



ROSE LETTER

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Rose Letter

The Heritage Roses Group

©

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IT WASN'T ALL ROSES

Darrell g.h. Schramm

The Empress of Roses was, of course, Napoleon Bonaparte's wife, the Empress Josephine. Though she collected roses for her extensive gardens at her estate of Malmaison, she did so only for five years, from 1804 to about the end of 1809 when she was divorced by her loving husband for being unable to bear him a child.

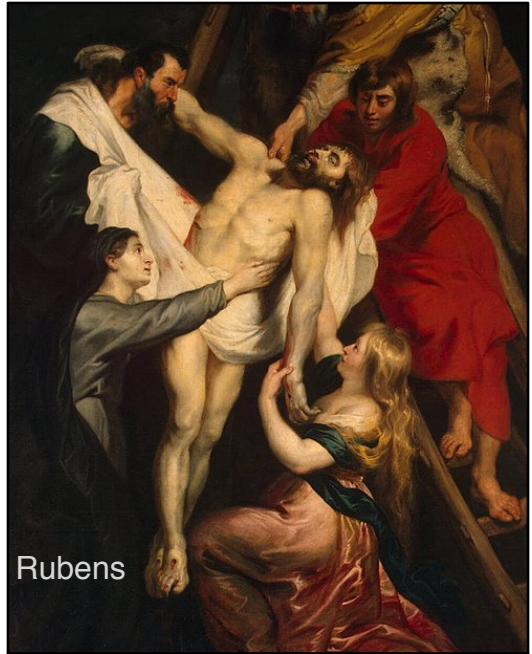
But she was renowned for other collections as well: wild animals, exotic plants, even fine art. We cannot say that all her collection was of her own taste or inclination, for Napoleon had confiscated much of it as spoils from his conquests. For example, when he conquered an area of Germany then known as Hesse-Kassel, he absconded with many paintings from the Kassel Gallery at the castle of Wilhelmshöhe. However, he did not send them to the Louvre in Paris but to Malmaison.

Among those paintings were some done by Rembrandt, Rubens, Andrea del Sarto, and Titian, certainly some of the most valuable. Both Rubens' (1617-18) and Rembrandt's (1634) paintings entitled *Descent from the Cross* found themselves in the collection. At least three paintings were by the Dutchman Paulus Potter, who painted in mid-seventeenth century, and at least four by Claude Gellee, a French landscape painter also known as Claude Lorrain, who painted in the last quarter of the 17th century. His *Landscape with Jacob, Rachel, and Leah at the Well* (1888) hung in the halls of Malmaison. A full-sized portrait of Josephine herself rendered in 1812 by the Swiss painter Fermin Massot may be one of the most noteworthy of those portraying the empress. To my eye, she appears rather older here than in other portraits of her.

After Napoleon's final defeat, Josephine having died suddenly the year before, Tsar Alexander, who had remained a friend of Josephine (though not, of course, of Napoleon), quickly arranged with her adult children Hortense and Eugene to purchase 38 of the paintings. Most of those had been acquired from Wilhelmshöhe nine years earlier, so a hue and a cry of protest was raised by the Germans, but the Tsar shrugged them off, sending the masterpieces to St. Petersburg without a backward glance. Today those paintings reside at the famous Hermitage Museum in Russia.

In addition to the paintings once belonging to Empress Josephine, the Hermitage today also owns a number of paintings once owned by Josephine's daughter Hortense, who later became the Duchess of Saint-Leu. From where or whom she procured them we do not know. Perhaps Napoleon bestowed them upon her, or they might have been in Josephine's collection but Hortense may have refused to sell them.

Hortense owned at least two Rembrandts, a Fragonard, a Ribera, and a few by such Dutch painters as van den Eeckhout and van den Tempel. *Children in a Park* by van den Eeckhout (1671) shows a child with roses in a basket and in a chaplet



Rubens



Gellee



Massot

van den Eeckhout



on her head. *Portrait of a Woman* by Abraham van den Tempel (1670) shows a woman with two picked roses lying on a table.

Perhaps most revealing of Josephine's taste in art is suggested in a painting she commissioned to be done by Pierre-Paul Prud'hon (1758-1823). Its lengthy title is *Love Seduces Innocence, Pleasure Entraps, and Remorse Follows*. It was scheduled to be exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1810, but Josephine's divorce near the end of 1809 forestalled that.

van den Tempel



Prud'hon kept the painting—not entirely finished—in his studio until his death. Today that painting hangs in the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa.

Also by Prud'hon is the probably most familiar painting of Empress Josephine, seated outside with trees in the background. It hangs, of course, in the Louvre.

Thanks to the Napoleonic Historical Society for much information.





A GERMAN REDOUTÉ?

Bill Grant

Wherever or whenever rose paintings are discussed, the name of the Belgian-French artist Pierre-Joseph Redouté (1759-1840) has pride of place. In addition to the scores of books that are printed every year, his drawings are found everywhere: on dishes, linen, wallpaper, and postcards. The reason is the beautiful and accurate depiction of the world's favourite flower. Alfred Parsons and Mary Lawrence produced some fine drawings but have never been given the same renown.

And now we must add another name: Salomon Pinhas, born the same year as Redouté, in Bayreuth, Germany. The discovery of his work, bound in a volume that lay in a royal library for over 160 years, opened a new chapter in the history of German horticulture.

In 1978 Dr. Wernt Grimm and his wife Hedi, residents of Kassel, who were helping to restore the rose collection at Wilhelmshöhe Park, were doing research on the history of the garden when they uncovered a bound volume of Pinhas' paintings. They recognized immediately the importance of the drawings, far more for their botanical worth than as artistic reproductions. In the years that followed, they tried to find a publisher for a

book. Dr. Grimm died in 2000 before they did, and his wife carried on, helping with the final publication. I had urged him to have it printed in German as well as English, and that has been done.

