



WAYWARD TENDRILS QUARTERLY

Vol.14 No.3

A WINE BOOK COLLECTOR'S SOCIETY

July 2004

"The Finest Wines in the World are Homemade Wines"

The Career of Philip M. Wagner

by Thomas Pinney

[Following the death of Philip Wagner in December 1996, the *Wayward Tendrils* published "An Appreciation of Philip M. Wagner, 1904–1996, with a Short Bibliography" by Robert Hutton. We are pleased to present now, in two parts, Tom Pinney's essay on this remarkable wineman. — Ed.]



Who belong in the pantheon of American wine? From the 19th century one would have to include such names as Adlum, Dufour, Longworth, Haraszthy. From the 20th century the choice is not so clear: Amerine? Frank? Schoonmaker? Ray? Mondavi? Gallo? However one might decide among these and a great many other names, there is one that certainly belongs: that of Philip Marshall Wagner. No one did more than Wagner to promote an intelligent interest in wine among Americans; even more impressive, no one did more than Wagner to show how every man might enjoy wine of his own making. Wagner's contributions were both literary and practical. He wrote well about wine—its history, its variety, and its pleasures—at a time when very few were doing so; but he also instructed a generation of Americans in the science and art of growing vines and making wine. And after he had raised an interest in wine, and shown how the eager novice might make wine of his own, Wagner would then supply the necessary vines. No one else among those who had the fortunes of American wine in their hands in the years since Repeal provided such a combination of things.

Wagner's work first caught my attention nearly forty-five years ago when I bought a remaindered copy of his *American Wines and Wine-Making*. The impact

of that work was such that I could not rest until I had tried growing vines and making wine myself. That I utterly failed to produce a drinkable wine was certainly not Wagner's fault, and I have always been grateful to him for helping to shape and guide my interest in the great subject of wine. When I published my *History of Wine in America* (1989) I included an acknowledgment of Wagner at the end of my introduction. "I should like," I wrote then, "to make acknowledgment to a writer personally unknown to me, Philip Wagner" and went on to say how much I thought he had done to "foster an intelligent interest in wine among Americans." Someone (I am pretty sure that it was my friend and fellow-Tendril, John McGrew) called Wagner's attention to this passage, and he wrote me a note of thanks; he also sent me, in token of my identity as a professor of English, a copy of his pamphlet on his old colleague, H. L. Mencken.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- MARTIN RAY and MAYNARD AMERINE
- COLLECTING WINE BOOKPLATES
- BOB FOSTER BOOK REVIEWS
- BALZER'S *CALIF'S BEST WINES* – An Index
- BOOKS & BOTTLES: "Smelling & Tasting"



Wagner and I exchanged a few further notes before his death in 1996, but, to my regret, we never met. I am happy to put down on the pages of the *Wayward Tendrils Quarterly* some of the information I have been able to find about Wagner's life and work, together with a checklist of his writings about wine. He deserves to be well-remembered by all wine lovers;

or, rather, as I have said, he deserves a place in the pantheon of American wine—and no minor place.

Wagner's parents were both from old Connecticut families, so it was appropriate that he was born in New Haven, where his father had just earned a Ph.D in Spanish at Yale. In the year of his birth Wagner was taken to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where his father had been appointed to the faculty of the University of Michigan and where he remained until his retirement in 1947. All of Philip Wagner's young life was spent in Ann Arbor. The elder Wagner published a *Spanish Grammar* in 1917, and this, Philip Wagner said, "put the four Wagner children through college." The three children who followed Philip were his brother Robert and his two sisters, Ruth and Mary Elisabeth.

Philip entered the University of Michigan in 1921, and soon showed an interest in journalism. He spent summers as a cub reporter on the Philadelphia North American, and was managing editor of the University newspaper, the Michigan Daily, in his senior year. After graduation he went to work in the publicity department of the General Electric Company at its headquarters in Schenectady, New York, and in the same year he married Helen Crocker, by whom he had two children, Susan, and Philip C.

I do not know when and where Philip Wagner might have acquired his liking for wine. Was it familiar on the family table? Did the undergraduates at Michigan enjoy wine? The circumstances were certainly all against his acquiring a familiar knowledge at that time and in that place. Wagner was 15 years old when the 18th amendment, forbidding the sale of intoxicating drink, was ratified; he was 16 when it went into effect, under the Volstead Act, in 1920, and he was 29 when the 21st amendment, the Repeal amendment, at last put an end to Prohibition in 1933. Thus the first decade of his drinking age was spent under conditions of severe drouth. Nor was Michigan then a place of established winemaking. There were extensive vineyards of Concord grapes in the fruit-growing southwest corner of the state, but anything suitable for wine had to come from elsewhere. It may be that the five years he spent in Schenectady saw the beginnings of his career as a student of wine and as a domestic winemaker, but one can only guess. What is certain is that by 1933, when he published *American Wines and How to Make Them*, he already had an expert's knowledge not only of the basics of winemaking but of general viticulture, of the traditions of European winemaking, and of the peculiar history of wine in America, both in California and in the East. This was a precocious achievement indeed, but must nevertheless have occupied a number of years of recreational study even for a precocious student.

In 1930 Wagner joined the Baltimore Evening Sun as an editorial writer, and so began the journalistic career that was to last to the end of his working days. I may summarize that career briefly here, to clear the ground for a discussion of his unofficial but thoroughly professional life as viticulturist, winemaker, and writer on wine. In 1936 he was sent to England as the London correspondent of the Evening Sun. His job was not to cover breaking news but to write feature material wherever he might find it. He returned to his work in Baltimore in 1937, and in the next year he was put in charge of the editorial page of the Evening Sun, in succession to Mencken, who briefly preceded him in that position. In 1943 Wagner migrated from the Evening Sun to the grander mother paper, the Baltimore Sun and for the next 20 years was editor of its editorial page. He retired officially in 1964 (but actually in 1963) in protest against the direction that the paper had taken under a new ownership.

This retirement by no means ended his journalistic work. For the next fifteen years he produced a twice-weekly column on public affairs that he distributed to a small group of newspapers through his own syndicate. Not until 1978, when he was in his mid-seventies, did he give this up, noting wryly that in fifteen years he had produced 1500 columns, "not a word of which has made any difference to anybody." However that may be, one may be sure that a man who spent nearly fifty years from 1930 writing regularly for the newspapers had more than a casual commitment to the work. Wagner's achievements as a wineman are all the more impressive when we consider that they were a kind of distraction from a busy life spent in a wholly different kind of work.

Phase the First:

Every Man His Own Winemaker

The rest of this brief account may now be devoted to Wagner's adventures with the grape. They began with his activity as a home winemaker during Prohibition, an activity that he shared with countless thousands of other Americans but that Wagner carried farther and developed more fully than any other of those thousands. As has already been said, we don't know when he began to make wine. But we have his great memorial to that work in *American Wines and How to Make Them*, a guide for the home winemaker that appeared, ironically enough, in 1933, the last year of Prohibition. Wagner's preface to the book is dated 23 May 1933, when Roosevelt's first administration, committed to Repeal, was already in office, and when the Repeal amendment had already been submitted to the states. But Wagner never supposed that domestic winemaking was a thing that would have an appeal only to people living under

— cont'd. page 4



Welcome! new Tendrils! **Bill Dyer**, Napa Valley winegrower and consultant, is pleased to be a W-T member with his own subscription—now, he reports, he does not have to rely on occasional readings at the Napa Valley Wine Library. **Hamlin Endicott** (Sawgrass Books, Brunswick, GA. e-m: sawgrassbooks@sprynet.com) has been collecting wine books for 15 years, with a special interest in “Italy, Madeira, Spain, Portugal, U.S. regional, and grape varieties.” His bookshop website (www.sawgrassbooks.com) has a nicely catalogued selection of wine books.

DINASTIA VIVANCO BODEGAS

has produced a strikingly lovely, full color, 8½ x 11, [20]-page booklet on their Briones (Spain) “dream come true.” Featured are the vineyards, the bodega, and the Museo de la Cultura del Vino (Museum of the Culture of Wine), including the library of antiquarian wine books. If you would like a copy, contact librarian Nuria del Rio (biblioteca@dinastiavivanco.es). (The copy your editor received is in English.)

ZINFANDEL toasted with Champagne!!

Zinfandel. A History of a Grape and Its Wine by Charles L. Sullivan (U.C. Press, 2003) has been presented the Veuve Cliquot Wine Book of the Year Award. Tendril members will recall that *Zinfandel* was originally published in serialized form in our *Quarterly*. Other excellent titles by our noted wine historian include, *A Companion to California Wine. An Encyclopedia of Wine and Winemaking...* (1998); *Like Modern Edens. Winegrowing in Santa Clara Valley & Santa Cruz Mountains 1798 – 1981* (1982); *Napa Wine. A History from Mission Days...* (1994); *The Society of Wine Educators. A History of Its Inception and the First Ten Years* (2000). Cheers! Charles!

The 2004 WINE LITERARY AWARD

for “Exceptional Contribution to the Literature of Wine in the English Language,” sponsored by The Wine Appreciation Guild (San Francisco), has been presented to the venerable wine writer and celebrated Southern California wine & food personality, Robert Lawrence Balzer. Sixty-five of Mr. Balzer’s ninety-one years have been spent writing about wine: almost a dozen books (including *California’s Best Wines*, 1948; *The Pleasures of Wine*, 1964; *This Uncommon Heritage: The Paul Masson Story*, 1970; *Balzer’s Book of Wines and Spirits*, 1973), contributions to the *Los Angeles Times*, *Sunset Magazine*, *Wine Enthusiast*, and *Wine Spectator*, and his own newsletter, *Robert Lawrence Balzer’s Private Guide to Food & Wine*. In 1986, he was acclaimed “Wine Writer of the Year” by

Wines & Vines. In 2002 *Wine Spectator* called him “the dean of American wine writers.” He is currently working on his autobiography, *Face the Tiger*. Saluté! Mr. Balzer!

FINE BOOK RESTORATION

Ruth Walker, a 1991-vintage Tendril and the long-time proprietor of Reade Moore Books in Petaluma, Sonoma County, California, has begun a new chapter in the book-world. She has closed the bookshop and will now devote her bookish hours to the craft of fine book restoration. Your editor’s library can attest to Ruth’s restoration talents. Contact her at walker@svn.net, P.O. Box 2944, Petaluma, CA 94952; 707.762.2215. We look forward to more of Ruth’s “Corners Bumped & Worn” columns in our *Quarterly*.

Viticulture and Enology RESOURCE BOOKS

In the annual “Buyer’s Guide” issue of *Wine East* (March 2004), Tendril **Hudson Cattell**, the co-editor and publisher of this excellent, up-to-date bi-monthly (hudson@wineeast.com), provides a splendid article and a list of those books “likely to be most helpful for grape growers and wine-makers, from beginners to those needing more advanced information.” Seventeen “professionals familiar with enology and viticulture in the East” responded to his questionnaire asking for the books they would most recommend. The resulting categorized lists are highly recommended reading. Search out the March 2004 issue.

WINE LABELS 1730 — 2003

Thanks to **Bill Duprey**, we have news of the 2004 publication by the Antique Collectors Club (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK) of *Wine Labels 1730 – 2003. A Worldwide History*, edited by John Salter. Advertised as a “high quality, hardbound publication” with over “1,400 labels illustrated,” this is “the first major work to be published on decanter labels since Norman Penzer’s classic, *The Book of the Wine Label*, in 1947.” UK orders (£85 + S/H): sales@antique-acc.com. For USA orders (\$150) see the publisher’s American website: www.antique-acc.com/ACCUS/acatalog.

RECENT GOOD READS ...

The “Doc” says try ‘em, you’ll like ‘em. *Noble Rot. A Bordeaux Wine Revolution* by Wm Echikson (NY: W. W. Norton, 2004)—a well-researched, engrossing journalistic eye-opener about the new Bordeaux and the changes at Ch. d’Yquem. *Bacchus & Me* by Jay McInerney (NY: Vintage Books, 2002)—brilliant and often irreverent musings about wine and wine people (including, the best of the bunch, “The Wizard of Bolinas”). Keep handy on the bedside table Gerald Asher’s *Pleasures of Wine* and Frank Prial’s *Decantations*.

PINNEY, *cont'd. from page 2* —

the shadow of Prohibition. On the contrary, he took the view that all good winemaking had always been done at home (according to a very liberal definition of "home") and would continue to be:

The finest wines in the world are homemade wines. True, there are some huge mass-production wineries, or wine factories, in California and the French Midi and Algeria. But these are the development of the past half-century.... Through-out most of human history, wine-making has been primarily a domestic art; traditionally, wine is made in the home, whether the home be a farm-house, a peasant's cottage, or a great estate, and is made of grapes grown on the place. (*Wine Grapes: Their Selection, Cultivation and Enjoyment*, p. 3).

This is perhaps a little heightened for rhetorical effect, but it does express one of Wagner's basic guiding ideas: good wine has been and can continue to be a "domestic art," one that almost anyone might practice. His first book was devoted to showing the way.

American Wines and How to Make Them is clearly written in the agreeable, unpretentious but highly-readable style that distinguished everything that Wagner wrote; it is also written with an authority quite remarkable in a young amateur who had, apart from printed sources, only himself as a teacher. It sets forth, with a good deal of particularity, the elementary facts about grapes and wines in the old world; the stress is, characteristically, upon the primacy of ordinary, daily wine. The production of fine wines, he says, is "infinitesimal as compared to the bulk of the world's wine," and of far less importance. He then sketches the history of wine-growing in this country as it was known in the early days before California came onto the national scene. His pragmatic spirit comes out in his discussion of the term "foxy" as applied to the aroma of native grapes. Wagner cites William Bartram's explanation that the aroma is like that of the "effluvia arising from the body of the fox," but Wagner is not persuaded: "I have been at some pains to sniff the 'effluvia' of several kinds of fox, in a number of celebrated zoos, and have been unable to detect the faintest resemblance." So, after his experiments in fox-sniffing (did anyone wonder what he was doing?), Wagner concludes only that "the English language badly needs improvement in the departments of olfaction and gustation."

