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THE WINE BOOKS IN JEFFERSON'S LIBRARY

by
Robert W. Hutton ©



Those of you who are wine-lovers know about Thomas Jefferson and wine. As a relatively new Virginian, growing and making wine, I feel I am making a small effort in fulfilling his memory. Those of you who are book-lovers know about Thomas Jefferson and his library. As a recently retired cataloguer at the Library of Congress, I feel that all of us at the Library of Congress have made great efforts in fulfilling his memory in that direction. Those of you who are Her Britannic Majesty's subjects might not remember the nasty unpleasantness that occurred in Washington, D.C., in 1814, which among other things caused us to repaint the President's Palace in whitewash, and thus bestow its new name, the White House. Shortly after these events, Thomas Jefferson realized that he was about to enter into a win-win situation. He had an unparalleled library. The country needed to replace its library. He needed money.

*Thomas Jefferson to Samuel Harrison Smith,
September 21, 1814:*

"Dear sir: I learn from the newspapers that the vandalism of our enemy has triumphed at Washington over science as well as the arts by the destruction of the public library with the noble edifice in which it was deposited...

"I presume it will be among the early objects of Congress to recommence their collection. This will be difficult while the war continues, and intercourse with Europe is attended with so much risk. You know

my collection, its condition and extent. I have been fifty years making it, and have spared no pains, opportunity or expense, to make it what it is. While residing in Paris, I devoted every afternoon I was disengaged, for a summer or two, in examining all the principal bookstores, turning over every book with my own hand, and putting by everything which related to America, and indeed whatever was rare and valuable in every science. Besides this, I had standing orders during the whole time I was in Europe, on its principal book-marts, particularly Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Madrid and London, for such works relating to America as could not be found in Paris. So that, in that department particularly, such a selection was made as probably can never again be effected, because it is hardly probable that the same opportunities, the same time, industry, perseverance and expense, with the same knowledge of the bibliography of the subject would again happen to be in concurrence. During the same period, and after my return to America, I was led to procure, also, whatever related to the duties of those in the high concerns of the nation. So that the collection, which



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I suppose is of between nine and ten thousand volumes, while it includes what is chiefly valuable in science and literature generally, extends more particularly to whatever belongs to the American statesman. In the diplomatic and parliamentary branches, it is particularly full. It is long since I have been sensible — it ought not to continue private

property, and had provided that at my death, Congress should have the refusal of it at their own price. The loss they have now incurred, makes the present the proper moment for their accommodation, without regard to the small remnant of time and the barren uses of my enjoying it. I ask of your friendship, therefore, to make for me the tender of it to the Library Committee of Congress, not knowing myself of whom the committee consists. I enclose you the catalogue, which will enable them to judge of its contents. Nearly the whole are well bound, an abundance of them elegantly, and of the choicest editions existing..."

This was written less than a month after British troops had invaded Washington and burned, among other buildings, the Capitol Building, which then housed the Library of Congress. The catalogue which he sent to Mr. Smith in 1815 was arranged according to Jefferson's own catalogue system. Some of the original collection still has the original Jeffersonian cataloguing, and to this day, the Library of Congress requires at least one cataloguer to be cognizant of the Jeffersonian system so that, as needed, it can be converted to the present Library of Congress cataloguing system. The collection, when finally shipped, proved to include 6,487 volumes. Jefferson received \$23,950 for his library, at prices of \$10 per folio, \$6 per quarto, \$3 per octavo, and \$1 per duodecimo. Such pricing was made easier by the fact that Jefferson had catalogued his books by size: 1 to 16 were duodecimo (12mo), 17 to 101 were octavo (8vo), 102 to 115 were quarto (4to), 116 to 129 were folio; a letter system was used for large books.

MEMORY • REASON • IMAGINATION

Jefferson based his cataloguing system on the system of Francis Bacon, who had organized all knowledge into the categories of Memory, Reason, and Imagination. Jefferson allocated Memory to History, both Civil and Natural. Reason was allocated to Philosophy, both Moral and Mathematical. Imagination was allocated to Fine Arts.

Jefferson's library included a few of the classic books on wine and winemaking, a topic which even now is an unbreakable combination in the subject cataloguing system of the Library of Congress. One may distill many potions besides whisk(e)y; one may brew many other potions besides beer; one cannot wine-make anything else except wine. Jefferson had a number of books on gardening in his library, but as one can find in contemporary gardening books, they rarely give useful information on raising grapes, particularly if one is trying to raise them for wine. Two notable exceptions were JOHN GARDINER and DAVID HEPBURN, *The American Gardener* (1804,

1st.ed.) and BERNARD McMAHON, *The American Gardener's Calendar* (1806, 1st.ed.). Both contain ample directions for grape growing and wine making – and, along with Samuel Deane's 1790 *New-England Farmer*, were the earliest U.S. books on horticulture. Another related book in his library, though not often classified a "wine" book, is STEPHEN JOHNSON's *Rural Economy* (1806), which includes a 42-page chapter on the "Culture of the Vine."

AGRICULTURE

"... agriculture, the employment of our first parents in Eden, the happiest we can follow, and the most important to our country." – T. JEFFERSON, 1817

Under Division I: History – Natural – Physics, we find Chapter 7: Agriculture. Books on wine, as catalogued by Jefferson, are as follows:

Cato, Varro, Columella, et Palladius De Re Rustica. 8vo.

SCRIPTORES REI RUSTICAE.

Rei rusticæ avctores latini veteres, M. Cato, M. Varro, L. Columella, Palladius: priores tres, e vetustiss. editionibus; quartus, e veteribus membran- is aliquammultis in locis emendatiores: cum tribus indicibus, capitum, auctorum & rerum ac verborum memorabilium. Criticorum & expositorum in eosdem atque Geoponicos Græcos notationes seorsum dabuntur... [Heidelbergæ:] ex Hier. Commelini typographio, 1595.

This book is a compilation of the works of classical Roman authors, still in print as parts of the Loeb Classical Library, which is in both English and Latin. These works cover all aspects of agriculture, with much attention paid to viticulture and winemaking as it was practiced in Roman times. A number of their ideas are pertinent even now. Grapevines and yeasts have not changed that much.

Oeconomie rurale de Saboureux. 6 vols. 8vo.

[*Cato, Varro, Colum., Pallad., et Vegetius.*]

SABOUREUX DE LA BONNETRIE, CHARLES FRANÇOIS.

Traduction d'Anciens ouvrages Latins relatifs à l'Agriculture et à la Médecine Vétérinaire, avec des Notes. Par M. Saboureux de la Bonnetrie . . . Tome Premier [–Tome Sixieme] . . . A Paris: Chez P. Fr. Didot, [de l'Imprimerie de P. Al. Le Prieur, –de J. G. Clousier]. M.DCC.LXXI.–M.DCC.LXXV. [1771–1775]

This work is a French translation of Cato, Varro, et al., by Charles François Saboureux de la Bonnetrie, 1725–1781, a French lawyer and scientist.

BOOKS may be classed according to the faculties of the mind employed on them: these are—
I. MEMORY. II. REASON. III. IMAGINATION.

Which are applied respectively to—

I. HISTORY. II. PHILOSOPHY. III. FINE ARTS.

			Chapt.	
I. HISTORY	Civil	Civil Proper	Antient	Antient History 1
			Modern	Foreign 2
		Ecclesiastical	British 3	
			American 4	
			Ecclesiastical 5	
	Natural	Physics	Natural Philosophy 6	
			Agriculture 7	
			Chemistry 8	
			Surgery 9	
			Medicine 10	
	Nat. Hist. Proper	Animals 11		
		Vegetables 12		
		Botany 13		
		Minerals 14		
	Occupations of Man 15	Technical Arts 15		
II. PHILOSOPHY	Moral	Ethics	Moral Philosophy 16	
			I. of Nature & Nations } 16	
		Jurisprudence	Religious	Religion 17
				Equity 18
			Municipal	Common Law 19
				Law Merchant 20
				Law Maritime 21
				Law Ecclesiastical 22
			Oeconomical	Foreign Law 23
				Politics 24
	Mathematical	Pure	Commerce 25	
			Arithmetic 25	
		Physico-Mathematical	Geometry 26	
			Mechanics 27	
			Statics 27	
			Dynamics 27	
			Pneumatics 27	
			Phonics 27	
			Optics 27	
			Astronomy 28	
Geography 29				
III. FINE ARTS	Architecture	Architecture 30		
		Gardening 31		
		Painting 31		
		Sculpture 31		
		Music 32		
	Poetry	Music 32		
		Epic 33		
		Romance 34		
		Pastorals 35		
		Odes 35		
		Elegies 36		
		Didactic 36		
		Tragedy 37		
		Comedy 38		
		Dialogue 30		
Epistles 30				
Oratory	Logic 40			
	Rhetoric 40			
	Orations 40			
	Theory 41			
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Authors who have written on various branches			44	

The classification scheme Jefferson devised for his collection as it appears in the Catalogue of the Library of the United States (Washington: Printed by Jonathan Elliot, 1815). The Library of Congress adopted Jefferson's organization of knowledge, using it to classify its growing collection of books for most of the nineteenth century.

[FROM: GILREATH, Thomas Jefferson's Library, 1989]

Husbandry of the antients by Dickson. 2 v. 8vo.
DICKSON, ADAM.

The Husbandry of the Ancients. In two vols.
By Adam Dickson . . . Edinburgh: Printed for J.
Dickson, and W. Creech; London: G. Robinson and T.
Cadell, 1788.

