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Vinaceous Correspondents:
Martin Ray's Friendships with Eminent Oenophiles

The Third Article in a Series / Seventeenth Section

by ***Barbara Marinacci***

PART III. MARTIN RAY AND MAYNARD AMERINE (1937-1976)

This installment concludes the lengthy portrayal of the relationship between this notoriously contentious Saratoga-based vintner and the internationally renowned UC Davis enologist. In their different fields of endeavor both promoted the development and imposition of quality standards on those wineries in California that made and marketed wines labeled as fine varietals. Many of these, however, were inauthentic or blended with lesser varietals, and mostly failed to impress or please true wine connoisseurs, who compared them with the classic European models. Besides presenting the connection primarily through their correspondence and expanding it through examining other letters and documents produced during their lifetimes, the article has provided a little-known facet of the lead-up to the "Wine Revolution" which began producing wines that gave California winemaking the recognition that Martin Ray had sought from the time he'd bought Paul Masson in 1936, when the Amerine–Ray friendship began. The professional and personal camaraderie between the two men went awry in the mid-1950s over MR's insistent publicity-seeking battle against the state's wine industry, as detailed in earlier WTQ *issues. Martin Ray regarded Maynard Amerine as the closest friend he'd ever had during his lifetime. This in itself presents a tantalizing psychological puzzle, since the two men in many ways were polar opposites in terms of their personalities and dispositions.*

Barbara Marinacci thanks Gail Unzelman abundantly for having published this series. She also appreciates permission granted by Special Collections at the UC Davis Library to use some of the documents now archived in the Martin and Eleanor Ray Papers; and by the Princeton University Library for similar permission to utilize microfilm access to Martin Ray's letters to Julian Street, which are in the Dept. of Rare Books and Special Collections. *At present she is pondering whether to undertake recounting the long story of the Rays' creation of Mt. Eden Vineyards—its ebullient beginnings, the growing interpersonal strife, and then the prolonged litigious aftermath following MR's ouster from corporate control—mostly told from the Rays' perspective, based on their correspondence and other papers.*

In the middle of June 1956, two months after deep-sixing his long letter to Maynard Amerine (see the previous WTQ), Martin Ray again sat down at the typewriter to compose another five-pager to him. This one he'd send. "We were happy to get your last letter in reply to Eleanor's. And I intended to write you long before this," he started out. This was a very different missive than the unsent one. Carrying on at first as if there were no problems between them, MR rambled along verbally, telling his longtime friend of what had been happening both on his mountain and inside his head. Clearly, he hadn't entirely abandoned hope that after the chill-down Maynard had imposed in mid-

1955, they could resume their wine-bonded connection. He began by telling of recent extremes in his own perpetual busyness, which had kept him from writing sooner.

> It has been a year such as I have never had before and will never have again! I say this because I have never worked so hard and never could stand it again. I have pushed myself to the very limit, knowing all along that I was doing just that.

He gave a detailed report on much of what had been going on in the past months, including the latest injury among the many that afflicted this hyperactive, hands-on winegrower over the years. Then he devoted two pages to giving a blow-by-blow account of happenings during the previous Thanksgiving Day get-together, which Maynard had sensibly declined to attend. The final offense of the day came when after carving the turkey, MR got so occupied with solving problems caused by other people—the crowning one occurring when a female guest ignored his ban on ever allowing their huge dog into the house, which produced a major eruption—that when he finally sat down at the table he found that his dinner meal, containing the entire main course, had already been removed and dumped into the kitchen disposal. "I said in all my life I had never heard of such terrible action of guests! ... I was reduced to a pulp," he told Maynard, asking, "Now, let me know if you have ever had a Thanksgiving like that!" Then he ventured this:

> There are many things I want to talk over with you regarding growing and wine making. A surprisingly large number of new things have come up the last year. Perhaps the most satisfying is that I have at last been able to finish a Chardonnay that has the true nose and taste so difficult to get. And I know how I got it and I am getting it each year now. My first Chardonnays never satisfied me and I was at one time very worried, as you know, about the prospects. I will bring you a bottle to drink when I come up next time. And I do want to come up and see you. There is nothing you need feel at all apprehensible about. We won't talk of anything we do not mutually wish to discuss. Most of all that is now seasoned with time or should be. And we still have our mutual interests. [6/15/56]

It was as if Martin Ray couldn't bear to end this letter, since it gave him the feeling that he was almost talking with Maynard once more. But at the very bottom of page 5 he finally brought it to a close.

> This is not a very good letter, I am aware. And my spelling is poor, too. But I cannot do better for now. I wanted to write, though, and keep in touch. It has been too long. Eleanor joins me in sending our love. [6/15/56]

There is no evidence on file that Amerine responded to MR's long letter. Silence at the Davis end told the Rays that Maynard was set on keeping his distance. After all, he might well fall again under MR's potent spell. Still, next year he answered some MR questions, and two weeks later sent a sympathetic note after learning that Martin had been badly injured when leaping from his truck as it careened out of control down the mountain road after its brakes failed. This encouraged MR to write, for him, a modest three pages.

> Thanks for your card and expressions. I'm out of the woods now, so to speak. For a few days I was sort of in a state of suspended shock, I guess. And after four days my ankles and wrists suddenly turned black and blue! So violent was the fall and tumble I evidently wrenched badly all joints. But I am getting back to work again now. [3/31/57]

Probably taking Maynard's message as a signal that he might now be amenable to resuming their friendship, MR's letter resembled ones he used to write. With clear delight he recounted recent happenings that might intrigue or amuse Amerine: notably Almaden's and Paul Masson's hiring of completely unqualified people (one of them a German he himself had recently employed) to manage the companies' large-scale vineyard and winery facility expansions into San Benito and Monterey counties—regions that MR declared were wholly wrong for fine winegrape growing, although Amerine and Winkler's landmark "heat summation" study, published in 1944 in *Hilgardia*, had identified them as promising. (See WTQ July 2005 issue.)

Various technical winemaking questions followed about some wines MR was currently working with, which MR hoped Maynard would answer "if you can do so without any trouble." If Amerine responded, the letter seems missing from the Rays' files. Undoubtedly he would now have avoided commenting on the industry trends and personnel that MR had gossiped about. He knew well enough by now that anything he wrote about such things MR might use for some ulterior purpose. Dr. Albert Winkler was about to retire as chairman of the Department of Viticulture & Enology, and since Amerine was in the best position to follow him, he wanted no complaints coming from wine industry leaders to undermine his bid. He indeed got the place.

What's in the Rays' Later Letters

Intermittent communications between the Rays and Amerine went on. For instance, Eleanor's vivacious report on "The Vintage of 1958" was mimeographed and mailed out to numerous people. It so delighted a number of its recipients that they gave or mailed it out to share with others. (It is reprinted

in a chapter in her memoir/biography *Vineyards in the Sky.*) Obviously Amerine received a copy, for on UC Davis letterhead stationery he handwrote a note to the Rays.

> I am glad you had such a fine vintage and such a fine time having it. Ours has been long and arduous and is just finishing. The northern grapes have been fine but in the south San Joaquin it has been disastrous, owing to two inches of early rain....
>
> There is little other news here: back and forth, work, work, work. No time for mischief.
>
> Yours cordially, Maynard A. [10/17/58]

After their close friendship with Amerine ended, when talking and writing to their sons, the Rays sometimes used him as an example of how brilliant people can go badly off-course. In writing this paragraph to Peter, MR delivered a veiled warning, since in his opinion his adopted son hadn't made a healthy marriage. "Maynard is not a well man," he started out, briefly relaying salacious gossip about his private life. The succeeding remark, though, was surprisingly gentle.

> It is all sad and too bad but I think you will find a good proportion of all of us turn toward the queer in one way or another as we approach or pass middle age, if our lives are not properly balanced with regards work as well as association and if there is not a sound and satisfying mating. And the more brilliant we are, the more it is true. [10/4/57]

Even more, his comment reflected his and Eleanor's extreme dismay over the recent marriage of Barclay, Eleanor's son (and Peter's twin), to Dr. Linus Pauling's daughter. Convinced that Linda was certain to ruin his life—and Barc was too naïve to realize this—for some months the Rays had staged a vehement but losing campaign against the engagement. Underlying the venom would have been the fear that by acquiring a new family connection widely and deeply devoted to both science and humanistic concerns, Barclay would lose his commitment to their impassioned, narrow-focused winegrowing life. Actually, their very behavior accomplished that by totally alienating Barclay. He would not see his mother, brother, or Rusty Ray again for 10 years—no longer arriving as a frequent, dependable helper in vineyards and cellar. This reduced the heirs to MR's wine kingdom to one.

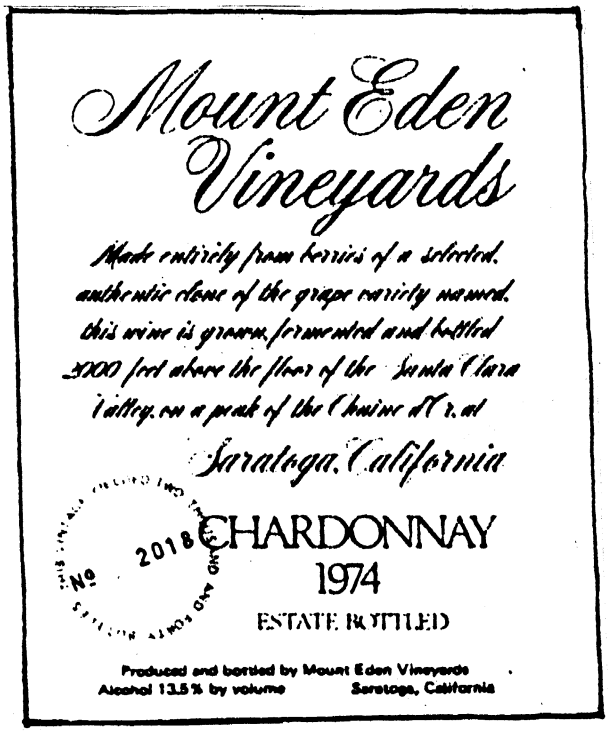
Over the years both Rays would write often to Peter, who after receiving his Harvard PhD, accepted a faculty position in botany at University of Michigan. Many of these letters provide information about their ongoing lives, with MR giving details about weather, visitors, vineyard conditions, and, above all, the developing wines—as his letters to Amerine had once done. Such letters would mostly cease when Peter moved back to the West Coast in 1966. The Rays also sent out many other informative, strident, or delightfully descriptive personal letters and newsletters to a number of persons: new acquaintances they wished to enthrall, old friends to update (such as publisher Alfred Knopf, who occasionally visited them, as did his wife, Blanche), wine writers, retailers and restaurateurs, compelling strangers who had contacted them, even a few aspiring winegrowers. Above all, a great many letters of the Rays reported on the various stages of their monumental, full-time involvement in having brought Mt. Eden Vineyards (MtEV) into existence.

