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Vinaceous Correspondents: Martin Ray's Friendships with Eminent Oenophiles

by ***Barbara Marinacci***

PART I. INTRODUCTION

[Tendril Barbara Marinacci, a developmental book editor, and author/coauthor of ten books on such diverse subjects as Walt Whitman, Linus Pauling, and California's Spanish Place-Names, is the stepdaughter of winegrower Martin Ray. Her mother was his second wife, Eleanor Ray. She is currently the editorial director of a history of the Viticulture & Enology Department at U.C. Davis. — Ed.]

This series began as a single article, inspired by Thomas Pinney's article on "The Wine List of Alfred A. Knopf" in the January *WT Quarterly*, as well as editor Gail Unzelman's chronological checklist of books on wine published by Knopf Inc.

Another book about wines and winemaking that Knopf himself wanted to publish, had it ever arrived in a form worthy of appearing among the offerings of his illustrious publishing house, was one that would be written by California vintner Martin Ray (1904–1976). An autobiography or memoir could have covered the long and turbulent career of this voluble California winegrower, whom Knopf had known since the early 1940s. For forty years, between the mid-1930s and the early 1970s, that strident wine-quality advocate—now classified as a "pioneer," a title conferring new respectability—produced America's most authentically varietal wines, and certainly the costliest.

A book about his lifework would have given MR a public forum for emitting his zealous opinions about winemaking and other matters, and also enabled him to express his genuine passion for "hands-on" vineyard and cellar work, which he performed both strenuously and with meticulous attention. But despite determined though intermittent efforts over a score of years by Martin's second wife, Eleanor, and sometimes even on her husband's part as well, the promising book that Knopf hoped to receive never arrived on his desk. Instead, the manuscripts that the Rays sent him from time to time, submitted with high hopes, were always regretfully declined. Whether cast in semi-fictional or ostensibly factual form, the Martin Ray story, as recounted by Eleanor, either wouldn't hold a reader's attention for long with its earnest lecturing about MR's noble campaign for quality-ensuring practices, or else was off-putting in its hyperbolic portrayal of the brave vintner who often spoke out fiercely, and mostly alone, against the attitude and practices of the wine Establishment of his times—whose representatives he variously called greedy, corrupt, spineless, conniving, or ignorant. MR never lacked insulting epithets for describing his generic or specific foes.

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Martin Ray's Crusade

"Rusty" Ray—as he was known to most friends and acquaintances—was both admirable and notorious for his perennial warfare with the wine industry, particularly the salient one in his home state. Largely for self-protective financial reasons, for all too long after Repeal ended Prohibition's dozen dry years in 1933, most commercial wineries (backed by the Wine Institute that represented them), declined to support and then implement the enactment of stringent quality standards that Ray kept insisting would be the unsteady industry's economic salvation.

In 1936 Martin Ray bought from Frenchman Paul Masson, his longtime mentor, the old winery and extensive property in the east-facing foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains and west of the town of Saratoga in the Santa Clara (now "Silicon") Valley. He already recognized the value of producing high-quality wines so as to remove the overall shameful reputation of America's vinous products, whether past or current. And for four decades thereafter, whether in publications written as the Masson proprietor, or in pronouncements issued later from his own small mountaintop winery close to his "old place," launched in the mid 1940s, MR insisted that far more California vineyards should be planted to fine-varietal winegrapes. These could be vintaged by the premier wineries into prestige-aiming wines; and when eventually released, they would be honestly and specifically labeled, as the current bottled wines were not.

An evangelistic purist, MR always maintained that only he did it all—grape growing, winemaking, wine labeling, wine marketing, even wine imbibing—as it *should* be done. This egoistic position scarcely endeared the Saratoga vintner to his winemaking peers, most of whom worked on a different scale, annually making quantities of wine counted not by a small and limited number of cases (as did MR) but by substantial gallonages. Indeed, for many years few of them ever produced wines that could compare favorably with the prime French models, as Martin Ray's best ones were acknowledged as doing. It took the "Judgment of Paris" in July of 1976, a half-year after MR's death, for the wine world to recognize finally that sometimes certain painstakingly made wines from California might even surpass their archetypes made in France.