There are many parallels between Redouté (working for Empress Josephine, and the creation of Malmaison) and Pinhas (employed by the Landgrave Wilhelm IX of Kassel, and the establishment of the Wilhelmshöhe rose garden in 1767). Although Malmaison is usually given as the first significant rose garden in Europe, the Wilhelmshöhe collection is much earlier. The connection becomes more evident when one learns that Napoleon's brother Jerome ruled in Kassel from 1806 to 1813 and lived at the castle. But there is no evidence that Redouté and Pinhas knew one another or either one's work.

Both the father and grandfather of Pinhas were professional painters, but he did not train to be a botanical artist. His watercolors do not record the detail of leaf, stem, and bloom that Redouté does. Nearly all his work is in the miniaturist mode. His regular occupation was drawing portraits of soldiers and the gentry as well as making copies of works in the castle collection.

Pinhas worked as court miniaturist from 1806 until about 1815. He died in 1837, two years short of the eighty years that Redouté lived. The roses were initially planted in 1770 by Daniel August Schwarzkopf, royal gardener, who had trained in England under Phillip Miller, the director of the Chelsea Physic Garden. The English style of landscaping was used from the beginning, and it is still evident there today. The plants came from Europe as well as the United States.

The 133 paintings are reproduced with the plate numbers assigned by Pinhas, and the roses are as large as 8 x 3 inches and others as small as 4 x 2 inches. The editors do not indicate the actual size of the originals. Like so many other books of this type, there is no index. The drawings were not easy to identify as Schwarzkopf gave titles related to their origin in the state of Hesse in addition to the recognized Latin and French names. About a tenth of the pictures could not be identified by the Grimms. Nearly half the Pinhas roses can still be purchased at nurseries around the world.

Forty-nine are shown with buds, and a few show that a bud or flower has been removed as is the case with some Redouté pictures. Roses are partly open, fully open with stamens showing, and 'Old Blush' is seen from

Pinhas



ROSA PRAENESTINA VARIEGATA

the back of the bloom. Pinhas makes little effort to give details of leaves, but occasionally there is leaf damage or even what looks like blackspot.

It was interesting to me to compare the same roses that both artists painted. Pinhas' drawing of *Rosa praenestina variegata*, which today is known as *R. x damascena* 'Versicolor' or 'York and Lancaster', shows a very pale, fully open, small blossom slightly tinged with small pink blotches. No buds, no prickles or bristles, and three leaves.

The petals are vaguely drawn.

Redouté



R. damascena variegata

In the Redouté version (he calls it *R. damascena variegata*), two large, fully open blossoms are surrounded by six buds; the thin stem is covered with small prickles, and the leaves are slate green and ribbed. The contrast between the white and pink-tinged petals is dramatic.

In another case, this time Pinhas' *R. lutea multiplex* (*R. hemisphaerica*, the Sulphur Rose), the partially opened bud compares closely with the Redouté depiction (*R. sulfurea*). The latter shows one bud, a partially opened bloom much as Pinhas drew it, and one large blossom half-open.

The

R. hemisphaerica



Pinhas' foliage is vague whereas Redouté draws many gray-green leaves. When I first saw this rose growing at Wilhelmshöhe, it had responded to the wet weather by not opening. On my last visit, the blossoms were nearly all open--and the bush was thriving in the warm weather. Today there are more than 600 shrub roses growing there, and

some are the ones depicted in the drawings.

It is unfortunate that photographs of the present rose garden are not included in the book. I was deeply impressed when I saw a waterfall crashing into a stream that feeds the large lake. An island of roses is entered by a small bridge, and there are swans to complete the almost Wagnerian scene. And roses, species, historical and modern ones, are planted around the lake. The Grimms are responsible for many of these that they planted themselves and maintained. They would cycle from their home at the bottom of the small mountain to work in all seasons. Many of those who have known and loved them hope that the garden will be recognized as a national treasure. [In June 2013, it was recognized as a World Heritage site. --Editor]

The introductions, one by the late Dr. Grimm, give the historical and botanical backgrounds of Wilhelmshöhe with archival drawings, maps, and paintings. Following the watercolors and the original handwritten list of roses, there is the important commentary on each painting. These comments on the plates have been well done with cross references not only to Redouté but to other artists and painters. The volume closes with an excellent bibliography and photo credits. The English translation was done by Margaret Marks.

This is an important book not only for the historical recording of what grew in one of Europe's earliest rose gardens, but it is also a beautiful testament to the work of Jewish miniaturist Salomon Pinhas and the discovery of his work by two accomplished rosarians.

William Grant is an author and photographer living in Aptos, California. He has written for many gardening and horticultural publications in the US, UK, and other countries. He has been a close friend of the Grimms and has visited Kassel several times.

For more information on Wilhelmshöhe and the early roses of Germany, see "Before and After Josphine" in our May 2015 issue of *Rose Letter*.

