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## THOMAS HART HYATT: THE MAN AND HIS BOOK

by Gail Unzelman

THOSE FAMILIAR WITH GRAPE AND WINE literature readily recognize Hyatt's *Hand-Book of Grape Culture*, published in 1867, as one of the cornerstones of California wine literature—and feel quite fortunate if they have a copy in their library. But who was the author of this milestone book so important to the state's budding wine industry in the 1860s, and so historically valuable today?

### PART I – THOMAS HART HYATT



HE ESTEEMED HISTORIANS of California wine—Leon Adams, Vincent Carosso, Ruth Teiser, Charles Sullivan, Thomas Pinney—include mention of Hyatt's book in their works, but Hyatt, the man, does not appear in their historical narratives. Ernest Peni-

nou gives him a brief page in one of his *Viticultural District studies*. What little we have known about T. Hart Hyatt is what Hyatt himself said in his book.

But today, with magical online resources of Census reports, 19<sup>th</sup> century newspapers, State Agricultural Society reports, U.S. Senate reports, City Directories, Cemetery records, historical society inputs, &c, we can at last paint a picture worthy of our author.

Thomas Hart Hyatt (1809–1881) was born in Danby, New York, a small village in Tompkins County in the south central area of the state, not too distant from Ithaca. In his own words written in his sixth decade, he sentimentally recalled being “Born in the woods, nurtured in a primitive log cabin, in a scant ‘opening’ in the primeval forests of Central New York”—a small farm, his “old ancestral homestead,” where he was proud of the King of Tompkins Co. apple grown there.<sup>1</sup>

#### Newspaper Man

Hyatt's first and foremost vocation was the newspaper business. He learned the art of printing with Mack & Andrus, an Ithaca printing and publishing firm specializing in educational and religious books and pamphlets. By the time he was twenty-two, he had moved to Brockport, Monroe Co., N.Y., in the vicinity of Rochester on Lake Ontario,

to co-found with Abeathar Harris in 1830, the Brockport Free Press, and Farmers and Mechanics Advocate, the first newspaper established in the town. As Editor & Publisher for almost four years, Hyatt initiated his enduring concern and participation in varied social, agricultural, and civic issues.<sup>2</sup>

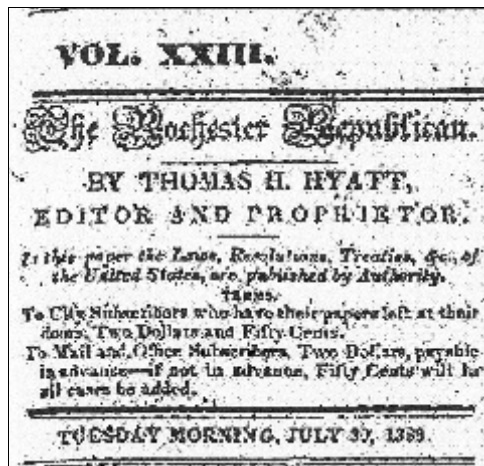
At this young age, he became a fervent, and lifelong, evangelist in the Temperance movement. He gave “an elaborately prepared” address as he organized the first Young Men's Temperance Society, and then served as its first President—an accomplishment so important to him that he would write about it in his book forty years later, and reiterate his belief that “the use of pure cheap wines [is] the best of temperance missionaries.” Hyatt, a deeply religious man and a leader in his church, professed moderation throughout his “unintoxicated” lifetime. He expressed his gratitude for the influence of his revered grandfather Jesse Hyatt (1753–1835), “family patriarch, ardent patriot” and honored Deacon of the Church.<sup>3</sup>

In July 1835 Hyatt moved about 40 miles west to his next publishing venture when he purchased the Lockport Balance, the newspaper of the small community centered about the locks on the Erie Canal, in the northwestern corner of the state. He was now married and the father of his first daughter; his second daughter would arrive shortly, and his only son three years later. He would continue as Editor/Publisher of the paper until he sold it in 1838.<sup>4</sup>

#### Decade of the 1840s

We assume the sale was for a good profit, for he next took over the much larger and very successful Rochester Republican (weekly) and Rochester Daily Advertiser from 1839–1853.<sup>5</sup> Hyatt, thirty years old, embarked on a decade of astounding achievement—in politics, agriculture, publishing,

community and consular service, and family. He became noticeably more active in local and national politics, writing prominent editorials calling for “peace in America” and other anxious themes.



Early issue of *The Rochester Republican* 7/30/1839

1843 as Secretary of the Committee for Arrangements for the State Agricultural Fair held in Rochester, and was a delegate to the State Agricultural Society meetings. He was a regular participant in the state fairs, and at the 1846 Fair, he proudly took home the 1<sup>st</sup> Premium (\$10) for both his two-year-old bull “Don Quixote” and his two-year-old heifer “Emma,” while his displays of peaches, apples, and pears were awarded numerous prizes. In a local history book of the day, Hyatt was applauded for his “devotion of time and money to the development of ‘the art of farming’” and was acknowledged for introducing many valuable and rare kinds of stock into Monroe Co, and doing much to advance the cause of agriculture.<sup>6</sup> To counterbalance his agricultural duties, he served a term on the Rochester Board of Education.

In addition to his newspaper publications, Hyatt issued two known books with his Rochester imprint (1841), one a small pamphlet, the other a sizeable tome (see illus p.13). We also know of at least two large trade catalogues (1841–1842) that he printed for Asa Rowe’s Monroe Garden & Nurseries, Monroe Co.’s earliest nursery business, located just outside Rochester.<sup>7</sup>

In Rochester, the center of the rich agricultural region of Monroe Co. on Lake Ontario, Hyatt’s avocation for horticulture and agriculture took on a leadership status. Among his many roles, he served in

During this busy decade of the 1840s, our indefatigable writer was a regular contributor to Luther Tucker’s *Cultivator*, the respected journal published in Albany “To Improve the Soil & the Mind” devoted to “Agriculture, Horticulture, Floriculture ... Domestic Economy.” He was the *Cultivator*’s Correspondent for the New York State Agricultural Society of Monroe County (Rochester), and from these various issues we can get further glimpses of Hyatt’s many activities in the local and State Agricultural Society ... even his duties as a popular judge of poultry and cattle at the State Fair. In 1845 he was elected Corresponding Secretary of the County Agricultural Society; the same year he presented a “new seedling apple, which promises to be valuable.”

The January 1846 *Cultivator* featured Elmwood Cottage, near Rochester, the “little Rural Home Farm of Thomas Hart Hyatt, Esq.” and printed an engraved illustration of this “tasteful country residence,” and provided a floor-plan (as these articles on “Rural Architecture” were wont to do). Hyatt himself described the home in splendid detail for the article, from planning to construction. He wrote that “for several years I have taken a deep and lively interest in the study of Rural Architecture, and the modes of beautifying the homes of our rural population.” He acknowledged the “admirable works of A. J. Downing on the subject” for his inspiration in the design of his “neatly decorated rural Gothic cottage” (six rooms downstairs, six bedrooms upstairs). He pictured his home would—after making certain the “style” and “expression” of the building appropriately corresponded to the site—“combine simple elegance, an apt expression of purpose, and utility and convenience of arrangement, with economy of expenditure.” Here is where he devoted himself to “the art of farming” applauded above.



ELMWOOD COTTAGE of Thos. Hart Hyatt, on the banks of the Genesee River, near Rochester, New York, 1846 — “The neat, pleasant little library, 10 x 15 feet, is my favorite room, and may be used for a reception or sitting room when not needed for more secluded purposes.”

## The Land of the Moor

In March 1848, when Hyatt was almost forty years old, he strode into a new chapter in his somewhat nomadic life. He was nominated and confirmed as U.S. Consul General to the Empire of Morocco at Tangier. He reported for duty in July 1848 and served until June 1850. Diplomat Hyatt, a financially successful, confident, intelligent, and handsome man—slight in stature, dark hair, a sharply featured profile and piercing eyes—would make a pronounced presence.



THOMAS HART HYATT 1809–1881 [Courtesy Herbert Hyatt]

He had been nominated earlier by President James Polk for consular positions in Ireland and Italy, but for whatever reasons these nominations were withdrawn, and he was subsequently confirmed as Consul at Tangier.<sup>8</sup> In researching for facts about his consular nominations and appointments, handled by the Senate Committee on Commerce, it was illustrated that political connections, then as now, were extremely helpful; income of a Consul would depend on the importance of the post. Until 1856, American consuls received no salary, but were allowed to engage in private trade and to collect fees from services to American citizens. As we shall see from some of his correspondence, life on the consular front, although of fine prestige, was not a plush assignment.

Tangier, Hyatt's place of residence for the next two years, is a city in northern Morocco that lies on the North African coast at the western entrance to the Strait of Gibraltar where the Mediterranean meets the Atlantic Ocean. Morocco was one of the first countries to accord recognition of the new American republic when it allowed American ships access to Moroccan ports in 1777, shortly after the outbreak of the American Revolution. Less than ten years later, the two countries signed a Treaty of Friendship and Peace which was renewed for an indefinite term in 1836, and Tangier became the diplomatic capital of Morocco. As testament to the special nature of the

U.S.– Moroccan relationship, Tangier is home today to the oldest U.S. diplomatic property in the world and the only U.S. National Historic Landmark located outside the United States.

We can sincerely appreciate that Hyatt was a man of words. He wrote two lengthy letters recording his observations around the Mediterranean to his Eastern colleagues: "Friend Tucker" at the Albany Cultivator describing the "The Land of the Moor: Climate and Products of Morocco" (Nov 1848), and later a six-page essay, "The Fruits and Fruit Trees of Morocco," to his esteemed colleague, A. J. Downing at his Horticulturist and Journal of Rural Art and Rural Taste.