According to Ray's gospel, the varietal named on a bottle's label would preferably be 100 percent, or the exclusive contents within; but if not, the percentages of any other contributory grapes should be identified. He berated the feeble BATF decree, introduced in 1936, stipulating that at least 51 percent of the bottled wine named on a label must actually come from that varietal grape. This meant that the near-half remainder, 49 percent, could legally come from inferior or junk grapes, or an unspecified grape concentrate. Identifying on labels the wine grapes' geographic origins was also crucial in MR's quality pronouncements. It would then force many wineries to admit having used as blending materials a sizable proportion of prolific and bland grape varieties, most probably grown in the torrid Central Valley, such as Alicante Bouschet, French Colombard, and even Thompson Seedless. (MR wouldn't have been pleased when the BATF in 1983 finally raised the minimal varietal amount to 75 percent, a figure still current; but this at least showed modest progress.)

MR wanted an industry-regulated system, modeled somewhat on the French wine industry's Appellation Contrôlée, that would be enforced through tight government inspections, as well as fines for violations found anywhere along the route from grape harvesting and crushing to bottling and marketing. The result?—dependably fine wines that finally would gain respect and credibility for California products among the world's wine cognoscenti. Premium wines could then sell for much higher prices, in line with sought-after French and German vintages, so that the rise in high-end wine consumption and wine revenues would benefit individual wineries, including those that in the past had refused to make the needed changes.

Telling Martin Ray's Story

As some Wayward Tendrils readers will recall, Eleanor Ray eventually published, in 1993, the final version of a memoir/biography of her husband: *Vineyards in the Sky: The Life of Legendary Vintner Martin Ray.* By then she was 89 years old and no longer capable of publicizing her book, which she could have done wonderfully well in previous years. Had the book come out much earlier, in the years following MR's death in 1976, she would have relished undertaking its promotion. She had persisted, as letters show, in seeking some publisher's commitment; but as with the prior Knopf disappointments, she didn't succeed, in spite of periodic efforts to revise the manuscript. Duplicated and bound forms of it, however, did circulate over the years among acquaintances and friends, almost like an "underground" publication.

In 1990, after moving up to Martin Ray's Mt. Eden "chateau" in Saratoga to take care of my mother in her old age, I undertook to make a reality of her book. Knowing well its importance to her, I was determined to publish it while she was still alive. My editing work included contributing new informational passages, rendered in her writing mode: for instance, she had taken for granted all readers' knowledge of basic aspects of grape growing and winemaking, whereas even some wine connoisseurs actually lack this. I even retrieved whole chapters, crucial to the emotional underpinnings of the story, that she had previously

cut from her manuscript in an effort to shorten it. A co-publishing arrangement was made with Heritage West Books of Stockton, which handled the book's production.

In the past decade Eleanor Ray's drama-filled memoir, which people often say "reads like a (major) novel" (that exact quote came from Anthony Dias Blue), has had numerous vocal admirers. Fictionalizing his life's tale in many places, Eleanor Ray managed to capture well the "essence" of Martin Ray in its more positive manifestations. But that book doesn't—it can't possibly—tell the whole story. No book or person can. Rusty Ray was a complex, contradictory, and often difficult man, with abundant psychological quirks, even pathologies, that were exacerbated when he was upset or on a wine-drinking spree. Yet on his best behavior he was undeniably charismatic, with decided heroic qualities and dimensions. Most people who knew MR couldn't help but be fascinated, and to this day they *love* to talk about him, whether they admired or hated him. His mesmeric reputation endures.

Now, what exactly had Alfred Knopf wished to get from his friend Martin Ray in the form of a publishable book about himself? The frank yet tactful letter that Knopf wrote to the Rays on 4 June 1969 conveys succinctly his expectations, along with his reasons for declining the latest attempt to put Martin Ray into print. His message is typed on the Knopf Inc. letterhead stationery. Yet it looks as if he himself typed it because it does not appear to be the work of a competent professional secretary, who surely would have been available had he dictated it at the publishing house. (By then Knopf Inc. was incorporated into Random House, and its founder-publisher had officially retired.) Moreover, Alfred in his own handwriting made various additions and alterations to the text. The absence of customary commas, somewhat improved here for readability (and omitting the [sic] indicator), is surprising in a fully literate person. Yet at the bottom on the left the typist's initials traditionally follow his. But it's a good letter, anyway.

