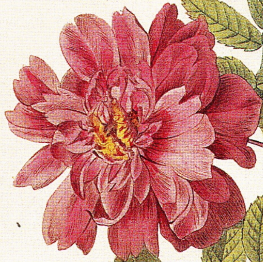


ROSE

LETTER



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Rosier de M.

ROSE LETTER

The Heritage Roses Group

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A TRIBUTE TO THREE EARLY AMERICAN ROSE LOVERS: PENN, PRINCE & DOWNING

Darrell g.h. Schramm

Three men well known in their time have never received their due as promoters of the rose. The educated public does not associate, for example, William Penn (1644-1718) with roses. He is rightly remembered as the founder of Pennsylvania. Penn's father had loaned King Charles II a considerable sum but died before the debt was repaid. Fortunately, in 1681 he settled the debt in part by granting a large area of land in the colonies to William Penn who immediately saw it as a respite and home for himself and other Quakers who were enduring religious persecution. Although he was unable to leave at the same time as others who sailed to the new land, he did draft a charter for the settlement, an essentially democratic system comprised of freedom of religion, fair trial by jury, free elections of representatives, a separation of powers, and freedom from unjust imprisonment. These ideas would surface later in the American Constitution.

Penn named his province Sylvania (Latin for woods or forest), but Charles II altered it to Pennsylvania. Penn was able to arrive the

following year, and from 1682 to 1684 he worked on designs for the city he called Philadelphia, which was soon laid out, then began construction on his own estate, Pennsbury Manor, on the Delaware River. By 1686, his gardener—one of two—was tending his fruit trees and roses. Whether the roses were native species or domesticated or both is unclear. Exploring the interior, he made friends of local Native Americans, eventually purchasing from them additional land.

Hearing of continued persecution of his Quaker brothers, he returned to England on their behalf, but was accused of treason by the new king William III. He was, however, acquitted. A Quaker named Gabriel Thomas wrote to Penn in 1698 while the latter was in England, giving an account of what others were growing in or near Philadelphia: among other plants, “Fruits, Herbs, and Flowers; [such] as Roses, Tulips, July-Flowers, Sun-Flowers . . . Carnations, and many more.” Penn’s taste for gardening, as well as the somewhat later influx of Pennsylvania Dutch (who were essentially German), made Pennsylvania the north’s gardening state, even as Maryland and Virginia became the gardening states of the South.

In 1699 Penn returned to the colonies. Having written of roses as garden favorites, he now brought eighteen different rose bushes with him to Pennsylvania. While we do not know the varieties, lists from catalogues of the time allow for informed guesses and speculation. These sources include Gerard’s *Herbal* of 1597, Parkinson’s *Paradisi* of 1629, and James Sutherland’s Edinburgh catalogue of 1683.

Among those roses quite likely were the following, all of which are still in commerce today: ‘Apothecary’s Rose’ (*Rosa gallica officinalis*), ‘Autumn Damask’, ‘Maiden’s Blush’, ‘The Musk Rose’ (*R. moschata*), ‘York & Lancaster’, ‘Conditorum’ (‘The Hungarian Rose’), ‘Rosa



Conditorum aka **Hungarian Rose**

Mundi', 'Great Double White' ('Alba Maxima'), 'Alba Semi-plena', 'Francofurtana', *Rosa majalis* (*R. cinnamomea*), 'Rose de Mai'--see our front cover), 'Burgundica' (Burgundian Rose' or 'Rose Burgundy') and 'Common Moss'.

In 1701 Penn felt compelled to return to England, for his financial advisor had defrauded him of so much money that he spent the next ten years in court. He nearly lost Pennsylvania because of the deceit. In 1712 he had a stroke that left him a speechless invalid. Penn died in 1718.

More fortunate was William Prince, Jr. His father William, Sr. of Flushing, Long Island, New York, had turned the family's private nursery into a commercial enterprise about 1765. His catalogue for 1790 listed eleven roses, including species. In 1791 Thomas Jefferson visited this nursery and followed his visit with an order of ten different roses from the list, asking for three of each. Prince sent him two of each. Two years later William, Sr. retired, giving majority control of the nursery to oldest son Benjamin and minority control to William, Jr.

Shortly before his father died, Junior had purchased eighty acres adjacent to the nursery, naming his property Linnean Botanic Gardens and Nursery. Apparently not much interested in the business, Benjamin sold most of his acreage for building construction and the rest in 1802 to William, Jr. Free to be on his own, William became an irrepressible importer of foreign plants.

William Prince, Jr.'s 1799 catalogue includes 'Old Blush', the Chinese rose that introduced recurrent bloom into Western roses and is still with us. In 1801 Prince was approached by David Hosack who had established the Elgin Botanic Gardens of New York to supply many plants for his personal Hyde Park estate which had been designed by Andre Parmentier, brother of the great, prolific Belgian rose breeder Louis Parmentier. Between 1805 and 1807, Lewis and Clark sent specimens from their Expedition to the Prince establishment for propagation. It was then that the Linnean Gardens became experimental grounds for cultivating found American species as well as adaptability test grounds for native European and Asian plants.

About 1810 John Champneys of Charleston, S.C., introduced 'Champneys' Pink Cluster', America's first hybridized rose, and

delivered two tubs containing six seedlings each of that rose to William, Jr. It was listed in his catalogue as ‘Champneys’ Monthly’, a name that describes its repeat-bloom capacity. (Incidentally, some gardeners claim the rose does not rebloom; history suggests



Champneys’ Pink Cluster



Rose de Meaux

otherwise. Perhaps their Noisette is not the real ‘Champneys’ Pink Cluster’.)

