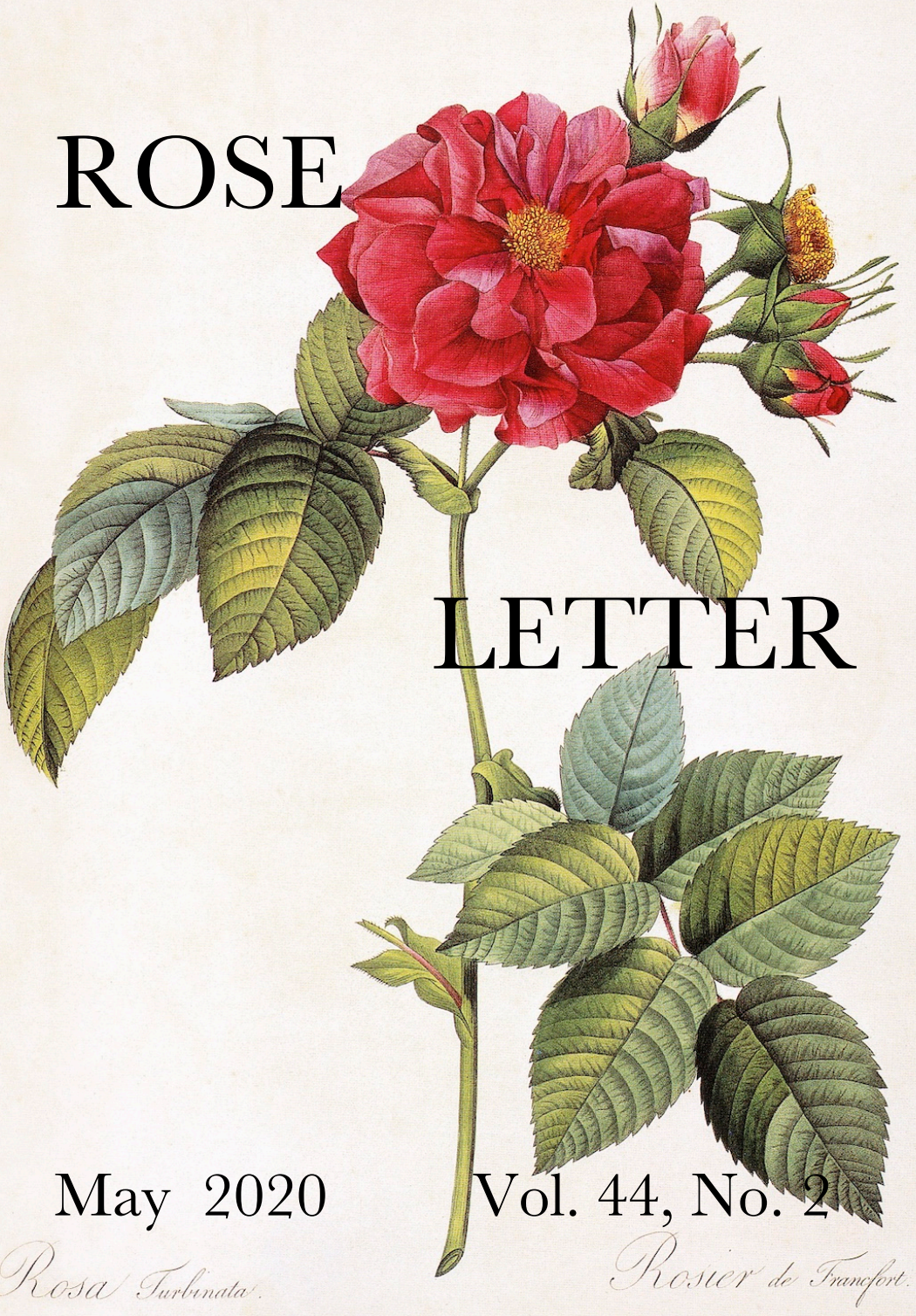
# ROSE LETTER

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# ROSE LETTER

The Heritage Roses Group



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## AN ELEGIAC TIME: ROSES OF 1920

**Darrell g.h. Schramm**


**The Cenotaph**

In 2014 I found myself seated in a pew of Salisbury Cathedral. Because the church bells had rung, I had entered the cathedral, not knowing what to expect. I quickly realized it was a memorial service for the dead, for Englishmen killed in WWI. The homily, a eulogy, left me in tears. The dead, the more than 700,000 dead, would continue to be remembered and honored for the next six years, climaxing to honor the interment in 1920 for The Unknown Warrior.

1920. Worldwide, slightly more than 100 roses were bred or introduced commercially 100 years ago. Of these, sixteen are still in the market today, mostly in Western Europe, only four offered for sale in the United States. On the brighter side, at least thirty rose varieties of 1920 continue to be viewed at Europa-Rosarium in Sangerhausen, Germany. It might be recalled that, as in January 2006, many roses at that enormous public garden perished in the severe winter of 2012. Loss is an inevitable part of life.

Perhaps surprisingly, more than a fourth of those 100 roses originated in England and another fourth in France. Quite likely many of them had been held in abeyance until the war ended. The English had lost nearly three-quarters of a million men, while nearly one and three-quarter million had been wounded, more than 41,000 having lost at least one limb.

Despite the horrendous loss of lives and the demise of Victorian certainties, by early 1920 the food and drink at the Hotel Savoy had returned in excess to pre-war expectations. After living on rations and grief, many people felt ready for a more light-hearted life. But in late spring, French director Abel Gance showed his controversial film *J'accuse* at London's Philharmonic Hall, a film that accused those who

profited from war, those who went on with business as usual, those who by their selfish lives betrayed the wounded and the dead. The silent film echoed much of Siegfried Sassoon's WWI poetry. But life danced on. Meanwhile the gaping wound made by Death was still keenly felt. Lack of a funeral for those men killed abroad made it difficult for hundreds of thousands to accept the finality of death. On 11 November, The Unknown Warrior, symbol and connotation of father, brother, son, lover, friend who had fallen, never to return, was laid to rest in Westminster Abby. At Whitehall, King George had lain red roses atop the coffin. The procession from Whitehall to Westminster proceeded in a hushed quiet, thousands of spectators and participants bound by the great national silence of the previous year. Again, in Westminster, red roses, mingled with violets, were placed at the base of the memorial.

