

ROSE LETTER



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ROSE LETTER

The Heritage Roses Group



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THE WHITE ROSE OF HANS AND SOPHIE SCHOLL

Darrell g.h. Schramm

Polyantha roses, offspring of *Rosa multiflora*, are not much grown by mainstream gardeners today, though their later, extended interpretations, the Floribundas, are. Yet Polyanthas, flowering in clusters and appearing like miniature Noisettes, are the perfect bedding rose, especially along borders.

‘Paquerette’, the first Polyantha, was sown by Guillot fils in 1872 and introduced in 1875. Its name means daisy. Pure white, the little double flowers were aptly baptized, though the yellow stamens are not particularly prominent. With hardly a prickle, the little bush grows about one to two feet high.

Soon following ‘Paquerette’ another pure white Polyantha—and there aren’t many—emerged, bred by Rambaux and in commerce by 1879, named ‘Anne Marie de Montravel’. Sometimes incorrectly classed as a China, its parents are another Polyantha and a Tea rose. Its flowers and their clusters are somewhat larger than the first rose, as is its fragrance. It may have been named for a member of a young nobility, the counts Montravel, not so entitled until December 1814.

‘Katharina Zeimat’ is a pure white Polyantha introduced by the German Peter Lambert in 1901. Very floriferous on a compact bush, its tidy, fragrant roses form rosettes, outstanding against dark foliage.

Another white Polyantha, also bred by Lambert in the same year, is ‘Schneewittchen’, the German name for the fairy tale character Snow White. Less fragrant than the former, it still remains popular, producing as many as fifty blossoms to a branch.

But no white Polyantha has the background of another German rose, ‘Geschwister Scholl’. Introduced much later, in 1974, it was bred by Anni Berger in the former East Germany. When her breeder and nurseryman husband Walter Berger died in 1960, she not only managed the nursery but also bred forty-seven roses, one of which was ‘Geschwister Scholl’. The name means The Scholl Siblings.

The name is attached to a young German woman and her brother during World War II who were part of a resistance group called The White Rose. It was a mobilization comprised of mostly young university students in Munich and a few older adults, non-Jewish Germans who understood Hitler’s inhumanity to man, woman, and

child and refused to be a part of it. They refused to consent to abnormality as normality. The society had formed in 1942 under the leadership of Hans Scholl, son of an anti-Nazi father. Hans had been imprisoned briefly in 1937 for his homosexuality and had become a



Hans & Sophie Scholl & Friend

disenchanted Hitler Youth squad leader. Quickly the group extended its work to other cities as far as Vienna.

Secretly they held meetings, secretly they scrawled graffiti “Down with Hitler” on government buildings—once on a bookshop wall they painted the words “Hitler Mass Murderer”—secretly they produced pamphlets and broadsheets decrying the Nazis, and secretly they distributed what they had written. In June of that year, they addressed a letter to a hundred selected citizens of Munich, urging them to “adopt passive resistance—resistance—wherever you are, and block the functioning of this atheistic war machine before it is too late. . . and the last youth of our country bleeds to death because of the hubris of a

subhuman.” Within the next six weeks, three other letters were sent to thousands of Germans—doctors, educators, bookshop and tavern owners, restauranteurs, and others who had contact with many people, as far north as Hamburg. The penalty, if caught, was obvious.

Hans had tried to keep his sister Sophie from learning of his clandestine operations, but when she discovered them, he could not dissuade her from joining The White Rose.

Of course they were caught.

The word *geschwister* refers to both brother(s) and sister(s), that is, to siblings. But the Gestapo tried to separate the two, offering Sophie but not to Hans a chance to recant and live—after all, she was one of them, a German, not a Jew. But at her trial in Munich, when asked why she had taken part in the resistance, it was recorded that she replied, “Finally, someone has to make a start. We said and wrote only what many people think. They just don’t dare to express it.” She refused to recant. And so she was sentenced to death.

Typically, the Nazi party in Munich would hang traitors and conspirators. But given first Sophie’s and then Hans’ unflinching courage, defiance, and youth, they changed the usual orders of hanging in public. Doubtlessly, they feared that the courage demonstrated by the Geschwister Scholl might be contagious. Sophie was to be executed first, then Hans. It would take place in the courtyard of Munich’s Stadelheim prison—by guillotine. Without a murmur or moan, without a tremble or twinge, she walked to the steel blade, laid down her head—and it was over. The day was February 22, 1943. Her age? Twenty-one. And Hans was next.

Later, her chief executioner attested to her comportment, stating he had never before witnessed anyone die as bravely as Sophie Scholl.

The Nazis did not publicize The White Rose nor the execution. But over the years, the story emerged from memoirs, from publications of pertinent documents compiled by Hans and Sophie’s sister Inge, and over the years in Germany the fame of Geschwister Scholl grew. Anni Berger, breeder of the rose, had never forgotten. In 2005, a film entitled



Hans Scholl

Sophie Scholl: The Last Days [English translation] was shown in Germany. Over a million people saw it. Unfortunately, few people outside that country know of it.

The courage of Hans and Sophie, their moral integrity, their inner strength are rarities today. I wonder if I have them. And yet, those are the honorable principles and convictions we sorely need in order to better our fractured world. Compared to the candle-in-the-dark tale of Anne Frank, Sophie Scholl's story is a beacon. And Polyanthas or not, the Geschwister Scholl are the white roses we need to cultivate in gardens of the human spirit and heart.