Wagner's discussion of the rise and triumph of California wines is in general sound enough but needing a good deal of correction in detail; it is interesting just for that reason, since it shows how even a good student of the subject was at the mercy of long-established legend and how much detailed inquiry had yet to be made.

When he turns from history and description to the practical subject of winemaking, Wagner's emphasis—and he was certainly right in this—is firmly upon the importance of variety. Few at the time had any idea of the varying characters and qualities of grape varieties. The Concord had driven the superior native varieties almost to the point of extinction, so far as the regular market was concerned. As for what came from California, that was mostly an array of mediocre varieties, preferred for their heavy production and ability to stand shipping: Alicante Bouschet and Carignane were the varieties of choice. Wagner hoped to persuade his readers to seek out the better native varieties; they might, he said, have to go "nosing about the country-side" to find them, but the search was worth it. He was not, however, optimistic about the future of the superior natives: few people had any knowledge of the differences between varieties, nor were the good ones grown on any considerable scale. "Many of the varieties, indeed, would have died out long since," he writes, "had it not been for enlightened amateurs who still cling to them. The low estate of these grapes is very discouraging."

The chapters devoted to making red and white wines, to the analysis of musts and wines, and to cellar treatment are well-calculated (as I can testify) to rouse in the reader a powerful wish to try winemaking for himself. Nothing could be made to seem more attractive, wholesome, and rewarding, as I am sure it was for Wagner himself and for the uncounted many who happily succeeded in following directions. At the end of the process the successful novice would have a cellar abounding in simple, sound wines to go with the daily meal. And, if he kept at it, he would, in time, have a range of wines to choose from. Wagner's concluding account of this ideal condition of things is worth quoting at length:

When the domestic wine-maker adds other varieties of wine to his cellar, he may begin to experiment with the fitting of various wines to various foods; and great fun it is. He will find that his Delaware or Catawba goes perfectly with oysters; that a California Petite Sirah is glorious with duck, being well able to hold its own; that few things are more satisfying to the hungry man than a vast heap of spaghetti, prepared as it ought to be with meat and mushrooms and many other things, and washed down with a great deal of rude and homely Alicante; that steak with mushrooms and a fat decanter of Colonel Haraszthy's Zinfandel are ideal companions; and that a joint of Chicago beef has unsuspected glories accompanied by a Norton. He will discover that plain food is capable of the most surprising exaltation by good domestic wines. And before long, perhaps, he will begin to understand the wisdom of that pleasant old gentleman who explained his vigorous old age by saying that every day since he could remember he had drunk

a bottle of good wine, except when he did not feel well, and then he had drunk two.

What a vision of splendid abundance this must have roused in the Depression year of 1933!

American Wines and How to Make Them is the culmination of the first phase of Wagner's work as a student and zealous advocate of wine. The book would have a long life and several changes of form. It had a second edition under the same title in 1936 and then, twenty years later, was substantially revised under the title of *American Wines and Wine-Making*, the book that introduced me to Wagner's work and its attractions. After yet another twenty years passed, a final, largely re-written version was published as *Grapes into Wine: A Guide to Winemaking in America*. The differences between the first and last versions are considerable, as even a cursory comparison of the two books will show; the first book was written under Prohibition, the last after forty years of renewed winemaking activity and the transformation of the American market, not to speak of the many, many technical changes introduced over the years that separate them. The first was written by a young enthusiast not yet 30; the last by a veteran in his 70s with a long record of accomplishment behind him. Yet the two versions are not so different that one cannot see the connection between them. As Wagner says, "in writing about [wine], one starts with whatever is already known and on record, including what one has written oneself." So the earlier book is always implicit in the later.

Phase the Second:

Bringing the French Hybrids to America

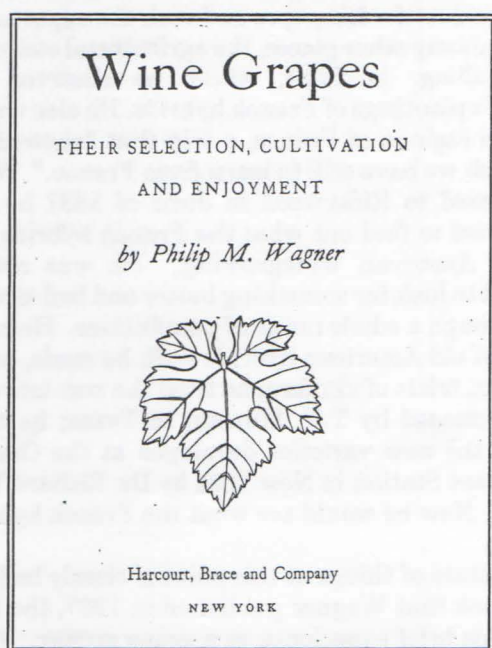
In 1932 Wagner first rented and then bought a house and some surrounding acres in Riderwood, a town north of Baltimore. Now a very handsome suburb of the city, it was then a rural place. Wagner soon discovered the remnants of a vineyard on his property and quickly set to work restoring and transforming it. Some journal entries that he later transcribed give an idea of his progress: "Found remains of a row of grapevines. Posts and wires down, canes extending 20-30 feet into orchard. Various *labruscas* plus 4 delicious red grapes with short fat bunches. Got interested." That was written in 1932. A year later he planted some non-*labrusca* natives: 50 *Bacchus*, 25 Delaware, 25 Moore's Diamond. "Wine in mind," he noted. Then, in 1934, he planted some *vinifera*—*Sylvaner*, *Carignane*, *Sirah*—as well as some *Cynthiana* and *Iona*. By this time he was in touch with the few specialists in viticulture who were then all that could be found in this country in those early post-Repeal years. Professor Bioletti, then about to retire as professor of viticulture at the University of California, sent cuttings of more *vinifera* for trial. F. E. Gladwin, of the Experiment Station at Fredonia, on

the Lake Erie shore of New York, sent, in 1935, something that was to prove more significant than the *vinifera*, all of which duly died or lingered unfruitfully. Gladwin sent "2 early Seibels at Geneva that he paid no attention to owing to 'lack of flavor.'" This is Wagner's first reference to what came to be called the "French hybrids." Thus began, in a casual, almost unnoticed way, the second phase of Wagner's career in wine: the work of propagating, disseminating, and evangelizing for, a new source of wine for the eastern United States, a work that was to make profound changes. For Wagner, however, it was only a logical step forward in his campaign to give every man the means to make good wine of his own.

Before the story of the French hybrids in America could unfold, however, some more preparation was required. In 1936 Wagner went to London as the correspondent for his paper and took the opportunity to visit, among other places, the agricultural station at East Malling, in Kent, where he observed the station's plantings of French hybrids. He also visited the wine regions of France, a trip that "showed me how much we have still to learn from France." When he returned to Riderwood in June of 1937 he had determined to find out what the French hybrids had to offer American winegrowing. He was always prepared to look for something better and had already gone through a whole range of possibilities. He knew the list of old American hybrids well; he made, as we have seen, trials of *vinifera*; he tried the non-*labrusca* hybrids created by T.V. Munson in Texas; he tried some of the new varieties developed at the Geneva Experiment Station in New York by Dr. Richard Wellington. Now he would see what the French hybrids could do.

The state of things at this point is clearly laid out in the book that Wagner published in 1937, the first fruit of his brief experience as a grape grower. *Wine Grapes: Their Selection, Cultivation and Enjoyment* is the complement to *American Wines and How to Make Them*. Having told American readers how to make their own wine, Wagner would now show them how to grow their own grapes. As he wrote in the preface, the book would tell "what grapes are suitable for the various parts of the country, what kinds of wine may be made from them, and what methods of culture are best suited to our American conditions." This was a bold enough program for an amateur who had been growing grapes for only a few years, but Wagner was a quick learner and a confident teacher. The most interesting thing about the book now is its recommendations of grape varieties, recommendations that show how very little experience was then available to support confident conclusions. For *vinifera* in California, Wagner prudently follows the California authorities: the list includes such now-forgotten

varieties as Beclan, Burger, Clairette, Gros Mansenc, and Saint Macaire. The only superior variety planted at all widely in California at that time, according to Wagner, was the Petite Sirah (or Durif), Cabernet, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Riesling, and the other *cépages nobles* simply did not figure in a way to signify. For the hardy experimenters who wanted to try vinifera elsewhere than in California, Wagner names an even more exotic list: Amigne, Beaunoir, Castets, Feteasca Alba, Gamza, Humagne, Maiolet, and Ratignier, among others. Some of these, Wagner says, had actually been tried in the U.S.; others, he thought, were quite unknown. Evidently the list was far more speculative than practical. Did any of his readers, one wonders, plant any of these things? And what might have happened to them?



The list of recommended native hybrids has a similar shot-gun character. Since Wagner is writing for the country at large, and since there had been almost no accumulation of experience in these matters following Repeal, he names all sorts of possibilities: America (a Munson hybrid), Bell, Colerain (a Fredonia seedling), Etta (from Missouri), Hungarian (despite its name, a Minnesota riparia), Montefiore, and Thomas (a muscadine). By way of conclusion, Wagner devotes a bare page to the French hybrids. These, he explains, were developed to avoid the defects of the standard vinifera varieties, are of "good" but not "distinguished" quality, and have been widely planted in France and throughout central Europe. They have not yet been tested in the eastern United States, but he reports that the New York Experiment Station at Geneva has begun trials of a number of them. The

book ends with a call to action:

It is highly important that experimenters in other parts of the United States should likewise undertake the testing of these varieties; for some of them, though they may not succeed in the difficult climate of Geneva, might prove thoroughly satisfactory under other American conditions.

That was the state of things in 1937. He now set about to change it by a strenuous investigation of the French hybrids, to which we may here devote a few words of explanation. The term "French hybrids" is Wagner's coinage, bestowed upon them when he first began to import them. They came from France, he explained, and the name was "short and simple." But the name is somewhat misleading. The hybrids were French in the sense that the people who created them were French (though Germans, Americans, and others have contributed to them since). The materials from which they were created, however, were no more "French" than were those of the uncounted thousands of hybrids that had been deliberately made in a number of countries since early in the nineteenth century to combine the blood of vinifera with that of various native American species. The aim was to produce a vine that would have the resistance to phylloxera and the fungus diseases of the American parent and the fruit quality of the European parent. "Producteurs directs"—direct producers—the French called them, since they needed no grafting but would grow on their own roots.

The work of creating these plants was typically not carried out at any of the official viticultural establishments of France; officially, it was held that grafting to resistant rootstocks was an adequate solution and that no new hybrids were likely to surpass the quality of the traditional varieties. Enthusiastic nurserymen and amateurs were therefore the main hybridizers; among their names are those of Baco, Couderc, Kuhlmann, Landot, Seibel, and Seyve-Villard. The vines that they produced for a wide range of conditions were well-received and widely-planted in Europe, despite official disapproval (since 1975 new plantings of the hybrids for commercial wine production have been forbidden in France). This work was not entirely unknown in the United States, as Wagner was to find after he began his own program of discovery, but it was known in only a very limited way and to no practical effect. The best account of the origin and purpose of the French hybrids that I know is Wagner's "The French Hybrids," an article appearing in the *Journal of the American Society for Enology and Viticulture*.

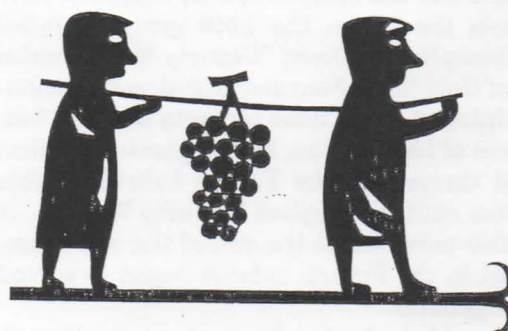
So Philip Wagner ventured into the labyrinth of importing the new hybrid vines from France, dealing with dilatory nurserymen, obstructive officials both French and American, complicated rules, misunder-

stood orders, and almost any other frustration one might think of. His first order was from Maurice Baco—25 cuttings of Baco #1—in 1938. Wagner had the assistance of the well-known Bordeaux *négociant* Édouard Kressmann in getting this order filled, but even so he did not get his cuttings (and then only 24 of them) until April 1939, when they arrived at Riderwood and were planted. The outbreak of the war in September 1939 meant that he could not continue to use France as the source of his collecting. But by then he had found a few sources for the French Hybrids in this country; Dr. Robert T. Dunstan, a teacher living in Greensboro, North Carolina, and Dunstan's friend, Joe Brooks, of Asheville, North Carolina, were two of these welcome collaborators. When Wagner called on them in 1941 he wrote: "Seeing their grapes was a thrilling experience; and their collections constitute a sufficient basis for a genuine viticulture east of the Rockies." By 1943, Wagner was able to report on the wines that he had made not only from Baco but from an array of four Seibel hybrids as well. Despite the difficult circumstances, his collection of vines continued to grow.

At some time in the decade of the 30s Wagner's marriage had been dissolved. In 1940 he married Jocelyn McDonough Guttmacher, herself a divorcee with two sons by her first marriage. Jocelyn Wagner entered fully into her husband's wine work; she was his life-long collaborator, and he was always careful to acknowledge her assistance in all that he did. All of his books from 1945 bear the simple dedication: "For Jocelyn." It may well have been her support that determined him to take his next important step: in 1941 he established a nursery at Riderwood, which remained for many years the only source of rooted cuttings of the French Hybrids in the east. They called it "The Boordy Nursery—J. & P. Wagner, Props." Why "Boordy"? And what did that mean? The name remains a mystery; Wagner himself never consented to explain it. Perhaps the bee emblem used on the Boordy wine labels has some bearing upon the name, but who knows?

