

# *A New Home for* OLD GERMAN ROSES

*Harald Enders*

Many old German roses, old in the sense of having been introduced in the timespan between the end of the nineteenth century and World War II, are in danger of fading into oblivion. Indeed many cultivars are already extinct. German rose and general gardening literature of the time in question reports about 1,600 to 1,800 different cultivars, which emerged from the rose nurseries of Peter Lambert, Johannes Felberg-Leclerc, Nicola Welter, Hermann Kiese, and many others whose names and roses are nearly forgotten today.



ABOVE: 'Heldengruss', Kiese (photo by Harald Enders)

RIGHT: 'Goethe' (photo by Gregg Lowery)

FAR RIGHT: 'Deutsches Danzig', Polyantha, Peter Lambert, parentage unknown, 1935. After appearing in commerce for just a few years, this cultivar no longer appears in Lambert's own rose catalogue of 1938/39. (photo by Harald Enders)





LEFT: 'Frau Karl Druschki'  
(photo by Harald Enders)

RIGHT: Peter Lambert  
(courtesy of Harald Enders)

I decided to collect the surviving roses of these 1,600 to 1,800 cultivars. My work started in early 2008 with reading, writing, and much manual labor, which was eventually replaced by horse-powered machinery when the work got too backbreaking. The aim was, and still is, to collect and help preserve what is left of the German rose heritage by planting "safety-copies" and by propagating, if possible, the cultivars that are threatened with extinction. Planting of the first roses

started rather prematurely in the autumn of 2008—some earth moving still had to be done—to minimize the risk of losing the potted plants to the cold of our sometimes rather nasty winters.

After the initial planting, other difficulties surfaced. Rather naively I had estimated that Germany's old roses would most likely be found in German nurseries; this proved in most cases totally wrong. I ended up scratching together what was to be found commercially all over Europe, discovering that many cultivars, among them some with a big reputation in their time, were only available overseas. Fortunately, dear friends helped me get some rarities from the United States, and with luck and persistence I obtained other rare cultivars from the Europarosarium Sangerhausen.

The definition of a rose of German origin is not as simple as it might seem. A painful nation-building process, a war with France, and two world wars have seen to that. So for reasons of my own, but not as a political statement, I have adopted a rather liberal view of what might be regarded as a "German" rose. Included in my collection are the roses bred by Geschwind from Austro-Hungary, cultivars from Ludwig (Louis) Walter from Saverne (Zabern), Alsace, and some of the very rare roses of Jan Böhm and Dr. G. Brada from the former Czechoslovakia.

My garden is situated in Northern Germany, zone 7b. At present, it is divided into a formal part of about 500 square meters and a landscape part of about 2,500 square meters. The formal part has a classical rose garden layout with 16 different rose beds

### Peter Lambert

1859 – 1939

Many members of the generation of breeders before World War II learned their trade at Peter Lambert's nursery. Lambert, the predominant figure in German rose breeding, brought approximately 180 different cultivars into commerce; among them are some that enjoyed worldwide success. The most prominent certainly is Frau Karl Druschki (1901). With the release of his 'Thalia Remontant' he laid the groundwork for a whole class of roses that bear his name: the Lambertianas.



Apart from his own breeding work, Lambert played other important roles in German rose history. For more than 10 years he was editor-in-chief of the *Rosen-Zeitung*, the publication of Verein Deutscher Rosenfreunde, the German Rose Society, and secretary of the society. He was the initiator of the rosariums at Sangerhausen and Zabern, for which he did the garden layout. In his later years, Lambert, like some of his famous French predecessors, became interested in growing wine and breeding more disease-resistant winestocks. He named the rose 'Ausonius' after a famous wine hill near his home at Trier (Trèves) and 'Reichsgraf von Kesselstatt' after the owner of a well-known winery.

Peter Lambert died just before the outbreak of World War II. Sadly, his heirs could not keep the nursery going. It died with its patron.

and a slightly elevated center where the garden paths meet. At this time it holds about 300 different cultivars. The Bruder Alfons ramblers cover an old horse shed that is now used to hold my garden equipment.

The collection roses are situated mostly in the formal part of the garden. My original plan was to organize the roses by breeder, ideally sorted by year of introduction. But this detailed type of plan was not operable. There would always be new acquisitions that would belong in a place that was already occupied. So in about two to three years the structure of the garden and plants will be revisited. Some of the more vigorous ramblers are planted along a 2-meter fence along the border of my premises, and were originally meant to fend off the deer which choose to devastate my garden. I chose this place for the ramblers because if they were located in the formal part of the garden, they would block the visual axis I had thought about when designing that section of the garden.

