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ROSE LETTER

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ROSE LETTER

The Heritage Roses Group

©

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Horvath's Roses	2
'Arnold'--Lost in Plain Sight	9
Hybrid Sempervirens: 'Princesse Louise' and 'Princesse Marie'	11
A Barbershop Quintet of Ramblers	14
The Rose of Woburn, of Thoresby & of Brod .	.20

THE RAMBLER AND CLIMBER ISSUE

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HORVATH'S ROSES

Darrell g.h. Schramm

In 1897, when the new American Rose Society held its first flower exhibition, Michael Henry Horvath (1868-1945) displayed fourteen new roses he had bred. He created a sensation.

Born in Szeged, Hungary, Horvath became a forest ranger in his teenage years, then a horticultural and agricultural designer in Budapest before leaving for New York around 1890. There he worked at the Pitcher & Manda Nursery in New Jersey, followed by becoming a superintendent at the Newport Nursery & Co. of Rhode Island where he had begun breeding roses using the species *Rosa wichurana*. The year 1896 found him as city and park planner in Cleveland. In 1901 he married, and eight years later he established his own nursery business in Mentor, Ohio.

Not interested in the ever-present, invariable Hybrid Tea, being an independent thinker, he used *R. wichurana*, the first breeder to do so, developing some of the first successful crosses with that rose. Among these he named 'Manda's Triumph', 'Pink Roamer', 'South Orange Perfection', and 'Gardenia' (which may have been co-bred with Mr. Manda in South Orange, New Jersey).

When the Elizabeth Park rose garden in West Hartford, Connecticut—America’s oldest municipal rose garden—was designed in 1904, the fences were lined with Horvath’s rambling hybrid *wichuranas*.

‘Manda’s Triumph’, a prolific Rambler reaching thirteen feet, comes with very double, white flowers in clusters, sweetly fragrant. The result of *R. wichurana* and supposedly ‘Ma Paquette’, it was introduced in 1893. That same year Horvath introduced ‘Pink Roamer’, a single rose in clusters, the foliage dense and quite fragrant. Like ‘Pink Roamer’, ‘South Orange Perfection’ was offspring of *R. wichurana* and ‘Climbing James Sprunt’ and of the same year. That extremely hardy rose, rosette in shape, is garbed in white, tipped with pink markings along the edges of the petals.

‘Jersey Beauty’, a pale yellow *wichurana* Rambler with prominent stamens in bright yellow, entered the market in or prior to 1898. Of a strong fragrance, these single roses on a vigorous plant from twelve to sixteen feet high



Manda's Triumph



Pink Roamer



Jersey Beauty



Gardenia

by ten feet wide, are shade tolerant. The plant prefers a warm, sheltered site. While working as city planner in Cleveland, Horvath had time in 1898 to introduce another rose: 'Gardenia'. This cross between *R. wichurana* and 'Perle des Jardins' parades itself in a cream color with a large pale yellow center, aging to

gardenia white. It is not without prickles. Like nearly all Horvath's roses, it yields a fine fragrance. The plant will send out canes as far as twenty feet, and where they touch the ground, they may root themselves. This rambler serves best on fences, walls, banks, or as a covering for a dead tree. It much resembles 'Alberic Barbier', though its blossom form is not as fine.

Between 1901 and 1925 Horvath did not introduce any roses. In 1925, using a *R. setigera* x *wichurana* seedling and crossing it with the Hybrid Tea 'Lady Alice Stanley', he produced 'Mrs. F. F. Prentiss', a shrub rose he



Mrs. F. F. Prentiss

named for a client and which he often exhibited but did not enter into commerce. He did, however, use it in breeding other hybrid roses, including 'Mabelle Stearns'.

Indeed, from the 1920s onward, Horvath used the species rose *R. setigera* more and more often. And while he did hybridize a few Hybrid Teas in the 1930s, his greatest successes were the roses with *R. setigera* as a parent. In 1934 he launched a thematic series of roses named in reference to piracy: 'Captain Kidd', 'Doubloons', 'Jean Lafitte', 'Long John Silver'.

Captain Kidd



‘Captain Kidd’ emerged from the cross of a *R. setigera* seedling with the Hybrid Tea ‘Hoosier Beauty’. A medium red rose, double, with some fragrance, the blooms grow on long stems of a plant reaching from ten to thirteen feet. The

rose is named for the Scotsman (c.1650-1701) who served as a privateer against the French and was subsequently rewarded by the New York City council. Thereafter, a private London company outfitted a ship and hired him to continue to seize French merchant and pirate ships. When reports reached the colonies and England that Captain Kidd himself had turned pirate, he was arrested on landing in Boston, then sent to England where he was tried for illegal piracy and the killing of one of his men. He was hanged in 1701.

‘Dobloons’ continues to be a somewhat popular *setigera* hybrid. Hardier than most yellow climbing roses, its golden yellow buds open into saffron-yellow flowers on dark green foliage. The double, cupped roses appear in small clusters on fourteen-inch stems. By the second year, the plant reaches fifteen feet. Dobloons are, of course, the Spanish gold coins notoriously sought, stolen, and demanded by pirates. In Robert Louis Stevenson’s novel *Treasure Island*, it is the refrain of a sea song which I remember as



Fifteen men on a dead man's chest—
Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum.
Drink and the devil done in all the rest—
Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum.