**Kitchener of Khartoum**

Perhaps those roses were the then very popular red 'Kitchener of Khartoum', also known as 'K of K', named for Lord Kitchener who had died in 1916 when the ship on which he sailed was struck by a German mine. To have chosen that rose would be quite fitting to the occasion.

Paris, too, honored a *soldat inconnu* that day but buried him two months later. Then other nations followed suit, no doubt some for political reasons. The United States referred to its burial as the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The soon-to-be-famous rose breeder Wilhelm Kordes, who had owned a nursery in England and, being German, had been interned on the Isle of Man as an enemy during the war, was released and began serious rose breeding at his new nursery in Sparrieshoop, Germany, in 1920.

That same year in Ireland, Alexander Dickson III became manager of the family rose nursery. His nursery along with those of Hugh Dickson and Sam McGredy produced a total of 22 Irish roses that year. The British Isles, then, contributed about 50% of new roses to the trade. The United States, still dependent on England, Ireland, and France for its roses, yielded only seven new roses that year.

**Gwen Nash**

**Padre**

**Souvenir de Gilbert Nabonnand**

The sixteen roses of 1920 still on the market—though some just barely so—are 'Adam Messerich', 'Bloomfield Abundance', 'Callisto', 'Coral Cluster', 'Fernand Tanne', 'Gwen Nash', 'Irene Bonnet', 'Jacotte', 'Padre', 'Rev. F. Page Roberts', 'Ruhm von Steinfurth', 'Souvenir de Gilbert Nabonnand', 'Souvenir de Claudius Denoyel', 'Souvenir de Claudius Pernet', 'The General', and 'Vanity'. Seven are Hybrid Teas, if we class the Pernetiana 'Padre' as such, which speaks to the popularity of the class. The others are ramblers, Hybrid Musks, and an assortment of other categories. Eleven of these sixteen are sold by only one to four different nurseries throughout the world. For example, 'Fernand Tanne', a rambler, is offered only in Germany. The Hybrid Tea 'The General', and the Tea

'Souvenir de Gilbert Nabonnand', are both sold only by Becky and John Hook in France, whose nursery as of this writing is up for sale. Such is the way of the world with most of the others as well.

**Bloomfield Abundance**

Of those few 1920 roses that continue to be more largely in commerce, 'Bloomfield Abundance' goes to the head of the class, 34 different rose nurseries of the world offering it. Its pale salmon-pink flowers grow large, singly and in small clusters, amidst dark green foliage wearing a sheen. A strong plant reaching six feet or so, its flowers, like a large 'Mlle Cecile Brunner', bloom from late spring until frost. It is quite hardy. Bred by Captain George C. Thomas, it is one in his series of Bloomfield roses, named for his estate in Pennsylvania even after he moved to Beverly Hills, California. Though now listed as a Floribunda, Thomas himself considered it a Hybrid Tea, as did Bobbink & Atkins who introduced the rose. Incidentally, Thomas declared that all profits and royalties from his roses should be donated to the American Rose Society.

**Vanity**

Reverend Pemberton's Hybrid Musk 'Vanity' boasts twenty nurseries that still sell it. Why a clergyman should have named his rose for one of the Seven Deadly

Sins is a mystery, for there is nothing deadly about this vibrant rose. Perhaps he had a sense of humor. Its mother parent was the red 'Chateau de Clos-Vougeot', but 'Vanity', a two-toned flower, itself displays a rich pink edged in carmine. The rather double or semi-double flowers, scented as of sweet-peas, are medium-sized, growing in loose but enormous trusses against a backdrop of olive-green foliage. This huge scrub bears stems seven feet long and continues to send out new shoots in spring and summer to provide autumn bloom.

Sixteen nurseries tender the Hybrid Bourbon rose 'Adam Messerich' (see right). A vigorous bush that grows to 5' x 4', blooming profusely from April or May to October, it shuns prickles. The semi-double flowers reveal a warm rosy-pink color and a mild scent of raspberries, strongest in the morning. Peter Lambert, author of the rose, named it for his friend, a successful merchant and shopkeeper who was also an ardent rose enthusiast and amateur breeder. He was born in Bitburg, Germany in 1875 and died there in 1961. The Messerich family today continues to operate two fashion shops in Bitburg.

**Souvenir de Claudius Denoyel**

'Souvenir de Claudius Denoyel', found in the catalogues of thirteen nurseries (only two of which are in the USA), is a darkly bright crimson rose, shaded with vermilion. Perhaps it was the rose lain at the tomb of The Unknown Warrior? The roses are large and

double and emit an outstandingly wonderful perfume. The red flowers do not burn in the sun nor do they fade with age. Though they avoid abundance in numbers, they bloom continually from spring into autumn. A Hybrid Tea that can grow to eight feet or more, it makes an excellent pillar rose with blossoms from bottom to top. It has justly been called "magnificent!" Like that of 'Vanity', its mother parent is the still extant, red 'Chateau de Clos-Vougeot'. Bred by Jean Chambard, who introduced 74 other roses in his lifetime, 'Souvenir de Claudius Denoyel' was named in memory of his niece's husband who was killed near Calais in WWI at the age of 21.


**Souvenir de Claudius Pernet**

One other 1920 Hybrid Tea deserves mention: 'Souvenir de Claudius Pernet'. It is sold by three nurseries in Japan, two in France, and one in the United States. The rose was bred and named by Joseph Pernet-Ducher in honor of his eldest son, who, like his second son, was killed in WWI. The deep sun-yellow rose has been called his masterpiece, the culmination of his work with yellow roses, the best strongly yellow rose at the time. (However, I would contend that no Pernet-Ducher rose has done as well or been as popular as 'Mme Caroline Testout'. Surely that was his masterwork.) On sturdy, upright, prickly stems, the large full flowers show outer petals that recurve and sometimes fade to cream. This rose detests dampness and rain, preferring warm, dry weather; thus, it does well on the continent but not in England. Perhaps that's just as well, for the rose still favors France where Claudius Pernet himself lived and died.