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GREAT POLYANTHA ROSES 1900-1950

Barbara A. Gordon

The first Polyantha was introduced around 1875 and many are still now being hybridized or evolved as sports. Polyantha roses are easy to grow, beautiful in garden landscapes and as cut in shows. With repeat colorful blooms, they add special historic and educational interest to any rose garden.

This group of Polyanthas I am writing about are commercially available from U.S. Nurseries or as cuttings and plants from rosarians like me who grow them.

'MME NORBERT

LEVAVASSEUR' ('Baby Red Rambler') was hybridized by Levavasseur of France in 1903. 'Crimson Rambler' (1893 H multi) and 'Gloire des Polyanthas' (1887 poly) are her parents. The one to two-inch blooms are a medium red, crimson rosy red with a center of a lighter white eye. Large sprays show off these semi-double cupped blooms which may form 1/4 inch hips. Being disease free with a slight fragrance and few prickles, she is amazing with 6,000 descendants, including 200 Polyantha roses.



'EXCELLENZ VON SCHUBERT' from 1909 was hybridized

by Peter Lambert of Germany. The historic parents are 'Mme Norbert Levavasseur' and 'Frau Karl Druschki' (1906 white Hybrid Perpetual). This deep pink, dark carmine-rose, grape purple, light blue-violet, crimson and lilac-colored Polyantha shows off its



diversified, small, double form of about one-inch blooms in large sprays. It climbs or sprawls from eight to 12 feet with vigorous canes. Few thorns, shiny dark green foliage, and very sweet strong fragrance, this gorgeous Polyantha is a must-have rose.

‘WHITE CECILE BRUNNER’, a sport of ‘Mlle Cecile Brunner’, was discovered and registered in 1909 by Frague from France. The buds are white/cream opening sulfur yellow and buff peach fading to white. The two-inch double full petaled blossoms with short petals in its center around reddish-brown stamens are exquisite. With no prickles, no hips, no disease, this three-feet to five-feet hardy rose bush has beautiful sprays and is easy to care for.



‘ECHO’ (‘Baby Tausendschön’) was discovered as a sport by Peter Lambert of Germany in 1914. This triploid Polyantha sported from Climbing ‘Tausendschön’ (‘Thousand Beauties’), a Hybrid Multiflora from 1906. These pink blend, deep pink to white clustered blooms are two to three inches, cupped, loose and semi-double. Abundant blooms, long-

lasting as cut flowers, grow on this bushy three to six feet plant. Thornless, hardy with no disease, she has no fragrance. Many sports have resulted from ‘Echo’ including the Koster series of Polyanthas.

LA MARNE’, hybridized in 1915 by Barbier from France, has a slight fragrance. This cross of ‘Mme Norbert Levasseur’ with ‘Comtesse du Cayla’ (1902 China) is disease resistant, almost thornless and has a few one-half inch hips. Prolific bloom is typical of this three to five feet tall and two to three feet wide Polyantha. With vigorous growth she is a great landscape rose. Color can be rosy pink with white



La Marne

centers, cerise, and salmon-pink, definitely darker in cooler temperatures and seasons, and may bleach to white in hot summer sun. Charming with cupped and ruffled petals, these semi-double blooms grow in loose clusters. La Marne' is a

hardy, beautiful Polyantha. 'MISS EDITH CAVELL' or 'Nurse Edith Cavell' was named for a British Nurse (1865-1915) in Belgium. The Holland-Dutch hybridizer de Ruiter discovered and named this Polyantha, a sport of 'Orleans Rose' (1909) after this lady in 1917. These dark red, scarlet-crimson blooms are semi-double and flattish in large clusters. This rose grows two to three feet tall, is disease resistant, and has rich green leathery foliage. She has little fragrance but can grow in part shade. 'Miss Edith Cavell' won an award in 1916 and is in the parent heritage of many roses including 'Robin Hood' (1927 H Msk), 'Orange Miss Edith Cavell' (1998 poly), and 'Iceberg' (1958 Fl).



'PHYLLIS BIDE'

was hybridized in 1923 by S. Bide of Surrey, United Kingdom. 'Perle d'Or' (1875 poly) was crossed with 'Gloire de Dijon' (1853 China/Tea) or 'William Allen Richardson' (1878 Noisette). She grows like a China climber, eight to 12



feet or larger in California. Almost thornless with small hips, 'Phyllis Bide' has a slight sweet scent. Color is a yellow blend: yellow, gold, cream, salmon, peach, pink, coral, and orange blushing darker with age. Full petaled two-inch blooms have open almost double form in sprays. This repeat flowering climber was awarded the Royal National Rose Society Gold Medal in 1924 and The Royal Horticultural Society Award of Garden Merit in 1993.

'BABY FAURAX' was introduced by Leonard Lille in 1924 in France. The parentage is unknown. It may be a dwarf sport of 'Veilchenblau' (1909 H Multi). Mauve coloration is a beautiful red-violet, turning blue-violet, violet amethyst with a white center eye and yellow stamens. Occasional white streaks appear in the petals. These double (around 45 petals) cupped blooms are two inches diameter in large sprays. Growth habit is small, to two feet. 'Baby Faurax' (pronounced 'four ax') has a pleasant, sweet, light fragrance. She needs sun and warmth or may mildew. 'Baby Faurax' is in the heritage of many purple roses.

'RITA SAMMONS', a 'Mlle Cecile Brunner' sport from 1925, was discovered and registered by B. Clark of Portland, Oregon. These deep rose, medium pink blooms open with a lighter edge. Very double blooms in sprays similar to 'Mlle Cecile Brunner' are held above the



large four to five feet bush which shows no disease. No prickles and with darker green foliage, this hardy Polyantha is beautiful with very fragrant two to 2 1/2-inch blooms.

