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*Abelia*

*Caprifoliaceae*

[*Linnaeaceae*]

*Abelia* commemorates an English surgeon/botanist, Dr. Clarke Abel (1780-1826) who, at the suggestion of the English botanist Sir Joseph Banks (1744-1820), accompanied Lord Amherst (1773-1857) to the British embassy in Peking (now Beijing) from 1816-1817 as Chief Medical Officer. Despite illness and movement restrictions while in China caused by problems of protocol between the embassy and the Chinese, Dr. Abel collected over 300 different plants and seeds (cultivated and wild) during his short stay there. The relative few that he gave into Sir George Staunton's care in Canton reached home. Sadly however the bulk of his collection that started out with him on his dramatic journey back to England (he experienced pirate attacks, fire and shipwreck) was lost. He did record his travels in *Narrative of a Journey in the Interior of China 1816-7* and, subsequently, took up the appointment of physician to Lord Amherst when the latter became Governor-General of India from 1823-1828. He died in India while still in office.