

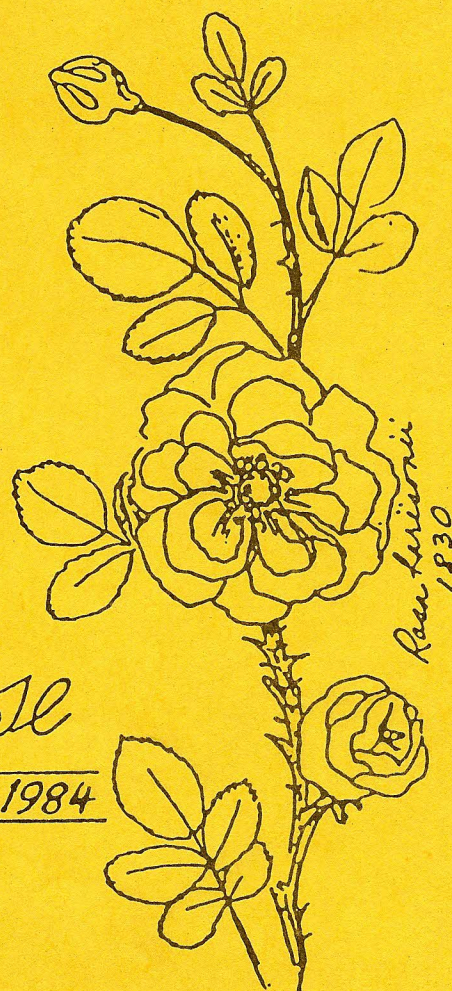


Rosa Andalusica  
1824

# The Old Texas Rose

Vol. 3 No. 4

Dec. 1984



Rosa Andalusica  
1830

## DARLING OF THE DAY: A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

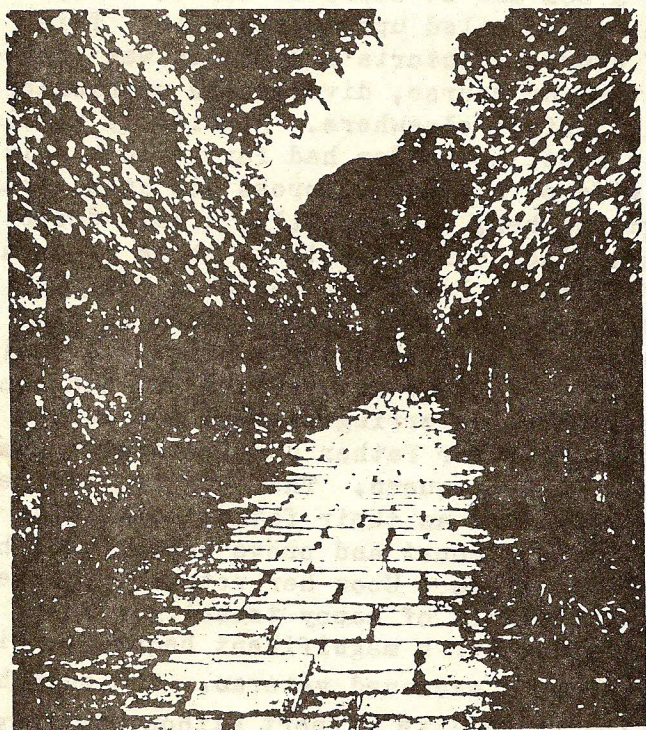
OF VITA SACKVILLE-WEST

Conrad Tips, Hous

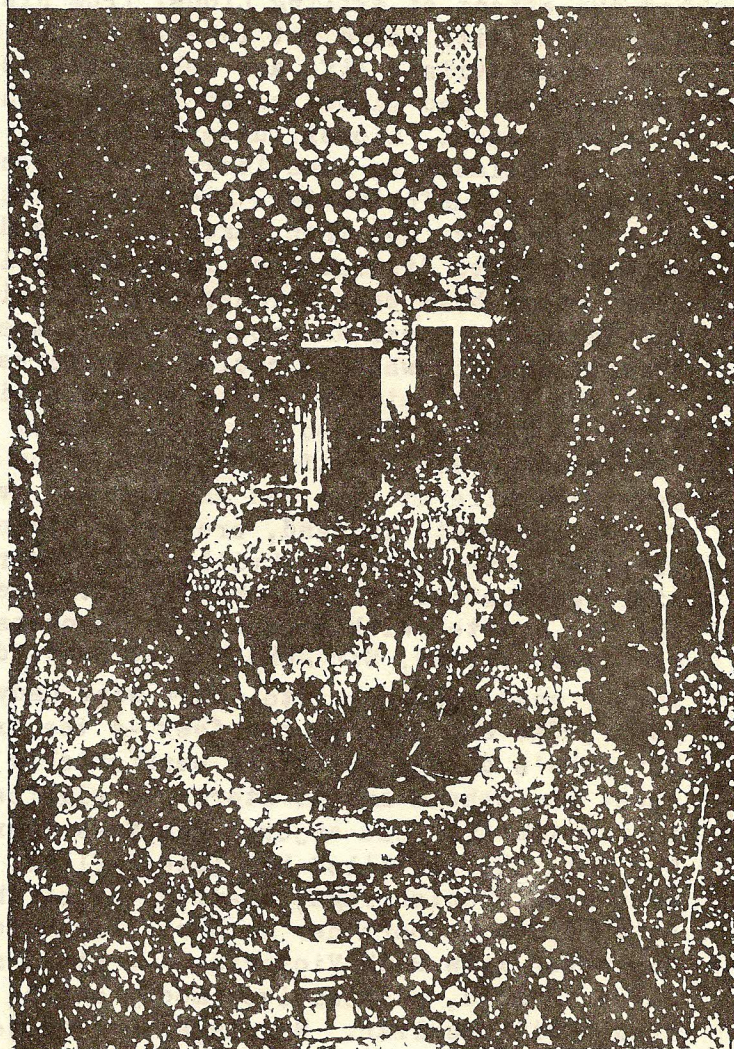
"Quelle roman est ma vie!" said Victoria, Lady Sackville, complacently and rather often. It was no more than the truth; a novelist of the romantic persuasion could never have concocted so improbable a heroine and so fantastic a life. She was the eldest daughter and second child of the of the unlikely union of Lionel, Baron Sackville, and Pepita, the Star of Andalusia. Whatever the lady's talents as a ballerina, she was without question a great beauty. Lord Sackville was enamoured and Pepita was prepared to entertain his addresses, which did not include marriage. Not that he wouldn't have married her, but there was an inconvenient husband. Pepita, above all, was a realist, who knew the usages of the world and the insecurities of a dancer's life only too well. Too, she was more than fond of her seldom present, often silent, rather dour lover; if nothing else, he certainly made a change. Lionel was good to her. She lived in what must have seemed royal splendor to a peasant girl, perhaps of gypsy blood; every whim was indulged, every luxury supplied, and, for her part, Pepita ran a lively and amusing household. Remembering her early poverty, she was kind to the poor and much loved for her benefices; charity or no charity, however, she and her brood were snubbed by the respectable of whatever place they found themselves in. For the sake of her children, Pepita was hurt. She, after all, had never been respectable and didn't much feel the lack and if her darlings were not invited to