'Jean Lafitte', the result of a cross between a *setigera* seedling and the lovely Hybrid Tea 'Willowmere', presents very large, pale pink flowers, double and given to occasional recurrence. Hardy, vigorous, and fragrant, "no other rose," wrote historian Roy Shepherd, "with the possible



exception of 'Dr. W. Van Fleet', offers more with a minimum of care, and 'Jean Lafitte' is easier to keep within bounds than is 'Van Fleet'." The namesake was a pirate operating in the Gulf of Mexico. Born in France, Jean Lafitte (1780-1826) engaged in smuggling out of New Orleans and seized merchant vessels indiscriminately. Eluding capture, he helped General Jackson at the Battle of New Orleans in 1815 and subsequently received pardon for his nefarious deeds. He died on Isla Mujeres.

'Long John Silver', a milky crystal white, thickly double



rose with an outstanding scent of gardenias (some say of myrrh), as a plant climbs from sixteen to twenty feet, a perfect rose for decorating trees. Its

stout, arching canes can be trained easily. The rose is named for the primary antagonist in *Treasure Island*, the one-legged, peg-legged cook on the ship *Hispaniola*, a cunning, manipulative, and treacherous man yet courageous and somewhat likable to Jim the protagonist.

About 1938 Horvath launched ‘Mabelle Stearns’, a beautiful, large, pink rose. A recurving and imbricated flower, it yields an intense fragrance, and blooms—depending on location—continuously or off-and-on throughout the season. The plant is short, about two feet high, but this “Door Yard Rose” spreads three or four times its height, suggestive of an early ground cover.



Disease resistant, it can—like ‘Souvenir de la Malmaison’—ball in damp or gloomy weather, no doubt best in dry climates. This is a rose (the very one in the accompanying photo) thought lost to the great

Camp Wildfire of Butte County, California (a hot, dry place) in November 2018 when the owners’ house and garden were burned to the ground. However, a few months later, along with a few other roses, ‘Mabelle Stearns’ emerged triumphant and with renewed health from the ashes. Given the rising temperatures and increasing wildfires of the American West, this enduring rose would be one to grow. Like the ‘Peggy Martin’ rose which survived the New Orleans’ Hurricane Katrina and flooding of 2005, this rose is a staunch survivor.

In Cleveland’s Lake View Cemetery is a gravestone marked “Mabelle Wilson Stearns 1879-1969.” Given that Horvath worked several years for the city of Cleveland, the woman there buried may be she for whom the rose was named.

In 1940, Michael Horvath released his perhaps most



fragrant rose, the dark red, hybrid *setigera* ‘Thor’. Opinions do vary regarding its scent: some claim it is of spice, others of Damask. The huge four-inch blooms pride themselves on being extra double. Some flowers are borne in small

clusters but most sit solitary. A climbing Rambler, it grows to twelve feet. It does, however, need a season or two to establish itself, and then it becomes quite vigorous. Vigorous, cold hardy, disease resistant, shade tolerant, fragrant—what more would one ask of a red climbing rose? Aptly named by Horvath, the rose exhibits the qualities of Thor, Norse god of thunder and son of Odin, king of the gods: endurance, resistance, resilience, and strength.

Michael H. Horvath, one of America’s greatest Rambler breeders, died in 1945, much respected, admired, and praised. In 1970 the daughter of Horvath, Mrs. Samuel J. Forbes, with the help of nurseryman Joseph J. Kern, founded a unique rose garden on 2.7 acres in Wooster, Ohio. The collection included about 1500 rose plants of some 500 different varieties, which were the gift of Joseph Kern. Named Garden of Roses of Legend and Romance, it is open to the public. Unfortunately, in 2019 nearly all the roses had to be removed because of Rose Rosette Disease.

Acknowledging *Rosa multiflora* as one culprit that transfers the disease, curator Jason Veil added that ‘Knock Out’ roses, since they bloom all summer and grow quickly, “allowed the virus to make its way across the country” because of their rampant fertility. Veil’s intention is to re-establish the garden gradually, though it may not be all roses.



'ARNOLD'—LOST IN PLAIN SIGHT

Anita Clevenger

Heritage Rose Foundation members learned about Arnold Arboretum's Jackson Dawson and his Rugosa hybrid 'Arnold' in 2017, thanks to a lecture from Benjamin Whiteacre at our Fredericksburg, VA conference and an article that he wrote for our October 2017 newsletter. 'Arnold', a cross between a Rugosa and Hybrid Perpetual 'Gen. Jacqueminot' introduced in 1893, was one of Dawson's triumphs: beautiful, healthy and repeat-blooming. He proudly named it in honor of the Harvard University arboretum where he worked. Unfortunately, the fashion for Rugosas was waning. After brief popularity, 'Arnold' was virtually forgotten.

In 2018, it was thought that the rose was probably lost altogether in the United States. Helpmefind.com listed it in Brooklyn's Cranford Rose Garden, in Arnold Arboretum, and in the Friends of Vintage Rose's collection, but it was not with any of the three. In our newsletter, we asked our readers to help us find it.

Earlier this year, I visited Don Gers' and Michael Tallman's garden, Rose Woods, near Santa Rosa, CA. I spotted a garnet-red, semi-double Rugosa and was astonished to read its label. It was 'Arnold'! This rose didn't know it was lost, and neither did its growers. How did it come to be there? Don Gers had dug up a root division from rose collector Marion McKinsey's

Sebastopol, CA garden in 1996. She got it from Gregg Lowery, who in turn obtained it from the late Mike Lowe in New Hampshire. There the trail stops, but it's known that Mike took rose cuttings from Arnold Arboretum as well as from Cranford.

Is this Dawson's original 'Arnold'? There is a 1994 herbarium specimen at Harvard, and a few photos and a botanical illustration. So far, our 'Arnold' seems the same. Further study and analysis could confirm or deny this.