"A judicious compilation from the Roman
writers in English" by Adam Dickson,
1721–1776, a Scottish minister, writer on
agriculture, and a practical farmer.

Tracts in Agriculture. 8vo. *To wit, Fabbroni,
Parmentier, Maupin.*

MAUPIN, FRANÇOIS.

*L'Art de la vigne, contenant une nouvelle
méthode économique de cultiver la vigne, avec les ex-
périences que en ont été faites.* Par M. Maupin . . .
Paris, 1779.

Four pamphlets bound together in one
volume. Maupin, a major writer on 18th
century agriculture and one time *valet-
de-chambre* to Queen Marie Leszcinska,
sent several of his tracts on the culti-
vation of the vine to Jefferson, with a
view to establishing the industry in the
United States.

L'Agricoltura del Trinci. 2 vols. 12mo.

TRINCI, COSIMO.

*L'Agricoltura Sperimentato. Ovvero Regole
generali sopra l'agricoltura . . .* Venezia, 1796.

Trinci's work, described by Jefferson as
"the best book of the agriculture of Italy,"
contains a substantial section on grapes,
including *Trattato sopra la coltivazione
della vite*, descritto da M. Bidet. Jeffers-
on's copy was sent to him in 1804 by
Thomas Appleton, U. S. Consul at Leg-
horn (Livorno).

TRATTATO

SOPRA LA COLTIVAZIONE DELLA
VITE.



P A R T E P R I M A .



A Coltivazione delle Viti confiste nel pian-
tarle, nel potarle, nel lavorarle, nel
propagginarle, nell'innestarle, nel con-
cimarle, nel legarle, nel succiderle, e
nel dar loro tanta terra, e tanto stabbio,
quanto bisogna per ingrassarle, e nel di-
scacciarne gl' infetti.

Se utile è al Proprietario l' avere un Vignajuolo ef-
perto in tutte le parti della coltivazione della Vigna;
minor certamente non è quello d' avere da per se stes-
so la cognizione di tutte queste cose, affine di dirigere
le operazioni di lui, e non restare ingannato.

Maupin sur la vigne. 8vo.

MAUPIN, FRANÇOIS.

*Nouvelle méthode non encore publiée pour
planter et cultiver la vigne à beaucoup moins de frais
. . . joints à la Théorie ou leçon sur le temps le plus
convenable de couper la vendange . . .* par M. Mau-
pin. Paris: Musier, 1782.

Traité de la vigne de Bidet & Duhamel.

2 vols. 12mo.

BIDET, NICHOLAS.

*Traité sur le Nature et sur la Culture de la
Vigne; sur le Vin, la Façon de le Faire, et la Manière
de le bien gouverner. A l'usage des différens
Vignobles du Royaume de France.* Seconde Édition.
Augmentée & corrigée, par M. Bidet . . . et revue par
M. du Hamel du Monceau . . . Avec Figures. Tome
Premier [Second]. A Paris: chez Savoye, 1759.

Nicolas Bidet, 1709–1782, was a French
agriculturist.

Henri Louis Duhamel du Monceau,
1700–1782, was a French botanist and
engineer.

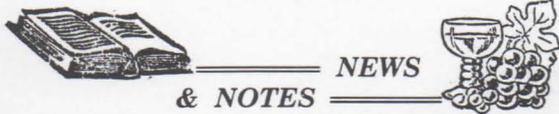
*Traite sur la vigne, par Chaptal, Rozier, Par-
mentier et Dussieux.* 2 vols. 8vo.

CHAPTAL, ET AL.

*Traité théorique et pratique sur la Culture de
la Vigne, avec l'Art de Faire le Vin, les Eaux-de-Vie,
Esprit de Vin, Vinaigres simples et composés; par le
Cen. Chaptal . . . M. l'Abbé Rozier . . . les citoyens
Parmentier . . . et Dussieux . . . Ouvrage dans lequel
se trouvent les meilleures méthodes pour faire,
gouverner, les perfectionner les Vins, Eaux-de-Vie, et
Vinaigres.* Avec XXI planches représentant les di-
verses espèces de Vignes; les Machines et Instrumens
servant à la fabrication des Vins et Eaux-de-Vie.
Seconde édition. Tome Premier [–Second]. A Paris:
chez Delalain fils, de l'Imprimerie de Marchant, An
X.–1801.

This work by Chaptal et al. is the classic
practical work for viticulture and wine-
making as practiced in France (and
Europe) at the beginning of the 19th
century. It was the Amerine and Winkler
for its time, for those seriously interested
in vines and wines. According to Jeffers-
on, Chaptal's book was "... the best ever
published on the vine, & on wines."
Recently, several antiquarian book sel-
lers have included editions of Chaptal et
al. in their catalogues, at prices ranging
from \$600 to \$2250. Jefferson purchased
his copy from bookseller Reibelt in 1805
for \$2.50, and immediately sent it to John
March for binding at a cost of \$1 per
volume.

[cont'd. on page 18]



Welcome to our new Tendrils! An updated and revised MEMBERSHIP ROSTER is enclosed.

www.winelit.slsa.sa.gov.au

Valmai Hankel, Rare Books Librarian at the State Library of South Australia, thanks us for the mention of their Winelit website in our last issue. She adds it is now possible to access the library's various catalogues and databases through the website (although the cataloguing of the Cellarmaster Collection of Rare Wine Books will not be completed until year-end). Valmai would appreciate site feedback from Tendril members.

The LAMBIEL MUSEUM

Our April 1997 issue paid tribute to Tendril Leo Lambiel's magnificent wine cellar and his wine library room whose six walls are covered with a 370 sq.ft. hand-painted mural depicting twenty-eight favorite varieties of wine grapes, trellised and twining to the ceiling. His home museum on Orcas Island, Washington, is open, by appointment, for daily guided tours. Visitors are cordially invited to experience his passion for the works of local artists. Write him for a full-color brochure: 668 Olga Road, East-sound, WA 98245, or call 360.376.4544.

Vinexlibris Tendrilii

Copies are still available of our limited edition booklet *Vinexlibris Tendrilii* featuring the wine bookplates of Tendril members. (See last issue for full review and details.) You will be pleased with this addition to your bookshelf — while all proceeds go to help defray Wayward Tendril expenses. Only 60 copies printed... Note: For those so infected with bookplates, copies of Erik Skovenborg's colorful *Vinexlibris - Bookplates with Wine Motifs* (1991) are available from The Port Lover's Library (fax 603.448.4160 or e-mail pll@valley.net).

ABC for Book Collectors

The seventh edition of this classic work by John Carter has been published by Oak Knoll Books, New Castle, DE. A "great basic resource and a rewarding volume for browsing or bibliophilic pleasure-reading," with over 450 alphabetical entries offering definitions of technical terms and booksellers' jargon, it is highly recommended.

Ex Libris

John and
Olivienne
Hutchison



IN MEMORIAM:

JOHN N. HUTCHISON
(1911-2001)

"By most measures I have lived (as an ordinary man) an extraordinary life, performing often minor duties but sometimes as a participant in great events."

Though not one of our more well-known "wine author" names, John N. Hutchison was, nevertheless, a fine contributor to the

literature of wine. While following a distinctive career — journalist, Army officer (including duty as General Patton's liaison with press correspondents), four years at the Marshall Plan Headquarters in Paris, followed by service in the U.S. Information Agency (with tours of duty in Paris, London, Manila, Washington, and awarded the Agency's Superior Service Award in 1973), public affairs officer for the U.S. Embassy in New Zealand—John Hutchison always "appreciated a good glass of wine as well as a good story." For many years he was a contributor, and later a contributing editor, to *Wines & Vines Magazine*. When André Simon published his encyclopedic *Wines of the World* in 1967, John was asked to write the section on "Wines of the Americas." He shares the title page of the 1966 classic, *Gods, Men, and Wine* by William Younger: "And a chapter on *Wine in America* by John N. Hutchison." As one of the prestigious list of contributors to the *University of California / Sotheby Book of California Wine* (1984), he wrote the historical essay, "Northern California from Haraszthy to the Beginnings of Prohibition."

John's wine writings, presented in his fluent, informative, and entertaining style, will forever be appreciated.



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WINE AESTHETICS FOR THE GUZZLER, THE BIBBER, AND THE TASTER,

or more precisely,

A philosophic excursus on the oenological and oenophilic arts with the objective of formulating an explicative, discursive compendium of issues on the problems of the axiology of wine judging, the questions of organoleptic and orectic language forms, and certain para-psychological animadversions that are prompted by theoretical parapomona on specific topics, such as inebriation and tasting.

by *Allan Shields*

[Tendrils Shields, Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus, SDSU, presented this lecture to the San Diego State University Chapter of American Association of University Professors, April 1976, two years before his retirement. He writes today, "It is safe to observe that the questions adumbrated and pursued in this lecture have yet to be given a definite resolution. Such subtleties of experience are, as the philosopher Thomas Vernon Smith noted, more frequently 'resolved than solved.' My objective in 1976, as now, was to crisp-up the concepts, a worthy philosophic program." — Ed.]



he subject of wine aesthetics is enough to drive a person to think. Wine itself has been a conversation piece for more than 6000 years and has insinuated its lovely self into virtually every activity of man—ceremony, medicine, religion, science, politics, economics, poetry, history, drama and various other forms of art including music, painting, dance, sculpture and architecture — even war. But when we examine the literature about wine, it eventually becomes apparent that there is a puzzling paucity of aesthetic analysis and sharp theory. One could reasonably expect that with all the world's bibbing, tasting, and judging that a respectable aesthetics of wine would be readily available. Not so. We

search in vain for any systematic theory of vinous virtues. It is only a minor hyperbole to assert that the problems of wine aesthetics are hardly raised, let alone resolved. What follows is an identification of some neglected issues in wine aesthetics and occasional suggestions for resolving some of them. It is not my purpose to present a new aesthetics of wine.

