIGHBORHOOD"

Mrs. A. E. (Mary) Johnson, Beaverton, Oregon

Camellia culture and interest for some is confined to the care, growth and development of a few or even a number of camellias, to provide an attractive planting about the home and garden and for the pleasant experience of having quantities of lovely flowers during the blooming period. Almost without exception, each individual has his or her favorite camellias. This partiality may be governed by a distinct preference as to flower form, color, or even plant growth characteristics. It may also be a combination of several such factors, which provides the person with what he considers to be his favorite or ideal camellia. One may have a definite preference for camellias with red flowers, while another may not be so particular about the color so long as the flower form is formal or completely double. Another individual may particularly prefer the anemone-formed blossoms, while still another may favor the single flowered varieties or semi-doubles, or even the fluffy peony forms. Whatever the individual preference may be we find that it is usually subject to change in much the same manner as fashion in dress. The greater wardrobe will, as a general rule, contain far more varied items of attire, and will be influenced by current fashion.

Somewhat similarly, when we first acquire a few camellia plants our knowledge is rather limited, which is not conducive to a great interest in a wide variety. Our fondness, for the moment, may be only for the red or the white camellias, or possibly the stiffly erect and very symmetrically shaped plants. Later on, however, as we have begun to learn much more about both our camellia plants and their flowers, it is not surprising that our collection increases in size and variety, along with our greater knowledge and increasing interest. We become more aware of the vast differences in foliage and in inherent plant characteristics. Wider variation in flower color and form increase with each succeeding year in our garden.

We have discovered, to our very great pleasure, that "Camellia Avenue" extends far beyond the first block or two—the foundation planting area. Just as any large river has its many tributaries, so "Camellia Ave." has its many side streets. Once you have reached that far, it is not difficult to proceed along the way—so here we go!

CUTTING LANE is only around the corner as you make a *just right* turn onto the first side street. Here for many blocks up and down are the homes and gardens of ever so many happy gardeners who delight in sharing their flowers with others. In this friendly neighborhood, people have long ago learned that it is never too late, nor ever too early, to add to the enjoyment and fascination of their camellia hobby. They have grown to appreciate the balance wheel that this interest provides between periods of pressure of modern day working and living and times of pleasant relaxation. They have learned that camellias, more than perhaps any other living plant, offer a greater variety of foliage, plant forms, flower forms and colors, together with an amazingly long blooming season. The individual natural growth patterns of camellias, they have discovered, are so varied that one may quite easily find an outstanding answer to the most difficult landscape problem, whether it be found in the stiffly upright varieties such as *Kumasaka*, *Kimberley*, or *Shi Shi Gashiri* (japonica), so suitable for use in certain places where a tall, narrow-growing plant is indicated. Or the answer may be found in the bushier, more open-growing types such as *Lady Clare* and members of the *Finlandia* family, or countless other older favorites as well as newer "greats" like *Guilio Nuccio* and *Tomorrow* and the several striking variations of *Mrs. D. W. Davis*. Our friends on "Cutting Lane" not only give camellias generously but use them likewise all about their gardens, having learned that there is a camellia for every situation, without monotonous repetition. A number of the *Sasanquas* and *Hiemalis*

are excellent when creating attractive ground covers: *Mine-no-yuki* or *Showa-no-sakae*, to name but two.

In this neighborhood, one will find many camellias used in group plantings, as a rule not exclusively but rather in combination with other attractive material such as azaleas and rhododendrons. In such plantings, particular attention is given, not only to the plant forms, but to foliage that is unusually handsome, or to interesting shape, color or texture and size. Varieties having spectacular flowers and those known to produce blooms in abundance are given careful consideration. Here, one thoughtful individual has planted a number of camellia varieties having handsome, extremely large foliage, yet rather rangy plants—varieties such as *Drama Girl*, *Lotus*, *Masterpiece* and *Coronation*—in a position that provides an attractive background during the entire year, yet enhances the display of blooms of gigantic proportions that these plants produce at bloom time.