'SUNSHINE' ('Cutbush') was hybridized by Marcel Robichon of France in 1927. Parentage is 'William Allen Richardson' (1878 Noisette) crossed with 'George Elger' (1912 apricot-pink Poly). This

strong, honey fragrant Polyantha has orange-red buds that open to saffron yellow, golden apricot double blooms, some fading to creamy-white in heat, showing yellow stamens. Sprays of under six blooms cover this one to two-foot Polyantha. With glossy foliage, it is amazing after almost 100 years in commerce. It was awarded Certificate of Merit in 1927.



‘DICK KOSTER’ is a sport from ‘Echo’ and ‘Tausendschön’ (1906) and ‘Anneke Koster’ (1927). D.A. Koster from the Netherlands discovered ‘Dick Koster’ in 1929. Typical Koster form of double and cupped dark pink blooms in sprays beautify this Polyantha. Disease resistant, strong stems, dark green foliage are typical for this three to four-foot Polyantha rose. Shade tolerance increases its gorgeous rich deep coloration. It produces no hips and no fragrance.

‘NYPELS

PERFECTION’ is a pretty pink and white Polyantha from 1930 found by M. Leenders in Holland. Being a sport of ‘Mevrouw Nathalie Nypels’ the

cute pointed buds open to hydrangea pink, medium to light pink two to three-inch blooms with yellow stamens showing. ‘Nypels Perfection’ is healthy, disease free with clusters of blooms on a two-foot to four-foot bush. Few prickles, moderate fragrance and some ½ inch hips helped earn it a First Class Certificate in 1931.

‘MARGO KOSTER’ (‘Sunbeam’) was also discovered by D.A. Koster as a sport of Polyantha ‘Greta Kluis’ from ‘Dick Koster’ (1929) and ‘Tausendschön’ (1906) in 1931. This beautiful salmon-orange blend, orange-coral, orange-red Polyantha has clusters of cup-shaped,

globular, semi-double blooms about 1 ½ inches wide with 20 to 30 petals. Usually one to three feet tall, ‘Margo Koster’ has almost thornless canes and bright green foliage, good for containers. She is lightly fragrant. ‘Margo Koster’ has sports of her own. ‘Climbing Margo Koster’ from 1962 is a beautiful nine to twelve feet climber.



‘THE FAIRY’ was hybridized by Ann and J.A. Bentall from Pennsylvania in 1932. ‘Paul Crampel’ (1930 Poly) was crossed with ‘Lady Gay’ (1905 orange-pink Rambler) to get this apple-blossom pink, pretty Polyantha. Her pink color varies with sun and temperature. These double flat rosette blooms are one to 1 ½ inches wide, around twenty to thirty petals.

Disease and pest resistant, hardy with a slight apple fragrance and bright apple green foliage, ‘The Fairy’ can tolerate some shade, but prune it lightly. Excellent as cut rose sprays, she can be grown successfully in a container, or as a ground cover. Being two to four feet high and wide with spreading branches or cascading from a tree or placed in borders, she is always in bloom. Comment from Jim Delahanty in 2005: “Most popular polyantha in the world.” Awarded Certificate of Merit in 1932 and Royal Horticultural Society Award of Garden Merit in 1993.

‘CHINA DOLL’ was hybridized in 1946 by Dr. W. E.

Lammerts from Livermore, CA and introduced by Armstrong Nursery. This slightly tea-fragrant Polyantha is from the 'Mrs. Dudley Fulton' (1931 white poly) and 'Tom Thumb' (1936 reddish Micro Mini) cross. A profuse bloomer of bright medium pink China-rose, mimosa light pink, with a yellow base and lighter reverse coloration. The one to two inch cupped blooms have 20 to 24 petals. Large sprays appear on 1 ½ to 2 ½ feet bushes. Good for container and border plantings, this compact Polyantha is nearly thornless and disease resistant. Spotted 'Pinkie' (1947) is very similar to 'China Doll'. 'Weeping China Doll' (1977) is a six to eight feet weeping (climbing) sport.

'PINKIE' was found by Herb Swim (USA), a sport of 'China Doll' in 1947. 'Pinkie' was introduced by Armstrong Nursery. She is similar to 'China Doll', having a medium pink color described as coral-pink, porcelain pink, Neyron-rose pink with darker veining. The sixteen-petaled blooms are open, cupped, loose in a sparse



cupped, loose in a sparse semi-double form. The two to three-inch blooms appear in small to large sprays having a medium sweet fragrance. The foliage is disease free and bright green on a three to four-foot bush. It reblooms quickly. This special Polyantha won an ARS All American Rose Selection Award in 1948. 'Pinkie' sported to a ten to fifteen-foot climber in 1952 that is just as special as the bush Polyantha rose.

'LADY ANN KIDWELL' (1948) was hybridized by Alfred Krebs from Montebello, California. This Polyantha is a cross of 'Mlle Cecile Brunner' and a seedling. Large for a Polyantha, the three-inch blooms above the foliage are usually nodding because of heavy petals in double star-shaped, quilled, or starburst-shaped blooms. The pointed long deep-pink/light red buds turn scarlet-red, claret-pink or hot-pink



when open. It's a very vigorous grower, three to five feet tall and wide. Strong upright growth leans horizontal when the heavy blooms sprays open. Very fragrant blooms are a welcome bonus.

'MOTHERSDAY' ('Morsdag,' 'Muttertag') sported from 'Dick Koster' and was introduced by F.J.