As a bonus to the reader, Hyatt opened his 1848 letter with a few thoughts on the American way of life, at the same time giving us another look into his motivational spirit:

Friend Tucker—When, three years ago, I wrote my last communication for your excellent Cultivator, from my little Rural Gothic Cottage at Elmwood, on the banks of the Genesee, at Rochester, I little thought that my next would be addressed to you from an antiquated Moorish mansion, on the banks of the Straits of Gibraltar, in such a strange, wild, unique country as is this "Land of the Moor." And much less did I expect, while cultivating my rutabagas and rearing my Short Horns and Herefords, in the valley of the Genesee, ever to be engaged in cultivating the Orange, the Fig, the Olive and the Pomegranate, and training my fleet barb, or Arabian charger, on the plains of Africa. Yet all these strange and unforeseen transitions have taken place in three short years .... But you know that a love of change, and a propensity for adventure and experiment, are characteristics of the people of Yankeedom; and he must be sadly deficient in the attributes pertaining to a genuine son of Yankee-land, who has not, as occasion may offer, the ingenuity and tact to turn his hand to any employment that may suit his fancy or convenience—whether it be that of an amateur cultivator of nature's productions, either in the frigid or torrid zones, in the temperate or tropical climes—whether it be in wielding a pruning knife or an editorial pen—plowing the land or plowing the sea—whether in cutting the Gordian knot of political tacticians, or the knotty limbs of an unsound sapling—or whether in treading the thorny paths of political strife, or the more dignified and pleasing walks of diplomatic life. This versatility of temper and character, which so peculiarly characterises the American people, seems strange and unaccountable to Europeans, although little is thought of it among ourselves.

Hyatt enthusiastically described the citrus, dates, figs, pineapple, banana, olive, pomegranate, almond, pear, apricot, nectarines... Yet, in all this wondrous bounty, "many a time," he admitted to Downing, "he



would have given a dozen of our best oranges for one of your fine Pippins of Western New York.” He carefully described the vine and its grape that flourished there, while noting that very little wine is made as “the Moors are prohibited, by their religion, from making, vending, or using any kind of spiritous or vinous liquors.”<sup>9</sup>

Hyatt later extracted pieces from these letters on the “subject of vine growing, the varieties of grape cultivated,” and our “First Vineyard in the Land of the Moor” for reprint in his 1867 book on California grape culture. He described his picturesque “old vineyard in the neighborhood of the Mediterranean, on the Morocco Coast, which we had purchased of a Moor... a little plantation situated on the slope or terrace of a hill ... where we have ripe grapes from about the first of July until late in October.” He added in the book, “When the foregoing notes were made by us sixteen or eighteen years since, we little thought we should ever have occasion to use them in this far-off Golden State of the Pacific. ... It has always been our aim in our travels around the world, to let no matters that might be of immediate, or remote, interest, escape our attention, or go unrecorded.” By horseback, he toured the vineyards of Morocco and “the vine-clad hills of Malaga” and Andalusia in Spain. These experiences and observations would be instrumental in pursuing his choice of vineyard lands in California.

Less than a year after arriving at Tangier, Consul Hyatt received a correspondence from Secretary of State James Buchanan concerning an ongoing, and threatening, situation: “Pirates off Morocco! The depredations committed by the barbarians who dwell on the Reef Coast of Morocco demand of you unceasing vigilance. You will, as early as possible, report to this Department on the subject; and, if necessary, suitable instructions will be transmitted to you. This Government will not patiently suffer the Corsairs of Barbary to make the entrance to the Mediterranean a place of danger, or even apprehension, to civilized commerce.”<sup>10</sup> Send the navy, would be a judicious reply.

As much as he enthused about the exotic, tropical horticulture of Morocco, and his travels in the Mediterranean, Hyatt welcomed his 1850 return home to New York, where he resumed his editorial/publisher work at the Rochester Daily Advertiser until the closing months of 1853.<sup>11</sup>

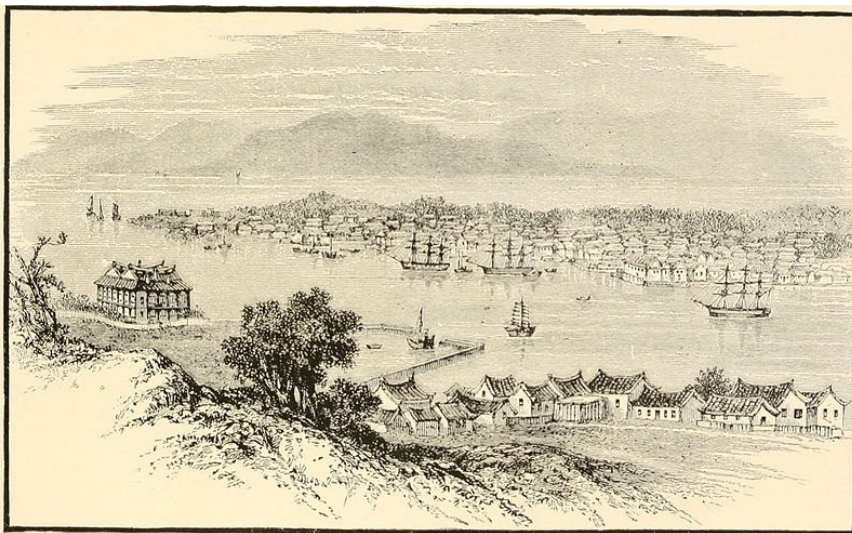
#### Consul at Amoy, China

**I**n November 1853, he was on his way overseas again. “Desiring a furlough from the severe battle-din of political war-fare which was raging so bitterly between the two sections of the divided

Democracy..., and to escape from the laborious and ungrateful toils and perplexities of daily editorial life, and wishing to gratify a penchant for foreign travel, and find a climate more mild and genial to a slender constitution, and not willing to be behind our Democratic brethren in exhibiting a zeal and patriotic willingness to serve our country in an official capacity,” he had accepted the Presidential Commission as U.S. Consul at Amoy, China, “for the purpose of aiding in taking care of our interests, commercial and judicial, political and international.” He would serve at this post from March 1854 to May 1861.<sup>12</sup>

After some consideration, and deciding that the westward route of travel from New York to China: “via Panama, San Francisco, Sandwich Islands, Java, Cape of Good Hope...,” would best suit his desires for travel, Hyatt arrived in San Francisco in early December 1853. He was truly impressed with San Francisco, “an emphatically fast place, ... a model of a progressive, energetic, enterprising, rapidly growing and highly promising young city.” It was not like any other city he had ever visited.<sup>13</sup> He does not say whether he explored the surrounding countryside during their three-week stay awaiting the clipper ship to take them on their voyage across the Pacific. Surely, with his inquisitive nature, especially in new lands, he would have taken this opportunity to get acquainted with the Bay Area and its abundant agricultural, horticultural, and viticultural possibilities. Family lore says that following his visit here he determined to move to California upon his return from consular duty.

Amoy, an ancient city of eastern China on the island of Amoy—one of the six islands of the Amoy Archipelago—northeast of Hong Kong, and west of the island of Taiwan, was one of the earliest seats of European commerce in China, one of the five



Amoy—the island, the city and its harbor—as seen from Kulangseu, c1885, some 25 years after Hyatt’s Consular service at the distinguished port. Hyatt and his family lived on Kulangseu.

designated British “treaty ports” of 1842, and the country’s main port in the 19<sup>th</sup> century for exporting tea. Hyatt described it as being “the most readily accessible and safest of all the important sea port towns,” and had an estimated population of 300,000.<sup>14</sup>

A few official communications at hand between the new consul and his superiors document some of Hyatt’s affairs while in Amoy in the 1850s.

#### Arrival at Amoy, China

After traveling a total distance of some 15,000 miles over a five-month period, Thomas Hart Hyatt arrived at Amoy on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March, 1854, several days late, after “a 10-days’ voyage from Hong Kong. We had a severe struggle,” he explained, “against the northeast monsoon, which blew so violently that we were twice driven into ports on the coast for safety.” Upon his arrival at the consulate, to be his place of business for the next seven years, he found none of the expected “archives, &c belonging to this consulate,” including the “Statutes at Large, the seal, coat of arms, press, flag,” and all the other government paraphernalia needed to run the office. He was hoping the one consular box just obtained from Canton would “contain the documents and books.” He continued his report, rather imploringly, “In the absence of my predecessor I am not aware of the precise form of proceedings, but suppose the legation will apprise the proper representative of the Chinese court of my appointment and arrival...and that he will direct the local authorities here to act accordingly, and to furnish me with the usual evidence of recognition, &c.”<sup>15</sup> His situation would not improve soon.

#### Amoy—Deplorable, Mortifying, Unrespectable

Commissioner to China Robert McLane reported to the Secretary of State his outrage: “Mr. Thomas H. Hyatt, the consul at Amoy, has been at his post since the month of April, and as yet no American vessel has entered or cleared at that port, and he has therefore collected no fees, but as he is a regularly appointed consul he receives \$1000 salary for judicial services; this sum of money is altogether insufficient to provide him a decent residence and support, and nothing can be more disreputable and derogatory to the dignity and honor of the country than the condition in which he is placed; absolutely unable to speak a word of the language ... and without the means of providing a decent subsistence; painful as it is to make this report, I have no alternative, for the honor of the country is necessarily involved in the condition of the Amoy consulate. Mr. Hyatt is without an interpreter or the means of employing one. A Chinese linguist, in the regular employment of the British consulate, gives him occasional assistance. Mr. Hyatt lives with rigid economy, and is from his habits of life able to exist in the situation in which he finds himself, and for that reason does not abandon it ... the

actual condition of the American consulate at Amoy, in the hands of a gentleman not engaged in business and with no other means of support than the judicial salary, is not even respectable. I will not attempt any concealment of the mortification I experienced at this state of things. ...A prompt remedy for the existing evil would be an immediate allowance from the contingent fund of \$1000...for an interpreter and office assistance. This amount is insufficient as a permanent measure of reform, but it is within your reach as a means of relief until Congress shall act. ... I would recommend a salary of \$2,500 as a minimum, with a Chinese linguist or interpreter at a salary of \$1,000 per annum as a minimum.” On top of all this, the Amoy American consulate had no consular jail, no facility for confinement of any American citizen, awaiting trial, subject to the jurisdiction of the American consul. Today, it is a bit overwhelming to think of these lengthy missives as the main means of communication—the typewriter would not come into use until the 1870s—everything was written in longhand, with pen and ink.<sup>16</sup>