Rather than burden you with a necessarily dull explication of what aesthetics can be taken to mean in this context, let me simply remark that the discussion and examples may prove to be enough to make the meaning clear. One caution must be made: aesthetic theory in none of the arts has succeeded in ruling out in advance what shall be relevant to consider. Our speculum must remain broad, especially when we seek a survey in this preliminary way. Let us begin by placing ourselves *in medias res* where the action is. From there we may progressively repair to quieter issues for reflective, contemplative consideration.

It can be said now in a preliminary way that though the proximate means of analysis are experiential, the ultimate objectives are explanatory and theoretical. The experiencing and enjoyment of wines, as with art objects, are palpably exciting and rewarding in ways that an historical analysis and a theoretical explanation are not. George Santayana recognized this hazard of writing in aesthetics in his work, *The Sense of Beauty*:

To feel beauty is a better thing than to understand how we come to feel it. To have the imagination and taste, to love the best, to be carried by the contemplation of nature to a vivid faith in the ideal, all this is more, a great deal more, than any science can hope to be.... [Philosophic] Reflection is indeed a part of life, but the last part.¹

Here are four cases that suggest some problems in the aesthetics of wine:

Case I: Still glowing from an early afternoon glass or two of sweet wine, a red eyed man sits down in a doorway of a side street in San Francisco, unscrews the cap on a fifth of Gallo Muscatel and tips the bottle up as he gulps the first of his evening's enjoyment.

Case II: This is a direct quotation from a wine list on the table of a popular San Diego restaurant:

ABOUT WINE: The only thing you need to know about wine is that you don't need to know anything about wine to enjoy it. Custom, of course, favors red wine with red meats, white wine with fish and fowl. But if you personally prefer a glass of White Chablis with your blood-rare beef, then Chablis is the proper choice. Champagne with hot dogs? Why not?

Case III: You are a diner in Gallatin's in Monterey, California. You have ordered Filet of Sole Meuniere and Broccoli with Hollandaise sauce. The

waiter hands you the wine list. From among fifty select foreign and domestic wines, which will you have?

California Chardonnay of Martin Ray

\$12.00 per fifth

Le Montrachet, 1959 \$20.00

Chateau Lafite Rothschild, 1934 \$25.00

Chateau d'Yquem, 1947 \$35.00

Case IV: Idwal Jones in his rhapsodic and romantic eloquence on California wines, *Vines in the Sun* (New York: William Morrow, 1949) details some of the skill of a true wine taster in his description of Almond R. Morrow:

The equipment of an accomplished taster is a judgment based on familiarity with wine-making, which is a very complex art, and with wines, of which he must have tasted oceans.

When Almond Raleigh Morrow stands before a table spread out with the tulip-shaped, thin-walled sampling glasses, the outer world is obliterated for him. He has been tasting wines for sixty years, is dean of the vintners on the Coast, and Honorary Chairman of the Board of the Wine Institute. His mild, softly beaming countenance, which holds the suggestion of a head vestryman, or Canon Prebendary, will betray nothing to the spectators, standing mute against the wall. They will have to wait until the end, when he has scratched off his notes and made some brief utterance, listened to as if it were the decree of a court of the last instance.

He works with precision, almost swiftly. His china-blue eyes, gone sharp behind the gold-rimmed spectacles, judge the color in a flash. Old red wines must show a slight browning; old white a golden tint. These samples before him run through the whole chromatic scale of wines. If the color passes, he lifts the glass. It will not do to inhale the scent too long, or the olfactory nerve becomes dulled. It may be fragrant, but if through the nimble emanation he detects a flaw, however slight, then the sample is rejected. It might be *tourne*, betrayed by ever-so-slight a fustiness; or it might be a symptom of one of the twenty maladies that afflict wine, which is a living and mysterious organism. He puts down the glass; for if that wine touched his palate, he would judge no more that day, or until the shadow wore off. He scratches a notation on what should be done with that wine—aeration, housing in another barrel, reblending, or destruction.

It might be something else. The chemist may prove the soundness of a wine, but only the taste—and taste is half smelling—can appraise quality.

Then he swirls his glass, watching the slow, downward trickle of the drops—*les pleurs du vin*—adjudging the “texture” of the wine, and tastes, not swallowing a drop. His comments are

written down. The wines are classified, on his utterances are based the prices that will be asked in the catalogues; some millions of dollars are involved, and the outlook for possibly a dozen huge wineries. The ceremony is over; he beams again, puts on his bowler hat, and hemmed in by the troop—less tense now but still manifesting reverence, for in the wine trade the possessor of a great palate is more honored than was any stage beauty of the Edwardian court—is escorted to luncheon, being doubtless famished. His breakfast this day was probably no more than dry toast and a nip of black coffee.²

There may be, you see, some good reasons for taking wine aesthetics seriously.

LANGUAGE AND LOGIC



A vocabulary of concepts for communication has been developed among oenophiles and oenologists which in part may justify our aesthetical interest. The language and logic of the aesthetics of wine actually started in antiquity, spread by poetry, literature, and song through human culture in so pervasive a manner as to suggest that, far from wondering why aestheticians should

concern themselves with wine, we should rather ask how they could have ignored so fecund a source of aesthetic instruction for so long.

No doubt, too, there are good reasons why the aesthetics of wine have been neglected. The vocabulary of descriptive terms is not free from vagaries. Even for the initiated a dry wine is one term that leaves a lot to be desired for specificity. Other terms are notoriously vague, especially for the uninitiated: peasantry, earthy, robust, fruity, aromatic, tangy, alcoholic, acetic.

This vintage tidbit appeared in an English parish magazine's report of a village wine competition and these terms are really quite definite! “Winners in the homemade claret section were Mrs. Davis (fruity and well rounded), Mrs. Rayner (fine colored and full-bodied) and Miss Ogle-Smith (slightly acid, but should improve if laid down).”³

Harold and Frances Torbert kept a running journal called Wine Tasting Notes which show a still different dimension of wine terminology, a topic to be pursued later. Here are some samples of esoteric jargon.

Burgundy (Roma Wine Co.): Another central valley blend from heavy-bearing, nondistinctive grapes. We had it as the carafe wine at an Italian restaurant, which describes it well enough.

Hearty Burgundy (Gallo Wine Co.): A blended red wine made in the central valley at Modesto, but tasting as if it had in it some grapes from coastal vineyards. A notch or two higher than the two preceding ones, this blend is good enough to serve as your inexpensive home drink or even to serve guests with such fare as casseroles, barbecues and other appetizing but not elegant dishes.

Cabernet Sauvignon (Louis Martini) 1961: Beautiful dark red robe; at nearly 10 years of age, it had a typically California nose, fruity and still fresh; in the mouth it shows an excellent balance between tannic hardness and acid, with considerable warmth and charm. One of the best California wines we have ever tasted.

Cabernet Sauvignon (Louis Martini) 1964: Robe similar to the 1961; on the palate it is obviously younger with still a good deal of tannicity. We believe that in another three or four years it will be a wine California growers can be proud of. ⁴

THE ACT OF TASTING

We cannot find much greater recommendation of wine aesthetics in such a concrete aspect as the act of tasting. For, once the visual and olfactory tests have been accomplished, there remain to be distinguished the qualities of FORETASTE, MIDDLE-TASTE, and AFTER-TASTE for that particular wine, and each quality distinguished by the educated palate must be named and described. Though foretastes, middle- and after-taste are the traditional gamut, I believe this is the proper occasion for unveiling a discovery in experimental wine aesthetics. As one whose budget is limited, I have been forced to drink quantities of mediocre wines from time to time. Superior wines may fall under these new conditions, but I cannot confidently say. However, with inferior wines there exist two further discriminable taste dimensions: 1) the long-after-taste and 2) the morning-after-taste. And these new sources of evidence may be used in supporting judgments of appraisal. Just how we can contend with these discoveries in a theory of wine tasting I have not yet decided. The achievement of discovery has left me in no fit condition to contend with such a sobering problem.

While on the general and unstructured subject of wine aesthetics, it may be well to mark dogmatically, and as a reminder, basic differences among tasters, so-called. We are not the first to do so.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY'S BANQUET

"You are laughing at me, Socrates," said Agathon; "but you and I will decide this controversy about wisdom by and by, taking Bacchus for our judge. At present, turn to your supper." After Socrates and the rest had finished supper, and had reclined back on their couches, and the

libations had been poured forth, and they had sung hymns to the god, and all other rites which are customary had been performed, they turned to drinking. Then Pausanias made this kind of proposal. "Come, my friends," said he, "in what manner will it be pleasantest for us to drink? I must confess to you that, in reality, I am not very well from the wine we drank last night, and I have need of some intermission. I suspect that most of you are in the same condition, for you were here yesterday. Now consider how we shall drink most easily and comfortably."