Don and Michael sent cuttings to HRF Trustee Dr. Malcolm Manners at Florida Southern College. He has propagated it, and found that it struck readily. He is growing additional plants to send to Arnold Arboretum, whose Keeper of the Living Collections, Dr. Michael Dosmann, is eager to add it to their collection and study it further. Malcolm and I will also work to get 'Arnold' to commercial nurseries and public gardens to ensure that its future is never again in jeopardy.

One rose preserved, many more to go. 🌹

Note: *In his article and lecture, Benjamin Whitacre theorized that the hybrid rugosa grown as 'America' in Europe is synonymous with 'Arnold'. We are excited to evaluate the new find against herbarium specimens and potential Arnold plants from Sangerhausen and to continue to examine that possibility. Limited review of hip production on the Santa Rosa 'Arnold' has cast some new doubts. Many thanks to Ben for pursuing this matter, and to Don Gers and Dr. Malcolm Manners for lending their expertise and observation skills. a.c.*

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**HYBRID SEMPERVIRENS:
'PRINCESSE LOUISE' AND 'PRINCESSE MARIE'**

Joan Harland

In the 1820's, soon after China roses were introduced to France, Antoine Jacques began to experiment, breeding European roses with the new roses or their early hybrids, including *R. chinensis*, the Bourbon rose (he was the first in Europe to receive its seeds), and the Noisettes. Unusual for the time, Jacques made dozens of vigorous hybrid ramblers using the species rose *R. sempervirens* (The Evergreen Rose) as the seed parent. Today, only a few of those hybrids are still available, including 'Adélaïde d'Orléans,' 'Félicité-Perpétué,' and the lesser-known 'Princesse Louise' and 'Princesse Marie'.

Jacques named the latter two roses after the French king's daughters. Jacques was the head gardener of the French king Louis-Philippe I, who owned over 175,000 acres of royal estates. Princess Louise was the eldest daughter, born during Louis-Philippe's exile in Sicily. According to Barbara Tchertoff, the Countess of Paris described Princess Louise as "blonde, graceful, rather delicate, and usually dressed in white." The shy Princess

Louise was married at 20 to the 42 year old King Leopold I of Belgium. Understandably, she was in tears during the wedding. But the marriage proved to be harmonious and today's Belgian royal family is descended from Louise.

In contrast to Louise, Princess Marie was lively and energetic, so obsessed by sculpture and drawing that she had her own studio in the Tuileries Palace. Many of her sculptures depicted Joan of Arc. Princess Marie married Prince Alexander of Württemberg, King Leopold's nephew, five years after her sister Louise's marriage. Tragically, both sisters died young from tuberculosis.



Princesse Marie

In August 1829 Jacques described their namesake roses in the *Journal d'agriculture pratique*. Both, he said, bear corymbs (flower clusters with flat or rounded heads). While those of 'Princesse Louise' comprise three to twenty full flowers of "very pale pink . . . passing to almost pure white," the corymbs of

'Princesse Marie' carry three to twelve full flowers with a "button of a beautiful Red; corolla of a dark pink first, then color of flesh." Jacques added, "This is the reddest of the double-flowered sempervirens, which is known to me today." 'Princesse Marie' (also known as 'Belvédère') can grow to an astonishing 32 feet. Both ramblers are summer-blooming and notable for their dark green leaves.

Jacques's choice of *R. sempervirens* as the seed parent was surprising: it's a wild species native to southern Europe, rarely grown in gardens. Although *R. sempervirens* is a climber, growing up to 20 feet, it blooms only once, its flower single (five petals), small, white, with only a mild fragrance. Geneticists state that only about seven to ten rose species contributed to our modern Hybrid Tea

roses - and *R. sempervirens* is not listed among them. Most of Jacques's contemporaries were using fragrant, double European roses, such as Musk roses, Damask roses, etc., to cross with the China roses, apparently hoping for a hardy, reblooming plant with a fully double, fragrant European flower.

What did Jacques find so attractive in *R. sempervirens*? Other than its climbing habit (which most Noisette roses also provide), *R. sempervirens* is outstanding for its dark glabrous foliage; disease-resistance to black spot, rust, mildew; and tolerance to drought and alkaline soils. It's also been reported as hardy to -19 degrees F., hardier than the Noisette roses.

About 2002, Dr. Maurice Jay of the Université Claude Bernard, Lyon, France, analyzed the genetics of both 'Princesse Louise' and 'Princesse Marie,' and found that (unsurprisingly) 'Princesse Louise' was a sempervirens with traces of *R. moschata* and 'Old Blush.' (The latter two roses are thought to be the parents of 'Blush Noisette.')

The analysis of 'Princesse Marie' was later scrapped, as the samples provided were from a commercial rose frequently confused with it.

Even today, although there are estimated to be at least two hundred rose species, a very limited number is used in modern rose hybridization, making hybrids vulnerable to disease. Members of the Rose Hybridizers Association discuss *R. sempervirens* as an attractive, underused candidate for developing disease- and-drought-resistant climbers. Antoine Jacques and his hybrid sempervirens roses were two hundred years ahead of their time.

Note: for further details about Jacques and his Hybrid Sempervirens ramblers, please see articles by Barbara Tchertoff in the *Historic Rose Journal*, online at <https://historicroses.org/antoine-jacques-part-i-by-barbara-tchertoff/>, from which much of this information was taken.



A BARBERSHOP QUINTET OF RAMBLERS

Darrell g.h. Schramm

It was the turn of a century, 19th into the 20th, when Casey would waltz with the strawberry blonde, when families and friends would picnic in the park with George or the pet dog, when Daisy would ride with her beau on a bicycle built for two, when barbershop quartets sang of romance down by the old mill stream, when roses rambled over fences, across paths, and from trees.