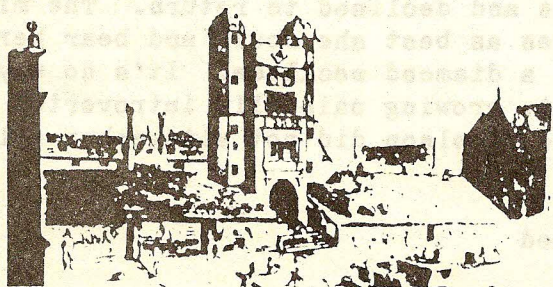
parties — well, she unpacked her castanets, unpinned her glorious auburn hair, and danced for them. Little Victoria never forgot her mother's flaunting beauty. Pepita died in Paris soon after giving birth to her seventh child. Lionel, away from town en poste, returned home to find his mistress dead and the baby with her and his terrified eldest daughter trying to keep the family together. It comforted Lionel but little to be told that Pepita died with his name upon her lips. Altogether, the situation was appalling. At length, the boys were sent to school, the girls to the nuns, and Lord Sackville to the Argentine. Victoria detested her convent — no Maman, no Papa, no love, no laughter, and precious little comfort. Then, quite suddenly, she was transported to England and there learned, for the first time, that she had two aunts, the Countess of Derby, who was kind to her, and the Duchess of Bedford, who was not, that her home for the moment was to be the palatial Knole House, and that presently she would accompany her father to the United States and there assume the first position in Washington's diplomatic society as hostess of the British Legation. The ill-educated, insecure, and undeniably illegitimate girl, though interested, took it all in stride. Queen Victoria, consulted, said in effect that she didn't mind if Washington didn't mind. Washington took a deep breath, smiled a bit tremulously, and replied it didn't mind if the Queen didn't mind.



The Pleached Lime Walk at Sissinghurst Castle



The South Cottage Garden with "Mme. Alfred Carriere" blooming on the wall



Sissinghurst in the 18th Century



Victoria took the town by storm, subjugating everyone she met. Smitten, the elderly President Arthur proposed matrimony but she thought not. He was but one of her willing victims and Victoria by that time was tempestuously in love with her cousin (so to speak), Lionel, who was handsome, charming, unembarrassed by an excess of intellect, and, conveniently, Lord Sackville's heir. He, pleased and no doubt relieved that matters had sorted themselves out so tidily, blessed the happy couple. The young people were well matched: both had beauty and great powers of attraction and both had passionate natures. Awakened to physical love, Victoria found that she liked it quite a lot. She lived in a dream of sensuality, recording each intromission in her journal with lyric enthusiasm. Lionel, it seems, was a skillful lover with remarkable powers of endurance. Nor surprisingly, Victoria presently found herself to be pregnant. The labor was very bad; torn during delivery, she was ill for a long time afterwards, but the baby, Vita, flourished. Never a child so bright, so beautiful, so — in a word — perfect. For the parents of this Infant Phenomenon, however, life was no so perfect. Victoria, frightened and doubtlessly remembering her mother's tragedy, announced that she wanted no more children. This, the science of contraception being what it was, had the effect of exiling Lionel from his wife's bed and it deprived him of the prospect of a son. Vita could not inherit Knole, which was entailed upon heirs male. This fact shaped Vita's life and embittered it. Of course, Victoria's decision was grounds for divorce, had Lionel cared to press the matter; of course, divorce was unthinkable in their class. Lionel, understandably, sought comfort elsewhere. Formidably virile, with the melancholy good looks of the Sackville race, he seldom had far to look. It was all very unfortunate. Had Lionel set the wife of his bosom across his knee, spanked her soundly, and then taken her to bed — giving her, incidentally, a half-dozen more babies to distract her from making life a living hell for Vita — three lives at least might have been far happier. Possibly. Victoria loved her husband, relished the masculine sex, and appreciated a masterful approach. But Lionel stood on his dignity and did what he could to preserve a facade of marital accord. Victoria declared that she didn't mind Lionel's transgressions. She did. She prowled the 300-odd rooms of Knole like a wounded tigress, longing to horsewhip her erring husband and murder his mistresses. Still, life continued to be interesting. Her father dead, Victoria was Lady Sackville at last and she reigned over Knole like a queen. Then her brother Henry, forged documents in hand, presented himself to the world as their father's lawfully begotten heir. Lady Sackville was required to go into court and prove herself and her siblings bastards, which she did with the greatest aplomb. Upon her return to Knole, she was greeted with a torchlight procession and a tumult of happy tenantry. Then, her great friend, Sir John Murray Scott died, leaving her a magnificent bequest. His family sued and back into court went Lady Sackville, a seasoned veteran. She soon had both judge and jury at her feet — the transcript reads like Gilbert without Sullivan — Sir John's dismal relations were quickly annihilated, routed, extinguished. The bequest was upheld amidst storms of giggles from Society in general and Lady Sackville in particular. She enjoyed the fuss enormously. Vita did not. And then, Lionel went too far. He installed his latest flame, and her husband, at Knole. Victoria, in a screaming Spanish rage, slammed out of the house and declined to return. The miserable Vita had to support her mother's lacerated nerves as best she could and bear her rages. One never knew with Victoria — a kiss, a slap, a diamond necklace. It's no way to raise a child, a sensitive, moody child, at that, growing painfully introverted and even a bit peculiar. Marriage in 1913 to Harold Nicolson did not altogether solve Vita's problems.