**We welcome letters and feedback or
discussion on our articles .**

We the Fairies, Blithe and Antic: The Lawranceanas

Stephen Hoy

We the Fairies, blithe and antic
of dimensions not gigantic

Thomas Randolph

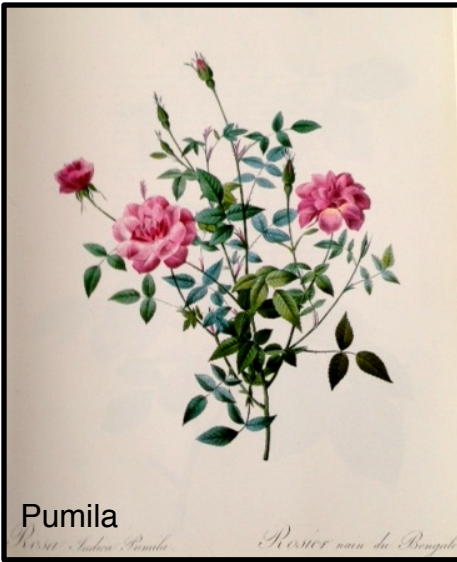
Part I

The Lawranceanas—essentially miniature Hybrid Chinas—are early forerunners of today’s modern Miniature roses. The origin of these Lilliputians of the rose world is a mystery. What is known, however, is that rose culture in China is referred to as early as the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. and was more advanced than anywhere else in the world until the 19th century. The China roses we know today are considered, to quote Howard Higson, a “complex of natural and cultivated hybrids that have evolved over more than a thousand years in Chinese gardens.” Repeated selection for desirable traits over an extended time resulted in a *R. chinensis* group characterized by repeat flowering plants often of compact, twiggy habit, with slender flower buds, blooms that deepen in color with age, few prickles, shiny pointed foliage, with presence of true reds. These “derivative” hybrids found their way primarily from China to Europe via East Indian trading routes whose primary ports-of-call were Calcutta and the islands of Mauritius and Réunion, the latter formerly known as the Île Bourbon, off the eastern coast of Madagascar. A variety of Latinized species names appear in rose literature in reference to the China roses including *indica*, *semperflorens*, *sinica*, *bengalensis*, and *nankinensis*. The preferred classification is *Rosa chinensis*.

Various reports indicate that a pale pink miniature rose having *R. chinensis* characteristics existed in gardens in England and France in the first decade of the 19th century. My own interpretation of those accounts is arranged in the following sequence.

London nurseryman James Colville, sometimes spelled Colvill,





secured a plant of ‘Parson’s Pink China’ now officially known as ‘Old Blush’ from Kew Gardens in or around 1793. He in turn began selling it to nurserymen in France and America. Dr. C. C. Hurst, quoted by Graham Thomas, stated that among others Pierre Joseph Redouté and Claude Antoine Thory began raising seedlings from ‘Parson’ Pink’ as early as 1798. In 1805 Colville successfully raised a dwarf pink seedling he named ‘Pumila’ (dwarf) from ‘Parson’s Pink China’ which he shared with French rosarian Louis Noisette. In France the

tiny double-flowered pink rose was renamed ‘Bengale Pompon’ and was easily rooted from cuttings.

An 1815 edition of *Curtis’ Botanical Magazine*, edited by Englishman John Sims, presented the earliest illustration and description of a small rose classified as *Rosa semperflorens minima*, also known as “Miss Lawrance’s Rose.” The illustration showed a single-flowered rose, but Sims’ comments mention that “several varieties . . . differing in size, color, and scent, have, within these few years, found their way into different collections about town,” and that he believed that they had been raised from seed. Its common name was an English tribute to the loved painter and teacher of horticultural art Mary Lawrance whose work *A Collection of Roses From Nature* had just begun appearing in print in 1796 (An engraved edition of the book sold at Bonham’s Auction in 2011 for \$28,000! The book does not have an illustration of her namesake rose since its publication predated the



rose's "appearance" in England). The attention drawn to the rose post-publication in the horticultural periodical prompted English botanist Robert Sweet to state that it had been imported to London from Mauritius in 1810, coinciding with the British overthrow of French governance of Mauritius that same year [Author's note: he did not claim to have introduced it himself from Mauritius as has been oft quoted.]. A nod seemingly confirming Sweet's version of its provenance appears in the conclusion of the brief horticultural entry stating that the plant from which the illustration was made had been given to him by a "Mr. Hudson from the war-office." Additionally, a rose fitting Sims' description, identified as *Rosa pusilla* ("minute/minature") or in French, *Rosier nain de l'Inde*, is listed in an 1816 catalog of exotic plants cultivated on Mauritius, hinting strongly that a miniature China rose, perhaps single-flowered, was familiar to gardeners on the island.

The third account of a pink miniature China's early appearance in continental Europe also has a ring of truth. In *History of the Rose*, Roy Shepherd states that Swiss botanist Augustin Pyramus de Candolle (1778-1841) secured a plant from Mauritius prior to its first appearance in England, possibly during French rule of the island. De Candolle arrived in Paris in 1796 where he established himself as a highly regarded botanist, co-authoring a number of horticultural works. He is reported to have planted a specimen of *Rosa indica humilis* ("dwarf") in a garden he established in the Champagne region of France. From there a plant of the diminutive pink China found its way to the botanical gardens in Bern, Switzerland (possibly brought by de Candolle upon his return to his Swiss homeland in 1816?). Its presence in Bern was documented by another Swiss botanist strongly influenced by de Candolle, Nicolas Seringe, in his botanical work *Mélanges Botaniques* (a work describing five groupings of roses and the various cereal grains grown in Switzerland, published in 1818): "All the characteristics of *R. indica* in miniature."

A fourth source appears in the writing of German historian and author Johann Christian van Stramberg. In a massive thirty-nine volume work entitled *Nützlicher und Rheinischer Antiquarius* (1854), detailing the history and geography surrounding the Rhine River, van Stramberg refers to a garden of roses located at the Stolzenfels Castle near Koblenz. He then delivers a meandering narrative describing the introduction of Noisette, China, and Tea roses into Europe, particularly France, concluding with an

index of varieties he recommended “out of his own experience.” In it he mentions ‘Rosa Lawrenceana,’ stating that it had arrived in France via Calcutta circa 1804. Van Stramberg describes it as single and rose-colored and goes on to say that in the decades since its arrival numerous miniature offspring had been raised, including Colville’s seedling ‘Pumila.’ Casting a shadow of doubt upon the accuracy of at least some measure of his account is an incorrect statement that it was described and pictured by Miss Lawrence.

Wherever the truth lies regarding their introduction to Europe, by the middle of the 19th century rose hybridizers had introduced three to four dozen miniature China seedlings generally referred to as Lawrenceanas.

[Author’s note: over time Miss Lawrence’s name has been misspelled so frequently that the incorrect spelling has become the norm.] Although some were given formal names, many were merely distinguished by color or as single or double-flowered.