Grootendorst from Holland in 1949. Her double, globular, cupped, clustered blooms show off carnation-red, rose-crimson and deep, dark red coloration. This two feet high Polyantha

grows well in containers with glossy light green foliage. A mild fragrance is a bonus, as many Polyanthas are not fragrant.



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‘ABEL GRAND’

Darrell g.h. Schramm

There was once a most handsome rose bush that grew unnoticed in an abandoned garden. Before the abandonment, the rose had thrived on its ability to quicken four of the five senses in human beings: to the eye it was not only charming but also almost erotically alluring; to the nose its scent was rapturously divine; to the touch it was like crumpled satin but also, given its armature of prickles, like broken shale under bare feet—merely a polite warning to be cautious; and to the tongue, a pleasantly mild savor as petals in a salad. But if I continue in this manner, you, the reader, won’t trust a word that I write. So allow me to begin again.

Although the rare and virtually forgotten rose ‘Abel Grand’ sits in excellent company among other survivors of 1865—‘Alfred Colomb’, ‘Coquette des Blanches’, ‘Fisher-Holmes’, ‘Isabella Sprunt’, ‘Souvenir du President Lincoln’, and ‘Souvenir du Dr. Jamain’—it has *never* been listed in *any* of the editions of *Modern Roses* or *Combined Rose List*. Nor have the following rosarians listed it in their publications: Parkman,

Sanders, Foster-Melliard, G. Henslow, G.C. Thomas, H.H. Thomas, G.S. Thomas, Mansfield, McFarland, J. Harkness, Krussman, Beales, Ruston, and Robinson & Lowery. Neither Mottisfont nor Roseraie de L'Haÿ grow it. Yet, the rose is neither mythical nor invisible. 'Abel Grand' lives!

Even over the years since its introduction, few English or American catalogues and books named it in their lists or indices. Between 1873 and 1903 in England, James Veitch, Shirley Hibberd, William Paul, and Max Singer gave it some notice, and one or two others. Similarly, in the U.S., Ellwanger and Dingee & Conard sold it on the East Coast, while John Sievers and California Nursery Company did so on the West Coast, but did anyone else? Today (in 2021) apparently only Loubert in France and Martin Weingart in Germany sell it. (Should you be reluctant to order and import it, seek those who grow it and ask for cuttings. I have recently endowed The Friends of Vintage Roses with a gallon plant of it, even as I had been given cuttings of it from a friend in Oregon.)

Why this oversight or neglect? Federic Damaizin of Lyon, who produced this hardy rose, bred several others still in commerce: 'Ardois e de Lyon', a Hybrid Perpetual; 'Mme Charles', a Tea; and 'Marie de St. Jean', a Portland. So it is not as though his roses are worthless or entirely overlooked. And this one, 'Abel Grand', despite being given the cold shoulder, has nonetheless survived.

'Abel Grand' is a grand and comely rose, a Hybrid Perpetual in silvery pink raiment reminiscent of 'La France'—but much fuller. These very full flowers, drenched in a wonderful and strong perfume beckon to the nose of any passerby. A robust plant with dark, irregularly serrate foliage, it blooms generously in autumn. It is also generous with its prickles. For a healthy bush, avoid growing it along the north side of buildings, walls, or solid fences and in areas of poor breeze circulation; otherwise, its canes will welcome powdery mildew, though not severely. A sun worshipper, 'Abel Grand' shuns damp climates. Even at four feet and with a flaw or two, it remains a grand, stout rose that should be neither forgotten nor abandoned, that deserves more attention and love.

A Festival of Roses!

Stephen Hoy

An announcement was published in the April 22, 1889 edition of Savannah, Georgia's *Morning News* inviting citizens to bring their horticulture, needlework, and artwork to a three-day exhibition sponsored by the city's Floral and Art Association. The ad proclaimed, "Roses, of course, will be the feature of the floral display" and encouraged everyone to participate regardless of garden size. Prizes would be awarded to nurserymen and amateurs alike.

From its establishment in 1733 by James Oglethorpe, Savannah had a rich horticultural history. A Trustees garden of about ten acres, an integral part of the city's design, featured pears, apples, peaches, figs, pomegranates, and numerous plants thought to possess medicinal benefits. Seeds and young plants from the garden were provided at no charge to planters and gardeners. The diversity of plant material was enhanced by locally sponsored expeditions to Europe, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. (*Rosa laevigata*, the "Cherokee Rose," was first described by Andre Michaux as found in 1787 on a plantation near Savannah.).

Savannah's population responded to the invitation enthusiastically. The morning after the festival opened, the newspaper reported, "Roses were brought in by the hundreds." Four long tables featured baskets, vases, pitchers, and waiters of roses as well as amaryllis, verbenas, heliotropes, and pansies. Container-grown material included an exotic assortment of geraniums, coffee and cinnamon trees, palms, ferns, variegated sweet potato vine, callas, and a rubber plant.

Cash awards, trophies, certificates, and gold medals were awarded in four categories. Class A, for nurserymen, called for a collection of twenty-four distinct roses, entries of cut roses or container grown roses, and floral arrangements. Class B, for amateurs, required collections of twelve distinct blooms or sprays or collections of six distinct blooms or sprays. Classes C and D, also for amateurs, called for baskets of roses, or random collections of cut roses respectively. Lastly, a local nurseryman, A. C. Oelschig, offered a special prize for the best display of twenty-five named Hybrid Perpetuals and ten named Teas.

The prize was extraordinary: fifty assorted named Hybrid Perpetual or Tea rose bushes!

