

# ROSE LETTER



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# ROSE LETTER

The Heritage Roses Group



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## THE ROSES OF MARGOTTIN

**Darrell g.h. Schramm**

Not all plant breeders and nurserymen in the history of the rose are above suspicion in their horticultural dealings. Several minor French nurserymen in the 19th century renamed popular roses and sold them under those new names. Imagine discovering once the roses were in bloom that two differently named roses were the same. In the United States during the 1890s, a California nurseryman A. F. Boardman and his partner filed bankruptcy for their Auburn nursery. But it was soon learned that Boardman was not above suspicion and had done so fraudulently, having transferred \$7000 worth of nursery stock to his wife. Between the years of 1851 and 1881, the Parisian rose breeder Margottin—not above suspicion—at least twice seems to have passed off a rose bred by someone else as his own creation.

Jacques-Julien Margottin, born in 1817, became an orphan at age fourteen. He soon began to work as an apprentice gardener for Count Mole at Castle Marais where he worked for three years. In 1838 he spent the year studying horticulture and the following year

became employed as Head Gardener for J. Alexandre Hardy's rosarium at Luxembourg Gardens in Paris. Two significant events occurred the next year: he married a woman with whom he had four children, and he established his own nursery, leasing the grounds at Ivry. Near the end of his lease nearly twenty years later, he bought property at Bourg-la-Reine, now a southern suburb of Paris, and relocated his nursery there. He was a member of the National Horticultural Society, also serving on its editorial board. In 1878 he was awarded the Legion of Honor.

Having introduced his first three roses in 1845, he produced over the years about eighty roses, mostly Hybrid Perpetuals and Bourbons. Five or six remain in commerce today: 'General Cavaignac' of 1849; perhaps 'Louise Odier', 1851, if it is his own; 'Jules Margottin', 1853; 'Triomphe de l'Exposition', 1855; 'Anna Alexieff', 1858; and 'Rev. H. D'Ombraïn', 1863.

The Hybrid Perpetual 'General Cavaignac' (see front cover) is named for Louis Eugene Cavaignac, a General who ran against and lost to Napoleon III in the 1848 presidential election. He had been chief of the executive government from June to December, prior to that loss. No doubt he had lost the election partly because his provisional government had levied an additional land tax, which did not exempt the poor. He had championed a republic, whereas Napoleon III soon made his rule an autocratic regime. But by then General Cavaignac had married Louise Odier.

The rose 'General Cavaignac' is short, quite prickly, very fragrant, very full, brandishing petals of a brilliant rosy pink or dark carmine, paler on the undersides. Its leafage suggests it might well be a Hybrid China rather than a Hybrid Perpetual.

In 1851, the year the General wed Louise Odier, the rose bearing the bride's name made its public appearance. The woman was the daughter of James Odier, a wealthy man whose hobby was hybridizing geraniums, pelargoniums, and other flowers. He bred one rose in 1849—'Gigantesque'—if not two, the second possibility being 'Louise Odier'. But we are not certain about this second rose. Although over the years it has been suggested that the father of the namesake was the true breeder, James Odier's expert gardener Jacques Duval, who was the actual propagator of Odier's many

pelargoniums—if not also his other flowers—may be the true breeder. Indeed, Odier was taken to task for attaching his own name to the pelargoniums he exhibited. After both Odier and Duval had died, Margottin, who had introduced the rose many years earlier, in the June 1883 issue of *Journal des Roses*, wrote an article claiming *he* had bred the rose 'Louise Odier' from a seeding pollinated with a rose whose name he could not recall. His adamant assertion suggests he doth protest too much.

Interestingly, a writer in *The Gardener's Monthly* of January 1863 had mentioned that Margottin had raised seedlings from 'Louise Odier' in "all shades of color, from pure white up to dark crimson," but "all proved worthless in their habit." A rose he named 'Louise Margottin' for his daughter seemed promising, but it too proved unenduring. Make of those failures what you will or nothing at all.

'Louise Odier', a Bourbon, grows on sturdy canes with maroon prickles. It yields lovely, recurrently blooming flowers, flat and round, of a soft, rich pink, often with a dash of lavender in the center. One of the most profuse of Old Garden Roses, it emits a wonderful fragrance, "one sniff," as Peter Beales put it, "inviting another and another and another." It does not object to some shade. And after all these years—170 in round numbers—'Louise Odier' still makes friends of heritage rose lovers.

'Jules Margottin' does so as well, though mostly in northern Europe. A Hybrid Perpetual, pale crimson of flower—though sometimes more deep rose—it arches its prickly canes under the weight of its many blooms. It grows to about five feet though it can be kept lower. Fully open, the flowers are nearly flat with a raggedy ruffle of petals, sending out a strong, delicious



**Jules Margottin**

scent. It repeats well. In wet weather it tends to invite mildew. Despite that flaw, ‘Jules Margottin’ was famously used in hybridizing and boasts about 17,880 descendants.

The rose was named for Margottin’s oldest son, who was a friend of the English breeder George Paul’s son, a fact indicating an



**Mme Jeannine Joubert**

international connection among rose hybridists. A horticulturist, Jules established his own nursery where he bred seven different roses, only one of which still survives.

That rose is ‘Mme Jeannine Joubert’, a deep cerise Bourbon which I grow but is available from only Flora Linnea Nursery in Sweden and by custom order from Freedom Nursery in Ohio.

A fourth surviving rose by Margottin père is the Hybrid Perpetual ‘Triomphe de

l’Exposition’. At the Paris Exposition of 1855, Margottin won the prize for the most beautiful rose on display. Proudly or pompously or both, he named it for his victory. (The Exposition marked the first time an English monarch—in this case, Queen Victoria—had visited France in friendship since the 15th century.)



**Triomphe de l’Exposition**

A deep red rose, full and quartered with a button eye and wafting a sweet perfume, ‘Triomphe de l’Exposition’ is a rose not much acknowledged in the English-speaking world. It was still sold in

Canada, however, as late as 2011. The oval-acuminate, deeply serrated leaves begin as yellow-green and mature to dark, shiny green. Prickles are relatively few. The bush crowds itself with numerous canes and blossoms, making a very full bush up to five feet high.

