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Northwest Wine Books: A Select, Annotated Bibliography by Willard Brown

[Tendril Will Brown is currently working on a joint project of the Oregon Winegrowers Assn. and the Oregon Historical Society to collect oral histories of the pioneers of the Oregon wine industry. As part of this assignment, he has delved into "almost every book written about Northwest wine." We sincerely appreciate his expert bibliographic contribution. — Ed.]



Wines from the Northwest United States have made spectacular progress in the last forty years. Unheard of before the 1960s, the Pinot Noirs of Oregon and the Bordeaux varieties of Washington have shown in international tastings and in critical reviews to be the equal of comparable wines from Europe and California. At the same time wines from the lesser known, adjacent regions of Idaho and British Columbia, Canada, have also been attracting attention. Consequently, there has been a flurry of books on the subject such that we now have a substantial literature on the wines of this area.

Having lived in the Northwest for over twenty years, I have followed the development of these wines and wine districts practically from the beginning, and have found a special collecting interest in the published literature: most of these books are in my library. It is a pleasure to share my thoughts about this body of writing with members of the Wayward Tendrils.

The books fall into several categories according to the biases of the authors. There are those primarily directed to the wine tourist as the districts, wineries

and tourist infrastructure have developed. Others, aimed at the consumer, are buying guides for the vintages and wines of the region. Several are primarily collections of stunning photography of the wine country. Finally, there are those which attempt to explain the success of the wines of this region from the standpoint of history, climate, geology, geography, and economics. Notably absent is a truly authoritative academic work on the subject, although several books come close. While many of these books are no longer in print, they may be found on the secondary market, particularly through the web-based book sellers.

Two publications, the first in the field, appeared in 1977. The best one and my enduring favorite is: PURSER, J. Elizabeth. *The Winemakers*. Vashon Island, WA: Harbor House Publishing Ltd., 1977. This book was the first important one to be written on the subject and remains so today. Presented in a large format (10x12½ inches), the author covers the history of wine in the region and provides an overview of viticultural practices and an introduction to winemaking principles.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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Geology, climate, and soil as factors in making the Northwest a special place for grape growing are discussed, and a brief history of wine in Oregon and Washington is given. The comprehensive text is supplemented with beautiful color photography by Lawrence J. Allen. The perceptive quality of naivete of this book is a metaphor for the emerging industry at a time when there were few wineries in the region and everyone was on a mission to prove that good wine could be made there.

The author, a Seattle writer and wine enthusiast, has an extensive background in wine on the retail and import level.

Also among the early publications are two books by Tom Stockley:

STOCKLEY, Tom (1936-2000). *Winery Trails of the Pacific Northwest*. Mercer Island, WA: Writing Works Inc., 1977; and *Winery Tours in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and British Columbia*. Mercer Island, WA: Writing Works Inc., 1978.

These two small books, directed at the wine tourist, are notable for recognizing Idaho and British Columbia as part of the Northwest wine region.

The author, a long time wine columnist for the Seattle Times and a noted wine judge, died in an airplane crash in 2000.

Five excellent books by Ted Meredith were published during the next decade. In these books one can see the evolution of the mature author with a firm grasp of his material. It is unfortunate that this fine series has not been continued.

MEREDITH, Ted. *Northwest Wine*. Kirkland, WA: Nexus Press, 1980; 2nd ed., 1983.

A good discussion of grape varieties and climate in the Northwest, with historical information, biographies, maps and vital statistics of the region's wineries. The second edition added information on soils.

-----, *The Wines and Wineries of America's Northwest: The Premium Wines of Oregon, Washington and Idaho*. Kirkland, WA: Nexus Press, 1986.

This is really the third edition of the series; the format is expanded to a larger size, and the text has added material on regional geology. Some wine evaluations are offered. There is an excellent bibliography.

-----, *Northwest Wine: Winegrowing Alchemy along the Pacific Ring of Fire*. Kirkland, WA: Nexus, 1990.

In this fourth and final edition of the series, the format is enlarged again. This is the most fully

realized of Meredith's Northwest wine books. The section on geology has been expanded with the use of diagrams and photographs and new information on climate in the region. There is also a section on wine grapes. New maps based on the American Viticultural Areas are included. The fine bibliography of the previous edition is gone.

-----, *Northwest Wine Companion*. Kirkland, WA: Nexus Press, 1988.

In this book the author deviated from his previous format to produce this small gem, wherein he introduced material not covered in his other books. He developed themes on wine judging, quality factors in Oregon Pinot Noir, and vinification for style in Northwest wines. Also included are detailed vintage-year descriptors for 1977-1987 and a comprehensive listing and description of the grapes grown in the Northwest. The balance of the book is devoted to a dictionary of wine terms, some general, some more specific to the region.

The author has been a member of the Society of Wine Educators and the Enological Society of the Pacific Northwest. He was invited to join the International Authors and Writers Who's Who in Cambridge, England.

Wine writers Ronald and Glenda Holden published several credible wine country guides in the early years but have not been heard from since. Their books, aimed at the wine tourist, are now well out of date but have some historical merit.

HOLDEN, Ronald and Glenda. *Touring the Wine Country of Oregon*. Seattle: Holden Travel Research, 1982.

-----, *Touring the Wine Country of Washington*. Seattle: Holden Pacific, 1983.

-----, *Northwest Wine Country: Profiles and Ratings for Every Winery in Oregon, Washington and Idaho*. Seattle: Holden Pacific, 1986.

The latter book deviated from the previous ones by dropping the tourist motif to concentrate on profiling the wineries.

In the 1990s several wine tour guides appeared to fill the gap left by the Holdens.

KAUFMAN, William. *Pocket Encyclopedia of American Wines: Northwest*. San Francisco: Wine Appreciation Guild, 1992.

The shirt-pocket format should appeal to the wine tourist and the coverage is comprehensive. The author has written a number of encyclopedic books on wine and has had a regular wine column in the Eugene (OR) Register Guard.

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NEWS & NOTES



Welcome, new Tendrils! We say hello to two new Australian members, **John Elliott** (PO Box 143, Nedlands, W. Australia, 6909 and **Randal Heinzen** (an American, actually, studying viti / vini in Australia — 63 Highfield Ave., St. Georges, S. Australia, 5064. E-mail: randyheinzen@hotmail.com.) Thanks to Tendril **Dan Longone** for introducing us to **Paul Hart** (1225 Ridge Ave., Evanston, IL; e-m: paul.hart@sothebys.com). A “beginning” collector, he states a special interest in 19th century wine books in general, and Burgundy in particular. **Terry Riley** (2853 Alida, Oakland, CA 94602) saw the Wayward Tendrils blurb in **Ben Kinmont**’s catalogue. Kudos to Kinmont! **Charles Sullivan**’s “Zinfandel” enticed **Dominick Cinti** to become a member (9 Whynwood Road, Simsbury, CT 06070; e-m: cinti@attbi.com. **Brian Dorsk** (4 Chimney Rock Rd., Cape Elizabeth, ME 04107; invinoveritas1@aol.com), a ten-year collector, has a special interest in Thos. Jefferson & wine, Champagne, Cognac, and Armagnac. Thanks to Tendril **Darrel Rosander** for adding Brian to our bunch.

A SPECIAL INVITATION

to the **Opening of the George Husmann Exhibit**, “What Wondrous Life: The World of George Husmann,” is extended to all Tendrils. At 2 p.m. on Saturday, 9 November 2002, George is “coming home” to Napa Valley (at the Napa Valley Museum in Yountville). The festivities will include a presentation by exhibit co-ordinator **Linda Walker Stevens**, and a wine reception. This historical, close-up look at the life of one of our most important wine pioneers is highly recommended. The exhibit runs through Feb. 2, 2003. (See the April 2002 *W-TQ*, p.11, for further information on the exhibit.)

BEER BOOKS & COLLECTIBLES

for sale!! **Brian Rea**, due to space restrictions in his new home, is selling some of his treasures: a collection of approximately 135 beer books, 18 Corgi limited-edition beer trucks (with boxes), 32 miscellaneous beer trucks, 30 HO-gauge beer boxcars and tankers. Books include some scarce items such as *Warm Beer* (1724), *Every Man his own Brewer* (1768), *Ale in Prose and Verse* (1866), *The Brewers Guide* (1840), *Theoretical Hints on Improved Practice of Brewing* (1777), *The Maltster’s Guide* (1860), *A Practical Treatise on Brewing* by Black (1840 and 1849); *Theory and Practice of Brewing Illustrated* (1850). All books are in VG condition or better. Brian prefers to sell the collection intact, but will consider other options. Contact him at ☎ 916.408.4317 or e-m: barguru@aol.com.

A LETTER from Eberhard Buehler

Thomas Camden’s reply (*WTQ*, April 2002) to Tom Pinney’s article on the Elisabeth Woodburn Collection prompted me to do a little follow-up. Camden (Director of Special Collections, Library of Virginia) says that “anyone searching under Elisabeth Woodburn’s name will be directed to a full catalog of the collection.” Well, not exactly. I tried “Elisabeth Woodburn” and the system responded that this phrase “has not been included in the library’s list of indexed phrases.” Then I tried just the two words Elisabeth and Woodburn and up popped a list that did contain a fair number of the items in the collection, as well as the catalogue itself and a number of other items that were not on the original list, including 3 works by Jean Chrysostôme Magnen from the 17th century—on manna, on tobacco and on philosophy—in addition to others, all of which may have come at some time from Woodburn, but they were not in that particular collection. He goes on to say that a “great many of the titles are housed in Special Collections due to their rarity, but other more common titles ... are housed in our stacks area which is closed to the general public.” Well, again—not exactly. I checked a large number of the items and I found that some of the rarities went into the stacks as “common titles,” and only a few (definitely not “a great many”) went into special collections. These were identified as ES or WS, mysterious collections not further identified or located. I followed Special Collections links that took me around in circles and I looked at detailed catalogue entries, but locations are not shown, and none of the books are identified as coming from the Woodburn Collection. I have searched through many, many online libraries, and I would have to rate the Library of Virginia near the bottom.