Class awards and trophies were presented to a handful of Savannah citizens including Mr. Oelschig. Although the names of the winning rose exhibits were not mentioned specifically, a number of varieties were highlighted.

Augustus C. Oelschig, immigrated from Germany to the US/Long Island in 1874. There, he worked in the greenhouse/horticulture industry. He resettled in Savannah in 1881, purchased land, and opened a nursery/greenhouse business. At one point he had eleven greenhouses with 75,000 sq ft under glass. According to one source, he was the first grower of field-grown roses in the U.S. The business is still family owned and in operation to this day!



Bred by Jean Beluze and introduced in 1843, ‘Souvenir de la Malmaison’s’ pearly pink, quartered blooms have always been cherished. The highly esteemed Bourbon rose quickly became a favorite not only in Europe but also in America and Australia. Although grown under glass in many locations, it grew to perfection in the warm climate of the southern and western states of America. As early as 1855 a Macon, Georgia, nurseryman Robert Nelson considered ‘Souvenir de la Malmaison’ to be “at the head of the class” among the roses he offered. Jules Gravereaux would call it the “Queen of Beauty and

Fragrance.”

Several Teas were among those seen at the exhibition. ‘Devoniensis,’ the first Tea bred in England, was raised by Mr. George Foster. A report in *The Journal of Horticulture, Cottage Gardener, and Country*

Gentleman states that it bloomed for the first time in 1838. In the early 1840's Foster sold the commercial rights to the rose to Lucombe, Pince, & Company. After it won a Silver Banksian Medal from the Royal Horticultural Society, demand increased dramatically. It was quickly found to be excellent when grown under glass for those in colder climates as well as an outstanding bedding rose in warmer climates. Its white, fragrant blooms, sometimes tinted yellow, led to it often being referred to as the "Magnolia Rose."

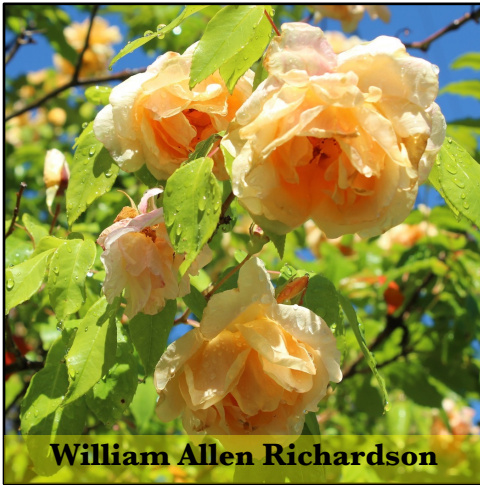
Another Tea mentioned in the account was 'Cornelia Cook' (aka Koch), a self or open pollinated seedling out of 'Devoniensis.' It was raised by Alexander Cook of Baltimore, Maryland, in 1855 and named after his daughter. Of it rose enthusiast Georgia Torrey Drennan wrote, "Gleaming white, sometimes tinged with pale gold in the open Rose, the yield of Cornelia Cook is royal." Although out of commerce now, it was in great demand in the southern states and could be found advertised in several southern nurseries, including Pomaria Nursery in South Carolina.



Unsurprisingly, the Noisette class was well represented. 'Lamarque' was raised in 1830 by a French shoemaker known to us as Mons. Maréchal. Originally known as 'Thé Maréchal,' it was renamed 'Lamarque' in honor of Jean Maximilien Lamarque, a French commander who served with distinction in the Napoleonic wars. Its white perfumed blooms had just a touch of yellow, hinting of a Tea ancestor. A comment recorded in 1887 reveals how highly it was

valued: “If a Rose grower be asked what is the most beautiful, the most free flowering, the most perpetual, the most vigorous, the purest white climbing Rose in cultivation, there is but one variety that he can conscientiously name as possessing all these good qualities.”

Another Noisette exhibited was the buttery yellow ‘Maréchal Niel.’ The origin of the sweetly scented rose is contested, but uncontested is that it was first seen growing in a garden in Montauban, France. It was obtained circa 1861 by Paris nurseryman Victor Verdier as an unnamed seedling. Eventually named for Maréchal Antoine Niel, minister of war under Napoleon III, Verdier released it commercially in 1864. The following quote points to its initial popularity: “When the first glorious blooms of it were seen . . . it was received with admiration, such as has never before been accorded to any single Rose. As a matter of course, not only rosarians and rose growers, but the horticultural world generally, were in a fever of anxiety to possess it, and the propagation of it was, and is still, an important business with nurserymen.” Its mention by name in Rudyard Kipling’s collection of stories entitled *The Jungle Book* in 1894 and Oscar Wilde’s play *The Importance of Being Ernest* in 1895 offers some insight into the general public’s overwhelming familiarity with the rose.



William Allen Richardson

‘William Allen Richardson’ was another Noisette featured in the exhibit. A Louisville, Kentucky, resident of the same name was an avid rose enthusiast. Having imported a large number of roses, he had regularly corresponded with Mme. Marie Ducher, widow of Jean-Claude Ducher. Mention is made in the 1910 *National Rose Society Annual* of a letter written by Richardson’s son-in-law W. R. Belknap in answer to the question “Who is W. A. R.?” Belknap indicated that Mme.