My question is, are we better off without those lost roses? Yes, if their loss was the result of weakness, disease susceptibility, or lack of beauty. Are we better off without all those men who fell in the war? Perhaps yes, if we've learned to become better human beings, valuing life and peace, giving of ourselves to others including non-familial

others, strangers, wild creatures, trees, the environment. But we've not learned. Too many people die, too many roses die, because of indifference, ignorance, or neglect. I don't mean to equate a human being with a rose nor elicit a "vanity of false distinctions," But we do have Potters' Fields of roses, just as we have Potters' Fields of those fallen in war. Loss is a condition of life, yes. So is honor. So is connection. And so is possibility.

## THORNS vs. PRICKLES

Just as most people have accepted *who* when *whom* is meant, so too has the average person accepted *thorn* for *prickle*. But there is a difference botanically and morphologically. "Botanically speaking," writes Stephen Scanniello, President of the Heritage Rose Foundation, "all roses are thornless. The correct term for the sharp non-woody protrusion from the epidermis of a rose stem is *prickle*. No rose produces the woody modified stem or branch known as a thorn found on plants such as the shrub Pyracantha, or firethorn." Botanical dictionaries and glossaries confirm him, as does Professor of Plant Sciences David H. Trinklein in his "Of Thorns, Spines and Prickles":

"Most people consider any sharp projection from a plant to be a thorn. This is understandable, since most people are familiar with roses and the sharp (sometimes painful) 'thorns' they bear. However, roses don't bear true thorns; instead they produce prickles. . . .

"Accurately used, the term 'thorn' is applied only to a sharp-pointed structure that is a modified branch. Thorns often arise from the main stem at leaf axils. Landscape plants with true thorns include firethorn (Pyracantha), hawthorn, and Japanese flowering quince.

". . . Prickles arise from stem tissue and are extensions of its cortex and epidermis. Perhaps because it nearly rhymes with the word "tickle", a prickle sounds must less threatening than a thorn or a spine. Such is not always the case. Undoubtedly, the most popular garden plant that bears prickles is the rose and most avid gardeners have had more than one painful, unfortunate encounter with its sharp appendages."

The above information notwithstanding, doubtlessly most people will continue to call the protrusions on rose plants "thorns." So be it.

**Ron's Autumn Damask**

## THE LAZY MAN'S DEER FENCE

**Ron Robertson**

I live in the country, quiet and peaceful, where most of the sounds one hears range from the more pleasant to the … well, less pleasant. A myriad of singing birds, humming bees, croaking frogs, cricketing crickets, buzzing insects, and whispering winds, to the other end of the spectrum ranging from yelping coyotes (jury is out on whether those are pleasant or not), grunting wild hogs, annoying wasps, digging armadillos, and perhaps worst of all, the soft crunching of deer dining on the garden.

Yes, deer do indeed make a sound when eating, and when you dare chase them away, they make an annoyed coughing sound, as if to say, "You can't be here all the time, so we'll be back, and back, and back, and back." At any rate, the deer were absolutely destroying my garden, and they seemed to love any rose with a Damask background the most, which also happened to be among my favorites. I didn't get a single bloom on 'Autumn Damask' for two years because they kept

eating it down to the ground. But they didn't stop there; they ate my Tea and Bourbon roses to the ground so that they were perpetually sprouting new growth, including in Autumn, just in time for a heavy freeze to kill them outright. On top of this, they had a knack for stepping on perennials and bulbs and pretty much ruining them. Once they've chewed on a rose, they cause severe dieback of the canes that had somehow managed to reach any size at all. I always imagine that it's because they have saliva that's toxic to all they taste. Needless to say, something had to be done.

**Once there were roses in these beds**

However, that something took me a long time to figure out, so hopefully this will save someone else years of frustration. Yes, I did use the sprays, and yes, they do work, if you're diligent. But I suffer from a few faults: one, I quickly get tired of spraying over and over; two, I'm a bit lazy, and I'd rather sit on the front porch and have a glass of wine in the evenings than go out and spray the roses *yet again;* and three, perhaps most damning of all, I'm not rich and could not afford to put up a seven-foot fence to keep them out, not to mention, I've yet to see a seven-foot fence that wasn't ugly, and why have a garden if you're going to surround it with an ugly fence? It's like pouring Veuve Clicquot into a paper cup.

So, I stared at the fence, at the chewed roses, at the deer staring placidly back thinking, "Will he never leave so we can have our dinner in peace?" And then one day it came to me. I don't think I've ever seen a deer jump *through* something. They'll jump *over* something, they'll crawl *under* something, but they will not leap *through* anything. Hmmm… maybe I can use that somehow. As it happens, I do have one of those 4-foot ornamental fences that look like white plank and board fencing surrounding the garden. It's a nice-looking fence for the situation,

maintenance free, and gives the all-important enclosed space a garden needs. I thought, "Why not take some rebar, and make arches of it between the posts of the fence and see if they'll quit jumping over it?" So, my very helpful neighbor offered to pick up enough 20-foot rebar to go between each post of my fence. As I mentioned earlier, I am a bit lazy, so rather than do anything elaborate with the rebar, I simply stuck one end of the rebar next to one post where it would push up against that post, bent the rebar into an arch and stuck the other end pushed up against the next post, making sure each end of the rebar was on opposite sides of the planks, thinking that would keep them from falling over, since they'd be supported by those planks (and it does). I made sure to stick the rebar down about a foot or more into the ground, which turned out not to be difficult, even in my clay/caliche soil. This took me only a couple of hours at most to complete, and met my "don't work too hard" requirement, one of the ironclad rules of my life.

That was three years ago, and since then not one deer has jumped the fence to munch on my garden. If your fence has space underneath the horizontal elements of more than a foot, you may have to do as I did and put chicken wire at the bottom to keep them from

**Arches of rebar barely visible above the fence**

crawling under. Young deer in particular are fond of that trick. I purchased a few large rolls of black-coated 18" tall chicken wire for the purpose, and stopped that from happening. The chicken wire is invisible, and the rebar nearly so. Now that my roses have been able to mature, I've been able to see my 'Autumn Damask' in all its glory (along with many other roses and plants), all thanks to this very inexpensive and easy-to-do solution. The deer grumble a bit, and their "coughs" have taken on a more desultory tone, but certainly I'm happier. Now, if I could figure out a way to keep things weeded that is as easy to do.