Frequently, places of honor are bestowed by specimen plantings of such worthy varieties as *R. L. Wheeler*, *Donation* (hybrid), *Mrs. D. W. Davis*, *Mary Christian* (hybrid), *Monte Carlo Supreme* and *Marjorie Magnificent*, or occasionally the small-leaved, daintier, or lacy-growing species such as *Fraterna*, *Saluenensis*, or *Cuspidata*. All have their place, whether they stand proudly alone or are arranged as companions for each other.

Along this street, one may see camellias growing in attractive containers or tubs, so that they may be moved from place to place wherever desired. They are also seen as hedges or screens, for camellia shapes and foliage lend themselves so well for this purpose. Many of these people even find camellias wonderful as espaliers along fences, against decorative concrete or brick walls, or along certain exposures of the home or patio. Another of the reasons for the intense interest on this "street" stems from the fact that its residents have learned that camellias may be propagated rather readily from CUTTINGS. They have found that in doing so they add to their own personal pleasure by giving or sharing of both plants

and knowledge with friends and neighbors. As with the ever-increasing list of new camellia varieties which seems to have no ending, so they find is the case with their knowledge. Newer methods of culture and propagation are constantly appearing to challenge the interest, in much the same manner as is found in higher learning—one portion completed opens the door to additional fields of interest and knowledge.

CUTTING LANE is certainly not a dead end street as we might have supposed in the beginning. An intersection is plainly visible, with a prominent sign indicating the direction to GRAFTING POINT. The people living in this area, we discover, are real "down to earth" folk. Some, here, have small greenhouses, both for pleasure and for better success with their experimentations. When, occasionally, it becomes necessary to give their address, they may hesitate to say "Grafting Point," as in truth, "POINT OF NO RETURN" is more apropos. This is no neighborhood for any mildly interested in camellias. There is a well known virus in the area and, contrary to most other forms of virus infections, these people like the one they have and plan to keep it thriving, if possible, even to the point of infecting other mildly interested friends. This virus is no respecter of age or station in life or business . . . anyone mildly interested in camellias is susceptible. Folks here are known as "down to earth people" because of a certain characteristic connected with a particular aspect of their hobby known as GRAFTING . . . many hours are spent down on their knees on the ground, as they go about the operation of transforming what was once a common camellia variety into a "hot" NEW NUMBER. This grafting "bug" or virus is most prevalent soon after the Christmas Holidays, but the joyousness of this particular time of the year really has nothing to do with the feverish state of excitement of the residents of "Grafting Point." Rather, it is due to the fact that this is the time of year when camellias begin to grow again following a winter rest period and this is GRAFTING TIME. Friends in this area have

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A CAMELLIA GARDEN SYMPHONY

R. F. Dickson, Sr., Pasadena, California

To give you the idea that prompted this theme, let's look at the definition of "symphony" which, in its broadest terms, is "a consonance or harmony of any kind." Now let our imagination escort us on a short tour of a concert hall and a camellia garden.

To set the concert scene one has to go back to his first impressions. My first vivid recollection of music is when a family moved into town with a piano and a daughter who played it. Going to hear her play soon became a regular Sunday afternoon event for all the neighborhood's young people. After this came music in the grades and in high school. Even before finishing school I was eager to hear all sorts of concerts. All this had transpired in Birmingham, Ala. so, when we found ourselves in Boston, Mass. at the end of World War I, guess what was one of the first things that we did? Correct you are the first time—we began going to symphony concerts, enjoying them more and more as we enlarged our understanding of the many instruments and how each contributed to the over-all message that the composer was conveying to the listener.

Every person who appreciates and enjoys music will also enjoy all of the principal orchestral instruments when played solo. Very recently we spent the better part of an evening with our recordings of Rubenstein and Horowitz playing Liszt and Beethoven. Another evening will be devoted entirely to chamber music. Then there always comes the time when we can relax and give uninterrupted attention to a great symphony. To me, this is the payoff for the year in which we were learning the meaning of music.

Now, let's look for the parallel in the appreciation we have for our camellia gardens. I am sure that many others have arrived over roads similar to the one that I have traveled. My earliest recollection of my parent's garden is that we had two large japonicas, one white and the other red. They always bore hundreds of rather small blooms which my mother cut freely for any and all who wanted them.