The nursery business was a commercial operation, but more than that it was a public service, Wagner's means to disseminate as widely as possible not only the good news about the French hybrids but the vines themselves. It must have cost him endless trouble and endless nuisance, but he maintained the nursery operation until 1994, long after he had sold his winery and only two years before his death. The nursery evidently was the one part most dear to him among his various works in wine. The catalogs issued by the Boordy Nursery provide a record of Wagner's own experience through his list of selections, and include instructions for establishing a vineyard. With their detailed reports on the characters of the vines offered

and the various remarks and comments that appeared in them through the years, they make a significant addition to Wagner's list of published works. I regret that I have been able to see only a few of them.



With the founding of the nursery Wagner began what he called his "Johnny Appleseed operation," the work of spreading the French hybrids over the land. The witty emblem of this work was the wrought-iron sign he commissioned to be hung at Boordy: this showed two stylized figures bearing a large bunch of grapes between them, in obvious allusion to the episode in Numbers 13, recounting how two scouts sent out by Moses into the Promised Land returned bearing a huge bunch of grapes slung on a pole carried over their shoulders, as evidence of the fruitfulness of the land. This is one of the most venerable of images associated with winegrowing, and has a thousand forms in European art. But Wagner gave it a local and contemporary twist. He used a drawing of the sign on the cover of his nursery catalogs, and explained in a note that it showed "two vignerons bringing the French hybrids to Maryland." This was perhaps mildly blasphemous but certainly quite charming.

As the collection of French hybrid vines grew at Boordy, so did Wagner's experiments in making wine from them; that, after all, was what they were meant for. In 1942 he held the first group tasting of wines made from his vineyard and from hybrids grown at the Geneva Station in New York: among the tasters were Frank Schoonmaker and Tom Marvel, whose ground-breaking book, *American Wines*, had been published in the year before. This tasting, which included some wines from grapes such as Delicatessen, a Munson hybrid, and Norton, an established native American, revealed that the Baco and Seibel grapes from Wagner's own vineyard offered new possibilities of quality. Their wines, Wagner wrote, "were a revelation to all of us." There was another tasting in 1943 but apparently not in 1944—the war would explain that. In 1945 came what Wagner called "a key meeting" at Fredonia: this included Adhemar de Chaunac, the winemaker for the Canadian Bright's Wines, Richard Wellington, the grape breeder at the Geneva Experiment Station, and Nelson Shaulis, the

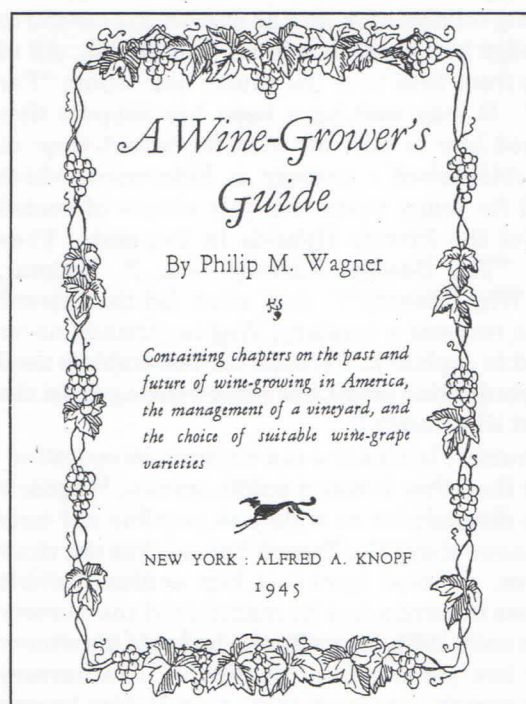
viticulturist at Geneva. The next year, the tasting, held at Geneva, was, Wagner wrote, "the most successful gathering so far." One reason that Wagner thought so was the evident fact that now not merely the scientists but the commercial winemakers were eager to join the party: the 1946 group included Charles Champlin of Great Western and Charles Fournier, of Gold Seal. Fournier had already demonstrated an interest in the most concrete way: in 1944, on the shores of Lake Keuka, he had planted the first commercial vineyard of the French hybrids in this country, from cuttings supplied by Philip Wagner. It was from this point on, at the end of the war years, that interest in the French hybrids began to spread and become general.

Wagner published a few items about the French hybrids during the war years—an item in *Gourmet* in 1942, and a couple of reports on the tastings in *Wines and Vines* in 1942 and 1943. His full treatment appeared in 1945 in *A Wine-Grower's Guide: Containing Chapters on the Past and Future of Wine-Growing in America, the Management of a Vineyard, and the Choice of Suitable Wine-Grape Varieties*. This is, in a way, a re-doing of the *Wine Grapes* of 1937, only now with much to say about those French hybrids that, in 1937, had not been tested at all. Wagner again showed himself a quick study; his first French hybrids were not planted until 1939. A brief six years later—years that included all the disturbances of the World War—he was ready to appear before the public as an expert on the subject. He listed 38 French hybrids selected from some hundreds, with detailed remarks on their culture and on their qualities for wine-making. Of these, he said, all but four had been tested in his own vineyard: "the list is not a bookish compilation but an outgrowth of personal study and evaluation." At the same time, Wagner was quite aware that testing of the French hybrids under the bewildering variety of American conditions had only just begun, so his remarks are often carefully qualified: "we have not yet tested the wine of this variety"; "may well have a place in hot, dry areas"; "may well prove a reliable producer of wine of good quality"; "we have not yet fermented this variety separately" "this variety may be of value in Districts 4 and 7," and so on. But for all the caution, the main character of Wagner's account of the French hybrids in *A Wine-Grower's Guide* is its enthusiasm:

The wines of the best of the French hybrids are a revelation to anyone who has worked with such grapes as Concord, Ives, Clinton, Norton, and the rest—clean-flavored, admirably balanced, and as the French say, "quick to drink." ... There is ample reason for confidence that, with time, this range of splendid grapes will yield varieties well adapted to all but the most inhospitable parts of the continent.

More than half a century after those words were written it may be said that they have been proven quite true; there is no state where the French hybrids have not been tried, and only a few places—"the most inhospitable parts of the continent"—where they have not done well.

The publication of *A Wine-Grower's Guide* was a culmination but not an end. Wagner, as has been said, continued to operate the Boordy Nursery, to send French hybrid vines to all parts of the country, and to carry on an extensive correspondence with fellow-amateurs and others until only a couple of years before the end. *A Wine-Grower's Guide*, after twenty years, was revised and published in a second edition in 1965. Wagner's recommended French hybrid varieties now numbered 43 instead of the original 38—not much of an increase, but the later list shows a much greater variety of origins, testifying to a greatly-enlarged knowledge of the available stock. In 1945 Wagner listed hybrids from only five hybridizers: Baco, Bertille-Seyve, Couderc, Seibel, Seyve-Villard, with a heavy stress upon Seibel. To these names in 1965 (Bertille-Seyve having disappeared) are added those of Meynieu, Galibert, Ravat, Vidal, Burdin, Landot, Kuhlmann, and Joannes-Seyve. Again, "almost all have been tested at Boordy Vineyard for varying lengths of time."



[To be concluded next issue]

IN THE WINE LIBRARY

by
Bob Foster



"what bunk"

The Accidental Connoisseur. An Irreverent Journey through the Wine World. Lawrence Osborne. 2004. New York: North Point Press (a division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux). 262 pp. Hardback. \$24.

Despite the highly laudatory comments on the dust jacket and a recent rave review in the *New York Times Review of Books* on this work, I have to say I found themes of English arrogance and condescension that kept repeating themselves to the point of irritation.

The author is ostensibly on a trip to various wineries around the globe in an effort to determine what is taste. He begins by telling the reader that he really doesn't know much about wine and is a novice who is confronted with excesses, egos, and technological absurdities. But as the story unfolds it becomes clear that this is untrue. He knows quite a bit about the topic and brings it out to make some acerbic observation about the wine world. Without question there is a mass of meaningless jargon, pretension, massive egos and other absurdities in the wine industry that deserve to be poked. For me, the problem was that the author presented a near ceaseless drone that became almost predictable, and thus tiring.

For almost everyone and everything in the wine world that he meets, he finds a reason to criticize in a "drive-by shooting" style. He makes one short visit, makes all his pithy, negative observations, and moves on. Sometimes the observations are simply wrong. Considering the increasing movement away from corks (with the inherent problems of TCA) to screw caps, Osborne sees this as a sinister move to get youngsters to drink. "Even more ominously than feral labels, this latest device [screw tops] taking the wine business by storm is intended to make wine appealingly infantile. Wine is becoming more kiddy-friendly as it comes to resemble bottled soda." What bunk. Anyone who has opened a twenty-year-old treasure from the cellar to find it corked understands the real reason for the change in closures. Similarly, in discussing California wineries in general, he comments that "gentleness and balance are states of mind, they are a condition of inner grace, and I often wondered whether Californians didn't confuse this with its technological equivalent. In other words they seemed to think that technological subtlety could

create human subtlety." Could the author paint with a wider brush?

I just had the sense that again and again Osborne was going out of his way to find things in the wine world of which he could be critical. Have you ever met a person who seems to gain a sense of importance or self-worth by being able to find things to criticize in others? This book seems to me to be the product of such a person. In a sense, the author becomes the character he attacks, the know-it-all. For example I find this especially true when the author quotes a sentence in French but provides no translation because, of course, all truly cultured individuals speak French. Gee, silly me. I took four years of Latin.

Moreover, if the author and the publisher wanted to be taken seriously, then there should have been an index. Not recommended.

"top notch"

Oz Clarke's Pocket Wine Guide 2004. Oz Clarke. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Inc. 320 pp. Hardback. \$14.

The more wine books I read and review, the more I enjoy and appreciate the works of Oz Clarke. He writes with a breezy, don't take any of this too seriously style laced with humor but packed with information. The latest edition of his annual pocket guide is out and it is top notch.

I particularly like the introductory section where Clarke talks about the modern style of wines from each of the major regions and comments on the particular wines he is drinking now. His list of six world-class wines that "don't cost the earth" is intriguing (especially since there is nary a single California wine on his list. But given the absurd prices of so many California wines, this is hardly surprising.)

For a mere \$14 you get a wealth of information, you get keen insights, and you get a wallop of Clarke's humor. It's a bargain. Highly recommended.

[Our Tendril thanks to Bob Foster and *The California Grapevine* for their always generous permission to reprint Bob's reviews—the above from the April-May 2004 issue. For subscription information and a sample issue, see www.calgrapevine.com. — Ed.]



THE WAYWARD TENDRILS is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1990 for Wine Book Collectors. Yearly Membership / Subscription to the WAYWARD TENDRILS QUARTERLY is \$20 USA and Canada; \$25 overseas. Permission to reprint is requested. Please address all correspondence to THE WAYWARD TENDRILS, Box 9023, Santa Rosa, CA. 95405 USA. FAX 707-544-2723. E-mail: tendrils@jps.net. Editor and Publisher: Gail Unzelman. —

ON COLLECTING WINE BOOKPLATES: A NEWCOMER'S CONFESSION

by
Rae Fahlenius

[Rae Fahlenius must be Finland's most avid wine book collector. He relayed his passion in "Collecting Wine Books: A Personal View" (Volume 13 #3, #4). We are pleased to present his latest "confession." — Ed.]



have been collecting wine books for twenty-five years, rather casually, but not without great enthusiasm and interest. In the collection, besides general works on wine, are books dealing with wine from many different aspects: viticulture and wine making, grape varieties, corkscrews, wine in art,

wine humour, history of wine, wine terminology, and even that miserable wine louse, phylloxera.

Last summer I decided to finally make a serious effort to read and examine the books also. Of course, I had come to flick through many of the books over the years. Any wine enthusiast must, I suppose, know how white, rosé, and red wines differ from each other. (And still something more, for sure.) I also wanted to compile a catalogue of the collection, and check on possible dedications, autographs, and even bookplates.

My earlier attitude to bookplates had been quite cold—they did not seem very interesting to me. Surely, I had noted, however, that there were previous owners' bookplates in some of my books. Two or three years ago I had even written to a very respected London bookseller who specialized in wine books asking him for information on a certain Mr. Edward Hale, whose wine bookplate I had discovered in quite a few of my wine books. I had purchased many of these books from the bookseller over the years, and a few of the books I had found in Helsinki. No information was found on Mr. Hale, but the bookseller could offer some more old wine books with the Hale bookplate, if I was interested. For some unknown reason I replied yes, even though I already had some of the titles (without the Hale bookplate). In his bookplate, one can easily see the name of Mark Wickham in small letters; I assume he is the artist.

Some time later the bookseller told me he had found other wine books with wine bookplates. Actually, I was not interested in the bookplates as such. I was interested in the wine books, and the bookplates were an added bonus, providing me with

evidence that the books had come from the libraries of famous wine writers, wine merchants, and gastronomists. I think that an exlibris of a connoisseur adds to the value of a book—not necessarily monetarily, but rather in a cultural context.

Among these bookplates was the finely engraved, burnished exlibris of the well-known heavyweight of wine culture and its literature, André L. Simon (1877–1970). Simon's classic bookplate, identified with only the initials "A.L.S.," is very desired among collectors. My copy of Clement Hoare's *A Practical Treatise on the Cultivation of the Grape Vine on Open Walls* (London, 1837) has this treasured bookplate.



The bookplate of Charles Walter Berry (1873–1941) belongs to the wine theme also—even though it depicts a hot-air balloon above London. Some words of explanation. As is well known, Berry was a respected London wine merchant and wine writer with several books to his credit. During the war in 1914–1918, he served as a balloonist in the Royal



Flying Corps' Observer Balloon patrol, and his favorite post-war pastime was flying a balloon. In his bookplate is the clock tower of St. James's Palace, at the bottom of St. James's Street, where the wine shop of Berry Bros. & Rudd is located. (It is very unlikely that Berry ever flew his balloon over this part of the city!) H. Warner Allen wrote

a book about the Berrys as wine merchants entitled *Number Three Saint James's Street* (London, 1950), and a house magazine published by the firm had the same title. Berry's bookplate adorns my copy of *The Blood of the Grape—The Wine Trade Text Book* by André Simon (London, 1920).