## THE ROSE ON OUR COVER

Although known today mostly as 'Empress Josephine' or 'Imperatice Joséphine', this rose apparently is a variety of the16th century rose Rosa Turbinata or Rosa Francofurtana, also called 'The Frankfort Rose'. Charles Malo in 1821 writes that it was commonly grown in Frankfort gardens and in surrounding areas, and that it grows four to five feet high. And while some sources echo his description, still others describe it as a rose that can climb twenty feet high, producing a mantle of flowers and foliage to cover an arbor or wall. That would support the claim in the 1817 edition of *Le Bon Jardinier* that there are two varieties. Nearly all sources mention the top-shaped (*turbiné,* hence Tubinata) receptacle. The color is somewhat variable: deep pink, violet-pink, or violet-red. This 'Empress Josephine' should not be confused with the 1842 Bourbon or 1852 Hybrid Perpetual of the same name.

**Empress Josephine**

## JOSEPHINE AND BOUGAINVILLE: FICTION VS.TRUTH

**Darrell g.h. Schramm**

Much of the rose lore we read from an earlier time is merely wishful thinking or even pure fabrication. A sensational story based on supposition or hearsay often titillates many people more than the truth. On the other hand, the act of uncovering the truth is often more exciting than the gossip or misinformation.

Most of us are familiar with the Empress Josephine, Napoleon's wife, whose passion for horticulture excited her to create a huge garden at her estate La Malmaison. Here she attempted to grow plants from the world over as well as—supposedly—"every rose known at that time." But that supposition is highly doubtful. That oft repeated statement was initially made by the eminent Jules Gravereaux who attempted to recreate her rosebeds about 100 years after Josephine's death and the destruction of her garden. Based on his research, he believed he had located the names of 197 of her roses but assumed she grew at least fifty others. Even if Gravereaux's assumption were correct, that she grew about 250 roses, that number would not have included "every rose known at that time." At least two nearby nurseries offered a larger selection. In 1800 Descemet at St. Denis was growing 300 varieties, and the old House of Vilmorin in Paris advertised itself as being "the first to procure the complete collection of roses." Clearly, if those facts are accurate, the Empress did not grow every known rose of the time. And if she really intended to do so, why send to Holland and England for them when she had a full selection at her virtual doorstep?

Initially roses were not Empress Josephine's focus at all, for

according to more than one historian, "not until 1804, under the influence of her botanists and gardener [did] roses [begin] to appear in the Malmaison garden." And then roses became her passion. Not only was she an empress, she was also First Lady of the Rose.

Unfortunately, fantasy, gossip, and jealous remarks about the elite, the wealthy, and the powerful is commonplace and all too easily believed. In 1936 the respected rosarian and writer Edward A. Bunyard in *Old Garden Roses* wrote of Josephine, "There was also a rival, the Countess of Bougainville, to spur further efforts" in creating an all-inclusive rose garden. No prior literature that I have read online nor within my more than 200 books on rose history or European history confirms this statement. And yet this misinformed or fabricated report has left a silvery snail trail that others have gleefully followed.

For instance, in a 2009 article, the Walsworth Company Master Gardener Association maintains, "Josephine's arch rival, the Comtesse de Bougainville . . . also vowed to amass rare plants, particularly roses. The two ladies were determined to outdo each other, especially when they heard about the availability of four virile stud roses from China." The words *arch* and *virile* are clues to exaggeration, the kind of yellow journalism that keeps a tale going. Besides, the empress had died before the fourth rose arrived. Another fairly recent source gossips that "a Lady-in-Waiting to the Empress (some say the Countess of Bougainville) persuaded her lover" to steal coveted dahlia roots from Josephine. The phrase "some say" should alert us to suspicion. All that glitters is not silver. Nor, in these cases, is it the truth.

Rather than spin a tale, make assumptions, or repeat a story without evidence, we need to acknowledge what we know and don't know. So what do we make of Bunyard's claim regarding the Countess of Bougainville?

To begin with, there was no "Countess of Bougainville" at that time. Admiral Louis-Antoine Bougainville (1729-1811) was not made a count until late in life, *after his wife had died.* And he did not remarry. Furthermore, the Bougainvilles were of the bourgeoisie, not of the nobility. Accordingly, neither his sister nor his mother was a countess.

In fact, the person intrigued by roses was this very celebrated explorer of the Pacific himself, Admiral Bougainville—not his wife. He

loved roses and had them grown in his hothouse for the pleasure of his wife. Moreover, he was a friend of both Napoleon and Josephine, not a rival.


**Admiral Bougainville**

Louis-Antoine Bougainville was a man of the Enlightenment. He pursued the arts and the sciences, attended salons, sailed around the world exploring the islands of the Pacific from 1766 to 1769, fought in the American War of Independence, involved himself in numerous romantic interludes, wrote articles and a popular book on his voyages. Paris society adored him. When he turned 50, his sister Marie-Francoise de Baraudin convinced him he must marry. In November 1780, he married Flore-Josephe, twenty years his junior, a woman from a naval tradition and minor nobility. She bore him three sons between 1781 and 1788, Hyacinthe, Armand, and Alphonse. During this period he became a member of the Academy of Science.

About 1799, as Napoleon was rising to power, the Bougainvilles bought the property of Chateau de Suisnes. It was here that Louis-Antoine, now nearly 70 years old, turned his attention to gardening. In addition to tropical trees and fruits, he began to grow roses. That same year he hired as his chief gardener Christophe Cochet, having observed him graft roses and lay out beds of Moss roses and other old garden varieties. To the delight of Madame Bougainville, his greenhouse roses flowered through the winter. And Cochet created an *allée* or avenue of roses on the estate.

Cochet was the first horticulturist in the Brie area of France to cultivate commercial roses. When in 1802 a nearby nursery was put up for sale, the Admiral loaned Cochet the 1200 francs needed to buy it. A portion of his rose collection came from the great Descemet, known for his breeding of Gallicas. The business became a success. Cochet's son

**Maman Cochet**

and then grandsons would continue the rose nursery into the early 20th century. The well-known Tea rose 'Maman Cochet' was named for Christophe's daughter-in-law, mother of Scipion who founded the *Journal des Roses*.

Bougainville was 75 years old, his wife 55, when Napoleon proclaimed himself Emperor. Because the two parties were friends, there was no reason for either the Admiral or Madame Bougainville to "rival" Empress Josephine. Indeed, if we scrutinize the political and biographical history, we see in Madame Bougainville anything but the need to compete.