Hyatt’s 12-year-old son Thomas Hart, called Hart, accompanied his father to Amoy. Hyatt senior was a stern and vocal advocate for exposing “young people, girls as well as boys, to travel ... not merely to the fashionable watering places in a luxurious carriage ...” “Take them,” he implored, “from the confined school-room and with you on foreign travel, let them mingle with the people of learning, refinement and intelligence of all nations.” It would be almost five years later before the remaining members of his family could join him. Of significant importance to his personal family chronicle is the 214-page diary kept by his middle daughter, 20-year-old Jennie, “A Journal during a Voyage from New York, America, to Amoy, China, 1858–1861...and A Visit to Japan July to September, 1861.”<sup>17</sup>

Our best record of the seven-year China Consular period is the series of articles Hyatt published in 1865 in his California Rural Home Journal. He described in flourishing detail the country, its politics, problems (“emboldened corsairs, the piratical vultures”), along with the major cities he visited while waiting for a vessel from Hong Kong to Amoy, a ten-day voyage of some 350 miles.<sup>18</sup> Unfortunately, the series was discontinued with Hyatt’s arrival at Amoy, so we have no look at his consular activities and horticultural experiences. In his book, published two years after the articles, he made brief mention of “China Grapes” in the chapter on the “Best Varieties of Grapes for a Vineyard.” He wrote, “None of the grapes of China have, to our knowledge, been introduced into the United States, at least to any great extent. We have raised them, to a limited extent, in China, ... there are none of a superior character.” But this is all we learn.

Not satisfied with his wanderings quite yet, upon his retirement from his consular duties in mid-1861,

Hyatt and daughter Jennie stopped in Japan for the summer to see this country of exquisite beauty and scenery and visit his old friend and fellow diplomatic consul, Townsend Harris, the first U.S. Consul to Japan.<sup>19</sup>

#### Hyatt in California

**I**n October 1861 Thomas Hart Hyatt arrived in San Francisco by steamer, back on U.S. soil, anticipating the pleasures of establishing his long-awaited California ranch and vineyard in this new-found “Land of the Vine, the Fig, ... the Olive ...” It is somewhat puzzling on how he made this come to pass in the next few years. After a stay of one month, he and daughter Jennie sailed for New York, and joined the family in Rochester. Jennie’s Journal records that in early 1862 Hyatt purchased “the old Rochester home” in Livingston Place, a broad, elegant, tree-lined street of mansions in Rochester; his periodic visits to Ithaca and Danby are noted, but she does not mention his other activities or travels to San Francisco. Yet, he purchased his first Napa County properties the same year, and several Solano and Yolo county properties in 1863; his remaining purchases were in 1864, 1865, 1867 (Yolo Co.).<sup>20</sup> (See maps pp.15-16.)

We know from his book that, in preparation for planting his vineyard, he had researched and read everything he could get his hands on regarding grape culture. Even though he had also toured the wine-growing countries of France and Germany, he was partial to the grapes and wines of southern Spain with its drier, warmer climate. He was pleased to see that the California vine-growers were now “directing their attention to high lands for the purpose of planting vineyards, and leaving the heavy soil of the valleys, as it should be left, to the production of cereals and other crops.” From his earlier visit(s), he would have had his eye on the hills and warmer climate of the small valleys atop eastern Napa Valley, and in Yolo County to the east, where rolling hills and abundant sunshine were readily available.

In 1862, Hyatt made his first purchase of California ranch land in southeastern Napa County, a part of the original Chimiles Rancho land grant of 1846. By 1864 he had accumulated a 640-acre, beautifully rugged, oak-studded property and another 69-acre parcel with elevations from 600–1000 feet, near the top of the western Vaca Mountains.<sup>21</sup>

Beginning in 1863, he ventured over the mountain range into Yolo and Solano counties to buy land—seven transactions were recorded in Solano County and eight in Yolo County between 1863 and 1865.

Solano County, in the Vacaville quadrant, was a prime agricultural area, just beginning to be settled. Here was, Hyatt realized, an investment opportunity that promised financial rewards. In late 1864 he advertised “Property For Sale or Exchange: Ranch Lands in Solano County of 440, 600, or 800 acres in

the vicinity of Putah Creek, about 20 mi north of Suisun City and 5 or 6 mi from Vacaville, and in one of the finest climates in California or the world, where grapes, and fruits of all kind... can be produced 6 weeks earlier in the season than in any other portion of Northern California...” At the same time he advertised another 1,000 acres: “For Sale in Solano County, near the Rio las Putahs Ranch, fifty 20-acre lots, at \$15 per acre, unexcelled for vine, fruit, or vegetable growing.” He would choose a choice piece of local property for his family homestead.<sup>22</sup>

Located in north central California, Yolo and Solano counties lie along the western edge of the great Sacramento Valley, a truly rich farming paradise. Shortly before Hyatt arrived, the town of Winters was just beginning to develop at a crossroads in Buckeye township in southwestern Yolo County, thirty miles from Sacramento and about sixty miles from San Francisco. Eleven miles south of Winters, but in Solano County, is the town of Vacaville. Founded almost a decade before Winters, Hyatt observed in early 1865 that “Vacaville has the appearance of a flourishing place for an inland town. Its excellent college, which we believe ranks high as an educational institution, seems to have brought to the town a class of cultivated people that are not always to be found in large numbers in a newly settled village. The farming lands about generally seem well cultivated and productive.”<sup>23</sup> These four diverse towns would be the focus of Hyatt’s endeavors for the next twenty years.

#### Mount Glenwood Vineyard, Yolo County

**T**he expansive hills at the eastern base of the Vaca Mountains, in Yolo County, near the small town of Winters, was home to the pioneer Hyatt Ranch and its sizeable 100-acre vineyard, christened Mount Glenwood. Hyatt described this property and its different exposures in his Hand-Book: “We have selected for our own vineyard at Mount Glenwood, grounds that slope east and west, north and south, southeast, southwest, northeast, and northwest, as well as the summit of moderately elevated hills, or table lands; and this in a location on the western border of the Sacramento Valley, on the first bench or plateau of hills rising from the plains toward the foothills that lie at the base of the eastern slope of the last coast range of mountains; in the neighborhood of Putah Cañon, and near to Putah Creek; and we hope, ere long, to be able to demonstrate from actual experience, what kind of an exposure is best in locations of that description.” That location is easily located today, but there are no grape vines.

Historian Ernest Peninou, who has tracked down and explored more old winery ruins and abandoned vineyards in the state of California than anyone probably ever will, recorded the early winegrowing history of Yolo County in two of his works. In the 1860s and ’70s, the Orleans Hill Viticultural Assn.



had extensive vineyard acres in the foothills at Capay Valley, north of Hyatt's large vineyard in Winters. Other winegrowing undertakings of note began as early as the 1850s, including a New Yorker who had come west in 1850, and by 1853 had several acres of vines at nearby Woodland, "probably the first in Yolo County." Peninou also provides some early Yolo Co. vineyard statistics: 1858, 228 acres; 1868, 360 acres; 1872, 803 acres; 1875, 927 acres; 1880, 850 acres. (As a comparison, Napa County had 2335 A in 1868 and 3967 in 1880.) He notes that by 1860 European varieties were beginning to displace the old-time Mission vines.<sup>24</sup> Mr. Peninou, familiar with the baking heat of the Sacramento Valley and the Winters area—more suited for growing grain than wine grapes—added this stinging comment to his history: "Why Hyatt chose these rolling dry hills just below the point where Putah Creek breaks through the coast

our State, along the foot-hills, through Pleasant Valley [near Winters], and Solano and Yolo Counties, no irrigation is resorted to, or considered necessary, which materially reduces the expense of cultivating a vineyard; and whether for raisins, or table grapes, or for wine, it can be demonstrated that they are better without irrigation than with." With a few statistics, Hyatt provides a look at the California wine industry in 1874, naming the four counties that produced the most wine of the State's 5,292,575 total gallons: Sonoma—1,836,000 gals; Los Angeles—1,164,800 gals; Napa—716,070 gals; Yolo—200,000 gals.; and a list of the Chief Wine Growers in the State (limited to those cultivating at least 10,000 vines / those producing at least 10,000 gals. wine): Sonoma, the largest producer, 37 winegrowers; 22 are listed from the rest of the State. In Yolo Co., only Orleans Hill Assn. is listed; in Solano Co., Wolfskill Bros. at Vacaville.