The bookplate of the famous Swedish gastronome, Mr. Tore Wretman (1916–2003), features a man who is closely reading a menu posted at the door of a restaurant (a very popular reading on holiday trips!). I have Wretman's exlibris in the 1850 Paris edition of *Eloge de l'Ivresse...* written anonymously by Albert-Henri de Sallengre (1694–1723), first published in 1714.

The first Finnish wine bookplate I ever saw was found in an antiquarian bookshop in Helsinki. It is a rather simple exlibris that depicts a bunch of grapes, and belonged to Juhani Jaskari, a distinguished translator. His autograph, dated "1955, Beaune," the capital of Burgundy wines, is also in the book, *Bourgogne Tastevin en Main* by Georges Rozet. An interesting book to bibliophiles, it was awarded the first Chevalier de Tastevin prize in 1949.

It was these bookplates of Simon, Berry, Hale, Wretman, and Jaskari that aroused my interest in late 2002 to begin collecting wine bookplates on a general basis. I had some background knowledge on all the men, except Edward Hale, who remained a mystery. Yet, I had more than 20 books originating from his library, which I assumed must have been extensive.

When I began to collect wine exlibris, I also decided to search out all the books, exhibition catalogues, and written articles on the subject. I thought, "There cannot be very many of them, all totaled." I was fully confident that I had found a pastime quite compatible with the disposition to do things in the manner of the famous Oblomov—during the years to come I would find new items only after long intervals. In some twenty-five years of collecting wine books, in many languages, I had found only a handful of wine exlibris in general, and just one with a Finnish name. This view of scarcity was to turn out completely false. I had not yet learned that the greatest number of exlibris are in fact loose, not in books, and collected only for exchange—this was true for wine exlibris, too.

I began my hunt for information on wine book-

plates and related literature by using the www-search engines. I soon found the site of Exlibris Aboensis, and quickly joined the society. The decision to join was encouraged by the fact that I had succeeded in acquiring my first book on wine exlibris just two weeks before. The book, *Wein-Exlibris aus 21 Ländern* by Hermann Jung (1973), contains 73 bookplates, one to a page. To me, this book legitimized the wine theme as a worthy branch of collecting bookplates. Before this, I had been suspicious about the sense of the whole project.

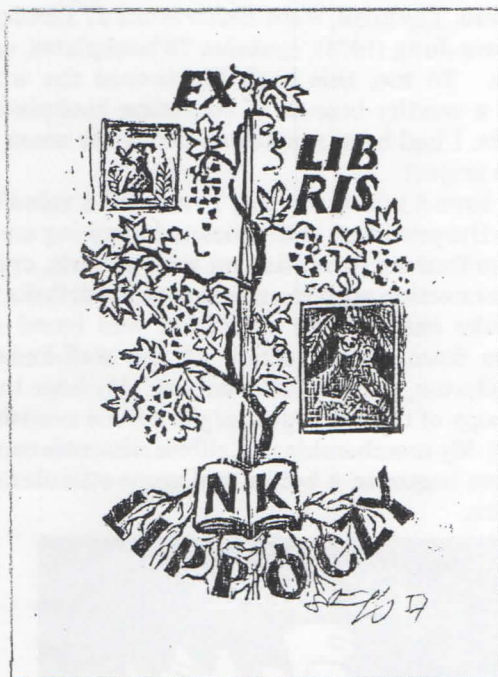
At the time I joined the EA, I received a valuable note from the president of the society informing me of a catalogue from an exhibition on wine exlibris, organized in connection with the meeting at Fredrikshavn a few weeks earlier. The exhibition was based on bookplates from the collection of the well-known Danish collector, Dr. Erik Skovenborg. My hope that an extra copy of the catalogue might still be available came true. My membership in Exlibris Aboensis could hardly have begun in a better and more stimulating atmosphere.



With the information I learned from the www-sites, I raced to send e-mails in many directions. I continued to visit many www-forums and left messages there about my interest in collecting wine bookplates, related books and other publications. As a result, the number of items in my collection of wine exlibris increased quickly. I now have some hundreds of wine bookplates (only a dozen or so can be classified as Finnish). The related books, catalogues, and articles now number about twenty (two of which are presentation copies, signed by the authors). These numbers greatly exceeded my first-year expectations of what I might find. I felt as if I were out of breath.

One of the great surprises to me is that there is a highly developed and wide-spread interest in bookplates in many countries of Eastern Europe. I have gotten many more wine bookplates from this area

than, say, e.g. from France. France is still one of the classic powers in regards to literature, books, and wines—one hopes that a country of such fine food and wine will offer some fine exlibris also.



Norbert Lippóczy

Some bookplates in my fledgling collection are exceedingly interesting. One of these is the first wine exlibris of Norbert Lippóczy, who is perhaps the most famous, considered by many as the “founding father,” of all wine bookplate collectors. Lippóczy (1902–1996), a Hungarian-Polish collector, began to collect wine exlibris in 1957 when he had commissioned a bookplate of his own by the Polish artist Józef Szuszkiewics (1912–1982). Since that time, Lippóczy collected thousands of bookplates.

Many exhibitions have been organized based on his collection. Mr. Lippóczy’s first exlibris, “with which all that began,” has been described in various books and exhibition catalogues, but I had not seen a picture of it until quite recently—and a few weeks ago I managed to get two copies of the bookplate. The first one was found among 30 bookplates sent to me by a German antiquarian bookshop. Because the Lippóczy bookplate is described by Jung in his book, I recognized it. When I turned the bookplate over, I saw the words “Mein erstes Wein-Exlibris, von dem habe ich angefangen – Wein-Exlibris zu sammeln – im Jahre 1957.” Considering the words “Mein” and “ich” it is quite plausible to think that the text is Mr. Lippóczy’s own handwriting. (But I have yet to verify this.) Soon afterwards, I acquired a 1973 exhibition catalogue related to wine exlibris. It is spiced with

Lippóczy wine bookplates—one of them, a tipped-in replica, is definitely Lippóczy’s first wine bookplate.

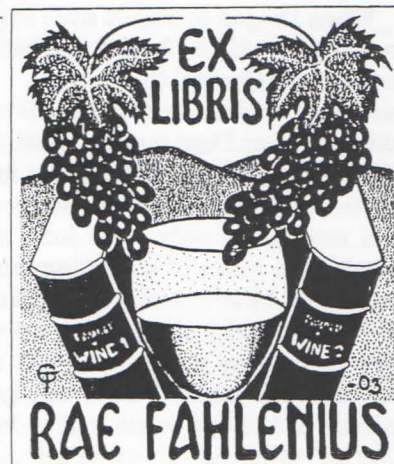
One of the many rewards I have enjoyed during the recent months of collecting wine bookplates is that the enigma of Edward Hale has been solved, at least partly. I received a message from California: Mr. Hale, who died in the early 1990s, was a Master of Wine and wine buyer for Harvey’s of Bristol. But that is all I know. Perhaps a fellow Tendril can offer me further information?

While “loose” bookplates have their own, interesting role for collectors, bookplates that are pasted into books enter into service in a larger cultural circulation. Through them, one can undertake, e.g., to reconstruct a library long since dispersed. Great pleasure can be taken in the artistic creation of the bookplate: I once found an exlibris carefully and skillfully drawn directly on the book. (I wondered, “How many of these were done?!”)

More and more intriguing questions and thoughts are aroused as I become acquainted with bookplates, step by step. In fact, many more than I could ever have imagined. It is a stimulating journey. ■



[EDITOR NOTE: For a veteran look at collecting wine exlibris, see Erik Skovenborg’s “Bookplates with Wine Motifs,” *W-T* Vol. 7 #2, April 1997.]





BOOKS & BOTTLES

by
Fred McMillin

SMELLING and TASTING

The Book: *Smelling and Tasting (Senses and Sensors)*, by Dr. Alvin Silverstein, Virginia Silverstein, Laura Silverstein Nunn. 2002. Twenty-First Century Books / Millbrook Press. 64 pp. \$12.95.

- Who's the most sensitive taster on the planet? With 50 times more taste sensors than man, it's the catfish, with 175,000.
- The poorest taster? Chickens are not finicky with only 24 taste receptors, but snakes have zero.
- As to smelling, the champion of the sea is the shark, with about 70% of its brain devoted to scent recognition. It can smell a fish for supper ¼-mile away.
- On land, it's the dog, with typically 170 million more smell receptors in its nose than in the human sniffer.

A few insights for wine tasters...

- Likes and dislikes of tastes in humans are inherited. Thus, you were born to dislike the taste of spinach, but Popeye wasn't.
- In the mouth, each taste bud responds mostly to only one of the four primary tastes: salty, sour, sweet and bitter. However, it looks like there is a fifth type of bud that is sensitive to the "meaty" flavors found in monosodium glutamate, some cheeses, and, of course, meat.
- Ever burn your tongue with something too hot? Not to worry. Your buds are being replaced regularly, with an average life of about ten days.

And there's much more. *Smelling and Tasting* is written for the young reader, but the marvelous illustrations and clarity of writing make it a required read for anyone who wants to increase their understanding and appreciation of what they are experiencing.

The Bottles: From our book, we learned that people inherit likes and dislikes of tastes. In my wine appreciation classes this is obvious: no matter how glorious the wine smells and tastes to me, about 15% dislike it. However, occasionally we encounter a bottle that everyone finds good or great. Here are six of them.

Some California wines that pleased everyone's smell and taste

- Domaine Carneros Le Reve Sparkling Wine, 1997. \$55. RATING: 92.
- Blockheadia Ringnosh Zinfandel, Napa Valley, 2001. \$28. RATING: 91.
- Jarvis Lake William Red Blend, Napa Valley, 1999. \$58. RATING: 88.
- Gary Farrell Russian River Valley Chardonnay, 2002. \$30. RATING: 88.
- Yorkville Cellars Sauvignon Blanc, Mendocino County, 2002. \$13. RATING: 86.
- Sunset Zinfandel, Dry Creek Valley, 2000. \$20. RATING: 85.

[Fred McMillin, our indefatigable "Books & Bottles" wine man, is also teacher, writer, researcher and taster—rating: 100. You are invited to savor his "On Wine" column at the Global Gourmet website. For information on his monthly San Francisco tasty wine appreciation courses, phone or fax: 415.563.5712 / 415.567.4468. — Ed.]



INDEX TO ROBERT BALZER'S CALIFORNIA'S BEST WINES

Compiled by *Gail Unzelman*

I do not know why I was compelled to compile this brief index to Balzer's 153-page book that is now 55 years old. But the handsome book has always been a favorite of mine, even though Balzer saw fit to provide an index only to the book's two dozen recipes. At publication (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1948), *California's Best Wines* was named one of the "Fifty Books of the Year" by the American Institute of Graphic Arts. In 1990 Dan Strehl and his committee awarded it a place in their bibliography, *One Hundred Books on California Food & Wine*, with this comment: "Recipe for a good book: take one fine author; one fine printer; one fine illustrator [Cas Duchow]; steep all these ingredients in the best of California's wineries and you have this outstanding treat" (p.39). Balzer's minor inaccuracies and poetic license are accepted in his flowing and anecdotal descriptions of thirteen of California's finest wineries and their historic winemen, while he weaves-in general California wine history, winemaking techniques, and wine appreciation. The second edition (1949) has added material in the preface (extended from x pages to xxi pages). I have used this second edition for the indexing—and being done, I hope it is useful...

Abbey Hotel, Scotland 31-2
Ahern family 102
Alaska Commercial Co. 64
Alicante Bouschet grape 18
Almaden xiv, 128-, 138-
Amerine, Maynard xiv, 23, 57-
Ausonius xvi
Bartholomew, Frank xx
Beaulieu Beaumont 85
Beaulieu Vineyards 82-
Benoist, Louis 140
Beringer Bros. Winery 101
Berry, Chas. W. x, 73
Big Tree California Wines 31-3
Bohemian Club, S.F. xv
Buena Vista Vineyards xix-, 53
Buena Vista El Dorado Claret
xx
Buena Vista Golden Hock xx
Buena Vista Pearl of Calif xxi
Burbank, Luther 107
Calif Bd of State Viti Com 56
Calif State Agri Society 52
Calif State Fair 1947 xviii
Campbell, Ian M. 30, 32
Caymus Rancho 64
Ch. Bellevue, Livermore 13
Ch. d'Yquem 22, 24, 83
Chapman, John 52
Chase, Howard 71
Chase, Minnie Mizener 70
Choate, J. H. 30, 33
Collins & Wheeland 28
Concannon, James 42
Concannon, Joe 42
Cooke, Chas. xxi
Crystal Springs Reservoir 53
Daniel, John 61-8, 72-9
Downey, Gov. 53

Druitt, Robert (quote) 120
Duval, Alexander [incorrectly
Alfred] 13-
El Mocho Vineyard 24
Ferrario, Ernest 23
Fountaingrove xix, 105-
Fountaingrove Pinot Noir 109
Freemark Abbey 101-2
Fromm, Alfred 135
Gallegos 44
Garatti, Frank 23
Golden Chasselas 73-4
Golden Gate Expo 1939 83
Goulet, Oliver xiv, 140
Grand Noir wine 28
Grange, Clarence & Frances 70
Grape Culture, Wines & Wine-
Making (Haraszthy) 54
Grau, Edward 44
Grau & Werner 44
Hall, Chaffee xiv
Hallcrest White Riesling xiv
Hanuska, Jan 114
Haraszthy, Agoston xix-, 53-61,
74
Harris, Thomas Lake 105-
Hearst, Phoebe (Pleasanton
home) 11
Held, Anna 132, 145
Hilgard, E.W. 55
Hollis, Henry ix-x, 8, 77
Holmes, Oliver W. (quote) 9
Inglenook Library [see
Niebaum]
Inglenook Winery 62-8, 72-9
Inglenook Pinot Noir 1892 75
Johnson, Albert 23
Jones, Charles 133, 138
Korbel, Joseph 112-

