WAYWARD TENDRILS QUARTERLY

Vol.16 No.2 A WINE BOOK COLLECTOR'S SOCIETY April 2006

THE GREAT WINE QUAKE

by

Charles L. Sullivan

[In our January issue of this year of the 100th anniversary of the Great Earthquake and Fire of 1906, wine historian Charles Sullivan presented Part I of the vinous story of this catastrophic event. We continue this amazing account. — Ed.]

When the big one hit Northern California in the very early morning of April 18, 1906, few, except perhaps in Santa Rosa and San Jose, were much surprised that such a thing could happen, shaken but not surprised. Everyone here knew that California was earthquake country, but not many of San Francisco's 400,000 inhabitants had been around in 1868 when a huge quake had shaken the then 60,000 souls in the City by the Bay. That temblor had been centered in the East Bay and had smashed everything on a thirty-mile front from San Leandro to Mission San Jose. But San Francisco had also taken a very heavy hit, particularly on "made" or fill land. Many buildings were destroyed, and from then until 1906 the event was known as "The Great Quake."

The new Great Quake may not have been much more destructive than the earlier one. But it was of a different nature. In 1906 the great San Andreas Fault was the culprit. It is the meeting place of two gigantic crustal plates. The Pacific plate on the western side of the 650-mile fault line has been grinding away to the northwest for millions of years. When the two plates lock at points of considerable unevenness, ever increasing strain and tension result. Eventually the locked point breaks apart and the snap results in an earthquake. That's what happened in 1906. The 1868 quake took place along the Hayward Fault, a branch of the San Andreas, and was not the direct result of plate tectonics. Of course none of this was understood back then.

In San Francisco the shake was quite destructive. Over the years the leveled city pictured in the morning photos of April 22nd has often been viewed as the result of a tectonic event. But it was the result of two events, the earthquake and the subsequent fires. Scores of buildings, mostly commercial and at this early hour not yet peopled, crashed to the ground. Again, the greatest damage was on fill land. Many public buildings collapsed due to shoddy construction. The new City Hall was reduced to a grotesque skeleton and became a photographic, if exaggerated, symbol of the destructive effects of the quake. Brick buildings and chimneys went down like duck-pins. But buildings constructed from the newfangled concrete, and those with solid foundations on firm ground, came through. As the sun rose during the day a consuming cloud of dust blotted out much of its rays.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Still the city stood and citizens' later accounts indicate that many were out on the streets marveling

at the dramatic damage downtown. Recall from Charles Bundschu's letter in our last WTQ how his sons were able to walk to their Bryant Street wine warehouse and its million gallons, "finding no speakable damage." But before the day was over the clouds above the city were smoke from the many fires that had erupted throughout the day and were unquenchable due to the collapse of much of the city's water delivery system.

San Francisco: The Wine Center

The Gundlach-Bundschu misadventure was a microcosm of the disaster that struck at the heart of the California wine industry that April day. Perhaps it would be better to say "head" of the industry, for the heart and muscle of the industry lay in the vineyards and cellars throughout the state.

Since the 1850s, when Charles Kohler and his associates began their operations that pioneered what was to become a formidable industry, San Francisco had been the place where huge amounts of wine from California's countryside were collected, blended, and shipped to the rest of the states. Could the leaders of the industry in 1900 have reached back and altered its history, they were about as likely to center it on the tip of an isolated peninsula virtually unconnected to the nation's great railroad grid, as the makers today of a high-powered German luxury sedan would be to give it the name of the Spanish term for mercy.

The tiny operations of the leading California wine merchants were well established in this financial capital of the west by the 1860s, before the industry began its tremendous expansion in the late 1870s. By the late 1880s many of these were no longer the establishments of small scale merchants. Many had huge cellars, with elaborate offices, housing hundreds of thousands of gallons of wine at the peak of the season—of which April was the central month. In addition many producers out in the countryside had established their own brands all over California and several east of the Rockies. Many of these producers also had their headquarters and commercial cellars in San Francisco. A few such firm names are recognizable by students of California wine history: Ruby Hill, Cresta Blanca, Inglenook, To Kalon, Gundlach-Bundschu, Italian-Swiss Colony, Theodore Gier. In total, there were twenty-eight such establishments in the city in 1906—small, large, and gigantic. It should also be noted that most of the largest merchants were also producers, with large wineries and vineyards out in the wine country.

The great expansion of the 1880s was a reflection of the national prosperity of those years. But American agriculture, including the California wine industry, overexpanded its productive capacity. The wine depression began in 1889. Then in 1893 the economy of the entire nation almost collapsed. It was "The Great Depression" until 1929. To make things worse, California's coastal counties—Napa, Sonoma, Alameda, and Santa Clara—where the state's fine dry table wines were produced, were devastated in the 1890s by the phylloxera root louse. The result of these troubles was a dramatic change in the way wine men did business, but it did not move the industry's center from San Francisco. In fact, the changes tended to increase the concentration of wine storage in the city.

California Wine Association

The massive wine surpluses and the decline in consumer buying power in the 1890s led to rock-bottom grape prices and ruinous price cutting in the wholesale trade. By 1894 the industry was in such a state of disarray that its leaders determined to stanch the bloodletting and bring order out of the chaos. In that year seven of the state's most powerful wine firms formed the California Wine Association (C.W.A.) to become, in wine historian Ernest Peninou's words, "the controlling force in the new era of the California wine industry." This was the era of trusts, a polite name for monopolies and near-monopolies, and the C.W.A. was a trust. But history seems to have proven the C.W.A. to have been what Theodore Roosevelt later called a benign consolidation —it and the rest of the industry prospered until Prohibition. When the quake hit in 1906, the C.W.A. directly controlled about half the wine in the city. Together with its closely associated firms, such as Italian-Swiss Colony and Lachman & Jacobi, the C.W.A. had direct or indirect control of some 75% of the commercial wine stored in San Francisco. The total was at least fifteen million gallons. Some estimates have been much higher.