The *Journal's* artistic masthead was designed and engraved by the noted San Francisco firm of Van Vleck & Keith, 1865. Durbin Van Vleck was one of the best known wood engravers and draftsmen of the City; William Keith would become known as the "Dean of California Artists," famous for his landscapes.

range is viticulturally unexplainable. Seemingly inexplicable as well is the fact that Arpad Haraszthy, the recognized authority on wine and champagne-making in California, chose a site some fifteen miles farther north on these same hot, dry foothills." When roaming around there circa 1960, Peninou found only the "stubs of old fruit trees to reveal the location of Hyatt's venture."<sup>25</sup>

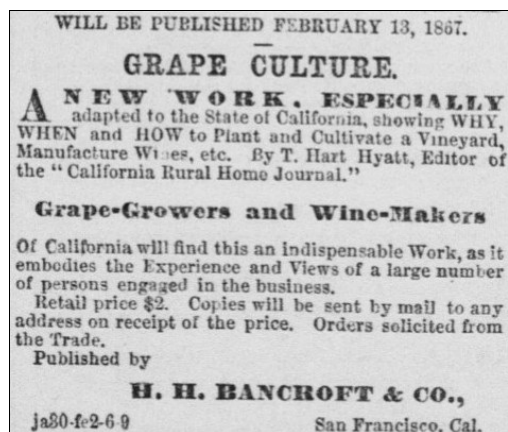
Which grape varieties did Hyatt plant? It is a lamentable historical loss that he did not record this in his book. His "List of 44 Choice Varieties of Grapes for a Vineyard of 100 acres in California," which he broke down into Table, Raisin, & Wine grapes, might provide a clue as to what he would use in his own vineyard, but it is a very broad range. He could have added this information to his second edition of 1876 along with the other added statistics, but he did not. Other than he hoped to "clear \$1000 per acre, annually, from my [raisin] vineyard, when in full bearing," we do not know his vineyard makeup. He does note, however, in reference to irrigating the vines: "In some of the driest and best grape regions of

#### California Rural Home Journal and Other Ventures

Once settled in the state, it did not take long for Thomas Hart Hyatt to get back into the publishing world. The Sacramento Daily Union announced in February 1865 that Hyatt had begun the publication, in San Francisco, of a new semi-monthly journal "devoted to agriculture, horticulture, farm stock, rural architecture, domestic economy, literature and news." "It is printed in quarto form," the paper declared, "and its typography is good. We trust the Journal will be a success." With the March 15<sup>th</sup> issue (v.1 #3), Hyatt ran an "Extra Sheet" displaying the many "Plaudits of the Press" from around the country. It was indeed a handsomely executed journal with its pages printed within decorative borders, and "full of interesting and useful matter ... of great importance to the health, happiness and general well-being of our people." In vivid detail, he reported on his travels to Napa, Solano, Yolo, Sacramento and other Bay Area counties, describing the towns, business enterprises, ranches, vineyards, agricultural products, opportunities. Large ads, often

embellished with engraved cuts, were a prominent feature. Editor Hyatt inserted several of his own, advertising “Ranches for Sale” (Napa Co., Solano Co., Menlo Park...), “Land to Let for Farmers, Gardeners, and Fruit Growers,” “Choice Vine-Lands For Sale,” “Job Printing” (Cards, Circulars, Pamphlets, Law Blanks, &c). Yet, at the close of the first year’s volume (15 March 1866), Hyatt ceased publication and bid adieu. Even though the Journal was on “a paying basis,” he cited “outside pressing business that must needs have our attention” and the lack of a wanted partner to bear “some of the cares, labors and responsibilities.” He had earlier advertised for a printer partner as he “wished to spend a portion of his time on his ranch, improving it.” With all of his other activities, one should not be astonished that the paper would run for only the one year, twenty-four issues.<sup>26</sup>

Over the next several years Hyatt’s place of recorded residence and profession changed frequently, reflecting his endeavors in many fields of opportunity, often all at the same time, and all, apparently, successful—real estate investor, insurance agent, attorney, winegrower, editor. We find him, variously, in 1866, San Francisco (Editor); 1867, Buckeye, Yolo Co. (Wine Grower; also listed in the S. F. Directory as an Attorney); 1868, Redwood City (soon to sell his “Villa Rosa” property); 1869–1870, San Francisco (Life Insurance Agent); in 1871–1872, Oakland (Editor/Agent). (We can add to his eclectic resume: as early as 1834 while still in New York, he acted as Agent for the “Rochester and Lewiston Eclipse Line of Opposition Stages” and was Exchange Broker at the Stage Office, where he “bought and sold most kinds of uncurrent money, on most liberal terms.”)<sup>27</sup>



#### Hyatt’s Hand-Book of Grape Culture

The most important date for us during these years was 1867, when Hyatt was fifty-eight years of age. The first edition of his award-winning book was published early in the year by Bancroft & Co., San Francisco. As will be discussed in Part II following, Hyatt’s welcomed treatise would become a valuable cornerstone in California wine literature.

He would see similar success in his real estate ventures. One transaction of note was his 1869 sale of his spacious home and property in Redwood City, on “The Peninsula” south of San Francisco. The Redwood City Gazette reported, “T. Hart Hyatt, Esq, has sold the B. G. Lathrop place in this town and removed to San Francisco. He bought the place less than one year ago for \$5500 and sold it for \$8000.” The 1870 Census listed the value of Hyatt’s San Francisco residence: \$5000 Real Estate, \$500 Personal Property.<sup>28</sup> For his country property, one 1872 assessment list of “Land-holders of California” recorded Hyatt’s land holdings: Napa County, 800 acres, value \$1600; Yolo County, 800 acres, value \$4800.

In December 1870, Moore’s Rural New-Yorker, “the great illustrated Rural and Family Weekly,” announced the addition “to its unequalled editorial staff the Hon. T. Hart Hyatt, of California, as Editor of the Pacific Coast Department—a new and valuable feature.” It was a choice, and honored, assignment for Hyatt. Prominent in the Eastern U.S. and read in California, the long-running Moore’s Rural New Yorker [1850–1878] was a highly regarded weekly that dealt with agricultural issues, with a section for the major events of the day. It had been founded by Daniel Moore, who previously had been the noteworthy editor of the venerable Genesee Farmer. (Moore, like Hyatt, was intensely interested in both town and agricultural issues. He served as president of the Monroe County Agricultural Society [NY] and later as the mayor of Rochester, 1865.)

Appreciating Hyatt’s love of rural architecture, we know he could not resist sending a little item titled “Bird Architect” to Moore’s weekly: “Among the evergreen foliage of a live oak tree, standing near the springs at Junglewood [his Solano Co. home], we noticed a bird’s nest, large enough for that of a pigeon or turtle dove, which had an awning or arbor built over as a screen against the hawks, as well as to keep off the burning rays of the mid-day sun. It exhibits a very judicious instinct if not a show of reason.”<sup>29</sup>

In San Francisco, the Pacific Rural Press began its illustrious publication in January 1871, and, as Hyatt wrote to the publishers, “it is just what is needed on the Pacific coast at this time, being the only journal of its character published in the State.” He added in a later note: “I take several newspapers and read a great deal of all kinds of good substantial matter; but after a fair trial of one year in reading the Pacific Rural Press, I can say that it furnishes the best and most useful reading matter which I can procure. It contains the largest amount of valuable information of any paper I have ever read, and it fills the great vacancy in newspaper literature, so long felt by all classes of industry in this State, and more particularly by us farmers and stockmen. I would not be without it for \$150 per year. Long may it live and prosper.”<sup>30</sup>

In a major show of support for the publication,



Hyatt contributed a significant essay on “Arboriculture in California” for the April 1871 issue. He began with a fond reminiscence of his ten successive “rural abodes” where “the cultivation and care of trees has been a passion, bordering on a mania, with us, since our earliest boyhood days. ... To plant and protect the trees, whether fruit or forest, has been with us an almost religious duty, for the half century since we were of sufficient age to commence our joyous mission. ‘Woodman, spare that tree,’ has been to us a sacred talisman. And, whether coming in possession of the broad acres of a rural home farm, or confined to the narrow limits of a city lot, our first impulse and first act is always to plant trees.” His mission here was to educate the populace of the State on the grandeur of all trees and the importance of their value, proper selection and culture. Much can be gleaned about the character of the man, Thomas Hart Hyatt, from this single essay. It is reprinted in its entirety at the end of our article.<sup>31</sup>

We can follow the path of Hyatt’s juggled activities with several notices in the local press. Always of a generous nature, he willingly participated in local agricultural meetings and shared his experience and knowledge in the matters of “rural affairs.” From his Redwood City estate, Villa Rosa, he gathered a “special premium” at the 1868 State Industrial Fair for “the best general exhibit of fruits.” When the American Pomological Society made a visit to California in the fall of 1870, Hyatt (in San Francisco) was among those “dignitaries and agricultural leaders” thanked for their assistance with the arrangements.<sup>32</sup> From 1871–1873 we find him at “Home Cottage” in Oakland. In 1872 Hyatt, a member of the Oakland Farmers’ Club in Alameda County, was elected one of six Vice-Presidents of the newly-formed State Farmers’ Union, and headed the committee to draft an address to the farmers of the state explaining their purpose to organize a State Association. At the September 1872 Vine Growers and Wine and Brandy Manufacturers annual meeting, T. H. Hyatt was among the many illustrious members in attendance, and was appointed to the Committee on Grapes, along with William Cantelow (Solano Co.), J. M. Thompson (Napa Co.), and H. W. Crabb (Napa Co.). Hyatt sent an early new year’s communication to the Pacific Rural Press, “Fruits of California—Eastern Apples Grown in California,” promoting an old variety of apple that he had grown early-on in New York in Tompkins County. He called it “King of Tompkins Co.” and provided the journal with a line drawing, saying he had drawings of all the “principal apples and pears grown in California,” and offered to “send any that may be desired.” Later in the month he would address the Vacaville Agricultural Association “upon the agricultural and horticultural pursuits in California, and more particularly to the cultivation of the Grape ... from his personal observations made of

the seasons of France and Germany ... [in] his opinion the soil and climate of California far exceeded any that he had ever found in any country...”<sup>33</sup>

Continuing his devoted attention to Bay Area agricultural affairs, 1873 could be called “The Year of the Grange.” In April he had addressed the Vacaville Agricultural and Horticultural Association on the importance of becoming a member of the State Farmers’ Union; this easily resolved, he and two other delegates were elected to attend the upcoming San Francisco convention. Hyatt next took on the mission to organize a local lodge of the Patrons of Husbandry, or, the Vacaville Grange. At a special meeting of the newly formed Grange, Hyatt and two members of his family were elected and installed as Charter Members & Officers. Hyatt soon thereafter organized a Grange in Elmira, just east of Vacaville. The Patrons of Husbandry, or the Grange, is the oldest American agricultural advocacy group with a national scope. It was founded in 1867 to sponsor educational and social programs for farmers, and later encouraged farmer-owned cooperatives to help combat the steady decline of agricultural prices after 1870, a result of domestic overproduction and foreign competition. The Grange became a force in the political arena, and successfully secured legislation in several states to regulate the over-zealous railroad and warehousing rates. On the local Platform presented by “Worthy Master T. Hart Hyatt, and unanimously adopted, ... we declare ourselves in favor of electing only such men to our Legislatures and other positions of trust as shall be faithful and devoted to the great agricultural interests of the State and nation.” Hyatt became an officer of the California State Grange, elected at a July meeting in Napa. He was invited to address the Sonoma County Farmers’ Club “upon the interest of agriculture.” In a rousing, political speech, with a bounty of statistics, he encouraged all Patrons of Husbandry “to stand together and elect those of merit.” “Who can fully estimate the mighty magnitude of this great agricultural industry? ... Whether or not this be the true doctrine for an old ‘political war horse’ to preach, it is my doctrine. Your speaker believes in standing upon the platform of his party [Democratic]—and he has done so unswervingly for more than 40 years—so long as there is a plank of principle left to stand upon...”<sup>34</sup>