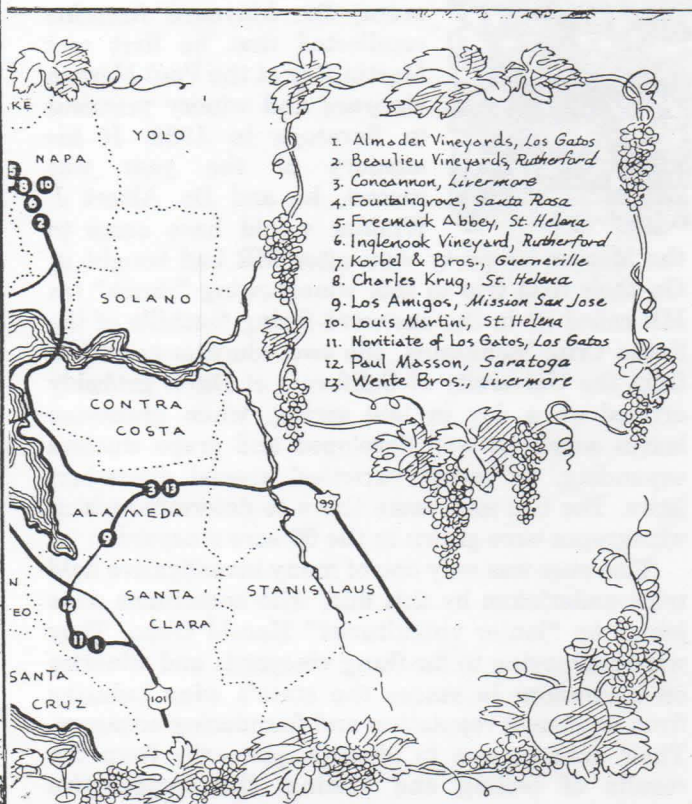
Korbel Winery xix, 114-19
Krug, Charles 100-1
La Cresta Vineyards 133-, 140
labeling, generic 29
labeling, varietal 28
Lachman, Arthur & Co. 28
La Montaña Cabernet xvi
Latour, Georges de 82-
Lefranc, Chas. 130, 137-8
Livermore 10, 16
Los Amigos Burgundy 1934 45
Los Amigos Vineyards 42-50
Los Angeles 52
Ludekens, Fred (artist) xx
Lur-Saluces, Marquis de 22, 83
MacBoyle, Errol 108
Maison Blanc 138
Maison Rouge Claret 138
Markham, Edwin 107
Martin Ray wines (see Ray)
Martini Dry Sherry 97
Martini, Louis M. 7, 90-
Martini (Kingsburg) 90-1
Masson, Paul xv, 128-, 138
Masson Champagne 132
Mayacamas Vineyard xvii
Mayock, Robert [also
incorrectly Maycock] 42-50
[McIntyre, H.] 66
McKey, Father 137
Mel, Louis 24-5
Mission San Diego de Alcala 51
Mission San Gabriel 51
Mission San Jose 42
Mizener, Henry 70
Mizener, Wilson 70
Mondavi, C. & Sons 101
Monte Vista Winery 136
Monte Rosso 99

Montelena Winery 104
 Montelena Carignan 1894 28
 Moscato Amabile 95
 Muscatel de Bordelais 18, 83
 Nagasawa, Kanaye 105
 Niebaum farm 62
 Niebaum, Gustav 63-
 Niebaum Library 64, 75
 Novitiate of Los Gatos 137, 140
 Pacific Union Club, S.F. xv
 Paris Expo 1937 20
 Pasteur, Louis 81
 pasteurization 81-2
 phylloxera 52, 56
 Pinot St. George grape 61
 Pins, Marquis de 83
 Pleasanton 11
 Price, Harold 23
 Rankey, Brother 137
 Ray, Martin xv, 133-5
 Ray Blanc de Noir 1942 xv
 Requa, Mrs. James 105
 Rixford, E.H. xv
 Ruby Cabernet grape 59

Santa Cruz Mts. 129
 Sauvignon Blanc grape 20, 83
 Schoonmaker, Frank 23
 Seagram & Sons 135
 Semillon grape 18, 83
 Serra, Junipero 51
 Silverado Squatters 73
 Simon, Andre ix-x, 33, 93
 Souverain Cellars xviii
 Spreckels, Claus 113
 Stags Leap Manor 70
 Stevenson, R. L. 69, 73, 82
 Stewart, J. Leland xviii
 Street, Julian 8, 135
 Street, Julian (quote) 28
 Talleyrand, Chas. 3
 Taylor, Jack & Mary xvi
 Tchelistcheff, Andre 84
 Thee, Etienne 129, 137
 Tubbs, Chapin 103-4
 University of Calif 55-
 Vignes, Louis 52
 Vina 13, 15, 66

Wayward Tendrils of the Vine
 30
 Wente Bros. Winery 15-27, 83
 Wente, Carl 13
 Wente, Ernest xiv, 17-
 Wente, Herman xiv, 10, 16-, 30
 (on labeling), 41-2, 90
 Wente Pinot Chardonnay 41
 Werner, Emil 44
 Wetmore, Chas. xi-xiii, 24, 42
 wine label collection 28
 Wine & Food Society Vintage
 Tour 1946 96
 Wine Advisory Board 42
Wine Press & the Cellar frontis
 28
 Winkler, A.J. xiv, 23, 58
 Woodside Vineyard xv
 World's Fair, St. Louis 1904 132

NOTE: See this issue's "News & Notes" for wine writing awards presented to Balzer. — Ed.



Vinaceous Correspondents: *Martin Ray's Friendships with Eminent Oenophiles*

The Third Article in a Series

by *Barbara Marinacci*

[Note: This is the sixth piece in an ongoing series of articles, and sections of articles, focusing on California winegrower Martin Ray and his relationships with notable persons connected to him by a mutual love of fine wine and shared opinions about the wine business. This correspondence reveals facets of unique friendships while providing glimpses at the eras in which they were formed and thrived—and then sometimes collapsed. After the Introduction (I), the first article (II), published in four installments, concerned MR's epistolary friendship with East Coast connoisseur-writer Julian Street. The author of this series—a book writer, editor, and daughter of Eleanor Ray, MR's second wife and widow—spent a year going through the abundant and fascinating Ray Papers, now archived by UC Davis. However, some of the quoted material in the initial sections of this article (to be published in several installments) derives from MR's letters to Julian Street and from Amerine's own correspondence with Street—both archived at the Princeton Library Division of Rare Books and Special Collections, which granted permission to quote from them. Additionally, valuable comments about Martin Ray's years at Paul Masson (1936-43) were obtained from an unpublished transcription of Charles L. Sullivan's interview with Maynard Amerine, conducted in 1984. Information about Amerine's early work was provided by Thomas Pinney. John Skarstad, University Archivist at UC Davis Library, located a Paul Masson Winery file folder that contained early correspondence between MR and members of the Division of Viticulture (now the Department of Viticulture & Enology), and permission has been kindly granted to use excerpts from some of these letters (Department of Viticulture & Enology Archives, AR-059).]

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

-1-



Almost a half-century after the event, Dr. Maynard Amerine recollected that he first met Martin Ray at the Paul Masson vineyard and winery premises in Saratoga in 1936. If his memory of the year was correct, he and Dr. Albert J. Winkler would have come to

the Masson property soon after MR had bought it. On their first trip to this winegrowing "ranch" (as MR called it) in the eastward-facing foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains, the two educator-scientists from the University of California at Davis probably arrived on a day in late spring, when grapevine leaves would be well developed and grape clusters expanding, to reveal varieties' special characteristics. The two men came there to determine which winegrapes were grown in the 60-acre vineyard.

This visit was only one of many investigative field trips undertaken by this duo, who sometimes were joined by "junior viticulturist" Harold Olmo. They were journeying to far-flung vineyards and wineries on a mission: to rescue the state's wine industry from its dismal reputation and foundering economy. Their purpose was to identify, primarily from the results of testing and tasting, the comparative quality of wines they would make from distinctive grape varieties they'd harvest from different climatic regions. Thus their job entailed obtaining grapes for the winemaking research begun on

campus in 1935, less than two years after Prohibition ended.

After welcoming the visiting professors to his lofty domain, Martin Ray would have given them a tour of portions of the extensive hillside vineyards that stretched in different directions around the old winery. He expected to benefit from their ability to discern or confirm the identities of various grapevines planted in what were supposed to be blocks of fine varieties; some still baffled him, despite his questioning old-time vineyard workers and a diligent use of several ampelographies.

Many years later, Amerine would tell Charles Sullivan about the confusing condition of the Masson vineyards that confronted him and Winkler on their visit in the mid-1930s:

Martin Ray certainly didn't know what was up on the hill then. I don't really think that Paul Masson gave him very much information. But the blocks had been sort of named, so that in a general way the Chardonnays were in one area and the Pinot Noirs in another. But it was very mixed up.... [W]e had to spend a whole day just trying to figure out where we were going to sample from before we even got started....

These were all old vines. And the vineyard was in much worse shape than the [flat] one at Almaden. Being on a hillside, there was more erosion from the heavy rains and washouts. People sometimes don't do the terracing properly. So you begin to have missing vines, and so there was more and more interplanting

up there. You couldn't say that the next vine was going to be Chardonnay.... Almost all the blocks had been interplanted during Prohibition. They didn't try to keep a pure block but were just trying to keep the vineyard going.

First of all, we had to spend quite a bit of time to try and identify where there was enough of a variety in an area that we could pick. I remember going up there one more time before we actually picked to do this. [From Charles Sullivan's interview; transcribed text slightly rearranged.]

Such a rampant mix-up of winegrapes wasn't just a recently introduced problem, since for almost a century vineyardists—unless they were extraordinary purists—tended to plant grapevines in haphazard and heterogeneous ways. Most chose vinifera varieties (usually as budwood to be grafted after the 1890s on phylloxera-resistant native-grape rootstock) for convenience, fast and healthy growth, and bountiful production, rather than for fine vintaging quality or uniformity of type. The 14-year Prohibition period starting in 1920 had worsened the situation, as vineyard owners removed or grafted over the delicate, shy-bearing varieties best for making good wine. Even the finicky Paul Masson, desperate to generate income, had succumbed to the trend, so now many previously pristine blocks of fine varieties had been replaced by inferior grapes that MR, fixated on quality, didn't intend to vintage. Nor would the UC Davis researchers want them either. But MR at least could sell them to less discriminating wineries.

As the visitors walked through various vineyard blocks at Masson, they must have explained to MR what they were doing, and why. Their findings, plus knowledge of varieties' performances in the European wine regions, should eventually enable them to recommend which varieties to plant where in California. Following their guidelines, wineries could begin to produce much better wines—even high-quality wines that connoisseurs far beyond California might approve and start buying, ultimately to transform the market. Bulk wine producers too could benefit from learning where to grow or obtain the most intensely flavorful grapes for blending with bland wine fermented from abundant and much cheaper juice grapes, to make superior if unpretentious *vin ordinaire* jug wines.

Background to a New Friendship

Both Amerine and Ray knew why California's wine industry was in deep trouble, and each man had committed himself to altering the situation in his own way and over time. Repeal, coming at the end of 1933, had brought a new set of hurdles when legal winemaking was resumed.

During Prohibition total vineyard acreage had greatly expanded on valley floors as growers put in the coarse, heavy-bearing varieties yielding dark, purplish-red juice favored by bootleggers, shippers, and home winemakers. Many couldn't even accurately identify their own vines, and most—strapped now for cash in these Depression years—wouldn't or couldn't consider replanting. The scarcity of fine-varietal grapes, known to yield the best vintages when grown under stressed conditions, dismayed the rare vintner who truly wished to make premium wines, as California had produced in the distant past. Fortunately, though, for Martin Ray, a number of fine varieties still grew in the Masson vineyards.

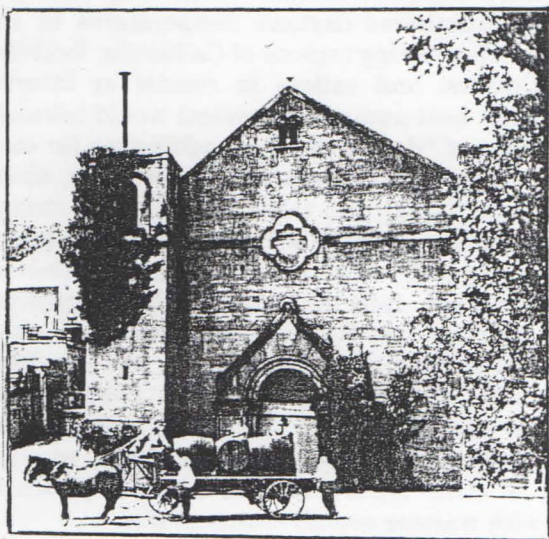
After 1933, some previously established wineries resumed their places in the commercial wine-producing ranks, and scores of new wineries joined them. But most wines made and marketed were inferior in quality, even awful. Most of the knowledge and skills of professional winemaking hadn't been transmitted to the new generation now enlisted in the business. Because the state's resurrected wine industry had a desperate need for expert help, UC's agriculture-focusing campus at Davis had launched the practical work of serving it through research, education, and outreach to be provided by its Division of Viticulture. Besides studying grapegrowing, the curriculum and research also included enology, the science of winemaking (now being pursued again at UC Berkeley as well).

When telling MR what their research project entailed, Drs. Winkler and Amerine probably presented the methodology of this complex new investigation, begun a year or two earlier. Intending to find out which varietal winegrapes did best in California's different climate zones, they set up a study of cumulative daytime temperatures in the various grapegrowing regions of California: foothills, mountainsides, and valleys in coastal or interior areas. Their heat-summation system would calculate the number of "degree days" by adding up for each area the highest temperatures, day after day, above 50° F, when vine growth takes place. Grapes coming from an identical variety but grown in either hotter or cooler regions would inevitably have distinctive properties when fully ripe; thus, when fermented under uniform conditions, the resultant wines would not only be of variable quality but also have measurable chemical differences. Some grape varieties would produce healthier, unique, and intensely flavorful grapes in cooler areas, whereas quality in other types would be better if grown in places with warmer overall temperatures.