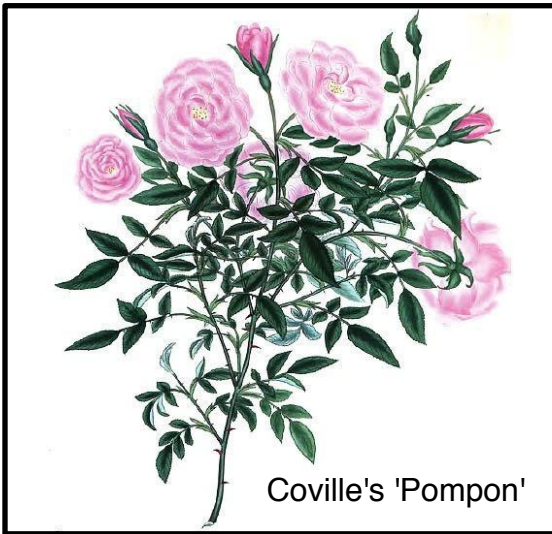
Research done by Dr. G. H. M. Lawrence, presented in the *1953 American Rose Annual* (“History and Nomenclature of the Fairy Roses”), and by rose historian Brent C. Dickerson (“A Check-List of Lawrenceanas”) gives us a fairly exhaustive lists of cultivars.

Meanwhile, American nurserymen were importing everything “new and improved” from the booming European rose trade. The Prince family was one of the preeminent New World horticultural dynasties, operating a commercial nursery in Flushing, New York, established in 1738. William Prince, son of the founder, remained well connected to numerous European horticulturists in England, France, Holland, and Italy. To promote his vast enterprise he published *A Short Treatise on Horticulture* in 1828, one of the earliest American books on the subject. In it he mentions that his collection of roses had recently grown to as many six hundred different cultivars. Among the roses of “China and India,” Prince includes the “Dwarf,” or “Pompon Rose,” admired for its very small flowers, almost certainly a reference to the Colville/Noisette ‘Bengale Pompon.’ Distinguished from it



is the “Lawrence Rose,” “the most diminutive [rose] known, both in leaf and flower.” When his son’s [Robert] *Manual of Roses* was posthumously published in 1846, thirteen varieties of Lawrenceanas were listed.

Another New York family, the Parsons, became similarly engaged in the horticulture business in Flushing and were quite active in importing a broad spectrum of plants from Europe. The founder’s son, Samuel Bowne Parsons, Sr. (1819-1906), published the first of two important rose books, *The Rose: Its History, Poetry, Culture and Classification*, in 1847. He refers to “R. Lawrenceana” or “Lawrence’s China Rose,” noting that “The beautiful little plants called fairy roses are nearly all



Coville's 'Pompon'

varieties of *R. Lawrenceana*; and they are all worthy of culture, from their extreme dwarfness.” Among a partial list of recommended China hybrids, he draws attention to two named Lawrenceana cultivars, ‘Caprice des Dames’ and ‘Retour du Printemps.’ Despite a note assuring readers that a complete list of varieties would be inserted at the end of the text, publication deadlines forced him to forego its inclusion.

Attention should also be focused on a third American nurseryman with a strong rose interest—Philadelphia (by way of Scotland) Robert Buist. Partnering with Thomas Hibbert, he opened a thriving florist business in 1830. After Hibbert’s death in 1837, Buist transformed the establishment into a retail seed store, nursery, and greenhouse enterprise. Although offering a wide variety of plants, he took special interest in roses, traveling frequently to Europe to bring back new cultivars. In 1844 Buist published the highly respected work *The Rose Manual*, intended to provide minute detail on the culture of roses in America and accurate descriptions of recommended varieties. The book contains a brief chapter dedicated to the Lawrenceanas mentioning but a few: ‘La Miniature’, ‘Gloire’, ‘Bijou’ and two American originated seedlings, ‘Pretty American’ (introduced in

1837 by N.Y. nurseryman Daniel Boll) and ‘Master Burke’ (introduced c. 1830 by Samuel Feast of Baltimore). An account first appearing in *Hovey’s Magazine of Horticulture* dated March 20, 1837, states that the latter variety, “after seven or eight years had not attained two inches in height” and that “half of a common hen’s egg-shell would have covered the whole bush without touching it.” The report has been generally considered a Paul Bunyan-esque tall tale. However, an earlier narrative appears to lend some credence to the story. Describing an exhibit of “plants of horticultural interest” at a Maryland Horticultural Society meeting in May of 1833, *The New England Farmer and Horticultural Journal*, Vol. XI, No. 11 reports,

The . . . Rose, likewise obtained from seed by Mr. Feast, is the most curious Rose perhaps ever produced. It is a dwarf and so completely does it vindicate its title to that appellation that it has now reached its third year, the bush is not quite two inches in height! It is a sturdy little affair, well furnished with branches, and clothed with leaves of surprising neatness. The blooms are quite as extraordinary; they are double, of a beautiful color [light rose] and very well formed, and of little more than half the diameter of a five cent piece!

So small a rose is, no doubt, a fairy blithe and antic.

Further south, the port city of Charleston, South Carolina was a rich horticultural center. John Champneys and Philippe Noisette are just two of the many nurserymen and rose enthusiasts who lived and worked there. Champneys had a long-standing business relationship with William Prince, Jr. and an extensive garden of roses. Although he died in 1820, most likely too early to have seen or raised any Lawranceanas, he was a close associate of Philippe Noisette. [Editor’s note: Philippe, younger brother of Louis Noisette of Lyon, France, had been sent to Haiti as a teenager to miss the “trouble” of the French Revolution. As a young twenty-one year old, he, his Haitian-born wife Célestine, and their children fled Haiti during the Haitian Slave-Revolt, moving to Charleston in 1794. There, Noisette was appointed Superintendent of the South Carolina Medical Society Botanical Gardens.] Along with Champneys, Philippe dabbled in raising new varieties of roses from open-pollinated seeds, contributing to the origin of the class of roses

known as the Noisettes. Philippe and his brother Louis in France exchanged seeds, cuttings, and plants; similarly, others likewise imported the same from Europe and other geographic regions.