Who was Anna Alexieff, for whom another rose was named? No one seems to know. Perhaps she was the second Lady X. If the appearance of the rose is at all representative of her, she would be the mysterious woman drawing all eyes to her on entering the opera house. Women in expensive Worth gowns, décolleté, would suck in their breath with envy at her lilac-pink, satin gown shimmering with silver, her high, ruffled collar accentuating her beauty, the entire vesture foreshadowing a silk evening gown adorned with feathers by Givenchy a hundred years later.

The habit of the plant is sturdy, vigorous, compact, growing to five feet, conducive to being shaped around a short pillar. The canes sport falcate prickles. A rather satiny, soft, silver or sometimes lilac pink, the huge, full flowers form a tender muddle of petals in and beyond the heart of the rose, almost like swans down. A very feminine rose. An abundant bloomer, it also offers many blossoms in the fall.

Of the rose ‘Rev. H. D’Ombrain’ I have written elsewhere. Suffice it to say that though he was an active vicar first in the town of Deal, a few miles from Dover, then in Westwell, near Ashford, his passion for roses found him scouring much of France in search of new varieties for his gardens. Furthermore, under the pseudonym of D. Deal, he authored many articles on horticulture. In 1876 he was instrumental in founding the world’s first rose society, the National Rose Society of England, for which he served as its first secretary. However, he humbly made no reference to his role when he wrote his book *Roses for Amateurs* in 1887. From 1888 to 1902 he published at his own expense the Society’s *Rosarian’s Year Book*, a predecessor to *The Rose Annual* which began five years later. Clearly the Reverend had left an impression on Margottin decades earlier, for the rose entered commerce in 1863.

Ahead of his time, the observant D’Ombrain in his little book of 1887 asserted that Tea roses and Noisettes were outpacing

the popularity of the Hybrid Perpetuals. Not only did he introduce the Noisettes to England, but he also popularized the Bourbon class of roses. Most of all, he championed his favorite Noisette ‘Marechal Niel’, which even today remains among the most popular of Noisettes. The Rev. Henry D’Ombrain died in October of 1905.

The open rose itself, a Bourbon, does have rather the ruffled appearance of the flower ‘Anna Alexieff’. However, the coloring is more complex, the outer circle of light pink petals merging into lilac or mauve, while the central petals become carmine or soft, light red. This lovely, scented rose is nearly extinct, but it does grow happily in my garden and in several other collections.

Nearly forty years into breeding, Jacques Margottin had not retired from desire for the limelight. In 1880 a young gardener Armand Garçon had bred a rose he named ‘Le Bienheureux de la Salle’ (‘Blessed La Salle’, founder of the Christian Brothers). He had already won prizes for some of his roses, which he had exhibited under the auspices of the Rouen Horticultural Society, one of which had won the Premium at the World Expo in Paris in 1867. When Margottin saw the La Salle rose, he persuaded his wealthy client Mme. Isaac Péreire to buy the rights to it, apparently with the promise to re-name it in her honor. Done. Margottin changed its



name and exhibited it in London in 1882 as ‘Mme Isaac Péreire’, and *as a creation of his own*. When the Rouen Horticultural Society learned of the malfeasance, it wrote a letter of protest charging that Margottin had taken false credit. Though the name of the rose did not revert to its original, Armand Garçon’s name was redeemed as the true breeder. Perhaps that humiliation is why Margottin insisted in *Journal des Roses* that he, not James Odier (or Jacques



Duval) had bred ‘Louise Odier’. With no one now to contradict him, was he once again buying honor with dishonor?

To end on a more pleasant note, the woman honored by the name of this rose was Fanny Péreire (1824 or 25-1910), a niece of Isaac Périere who married her when she was sixteen. Isaac was a wealthy Paris banker with many lucrative investments. He was also a known art collector who owned paintings by Ingres, Murillo, Rembrandt, and others. When a fellow Frenchman urged him to buy Vermeer’s *The Geographer*, he did so, essentially launching Vermeer’s fame. Like her husband, she was a Simonist, believing that the poor should be aided by and protected from the rich. When a doctor saved her daughter’s life in 1878, Mme Périere donated a hospital to the community of Armainvilliers where the Périere family had a country chateau. A benevolent woman, after her husband’s death, she looked after the entire extended family. ‘Mme Isaac Périere’ is a big rose named for a woman with a big heart.

### **IMAGE CREDITS**

Pages 2, 4, 5, 7, 12, 14, 17-20: Darrell Schramm

Pages 10, 11, 13: Elaine Sedlack

Page 15: Kathy Keatley Garevy

Page 16: Michael Tallman

Page 24: Bill Grant

Page 28: David Austin Roses

Page 30: art by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema

### **ERRATUM #1**

- A serious error occurs on page 32 in our Nov. 2018 issue. The second sentence below the photo should read “Breeder Sam McGredy III asked his wife Ruth to choose a rose . . . .”

## “CURIUSER AND CURIUSER”:

### A STUDY OF FIVE FOUND ROSES

**Elaine Sedlack**

Since I've moved to Eugene, my favorite pastime is searching out the many roses planted around town, including many old ones. My fantasy when I moved here was of leisurely bicycling from rose to rose on a warm summer day. One day I realized that their mere existence in Eugene did not necessarily indicate that they had been carried across the Oregon Trail, an idea I had favored. Though this is no doubt true for some, in many cases the phenomenon of all these roses more likely can be attributed to Heirloom Roses in St. Paul, Oregon, because it was a favorite destination for gardeners when the nursery display garden was open and in bloom. I think that this, coupled with the fine (recently renovated!) collection at the municipal Owen Rose Garden, and the two centrally located cemeteries where old roses were historically planted as memorials, fostered an appreciation here for heritage roses. There also used to be a chapter of the American Rose Society in Eugene, some of whose members collected old roses. Regardless of how they got here, there are numerous old specimens to be seen in peoples' gardens. But if I were to ask the owners of the property if they knew their names, invariably the response would be, "That was already growing here when we came." As someone who enjoys puzzles, I became determined to try to identify these unknown roses.