From the 1890s to the 1930s, rambling roses were at their height of popularity. Men like Dr. Walter van Fleet, Michael Walsh, and Rene Barbier bred them exuberantly. Why breed a mere Pernetiana or Polyantha when one could produce green mansions lavishly ornamented in cartouches of floral color (somewhat like this sentence)? And so they did. Short of writing a book on ramblers—and indeed a few have been written on the topic—this review will discuss a quintet of ramblers introduced in the first decade of the 20th century.

A particularly beautiful rose but one lesser known is ‘René André’ of 1901, bred by Barbier, crossing *Rosa wichurana* with the now lost Noisette ‘L’Ideal’. Buds of saffron yellow or amber form semi-double and double flowers of a yellow-copper-pink blend or

sometimes pale peachy pink. Because the outer petals fade in color first, each bloom, not being coy, exhibits contrasting shades in its several stages as it merges into its last days. The flowers share the elegant shape and color-blend of Tea roses. Occasionally they rebloom. One can detect a sweet scent—of apples, it seems. Like most Barbier roses, the plant bears very flexible canes rife with fishhook-like prickles and dark bronze-green leaves with a sheen. Though a low rambler, the canes reach out twelve to twenty feet. Because it is shade tolerant, it is good for training and trailing from trees.

While the young man René André may have been a friend or neighbor of Barbier, he was also a French swimmer on whom France pinned its hopes for the third modern Olympics held in London. Certainly he seemed to have shown promise in training, for Barbier named the rose in his honor seven years before the event. René André, however, did not qualify for the semi-finals, let alone the finals.



One of four late-flowering ramblers released for the good old summertime in 1904 by Michael Walsh was ‘Minnehaha’. Of a deep yet delicate pink, the semi-globular flowers pale with age. An identifying feature is the outer petals which are not quilled, though a few of the inner petals are. Glandular bristles show noticeably on the pedicels. The serrate leaflets are elliptic-acuminate in shape. The blossoms hang in loose, often somewhat open, trusses. Sometimes mistaken for ‘Dorothy Perkins’,

‘Minnehaha’s’ flowers grow somewhat larger than those of

‘Dorothy’. Furthermore, ‘Dorothy Perkins’ shows virtually no bristles on its pedicels, and while some of its petals are quilled, others are fluted. Alluding to similarities, breeder Jack Harkness declared that Walsh’s plant “could pass for a sport of ‘Dorothy Perkins’”. Rosarian George M. Taylor in 1933 preferred ‘Minnehaha’ for its “elusive charm” and its “refinement that is totally absent in ‘Dorothy Perkins’, the difference between a thoroughbred and a drayhorse.”

The name of the rose comes from Longfellow’s Ojibway saga “The Song of Hiawatha,” a poem of 1855. Minnehaha, whose name in Dakotah supposedly means Laughing Water or Waterfall, was Hiawatha’s lover who died of famine and fever in a severe Minnesota or Canadian winter. (Her death echoes the personal life of Longfellow whose first and second wives had died long before he did.)

In the Midwest where I grew up, a Minnehaha jump rope rhyme was popular among children; Baby Boomers may recall a version of it. I learned it as “Minne-Minnehaha/ went to see her papa./ Papa died/ Minne-Minne cried./ Minne had a baby/ named Dick Jim./ She put him in the bathtub/ to teach him how to swim./ He drank down the water,/ ate a bar of soap./ She took him to the doctor/ so he wouldn’t choke.” While jumping rope we counted Dick Jim’s burped soap bubbles. Many years later, I interpreted this rhyme as based partly on incestuous rape and patricide, a tragedy befitting Minnehaha’s own in the poem.

‘Alida Lovett’ was bred by Dr. van Fleet, who was determined to create roses that would not demand the pampering required of

Hybrid Teas. A vigorous climber of upright growth, ‘Alida Lovett’ originated as a cross between *R. wichurana* and ‘Souvenir du President



Alida Lovett

Carnot'. Virtually without prickles, this hardy plant does not mind semi-shade. Its shiny foliage shuns mildew. The coral or shell pink roses, yellow at the base, double with reflexed petals, flower in large clusters and yield a strong perfume. They last a long time on plant and in vase.

'Alida Lovett' was not released until 1917 and was done so by J. T. Lovett's Monmouth Nursery in Little Silver, New Jersey. It was said to be named for Lovett's wife. (Perhaps he had met her down by the old mill stream.) Dr. van Fleet also bred 'Bess Lovett' and 'Mary Lovett', both ramblers, said to be named for Alida's sisters. I, however, became suspicious. Between 1899 and 1917 three different 'Mrs. Lovett' roses were produced, one still being offered in 1919. So why name yet another for his wife? It would seem to me, then, that all three—Alida, Bess, and Mary—were not only sisters but also children of Mr. & Mrs. Lovett. And so it was confirmed in Lovett's nursery catalogue.

'Seagull' (1907), the result of *R. multiflora* crossed with the Hybrid Perpetual

'General Jacqueminot', is apparently the sole rose bred by a Mr. Pritchard of the U.K. A very fragrant once-blooming rambler, it sends out arching canes with single and semi-double pure white flowers in large



billowing clusters. Though able to decorate a small tree, it is not outrageously rampant. The sheer white blossoms and the smaller habit differentiate it from 'Rambling Rector'. If you do not have space for a tall tree-robing rambler—like 'Rambling Rector', 'Kiftsgate', 'Lykkefund', or 'Wedding Day'—this is the rambler for you.

Although 'Seagull' is pure white, not all gulls are. Gulls are primarily white as adults, greyish brown as immature birds. Some

also show grey and/or black in their feathered raiment.

A few gulls, like Bonaparte's Gull and Laughing Gull, wear a black hood. Most, however, are white-capped: Western Gull, Glaucous Winged Gull, Herring Gull, etc., but hybridization and backcrosses occur, much like today's Hybrid Tea roses, especially among the white-headed types,.