Dear Eleanor and Rusty:

I was going to write you today about the manuscript and now I have your letter of May 29th as well as that of the 17th to which I made a reply on the 27th.

Both of you dear people sign all letters but my hunch is that Eleanor wrote the one of May 17th and you, Rusty, wrote the one of May 29th. The two styles, I must ask you to believe, are not identical. This is important and I'm going to risk our old friendship, hoping that the risk will be no more than nominal, by writing you both with the utmost frankness. Eleanor has tried many times to tell your story and the present manuscript, judging by what we have seen of it, promises to be more of the same. When I say more of the same, I mean same in the sense of being open to exactly the same objections as before. She's a good wife and so much in love, as so many people are, with what you have done that I don't really think she is temperamentally fit to write your story. On the other hand, I am by no means certain that you couldn't write it yourself—having all the help you like from Eleanor in the form of frank talks between you, criticisms back and forth and so forth but with the writing to express your personality and yours alone.

The point is that if your story is good enough to be published, and we think it is, then it's good enough to be done right and not in terms that—again I must speak frankly—really embarrass your more sophisticated friends. And the story of your career with its culmination in the present wines that you are making is a sophisticated and not a naïve or simple tale.

It certainly redounds greatly to your glory in the eyes of those who know you but even so it will not bear a thick sugar coating of sentimentality or any attempt in the telling of the story to make you out to be larger than life, a superhuman "one against the Gods" so to speak who apparently never made a mistake. It shouldn't remind one of the story they tell about the late English publisher Sir Stanley Unwin, whose wife said to him after she had read the manuscript of a good part of his autobiography, "Don't you think, Stanley, that it would sit better if you admitted once in awhile that you had been wrong and made a mistake?" Whereupon Sir Stanley replied, "My dear, I'm not writing a work of fiction." Generally speaking, the facts should be allowed to speak for themselves. People who have no interest whatever in wines are not going to buy the book while people who have could be counted on to form the right opinion without its being pointed out repeatedly and, if I may say so, tiresomely by the text.

So I think, if Eleanor will forgive me, she ought to encourage you to try a few chapters all by yourself. If they are done while I am away, send them on to my secretary, Mrs. Gretchen Bloch, with a note requesting her to turn them over to Mrs. Judith Jones, who is in charge, and has been for many years, of all our wine and food books—among others. If this scheme doesn't work out, then we'll frankly be faced with the fact that your story will have to be told by a third person.

I wish we could come to see you on our way to Brazil but apart from the time involved it would take us several thousand miles out of our way.

And I hope I don't need to say how flattered I am by your attitude toward our imprint. But for that very reason <u>and</u> because of our old and enduring friendship I wouldn't want to publish and you wouldn't want us to publish a book about you that we couldn't stand behind with everything we have.

Helen joins me in best love to you both.

Yours ever,
(signed) Alfred

AAK:at

The tone and contents of this letter demonstrate well enough the friendship that existed between Alfred Knopf and the Rays, who had previously entertained him and Blanche Knopf, his wife and extraordinary publishing partner, separately or together, at their home and winery in Saratoga on half a dozen occasions. (On Alfred's last trip there, in 1969, he brought his second wife, Helen, whom he had married after Blanche's death in 1966.) The letter delicately addresses Eleanor's tendency toward reverential sentiments, inflation, and bombast—though MR certainly had them all, and more, in his own ample forms, which she had merely embellished.

The letter also reveals Alfred's own awareness of Rusty Ray's innate ability to be able tell his own tale, in more manly language. But how did Knopf know that MR could actually write well enough to create a book? ... Because for a number of years, between 1953 and 1969, he had periodically received letters from his vintner friend, detailing issues that concerned him or current happenings. Sometimes these missives sent from Mt. Eden would go on and on for pages.