An important facet of this research would come after identifying which grape varieties were growing

in the many vineyards in the five different temperature zones in California, ranging from cool to hot. The two scientists would request permission from a number of growers to pick samples at vintage time, for they planned, with help from their students, to crush these grapes and proceed to make white and red wine samples from the fermented must. Certainly when they met with MR the UC Davis visitors would have expressed the desire to eventually harvest ripe grapes from the uncommon fine-varietal vines they saw on the Masson premises—although they realized it wouldn't be an easy picking job because of those mixed-up blocks.

As for Martin Ray, surely he told the two professors about his own aims as Paul Masson's new proprietor: he wanted to make the best still wines and champagnes possible, to show the world what California was capable of producing. To do this, he would vintage, and therefore ultimately grow, *only* pure fine-varietal grapes. MR would also have asserted emphatically that he intended to make his future Paul Masson dry table wines wholly from fine varieties. There would be no blending at all for him, as the other winery proprietors and vintners did it. He wanted his wines to be "natural," alive—individual living entities created from the beneficent actions of microorganisms like yeast upon juice extracted from handpicked, clean, high-quality winegrapes. So he didn't wish to sterilize them chemically by adding sulfur dioxide or to pasteurize all the life out of them by subjecting them to heat treatments. Such statements were bound to astound Amerine. In those years he was unlikely to ever encounter another zealous fine-wine purist like Martin Ray, who sought to learn and then perfect the mysterious alchemy of traditional winemaking.



[The handsome facade of Paul Masson Winery]

During this first visit by Amerine and Winkler, MR surely introduced them to all four floors of Masson's 30-year-old winery building, which he had begun to renovate. (Years later, Amerine recalled how impressed he had been with the impeccably clean cellars—always an MR requirement.) Then MR must have invited his visitors to partake of vinous refreshments before their departure, leading them to the nearby two-story stone house where he and Elsie lived—formerly Paul Masson's requisite but modest Burgundian vineyard *château*. That was surely the occasion when Amerine met Paul Masson, for he recalled that MR had persuaded the elderly Frenchman to return to his former domain, to meet and talk with the two scientists. "He wanted us to quiz him about where it was he had gotten some of the grape varieties there," Amerine said. The occasion would have called for MR to ceremoniously serve a champagne made in some past year by Masson himself and perhaps some aged still wines dating back to before Prohibition.

At this and other early encounters Maynard Amerine not only took note of MR's ambitions and already adamant opinions about winemaking, but also experienced his vitality, robust humor, and forceful character. He must also have seen traces of sudden sensitivity and an impetuous temperament. A curious coincidence had also emerged: Maynard was already acquainted with Elsie. "I knew her socially before I knew Martin at all," he told Charles Sullivan. "She knew my family in the valley." Elsie, though, was some years older than he; by then she was in her late 30s while he was in his mid-20s.

MR would learn from Amerine that after spending his early childhood in Santa Clara Valley, he had later moved with his parents from San Jose to a fruit ranch near Modesto, in the Central Valley—where they failed to prosper. A farm boy born in 1911, Maynard had been a high achiever in school; attracted to science, he saw the value of applying the scientific method to solving agricultural problems. After earning a B.S. at the UC campus in Davis, he had gone on to UC Berkeley—and was near to completing his Ph.D. in plant physiology when viticulturist Albert Winkler, appointed chairman of the new Division of Viticulture (separated now from Berkeley's control), brought him back to Davis in 1935, to serve as an instructor and his research assistant, specializing in the scientific study of winemaking.

Amerine and Winkler's research project would last seven years altogether—nine before its full results were published. (Eventually, two decades later, it began influencing vineyard plantings virtually worldwide when the Wine Revolution commenced.) During its long course Maynard

Amerine would meet a great many vintners as well as winery and vineyard owners. A number of them became both research collaborators and friends. The cooperative interactions between them and him, as well as with others on the UC Davis faculty, were bound to greatly affect how winegrapes were grown and wines made. As multiple problems emerged in vineyards and cellars, the university's scientists and outreach educators worked to diagnose and solve them, often in concert with viticulturists and enologists elsewhere in the world.

For his part, Martin Ray over the years would sometimes seek information about scientific findings in biochemistry, microbiology, plant physiology, and pathologies in grapevines and wines, as well as about new technologies devised for winemaking and vineyard care. At such times he was likely to contact the staff at UC Davis, particularly Amerine. But his orientation differed radically from that of most commercial vintners in his era. He was more interested in tending his vineyards and making great wines in the classical tradition than in making a lot of money—which he had done earlier as a stockbroker. At the same time, though, MR strove to earn a living from doing what he loved best. And he needed it to be sufficient enough for him to enjoy the gustatory pleasures of “the Good Life,” as he called it. From the start, Maynard Amerine surely understood and admired him for those aspirations, and he may have enjoyed a more emotionally and spiritually intimate relationship with MR than with any other vintner of their time ... while this close relationship lasted.

Early Correspondence and Contacts

That first grape-identifying session at the Paul Masson premises between MR and the two UC Davis faculty members was followed by letter, telephone, and in-person contacts. The earliest letter in a folder devoted to the Paul Masson winery, in the correspondence archives of the Department of Viticulture and Enology, is a carbon copy of a brief letter from Dr. Albert Winkler to Martin Ray. It indicates that MR and Amerine had connected since their initial meeting.

Dr. Amerine informs me that you are planning to employ a man to take care of the operations and development of your vineyard. I have a man in mind who graduated here last year and whom I think would be just about the type of individual that you are looking for....

Before getting in contact with him again, I wish you would give me a little bit better idea of what you intend to pay and just what you would expect of him. [9/15/37]

As in the letters MR would begin writing to Julian Street two years later, here was an

opportunity for him to present aspects of his *modus operandi* along with his high aims as a winegrower. What MR wrote he'd probably already told MA.

I was glad to receive your letter of the 15th and to learn that you have in mind a man graduated there last year whom you think would be the type of individual that I am looking for here.... [I] will endeavor to give you a better idea of what I would expect of such a man so employed.

As for salary, I have no amount in mind, except that it is always my policy to pay in proportion to what I receive. I have had men at very low salaries who did not earn them, and others at high salaries who easily earned all they were paid. You can readily understand that I would be willing to pay any reasonable amount for the right kind of a man, although I would expect that the responsibility of the proof of worth rest in the hands of the man. I would not be interested in starting a man out at a high salary merely basing it upon his apparent ability and recommendation of others, nor would I be inclined to touch any immediate value on any theories of how he might in the future prove his services of outstanding value.

I came very close to hiring a foreman recently at a salary far in excess of what I would normally have paid merely because he had all but sold me by conversation alone on his value. I had negotiated with him over a period of some months which afforded me an opportunity to try out several of his plans in the vineyard, and his pruning methods, in which he was so confident, were tried out in a certain section of the vineyard with a resulting loss of at least five tons of Champagne grapes. This and a few other incidents fortunately indicate[d] to me that he really did not know all that he claimed to, and because of this and other situations which have arisen lately I have definitely decided that what I want is a young man of intelligence and willingness to learn, but preferably with no experience at all other than whatever theoretical training he may have received or actually experience acquired at the University. If I can obtain this type of a chap who is willing to do what we tell him to do and otherwise intelligently go about his job, he will fill the order better than the more experienced man who has certain set ideas which probably would not work in with our plans here.

Briefly, the job would be one of permanence, and its value to the right party would certainly be greater than that afforded by any other probable opportunity. It is our desire to develop here the finest vineyard in the country and, as you know, this will involve a great deal of planning and hard work. I have found that many foremen today are inclined to want to have men to do all of the work. Everyone works here, and anyone selected for this job would have to be a working foreman who, during certain months of the year, would

have no one to assist him. He would have to willingly undertake all kinds of work and his reward would be based not only upon his accomplishments, but also his attitude and willingness to go ahead in the same way that our head cellarman works with his men in the cellars.

I will be very glad to meet anyone that you might think qualified for this position. [9/21/37]

Later, Dr. Winkler responded that unfortunately the young man he'd had in mind had decided to stay in his current position and that he had no one else at present to recommend. (No former UC Davis students, it seems, ever worked for Martin Ray. He probably felt that receiving an excellent technical education but minimal practical skills would spoil them for performing hard field or cellar labor under his direction.)

Although after this MR would exchange occasional letters with Winkler and Olmo about viticultural matters, his primary connection with the Division of Viticulture was with Maynard Amerine, whose first letter to MR on file was sent in mid-October of 1937—over a year after the two men met, if indeed Amerine was correct in saying that it was 1936 when he had first looked at those wildly mixed-up Masson vineyards. (It may in fact have been 1937.) Although the letter is properly addressed to Martin E. Ray, Proprietor, the salutation says "Dear Mr. Martin"—doubtless a department secretary's unnoticed error. In the first paragraph the "Junior Enologist," as MA gave his title below his signature, expressed a pro-forma gratitude.

I want to thank you very much for your kindness in permitting us to secure the grapes from you yesterday. It is very helpful to us to be able to secure varieties from your location and we trust they will be of future service to the industry at large as well as ourselves.

(The "us" mentioned by Amerine may have included one student or several, as well as Dr. Winkler. And this grape-gleaning session during vintage time that Amerine referred to had been his *third* visit; when he told Sullivan about first meeting MR, he said they'd had to return a second time to Masson to examine the varietal blocks before the actual picking.)

As for the grapes the UC Davis men took away, Amerine remembered this:

We collected a large number [of varieties]. They are all listed in the 1944 *Hilgardia*. Certainly we collected Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Folle Blanche. And Pinot Blanc and Chardonnay. [They also probably picked MR's Gamay Beaujolais—one of his favored varietals.] The vineyard was very difficult to sample from. The only block that I remember being reasonably easy was the Chardonnay variety. The others that we tried to pick, we'd try 25 vines in each direction and if

we found 10 of the proper vine we had enough to collect. We wanted 10 pounds from 10 vines, which was the minimum amount we had established previously for collecting.

The Winkler-Amerine intention for the wine-making experiments at Davis was to gather, if possible, a minimal 100 lbs. of a particular variety from a vineyard—not enough to deplete a winery's supply—in order to produce ultimately a good sample of wine. So they must have taken away at least 500 lbs.—a quarter of a ton—of five or six fine-varietal grapes from Masson. They always hoped winegrapes would be donated to their good research cause, but if necessary they'd pay for them. After harvesting the selected grapes, the scientists would return to Davis to make small batches of wine. These were usually kept in separate 5-gallon glass jugs, labeled as to vineyard of origin, variety, and date; eventually they were bottled. The end result over time: several thousand separate wines, kept in a cellar on campus. Various researchers in the Department would systematically both analyze chemically and taste-test these varietal wines, comparing them with others taken from different climatic regions, I (the coolest) through V (the hottest). Using a 100-point system for "organoleptic evaluation" of these wines, Amerine and others would taste 20 wines in the morning and another 20 in the afternoon.

Developing a highly sensitive palate and acquiring good knowledge of the European wine models were both clearly crucial tasks, and young Maynard Amerine, who had known almost nothing about wine at the start of this work, had applied himself thoroughly to the job. Winkler brought to the campus a former viticulture professor at Berkeley, Edmund Henry Twight, specifically to instruct both him and Amerine (but particularly the latter) in the principles of winemaking and wine judging. Maynard read widely through wine literature, covering aesthetics, history, and technical practices. He also joined men's upscale social clubs in the San Francisco Bay area and spent time with wine connoisseurs, to be introduced by them to many of the world's great vintages. By 1937 he was well on his way to becoming an acknowledged expert. Early in that year he had taken a leave of several months from his Davis position, and traveling at his own expense went off to visit winegrowing regions on the Continent—the first of many such informative yet pleasurable expeditions.

At the same time, Martin Ray, intent upon establishing himself as the grower and maker of America's best wines, was also fast becoming adept at wine tasting. In his former years at college, in magazine publishing, and as a stock broker—all

during the Dry Years—he had drunk various intoxicating and banned beverages with gusto and sometimes to excess. Now he centered his attention upon wine. However, as MR later told Julian Street in several letters (and surely Amerine had learned this earlier), he had to be carefully abstemious. He had found that for health reasons (he'd suffered a probable stroke in the early '30s, when he was only around 30) he could no longer "drink" alcohol of any kind in appreciable amounts without suffering anxiety and severe palpitations. So he only permitted himself to *taste* wines, including his own—sampling them with the utmost moderation. (Quite probably Elsie Ray closely monitored his consumption.) As a winery proprietor, he was deliberately training himself to detect and discern all manner of things about wines: their aroma, color and clarity, flavor, acidity, tannin, reducing sugar, body, balance, complexity, imperfections, and downright defects. MR also looked for what he'd later describe as the overall "come-on" that encouraged a drinker to consume more—but which he refrained from doing in that period of his life.

Since MR intended to make table wines and champagnes comparable to or possibly even superior to the best ones produced in Europe, and stoutly maintained this was possible to do in California, his personal goals as a vintner coincided with enologist Amerine's aims as a wine scientist. And both men truly loved fine wine.

Discussing Technical Wine Issues

The bottle of champagne that Amerine took away with him on that grape-picking day in 1937 was Paul Masson's popular signature rosy champagne, *Oeil de Perdrix* (eye of the partridge). In making it, MR and his head vintner, Oliver Goulet, apparently used as the main constituent a wine that had been cellared some years earlier. MA soon reported on the UC tasting group's reaction to the sample:

There was some question as to whether the wine itself was of sufficiently high quality to justify the expense of champagning it. This is not to be taken as a criticism of the champagne itself, although we did feel that it was made from wine that was perhaps a little too old and consequently had a somewhat woody flavor; and, furthermore, it may have been a little too dark for the type. Our impression of this type of wine is that it must be very fresh and gay, and possibly because the wine was a little old, it did not quite come up to what one would have anticipated.