William Jr.’s 1822 catalogue lists 170 roses. These include the eleven listed in 1790 as well as three Moss roses, various Scotch or Spinosissima roses, ‘Unique’ and other Centifolias, eight

Chinas and one Tea rose. Also offered for sale were roses still in commerce today, such as ‘The Bishop’, ‘Rose de Meaux’ ‘Austrian Copper’, *R. carolina* (the single form), ‘Celestial’, and ‘Triumphant Bizarre’ [*sic*] (also known but maybe not the same as ‘Charles de Mills’). By 1825, his list of eight Chinas had reached 64, which included a few hybridized roses such as ‘Lady Banks’ and ‘Herbemont Superb’ by America’s first female rose breeder Caroline Herbemont.

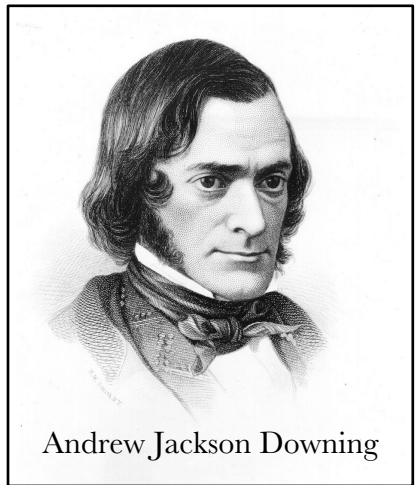
In 1828, William Prince, Jr. published *A Short Treatise on Horticulture*, the first book of its kind in America. By that year he was offering more than 600 rose varieties. With his son William Robert he also co-authored *The Treatise on the Vine* in 1830. The man seems to have been indefatigable. Yet he retired in 1835, allowing his son to take charge. When William, Jr. died in 1842, the nursery tendered about 700 rose varieties.

Usually it is his son William Robert Prince who is most often

written about, primarily because of his *Manual of Roses: Comprising the Most Complete History of the Rose, Including Every Class and All the Most Admirable Varieties in Europe and America*, published in 1846. Author Peggy Cornett asserts his book established him as a “premier authority on roses of the 19th century.” Perhaps it did, but it did so fraudulently, for William Robert Prince plagiarized much of his description, observations, and rose advice from Thomas Rivers’ *The Rose Amateur’s Guide*. In addition, apparently a poor businessman, he lost his fortune and nearly lost the nursery, which for some years was taken over and managed by his uncle.

Such behavior was beneath William Prince, Jr. He was a civic-minded man, even establishing a steamboat run from Flushing to New York City. He promoted horticulture in nearly every category and promoted roses, increasing his offering from fewer than a dozen to nearly 700. Furthermore, his connection to John Chamneys as well as to Lewis and Clark and thus to Thomas Jefferson acknowledges his spirit of advocacy and good will.

Like William Penn’s story, the following one does not have a happy ending. Andrew Jackson Downing, born in 1815, has been accorded “America’s most influential landscape gardener” of his era. At only 26 years old, he published in 1841 *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*, the first American book on the subject, one that was instantly popular and remained so for decades and is still considered one of the best books on the naturalistic style of gardening. The work acknowledges his admiration for Andre Parmentier, mentioned earlier. That same year he also published *Cottage Residences* and four years later, co-authored with his brother Charles *Fruits and Fruit Trees of America*. The following year he became editor of the magazine *The Horticulturist*. He was 31.



Andrew Jackson Downing

His father had died in 1822 when Andrew was seven; consequently, his oldest brother Charles managed the family nursery. It

was there that Downing became interested in botany, joining his brother in 1834. At age twenty, he began visiting the finer estates along the Hudson River, studying their landscapes, sketching, measuring, and recording his observations. When 23, he married Caroline De Wint and, after his mother died, built their own home on a hill surrounded by the ornamental shrubbery, trees, and lawn he had landscaped. In 1839 Andrew became the sole owner of the nursery until his death. Downing's reputation made the nursery popular for buying ornamental plants. At its height in 1840, it listed, among other plants, 160 varieties of roses.

Eventually he was asked to design the grounds for the Capitol, the White House, and the Smithsonian Institute. Unfortunately, he was unable to complete this prestigious commission, but his conceptions were essentially carried out. It was Downing's books and his articles in *The Horticulturist* that by and large stimulated the movement for city parks and pleasure grounds. Downing also seems to have been instrumental in the establishment of a nursery in the South by alerting Robert Nelson, who had contributed articles to *The Horticulturist*, to the fact that the Southern states had "no extensive nurseries"; in short order, Nelson moved to Georgia where in Macon he set up his Troup Hill Nursery.

Because of his love of roses, Downing held an annual Feast of the Rose, inviting as many friends and acquaintances as he could gather and his house could hold. Such a rose feast recalls the ancient Roman Rosalia and the Persian festival of the rose.



Of all the classes of roses, Bourbons were his favorite, and within that class—and of all classes—his favorite rose was the lovely, scented, soft pink 'Souvenir de la Malmaison'. By 1847, he was growing it along with 'Mrs Bosanquet' and a year or two later may also have grown 'Coupe d'Hebe', 'Great Western', 'Pierre de St Cyr' and the now lost 'Prince Albert', all



Duchess of Sutherland



La Reine

popular Bourbon roses of the time.

