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A CHAT on "THE FIRST AMERICAN WORK on GRAPE CULTURE"

by **Liber**

[This entertaining discussion appeared in the November 1867 issue of *The Horticulturist and Journal of Rural Art and Rural Taste* (New York: F. W. Woodward). It seems many 19th-century journal correspondents favored initials or pen-names to sign their contributions (much to the chagrin of modern-day readers, I might add). In the *Horticulturist*, during the 1850s and '60s, we find frequent contributors *Horticola*, *Viticola*, *Vitis*, *Old Digger*, *Juvenis*, *Fox Meadow*, *El Medico*, *Pratiquer*, *Reuben* and *Al Fresco*. Our unidentified following friends, *Liber* and *Biblos*, today surely would be enthusiastic *Wayward Tendrils*. — Ed.]



few evenings ago I stepped into the study of a friend whom I shall name *Biblos*, and who is known among his friends as having the finest library of agricultural works in this part of the country. I felt anxious to learn a little about the early American books on Gardening, and felt pretty certain of obtaining from *B.* the information of which I was in search. On asking him which was the earliest American work on the Vine, he replied: "Really I can not tell without looking. It is a pity that we have no good work on the bibliography of American science and art. Theology and metaphysics have been pretty well worked up by Trübner, but for the rest we must depend upon the booksellers' circulars and Roorbach's work. Pass me that volume by Fuller, lying on the table. I believe he gives a list. [He then examined the book.] He gives *Adlum's*, published 1823, as the first work. My copy was published in 1828, and is the second edition. Let us see what he says about the History of grape culture. Of this he says nothing. Pass *Husmann's* work, *Grapes and Wine*. Here we have a very good History. From this it appears that grape culture has been carried on in this country for more than two hundred years. It will be strange, then, if we do not find some work on grape culture prior to 1823. Let me look at *McMahon's Gardening*. It was published in 1806, and is the oldest American work on Gardening that I possess. My copy has seen some strange adventures, having been brought from the South during the late

war. This work is not mentioned by Downing in his list of works prefixed to his *Fruits and Fruit Trees*. The oldest work there mentioned is *Coxe's*, 1817, and the next is *Prince's*, whose treatise on Horticulture—an admirable little work, by the way—was issued about the time *Adlum* published his book."

"... list of American books on Horticulture?"

L. Well, really this is annoying. Is there no nearly perfect list of American books on Horticulture?

B. I believe not. *Phin*, in his book, says that he was asked to make out such a list for vine culture, but he declined, as being incompetent. He gives a list, however. Let us look at it. [Picks up *Phin's* book and examines it.] Well, this is really a strange list. More remarkable, perhaps, for its omissions than for its contents. He seems to have included only those works which he had consulted. This list, like every



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other, may be useful; but it seems to me that if he had left out the *Chemistries* of *Gmelin* and *Graham*, and had given us a list of all the works of which he could

have found any account, his labors would have been of more value. If he had wished to distinguish those he had consulted, he might have prefixed an asterisk to each. I have heard that he was at one time librarian to a large institution, and this list evidently shows a knowledge of bibliography, which might have done us good service if he had chosen to use it. His forte seems to lie in hunting up knowledge in out-of-the-way places. Who would have thought of looking for a translation of Chaptal in the *Philosophical Magazine*? I wonder why some one of our publishers do not extract and republish it.

L. Allow me to look at the book when you get through. Well, this is quite a long list, though it seems to me that many of the books mentioned relate to anything but vine culture. Still, we may find in it some clue to our object. Let me look down the list. Here is a work: S. W. Johnson, *The Culture of the Vine*. New Brunswick, N. J., 1806. Have you it?

B. No, I have not. Never heard of it. [Searches his catalogues.] I can not find it in any catalogue in my possession. I am inclined to believe that must be the first exclusively devoted to the Vine. It is seventeen years prior to Adlum—the earliest work mentioned by Fuller.

L. By the way, B., have you a book of Busby's with the same title as Husmann's recent work, *Grapes and Wine*?

B. I have not. I am inclined to believe that is a mistake of Fuller's. I have a copy of Busby's *Visit to the Vineyards of France and Spain*, but I can not find a record of any other work of his; still, it would not be safe to say there is none.

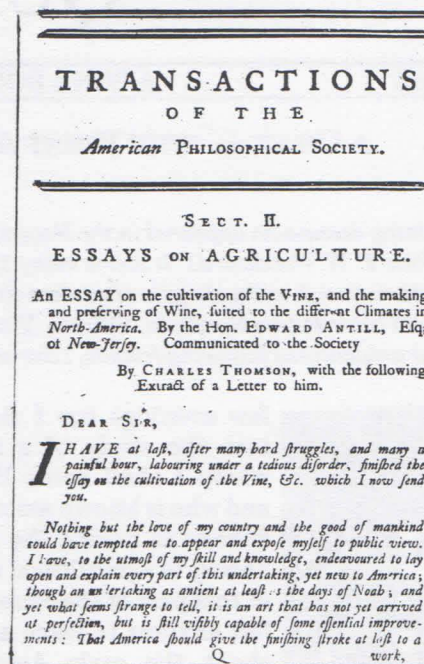
L. In looking over Husmann's work, I see that he alludes to an article by Mr. Antill on the "Culture of the Vine," published in the *American Philosophical Transactions*, Vol. I. Have you got that work?

B. Yes, I have—nearly a complete set of it. I see Phin has that in his list. Here it is. Mine is the second edition, published, like that referred to by Phin, in 1789. A note on the fly-leaf of my copy says that the first edition was published in 1771. The "Essay" itself is dated 1769. I am inclined to think that here we have the first practical directions for cultivating the vine ever published in America.

L. Yes; but you can not call this a work on the Vine! This is the *American Philosophical Transactions*!

B. That shows, friend Liber, that you know more about vine culture than you do of bibliography. I suspect you are one of those who would place the *Diversions of Purley* on the same shelf with your book of Games, and Edgeworth's *Essay on Irish Bulls* among your books on stock-breeding. If you do not look beyond mere titles, you will be found some day ordering a copy of *Ruskin on the Construction of*

Sheepfolds with a view to getting up for some of our agricultural papers an article on that essential department of sheep husbandry; or Ryle's *Wheat and Chaff* for the purpose of comparing it with Klippart's work under a similar title. Still, as you say, it is not a work devoted exclusively to the Vine, or even to fruit culture. Nevertheless, it forms the first complete American treatise on the Vine.



[ANTILL, 1771]

L. Perhaps you are right; but Fuller includes in his list only those works relating wholly to the Vine.

B. That was his intention; and yet, if he had strictly carried that out, he would have excluded Haraszthy's work, which treats of silk and sorghum as well as grape culture. As a list of works whose titles speak only of the Vine, his catalogue is very well; but you see that the rule which he has adopted leads him to exclude that work, which is the acknowledged standard in regard to the descriptions of the different varieties of the Grape—a work which is so characterized by the highest of all authority, the American Pomological Society. I refer, of course, to Downing's *Fruits and Fruit Trees*.

L. Well, B., I am afraid you have worked too much among books for me to have any chance with you in an argument on bibliographical subjects. Let us set down Antill's "Essay" as the first. I would like to examine it.

B. All right; but let us chat now, and you can take the book home with you and examine it at your leisure.

— cont'd., page 6



NEWS & NOTES



Roster additions and changes: We welcome new members **Stephen Blackmer** and **Suzanna Forest**, proprietors of Chanticleer Books, ABAA, who have a special interest in wine books (PO Box 765, Kenwood, CA 95452; 707-833-5609; e-m: chantbks@vom.com). You can browse their inventory at [Chanticleer books.com](http://Chanticleerbooks.com). **Willard Brown**, 630 Leonard Street, Ashland, OR 97520. ☎ 541-482-4100 (H) and e-mail: brownwil@mind.net. Will has been collecting some 30 years, specializing in the wine literature of the Pacific Northwest. **Angela Stewart** sends new telephone: 323-665-7840 and e-mail: angeluise@prodigy.net. John Thorne's new numbers: fax 020-8220-0082; e-mail: liquidliterature@aol.com. Please update **Jerry Kantor's** numbers: ☎ 757-623-1463; fax 757-623-5545; e-mail: jjkantor@msn.com.

Wine Books of Eastern America

During a recent first-time visit to several eastern U.S. and Canada wine districts, some noteworthy wine books were found. By district—**Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania Wineries** by Linda Jones McKee & Richard Carey (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2000, 182 pp). A nifty, geographically presented, guide to the state's some fifty wineries. **New York Finger Lakes: Wineries of the Finger Lakes Region. The Heart of New York State** by Emerson Klees (Rochester: Friends of the Finger Lakes, 2000, 159 pp). This guide highlights over sixty wineries in New York's scenic lake country. **Culture in a Glass. Reflections on the Rich Heritage of Finger Lakes Wine** by Richard Figiel (Lodi, NY: Silver Thread Books, 1995, 53 pp). A handsomely produced book, in stiff card wraps, enhanced by historical photographs. **Crooked Lake and the Grape** by Richard G. Sherer (no publisher/place, [2000], 136 pp). A "comprehensive pictorial history" of the Lake Keuka grape and wine industry from 1820 to 1960, lavishly illustrated with old photos, wine labels, grape-box labels, winery letterheads, &c. **Lake Ontario, Canada: Touring Niagara's Wine Country** by Linda Bramble (Toronto: Lorimer & Co., 2000, 72 pp). A glossy, full-color guide to the wineries and surrounding sights. **The Story of Hillebrand Estates Winery** by Peter G. Mielzynski-Zychlinski (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 2001). **Anatomy of a Winery. The Art of Wine at Inniskillin** by Donald J.P. Ziraldo (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 2000, "Millennium Edition," 56 pp). A personal tour through the "world of cool climate viticulture and winemaking" by the co-founder of Inniskillin, one of Canada's premier estate wineries. Also of note, two books discovered at Monticello that

deserve a place on your winebook shelf—next to Jim Gabler's *Passions. The Wines and Travels of Thomas Jefferson* (Bacchus Press, 1995)—are *The Gardens of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello* by Peter Hatch (Charlottesville, VA: Jefferson Memorial Foundation, 1992, 56 pp). A beautifully illustrated book written by Monticello's Director of Gardens and Grounds, includes information on Jefferson's vineyards. *Jefferson's Books* by Douglas L. Wilson (Charlottesville, VA: Jefferson Memorial Foundation, Monticello Monograph Series, 1996, 60 pp) is a fine reading companion to Robert Hutton's article, "The Wine Books in Jefferson's Library," in the *Wayward Tendrils Quarterly* (April 2001, Vol.11 No.2).