Many librarians would dispute Camden’s statement that the “general consensus is that in creating ‘pockets’ of material, accessibility is diminished.” On the contrary, says one of them, the opposite is true. In the particular case of the Library of Virginia, it’s a moot point, since accessibility appears to be limited at best.

The state bought the collection fair and square and they can of course do anything they want with it. But if I were a Virginian, I might conclude that, the sobering common-sense influence of Virginia’s own distinguished Thomas Jefferson notwithstanding, the library is still actively protecting me against the evils of alcohol, and that the purchase of the collection was an unconscionable waste of my money.



SOME NEW BOOKS OF NOTE

Notice of two new publications from The Wine Appreciation Guild in San Francisco has been received: Winner of the André Simon Book Award: *The Great Domaines of Burgundy: A Guide to the Finest Wine Producers of the Côte d'Or* by Remington Norman, 2nd edition, revised, 2002, 288 pp. \$60; and, hailed as "the most original wine book in years" is *Africa Uncorked: Travels in Extreme Wine Territory* by John and Erica Platter, 2002, 256 pp, over 200 color photographs, index, and tasting notes. \$25. James Conaway has a sequel to his 1990 saga, *Napa: The Story of an American Eden*. Just released is *The Far Side of Eden: New Money, Old Land, and the Battle for Napa Valley*, 2002, 384 pp. \$28. Two recent English translations of Italian wine books are being offered (solely) by ArtisanIdeas.com: "...the definitive book on the King of Italian Wines," *The Mystique of Barolo*, is a large-format, 288-page book illustrated with over 400 photographs. \$75. Also available is *Barbera*, edited by Burton Anderson, M. Busso, M. Gily, D. Lanati, and translated from the Italian by Liz Marcucci Zazzera, 144 pp. Illus. \$45. Check the ArtisanIdeas web-site for "their growing selection of professional books on wine and spirits." *A Treatise on Raisin Production, Processing and Marketing*, edited by Professor Vincent Petrucci and Carter Clary (2002, Malcolm Media Press, Clovis, CA., 268 pp., illus. \$75) This lavish, yet scholarly, work (presented in a large, 8½ x 12" format) is available from P & P Enterprises, 3481 E. Via Monte Verde, Clovis, CA 93611. Or call 559-297-7376 for details. (See "The 'Professor's' Singular Vine" by Allan Shields this issue!)

TONICS for SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

To accompany that glass of vintage Port, try one these wine-theme novels: *The Wine Princes* by Margaret Mackay (NY: John Day, 1958). An historical novel set in early 19th century Oporto. *Sour Grapes* by Martin Sylvester (NY: Villard, 1992). Wine merchant, bon vivant, and amateur detective William Warner sets out from foggy London to sunny Crete... Other William Warner mysteries are *A Dangerous Age* (1986), *A Lethal Vintage* (1988), and *Rough Red* (1989). *Grand Cru* by Sandra Lee Stuart (NY: Lyle Stuart, 1989). It is 1849 and France is caught up in passionate political and social upheaval. A struggle between brother and sister and the Saint Savin family vineyards in Bordeaux... *Make Friends with Murder* by Judith Garwood (NY: St. Martins Press, 1992). California's "Santa Clarissa Valley" and the "Novelli Winery" are the scene for the author's first murder mystery. It seems the corpse found among the wine barrels was known to everyone in the valley, and most had a reason to want him dead. Good night.

WANTED, PLEASE!!

The Wayward Tendrils Quarterly wants articles! All members are encouraged to share their collecting interests and knowledge for the benefit and joy of all Tendrils. Let us hear about favorite authors, special books, a collecting passion... Awaken, dormant Tendrils!



"NOT WORTH MUCH" A 100-YEAR-OLD REVIEW

J. L. W. Thudichum, MD, FRCP (1829-1901), published *A Treatise on Wines: Their Origin, Nature, and Varieties, with Practical Directions for Viticulture and Vinification* (London: George Bell) in 1894.

André Simon, in his *Bibliotheca Vinaria* (1913), had this to say about the work: "A revised and much abridged edition of Drs. Thudichum's and Dupré's work published in 1872. Most of the scientific data contained in the 1872 edition have been omitted, but the majority of the errors have been retained. It lacks the thoroughness of the earlier work, without being simple or clear enough to be termed a 'popular' book."

In 1894 the London publishers sent a copy of Thudichum's book to the editors of *Pacific Wine & Spirit Review* (San Francisco), who reviewed the book in their 5 April 1894 (Vol.32 No.5) issue and again in 1896 (Vol.36 No.11) when the book was reprinted as a member of Bohn's Scientific Library. They, likewise, did not value its contents:

"The work is presumably up to date, or it would not have been published with the date 1894; and much as we respect Dr. Thudichum's name as a viticultural authority, we are compelled to say that if his information is no better as regards the wines of Europe and other countries than it is concerning those of California and the Eastern states of this country, the paper, press-work, and ink used in getting out the book are worse than wasted.

"As far as America goes, the author has succeeded in producing a literary curiosity that we cannot refrain from presenting to the wine producers and wine trade." [5 April 1894]

"The book is chiefly remarkable for being a far-gone, out-of-date affair ... 'On the Ohio, the Rhine of North America, there were 1550 acres in cultivation.' Indeed? And no mention whatever of any wines in California! Read up, Thudichum — read up. There might be time for even you to learn a little.

"The book is published in this country by Macmillan & Co., NY; price, \$1.50." [7 August 1896]

"WINE IN PRINT" — A BOOK REVIEW

by
Hudson Cattell

Sketches in North Carolina USA 1872 to 1878.

Vineyard Scenes by Mortimer O. Heath. Introduction and Notes by H.G. Jones. Raleigh and Chapel Hill: Division of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Raleigh, in association with the North Caroliniana Society, Chapel Hill, 2001. Soft cover. \$25. (May be ordered from the North Caroliniana Society, Wilson Library, Campus Box 3930, Chapel Hill, NC 27514-8890, for a \$25 contribution, half of which is tax deductible.)

"...the most historic vineyard in North Carolina"

In the 1840s North Carolina was the leading wine producing state in the United States, and the largest vineyard was a Scuppernong vineyard owned by Sidney Weller which was just over six acres in size. Weller's vineyard, located between Brinkleyville and Ringwood in western Halifax County, was later known as Medoc Vineyards and is today looked back upon as perhaps the most historic in North Carolina. After Sidney Weller died in 1854, the vineyard and wine cellars were sold in 1867 by his widow Elizabeth and her son John to Charles W. Garrett and two of his brothers. Charles Garrett's nephew was Paul Garrett, who got his start working for his uncle as early as 1877. The winery grew rapidly despite family feuding, and by 1906 when fire destroyed the winery, Paul Garrett was the chief owner, the vineyard had reached 85 acres in size, and the winery was producing more than 100,000 gallons a year. [See Vol.9 No.4 "Everything Old is New Again" by Gordon Jones, and Vol.10 No.1 "Update" for interesting coverage of the Garrett Winery. — Ed.]

In 1872 a young Englishman named Mortimer Oldham Heath came to the United States and found employment in the C.W. Garrett & Co. winery. From 1872 to 1878 he wrote letters home to his father in England, and in each letter he sent a pen, pencil or watercolor sketch of his activities and the life of the winery. His father saved the sketches and pasted them into a scrapbook. In 1987, H.G. Jones, a former director of the North Carolina Archives and History and, later, curator of the North Carolina Collection at Chapel Hill, learned about the existence of the scrapbook and went to England to examine it. Arrangements were then made to copy the sketches and eventually publish them.

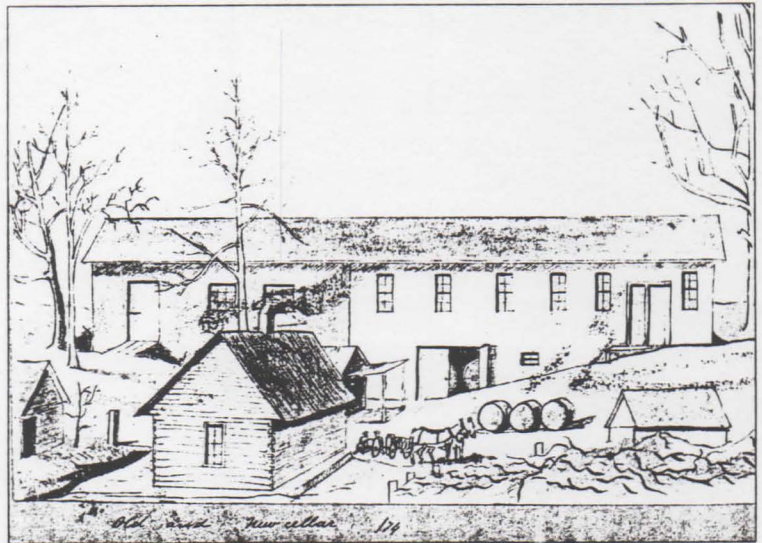
Just over 90 sketches are reproduced in this book. Most of them are titled and many have a date. Not much documentation relating to the 1870s exists,

and Heath's sketches are historically important because they show the expansion of the winery from a single cellar with a few buildings in 1873 to a 20x60-foot two-story building in 1875 to a 40x60-foot three-story building in 1876. Other sketches show buildings and vineyards, equipment and machinery, and vineyard and winery operations from pressing and "grinding grapes" to digging post holes and setting posts. In addition to these vineyard and winery subjects there are sketches of rural life such as planting cotton and a series of four sketches titled "pig killing time." Some charming personal sketches show the room where he stayed and "Going to see my gal!!!" where he depicts himself in an open wagon whipping along the horse as fast as it will go.