Gull-like fossils have been found dating back 24 to 37 million years. About 51 different gull species exist today. They are gregarious and colonial. Gulls adapt easily to environments altered by human beings, one of the few bird groups that do. Landfills often supplement their usual marine diet. Most larger gulls, like Bonaparte and Great Black-backed Gulls, will eat the eggs and even chicks of other species, especially of terns and plovers.

In the 1970s female pairing was observed among gulls in several areas of Southern California. This so-called "lesbian gulls" behavior resulted from estrogen effects of human DDT use in the environment. Many gulls, male and female, failed to develop courtship behavior, and male gulls abnormally developed ovarian tissue and ducts for the passage of eggs. Similar feminization effects



Rambling Rector

occurred among other sea birds, marine mammals, and fish. To repeat, not all gulls are pure.

'Rambling Rector' has already been mentioned. The breeder of this rose is unknown. It was found in 1910 (some say 1912) at the Daisy Hill Nursery in County Down, Ireland. But

it was not—is not—a wild Irish rose. A tall plant, even (to keep it Irish) Brobdingnagian, with very far-reaching and quite prickly canes, it blooms once a year in an unforgettable mass of creamy white flowers, double and semi-double with amber stamens.

Trusses of forty to fifty flowers surrender a strong, musky scent. It rambles religiously onto and over anything nearby. (After all, *religio* in Latin means a fastening or a binding to something, and *religio*, a bond between human beings and gods.) It looks best hanging from

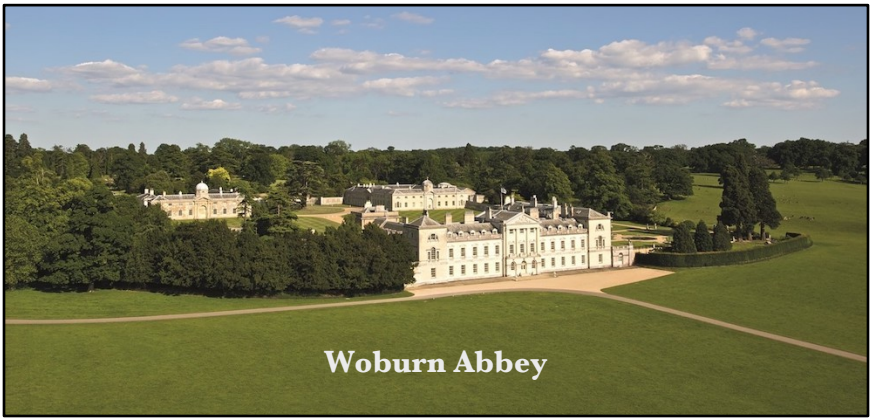
or embroidering trees. Dappled shade suits it fine. If you cannot have enough of it, or should you wish to overwhelm someone, friend or enemy, it is easy to propagate.

Discovered by Thomas Smith of Daisy Hill, it appears to be an older rose of the Multiflora family, renamed as a foundling. The name may have been given tongue-in-cheek for any long-winded clergyman enamored of his own rambling homilies. Though not a species rose, I can hear in my head a barbershop quartet singing of it as “My wild Irish rose, sweetest flower that grows.” Certainly, it rambles wildly enough to seem akin to several wild roses.

Conclusion: Even as rambling roses were the floral signs of the times, so barbershop harmonies were the songs of the times. I confess, though it’s rarely a barbershop melody, I often find myself singing as I work among my roses.

CREDITS

Pages 2 & 6 top	Malgorzata Kralka
Page 3 top	Manda’s catalog 1892
Pages 3 mid, 5 top & bottom, & 8	Pamela Temple
Pages 3 bottom & 12	Etienne Bouret
Pages 4 top, 14, & 17	Elaine Sedlack
Page 4 bottom	Johannes Reiter
Pages 6 bottom, & 25	Bill Grant
Page 7	Beth Hana
Page 9	Anita Clevenger
Pages 11 & 15	Wilrooij of Wikimedia
Page 16	Connie Hilker
Page 18	Karl King
Page 20	cover of Guidebook for Woburn Abbey
Pages 21, 26, 27, & 28	Darrell Schramm
Front Cover	Shen Quan, 18th century
Back Cover	<i>Journal des Roses</i> 1886



THE ROSE OF WOBURN, OF THORESBY, OF BROD

Darrell g.h. Schramm

Woburn Abbey

Excellent for growing over fences, low buildings, and into trees, the rose ‘Russelliana’ asks that it also be near a footpath or walkway to delight a stroller’s sense of smell with its Damask scent. A Hybrid Multiflora crossed probably with a Gallica and perhaps also another rose, it reveals the shape and coloration of Gallica flowers in general: very double, flat, dark crimson flushed with purple, aging to magenta and mauve. In foliage likewise that of a Gallica: leathery, dark, serrated obovate leaflets. In fact, leaflet for leaflet, it matches the foliage of ‘Violacea’. Reaching as much as twenty feet, it shows itself hardy and floriferous, able to endure drought, heat, cold, disease, and neglect. It will not object to some shade.

I had ordered the rose ‘Himmelsauge’, but the rose that arrived, though somewhat similar, did not correspond to the photos I had seen of it. I knew ‘Russelliana’ had at times been confused for it. Subsequent consultation with two or three rose experts confirmed my assessment. And then I discovered that a Professor Anne Bruneau at the University of Montreal had done comparative DNA analyses that demonstrated ‘Himmelsauge’ and ‘Russelliana’ are genetically identical. I’ve no regrets. It’s a beautiful rose, just what my cyclone wire fence called for.