"What Wondrous Life: The World of George Husmann"

After a successful showing in Missouri, this historical exhibit is scheduled to open in California's Napa Valley on Sunday, November 10th, 2002, at the Napa Valley Museum in Yountville. Save the date and make plans to attend! A splendid excuse to have a gathering of Tendrils?! More later...

UNIQUE PROJECT!!

Tendril **Dean Walters** is compiling a full-color illustrated book on pre-Prohibition California wine advertising—postcards, trade cards, letterheads, calendars, corkscrews, tin trays and signs, and other winery-issued advertising pieces. If any Tendrils have items that could be considered for inclusion, get in touch with Dean! E-m: dean_w@pacbell.net or ☎ 415-459-6393.

CHWARTZ BIBLIOTHÈQUE BACHIQUE

Bernard Chwartz of Toulouse, considered one of the great French collectors of wine books, is selling his fine library. The first part (A – D), containing "livres et documents anciens et modernes sur le vin, la viticulture, l'oenologie," was sold at auction in Paris on June 28th. Dates for subsequent auctions have not been announced, but inquiries can be sent to Gérard Oberlé: oberle.gerard@wanadoo.fr. Our thanks to Tendril **Jean-Luc Chagnon** for this information!



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REMEMBERING ELISABETH WOODBURN

by
Hudson Cattell

[Tendril Hudson Cattell, publisher of *Wine East* magazine, is the voice of "Grapes and Wine in Eastern North America." We applaud his efforts and knowledge in this important segment of the world of wine, and eagerly await his forthcoming book on the subject. — Ed.]



om Pinney's article in the January issue of *Wayward Tendrils Quarterly* brought back many memories. For me, and I'm sure for others, Elisabeth Woodburn will always remain the consummate bookseller.

My first trip to Booknoll Farm in Hopewell, New Jersey, came 25 years ago on June 16, 1977. It had been less than a year since my first business partner, H. Lee Stauffer (now Lee S. Miller), and I had purchased *The Pennsylvania Grape Letter* and renamed it *The Pennsylvania Grape Letter and Wine News*. (This was the newsletter predecessor of *Wine East* published by Linda Jones McKee and myself.) At that time neither Lee nor I was familiar with the grape and wine industry outside Pennsylvania. I don't remember when I first heard about Elisabeth Woodburn, but I was trying to increase my meager knowledge of grapes and wine in the East, and Lee welcomed the opportunity to get an interesting story for the *Grape Letter*.¹ When I called Elisabeth to set up an appointment, she not only consented to an interview but suggested that we plan to stay for lunch.

That morning Elisabeth gave us an overview of her stock of books and recommended in particular U.P. Hedrick's *The Grapes of New York* (Albany: J.B. Lyon, 1908) and Liberty Hyde Bailey's *Sketch of the Evolution of Our Native Fruits* (New York: Macmillan, 1898). While paying for these books she told me that I had just bought the last copy of *Grapes of New York* that she would sell for under \$100.

She also confirmed what I already suspected, that not much had been written about the history of grapes and wine in the East after Prohibition. The absence of such information was soon to become the principal motivation leading to my decision to write (in collaboration with Lee Stauffer) the three booklets in *The Wines of the East* series: *The Hybrids* (1978), *the Vinifera* (1979), and *Native American Grapes* (1980). When I sent her a copy of *The Hybrids* soon after it was published, she reminded me of that morning in Hopewell. Now you know how books get written, she said. They're written to answer a need.

Lunch was simple and delightful, consisting of

delicately curried eggs, salad, warm bread, lemon yogurt with strawberries, and wine, of course. We were introduced to the "co-cook," Keith Robertson, a well-known author of children's books, and Elisabeth's husband. We learned that most of the ingredients for lunch came from the farm and that both of them were actively involved in the farm. Keith was at that time working on a contemporary style barn on the property that would house the "stock" — the more than 10,000 books that constituted Elisabeth's inventory of books on horticulture, gardening, herbs, domestic arts, and farming. Her specialty was books about the farm and home and how people lived in the past. Wine, she added, was always a part of this.

Elisabeth was one of this country's largest dealers in wine books, wine prints, and wine posters. Her stock of perhaps 2,000 items was located in a room in the farmhouse that doubled as living quarters. Visitors were admitted by appointment only. She issued catalogs periodically. Most of her worldwide sales were by mail order for, as Elisabeth told us at lunch: "I don't sell my books—people buy them. They know what they're doing—I don't have to tell them."

At the time of our visit in 1977 the growth of interest in wine was booming and acquiring wine books for sale was becoming more and more difficult. "Prices are just going up beyond belief," Elisabeth said during our interview. "The rare book market has catapulted in price. In Europe it's worse—two or three times more, especially in Germany."

The scarcity of old and rare items eventually led to Elisabeth's decision to discontinue selling wine books, and the wine part of her business was sold on September 1, 1982. It had gotten to the point, she said at the time, where people who had individual items or collections for sale would ask me what I would pay for them. Then I would find out they weren't interested in selling to me unless no other dealer would offer them more.

The difficulty in finding books was also responsible for Elisabeth's occasional refusal to sell an item. If she felt that someone was buying books solely for investment purposes or to show them off, she might refuse to make the sale. Books are important for their content, she would say, and they should be read for enjoyment or for the information they contained.

Elisabeth was not a collector herself, and she felt very strongly that it would be impossible for her to be a collector and stay in business. To her, dealers should never be in competition with their customers. She would, however, build collections for sale when she found items that had historical significance or considerable value. In 1977 a collection of 24 historical menus from the 1870s sold to a customer in Japan for \$600. Tom Pinney wrote in his article about another

Woodburn collection, the "United States Alcoholic Beverage and Grape Collection—A Historic Collection, 1771–1919," that was sold in 1982 to the Virginia State Library in Richmond, now the Library of Virginia, for \$27,500. Elisabeth let me go through this collection in 1981, and I remember being overwhelmed at seeing the 145 items, many of them true rarities, in one place. I also wondered if the collection might find its way to the library at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, New York. It was not to be.

As early as October 1977 Elisabeth and I had discussed the idea of an Eastern wine library to be housed at Geneva. She had been pushing for such a library but wanted to see it located in New York City, the gourmet center of the country; and, if not New York, in a large city in the East such as Philadelphia or Washington. In a letter to us dated November 1, 1977, she called Geneva "that inaccessible spot" and could not see that a library housed there would be useful to anyone who was not close by. While any large city in the East other than New York would be a lesser choice, it would still be a place where someone could go and stay while doing research as well as get to easily.

Other people also advocated Geneva as a site for the library, but not all of them understood where Elisabeth was coming from. On January 15, 1979, Philip Wagner—who a few years later was to donate his personal collection of wine books to Geneva—wrote to Elisabeth: "As for the library project, I suppose we are talking about two different things. I can't help thinking of a nuclear library for actual winemakers and viticulturists. N[ew] Y[ork] C[ity] isn't really the place for it, and they aren't the ones with the money. You are thinking of the other half of the industry, the commercial and promotional half, the marketing half, with its big and important fringe of advertising people, the new breed of instant experts in wine journalism, etc."

Today, Cornell University's Eastern Wine and Grape Archive at the Kroch Library in Ithaca and the Frank A. Lee Library at Geneva are recognized as leading research centers for Eastern grapes and wine. It is hard not to agree with Tom Pinney when he wrote after his visit to the Virginia State Library that it is a pity that the Woodburn Collection was not kept intact. I like to think that Elisabeth, if she were alive today, would agree.

1. This Elisabeth Woodburn interview was published in the September 1977 issue of the Grape Letter.



www.wine-maker.net

THE THACKREY LIBRARY =

AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF PLEASURES

is "an attempt to provide an on-line archive of early texts on the making and understanding of wine, not excluding those somersaults & mysteries, jokes & inspirations that are part of the pleasure this is all about. Since to my knowledge, no such anthology has ever been offered, even in print, it is by far the most important contribution I can hope this site might make.

"There are many purposes in reading. One is, to get to the point. Such readers should flee this site as fast as their mice will carry them.

"For others, to read is to savor the pleasures of the text, the light of distant lives, the tastes of language, the freshness and strangeness of the infinity of worlds lived within the world. Jorge Luis Borges, the great Argentine poet, devoted much of his life to such an archaeology, and envisioned even Paradise to be a sort of library. He would have understood perfectly why I have called this part of the site, an archaeology of pleasures.