At a flower show in Boston in the early 1920's we saw a camellia exhibit that, as I recall, was 25 or 30 in number and mostly formals. All, of course, were grown under glass and they attracted much attention. After arriving in Southern California early in 1942, we began seeing more and more camellias. We were then apartment dwellers but began attending camellia shows about 1946 or 1947. I joined the American Camellia Society before we had a garden of our own. As it was with music, I was eager to have some plants. So far as I know, we were the only family in Hollywood with five potted camellias on a second story balcony. But just as with music there was a lot of pleasure with less than a full symphony.

Since 1950 we have lived in our home on a half acre and have been slowly working up to the symphony. In our starting group were such standards as *Adolphe Audusson*, *Alba Plena*, *Elegans*, *C. M. Hovey*, *Daikagura*, *Debutante*, *Herme*, *Lallarook* and *Matthotiana*. These we still have and they might be called the "theme instruments" of the symphony. Every season since starting our collection we have added some. It is not our aim to have everything that is on the market—we are merely trying to have good representatives in all the classes. Just as a symphony orchestra director would not want all of the horns in town, we do not want all of the white camellias. We have tried to get good specimens typical of the white singles, semi-doubles, formals, etc. This thought extends into the pinks, reds and variegated. As it is with the symphony conductor, in addition to his good horns he wants good violins, violas, flutes and all of the other basic instruments. But a lot of good basics is not the whole story. It requires a full range of all the orchestral instruments. So it is in our camellia garden symphony. With all of our garden's basic instruments—japonicas—we have a dozen good reticulatas, perhaps thirty sasanquas, twenty hybrids, one or two heimalis and vernalis, also a

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OUR CAMELLIA "NEIGHBORHOOD" (Continued from page 6)

never been more friendly, nor neighbors more neighborly, than at this time of year . . . particularly if one or the other just happens to own a plant of *Betty Sheffield Supreme* or *Purple Swirl* from which a scion may be "scrounged." You see, these people, too, have their favorites . . . only the newest or "hottest" varieties of the moment are their favorites—for the moment. Seriously, though, these are wonderful people . . . and this is a wonderful neighborhood in which to live. "Newcomers" to the area often are quite overwhelmed by the generosity shown them, but those who have resided here longer never forget the kindnesses received when they, too, were new in this neighborhood.

The next street marker indicates clearly that we should make another RIGHT turn which will take us to SEEDLING CIRCLE. This is a fast growing section, particularly suited to those persons having a bit of patience in their make-up and with a generous amount of pioneering spirit and imagination thrown in for good measure. Here, as in the other areas, we find camellias in abundance though we note in some instances slightly overcrowded conditions in the planting arrangement. It seems typical that many of these residents are running out of planting space even though many more plants in this neighborhood are relatively young. Most of these young plants have been grown from seed and, because these people apparently do not find it possible to part with a single precious young plant until it has reached blooming size and each new flower has been carefully appraised, over-crowding is becoming evident. This is understandable because in many cases it has taken as long as eight or more years of tender care to bring these seedlings to flowering age. It all began back in the fall of the year when the seeds were produced, then planted in flats (or perhaps put into plastic bags) in a special germinating material and the material slightly dampened to induce quick germination when placed in a warm location. Eventually these little seedlings were large enough to be transplanted into

cans or the open ground and from this point on it was simply a matter of patience and waiting for the first flowers. A few of the people here are growing their seedlings under continuous light in greenhouses. They are fortunate, indeed, for this makes it possible to bring young seedlings into flower in two years or even less time. Each fall they plant more and more seeds and ultimately this means that in each spring they may expect the thrill of watching for flowers of many new seedlings to open. For most of these people there are favorites, too—almost every new seedling that opens for them is a *new favorite* camellia.

From "Seedling Circle," it is just a short distance up a picturesque hillside, to "Species Terrace," and a little farther on up toward the hilltop, we find "Hybrid Heights." The shopping center for this area is named "Pollen Plaza," and the local bank is known as the "Pollen Bank." It is fast becoming famous for its "dividend payments" and the high rate of interest accrued on "customer savings." Pollen is its only "gold," and the dividends run unusually high because they are the pleasures a person gains from sharing with others this gold that you are always fortunate enough to possess. Here, also, the "stock market" is always busiest when the "Pollen Bank" has paid handsome dividends and the folks from "Grafting Point" start to move in on a "hot tip"—connecting the *tip* with the *stock* is very profitable, of course!