Ducher wrote to his father-in-law indicating a sport had appeared in her Lyon garden originating on a pale yellow rose *he had sent her* and that if able to propagate it, she would name it for him. However, in 1886

Mme. Ducher's son-in-law, Joseph Pernet-Ducher, had written a short article in the *Journal des Roses* stating that it was a seedling that arose from a pollination of 'Rêve d'Or.' Whichever report is true, 'William Allen Richardson' was put on the market in 1878. Its coppery orange-yellow blooms were very novel, prompting many to grow the rather tender variety under glass.

Two possibly mis-identified roses were among those mentioned. One was simply referred to as 'Jacquinet.' A rose of that name identified as a Centifolia can be found described in several sources as having deep pink flowers with a white stripe on each petal. Did the reporter mean 'Jacqueminot' as in 'Général Jacqueminot' the velvety red Hybrid Perpetual? The latter was very well known in the Deep South as both a garden and forcing rose. Another questionably named variety was "Baron Rothschilds." Without any additional information the rose could be one of three possible cultivars--the crimson 'Baron de Rothschild' bred by Guillot fils, the purple 'Baron Adolphe de Rothschild' bred by Lacharme, or the light pink 'Baroness Rothschild' (originally sent out as 'Baronne Adolphe de Rothschild') bred by Jean-Claude Pernet. A number of sources indicate that 'Baroness Rothschild' was familiar to late 19th century American rose enthusiasts, suggesting it as a likely candidate.

Three Hybrid Perpetuals also featured prominently among the rose entries. 'Magna Charta,' bred by William Paul before 1875, was well known for its deep rose-pink, fragrant blooms. Terms like "strong grower," and "free-blooming" were often attached to its catalog descriptions. 'Mabel Morrison,' discovered by English florist Joseph Broughton, was introduced to commerce by Henry Bennett in 1878 as a sport of 'Baroness Rothschild.' S. Reynolds





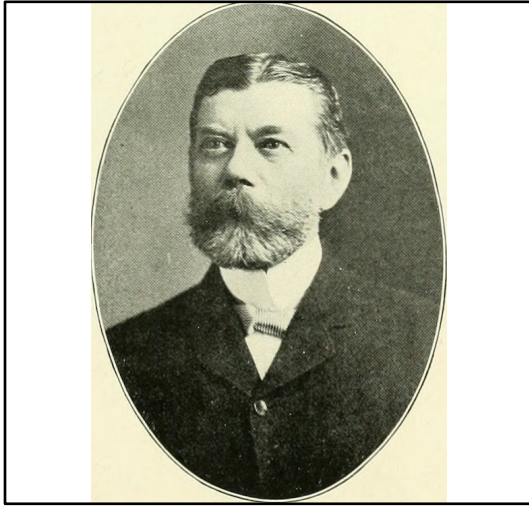
Hole considered it an unrivaled white bedding rose: “Mabel Morrison promises to be a precious acquisition in our present dearth of really white roses, larger than Madame Lacharme, and more reliable and hardy than Niphetos.” The third named Hybrid



Perpetual was ‘Her Majesty,’ a rose-pink cultivar bred by Henry Bennett. In 1883, when initially exhibited by Bennett, it was awarded the first Gold Medal presented by Britain’s National Rose Society. Its beautifully symmetrical arrangement of petals and immense flower size were highly regarded. ‘Her Majesty’ was reported in the newspaper article to have the largest bloom of any rose in cultivation!

The last specifically mentioned cultivar was the silvery-pink ‘La France.’ Raised by Jean-Baptiste Guillot in 1867, it was still classed as a Hybrid Perpetual in many late 19th century catalogs. Its reflexed outer petals, strong perfume, and free blooming habit would contribute to its wide distribution. It was eventually designated, rather arbitrarily, the first of the “great army of Hybrid Teas.”

Thanks to the passion of a widening circle of rose enthusiasts, all but one of the above mentioned roses are commercially available today and deservedly. Whether we grow them for the distinctive form of their blooms, for their enticing fragrances, or because of fond memories associated with people and places from the past, each has its unique qualities. Let festivals of roses continue!



THE JOHN SIEVERS ROSE

Darrell g.h. Schramm

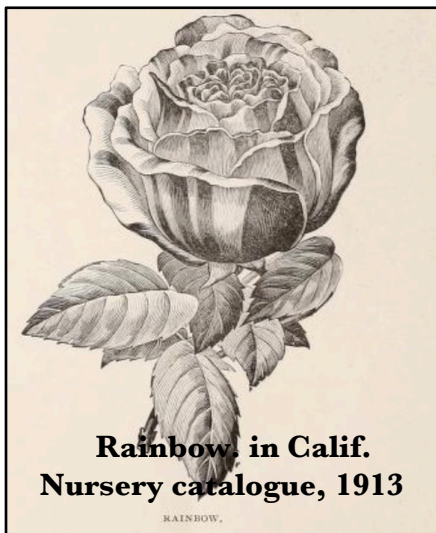
When the originator of California's oldest surviving rose was born in Bremen, Germany, Alexander Hardy in France had just released into commerce his lovely scented rose 'Eugene de Beauharnais', and Jean Laffay had released two of the earliest Hybrid Perpetuals, 'Prince Albert' and 'Princesse Hélène'. The year was 1837.

The man in question was John H. Sievers. At age twenty, he chose to leave Germany in order to seek his fortune. Boarding the clipper ship *Virginia*, he sailed around the Horn, arriving in San Francisco on Christmas Day, 1857. Temporarily working as a banker, then as a bookkeeper for Golden Gate Flour Mills, he decided to pursue his love of flowers and launched into the floral trade.