Amerine, though, then had wonderful things to say about the bottle of Pinot Noir, vintaged around 1916, that MR had given him earlier, in the spring.

[W]e found this a very delicious wine with a beautifully

developed bouquet and possessing all the charm and elegance which one associates with the wine of this age made from these grapes. There were several remarkable features of this wine aside from this beautiful bouquet, one of which was the very good retention of color after all these years in the bottle. The wine was smooth and velvety and I may say that, at least in my own opinion, it is one of the nicest red wines that I have ever tasted in California. I am hoping that somewhere in the crevices of your winery you are going to be able to find a few more bottles of this....

The Pinot is an exquisite example of a fine wine properly aged and brought to maturity. The shame of it is that it is improbable that we shall have more of this kind of wine for many years, at least until you begin to bottle your red Pinots. [10/13/37]

By now, of course, Maynard Amerine could make the last statement with some confidence because he had seen Masson's Pinot Noir vines (few other winegrowers had any), and almost certainly had tasted the 1936 vintage as it was developing in cask. He had also listened to MR talk about his plans as a vintner of pure varietal wines, and could contrast this with what he was seeing, hearing, and tasting at other California wineries.

Within several days MR responded to Amerine's letter. He thanked him for his high opinion of the "old still wine so well preserved," and finally took up the *Oeil de Perdrix* matter, letting Amerine know that he welcomed his forthright judgments, even if negative.

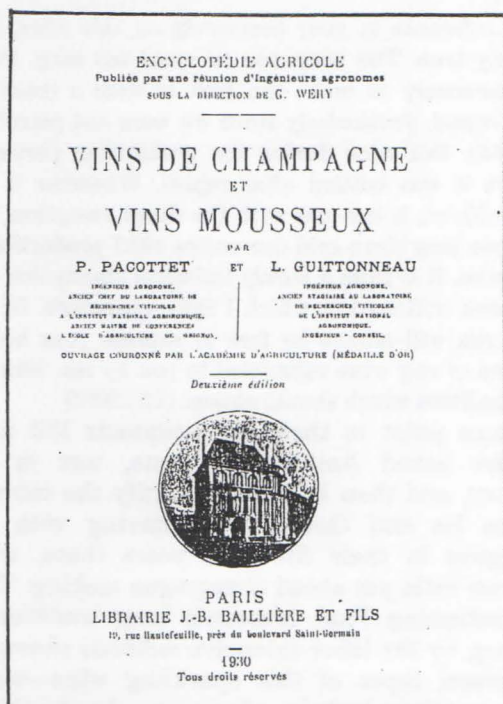
With reference to your comments on this wine, it is entirely true. The wine was in wood too long, but it was necessary to make the best of such a condition after repeal, particularly since we were not permitted to bottle this wine during the prohibition period. It follows it was bottled after repeal. Wherever it has been offered, it has met with the finest reception, and we have long since sold our entire 1937 production of this wine. It is from a purely technical standpoint that you have criticized it, which I fully appreciate. In any case, you will always be free to express your honest opinion of any wine submitted to you by me, which is the condition which should obtain. [10/19/37]

At some point in their early contacts MR must also have asked Amerine to taste, test in the laboratory, and then hopefully identify the cause of problems he and Goulet were having with the champagnes in their first two years there, when they knew little yet about champagne making. They were continuing Paul Masson's long tradition of producing, by the labor-intensive *méthode champenoise*, several types of this sparkling wine—which Masson somehow had cleverly arranged to be able to make legally during Prohibition and be sold by prescription for medicinal purposes. In 1984

Amerine told Sullivan about MR's champagne crisis at Masson:

Certainly by 1937 Martin realized that he had a major problem in the champagne.... [H]e had been to Korbel at least once and he had tasted all the currently available French champagnes. It really didn't take very long for him to realize that there was something wrong with that champagne.... Well, he asked us and he asked other people who were making champagne. He would get on the phone and call a dozen people before breakfast. [Transcribed text slightly rearranged.]

According to Amerine, MR had appealed to Paul Masson himself for advice but couldn't get satisfactory technical counseling from the old Burgundian. Inevitably, he and Goulet pored over champagne-making recipes and tried out formulas and remedies found in Masson's old Cellar Book. Amerine may have alerted MR to a classic French book, *Vins de Champagne et Vins Mousseux* by Paul Pacottet and L. Guittonneau, that detailed the standard processes for making champagne and sparkling wines. MR arranged to get the 1930 second edition translated for his own uses, and Amerine and Twilight (who was fluent in French) agreed to read the manuscript text for accuracy before MR had several copies duplicated and bound. (Two are now at UC Davis; MR had agreed to donate them in lieu of paying the professors for their work. MR's own copy now resides in the Sonoma County Wine Library, Healdsburg, CA.)



[Title page 1930 2nd French edition]

MR and Goulet eventually solved the Masson champagne problem. "I think it was a bacteria," Amerine recalled. "He got the new culture and the difference was like night and day." But there may have been other problem-causing factors that Amerine, a half-century later, had forgotten about. For instance, he had written this to MR as if offering technical advice and guidance:

I have been looking over what Pacottet and others have to say about pasteurization of the must. I find that Pacottet has nothing to say against this process, and that he recommends it for (a) grapes damaged by rains and rot, (b) grapes picked from the vineyard without sorting. He also has considerable to say about using SO₂. I find no comparison of the two methods in the text. From what he has to say, there is little danger of pasteurizing must if the heating period is not too long nor the temperature too high as far as leaving a cooked taste in the wine. [MR definitely did not subscribe to pasteurizing wines by "cooking" them in hot rooms.]

I still feel that a test would be desirable for this reason: the grapes that Pacottet and co-workers were using are considerably more acid than the grapes to be used here. Under conditions of lower acidity the grapes might—I don't say would because I don't know—prove more susceptible to oxidation during pasteurization.

The higher volatile with the X variety still seems to me to be a combination of conditions: (a) coming to the winery first and boxes not completely sterile; (b) inoculation of yeast in crusher, etc., not great and sluggish fermentation; (c) possible hotter weather earlier in season for grapes as they reach winery and for fermentation. There is no indication that this variety naturally has a tendency to higher volatile than any other. The only possible difference might be in having a lower total acid (hence a higher pH) than FB [Folle Blanche, which MR grew and often used in his champagnes], etc., and thus being more nearly in the optimum pH range for spoilage organisms. [5/31/38]

Whenever Amerine visited at Paul Masson, MR might have shared with the enologist one or several of the French or German wines he had been acquiring, so they could compare their judgments. And surely too he'd often take him to the winery and use a wine thief to proffer sample tastes of various table wines developing in cask that he and Goulet had vintaged: the white fine varietals—Pinot Blanc (Vrai), Pinot Chardonnay, Folle Blanche; and the reds—Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Gamay Beaujolais. He always expected to get a candid evaluation.

In an October 1937 letter to Amerine, MR had said in a P.S.: "Our vintage season is at an end, and we believe we have some very fine new wines, concerning which we will know more, of course, a

little bit later on." It turned out later, though, that apparently the grape harvest in 1937 proved disappointing in its vintaging outcome. (Probably it wasn't good either for Amerine's getting decent winegrapes from the Masson vineyards other than Pinot Noir for his winemaking research.) As MR would later tell Julian Street:

In 1937 I lost (for our use) all our crop except the Pinot Noir. It was a very bad year. The grapes came in in bad shape and were covered with wild yeast and bacteria. I didn't look at them under a glass as it was not necessary and would not have changed anything. I knew from the first fermentation that it was a bad year. I saved the Pinot Noir because it was the first grape picked and I made the wine you have tasted ... out of the free-run juice. The wild yeast and bacteria is always on the skins and the free-run juice is more free of it. So, this wine was a good wine, the only one I made that year and kept. I sold all of half the grapes, and the wine I made I also sold. None of the fermentations were perfect. You have to take such years but they don't often jump at you without warning. [7/3/40]

It's more than likely that Amerine had strongly advised MR to sell off the defective wines he had made in 1937, since he was so adamantly determined to establish a reputation for making only superior varietal wines. Other wineries could, and did, ameliorate various faults in an unlikable wine by sterilizing it with metabisulfite, adding other chemicals, blending it with better-tasting wines, or distilling it into brandy.

A Continuing Correspondence

During the latter part of 1937 and the first half of 1938, notes and letters passed frequently between Amerine and Ray, who after a while changed the salutation from "Dear Mr.—" to using each other's surnames only (e.g., "My Dear Amerine"), eventually to evolve into first names, as MR would do with Julian Street. Like Street, Maynard called him Martin, avoiding the nickname "Rusty," which many other people readily used, including Elsie.

In the fall of 1937 Amerine had apparently gently criticized a newly designed and printed label that MR had affixed on some Masson wine bottle he'd given to Amerine. (A copy of this letter, alas, apparently wasn't preserved.) MR responded:

I must plead guilty to the accusation politely made in your letter of October 21, 1937, although I call to your attention a carbon copy of a letter just written to the makers of the label, which I thought would be of interest to you and which I ask that you please return. I was truly very disappointed in this label, but expect to have finished shortly something more nearly what I

had originally in mind. [10/26/37]

Amerine wrote back, indicating that perhaps the two men had talked over the phone.

A very interesting and intriguing discussion on the subject of labels, I must say, and I trust that you will be able to find a satisfactory label for your white and red still wines in the near future. Unfortunately, I am busy as a bee this morning getting ready to go to Los Angeles and cannot make more extended comments.

Thanks for letting me see the letter and I shall be very much interested in finding out how your final label comes out. [10/28/37]

MR may have continued to use that unsatisfactory label; or if he did contrive a replacement, it was the notoriously pretentious one that mimicked Germany's Schloss Johannisberger label, with its vineyard panorama. MR would use it on the new line of "signature" table wines (with the label bearing Martin Ray's own signature)—pure varietal wines that Masson began releasing in the late '30s, with the white ones going first. (It's highly doubtful, of course, that Amerine ever approved this label.)

Toward the end of 1937, Amerine wrote to ask whether Masson might have a spare old champagne-corking machine that MR would sell to the Viticulture Division. When informed that indeed there was one, Winkler and Amerine drove to Saratoga to see it, knowing in advance that MR would set a modest price on it. Amerine wrote to MR afterwards:

We enjoyed very much our visit with you yesterday morning and the consequent discussion of the multiple problems of the industry. I also want to thank you for the case of champagne and I shall be looking for the bill here at any time....

With respect to the white wine "M.R." [a signature Chardonnay], Winkler and I tasted it rather carefully and found it to be a pleasant wine, of nice basic quality, and having good body. The color seems to have darkened a little since I tasted it last and you have added such a slight amount of SO₂ that it is hardly perceptible. While tasting the wine we discussed with Mr. Goulet [*sic*] its probable future. Since other white wines of your vineyard may behave in the same fashion, we thought it might be of interest, if you had a good barrel, to divide your present puncheon, placing half in glass and half in the barrel. This would give you a fine opportunity to discover if the volatile acid continued to increase in glass (it probably won't increase very much in glass), and to find out the behavior of the wine in wood with further aging. However, this was all more or less polite conversation since the wine is very nice and probably will not spoil under most treatments. [12/30/37]

Then it was MR's turn to write back, and he defended the wine made from his Chardonnay grapes. This fine varietal in future years would be

one of the three sought-after Martin Ray table wines, but even then (hard to believe today) was little known, as it was rarely planted in California until the 1970s—four decades after MR began vintaging it at Masson and then marketing it as a 100% varietal wine.

I am very sorry that it was not possible for me to properly entertain Doctor Winkler and you on the occasion of your last visit, but I assure you that I did enjoy the visit which we had, and I am going to look forward to the next one being more leisurely conducted and including many discussions which I hope to have some day with you....

Concerning the Pinot Chardonnay wine which you tasted, I was interested to note what you said about it, although of course it would be necessary to discuss it before I could have your full opinion. There is one thing, however, that seems to have formed an impression on your mind which I do not fully justify. It is the matter of color. Any Pinot Chardonnay which is picked for still wine will have some color, and if allowed to ferment on the skins, it will have an abundance of color. It will, in fact, become a deep gold. For champagne, these grapes are picked earlier, are quickly crushed, pressed, and the juice is rapidly drawn off. Obviously, in champagne, you do not want this color. It exists in all of our present wines, but will not exist in any of those which we will ultimately finish under our own manufacture. But for still wine, I do not understand why the color should be objectionable to you, if it is. Every white burgundy of merit which I have ever inspected has been deep in color. In fact, I have thought that the finest of them must have been fermented on the skins without doubt. Please advise me what you have learned with regards to this condition in the burgundy district with their white wines of the finest grade.

To me, a golden color in a fine glass of fully matured white wine is definitely an advantage as compared with a pale greenish hue which cannot be held permanently in any white wine, however manufactured and preserved, and which in itself does not possess the same character, so far as appearance is concerned as I react to it.

Everywhere I go, wine makers seem to demand the absence of color. You will find that next year our still wines will have more color than the one which you tasted, as we have definitely determined that the best qualities in the grapes can only be conveyed into the wine if treated in such a way as will surely bring along much color, too, in the case of the white Pinot grapes. Being natural, and additionally pleasing to look at, we have determined to accept it. What do you think about this? [1/4/38]

The contents of the folder of letters written between September of 1937 and June of 1938

indicate that traffic of various kinds frequently went on between MR and MA during those 10 months—as when MR asked Amerine to send several gallons of Seitz filtered grape juice, which he intended to pasteurize (by heating it) and then use as a base for starting new yeast cultures for inducing a second fermentation in the Masson champagnes when bottled:

I do not know how it ever happened that we did not pasteurize and retain sufficient grape juice last vintage season to take care of the growing of our yeast for this spring's bottling. I guess we were so fatigued that when the last grapes came in we were so happy that we forgot all else other than that the season was over. [2/10/38]

But then MR, who loathed the odor and taste of any sulfur used in wines, had to write MA again, to complain about the second gallon of juice sent to him:

I understood you to say that the juice had not been sulphured, whereas I found it heavily sulphured.... Goulet and I wondered how the sulphur may have gotten into your juice, since you did not know that it was there—but there are, of course, many ways that it might have happened. I thought that possibly you had instructed some one to draw off the free-run juice immediately after the grapes were crushed, and that it was your assumption that in so doing there would be no sulphur in the juice. I further assumed that possibly sterilization of the must by the addition of metabisulphite had already taken place, thereby putting the sulphur into this juice. In any case if you will test any that you have you will find that it is there present.