The gardens on "Hybrid Heights" and those along "Species Terrace," have taken on a quite different look. Sometimes we are not able to recognize some of the plants in these gardens as camellias, but that they are, we are told and from them, or from combinations of them, through hybridization and patient and painstaking experimentation are coming some of the loveliest new additions to the already large family of camellias that one might imagine. People here have been carrying on considerable experimentation to bring about strains of hybrid camellias with greater cold resistance than known pre-

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PERSONAL TASTE IN CAMELLIAS

Helen Dobson Brown, Sacramento, California

Many a sage has tried to define "taste" as it relates to personal choice or style. As to the verb, Webster says in part: "To like, appreciate, enjoy. To become acquainted by actual trial." Watching a crowd at any camellia show, there is little doubt they are liking, appreciating, and enjoying what they see, and that most viewers can scarcely wait to "become acquainted by actual trial."

However, popularity lists reveal a wide variance in taste as to variety, especially among the uninhibited and inexperienced, to whom the names of the latest introductions are so far—just names. Not having yet graduated to that worthy group known as collectors and hobbyists, the entranced neophyte is blissfully free to pick any camellia solely from personal taste.

An avid hobbyist, on the other hand, may hover over the collections to see what that "hot" one he ordered sight unseen, looks like. Interest sharpened by experience, the chase becomes the challenge, and taste turns to tracking down the new, the unusual, the hard to get. An extra lathhouse or two may spring up in his garden. In a word, he becomes a gourmet of camellias.

These, of course, are two extremes. In between are the majority of camellia fanciers who enjoy camellias in their gardens and even occasionally add a "collector's item" purely because they like it—not necessarily because it is new. Then there are those, thank goodness, whose taste turns to propagating, hybridizing, and analysis of the whys and wherefores.

Undoubtedly many things enter into the final expression of what we call taste. For instance, a landscape architect of our acquaintance defines his favorite camellia as that one which does the best job for a particular spot. Another friend, an architect and designer, sees camellias as a wonderful complement to a home; his particular love, in addition to the blossoms, being the satiny evergreen foliage. His charming wife has been known to choose a camellia to wear because the color matched her fingernail polish!

Right now there seems to be a battle going on between the little camellias and the big ones. With the advent of the fabulous Yunnan *reticulatas*, a new model of size seemed to influence the public taste for camellias and everyone—almost—began looking for big ones. As if stimulated by this concept, japonicas such as *Drama Girl*, *Coral Pink Lotus*, *Mrs. D. W. Davis*, and *Tomorrow*, began to arrive on the market, in some cases outsizeing even the *reticulatas*.

Perhaps we should credit some of the delicate hybrids, such as *Donation*, *E. G. Waterhouse* and *Citation* with more or less bringing the size situation back to a reasonable basis. Many of you will remember that at last year's shows the delicately formed but smaller camellias such as *Magnoliaflora* and *Spring Sonnet* did very well in competition with the "Drama Girls." Some experienced camellia fanciers feel this may well indicate a trend. After all camellias can get just so big.

I am among those who have been thrilled by these spectacular big camellias. But I have been just as thrilled by many of the beautiful smaller ones. Personally, I feel we should appraise each group on its own merits; quality, form, and color—not size—being the deciding factor of judgment or comparison.

While there is a tendency to think only of the blossoms when naming favorites, the wonderful potential of camellias in landscaping is being discovered. The result should be more beautiful gardens. One prominent wholesale nurseryman in California reports a decided increase in the call for large orders of camellias by landscape architects.

Responding to the renewed interest in smaller flowers, many persons are taking a second and third look at sasanquas because of their outstanding landscaping possibilities. Japonicas, *reticulatas*, and the lovely new hybrids such as *Fluted Orchid* and *Bonnie Marie*, I feel, should also be considered in relation to landscape value, with special emphasis on grooming.