In November 1876, at age sixty-five, the Hon. T. Hart Hyatt was called upon to testify before the Joint Congressional Chinese Investigating Commission on the Chinese immigration question. At hand for discussion this day: were there too many Chinese, should their immigration be restricted, were their wages too high, were they taking away work from white laborers, is white immigration preferable, &c. Hyatt’s testimony was summarized in the San Francisco Daily Alta California: “I reside in Solano Co; am engaged in farming; have been in China as United

States Consul in Amoy, from 1853–1861. He read a statement of his views on the Chinese question, published in April 1876, in which he takes the ground that the Chinese Government do not desire Chinamen to leave that Empire, and that the people of San Francisco or California are biting off their own noses in the Chinese crusade. He thinks the wages paid to Chinamen are too high.”<sup>35</sup>

Until the death of Thomas Hart Hyatt in 1881 at age 71, documentation of his activities dwindles after these mid-1870s—excepting for the important publication of the second edition of his *Hand-Book of Grape Culture* in 1876. It is hard to imagine, but it is satisfying to think that perhaps he “retired” to his ranch to tend his vines and fruit trees. Another pleasant thought is that, mercifully, he did not live to see the invasion of the deadly phylloxera into Yolo County and the subsequent destruction of its vineyards. Thomas Hart Hyatt is buried in the small family cemetery on his Winters ranch, in the shade of the noble oak trees on the “summit of a moderately elevated hill.”

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PART II:  
HYATT'S HAND-BOOK OF  
GRAPE CULTURE

**I**N FEBRUARY 1867, a momentous event in the history of California wine books took place. The enterprising San Francisco printing and publishing firm, H. H. Bancroft & Co., published T. Hart Hyatt's *Hand-Book of Grape Culture* (Price, \$2.00). This is the first book on wine to have a California imprint. On the publication of his book, Hyatt received a “Special Diploma” award from the California State Agricultural Society at the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual California State Fair for his important contribution to the wine industry. Today his book is honored as one of the four cornerstones of California wine literature.<sup>36</sup>

Thomas Hart Hyatt was fifty-eight years old and had been in California for only a few years when he sat down to write his “little *HAND-BOOK OF GRAPE CULTURE*,” or “*Why, Where, When and How to Plant and Cultivate a Vineyard, Manufacture Wines, Etc. Especially Adapted to the State of California. Also to the United States Generally,*” as the subtitle reads. Hastily prepared, he said, with “only about a month's

time to gather together and arrange the material and write out its pages (which have greatly exceeded in number what we originally intended),” Hyatt signed the book's Introduction, “San Francisco, January 1, 1867.”

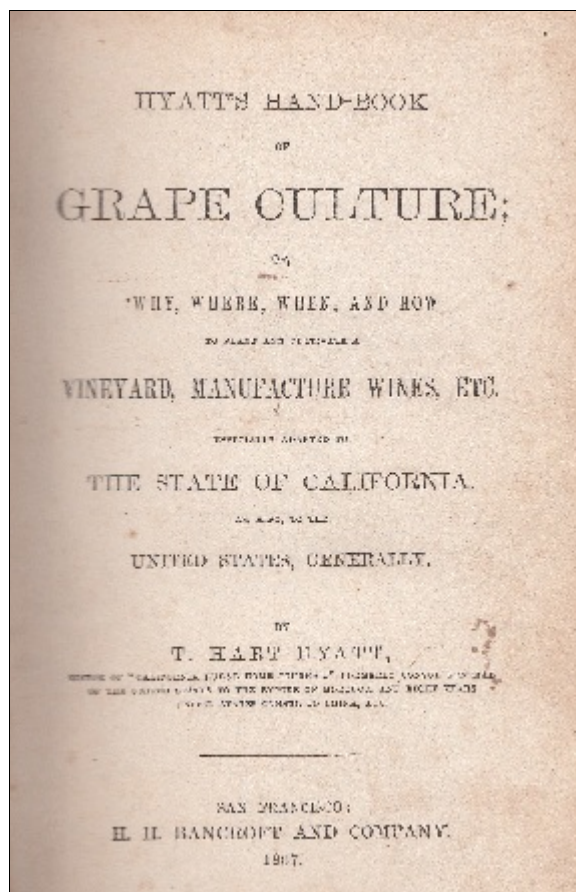
He dedicated his book to the great Ezra Cornell [1807–1874], President of the New York State Agricultural Society, State Senator from Tompkins Co. (Hyatt's home county), and in 1865 founder of Cornell University, Ithaca. Hyatt's admiring dedication reads: “To the Honorable Ezra Cornell, Senator of the State of New York, the Enlightened and Liberal Friend and Patron of Agricultural and Horticultural Progress and Improvement Culminating in his last Grand Enterprise, the Establishing and Endowing of that most Noble Institution, the Cornell University, at Ithaca, New York, this little work on Grape Culture is most respectfully and cordially dedicated by his friend and former fellow townsman. The Author.”

Hyatt wrote an 18-page Introduction to present his 279-page treatise to the public, with the reasons for doing so. At the same time these introductory remarks offer us valuable insight into Thomas Hart Hyatt.

Why He Wrote the Book

**H**yatt explained, “The author, having some years since purchased several thousand acres of the choicest vine-growing lands in California, located in the counties of Napa, Solano, and Yolo, and selected therefrom one hundred acres for a home-vineyard (christened “Mount Glenwood”), and while making preparations to go on with his planting the coming winter, he wished to profit by the experience of those who had not

only studied the subject of grape culture in California thoroughly, but had also had practical experience in the matter, and bring them to aid his own experience and observations, gained by several years' residence in California. ... what was so essential to his own guidance and success, might also be of equal benefit to others. And some judicious friends...urged him to prepare a work that all might avail themselves of who wished to engage in grape culture in California. Therefore this little *HAND-BOOK OF GRAPE CULTURE* maketh its appearance.”



Hyatt continued, “The author, having spent many years in foreign countries, in climates similar to that of California, is enabled to give the result of his observations and experiences in those countries, which may be of practical benefit in California. After several years’ residence on the borders of the Mediterranean, with frequent explorations in the south of Spain; and an eight years’ residence in China, visiting Java, spending a summer in Japan, visiting the Island of Cuba, South and Central America, etc: he has come to the conclusions that of all the countries he has become acquainted with, California presents altogether the most favorable prospects for the culture of the grape, as well as all the semi-tropical fruits; and believes it will ere long be distinguished as “The Land of the Vine, the Fig, the Orange, the Olive, and the Palm.” ... He then reminded the reader, “there is no employment more agreeable, or more remunerative, than the culture of the vine.”

He neatly summarized America’s substantial literature on wine growing: “Many, very many, works have been written at the East, on the subject of grape growing generally; but not one of them is at all adapted to California.” Hyatt politely dismissed Col. Agoston Haraszthy’s work of 1862 [Grape Culture, Wines, and Wine-Making] as an “interesting and useful work, containing 400 large pages, partly devoted to the growing of sugar cane, sugar beets, silk worms, etc.” but its “large size, and consequently more expensive price [\$5], together with new discoveries and improvements that have been made in grape culture ... seem to call for just such a cheap [\$2] little HAND-BOOK for the people generally.”

Hyatt closed his Introduction with an explanation of terminology used in the book. He preferred and used the term “vintager, although nearly all our contemporary authors use the term vintner, when they speak of the vine dresser or grape culturist. Our standard lexicographers,” he continued, “define vintner to mean ‘one who deals in wine; a wine seller.’” [One hundred and fifty years later we still have the same issue with this vinous nomenclature.]

#### Sixteen Chapters

The book’s Table of Contents, listing the sixteen chapters, or “parts” as Hyatt called them, efficiently outlines the steps to be a successful winegrower: Inducements to Engage in the Culture of the Grape; Climate Best Adapted to the Growth of the Vine; Best Soils for a Vineyard; Location, Site and Exposure for a Vineyard; Preparing the Ground; Laying Out and Planting the Vineyard; Pruning and After-Culture; Best Varieties of Grapes for a Vineyard; Vineyards of Morocco and Spain: Compared with California. The Author’s First Vineyard in the “Land of the Moor”; The Vintage: Gathering the Grapes, Packing, Marketing, Etc; Wine Making and Its Incidentals; California Wines and Wine Vineyards;

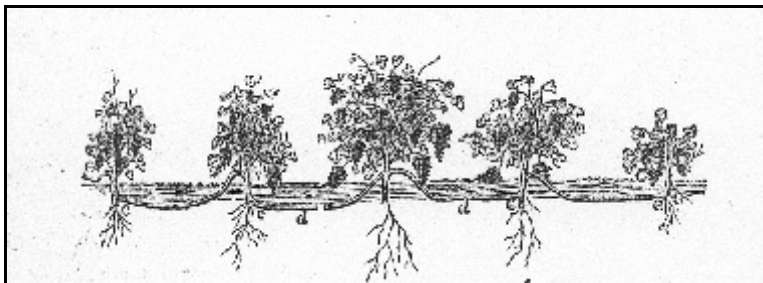
European Wines; Cold Graperies; Diseases and Insects Injurious to the Grape; Miscellany Vinicultural.