Keep in mind that it wasn't until about 1804 that Josephine began to amass her collection of roses.

In early August of 1801, Flore-Josephe Bougainville was strolling along the River Yerres on the De Suisnes property when she stumbled upon the body of her second son, Armand. He had drowned. She became so ill with grief that she never fully recovered.

If that fact is true and if the dates are accurate, it seems highly doubtful that Madame—not Countess—Bougainville vied to outdo Josephine. Not only was she decimated by grief, but also Josephine had not begun to collect roses!

Soon after Napoleon proclaimed himself Emperor in 1804, he instituted the Legion of Honor and made the Admiral a Grand Officer as one of the first recipients of this award. It seems, however, despite her husband's honor, that Mme Bougainville could not shake the loss of her son and, in 1806, still grief-stricken, she died.

The Admiral promptly sold De Suisnes and bought a small house for himself in Paris. In 1808 Napoleon conferred on him the title of Count. And so, in her lifetime, Mme Bougainville was never a

countess. The French, however, may refer to her as such out of respect for her noteworthy husband. Five years after his wife, Count Admiral Bougainville died; and though his ashes were interred in the Pantheon, his heart was buried with Flore-Josephe and his son Armand in the

**Noisette Bougainville**

Montemartre cemetery of St. Pierre.

Today, Bougainville is most often remembered for that vine profuse with three-petaled flowers that bears his name, the bougainvillea. But a reef, a cape, a mountain, an island, two bays, and three straits—all in the South Seas—are also named for him. And a Noisette rose.

Bougainville is the northernmost of the Solomon Islands, near New Guinea. What follows is neither rumor, gossip, nor falsehood. It is on this island that in the 1960s the British-Australian corporation Rio Tinto began to take possession of its fertile land to mine copper. By 1989 the mine tailings had poisoned much of the water and soil, destroying most of the local agriculture. Conflicts ensued. Native resistance was confronted with both assassinations and massacres to the extent that nearly ten percent of the population has been killed. In the summer of 2009, the U.S. district court in Los Angeles upheld the suit

by the residents of Bougainville, suing Rio Tinto for "crimes against humanity, war crimes, and racial discrimination." Rio Tinto's defense has been that the economic and the mining crisis make contracts obsolete. It's as though someone would have insisted in Madame Bougainville's grief that her son was obsolete, that human beings do not matter.

But to return to the French Admiral and Count: In 1822 Pierre Cochet, the son of Christophe, Bougainville's gardener, bred a lovely Noisette rose named for the Admiral which Vibert introduced. It is a deep rose pink that fades to a blush pink, with the reverse side invariably paler. Its 35 to 40 petals roll back to a point. The flowers are quite small, perhaps an inch across, but they grow in clusters of thirty to fifty. The stipules are red, the prickles large. While it is somewhat compact, the plant can spread to a degree, growing to between six and seven feet tall. It blooms almost constantly. Cut it back—but why?—and it will return, offering purple-pink buds that open again into rich clusters of rose. Oh rose, rose, you are not hearsay; you are our truth. You demonstrate for us the will to live. Travel the world we may, but we return to you.

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# Rose Picker's Disease

**Stan Griep**, Master Rosarian, Denver Rose Society
rosemanstansblog.wordpress.com

I had never heard of Rose Picker's Disease or the *Sporothrix schenckii* fungus until about eight years ago now. Had someone told me about Rose Picker's Disease before then, I would have thought they were joking due to me being a rosarian. However, the disease and the fungus became very real to me when my dear mother fell into a climbing rosebush in her back yard. She got several puncture wounds from that fall and a few nasty cuts. Some thorns had also broken off in her skin. We cleaned her up well. Removing the thorns and using hydrogen peroxide on the wounds, we thought we had done a good and thorough job. We soon learned we had not! My mother started to develop hard bumps under the skin that were itchy and then painful, eventually breaking open to drain. I will spare you the rest of the nasty details. We took her to the doctor and then to a specialist who was also a surgeon. The entire ordeal went on for nearly two years with antibiotic drugs, other drugs and surgeries to remove the nodules. Had we taken her to the doctor as soon as possible, be it against her will, perhaps we could have saved her the nasty experience but also perhaps not. The first doctors were perplexed by what they saw, and the specialist told me that he was going to write a medical paper on the entire situation. That is when it really hit me that what we were dealing with was extremely serious.

Researching the disease and the fungus that causes it again for this article did give me the chills I must admit. Here is some medical information on it for you:

Sporotrichosis is a chronic infection characterized by nodular lesions of the subcutaneous tissue and the adjacent lymphatics that make pus, digest the tissue and then drain. Some of the diseases that may be caused by Sporothrix are

- lymphocutaneous infection: localized lymphocutaneous sporotrichosis
- Osteoarticular sporotrichosis – the bones and joints may become infected

- Keratitis – the eye(s) and adjacent areas may become infected
- Systemic infection – sometimes the central nervous system is invaded as well
- Pulmonary sporotrichosis; this is caused by the inhalation of the conidia (fungal spores) and is seen in about 25% of the cases.

Sporothrix typically lives as an organism that obtains nutrients from dead organic matter such as wood, decaying vegetation (such as rose thorns), Sphagnum moss, animal feces and soil. Sporothrix is especially abundant in areas where Sphagnum moss is abundant, such as in central Wisconsin. It is only rarely transmitted to humans; however, when the Sphagnum moss is collected and used for floral arrangements and such uses where it is handled a lot, the right conditions are provided for the transmission in some manner.

This article on Rose Picker's Disease brings to the forefront the need for safety while we work out in our gardens. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reports that emergency rooms treat more than 400,000 garden tool-related accidents each year. Taking proper care of our hands and arms while working in the garden is extremely important to help prevent accidents. Wearing those heavy and hot gloves while pruning may feel like a huge inconvenience; they truly do provide us with some great protection. There are rose pruning gloves on the market these days that are not so heavy and have protective sleeves on them that extend up the arm. The thorn on a rose stem or cane provides an excellent device for transmitting infectious material into your skin, as is seen with Rose Pickers Disease from the fungus *Sporothrix schenckii*.