That favorite class was followed by Hybrid Perpetuals, roses which only then were just becoming known. Of these he very likely grew 'Duchess of Sutherland', 'Baronne Prevost', 'Marquise Boccella', 'La Reine', and 'Comte de Paris', all but the last still available today.

His second favorite rose, 'Old Red Moss', is still sold by one nursery in Switzerland and by Burlington Roses in California. It was said to have arrived in England from Italy around 1735. The bush grows to five feet by four feet. (It should not be confused with 'Red Moss', also known as 'Henri Martin', which was not bred until 1862.)

Downing's third favorite rose was a pink

Bourbon of about 1834 that had already gone out of fashion in his time, 'General Dubourg'. Though "not very double," it showed itself to be prolific and for him emitted "the most perfect rose scent" that he had ever inhaled, and so he was determined to nurse it carefully. The rose was named not for a true general but for a French revolutionary who disguised himself as one in helping to overthrow the monarchy in 1830.

Unfortunately, Downing's determination was cut short in 1852. On an excursion by small steamboat on the Hudson with his wife, her mother, and her youngest sister and brother, the boat caught fire. All but

Andrew leaped into the water to escape the flames; he climbed to the top deck and threw deck chairs into the river as buoy for those unable to swim. To two or three of these his wife clung until she was pulled to shore. Downing was last seen in the river, trying to save a friend when others began to cling onto him. Then he was gone. At his funeral “royal roses he loved so well”—these may have been Alba roses, known in earlier times as Royal Roses—were woven into a garland with jasmine and clematis, a garland fit for “The Priest of Beauty.”

William Penn loved roses enough to carry eighteen bushes with him on the long voyage from England to America in 1699. William Prince, Jr. successfully strove to increase horticultural knowledge and his father’s pittance of eleven roses to a trove of nearly 700. Andrew Jackson Downing was so enamored of roses that he annually hosted a Feast of the Rose among the rose bushes and other plants of his hilltop estate. Yet to my knowledge, no rose was ever named for any of these three remarkable men.

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Mr. Nelson's Antebellum Roses

Stephen Hoy



In September of 1847, Macon, GA, citizen George W. Fish wrote a letter to A. J. Downing, editor of the *Horticulturist*, lamenting the fact that there were “no intensive nurseries in the South . . . from which we can procure fruits, flowers, shrubbery, etc. as may be desired. This is unquestionably felt as a sore inconvenience.” Downing was acquainted with a Danish horticulturist living in Newburyport, Massachusetts, named Robert Nelson (1803-1866) who had written several articles for *The Horticulturist*.

The son of an important agricultural official in the Danish government and nephew of well-known horticulturist Professor Eric Viborg, Nelson (originally Nielsen) graduated from the University of Copenhagen in 1822 having received an education in horticulture and botany. For twenty years he served as an assistant to his father. As the result of political unrest and his family’s association with the monarchy, he immigrated to the U.S. in 1846, subsequently obtaining a position as a gardener in Newburyport.

Downing must have forwarded Mr. Fish’s letter to Nelson because he abruptly moved to Macon in the fall of 1847. He purchased a ninety-four acre tract of land just west of Macon on Troup’s Hill (now inside the city limits near First Street and between Elm and Ash Streets). Troup Hill Nursery was soon advertising in *The Southern Cultivator* and in a Macon newspaper offering fruit and ornamental trees, shrubs, greenhouse plants and bulbous roots. By 1849 the catalogue included numerous varieties of apples, pears, cherries, plums, peaches, nectarines, grapes, apricots, strawberries, and raspberries. A column in the *Journal and Messenger* stated, “Our friend Mr. Nelson seems to have been

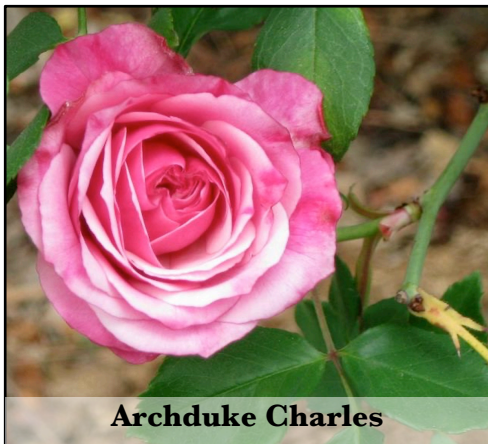
wonderfully successful in his horticultural experiments. Only two years have elapsed since he commenced operation upon the apparently poor, gravelly ridge near the South Western confines of the City. The prospect was indeed a gloomy one; but the result has shown the importance of uniting science and common sense, in the cultivation of the soil. Owing to Mr. N's improved system of manuring and deep culture, grounds which at first would scarcely produce a respectable crop of broom-sedge, now grow fruit trees, plants and vegetables, most luxuriantly."

One year later the nursery began offering dahlias and roses. An advertisement run in the February 1852 edition of *The Soil of the South* revealed that in addition to a vast collection of fruit trees, Troup Hill's catalogue of roses had greatly expanded: "His collection of roses is the best ever offered in the South - consisting of more than one hundred and fifty of the very finest ever blooming varieties--Chinese, Tea, Bourbon, Noisette, and Hybrid Roses [Hybrid Perpetuals]--all own root, all propagated here."