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THE SOUTHERN SCENE

Mrs. M. J. (Lilette) Witman, Macon, Georgia

The Piedmont Plateau slopes gently south of Macon before disappearing completely. The land then offers to the eyes an entirely new topography—that of the Coastal Plain of Georgia, which expands roughly from South Macon to the sea.

After leaving the Plateau the traveler may notice changes in the geological structure of the soil, the red clay of the Piedmont region gradually making way for the fertile sandy loam of the Coastal Plain. He is, however, more likely to notice the difference in the crops grown on the land. After leaving the peach belt the roads roll along extensive cotton fields, corn fields, peanut fields, milo fields, to name a few. These same roads skirt along well developed timberland, another great source of revenue for the region.

It is in the midst of this rich farming country that, in 1905, a Connecticut Yankee established the little town of Tifton, the new home of the American Camellia Society. The Georgia Coastal Plain Experiment Station was established there in 1918. Its present director is Dr. Frank King. When it originally opened it had at his disposal two hundred and six acres of land at the edge of Tifton. It has grown to approximately four thousand acres. There are now at the station sixty-three scientists doing research work into new crops, new varieties, new breeds, new methods, as well as in the correction of the numerous diseases that plague our plant world. Many of the findings of this station have gained nationwide fame—such as the Coastal and Suwannee Bermuda grasses which, by the way, are largely responsible for Georgia's rise to the top as a cattle breeding state. Among their other contributions to agriculture are the Starr millet, the Dixie 18 hybrid corn, the Gator rye, also an improved strain of blueberries. Highly prized golf course and ornamental grasses, too, have been developed at the station, such as the famous Tiftlawn, the Tifgreen, the Tiffine Bermuda grasses and the Emerald Zoysia grass.

While visiting at the station I saw trees that I did not know existed—several large chestnut oaks with their fat, round acorns and leathery oblong leaves resembling those of the Chinese chestnut tree, except that their edges have deeper scallops. I was fascinated by a row of pistachio nut trees and by the size of the feijoa (the guava) shrubs, with their lovely small oval leaves, glossy and green on one side, dull and silvery on the other.

Judging by the fine specimens to be seen everywhere both soil and climate seem unusually favorable for growing camellias. The temperature, I was told, rarely drops below 20 degrees. The two scientists I had the privilege of interviewing while at the station are deeply interested in this genus. One of them, Dr. D. L. Gill, renowned pathologist, was brought to Tifton mainly to do research in camellia diseases. He took me to the greenhouse where he does his experimenting and explained the work he is engaged in at this time. He showed me some camellia seedlings and small grafts which he had previously inoculated with various fungi, and that he was now treating with various fungicides in an effort to determine which was the most effective. Speaking of fungi, Dr. Gill reiterated the importance of doing away with mulches around camellia shrubs since they are perfect media for bacteria, also because it has been proven that they are more detrimental than helpful in case of severe freezes, by preventing the beneficial radiations from the soil to reach the plant. The American Horticultural Society reported, some months ago, a similar finding in the case of azaleas. Those that were not mulched came through severe freezes without much damage, whereas those that were mulched suffered heavily from split bark and had to be pruned to the ground.

The other scientist I interviewed, Dr. W. T. Brightwell, a horticulturist, told me that his interest in camellias dates from 1945 when he planted his first shrubs under the pines surrounding his home. Then in 1950, through the com-

bined efforts of Dave Strother and Judge Arthur Solomon, a Camellia Test Garden was added to the station. In 1952 Dr. Brightwell was put in charge of it. The Test Garden is planted under tall pines and bordered with large azaleas. Spacious alleys, where visitors can stroll and have a better view of the varieties (400 of them), have been provided throughout the garden. The varieties can easily be identified thanks to large labels bearing names visible several feet away. I never saw a finer collection of camellia shrubs anywhere. The sight of an unusually bushy six foot specimen of Capt. Rawes covered with buds startled me, as it was the first *reticulata* I had seen thriving in the open in Georgia. Dr. Brightwell pointed proudly to two of his favorites—a magnificent Donation plant and a sturdy young graft of *C. granthamiana*. Dr. Brightwell has great plans in mind for the Test Garden, as soon as a little more help and a glass house can be made available to him. He took me to see some additional land at his disposal, where he tentatively plans to have a section for rare sasanquas, a section for hybrids and one for hardy species. Dr. Brightwell's enthusiasm about these projects is real and should be an inspiration, not only to those at the American Camellia Society headquarters who are fortunate enough to work with him, but to the entire A.C.S. organization.