Martin Ray as Letter Writer

Alfred Knopf by no means was the only person who received lengthy and sometimes eloquent epistles from Martin Ray himself. These clearly weren't written by his alter-ego "voice," the more effusive Eleanor, who as his more-than-willing amanuensis frequently composed both business and personal letters to be signed by him. She also often took Rusty's dictation while he worked in the cellar among his beloved wines (conveniently for him, she had learned Gregg shorthand in young adulthood and never forgot it), and then typed up his orally composed letters.

As Knopf pointed out, it is usually evident from the writing style which one of them had created a particular letter, though it might be signed by them both, or just by MR alone. Rusty Ray himself actually *wrote* competently and often expressively, but usually without Eleanor's special flourishes. When intent upon producing a serious letter, which involved thinking through some issue before setting ideas or feelings or event coverage directly down on paper, he might handwrite a letter, or at least create an outline or draft that Eleanor could then elaborate upon in a draft—which he could edit prior to sending it out in final form. But sometimes he just wished to type out the letter himself. As the words came to him, seated before the typewriter for several hours, he might pound away on the keys without taking a break, which would have ended the focused concentration that enabled him to pursue some topics intently for paragraphs or even pages, or even to take discursive or reflective pathways as it pleased him to do. The people he chose to write to in this way were usually regarded as his intimate friends or as people worthy of cultivation because of their important influence in the world of wine—or both.

The Shields Library's Special Collections at U.C. Davis is now the permanent repository of the Martin Ray & Eleanor Ray Papers. The Rays' correspondence occupies the largest part of this considerable collection. They obviously enjoyed letter writing, for over the years they wrote many hundreds of letters to friends, family members, acquaintances, and business contacts. Unlike many private correspondence collections purchased by or donated to libraries whose contents are frustratingly lopsided because these notable persons usually failed to make copies of the letters they wrote to their correspondents, the Rays' own letters are almost totally preserved—usually on the canary-yellow paper used as second sheets. Then there are hundreds of originals of letters written *to* the Rays, whether initiating contact with them (often because the writer had greatly admired some Martin Ray wine introduced into their life, perhaps transforming it) or in response to a letter received. (The collection, however, contains few letters dating back earlier than 1953, since fires destroyed the main letter files: first in 1941 at the Paul Masson winery, where the business office was located; then in 1952 at the Rays' newly built mountain home. Two chapters in *Vineyards in the Sky* describe these dramatic conflagrations.)

For a period of a quarter-century, in their many letters the Rays reported in detail on their day-to-day existence. This middle-aged-to-elderly couple lived on a mountaintop in a rather rustic and isolated place. Though they were close to the rapidly expanding urban world 2000 feet below, which their spectacular homesite overlooked beyond the vineyards, a 2½-mile narrow dirt road wound up through steep terrain that was covered with impenetrable, scrubby chaparral or thick groves of oak, laurel, buckeye, and madrone. In the opposite direction, along the coastal ridge, lay forestland with tall redwoods. The Rays' lives there were almost wholly devoted to the labor-intensive pursuit of winegrowing, and to the attendant cultivation and entertainment of friends and acquaintances who admired wine—especially Martin Ray-made wines.

Fortunately, researchers intent upon finding out more about Martin Ray will benefit from the Rays' automatic procedure when letter writing: they inserted a carbon paper in front of a second sheet for producing a copy for their own files. Thus they made carbons of all letters and even handwritten notes that they sent out through the years. The Rays routinely copied not only business letters, but also the gossipy and sometimes highly personal ones to friends and family members—which often contained business-connected matters too. They wished to have always available to them the firm evidence of what they had said before to someone, so as to avoid repetition—or, worse in Rusty's way of thinking, ever contradicting themselves. They could also thereby "recycle" statements they had previously made to another person. Actually, among the most intriguing letters are some that one or the other Ray wrote, usually when inflamed with some notion, but then decided to refrain from sending out in this form. Still, the original was kept, and penciled in at the top would be "Not sent." Edited drafts were also filed away.