"'Tis a good proposal, Pausanias," said Aristophanes, "to contrive, in some way or other, to place moderation in our cups. I was one of those who were drenched last night." Eryximachus, the son of Acumenius, hearing this, said, "I am of your opinion; I only wish to know one thing—whether Agathon is in the humour for hard drinking?" "Not at all," replied Agathon. "I confess that I am not able to drink much this evening." "It is an excellent thing for us," replied Eryximachus — "I mean myself, Aristodemus, Phaedrus, and these others—if you, who are such invincible drinkers, now refuse to drink. I ought to except Socrates, for he is capable of drinking everything or nothing; and whatever we shall determine will equally suit him. Since, then, no one present has any desire to drink much wine, I shall perhaps give less offence if I declare the nature of drunkenness. The science of medicine teaches us that drunkenness is very pernicious; nor would I choose to drink immoderately myself, or counsel another to do so, especially if he had been drunk the night before." "Yes," said Phaedrus, the Myrinusian, interrupting him, "I have been accustomed to confide in you, especially in your directions concerning medicine; and I would now willingly do so, if the rest will do the same." All then agreed that they would drink at this present banquet not for drunkenness, but for pleasure. ⁵

THERE is the secret that is basic to the distinctions among imbibers—HOW wine is drunk. The MODE with which they are done, Plato says, determines the worth of talking, singing, love-making, and drinking. I shall reject these temptations to divert.

Here then is a range of wine drinkers based on their manner of drinking, that I have compiled. Such drinkers are visible any night, in any city, during any century of man. From the list you may learn HOW you drink wine. Mark these distinctions well.

One matter more before the list. The first (and lowest) drinker on the list, or more accurately, the

method or mode of drinking, is swallowing without noticing; whereas the highest (and last) on the list of modes is the very opposite: noticing in subtle detail without swallowing in the least.

MODES OF DRINKING WINES

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| I | II |
| 1. Swigging | 4. Imbibing |
| 2. Guzzling | 5. Sipping |
| 3. Drinking | 6. Tippling |
| III | IV |
| 7. Bibbing (to bib) | 10. Trying |
| 8. Sampling | 11. Proving |
| 9. Testing | |
| V | |
| 12. Tasting | |

Though this list may seem to depend upon strained distinctions that are more colorful than careful, I have not really begun to display the variety. Regarding the last category of tasting itself, for example, it is no exaggeration in the least to say that there are so many further refinements waiting to be made of substantial differences in capacity and skill of discriminations of taste that I can only be said to have introduced the subject. We would better speak of specific tasters, to be accurate: taster of Cabernet Sauvignon; taster of Sherries; taster of Ugni Blanc, &c.... Just as in music, conductors specialize in Brahms, Beethoven or the French Impressionists, and are known for their specialties, so in the wine industry, skilled tasters are known for their specific skills and knowledge.

CONCEPTUAL DISCRIMINATION

I fear that all of this talk about wine without wine to imbibe will strike you as trying to kiss you over the telephone. Such is the lot of the philosopher of art. Indeed, if we can believe recent philosophic efforts, the objective of philosophy is to effect conceptual discrimination, and in our work here we can be said to have barely begun. In conceptual discrimination we celebrate differences and distinctions, trying to avoid the easy temptation to find everything related to everything else in a great smear of bland similarity, a great BLAH of sameness and identity.

A Marine officer recounted these experiences. When he was captured by the Japanese on Corregidor early in WWII, he perceived all Japanese as exactly alike, failing to discriminate any individual differences. On being rescued from the Japanese prison four years later, he then could individuate Japanese, but on the American Hospital ship, he saw all Americans as exactly alike!

We once owned a bantam rooster whose actions

illustrate the human confusion of failing to discriminate. During windy weather this rooster, Mr. Tut by name, quite frequently tried to copulate blowing leaves and paper sacks. How confused and conflated can your ideas get? Remember this aphorism: avoid copulating paper sacks. In this manner you will be nearly philosophical.

Let us discriminate.

"Taste" is one concept that is central to wine aesthetics, as it has been germane to aesthetics in general. Any number of authors have instructed us in the skills of tasting wines, the act of sampling, drinking and judging wines. Many have divided the act into its main parts: 1) the vision of the wine, 2) the nose, 3) the wine in the mouth, and 4) the swallowing. David Hume recounts an incident which illustrates an added dimension: the delicacy of tasting.

It will be proper to give a more accurate definition of "delicacy," than has hitherto been attempted. And not to draw our philosophy from too profound a source we shall have recourse to a noted story in *Don Quixote*.

It is with good reason, says Sancho to the squire with the great nose, that I pretend to have a judgment in wine: This is a quality hereditary in our family. Two of my kinsmen were once called to give their opinion of a hogshead, which was supposed to be excellent, being old and of a good vintage. One of them tastes it; considers it; and after mature reflection pronounces the wine to be good, were it not for a small taste of leather, which he perceived in it. The other, after using the same precautions, gives also his verdict in favour of the wine; but with the reserve of a taste of iron, which he could easily distinguish. You cannot imagine how much they were both ridiculed for their judgment. But who laughed in the end? On emptying the hogshead, there was found at the bottom, an old key with a leathern thong tied to it.⁶

Variations of the conditions of tasting obviously will affect the tasting. But it is not obvious just how far reaching those conditions may be. We can readily assent to biological and psychological evidence about how our senses differ. Our taste buds vary in number and acuity. We may be pathologically deprived, possess genetic faults by inheritance, suffer psychical hysteria, have developed long standing habits of simply not noticing. We may smoke. All wine tasters of discrimination understand the problem of clearing the palate between samples. But how are we to measure these additional conditions as they influence our tasting? 1) The high price of the wine, 2) The

company you are in, 3) Whether or not there is enough to go around, 4) Whether the tasting occurs in a winery tasting room or in a garage, 5) Drinking from a plastic cup, a dirty bottle, etc.. Though these kinds of conditions are rarely taken into account, I do not believe they can be ruled out arbitrarily as without some influence. Think, too, of the influences transmitted wholesale by advertising on TV ("That lil ol' winemaker, me!"), the very names of wines (California wines use European names: e.g., Burgundy, etc.), the general reputation of a particular winery's wines and that influence on any one of their wines, the reliance on the general reputation of a restaurant to pick a decent *Vino de Casa*, or the knowledge of whether the wine is imported. Chilean whites in dusty pinch bottles, long since past their prime and vinegary beyond belief, are snatched up by the thousands by innocent Americans, simply because they are "imported," apparently.

If these conditions seem too indirect, let us take a condition of tasting that is directly involved and amplify it for clarity. A European skill that is not widely known in this country can greatly enhance your understanding and enjoyment of wines. When you take some wine into your mouth (a sip), try arching your tongue, spreading it wide, then cautiously draw in air around the sides, causing the wine to slosh around. This simple trick (which may choke the unwary if the head is tilted back, or if air is taken in too fast) will warm the wine, thus releasing esters to the olfactory region and will contact greatly exposed areas of the taste buds, thus increasing the qualities to be noticed. A chief drawback to this practice is the noise that accompanies it, but if others are doing it, the onus is at least shared. With practice the skill can be executed in near silence and may be secretly done even during dinner parties.

Before leaving this topic, it may be mentioned that there are other less direct consequences and effects of wine tasting that are noticed by all consumers, even though their influences are evanescent and fleeting. Think of the influences on appetite, the visceral functions, including digestion, and even on the impulses to sexual lust.

Later I shall have occasion to add some further remarks about the meaning of taste as judgment, leading to connoisseurship.

NOTES

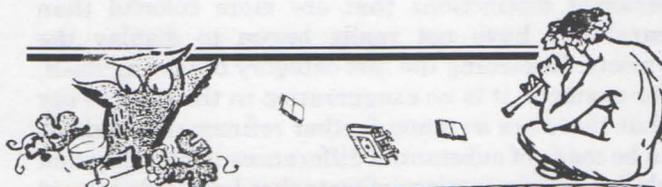
1. George Santayana, *The Sense of Beauty*, p.11.
2. Idwal Jones, *Vines in the Sun* (New York: Wm. Morrow, 1949), pp.68-73.
3. *Playboy*, November 1972.
4. Harold and Frances Torbert, *The Book of Wine* (Los Angeles: Nash Publishing, 1972), pp.381-2.

5. Percy Bysshe Shelly, Transl., *The Banquet* (Plato, "The Symposium"), pp.12-15.
6. Alexander Sesonke, *What is Art*; David Hume, *On the Standard of Taste*, p.158.

[In our next issue, we shall continue this study of the aesthetics of wine with a "further discrimination": the effects of drinking alcohol and the language of inebriation . . . among other things. — Ed.]



"Clearly,
the pleasures wines afford are transitory—but so are those of the ballet, or of a musical performance. Wine is inspiring and adds greatly to the joy of living." — NAPOLEON I [1769-1821]



ON THE RETURN OF A BOOK LENT TO A FRIEND —

I GIVE HEARTY AND HUMBLE THANKS for the safe return of this book, which having endured the perils of my friend's bookcase & the bookcases of my friend's friends, now returns to me in reasonably good condition. I give hearty and humble thanks that my friend did not see fit to give this book to his infant for a plaything, nor use it as an ash tray for his burning cigar, nor as a teething ring for his mastiff. When I loaned this book, I deemed it as lost; I was resigned to the business of the long parting; I never thought to look upon its pages again. But now that my book has come back to me, I rejoice and am exceedingly glad! Bring hither the fatted morocco and let us rebind the volume and set it on the shelf of honor, for this my book was lent and is returned again. Presently, therefore, I may return some of the books I myself have borrowed.