As it was my first visit to Tifton, Joe Pyron, the Executive Secretary of the A.C.S., and Dr. Brightwell very graciously took me on a tour of the residential section. I had no idea that camellias were so profusely used in the landscaping of yards and parks. There was not a single home that did not possess at least one bush. We passed by what looked to be an empty lot and saw, growing there alone, a well proportioned, large, healthy specimen of *Alba Plena*. I understand that it bears gorgeous blooms each winter in spite of the fact that it has never been cared for or fertilized. Large camellias with unusually glossy foliage were outstanding near the home of Mrs. Kate Hill, a South Georgia Society Director; near that of Mr. Jack Radcliffe, a pathologist,

whose wife, Margaret Radcliffe, gave her name to one of the most charming blush pink blossoms in existence. Mr. O. J. Woodard, too, has a charming setting for his house, with unusual trees and shrubs, among them many fine camellias. He is a horticulturist and I was told that he was instrumental in bringing the Camellia Test Garden to Tifton. Camellias dominate the scene also in the garden of Mr. P. D. Fulwood who has given the town the lovely park that bears his name, located right across from the new hospital and where convalescing patients can stroll peacefully among greenery and flowers. Lack of space prevents me from mentioning any more of the delightful gardens I saw, but I was truly enchanted by my little excursion.

Tifton is a typical small South Georgia town. It does not boast of a great historical past, of spacious ante bellum mansions or of thriving modern industries, like many of its close neighbors. However, it is proud of its fine, beautifully landscaped homes, of Abraham Baldwin, its agricultural college, of the new four-lane highway that links it with large centers, of having been selected as the site of one of Georgia's finest Experiment Stations. Tifton's citizens are also proud of their ties with the fine and progressive South Georgia Camellia Society which has a membership of approximately one hundred and fifty scattered over fifteen South Georgia communities—including Albany, Moultrie, Americus, Thomasville, Quitman and Valdosta. The board of directors of this society met recently in Moultrie to make plans for entertaining the members of the governing board of the A.C.S. who will have their Fall Meeting in Tifton on November 10, 11 and 12. Joe Pyron expects people from many distant states including California. We hear that Milo Rowell, the Al Dekkers and Monique Peer are flying over to attend the meeting.

We were also told that the youthful, tireless South Georgia Camellia Society is planning to extend an invitation to have the A.C.S. convention held in Albany, Ga., in 1963, and that they have already some splendid entertainment in mind.

A CAMELLIA GARDEN SYMPHONY (Continued from page 7)

granthamiana. We feel that we are working up to a fair symphony.

But the whole story still has not been told. From this symphony we draw many solo pieces, so to speak. Picture, if you will, a fine specimen of *Guilio Nuccio* displayed in a black ceramic dish on your coffee table—or perhaps a blue ribbon *Max Goodley* worn on a cream lace frock. A few of the delicately beautiful *Billie McCaskills* arranged with appropriate materials for a luncheon table decoration reminds us of the interesting things that two or more members of a symphony orchestra often do when they play in small groups.

At the height of our blooming season we are getting the full symphony whenever we walk through the garden and enjoy the camellias all at one time. This is second only to attending any one of the gorgeous camellia shows that we are treated to every season.

If your camellia garden has not already reached the symphony state, we urge that, if you have space, you start doing some-

thing about it. Please do not construe anything written here as intending to belittle a limited collection. Quite the opposite is true. Much enjoyment may be had from a single specimen. We have gone from five plants to several hundred. Each increase means more work is always entailed, but it is very rewarding work if, in fact, one may call anything he likes to do "work."