If there ever comes a time when I'm satisfied with my garden, I will open it to the public, at least for several weekends of the year. But this is still a dream of the future.



ABOVE: 'Apotheker Franz Hahne', Pernetiana/  
Hybrid Lutea,  
Dr. F. H. Müller,  
parentage unknown,  
1919. Brought into  
commerce more than  
15 years after it was  
bred. (photo by Harald  
Enders)

LEFT: 'Gottfried Keller'  
(photo by Gregg Lowery)

RIGHT: 'Andenken an  
Moritz von Fröhlich',  
bred by Wilhelm Hinner  
(photo by Harald  
Enders)



#### CREATIONS BY AMATEUR BREEDERS

During the so-called Golden Years of German rose breeding between 1900 and 1916, before World War I began to impact horticulturists, a number of amateur breeders like Dr. F. H. Müller, Dr. G. Krüger, and Robert Türke contributed new roses that became famous in their time. One of the most prominent cultivars of those that survive today, despite its rocky start, is Dr. Müller's 'Conrad Ferdinand Meyer' ('Germanica' × ['Gloire de Dijon' × 'Duc de Rohan']), Dr. Müller was unable to find a professional propagator among German breeders, but eventually found Otto Froebel in Switzerland and Jules Gravereaux in France, two who were willing to bring this rose into commerce.

Dr. Müller's early Pernetianas, or Hybrid Luteas as they were classified in German rose literature at the time, are largely forgotten. Dr. Müller's 'Gottfried Keller' (1894), 'Schmetterling' (1904), 'Dr. Müller' (1905), and 'Apotheker Franz Hahne' (1919) were bred at the same time but independently of Pernet's breedings. When roses bred by Dr. Müller were given to Sangerhausen at the beginning of the twentieth century, they did not have names; only numbers distinguished them. Many of his Hybrid Luteas and



'General de Vaulgrenant', Hybrid Tea, Ludwig (Louis) Walter, 'M.A.Gance' × 'Mme. Henriette Schisselé', 1926 (photo by Harald Enders)

Hybrid Rugosas, also unnamed, went to L'Haÿ, to Jules Gravereaux who had recognized their merits.

One of the very rare cultivars of German origin is 'Professor Schmeil', a Pernetiana (Hybrid Lutea) sport of 'Mme Édouard Herriot', which was found by a nursery owner named Kröger among his rose fields in Elms-horn. Kröger exhibited this cultivar on several occasions at rose exhibitions around 1926. I do not know if it was ever in commerce.

Sangerhausen was a safe harbor for other roses bred by amateurs who could not find a professional propagator to introduce them or who perhaps were not concerned about introducing them. Among these amateur breeders was Ernst Dechant of

Saxony. Compared to many of his professional colleagues, Dechant's achievements stand out. Of the eight roses we know he bred, six have survived and five are still, or are to be again, in commerce. One of them was never even named: the Moss cross of 'Eugenie Guinoisseau' × 'Nuits de Young' (ca. 1938). It was sent to Sangerhausen for observation, and kept and preserved there through World War II until Martin Weingart put it into commerce decades later.

Another gifted amateur breeder was Ludwig (Louis) Walter, an official of Germany's Imperial Postal Service living in Zabern. He sent out his first roses in 1906 when Alsace was occupied by Germany as result of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870–71. Quite a few of Walter's early cultivars have survived, again thanks to their preservation at Sangerhausen. With the end of World War I, Alsace came back to France and Walter completely disappeared from the German rose world. It took nearly ten years to re-establish the connection. Meanwhile, Walter continued his work, breeding such roses as 'Général Berthelot' ('J. B. Clark' × 'Farbenkönigin') and 'Général de Vaulgrenant' ('M. A. Gance' × 'Mme Henriette Schisselé'), both Hybrid Teas.