Hyatt was certainly well familiar with the agricultural and viticultural works of the day. Throughout the book he repeatedly uses the authoritative writings of the most experienced and successful vineyard owners and horticulturists to give evidence for the fact that “there is no more favorable climate for the culture and growth of the grape than California” and the best ways to accomplish this. Acknowledging that there is not just one correct way to be a winegrower, Hyatt stressed that he wanted to present the contemporary evidence, and let the reader select which method he preferred. Almost all of the authors quoted are well-known today in the history of wine literature, and their books are valuable assets to any wine library. He cites W. C. Strong’s “recent excellent work on Grape Culture” [Culture of the Grape, 1866], and quotes Frederick Muench of Missouri, author of the 1865 School for American Grape Culture, “who has had much practical experience in the culture of the vine”; he found good information in Charles Reemelin’s popular Vine Dresser’s Manual that saw numerous editions after first being published in 1855; he was also familiar with Robert Buchanan’s Cincinnati-published book, The Culture of the Grape and Wine-Making (editions in the 1850s and ’60s). His quest reached outside the American publications, as he acknowledges the classic treatise of Thomas George Shaw, Wine, the Vine, and the Cellar (London, 1864), and its advice on the soils best suited for grape growing. He gleaned information from the U.S.D.A. annual reports, California newspapers and reports available from the horticultural societies from around the state; he printed several accounts compiled by Agoston Haraszthy on the “mode and cost” of preparing a vineyard for the Buena Vista Vinicultural Society, “one of the most extensive in the world.” Additional contemporary American horticultural works that he might have referenced in his substantial library, and that we seek out for our libraries of today, include: John Adlum’s Cultivation of the Vine (1828), the first book published in America on grape culture (published only two years before young Hyatt began his journalistic career); two early works by William Prince, Short Treatise on Horticulture (1828) and Treatise on the Vine (1830), both New York published; J. Fisk Allen, Practical Treatise on the Cultivation of the Grape Vine (editions in the 1840s–1850s, Boston/New York); F. R. Elliott’s Fruit Book (1854, New York), a popular 500-page guide; A. J. Downing’s classic Fruits and Fruit Trees of America (1857 rev. ed., New York); Andrew Fuller’s The Grape Culturist (1864, New York); William Chorlton, American Grape Growers Guide (1865, New York); Geo. & F.W. Woodward, Woodward’s Graperies and Horticultural Buildings (1865, New York); George

Husmann's *Cultivation of the Native Grape* (1866, NY), written "by a practical worker" for "the use of a beginner," published twelve months earlier.

#### Concluding Remarks

Hyatt closed, "We have said all we deemed it necessary to say, and given all the facts and opinions of various authorities that we considered essential to elucidate the various points involved, and to correct or confirm our own theories and practical observations and experiences. ... Our little HAND-BOOK will be found to embrace a sufficient amount of condensed knowledge and practical experience on the subject of Grape Culture, especially in California, to enable any sensible judicious man to go on with the culture of the grape understandingly and with success."



"Appearance of the Vines at the close of the Fourth Season."

#### Testimonials

The book immediately brought accolades from newspapers and rural journals from California to the East Coast. To sample a few: The San Jose Mercury described the noted horticulturist author as "a vigorous writer, of ripe experience, and an eminently practical man. We advise all vintners to procure a copy as soon as practical." One of the San Francisco papers noted that, in addition to its worthy contents, "It is attractively printed and elegantly bound." Another exclaimed, "We are glad to see that this subject has engaged the attention of a gentleman eminently qualified by education, reading, and experience, to do it justice. The author brings to bear on his work much enthusiasm and a large experience, gained not only in foreign lands where the vine flourishes, but derived from practical attention to the subject in California. We strongly advise every farmer to procure a copy of the book." Moore's Rural New Yorker verified what Hyatt had hoped his practical handbook would accomplish: "Although most valuable to the California vineyardist, yet it helps to widen our [Eastern] knowledge of the vine." Hyatt's very welcomed practical treatise was not without its critics. One San Francisco newspaper editor found fault with Hyatt's credentials, for he has "been in California only a few years, and [his] experience in grape-growing and wine-making has been limited." He concluded his review with a "However—Mr. Hyatt's book, though far from perfection, contains a large quantity of instructive and entertaining matter, and we can commend it as containing much information that is not to be found elsewhere. ...it is probably better for the use of Californians than any other book."<sup>37</sup>

#### "The Standard Work for the Pacific States"

In 1876, America's Centennial Year, the second edition of Hyatt's *Hand-Book of Grape Culture* was published by A. L. Bancroft & Co., nine years after the first (Price, still \$2.00). Hyatt remarked in the Preface that "scarcely a twelvemonth had elapsed ere the whole first edition was exhausted." [Is this perhaps why the book is so very scarce today?] He admitted "a new edition has long been called for, but we deemed it best to delay its issue until we could have something new to add in the further improvement and progress of Grape Culture and

Wine and Raisin Making."

The chapter headings remain the same as the first edition, but there is a newly added Appendix of thirty-seven pages, divided into eight parts, "recording the Progress, Improvements and Statistics of Grape Culture up to the Centennial Year." This includes new statistics for

the winegrowers of the State; a supplemental list of recommended grapes for table and wine use, including the "Twelve Best Varieties for Wine" awarded by the California Vine and Wine Growers' Assn. in 1873; a list of the best wine grapes in France; and information on the now-ravaging *Phylloxera* infestation.<sup>38</sup>

The second edition, although it has the added 37-page Appendix and two pages of Testimonials, presents itself in a slimmer volume with the use of a thinner paper for the printing. Both editions were issued in cloth with their titles gilt-stamped on the spine.<sup>39</sup> Sparsely, but practically, illustrated, there are diagrams of planting schemes, several charts and tables, and one engraved drawing of vines and one of a vineyard tool. In the October 28, 1876 issue, the San Francisco Pacific Rural Press printed a fine descriptive and congratulatory notice of the book and its author, "one of our earliest and ablest agricultural writers ... his book is worthy of him." At the same time, the Editor of the Daily Alta California took a different stance in announcing the book's publication. He bemoaned the fact that Hyatt "did not entirely rewrite the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition... His experience, as the owner of a vineyard in California, his familiarity with agriculture generally, and his practice as a writer for the press, fitted him to give us a comprehensive treatise upon a subject which offers an abundance of material and has an extensive and permanent interest in the State. The work is the best that we have for general use; Haraszthy's is too large, and is, we believe out of print; and if the author had rewritten it and put into it all that he knows of the subject, many years might have passed before another



would have been needed.”<sup>40</sup> In some ways, the modern reader and student of wine history would agree with the Alta editor. It would have been historically valuable to know, for instance, what grape varieties Hyatt had planted and how they performed; and was he “able to demonstrate from actual experience, what kind of an exposure is best” as he had hoped in the first edition preface?

Nonetheless, the book was “the best that we have” and would not be supplanted until after Hyatt’s death when the next generation of pioneer California winegrowing authors would come on the scene in the 1880s. In 1883 E. H. Rixford published his landmark treatise, *The Wine Press and the Cellar*, the first book devoted to California winemaking; following in 1888, the industrious Prof. George Husmann, who had arrived in the state just before Hyatt’s passing, wrote his *Grape Culture and Wine-Making in California*; then in 1889, the ground-breaking work of Frons Eunice Wait, *Wines and Vines of California*, the first book written for the consumer, and by a woman.

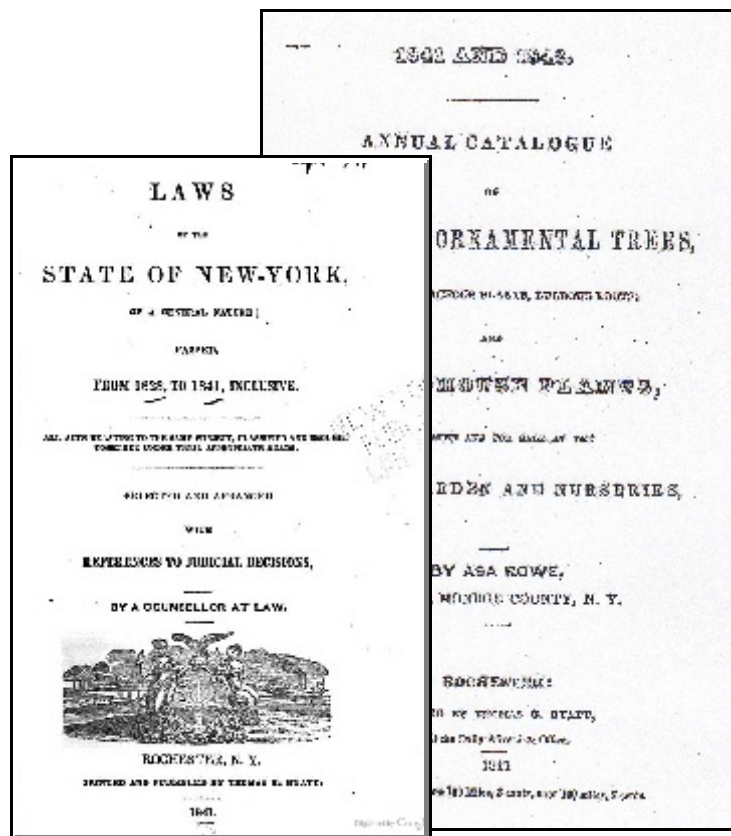
And the illustrious list continues today.

#### NOTES

Please note, although thoroughly explored and documented in my research file, family genealogy details have been omitted from the essay.