When you are selecting plants to add to your collection keep in mind the valuable advice given by William E. Wylam of the Huntington Botanical Gardens, San Marino, Calif., in this regard: "Do not choose camellias from a display of cut blooms but, instead, select them from growing plants. In this way you will be in a better position to evaluate their faults as well as their virtues. Too many people think of the camellia only as a cut flower and overlook its wonderful value as a shrub." Some camellias in our garden would be there as ornamental shrubs even though they never bore a flower!

OUR CAMELLIA "NEIGHBORHOOD" (Continued from page 8)

viously. Here, also are residents working with rare species in an attempt to create new camellias with distinct fragrance, as well as those that hope to extend the blooming season of camellias completely around the seasonal clock. Here, on the Heights, one also finds that those living in this rarified atmosphere have their camellia favorites, too, and quite naturally many of their "pets" are hybrids. Some of these have flowers of enormous size while others are of lacy, daintier plant form, bearing blooms of the same small proportion, bringing about an overall picture of loveliness.

Occasionally, these people day-dream a bit about their favorite "Camellia of the Future." Perhaps it may be very huge, but it might well be a Camellia of open, graceful habit with leaves no larger than a rose but like a rose leaf in shape and the plant at blooming time simply covered in a shower of tiny miniature fringed *Ville de Nantes*.

It really does not matter too much on just which one of the different camellia "streets" we live. We may be sure that it will be a pleasant place, with wonderful camellia friends all about us.

PERSONAL TASTE IN CAMELLIAS (Continued from page 9)

Information developed by the new rating system should be valuable in any landscaping project.

So I have taken no poll nor made a list of favorites even though I have many. Like the secrets of outer space the future holds many more presently undiscovered camellias which I will be unable to resist. I leave to each one of you the fun of

finding your own favorites, making your own list, for your own reasons—expressing your *own* taste.

"Taste is nothing but sensibility to the different degrees and kinds of excellence in the works of Art or Nature," says William Hazlitt, speaking of the noun. Thank you, kind Sir, for your definition. I cannot think of a better one.



Last year a friend came to me with the request that I give him instructions on grafting. My friend had been seriously stricken with camelliatis and his temperament was high with interest and pertinent questions, as we proceeded with the lesson of actually grafting a few seedlings. I'll try to relate the conversation.

His first question was, "Why do you say this is one of the best times to graft?" (It was December 2, 1959.)

Experience has shown me that, when grafting in a greenhouse, the earlier grafts (Thanksgiving through January) are always higher in percentage of takes and seem to be better grafts than those done after March 1st.

My friend came back with the statement that he had read that March was the best time to do the job. My reply to this was, "this is probably true when grafting a plant in the open ground and I'll bet the person who wrote that was from the deep South, where I understand the great majority of grafts are done in the fields and after the root stock has come out of dormancy which is along in March, depending upon weather conditions and temperatures that particular year."

But let's get back to grafting in the greenhouse and my friend, who now asked, "How long have you had this root stock in the greenhouse?" This is an interesting question for I have found that by giving the stock heavy waterings and placing it in the greenhouse under constant heat of 65° to 80°, the stock comes out of dormancy in one to two weeks and as I see the leaf buds swelling to start growth while the roots are now only moist the stock is perfect for grafting.

Such can not be the case in December or January in the field or elsewhere outdoors.

Joe then came up with a question that ran something like this: "Suppose some friend sends you scions and your root stock is not yet ready for grafting, what do you do then?"

Well, we won't graft the stock until it is ready, therefore we moisten a polyethylene bag so the bag is only "fogged"—not wet—and put the prized scions in the bag which is sealed with a rubber band and placed in our refrigerator—not our freezer—and hold them there until the stock is "ready." This refrigerator treatment is especially beneficial in grafting. For some reason, such refrigerated scions seem to callus sooner and better than those not refrigerated. Wouldn't it be fine if some learned person would, after research, tell us why this is true? So we have no trouble in holding scions until we are ready to graft provided there is not much moisture in the polyethylene bag. This is especially important in the case of *reticulata* and *granthamiana* scions as the interior wood of these species is soft or pulpy and rots quickly when exposed to too much moisture.

My novice friend then came up with a good question when he said, "These seedlings sure look healthy and too good to cut off—why don't you graft some of those outside that do not look so well."