To Be Continued

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## THE RUSTLE, 1984

This year when planning the Rustle, President Bill Welch instructed me that we were too many and too civilized to go out and pillage the countryside as had been our wont. We would just do our nursery tour, picnic, and afternoon lecture. Joe Woodard had requested the date, Sunday, November 4th. A few weeks before Buddy Harrison called and in a small voice asked we have a Rustle the Saturday before. I was overjoyed: you can't take the "rustle" out of old Texas Rustlers!

So Buddy, Joe and eleven other Dallas/Ft Worth folk drove down. Saturday afternoon we all convoyed off to loot in the Navasota environs. Jessie Mae Nelms gave us cuttings of Pam's Pink, that wily China as yet unnamed, and her huge yellow tea, discovered by Cleo Barnwell (who hopes it will prove to be Perle des Jardins, T, 1874). A rent house yard yielded both Cecile Brunner and Bloomfield Abundance, though I'm sure we couldn't help getting those cuttings mixed. Both were blooming and Joe showed us the fuller flowers and differing habit of BA.

Another rent house was vacant, but gave us the Cute Rose, named by Susan Urshel Schmidt for its dwarf China habit.

The by now famous Hole Rose was visited again, and after comparing it "side by each" I'm sure that it is Marie vanHoutte, T, 1871.

South of town Martha Gonzales tolerated us another year. We are assured her Tea is Mrs Dudley Cross, 1907, because of its lack of thorn. Cleo identified her small red China as "Dresden."

Another yard in this general area had something that looked like Champney's, plus a long-budded pink Tea, that I christened Helen for Mrs Woodard. One cutting holds tenuously to life in my mister!

The Rustlers, weary but unbowed, returned to my house where Missie fed us homemade hamburgers, and we caught up on lots of good rose gossip.

The morning of November 4th dawned about four hours too early for me, as people began arriving before I was all set up with lists, name tags, rose tags, etc. I was so glad to see some members I knew only by name -- now I can add the faces. I was completely undone to meet my favorite TV personality, Bill Adams, Harris County Extension Agent. Bill has long advocated Louisiana iris, Chinese veggies, and recently Texas red Maples, and now he has begun to recommend old roses. Among our officers present were Margaret Sharpe (VP), Sara J Derby (Sec), Conrad Tips (2nd VP), and Joe Woodard (Chmn Council).

Wr "headed up and moved out" for Independence about 10:00. I'll bet you-all thought you would never get there by my favorite short-cut. I told everyone that the La Bahia Trail was laid out by deLeon in 1690 -- of course, I didn't mention that few people had used it since! I did want everyone to admire those wonderful live oaks on that road.

Mike greeted everyone at the "blue office." Bill Welch met us there; he had just rolled in from a convention in San Antonio, and had had to bring the food from Bryan that morning. We romped around the growing field, especially the alphabetized 2 gallon roses until almost noon. We certainly had glorious weather, and I hope everyone got great photographs. Mike gave us each his Petite Scotch Pinkie as we left: it is a favorite of his, and comes from the Cape Fear region of Carolina, about 1750.

The Shoup Srs, Mike and Nancy (brave folk!), hosted us at their country place nearby where we dined on BBQ and the trimmings. (Mike Sr has an oil company in Houston.) We posed and had our "beauty struck" and then returned to Navasota for our lecture.

Many thanks to Brent Pemberton, Jean Williams of La Grange, and Buddy Harrison for their programs. I'm sorry the Episcopal Parish House



# RUSTLE, Cont.

was not set up well, but we hadn't expected so many -- nor everyone to stay for the program.