When I work on a rose i.d., I begin by taking many high resolution photographs of *all* of the plant's parts—flowers and leaves of course, from many angles, but also the hips, prickles, bark color and habit. When I transfer them to my computer, I am able to zoom on the images and thereby wield my computer like a microscope. It is astonishing what information will then reveal itself.

The first order of business is to work out which class the rose best falls into. If it is a climber, perhaps it exhibits the tell-tale serrated stipules typical of Multiflora ramblers. Of course, then you have to figure out *which* Multiflora. If it smells like green apples, then

you know it is likely a Wichurana relative. There are distinct characteristics for the different classes revealed by hips, sepals, foliage, prickles and bark. Flower color can offer clues as well—think of the coppery tints often found in the Nabonnand Teas, or the darkening crimson hues of the China rose.

One useful resource for working through the process is a booklet written and produced by Judy Dean, Lynne Storm, and Bev Vierra. The “Field Report of Rose Characteristics” is thoughtfully written and provides a consistent systematic process for evaluating and documenting found roses, with checklists for recording their different botanical features.

### 1. 'Safrano'

I would pass this rose on my bicycle route to and from a weekly class. I was impressed by how much of the year it flowered, and how profusely. I would pull up next to it and



just stare, trying to will an association with an image I may have seen, or a name I had come across. This weed-engulfed, six feet tall plant was flowering with abandon in an exposed parking strip. Not knowing what it was, I mistakenly thought at first it might be an old Hybrid Tea. I based my assumption on the pedicels which didn't have a pronounced nod in that particular way of Teas, and that it must therefore be a Hybrid Tea, even though there were no indications of any Hybrid Perpetual influence, a fact I ignored. It had stout, smooth canes and large prickles, smooth leaves, and flowers in clusters. The color was pale peachy pink, with lighter

tones. The flower form was attractively disheveled and loose, with not too many petals. In trying to identify this rose, I thought it must be related to ‘Safrano’. Somehow it never occurred to me that it might actually *be* ‘Safrano’! If I have learned one thing in this process, it is to keep an open mind. However, I kept thinking I needed a list of Hybrid Teas descended from ‘Safrano’, and I spent fruitless hours in my books looking for likely relatives. If I had thought things out more systematically, it might have dawned on me sooner that this was the Tea rose ‘Safrano’ herself. It was only from looking at many images of ‘Safrano’ that I finally got it. At this point, when I have come up with a “best guess”, I begin to ask people who are more knowledgeable for help—collaboration is often key. I am reluctant to pronounce with certainty unless I am personally familiar with a rose, and even then, I hope to find someone to concur. (Also, you can trust Google only so far.) So I sent some photos to our Esteemed Editor, and he confirmed the i.d. by sending me photos of his ‘Safrano’. Another puzzle is that this particular plant has stronger color than I previously believed was accurate for this rose. I even sent for ‘Safrano’ myself for comparison. My small gallon-sized ‘starter’ plant had much smaller and paler flowers; they were anemic compared to those of the established Eugene plant, but the form is essentially the same. What I am excited about, if it truly is ‘Safrano’, is that this plant in its maturity produces relatively large and more deeply colored blooms than I’ve ever seen on ‘Safrano’. I believe it is a very good form.

## 2. ‘Marchesa Boccella’

This rose with frilly, clear pink flowers has those high shoulders typical of certain Hybrid Perpetuals, by which the flowers are nestled in foliage. It grows on a corner lot above a retaining wall in full



sun. I noticed it early on, but thought it would be hopeless to try to figure out, since there are so many HPs. The fragrance seems light, and the clustered flowers are marvelously quartered. The business where the plant is growing changed hands and is now a marijuana dispensary—which goes to show that you find old roses everywhere! When I finally began trying to identify it, I showed it to Darrell. He thought it might be a Centifolia, so then I went through all the descriptions for Centifolias, but the leaf was never right. One thing that threw us initially, was that the pot shop had pruned it down to three feet to fit under its sign, but then I gradually remembered it as having been taller the year before, more than four feet. Finally I noticed that it was still blooming in August, so then I came back to the HP theory. When I mentioned this to Darrell, among several of his suggestions was ‘Marchesa Boccella’. The leaf on this rose is very distinct; relatively narrow and elongated. In maturity it is slightly rugose, with impressed veins, and there is a slight twist to the leaf. I used to grow this, and remember the fragrance as being spicier, very clove like. This is the only characteristic that I am still pondering; otherwise I believe this to be correct. And, yes, we inhaled! We are trying to get permission to ‘help’ the business keep their sign visible, by maintaining the rose—by taking occasional cuttings.

### 3. ‘La Reine’

This rose is amazing! It consists of two plants growing together between the sidewalk and the parking lot of an apartment complex. The whole thing is five feet tall by about ten feet wide, mounding, and with rich pink flowers. It is very



lovely, in spite of not receiving obvious care, but it is apparently appreciated enough to keep. The fragrance is deep and wonderfully

rich. To think that it has graced gardens since 1842, and to find it here today in pedestrian circumstances is poignant. It was only because I had written about Jean Laffay's roses that the name 'La Reine' came to mind. Sometimes I find myself perusing indices of names, hoping something will jump out. I had never met this rose in person. I figured it had to be an HP or a Bourbon, but the smooth leaf was a fresh green, and Bourbons are known for often having a gray-green cast to their foliage. It was also more restrained than the larger growing Bourbons. The giveaway was the full, scalloped flowers, loosely muddled in the center but shapely and recurving on the outer petals. The deeper warm pink color helped to narrow the choices, and, when I finally sent photos to Darrell he replied, delightfully: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, it doth appear very much like 'La Reine'".

