

*Lodoicea*

*Areaceae*

[*Palmae*]

*Lodoicea* commemorates, for some authorities, Louis XV (1710-1774) of France while others believe it is named after the most beautiful daughter of the legendary Priam, king of Troy, Cassandra.

Louis XV (1710-1774) succeeded his great-grandfather, Louis XIV (1638-1715), to the French throne in 1715 as a little boy of five, co-incidentally like his great-grandfather before him. His reign included three wars, the first being that of the Polish Succession from 1733-1735, the second the Austrian Succession from 1741-1748, and the third the Seven Years' War of 1756-1763. His family died around him from the same disease when he was two and in 1744, when he took part in the second war, he became seriously ill himself but survived. No doubt these factors had some bearing on his reported great popularity early on, a popularity which had reversed dramatically by the end of his reign. Historians debate his personality and intelligence, and many suspect that reversal was fuelled not only by ineffectual foreign policy and, towards the end of his reign, attempts to curtail the Parlements' power but also a hedonistic, amoral Court – despite the prosperity, technical advances and population growth in France as a whole. Louis XV was indiscreet about his relationships with his mistresses, about whom his wife, Maria Carolina Sophia Felicitas Leszczyńska (1703-1768), with whom he had ten children, was well aware. Two mistresses were especially influential, Madame de Pompadour (1721-1764) and then Madame du Barry (1741-1793). Queen Maria died six years before his own death from smallpox.

Cassandra – Greek mythology describes how the Greek god Heracles, when he captured Troy, killed King Laomedon and two of his three sons. The third and youngest, Priam, survived to become the last King of Troy. Troy was captured by the Greeks from Mycenae during the ten years of the Trojan Wars of the 14<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, or 12<sup>th</sup> Centuries BC. (According to many modern Greek historians much of the description of the Trojan Wars in Homer's *Iliad* (written in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century BC) is historically correct. Also they have discovered that Illiona, also known as Ilius or Ilium, was built on the site of Troy.) Priam was married to Hecuba and they had very many children including Paris, Troilus, and Hector – and one of their daughters was Cassandra. Achilles killed Hector and two other sons of the thirteen that died in battle, and their father, Priam was eventually murdered by Achilles' own son.