From 1959 on, all too much of the Rays' physical and social energy went into the unending challenges connected with the winegrowing corporation that they had launched with tremendous enthusiasm and anticipation of future splendors. For better (it initially seemed) and then for worse, the MtEV organization's activities and disputes occupied the centerpiece of their very lives. Understandably, in the time remaining to him MR fixated on what had gone so wrong for him in recent years, and why—identifying a diverse line of malefactors that went well beyond his original MtEV adversaries. Thus a great many of the Rays' tendentious letters from these years express the intense effort they expended in creating, sustaining, and then desperately trying to hold onto the wine domain that Martin Ray had willed into being on his Mt. Eden.

The intriguing tale of Martin Ray's role in originating and then trying to hold onto MtEV as his prime creation—covering its first dozen or more years—is far too complex and convoluted to present in detail in this publication. Beyond that, undertaking to tell the entire story of MtEV's evolution, which involved a long, turbulent post-Ray period, would take a wine scholar at least several years in order to produce a fascinating, book-length tale. The work would mean extended stays at UC Davis, delving among the Ray Papers and copying numerous letters and other documents. It would also entail conducting interviews with surviving share-holders and numerous attorneys, perusing many litigation records and available correspondence, and talking with former and current managers. Fortunately for the wellbeing of the corporation and its property on Mt. Eden, in the early 1980s Jeffrey Patterson and Eleanor (Ellie) Patterson came in to replace chaos with order, superb wines, and financial success. Almost equally extensive, and indeed mind-boggling, would be a separate project: making a narrative using the paper trails of other correspondence and litigation

involving MR in his remaining years, once his conflict with MtEV was mostly over.

[Note that when Mt. Eden Vineyards, Inc. (later to be called the MEV Corporation) began marketing its wines in the early 1970s, the name-use on the label was challenged by Villa Mt. Eden of Napa Valley, whose proprietors maintained that wine consumers might confuse the two identities (which seemed to hold true). The litigation was settled when MEV agreed not to abbreviate "Mount" but always to spell it out on labels, promotional literature and advertising, and legal documents. Thus not long after Martin Ray's time of involvement, the business and the wine began using Mount Eden Vineyards as its official name.]



From: *Central Coast Wine Tour: San Francisco to Santa Barbara* by Richard P. Hinkle (Vintage Image, 1977)

Starting the Mt. Eden Vineyards Venture

As back-and-forth letters show, Maynard Amerine occasionally took part in one facet of the saga of Mt. Eden Vineyards, from its start to close to the end of Martin Ray's involvement in it—appropriately, as a wine tester and taster. (See the subhead "Amerine's Connection with Mt. Eden Vineyards," below.) MR began launching his grand new scheme in 1959. The news of it probably didn't surprise Maynard. Five years earlier, when on a one-year sabbatical leave in Europe, Martin had written extensively to him about the financial and logistical need to expand his Mt. Eden grapegrowing and winemaking operations. He'd asked for Amerine's advice, requested suggestions and connections to possible investors, even hinted that his friend would make a perfect partner—if this might ever come about.

Then in 1955, a few months after Amerine returned to Davis, MR had told him how actor Burgess Meredith loved his wines, along with Mt. Eden's scenic views and ambiance, so much that he was going to buy a small piece of the mountain in which MR owned an entire half-section, or 320 acres. He'd create a vineyard there, in the midst of which there'd be an idyllic vacation home for "Buzzy." But then time went by. Meredith couldn't get pinned down to a commitment so that land clearing and planting might proceed in a timely way. Instead, he flitted in and out of communication. Periodically, in impulsive phone calls or notes, he'd reassure Rusty Ray of his ardent desire to join him in winegrowing, and blame all the stalling on his business manager.

By 1958, thoroughly frustrated, MR sought likelier prospects for partnerships in expanding vineyard properties on Mt. Eden. Compensating socially for the lack of close family members, the Rays had begun cultivating wine drinkers in the next generation who mostly lived nearby—especially a group of young physicians and their wives. Gazing out through the house's huge picture windows or seated on the veranda, guests were enchanted with their convivial hosts, the wondrous wine and delectable foods, and the splendid view of the wide valley spreading out far below the vineyards, where thousands of emerald green grape leaves danced in passing breezes. This magic spell repeated the one Martin Ray had cast over visitors two decades earlier when he owned Paul Masson. Now when these well-heeled new friends spoke about their ardent desire to somehow share in this winegrowing paradise, MR disclosed how they might capture this "Good Life" vision. Not surprisingly, the plan would also provide the financing he needed to expand his own wine business and elevate further his reputation for making the finest and most expensive of California wines.

First, MR arranged to sell land for a Chardonnay vineyard to a couple who eventually would build a house there. Meanwhile, he shared with a few new friends his conception of a far more ambitious undertaking: a winegrowing corporation to be called Mt. Eden Vineyards, Inc.—and they enthused over it. The corporation would agree to buy, for $160,000, a quarter-section of Mt. Eden land from MR (some of which might then be resold to individual owners). MR

could obtain a large loan, secured on the property, from the Crocker-Citizens National Bank, and this would basically underwrite the costs of launching the quality-focused winegrowing enterprise subsumed under the Martin Ray Domaine. (He always used the French spelling.)

Serving as the president of Mt. Eden Vineyards (MtEV), MR would exercise monocratic control, directing all decisions, actions, and social activities. He intended it to be a lifetime position. A few of MR's closest associates at the time took "founders" roles on the board of directors, to assist him with planning and then take part in organizational activities and even some winegrowing operations. The work would start when gigantic earth-moving equipment carved into various chaparral-covered ridge areas that MR found suitable for creating new mountain vineyards but which required the near-leveling of slopes and filling hollows with topsoil.

Furthermore, MtEV would construct a large wine cellar surmounted by a *chateau* made of poured concrete. The latter, given the name of the traditional Burgundian building where wine business and client entertaining takes place, was where shareholders in the large group of socially compatible member-investors would gather on festive occasions. At other times the huge living room, large kitchen, and four bedrooms and bathrooms could be enjoyably occupied by members and their family or friends for brief stays. Wines—at first mostly ones produced by MR, then MtEV's own vintages—were to be distributed as shareholders' dividends, with more available at discount. Once the MtEV cellar got bonded, any remaining inventory of wines produced from grapes grown in the vineyards would be marketed under the Martin Ray label as a domain, but prominently identifying MtEV or one of the individually owned vineyards on Mt. Eden as the source. (In the next few years, MR would sell two more prospective vineyard properties to individual Mt. Eden Vineyard members —making five in all, counting MR's.)

What were MR's primary motives in founding MtEV? It provided the financial means to greatly expand both his vineyards and winemaking operations within the protection of a corporate structure. And certainly to have a large wine domain featuring his name was an ego-boosting dream fulfillment. In their outreach communications, though, both Rays portrayed the new business entity primarily as a social organization—and they genuinely wanted it to succeed in that way. They felt that people truly devoted to wine appreciation and drinking would feel privileged indeed to be invited to join this elite group. Still, MR's selling routine in persuading people to become shareholders also involved convincing them this was a wonderful investment opportunity. (They may have somewhat patterned their approach after the Taylors' clubby gatherings at Mayacamas, which they knew about, but MtEV would make stakeholders out of its members.)

In launching this and other joint enterprises that tapped into other people's assets and enthusiasm, MR drew upon tactics (some possibly shady) that he'd used in running his own stock brokerage. His business entity, Martin Ray Inc. sometimes dabbled in real estate transactions, as in assembling financial backing from a number of small shareholders when buying Paul Masson in 1936. He reasoned that by selling land through purchase agreements, not through mortgages arranged through banks and other lending institutions, he could retain legal ownership until the buyers had paid him the full price for the property—not outright, but sometime in the distant future. In the meantime, he would hold onto the title deeds, enabling him virtually to continue to control the properties' uses.

MR explained to prospective MtEV shareholders and other land buyers that newly subdivided property known to be changing owners would be assessed at considerably a higher rate over the previous one, since real estate prices, and market value, in Santa Clara Valley were rapidly rising. Because his purchase agreements would not report these interpersonal land sales to title companies and the county, both he and the buyers could avoid having their property taxes appreciably raised. All he had to do was show them what was happening to all the farmland and orchards familiar to him as a boy growing up in the area, and later when he viewed them from on high at his mountain homes at Masson and on Mt. Eden. They were fast disappearing as the burgeoning high-tech industry was on its way to creating "Silicon Valley." From the veranda at night, instead of looking down upon a few dozen points of light coming from the dark valley floor (where MR once could identify all the separate farm houses), you'd now see a bright carpet with random patterns of mostly white, gold, and red dots spreading out far below them.

MtEV's articles of incorporation declared shareholding memberships would be limited to 25 couples, with each set contributing $100 a month for 100 months, for a total investment of $10,000—with $250,000 the grand total. In addition to receiving monthly income from shareholders, the corporation would take out a bank loan, secured on MR's property, to help finance the high costs of developing vineyards and erecting the large concrete chateau

and cellar.

The Rays acquired MtEV members by inviting a succession of select couples to visit them; often they also later saw them in their homes, to check further on their suitability. (People who lived in unclean or chaotic households were ruled out.) The Rays told couples that their offspring might eventually be able to take active roles in managing the MtEV business or winegrowing end of MtEV if they proved interested and capable. Their letters reveal the extent to which prospective members were usually scrutinized prior to receiving an invitation to join the MtEV group. Those who accepted felt flattered and honored, and might then recommend their dear friends, too.

Though membership was supposed to be conferred only on couples, the Rays made one exception with a bachelor-oenophile acquaintance who'd been eager to join. MR later greatly regretted this, for he decided that Edward Wawszkiewicz, a biochemist who at the time hosted a local radio program about wine, was a main suspect in having stirred up major problems later.

During this early period, when MtEV was just starting out, ER—ever a publicity enthusiast—began sending out a steady stream of "Flashes." These winsome newsletters, though seemingly in-group communications, were used as a member-recruiting tools as well as promotional pieces sent to wine writers, retailers, and customers on their large mailing list. They first told of MR's ambitious plans for new vineyards and the building construction, then later of the progress in both. They described at length how hard MR was working to carry everything out magnificently under his constant quality-attentive, supervisory involvement, which often required his own extreme physically demanding labors. Invariably, recent exciting dramas got recounted, whether they involved extraordinary weather, people, wines in the making, or the physical transformations happening on Mt. Eden. With great verve ER profiled each couple as they joined the group, and she delighted in recounting the various celebratory feasts that took place on Mt. Eden, where of course marvelous, newly available Martin Ray wines were presented to great acclaim.