As a result of the huge influx of horticulture during this time, there is reason to believe that some members of the Lawranceana class began to populate the gardens of Charleston. One documented link is found in the history of a family that relocated from Charleston to Florida in the 1850's. Phillip Benjamin Harvey "P.B.H." Dudley and family made several trips to the area before purchasing farm land in 1859 just west of modern-day Gainesville, Florida. Capt. Dudley (who served in a Florida regiment during



the Civil War) made numerous trips to Charleston to sell cotton and other crops raised on his Florida farm. They transported numerous roses from Charleston to their new homestead over the course of several decades. Among the many that would have been commercially available in Charleston--'Champneys' Pink Cluster,' the 'Green Rose,' 'Old Blush,' etc.--was a

miniature pink China hybrid whose given name is lost to commerce. Family members recall that Dudley purchased the diminutive rose around the time of the birth of his first granddaughter Dolly (Catherine "Dolly" Dudley, born 1878). In my garden 'Dolly Dudley' has dime-sized medium pink blooms of about 20-25 petals and, in a container, grows about 12-15" in height and width.

(to be continued with Part II in our next issue)

Stephen Hoy is the editor of the online publication [Singularly Beautiful Roses](#).



THE STORY OF HARRY TEVIS, ROSE LOVER

Darrell g.h. Schramm

When Henry “Harry” Lloyd Tevis died in 1931, his demise marked the end of the Grand Country House era in California. Indeed, his lavish estate has been claimed as “the last great show place” in the San Francisco Bay Area that entertained “in the ‘grand manner’.” And it grew hundreds upon hundreds of roses.

Harry Tevis was the oldest son of Lloyd Tevis, a forty-niner who was joined by James Ben Ali Haggin in the gold fields, only to form a law partnership in San Francisco. Later they teamed up with the father of William Randolph Hearst, establishing the firm of Haggin and Tevis as directors or managers of, among other enterprises, Anaconda copper mines in Montana and Homestake gold mines in South Dakota. Lloyd Tevis also owned Stockdale Ranch in Kern County with its thousands of acres of cattle and sheep. In addition, he helped form an oil company that would become Standard Oil. Thus Harry Tevis, through his father, came into his wealth.

In 1905 with his millions, Harry purchased a mountain retreat from James L. Flood (son of the Silver King James Clair Flood) in the Santa Cruz Mountains above Los Gatos. Less than a year later, the infamous San Francisco earthquake of 1906 ruined the large house, so Tevis built a splendid new mansion some distance from the original. By 1909 it was

completed. The huge acreage also contained a clubhouse where he entertained, an open-air dining room, a conservatory, greenhouses, horse stables, separate servants' quarters, a large cottage for the gardeners, and eventually a gymnasium and a movie theatre (Buster Keaton movies seem to have been favorites).

In addition to a swimming pool and three lakes, the property featured fruit orchards and 75 acres of lawns and formal gardens, including a large rose garden. At one time as many as 100 gardeners, laborers, and other servants cared for the estate, which Tevis named Almadale.

Harry Tevis was famous for his hospitality and magnanimity, the personification of *noblesse oblige*. Unless he had gone to his hotel residence in San Francisco for a weekend (usually to attend the theater or the opera, or to attend business) or on a vacation, he entertained guests nearly every weekend, sometimes longer. Even when he was not on his premises, some guests arrived to stay a day or night. He felt rewarded when guests admired and enjoyed the beauty and peace of his bountiful and handsome holdings. Visitors swam, played badminton, rode horses, strolled the gardens, toured the vast property by car, read in the library, and were wined and dined.

Among his many guests, some of the most famous were Senator Phelan, Gertrude Atherton, Mrs. W.H. Crocker and Miss Jennie Crocker (who would later buy Harry's brother's estate in Burlingame), Rudolph and Mrs. Spreckles and Mrs. C.A. Spreckles, the Hearsts of San Simeon, and various well-known nurserymen such as Charles Abraham of San Francisco, Timothy Hopkins of Menlo Park, Charles Navlet of Sunnyvale, and Carl Purdy of Ukiah—not to mention his brother William who owned Stockdale Nursery in Burlingame, among other lucrative enterprises. One luncheon guest in April of 1918 and again in June of 1920, if not at other times also, was Mrs. Haggin, the former Countess Festetics-Hamilton.

The countess, nee Eila Haggin, had married an Austrian-Hungarian count in 1892 but sued for and won a divorce in



Comtesse Festetics-Hamilton

1900, after having endured—she maintained—five years of neglect on her husband’s yacht. To be fair to both sides: the count did file countersuit, claiming that her parents had reneged on the promised one million francs of the dowry, the lack of which kept them housed on the yacht instead of in a mansion or palace. Much later, in 1924, the erstwhile countess was to re-assert he wedding vows, this time to Robert T. McKee from one of the wealthiest families in Stockton.

It will be recalled that the senior Tevis had been a partner with James Haggin during the Gold Rush days and afterward; the latter was the grandfather of the countess. She apparently also was Harry’s cousin, for records indicate that Lloyd Tevis, his father, had become a brother-in-law to James Haggin. (An interesting aside but somewhat linked to roses: Eila Haggin’s maternal grandmother was Stephanie de Beauharnais, second-cousin to Empress Josephine’s daughter Hortense and an adopted daughter of Napoleon Bonaparte.)

The rose named for the countess, ‘Comtesse Festetics Hamilton’, is a tea with color ranging from carmine red to pale pink with coppery reflexed petals in the center; bred by Nabonnand, it was introduced in 1897. A tall, wide bush, ‘Comtesse Festetics Hamilton’ is still available from a few rose nurseries.