"So it will appeal only to a certain kind of reader, and is subtitled, 'The Thackrey Library' because it consists in excerpts I have made over a period of many years from my own library of early printed books and manuscripts on the making and understanding of wine.

"The documents on this site are transcriptions; they are not scans. That is, I have typed them by hand, letter by letter, into my Macintosh in a font as close as possible to the original, with all the formatting and special characters carefully preserved. This is altogether painstaking; but the texts taste better that way, and it permits anyone to easily download a very close facsimile of the original."

Thus, we are introduced to the unique website of Sean Thackrey, stellar winemaker and exceptionally passionate student of wine-making history. Dig in and enjoy!



LIBER, cont'd from page 2 —

I did so. The "Essay" fills eighty-five quarto pages, and tells us how to care for vines from the cutting to the vintage. The author has sanguine hopes of success, for he says: "If the vineyard does not succeed, the fault is in the man, and not in the vine." And after this quaint fashion he holds out the most endearing encouragement to his readers. "The apprehension of being at a certain expense, without the experience of a certain return, will hinder many from making the attempt; but let not these thoughts trouble you, nor make you afraid. You have a friend for your guide who will not deceive you nor mislead you; one who by experience knows that the thing is practicable here, where the country is open and clear; one who looks upon you all as his children, and with the fondness of an affectionate father will take you by the hand, and lead you with plainness and honest simplicity through all the different operations, till you become master of the whole, and then with pleasure and delight will look and see you reap the profits, to your full satisfaction, of all your expense and labor."

In these days, when we have \$100 prizes offered for the best vine, and when it requires the combined wisdom of the ablest members of our Pomological societies to make out a list of vines suitable for a given section of country, it is interesting to read the names of those Mr. Antill recommends. The list is long, so we content ourselves with samples.

For New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut, the Black Hamburgh, the Miller Grape, etc. For Pennsylvania and "the three lower countries," Chasselas, Blanc, Red Fronteniac, etc. Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina require White Fronteniac, White Oporto, etc.

It would seem from his "Essay" that there was not a single American variety cultivated by the better class of fruit-growers.

"The reason for my being silent about vines that are natives of America, is that I know but little of them, having but just entered upon a trial of them, when my ill state of health forbade me to proceed. From what little observation I have been able to make, I look upon them to be much more untractable than those of Europe; they will undergo a hard struggle indeed before they will submit to a low and humble state, a state of abject slavery. They are very hardy, and will stand a frame, for they brave the severest storms and winter blasts; they shrink not at snow, ice, hail, or rain; the wine they will make, I imagine from the austerity of their taste, will be strong and masculine."

He recommends deep culture and thorough manuring, but objects to the placing of any manure in the hole in which the vines are set, claiming that to do

so is to set the vines in flower-pots.

His directions for pruning are full and excellent. He advises to save all roots ... he objects to root pruning at the time of planting ... he recommends mulching, and describes training both upon stakes and trellises.

It would seem that there were stealers of fruit in those days as well as now ... and he directs us "to guard against such attempts by a close high fence without and a smart watchful dog within, and especially by the vigneron appearing now and then with a gun in his hand, walking about his vineyard." He shows no mercy to the bird thieves, and directs us to shoot the robins and catbirds, and destroy their nests.

He condemns, in the strongest terms, the growing of crops between the rows, and directs those who can not employ horse power to use the two-pronged fork, of which he gives a cut, calling it a *sarkling* iron.

On the whole, this curious old work contains much that is to be found in our modern treatises, and yet it was written before Speechly had given his work to the public, or Switzer had described his "New Method."

His hopes were high, and from statements in his essay we should say that at first he attained a moderate degree of success. We presume, however, that his vineyard was ultimately a failure, and that the only record left exists in what my friend B. assures me may be called "the first American work on grape culture."

[Liber's investigative report prompted a response from "A.S.F" (Andrew S. Fuller?) in the December issue. We continue with words from "A.S.F." ...]

The remarks of Liber in the November number are quite interesting as well as instructive. The history of American Horticulture will evidently be written at some future time, and every fact that can be recorded now will aid in making that history more complete.

Having devoted considerable time in years past in endeavoring to compile a bibliotheca of American Horticulture, I was exceedingly gratified to learn that a copy of S. W. Johnson's work on grape culture was in existence. Is it not really surprising that other writers contemporary with Johnson should not have even mentioned him or his book? Adlum, Dufour, Prince, Loubat, Fisher; in fact, no writer on grape culture, except Phin, has referred to him.

One would have supposed that Johnson's book would have been mentioned in the *Transactions of the Pennsylvania Agricultural Society*, which was in a flourishing condition in 1806, the year in which Johnson's book purports to have been written. But from a careful examination of the reports from 1785 to

1811, I can find no reference to such a man, neither do I find the book named in the catalogue of the library. This circumstance appears more strange, inasmuch as some of the most active members of this Society lived in New Jersey, and several at Burlington.

As Liber refers to McMahon's work as the oldest American book on gardening, it may not be uninteresting, to a few at least, to learn that this work is not an original one with McMahon, but is an old English work reprinted in this country with very slight alterations, and without credit to the real author.

[*plagiarism?*]

It was written by John Abercrombie, of England, and first published in 1766 under the title of *Every Man His Own Gardener*, by Thomas Mawe. Abercrombie placed Mawe's name to the work, supposing it would have a larger sale, as Mawe was at that time gardener to the Duke of Leeds. After it became generally known who the real author was, Abercrombie placed his name on the title-page in connection with Mawe's.

Abercrombie died in 1806, the same year in which his book appeared in this country under the title of *McMahon's American Gardener*. McMahon made some slight alterations in the work, such as omitting a few lines here and there, and adding a few of his own, also changing in some instances the arrangement of the paragraphs.

Who knows but some future historian of American Horticulture will point out similar plagiarisms in works of our time!

[In the January 1868 issue we are treated to "ANOTHER CHAT ABOUT OLD BOOKS" by friend Liber, in which plagiarism is the main topic of discussion ...]

The December number of the *Horticulturist* was a prominent item in my mail matter one day last week.

[After chastising the Editor — "I felt angry with you" for again failing to supply a Table of Contents for your readers — he continues ...]

Among the pleasant things which caught my eye was the note by the well-known writer A.S.F., in which he alludes to some former scribblings of mine. He seems to regard them as interesting as well as instructive; and as I claim no honor beyond that of a mere reporter, perhaps I may be pardoned for sending you another conversation, to which the article just mentioned gave rise.

In the evening, as soon as supper was over, and I had attended to the various little duties incident to country life, I walked over to my friend B., having first put the *Horticulturist* in my pocket. I found B. at home, and asked him if he had seen the article by A.S.F.

B. Yes. It is a pleasant, sensible article.

L. But is it true that McMahon's book is a mere reprint of Abercrombie's work?

B. Perhaps in calling it a *reprint*, A.S.F. uses language a little too strong. McMahon borrowed largely from Abercrombie, but he modified the original a good deal, and he added much new matter. I had the misfortune to fall on the ice last night and sprain my ankle, so please hand me that green book and its companion in musty old leather, and also McMahon's book, of which the first edition stands on the shelf, just below Abercrombie. Here we have one of the latest editions of Abercrombie. London, 1857. Edited first by Main and then by Glenney, and now forming a 12mo of 459 pages. The old edition is larger, and McMahon's is an octavo of 666 pages; and if you examine it closely and compare it with Abercrombie, you will see that a good deal has been added and changed.

Loudon (*Encyclopedia of Gardening*, 1850, p.339) refers very respectfully to McMahon's book; and as he was unquestionably *familiar* with Abercrombie's work (which was the pocket companion of most young gardeners at that time), it is strange he did not notice the plagiarism. By the way he describes the book, as a 12mo, I should like to know whether this is a mistake, or whether the book was republished in Great Britain.

Abercrombie was a good gardener, and wrote several works besides this. There are two books standing on that shelf—Johnson's *History of Gardening* and Felton's *Portraits of English Authors on Gardening*. Please hand them down. Johnson gives quite an interesting account of Abercrombie. "He was born in Edinburgh in 1726, near which city his father conducted a large market-garden."

L. Why, I read the very same words not an hour ago. Have you *Wet Days at Edgewood* among your books?

B. I believe so. There it is.

L. That sentence, at least, is transferred *verbatim* to *Wet Days*. Is the whole article copied?

B. No. The materials are evidently almost entirely from Johnson; but then this is all fair. Mitchell has re-arranged them and converted them into a Life of Abercrombie, very different from that of Johnson. And so with McMahon. He took many of the paragraphs of Abercrombie, and many of his directions are quoted *verbatim* from *Every Man His Own Gardener*. But Abercrombie's work, if simply reprinted, would not have suited our country, while McMahon's book has been received with great favor.

L. It would be interesting to examine how far this plagiarism is carried on.

B. Yes: but unfortunately the labor is great and the reward small. Still, we can find enough of it if we

seek it. If our friend R. had not borrowed it, I could show you a recent book in which even typographical errors have been stolen; and we have recently had an instance of a standard English book being appropriated piecemeal by one of our periodicals, and published as original.