Nelson's expertise and knowledge quickly became a treasured commodity throughout the South. The presence of such an experienced horticulturist in Macon prompted its residents, including the Rev. Stephen Elliott, Simri Rose, and George Fish (the letter writer mentioned above) to form the Central Horticultural Association. For several years the group sponsored exhibitions of flowers, fruits, and vegetables in which Nelson's roses won awards.

In 1851 Macon became the site of the Southern Central Agricultural Association's annual fair. Over twenty thousand people attended it from all over the Deep South. There Robert Nelson was again a prize winner for his roses and dahlias. In 1853 he appeared as a guest speaker at the convention of the Cotton Planters in Montgomery, Alabama. Articles authored by Mr. Nelson began appearing regularly in the now widely circulated agricultural journals and in local newspapers. In 1854 he joined the staff of *The Georgia Citizen*, a Macon, GA newspaper.

In late April of 1855 Nelson stopped by the Macon office of *The Georgia Citizen* with a bouquet of roses. In true rose-enthusiast fashion he provided the editor with the names of all the roses. The eloquence of the editor's poetic rhapsody in praising the roses caused the



Archduke Charles

piece to be reprinted in several publications. “Most conspicuous in our group is the magnificent *Souvenir de la Malmaison*, with a face as delicately beautiful and softly tinted as the full orbed moon rising through those light mists that float about the horizon of a calm summer sea. Its enormous flowers, its gorgeous buds, and its luxuriant foliage entitle it to the appellation of the

Queen of Roses.” The editor continues in a similar vein mentioning ‘Devoniensis’, ‘Archduke Charles’, and more than twenty others.

One year later an article entitled “Roses for the South,” reprinted from a series of articles originally written for *The Georgia Citizen*, was published in the *Southern Cultivator*. In it he presented a list of eighty-four roses which he considered “*first-rate* ones or which possess some peculiar or interesting qualities.” It was comprised primarily of reblooming Chinas, Teas, Bourbons, Noisettes, and Hybrid Perpetuals, but also contained some “spring” roses.

The names of several cultivars jump off the pages of the article, varieties that are familiar to lovers of heritage roses; others defied my attempts to confirm their identities or Mr. Nelson’s descriptions. After

an hour of skimming through *The Combined Rose List*, I discovered that forty-two of the eighty-four appear to be still in commerce. The list provides an insightful glance into an era when several of the heritage rose classes particularly suited to growing in the southern U.S. were still in their formative years.

Among the Chinas, Nelson considered ‘Archduke Charles’ to be one of the best, “of very luxuriant growth, and a most prolific bloomer.” Another,



Viridiflora--Green Rose

described as “an immense bloomer of a brilliant dark scarlet color and velvety tint,” was ‘Marjolin’. The presence of the “Green Rose” on Nelson’s list confirms that it has been popular in the Deep South for more than 155 years! It was recognized by Nelson as being “indispensable for bouquets.” Uniquely, no mention was made of ‘Old Blush’, ‘Slater’s Crimson China’, or ‘Cramoisi Supérieur’.

Nineteen Teas were included on Nelson’s honor role. All but three were introduced before 1840. The light pink ‘Adam’ was considered a “splendid flower and a good bloomer;” ‘Bon Silene’ was mentioned for its “deeper coppery hue and delightful fragrance.” The pure white ‘Niphetos’ was mentioned for its long, pointed buds, and the pale pink to white ‘La Sylphide’ for its fine form. Two Tea roses quite well known to Georgia rose growers were the “exceedingly fragrant” ‘Devoniensis’ and the buff colored ‘Safrano’. Nelson suggested to growers of the latter that “if a person will take the trouble of tying a little sewing cotton [thread] around the bud, it will be prevented from expanding, and keep for many days in its highest beauty.”

Nelson was undoubtedly fond of Bourbons, which he introduced with the following praise, “By hybridizing and cultivation they have reached a high degree of perfection.” ‘Souvenir de la Malmaison’ received high accolades: “This pale flesh colored rose stands perhaps at



Niphetos



Leweson Gower

the head of all roses.” Nelson considered the globular, full-flowered form of the white to pale pink ‘Acidalie’, the pale pink ‘Mrs. Bosanquet’, and the pink ‘Hermosa’ (now classified as a Hybrid China) to be almost perfect. ‘Leweson Gower’, sometimes mistakenly thought of as a sport of ‘Souvenir de la Malmaison’, resembled it enough to win Nelson’s admiration. He considered the range of colors found in the Bourbons to be a bonus to Southern growers, especially the deep velvety crimson of ‘Paul Joseph’ and ‘Princesse Clémentine’ (both apparently lost to commerce).

Like the Bourbons, the Noisettes as a class were only several decades old. Mr. Nelson recommended the pure white ‘Aimée Vibert’ and two 1830 introductions, ‘Lamarque’ and ‘Jaune Desprez’,



which had already gained a measure of fame in southern gardens. Another early variety which attracted much attention in the south was ‘Smithii’ (see “On the Trail of a Forgotten Rose” by S. Scanniello, Winter 2005 HRF newsletter). Whereas in northern gardens this very double yellow rose rarely fully opened, it often reached perfection in the Deep South. Although Nelson was a strong advocate of growing roses on their own roots, he recommended that this variety be grafted and planted in a “rich situation.” Two



uniquely colored Noisettes were included, the carmine-shaded ‘Felleberg’, “particularly showy in the fall,” and ‘Octavie’, “reddish purple and a good bloomer.” A pair of presumably different seedlings of ‘Lamarque’ also received his recommendation: ‘Augusta’ and



‘Solfaterre’. They are currently thought to be different names for the same variety, but Mr. Nelson drew a distinction between them based on hardiness. ‘Augusta’, “a very fine yellow climbing rose,” he reported, originated in Ohio and unlike ‘Solfaterre’, was “perfectly hardy” in that climate. One last Noisette deserves mention for being on Nelson’s list: ‘Chromatella’, about which Mr. Nelson wrote, “Few roses have caused such an excitement in the floral world as this. It is a climber of the most luxuriant kind.”