Both Rays—but especially Eleanor, who had more time for it—also wrote many personal letters to the shareholding group as well as to its candidates, and also described MtEV to others. Here's a portion of what she wrote to their friends John and Lilly Esquin.

> Since their cellars aren't ready, Martin is going to make their wines here this year.... Members will get two cases of still wine or a case of champagne perennially, plus whatever profit from any wines designated to be sold. But the objective is not to make money, but to make the finest wine possible. In this way it is more of a club than a business. Isn't that the greatest step forward in the history of quality in California winegrowing? We're thrilled to death. [7/11/60]

Of course her tone and words were hyperbolic. Yet what she then added at the end was surely premonitory. "But of course it is much work for us, on top of all our own business." The sheer entertainment of MtEV members—actual and prospective—for the Rays was, and always would be, time- and energy-consuming work. And as for using the grotesque yet common expression "thrilled to death": it actually forecasted MR's eventual fate, since Mt. Eden Vineyards would speed up his decline in a number of ways.

Amerine's Connection with Mt. Eden Vineyards

The creation of MtEV gave MR new reasons to get back in touch with his old friend Maynard. During the early 1960s he would even visit him several times at UC Davis, where Dr. Amerine served as chairman of the Department of Viticulture & Enology, between 1957 and 1962. Amerine was applying himself, as Winkler had done, to furthering the department's reputation for preparing students for future jobs in grapegrowing and wine production. It was also increasing its laboratory and technical field research, which often called for conducting cooperative projects with vineyardists and wineries. Even Europeans working in or intending to enter the wine industry might come to Davis for special training. Times had changed from when Amerine complained, not long ago, that few students enrolled in courses or took majors in the department, for by the late 1950s great interest in wines, and in California ones in particular, was starting to surge. This nationwide phenomenon, most noticeable in urban and suburban areas, encouraged wineries, including start-up "boutique" ones, to charge—and get—much higher prices for better-quality varietal wines. MR was already benefiting from this keen interest. But no longer was he a uniquely quality-obsessed winegrower, though he mostly failed to recognize or acknowledge this.

In October of 1959 MR wrote Maynard about the prospective developments on Mt. Eden. "I don't know if you have heard about it ..." MR started out. He then proceeded to tell of the recent sale of 25 acres west of his mountaintop to a Colonel and Mrs. Rawls, where a Chardonnay vineyard was to be developed. There was still more to disclose.

> We have also sold the quarter-section to the east of us

which includes 60 acres of land which will be planted to Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and White Riesling. This property is being sold to a group of 25 people who are forming a corporation. On each of these properties a modern residence and concrete cellars would be built. The Rawls property will have about 10 acres of vines and the other property, to be known as Mt. Eden Vineyards, will have approximately 60 acres of vines.

I have a 100-month contract to oversee the clearing, planting, and development of both properties as well as to bring the properties into production, modeled as closely as possible after our operations here.

After giving this news, MR said he had just sent up to him samples of two young and different Chardonnay wines that were recently fermented and bottled. He asked to get both chemically analyzed and tasted, and wanted to explain why he was asking this favor of him. One batch had been made from grapes purchased from Dr. Schermerhorn's vineyard in the Santa Cruz Mountains, because "the Mt. Eden people are anxious to have an early vintage—before their own grapes can be planted and come into bearing"—and he needed to decide whether they'd be good enough to buy in greater quantity next year.

If you will be kind enough to have an alcohol, volatile and total run on each of the samples sent to you it will be much appreciated by all parties concerned. [10/8/59]

Right away Amerine personally took charge of the lab work, for on the following day he handwrote a note that provided the results.

Dear Eleanor and Martin:

Mr. Root and I ran the analysis of the two wines with the following results:

Ray	Schermerhorn
Total acidity 0.76	0.84 % as tartaric
Volatile acidity 0.018	0.032 % as acetic
PH 3.34	3.30
Alcohol 13.5	13.0 % by vol.

Dr. Ingraham also examined the wines for their microflora. Only a few yeast cells and a few bacteria were noted in the other sample. Its slightly higher volatile [acetic acid, therefore vinegarous] would also suggest that the grapes were not quite as clean. But this is only supposition and the bacteria may drop out and 0.032 is not a noticeable volatile. The Ray grapes were obviously a little riper—less acid, higher pH and alcohol.

The Schermerhorn was too yeasty to taste but the Ray sample was very rich in taste....

The vintage is over here. Very good reds I feel but the hot July wasn't good for the whites. Otherwise busy as usual.

Hope this is the information you wanted on the wines. [10/9/59]

MR, too, was quick to respond. He clearly relished an opportunity to chat a bit with his old friend. "Thanks so much for your note and the analyses. I am pleasantly surprised with both," he wrote, going on to describe the adverse conditions under which both grape groups had been picked. He then described how the press cakes had been removed twice, broken up, and returned to the wine press so that all remaining juices could be squeezed out of the pomace for distribution into the fermenters—a technique Peter had learned when visiting the Burgundian Latours during vintage time two years before.

MR asked about the appropriate usage of the terms "thin" and "viscous" in wine terminology. And he wanted to know about certain variations detectable in wines made from a particular wine-grape variety but grown in different locations—which would later become important considerations, either when choosing particular clones (or selections, really) or buying the wines coming from different vineyard locations. (And might these differing locations, such as the *terroir* factor, somehow eventually even alter the variety itself?)

Now, do you think that if grapes from both vineyards came in with identical sugar, total and volatile and were made into wine under identical conditions they would have an approximately same "viscosity"? What I am getting at is a subject we have discussed long ago—Do vines and their fruit from a given variety long grown under not identical conditions tend to differ even if the different vines be brought back to identical growing conditions?

Then came a paragraph asking Amerine for advice about where he might obtain the best White Riesling budwood, as MR was determined to add, after planting Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Chardonnay, the fourth of the "noble" European winegrapes to the Martin Ray Domaine acreage, though admittedly he lacked experience with it. But the most important thing he asked for was Maynard's help in setting up a quality control system. Having failed in 1955 to pressure the Premium Wine Producers into setting up QC within their group of wineries (which had caused Amerine's rupture with him), MR now intended to introduce it within his own fast-expanding mountain vineyard domain as well as in future wine production there. And so he said this:

When Mt. Chardonnay and Mt. Eden Vineyards are planted and wines are coming to market under all three proprietorships, we will all employ on our labels some words relative to a quality control. And we want to get started now with drawing up the plan and rules we

have both always been interested in. In this case we will simply operate under such rules and invite others to join when, as and if they like. But certainly there must be a disinterested administration. I would like it to be the University and so I am asking you if you would appoint someone of your faculty to take on this responsibility. The way things are, the circum-stance could not be more favorable for success as initially and for at least 100 months to come all authority of the growers is in my hands. And it is my desire merely to pattern our organization as closely as possible to the system of the French, giving effect to local conditions and leaving it in the hands of your appointees.

So, I have asked you about the matter of "viscosity," the best source of White Riesling stock and the matter of University participation in an effective measure of quality control to be initially supported fully by the three growers, as described. And since I do not know any of your new professors up there, I will be guided entirely by your selection of any that may be interested. [10/12/59]

Shortly after receiving MR's letter, Amerine again wrote back, responding to his questions, and especially focusing on the issue of setting up an appellation combined with quality control:

Now, as to your quality control program: the people who really should be doing these quasi-legal matters is the State Department of Agriculture, but they are not staffed for this as far as the grape and wine industry is concerned, so far as I know. The Federal Government has set up specific table-grape quality standards and these are widely accepted by the industry.

You speak of patterning your quality control system to the French by which I suppose you mean some sort of appellations controlée. These regula-tions generally have the following types of control: (1) types of soil, (2) variety (or varieties in many cases) of grapes, (3) maximum yield of the grapes, and (4) minimum percent of alcohol. It establishes a minimum standard of identity and quality....

Someone from the department certainly could meet with you and suggest standards such as these which you might want to set up. [10/19/59]

From time to time there was more correspondence between the two men during the next seven years. But whether or not MR ever received much, if any, QC and appellation advice from UC Davis professors, he just went ahead and created his own Saratoga Appellation—the first designated one—and set up specific quality standards in vineyard and wine-making practices that he vowed to maintain, albeit on his own small scale. Other winemakers noticed Martin Ray's bold, independent move, and approved (and maybe even envied); among them was André Tchelistcheff. But not until 1980, two decades later and several years after MR's death, did the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF) begin to confer American Viticultural Area (AVA) statuses on circumscribed winegrowing regions, based on a tradition of winegrape growing as well as type of soil and climate. (The Santa Cruz Mountains AVA would be conferred in 1982.) But such an "appellation" refers to grape origin and winery location. It does not specifically limit grape varieties that are grown and under what conditions, or concern itself with wine quality, unlike the strict French regulations in the *Appellation d'origine controlée* system, which was more what MR had in mind. (However, in his Saratoga appellation he would have combined the four classic winegrapes grown in the far-flung Bordeaux and Burgundy provinces and Germany.)

In Amerine's first letter sent to MR in October of 1959, responding to the news about MR's having sold to other people land on which he'd create new vineyards, he had commented: "Am glad your mountain is getting occupied. The company will keep you occupied with entertaining I am afraid." [10/9/59] And MR wrote back:

Oh, yes, relative to your comment that all this development here on the mountain may lead to much entertaining, we reached the absolute peak of endurement [*sic*] about a year ago. Our gate is now always locked, we see no one other than by appointment and we invite no one but old friends or those that want to come sufficiently to put themselves forward in a manner not to be resisted! We have gone back to two dinners a week and that is enough. We are 55 now and if we are to reach 100 we must have simplified. Thanks again for everything. [10/12/59]

Martin Ray, however, did *not* simplify his life when he founded Mt. Eden Vineyards. He had begun to immeasurably complicate and overstress it—in a way only he could have done.