Next year I hope we can have a plant sale. Let's all work on rooting some of our favorites, and bringing them to sell or swap with each other -- not large or expensive plants, of course. This way we can all have practical souvenirs of our day.

THE OLD TEXAS ROSE is published irregularly by the Brazos Symposium, more commonly called the Texas Rose Rustlers, for the area of Houston and Central Texas.

The Rustlers are about 125 members from this area who grow, but more importantly, collect the old garden roses which are a particular part of our heritage. With collection also comes the responsibility to preserve by distribution, and to identify, if possible. Old roses are beautiful gifts from the past to us and to the future.

Dues are \$5/yr for about four copies of The Old Texas Rose, other information sheets, and the yearly Great Rose Hunts, usually held in either November or December. Dues are payable to Corres. Sec. Miss Pamela A. Puryear, 708 Holland St, Navasota, TX 77868, phone 409 825 3220.

Other associations which replicate our purposes are the Dallas Rose Society's sub-group, Historical Roses of Dallas. Mr J W Harrison of Richardson is president, and Mr Joe M Woodard of 8636 Sans Souci Drive, Dallas 75238, is editor. Dues are \$10/yr to him for The Yellow Rose, published monthly.

On a national level, the Heritage Roses Group also acts as a clearing house of information on old garden and species roses. Our SouthCentral Co-ordinator is Ms Mitzi VanSant, 4806 Evans Avenue, Austin 78751. Dues are currently \$4/yr, and their journal is the Rose Letter, four times yearly.





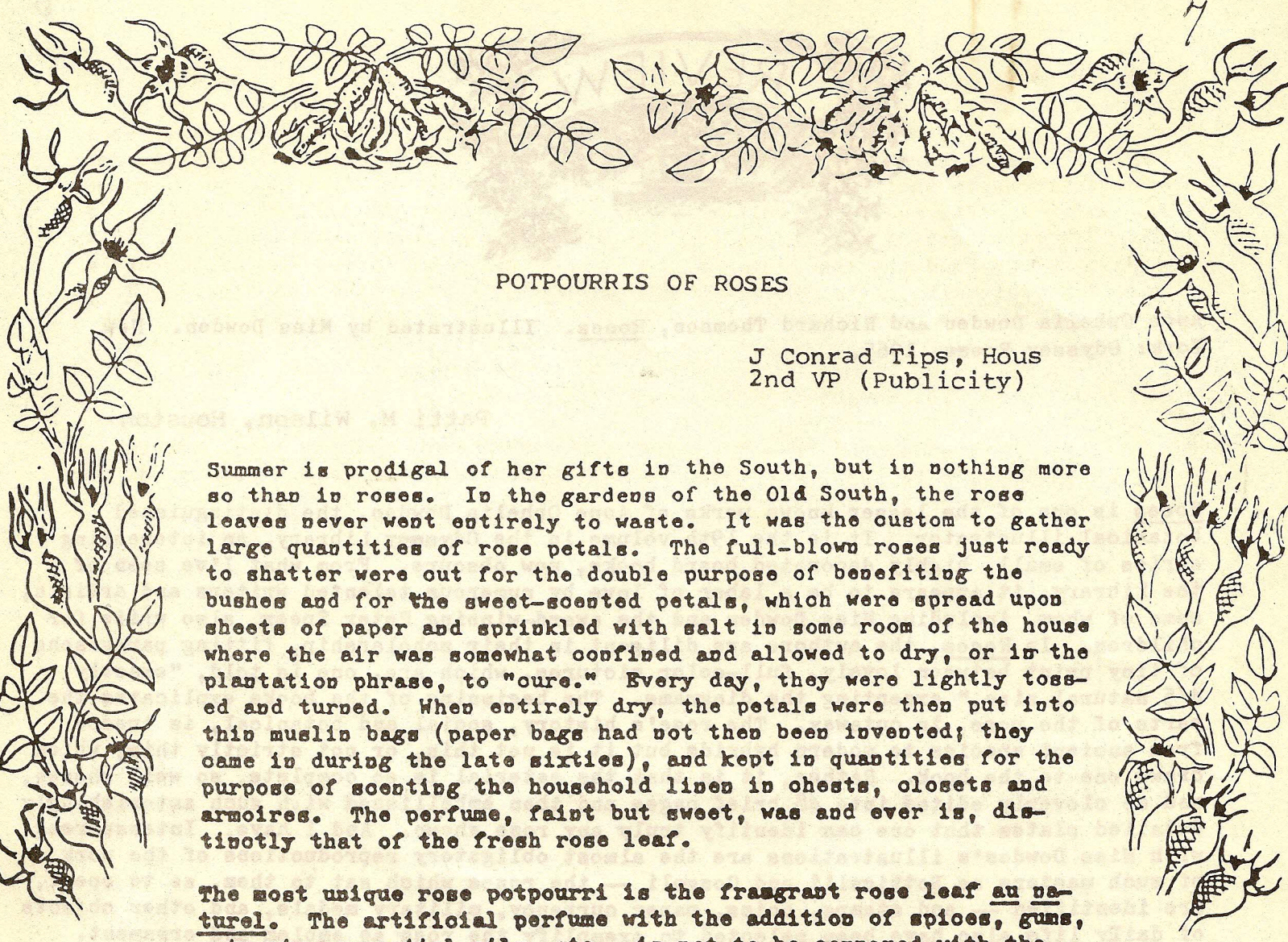
Anne Ophelia Dowden and Richard Thomson, Roses. Illustrated by Miss Dowden. New York: Odyssey Press, 1965.