Despite the sulphur the last shipment received from you was in a state of fermentation, showing that either the sulphur was not in large quantities, or else the yeast was very sturdy in sulphur resistance. I should say that another day or so would have seen an explosion of the glass container. Which brings me to the further cause of writing you. I suggest that you look into the matter of fermentation of any which you have remaining if you desire to retain it. [3/16/38]

Amerine's letter written several days later shows the quick attention, reflective reasoning, and precise investigation that he customarily gave to all wine-making problems that were brought to his attention:

I was sorry to learn that there was something wrong with the second bottle of grape juice. I am entirely unable to account for the presence of the SO₂, but I am able to figure out the fermentation. When we sent the first jar to you, we had noted that the corks were loose on some of the other jars. At the time of sending the second one, I picked the jar that had the tightest cork, but none of them were very well sealed in so that it quite easy to account for the presence of the free yeast

and the slow fermentation which had taken place.

As far as the SO₂ is concerned, I am quite sure that when the grape juice was filtered there was no sulfur in it because I had the class do this filtration and I watched them crush the grapes, dilute it with water, and finally pass it through the Seitz germ-proof. Occasionally the boys use a little meta-bisulphite in washing the gallon jars, and it is possible that the jar which you received had not been properly washed. After receiving your letter I immediately went to the cellar where there were two more jars and took samples for determination of SO₂. We were unable to detect any SO₂ in one jar, but in the other there was about 40 ppm. [3/19/38]

Each correspondent in his letters usually invited a response from the other to some question asked or opinion given—or a bunch of them. In letters and talks the two men continued discussing wines, whether MR's or European vintages, and technical matters in winemaking. But gradually books and other cultural subjects would be brought up, along with noting the alarming condition of international relations in Europe and Asia. It's certain too that MR began asking Maynard to come to Masson on various occasions when he would be entertaining celebrities there, as the erudite and increasingly sophisticated young professor would have fit well into the social milieu.

What MR Said About Maynard Amerine

By late 1939, when MR began his extraordinary correspondence with Julian Street, he mentioned Amerine in his first letter—and frequently afterwards.

Dr. Maynard Amerine of the University of California School of Viticulture at Davis, is ... doing a great deal to further the interest in, and appreciation of the fine wines of the world. We, who make wines, must rely for recognition of them, to a very great extent, upon those of you who have come to be respected as eminent authorities. Our actual success, is then, to be obtained in a major way at your hands, for, until the people can judge for themselves, they have no alternative than to follow your recommendations.

With this in mind, I have considered it my responsibility to cooperate to the fullest with any undertakings intended to educate the people further of wines. [11/27/39]

MR's letters to Street often praised him as a matchless arbiter and promoter of fine wine who was providing crucially needed wine education to the public. He soon began to show what pride he took in his close association with Dr. Maynard Amerine. Like Street, Amerine was engaged in wine education—of UC Davis students, of wine professionals, and of wine drinkers. But he also worked

diligently as a researcher who delved continuously into the science of winemaking, about which Street admittedly knew almost nothing at all. Amerine was intent upon perfecting wines by understanding, through numerous investigative projects, both their most basic and most complex aspects.

As for MR himself, he knew he was performing a vital corollary function by aspiring to make excellent wines. It was the crucial way to change people's attitudes about California's potential for producing fine, and someday even great, wines. As he told JS:

I would give anything if there were more people here on the coast who were genuinely interested in fine wines, like you and the group with whom you are no doubt intimately associated. Mr. [Harold] Price [of the San Francisco Wine & Food Society] and Dr. Amerine are doing a great deal to educate people and they deserve great credit, but there are tremendous prejudices to overcome and it will require time.

As I have already said, it is my desire that one of the first accomplishments will be the recognition of the fact that fine wines can be produced here. If just this much can be accomplished, we will have come a long way. Recognition of this fact can come only through the few outstanding authorities, for it is to these few people that those unable to judge for themselves look for advice. You will understand then, I feel that our future is to a very great extent in the hands of you and a very few people. Wines must be both made and recognized (or discovered). One without the other does not benefit very many people. [1/15/40]

A half-year later, MR told Street much more about his UC Davis friend, writing at surprising length about Maynard's virtues and activities. Now that MR had established his own satisfying correspondence with Julian Street, he decided he should broker a relationship between JS and his friend, who during his occasional travels to the East Coast might make time to meet his favorite wine authority. MR's description of the young UC Davis enologist provides a rare look at Amerine when he was still in his twenties. At the same time, MR reveals his own—and evidently Amerine's as well—growing disillusionment and dismay over most of California's publicly acknowledged wine connoisseurs.

I want to say, I am in the process of introducing to you Dr. Amerine, of whom I have heretofore written. And with your permission, I am going to ask him to write to you.

He is, in my opinion, the only one active and influential [sic] member of that group of leaders in California, who pretty well dominate things, who is genuinely and profoundly interested in wines. The others either are not active and influential or they are phonies, stuffed shirts or only selfishly interested as a

means to some other end, I believe. Amerine's interests outside wine are a means to the end that he learn to know and enjoy more of his life which is actually devoted to wines, the knowledge and appreciation of them. There are lots of other honest people who like wines but they are not in that group of leaders other than as above classified. I sincerely believe there is Dr. Winkler, who is certainly an honest man of much experience. But his experience is limited to a certain type of experience as is his ability and his life. Amerine lives and works in a broad world. He knows every vineyard in California, which I do not believe can be said of any other man. He knows virtually every producer. He knows the vineyards of France and Germany as well as he could by one extended trip there and many friendships that also take him into the vineyards and cellars abroad. He spent his own savings to go abroad to learn first hand. He is active in the Bohemian Club, where he is on the Wine Committee. He helped organize the Society of Medical Friends of Wine for the good of the Wine Industry and the prestige and respect it needs here. He is active in the Wine & Food Society of San Francisco....

Amerine works long and hard. He reads a lot and on many subjects. He goes to a few operas and sees some of the good shows. He is very interested in foods and permits himself to eat well. He has a mind of his own and is indeed very strong willed but he has permitted some much older than himself to dominate at times in the past when he knew more than they. I believe they have sort of leaned on him while at the same time taking the applause. He probably permitted this in the knowledge it might be proper and even best but I doubt if he will do so in the future and certain it is he can and will do what he thinks is best.

His ability is outstanding and extensive, both native and acquired. He also has personal charm. He will grow away from them all. He is honest and genuine. He thinks clearly and deeply. He is appreciative, thoughtful of others, and I have found him always anxious to give more than he receives. He will be the leader someday, if he so desires.

This covers Amerine pretty well, as I see him. I have gone a "long way" but it is necessary to go a good deal further to find another like him, and I would not know where to look.

He is interested in making wines as you and I know they should be made. He is a professor at the School of Viticulture, I think you know. He has drunk more fine wines than all the other members of the S.F. Wine & Food Society put together and continues to drink them, so he knows something about fine wines other than what others say of them.

He should know you and you will enjoy knowing him.
[5/4/40]

(When Amerine did write to Julian Street, however,

his first letter wasn't to MR's liking—as will be revealed in the next issue.)

Insights Into a Close Connection

The Paul Masson Winery folder containing less than a year of their early correspondence indicates that the two still-youthful men—Maynard was seven years younger than Martin—were fast forming a firm friendship. They began to meet occasionally, since Amerine often found both job-connected and social reasons to visit the Masson premises. Probably a few times in those early years MR even drove up to Davis to see the vineyards and winemaking facilities under development there and to bring wine samples—and to visit with Amerine. Their letters began mixing personal information and social transactions with the mutual wine-connected interests—as shown when Amerine lent MR his copy of Aldous Huxley's *Point Counter Point* as a prelude to discussing the provocative novel with him.

Correspondence and contacts would naturally have continued apace. Considering their frequency at the start, as the friendship progressed in the months and years ahead, letters would have passed often between the two men as the most satisfying form of communication when in-person conversations couldn't take place; better than telephone calls, they provided written records. However, to locate any extant letters between them beyond May of 1938 would require time-consuming delving into the chronologically arranged general correspondence files of the Viticulture & Enology Department, since having a special folder of Paul Masson letters wasn't continued.

It's apparent from his letters to JS that by 1940 MR regarded himself as a mentor and confidant to the younger man, who had not yet wholly achieved the superb self-confidence, urbane manner, and mature professional demeanor remarkable in subsequent years. MR declared that the young enologist was the only truly knowledgeable and genuinely talented person in California who was involved with the wine industry and wine connoisseurship; after their split in 1955 he continued to proclaim the highest esteem for Amerine's knowledge and abilities.

Probably Amerine served as a pipeline to MR for a lot of information and gossip about the wine industry and its personalities from the late 1930s into the mid-1950s. Because of his various professional and avocational positions, he circulated much more than MR out in the wine world. MR, for his part, most of the time stayed on his mountaintop, working in his vineyards and wine cellars, or occasionally writing long, revelatory letters to a succession of wine-loving recipients. Amerine at

times disclosed negative information and trade gossip that MR might not have known about otherwise—though his letters to Street indicate that he had some other informants as well. For instance, he would often send Oliver Goulet out to visit certain wineries and vineyards as both his emissary and spy. Over time, Maynard began to realize that he needed to become more circumspect about sharing his experiences, impressions, and opinions, because MR might well use them later as ammunition when attacking other vintners and wineries when furthering his own great cause: the making of pure and fine varietal wines—so as to raise far higher (he said) California's reputation for quality winemaking.

Anyone writing about the nature of the relationship between these two very different wine men will be further handicapped by the fact that in later years, after self-protectively putting their friendship "on ice," Amerine as a matter of policy would seldom mention Martin Ray's name, let alone say anything about him or his wines. But his previous, longstanding social connection with MR had run very deep. Furthermore, although MA presented a gracious and cosmopolitan man, he was also intensely private, and apparently wished to remain so to posterity—an unfortunate circumstance for an aspiring biographer. He eventually destroyed copies of personal correspondence in his UC-Davis office files, and probably much of his professional correspondence as well. (However, some of his friends and associates surely cherished and preserved letters from him.) During his retirement, he also got rid of personal papers kept in his home.

Amerine was a prolific writer, publishing hundreds of both technical and popular articles and pamphlets, and a number of books. (He was already busily writing when he took up with Martin Ray. His first paper, published in 1937, "Wines at the Paris International Exposition," was followed in the next year by 12 more, all but two co-authored with either Winkler or Twilight, and these 10 appeared in *Wines & Vines*.) He didn't compose a memoir, though he did provide two oral histories (1972 and 1988) about his work. Occasionally Dr. Amerine would agree to be interviewed, as he was by Charles L. Sullivan in 1984. It's rather amusing that in his note to Sullivan assenting to their meeting, he declared, "I would not want to be interviewed on anything about Martin Ray or his wines or winery." Yet he ended up saying quite a lot when he got talking. That's the kind of person Martin Ray was: whether admired or despised, he fascinated people who knew him, or even knew of him—and still does, more than a quarter-century after his death. They couldn't, or can't, help giving memorable first-hand

or second-hand impressions of him or remembrances of encounters. They also speculate about MR's undeniably charismatic powers, which induced susceptible people to undergo sudden "conversions" to pursuing the winegrowing life—though resultant bad experiences in more than a few gave him the reputation of being a con man. Amerine, like numerous others, may have been mesmerized by him for years.

There are, at least, additional sources of information about the MR-MA bond ... and its eventual breakage. As indicated above, MR wrote about the young Amerine during the early 1940s in his long letters to Julian Street, most of which have fortuitously been archived. It's evident that MR got to know Amerine well during his early years at Davis, before he became internationally renowned as an enologist, wine authority, and author. As for a later time in their relationship, the Martin and Eleanor Ray Papers, now at UC Davis, contain a number of informal letters, notes, and postcards that Amerine sent to them over several years in the mid-1950s. (Previous letters from MA and carbon copies of MR's letters to him were destroyed in the Masson winery fire of 1941 and a house fire in 1952.) There's also a fat file of carbon copies of the Rays' letters to Amerine (with MRs especially revelatory), as well as various references to Amerine in other correspondence of theirs.

What held this friendship tightly together for so long? Both men had grown up on the land and wanted to live and work close to it. They had a number of interests in common, both earth-bound and sophisticated, and they liked to read as well as listen to and tell stories. MR acted out his outsized emotions in ways that the far more reserved MA could not—or did not. Surely the most intense and abiding link, of course, was that both strove to perfect winemaking in California, so they often exchanged conjectures about and insights into ways of doing it. Their connection, both professional and social, grew steadily into an intimate friendship that went on satisfactorily for a decade and a half.

[To be continued in the next issue.]

[EDITOR NOTE: See our *Tendrils Newsletter*, Vol.8 No.2 and No.3 (1998), for personal remembrances and tributes to Maynard Amerine (1911–1998). See also Vol.3 No.2 (1993) for a review of *Vineyards in the Sky. The Life of Legendary Vintner Martin Ray* by Eleanor Ray, with Barbara Marinacci (1993; 2nd ed, 2002). Copies of *Vineyards* are available from Barbara (bookmill@ix.netcom.com). Also of interest, see "Eleanor Ray: A Profile in Memoriam" by Barbara Marinacci (Vol.10 No.3, July 2000).]

A BIBLIOMANIAC ??



"Holy cow! What kind of crazy people used to live here anyway?"

© 1967 by *The New Yorker* magazine, reprinted by permission of Sam Gross.

[From *A PASSION FOR BOOKS*, by Harold Rabinowitz and Rob Kaplan.
New York: Random House, 1999]