Some of the best Hybrid Perpetuals, according to Mr. Nelson, were the brilliant, rosy pink ‘Baronne Prevost’, which he loved for its large flowers, ‘Géant des Batailles’, velvety red, deliciously fragrant and quite distinct, and the very double, lilac pink ‘La Reine’, which he considered worthy to be grown in every garden. One



recommendation that deserves unique attention is ‘Pie IX’. This reddish purple cultivar was introduced by Jean-Pierre Vibert in 1849, two years after Pope Pius IX was elected pope. Although little is known about the popularity of this rose in Macon during this era, Pope Pius IX was a much loved and respected figure there. In 1874 Pio Nono College was established in Macon using the Latin version of his name, and Pio Nono

Avenue is still a very busy Macon thoroughfare.

Surprisingly, several Moss roses were included in Mr. Nelson's recommendations. He wrote, "There is an opinion that Moss Roses will not thrive in the South, and, in fact, several of the varieties may require more attention than most persons may feel disposed to bestow upon them. Fortunately some of the finest will succeed admirably by proper treatment and very little trouble. Let it, however, be borne in mind that they always require a deeply worked and very rich soil, where moisture is within the reach of the roots." Those most suitable for the South included the rose pink 'Princess Adelaide', "the most profuse bloomer of all the Moss roses in a Southern climate, and "Pink Moss" or



Fortune's Double Yellow

'Communis', which he claimed presented "no difficulty in raising to perfection" when well mulched.

Amongst some "Miscellaneous Roses" included are both *R. banksiae banksiae* and *R. banksiae lutea*, and "a climbing rose of new introduction," 'Fortune's Double Yellow'.

Mentioned for its swelling popularity, Nelson had several

reservations about this buff yellow rose: "It is true the color is remarkable, but the flowers are but *half* double, of short duration, and beautiful in the morning only, before fully expanded." Lastly, he recommended "Persia Yellow" or *R. foetida persiana*, the double yellow rose introduced to Western growers only some fifteen years earlier.

Unfortunately, although a learned horticulturist and a wonderful grower of roses, Robert Nelson was not a good businessman. Beginning in 1855 financial debts began to catch up to him. An advertisement in the *Macon Telegraph* published a notice of Public Sale of Nelson's

Troup Hill Nursery property and his residence. One of the creditors to whom money was owed was Robert Buist, the prominent Philadelphia nurseryman and rose authority. In November of 1856 the nursery closed, and Nelson moved to Augusta, GA, to work for Dennis Redmond of Fruitland Nursery. After a brief stay there he moved again to Montgomery, AL, to write for the *American Cotton Planter*, which had merged with *The Soil of the South*, and for the *Montgomery Mail*. Unfortunately, he passed away in 1866.

Robert Nelson's legacy in the world of roses touches a time when Southern gardeners were becoming the unique beneficiaries of the development of the Hybrid Chinas, the Tea roses, and the Noisettes. His experimentation with the Hybrid Perpetuals and Bourbons opened the door for rose growers in the Deep South to expand their gardens and to enjoy a great diversity of flower forms, colors, growing habits, all generally with varieties that could be expected to offer more than one season of bloom. Although his contributions spanned nearly two brief decades, his goal was to direct the Southern grower towards garden success and garden delight. Robert Nelson did not have access to the multitude of varieties grown by his northern counterparts, nor did he live long enough to witness the introduction of many of the roses that today define the classes of roses he wrote about. However, many Southern rose enthusiasts have adhered to these sage words of counsel: "I shall always follow the advice of my lamented friend, A. J. Downing, Esq, 'Never keep a large collection, but a choice one.' "

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Rose Confusion in Jacksonville

George H. Furrow

Beside the old pioneer church of St. Andrews in the old pioneer town of Jacksonville, Oregon, sits a modest garden of old roses. Over the entrance of the enclosure hangs a carved wooden sign reading Old Rose Garden. And indeed, given the earliest known dates of origin for the roses I could identify, the oldest was bred in 1840. A few older roses grow there, but their dates are lost in the lingering ground fog of time.

The rose garden with its one gravestone is much, much more recent. After gold had been discovered on Daisy Creek in 1852, a large group of settlers arrived in southern Oregon in the spring of 1853. Soon thereafter, a Methodist church was begun but construction not completed until 1854. It was the first church built in southern Oregon. About 125 years later in 1978, it became St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and continues as the oldest church in Oregon still in active use. In 1959-60 the Medford Rose Society planted beside the church a garden containing only pre-1867 roses. Clearly the intention was to present roses in keeping with the era of the town and church's founding. The initial 96 rose plants came

from one of the few U.S. nurseries selling heritage roses at the time, the Joseph Kern Nursery in Mentor, Ohio. By the turn of the century, newer roses had made their way into the garden.