— CHRISTOPHER MORLEY, *The Haunted Bookshop*
[New York, 1919]



BOOKS & BOTTLES

by
Fred McMillin

White House Gastronomy ... from Martha to Mamie

PROLOGUE

- ◆ The only president to raise grapes on the White House grounds was James Buchanan (1857-1861).
- ◆ The biggest eater in the White House was William Howard Taft. Dinner on 4 August 1910 included lobster, salmon, cold roast beef, roast turkey, tongue and ham. And don't forget the frozen pudding and the cake!
- ◆ Second president John Adams held the first reception in the White House on January 1st, 1801, and his son, 6th president John Quincy Adams, introduced the custom of drinking toasts at the White House.
- ◆ What president often read cookbooks to relax? Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953-1961). Which brings us to Mamie (Eisenhower) and Martha (Washington) and what they had in common.

THE GENERALS' FAVORITES

- ◆ Both George and Ike liked meat loaf. The dishes were similar, except: 1) Martha used cracker crumbs vis-à-vis Mamie's bread crumbs, and 2) Martha used only beef, compared to beef and pork at the Eisenhower's.
- ◆ Both generals were fond of onions. Ike's had to be prepared separately, since Mamie didn't like them. "President Washington loved onions and even ate them cored and stuffed with mincemeat."

THE BOOK: *White House Chef* by François Rysavy, 1957. Revised edition: *White House Menus and Recipes* [added President John F. Kennedy years], 1962. New York: Hearst Corp., Avon Book Division.

The source of all these tidbits is French-trained chef François Rysavy . . . who was stunned his first day at the White House when the supper menu he was to prepare certainly didn't challenge his skills: chicken soup followed by a broiled sirloin steak with squash and string beans. But, the wine was not specified, so at least he could check the cellar and pair a lovely sherry with the soup and a claret with the sirloin.

Then the shock . . . the only beverage for the entire meal must be ice water!

THE ROUTE TO THE WHITE HOUSE

So who is Chef Rysavy? Orechov, Czechoslovakia, before World War I . . . François has no memory of his parents, who both died from illnesses when he was two. Condemned to living in orphanages, at age nine he arrived at the home of his next guardians, a very harsh couple. But, even at a very early age he was fascinated with food, and the couple lived above a pastry shop. "It smelled the way I thought it would in Heaven." That was the start of the route to the White House. There, he humbly cooked for world leaders, and also, with equal respect, combed the White House files to learn much about the gastronomy of past American presidents.

THE BOTTLES: Rysavy's revelations about some of the wines:

- ◆ SHERRY has a long track record at the White House. Nearly two centuries ago Dolley Madison was adding two cups to her wine soup. Much later (1957), Dry Sack sherry was poured for eighty-three at a dinner honoring Chief Justice Earl Warren.
- ◆ ROSÉ WINES. Jacqueline Kennedy often used pink wines. For example, it was poured with Cornish hens and spinach soufflé for the daughter of India's Prime Minister Nehru.
- ◆ CHAMPAGNE. Pol Roger was the Rysavy pick in the 1950s. The "Dry Special" was served to the President of Italy with a simple Bibb lettuce salad after the lamb chop entrée.
- ◆ MADEIRA. The big wine from the small island appears in a number of White House recipes: a very old one for Black Bean Soup (at a Pres. Kennedy stag dinner for twenty-one), and in a more recent recipe for Capon Supeme (at a Jacqueline Kennedy ladies-only luncheon for 600)—which may have depleted the White House supply since a half-cup of Madeira was required for each bird.
- ◆ CHABLIS (Chardonnay). British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan surely enjoyed his trout—an entire bottle of Chablis was used with each five fish.

POSTSCRIPT

Chef Rysavy tells of serving in the White House someone who was my very sharp chemistry lab partner at Stadium High School in Tacoma, Wash. John Eisenhower and I didn't know his dad would become President.

FOOTNOTE: Fred expresses his thanx to Editor Gail for massaging his drafts into coherence for the past ten years.

[The Editor expresses her thanx for 10 years of columns!] 

A STUNNING COLLECTION

A BOOK REVIEW by
James Gabler

Lloyd, Ward, et al. *A Wine-Lover's Glasses: The A.C. Hubbard, Jr. Collection of Antique English Drinking Glasses and Bottles*. Somerset, England: Richard Dennis, 2001. 128 pp. Illus. \$90.

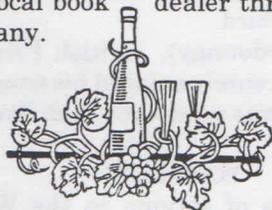


love of wine was the catalyst that inspired A.C. Hubbard, Jr. to assemble this fascinating visual and historical account of 17th and 18th century English drinking glasses and bottles. The well-written text, by Ward Lloyd and other authorities, takes the reader on an easy-to-

understand journey on where and how antique English drinking glasses (mainly wine glasses) were made, and why they evolved as they did.

Beautiful color and black and white photographs depict over 600 glasses and bottles, and make this book a unique and valuable reference source for curators, librarians, historians, collectors, dealers, and wine lovers with an intellectual interest in wine. For example, the chapter on wine bottles contains detailed photographs of eighty-one bottles and bottle seals dating from 1650 to 1830. I know of no other source extant that records so completely the visual history of 17th, 18th, and early 19th century wine bottles. This same comment can be made for the other chapters that discuss and show the emergence of English drinking glasses: balusters, balustroids, Newcastles, air and color-twists, Jacobean, and engraved and painted glasses. Also within the collection are numerous interesting and rare items, including a color-twist sweetmeat (known by only one other example) and a one-of-its-kind signed Royal Armorial Beilby.

A Wine-Lover's Glasses can be ordered from Amazon.com, Barnes&Noble.com, or by special order from your local book dealer through the Ingram Book Company.



"the work is a joy"

Bob Foster is pleased, yet slightly puzzled, with *Wine Memories: Great Writers on the Pleasures of Wine*, edited by Sara Nicklès. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2000. 142 pages, hardback, \$16.95. He writes: I always enjoy finding a passage about wine in a great work of literature. Sara Nicklès has

assembled an amazing array of material from such notables as Ernest Hemingway, James Thurber, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and A. J. Liebling. It is a fascinating journey, artistically illustrated with color photographs of wine labels—but I can't quite understand how they were selected as they seem to have no direct connection to the work being quoted. But in any event, the work is a joy.

2001 WINE FICTION

Grand Cru by Barney Leason (New York: Tom Doherty Associates Book, 2001. Paperback, 308 pp. \$7.) "New York Times Bestselling Author" Barney Leason, writer of "sizzling tales of intrigue and desire among the rich and beautiful"—who has sold over 3,000,000 copies of such stuff—now "exposes what really goes on in the sexy milieu of world-class winemakers!" World-renowned wine expert Robert Parker critiques it as "tasty,...a juicy novel...with intrigue, fraud, murder, greed, and worldwide scandal." Our in-house critic: "A preposterous romantic novel ... nothing ever happens."



AVAILABLE APRIL 2001

The California Wine Association and its Member Wineries 1894 - 1920 by Ernest P. Peninou and Gail G. Unzelman. Santa Rosa: Nomis Press. 414 pp. Illustrated, with Notes and Index. \$60.

"From its founding until Prohibition — the mighty C.W.A. dominated California's wine industry." The giant firm, under the brilliant leadership of founder and president, Percy T. Morgan, controlled over 80% of the wine made in California and owned vineyards and wine cellars in every major wine-producing area of the State.

This fascinating history of one of the wine industry's grandest enterprises—including historical sketches of the founding San Francisco-based wine houses and some eighty affiliated wineries throughout the State—is generously embellished with many previously unpublished photographs and illustrations from the authors' private collections.

Available from Gail Unzelman at Nomis Press, Box 9023, Santa Rosa, CA 95405. 707.546.1184 or email: nomis@jps.net. \$60 (less 20% discount for all Tendrils) + \$4 S/H.

IN THE WINE LIBRARY

by Bob Foster

An Encyclopedia of the Wines and Domains of France by Clive Coates. Berkeley/Los Angeles: U.C. Press, 2000. 608 pages, hardback, \$60.



I had been critical of Coates' last work, *The Wines of France*, because he simply listed the major producers in certain regions without giving any evaluative comments. Given Coates' thirty-five-year love affair with the wines of France, I felt he could have given his readers so much more.

With this work, Coates shows he is capable of providing his readers with the depth of his information and opinions. The work begins with an introduction that covers some of the more familiar areas: the history of wine in France, a year in the vineyard, how wine is made, the grape varieties of France and the French wine laws. While some of this is unnecessary information (if you care enough to want a detailed book on the wines and producers of France, you probably already know how wine is made), other portions are particularly interesting. In describing the grapes grown in France, Coates includes the regions where the grapes are used, and the various styles found for wines made from these varieties. The section on wine laws is interesting for what the laws allow and the loopholes that Coates soundly criticizes.

The core of the book is over 500 pages evaluating the specific producers of France. The book is divided into 11 major regions (containing a total of 39 sub-regions). For each of these regions and sub-regions, there is a color map. Some of the maps are clear and readable, while in others there is simply too much information crammed onto one page. For example, the map of the Northern Côte de Nuit tries to show all of the major vineyards from Fixin to Vougeot. So much information is crammed onto this third of a page, that the reader only gets the vaguest idea of where a particular vineyard is located.

For each of the regions, Coates presents a small data block giving hard numbers such as the size of the region, its production levels, the grapes used and an assessment of recent vintages. Then comes the meat of the book. Coates has entry after entry covering the major producers in the region. For each of the producers there is a data block including the name of the owners, the size of the vineyard and a list of the wines produced. This is followed by a lengthy paragraph evaluating the wines. While Coates is a

devoted lover of French wines, he is no sycophant; he gives criticism where it is due. For example, in talking about Domaine de Beurenard in Châteauneuf-du-Pape he comments, "Occasionally I find the Cuvée Boisrenard too oaky."