You see those four ponderous folio volumes bound in rough old calf. They are Prof. Martyn's edition of Miller. [Presumably *The Gardener's and Botanist's Dictionary*, 1807, as per *Hunt Botanical Catalogue*, Vol. II, p. 501 — Ed.] Please hand me the first volume. I read in it the other day a curious passage in regard to this very subject. After giving a very complete list of authors, he says: "It would be a curious speculation to ascertain how much, or rather perhaps I should say how little, in this copious list of authors and their works is truly original. The venerable Judge Fitzherbert, the father of English Husbandry, gave a good example, but it was not followed by many. The old gardening books previous to the Restoration are of very inferior value, with scarcely any pretense to originality"

It would not be strange if Abercrombie himself had done unto others as he had been done by. Prof. Martyn seems to hint this in the following sentence: "Mr. Miller during his long career had no considerable competitor until he had approached the end of it, when several writers took advantage of his unwearied labors of near half a century, and fixed themselves upon him as various marine insects upon a decaying shell-fish. I except Hitt and Justice in 1755, who are both original, as is also Hill. Hanbury first appeared in 1758; Wheeler in 1763; Abercrombie, under the name of Mawe, in 1766."

L. Well, this does not argue much for the morality of gardeners.

B. It is the same in all other departments of literature. Even theology is not exempt from it.

L. I have been looking over *Wet Days at Edgewood* lately. I see he refers to several works on the bibliography of Agriculture. Have you got them?

B. Most of them. Johnson's *History of Gardening*, Felton's *Portraits*, Weston's *Tracts*, and Donaldson's *Agricultural Biography* are the chief works in this department referred to by him.

L. I hope that if by "bibliotheca" A.S.F. means a dictionary of horticultural works, he will publish it, as such a catalogue would be very valuable.

B. It would certainly be of very great assistance to all lovers of books. I had a letter the other day from the Professor of Agriculture in one of our colleges, and he tells me that he has been engaged for some years on a work of this kind. He is now pushing it forward, and knowing that I had a few curious old books, he wrote to make some inquiries about titles, etc.

L. Such a book would be of incalculable value, not

only to every book collector, but to every student, and I hope it will point out the most thorough and the best works in all departments of agricultural sciences.

B. That would be not only a difficult, but a dangerous undertaking.

L. Do any of the works previously mentioned include American authors?

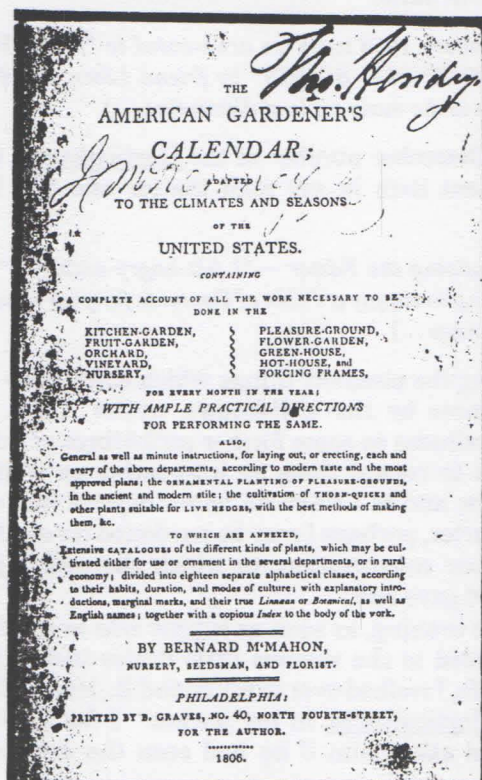
B. I believe not. The fact is, our American Agricultural literature is a *terra incognita* to bibliographers. None of our American publications do us justice. Trübner's work on American literature is disgracefully meagre. Thus, Adlum's name is not given in it. Either Alibone's *Dictionary of Authors* or the *New American Cyclopaedia*, in whose pages every tenth-rate literary author is found, does not mention Adlum.

L. Which was the first work on Agriculture published in the country?

B. Really I can not tell. Your question is a very difficult one to answer. The oldest work in my possession is that by Varlo [Charles], in two volumes.

And then I took from his shelf a very curious work on Agriculture. But I see that I have taken up enough of your space and time with my rambling chat, so, if you please, I will defer to a future number an account of the first American work on Agriculture.

[Alas, Liber's promised chat on the first American work on Agriculture was not found in subsequent issues of 1868, the last volume of *The Horticulturist* in your Editor's library.]





IN THE WINE LIBRARY
by
Bob Foster

Brunello to Zibibbo: the Wines of Tuscany, Central and Southern Italy by Nicolas Belfrage. London/New York: Faber & Faber, 2001. 493p. \$20.

Perhaps the good folks at Faber and Faber are finally realizing that a wine book that is all text with no maps, no photographs, and no reproductions of labels results in a work that has the visual attractiveness of a concrete wall. For years, the wine books from this publisher had a distinctive sameness: superb, informative text with nothing to visually entice the reader. It was as if such "frills" that might tantalize the eye would distract from the importance of the text.

This book thankfully breaks from that dreary mold. While there are no photographs, there are nine maps and probably a dozen reproductions of labels.

"if you love Italian wines, buy this book"

The text is absolutely top notch. Any lover of Italian wines needs this book in their wine book library (along with the companion work on Northern Italy published in 1999). The book is geographically based with lengthy sections on the central, east, and west regions of Italy. In these sections the focus is on the traditional grapes and wines of each region. The newer innovations, the so-called international varietals and the blends, each have their own detailed chapters. The author has a very thoughtful section entitled "Oenology: Typicity versus Internationalism" in which he discusses the pressures on Italian winemakers to make wines of a more international style (some cynics would say a Parkerized style) that might obscure the traditional flavor of the grape or the region but produce a wine that would sell more readily on the world marketplace. Since one of the hallmarks of these new international wines is high oak, the author addresses this topic as well. As he aptly notes, "The problem, which has arisen in Italy, is that far too many wines are being made where the wood aromas dominate those of the wine. It is true that there is a certain predilection on the part of the market for wines that have a toasty vanilla smell to them, the reason being that consumers associate those smells with high quality ... But at the end of the day ... it is not wood aromas that wine is supposed to be about." Clearly Belfrage understands the dangers of the trendy rush to embrace the new international style.

For a mere \$20, this book has a wealth of superb material. It's a steal. If you love Italian wines, buy this book. Highly recommended.

How to Taste: A Guide to Enjoying Wine by Jancis Robinson. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001. 208p. \$25.

"a top notch introductory work"

Jancis Robinson is surely one of the finest writers of our era. Her writing is knowledgeable, enthusiastic with an attitude that doesn't take herself, or the subject, too seriously. Her latest book is a top notch introductory work for a beginner who is filled with questions about wine.

The book is broken into six major sections: "Learning to taste," "Practical matters," "The raw materials: white grapes," "The raw materials: red grapes," "Strong and sparkling wines," and finally, "Wine, food, and fun." Within each section Robinson covers all of the basics in very short subsections. Breaking this introductory work into multiple small components containing first theory then practice is an inventive new approach that is first rate and lets the reader build knowledge in small understandable units.

The book is profusely illustrated with photographs, with lots of interesting uses of different style and type faces. There are no wine label reproductions and no maps, a bit of a detriment. There is an extensive index.

This is one of the best introductory books on wine to come to the market in recent years. For someone wanting to learn the basics of how to taste and enjoy wine, I can think of no finer starting point. Very highly recommended.

The World Atlas of Wine, Fifth Edition. Completely revised by Hugh Johnson and Jancis Robinson. London: Mitchell Beazley, 2001. 352p. \$50.

***"a critical reference tool
for any wine book library"***

The newest edition of *The World Atlas of Wine* is glorious. Jancis Robinson has taken over the helm from Hugh Johnson as the author. The reader gets two experts for the price of one. The combination of styles is charming. Johnson's deceptive use of the language combined with Robinson's humor and zest is impressive. For example, in a description of the Sambar region, the authors write, "Substantial enterprises produce substantial quantities of often quite unsubstantial sparkling wine."

The centerpieces of the book, of course, are the maps. Without questions the cartographic works are without peer. The detailed presentations make the book a critical reference tool for any wine book library. The maps of some regions, Burgundy for example, are so detailed that each of the main vineyards is identified.

For each of the regions the authors present an overview of the region, the map of the area, and the reproduction of some of the labels of their favorite

producers. It gives the reader a solid general knowledge of the area.

Of course, the question that immediately arises for a wine book lover with limited funds, which book is better, this book or as reviewed earlier, *The Global Encyclopedia of Wine*? It all depends on what you seek. For detailed maps, it's *The World Atlas* by a mile. If you're looking for separate entries on the major producers of each region and more detailed information, then it's the much longer *Global Encyclopedia*. There is no clear overall winner.

Since the very first edition of *The World Atlas of Wine* over 30 years ago, it has been the cornerstone of my wine book library. Whenever I need a geographic overview of a region, this is the work I use. The Fifth Edition carries on the commitment to utmost quality. Very highly recommended.

Oz Clarke's Encyclopedia of Grapes: A Comprehensive Guide to Varieties and Flavors by Oz Clarke. New York: Harcourt, 2002. 320 pp. Cloth. \$40.

"informative and entertaining"

Oz Clarke is one of my favorite modern wine writers. He has the ability to present a wealth of information in a breezy, funny style with a tone that pleads not to take him or the topic too seriously. As a result, I always find his writing to be both informative and entertaining. This work is one of his best. It's done in an encyclopedia format limited to grape varieties. It begins with Abouriou and ends with Zinfandel. Some of the entries have no more than a sentence or two, while others have several pages. For the major varieties, Clarke includes a horizontal graph showing aging potential.