There were, however, at one time two ‘Russellianas’, both

produced at Woburn, the grand estate of the Duke of Bedford. The first was a white and yellow climber with elliptical, glaucous leaves. In the *Hortus Woburnensis* of 1833, compiled by James Forbes, head gardener to John Russell, the Duke, after George Sinclair left, the rose is listed under two names, “Russelliana Sincl.” and “Lady G [Georgiana] Russell.” Sincl. clearly refers to George Sinclair, horticulturist and head gardener at Woburn Abbey from 1807 to 1825, employed by the Duke and who may have raised the rose. That rose, however, seems to have vanished quickly.

Incidentally, we should not be surprised that the Duke gave the same name to two of his roses. He also grew, among many, three types of orchids and named each one ‘Russelliana’. The rose breeder Louis Leveque named three types of his roses ‘Mme Louis Leveque’, only one of which—the Moss—has survived.

The crimson-purple ‘Russelliana’ is the one to have



survived. This rose has gone by several other names, at least two of which can be dismissed: ‘Russell’s Cottage Rose’, “Old Spanish Rose,” ‘Scarlet Grevillia’, and ‘Souvenir de la Bataille de Marengo’. The latter name is a mid-20th century invention by the notorious garden designer Nancy

Lindsay, an inveterate fabricator and embroiderer, so we can dismiss that lengthy alias. ‘Scarlet Grevillia’, too, may be cashiered, for no scarlet appears in the coloring of the rose. “Old Spanish Rose” might be ignored, for it is often found with double quotation marks, which suggest a found or mystery rose.

On the other hand, some rosarians have speculated that the rose came from Spain. Certainly that is a possibility, for the Duke and his second wife from 1813 to 1815 traveled through Italy,

Portugal, and Spain. We do not know the provenance of this ‘Russelliana’, so it is quite likely, given the Duke’s interest in horticulture, that he might have returned with the rose. However, it does seem an odd omission, then, that the crimson-purple ‘Russelliana’ is not listed in *Hortus Woburnensis*.

In fact, the earliest listing of the rose appears to be in *The Gardener’s Magazine and Register* of March 1827, which refers to “Russelliana; the Cottage rose of Messers. Cormack and Sinclair, pale red, large size.” This could be interpreted to mean that George Sinclair and John Cormack produced the rose. The rose, however, is not pale red; yet location, weather, and climate can affect color. The next listing of ‘Russelliana’ I have found is in Sir Joseph Paxton’s catalogue of 1836. He assigns the more acceptable color “light purple.” The date most often given for the introduction of this rose is 1840, but here we see it was definitely before 1836 and, if the “pale red” is meant to be the same one, the date would be pre-1827. Indeed, Sinclair, who experimented with many plants, may have developed the rose while still in the employ of Lord Bedford. Regardless, the rose was quite popular in the 1840s.

John Russell, the 6th Duke of Bedford (1766-1839), could trace his lineage back to Charlemagne and Alfred the Great and Henry II. It was Henry VIII who granted Woburn to the Bedford family. From his first wife of fifteen years Georgiana, who died in 1801, he sired three sons, the eldest to become the 7th Duke of Bedford, who, incidentally entertained the young royal couple Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1841, eighteen months into their marriage. The second son became a distinguished soldier and diplomat, the youngest, also John Russell, a Prime Minister. With his second wife, also Georgiana, wed in 1803, the 6th Duke of Bedford sired seven sons and three daughters. Said to be painfully shy, the Duke clearly was not so in the bed chamber.

For fourteen years he served as a Whig Member of Parliament. Disillusioned with the Napoleonic wars between France and England, he resigned from politics. Thereafter, he devoted himself to horticulture and botany, improving his several properties and amassing an enormous plant and fine art collection. In the steps of his father, the 5th Duke, who had laid out much of

London's Bloomsbury district with fine Georgian squares and streets bearing Russell family names like Bedford, Gordon, Russell, Tavistock, and Woburn, the 6th Duke in 1830 renovated the rather beggarly and shabby Covent Garden Market with a new central building and piazza. From 1822 onward, Lord John Russell began to suffer from attacks of apoplexy. In 1830, he rebuilt the Covent Garden flower market, where later Sinclair and Cormack rented a conservatory from him. In 1833 *Hortus Woburnensis, A Descriptive Catalogue of Six Thousand Ornamental Plants Cultivated at Woburn Abbey* was published. It listed 642 different roses growing at Woburn. Since 'Russelliana', the Cottage Rose, is not numbered among the the 642, perhaps it was growing on one of his other properties, in Devonshire, for instance, or London. In 1838 the Duke became Vice-President of the new Royal Agricultural Society.

In the fall of 1839, Lord John Russell, having an apoplectic seizure, died at age 73. The last new plant of his collection that flowered just prior to his demise was *Catasetum Russellianum*, a many-flowered orchid in pale green. An obituary of the time praised him: "In him science and the arts have lost a steady friend and a munificent patron; and botany and horticulture have seldom had a more devoted admirer." His works, his interests, and his posterity ensured his name.

His daughter-in-law Anna Russell, a friend of Queen Victoria and a Lady of the Bedchamber, is credited with making fashionable England's ritual of Afternoon Tea.

Bertrand Russell, the philosopher (1872-1970) but also political activist and Nobel prize winner, could claim him as a near ancestor.