#### 4. 'Salet'

This one was fairly easy to figure out, because there are only a few remontant Mosses, and it was definitely mossy. The process of elimination



narrowed it down to 'Salet' (again confirmed by our Esteemed Editor). It had longer, less rounded leaflets than 'Centifolia Muscosa', and an elongated hip, in the Damask mode. The leaves' pale undersides reinforced this connection, and the flowers also were supported by the 'high shouldered' effect. And then the moss! It is thick and dark green, extending beautifully to the sepals, which are often foliaceous. When I realized that it was a repeater, this was pretty much the only choice. Also, since the color is an emphatic pink, it obviously isn't 'Quatre Saisons Blanc Mousseaux'. Darrell pointed out that 'Salet' typically had serrated leaf margins that looked a little ragged, as though they had been torn; when I put it "under the microscope" I could see this feature. It is growing in the

same parking strip as the aforementioned ‘Safrano’. I would love to meet the person with the refined sensibility who chose these two. There are more individual plants of ‘Salet’ visible inside the front gate of this property, making me wonder if in fact these are very old plants, and that divisions were taken over time to increase the numbers. The plants inside the gate were more than six feet tall, but the parking strip plant is only around four feet. I noticed that both ‘Salet’ and ‘Safrano’ were severely pruned last winter, whacked back to two feet, but they have since rebounded.

### 5. ‘**Souvenir du Dr. Jamain**’

As usual, no one presently living at this residence knew anything about this rose, because it had been there when they moved in. It is a sturdy plant about seven feet tall, very full though somewhat angular, with beautifully formed flowers of the darkest wine-red. Short



prickly flower stems seemed to indicate an HP, and the color helped to quickly narrow things down. The fragrance is magnificent! It gets good morning sun, and then is protected by a massive fig tree in the afternoon, which helps keep the flowers from browning. After trolling through all the HP’s listed in the old Vintage Gardens catalog, I finally determined this to be ‘Souvenir du Dr. Jamain’. It helped that I had grown this plant in my previous garden, since there is nothing like having lived with a plant to aid in recognizing its ‘gestalt’. Because one of our members knew the people who lived here, we were able to obtain cuttings. Mine rooted right away, so I am pleased to know that not only will I be able to grow this again, but that our extra plants will be dispersed to the community, to increase people’s rosy experiences in Eugene, regardless of whether the name of the rose is known!

# THREE BAD BUGS

**Michael Tallman**

As if we rose growers don't have enough troubles to deal with, Mother Nature has seen fit to beset us with several more from the insect world. The three under discussion here are all the more insidious because insecticides would be useless against them even if one wanted to spray. The best one can do is simply get revenge upon them for the damage they cause.

Pest #1, and perhaps the most devastating that almost everyone is familiar with, is the red weevil, rose curculio (*Merhynchites bicolor*). Their population is timed to destroy as many precious rose buds as possible. I suppose we should be happy they seem to attack only certain roses [*R. canina* and other pale roses—editor], but those certain roses will give scant open flowers when they are attacked. Your recourse is to go out and KILL, KILL, KILL, holding a cupped hand or can of soapy water underneath, for curculios fall to the ground at the slightest sign of danger. Once on the ground they are impossible to find in the leaf litter, but in a few minutes they rise and fly (yes, they do fly) back to the rose buds they are destroying. I prefer the cupped hand approach as the revenge is all the sweeter to squish them with my other fingers. "Two-fers" (a mating couple) are particularly satisfying.



Remove all wilted rose buds and throw them into the trash, not onto the ground. It is possible the eggs will hatch and the larvae continue development upon the ground to re-infest next season. If you are diligent, you may get a few more open rose flowers to enjoy on a vulnerable bush.



Pest #2 is less commonly seen. A rose is feeling vigor and decides to send up a new cane. You go out one fine morning and the top few inches of cane are wilted over, but you know you've kept up with the watering. The culprit here is the raspberry horn tail, or stem boring sawfly (*Hartigia* sp.). Your only recourse is to break [or cut] off the cane tip a few inches below the wilt where you may find the white grub busy girdling the stem, hidden in the center pith. If you don't find it, throw the cane tip into the trash anyway.

The third pest involves a sun-burned rose cane. You may see the bases of canes at ground level turn yellow. The hot summer sun



can strike there, causing this discoloration, especially if the rose is not getting enough water. Act before it's too late. White water-based paint diluted 50% may be painted on the few inches of yellowed cane at ground level. Or apply some shade with mulch or a cover plant grown there. If left unchecked the cane burns brown, and at this point *Chrysobothris* makes its home there, slowly finishing off the whole cane with its burrowing.

By the way, the adult beetle of this flat-headed borer is a favorite with bug collectors due to its gorgeous color, if that's any consolation. You may break [or cut] off the cane at this point and seek out the grub and KILL. You lose the cane but isn't revenge sweet? This condition may also occur higher up on rose stems where the full sun strikes them.

So in the case of curculios, "gather ye (wilted) rosebuds while ye may," and watch out for the other attacks. We gardeners must fight Mother Nature sometimes to create this most un-natural thing we call a rose garden.



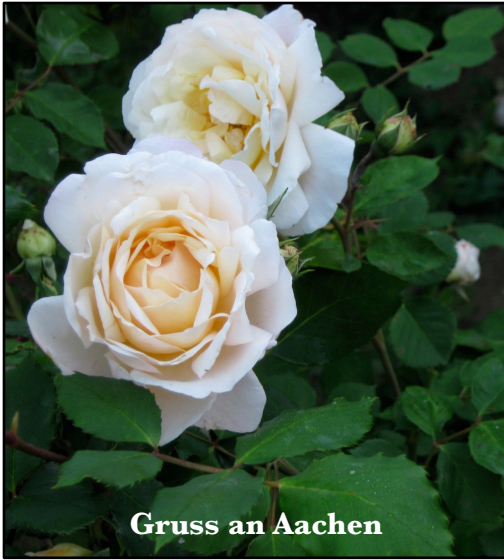
## **GREETINGS TO ROSE LOVERS**

**Darrell g.h. Schramm**

Even though I hail from a long line of Germans and spoke German before English, I find the German word for *greeting*—*gruss*—rather unwelcoming in sound. Fortunately, that reaction has not deterred my delight in growing three roses whose names begin with that word: ‘Gruss an Aachen’, ‘Gruss an Coburg’, and ‘Gruss an Teplitz’.