When the Rays wished to widely broadcast letters or newsletters in some publicity blitz, Eleanor carefully typed up a special "master" and then could run off dozens, even hundreds, of copies on their own Swiss-made machine. These duplicated papers too are in the Ray collection. Nowadays, of course, with the invention and prevalence of photocopiers, facsimile devices, and computers it isn't difficult to retain or retransmit digital or hardcopy records of one's correspondence, or to reuse texts already written by adapting them into new forms. (What a great time the Rays might have had in our electronic era—with a word processor for letter writing, software and printers for desktop publishing, and Internet e-mail; and how much time and postage they could have saved!)

Probably less than a quarter of the archived Ray correspondence consists of Martin Ray's own letters, whether dictated or typed by him. But what's there is still plenty, and often authentic stuff. Eleanor Ray, though, barely tapped into this rich vein of her husband's words when writing *Vineyards in the Sky*. Instead, she presented Martin Ray, appropriately for her own perspective and the one she wished to convey to her readers, as the righteous protagonist in his own life drama, beginning in early childhood and ending with his death. She replicated in mostly fictional form (based on what she knew or surmised, or on what MR had told her) his thoughts and feelings, supplied scenes and dialogue, and provided passages with background wine history, as well as added her own perceptions and experiences over time. (Conveniently, she actually had known MR well, starting in her college years—three decades before she married him in 1951, after his wife Elsie's death. In the early years he was her first husband's friend and business partner, and had even been the best man at their wedding.)

Perhaps it is time now to get Martin Ray to speak for himself in print. And using the distinctive voice expressed in his own letters is surely the best way for doing this.

Looking Ahead

Initially, at WT editor Gail Unzelman's invitation, I undertook to write a single article about MR's epistolary and in-person relationship with Alfred Knopf. But I soon found myself writing too much, going off on side excursions with other Martin Ray friends and acquaintances whom both men knew. Particularly compelling were MR's letter exchanges in the early '40s with Knopf wine author Julian Street—who, after all, had supplied the initial link between Knopf and Ray. This was also the period when Martin Ray was achieving his first fame among oenophiles with his Paul Masson varietal wines. I also knew, from having gone carefully through the Ray correspondence before turning it over to UC Davis, that other fascinating relationships were reflected in the letters that MR had written and received during the later thirty years. So I decided to propose furnishing a far more ambitious and lengthy contribution involving Martin Ray's correspondence with wine lovers—since the very existence of these letters may otherwise never be known to most wine scholars and researchers.

Thus now, with our editor's indulgent permission, the original topic has been greatly expanded in prospect, to be published in future installments. The long, segmented survey will portray Martin Ray and a selection of his notable "vinaceous correspondents" through the years—and also bring in other personalities, along with certain key events relevant to the relationship's particular time span.

The article in the next Tendrils issue will feature MR's remarkable correspondence with renowned East Coast author and wine connoisseur, Julian Street. Once begun, it led to their close friendship. These early letters establish Rusty Ray's bent toward writing long letters to people whom he admired, or at least regarded as useful contacts, and therefore hoped to impress or influence in particular ways. (Their letter exchanges, however, are not part of the U.C. Davis-owned collection; instead, they have been preserved in the Princeton Library.)

Taking the Ray correspondence in a somewhat chronological sequence will then lead to U.C. Davis enologist Maynard Amerine, who was MR's good friend and ally (as quality advocate) from the late 1930s until 1955—the year of Martin Ray's "Wine Quality Fight." Following this I will take up the Martin Ray/Alfred Knopf letters, which are unusual in their expansiveness and revelations, particularly be-

cont. p.10 —

MARINACCI, cont. from p.5 —
fore the Rays founded the time- and energy-consuming Mount Eden Vineyards Corp. in 1960. That ambitious but ultimately doomed endeavor (at least for the Rays), which involved two dozen member-investor couples, deserves an article unto itself.