On May 30 a few years ago, I spent a lovely but hot morning studying, cataloguing, and describing the plants in that garden. Doing so for only two hours (I was expected elsewhere) was not enough time, so I vowed to return. Far fewer than 96 plants listed were growing there. Parts of the garden were bare where, no doubt, roses once nudged against each other. At least ten of the approximately three dozen rose bushes were identified by small, engraved plaques, though not always accurately.

Near the gate one rose was labeled “Cesone.” Obviously this was a slight error for the name of the Moss or of the Portland rose ‘Cesonic’ (1859). The Moss is a deep pinkish red or even maroon. This had no moss, nor was the color correct. The Portland is deep pink or red, and this one was not. And neither one is a rambler as this rose was. With its fringed stipules and a button eye embedded in the magenta-red petals whose outer rim of encircling petals showed a lilac pink, the rose looked to me like ‘Russelliana’.

Nearby a rose labeled ‘Mrs. John Laing’ clearly was not. This two-foot high rose, with its seven leaflets to a leaf the color and texture of a Gallica or Damask, its flared stipules and very prickly canes, was not a Hybrid Perpetual. In fact, ‘Mrs. John Laing’ (1885) is “nearly thornless.” But what was this one?

Another mislabeled rose was called “Narcisse de Salvanity.” No

doubt the name meant is ‘Narcisse de Salvandy’ (1843). In fact, two such roses grew in this garden. Tall climbers with soft pink, double flowers in clusters, its canes were scattered with both falcate and straight prickles. The true ‘Narcisse de Salvandy’, according to the literature, is a cherry red or deep pink Gallica with a button eye and white edges, growing mostly solitary on stems with an



NOT Narcisse de Salvandy

occasional small cluster. So this rose whose habit and somewhat shiny leaves are clearly not that of a Gallica is something else. Is, perhaps, the rose labeled 'Mrs. John Laing' the actual 'Narcisse de Salvandy', because the labels may have been misplaced? But isn't 'Mrs. John Laing' much fuller? And it's not a climber.

Other labeled roses include the Hybrid China 'Cardinal de Richelieu' (c. 1840), the Hybrid Perpetuals 'Charles Lefebvre' and 'George Washington', both of 1861, the latter a stunted plant only a foot high but with four red buds and a few spent flowers. The somewhat sandy soil may have contributed to the dwarf-like growth as well as to the loss of other plants. The partly dead 'Mme Ernst Calvat' of 1888 was given to rather prolific suckering. Do Bourbon roses sucker? If not, this may be another mislabeled rose. On the other hand, 'Mme Ernst Calvat' is on a 2002 partial list of catalogued roses in this garden.

Three Noisettes and three Albas grace this little churchyard, 'Alba Semi-plena' being among the latter group. The two 'Apothecary's Roses' may have reverted from 'Rosa Mundi', which was recorded there in 2002, for no 'Rosa Mundi' grows there now. A red rugosa may be the 'F.J.



Apothecary's Rose

Grootendorst' (1918) listed in 2002. One unlabeled rose, white, its inner petals incurved into a cushion pressed down with a button, could be 'Mme Hardy' (1832) on that same recent list. But I saw no 'Alain Blanchard', no 'Archduke Charles', no 'Baronne Prevost', no 'White Maman Cochet', which were apparently all growing there eighteen years ago.

One rambler was, no doubt, 'Veilchenbleu' (1909), bringing the garden roses into the 20th century. The other new kids on the block were 'Kathleen', a Hybrid Musk (1922), 'Carmenetta', a lovely Hybrid Glauca (1923) with long leaf-pointed yet needle-like sepals reaching high above unopened buds, and the latecomer Hybrid Perpetual 'Henry

Nevard' (1924). The 2002 list also mentions a far more recent rose 'Wind Chimes' (1946), but I saw no such label nor would I recognize the plant.

I was unable to identify two different purple Gallicas and two Multiflora hybrids. One of the latter deserves mention. It displayed long-stemmed clusters of loose, globular flowers with wide pink margins merging to blush or white; blood red or even black "thorns" with a broad base were widely dispersed on otherwise smooth canes. The medium-green foliage exhibited a slight sheen. Could it be 'Mme d'Arblay' (1835)? What other long-stemmed clustering rose produces blackish prickles? But the flower color should be only white, no?

Two rather thornless plants intrigued me. I wondered if the pink, semi-double, waist-high rose was the Polyantha 'La Marne' (1915)? The other appeared Gallica-like, perhaps a Gallica hybrid, reaching to about seven feet in height, with very full blooms in clusters of a pale pink. Could it be 'Belle Isis'? 'Duchesse de Montebello'? 'Duchesse d'Angouleme' of which there were at least three? This rose garden demands more scrutiny (and care), so on a day when the sun is not clawing my shoulders and diluting color from photographs, I shall return.

Post Script: I have twice tried to return, only to be diverted. I had hoped to return this year (2020), but the pandemic has prevented it. Perhaps next year? In the meantime, if someone else visits the garden and identifies some of the roses, please notify me through the *Rose Letter*.

NOTES on COLOR in ROSES

- China roses darken with age.
- Iron in the soil can make a red rose somewhat purple.
- Kelp meal in the soil can make a reddish rose more pink.
- When the soil is too cold or too wet, the darker roses may bloom pink or even nearly white
- The darkest roses alter color most in wet seasons or in too much shade.