For seventeen of the major grape varieties there are full-page paintings that illustrate some aspect of that grape or its history. For example, for Zinfandel there are clusters of grapes in and around a gold-dust pan with a background poster proclaiming the discovery of gold in California making it the new El Dorado. For Cabernet Sauvignon there is a painting with grape clusters against a brilliant sunburst, the emblem of France's King Louis XIV. His court at the Palace of Versailles was filled with images of his glory. This painting is designed to reflect "Cabernet Sauvignon's self-importance and regal position in the world of wine." While I have never made any claim to have any skills at all as an art critic, I find the original pieces of art striking and entertaining.

I can't help but wonder how noted English wine writer Jancis Robinson feels about this book. She was the pioneer of an encyclopedia that used a format based on grapes (*Vines, Grapes and Wines*, Knopf, 1986). She was the first to use horizontal graphs to illustrate a prediction of the maturing and peak

plateau of a wine (*Vintage Timecharts*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989). Of course, there is no copyright on an idea or a concept and Robinson certainly had the opportunity to do subsequent editions of these works and did not do so. But I'm still curious.

Even if the basic concepts for this format did not originate with Oz Clarke, he has taken the ideas and executed them in a top-flight manner. This is a terrific book. Very highly recommended.

Chilean Wines for the 21st Century, edited by Hernan Aguirre. Santiago, Chile: Antarctica Books. Imported by Wine Appreciation Guild, So. San Francisco, CA., 2001. 241 pp. Text in Spanish and English. Cloth. \$65.

"\$65 price tag is understandable"

It's no contest. This book wins the award for the most lavish, most visually appealing wine book of recent times. It begins with both a full-color, close-up photograph of a vine on the dust jacket and a different color photo engraved on the hard cover underneath. Almost every page is illustrated with color photographs or detailed maps. The visual layout is stunning. But there are times when the book relies on that visual image to the detriment of hard content. Moreover, with the book measuring 14" tall and 10" wide on heavy stock, it is cumbersome and difficult to read while seated in a chair. It virtually demands a library table.

The book begins with short chapters on twenty-five of the best Chilean producers. There is generally a page or two devoted to the history of the winery with several photographs of the property. Following are photos of one or more of that winery's products and a short description of the wine. It's unclear who wrote these sections since there is no attribution, but all of the material is persistently laudatory to the point that it becomes a bit too much. No wine producing country is continually this magnificent. Nevertheless, these chapters do contain excellent background material.

I found the next section unusual and interesting. The editors had various foreigners write about why they chose to make wine in Chile. There are segments by such notables as Miguel Torres, Bruno Pratts, Robert Mondavi, and Jess Jackson. It is interesting in reading their statements to note that above soil and climate, one of the attractions was the fact that phylloxera has not invaded Chile. Of course, since each of these segments was authored by an investor with vast financial interest in Chile, there is nothing but glowing praise for their own efforts and the wines.

This section is followed by a chapter on the nine major growing regions in Chile. In addition to the wealth of color photos there are detailed topographical maps and numerous foldout pages with spectacular three-page-wide photographs of each region. It is

visually superb. But given the size of the photos and the bilingual text, some regions end up with only five or six paragraphs. I yearned for a bit more substance.

Next comes a chapter on the ten major grapes used in Chile. While, for most of the book, the English language text reads well, it is in this chapter, in the section on Gewürztraminer that I became utterly lost: "It is a very hardy variety but sensitive to overflows (a problem with fructification) so that special procedures have to be observed when pruning." Huh?

There are then chapters covering the basics of making red and white wine. I just keep thinking that if someone cared enough about Chilean wines to spend \$65 for a book, they probably know the basics on how wine is made. A section on unusual experimental wine making techniques might have been better.

The book includes a chapter that provides detailed tourist information for the five major wine regions, covering places to stay as well as places to dine.

The last chapter of *Chilean Wines* deserves to be emulated in other countries. It is entitled "Wine Authors." The use of the term "authors" is really referring to the Founding Fathers of the Chilean wine industry. There are photographs and short profiles of fourteen persons (both men and women) who have been major contributors to this country's modern wine industry.

There is no question Chile is rapidly moving toward center stage in the world's fine wine market. In 1990 it exported just \$51 million worth of wine. In 2000 the number jumped to \$573 million. The book presents this ever growing, ever improving region with an absolutely uncritical eye and heaps of praise on everyone and everything. Given the lavish format and the abundant use of color photography and maps, the \$65 price tag is understandable, but will probably be a major impediment to all but the most ardent Chilean wine fanciers. Nevertheless, there is a wealth of interesting information. Recommended.

[Bob's wine book reviews appear regularly in the *California Grapevine*, issued bimonthly. We Tendril-ly appreciate permission to reprint the above reviews, excerpted from the Feb-March, April-May, & June-July 2002 issues. For subscription information write *California Grapevine*, P.O. Box 22152, San Diego, CA 92192, or phone 858. 457.4818.—Ed.]



BOOKS & BOTTLES

by
Fred McMillin

WINE SMILES

The Book: *You're a Real Wine Lover When ...* by Bert Witte. San Francisco: Wine Appreciation Guild, 2002. 60p. \$10. (Originally published in the Dutch language in The Netherlands, 1991.)

A reporter asks a British connoisseur: "Do you prefer wine or women?" A long pause, then a reply: "It depends on the vintage!"

That joke is not in Bert Witte's bundle of chuckles, *You're a Real Wine Lover When ...*, but it captures the spirit of the charming, 60-page book of wine cartoons by the award winning Dutch cartoonist. (We used our own joke to avoid giving away Bert's punch lines.)

Bert's book is divided into six chapters: "The glass, the bottle, and the label"; "Sampling and tasting wine"; "Wine production"; "How to handle wine"; "Wine before, during, and after dinner"; and "Common and unusual wine situations." Each area is given its proper drubbing with Witte's scathing wit and brilliantly ridiculous caricatures. Check the connoisseur's reaction when the sommelier brings him a Riesling with a label reading "Made in Algeria." Or see the husband's response at the supper table when his spouse proudly announces she has enhanced the evening's cabbage and broccoli stew with his favorite Cabernet. You might call it "Wine's Far Side."

There aren't many gifts you can give yourself or a wine-loving friend for only \$10, but this is one.

The Bottles: Here are two bottles recently recommended by my tasting panel.

A Riesling – "Fantasy" by Casa de Caballos, 2000. \$15. The grapes were grown in Paso Robles, CA, not Algeria!

A Cabernet Sauvignon – Staglin Family, 1997. \$65. Stunning ... great winery ... great year. Pour it into a glass, not a stew!

[Our sincere thanks to Elliott Mackey and the Wine Appreciation Guild for permission to print the rear cover illustration. —Ed.]

The Most Important Book Ever Written about California Wine

by

Thomas Pinney



One of the really neglected books in the literature of wine in California is a modest work by William Vere Cruess called *The Principles and Practice of Wine Making* (New York: The Avi Publishing Co., 1934). I have often wondered why this book has not been recognized for what it is—which is, to put it simply, the foundation

upon which the restored California wine industry was rebuilt. It is, as well, a vivid account of what winemaking was like at the moment of Repeal and as it continued to be for some years. In a practical point of view, it is the most important single work that has ever been written about wine in California; by rights, it should be reverently mentioned in all histories of the subject and it should be eagerly sought by all collectors. I will now try to explain why.

The situation for California winemaking at the moment of Repeal, in December 1933, after nearly fourteen full years of Prohibition, was plainly desperate. Many wineries had continued to exist as storage facilities or as producers of wine for the very limited legal markets open to them—medicinal wines, sacramental wines, wines for flavoring in tobacco, in canned soups, and in other such commodities. There was also a substantial trade in grape concentrate for home winemaking. But the regular operations had been badly broken. Many wineries simply disappeared. Others hung on in a marginal way. Equipment was dispersed or fell into disrepair. Cooperage dried out. Buildings grew derelict. And, perhaps most important, the continuity of tradition was cut off. The supply of young people was diverted into other kinds of jobs, and the traditional knowledge of how things were done could not be maintained.

The obvious consequence was that most of the people who took up winemaking again in California did so without a working knowledge of how to do it. They might know something; and they might be lucky enough to find help from people who remembered. Or they might not. The well-known story told by Ernest Gallo makes the point: if, he said, he and his brother Julio had not found in the basement storage of the Modesto library a couple of pre-Prohibition pamphlets on winemaking written by the University of California

experts, they probably would never have survived their first year in business. Stories abounded in that first year of wineries whose fermentations had stuck, or whose wines had turned to vinegar, or had been soured by tourne, or had been rendered unsaleable by haziness and turbidity.

William Vere Cruess

Davis was not yet in a position to be of any help in this situation. Its work was mostly devoted to viticulture then, and of course "wine" had been a forbidden subject under Prohibition. The only institutional connection with the pre-Prohibition days was at Berkeley, in the Division of Viticulture and Fruit Products, which had been devoting itself to innocent studies of unfermented fruit products during the dry years. But there were several teachers in the department who went back to the days before the drought. Chief among them was William Vere Cruess (1886-1968), who had worked on problems of fermentation with Bioletti himself so long ago as 1911. Now, in the first glimmerings of the dawn of the new day, he sprang into action.

To meet the most urgent practical need, he and his colleagues published a guide to the laboratory analysis of wines: without the ability to perform at least the basic analytical tests, a winemaker would not be able to meet the legal standards required by the government. So *Laboratory Examination of Wines and Other Fermented Fruit Products*, written by Cruess, M.A. Joslyn, and L.G. Saywell, all of Berkeley, appeared in 1934, within months of Repeal. That it was done in much haste appears from the errata slip at the beginning of the book.