Creating and Managing Eden

At the Founders Day banquet on Mt. Eden on March 26, 1960 (an event audio-recorded for the benefit of posterity), a wine-infused, noisily jubilant Martin Ray addressed the assembled celebrants in his characteristic voice—rather nasal, high-pitched, and singsong, as numerous people have delighted in replicating, especially if they ever held grievances. He made it clear to the members there that he didn't subscribe to voting procedures in PTA-style meetings where a majority rules. As president of MtEV he would make all important decisions, and most minor ones. Seven years later, he would summarize this explicitly autocratic arrangement in

a brief document intended for a judge's consideration, titled "The Organization and Deterioration of Mt. Eden Vineyards, Inc.":

> It had been agreed among all the original shareholders [a.k.a. the "founders"] that Martin Ray would vote all the shares and retain full management until such time as the debts to him were paid off." [1968; undated]

In the first six years of MtEV's existence, Martin Ray seemed to be everywhere at once. Besides tending his own vineyard surrounding his and Eleanor's home at the top of the mountain, he supervised all stages of work on the four new vineyards on Mt. Eden—starting with bulldozing, clearing out all vegetation, and soil rearranging, then installing deer fencing. He laid out the new vineyards as he'd always done, with redwood stakes pounded singly into the ground in rows 10 feet apart in both directions, and planted thousands of grapevines next to them. Stuck in the belief that his old, accustomed ways were best, when planting or replanting vineyards MR wouldn't consider following the wine industry into using differently nuanced trellising systems, which had proved effective in simplifying both vine care and increasing yield. Drip lines installed across the lowest wires could deliver water and nutrients to young vines whose roots hadn't yet burrowed deep into the ground—which could have been beneficial in the dry farming that MR basically practiced in order to produce smaller, more intensely flavored winegrapes. Also, the more constricted vine growth in trellising allowed for easier, quicker pruning; canopy management afforded better access to dusting or spraying young vine leaves for mildew control and later in regulating optimal sun exposure for cluster protection and uniform ripening. In trellising, too, grape clusters weren't as vulnerable to bird and varmint attacks from above and below. But even though trellising was widely touted as a better guarantor of vine health and considerably increased grape tonnage per acre (a financial boon with costlier fine winegrapes), MR wouldn't consider trying a bit of it on Mt. Eden. Sometimes he did, however, like to experiment with techniques in the vineyard or cellar until he got something just right from his perspective —and then intended to always keep it that way.

As for the planting of the vines themselves, in his rush to get thousands of them started in the new vineyards on Mt. Eden, instead of putting in phylloxera-resistant rootstock and in the next year grafting the chosen grape variety's budwood onto it, MR sometimes took unwise chances, too often inserting vine cuttings that would produce their own roots. And this was dense, clay-like soil interspersed with rocks, not the sandy loam known to be less hospitable to that tiny, underground-living, root-sucking, infection-transmitting insect pest. (And indeed phylloxera gained a foothold on Mt. Eden in later years.)

With the requisite year-round vineyard care, MR was doing all that too: both overseeing and taking part in such chores as pruning, sulfur-dusting, suckering, weeding, trying to prevent cane breakage during windstorms—all vineyard handwork. He'd mount his Caterpillar tractor and ride through the vineyards, disk-churning up the soil and then rolling it. Plus in tandem with Peter he directed the time for harvesting, the hiring of crews to pick and bring in the piled-up grapes in wooden boxes; the succeeding grape crushing and de-stemming done by the crusher's whirling blades; the differing consignments of pulp and juice from the white or red grapes; the addition of a bubbling brew of fermented juice started earlier with some favorable yeast—but *never* adding doses of the metabisulfite that other vintners used to prevent or halt microbial infections. Every four hours, throughout the day and night, he'd go to all the large containers holding the fermenting musts from the Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon crushes and vigorously push downward with a special wooden paddle the thick caps, formed from color- and flavor-releasing grape skins, into the carbon dioxide-emitting, dark red fluid, which sometimes sent up geysers. And there were the pressing operations, with MR using the old wine press with its wooden side slats, clanking back and forth the handle that lowered the flat wooden disk at the base of the gigantic iron screw onto the bed of crushed grapes. The white grapes went in right after the crushing and before fermenting, but the red wine-in-the-making went in, skins and all, days later—only after the saccharometer, lowered frequently down into the fermenters, finally showed that the sugar had been satisfactorily converted into alcohol.

MR had named Peter Martin Ray the official winemaker for the entire Martin Ray Domaine, not just in his own winery. He did this even though his adoptive son usually could only spare a few weeks on the mountain at vintage time, away from his professorship post. So during most of the year, MR took the place of this absentee winemaker. He tended the wines in casks as they aged—topping them as the wine levels dropped through evaporation; and racking, filtering, or fining when necessary before bottling them. He also involved himself in the complicated procedure of making his trademark dry sparkling wines. Increasingly he hired part-time workers as "cellar boys" to help with various tasks, including labeling and packing; but as before, Eleanor

also served as his assistant.

But this intensive winegrowing-connected work was only a portion of the multi-tasking work that MR did throughout each year, from 1960 on. Functioning as an untrained, ad-hoc architect, he designed precise plans for the large cellar that would hold the MtEV wines, the chateau to rise above it, and a concrete-slab terrace stretching across the length and one width of the building for a total of 150 feet. Then serving as the contractor, he arranged for wooden wall forms to go up temporarily (to be used again elsewhere) to receive the wet cargoes from successive processions of cement mixers that slowly ascended the narrow mountain road—and hired groups of day laborers to be on hand to help with the pours. When all the walls of the two-story structure were up, with the thick concrete ceiling of the cellar serving as flooring for the chateau above it, and a roof finally put on, he engaged and supervised the work of carpenters, plumbers, and electricians to undertake the interior work. By then, it was the mid-1960s.

Most of the time MR lacked competent backup help from Anglo assistants in both the vineyard and construction work, for such men didn't last long in his demanding yet low-paying employ. Luckily, an extended Mexican family stuck around for years and performed a wide variety of tasks. Even so, MR wouldn't trust them, resented their demand for ever higher wages ($3/hour struck him as outrageous), and judged most of their work as inferior or defective. (The Rays were incredulous and shocked when some of the younger ones, as newly minted Americans, enrolled in college or took white-collar jobs. A few eventually would become professional winemakers and vineyardists themselves.)

All of these responsibilities and strenuous labors—virtually full-time work for at least three men; four if you counted in the business aspects—were becoming too much for any single person to handle with equanimity. But after all, MR had insisted on doing it all—and not for monetary gain, since he received no salary, partly to conserve on the cost of creating his Wine Eden. He believed that only he could achieve everything necessary in fulfilling his glory-dream of having his own dynastic wine realm. And though he accomplished extraordinary things, his efforts steadily and increasingly were exacting a harsh toll on both his mental and physical well-being. Moreover, the intensive socializing often expected of the Rays in accommodating frequent visits from various MtEV members was overtaxing his nervous system.

Many letters MR wrote in the early MtEV period show in detail how increasingly he was building up annoyances, prejudices, resentments, suspicions, and extreme dislikes toward particular individuals or couples. But MR could glide over negatives whenever he wished to put a positive spin on things. So when he wrote to Amerine in the spring of 1965, in connection with sending a new set of wines for analysis, he told proudly of now having five separate vineyards; even his own was now larger than when Amerine had last seen it. Altogether, he was farming some 30 acres now, and in a few years might make it twice that number.

> I want very much for you to see these vineyards, Maynard, and our cellars, and what we have done here. We started out the same year, and the plans we each made we used to share. It would be very rewarding to resume conversations about we both have done. [4/28/65]

Maynard never came again to Mt. Eden, so this poignant wish was never to be fulfilled.

Troubles Mount on Mt. Eden

Ever since that severely disabling stroke in the mid-1930s (he called it a nervous breakdown) apparently had permanently damaged certain parts of Martin Ray's brain, he was inclined to erupt emotionally, or fixate, distort, fabricate, meddle—guaranteed to make whatever bothered him a whole lot worse, and anger or upset others. (This vulnerability was discussed in the WTQ October 2003 issue and reprised later.) Moreover, whenever interpersonal stresses, back and other bodily injuries, task or financial worries, severe allergies to sulfur and pollens, or infections plagued him, he gobbled down an assortment of pills to ease pain, insomnia, gastrointestinal problems, tension, inflammation, anxiety, high blood pressure, breathing problems, fury—whatever. These medications were amply provided by various physician friends, and were apt to be taken in combination with plenty of wine. (Strong-willed, though, MR could readily give up his beloved wine and other treats whenever he periodically put himself on a strict weight-loss diet.)

Not surprisingly, people on the other side of the equation—MtEV member/shareholders—had their own valid reasons for disenchantment over how Mt. Eden Vineyards seemed to be straying far from initial expectations and promises made. In the early 1960s, nobody as yet openly challenged MR's autocratic regime, and most members seemed happy enough just letting him take full charge of all the work to be done. But by the mid-1960s the overall mood was definitely shifting. The Rays, for instance, restricted most members' use of the chateau. (Part of the reason was that too often it had been left in a terrible mess, which Eleanor then had to clean up.)

Since MR always needed and wanted to be positioned to control everything and everyone else around him, and probably felt tense in group situations, he had always refused to join any club or association, such as a *confrérie* of winegrowers, and declined even to attend most wine-celebrating banquets. But his assumption of the dominant, masterly role in Mt. EV now changed all of this.

As previously described, MR had a long history of relationship conflicts—whether the people involved were linked with him in business, the wine industry, or the workplace, or else socially. Family members were never exempt, either. It was highly unlikely, then, that he'd change his arbitrary, harshly judgmental, and suspicious tendencies in any new venture involving others. His tendency to overreact and become insulting and accusatory surfaced as early as 1961, ending in total alienation from two of the initial MtEV "founders"—one of whom would be initially instrumental in MR's ultimate undoing.

Although he couldn't tolerate arguments, MR was becoming embroiled in too many of them with MtEV members whenever his own opinions were challenged or contradicted, or a previously trusted friend tried to intervene. With his tendency toward paranoia expanding, he amplified whatever bothered him about other people, and then often assigned sinister motives to them. Rather recklessly, he sometimes gossiped maliciously, wrote offensive letters, tried to turn members against each other. At gatherings intended to be pleasantly convivial MR too often got inebriated and acted either childish or obnoxious. (Drunk is drunk, after all—even when you're imbibing your own well-crafted wine or the best French vintages and costly cognac.)

MR was fast losing his uniquely mesmeric hold over people who witnessed his drunken behavior or directly experienced his attacks and other transgressions. The Ray Papers contain, intriguingly, a few descriptions of such occasions that ER wrote up afterward to warn Rusty about the adverse consequences of these performances, but then (as she noted) she didn't dare show them to him. She realized all too late that Elsie, MR's first wife, would *never* have allowed Rusty, let alone encouraged him, to get involved with anything like MtEV. Knowing well of his extreme vulnerability to nervous stress, particularly in group situations, Elsie would have prevented such a byzantine entanglement—probably guaranteeing that both MR's winemaking career and his life trajectory would have ended satisfactorily.

How could MtEV members *not* watch MR with growing concern about his leadership of the corporation in which they were investing money on a monthly basis? Inevitably, when some of them got together or talked on the phone they grumbled about grievances, exchanged lurid tales, and expressed concern about MR's management style, behavior, or emotional stability. Also a few were becoming openly critical about the annual allotments of MR-made wines, some of which they judged disappointing, even unsound. The cognoscenti among them were growing alarmed at other new wines of his that he'd proudly served them. This boded ill for the future, since by the mid-'60s the wine connoisseurs knew well that some other California wineries, whether long-established or new on the scene, were offering more agreeable and uniformly better-made varietal wines. When the widely heralded Mt. Eden Vineyards would come, soon, into the marketplace, their wines could bomb out as a huge embarrassment—and MtEV would become a lousy investment.