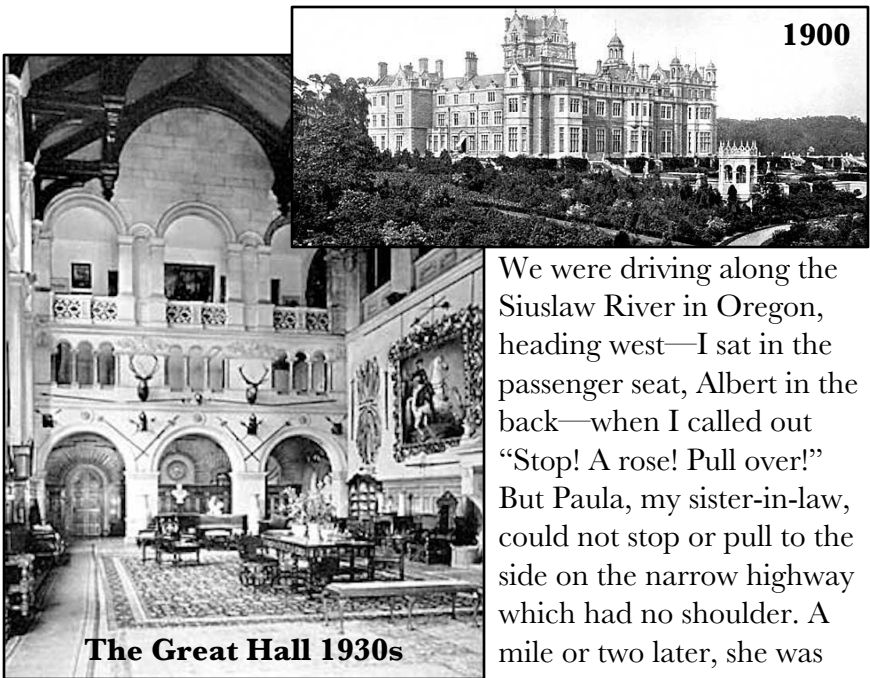
The 13th Duke, Herbrand Russell, President of the Royal Zoological Society from 1899-1936, saved from extinction several endangered animals from China and India by transporting some of them to New Zealand and others to the park at Woburn Abbey.

Mary du Caurroy Tribe, Duchess to the 13th Duke, was an avid naturalist, ornithologist, and one of the first Western women to practice Japanese martial arts. A supporter of women's suffrage, she financed four new local hospitals and served as a radiologist there. During World War I and for many years afterward, she

worked as a nurse. In her 60s she learned how to fly a small plane, acquiring the epithet the Flying Duchess. After several record-breaking flights to Africa and India, she died in a solo plane accident, lost at sea. She was 71.

The Marquess Tavistock, grandson of the 13th Duke and Duchess, a writer and broadcaster, inherited the estate in the 1950s and its burden of enormous death taxes. Rather than surrender Woburn Abbey to the National Trust, he opened the doors of the abbey to the public for a fee, thus raising needed funds, one of the first great landowners to do so. Later he established Woburn Safari Park on the grounds where his grandfather had introduced rare animals and his much earlier ancestor, the 6th Duke, grew the rose ‘Russelliana’

Thoresby Hall



We were driving along the Siuslaw River in Oregon, heading west—I sat in the passenger seat, Albert in the back—when I called out “Stop! A rose! Pull over!” But Paula, my sister-in-law, could not stop or pull to the side on the narrow highway which had no shoulder. A mile or two later, she was able to turn around and, while she drove slowly, I directed her to the area where I’d spotted a theatrical curtain of white roses. Fortunately, a narrow dirt driveway, much overgrown, allowed us to park the car. Nearly tumbling from the vehicle, I gaped in astonishment. Hanging in a

festivity of festoons from an oak tree, long, slender strands of white roses that had climbed to the top had cascaded down again. From the base of the oak and three or four yards beyond, the ground was covered with trailing and upright canes of the flowers. I could hardly determine the original site of the plant bed.

“Is it a wild rose?” Paula asked. “It certainly is growing wildly.”

Stooping to the flowers, I answered, “No. Look. Some of them are semi-double and some even double. Wild species have only five petals. Someone must have lived here at one time and planted it.”

“It definitely doesn’t mind some shade,” Albert observed.

Glancing around, we located among the overgrowth the foundation of a former building, probably a small house. What may have been a front yard was now tall grasses and weeds and a scintillation of white roses. From the driveway we could see a trestle spanning the river. Perhaps a station master had lived here. ‘That’s the Cushman Railroad Crossing,’ Paula informed us.



Because we had no tools, we decided to return for cuttings or even a shoot or two. And we did. We dug up two shoots, cut a huge bouquet from which we could take cuttings, and took several photos. Later, I sent the photos to a botanist who specialized in old roses for possible identification. “‘Thoresbyana’,” he replied. “Sometimes called ‘Bennet’s Seedling’.”

It was the first time I’d heard of the rose. A slow grower, six years later it was thriving elatedly in my garden, thrusting its long, slender canes vertically, horizontally, obliquely to the north, the



south, the west. To a gardener's advantage, the slim wands are flexible and easy to train. The small panicles of pure white flowers are scented, flat but decorative. The plant will reach thirteen to twenty feet. 'Thoresbyana', I learned, should not be pruned.

Apparently this Ayrshire rose (*R. arvensis hybrida*) was discovered growing among briars by a Mr. Bennett, gardener to the 2nd Earl Manvers on the Thoresby Hall estate in England. The grand house (today a luxury hotel) sits on 2000 acres in the heart of Robin Hood's Sherwood Forest in Nottinghamshire. The pleasure grounds are separated from the forest by a ha-ha (an earthen moat or sunken fence). Though the property dates to the 1580s, the first residence was remodeled in 1685-87; it burned to the ground in 1745. Once rebuilt, the well-know landscape gardener (as he called himself) Humphry Repton was hired to alter the grounds, which featured a rose garden. In the 1860s when the 3rd Earl succeeded to the title, the gardens were redesigned and the house rebuilt, supposedly with about 100 bedrooms.