Patti M. Wilson, Houston

Roses is one of the lesser known works of Anne Ophelia Dowden, the distinguished botanical illustrator. It is the 19th volume in the Odyssey Library, an interesting series of small, highly decorated board books, now obscure. From what I've seen of the Library, it appears to be a labor of love by numerous talented writers and artists, some of whom, including Miss Dowden and the award-winning Peter Speer, also write for children. In Roses, the authors are diligent in their scholarship, fitting paragraphs of tiny print between lovely, full-color pictures, which are, one is told, "exactly 4/5 natural size," excepting the diagrams. The beginning of the book explicates the parts of the rose, in outaway. The rose's history, social and botanical, is traced from ancient species to modern hybrids but it is not this, or not strictly this, which draws one to the book. Rather, it is that the material is so complete, so well chosen, and so cleverly edited into 48 brief pages and then embellished with such astonishingly detailed plates that one can identify truly any rose shown. And I have. Interspersed with Miss Dowden's illustrations are the almost obligatory reproductions of the work of such masters as Botticelli and Gozzoli — the roses which sat to them, so to speak, are identified — and stamps, coins, paper currency, military medals, and other objects of daily life also have been selected to exemplify the rose as emblem and ornament. Of blameless quality, combining the novelty of a postcard collection and the charm of a child's book, Roses is the perfect browse. For those who enjoy it, Miss Dowden has another title in the Odyssey list, The Secret Life of the Flowers, which deals with reproduction. Also, she has written The Blossom on the Bough, on trees, Wild Green Things in the City, about weeds, Look at a Flower, an introduction to botany, and This Noble Harvest, on herbs. In 1969, Miss Dowden illustrated Shakespeare's Flowers, by Jessica Kerr, and it's a treat.

Miss Dowden was born in Denver, Colorado, 17 September 1907. She studied at the University of Colorado, Carnegie Institute, and the Art Students League. She taught for many years and has exhibited widely. Her work may be seen in the collections of the New York Botanical Garden, the Brooklyn Botanical Garden, and the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. She lives in New York and paints in New Hampshire. Mr. Thomson, a leading authority on the old garden roses, has done much to popularize them through his books and articles. Most of the blossoms, leaves, and hips depicted by Miss Dowden came from Mr. Thomson's famous collection.