Some disenchanted shareholders stopped coming around and sending in their monthly dues, having decided that MtEV might never pay off, so they'd risk by hanging on. Others just never really got involved. (Burgess Meredith was among them. MR had persuaded him to become a member in lieu of purchasing a separate vineyard, but he had never showed up for festivities, disappointing those who hoped to mix with a show biz celebrity. A lawsuit and a countersuit ensued, ending these two men as rambunctious, wine-loving pals.)

So members began bailing out, or else MR bluntly told them to depart. (Fifteen of the original 25 had ultimately left by 1967.) It became increasingly difficult to persuade others to buy their shares, though the purchase price was held to the total amount they'd invested so far. Besides, the Rays had no longer had time or desire to court anyone. They bought a few shares for themselves and Peter, and a much-trusted member took up two more—even though the original setup prohibited any member from owning more than one share. And since that pattern was broken, MR conveniently allowed and indeed encouraged Robert Nikkel—a MtEV member who also now owned one of the separate vineyards—to acquire multiple unloaded shares in the explicit understanding that he'd always vote all six of them in whatever ways MR wanted. (The financing was accomplished through RN's lumber corporation; MR had told him he didn't want to know how this was done.) Bob, however, behind MR's back was already associating with a growing group of MtEV malcontents. Perhaps he was fence-sitting so as to determine which way a favorable wind was blowing; he'd then go in whichever direction seemed best for future profits, and not lose the value of his shares. Or

maybe his motivation was to obtain crucial information from an unsuspecting Martin Ray that eventually would be used against him, to push him out of positional control of MtEV so that he could rule the roost.

The Wine Decline

From 1960 on, MR spent far too much time and effort in developing Mt. Eden Vineyards and the three other new vineyard properties—all part of the Martin Ray Domaine—but apparently too little of both in the two wine cellars there, his own and MtEV.

MR's plummeting charisma and respect among MtEV shareholders was paralleled by the disappointing or even faulty caliber of some of his newer wines, indicated that his skills as a winegrower were erratic and on the wane. All the hard work, social distractions, and growing conflicts inevitably had affected MR's winemaking prowess. Probably, too, as his age advanced he was losing some of his acute tasting ability—though he'd never been particularly objective anyway when judging his own wines, as even some of his friends might admit (but would never dare tell him so). Where was MR's vaunted quality control now? members might ask.

The problem can be discerned from Maynard Amerine's last technical report on four wines that MR had sent him for analysis and tasting: three Chardonnays (a 1965 and two 1966s), and a 1962 Pinot Noir. It was given in a dictated and typed, one-page-plus letter.

The first Chardonnay Maynard hadn't cared for: "It is far too woody for me and the aftertaste is not as clean as one would like." And the analysis was given this way: "total acid, 0.74% (as tartaric), volatile 0.062% (as acetic), pH 3.55, alcohol 12.0% (by vol.), extract 2.3, and tannin 0.04%." The 1966 Chardonnays fared better—the first eliciting "I liked very much indeed. It has a fine rich flavor and plenty of Chardonnay character." Then he went on.

> The second 1966 Chardonnay I liked less. It is not as flowery and fragrant as the previous sample—not as distinctively Chardonnay. I can't explain why since the wines, analytically, are obviously Siamese twins.
>
> These three whites were all more or less petillant. I do not mind a gassy wine, such as a cheap Vouvray or Alsatian white, or even a very gassy Rhine or Moselle, when they are to be sold very young and used for quaffing at lunch. But a big Chardonnay calls for a fine finished wine. It doesn't need gassiness. I would try Millipore filtration if this is a persistent problem. Small size Millipore filters can now be purchased for a reasonable price and they will insure stability if properly used. And they also take care of the cloudiness and gassiness of secondary malo-lactic fermentations in the bottle.
>
> Finally as to the 1962 Pinot noir I found it had a fine body but was most difficult to assess because of its bitter taste (as if reworked) and probably a malo-lactic that got out of hand. It obviously has some Pinot noir quality but the defects outweighed this. I was surprised also to see it browning slightly already, though I don't mind that too much. The analysis was: total acid 0.60, volatile 0.067, pH 4.03, alcohol 12.5, extract 3.0, and tannin 0.32. This is a very high tannin but we rechecked it. The pH is also very high, indicating a complete malo-lactic fermentation.

At the letter's end he responded to MR's prior comments about how the quality of hitherto highly reputable French wines was obviously decreasing.

> I have stopped trying to understand the French exporters. I had a very expensive 1935 Clos Vougeot in Beverly Hills recently that was at least 50% fake. I don't mind a little fake at $1.50 but not at $10.50.
>
> Busy like mad just now. [3/29/67]

This seems to be the last letter that Amerine ever sent to Martin Ray. His candid assessments of MR's recently vintaged wines were symptomatic of sorely troublesome problems fast accruing up on Mt. Eden—only one of which was the quality of the winemaking. And there MR could have used just the right sort of help. So it is both ironic and sad to consider that during the 1960s MR twice had the chance to take on young men as assistant resident winemakers. He turned them down, in turn, rather rudely. They were Warren Winiarski, in the early 1960s, who wanted to come West, with his family, from his university position and become MR's apprentice; and Richard (Dick) Graff several years later, when MtEV shareholders tried to force MR to accept him an assistant. Both within a decade had become masters of the art, and notable prize winners in the famous Judgment of Paris of 1976. That highly publicized event proved to the world that California could produce wines as good as Europe's—which of course Martin Ray had stubbornly maintained ever since the mid-1930s. (Fortunately for his ego, perhaps, this event came six months after his death.)

Furthermore, another man well qualified to be MR's best successor and his equally talented wife were early MtEV members for a time, as well as owners of the Cabernet Sauvignon vineyard that MR had planted for them. But when MR began distrusting Jack Davies and then expelled him from MtEV, he and Jamie sold their property to another member. Moving on to Napa Valley, the Davies bought the historic but badly rundown Schramsberg winery, and through determination, hard labor,

adroit networking, and skill turned it into a prime sparkling-wine producer. Sometimes they admitted that they might never have gone into winegrowing at all had they never met Martin Ray and been converted to his vision of the Good Life.

Any of these men would have been capable of ultimately supplanting MR as the CEO of Mt. Eden Vineyards and eventually of the MR domain itself. But in his dynasty-building plan MR had already chosen a different successor: Peter, to whom he turned over, in 1958, many winemaking responsibilities at vintage time, calling him the Martin Ray winery's winemaker. But he himself had to work with the wines as they progressed all along from aging in cask into bottling, since PMR was back East and busy throughout the year with his own university career as educator and researcher—rarely in residence at Mt. Eden except at vintage time. Even when PMR moved to the San Francisco Bay area in the fall of 1966, winegrowing for him always remained an avocation, taking second place to his professional work as a plant physiologist. Nor would he ever be a savvy businessman with adroit social skills who would understand the need for an excellent knowledge of the fast-changing wine industry ... or the obsessive, impassioned, wholly dedicated winegrower MR hoped he'd eventually become—in his own image.

MR's focus on imprinting his own identity on the future, achieving immortality through his lifework, is detectable in the occasional letters he was still writing to Maynard, which retained some of their former intimacy. (Some letters from Amerine to which he responded evidently didn't get preserved in the Rays' files, probably because in the years before home copier machines were available they were forwarded to someone else to read and never got returned.) As in earlier years, MR would report on what was happening on Mt. Eden, or on the thoughts that recently had been going through his head, and then express his hopes for the future.

> I was about to tell you you should not work so hard! But then came the thought, I have never in my life worked so hard. And I was reading in Time the story about the famed surgeon down Texas way who has done 10,000 heart surgeries, works until 12 every night, goes to work at 5 A.M.! He says work never hurts anyone! I guess it must be true ...! Anyway, we have a magnificent Domaine built up here now. The vineyards are beautiful and the wines encourage us to "carry on." Peter will take over the planning and management when he gets here and it will make Eleanor and me feel a real security with a couple more generations beyond us provided! [5/27/65]

In his next letter MR told Maynard, "It is very good to be again in touch with you and having your help as of old!" Then he said he wished he'd joined them on MtEV's "Founders' Day" celebration, when 6-year-old Martin, PMR's first son and MR's namesake grandson, regaled the group of 40 wine-happy people by strumming Eleanor's guitar and singing.

> He says he is going to be a winemaker. We shall see. But all this would bring joy to Elsie's heart— to know that life here goes on even as long ago but now with security for the foreseeable future and perhaps beyond! I tell you all this because you know so well how very hard Elsie and I worked for so long and Eleanor is working just as hard now! [6/24/65]

But in spite of all his strenuous efforts for 40 years, MR's vision of his personal perpetuity ascending through a strongly committed winegrowing family vine would fail to bear fruit.

Disastrous Discord

By late 1966, as various letters show, MR began to sense that a "conspiracy" was forming against his rule and contrived a tactic to combat it. He told Bob Nikkel of his intention to sell his ownership of both the Martin Ray winery and all his remaining property to the Mt. Eden Vineyards corporation—in exchange for a sufficient number of newly issued shares that would guarantee his and his heirs' control over it forevermore. Basically, then, it would become primarily a family-owned entity with a set of minor shareholders. Nikkel surely saw this as a bad omen for his own six-shares investment in MtEV as well as the "Mt. Cabernet" vineyard he had bought from Jack Davies. He joined and then spearheaded a covert effort to organize enough dissidents to end MR's corporate hegemony. In April of 1967 he co-hosted an unofficial shareholders' meeting in the San Francisco home of an original "founder"—a psychiatrist who, insulted by MR, had left the social MtEV group as early as 1961 but refused ever to sell his share. Present were other disgruntled MtEV members, a young lawyer named Conger Fawcett who had agreed to represent them, and a few couples who knew little about the discontent but were invited so they might contribute their votes or proxies in any future showdown.

When MR found out about the meeting, he was furious. Back-and-forth arguments and seeming conciliations went on with Nikkel acting as go-between. Then when he called for an annual meeting to take place on Mt. Eden in May of 1967, where he would announce his decision, as president-dictator, to alter the financial structure of MtEV, the rebel group with Fawcett's help obtained an injunction forbidding

it to take place.

Now an outraged MR really had something to complain about. Certainly, however, he didn't disclose any of these or other amplifying problems in letters to Amerine, as he would have done in the earlier years. His main confidant now was MtEV's first founding member: Dr. Ralph Isaac, a physician living in Portland, Oregon—a sensible, decent, seemingly unflappable man who somehow managed to remain loyal to MR right to the bitter end. The collection of their correspondence is especially valuable in providing detailed overviews of the deterioration and destruction over time of the Rays' relationships with most MtEV shareholders—particularly, of course, with those who had stirred up dissension, then directed its legal ramifications and financial consequences. Their attorney, Fawcett, was always depicted as a clever and fiendishly relentless foe.