Harry Tevis’s generosity extended beyond providing a weekend in the country on his resplendent estate for relatives and friends—and even for a few troubled young men. Depending upon the season, he would regularly send gift boxes of plums, cherries, pears, prunes, apples or other fruit from his own trees. Frequently he also sent gifts of violets and dahlias and other

plants. In 1916 he donated 400 roses to the city of Los Gatos, 350 to be planted in the high school park and fifty in the park at City Hall. In 1917 he had a large number of roses dug up and sent to Mrs. Wells of Gem Nursery in Los Gatos. To Agnes Bourne of Filoli, Woodside, he sent a ‘Coupe d’ Hebe’ and a ‘York and Lancaster’ rose. Several times he sent ‘American Pillar’ as a gift. When Cora Older of San Jose asked for some red rose



plants to decorate San Jose streets (she had initiated the Rose Festival in that city), he no doubt complied. After all, she had offered to provide him, if he did not grow them, with ‘Gruss an Teplitz’, ‘Paul’s Scarlet’, and ‘Ragged Robin’, i.e. ‘Gloire des Rosomanes’.

As his diaries show, Harry Tevis enjoyed visiting nurseries. He frequented and/or ordered plants from at least two dozen different plant sellers. Among others, his roses came from such famed nurseries as Bobbink and Atkins of New Jersey, Dingee and Conard of Pennsylvania, Charles Abraham’s Western Nursery and Ludemann’s Pacific Nursery both of San Francisco, MacRorie and McLaren Co. of San Mateo (McLaren being Donald, the undeservedly forgotten son of John McLaren, he of Golden Gate Park fame), and John Smith’s Roseacres of Hayward.

Harry Tevis grew at least 38 distinct rose species. He seemed to favor *Rosa gigantea macrocarpa* from Manipur, India, a rose he called “Giant of India,” and *R. roxburghii plena*, of which he ordered a dozen. That large order suggests he may have grown roses

elsewhere on his estate, other than just in his rose garden, especially given the many climbing and rambling roses he owned. Among the 38, he also grew *R. moschata* v. *nivea* (also known as *R. dupontii*) bred by Andre Dupont in 1817 and thus not strictly a species, for Moschata had been crossed with a Gallica. And he also grew *Rosas blanda*, *bracteata*, *gymnocarpa*, *Helena*, *Hugonis*, *macrantha*, *pendulina pubescens*, *puberulenta* (which had been found by a friend in the mountains of Utah, a sub-species of *R. woodsii*), *rubiginosa* (Eglantine or Sweet Briar), and *setigera*.



Rosa roxburghii plena



Dr. Huey

The enormous ‘Mermaid’, ‘Russeliana’ (“Old Spanish Rose”), and ‘Dr. Huey’ (a pillar rose) also graced Almadale, as did the old Damask ‘York and Lancaster’, the Bourbon ‘Coupe d’Hebe’, the Rugosa ‘Rose a Parfum de l’ Hay’, the Polyantha ‘Baby Doll’ (also called ‘Tip Top’), and the 1915 Hybrid Tea by Hugh Dickson ‘Gorgeous’—among hundreds of others. Though he employed a fair number of gardeners, Harry himself worked in his gardens, especially among his dahlias and roses, no doubt wearing a floppy if not sloppy hat as shown in several photos of the man. Additionally, he often exhibited his flowers in San Francisco competitions.

Late in life, Tevis met Dr. Emmet Rixford of San Francisco, a surgeon at Stanford and passionate rose lover. In 1928 the two men began exchanging roses. Though Tevis had acquired his Indian *R. gigantea* in 1908, twenty years later he enquired of Rixford about another Gigantea, perhaps because he had lost his earlier plant or simply because he wished another. Rixford replied that he had obtained Gigantea seed from the late Dr. Franceschi-Fenzi and had budded sixteen plants on *R. odorata* rootstock. He sent Tevis two plants. He further offered to send him *R. brunonii*, *R. ecae*, *R. moyesii*, *R. stellata*, and *R. x l’ Heritierana*.

Ever interested in rare roses, Dr. Rixford was especially excited by and eager to send Tevis *R. moschata nivea*, which the doctor described as “a vigorous climber with light green stems which loves to bask on the top of a pergola, with hanging corymbs of twenty to thirty delicate single white flowers, suffused with the faintest blush of cherry, straw yellow stamens.” Adding this rose to his collection, Tevis at the end of 1929 requested from Rixford any of the following: Hill’s ‘America’, ‘Duchess of York’, ‘Heart of Gold’ (not to be confused with those of today), ‘Pilgrim’, ‘Premier Essai’, ‘Antoine Rivoire’, ‘Breeze Hill’, ‘IXL’, and ‘Mrs. Henry Morse’. Only the last four are still on the market.



Like Rixford who hybridized some roses and raised others from seed, Tevis also tried his hand at breeding hybrids. One of his crosses was the rose he called ‘Los Gatos’. The rose seems not to have been marketed. Typical of his largess, Tevis no doubt would have disseminated the rose as a gift to relatives and friends.

Because of his magnanimous nature, Tevis was often approached by charities and individuals for contributions to their cause. Over the years he financially assisted several young men through their school years. One audacious young woman from Germany wrote in broken English requesting enough money to buy a small house. Even the well-known rose breeder Father Schoener, “Padre of the Roses,” asked for assistance. On that matter, Tevis consulted Dr. Rixford for advice: Should he open himself to dealings with Schoener? In response, on August 1, 1929, Rixford wrote that Father Schoener

has been in financial trouble and has been unable to meet some of his obligations, i.e., our friend John Smith of Hayward, sold Father Schoener some fifteen hundred roses and was never paid. I think the bill amounted to something over Seven Hundred Dollars. I suspect that the trouble was that Father Schoener thought he could run a nursery as a business, and got out the catalog which must have cost a good deal of money, and then very likely was unable to sell the roses.

Tevis was well advised. Though Schoener had earlier introduced his lovely rose ‘Arillaga’, and would in a year introduce his excellent ‘Schoener’s Nutkana’, his ego, like that of Luther Burbank, informed him that all of his rose creations were outstanding, but also like those of Burbank scarcely any survived long in the marketplace. Schoener seems to have been neither a worthwhile investment nor charity.