‘Gruss an Aachen’ is considered the first Floribunda, though when it appeared in 1909, that was more than two decades before that class of roses was codified—much like the Hybrid Tea, which appeared at least two decades before ‘La France’ was the first to be designated as such. Before that classification, rose authority and editor Horace McFarland in 1936 had described ‘Gruss an Aachen’ as a Hybrid Polyantha, “the first to cross over from the small cluster-flowered pure Polyantha type toward a larger Hybrid Tea class.”

The bush is stalwart and productive, low, rigid, compact, and



**Gruss an Aachen**

rather erect. In late summer the glossy foliage is less abundant than in spring. The flowers are huge, full, and of subtle coloring, a pinkish cream with some peach tints but fading to white in hot weather. It offers a mild scent. Though it is supposedly prone to blackspot and mildew, mine has hosted only a touch of blackspot but been free of other fungus. I also grow the rose-pink form 'Rosa [Pink]

'Gruss an Aachen', but though it is fuller of foliage than the latter, it has been a slow and stingy grower its first two years; nonetheless, its flowers are lovely if less subtle in color.

Aachen is the German name for the city Aix-La Chapelle. Known for its mineral springs, it was Charlemagne's capital city, one of his two favorite residences and where he died in 814. It was also the birthplace in the 11th century of Albert of Aachen, historian of the First Crusade and its carnage. After the Napoleonic wars, an international Congress was held there in 1818 to regulate the affairs of Europe. Already a sense of European union was emerging, but the two world wars interrupted its progress. During World War II in 1944, Aachen was the first important German city attacked by the Americans. The police and Nazi Party of the city abandoned it, leaving it to the citizens to defend. It took six weeks to capture the city, which by then was largely destroyed.

According to German rose expert Harald Enders, this rose was actually bred by Wilhelm Hinner (1868-1939) and not Philip Geduldig (as is often stated) who introduced it. That was in 1909. Hinner was one of the first German nurserymen to import roses from the USA. 'Gruss an Aachen' and 'Georg Arends' are his two most famous of several roses; however, because the great but somewhat self-exalted breeder Peter Lambert shunned him, Hinner rarely

received the recognition he deserved.

‘Gruss an Coburg’, a Hybrid Tea, puts forth coppery buds and huge, full flowers inconstant of color but generally of a pale fawn and orange blend with burnished yellow at the base and the outside petals a pale brick color suffused with a golden pink but all rather pastel. The fragrance of the rose is strong, captivating, hinting of cloves. The plant grows rigorously, its upright branches spreading like

welcoming arms: *Gruss!* I call it my February rose, for it usually blooms through my California winter into that month.

The rose was introduced in 1927 by the German nurseryman Johannes Felberg-Leclerc (1872-1939). Like the renowned breeder Pernet-Ducher, he



added his wife’s surname to his own. He had worked as an apprentice under the famous but not altogether scrupulous Peter Lambert, then took over his father’s nursery in Trier about 1902-03. His Bourbon rose ‘Hofgartner Kalb’ won the 1913 Gold Medal in Breslau. Over the years he bred at least eighteen new roses, four still on the market today, including of course ‘Gruss an Coburg’.

Architecturally and historically, the city of Coburg, situated on “the road of castles,” is welcoming and attractive. Martin Luther sought shelter there for six months; Berlioz, Liszt, Paganini, and Richard Strauss all stayed there, not to mention dukes and other nobility. It was the alternate residence (the other being Gotha) of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha in a 16th century castle on a hill above the town. Prince Albert (1819-1861), consort of Queen Victoria, was born near Coburg, younger son of the Duke by his first marriage

Adolphe Thiers (1797-1873), who was instrumental in

establishing Louis Philippe as the new king in 1830, in getting Louis Napoleon elected president in 1848, in suppressing the Commune, and in founding the Third Republic of France, once declared that if he had his way, he would have a member of the Coburg dynasty sitting on every throne in Europe. How could he have known that the Great War would unseat the last of Coburg royalty?

On the death in 1900 of Duke Alfred, Queen Victoria's second son, who had been the Duke of Edinburgh, Arthur of Connaught was to have succeeded him, but he refused the dukedom, and so Prince Charles Edward of Albany, son of Queen Victoria's youngest son Prince Leopold, at age thirteen inherited the German duchy. When World War I erupted, he left England reluctantly to fulfill his duty as duke. He was made a general but, perhaps out of sensitivity to his English roots, never given command. After the war he was deposed in 1918 when Saxe-Coburg and Gotha became separate republics. Coburg was soon annexed to



Bavaria. Before World War II, Duke Charles Edward had flown the Nazi flag over his residence. After the war he was placed under house arrest for his Nazi affiliations. In 1949 he was classified as a Nazi Follower, Category IV (not charged with Nazi crimes). He died of cancer in 1954.

‘Gruss an Teplitz’ recalls a small city in the Czech Republic that once belonged to Austria. Similar to Aachen, it was famous for its hot springs. While staying in Teplitz (also Teplice) in 1812, Beethoven began composing his 7th Symphony. Here in September 1813 the monarchs of Russia, Prussia, and Austria signed a treaty of alliance against Napoleon. In 1938 it was annexed by the Nazis. The synagogue in Teplitz, once the largest in Bohemia, was demolished, and the deportation of the Jews began.

It was near Teplitz in 1829 where the great rose breeder

Rudolf Geschwind was born and lived his first eighteen years. A citizen of the vast Austro-Hungarian Empire, he became a royal forester, moving often, as his duties required, to regions that today are a part of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, and the Ukraine. Yet in the space of fifty years, despite his career in forestry, he hybridized more than 140 roses, wrote a book on Tea roses, another on winter hardiness of roses, and numerous articles.

Geschwind introduced his first rose in 1865. The following year he had Ketten Brothers nursery of Luxembourg introduce thirteen of his varieties. By the turn of the century he was raising about 5000 rose seedlings annually. His goal was to achieve winter hardiness and floriferous bloom. Going against the grain of French and English hybridizers, who merely crossed Hybrid Perpetuals or Hybrid Teas with each other, he used species roses to attain his goal, among them *Rosa arkansana*, *R. beggeriana*, *R. californica*, *R. canina*, *R. roxburghii*, and *R. setigera*. And he succeeded. Today at least 31 of his roses are identified and available. A number of debatable identities remain in research.