The next step was to provide a complete outline of the standard practices of winemaking, from vineyard to bottle, and that was the service performed by *The Principles and Practice of Wine Making*. The book first appeared as a series of articles in the *Fruit Products Journal* from November 1933 to June 1934. Repeal did not officially come about until 5 December 1933, but its passage had been certain long before that, and when vintage time came in 1933 the Prohibition authorities averted their gaze from the renewed activity in wineries. Thus it was possible for a university professor to write publicly about winemaking even in advance of the actual moment of Repeal. It was also the case that a lot of wine was made before the first "legal" vintage in the fall of 1934, so that Cruess had many object lessons before him in the great quantity of poor wines and spoiled wines produced in the vintage of 1933.

Cruess did not restrict himself to print as a way of instructing the California wine trade. He travelled up and down the state, attending meetings of the trade, addressing growers and winemakers, holding

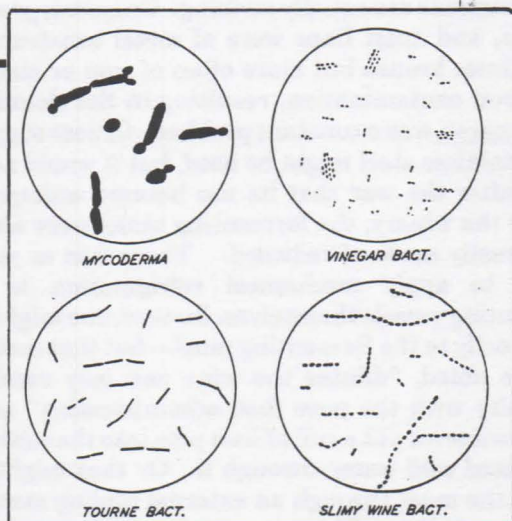
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The Principles and Practice of Wine Making

By

W. V. CRUESS, Ph.D.
Professor of Fruit Technology
University of California
Berkeley, California

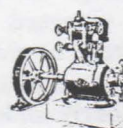
THE AVI PUBLISHING CO.,
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[Illustration, p.130]



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workshops, and generally publicizing the fact that winemakers could find help for their ignorance at Berkeley. He organized a training program that made use of the younger members of his staff. According to Maynard Joslyn, who was one of them, they "went through every wine making or possible wine making area of California," and, he added, "without our assistance, most of the wine would have been spoiled."¹

Principles & Practice of Wine Making

The permanent record of what they taught is set down in *Principles and Practice of Wine Making*, and we may now turn to look at what the book contains. Much of what it has to recommend is still standard practice, beginning with the principle of strict cleanliness. Cruess stresses such things as the importance of getting the fruit from vineyard to winery quickly before it begins to deteriorate; he gives instructions for the use of sulfur dioxide; he explains the use of pure yeast cultures, and he clearly understands the importance of cool fermentation, especially for white wines. His authorities are, necessarily, very often French, since no work had been done in enology in the U.S. during the dry years. Cruess treats Pasteur's *Étude sur le vin* (1866) as though it were a contemporary guide (p. 122).

Some of the practices described—though not necessarily recommended—seem a little odd now: for example, making red wine by drawing off the free run juice, heating it, mixing it back in with the crushed grapes, then pressing the lot, cooling the juice, and finally fermenting it off the skins (pp. 94-95). Another oddity described is the process for making high-alcohol sweet wines without fortification by the method of "syruped fermentation." This involves feeding the fermenting must with grape concentrate so that the yeasts have a constantly renewed supply of sugar: by this method, Cruess reports, "18 per cent alcohol was readily attained" (p. 195). The method, or one resembling it, was regularly used by Washington wine makers after Repeal. Yet another curious practice, this one brought about by the discovery that Americans wanted sweet wines rather than dry, was the conversion of dry wines into sweet wines "by the addition of grape concentrate and high proof brandy or by addition of cane sugar and brandy" (p. 199).

In the vintage of 1933 in California, Cruess observed, the "most common method" of winemaking was "the 'let alone method'...Nature takes its course, often with disastrous results to the quality of the wine" (p. 70). The most common trouble was the bacterial infection called "tourne," which turned the wine turbid and flat. It could be prevented by the use of sulfur dioxide, by the use of pure yeast, and by cool storage, but those things were exactly what many of the first winemakers did not or could not provide. So

tourne was "the most destructive and most prevalent of wine diseases" (p. 132). Another frequent problem was an excess of cream of tartar in the new wines. When the wines were shipped east and encountered cold weather, the tartar precipitated in the bottle and the wine would be sent back by the dealer. The solution was to refrigerate the wine by one means or another to precipitate the cream of tartar and then to filter it.

Such afflictions are now rare in California, since the right procedures have long since been learned. But the scene then was very different. Cruess' review of "grapes for wine making" suggests how different it was. For red wines he names Zinfandel, Petite Sirah, Carignane, Mataro, Malvoisie, Mission, Alicante Bouschet, Cabernet, Pinot Noir, and Refosco. But Cabernet is "not grown extensively in California" and Pinot Noir, though grown "to a limited extent" in Napa and Sonoma is "seldom seen elsewhere in this state" (p. 13). For white wines, there are Burger, French Colombard (which Cruess, as was the rule then, calls "West's White Prolific"), Muscat, Malaga, Thompson Seedless, Golden Chasselas, Semillon, Sauvignon vert, Sauvignon blanc, Franken Riesling, Johannisberg Riesling, Grey Riesling, and Traminer. Golden Chasselas (Palomino) he thought the best of the readily available white grapes; Semillon was best for "wines of the Sauterne type" (p. 15). Chardonnay is not mentioned, though Cruess notes that the "so-called white Burgundy grape" goes into some French champagne and that this grape is reported to be "the same as that used for making some of the white wine of Burgundy" (p. 167).

When we move from the vineyard to the winery the omissions are equally striking. Crushers, presses, pumps, and must lines were of metal construction, sometimes bronze but more often of iron or steel, so that iron contamination, resulting in the cloudiness called *casse*, was a constant problem. Cruess suggests that stainless steel might be used, but it would not be until after the war that its use became widespread. Inside the winery, the fermenting tanks were almost universally made of redwood. There was as yet no effort to apply mechanical refrigeration to the fermenting vessels themselves. Instead, one might add ice directly to the fermenting must—but that method, Cruess noted, "dilutes the wine and may result in difficulty with the pure food administration" (p. 86). Many wineries put a coil of iron pipe into the tank and circulated cold water through it. Or they might circulate the must through an external cooling machine of jacketed tubes. The water itself might be cooled by passing it over a cooling tower; otherwise, one used ice.

The wine, when fermented, went into storage containers that might be of redwood or of oak (p. 40);

this is one of the few points at which Cruess even mentions oak, and, though he observes that it is "considered the best wood for storage casks" he says that "for bulk wines redwood is excellent." And the unspoken assumption of the book is that bulk wines, for the moment at least, are the only thing in question. So with the matter of aging. Cruess says that "with the repeal of prohibition there was frenzied desire on the part of wine makers to age their new wines 'overnight.' Many different treatments were attempted in various wineries, usually with indifferent success" (pp. 117-118). Among the treatments were pasteurizing, cooking (as with sherry), or the addition of dry sherry to impart an aged flavor, or exposure to sunlight, or refrigerating and then warming the wine, or the addition of oak shavings, or the use of hydrogen peroxide, ozone, or pure oxygen to hasten oxidizing, or ultra violet light (pp. 118-119). There is no reference at all to the practice of aging in small oak cooperage.

When the wine is ready for market it might go into oak barrels for shipment, but, Cruess warns, unless such barrels are carefully treated with soda ash and steam they may "impart much oak taste to the wine" (p. 161). On the matter of what to call the wines made in California, Cruess allows that such names as sherry, port, and champagne have been taken over for American wine types, but he thinks there should be a better way:

The author is one of those who believes that American wine makers should in the years to come make an attempt to stand upon their own reputations and strive to develop American place names and typically American class names for their wines. He believes that we can make just as good wines on the average as the European wine makers and should no longer find it necessary to lean upon European wine names (p. 165).

Since no one knew better than Cruess how much bad wine was then being made and by what uninstructed methods, his faith in the future is, to put it mildly, remarkable.

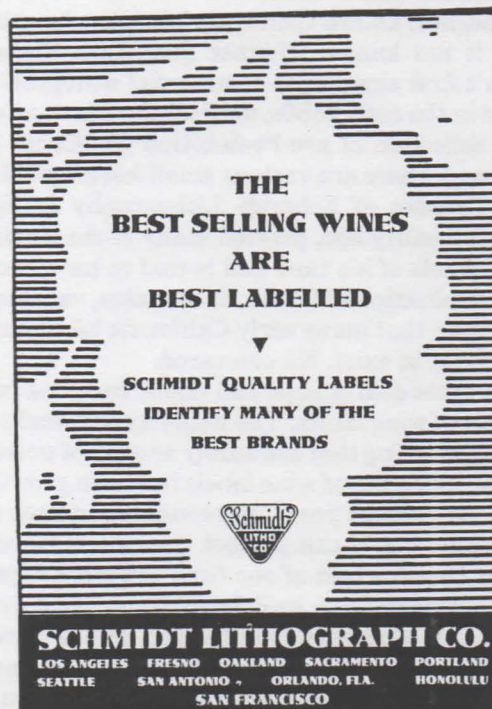
Did *The Principles and Practice of Wine Making* have any effect? Did any one use it as a guide, and did it make a difference? I have called it "the most important book ever written about California wine," but of course I have no evidence for the practical meaning of such a statement. One may say, however, that if California's wine makers did not follow Cruess they had no one else to follow. Not until the series of winemaking guides by Maynard Amerine and M. A. Joslyn was published by the University of California in the 1940s was the groundwork information laid out by Cruess in 1934 brought up to date and refined by

some years of practical experience in commercial winemaking and by renewed laboratory investigation.²

Cruess' book continued to have an active life. A second, greatly-expanded edition (476pp. against the original's 212) was published in 1947, and in 1960 it underwent a transformation as *The Technology of Wine Making*, by M. A. Amerine and W. V. Cruess, a treatise of over 700 pages.³ As the authors wrote in the preface, the book was "in many respects" the third edition of *The Principles and Practice of Wine Making*, but now so much altered that a new title was called for. In the mere quarter of a century that elapsed between the first and third editions of Cruess' book, the principles of wine making had not, perhaps, been much changed, but the practices were far more complex and sophisticated. A comparison of the two books gives a striking measure of how many and how extensive were the changes in California wine making in that brief period.