## POTPOURRIS OF ROSES

J Conrad Tips, Hous  
2nd VP (Publicity)

Summer is prodigal of her gifts in the South, but in nothing more so than in roses. In the gardens of the Old South, the rose leaves never went entirely to waste. It was the custom to gather large quantities of rose petals. The full-blown roses just ready to shatter were cut for the double purpose of benefiting the bushes and for the sweet-scented petals, which were spread upon sheets of paper and sprinkled with salt in some room of the house where the air was somewhat confined and allowed to dry, or in the plantation phrase, to "cure." Every day, they were lightly tossed and turned. When entirely dry, the petals were then put into thin muslin bags (paper bags had not then been invented; they came in during the late sixties), and kept in quantities for the purpose of scenting the household linen in chests, closets and armoires. The perfume, faint but sweet, was and ever is, distinctly that of the fresh rose leaf.

The most unique rose potpourri is the fragrant rose leaf au naturel. The artificial perfume with the addition of spices, gums, extracts, essential oils, etc., is not to be compared with the rose petal in its purity. The usual method of curing them has just been described. There is a difference in roses. Some have not strong enough perfume to serve this purpose without the aid of aromatic herbs, spices, or essential oils. Others have strong and lasting perfume, the purity of which is alloyed by any additional odour. La France, noted as the most fragrant of all roses, and Reine Marie Henriette, equally as famous for its strong, vinous

scent, combined, make ideal filling for rose jars. The thick, leathery petals of Marie Henriette are rich in some subtle substance that savours of the wine-press. La France might make the pure attar of roses, its breath is so deliciously sweet. The natural perfume of these roses will pervade the air of any apartment when the lid is removed from the jar. This simple potpourri is made fresh every year, when roses are at the height of their bloom.

Thus Mrs. Drennan in Everblooming Roses; the English method is rather more elaborate:

What we call moist pot-pourris were formerly called by the prettier name of scented jars. Instead of the modern labour-saving method of spraying the flowers with various essences, such as essence of Rosemary, oil of cloves, eau de Cologne, essence of Verbena, Rosewater, essence of Heliotrope, oil of cinnamon, etc., the flowers were more or less pickled. Pot-pourris of this kind were made in deep big crocks and the proportions were about half a pound of bay salt and a handful of coarse kitchen salt to two pounds of flowers. The petals and salts were strewn in layers about half an inch



thick and on top was placed a wooden lid with a weight on it to keep the whole well pressed down. After a week the mixture was spread out to dry but not in the sun. Then the dried leaves such as Verbena, Rosemary, Lavender, etc., were added. Last of all the spices were added, usually bruised cloves, powdered Allspice, Coriander, Cinnamon broken in small pieces allowing two or three ounces of spices to every pound of pickle. For six weeks the whole was stored in an airtight jar, after which a few drops of some essential oil were added. Roses, however, were the chief ingredients in all pot-pourris, and the roses chiefly valued for pot-pourri were the Apothecary's Rose (R. officianalis), the Cabbage Rose, and most of the centifolia hybrids, R. gallica, Kazanlik (the rose grown in Bulgaria for attar of roses), Damask roses, the most sweetly scented of the rugosa hybrids, the Bourbon roses, notably Madame Isaac Pereire and Parfum de l'Haye. To these may be added George Dickson, Gruss an Teplitz, Chateau de Clos Vougeout, Mrs. John Laing.

This paragraph is excerpted from Eleanor Sinclair Rohde's Rose Recipes, published in London by Routledge in 1939, with decorative borders by Helen Kapp. Miss Rohde was born in India, where her father was agent to the Maharajah of Dravancoore and Cochin. She attended Cheltenham Ladies' College and Oxford University and later worked for some years as private secretary to the indomitable Lord Curzon, that very superior person, which indicates that she had plenty of grit in her craw. Her garden in Surrey, designed around uncommon herbs and vegetables, was much admired between the wars. She wrote many books — cookery, herb- and bee-lore, old roses, the history of gardens and gardening, bibliography — a number of which are considered classics of their kind. Happy the possessors! It's true that she was rather given to seeing fairies at the bottom of the garden, but we all have our little eccentricities and I can think of worse. In my opinion, her finest books are The Scented Garden, The Story of the Garden, Herbs and Herb Gardening, and Shakespeare's Wild Flowers, Fairy Lore, Gardens, Herbs, Gatherers of Simples and Bee Lore. They are not easy to come by.