Should you be poked, scratched or pricked by rose thorns, and you will be if you grow roses for any length of time, take care of the wound properly and right away. If the poke, scratch or prick draws blood, it is definitely deep enough to cause problems. Even if it did not draw blood, it could still lead to problems. Do not make the mistake of thinking that treatment of the wound can wait while you finish your pruning or other garden chores. I understand that it is an inconvenience

to drop everything, then go back to work. However, it truly is very important. If nothing else, do it for this old rose man.

Perhaps it would be worth your while to create a little medical station of your own for the garden. Take a small plastic paint bucket and add some hydrogen peroxide, individually wrapped gauze pads, wound cleaning wipes, tweezers, Bactine, Band-Aids, eye-wash drops and whatever else you think appropriate. Take your little Garden Medical Station with you each time you work in the garden, then treating a wound will not require travel to the house to take care of it. Keep an eye on the wound, even if you think you took care of it properly at the time. If it becomes reddish, swollen or more painful, see your doctor!

Enjoy gardening in a safe and thoughtful manner; after all, our garden friends need our shadow there!

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**IMAGE CREDITS**

| | |
|---|---|
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## BEYOND 'LA FRANCE'

### Darrell g.h. Schramm


As most rosarians know by now, those who have attended to new research or have updated what they learned long years ago, the rose 'La France' of 1867 was *not* the first Hybrid Tea. It was the first rose to be designated as a Hybrid Tea. The distinction is important. Earlier Hybrid Teas had been bred, but no one acknowledged them as such because the category had not been invented. Although others surfaced as early as 1849, the prime example is 'Victor Verdier' of 1859, the result of a cross between the Hybrid Perpetual 'Jules Margottin' and the Tea 'Safrano'. The immediate definition of a Hybrid Tea in 1867 was just that, a Hybrid Perpetual parent crossed with a Tea parent.

One or two other Hybrid Teas were introduced over the next five years, but then in 1873 Francois Lacharme introduced 'Captain Christy'. He had exhibited the new, nameless rose at the Lyon International Exposition of 1872 where he met the English breeder George Paul. It was the latter who suggested the name for the rose. But which Captain Christy was honored by that name is somewhat of a mystery. We know of at least six men so named who were living in the course of the 19th century, several of whom were contemporaries. One of them was known as an amateur rosarian living in London, but which one? Lacharme's prompt acceptance of the English name suggests the captain was well-known. One might suppose, then, that the captain was either still alive or fairly recently deceased. Three of the six Captain

Christys were still alive when the rose was exhibited.

Indeed, we know a Captain Christy attended the meeting in London that founded the National Rose Society in December 1876. One Christy lived in Scotland, the second one died in 1876, so quite likely it was neither of them. That leaves the captain of the English passenger ship *Accrington*, Captain Thomas Christy, captain from 1861 to 1879. (It is possible I overlooked someone.)


The rose itself, of a soft, delicate pink or incarnadine pink, yields large, very full flowers on erect stems of a robust plant with luxurious foliage. It was the first Hybrid Tea bred from two Hybrid Tea parents. And it still survives today.

Slowly over the next decade or so, other well-known Hybrid Teas found themselves on the market, roses such as 'Julius Finger', 'Lady Mary Fitzwilliam', and 'Grace Darling'. Indeed, Henry Bennet in England had released at least ten roses deliberately bred as Hybrid Teas by 1881. In the United States, John Cook offered the nation its first Hybrid Tea: 'Souvenir of Wootton'. That event occurred the same year a ferry exploded in San Pablo Bay (I mention this irrelevant fact because my house overlooks that bay): 1888. Wootton was the name of the George W. Childs estate in Pennsylvania

where John Cook and other breeders and nurserymen had met the previous year for a conference—no doubt a remarkable gathering.

'Souvenir of Wootton' is the result of a cross between the Tea 'Bon Silene' and Lacharme's Hybrid Perpetual, the dark red 'Louis van Houtte', two roses still available today. 'Souvenir of Wootton' derives its velvety crimson from the latter. The rose produces very large, fully double, and quite fragrant blossoms on a strong bush of medium height. Why this rose has nearly vanished is a puzzlement. Perhaps 'General MacArthur' (1905), 'Chateau de Clos Vougeot' (1908), 'President Vignet' (1911), 'Hadley' (1914), and/or eventually 'Crimson Glory'—all very red—were considered superior in some way. Although the rose is nowhere sold, John Cook's descendants in Chicago shared cuttings of 'Souvenir of Wootton' with the Maryland Rose Society where it grew for a time, but it died in the winter of 2016-2017. Though a few specimens may still grow in Australian gardens, the Chicago relatives may own the only specimen in this country.

**Mme Caroline Testout**

In 1890 the rose 'Mme Caroline Testout' saw the light of commerce. It was Joseph Pernet-Ducher's first major success in rose breeding. Much has been written about this Hybrid Tea, so I will not repeat that history except to assert that I have found it growing in quite a few pioneer cemeteries in Oregon. Child of a Tea, 'Mme de Tartas', and a Hybrid Tea, Bennett's 'Lady Mary Fitzwilliam', it has been a parent and grandparent to hundreds of other roses.

To name a few, it was parent to 'Adam Rackles' (one of my very favorite roses), 'Daily Mail Rose', 'Enchantress' (a John Cook rose), 'Entente Cordiale', 'Frau Karl Druschki', and 'Wife of Bath'. Among its grandchildren are 'Arrillaga', 'Bloomfield Dainty', 'Excellenz von

Schubert', 'Georg Arends', 'Gruss an Aachen', 'Gustav Grünerwald', 'Ibiza', 'Mary Rose', 'Mme Grégoire Staechelin, 'Mrs Herbert Stevens', 'Paul's Lemon Pillar', and 'Scepter'd Isle', to name a handful.

Jack Harkness wrote that more than any other rose 'Caroline Testout' "brought roses into the central and choicest positions in gardens . . . where they could actually be seen, instead of being enclosed in a rose garden." It is definitely a rose that invites people to walk up to it.

In 1880, Pernet-Ducher attended a rose meeting in Lyon, also attended by the carefully deliberate hybridizer Henry Bennett. In 1912 Pernet-Ducher said at a conference that without Bennett's foundational knowledge, he himself would not have been able to succeed as he did at rose breeding. 'Caroline Testout' was only one of Pernet-Ducher's many outstanding successes. Today in Australia, Warren Millington continues to use 'Mme Caroline Testout' often as a parent in breeding his beautiful roses.