The coverage spans all of France in amazing detail. There is a vast wealth of information here. Lovers of French wines will find this work an absolute necessity for their wine libraries. Highly recommended.

Private Reserve: Beaulieu Vineyard and the Rise of the Napa Valley by Rod Smith. Stamford, CT: Daglan Press, 2000. 173 pages, hardback, \$39.95.

To commemorate BV's role in the Napa Valley in the 20th century, the winery has commissioned a beautiful, lavish work chronicling its history during the last century. The loving tribute is replete with gorgeous photographs and seldom covered historical details. The modern photographs are by well know photographer Andy Katz and, as always, his work is top notch. In addition there are a large number of older photographs from the earliest days. For me, the photograph of the BV laboratory in the early 1950s is fascinating in that the two men laboring in it are Andre Tchelistcheff and a very young Joe Heitz.

Collectors of Beaulieu's Georges de Latour Private Reserve Cabernets will be particularly taken with a section of tasting notes at the back of the book covering over 50 vintages dating back to 1936. (These notes stem from a tasting in London in 1999.)

But having praised all this, it must be noted that such winery produced projects seldom if ever even allude to the darker side: there is no mention of the vintages plagued by bottle variation (1974 Private Reserve may be the best example) and no mention of the years of mediocre wines. Additionally, the lack of any index makes the work more of a coffee table decoration than a serious reference work.

Despite these points, Beaulieu wine fans will find much here to enjoy. The detailed material on the early years is fascinating, supplemented by photographs never before made public. Highly recommended.

[Our Tendril thanks to Bob Foster and the *California Grapevine* for their generous permission to reprint Bob's book reviews from the Feb/March 2001 issue. — Ed.]



ZINFANDEL: A HISTORY OF A GRAPE AND ITS WINE

by

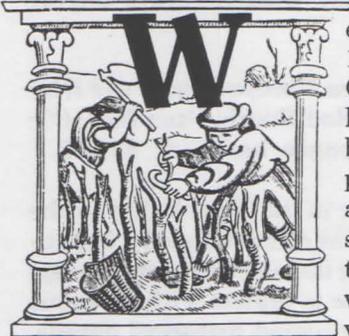
Charles L. Sullivan

INSTALLMENT VIII

ZIGNETTES

A glowing, freewheeling economy has allowed consumers to pursue luxury wines like never before...

— JAMES LAUBE, *Wine Spectator*, 2001



We left Zinfandel in the late 1980s in a state of rebirth. Our historic friend was heading into the 1990s, a beautiful and well-muscled phoenix. But in 1991 when a certain producer / consumer group was organized to promote Zinfandel, there was no sense of frenzy involved. And certainly the next year when that same group held its first tasting, at San Francisco's Mandarin Hotel, twenty-two producers poured their young and old wines to about 100 tasters, without fanfare or mob scenes.

Purple-tongued Tastings

Now let us leap ten years to old Fort Mason on San Francisco's waterfront. Here two gigantic former Transportation Corps warehouses have been converted into a pair of wine tasting salons. Either could hold two full-sized games of American football simultaneously, with space to spare. For seven hours thousands of consumers will pay \$35 (member) to \$45 in order to taste the young and very young wines of more than 250 Zinfandel producers. The human crush can be challenging, particularly around certain producers whose names begin with R. But I doubt if there is a happier purple-tongued group that size elsewhere in the world. I wouldn't miss it.

The number of producers has increased fivefold since 1994 when these ZAP tastings really started taking off. In 2001 and in 1994 about 86% of the producers represented were located in the North Coast, the Central Coast and the Sierra Foothills. And when we look at the year 2000 vintage, from which many producers were offering barrel samples, some interesting statistics come through. If we examine the total Zinfandel production of these premium areas we arrive at a tonnage that comes to but one in nine (11%) of the bottles of Zinfandel California will produce from that huge vintage. In other words the visible enthusiasm we saw at Fort Mason was directed to a very small percentage of the Zinfandel that California produced last year.

The average price of the bottles offered at this year's extravaganza was a whopping, I think, \$22.36.

I count 36% of these at \$25.00 or more. Three years ago the average was \$20.80 with 24% at or above the \$25.00 mark. These numbers are understandable when we see that the average price of the 1998 Zins rated at one puff or higher by *Connoisseur's Guide* has been \$23.18.

Lest it seem that I am denigrating this situation, and I have heard and read many who do, I should add some personal history. I like the big, rich, luscious style of Zinfandel so popular now, but I don't buy it for my cellar. What I buy is for the future, selecting wines for their structure, chemistry, varietal definition and its intensity. I'm currently drinking my '84-'87s. At Fort Mason my wife Roz and I tasted and spit every wine \$20 and under from the 1998 vintage, now currently on shelves. From these we found fourteen we would happily own; yesterday I bought a case of one beauty (\$14.95 per bottle, listed at \$18.00). I shall use it to help me through my declining years.

Strange Numbers

The premium Zinfandel of the 11% I mentioned above actually represents less vintage 2000 tonnage than the Cabernet Sauvignon production of Fresno County in that year, and little more than half the Chardonnay produced in that desert land. In other words, there is not as much fine 2000 Zinfandel as we might think, although we eventually will have to share about 30,000,000 bottles of it.

To these data I shall now add a bit of mystery concerning that 11% premium land. In those areas, whose environment helps account for almost all our great Zins, the acreage in that variety has grown at an annual average rate of 1.9% in the last decade. The average growth of land in Cabernet Sauvignon there has been 279% of that rate. Sonoma Zinfandel acreage grew at a rate of about 40 acres per year in the nineties. Could there be something of a shortage of premium Zinfandel grapes in relationship to other top varieties?

I shall suggest an answer to that question with two figures: in 1990 Sonoma Zinfandel brought growers an average of \$727 per ton. In 2000 it was \$2143, a figure higher than the average for Napa Cabernet three years earlier.

It takes several years for such a situation to

translate into more grapes, if quality is to be maintained. Thus we might expect to see Sonoma grape growers rushing to plant Zinfandel, since that grape's price in 1998 was about the same as Chardonnay there, and was about \$200 higher in 2000. But in the 1998–1999 seasons Sonoma growers planted 374 acres of Zinfandel and 2141 acres of Chardonnay. I never took any economics or history courses that help me explain these data.

Old Vines?

One of the factors that adds to the sense of scarcity surrounding fine Zinfandel production has been the growing interest during the nineties in wine from "old vines." There is little one can do to expand the amount of old-vine Zinfandel available except to cheat (e.g. overcrop) or to lie (what is old?). At first glance one cannot avoid the idea that much of the fervor for wine from ancient vines is a marketing ploy. It is, but there is some substance to the contention that grapes from very old Zinfandel vines make wines with concentrated flavors. And there is reason to believe that the intensity comes from more than the fact that older vines make for lower yields.

Now and again I am asked to name the oldest stand of Cabernet Sauvignon or Chardonnay vines in the state or a region. My first reaction is, why should anyone care? A Bordeaux grower would think someone daft to boast at having a Cabernet vineyard with vines 50 or 75 years old. What could possibly be the advantage? But a Zinfandel vineyard, on upland soil, dry farmed and head pruned of that age is a treasure today.

I am certain that a fair percentage of Zinfandel vineyards whose wines bear claims of superannuation carry exaggerated birth dates. In the nineties I winced to hear the seemingly endless claims for hundred-year-old stands in the North Coast. How did these vines survive the phylloxera blizzard that blackened Napa and Sonoma from the late 1880s to the late 1890s? Certainly there were some few planted on resistant rootstock by such prescient pioneers as Kenwood's James A. Shaw who grafted his Zinfandel onto *V. riparia* rootstock in the 1880s, and whose vines survive on the Kunde Estate today. But these are extremely rare. Almost all the oldest Zinfandel vines in Napa and Sonoma would date from 1897–1909 when serious replanting took place, mostly on *rupestris* St. George rootstock. But most of the old-vine Zinfandel here is 75 to 80 years old and dates from the planting frenzy of the early 1920s.

It is not possible to calculate precisely how many old vines of what age are still standing. But there are some statistics available that can lead us to informed guesses. Let's look for 40-year-old vines in Napa and

Sonoma, this being the age which I take to be the consensus minimum limit for the old-vine sobriquet.

In 1990 Sonoma and Napa had 4500 acres of Zinfandel more than ten years old. In 1980 there were 3300. In 1970 there were almost 4000 that dated from 1959 or earlier. Looking at the last number should we guess how many of those 40-plus vines are still bearing? Say, one fourth, at least. If so, with a yield of 1.5 tons per acre we might expect to see from 15,000–20,000 cases of old-vine Zinfandel from these two counties. Amador, Paso Robles, and Lodi also have their share of such vines.

How old is old? is another hot question. And how do we know how old a parcel of vines is? And what about stands in which a large number of vines have been planted to replace the dead and dying? Not long ago the BATF indicated that it was going to look into possible criteria to impose on labels that claimed old-vine status for their wine. Now, wisely, I think, they are looking the other way. But there has been a lively debate in the press and in wine publications since 1999 on the subject. Most of those interviewed think that 40 years should be the absolute minimum, but I'd say that 50 to 75 is preferred. But Matt Cline noted that old vines are no insurance for quality. He knows of ancient stands on deep rich soils that are pruned to yield five tons per acre. And Ravenswood's Joel Peterson claims that you can trick a young vine into giving old-vine like fruit. Head prune, short spurs, dry farm, St. George rootstock, small crops, reduce leaf cover and — voila! But he chooses his words carefully when he says with such a careful regimen that "you do get *some* (my emphasis) of the old-vine character."