#### THE PERFUME OF THE ROSE CHARACTERISTIC OF ITS PARENTAGE

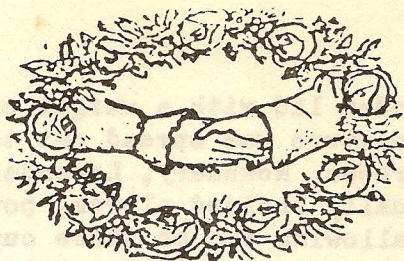
excerpts from R Curtis London Florist  
1858

The next distinct family ... is the Tea Rose, the type of which, the old yellow Tea, had its birthplace in China. This class of roses cannot be distinguished from the China but by its scent, which the French with their nicety of discrimination consider to be like green tea. It has certainly a very peculiar scent unlike every other Rose. ....

Few or no Roses are so odoriferous as the Teas. I have found a single bloom of (the Tea) Goubault sufficient to perfume a large room. Their peculiar scent is to be recognized, however they may have been crossed with other Roses.

So much for perfume. What is a Rose without it?





PAMELA PURYEAR, ED.

FEATURE ARTICLE. The lead article for this OTR is Conrad's study of that strange but great gardener, Vita Sackville-West. Part I covers her ancestry and early life; Conrad will conclude with her gardening achievements. The illustrations are of her garden at Sissinghurst Castle, Kent, from Peter Coats, Great Gardens of the Western World.

PUBLICITY. Has everyone noticed how much old roses have been in the news of late? My article on old-fashioned plants appeared in Leaf & Liesure in November. Texas Homes ran a fine piece on Mike Shoup Jr and the Antique Rose Emporium in January, beginning on page 35. Bill Adams certainly has faithfully mentioned old roses in his newspaper articles. December's Flower and Garden also mentioned Mike. The American Rose Magazine ran Mike's article "Old Roses As Landscape Plants," with Dr Welch's address (How did they manage that???) The Houston Chronicle's "Lifestyles" also did Mike & Co proud with a color spread, mind you! (Dec 11, Sec 6).

Upcoming is the January Nieman-Marcus catalogue, and an article by new member Sally Squires in May/April Houston Home & Garden. I don't know if Texas Gardener will take the bit I wrote on my old rose collecting memoirs. If so, it would probably be out by June, 1985. Don't worry; I don't name names -- or, at least, not many!

A MUST TO DO. Why hasn't everyone subscribed to Buddy and Joe's The Yellow Rose??? It's WON-DER-FUL, \$10/yr or \$1/ea. Write Joe Woodard at 8636 Sans Souci Dr, Dallas 75238. I must know who won the "I'm Just a Willow Water Widow" country song-writing contest!

NEW MEMBERS. Speaking of willow water, if you are a new member, you recieved in early January a sheet on how to root rose cuttings. The sheets are available to everyone for the postage, so send a big SSAE for as many as you want.

OLD-TIMEY IRIS. Friend Bill Hunt from Raleigh, NC, an old rose lover and Founding Father of the Southern Garden History Society, identifies our old "white flags" as Iris X albicans, a native of Yemen. No wonder they don't mind our Texas heat!

DISCOVERIES. For all you old old rosers, we think we have finally named a few of the stars of previous Rustles!

STUDY NAME	SOURCE	REAL NAME
West Emma	Emma Renz, Brenham	Etoile de Lyon T 1871
The Hole Rose	near rr, Navasota	Marie vanHoutte T 1871
Caldwell Mini Pink	re Bill Welch	Mignonette P 1880
Dillard	re Pat Harrison	Climbing Clothilde Soupert P ?
Eloise Adams	re Tom Adams	Clothilde Soupert P 1890
White Carl/Brenham Wh	Mrs Carl Meyer, Bren	Krönprincessin Viktoria B 1887 (wh sport of Malmaison)
Giddings Pink Cup	re Tom Adams?	Hermosa Ch 1840
Josephine	J Kennedy, LA	Nestor G 1846 ??
Andrea	Andrea Abad, Nava	Mrs Dudley Cross T 1907
Dwarf Red China	Martha Gonzales, Nava	Dresden ND