Introductory sections include four useful articles by H.G. Jones on the history of the property from the time Sidney Weller bought the first of more than 500 acres of land in 1829 to the fire in 1906. A biographical note about Heath by his great-nephew Christopher Terrell is also included.

This volume is printed on heavy glossy stock to enable quality reproduction of the sketches. The edition is limited to 500 copies numbered and signed by H.G. Jones.

Sketches in North Carolina USA 1872 to 1878 is self-recommending to historians and warmly recommended to anyone interested in the period.



[Reduced]

[Tendril Hudson Cattell, co-editor/publisher of *Wine East — News of Grapes and Wine in Eastern North America*, writes a regular wine book review column, "Wine in Print," for this worthy bi-monthly publication. We tendril-ly appreciate his kind permission to reprint his reviews (the above from the July-August 2002 issue) in our *Quarterly*. — Ed.]

BROWN, cont'd from p.2 —

HILL, Chuck. *Northwest Wines and Wineries*. Seattle: Speed Graphics, 1993.

The author assembled a tasting panel and rated the top 180 wines of the Northwest; he also provides the usual winery profiles, maps, and addresses.

HILL, Kathleen and Gerald. *Northwest Wine Country: Wine's New Frontier*. Old Saybrook, CT: Globe Pequot Press, 1999.

Arranged for the wine tourist, this guide starts in Southern Oregon and moves northward through the wine districts of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and British Columbia. There is an emphasis on tourist accoutrements, and the coverage of the wines of British Columbia is thorough. The book is recent and still somewhat useful, but errors in its historical content tarnish its credibility.

CLARK, Corbet. *American Wines of the Northwest*. New York: William Morrow, 1989.

This comprehensive book, the first to be published by a major publisher outside the Northwest, is one of the best. The author covers every aspect of the industry in addition to providing wine ratings based on tastings in a variety of settings.

Clark has been a wine columnist and wrote the Wine Appendix for *The Frugal Gourmet Cooks with Wine*.

The following books are highly recommended, if only for their artistic merit.

PETERSON-NEDRY, Judy. *Showcase Oregon Wineries*. Photography by Bryan Peterson. Portland: H. Dieter Rickford, 1981.

More of a monograph than a book, it features the artistic photographs which were to become a staple for the author.

-----, *Oregon Wine Country*. Photography by Robert Reynolds. Portland: Graphic Arts, 1998.

-----, *Washington Wine Country*. Photography by Robert Reynolds. Portland: Graphic Arts, 2000.

Both of these books feature stunning color photography of the wine country and the wineries. Also featured are mini-biographies of many winemakers and winery owners. The Washington book is more comprehensive, containing the addresses and web-sites of over 100 wineries.

The author, a wine country insider, has written about food and wine and the Northwest since 1978 and is a founding editor of Northwest Palate, a popular regional periodical.

GREGUTT, Paul; MCCARTHY, Dan; and PRATHER,

Jeff. *Northwest Wines. A Pocket Guide to the Wines of Washington, Oregon and Idaho*. Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 1996. 2nd ed.

Northwest Wines is about rating Northwest wines. A review of grape varieties and vintage years is provided, and the wineries and their products listed and rated. At the end are quality ratings by grape variety. This was a very useful book, consumer oriented and reliable, but now out of date; it will not be revised.

The authors have sound wine credentials and Paul Gregutt is now the wine columnist for the Seattle Times.

Two recently published books could be classified as histories:

PINTARICH, Paul. *The Boys up North*. Portland: The Wyatt Group, 1997.

This is the story of the pioneers of the modern era of Oregon wine. The "boys up north" were those so named by Richard Sommer of Hillcrest Winery in Roseburg, Oregon, because they were in the Willamette Valley to the north of him. Each chapter is a vignette of one or more of the "boys" and their contributions to the wine history of the region and their search for the "Holy Grail," which in this case is the Pinot Noir grape and its wines. The story centers on Dick Erath as though he was the most influential figure in this history, but in fact he was neither the first nor the most important figure in the early history of the industry. He was, however, influential and probably less difficult and more approachable than curmudgeons David Lett and Charles Coury or quirky recluse Richard Sommer. Accordingly the author relied on interviews with Erath to advance his history. The narrative is reportorial and anecdotal; there are no citations or bibliography. Except for a modicum of history, the entire story is crafted from the interviews. The book, however, has considerable merit as a well-written report on the origins of the modern Oregon wine industry and is a good quick read, but it is not a work in depth. The author was a reporter and editor for the Portland Oregonian for thirty years.

IRVINE, Ronald (with Walter J. Clore). *The Wine Project: Washington's Winemaking History*. Vashon, WA: Sketch Publications, 1997.

This carefully researched book is the best to date on the history of wine in Washington. It is also the story of Walter Clore and the Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center of Washington State University. Clore, considered by most to be the father of the modern Wash-

ington wine industry, was associated with the Center for many years. The Wine Project, conducted by the Center, gave a great boost to the industry with the release of its data confirming the potential for vinifera winegrape growing in Eastern Washington.

The author was a former Seattle wine retailer.

Although some of the books noted above discuss British Columbia wines and wineries, none do so with the thoroughness of this trio of books by John Schreiner.

SCHREINER, John. *The Wineries of British Columbia*. Victoria, BC: Orca Book Publishers, 1994.

-----, *The British Columbia Wine Companion*. Victoria, BC: Orca Book Publishers, 1996.

-----, *Chardonnay and Friends: Varietal Wines of British Columbia*. Victoria, BC: Orca, 1998.

Each of these books can stand on its own, but all three taken together constitute a veritable encyclopedia of wines and wineries of British Columbia. In the first one the author gives a detailed history of the region and explains why it has been only in the last decade that the region has received any attention from the rest of the wine world.

The author modestly describes himself as a graduate of the German Wine Academy and a wine judge. He has also written *The World of Canadian Wines* (1984).

The following two books are perhaps the most authoritative of their kind.

CASTEEL, Ted, editor. *Oregon Winegrape Growers Guide*. 4th ed. Portland: Oregon Winegrowers Assn., 1992.

This large-format paperback was published by the Oregon Winegrowers Assn., an organization of winegrape growers. Now in its 4th edition, it has been greatly expanded from the previous editions. Thirty chapters cover everything anyone would want to know about growing winegrapes in Oregon. Because it is so comprehensive and at the same time fundamental, it has had considerable appeal outside Oregon as well. The principles are those of cool-climate viticulture and are universally applicable to regions with a similar climate. The individual chapter authors are vineyardists, extension agents, Oregon State University professors, and others—all experts in their respective fields.

The fifth edition, which promises to be even more lengthy and comprehensive, has been in revision for some time, and it is now expected to be available in 2003.


The final book—and the latest one released—is also the best effort to date. If I were to recommend only one book on Northwest wine, this would be it.

HALL, Lisa S.. *Wines of the Pacific Northwest: A Contemporary Guide to the Wines of Oregon and Washington*. London: M. Beasley, 2001.

This book is the intellectual successor to the Purser and Meredith books cited earlier. The author covers the wines of Oregon and Washington in distinct sections. In each state section she starts with a history, then a chapter on “identity” where she discusses signature factors which identify the state’s wines, then a section on the regions and their wines with an emphasis on the varieties. Each wine region is discussed in order, either by county, district, or AVA, since this is more or less how things evolved. A vintage chart is provided at the end of each state listing. In the regional sections, each area is treated with a discussion of such details as history, climate, geology, soils, elevations, varieties, rootstocks, vineyard density, trellising, canopy management, yields. There are maps of each district and its wineries. A listing for each area winery provides vital information including address, telephone, web-site, e-mail, acreage, varieties and production figures. Throughout are excellent color photographs of vineyard and winery scenes as well as black and white photos of many key industry people. Periodically throughout are vignettes on items such as the Scott Henry trellising system and the International Pinot Noir Celebration.

Hall’s book combines features of a wine atlas, encyclopedia and tour guide; however it is not without some problems. The index entries are misaligned with the actual pages of appearance; trying to locate something from the index becomes an exercise in deduction, since many of the entries are actually and predictably, two pages away. The author has advised me that this will be corrected in the second printing of the book due soon.

There are other factual errors but these are relatively few considering the scope of the book. I am optimistic that this work will be updated periodically and kept abreast of the constantly changing wine scene of this region.

The author, a former food columnist, is a senior editor for *Wine Business Monthly* and winebusiness.com. She has contributed to the *Oxford Companion to Wine*, and the *World Atlas of Wine*, and is the first Oregon candidate for certification as Master of Wine. 



BOOKS & BOTTLES

by
Fred McMillin

WINE COUNTRY PASSAGES

THE BOOK: *They Left their Mark. Famous Passages through the Wine Country* by Joan Parry Dutton. St. Helena, CA: Illuminations Press, 1983. 185 pp. Illus. 8" x 10" hardback, with dustjacket.

The author describes her book this way: "The spine of my story is Mount St. Helena and the countryside around it westward to the coast." Thus, she includes, among others, fascinating details about the Wappo Indians, the Russians arriving before the Spanish, Cyrus Alexander (who "ranks second only to George Yount as a peer of pioneers"), and two legendary Lillies, Coit and Langtry. Lillie Coit would sometimes dress as a man, go to a bar in St. Helena, and smoke, drink bourbon, and swear with the best of them. Actress Lillie Langtry was possibly the most beautiful vintner the world has ever known. From her ranch northeast of St. Helena came wine bottles that wisely "bore the picture of myself on the label." (Her portrait still graces the bottles of Guenoc Winery.)

■ GEORGE YOUNT, a "self-reliant, inventive and ingenious" mountain-man from Missouri, could neither read nor write. However, in 1836, after he roofed General Mariano Vallejo's Sonoma home with California's first wooden shingles, the General gave him two square leagues eighteen miles to the east, in the heart of Napa Valley, and Mission grape vines to go with it. Soon, George was making 200 gallons a year of Napa's first wine.

■ ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON, self-described as "a mere complication of cough and bones," nevertheless took to horse and buggy and visited wineries the fourth day he was in the Napa Valley (1880). Included was Beringer Brothers, the "most handsomely finished of any wine cellar in the Napa Valley" according to the *St. Helena Star*. Two days later he "tasted all" of Jacob Schram's eighteen wines. Robert's new wife Fanny got along famously with Jacob's Annie, who no longer traveled because Jacob had decided she could not leave home without wearing a corset! (The honeymoon stay on Mt. St. Helena and valley travels are picturesquely recorded in Stevenson's *Silverado Squatters*.)

■ JACK LONDON: "Lord, what stacks of hack I'm turning out ... every time I sit down to write, it is with great disgust." Yet, he managed to turn out a mere fifty books in sixteen years ... which financed the purchase of 129 acres, that grew to 1400 acres, near Glen Ellen in Sonoma County. (His grand-nephew, Milo Shepard, was born at the ranch and became the modern guardian of the London vineyards.)

■ SIR FRANCIS DRAKE's *Golden Hinde* entered San Francisco Bay in June 1579. A single Indian paddled out to the ship, delivered several orations, and finally threw onto the deck a bundle of black feathers and a basket of tobacco. He refused all trinkets in return except a cap thrown to him. Thus went the first meeting between Englishmen and the North American Indian. Later, the visitors would eat frequently with their new American friends, washing down the food with Chilean wine, which Drake had taken from a ship he captured off Chile on his way north.

■ LELAND STANFORD'S friend, Samuel Brannan (California's first millionaire), invested his gold-rush profits in Calistoga, upper Napa Valley. His dream resort included a horse racing track, a skating rink, several hotels, vineyards, etc. It almost included a university, too, but Stanford decided Calistoga was too far north for his planned institution.

■ London author HILAIRE BELLOC, like Robert Louis Stevenson sixteen years earlier, honeymooned in Napa Valley. He had married a Napa girl, Elodie Hogan, whom he had met in London and anxiously courted for six love-sick years. While Belloc called California "Paradise," the young couple settled in London. (Among Belloc's many titles, we especially appreciate his *Heroic Poem in Praise in Wine*).

THE BOTTLES: Here are fine bottles we've sipped recently from some of the wineries mentioned in *Famous Passages*, in order of preference:

Montes Folley Syrah 2000, Chile. \$70.

Chas. Krug Napa Valley C.S. 1996. \$47.

Schramsberg Cremant 1999. \$29.

Kenwood Jack London Vineyard C.S. 1998. \$35.

Guenoc North Coast Zinfandel 1998. \$14.

Beringer Founders' Estate Pinot Noir 2000. \$12.

NOTE: The author wishes to express his thanks for the Editor's consistently improving these columns for over ten years.

The chief objection to new books is that they prevent us from reading the old ones. — Joubert



**CELEBRITY BARTENDERS:
JERRY THOMAS AND
THE FIRST COCKTAIL BOOK**

by
Brian Rea



erry Thomas was a famous bartender of the late 1800s who created the "Blue Blazer," and supposedly the "Tom and Jerry," as well as the first bartender's guide, or cocktail book. A thumbnail sketch of his career (a combination of fact, fiction, and supposition) indicates he was

born in Watertown, New York (where the snow doesn't melt till June), in the year 1825. While he was still quite young, his family moved to New Haven, CT.

His first position as assistant bartender was in a couple of New Haven taverns, where most drinks were served at tables. When he was 24 years old, he decided to seek a more exciting future in California, though it would not seem as bartender. Most likely he joined one of the numerous "49er Gold Rush" contingents that were heading west at this time.

In March of 1849, Jerry boarded the bark Ann Smith in New Haven, and arrived in San Francisco seven months later. After the lengthy voyage and short of funds, he looked for employment in the city. To his good fortune, bartenders were in short supply, as almost everyone was leaving for the gold fields, and he had little difficulty in finding work.

Because of his prior bartending experience, Jerry was hired at a famous establishment, the El Dorado, located on Portsmouth Square, then the heart of San Francisco. The El Dorado was a large, canvas and wooden structure, with extensive decorations, a long and beautifully ornate bar, nude oil paintings, curtained booths, chandeliers, gaming tables, orchestra stages, dancers, live performers, and attractive waiter girls. San Francisco, and the El Dorado, experienced several fires in 1849 and 1850, and eventually the building was reconstructed of stone and brick (one wonders if some of these conflagrations were caused by Thomas' experiments while concocting his famous Blue Blazer).

Within months, Jerry became the Principal Bartender's First Assistant, a reward for his hard work, constant attempts to create better tasting concoctions and more attractive presentations, and his imposing presence behind the bar.

But in late 1851, thinking his fortune would be better obtained in the California gold fields, he went

to Yuba City in Sutter County for a brief period, and then ventured 75 miles east to Downieville, a more active mining community. He found employment at a saloon that was a smaller version of the El Dorado, with entertainment, gambling, minstrels, plays, and such. Jerry worked in the gold fields by day and behind the bar at night, but he soon realized this regimen was exhausting his energies and not accumulating any serious funds.

So he began to "grubstake" certain miners, providing them with funds for food, clothing, and mining equipment. When several of these miners made fairly sizable strikes, he was rewarded in return by the appreciative men. Within a year and a half Jerry had "mined" approximately \$15,000.

He returned to New Haven, but quickly became bored (who wouldn't?). He missed the pulse, noise, and excitement of a roaring saloon. In 1853 he escaped to Charleston, South Carolina, where he was bartender at the Mills House for a short period. He then moved on to New Orleans and briefly experienced being a working partner, a function he rather liked.

His restlessness took him next to St. Louis where he worked at the Planter's House (a prestigious position that would be included on the title page of his soon-to-be-published book), and then to Chicago, where he seriously began to consider opening his own establishment in New York, and moved there within a year. Upon his arrival, he was hired as the Principal Bartender at the Metropolitan Hotel (this position also noted on the title page), a famous property in the city. Soon after, he became an owner in a series of fine saloons.

In 1859, Jerry and his rather expensive "bar utensil kit" (valued at some \$5,000) sailed to England, supposedly to view the Hienan-Sayers boxing match. Jerry was an avid fight fan, and prized himself on attending all the major pugilistic events. In Liverpool and Southampton he conducted a number of American cocktail and mixed-drink presentations, and then headed for London.

In July advertising leaflets were dropped from a hot air balloon over the city:

Mr. T.B. Simpson

Begs to inform the Public that by particular desire,
he has opened

An American Bar

For the supply of

**The Real Genuine
Iced American Beverages**

Prepared by

A Genuine American Professor

Every Article of which T.B.S. guarantees shall be of the First
Quality and in Original Purity

This announcement was followed by a list of cobblers, punches, juleps, fancy cocktails, and Democratic Drinks, together with their prices. Some of the Democratic Drinks on the list were the Geo. Washington, Henry Clay, and the Patriotic, as well as the Silver Grey, Hard Shells, and Locomotive. It would seem safe to name Jerry Thomas the Genuine Yankee Professor who would be creating the Real Genuine Iced American Beverages at Mr. Simpson's establishment. ("Professor" was a common term applied to so-called professionals in a particular field, including bartenders and piano players.)

Two years later and back in New York, the Professor was approached by publishers Dick & Fitzgerald to compile a bartender's guide, or cocktail book, based upon his collection of recipes. One of the reasons the publishers gave for developing this book was the popularity of American cocktails in London, especially those with the strange, new-world names, such as: Locomotive, Blue Blazer, Eye Opener, Alabama Fogcutter, Stewed Quaker. One could also assume the publishers had too often experienced the inconsistencies of cocktail preparation in the various establishments they had visited. The Professor's book was completed and published in 1862.

The publishers gave it a most comprehensive title: HOW TO MIX DRINKS, OR THE BON-VIVANT'S COMPANION, CONTAINING CLEAR AND RELIABLE DIRECTIONS FOR MIXING ALL BEVERAGES USED IN THE UNITED STATES, TOGETHER WITH THE MOST POPULAR BRITISH, FRENCH, GERMAN, ITALIAN, RUSSIAN, AND SPANISH RECIPES EMBRACING PUNCHES, JULEPS, COBBLERS, ETC., ETC., ETC., IN ENDLESS VARIETY BY JERRY THOMAS ... TO WHICH IS APPENDED A MANUAL FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF CORDIALS, LIQUORS, FANCY SYRUPS, ETC., ETC., ... THE WHOLE CONTAINING OVER 600 VALUABLE RECIPES BY CHRISTIAN SCHULTZ ... NEW YORK: DICK & FITZGERALD, PUBLISHERS, NO. 18 ANN STREET. 1862.

One has to admit this is a rather extensive title, probably a result of the publisher's attempt to appeal to the broadest reader base. [See the rear cover illustration of this issue for the *complete* title. — Ed.] The book proved popular and was reissued twice in Thomas' lifetime, in 1876 and 1887, and under two different titles: *How to Mix Drinks or the Bon Vivant's Companion*, and *The Bartender's Guide*—the one better suited for bartenders, the other for owners and the public. Herbert Asbury edited, added a lengthy introduction, and reissued the book in 1928, 1929, 1930, and 1934.

As a really *old time* bartender, I most certainly would have had some reservations about purchasing a cocktail recipe book with such a lengthy title, especially regarding the "A Manual For The Manufacture of Cordials, Liquors, Fancy Syrups, etc., etc." section. Sometime in the near future I will address

the proliferation of manuals on the "doctoring" of alcoholic beverages in the bar/pub/saloon business. Decades ago we called this technique "Better Living through Chemistry," which was a famous corporation motto. In my early years in the bartending profession, I was employed at establishments where numerous brand-name products were refilled with a cheaper brand, and God forbid you ever got the bottle labels wet. And we also had some interesting formulations for many popular cordials, as well as our special "Shampagne." But that's another story.