Old vs Young

One might think that serious blind tastings of old vs young-vine Zins would have been common, but producers are not interested in such events. Strange things can happen when tasters can't see the labels. Finally, last month the San Francisco Vintners' Club put together a six vs six tasting, eight of the twelve from Sonoma. Of the latter there were four each, young and old. Their average price was close (\$21–19) but the young wines had a higher average, mainly from one wine, the group winner.

The group favored the old-vines 57–43. I favored young vines 53–47. My favorite was old-vine (\$18). The group favorite was young (\$33). In this calculation I did not count the non Sonoma wines because two had a California appellation, one was from Napa and one from the Sierra Foothills. None of these ended in the top five. Also worth noting was the average alcohol content of these twelve wines — 14.7%, right in line with the numbers from the Club's Zinfandel tasteoff last year.



ZINFANDEL EXPRESS

News for Zinfandel Advocates and Producers

JANUARY 2001 - Vol. 9 No. 1

The Association of Zinfandel Advocates and Producers (ZAP) is a non-profit [501(c)(3)] organization. ZAP is dedicated to educating the public about the unique contributions of Zinfandel grown in America to the world of wine. It has a significant place in American culture and winemaking. Zinfandel's distinctive character and exceptional quality place it among the prominent wines of the world.

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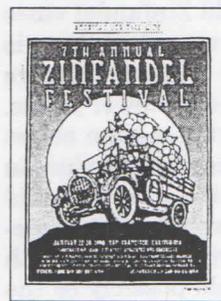
Rebecca Robinson

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ZAP prepares for the 10th Anniversary Celebration Festival January 25-27, 2001

It's news you can use to play with your palate and stretch your senses in a friendly and boisterous setting at the water's edge in San Francisco and across the Bay in Alameda. Glorious Zinfandels await you.

Find out if the 1999 vintage meets the expectations as another stellar year for Zinfandel. Chat with the winemakers. Experience the passion. We look forward to greeting you there!

AS WE GO TO PRESS...

As we go to press, our new board of directors is taking shape. ZAP is pleased to announce that Robert Biale from Robert Biale Vineyards will take over as President. The ZAP Board is a critical component to the success of ZAP, charting our course and leading our organization with exciting ideas and programs. ZAP is pleased to present the 2001 Board as listed on the cover. We welcome new board members Chuck Spenker, Spenker Winery in Lodi, Phillip Lolonis, Lolonis Winery in Redwood Valley, Mendocino, Susan Ridley,

Hendry winery in Napa and Donn Reisen, Ridge Vineyards, at large.

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ZINFANDEL EXPRESS / January 2001 1

Old-Vine Zin vs Phylloxera

Here might be a good place to tell you why old-vine Zinfandel did not fall victim to the phylloxera plague that smashed Napa and hurt Sonoma in the 1980s and early 1990s. The problem was a certain rootstock, the AxR#1, which the University, since the 1950s, had been advocating as the best under most California conditions. Foreigners, particularly French and South Africans, knew from experience that this stock was not resistant. It is a cross between a resistant American vine and a very non-resistant vinifera variety. Few Californians paid any attention to this history and by the 1990s vineyards were collapsing. Thousands of acres of vines have been torn up and replanted in Napa and Sonoma over the last fifteen years. But most Zinfandel, old or young, has not been affected. The situation was particularly obvious in Sonoma where the St. George rootstock for Zinfandel has an almost universal following dating back to the late 1890s.

Thus, most old North Coast Zinfandel vineyards have survived this new phylloxera attack. Napa Zinfandel growers have been spared some, although well over 1000 acres were planted there on AxR#1 in the 1970s. But a large portion of these were grafted to other varieties or pulled up in the 1980s when few Zinfandel vines were planted there. After the University finally warned against the AxR#1 in 1990, Napa has added about 500 acres of Zinfandel on other rootstock. Sonoma has added about 1000 acres.

ZAP

The Zinfandel Guild went down for lack of support from the industry itself in the early 1980s. Other organizations associated with specific varieties have been formed with varying but certainly less than spectacular success (e.g. Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon). None has come close to matching the success of ZAP, Zinfandel Advocates and Producers.

Originally the brainchild of Storybook Mountain's Jerry Seps in 1991, it was seen as a producers' marketing tool aimed at raising the image of Zinfandel as a fine wine variety. When *Sunset Magazine's* Margaret Smith came aboard as executive director the emphasis was modified, adding an A for consumers to add to the producers' P.

We have seen the modest beginnings at the first tasting in 1992; the timing was perfect. The extent that ZAP has ridden the wave of Zinfandel frenzy in the nineties or is largely responsible for it is debatable. In 1997 ZAP president Kent Rosenblum was asked, "Did ZAP create all this interest and energy?" His answer, "I think it was already there but ZAP was responsible for organizing and channeling it into an effective force." Today there are about 270

producer members with an advocate membership of well over 4000.

Smith's newsletter, "The Zinfandel Express," gave the advocates a detailed program for enjoying Zinfandel all over the state. They carry their membership cards which they display at a member-producer's tasting room. Cordial reception and abundant hospitality are the almost inevitable result. Most producers hold special ZAP events. This approach plus the monster January tasting at Fort Mason have done much to help the founders reach their original goal.

Heritage Grape?

One of ZAP's campaigns has been to get national recognition of Zinfandel's special place in America's viticultural history. The first step was a tasting for Congressional representatives in Washington DC in May 1994. There a resolution was read proclaiming Zinfandel "a National treasure." In July 1997 Rosenblum officially announced this "heritage" campaign. Two months later ZAP leaders met at Storybook with representatives of the Smithsonian Institution to discuss that organization's possible association with the campaign.

Although there has been much energy expended to have Zinfandel named America's "heritage grape," the resolution presented to the U.S. Senate (#132) in July 1999 by California's Senators Feinstein and Boxer simply called for January 23-29, 2001 to be "Zinfandel Appreciation Week," and acknowledged that Zinfandel is a "National treasure."

It is not clear to me how much grumbling there was east of the Rockies by those who might think a native variety like Concord or Cynthiana more appropriate. But grumbling there was. And with the political chaos during the last months of 2000 the resolution did not come to a vote.

To my way of thinking a more notable ZAP contribution has been a practical one in terms of a Zinfandel heritage. At the Oakville Experiment Station a small (.76 acre) vineyard has been set aside, administered by the Viticulture and Enology Department at UC Davis under James Wolpert. ZAP has pumped in sizable sums of money so far to support the project, which is unique in California. Wolpert and his crew have scoured the state for older Zinfandel vineyards to take cuttings and establish a vineyard of about 500 vines. At last count there were 90 selections from 27 sites. In Wolpert's words, "This research will help us discover answers to some of the mysteries surrounding Zinfandel and preserve the special qualities of these old vines for future generations."

[cont'd. on page 19]

[HUTTON, *cont'd. from page 4*]

Jean Antoine Claude Chaptal, comte de Chanteloup, 1756–1832, the author of volume two, served as Napoleon's Minister of the Interior. A chemist, instructor of chemistry at Montpellier, he was in charge of establishing chemical industries, and among many other things introduced the metric system of measurements. During the Napoleonic era, in an effort to reduce dependency on sugar imports from overseas colonies, blockaded by the British navy, extraction of sugar from sugar beets was developed, and the availability of relatively inexpensive sugar allowed its use to fortify grapes with a low sugar content. Such a practice, called Chaptalization, was developed by M. Chaptal.

Antoine Auguste Parmentier, 1737–1813. French chemist and agriculturist.

François Rozier, 1734–1793. French agriculturist and author – killed, while sleeping, by a bomb explosion.

Louis d'Ussieux, 1744–1805. French author.

Millar's [sic] gardener's dictionary. Fol.

MILLER, PHILIP.

The Gardeners Dictionary: containing the best and newest methods of cultivating and improving the kitchen, fruit, flower garden, and nursery; as also for performing the practical parts of agriculture: including the management of vineyards, with the methods of making and preserving wine, according to the present practice of the most skilful vignerons in the several wine countries in Europe . . . The eighth edition, revised . . . and embellished with several copper-plates, which were not in some former editions. London: Printed for the Author, and sold by John and Francis Rivington [and others], 1768.

Miller, 1691–1771, was an English gardener and botanist. Included in this work are English translations of Claude Arnoux's *Dissertation sur la Situation de Bourgogne* (1728) and Jacques Boullay's *Manière de Bien Cultiver la Vigne . . . dans le Vignoble d'Orléans* (1723), with two full-page plates showing wine presses. Jefferson made constant use of Miller's *Dictionary*, and while in Paris, he bought a copy of the French language edition, *Dictionnaire des Jardiniers de Millar* (1785), translated by Laurent de Chazelles, French horticulturist.

TECHNICAL ARTS

Under Division I: History - Natural - Occupations of Man, we find Chapter 15: Technical Arts. Here,

under WINE, the following books are listed:

Art de faire le vin par Cossigny. 8vo.

CHARPENTIER DE COSSIGNY, JOSEPH FRANÇOIS.

Observations sur "L'art de faire le vin" par Mr.