At one point Rixford also offered to borrow Ellen Willmott’s valuable two-volume *The Genus Rosa* with its illustrations by Alfred Parsons from the U. C. Berkeley library to



Ellen Willmott

help Tevis ascertain the correct name of some of his mislabeled roses. Whether Harry accepted this offer is unclear.

What is clear is that Harry Tevis's philanthropy and munificence was returned in the person of Dr. Emmet Rixford. A true gift moves, it travels, it continues outward, it keeps on giving. It does not stop with the first recipient. And sometimes, as with Rixford, the gift comes full circle. It seems almost an innate trait of the Rose that it be given away. A friend, say, gives me a rose plant; a niece or other person admires it, so I give her a cutting from which she in turn gives a cutting or plant to a friend, and so on—the gift moves. The giving grows. As a result, the rose continues to live. Harry Tevis in his floppy hat gave of himself again and again to the end of his days. He died, much loved, at age 72. He should not be forgotten.

PHOTO & ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

- Page 5 courtesy Sarah Foote
Pages 7 and 20, right Bill Grant
Page 9 Paul Barden courtesy Pedro Dot Nursery
Page 10, top R. Indica Pumila by Redouté
Page 10, bottom The Botanical Register, 1821
Page 13 Charles Andrews, 1828
Page 15 Linda Rengarts
Pages 16, 18, 19, 24-27 Darrell g.h. Schramm
Page 17 Karl King
Page 20 'Breeze Hill', Cass Bernstein
Page 21 portrait of Miss Willmott by Rosina
Mantovani
Page 23 courtesy Karl King

On Water and Roses: Food for Thought

Possibly because of the necessity of making every penny count, with their low money incomes, most Europeans expect their plants to last much longer than in this country. Many amateurs withhold chemical fertilizers the entire first year, and it is a common practice to pinch off the buds the first season, at least until late in the summer or early fall. Garden roses are seldom watered, because their owners realize that they will benefit from rest during dry periods and more than make up for lost time when rainy days come. Europe seems to have a definite advantage in this respect. There are sections of this country where some irrigation is absolutely necessary, but I wonder whether better roses cannot be grown in most places (at least where trees grow *well* in forests) over a whole season without ever watering, than when they are watered copiously. The perfectly glorious roses at San Remo come on plants that pass through over four months of scorching heat in the summer without a single drop of water. The roses are either on their own roots (as in the case of 'Frau Karl Druschki', 'Dame Edith Helen', and 'Ulrich Brunner', grown for cut flowers) or budded in place on Canina cuttings stuck fifteen to eighteen inches into the ground. They pass through a dormant period in the summer and another in the winter, and are pruned low after each. Most amateurs succumb to the temptation to water most frequently in this country precisely when they should not: in the hottest months of the summer when roses should be resting for their fall effort. I have irrigated at intervals of five to seven days as many rose experts believe

to be desirable in this country, thus running up a water bill that I could ill afford to pay; and the results over the season were not nearly as good as at present, when we never irrigate. (The average rainfall at Durham [North Carolina] is around forty inches.)

Dr. E.J. Hamilton. "European and American Roses Compared" in *The American Rose Annual 1941*, page 85.



THORNLESS IN OREGON

Darrell g.h. Schramm

In Mountain View Cemetery of Oregon City, Oregon, grows a solitary Damask rose. Apparently it had been cut down several times by a maintenance person until a metal fence was erected around the plot of the grave and the rose. Although it was more spreading than tall, and not very tall, it appeared to be ‘Autumn Damask’, also known as ‘Quatre Saisons’. Lack of care and repeated pruning can alter the habit of a rose.



At the corner of Rilance Lane and Holmes Lane in Oregon City sits The Rose Farm Museum in the old William Holmes house, built in 1847. William and Louisa Holmes had been part of the huge migration to Oregon in 1843 when more than 900 people ventured west to the Willamette Valley. Louisa was fond of roses and grew many in her yard.

Across the road from the actual garden and in a ditch grows a luxuriant old deep purple rose. One of my companions told me that Mrs. Holmes called this rose ‘Cardinal’, perhaps believing it to be the old Gallica (Hybrid China, really) ‘Cardinal de Richelieu’. I thought not. No, this rose reminded me almost at once of both the Gallica ‘Orpheline de Juillet’ and the Portland ‘Indigo’, yet of neither one exclusively. Like ‘Orpheline’, this sprawling roadside rose had China-like leaves but in most other respects, such as in its straight prickles, appeared to be a Gallica. Or a Damask Perpetual. And there ‘Indigo’ showed its colors and its somewhat thick pompon shape, most often with a button eye. I wondered if it was one of two or three lost dark crimson or purple Gallicas like ‘Pompon’ of 1835. Or perhaps that found mystery rose called “Little Red Runaround.” Certainly it was not John Cook’s red Hybrid Tea ‘Cardinal’ introduced in 1904.

Snuggled into lush leaves in the garden proper, another rose,



Belle de Crecy

somewhat flat, purplish rose-pink, suggested it was of the Portland class. And then there was the Moss rose. Oh, why did I not know the Mosses better! This Moss rose grew on a large bush, sprawling like many a Centifolia, proudly showing off its long canes and vicious thorns. There were others, but it was time to go. I left with a sigh of defeat. These Oregon roses were incredibly exuberant in their growth, their number, and their vibrant color. Nowhere else in the U.S. had I seen such intense roses.

By the time we reached End of the Trail Cemetery, still in Oregon City, I was nonplussed. Over and over again, I had encountered old roses without spines, prickles, bristles, thorns (if you will). Now I saw a thornless pink Gallica with a button eye. ‘Duchesse de Buccleugh’? I was taking an educated guess and regretting I didn’t have more rose years behind me. And then yet another nearly thornless rose came into view. My head was spinning into a tapestry of roses. The glaring sun did not do justice to my photos nor my amateur photography here, so later I had only my quick and cursory notes to rely on. I promised myself to make a study of roses without spines.