An interesting aspect of Mr. Thomas' book is the number of concoctions that contain wine. Champagne in Champagne Punch, Pine-Apple Punch, Regent's Punch, La Patria Punch, Champagne Cobbler, etc. Sherry is used in punches, cobblers, sangarees, Cider Nectar, and other recipes. Claret is featured in cups, Non-Such Punch, Mulled Claret, Gothic Punch, and Badminton's, to name a few; Sauterne in cobblers and punches; Port wine in Negus, punches, and sangarees, and more. Catawba wine is an essential ingredient of the National Guard 7th Regiment Punch, Rochester Punch, and Gothic Punch, as well as in cobblers. There are similar mixed-drink recipes using Hock, Sparkling Isabella, Moselle, and Burgundy.

Also of interest is the somewhat confusing pricing on the 1862 *Bartender's Guide*. One copy has a price of \$2 stamped on a cover illustrated with a bearded character, elegantly dressed, holding a drink in one hand and a cigar in the other. A list of Dick & Fitzgerald publications in the back of the book indicates the book may be purchased for \$1.50. Another printing had just the title, *The Bartender's Guide*, on the cover, with a price of \$2.50. Then there is another printing, titled *How to Mix Drinks*, with a price of \$2.50. It appears that as soon as each printing sold out, there was an immediate increase in price.

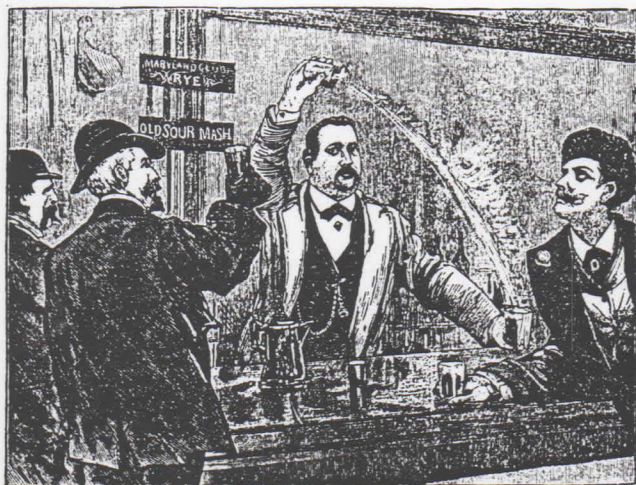
So what made Jerry Thomas such a success? He constantly experimented with creating new drinks, he steadily improved basic cocktails, and he attempted to utilize all new liquors (and liqueurs) as soon as they came on the market. Most important, perhaps, was his habit of writing down the recipe of *every* cocktail he ever made, be it bad or good. And he was probably one of the first bartenders who understood that image was extremely important in establishing *presence* behind the bar. A naturally imposing man, he upgraded the traditional bartender's uniform and presented himself in a tailored white bartender's jacket, stiff shirt and bow-tie, a dark silk vest, a jeweled stickpin and an expensive watch and fob, together with well-pompadoured hair and mustache.

The most important point in this tale is that Jerry Thomas was the very first "Celebrity Bartender." There are many other "Barstars" who have authored books—Harry Johnson, William Schmidt

("The Only William"), Harry McElhone, Frank Meier, Harry Craddock, Patrick Gavin Duffy, William Boothby, to name a few, up to and including the master bartender of today, Dale DeGroff.

Eons ago, when I was a bartender in the late 1940s, I worked with a rather old gentleman who had been tending bar almost 50 years. He had a copy of the original *How to Mix Drinks or The Bon Vivant's Companion*, and we were discussing the Professor's famous "Blue Blazer" creation. My friend told me the story about the first time Jerry concocted the drink: it was a disaster. It seems he attempted to make the drink using two copper mugs. Into one of the mugs he poured three ounces of Scotch whisky, then added to it about three ounces of scalding hot water. After lighting the mixture, he commenced pouring it from one mug to the other, from a height of about two feet. He was successful on the first pour of the stream of fire, but when he tried to pour again, he suddenly dropped both mugs on the bar top, almost setting it on fire. (It was a quick lesson in how rapidly copper conducts heat.) Now duly educated, the Professor used silver mugs for all future presentations. What really intrigued the old bartender and myself was that this so-called famous drink, which required all of Jerry Thomas' intelligence and intellect to create, was just a "Scotch Hot Toddy." It contained Scotch, hot water, sugar, and a lemon peel. The only addition was a lighted match. So much for creativity.

[Brian Rea, a now-retired, 50-year veteran of the Adult Beverage Industry, fell off the wine-library-cart several years ago. He sold his wine book collection and concentrated on forming one of the finest drink book libraries in the country. Today, with over 1500 drink-related books and pamphlets, dating from 1705 to the present, plus artifacts and ephemera, his "Barchives" is a serious research library. See "News & Notes" for a notice on his "beer collection" and his contact information. — Ed.]



[From *Bon Vivant's Companion*, 1928]

RECOLLECTIONS OF ELISABETH WOODBURN:

Book dealer, friend, hostess & leader (a fitting anagram of "dealer")

by
Eberhard Buehler

[It is with great pleasure that we print this vintage book collecting remembrance—a "meritage" of a passionate book collector and an extraordinary bookseller. — Ed.]



he recent Wayward Tendrils articles touching on Elisabeth Woodburn—by Tom Pinney (with follow-up by Thomas Camden) and by Hudson Cattell—prompt me, dour collector that I was, to add to the collection with further recollections.

We (meaning my wife Nancy and I) did not make the acquaintance of the redoubtable Woodburn until after we had already accumulated a respectable number of books on wine and other alcoholic beverages. Our collection began rather slowly in 1960, more by accident than by design, but by late 1963 the design was there and the frenzy followed. And so, on a Saturday like any other, in March of 1965, after doing our shopping and washing the car, we called this bookshop in Hopewell we had seen advertised, and asked Ms Woodburn if we could come for a visit. After determining that we were indeed proper collectors, she agreed, and since we lived in Matawan, New Jersey, at the time, we were there within the hour.

Well, we were overwhelmed by the wealth of material that greeted us, the more so because we realized how well it meshed with our budding collection. We had of course shopped in all of the myriad used bookshops, long since disappeared, on Broadway and Fourth Avenue south of Fourteenth Street in New York, including Eleanor Lowenstein's Corner Bookshop, which specialized in cookbooks, though it carried a large selection of beverage titles as well. But Booknoll Farm was a really happy surprise. Although there were some cookbooks, the selection of books heavily favored wine and other beverages, after horticulture of course, for which our eyes were not trained.

After ravenously scanning the treasures laid out on the tables and shelves, I finally came around to doffing my hunter's outfit and recognizing, as Nancy had already done much earlier, that we had just met some very charming people. In addition to Elisabeth Woodburn (Mrs. Betty Robertson), there was her husband Keith, their teenage daughter and son, and Betty's mother. Once we started talking, I was torn

between my social responsibilities and my collecting responsibilities, and kept looking through the books as well as I could while continuing the conversation. The book transactions actually ended when we ran out of money, but the party continued, as we were invited to stay for dinner. And yes, not only was Betty a passionate gardener, she was also a very good cook. Keith, congenitally warm and outgoing, regaled us with endless stories. We finally tore ourselves away shortly after midnight. Because of my own association with the navy, I felt a certain kinship with Keith, who served in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters during the second World War and had been commanding officer of a destroyer. He retired as captain in the Naval Reserve.

The next visit to Booknoll Farm came about six weeks later and the results were just about identical. We can't remember how often we had dinner with the Robertsons, but we do remember that these evenings were always very enjoyable. On several occasions we brought a wine from our cellar to contribute to the conviviality. Naturally, we bought at least a few books each time we visited, and dinner with its truly scintillating conversation was always a highlight for us.

Betty's most important influence on our collection was to flesh it out with agricultural and horticultural works, many of which contained important material on grape culture. Many a garden was graced by grapes, even where nary a berry was turned into wine.

On one of my business trips from New York to California, in 1967, I took advantage of my free time to visit as many bookstores as I could—in San Francisco, Palo Alto, San Jose. But I also rented a car for a drive through the Napa and Sonoma wine country. Imagine my surprise—and Betty's—when we ran into each other on a tour of the Haraszthy Cellars. No doubt we had both visited some of the same bookstores as well.

By the late sixties, concurrently with the growing interest in wine, prices of wine books began their inexorable rise. The Leon Lambert gastronomy auction in 1966 was probably the last great bargain sale, the likes of which we will not see again until the bottom falls out of the wine market—probably not in my lifetime, but eventually. Through her contact in London, Betty had bid successfully on a large number of items in that sale, and I was able to acquire many fine books as a result.

One of the things that helped me in my book searches was the ability to communicate reasonably well in languages other than English. In our travels to France, Germany and Spain—not only to wine centers such as Bordeaux, Strasbourg, Würzburg, Jerez etc., but to major book centers like Paris, Hamburg, Munich, Frankfurt, Lisbon and Madrid—I went to

out-of-the-way dealers where English was spoken poorly, if at all. Particularly fruitful were trips in 1966 and 1969, and I became less dependent on Betty for some of the hard-to-find items.

Thus, our regular visits to Booknoll Farm became much less frequent as time went on and the collection grew to the point where scarcity and price conspired to limit its expansion. While we lived in Manhattan (1969-71), we saw Betty & Keith mostly at book fairs and sometimes at the Antiquarian Book Center in Rockefeller Center. Then, when we moved back to New Jersey (Ridgewood), the big old house we had bought for renovation competed heavily for our financial resources. Nevertheless, we continued to occasionally meet the Robertsons in Hopewell.