Geschwind died in 1910. Countess Marie Henriette Chotek (for whom a Hybrid Multiflora rose was named) bought his collection and seedlings, bringing a few into commerce around 1930. But the Great Depression limited her ability to care for her rosarium, and by the end of World War II, it was entirely destroyed. Almost his legacy was lost, but a few aficionados rediscovered and have preserved much of it. Some roses were found in huge public gardens. It was also discovered that breeder Peter Lambert had attached his own name to some of Geschwind's roses. By the 1990s, through the research of several rosarians in Austria, Germany, France, and California, Geschwind's reputation made a comeback.

It is not clear if one rose is Geschwind's or not. I bought it as his 'Himmelsauge', but DNA research at the University of Montreal indicates that it is genetically identical to Russelliana.' So is mine 'Russelliana', or is it 'Himmelsauge'? Regardless, it's a climbing loveliness. I also grow 'Anna Scharsach', 'Erinnerung an Brod', 'Ziguenerknabe' ('Gypsy Boy'), and 'Gruss an Teplitz'.

'Gruss an Teplitz' has the distinction of being used at the end of a pilgrimage. Near the white town of Pushkar in the

Ragasthan desert of India grow large fields of 'Gruss an Teplitz'. Its flowers are dried and sent daily to Mecca.

'Gruss an Teplitz', from 1897? (see below), a scarlet and wine-red rose with some white markings on the inner petals, has long been popular. In fact, it was voted into the Old Rose Hall of Fame by the World Federation of Rose Societies. A light, spicy scent, cupped and recurrent blooms, a compact habit, and hardiness make it a valuable and dependable rose. Said to grow six feet tall, mine has never reached that stature; perhaps it prefers to put its energy into its outstanding flowers.

Peter Lambert, in giving the history of 'Gruss an Teplitz', states at the outset that he "sent out" the rose in 1897 but ends his little history with the statement "in 1898 I gave it to commerce." That discrepancy aside, he acknowledges that he bought the rose from Geschwind.

Geschwind had crossed the Bourbon 'Sir Joseph Paxton' with 'Felleberg' in 1865-66. He kept one of the seedlings because of its full flower, its free-flowering trait, and its ability to fruit well. This rose he grew in his garden until 1895. He then crossed his rose with the Tea 'Papa Gontier'. One of the seedlings of that cross was a semi-full rose of dark crimson, the only offspring he retained. He then hybridized that with 'Gloire des Rosomanes'. Of the seventeen resulting seedlings, he kept two, one a large, scented, cinnabar-colored rose blooming sometimes in clusters that he called 'Irlicht'; the other he named 'Gruss an Teplitz'. Given that this rose contains *R. chinensis* in its genes four times via a parent of 'Sir Joseph Paxton', 'Felleberg', 'Papa Gontier', and 'Gloire des Rosomanes', it would seem to earn the classification of Hybrid China. Most Hybrid Chinas do not rebloom, yet a few, like this one, do. At worst, its complex parentage suggests it could be called a Shrub—much as I dislike that category.

Aachen, Coburg, Teplitz—greetings to these towns suggest a fondness for them. No doubt Hinner, Felberg-Leclerc, and Geschwind enjoyed a measure of happiness while residing in their respective cities. Even today, wherever grown, these flowers extend their greetings to rose lovers of the world.

# THE PRUNING AND CARE OF ROSES

**Darrell g.h. Schramm**

Despite pale, afternoon sunlight from a sun hanging low in a cloudless December sky, the air is cold. I don my hat, jacket, and gloves, then step outside. Collecting my secateurs, long-handled pruners, and pruning saw, I next briefly sharpen my clippers (secateurs) and loppers (long-handled pruners). It's time to begin pruning most of my 225 roses.

“Most?” you might ask. “Why not all?” The answer is that *not all roses require pruning*. Most people grow only modern Hybrid Teas, Floribundas, and/or dwarf patio roses, and, yes, those invariably need to be pruned, so we'll begin with them.

But first a word or 88 words about why we prune. To prune is to shorten, to reduce. If you wish only a few large Hybrid Tea blooms, especially as an exhibitor at rose shows, then you must prune hard, prune close, that is to say five to ten inches from the ground. If the plant is an established Floribunda, prune an inch or two higher. Such severe pruning generally reduces the life of the roses, encouraging fat, woody crowns (the base of the plant) which can lead to rotting and suckering. But your roses, though fewer, will be larger.

On the other hand, if you grow roses to decorate or perfume the garden or to fill vases, that is, if you desire quantity, not size, prune the Hybrid Teas and Floribundas moderately or even lightly. By moderately I mean cut the stems back to half their length. Light pruning cuts back the canes by a third or so. Light pruning is done mostly with very vigorous plants such as ‘Peace’, ‘Distant Drums’, ‘Black Magic’ and their ilk, or climbers.

The pruning cut itself should be at a slight angle about one centimeter or a quarter of an inch from the bud-eye or node (though I doubt the angle matters). More than a half inch above this node invites dieback. Sharp clippers are essential; do not force them to cut through a thick cane; for that use your loppers.

Regardless of the pruning technique or the kind of rose, remove all dead, damaged, and diseased wood (the three D's). Of



course this also applies to roses that require no pruning. If the cut surface is brown, cut back farther to where the cut is white. Remove all stems thinner than a pencil as well as any branches that cross and rub against each other. Try to produce an open-centered bush for good air circulation as a way to prevent fungus. Break or cut off all suckers. Only healthy and ripe canes should remain.

Other classes of roses, however, have different pruning needs. In general, remove most of the old wood and weak wood, erring on the side of generosity. Growth and profusion of flowers depend primarily on root action, which in turn depends on the foliage to stimulate and sustain root chemistry. Accordingly, old/heritage/antique roses are rarely reduced to the extent of modern roses. And some should not be pruned at all.