In 1871, partnering with F. A. Miller, he opened Florist Depot at 25 Post Street. In addition, the two men opened their Exotic Gardens and Conservatories—which included ten greenhouses—on the 1700 block of Mission Street. They began to make a name for themselves when at both the spring exhibition of the State Agricultural Society and again at the autumn exhibition, they won Second Prize. But with the collapse of the Bank of California in 1875 causing an economic crisis in the state, Sievers and Miller dissolved their partnership. While Miller

continued as proprietor for Exotic Gardens, Sievers continued alone with the Post Street florist shop and located his nursery gardens on Chestnut Street near Van Ness Avenue.

Sievers went on to exhibit his plants at Agricultural Fairs, Floral Societies, and the annual Industrial Exhibitions (so called because they were founded by the Mechanics Institute in 1857 but also included manufacturing and agriculture, which comprises floriculture). In 1884 he won First Premium (a cash prize) and the Gold Medal for “Best Collection of Plants and Flowers” at the Industrial Exhibition. The following year he won four out of five First Prizes.



Most importantly, that year he discovered on his Tea rose ‘Papa Gontier’—coppery pink, semi-double, and fragrant—a sported rose with broad stripes and other splashes of darker color. Deciding to propagate it, he named the rose ‘Rainbow’.

The next year, 1886, he changed the name of his business to Metropolitan Nursery and branched out to offer services in decorating churches, halls, and other public buildings. That year he also introduced to the public the rose ‘American Beauty’, a French Hybrid Perpetual, the first nurseryman to do so in the West.

He submitted to the public his own rose ‘Rainbow’ in 1889, the same year nurseryman Edward Gill of Berkeley, the first Californian to produce his own roses, introduced the short, red Hybrid Perpetual ‘Mrs. Cleveland’, raised from a seedling. Sievers also began hybridizing carnations that year.

Sievers’ catalogue of 1892 offers ‘Rainbow’ at three different prices: 25 cents for a one-year-old plant, 50 cents for a two-year-old, and 75 cents for a three. At the State Floral Society show that year, he won First Prizes for five categories of roses. By 1893 he was selling a

selection of 238 rose varieties, mostly Tea roses.

Around that time he discovered another sport, this one on ‘White La France’, a sport he initially called ‘The Midwinter’. A “dainty rose” with “fringed and fluted petals like a carnation” and of a light peach color, he exhibited it

in 1894 at the Midwinter Fair held in Golden Gate Park from January 27 to July 4. He also displayed the new rose ‘Improved Rainbow’.

On April 28, 1894, John Rock of California Nursery Co. in Niles ordered from Sievers 158 roses, two each of 73 varieties and twelve ‘Improved Rainbow’. No doubt Rock had attended the Midwinter Fair and had seen ‘Improved Rainbow’, for Sievers had yet to list it in his catalogue. Interestingly, a very large majority of the roses Rock ordered are no longer extant, roses such as ‘Comte de Grassin’, ‘Comtesse Eva Starhemberg’, ‘Emperor William’, ‘Elise Chatelard’, ‘Oakmont’, ‘Princesse de Sarasina’, and ‘Souvenir de Lady Ashburton’.

Two older sources speculate that ‘Improved Rainbow’ may have been propagated by Luther Burbank, but I have found nothing to confirm that speculation. Indeed, his *New Creations* volume of catalogues from 1893 to 1901 does not mention this rose, nor does his article on the rose as “universal flower,” in which he discusses his breeding over time of several different roses. Sievers seems to be the first nurseryman to have named and described ‘Improved Rainbow’, something he did with enormous enthusiasm, stating it was better than the original ‘Rainbow’. In fact, when he introduced the rose in his 1895 catalogue, he removed ‘Rainbow’ from his list of rose choices. That catalogue names both ‘Peachblossom’, now renamed from ‘The Midwinter’, and ‘Improved Rainbow’ as “New” roses, the very omission of ‘Rainbow’ itself suggesting Sievers may have produced the “improved” rose. Why else might he not promote his own original rose? Other catalogues now offered both.

As to ‘Peachblossom’, Timothy Hopkins in his *Sunset Seed and*



Plant catalogue of 1896 confuses Burbank's 'Peach Blow' with Sievers' 'Peach Blossom' [*sic*], using the latter's description to describe the former. Careless errors such as this have created confusion in the historic rose world numerous times over the years. At the Annual Flower Show held at the Palace Hotel before a "vast throng," Sievers won "Best in Show" that year for his display of carnations and pelargoniums. One wonders if he also exhibited 'Peachblossom' and 'Improved Rainbow'.

His home base still on Post Street, Sievers in 1897 won a lawsuit of \$7,500 against the city and county of San Francisco for flood damages to his nursery property "caused by raising [the] grade of Van Ness avenue and Chestnut street" [*sic*]. In his catalogue of that year, he lists fifty of his newly hybridized carnations as well as E. Gill's rose 'Mrs. Cleveland', also of 1889, ("brighter red than 'General Jacqueminot' and more profuse of bloom"), 'Marchioness of Lorne' ("a fulgent rose color") but not 'Rainbow', only 'Improved Rainbow' (penciled Gontier pink stripes "on every petal" rather than the broad stripes and splashes of 'Rainbow').



John Sievers gradually transferred his interest in roses to begonias, pelargoniums, and a passion for carnations. In 1902 horticulturist Charles Willis Ward of New York invited him to write an article for his book *The American Carnation*. Sievers accepted. The book was published in 1903. Ward would move to California in 1915 and manage four nurseries in Humboldt County, growing roses and other flowering plants until he went bankrupt.