NOTES

1. Maynard A. Joslyn, "A Technologist Views the California Wine Industry," University of California Oral History, The Bancroft Library, Berkeley, 1974, pp.18-19.
2. The three bulletins are "Commercial Production of Table Wines," 1940; "Commercial Production of Dessert Wines," 1941; and "Commercial Production of Brandies," 1941.
3. As *The Technology of Wine Making*, the treatise ran to several editions: 1967, 2nd ed. (H.W. Berg added as author); 1972, 3rd ed. (Amerine, Berg, Cruess); 4th ed., 1980 (Amerine, Berg, R.E. Kunkee, C.S. Ough, V.L. Singleton, A.D. Webb).



[Ad from *Principles...*, 1934]

CALIFORNIA WINE LABELS

by Roy Brady

[Roy Brady, before his death in 1998, arranged for his collection of some 50,000 wine labels to go to the University of California, at Davis. He had written the following piece to accompany an exhibition of wine labels, "The Roy Brady California Wine Label Collection," at the Museum of Art Bookshop & Gallery in Long Beach, California, December 4, 1983 - January 15, 1984. We are pleased to present his brief essay to all Tendrils. — Ed.]



natural fate of the wine label to perish with the wine. The wine is drunk, the bottle discarded. Until recently collecting labels seems to have been rare. A few labels survived on

bottles kept long, but in the dampness of cellars labels tend to molder away. Other labels survive because winemakers did not bother to discard leftovers, but they seem to be a very small minority.

Ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, and Greeks identified their better wines with clay seals, but it was not until the 18th century that paper bottle labels began to be used and it was not until well into the 19th century that they became at all common. In Britain, vintage Ports were still being delivered unlabeled between the two world wars.

The earliest known California labels are from the 1850s. It is not known whether Jean Luis Vignes, California's first significant commercial winegrower, who began in the early 1830s, used labels. There exists no major collection of pre-Prohibition California labels, although there are various small holdings. Max Schmidt, founder of Schmidt Lithography in San Francisco a century ago, printed many of the leading California labels of his time and is said to have had a world-wide collection of labels. It has, alas, vanished. It is very likely that many early California labels have ceased entirely to exist. No one cared.

Yet, a great deal of time and talent has gone into the creation of wine labels. The majority are works of art and fine printing that are surely worthy of preservation. The collecting of wine labels has been growing rapidly in very recent years. It cannot bring back all the lost labels, but it can protect the rare survivors and ensure that the best of our time will not be lost.

The extraordinary proliferation of California wineries and of wine brands in the last decade or two has offered an unparalleled opportunity to create new labels. The number of new designs undoubtedly runs to thousands, the number being augmented by

frequent changes of design and by the simultaneous use of two or more designs. Increasingly, labels are designed by recognized artists. Some of the results are striking, but others leave not a little to be desired. It must be recognized that the artist never has free rein to create. First, the government has a good deal to say about what can, cannot, or must appear on a label. It has the power of final approval and has disallowed labels for what seem like capricious reasons. Second, the wine producer may have ideas of his own about labels, and they are by no means always good; they often lead to excessive ornament, gilt, and strange shapes. Third, not all designers have impeccable taste.

It must also be recognized that the basic purpose of a label is to sell wine, and if it does not do that its artistic merits are irrelevant. A label should attract attention, please the eye, inform, be memorable, and be recognizable on a shelf across a wine shop. Opinions as to how to achieve these things vary considerably and not infrequently result in labels that are garish and cluttered rather than simple and handsome.

A singularity of recent California labels, found in no other part of the world, is the compulsion to tell all. Certainly it is better than the old days of not very long ago, when winemakers were reluctant to reveal even the legally required minimum of information. But is the customer, unless he himself is a winemaker, really captivated by a gripping, step-by-step account of the progress of the malo-lactic fermentation, with spirited asides on the total acidity?

At their best, California labels are second to none in design and interest. It is remarkable how much variety can be put onto a dozen or two square inches of paper.



[FROM THE BRADY COLLECTION]

The Trouble with Raisins...

by
A. Edwin Smith-Shields

[Our present-day professor of "wit, wisdom, and morals" brings us further delights. Read on. — Ed.]



he trouble with raisins isn't their appearance, wrinkled, unappetizing black, or luminescent yellow, or their desiccated-looking skins when "hydrated." From the box, the solid mass obscures the individual morsels, but that isn't the problem. The trouble with raisins

isn't their propensity to be over-produced for an insubstantial world market annually, nor is it their reputation as a last choice of fruit for fruitcakes or pies or even ice cream or as an additive to cereals. ("Three scoops" ... whatever that means.) Trouble enough occurs frequently in California's Great Central Valley, when early fall rains can seriously damage sundried fruit spread out along vineyard rows on trays or papers. The trouble with raisins is that they produce exuberant flatus in human beings, a fact revealed here in public for the first time.

Before expanding this impolitic report further, it needs to be admitted that what will be discussed may offend some readers. Sorry. Some subjects, such as death, disease, and diarrhea are, by their nature, likely to be unappealing, and thus difficult to present without offense. The very mention of the subject projected for discussion conveys an air of offense, if you follow my drift. Sorry, again.

The subject of raisin flatus, and by implication, grape flatus, is a well-kept secret in the trade, never, I believe, actually, overtly acknowledged as a problem, for the obvious opprobrium attendant on the admission of the fact. If the word were to get out that raisins cause serious volumes of flatus, an already flat market of consumption could be driven down even more. Why would anyone, except in the privacy of his isolation from human kind, ever want to admit responsibility on the subject? Raisin flatus, like the study of flatulence in general, is unlikely to be incorporated in advertising, or in sales slogans printed in flashing colors on boxes or cartons. Is it necessary to illustrate graphically how such advertising could appear?

Within the wider context of human flatus in general, few medical facts carry the warrant of scientific experiment. One medical consultant friend (name on file) researched the literature in a preliminary way, emerging with the startling information that only one foodstuff has definitely been determined to cause near-universal flatus: beans. [Many years ago, a radio contestant was required to respond instantaneously to a question posed: Name two noisy vegetables. Agitated and under pressure, he blurted out, "Celery and — and — Beans!"] Unfortunately, beyond beans, the medical evidence disappears in the quagmire of human variability, where different foodstuffs in differing quantities affect people differently, such differences dependent on genetics, habit, eating patterns, practice of mastication, bolus formation, frequency of bowel movements, tendency (weasel word) toward diverticulitis —do you really need more examples? Of the limitless possibilities of drink and food that cause flatus, it should be added that soft drinks, even champagne, or swallowing air, are obvious sources of intestinal flatus—gas in, gas out, by one means or another.

What evidence have I that raisins actually give themselves airs, when virtually any ingested substance can cause the same result, given allowance for differences in degree? The issue, a clouded one, is not obvious. The answer now, as far as we have tested, is that my wife of sixty-one years and I have come to the same, explosive conclusion by, shall I say, accident. For months, we were regularly eating raisins in cereals for breakfast, comfortable with the normal results of fourteen "episodes" per day (Benjamin Franklin says the number is seven) some medical sleuth, with a nose for details, has said to have discovered, a result to make one ponder the worldwide production of methane by billions of people and the resulting environmental effects.... In our case, deprived of any raisin ammunition for a week or so, we both noticed a remarkable reduction of the usual episodic events, enough to discuss the observations in casual conversations you had best not ask about. Needless to add, our chosen topics of conversations are not uniformly so impoverished. There are, after all, more important subjects that move us to discussion. We were uneasy about the paucity of our evidence. Keenly aware of the pressure against anecdotal evidence of such an unobserved, uncontrolled, basically unrepeatable experiment, we suppressed our personal discoveries until now, now when we can, so to say, come out of the water closet. For those unwilling to accept our testimony, there is a simple expedient: Duplicate our experiment *en famille*, preferably in the confines of your abode. Don't trouble us with any report, for we surmise with confidence just how the trials will come out. For better or worse,

raisins will be found to be a partner-in-combat with beans. Recall: The mystical Pythagoreans held a prohibition against eating a Mediterranean bean commonly used in the region, a vigorous generator of gases in a painful proportion to the small beans. We can see no reason for any prohibition against raisins, though a personalized reduction in intake may be advisable, unless you actually enjoy the *status quo ante*.