And I did so. In cemetery after Oregon pioneer cemetery throughout



Complicata



Dupuy Jamain

the state, and I've visited at least fifty, old rose bushes generally included many or even most plants without prickles. Bourbon roses are often without prickles or nearly so but nonetheless are frequently mistaken for Centifolia roses; however, the latter, with perhaps one or two exceptions, are quite prickly. Here, then, for those trying to identify heritage roses or seeking to buy such roses without prickles, is a list of "thornless" or "nearly thornless" roses bred before 1900:

(A = Alba, B = Bourbon, Ch= China, D = Damask, G= Gallica, HCh = Hybrid China, HP = Hybrid Perpetual, M = Moss, N= Noisette, P = Portland, Pol = Polyantha, sp = Species, T = Tea rose)

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Agatha | G |
| Aimee Vibert | N |
| Alfred de Dalmas | M |
| Archduchesse Eliz. d'Autriche | HP |
| Archduke Charles | Ch |
| Assemblage des Beutes | G |
| Belle de Crecy | G |
| Belle Isis | G |
| Boule de Neige | B |
| Cardinal Richelieu | HCh |
| Catherine Guillot | B |
| Champion of the World | HP |
| Charles Lawson, varies | B |
| Chloris | A |
| Clotilde Soupert | Pol |
| Complicata | G |
| Duc de Cambridge | D |
| Duchesse de Buccleugh | G |
| Dupuy Jamain | HP |
| Empress Josephine | G |
| Eugenie Guinoisseau | M |
| Fellicite Parmentier | A |
| Frederic II de Prusse | HCh |
| General Kleber | M |
| Gilbert Nabbonand | T |
| Gloire Lyonnaise | HP |



| | |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Henri Fouquier | G |
| Hippolyte | G |
| Honorine de Brabant | B |
| Jean Ducher | T |
| La Reine | HP |
| Lady Banks (wh & yel) | sp |
| Louis XIV | Ch |
| Mlle Cecile Brunner | Pol |
| Mme Alfred Carrier | N |
| Mme Dore | B |
| Mme Legras de St Germain | A |
| Mme Plantier | A or N |
| Mme Sancy de Parabere | B |
| Manetti | N |
| M. de Morand | HP |
| M. Jules Lemaitre | HP |
| Mrs Dudley Cross | T |
| Mrs John Laing | HP |
| Nanette | G |
| Nestor | G |
| Nouvelle Pivoine | G |
| Paul Neyron | HP |
| Perle d'Or | Pol |
| Pompon Blanc Parfait | A |
| Prince Albert | HP |
| Prince Albert | B |
| Prince Charles | B |
| Queen of Denmark | A |
| Reine des Violettes | HP |
| Roger Lambelin | HP |
| Rose des Maures | G |
| Souvenir du Dr Jamain | HP |
| Sultane Favorite | P |
| Triomphe du Luxembourg | T |
| Tuscany Superb | G |
| Ulrich Brunner fils | HP |
| Vick's Caprice | HP |



Tuscany Superb Mme Legras



Paul Neyron



Ulrich Brunner fils

THE ROSE ON OUR COVER

‘Pauline Labonté’, also known as ‘Mme Pauline Labonté’ appeared as a lithograph by François Grabon in Hippolyte Jamain and Eugene Forney’s 1872 *Les Roses*. Grabon was an illustrator of books who owned his own atelier; Jamain was a rose grower, and Forney a professor of arboriculture.



This pink tea rose was raised by Monsieur Henri Pradel in 1852. Pradel is also remembered for breeding the Bourbons ‘Comice de Tarn-et-Garonne’ and ‘Omar Pacha’ and the famous Noisette ‘Maréchal Niel’. Although ‘Pauline Labonté’ was in commerce for over 35 years and therefore seems to have been popular, very few surviving catalogues or books seem to have listed this rose. In England John Cranston listed it in his

Cultural Directions for the Rose of both 1887 and 1888, describing it as “Outer petals flesh, tinted cream, centre deep salmon-buff, very large, full, and fragrant.” In the United States, the California Nursery Company listed it as ‘Mad. Pauline Labonte’ in the first edition of its catalogues, also in 1888. While no description is given, a price list is. The rose sold for 35 cents, ten for three dollars, and 100 of them for \$25.00. (Today, the typical price for *one* is about \$25.00.)

But then, it is no longer sold anywhere. Not even the great Friends of Vintage Roses collection houses it. In fact, unless it is a mystery rose yet to be identified, this tea is not growing anywhere. One does wonder if one of the unidentified, pinkish tea roses found in California might not be this one. As I recently wrote in my journal, “For all its beauty and incitement to love, the rose until 1842 is elusive. Even then it would often survive only in the shadows of poor record-keeping and vague narratives, surviving as a mere catalogue item. The tea rose ‘Mme Pauline Labonté’ is the most recent example in my experience, of which thousands of such unknown roses exist.” Perhaps featuring her here and on the cover of *Rose Letter* might aid in resuscitating her, if indeed she does still grow somewhere, “alone and palely loitering.”

FROM OUR READERS

Dear Mr. Schramm:

As always, the latest issue of *Rose Letter* was a treat.

—Margaret Ganier, LA, New Orleans Old Garden Rose Society

First of all I want to say how much I enjoy "your" rose letter, and what a great way to learn history!

—Susan Walker, HRG, CA

The last issue was dynamite! They are just getting better and better. Thanks so much for the effort you put into that little journal.

—Alice Flores, CA

Kudos for this RL as it really is a great addition to the preservation rose world.

—Pam Greenewald, FL

I'm so glad I joined HRG! The newsletter is wonderful—great pictures, good writing—love the articles. Well done! Please keep up the good work. It is appreciated. —Susan Kealey, Montara, CA

Dear Editor,

Thank you from here in Fort Bragg, Jewel of the North Coast, for all your research and graceful writing. I ever look forward to their arrival. This worm lives on, and you make everything come alive. Thank you from an old rose gardener. —Joyce Demits, CA

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'Gorgeous', a Hybrid Tea of 1915 that grew in the garden of Harry Tevis.