A woman in one of the rose societies to which I belong asked me if I would like to have her rose ‘Daybreak’. Immediately I accepted, already owning three or four Hybrid Musks. These roses grow in pretty clusters, usually on climbing stems. My



‘Cornelia’ has grown into a fig tree, its small nosegays of pretty pink and yellow flowers the size of pea coat buttons adorning the tree attractively. I asked her why she did not want ‘Daybreak’. “It just doesn’t bloom,” she said. I asked her if she had pruned it. “Of course!” she replied as though the answer should be obvious.

“But it’s a Hybrid Musk,” I told her. “They resent pruning. It takes as much as three years, maybe four, for some to bloom well again if you prune it. Deadheading and removing the three D’s is all you need do.” To be fair, in 2003 Graham Murphy maintained Hybrid Musks should be hard pruned in winter. However, I attend to Pemberton, originator and breeder of many Hybrid Musks who suggested otherwise.

All roses are not equal. All classes of roses should not be

pruned in the same way. The old, historic roses such as Albas, Centifolias, Damasks, Gallicas, and Mosses should be pruned soon after their blooms are spent for the season. Most of these once-blooming roses can be cut down by one-fourth to one-third, except for Centifolia and Moss roses. Centifolias (the old cabbage roses) should be shortened to about six bud-eyes. Mosses should be shortened by half except for the new growth, shortened to three bud-eyes or so. But if it is a repeat-blooming Moss, prune when the plant is dormant and reduce it by half.

A word about Damasks: remove old growth from the bottom to encourage young shoots. It helps to know one's roses.

Bourbon roses, whether of the recurrent sort or once-blooming sort and once the plant is three years older or more, are to be shortened by a foot. Portlands, which do rebloom, can be reduced by a fourth. Most Hybrid Perpetuals are to be cut down by a fourth also, though if the plant is especially vigorous, remove two or three old canes in November. Some Hybrid Perpetuals are more temperamental: 'Baronne Prevost', 'Dr. Andry', 'Dupuy Jamain', 'Fisher Holmes', and 'Monsieur Boncenne' should all be pruned more lightly, and 'Duke of Edinburgh' should be pruned lightly or not at all. Know your roses. Observe, study, attend.

Hybrid Chinas should be pruned down to from six to twelve bud-eyes, but never shorten tall canes of six to twelve feet. Chinas, however, require some pruning when dormant but only lightly to shape the bush. This class of roses tends to build on itself. As for drought-tolerant Tea roses, the perfect roses for the Sacramento Valley, they require very little pruning, just enough to shape the bush and to remove the three D's.

DO NOT prune Rugosas, Spinosissimas, or Wichuranas, nor miniatures nor ground cover roses. But do remove any obvious dead wood. Also, do not spray these roses with anything stronger than water.

Roses in pots need a pruning much closer than those in the ground—except for Hybrid Perpetuals and Hybrid Bourbons. Prune these down to two eyes. Keep in mind that roses in pots require more water and nutrients than roses in the ground.

In the 1990s several organizations, including the Royal

National Rose Society of England, tested what came to be called the “Easy Care Method” of pruning roses. Simply cut all bushes to half their height, quickly, with either secateurs and loppers or a hedge trimmer. The angle of the cut is ignored as are weak and twiggy growth, which is left on the bush. It came as a surprise to the testers and gardeners alike that the bushes were no less healthy and the flowers sometimes larger than and as numerous as those pruned in the traditional method. Roses are forgiving.

Once the pruning has been completed, toss a tablespoon of Epsom Salts (magnesium sulfate) around the foot of the rose bush. It aids the plant in using nitrogen, sulfur, and phosphorus and encourages growth of new canes from the crown. Then spread a three-inch layer of organic mulch or sterilized steer manure around the base of the roses, to within a few inches of the crown (the base of the plant). This covering keeps the soil moist during the dry seasons, reduces weeds, discourages blackspot, and improves the structure of the soil.

In early spring fertilize the roses with a plant food high in nitrogen. Usually I use fish emulsion or feather meal, but sometimes I make a 32 gallon container of alfalfa tea and pour a gallon or two around the base of each plant. (Add a gallon or somewhat more of alfalfa pellets to 30 gallons of water; allow it to sit for three to five days, stirring it vigorously at least once a day. Some rosarians also add a cup or two of molasses. You’ll need a lid. The smell is not pleasant.) Roses in pots should be fertilized every four to six weeks, their access to food and water being limited. Do deadhead the spent flowers to encourage more bloom.

I mentioned at the beginning that I’ve begun pruning in early December. The traditional time for pruning has been January through early March, but with climate change, certain roses have been flowering much earlier than usual, bud-eyes emerging as early as late November and early December. Consequently, I’ve begun pruning earlier, so far to no detrimental effects. My one concern is that should a winter frost strike, it could kill any new growth on the pruned roses.

Finally, once the roses are pruned and mulched, a shallow hoeing or scratching of the soil periodically during summer and fall

will prevent hardening of the soil, especially if it is clay. The fertilizer in those seasons should be low in nitrogen and higher in phosphorus and potassium. If you have access to nettles, a nettle tea is probably the very best fertilizer. Bone meal scratched into the soil or pot around the rose plant provides an excellent source of phosphorus and calcium. Potassium sulfate aids in healthy root development and drought tolerance. Just be sure to irrigate your plants before applying any plant food.

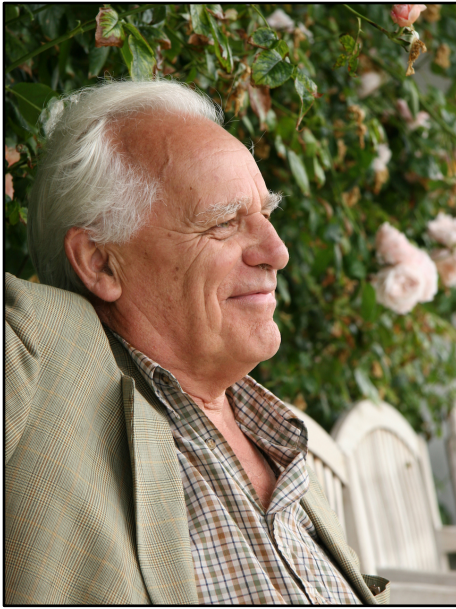
## THE CHANGING ROSE MARKET

It is gratifying to learn that the contemporary rose market is undergoing some changes. In the last few years American rose hybridizers, somewhat slow and behind their European counterparts, have begun to listen to what gardeners and rose recipients want: fragrance and low maintenance. Hybrid Teas require high maintenance, especially in plant food and water, and fragrance has often been “hit or miss.”