J. A. Chaptal . . . Par J. F. Charpentier Cossigny. Paris: Imprimerie de Gagnard, 1807.

Joseph Francois Charpentier de Cossigny, 1730–1809, a French naturalist, was *capitaine-ingénieur du roi*. Jefferson received this book from the author in 1808 and had it bound by Joseph Milligan, Georgetown, at a cost of 50 cents.

Fabbroni dell' arte di fare il vino. 12mo.

FABBRONI, ADAMO.

Dell' Arte di fare il vino, ragnionamento di

Adamo Fabbroni. Firenze, 1787. First edition.

A gift from the author, sent via his brother Giovanni. Jefferson replied upon receiving the book: "... be so good also to convey to your brother my acknowledgements [sic] for the present of his book on the subject of wine, a subject interesting to me, and which had not before been philosophically treated ..."

Tracts in the arts. [including:] **Eclaircissements concernant la vigne, les vins etc. par Maupin.** 4to.

MAUPIN.

Supplément nécessaire à la science des académies . . . ou nouvelle démonstration . . . de mes principales découvertes concernant la vigne, les vins, les cidres, les terres, les grains, . . . par M. Maupin. Paris: Musier, 1784.

Five tracts bound together in one volume for Jefferson by John March in August 1805. The cataloguing data does not make clear which of Maupin's numerous pamphlets on Wine this is, but it is most likely the above title.

Art de faire le vin par Maupin. 12 mo.

L'ART
DE FAIRE LE VIN,
OU
EXPÉRIENCES
SUR
LA BONIFICATION DE TOUS
LES VINS,
TANT BONS QUE MAUVAIS, LORS DE
LA FERMENTATION,
A L'USAGE DE TOUS LES VIGNOBLES;
Avec les Principes les plus essentiels sur la
manière de gouverner les VINS.
PAR M^e. MAUPIN.

Jefferson was involved in compiling a library covering all of human knowledge, a rather difficult project for someone simply setting up his own reference collection, let alone a local or national library. That he had done so was a salvation to our new government which had just lost its starting library in the conflagration of 1814. Here was a ready made collection that enabled the refoundation of one of the greatest libraries in the world. And he didn't ignore the best books on wine and winemaking that he could find at the time!

INFORMATION: JEFFERSON LIBRARY

The two major sources of information on the Jefferson library are:

Catalogue of the Library of Thomas Jefferson. Compiled with annotations by E. Millicent Sowerby. 5 vols., 29 cm. Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1952-1959. Reprinted by the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, Inc. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1983.

Thomas Jefferson's Library. A Catalog with Entries in His Own Order. Edited by James Gilreath, Library of Congress, and Douglas L. Wilson, Knox College. Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1989. 149 pp., 23 cm.

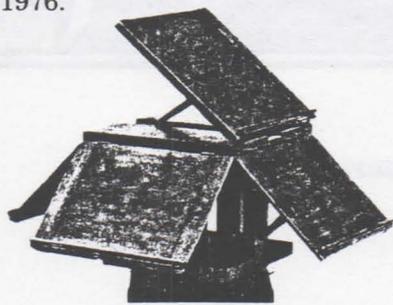
RECOMMENDED COMPANION READING:

Silver, Joel. "Thomas Jefferson as a Book Collector." *American Bookman's Weekly*, Sept. 15, 1997. pp.586-594. (Silver's in-depth article cites numerous published writings on Jefferson and his library.)

Gabler, James. *Passions. The Wines and Travels of Thomas Jefferson.* Baltimore: Bacchus Press, 1995. [Contact Tendril Gabler: bacchuspr@aol.com.]

Lawrence, R. de Tréville (Ed.) *Jefferson and Wine.* The Plains, VA: Vinifera Wine Growers Assn., 1976.

Christian Brothers Wine Museum of San Francisco. *Thomas Jefferson and Wine in Early America.* [Illustrated catalog for] A Special Bicentennial Exhibition, 1976.



[Five-sided walnut book stand, ca.1810, at Monticello. - From the Library of Congress Bicentennial Exhibition on Thos. Jefferson, April - October, 2000.]

[SULLIVAN, cont'd. from page 17]

The vines are head pruned on *rupestris* St. George rootstock, spaced at eight by nine feet. The Heritage Vineyard produced its first small crop in 1997: a single wine was made by Nils Venge of Saddleback Cellars. Later vintages came from Biale (1998) and Cline (1999). In 2000 several separate lots were produced at UC Davis.

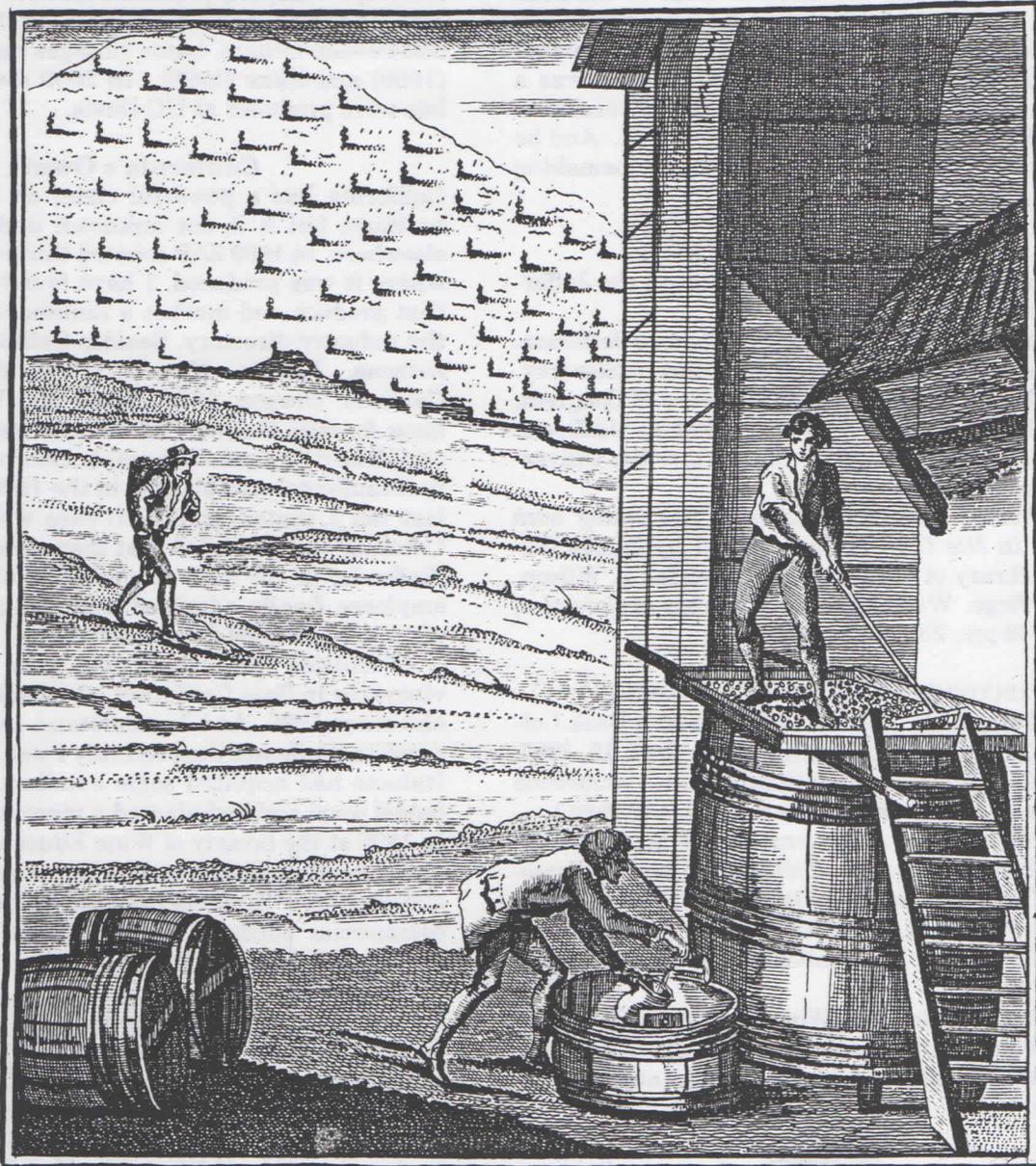
California's Own?

California has a powerful claim on the Zinfandel heritage, but it is not unknown under that name elsewhere. In 1999 ZAP counted thirteen other states where it was produced. I have found a total of ten that produce and market a Zinfandel, according to the industry directory. Besides California there are Arizona, Illinois, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Ohio, Texas and Washington. I know for sure that several of these states have well-established Zinfandel vineyards. Southwest Oregon's first Zinfandel was planted in the 19th century. But last fall I visited an 80,000 case winery in North Carolina and marveled that they were able to ripen Zinfandel in the hills around Asheville. A friendly employee finally admitted that the grapes for this wine were shipped from California.

Outside the U.S. we find some old Zinfandel vineyards in Baja California. Australia has claimed one since 1980. And I understand there is a small patch in Bordeaux. Just recently I was told that some Italians had acquired some excellent Sonoma Zinfandel wood and had planted a vineyard on the boot. In 1990 at the Society of Wine Educators conference I was really taken aback when a member of the audience at a Zinfandel session came forth with a commercial bottle of South African Zinfandel. It surely tasted like Zinfandel.

All of this has nothing to do with the fact that bottles of a certain Italian wine can now be legally sold in Europe as Zinfandel, perhaps soon in the U.S. I shall deal with this Second Zinfandel War next time when I finally conclude this history.





[FROM: MAUPIN NOUVELLE ÉDITION ...]