In a day when virtually (an appropriate adverb here) any image is allowed on television or in films, when overt depiction of release of flatulence on, say, "Seinfeld," "Home Improvement," is a comedic, leg-slapping staple, we may be excused for bringing up the subject in a serious, respectable essay. There are many precedents in the literature. Without going far afield, we take note that Garrison Keillor has emitted a hilarious episode in his recent book, *Lake Wobegon, Summer, 1956*, leaving nothing to the reader's scatological imagination.

Ben Franklin's Prize Question

Even more telling, and with the added virtues of subtlety, true wit, and literary value, is the creative treatment by Benjamin Franklin in his bagatelle, "Letter to the Royal Academy." While Keillor stresses the total sensory speculum of flatulence—olfactory, visual, tactile, audible (and risible!)—Ben Franklin concentrates on the social consequences, embarrassment, and sources (causes), having himself experienced worldly "exposure" to widely varying foodstuffs, qualifying him to share his wisdom.

Limitations of space preclude quotation of the entire piece, but a few sentences, at least, will serve to convey Franklin's penchant and purport, best enjoyed in the original.

His excursus was prompted by a request from the "Royal Academy" for submission of a prize question deserving of scientific investigation. His proposal is, essentially, to apply chemical improvements on nature's callings. Attend.

It is universally well known, that in digesting our common food, there is created or produced in the bowels of human creatures a great quantity of wind.

That the permitting this air to escape and mix with the atmosphere, is usually offensive to the company, from the fetid smell that accompanies it.

That all well-bred people therefore, to avoid giving such offense, forcibly restrain the efforts of Nature to discharge the wind.

That so retain'd contrary to Nature, it not only gives frequently great present pain, but occasions future diseases, such as habitual

cholics, ruptures, tympanies, etc., often destructive of the constitution, and sometimes of life itself.

Were it not for the odiously offensive smell accompanying such escapes, polite people would probably be under no more restraint in discharging such wind in company, than they are in spitting, or in blowing their noses.

My prize question therefore should be, To discover some drug wholesome & not disagreeable, to be mixed with our common food, or sauces, that shall render the Natural Discharges, of Wind from our Bodies, not only inoffensive, but agreeable as Perfumes...

Franklin proceeds to argue in defense of his proposal by showing evidence of its plausibility.

...Certain it is also that we have the power of changing by slight means the smell of another discharge, that of water. A few stems of asparagus eaten, shall give our urine a disagreeable odour; and a pill of turpentine no bigger than a pea, shall bestow on it the pleasing smell of violets. And why should it be thought more impossible in Nature, to find means of making a perfume of our Wind than of our Water?

Franklin further argues for the "Utility" (!) of his plan, [In the 18th century and later, a "utility" was the euphemism for a Chic Sale, an outhouse, or the dozens of other terms the reader can furnish now.] contrasting his useful plan with the useless plans of Aristotle, Descartes, and Newton, as examples.

The pleasure arising to a few philosophers, from seeing, a few times in their life, the threads of light untwisted and separated by the Newtonian Prism into seven colours, can it be compared with the ease and comfort every man living might feel seven times a day, by discharging freely the Wind from his Bowels? Especially if it be converted into a Perfume: For the pleasures of one sense being little inferior to those of another, instead of pleasing the sight he might delight the smell of those about him, & make Numbers happy, which to a benevolent mind will afford infinite satisfaction.

Well, there you have it from the happy inventor himself: A reasonable way to transform an offensive effluence into a welcome "relief," and, by the same stroke, increase raisin consumption, a wind-wind result. All that is required is to add the yet-to-be-

found chemical to sublimate offensive flatus into pleasurable, shareable airs, and to advertise the pleasing discovery to the world. What an opportunity for the animated dancing raisins and their lyric writers! Think of the political fall-out when the government of the United States of America continues benevolently to drop those tiny boxes of California raisins from the sky on the grateful and hungry Afghans. What a poetic license the government can claim when one considers the historical fact that, centuries ago, Afghanistan-Turkey-Armenia-etc. were the originators of the Sultana raisin—call it “carrying coals to Newcastle,” Sultana to the Sultans. Our air-drops can’t fail to increase the happiness of the Afghans, “...which to a benevolent mind will afford infinite satisfaction.”

Quod erat demonstrandum.

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A RECENT FIND

The Mosella of Decimus Magnus Ausonius, translated by F. S. Flint. The Poets' Translation Series, No.6 (issued monthly). London: Printed by Spottiswoode & Co. To be obtained from: The Egoist, Oakley House, Bloomsbury Street, W.C., 6d. net. [n.d.], 22 pp.

Ausonius (310-395) was born at Burdigala (now Bordeaux, France) about the year 310. “He was educated as a rhetorician; practised law; and afterwards became a professor of grammar and rhetoric. Chosen by the Emperor Valentinian as tutor for his son Gratian, he was successful both as teacher and courtier, being made count and quaestor by Valentinian, and after the latter’s death, prefect of Africa and Italy, and next of Gaul, by Gratian, who, in the year 379, nominated him to the highest possible honour, that of consul. Ausonius was famous among his contemporaries both as a teacher and as a poet. *The Mosella*, written at a time when the seat of the Roman Empire was at Treves on the Moselle, is his most famous work; it has been translated many times into French and German. This is the first English translation, it appears.” There is another English-language edition, not seen, but listed in Will Ransom’s *Private Presses and their Books* (New York: Philip Dushnes, 1963): Printed by The Clerk’s Press at St.

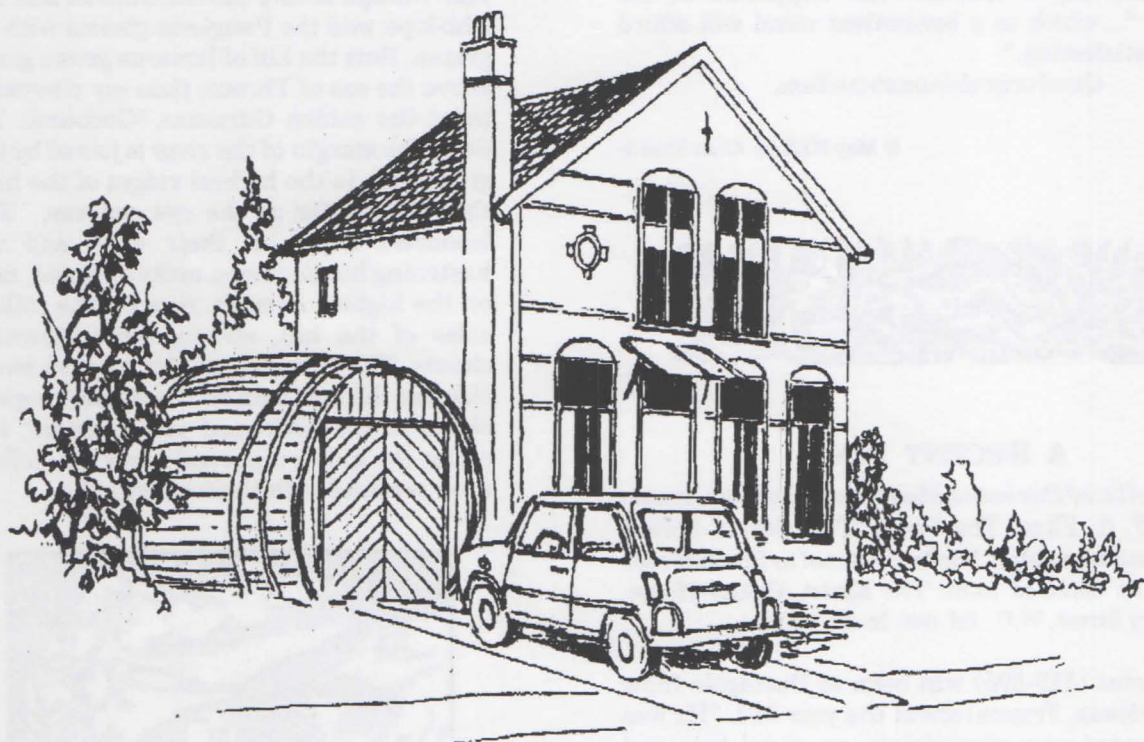
Paul’s Rectory, Fremont, Ohio, 1917, 41 pp., in an edition of only 40 copies.

BUT WE HAVE LOOKED long enough at the waterways and the gliding shoals of fishes; we have counted their many bands long enough. Let the spectacle of the vines show us other splendours, and the gifts of Bacchus entice our wandering eyes to where a lofty peak in a long range of steep hills, and rocks, and sunny ridges with their folds and windings mount up, clad with vines, into a natural amphitheatre. Thus a ripe vintage covers Mount Gaurus and the Rhodope, and the Pangaeus gleams with its grapes; thus the hill of Ismarus grows green above the sea of Thrace; thus my vineyards paint the golden Garumna (Garonne). Indeed, the margin of the river is joined by the green vine to the highest ridges of the hills that stretch far as the eye can see. The labourers happy at their work and the hastening husbandmen make all speed, now on the highest summit, now on the rolling sides of the hill, striving with clownish shouts. The traveller on the road by river-side and the boatman on the waters sing out abuse to the backward vine-dressers: the rocks, the quivering woods, and the hollow river resound with their voices.



[“Der Rebmann: The Vinegrower” — from *The Book of Trades (Ständebuch)* of Jost Amman and Hans Sachs, 1568. Dover reprint edition, 1973.]

YOU'RE A REAL WINE LOVER WHEN...



...YOU EVEN STORE YOUR CAR IN FRENCH OAK!

[From *You're a Real Wine Lover When ...* — See McMillin, p.11]