The rebellion against Martin Ray's rule of Mt. Eden Vineyards reached its zenith on January 2, 1968, in the corporate takeover staged at an annual meeting held in San Jose, not at Mt. Eden, as it always had been before. Then and there, the majority of shareholders present and the proxies assigned to them voted MR out of the presidency. (MR later claimed that they both lacked a quorum present and had insufficient votes to do this legally.) Though invited to remain on the board of directors, he and Eleanor walked irately out of the room, and in the following days hired a lawyer and began to launch an all-out war against the MtEV corporation. Several other members who supported them and hadn't attended the meeting also removed themselves from the organization and let their monthly payments lapse. Meanwhile, letters and phone calls went back and forth between them and the Rays. Other shareholders stayed on the sidelines, confused and upset, not knowing which side to back and hoping their investments wouldn't tank. MR and ER had a long struggle ahead of them.

Peter Ray had moved to California in the fall of 1966, just as the crisis in MtEV management began surfacing. He had joined the biology faculty at the new UC Santa Cruz campus—little more than a half-hour drive across the mountains from Saratoga. Several years later, he would move again, to become a professor at nearby Stanford University. Meanwhile, his twin brother, Barclay Kamb, had reentered the family circle, as had their sister, Barbara or "Bobo." Both came with their spouses and children on occasional visits. Eleanor was always happy to see them, but tension was inevitable not only because of the long-going MtEV crisis, but also because her children's prior ugly conflicts with MR were never forgotten or forgiven, and could never be resolved.

And as for Peter's proximity now, it actually offered little dependable relief to MR. Earlier, he had questioned the wisdom of his parents' enthusiastic plan to start Mt. Eden Vineyards, and now his skepticism and warnings had proven apt. Also, although for 15 years MR wanted his adopted son to live nearby and share many more of the year-round responsibilities in winegrowing, new causes for turmoil between them kept erupting. PMR saw and did things quite differently than MR, and had sought ways to work things out reasonably with the dissident MtEV shareholders. But compromise was never a way in which Martin Ray intended to operate. Nor would he ever willingly agree to allow *anyone* other than himself, even his own son and heir, to really run things on Mt. Eden—in spite of frequent previous and sometimes current assurances otherwise.

The Rays sought to protect their ownership of the MtEV property, because by no means had MtEV paid them completely for the land itself, let alone the combined costs of the vineyard creation and chateau building, or their own considerable labors there. So they moved from their own home on the very top of Mt. Eden to occupy the big house initially intended for MtEV members' use. On the next level below their original home, it commanded a similarly spectacular view of Santa Clara Valley. Though the Rays were living on ostensible MtEV land and in its chateau, MR still, after all, held title to the place. The corporate renegades soon took over the Rays' vacated house above, as well as the redwood cabin that MR had built as his first home on his mountain. For a few years, Dick Graff and his brother periodically stayed up there, functioning as resident winegrowers.

Meanwhile, the two warring camps fought each other in various stages of litigation. One involved deciding who really owned and could farm particular vineyards. MR would become enraged when noticing MtEV's imperfect or negligent care of the two vineyards purchased by individual members (though one wasn't fully paid for). And they were trespassing on his own vineyard property when staying up at his abandoned houses. He sometimes tried to block entry either by putting a chain across the main road, obstructing the property entrance, or calling the sheriff to evict MtEV workers as trespassers. The MtEV dissidents persisted anyway—pruning vines and harvesting the grapes to make wine in MR's former cellar. Sometimes, to the Rays' disgust or amazement, they even threw large, lavish parties, bringing guests up the mountain in vans. The Rays

were delighted when they heard how these disloyal MtEV members had formed factions and now squabbled nastily among themselves, to the extent that blows were exchanged.

Throughout the constant contention and stress, MR continued to farm several of the vineyards, usually making wine from their grapes. However, with ownership of the various properties as yet undetermined by a court decision, both sides were reluctant to shoulder the financial responsibilities connected with them, such as paying the accumulating bills for labor and the property taxes. The Rays' entire perspective on the MtEV members had become furiously embittered, as reflected in a 1968 document that MR had composed when requesting that the court award him a receivership during one the early round of disputes with MtEV dissidents, who had accused MR of fraud. In it he declared that MtEV owed him and his wife at least $300,000. Moreover, as he put it, in caps—

> THERE HAD ALWAYS BEEN GREAT TALK AMONG THE SHAREHOLDERS AS TO HOW ANXIOUS THEY WERE TO TAKE PART IN ALL THE WORK. BUT ALL THEY EVER JOINED IN WAS EATING AND DRINKING—AND GOD KNOWS THEY WERE ADEPT AT THAT! EVEN HERE, THEY EXPECTED US TO DO ALL THE WORK. THEY WERE ALL TAKERS, WE THE GIVERS. OF THE GREAT FEAST DAYS WE PROVIDED FOR THEM NONE EVER COST LESS THAN $50 PER PLATE, AND THEY WERE GIVEN FREE OF CHARGE. AND SHAREHOLDERS HAVE RECEIVED 12 CASES OF WINE [EACH] WORTH A TOTAL OF $2000 X 25 or $50,000, THESE GOING TO ALL THOSE WHO LATER DEFAULTED ON THEIR FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS, AS WELL....
>
> AS TO FUTHERING INTEREST IN OUR WINES, NOT ONE SHAREHOLDER OF ALL THE SOME 40 COUPLES WHO HAVE OWNED SHARES HAS EVER SOLD ONE CASE OF WINE EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY. THIS HAS BEEN A ONE-WAY PROPOSITION FOR ALL OF THEM. WE DID ALL THE WORK, FURNISHED ALL THE ENTERTAINMENT FOR THEM AND THEIR FRIENDS, FURNISHED THE FACILITIES, CLEANED UP AFTER THEM, JUST AS WE SUPPLIED ALL THE CREDIT AND MOST OF THE MONEY FOR CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT—MORE THAN ALL THE REST OF THEM PUT TOGETHER—AND WERE PAID NOTHING.

For five years, from 1967 on, a relentless series of legal skirmishes involved meetings with and communications between lawyers (with Fawcett always representing MtEV), scheduled court appearances, and taking depositions of many of the shareholders. Suits and countersuits proliferated, initiated by both parties in the conflict. Sometimes it would appear that a resolution was close, only to fail. All this activity required the Rays to hire and then inform a succession of lawyers, each in turn disappointing them—and all at considerable cost. Perusing only a residual portion of the legal papers can be an exhausting and mind-numbing ordeal. It is fascinating, though, to read the Rays' own comments in letters and other papers about the latest conflicts, guesses about different people's motives behind the opposition's persistence (with the primary villain's identity changing over time), and reports on Fawcett's latest shrewd moves. (The Rays would actually end up admiring Conger, convinced that if he'd been *their* attorney, he would quickly have won their cause for them.)

Exasperated and exhausted over the never-ending battles, MR finally decided to end it all by declaring his intention to buy up all the dissident members' shares at the total amount of money they had invested, and to assume the bank loan secured by MtEV in 1960 to develop the new winegrowing business. Initially confident he'd be able to do both, he courted a number of potential buyers. But the MR reputation for incessant lawsuits, snarled land ownership statuses, chicanery, and big debts caught up with him. As the deadline approached, he even tried to persuade the Seagram corporation to buy his winery and vineyard, though over the years he had ridiculed everything its managers had done at the Paul Masson property ever since he'd sold it in 1943. (One Ray letter to them even proposed doing massive earth-moving to totally fill in the upper part of the narrow canyon, to join the two halves of Table Mountain.)

Nearing the conclusion of his conflict with the detractors who had seized control over MtEV, MR was more than ready to recognize the magnitude of his mistake in believing in the success of a group made up of friendly people who loved wine and admired him. As he wrote to the Piersigs, who had been among the MtEV members who had backed the Rays up to the end of their fight:

> You can imagine how absolutely frustrating it is, to have everything we have built up over all these years jeopardized to the point of utter destruction. Of course this destruction is not an isolated case in the wine industry. Every single group that has ever been formed in winegrowing here in California has disintegrated in the same way, from trouble-makers in the group. I thought ours would be the exception. But just when we were coming into the very peak of our development and success the inevitable schemers blew up the whole achievement. [11/11/71]

He also might have admitted that he too had fallen prey, if on a smaller scale, to the failing of all too

many ambitious winery kingpins in the past, who thought that they would succeed magnificently in their winegrowing mission by going really BIG in their vineyard expansions—heretofore an abiding historical theme of his.

So despite MR's best but desperate efforts, he failed to secure sufficient funds by bringing in either new investors or a total buyout. MtEV obtained a court judgment against him, which led to a sheriff's sale of the original core of MR's property on Mt. Eden —the 93 acres around the mountaintop, including the two houses and the large vineyard. When the parcel was auctioned off in December of 1971, the MtEV corporation, making the only bid, acquired it at the bargain price of $100,000. This basically paid off their judgment against the Rays, so that no money passed hands. MR, at least for now, could hold onto the former MtEV property with its chateau, wine cellar, and Chardonnay vineyard. However, he was already involved in other precarious deals concerning his land and his need for money.

Left Behind in New Times

During much of this continuously stressful period over MtEV control and ownership, Eleanor somehow managed to function gamely as MR's frequent mouthpiece and defender. She also sent out cheerful letters and news releases about Martin Ray wines to people who might know nothing at all about the Rays' severe problems—as if taking welcome respites from near-incessant troubles and torment. Now and again, when she'd find reasons to bring Maynard Amerine's name into her correspondence, she'd express MR's perpetual trust in his wine judgment. An example of this occurs in her letter to a Mr. Olcott, who had written MR about turning the growing vogue of public tastings into a way to make ordinary wine drinkers the real arbiters of the best wines.

> Must tell you MR is absolutely horrified at the idea that mere amateur wine buyers should have any voice in rating the quality of wines, as suggested in some proposed panel of "experts and laymen"! It is more absurd than proposing amateurs to judge the relative points of dogs at a Dog Show! The truth is that very few exist in this country capable of judging the quality of a wine. And even these are necessarily governed in their public statements by their business and/or political connections. Dr. Maynard Amerine has one of the finest palates in the country—in fact, were we faced with a million-dollar decision on a wine he definitely is the one and only one Martin Ray would consider for any opinion beyond his own expert palate.

Here was another chance, too, for a Ray comment on the professional bind that they maintained had made Amerine subservient to the Wine Institute's dictates and also forced him to cater to the big wineries supporting it, along with much of the research work done by the Department of Viticulture and Enology at Davis.