A TALE OF TWO INTERTANGLED RAMBLERS

Darrell g.h. Schramm

Early in the 20th century when the popularity of rose ramblers and climbers was in its heyday, two German nurserymen bred two rambling roses that remain popular to this day. Those two ramblers, ‘Veilchenblau’ and ‘Tausendschön’, both Hybrid Multifloras, were raised, respectively, by J.C. Schmidt and Hermann Kiese. Though just barely, a few other roses by these two men remain in commerce today.

An entanglement occurs at once, however, regarding ‘Veilchenblau’: though most sources declare that Schmidt was the breeder, two online German sources claim Kiese was the breeder and Schmidt merely the introducer of the rose. These two men often worked very closely together, and both respected each other. Could it have been a collaborative effort? For convenience, until more solid evidence appears to ascertain the true author of the rose, I’ll attribute it to Schmidt.

‘Veilchenblau’, meaning violet-blue, appeared in 1909, a child of ‘Turner’s Crimson Rambler’, a Multiflora hybrid, and ‘Erinnerung an Brod’, a Setigera hybrid. Its color has been described as reddish violet, bluish purple, and lilac violet, turning to metallic blue and amethyst, showing a white center. Some early observers considered the color bizarre or odd, certainly novel. Rose breeder Otto Jacobs wrote that it was “not pretty but useful.” As late as 1959, rose authority Richard Thomson thought it “an abomination.” But Nancy Steen in 1966 saw it



Veilchenblau

as “most attractive when grown in association with tall, modern fuchsias, the flowers of which harmonize perfectly” with the “smokey, rosy mauve” of ‘Veilchenblau’. A cream-colored climber such as ‘Bobbie James’ would also look attractive beside it.

Its color fits into a class with ‘Donau!’ (1913), ‘Magenta’ (1916), and ‘Violette’ (1921). In fact, at least one rosarian has declared, and I agree with him, that ‘Violette’ is an improved form of ‘Veilchenblau’. Nonetheless, ‘Veilchenblau’ remains more popular and is sold by at least twice as many nurseries as any of the other three.

Color aside, the medium-sized, semi-double flowers in large clusters offer a fragrance some say is a lily-of-the-valley scent. As a summer bloomer, the plant is generously profuse. Hardy and vigorous, it is also generous with its prickles. The long leaves wear a winsome gloss, but the plant tends to lose its lower leaves early. It does best in some shade but also tolerates heat and poor soil. Given its vitality, it has been used as an understock.

Johann Christoph Schmidt’s nursery was established by his grandfather in 1823. Between 1895 and 1920 Schmidt bred about thirty different roses, most of which are no longer available with the exceptions of ‘Anemonenrose’, possibly ‘Annchen Müller’ and ‘Rubin’ and, of

course, 'Veilchenblau'. Often he would introduce roses by other breeders and unselfishly (unlike fellow German nurseryman Peter Lambert) give them credit for their productions.

A few such roses were bred by Herman Kiese (1865-1923) who worked for Schmidt as head gardener for 22 years. In 1904, having bred several roses, he left Schmidt's nursery to open his own. A year later he

discovered a lemon-yellow sport with a green pip center on the rose 'Mlle Franziska Krüger', which he subsequently developed and named 'Blumenschmidt', the nickname for Schmidt's nursery. Except in winter, this large Tea rose



flowers almost constantly. Nearly without prickles on its arching stems, the plant grows low, compact, and healthily. The flowers emit a fragrance and prove especially floriferous in autumn.

Kiese had also bred the lovely Rambler 'Tausendshön' before leaving his former employer. He exhibited the rose at the Düsseldorf Rose Show in 1904 where it won a First Prize. Because he had yet to make a name for himself, he then asked J.C. Schmidt to introduce it along with 'Blumenschmidt', which the latter did in 1906. Here we see a friendly intertonglement of rose breeders.

'Tausendshön' (meaning 1000 beauties), a cross between a Multiflora hybrid with some Noisette genes and another Multiflora hybrid with some Hybrid Perpetual genes, shows the lushness of those secondary genes in its exuberance of flowers. A truss will display multiple colors as the new buds open among the older blossoms, thus revealing itself in soft shades of silvery pink, rose, cream, and of white. The mature flowers disclose a delicate satin pink with a white center. Some gardeners

call it the “Pink Banksiae Rose,” but it is definitely not of the Banksiae family. The full blooms, frilly and crinkled, come in large corymbs on strong stems, a whole spray as much as twelve inches across, forming its own bouquet. The luxuriant clusters fairly conceal the foliage. Nearly without prickles, the strong plant makes an excellent pillar rose of seven to eight feet and higher. Unfortunately, it does not repeat its bloom, but the flowers flourish for six to eight weeks. In fact, it generally blooms sooner than most other Hybrid Multifloras. Somewhat shade tolerant, it seems resistant to pests, but its small leaves can invite mildew in mid-summer.

This rambler has sent out seven or eight sports, one of them the bushy Polyantha ‘Echo’, also known as ‘Baby Tausendschön’. It is inclined, however, to revert to the original. A number of Tausendschön’s first generation roses have survived. In 1925, D.W.