#### INTRODUCTIONS BY NURSERYMEN

For much of the first part of the twentieth century, Peter Lambert of Trier (Trèves), was the predominant breeder. More than 160 different cultivars emerged from his nurseries. At least until the early 1950s, the most acclaimed pure white rose despite its

#### Hermann Kiese

1865 – 1923

After learning his trade from the great old man of German rose breeding, Friedrich Harms of Hamburg, Kiese worked at the Schultheis nursery. At the age of 22, he became head gardener at the J. C. Schmidt nursery, where some of his most successful creations such as 'Rubin', 'Aennchen Müller', and 'Tausendschön' were bred. In 1908 Hermann Kiese opened his own nursery at Vieselsbach, a little town near Erfurt. There he succeeded in breeding some of the first remontant ramblers such as 'Magda Wichmann' and 'Weisse Tausendschön', not to be confused with William Paul's 'White Tausendschön'. Then came 'Wartburg' and 'Eisenach', and later, 'Gräfin Chotek' (not to be confused with Peter Lambert's 'Marie Henriette Gräfin Chotek', which was introduced in the same year). Kiese also bred Polyanthas. His 'Kleiner Liebling' became quite a success in the United States where it was known as 'Little Darling', the "thousand flower rose."

After Peter Lambert stepped down as editor-in-chief of the *Rosen-Zeitung* and secretary of the Verein Deutscher Rosenfreunde, Kiese took over and led the society successfully through the tough years of World War I and the first post-war years. About 50 different cultivars emerged from Hermann Kiese's nursery. Today most of them are extinct or at least very rare, but some of his ramblers are still in commerce. His rose nursery did not outlive him. His son who continued the nursery but stopped all rose breeding, played an infamous role during the Nazi regime, and as a consequence the nursery was nationalized in 1949. Whatever might have survived of the nursery's roses was lost.

lack of fragrance was his Hybrid Perpetual 'Frau Karl Druschki' ('Merveille de Lyon' × 'Mme Caroline Testout'), which is still in commerce worldwide.

Lambert produced other famous roses: the white Hybrid Tea 'Kaiserin Auguste Viktoria' ('Coquette de Lyon' × 'Lady Mary Fitzwilliam') of 1891, the Bourbon 'Adam Messerich' ('Frau Oberhofgärtner Singer' × ['Louise Odier' × 'Louis-Philippe']) of 1920, the Polyantha 'Katharina Zeimet' ('Étoile de Mai' × 'Marie Pavié'), the Lambertiana-strain of Multiflora Hybrids, and many others.

But what happened to Lambert's white Polyantha 'Schneewittchen' ('Aglaiä' × ['Paquerette' × 'Souvenir de Mme Levet'], 1901), whose expulsion from commerce was quickened by the fact that Reimer Kordes used the same name for a very successful but mildew-susceptible white Floribunda he introduced in 1958, or 'Goethe' (1911), one of the very few Moss roses of German origin, or 'Deutsches Danzig', a carmine-pink Polyantha? They have survived but only just. Today they are in commerce again thanks to specialty rose nurseries.

Apart from the predominant role that Peter Lambert played in German rose history, some of his roses were the preferred breeding material of rose breeders all over the world. 'Kaiserin Auguste Viktoria' was used by Bonfiglioli, Verschuren, Widow



LEFT: 'Zlaty Dech',  
Hybrid Tea, Jan  
Böhm, 'Admiration'  
× 'Talisman', 1936

RIGHT: 'Adam  
Messerich', Bourbon,  
Peter Lambert, 'Frau  
Oberhofgärtner  
Singer' × ('Louise  
Odier' × 'Louis-  
Philippe' (Guerin)  
1920

BELOW: 'Dr. Ingomar  
H. Blohm', bred  
by Peter Lambert  
(photos by Harald  
Enders)



Schwartz, Nabonnand, and Soupert & Notting—the most prominent European breeders of that time, and Conard & Jones, Van Fleet and Henderson in the United States. Lambert's 'Trier' ('Aglaiä' × 'Mrs. R. G. Sharman-Crawford'), already introduced in 1904, was one of the ancestors of the Hybrid Musks, bred by Pemberton in the 1920s. Even in the 1990s, 'Trier' still was used by Louis Lens to help create his series of Hybrid Musks. What interested Peter Lambert from the beginning was to bring remontancy to the once-blooming rose classes of the time. With his 'Thalia Remontant' of 1903, he reached this goal, at least with ramblers, quite early in his career. Like so many other breeders, Lambert concentrated on Hybrid Teas for some time, but unlike many of his colleagues, he rather early on held the opinion that the class had already reached its peak and was, at least since the early 1920s, on the decline.

Another prominent survivor of the world of German rose breeding is 'Gruss an Aachen' ('Frau Karl Druschki' × 'Franz Deegen'). Often attributed to P. Geduldig, who brought it into commerce, it was actually bred by Wilhelm Hinner, a lifelong antagonist of Peter Lambert.