Things took a dramatic turn in late 1978, when my job took me to Milan, Italy. We had packed the entire collection and sent it off to storage. Less than a year later, in September 1979, we learned there had been an intense 20-hour fire at the warehouse and our belongings and those of 11 other families on overseas assignments had been destroyed. Only later did we learn that the books had suffered more water than fire damage. Unfortunately, I did not call Betty until some time later to cry on her shoulder. She knew of a space-age freeze-dry facility in Philadelphia; the books were sent there and promptly deep-frozen for processing, a little too late alas. In December, just before Christmas, we combined our annual home leave with a visit to the warehouse in Connecticut where the goods had been moved. After inspecting the damage, we drove down to Betty & Keith's in Hopewell for the week-end. Their house and barn had by now been turned into a beautiful place and we enjoyed great food and two days of rest and sympathy. The following week, Keith drove Betty up to the warehouse in Connecticut, where she acted as our expert witness, together with other "experts" (book restoration, etc.), all of whom of course knew each other very well. Betty was truly a friend in need, and we'll never forget her kindness and support during that difficult time.

We cancelled the last book order we had placed with Betty while we were in Italy, but there was a more interesting transaction that sprang from the ruins. First, a little background. Betty believed that a book dealer should never collect what she sells, because that would ultimately hurt the relationship with the customer. One evening, during the sixties as I recall, while we were in our cups at dinner with Betty & Keith and the children, I remarked, casually and innocently, that I had heard there were dealers who secretly built collections of their own on the side. The look that her son gave Betty was a dead giveaway for something. That something, which she told me about later, was the "United States Alcoholic Beverage & Grape Collection" which Betty eventually offered

for sale, and which was purchased by the Virginia State Library (now Library of Virginia). That collection contained a few items that I would have dearly loved to own. Well, Betty spotted a book in the remains of our collection that was not in that list and I agreed to let her buy it back so that it could be included in the collection.

Betty and Keith did actually collect books for themselves that were never for sale. They showed us some stunning illustrated books, and great rarities, particularly on birds. And speaking of birds, they had Canada geese nesting in a pond on their farm.

Before our move to Italy, Betty suggested that I might want to use the opportunity to build a more focused collection, specializing in Italian books. She had a good customer in Italy who had an extensive collection. Unfortunately, I had only just begun to get my book bearings in Italy—we had been there less than a year—but it was an idea I might well have acted on. As it was, I had already accumulated a small pile of Italian wine books. But after the loss of the collection, I gave up wine book collecting “cold turkey.” Betty also suggested a couple of times in the late seventies that I buy her wine book business, since she wanted to concentrate on horticulture. But I declined the invitation, recognizing that I didn’t have it in me to be a book dealer, certainly not with real live customers knocking at my door. In the entry on Elisabeth Woodburn in the *Dictionary of American Antiquarian Bookdealers* (Greenwood Press, 1998), Donald Dickinson says this about Woodburn’s narrowing her specialties: “First she sold her stock of 4,000 cookbooks, estimated to be one of the largest in the country, and then, unhappy with the people who collected wine books—they were slow to pay their bills—cleared her shelves in one big sale.” I recall several occasions when Betty complained bitterly to me about some of her delinquent customers.

On our return from Italy in 1983, we made our home in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. In 1984, Betty paid a visit to Chapel Hill resident William L. Hunt, North Carolina Botanical Garden benefactor, and one of Betty’s longtime customers for horticulture books. Betty & Keith dropped in at our place for breakfast that day, and since they wanted us to meet Mr. Hunt, arranged for him to come to our house later to pick them up. Not only did we meet our distinguished local citizen, but we got an expert critique of our plantings and Nancy got a signature for her copy of Hunt’s book on Southern Gardens.

Our last visit to the Robertsons was in June of 1988. We were in the vicinity and called to invite ourselves over for a visit. Betty’s garden was as beautiful as ever, and there was a second terrier to keep her Skye company. (To this day, Nancy thinks of Betty whenever she sees a Skye terrier—or a scented

geranium.) We enjoyed a long talk over drinks. When I told Betty of my new collecting interest, she immediately had me call a bookdealer friend of hers in Pennsylvania who specialized in that area.

Some time prior to this last visit, we had learned that Keith collected books on poker, a game at which he was an expert. One of our local Chapel Hill used bookshops had a shelf of books on card games and I picked up two poker books that “felt” promising. I gave these to Keith, and it turned out that one of them was quite scarce and he did not own it. Imagine our surprise when we saw an article on Keith’s poker book collection in the *Wall Street Journal* (“He’s Flush With Poker Books,” 10 August 1990), which called it “the largest collection in the U.S. and probably the world.” Keith was not only a collector, but a well-known award-winning writer of numerous children’s books and six murder mysteries (as Carlton Keith). Our last letter to Betty & Keith was sent in August of 1990, just before we went to Shanghai. When we returned in February of 1991, we learned that Betty had died suddenly on November 18th, at the age of 78. Keith, who had been suffering from cancer, survived her by less than a year.

Betty often talked to us with great admiration about her contemporaries Leona Rostenberg and Madeleine Stern, the famous New York antiquarian book dealers, still active, as far as I know, at the age of 90. Leona Rostenberg was the second woman to head the ABAA (1972-74). Interestingly, her friend Betty Woodburn became the third ten years later (1982-84). A testament to her strong leadership comes from Lawrence I. Fox, writing in 1999 on the occasion of his 20th anniversary as legal counsel to the ABAA. Stating that the “Association now has the strongest and most recognized code of ethics in the industry,” he also says: “The steadfast refusal of Betty Woodburn and her board of governors to accede to an expelled member’s demand for reinstatement, and their resolve to stand firm in defense of their decision to enforce the ethical code, established the ethical code as one of the most significant reasons for the Association’s existence.” In the same article, we also learn of Betty’s generosity: “In 1991, the Elisabeth Woodburn Fund was established to provide financial assistance to advance continuing education efforts of antiquarian booksellers and to fund research projects related to bookselling.”

Betty signed some of her notes to us “ER.” I think it’s rather fitting that she shared those initials with “Elizabeth Regina,” Queen of England. Thus wine book collectors can have their own queen—no purchase necessary.



THE 'PROFESSOR'S' SINGULAR VINE

by
Allan Shields

[This is Allan's ninth contribution to our *Quarterly* since he became *Tendrill-ized* in 1999. But we were previously introduced to his enthusiastic and eclectic interest in the world of wine in 1994 when his publication, *Wild Bill Neely and the Pagan Brothers' Golden Goat Winery* (1992) was reviewed (v.4 #1). Since joining he has delighted us with book reviews, instructed us in "wine aesthetics," and given us in-depth studies of the Bancroft Oral History Series and the history of the Thompson Seedless grape. His non-winey publications include biographies of two of his heroes, composer Erich Korngold and movie star Rin-Tin-Tin. — Ed.]

"An institution is the lengthened shadow of a man."
— Ralph Waldo Emerson



On the campus of California State University, Fresno there exist many "monuments" that are not so designated: Joyal Hall, Henry Madden Library, Phebe Conley Art Building and the soon-to-be constructed, academically named, "Save Mart Center." One more mute, living monument grows vigorously on Barstow Avenue in front of the Viticulture and Enology Research Center, parallel with the sidewalk on the north side of the busy through-campus road driven along daily by thousands. Few are even aware of the very large grape vine, or give it a second glance, mainly because there are hundreds of acres of grape vines nearby. "Ho-hum, another row of vines," viewers must be thinking. What is not at all obvious to a casual viewer is the fact that this vine is a singular, lone Thompson Seedless work of art created over many years by Professor Vincent E. Petrucci, and personally attended by him, or under his direct supervision, year in, year out, since it was planted in 1981.

In mid-2001, this monumental *vinifera* Thompson Seedless vine measures approximately 83.5' in length (counting the blowing annual canes), about 7'+ high (ditto) and it is supported on a specially designed trellis composed of stout wires strung at various levels, supported by husky posts with T-bars about every 8', strong enough to support the great, annual burden of luscious table grapes. The 'Professor's' vine measures 2' in circumference at the base of the cordon (stem, trunk) at the graft made onto Dogridge root-stock. (The vine was procured from the Sunridge Nursery, east of Bakersfield.) The "arms" or cordon branches

which go left and right (east to west) from the main cordon stem, run about 40' and they measure about 4" in diameter (or nearly 1' in circumference), varying along the arms. In 2000, the vine yield was eight hundred pounds, the equivalent of 22 tons per acre. Though the vine is irrigated under a carefully controlled program, it also receives ambient water from the adjacent lawn and flowerbed sprinklers. It should be obvious by now that Vince's singular Thompson Seedless vine is no ordinary one. It is indeed monumental, if only in size, and it is also monumental in a richer sense, as we shall reveal.

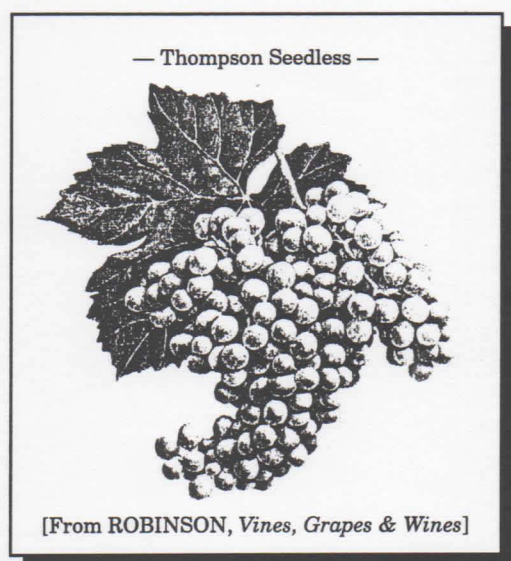
Why did the 'Professor' choose a Thompson Seedless vine, the most common raisin/table grape grown in California and the great San Joaquin Valley? Though it figures largely as an additive to jug white wines, as sweeteners in baby foods and other foods, and in canned fruits, such as the ubiquitous "Fruit Cocktail," and, primarily, as raisins, it is seldom made into a varietal wine.