'Mme Abel Chatenay', a hybrid of the Tea 'Dr. Grill' and 'Victor Verdier', was released into the trade in 1895. A blend of two or three pinks—carmine, rose, and buff or incarnadine pink and pale salmon—"the inner side much lighter towards the edges," according to *Rose Annual* of 1910, the flowers transmit an exquisite fragrance. Large and very full, they emerge from a vigorous bush with strong but sparse prickles. They may blackspot and/or mildew slightly, but to their credit, they are also excellent bloomers and drought tolerant, one of the few Hybrid Teas with that latter quality.

**Mme Abel Chatenay**

As gardeners and rose fanciers, the Chatenays go back at least to 1762 when a relative of that name designed and planted a rose garden in or near Doue-la-Fontaine, a town today considered by many of the French to be the rose capital of France.

Madame Abel

Chatenay was born Augustine-Delphine Chatenay in the village of Vitry-sur-Seine near Paris in 1857. She married a close relative from the same town, one Abel Chatenay at age nineteen. Abel Chatenay was at one time secretary-general and at another the first vice-president of the National Horticulture Society of France from 1913 until his death in 1931. They had three daughters, two of whom died young, but one who lived until 1977 and whose grandson Patrice Huet was still alive in 2009. In 1894 Abel and Augustine bought a summer house in Cabourg, where Mme Chatenay died in August of 1928.

In 1903 breeder Peter Lambert in Germany offered 'Gustav Grünerwald' to the rose market. A large, cool carmine-pink flower with pale yellow center, it emits a lovely scent having overtones of old Damask roses. It seems to enjoy wet weather and will open its huge bloom in rain and even in January where winters are mild. Rather like 'Mme Caroline Testout', one of its parents, but not nearly as tall or floriferous, the flowers are long-lasting on bush and in vase.


**Gustav Grunerwald**

The rose was named for the head gardener of Tsar Alexander III's summer residence, Gatchina. The extensive grounds, which included a grand terrace, lime tree garden, an upper and lower Dutch garden, botanical gardens, and a private royal family garden, surely kept Grünerwald busy. He seems to have had a good reputation in the horticulture world, for a lilac-pink chrysanthemum is also named for him.

Two years after 'Gustav Grünerwald was launched, E. G. Hill in the United States released the early bloomer 'General MacArthur'. This bright red or brilliant crimson rose, large, flat, and wonderfully fragrant, may "blue" at the edges under a hot sun. But that is compensated by the bush being mildew free and ever eager to bloom. Low, compact, but

spreading and vigorous, it will push out its solitary blossoms from May until frost. The plant does well in moist, heavy soil and also is not dismayed by rain. Its outstanding foliage appears bronze-green. 'General MacArthur' has been known to flourish for forty years and more.

**General MacArthur**

The man General Arthur MacArthur at age eighteen found himself in a Wisconsin Infantry Regiment during the Civil War where he was severely wounded in chest and leg but eventually recovered. In 1875 he married and sired three sons; his third son, Douglas MacArthur of WWII fame, was born in 1880. In 1885 Arthur MacArthur took part in the campaign against the famous Apache Geronimo. By 1899 he was fighting in the Battle of Manila. The following year he became the Governor-General of American occupied Philippines. He was promoted to Major General in 1901 and retired in 1909. He died of a heart attack in 1912 at age 67.

Though I overlook such superb roses as 'Kaiserin Auguste Victoria', 'Mrs Aaron Ward', and a few other fine early Hybrid Teas, one other worthy rose beyond 'La France' is 'Mrs Wakefield Christy-Miller', inaugurated by Sam McGredy II in 1909. The peony-like flowers show pearl-pink with some salmon shading, a lighter color within the petals, darker and more vermilion outside. Fragrant, and basking in heat, they refuse to fade in the sun. The bushy plant is floriferous and vigorous, but in some locations prone to blackspot.