## Wilhelm Hinner

1868 – 1930

Wilhelm Hinner is a rather enigmatic figure in German rose history. Nothing is known of his early years, but in 1893 Hinner became a member of the Verein Deutscher Rosenfreunde. At the time he was employed by Peter Lambert. Shortly after that, a serious dispute with his employer must have occurred because five years later in 1898, Hinner and some others tried to push Lambert out as editor-in-chief of the *Rosen-Zeitung* and secretary of the Verein Deutscher Rosenfreunde—without success. The attempted *putsch* earned him the lifelong enmity of Lambert, the most powerful man in the rose world at the time. Hinner was finally expelled from the Verein Deutscher Rosenfreunde in 1907 and as Lambert remained editor-in-chief of the *Rosen-Zeitung* until 1910, none of Hinner's cultivars was introduced there. This perhaps explains why many of Hinner's cultivars, such as 'Georg Arends', a pink HP from 1910, did not get the attention they might have.

Hinner's reputation among his fellow nurserymen was clouded by a number of conflicts. For a short time there were two different 'Georg Arends' in commerce, and there was the 'Angela Müll'–'Dorothea Söffker' incident. Also overshadowing his life and reputation as a rose breeder was the 'Pharisäer' case. Peter Lambert had accused and sued Hinner for having stolen the mother plant from Lambert's premises. As a result, Hinner looked for other fields of endeavor, and was among the first nurserymen to import roses to Germany from the United States (1926). This line of business was probably facilitated by one of his sons, Peter Hinner (1897 to 1985), who had emigrated to the United States as a young man. After World War II, Peter Hinner introduced four cultivars in the United States with the Bauské Brothers, who were fellow German immigrants. Wilhelm Hinner died in 1930, forgotten or never really recognized by the rose world.

One of the chief ironies of German rose history is the fact that Hinner's greatest success in rose breeding—indeed one of the most successful German roses of all in its time and even today—is not linked to him at all. His large-flowered Polyantha 'Gruss an Aachen' has been attributed to the Geduldig nursery, but Philipp Geduldig only propagated and introduced it. The rose was bred by Wilhelm Hinner.

Other German cultivars were not so lucky. Roses like 'Reichsgraf von Kesselstatt' (Lambert, 1898), 'Prof. Dr. Schmidt' (Strassheim, 1899), 'Herzog Friedrich II. von Anhalt' (Welter, 1906), 'Andenken an Lydia Grimm' (Geduldig, 1910), 'Freudenfeuer' (Kiese, 1917), and many others survive only as names in rose literature. They are history.

Many roses bred by Jan Böhm are threatened with the same fate. One of Böhm's most unusual roses is 'Zlaty Dech' ('Admiration' × 'Talisman', 1936), an orange

## Dr. Georg Krüger

1848 – 1926

Dr. G. Krüger was an amateur breeder and rose scientist. Some of his creations, like 'Freiburg II', 'Rübezahl', and 'Glarona' are still in commerce in a few specialty rose nurseries. But he is not a notable figure in German rose history for the roses he bred, but for his scientific work. After his return from Switzerland where he worked as a physician, Dr. Krüger devoted himself to laying the basis for scientific rose breeding. His books and articles built the theoretical ground for future rose breeders, and his work inspired Wilhelm Kordes and his rose breeding. Dr. Krüger's most important works were "About pollination," 1903; "Register of Roses," 1906; and "The development of flower and fruit of the genus *rosa* . . .," 1909. For these, Dr. Krüger was highly respected by the rosarians of his time. His "Register of Roses," a descriptive listing of the descendants and parents of famous and successful mother plants, anticipated by 100 years one of today's most valued HelpMeFind features.

Hybrid Tea described as apricot-yellow with pink edges. The petals are strongly veined red, giving the blooms a very special appearance.

### BRUDER ALFONS AND 'MARIA LIESA'

The Augustinian monk Bruder Alfons (aka Franz Karl Brümmer; 1874 to 1948) bred a number of cluster-flowered climbers, which he gave to Sangerhausen for observation. It is a true rose miracle that at least some of them survived and are commercially available today. Charles Quest-Ritson in *Climbing Roses of the World* gives a rather harsh verdict on the roses of Bruder Alfons, but look for yourself. They are far more than just another relic of the past. The story of the cultivar 'Maria Liesa' is truly astonishing. After a short intermezzo in commerce in the late 1930s, it survived for a long



TOP RIGHT: 'Reichsgraf von Kesselstatt', Tea, Peter Lambert, 'Princesse Alice de Monaco' × 'Duchesse Marie Salviati'. Named after the owner of a famous vineyard near Trier.