During an interview on June 19, 2001, Vince gave this answer to the question, "Why did you select the Thompson Seedless?":

That vine was planted by Carter Clary in my honor. I thought the Thompson Seedless has the largest single acreage of any variety of grapes planted in the United States (but not the world). I thought it very appropriate that our "signature" grapevine would be planted for display at the Viticulture and Enology Research Center front yard. Because of this, my idea was to make this grapevine unique. On that day it was planted by Dr. Clary, and upon subsequent growth to this day, I personally trained the vine, pruned it only with the help of graduate and undergraduate students, who collected the pruning wood in order to measure the various weights. These data would become useful for comparisons in later years. This unique training system was a bilateral cordon, which would soon reach 40' per side. At each stake placing of the cordon I developed the typical Thompson seedless 'head and cane structure,' thus simulating the Thompson Seedless at each stake.

The selection of Thompson Seedless was an entirely appropriate one if only for the fact that the variety has, historically, done more to support the viticulture and raisin industry in California than any other. It is claimed that the Thompson Seedless accounts for more than 90% of the acreage devoted to table grapes, and an even higher percentage to raisins. Clearly, Thompson Seedless is no longer just one of the bunch: It has earned its place as a symbolic icon for the industry, even including the wine industry. Truth be told, a great deal of "white wine" is the result of blending Thompson Seedless with other varieties, and

a few vintners, including the winery at California State University, Fresno, are known to have made an acceptable white wine as a Thompson Seedless varietal. One such bottling, from the very first crush in 1997, was sold at the university Farm Market labeled, "Sunrise," with the name "Thompson Seedless" prominently displayed. Professor Maynard Amerine, Department of Viticulture and Enology, University of California-Davis, maintained that the "wine snobs" may dismiss a Thompson Seedless wine, but given proper selection (seasonal timing), controlled yeast and fermentation, temperatures, soil, etc., it is entirely possible to make a good, light wine from the lowly grape. Among the wine cognoscenti this debate, and many more like it, will likely rage perennially, but the economic fact remains that Thompson Seedless juice has sustained many light, white wines over the years.



In her handsomely illustrated book *Vines, Grapes, and Wines* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), Jancis Robinson identifies Thompson Seedless with the Sultana vine. Under the heading, "Synonyms," she lists: Sultanina, Sultanine Blanche (France); Oval Kishmish (Middle East); Kismis (USSR); Fehersultan (Hungary); Thompson Seedless (California).

Following are the synonymous names of the Thompson Seedless grape found during my research on its history, along with the sources cited in the original text.¹ (This list is not complete.) [See *W-T Quarterly*, Vol. 12, Nos. 1, 2 for Allan's Thompson Seedless history, "A Lust for the Lady de Coverly." — Ed.]

- ▶ Lady de Coverly (California State Historical Marker No. 929)
- ▶ Thompson's Seedless (Harter Bros. History)
- ▶ Thompson Seedless (Harter Bros. History)

- ▶ Sultana (in Australia and South Africa: Winkler, Weaver, Robinson)
- ▶ Sultanina (Luther Burbank, Winkler, Robinson)
- ▶ Oval Kishmish (in Eastern Mediterranean: Winkler, Robinson)
- ▶ Sultanina rose (Winkler, Weaver, Robinson)
- ▶ Sultanich (Eastern Mediterranean: Winkler)
- ▶ Chekirdeksiz (in Turkey: Winkler, Robinson)
- ▶ AK Kishmish (in Russia: Winkler, Robinson)
- ▶ Sultanine Blanche (France: Robinson)
- ▶ Fehersultan (Hungary: Robinson)
- ▶ Colloquial: 1. Thompson; 2. Thompson Worthless (see Hanson); and 3. Martin Ray was so unhappy with vintners who actually made wine using Thompson Seedless grapes he refused to use the upper case for Thompson's name, instead calling it "thompson seedless." (Eleanor Ray, *Vineyards in the Sky: The Life of Legendary Vintner Martin Ray*, Stockton, CA: Heritage West Books, 1993.)



"stop planting that damn grape ..."

Victor Davis Hanson has recently written an encomium for the Thompson Seedless vine. He gives William Thompson large credit as a genius in the nursery business. Hanson speaks from long family experience about the Thompson Seedless:

I grew up with my great-grandfather's and grandfather's Thompson vineyards, worked, played, and aged amid their 45,000 vines, 90 acres planted mostly in the last century on every empty space of this farm. I have been on my knees for two years, along with my brother and cousin, planting twenty more acres of Thompsons, weeding around the young vines, staking and wiring the vineyard, training the young vinelets up the stake. I have torn out ten acres of my ancestors' grapes with a tractor and chain, hired a bulldozer to eradicate twenty and more acres and to stack their carcasses for burning—stakes, wires, stumps, and all. I have planted, worked—and destroyed—Thompson vines most of my life on or beside a tractor...

There are over 8,000 varieties of grapes in this world, grown in hundreds of different climates in a variety of soils. But within the United States nearly 90 percent of all commercial grape acreage is found in California. Of those 70 to 90 important varieties grown here, about half of the state's vineyards are planted in just one species, Thompson Seedless grapes. Thompsons comprise some 300,000 acres, nearly all of it in this Central Valley. America does not know it, but the Thompson Seedless grape is the nation's most ubiquitous and important vine...

...Thousands of farm families in this century lived and died by the Thompson. They thrived due to its sheer power of production, its supernatural abilities to produce fifteen tons and more of fresh grapes per single acre of vineyard—and just as often died by the ensuing surfeit when the winery, the raisin packer, the canner, the juicer, and the shipper said, “You farmers, stop planting that damn grape; we got all the Thompson Worthless we can handle and then some.” You see, we planted it to superfluity because it was the perfect grape for this perfect Valley. [Victor Davis Hanson, *The Land Was Everything: Letters From an American Farmer*, New York: The Free Press, 2000.]



VINCENT PETRUCCI AND THE VITICULTURE & ENOLOGY RESEARCH CENTER

Others have referred to the Viticulture and Enology Research Center as a monument to the career and influence of Professor Vincent E. Petrucci, and to the Viticulture and Enology programs at California State University, Fresno. From 1947 and beyond his retirement in January 1994, Vince Petrucci devoted his considerable talents to gathering support for a viticulture program (1948), then an enology program (1956), and recently, in 1999, watching the establishment of an academic department: the Department of Viticulture and Enology. (Vince is the first to recognize the many colleagues and industry friends who also contributed to these achievements.) His success in gaining financial, administrative, and even political support for the programs is everywhere recognized and frequently noticed with special awards. The dedicated Thompson Seedless vine in front of the VERC should be mentioned first. The library in the VERCenter is named in his honor: the Vincent E. Petrucci Library. In May 1994, California State University, Fresno bestowed the honorary degree, Doctor of Science, on him, recognizing his long commitment to the science of viticulture and his dedication to the development of the viticulture-enology program.

Leaders in the industry quickly saw the future benefits of carefully controlled research producing reliable, practical results, and eagerly supported the technological training of both undergraduate and graduate students who would be well prepared to enter the industry, ready to run when their feet hit the ground after graduation.

The administrative complexities of the organization of both the Viticulture and Enology Research Center and the recent Department of Viticulture and Enology within the California State University system

cannot easily be reduced to an abstract outline or table of organization. This achievement was reached only after many years of progressive, farsighted effort on the part of many people and agencies of academic government. Here is one effort to adumbrate the complexities by quoting material that appears in a glossy promotional bulletin published by the Viticulture and Enology Research Center in the early 1990s. The VERC was dedicated in 1993. (N.B. This was published before the department was established in 1999.)

Donations from the grape and wine industry funded the first research building, which was completed in 1978. The [V&E] Center includes a 143-acre vineyard used as a teaching laboratory, a winery, a grape varietal block consisting of commercial rootstocks, grape species and over 100 cultivars, a commercial prototype micro-wave vacuum drying system (MIVAC), a fuel alcohol engine modification unit, laboratories, cold storage facilities, dehydrators, growth and fumigation chambers, a greenhouse and a viticulture and enology specialized library supported by the CSUF Viticulture Alumni Club.

In 1985, the Viticulture and Enology Research Center (VERC), became an official entity [of the university] with Professor Vincent E. Petrucci as Director. VERC is one of the several centers under the direction of the university's California Agriculture Technology Institute (CATI). [N.B. The CATI is not to be confused with the Agricultural Foundation. Fortunately, the history of that primary and important organization at California State University, Fresno can be set aside for our purposes. It should be mentioned at least that the Ag Foundation was the single most important determining organization in the founding of CSU, Fresno on its present, expansive campus site. It is the Ag Foundation which holds the license to permit the making and selling of wine.]

The California Agriculture Technology Institute is a legal entity separate from, but integrated with, the university system, and was organized by businessmen and ranchers concerned to provide financial assistance and professional direction for agricultural programs on the campus of CSU, Fresno. The CATI also provides a legal entity to collect donations and to administer grants and scholarships. It also provides the necessary separate legal entity, under the Agriculture Foundation, required for the university to house a winery, and to sell wine under legal, limiting conditions too detailed for our present purposes. All of the above is independent of the departmental functions—but not entirely, for the research faculty salaries are supported by the CATI, while the university provides for teaching appointments. Indeed, the Director of the VERC is also the Chairman of the

Department of Viticulture and Enology, itself a unique administrative arrangement in the university. In 2001, students continue to perform hands-on work in the vineyard experiments, in the technical laboratories, but now earn credits towards a degree in viticulture, enology, or both.

From a practical standpoint, there can be no dichotomous division of knowledge between the grape and the wine. Whatever affects the grape on the vine will affect the wine in the bottle. Thus the VERC works entirely in consonance with the curriculum in the Department of Viticulture and Enology.