In April of 1906, a huge earthquake struck and devastated much of San Francisco. All of Nurseryman's Row from Fourth Street through 14th Street on Folsom was ravaged by flames; only those nurseries from 15th Street onward survived. His business in downtown Post Street destroyed by fire, Sievers soon afterward opened a nursery shop with J.B. Boland, called Sievers & Boland Florists, on Van Ness near his

Chestnut Street nursery gardens. Fortunately, that area of the city had not been destroyed by quake or fire. After its renovation from fire damage, the Fairmont Hotel hired Sievers to decorate the palatial building for its grand re-opening.. Now seventy years old, Sievers was still in business and in demand.

Three years later, however, after a brief illness in his home at 1306 Jones Street, on September 8, 1910, John H. Sievers died.

‘Improved Rainbow’ continued to be sold, at least until 1922 when California Nursery Company still offered it. But the rose, like ‘Peachblossom’, gradually disappeared from lists. Today it is ‘Rainbow’, not ‘Improved Rainbow’ that still remains on the market. Its vigor, health, and profusion of bloom certainly attests to its popularity among heritage rose lovers after more than 130 years. ‘Rainbow’ is, after all, California’s oldest extant, cultivated rose.



ROSE CANKERS

The rose pathogens of which most of us are familiar are blackspot, downy mildew, powdery mildew, and rust. Information on those is widely available and so will not be addressed here. Stem cankers and dieback are less often discussed.

At least two different fungi and a few pests can cause stem cankers and dieback. Cankers are generally brown, frequently with grey centers or tiny, black raised spots on dead tissue of stems. Some canker spots appear yellow or reddish and can produce black-fruiting bodies. Torn, broken, or cut stems and branches and those that have been damaged by rubbing against each other, as well as cold winter temperatures resulting in dead or dying flowers, twigs, and stems, can invite the pathogens to move into the injured tissue.



Dieback also occurs on rose wood when a stem or cane has been cut too high above a node. That part usually turns black. When pruning stems and small branches, aim to cut about a fourth-inch, not more than a half-inch, above a node.

Nectria cinnabarina is a fungus that invades wounds of hardwood plants, especially trees, and results in dieback. *Nectria galligena* is what usually invades rose injuries. This canker looks like rust on the stems or in the crook of a leaf-stem and branch or twig.

Moth larvae as small white or yellow worms can also bore into canes where an injury has occurred, as can the hatched eggs of the sawfly.

If caught early, spraying with an organic product containing *bacillus subtilis* may help. An extract from *Yucca shidegera* or *Yucca filamentosa* also treats *Nectria*. Remove the canker or dead parts by cutting two or three inches below the infected section then dipping your pruners into a solution of one part bleach to nine parts water after each cut so that you do not transfer the fungus.

THE ROSE ON OUR FRONT COVER

The rose on our front cover is the Boursault ‘Mme de Sancy de Parabère’. The Boursaults are a small class of roses developed mostly in the 1820s with *Rosa pendulina* as a parent. Few are still extant.

‘Mme de Sancy de Parabère’ is usually assigned the date 1874, the year after nurseryman Ferdinand Jamain had seen the rose growing in the garden of horticulturist Monsieur Bonnet of the nursery firm Bonnet & Fils. The first record of this rose seems to be that in *Journal des Roses* of August 1885. According to this reference, Bonnet did not know what it was and gave the rosebush to Jamain who, at the suggestion of Madame Bonnet, named the rose ‘Mme de Sancy de Parabère’.

Subsequently, Jamain presented a bouquet of the flowers to the Central Society of Horticulture of France for identification, but none there recognized the rose. Later a Monsieur Bachoux observed that this was a rose cultivated for forty years on the property of a M. de Boismilon. Jamain concurred that this was an old variety, “without doubt some very old rose,” he wrote, “which could have been neglected and which would have been lost from sight.” The date of the rose, then, could be as early as 1845. In fact, as E. F. Allen wrote in the *Rose Annual* of 1973, “Until more evidence comes to light, the date of introduction must be altered to ‘before 1845’.” A Sleeping Beauty of a rose, now awakened.

This climbing rose produces the largest flowers of the Boursault class, in clear, cerise pink, very floriferous. The reverse side of the petals shows a silvery pink. Within the circumference of the quite large, outer petals is nestled a ruffle of small petals. The flowers do emit a fragrance. The plant is vigorous, very cold hardy, virtually without prickles, and an exceptionally early bloomer. It grows eight to fifteen feet. To root it from cuttings is easy.

Of note is the name: Although the caption under the chromolithograph omits the first *de*, the name throughout the article in *Journal des Roses* is ‘Madame de Sancy de Parabère’. The woman seems to have been Charlotte Lavinie Lefebvre, nee Desouettes, de Sancy de Parabère (1815-1884). She had been a Dame of Honor in Empress Eugenie’s court. Mme Bonnet, who suggested the name, must have been a friend or admirer.



THE ROSE ON OUR BACK COVER

Rosa systyla, the Columnar-Styled Dog-Rose, as it's called in the UK, is today most commonly known as a form of *R. stylosa* and apparently a cross between *R. arvensis* and *R. canina*. A summer-flowering shrub that grows to ten feet in height, its similarity to the common dog-rose occurs in its color and shape, though the foliage is more closely bunched, and it produces more flowers. The blossoms can be white or pale pink, the generally large prickles are wide at the base, and the long pedicels show glandular bristles. The hips are red.

First described in 1809, *R. systyla/stylosa* can be found growing in hedges and along roadsides, throughout the southern parts of the British Isles and Western Europe.

The painting on the back cover was done by botanist James Sowerby.

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