Several other important sets of correspondence over the years will later be presented: MR's letter exchanges with wine writers and commentators such as Angelo Pellegrini, John Melville, Edward Wawszkiewicz, Robert Balzer, and Robert Benson; his correspondence with various aspiring winegrowers and fledgling vintners, some of them now well known; and excerpts from his frequent letters over the years to his stepson and namesake, Peter Martin Ray, whom he had adopted as an adult, and who was his early emissary to French and German wine estates—and after 1959 usually functioned as the Martin Ray Winery official winemaker at vintage time.

As much as possible, all these letters will be mined primarily for technical information they contain about MR's grape-growing and cellar methods, at a time when new scientific knowledge and technological innovations, notably issuing from UC Davis, were rapidly changing winemaking; for insights into the "real" Martin Ray, with his vivid memories, strong biases, glorious dreams, and deep disappointments; and for his views—harsh but often fact-based—about past and present trends and problems in the wine industry, in the state, the nation, and internationally, during the years leading up to the California-led Wine Revolution.

I have undertaken this lengthy project partly because I am aware that many people interested in American wine history, even some wine historians, may never have even heard of or read about Martin Ray; therefore they do not realize the importance of the crucial role he deliberately took for forty years as the infamous gadfly of the firmly entrenched California wine establishment, dominated by the big wineries. The independent MR could say all sorts of scurrilous things that vintners with personal standards perhaps as high as his, but who were in the employ or even management of reputable wineries, wouldn't dare reveal or declaim. Someone, after all, had to hold the quality banner aloft, take the gunfire as it came, and fire back. As wine historian Charles L. Sullivan and others point out, almost everything that Martin Ray doggedly fought for in the wine industry, often single-handedly, ultimately came to pass—if not exactly as he had willed them.

The wine industry's leaders, understandably enough, did not intend to help immortalize MR by ever giving him, in magazines and books, the recognition that surely was due him. Apparently their tactics largely succeeded: omitting his wines from premium lists, and also preventing his stridently critical opinions from reaching most people who were becoming interested in wine. They did this not just by ignoring his proposals and attacks, but also (or so MR maintained) by getting the powerful Wine Institute to forbid periodicals that carried lucrative wine ads to even mention his name or his wines, let alone print articles praising him and the bottled vinous elixirs of his mighty labors. Thus wine scholars may never encounter the name of Martin Ray in archived publications, while students of wine history are unlikely to read much about him, if anything at all, in retrospective books.

Using excerpts from various documents originating with Martin Ray may kindle the interest of researchers in the Martin Ray & Eleanor Ray Papers. The Ray correspondence also should intrigue people probing and profiling the winegrower's psyche—in the generic sense, but also in its particularly unique and burly manifestation in Rusty Ray. The Papers, given to the U.C.Davis Shields Library four years ago, are now identified on the Special Collections' Website list of manuscripts pertaining to Viticulture and Enology (http://www.lib.ucdavis.edu/specol/html/viticul.html). The Papers are difficult to access as a totality because they repose in warehouse storage, at the University of California's Northern Regional Library Facility (NRLF) in Richmond. Boxes containing particular files can be requested for delivery within several days to the Shields Library, and there their contents may be perused and copied, but not borrowed.

Why Remember Martin Ray?

MR prided himself on being a "classic" vintner in the small French wine-estate manner. He produced annually at most only several thousand cases of wine. He used equipment that would now be considered antiquated and, indeed, rather primitive. Nevertheless, in his search for perfection he constantly experimented in both his grape growing and winemaking. His prideful "lone-wolf" stance (which began in the late 1930s), however, increasingly kept him distant from the technical knowledge and innovations that went on in an accelerating pace in university research programs and at other wineries—ultimately to his detriment as a vintner.

Martin Ray, although long departed now, remains an intriguing icon to idealistic winemakers who avow that handcrafted wines are best and that "Small Is Beautiful"—the chapter title in Paul Lukacs' book *American Vintage* (Houghton Mifflin, 2000) featuring Martin Ray. He is also known to wine aficionados aware of the strenuous history of finally bringing quality standards and honesty into American winemaking and wine marketing. Therefore, it seems a worthwhile challenge to present the particulars of one

man's singular fixation on making the best possible wine—not just within his own cellar but in the nation's wine industry at large. His thoughts, opinions, concerns, and actions are mostly revealed within the context of his friendships and frequent correspondence over time with a variety of oenophiles.