1. Pacific Rural Press, 4/1/1871, 1/18/1873.
2. The dates on the details of this paper are conflicting, at best. Landmarks of Monroe Co, NY, 1895, p.421, says first issue was Dec 1827; NY Register 1830–37 has Hyatt in place 1832, 1833, 1834; Gazetteer of NY State, 1860, pp.397, 1831–. Another early source unashamedly says: “Harris and Thomas Hart Hayatt [sic] started a paper at Brockport, but at what time, I am unable to say.” In the California Rural Home Journal, 8/1/1865, Hyatt reminisced that he founded the paper in 1830 and sold it some three years later.
3. Lockport Daily Journal, 8/17/1880; obit, Lockport Balance, Aug 1835.
4. Thomas Hart Hyatt (THH) married Esther Margaret Walbridge May 1833, in Clarkson, Monroe Co, NY. Daughter Esther (“Addie”) born 1834, Jane (“Jennie”) born 1838, son Thomas Hart (“Hart”) born 1841, daughter Maria Louise (“Lulu”) born 1854.
5. The dates are not clearly recorded: one historian says from 1839–1842 only, but this is inaccurate. When he was Consul to Morocco 1848–1850, he left the paper in the charge of an associate until his return. In 1847–1848 he was also co-proprietor/editor of The Daily Globe, New York City.

6. Frederick Follett, *History of the Press in Western New-York from the Beginning to the Middle of the Nineteenth Century*. [1847] Reprinted NY, 1920. 65 pp.
7. A Discourse in ... Rochester, NY, on the Sabbath after the Death of Wm Henry Harrison, President of the United States April 11, 1841, by Tyron Edwards. Rochester, NY: Printed by Thomas Hart Hyatt, 1841. 16 pp. *Laws of the State of New York...passed 1828–1841*. Rochester: Thomas Hart Hyatt, 1841. *Annual Catalogue of Fruit*



Courtesy Greece, NY, Historical Society

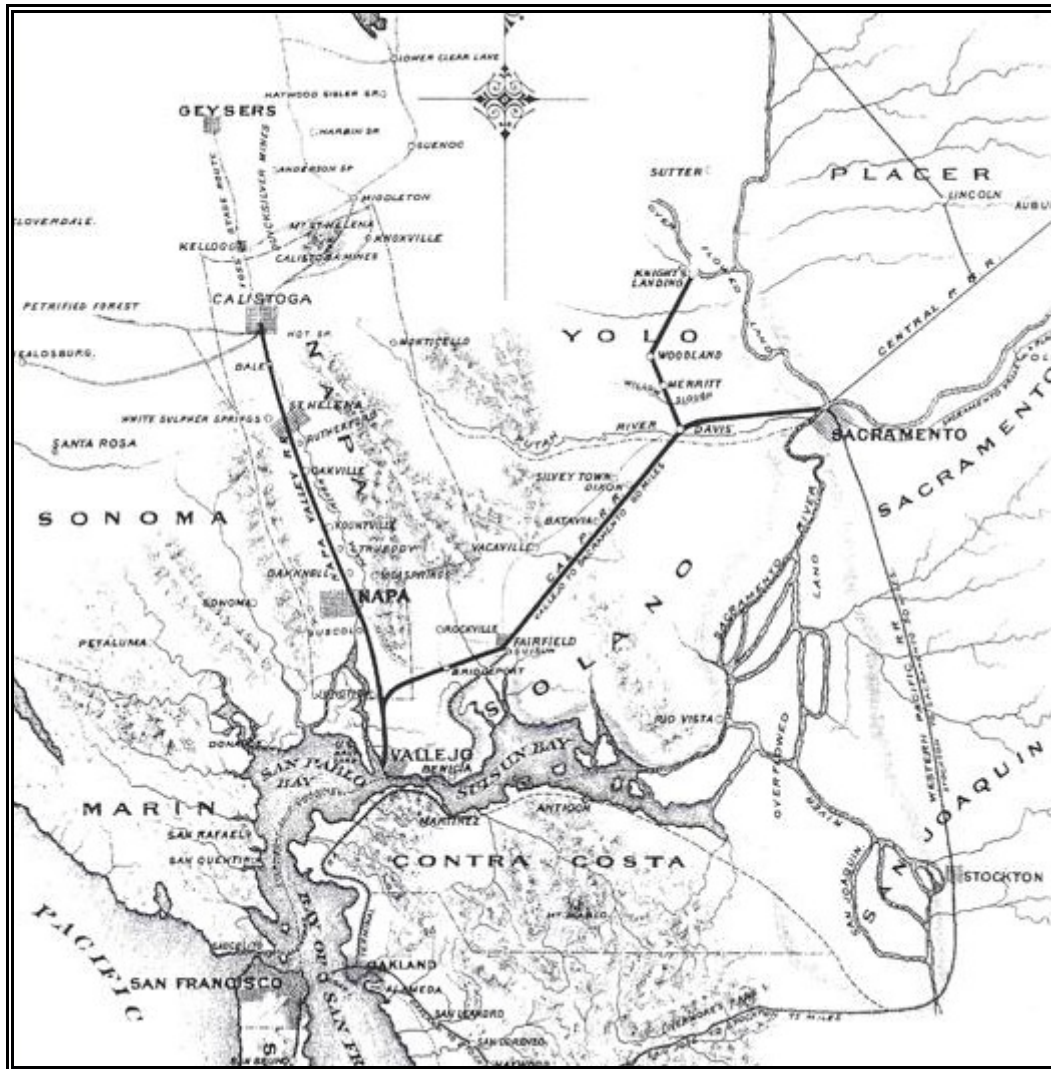
- and Ornamental Trees: Shrubs, Herbaceous Plants, Bulbous Roots; and Green-House Plants Cultivated and For Sale at the Monroe Garden and Nurseries, by Asa Rowe, Greece, Monroe County, N.Y. 1841–1842. [not illustrated] Rochester: Printed by Thomas H. Hyatt, at the Daily Advertiser Office, 1841.
8. Senate Proceedings 1845–1849.
9. Cultivator, Feb 1849, p.41-3; Horticulturist... Oct 1850, p.173-9.
10. *The Works of James Buchanan...1848–1853...Vol.8*, 1909. p.316-318.
11. It is not documented, but one can hardly believe that his wife and the three small children accompanied him for his 2-year stay. The census for 1850 locates the Hyatt family in Clarkson, Monroe Co., N.Y., making their home in the large boarding house owned by Mrs. Hyatt’s parents, Silas and Esther Walbridge. Clarkson was close to their old neighborhood of Brockport and also very near Rochester.

12. California Rural Home Journal (CRHJ), 5/15/1865. In a series of nine articles for his paper, THH published for the public his "Random Leaves from our Note Books of Travel. A Voyage from New York to China, and Round the World, via Panama, San Francisco..."; U.S. Consul Archives. THH resigned in April 1861, reason not stated.
13. CRHJ, 6/15/1865, 7/1/1865.
14. CRHJ, 9/1/1865. The Hyatts lived on the island of Koolongsoo (or Koolongsu, Kulangseu), across a narrow strait from the city of Amoy. Along with riding their cherished steeds, sailing around the island was a favorite family activity. Journal during a Voyage from New York, America, to Amoy, China, 1858–1861...and A Visit to Japan July to September, 1861, by Jennie Hyatt. Cornell University, Rare Books & Manuscripts, North Family Papers, Box 7.
15. THH writes that he was Consul to China for 8 years. This was his appointed term; he was initially appointed 6/14/1853 during a recess of the Senate, and was re-appointed 2/13/1854. His service in China was from March 1854–May 1861. Correspondence of the Late Commissioners in China, 1859, p.274; CRHJ, 9/1/1865.
16. U.S. Legation, Hong Kong, August 20, 1854. Despatch written by Robert McLane, Commissioner to China, to W. L. Marcy, Secretary of State. Message of the President of the United States ...Communications Mssrs McLane and Parker, late Commissioners to China, 1859. p.165-168.
17. CRHJ, 6/1/1865. Family members: wife Esther (age 43), daughters Addie (24), Jennie (20), and Lulu (4).
18. CRHJ, 8/1/1865.
19. Journal.... Mrs Hyatt and two daughters returned to New York in September 1860. Hart Hyatt remained in Amoy to settle up the house and other affairs.
20. California GLO / BLM Land Patents.
21. One wonders if these were not speculative purchases. Daily Alta California, 10/3/1864, carried his ad: For Sale Cheap, a stock or vine ranch of 640 acres in Napa County, on the road from Napa City to Wooden Valley, about 6 mi from the former place; also 69 acres in Gordon Valley, \$10-\$12 per acre." He also listed For Sale, "21 acres of land at Menlo Park, near Redwood [south of San Francisco], at \$125 per acre."
22. California Register of Voters 1866-98 recorded his residence for the years 1875 and 1876 in Vacaville.
23. CRHJ, 2/15/65.
24. Ernest Peninou, History of the Sacramento Viticultural District, 2004, p.55, 70; History of the Orleans Hill Vineyard & Winery of Arpad Haraszthy & Co. (1983) gives a detailed history of the Capay Valley area, just north of Winters.
25. Peninou, Napa Viticultural District History, 2004, p.136, 114-115.
26. Sacramento Daily Union, 2/18/1865; Carosso, California Wine Industry 1930–1895, 1951, p.219, records dates of CRHJ: 2/15/1865–3/15/ 1866 (24 Nos.); U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library has the full run—the only known holding of this now rare periodical..
27. Charter & Directory, City of Rochester, N.Y., 1834.
28. Among the Hyatt family personal possessions were numerous household furnishings brought back from Morocco, China, and Japan. Thomas Hart Hyatt Probate, Yolo Co. Archives.
29. Reprinted in Pacific Rural Press, 3/25/1871.
30. Pacific Rural Press, 4/1/1871, 12/23/1871.
31. Pacific Rural Press, 4/1/1871.
32. California Farmer & Journal of Useful Sciences, 10/13/ 1870.
33. Sacramento Daily Union, 9/25/1872; Pacific Rural Press, 11/23/1872, 2/1/1873.
34. Pacific Rural Press, 7/19/1873; Daily Alta Calif, 7/19/1873; Ezra Slocum Carr [1819–1894], Patrons of Husbandry on the Pacific Coast; Being a Complete History..., 1875, p.15, 82-84, 131, 221.
35. Daily Alta Calif, 11/16/1876. Hyatt was well aware of the Chinese issue and had followed it closely. More than ten years earlier, in his California Rural Home Journal (1/15/1866), he had published a lengthy editorial, "The Chinese as Farmers and Farm-Laborers. Do We Want Them in California?" His answer was, Yes—"Let us encourage the better class of Chinese, the rural population, to come ... and aid in cultivating our broad acres and in developing our mines."
36. The other three being Agoston Haraszthy [1812–1869], Grape Culture, Wines, and Wine-Making, 1862, the earliest book on California wine (see WTQ v.23 #2); Emmet H. Rixford [1841–1928], The Wine Press and the Cellar, 1883, the earliest California book devoted solely to winemaking (WTQ, v.8 #1); Frona Eunice Wait [1859–1946], Wines and Vines of California, 1889, the first book written for the consumer, and by a woman (WTQ v.21 #3). We will add a 5<sup>th</sup> cornerstone, Grape Culture and Wine Making in California, 1888, by George Husmann [1827–1902] (WTQ v.8 #3). Of Husmann's many valuable published contributions to the American wine industry, this is his first book written for the California wine grower, and very much needed at the time. Of note, Hyatt's treatise was the only one of the group to have a second edition.
37. Daily Alta California, 2/11/1867. The Alta would again be critical of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition in 1876.
38. Awarded to J. R. Nickerson, Lincoln, Placer Co: "Zinfindal, Berger, B. Malvasia, Upright Burgundy, Y. Orleans, Red Tramina, Muscateller, White Riesling, Miller's Burgundy, Barbareaux (or, Barbarossa), Golden Chasselas, B. Frontignan."
39. All copies viewed have been bound in a deep forest green cloth with gilt-stamped spine.
40. Daily Alta California, 10/16/76.