RIGHT: 'Freudenfeuer', Polyantha, Hermann Kiese, seedling of 'Orléans Rose'. Translation: 'Bonfire' (plates from *Rosen-Zeitung* courtesy of the *Bücherei des Deutschen Gartenbaues e.V.*)



ABOVE: 'Kynast', bred by Dr. Georg Krüger  
 RIGHT Harald Enders's garden (photos by Harald Enders)

time only at Sangerhausen. Today, 90 years after it was introduced, it is sold again by many European nurseries, and even mass propagators have turned to it in recent years.

The good fortune of 'Maria Liesa', however, is absolutely exceptional. For quite some time I was of the opinion that the outbreak of World War II led to the decline of German rose breeding, with the exception of the Kordes and Tantau enterprises. But this proved wrong; the decline had already begun in the late 1920s and early 1930s when the first and second generation of German rose

breeders died and their nurseries closed or their successors stopped breeding roses. In the so-called Golden Years between 1900 and 1916, only a few new German roses were introduced. In the first decades of the twentieth century, the lifespan of a rose—the time between its introduction and disappearance—was not longer than it is today. So when the war started in 1939, many cultivars of the Golden Years were already out of commerce. This certainly is one of the reasons that of the 1,600 to 1,800 German-bred roses, only about 200 to 300 have survived to the present day. The number in commerce is even smaller.

#### SANCTUARY FOR GERMAN ROSES

The Sangerhausen rosarium was founded in 1903 at the instigation of Albert Hoffmann and Peter Lambert, who were at that time members of the executive board of the VdR, the German Rose Society. The rosarium initially was planned as a refuge for roses and rose classes supplanted by the upcoming new class of Hybrid Teas. Another reason was the unlucky fate of the vast species rose collection of Dr. Dieck from Zöschen, a great German horticulturist who had given his collection to Albert Hoffmann. Dr. Dieck's collection of more than 400 different species roses was shown at the World Exhibition of 1900 in Paris. From there it was moved to Jules Gravereaux's Roseraie de L'Hay. In the following years, Sangerhausen received duplicates of this species collection from Gravereaux, who generously provided the Sangerhausen rosarium

with propagation material.

By 1925, more than 8,500 different cultivars of all classes were in the collection at Sangerhausen. But increasingly after that, Sangerhausen took on the role of a test and display garden for cultivars bred by German rose breeders, resulting in its big collection of early German roses. Soon after World War II, Sangerhausen vanished behind the Iron Curtain for almost 40 years, and was nearly inaccessible to rose lovers and breeders in the western hemisphere. Then came the reunification of Germany. After a short period of uncertainty, the city of Sangerhausen together with the provincial government realized their responsibility, and funds were directed to the modernization of the infrastructure of the garden. Today the Sangerhausen rosarium, now called the Europarosarium Sangerhausen, is better off than at any previous time. Hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over the world enjoy this truly unique rosarium each year.



What was missing until today was the rose world's recognition of the efforts and merits of those few who were responsible for keeping "The Worlds Greatest Rosarium" alive in the often difficult times following World War II and during the Cold War.

In the last years 60 to 100 years Sangerhausen has lost many cultivars, which is all the more unfortunate as some roses only survived there and were presumably the last of their kind. On the other hand the rose world must thank Sangerhausen's authorities for saving many other cultivars from extinction—and not just German roses but rose cultivars from all over the world. So despite mix-ups in labeling, for example, of some cultivars bred by Geschwind or the presumed last surviving cultivar of 'Berti Gimpel' ('Frau Karl Druschki' × 'Fisher & Holmes'), a Hybrid Perpetual bred and introduced by Johann Altmüller in 1913, there is much to be grateful for. It is time to take care of what is left.

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HARALD ENDERS, *his wife, and their rather fastidious border collie live in an old farmhouse in Northern Germany. His book on Bourbon roses, written in German, is the first ever devoted solely to this rose class. Today Harald grows about 500 different rose cultivars of all classes. Educated as a lawyer, he is now working as departmental controller in an insurance company. With his garden devoted to roses of German origin, he wants to make a contribution to the preservation of Germany's cultural and horticultural heritage.*