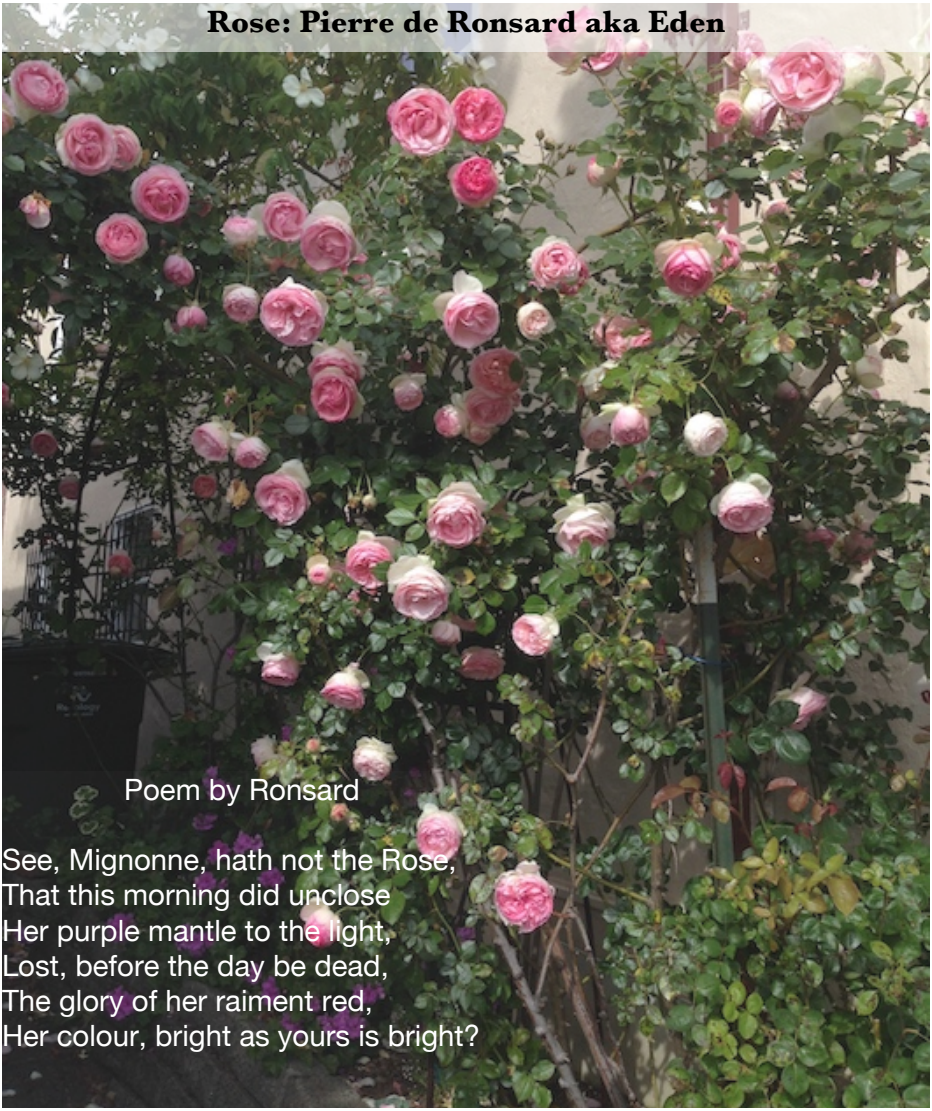
**Lady Mary Fitzwilliam**

After Bennett's lovely 'Lady Mary Fitzwilliam' seemed to have vanished, when it was supposedly found growing in England, it was soon ascertained not to be the Lady after all, but the Mrs, i.e., 'Mrs Wakefield Christy-Miller'. (The real 'Lady Mary Fitzwilliam' was eventually discovered in an Australian nursery owned by Bennett's son.)

Wakefield was born in 1835, to the family of Christy & Co. (note the variant spelling, common to this tribe), manufacturers of hats since 1773 in Stockport, Cheshire. Raised a Quaker, Wakefield opposed High Church and its rituals. He married Mary Elizabeth Richardson in 1872. She gave birth to four sons and a daughter. At some point, one source declares, he changed his surname by adding Miller. He died in Dublin in 1898. Mrs Wakefield Christie-Miller, born in 1834, died in 1929.

Hybrid Teas seem to have seen their day; the interbreeding of Hybrid Tea with Hybrid Tea today has not furthered longevity, disease resistance, nor fragrance. The renowned Ralph Moore long ago found the flowers boring, as did famous breeder Kordes already in the 1930s. Aside from their sameness and predictability, they are water guzzlers, of no service to the environment, drought, and climate change. As a result, rose breeders as a whole—from Austin in England and Kordes in Germany to Sproul and Carruth in the USA—are using species and heritage roses to reinvigorate this failing class, if not to create something beautifully new. I applaud them for launching out into the deep.

**Rose: Pierre de Ronsard aka Eden**



Poem by Ronsard

See, Mignonne, hath not the Rose,
That this morning did unclose
Her purple mantle to the light,
Lost, before the day be dead,
The glory of her raiment red,
Her colour, bright as yours is bright?

Ah, Mignonne, in how few hours,
The petals of her purple flowers
All have faded, fallen, died;
Sad Nature, mother ruinous,
That seest thy fair child perish thus
‘Twixt matin song and even tide.

Hear me, my darling, speaking sooth,
Gather the fleet flower of your youth,
Take ye your pleasure at the best;
Be merry ere your beauty flit,
For length of days will tarnish it
Like roses that were loveliest.

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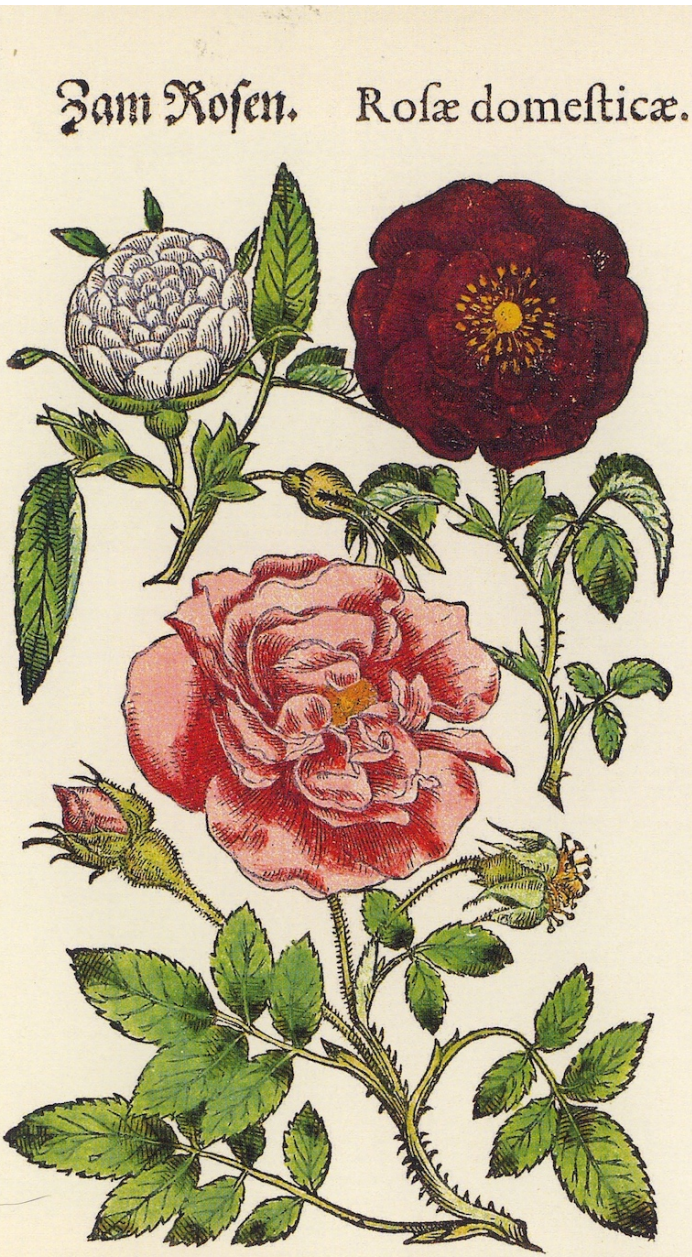


**Domestic Roses by Piero Andrea Mattioli, 1586**