FOR THEIR ENTHUSIASTIC energies and able assistance, I send my sincerest thanks to Herbert Hyatt, great-grandson of Thomas Hart Hyatt; Marty Schlabach at Cornell University, Mann Library; Bo Simons at Sonoma County Wine Library, Healdsburg, CA; Donna Eschenbrenner, History Center Archives, Tompkins Co, NY; Amanda Mason, Yolo Co, CA, Archives. ■







1878 SMITH & ELLIOTT MAP OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA, central to the activities of Thomas Hart Hyatt, 1862–1881



Arboriculture in California  
by T.H.H. [Thomas Hart Hyatt]

[Written for the Pacific Rural Press, San Francisco, v.1 #13, April 1, 1871, "Home & Farm Section"]

A Glance at the Writer's Experience with Trees

THE CULTIVATION AND CARE OF TREES has been a passion, bordering on a mania, with us, since our earliest boyhood days. Born in the woods, nurtured in a primitive log cabin, in a scant "opening" in the primeval forests of Central New York, where the lofty elm, the stately pine, the majestic and beauteous maple, the pyramidal balsam, fir, and the elegant magnolia and their multitudinous forest companions, threw welcome shades and scattered their fragrant blossoms far and near; we seemed to have been inspired with these grand old forest scenes with the spirit of the woods, with those magnificent sylvan beauties, from our very infancy. To plant and protect the trees, whether fruit or forest, has been with us an almost religious duty, for the half century since we were of sufficient age to commence our joyous mission. "Woodman, spare that tree," has been to us a sacred talisman. And, whether coming in possession of the broad acres of a rural home farm, or confined to the narrow limits of a city lot, our first impulse and first act is always to plant trees. We have planted and cultivated the elm, the maple, the chestnut, the beech, the linden, the hickory, the oak, the magnolia, the fir, all and every variety of forest trees, in the soil of our own native New York; and every variety of shrub and fruitful tree that can be reared in that cold clime. We have planted and reared bananas, the laurel, the cork tree, the cedar of Lebanon, the orange, the lemon, the fig, the date, the vine, and our own native fruits, as well upon the sunny shores of the Straits of Gibraltar, in the genial clime of the "Land of the Moor," and in the far Orient—the Flowery Kingdom—have we eaten of the orange, pumato, banana, pine apple, laiche, grape, pepa, custard apple, guava, fig, cumquat, as well as the peach, apricot, pomegranate, and pear—nearly all from trees or plants of our own planting; and have there cultivated the pride of India, the bamboo, the cocoanut, the mimæ, the ailanthus, the camphor tree, the pith or rice paper tree and enjoyed the cooling shades of our own vine and banyan trees, in our island home in that far Orient. And in our own California have we cultivated, more or less extensively, nearly all of the native trees, tropical and semi-tropical, and the *Washingtonia gigantea*, the Australian gum tree, pepper tree, etc. And we can point to trees of our own planting in the Empire State, that in sturdy bulk and towering majesty will vie with the huge monarchs of the forest. Whether inspired by some forest genii or Nick of the wild woods, we scarcely know; but certainly it is, that without any particular pre-meditation or design, all of our homes for nearly a half century past, have had a tinge of the woods and of forest life, as evidenced by the names with which we have christened our rural abodes, as for instance: "Elmwood Cottage," our suburban rural gothic home in Rochester, N. Y., built nearly 30 years ago; "Glenwood," another suburban retreat, and "Forestwood Lodge," in the same city; "Willow Cottage," our old ancestral tabernacle, in the town of our nativity; "Bamboo Terrace," our garden and vineyard on a sunny slope of the Straits of Gibraltar; "Villa of the Banyans," our Island home in the Celestial Orient; and in California, we have our "Mount Glenwood," in Yolo; have had our "Villa Rosa," at Redwood, and now our "Jungle-wood," in Solano, and on the Alpine heights above Napa, our "Laurel-Wood Ranch." Well, the fastidious reader may say, these are mere fancy names, and he may insinuate that they are the ebullitions of vanity. Well, have it so, if you will, but we insist that it is the inspiration of the "Genii of the Woods," while we are only the humble "medium" through whom to communicate these revelations to the outer world. With all these somewhat diversified experiences, it will not be wondered at, that we should feel a deep interest in all that pertains to the sylvan or arboriculture of California, our chosen, adopted home. And we beg pardon of our readers for detaining them so long by our rambling sketches, from what we sat down to say about:

### The Cultivation of Trees in California.

**W**e have just read the award of the Board of Agriculture of our State, for the propagation and planting of the greatest number of forest trees; and note the remarks of the several applicants for premiums, and that the award was made to the party who had 33,000 trees, all of one kind—the Australian gum tree, or eucalyptus globulus. Now this to say the least. To encourage the propagation of but one kind of tree, and that of doubtful utility, even if it can be grown successfully, which we very much doubt, as it naturally becomes top-heavy, the limbs growing much faster than the body or the roots; and when the ground becomes wet and soft, they are liable to blow over in the first hard gale of wind that blows, especially in light soils or adobe soil. We have experienced this difficulty ourselves, notwithstanding our precaution in propping them up and staying them with cords and stakes. We have had trees of this kind that were a foot and a half in the circumference of their trunks, blow over with all our precaution, in lightening tops, etc. Their roots do not seem to strike down deep enough to find holding ground, and especially if they do not penetrate the sub-soil or hard pan, which it seems difficult for them to do. And then, for shade trees, they do not compare with some of our own native forest trees; their branches are too loosely set, scraggily, not close and compact as a shade tree should be. It seems to be a fast-growing tree in our soil and climate; and as giving variety to the lawn and landscape garden, a few of these trees judiciously interspersed, and carefully trained and guarded, are ornamental, and may be properly introduced: but we doubt the propriety of encouraging the growing of forests of these trees, until they have been more successfully tested than they have yet been in California. It strikes us that the award should have been to the party producing the greatest variety of forest trees that can be most successfully cultivated. One of the claimants to the prize had 39,000 trees of the following varieties: Lombardy poplar and balm of gilead, 5,000; morus multi-aulis, 7,500; modus alba, 5,000; California black walnut, 10,000; American white maple, 4,000; American white elm, 5,000; English elm, 2,000; Spanish chestnut, 400; American chestnut 500. This, we think, would be far better than to bestow the premium upon one kind of tree, and that, as yet, a sort of hybrid in this country. If the restrictions of the Board did not allow of awarding the prize, because these trees were only planted in nursery, then their restriction should have been removed, and a liberal prize awarded to all the parties competing. The sum of \$50 is but a paltry affair, any way, for the encouragement of such an important enterprise, not half as much as is sometimes awarded to some old broken-winded nag at a horse race.

If the prize offered had been \$1,000, instead of \$50, the State, if not the Society, would have been the gainers by it. Our State Government has, we believe, a standing bounty, to encourage the planting and cultivating of forest trees along our public highways. It is a noble enterprise, and we hope to see it generally carried into effect, until every roadside in our State shall be adorned by these forest sentinels.

Cultivate trees, then, beautify your homes, is our injunction to old and young, to rich and poor—it pays financially. We have rarely, if ever, spent \$10 for trees, that we did not receive \$100 in the increased value of our place when we sold; and you will receive twice that in satisfaction and healthful pleasure, while cultivating them and watching their growth, and the development of their floral charms, if it be in beautifying a permanent home, that you never wish to sell, but to leave as a legacy to your family and offspring. What monument can be more noble and praiseworthy, and satisfactory, than to enable your descendants, in after generations, to point with pride and say, that fine, lofty maple, and that group of orange trees, were planted by my father when I was an infant; that magnificent, towering linden, and these fine old apple trees, were planted where they stand by my grandfather; that huge old oak, and that cluster of venerable pear trees, were planted by my great grandfather; that young forest, that wooded hill-side, those groves of growing forest trees that adorn yon landscape, those groves of oranges, almonds, figs, apples, cherries, etc., were planted by my own hand, and I hope to leave them as an heir-loom, a legacy to my children, or children's children. Verily, your children will rise up and called you blessed to the remotest generations. T. H. H. Jungle-wood, March, 1871



CORNERSTONES OF CALIFORNIA WINE LITERATURE

Haraszthy  
1862

Wait  
1889

Husmann  
1888

Rixford  
1883

Hyatt  
1867

Hyatt, rev.ed.  
1876