This academic department is unique in the university, as already noted, in that the faculty members in the V-E Department are expected to devote 70% of their time to research and 30% to teaching, at least until the number of faculty positions is increased as the department grows. The heavy financial contributions from the wine, raisin, and grape industries make all of this possible.

The Thompson Seedless cultivar has lent itself to the development of nearly 50 new seedless grape varieties, some of which promise major new developments in the entire industry. New types of table grapes and raisins, including the new "Puff Raisins" and, especially, new varietal wine grapes, are direct results of experimental, basic research. Thus, not only does The 'Professor's' singular vine celebrate the past viticultural-enological achievements. It augurs well for the rapidly developing future.

From 1947, when Vince displaced all other candidates for the sole position as viticulturist ("because I could drive a tractor"), he has been dedicated to enhancing his relationship with leaders in the industry of grapes—wine, raisins, vines. Roma Wine Company donated the money to cover his first position (an endowed amount of \$50,000, not Vince's salary!) where he labored and taught in the vineyards at Hammer Field, now part of the Fresno–International Airport and the Air National Guard station. Looking back to 1947-48, more than half a century ago, those humble beginnings seem no more than a hazy dream, compared with the current, dazzling reality of the program and facilities.

Well known is the overwhelming success of Vince's efforts to attract support from the industry. The obvious support is money—money to build the facility buildings ("the edifice complex"); money to support grants and scholarships; money to support research, faculty, and staff; money for a technical library and librarian.

Vincent E. Petrucci Library

The Vincent E. Petrucci Library has a clearly stated mission: to collect "information on the subjects of viticulture and enology, and provide the materials,

services, and facility necessary to meet current and future information needs of students, faculty, staff, and industry." The library, with some 700 volumes, an extensive pamphlet file, and current subscriptions to 32 periodicals in the field, supports the curriculum of the classes offered in the areas of viticulture and enology as well as research projects being conducted at VERC. An endowment established in 1996 by the "Viticulture Alumni Club" supports all library operations.

Leaders in the industry have also given their personal services and time to organizational meetings, boards, and advisory groups, as well as political support on and off campus. Within the context of VERC, at least, it is common, public knowledge that Vince Petrucci has had to contend with running, rear-guard attacks opposing the founding of both the viticulture-enology program and the new department. Maynard Amerine, professor at the University of California, Davis, where Vince earned the Bachelor of Science degree in Pomology and the Master of Science degree in Horticulture, strongly and publicly opposed the development of a program not under the direction of UC, Davis. On campus at CSU, Fresno a few intellectual elitists doubted the educational values of growing and guzzling wine. Town and gown collided annually, it seemed, over the production, sampling, and sales of alcoholic beverages. More than occasionally, Vince found himself alone while defending his program, and several times doing so from a hospital bed, when pressures of tension became too much for human flesh. Monuments are rarely dedicated for suffering sleepless nights or stomach ulcers and similar setbacks. Perhaps they should be.

Another criticism raised about the program support is that large donors might be in a position to influence unduly the research process, design, direction, and thereby possibly influence results scientifically prejudicial. Dean Daniel Bartell, of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, answers those concerns. First, he points out, all grants for research are under contractual limits, meaning that there are no outside restrictions or attached strings designed to manipulate the research. Policy ensures the opposite. Scientific standards are scrupulously adhered to. Second, though there are, indeed, 'proprietary contracts,' experimental studies designed by a donor, these too are carefully designed with controls and time limits, so that the results, positive or negative, must be made public within the contracted time limit.

Some of the major donors are well-known names in the industry, firms such as Roma Winery, Delicato Winery, Canandaigua, and Gallo. On the other hand, of the more than one hundred donors, many are modest family interests: the Geno Nonini family and

the Walter Ficklin family (both of Madera), Dr. and Mrs. Don Ford, William Robinett, the Ricchiuti family, or the Metzler Family Farms. These are representative of the widespread support, the foundation of the entire program.

Needless to say, so I'll say it, without the constant support of the Ag Foundation, the CATI, and especially the College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, the path of development, rough as it was in hindsight, would have been rougher and longer in coming. From the outside looking in, it is we who are the ultimate beneficiaries of the foresight and dedication of Vince Petrucci and his colleagues. To them we raise a toast: Cheers!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: Vincent E. Petrucci; Dean Daniel B. Bartell; Alev Akman, Library Coordinator, Vincent E. Petrucci Library; Cynthia Wood, Information Services Coordinator, VERC; Christy Hicks and Jean Coffee, Henry Madden Library; Prof. Ken Fugelsang, Winemaster, VERC.

SOURCES (not listed in text):

Luther Burbank, *His Methods and Discoveries and Their Practical Application*, Vol. VI, New York/ London: Luther Burbank Press, 1914.

Robert J. Weaver, *Grape Growing*, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1976.

A .J. Winkler, *General Viticulture*, Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1962.

1. The original text of "The 'Professor's' Singular Vine," from which this Wayward Tendrils excerpt is taken, has been presented in bound form to the Vincent E. Petrucci Library. It includes a considerable amount of evidence on the origin and naming of the Thompson Seedless, and is profusely illustrated with color photographs and wine labels.



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A Treatise on Raisin Production, Processing and Marketing

Edited by
Vincent E. Petrucci, Sc.D. and
Carter D. Clary, Ph.D.



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THREE BOOKS WE DON'T HAVE TO HAVE ONE OLDER, TWO NEWER

[The following review is reprinted, with kind permission, from the Spring 1950 *Wine and Food* quarterly journal of the I.W.&F.S. — Ed.]

Wine Journeys by Stuart Olivier. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1949. 1st ed. 312 pp. Cloth, with dust jacket.

It would be better to disregard this book except that some unwary *Wine and Food* reader may see it advertised and be tempted to purchase it. The introduction is favourable as no less a critic of American letters than Mr. H.L. Mencken recommended its publishing. In addition, the author was formerly a practising newspaper man from Baltimore and may thus be considered able to write in a style appropriate to the wines and period concerned. Instead, one finds dull stories couched in the most atrocious American slang and filled with bad clichés. His taste in exposing his methods of collecting is certainly questionable. Even the text is not free of criticism. That Julius Caesar sponsored brandy production in the Charente is a new angle. That one should be pleased to be baptized in 1911 Burgundy is more surprising. And the use of Lunel (normally a sweet muscatel) to "wash down" ham is incongruous. The author notes the sad state of twentieth century culture. His book inclines one to agree.

[In the June-July 2002 issue of *Wine East*, Hudson Cattell gives us fair warning. — Ed.]

Grossman's Cyclopedia: The Concise Guide to Wines, Beers, and Spirits by Harriet Lembeck. Philadelphia: Running Press. 640 pp. Soft cover, \$10.

First of all, this book is an abridgment of the 7th edition of *Grossman's Guide to Wines, Beers, and Spirits* published in 1983 and favorably reviewed in the January-February 1984 issue of *Wine East*. The 6th edition of Grossman's standard reference work on licensed beverages was the first to be revised and updated by Harriet Lembeck. This concise edition is not only much smaller (4½" x 5¼") but leaves out too much, including all of the 50-page chapter on the wines of the United States. Not recommended.

[Our thanks to Bob Foster and the *California Grapevine* (Aug-Sept 2002) for pointing out this one. — Ed.]

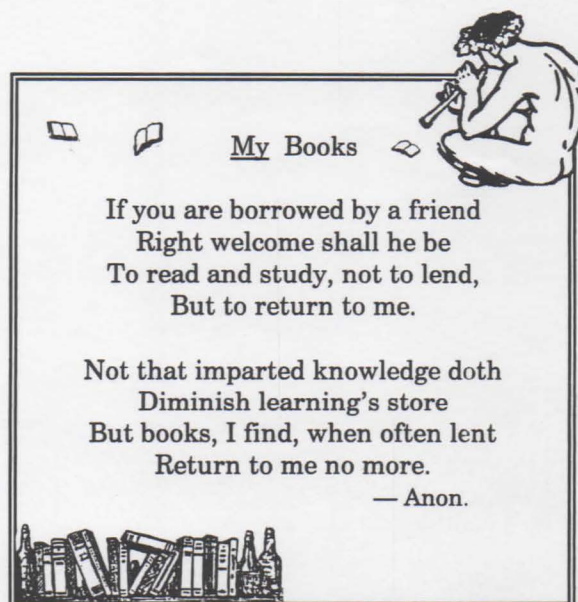
Sniffing the Cork, and other Wine Myths Demystified by Judy Beardsall. New York: Atria Books (Simon & Schuster), 2002. 1st ed. 210 pp. Hardback. \$22.

For some reason it seems as if we are in an era in which everyone wants to write a basic wine guidebook. Given this plethora of works the question that must be asked with each new work is: what does it add to the literature? Sadly, with this book the answer is, it's the same core information available in scores of other works, in simply a new cover.

The author, who spent twenty years in the wine business and was the first woman manager at the famous Sherry-Lehmann wine shop in New York City, clearly has a passion for wine. In fact, she's the only wine writer I've ever read who devoted a section to the sounds of opening a bottle and pouring a glass of wine. But I've never gotten any real pleasure from the sound of a cork coming out of a bottle. Of course, if done carefully, there will be almost no sound.

Both the press release that came with the book, and the introduction emphasize that this is a work designed to primarily speak to women. While there is little question that wine making and wine appreciation have for too long been bastions for males, the material in the book seems gender neutral. Sections on matching food and wine have been part of wine literature for decades. If there is a slant to this book that is especially for women, it eluded me. (But then I'm of the other gender.) There are no maps, no photographs, only a few sidebars. It's not particularly visually interesting.

If this were the only beginning wine book on the market, it would be a decent basic work. But it is not the only book and others have covered this territory in a more interesting manner in books that were loaded with maps, charts, and photographs. Not recommended.



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