Now new fragrances and a diversity of fragrances in roses are entering the market. Rose breeder Tom Carruth has already created a number of fragrant new roses. A few hybridizers are cross-breeding with historic roses. Breeder Andrew Barocco is attempting to breed recurrently blooming Centifolias and Banksiae. Using *R. hulthemia*, he has created a heat tolerant, scented rose named ‘Fragrant Blush’ expected on the market this year. Jim Sproul, known for favoring *R. hulthemia*, has created a number of unusually colored, heat tolerant roses. Other rarely or never used species roses are waiting in the wings. We look forward to a less-conformist, rosy future. —The Editor

### ERRATUM #2

- In the last issue of *Rose Letter* (Nov. 2018) an error occurs on page 27. The sentence should read “According to this reference, nurseryman Ferdinand Jamain had seen the rose growing in Bonnet’s garden in 1873,” NOT 1973.



## DAVID AUSTIN

At the age of 92, on December 18, 2018, the renowned breeder of English Roses David Austin died. Born in February of 1926, in Albrighton, England, he began to work with roses as a hobby when a teenager. In the 1950s he began breeding.

His first commercial rose, a hybrid of the Gallica ‘Belle Isis’ (1845) and the Floribunda ‘Dainty Maid’ (1938), resulted in the lovely, pink, non-repeating ‘Constance Spry’. It became available in 1961. An “instant success” and still popular, it spurred him to continue crossing old roses with modern roses. His second rose ‘Chianti’ was the first crimson English Rose, one with a “powerful Old Rose fragrance” but likewise not a repeat bloomer.

Two years later in 1969 he established his business, all the while experimenting. He soon found, along with the modern rose, the old Portland rose class to be the most successful in raising recurrently blooming roses. He was further determined to combine the rich scent and beauty of color in Old Roses with the recurrent trait of modern roses. He succeeded.

A number of the roses he bred in the late 60s and early 70s were weak and inclined to disease. These he pulled from the market, confessing to being too hasty in his desire to share them. Austin then incorporated Rugosas and Noisettes into his breeding. These two choices stamped the seal of his success and popularity, ‘Mary Rose’ and ‘Graham Thomas’ being two noteworthy results.

Even as the early American rose breeder George Ellwanger divided the Hybrid Perpetual class into fourteen types, so David Austin divided English roses into six types: The Old Rose hybrids

(‘Brother Cadfael’, ‘Jude the Obscure’, ‘Gertrude Jekyll’, *et al.*), the Leander Group (‘Abraham Darby’, ‘Benjamin Britten’, ‘Golden Celebration’, *et al.*), the English Musk types (‘Graham Thomas’, ‘Francine Austin’, ‘Queen of Sweden’, *et al.*), the English Alba group (‘Cordelia’, ‘The Alexandra Rose’), the Climbers (‘James Galway’, ‘Snow Goose’), and the English Cut-Flower types (‘Oberon’, ‘Portia’)

Eventually David Austin Roses, Ltd., owned by himself and his son David J. C. Austin, was growing more than 1.2 million roses in Albrighton, Shropshire, one of the world’s largest rose-breeding enterprises. Yet Austin also found time to write four books and to co-author another, most of which have gone into new editions. In 2003 the Royal Horticultural Society bestowed on him the Victoria Medal of Honor for his efforts on behalf of horticulture.

Some of his recent roses are peach-colored ‘Roald Dahl’, soft lemon ‘Imogen’, apricot-colored ‘Bathsheba’, white ‘Desdemona’, and deep crimson ‘Heathcliff’. Austin’s roses are introduced to the public only after eight years on trial. With more than 230 roses to his credit, David Austin’s work attests not only to his determination and passionate devotion but also to his high standards and love of beauty. The rose world is grateful.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mar 11	“Identifying Eugene’s Roses” at Eugene Garden Club Bldg, 1645 High Street, 7:00 pm
April 13	Open Garden at Sacto Historic Cemetery. Huge sale of old roses, tours and more. Broadway & 10th, 10:00-2:00, Sacramento
April 15	“Rose Companion Plants”: Eugene, OR Heritage Roses Group, 1645 High St. 7:00 pm
May 18	<b>Rosalia</b> /Rose Festival, Wischemann Hall, 465 Morris St., Sebastopol. 11:00-3:00 p.m.
May 19	Celebration of Old Roses. El Cerrito? (details not yet available)

# ROSALIA

**What:** a gathering of rose lovers, a discovery about roses, their history and how to grow them, a sale of rare roses and companion plants, an adornment with roses

**Where:** Wischemann Hall, 465 Morris St., Sebastopol, CA 95472

**When:** Saturday, May 18th from 11 am until 3 pm.



**Who:** The Friends of Vintage Roses, a nonprofit established to preserve an historic collection of several thousand roses, based in Sebastopol, CA, in Sonoma County, and sharing curatorship of the roses with preservation-minded individuals and groups across the United States.

- Contact: Gregg Lowery, Curator at [curator@thefriendsofvintageroses.org](mailto:curator@thefriendsofvintageroses.org) or [info@thefriendsofvintageroses.org](mailto:info@thefriendsofvintageroses.org).
- Our website: [thefriendsofvintageroses.org](http://thefriendsofvintageroses.org)
- Post enquiries to The Friends of Vintage Roses, 3003 Pleasant Hill Rd, Sebastopol, CA 95472

**Why:** To aid in the work of the volunteers who maintain and help to preserve a great collection of old roses

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'Apothecary's Rose' in De Materia Medica by Dioscorides, first century

R. 170