> But politically his University of California viticulture and enology departments are very much dependent upon the indulgence of the Wine Institute—so you can depend on it that Dr. Amerine would safeguard his every pronouncement to keep within bounds set by Wine Institute policy.

The Rays had always urged novice wine drinkers not to believe and follow whatever wine writers told them they should like or prefer, but to familiarize themselves, directly and often, with wines themselves, especially the great ones. So ER had fun with a recent Wine Institute ad.

> Any intelligent layman must discount a considerable percentage of what he reads in books or articles on wine as well as in any published charts; and learn to chart his own "taste course" by drinking the world's accepted top wines continually so as to educate his palate and acquire a basis for judging lesser wines. There is no short cut to becoming a "Wine Expert," despite the Wine Institute's much-advertised claim "YOU TOO CAN BECOME A WINE EXPERT, FOR ONLY $1"! [4/28/68]

By then, a mania for wine tasting, wine tourism, and acquiring wine connoisseurship was starting to spread across the nation. But MR, stripped now of his grand Domaine dream and fighting to hold onto his mountain, was losing his quality edge. He didn't seem to realize that a Wine Revolution was arriving ... and that he had no longer occupied the foremost place in any vanguard. He had always proclaimed to visitors and to letter or newsletter recipients that he held much higher standards than other winemakers and winery proprietors. Yet still holding himself aloof, as if contact with his peers might contaminate his high ideals, MR now seemed somehow stuck back in the Dark Ages of winegrowing.

Actually, even while embodying his chosen role as wine purist and quality control agitator, he might have benefited from far more and closer contact with various facets of, and people within, the wine industry. From the very start of his career as a winegrower he had handicapped his winemaking enterprise by refusing to associate with most other growers and winemakers. Out of principle he also didn't subscribe to publications that presented the latest marketing news or research and technological reports, such as *Wines and Vines* (partly because it was subsidized by the hated Wine Institute).

Before 1955, of course, MR's association with

Amerine had at least kept him fairly well informed of recent developments that might apply to his own limited-production operation. But after the friendship breach and especially after starting MtEV, MR had little time to learn about what other wineries were doing experimentally, with success. These activities were presented and discussed at Technical Advisory Committee meetings at the Wine Institute in San Francisco, as well as among vintners, and between them and UC Davis researchers. MR, though, seemed to think he already knew almost everything worth knowing about winegrowing. Nor would he benefit from learning about other vintners' innovations, which he would regard as suspect anyway, devised for getting more wine to market earlier and more cheaply. And he ridiculed the new practice of cold fermentation of white wines—maintaining that during the fermenting stage, high temperatures not only sterilized the must but also intensified the flavor, as cooking does with many vegetables and fruits. (And of course he didn't employ sulfite for its antimicrobial effects.)

Meanwhile, MR's premium-wine competitors within California's wine industry were continuously improving the overall quality of their wines. They had been partly pushed into their own better quality controls by a new generation of idealistic winemakers, who followed MR's small-scale winery model (now assigned the sobriquet "boutique") yet were likely to pay far more attention than he ever did to research into improving aspects of grapegrowing and winemaking, and then applying them.

On his own, Martin Ray had functioned for years, with Elsie's and then Eleanor's crucial help, as a visionary leader of the opposition to mass-produced, commercialized wine. As an eloquent maverick-host, his oddly magnetic charisma, combined with his potent, pure varietal wines, had created converts to his visions of the winegrower's Good Life. In the late '60s and early 1970s his wines were still being sought after as rarities and challenges. Often difficult to obtain, they were often collectors' items (and still are)—mostly bought and kept for display and bragging, not for drinking.

The current "cult" wineries producing small quantities of astoundingly pricey wines hark back to Martin Ray's years of exemplifying the small-production winery that commands intense respect, even awe. Many of the notable boutique wineries have been started by or feature vintners—women as well as men (a phenomenon that would have amazed MR)—who are just as passionate and committed as MR had been. But they are open to applying current scientific and practical findings to the growing of grapes and the making of wine. Usually, unlike MR, they have taken formal academic courses in enology and viticulture. And they rarely try to command everything and everyone around them, and instead rely on expert teamwork in order to succeed in the highly competitive wine marketplace.

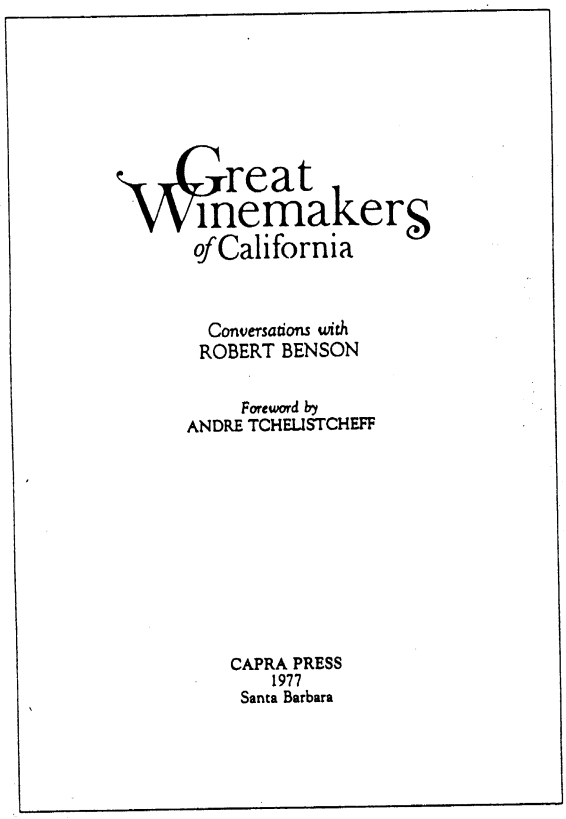
Departures and Successions on Mt. Eden

After the ignominious defeat of his once glorious vision of commanding a mountaintop wine kingdom, MR faced ever-worsening financial circumstances. His physical and emotional health continued to decline. From the late 1960s and up to mid 1970s, most of his letters, and some of ER's, reflect frantic and misguided efforts to raise money. Wine sales could scarcely cancel out escalating debts and to pay accrued attorney and court costs as well as living expenses and taxes. Although the conflict over MtEV ended in late 1971, another large collection of litigation records had already begun building up. They were the inevitable results of MR's hastily contriving new land purchase agreements, and even some title transfers, that he undertook to supply needed cash or to protect him from property seizures over accumulating debts and delinquent taxes. Sometimes he resold some property even though he hadn't closed out the previous deal after turning against the buyer for whatever reasons.

Not surprisingly, such murky arrangements kept backfiring on him, resulting in an unbelievable number of actual or threatened lawsuits. Later, it would take years to make sense of and resolve the snarled up ownership records and boundary lines for all the fragments of MR's former half-section of land that he kept disposing of—invariably to people he soon mistrusted, then bitterly fought with. At one point, MR even sold off the winery business and his inventory of wines to a physician. But soon he locked the entry gate and padlocked the cellar to prevent the man from entering the winery to remove and start selling some of the wines he'd supposedly bought. MR even sold the whole "Chateau parcel" itself—some 30 acres, including its three-acre Chardonnay vineyard—to a man who lived back East, on the condition that he and Eleanor could remain living there during their lifetimes. But when he was denied a contract to farm the vineyard, he watched it go moribund as it went unpruned, unplowed, unsulfured—and unloved, with any grapes produced hardly worth harvesting.

For a few years in the '70s MR continued to make wine in the chateau's cellar, but it was mostly an erratic, half-hearted effort. Periodically he feuded with Peter, first over PMR's attempts to mend relations with MtEV, then when he tried, several

times, to rescue the operations of the Martin Ray winery itself when MR was legally forbidden even to enter the cellar but refused to adhere to the ruling. Months would go by without contact between them, so once again Eleanor was bereft of a child.


Great Winemakers of California

Conversations with
ROBERT BENSON

Foreword by
ANDRE TCHELISTCHEFF

CAPRA PRESS
1977
Santa Barbara

[Martin Ray leads the parade, pp.19–31]

In 1975 and 1976 Robert Benson interviewed 28 notable vintners for his *Great Winemakers of California* (Capra Press, 1977). Martin Ray is the first subject in the book. No longer actively making wine and in badly failing health, he still managed to be as zealously articulate as ever about his painstaking craft as ever he had been during his almost 40 years of practicing it. Benson's "conversation" captures much of MR's feisty spirit and strong opinions, along with statements about his own approaches to vineyard and cellar care. Benson later told ER that he found Martin to be the most compelling of all the vintners he'd talked with. The dying lion still roared.

Living and working far from Saratoga, Maynard Amerine often circulated elsewhere, in different places and among different sets of people connected with the California wine industry. Retiring from UC Davis in 1974, he settled first in Sonoma, then in Napa Valley, and for some years was a scientific adviser to the Wine Institute. So doubtless he heard from a number of people about the increasing dissatisfaction among the MtEV members during the later 1960s, the legal tussles, and even the dismal final years of Martin Ray's life. He might even have felt a tinge of compassion. After all, he had once known MR well, over the two decades of their friendship, in all his contradictions—egregious faults as well as admirable and endearing qualities.

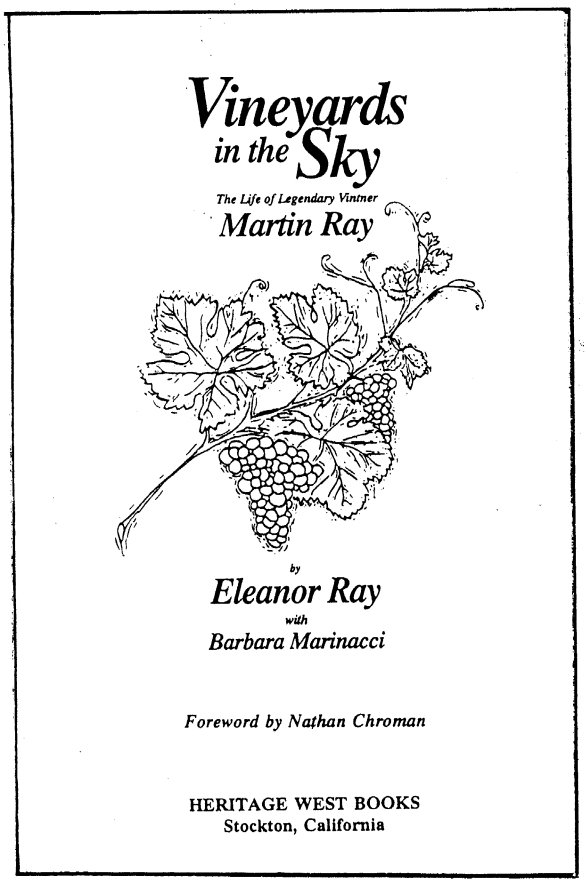
When Martin Ray died January 26, 1976, of multiple myeloma, his widow inherited only debts and litigation (which PMR quickly began to address and solve). Perhaps Maynard Amerine sent a condolence note to Eleanor after Martin's death. If so, it isn't among the notes she saved as memorable. But later in that year he responded on a postcard to ER's "newsy letter." Probably she had sent him a note that accompanied the newsletter she'd just produced, telling of how her son had taken MR's place in conducting the vintage activities on Mt. Eden. (There's no copy on file of what she wrote to him.) It seems she also had expressed in the wish to see Maynard again (as she was doing with other friends of the past that MR had alienated). If she'd hoped to talk with him about the old times, certainly his brief message dispelled that fond dream.