According to 1st Baron Hatherton, Edward John Littleton, an enormously wealthy politician and friend who was a guest of the 2nd Earl Manvers at Thoresby Hall, the place was "a large cold House, with quantities of rooms badly aired and furnished." The Earl spent only modest sums on the manor.

The 2nd Earl Manvers was Charles Herbert Pierrepont (1778-1860). He had been a naval officer under Lord Nelson but retired in 1803. In 1804 he wed Mary Laetitia Eyre (no relation to Jane!) and sired two sons and two daughters. His elder son married the daughter of Baron Edward Littleton. Sadly, he died in 1850, so the Earl's second son inherited the title. From 1806-1816, as

Viscount Newark, he served in Parliament. After 1816, Lord Charles Pierrepont focused mostly on managing his estates. As a landlord, he had a good reputation. Twice in his 80th year, he was honored by various tenants showing their esteem in a ceremony of testimonials. He was a beneficent man, not least instrumental in establishing St. Mary's Hospital in Paddington.

Both 'Russelliana' and 'Thoresbyana' can be viewed at the 15th century moated Helmingham Hall in Suffolk, its gardens, designed by owner Lady Tollemache, open to the public. Both roses grow within the walled garden, 'Russelliana' in the late summer border, but kept as a shrub, and 'Thoresbyana' climbing along a wall.

One last word on 'Thoresbyana': According to the *Journal des Roses* in 1910, it is not the same rose as 'Bennett's Seedling', although "both are indeed from the same breeder." It asserted that 'Thoresbyana' was introduced in 1840, 'Bennett's Seedling' at a later date. I have found nothing, however, to confirm that assertion. In fact, Thomas Rivers in his 1837 catalogue lists 'Bennett's Seedling', "a very pretty double and fragrant Rose." So while Rivers' information shows the date in *Journal des Roses* to be incorrect, Rivers does confirm that 'Bennett's Seedling' was discovered "growing among some briars by a gardener of the name of Bennett, in Nottinghamshire." But is the name of the rose synonymous with 'Thoresbyana'?

BROD

A dense Rambler with arching and hanging canes, 'Erinnerung an Brod' (meaning, in remembrance or souvenir of Brod) expends such vigor that in my garden it seemed to have grown seven feet overnight. The large, thickly full and scented flowers show an often quartered face in a variable, somber coloring: dark crimson-





purple or purple overall or red surrounded by a ring of crimson-purple petals and a mixture of both in the center or even violet-blue but nearly always with a very nubby pointel in pale yellow. Floriferous and somewhat prickly, it can endure frost, heat, and shade. Not fastidious about soil, it won a prize at the Universal Exposition of 1889 in Paris. Called ‘Souvenir de Brod’ by the French, it was introduced in 1886 by Rudolf Geschwind.

Incidentally,

Geschwind was also the

breeder of the climbing rose mentioned earlier, ‘Himmelsauge’, which he sold to the German nurseryman-breeder Johann C. Schmidt. But its identity today remains uncertain.

Rudolf Geschwind, who lived in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and was raised in German, spent his youth in Teplitz (he named one of his most renowned roses ‘Gruss an Teplitz’), studied first in Prague then at the Forest Academy in Schemnitz, Slovakia. He began to hybridize trees, but his results were not popular. As a forest warden, he lived and worked in the town of Brod from 1859 to 1867. Here he turned to hybridizing roses.

Brod, about 120 miles southeast of Zagreb, is a community on both sides of the river Sava. In 1739, it had been divided into two administrations, the right or south bank of the river under Austrian control, the left bank under Turkish control. To distinguish the two, the left side of the town was called Slavonski Brod. The old meaning of Brod is ford or water crossing. Today these twin towns, connected by a bridge, are mutually cooperative, the south bank in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the north in Croatia. When Geschwind lived there, the population was under 900. After he left,

by 1878 both towns experienced rapid urban development and a significant increase in population.

Geschwind was next transferred to Bohemia. In 1872 he returned to Hungary where he wrote and published a book in German on hybridizing roses. But he continued working in forestry, living all the while in Karpfen/Krupina, then retired in 1905. He did not cease experimenting with and breeding new roses, introducing one even in the final year of his life.

Despite breeding more than 140 rose varieties over fifty years, often using wild species, many which he himself grew, such as *R. arkansana*, *R. californica*, *R. canina*, *R. roxburghii*, *R. rugosa*, *R. setigera*, and others, Geschwind did not profit from his endeavors and frequently struggled as a wage earner. (He had two sons.) Though nurserymen Peter Lambert and J.C. Schmidt in Germany sold and bought a few of his roses, Geschwind worked in the hinterland, far from the maddening crowd of rosomanes selling their roses in Western Europe. Only in the 1990s, eighty years after his last rose, did Rudolf Geschwind become better known. He died in 1910.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The **Heritage Rose Foundation** has awarded a grant to the Soos Creek Botanical Garden in Auburn, Washington. Soos Creek Botanical sits on 22 acres containing twelve differently themed gardens. Hundreds of old and modern roses grow in mixed perennial beds. The garden was created by Maurice Skagen and his partner Jim Daly.

On November 6, 10:00 to 1:00 Gregg Lowery will give a **free workshop** on identifying, propagating, growing and pruning roses at 3003 Pleasant Hill Rd, Sebastopol. Limited to 12 persons. To reserve your space, contact curator@thefriendsofvintageroses.org

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JOURNAL DES ROSES (Guiseux près Brie-Comte-Robert (S. et M. France) Janvier 1880



Rosa Sempervirens, var. Princesse Marie (Jaques)

Desm. et De Tollenere. Bruxelles.

Princesse Marie