WINE BOOKS CAN STIR UP A TREMENDOUS ENTHUSIASM FOR LEARNING ABOUT FINE WINES

CATCH YOUR CUSTOMERS' INTEREST WITH A BEAUTIFUL WINE BOOK LAID OPEN NEARBY, SUCH AS ANDRÉ SIMON'S BOOK THE NOBLE GRAPES AND THE GREAT WINES OF FRANCE (McGRAW-HILL) WITH ITS EXQUISITE COLORED PHOTOGRAPHS. ENCOURAGE YOUR CUSTOMERS TO READ WINE BOOKS BY HAVING THEM THERE, BOTH FOR ATMOSPHERE AND FOR SALE. YOU WILL WANT JULIAN STREET'S WINES (KNOPF), ALEXIS LICHINE'S WINES OF FRANCE (KNOPF), JOHN MELVILLE'S GUIDE TO CALIFORNIA WINES (DOUBLEDAY). NO ONE SHOULD TAKE TOO SERIOUSLY WHAT THEY READ IN ANY WINE BOOKS, AS MISINFORMATION IS RAMPANT; NEVERTHELESS, MUCH CAN BE GAINED FROM THEM, ESPECIALLY IN WHETTING THE DESIRE TO TASTE AND KNOW THE WORLD'S WINES.

From "Great Wines and How to Sell Them" by Martin Ray (1958, 14-pages, typed in the familiar uppercase, sans-serif font used by Martin Ray).

[TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE]

[Please note: Eleanor Ray's *Vineyards in the Sky: The Life of Legendary Vintner Martin Ray* (with a new cover and excerpts of reviews it received) was recently reprinted. Priced at $21.95, it may be ordered from The Bookmill (Barbara Marinacci's DBA) at 22000 Mt. Eden Rd., Saratoga, CA 95070. California residents, please send a check for $26 to cover shipping/handling costs and state tax; out-of-state buyers, $24.25. (Discounts available for multiple copy purchase, and to distributors and retail outlets.) Barbara also welcomes Martin Ray reminiscences and comments from readers. Contact: bookmill@ix.netcom; Phone/fax (408) 867-9450.]

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THE WINE LABEL CIRCLE

by

Darrel G. Rosander

TENDRIL members may be interested in the Wine Label Circle, a small group similar to the Wayward Tendrils. The "labels" are not paper, but usually of silver, designed to hang on small chains around the necks of decanters to identify the contents. The Wine Label Circle was founded in 1952 in England as a society for collectors of wine, spirit, sauce and bin labels, and to provide a focus for academic research into all aspects of labels and their historical and social connections. These wine labels were originally known as bottle tickets when first introduced around 1730, but are now usually called wine or decanter labels and are still made today. The international membership numbers about 150, consisting mostly of collectors, but includes authors, auction houses, museums, livery companies and wine related businesses. The Journal of The Wine Label Circle is published twice a year—issues contain about 35 to 40 pages. Members contribute the articles that cover such topics as names on labels, silversmiths that made labels, identification of silversmith's marks, label designs, bin labels, descriptions of members' collections, auction results, etc. Members also submit questions that other members answer or discuss. Many photos of wine labels are included in each issue. There are no advertisements. Some auction houses may send notices or catalogs when collections of wine labels are offered for sale. Each fall an Annual General Meeting and Dinner are held in England.

The book, *Sauce Labels 1750-1950* by John Salter, was released (cost £57 / ~$88) at the October 2002 General Meeting. This book traces the history and development of the use of condiments in Great Britain, of soy and vinegar frames and of labels for sauces, ranging from Anchovy and Soy sauces to Camp, Worcestershire and Harvey's Fish Sauce.

Wine Labels 1730-2000: A Worldwide History, written by a number of members and edited by John Salter, is scheduled for release in November 2003 (estimated cost £85/~$132) at the Olympia Antiques Fair in London. The book covers how and why these labels originated, names on labels, shapes, designs, manufacture, hallmarking and makers. The Wine