> The past seems so long ago. Hard to recall what really happened. But perhaps to just remember entre nous. A good holiday season. – Maynard A.

Following MR's death a new winemaking corporate entity, Martin Ray Vineyards, was established, with Peter Martin Ray as president. Following many of MR's practices but at first buying most winegrapes from Carneros and Sonoma valley, it prospered for a time, but eventually fell afoul of internal feuding between partners—which unseated Peter from a controlling position as president, as MR had been before him. After this ouster in the early 1980s the MRV operation departed from Mt. Eden, and little wine was made beyond that time. The business use of Martin Ray's name and the remaining wine inventory were bought from the failed corporation in the early 1990s by Courtney Benham. Eventually this new Martin Ray Winery settled down at Sonoma County's historic Martini & Prati winery, in the Santa Rosa area—far from the Santa Cruz Mountains that Martin Ray had so loved. But his name, at least, endures elsewhere in connection with quality winemaking.

Over time, ER and PMR worked with lawyers and several property owners so that eventually the so-called Chateau parcel of 30 acres and another, larger part of MR's former mountain were returned to family ownership. During the late 1970s Peter Ray

and his twin brother, Barclay Kamb, had begun a winegrape-farming partnership, separate from MRV, that managed the three acres of Chardonnay in front of the chateau and developed 10 acres of vineyards within a lower section of Mt. Eden. The business continues today, producing Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, and Chardonnay varieties. Some wine is made for family use, but most of the grapes are sold.



[1st edition, 1993]

Maynard Amerine would never reenter Eleanor's social life. In 1990, this author began assisting her mother by editing, reinserting discarded chapters, and adding new material to the manuscript of *Vineyards in the* Sky before arranging to get it published. She wrote to Maynard Amerine at his home in Sonoma and asked to interview him—hoping to clarify certain things about MR by getting his perspective. This was his typed reply:

> I have your letter of July 20 regarding your project on Martin Ray. I am sorry I cannot get involved with anything about Martin Ray. For your information this is not the first time that I have found it necessary to decline to be interviewed about his career or his vineyards or wines. [8/1/90]

Probably then finding this rather brusque, he added below, by pen, "Regards to your mother."

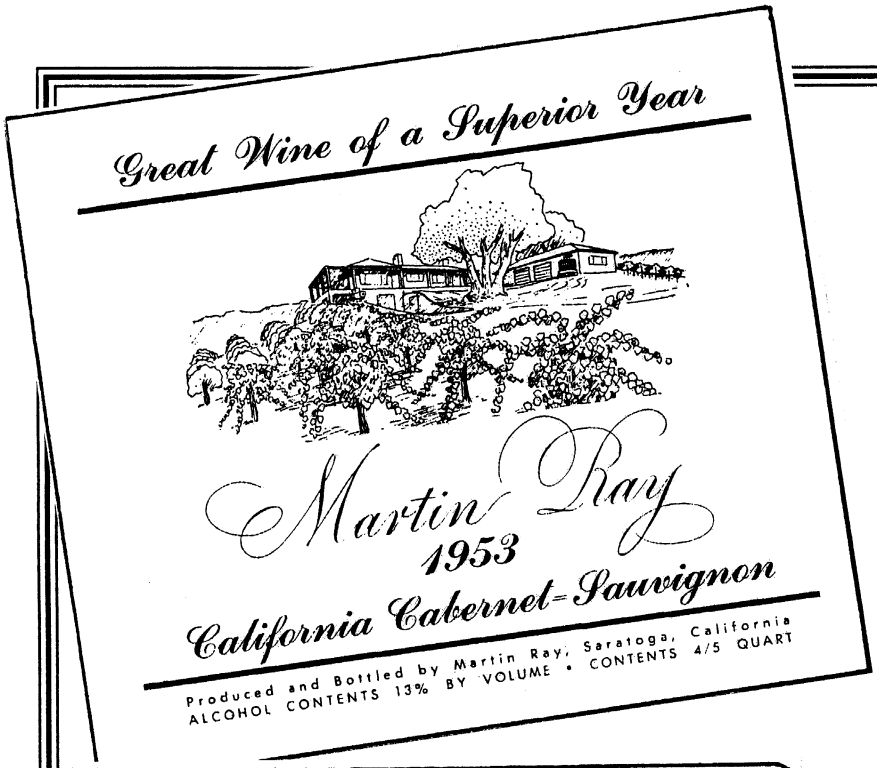
When the Martin Ray memoir/biography was published several years later, a copy was sent to Amerine. An acknowledgment came on notepaper with his name printed at the top.

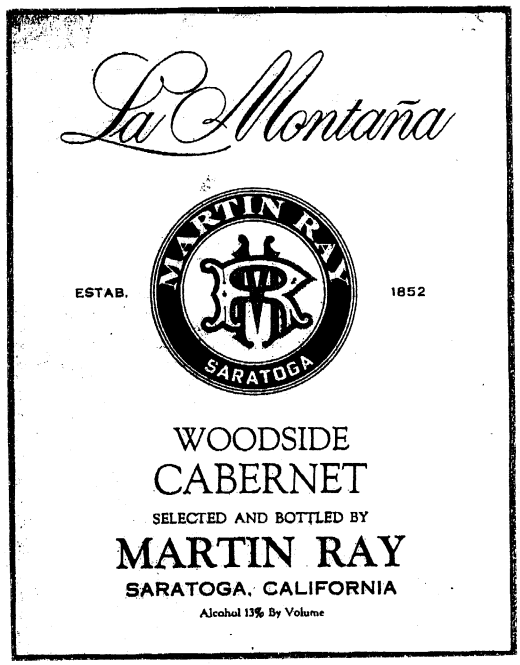
> Dear Eleanor and Barbara:
>
> Thank you for sending me a copy of "Vineyards in the Sky ..." I have carefully read it cover to cover during a quiet holiday season.
>
> As you know I never believed that the ends justify the means and I still don't.
>
> My best wishes for your health and happiness.
>
> Yours cordially and faithfully,
>
> Maynard Amerine [1/5/93]

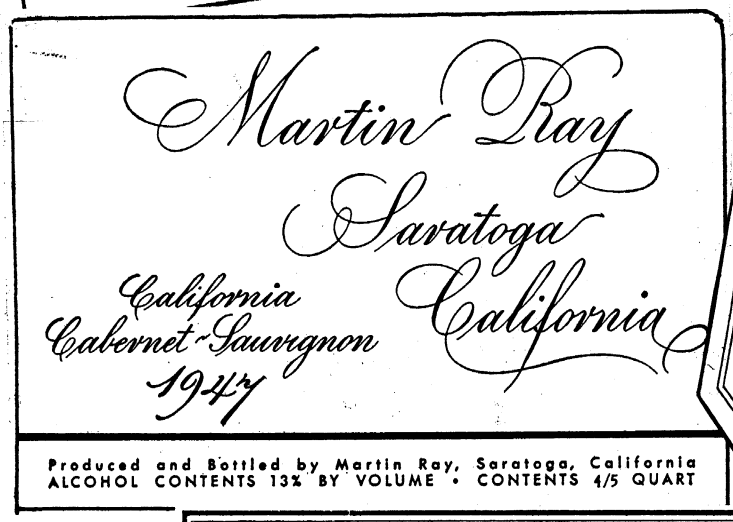
Clearly he hadn't forgotten the basic cause of his ruptured friendship with Martin Ray almost four decades earlier, and once again he justified it. But as more years went by, Alzheimer's disease began dimming his mind, so that any memories of their relationship must have disappeared entirely. Maynard Amerine died in March 1998. Eleanor Ray outlived him by two years, passing away in April 2000, at the age of 96. By then, she too had forgotten entirely what that entire past furor over wine quality control was all about.

After Eleanor's death, MR's ashes, along with those of his two wives, were scattered in the Chardonnay vineyard below the chateau and wine cellar that he had originally built for Mount Eden Vineyards. And as for that quality-focused enterprise: still based at the top of Mt. Eden, it is truly Martin Ray's best winemaking legacy. Surviving a series of internal management conflicts after MR's time and a bankruptcy threat, it was finally brought into a prosperous, expanding condition after Jeffrey and Eleanor Patterson arrived there in the early 1980s. Had MR *not* lost control of the corporation years earlier, the winegrowing corporation probably would not have survived. The Wine Revolution's marketplace required a management approach that MR didn't possess or believe in.

The story of Martin Ray and his sustained fight for wine quality is worth remembering ... and then recounting to anyone who naively believes that fine and even great varietal wines have always been made in California, and that they were available throughout the nation and elsewhere in the world. And that is exactly how MR kept proclaiming—indeed, demanding—it should be.


Great Wine of a Superior Year
Martin Ray
1953
California Cabernet-Sauvignon
Produced and Bottled by Martin Ray, Saratoga, California
ALCOHOL CONTENTS 13% BY VOLUME • CONTENTS 4/5 QUART


La Montaña
ESTAB.
MARTIN RAY
SARATOGA
1852
WOODSIDE
CABERNET
SELECTED AND BOTTLED BY
MARTIN RAY
SARATOGA, CALIFORNIA
Alcohol 13% By Volume


Martin Ray
Saratoga
California
California
Cabernet-Sauvignon
1947
Produced and Bottled by Martin Ray, Saratoga, California
ALCOHOL CONTENTS 13% BY VOLUME • CONTENTS 4/5 QUART

Paul Masson
CALIFORNIA Gold CHAMPAGNE
NATURALLY FERMENTED IN THE BOTTLE
PRODUCED AND
PAUL MASSON CHAMPAGNE COMPANY
SARATOGA, CALIFORNIA
BOTTLED BY
CONTENTS ½ QT.
ALCOHOL 13% BY VOLUME

TAX PAID BY STAMPS AFFIXED TO CASE
Paul Masson
California Light Wine
Dry White
VINTAGE 1974
Martin Ray's
CONTENTS ¾ QTS.
ALCOHOL 13% BY VOLUME
PRODUCED & BOTTLED BY PAUL MASSON CHAMPAGNE COMPANY
Bonded Winery No. 144, 14th District, Saratoga, California

MARTIN RAY
SARATOGA