Coolidge of Pasadena, who did much to beautify his young city horticulturally, crossed it with ‘Veilchenblau’ to create ‘I.X.L.’, which he and others used as a rootstock. And here we see an intertangement of the two ramblers. The following year Ludwig Walter introduced ‘Madeleine Seltzer’, a pale yellow Hybrid Multiflora, ‘Mrs Aaron Ward’ its other parent. In 1933 Gustav Brada of Czechoslovakia put on the market his prize-winner ‘Poema’, a pure, deep pink rambler becoming silvery pink with age and growing in clusters of ten to 100 flowers. All three of these continue to keep a toe-hold in commerce.



I.X.L.



Madeleine Seltzer

Kiese produced about seventy roses, at least a dozen of which have survived, some like ‘Gruss an Weimar’ and ‘Leuchstern’ sold only by Loubert of France, or the fragrant Hybrid Tea ((or Portland?) ‘Stadtrat Glaser’ sold only by Rogue Valley; ‘Wartburg’ a seedling of ‘Tausendschön’, sold by three European firms and by two in Japan, but one, ‘Kiese’, a red hybrid of *Rosa canina*, 1910, commonly sold throughout Europe and by Hortico of



Canada.

From 1911 to 1919, after Peter Lambert resigned his offices, Hermann Kiese served as editor of *Rosenzeitung* and as head of the German Rose Society. At the same time, he continued to introduce his



new roses and those of at least four other German breeders.

When Kiese died in 1923, his son Wilhelm took over the business; however, he did not breed roses. During World War II, he favored the Nazi hierarchy; consequently, at the end of the war, the East Germany government confiscated the nursery and nationalized it in 1949. So much for loyalty to the Third Reich.

Today nearly two dozen Hermann Kiese roses are listed at Rosarium Europa in Sangerhausen. Kiese is not forgotten. One has merely to gaze upon 'Tausendschön' in glorious bloom to be assured that he will not be. And as if to clinch the matter, the town of Vieselbach, a suburb of Erfurt, where Kiese lived, has a street named for him.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND HRG

I want to tell you how much I enjoy the *Rose Letter*. As someone who is passionate about Old Roses and good writing, I look forward to finding the latest issue in my mailbox, and especially enjoy your articles. My only complaint is that it doesn't come often enough! I also appreciated your enthusiastic talk last year at the Marin Rose Society's meeting on the History of the Rose in California. You bring a lot of zest to the subject! —Joan Harland, CA

It is fabulous as usual but for some reason I absolutely lived this edition [August]! Thank you to all involved. —Cyd Wade, Florida

Another gem of a publication! So far I've only read the article about David Ruston's roses -- how very sad. I distinctly remember Kim Rupert telling me many years ago that I shouldn't count on my garden outliving me, going on to say that very, very few gardens outlive the individuals who create them. How true his words were. —Cliff Orent, CA

Wonderful publication. Thanks so much. David Rustin's Roses article by Margaret Furness is so sad. I remember when he was here in N. CA, gave a

wonderful demo enjoyed by all around 20 years ago. Darrell's articles are always super good. Thanks for all the time & effort you all put into *The Rose Letter*. —Barbara Gordon, CA

I enjoyed especially the article on sweetbriars. Can't plant the species here, it's a declared weed, like the dog rose, and both of them are profuse on roadsides. We hadn't heard about Milton Nurse's death. Today Billy, Pat, Patricia and I have been exchanging emails about the various—very funny—road trips we took him and John on, and Pat's visit to them in London. We will miss him. —Margaret Furness, Australia

The articles and photos in the last issue were just beautiful.—Marge Hansen, age 100, CA

I'm in awe of the intellectual and extremely well-researched articles you write in the *Rose Letter*. You are the consummate historian and recorder of the most lovely and lesser-known and possibly otherwise lost roses and their history of anyone I've ever known or read! I don't know how you are able to compile the detailed information you share in each of your articles, and your writing style flows so beautifully and makes each read entertaining. —Ingrid Wapelhorst, Oregon

You write better than 90% or more of writers out there. Your ability to mold ideas, your figures of speech—you should publish another book or write for a magazine. —Bill Grant, CA

THE ROSE ON OUR COVER

Painted by Pierre-Joseph Redouté, we see 'Rose de Mai plena', i.e., 'Rose of May', the double variety. AKA 'R. Centifolia de Grasse', grown in Grasse, France, to create rose oil and rose perfume, it likely is not the same rose Redouté painted. Under its old name, *R. majalis* (Latin for Rose of May), it dates prior to 1600. Apparently after a pestilence decimated the roses around Grasse in the late 1800s, Gilbert Nabonand in 1895 suggested the single 'Rose de Mai', one without prickles. But the industry also began using a double form developed by M. Lunier, known as *R. x centifolia* L., the one most used today. Roses are harvested in the first two weeks of May.

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Domine

Deus pater sanctissime, et omnipotens Lumen in-
dens, et beatissime conditor omnium luminum. Benedic nos
homines per te creatos, ac sanctificatos, qui illuminasti omnem
mundum, ut a te uero lumine accendamus atque illuminemur.

Deus Pater sanctissime omnium uirtutum, ac conditor omnium lu-
minum, cuius sunt omnia, que sunt optima, inlere secundum multitudi-
dinem miserationum tuarum, amorem illum ardentem beatissimi tui
nominis, et presta in nobis christiana perfectissima religionis augmen-
tum, ut tuo diuino auxilio nutriti, ad omnia pietatis studia accendatur.



Mira Calligraphaie Monumento by Georg Hoefnagel, 16th c.