My pal soon understood when I told him those that didn't look so well weren't—they were in the hospital and that, wanting a healthy graft of a good variety, we would only use root stock that was also healthy. You can't "make a silk purse out of a sow's ear" in camellias, either!

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My pal Joe then asked, "Why do you cut the scion so thin?" This is elementary but a tough one to explain. It involves a geometric equation that I can't remember, but it is obvious that when a larger calipered root stock is split, the thinner the scion the less spread of the root stock when the scion is inserted in the cleft and the more chance one has of matching the cambium layers of scion and stock on each side.

With the graft now made and the rubber band well wrapped on the stock, Joe came up with a good one. He said, "Dick, your jar is dirty as heck — yet, I know you washed out the inside of it — but I understand that jars should be not only washed clean but actually sterilized to avoid fungus and other after-grafting troubles."

"Joe, old pal," I said — "have you ever been through a commercial nursery that propagates thousands of camellia grafts

each year? No? Well, the reason I washed out the inside of the jar was solely for the purpose of putting moisture and humidity into it. When the aforementioned propagators cover their grafts, the cloche, or jar, is not only dirty outside, it is also dirty inside and there are several good reasons for this. One is that with all the grafts they make, they don't have time to "sterilize" jars each year but most important is that the dirty jar diffuses the light or sun entering the jar, which light is important to the well being of the graft. Whoever came up with the idea of sterilizing bottles or jars in grafting must have been a medicine man.

"So now, Joe, all we have to do is wait about three weeks, then, when we see a good callus between the scion and the stock, remove the jar. When the air gets to the graft it really 'takes off' and we soon have a fine plant of that new 'hot' one we wanted so much."



Intensive preparations are going forward for the entertainment of the delegates and friends of the American Camellia Society when they assemble Feb. 25 and 26 at the Disneyland Hotel for their Annual Meeting. Besides the regular series of meetings and conferences of the A.C.S., a full scale camellia show will be set up by the Southern California Camellia Council, to be open to the public. Tickets are already being sold for this event and prospects seem excellent for a first class, if not unique, show. Professional decorators have been employed to plan the whole set-up and, among other novel features, will be a door prize of a brand new station wagon. What a camellia show!

It is good news that the Descanso camellia show will take place next March 11 and 12 at the usual place. It will be staged, as in the past, by the Southern California Camellia Council (all the camellia societies in Southern California). Many camellia people have assumed that the Disneyland show (see above) would take the place of the Descanso show this year, but this will not be the case. The Descanso show will combine both the cut flower and the arrangement exhibits on the same week-end and will otherwise have all the usual features of both.

Granthamiana blooms have an almost unique character among camellias. They are huge, white, saucer-shaped singles with eight or nine big crinkled petals and a most surprising globe of deep orange-yellow stamens in the center. The stamens are very numerous and very close together, making a solid mass of color, which, at its base, has a reddish coppery tinge. These flowers resemble huge Ma-

tija poppies rather than camellias and are set in deep green "waffled" foliage. A most valuable feature is their early (October) blooming.

The heavy seed crop on camellias this year, including *reticulatas*, matured earlier than usual. The breeding and inter-breeding of camellias by growers has speeded up the natural processes that, as far as the production of new varieties is concerned, would have taken hundreds of years for nature to accomplish. This is apparent not only in the great number of new varieties now on the market, but these same new varieties produce their first blooms (and seeds) in a much shorter span of years than their primitive ancestors did. This fact gives the grower of seedlings something of a clue as to their value; if they require ten or twelve years to produce their first blooms, these will probably be closer to the primitive and less important. But the "best" new varieties, being higher bred and used to a faster pace, will often produce their first blooms in a much shorter time.

Time marches on. When I attended my first camellia society meeting about a decade and a half ago, there was a "plant sale" or raffle consisting of two potted camellias — a *Debutante* and a *Glen 40*, both very new at that time. At the first meeting of this season (Nov. 3) of the Pacific Camellia Society, there were seventeen potted camellias in the plant sale, including such new varieties as *Lady in Red*, *White Nun*, and *Vulcan*. This is just one example of how far and how fast we have traveled on the camellia road in fifteen years. Incidentally, there were four persons from the original group who were present at the recent meeting.