The Devastation

The huge shake Wednesday morning caused a great amount of damage to the city's wine establishment. Smaller, wooden structures without real cellars were battered and lost much of their stored wine in the first shake. The large operations, though battered, held up well. Most of the wine was stored in large upright wooden tanks or oval casks. But there were also oak barrels stacked up by the tens of thousands. Much wine was lost wherever large tanks split and when barrels rolled. But most did not. The immense C.W.A. (Calwa) cellars at 3rd and Bryant came through very well, as did the great Lachman & Jacobi building down the street, although the upper portions of both places were badly damaged.

But by Wednesday evening much of what had been a shaken and somewhat battered city had become a roaring inferno. By Friday almost all of the commercial wine stored in San Francisco was lost. When the fires finally burned themselves out that night and

Saturday morning, the disaster lamented by Charles Bundschu was complete. In May when the Pacific Wine & Spirit Review came out with its "Calamity Edition," the fire was the main story. The photos reproduced in the Peninou and Unzelman history of the C.W.A. illustrate the situation— concrete walls still standing and looking down on a sea of charred and empty tanks amid "a chaos of hoops and debris."

Of the twenty-eight commercial wine establishments in the city, twenty-five were destroyed. Between twelve and fifteen million gallons were lost, not counting the large amounts destroyed or ruined in retail outlets, restaurants, clubs, and private homes. That total does not include the contents of many specialty wine locations, such as Paul Masson's office and elegant retail shop in the Palace Hotel. A small but important part of the loss in this category was the destruction of the C.W.A.'s collection of well-aged premium wines in bottles. Thomas Pinney characterizes this collection as a demonstration "to the trade what such care could do for the state's wines." He cites an eastern wine man who argued in 1915 that this loss was "one of the greatest calamities that ever visited the California wine business."

Historians and journalists have debated since 1906 on how much wine was lost in the fires. The commercial gallonage is not in doubt. But how do you measure the gallons of wine used by the Italian families in North Beach and on Telegraph Hill? Who among them didn't have a couple of barrels in the basement easily brought up to soak the wooden roofs and sidings all over that part of town? Many homes were saved in this way.

Survivor Tales

Luckily, some companies had not yet brought in all the 1905 vintage from their wine country production facilities. Such was the case with B. Arnold & Co., who ran Inglenook; Wm Hoelscher & Co. (To Kalon) and C. Schilling (Napa) were also thus fortunate. (Hoelscher wrote the PW&SR that they were "a little disfigured but still in the ring.") Many firms immediately set up shop across the bay. The Napa & Sonoma Wine Co. fled to Oakland, Landsberger & Son went to Napa City and took over the old Lisbon Winery (which stands today and houses the Jarvis Winery Music Conservatory).

The three firms that survived the fires almost undamaged were the French-American Co. (Brun & Chaix, Napa Valley) on Harrison Street, the St. George Vineyard Co. (Fresno) at 8th and Brannan, and the huge Italian-Swiss Colony (I.S.C.) warehouse and cellar at Greenwich and Battery. The salvation of the latter provides us with one of the liveliest tales of the great quake and fire.

Italian-Swiss Colony's Well

The I.S.C. began operations in Sonoma County in 1881 just north of Geyservile, at a place they called Asti. The company grew and prospered and by 1888 had a San Francisco wine depot on Montgomery Street. By 1896 they had a big three-story warehouse at Battery and Pine, and two years later a million-gallon depot just up the street. In 1903 they purchased two large lots from A. Hotaling & Co., the liquor dealers, and added a huge brick cellar at Battery and Greenwich, well situated near the railroad and waterfront. On Sunday morning after the quake, the building and its two million gallons of wine were all the company had left in the city.

During its construction a spring had been found on the property and a well was dug. On the morning of the quake, founding I.S.C. president Andrea Sbarboro had raced down from Asti and taken charge of the defensive battle on Greenwich. He had a small fuel-oil engine set up to run the pump at the well (all electricity was out). Sbarboro led his I.S.C. firefighters, keeping a steady stream of water on the building and its roof until a small lake was created on top. He later wrote, "We fought unceasingly for three days and three nights." At times the heat from the several advancing fires was almost unbearable. Later he had a line of hoses extended to the waterfront to help pump water onto the buildings of the area. After the fire, the I.S.C. spring was one of the few sources of fresh water in the city. "People came from all parts with buckets and barrels. Even railroad engines were furnished water from the well."

Examination of the fire map of the city reveals a district east of Telegraph Hill not leveled by the conflagration. Most histories credit the somewhat sheltered character of the area, a view that does not account for the several buildings that did go down there. Recent works also credit the fire boats on the bay front that did good work for the area. But none I can find remember the I.S.C. well and Sbarboro's band of heroes. The great old brick building is still there, but no one I talked to on my last visit had an inkling about its role in the fiery earthquake.

California Wine Association Heroes

The C.W.A. also benefitted from the successful battle on Greenwich Street. Since 1900 the I.S.C. had been a close affiliate of the C.W.A.; by the time of the quake, the Association was fortunate enough to own a half-interest in Italian-Swiss Colony, although I.S.C. continued to operate separately with its own brands. (This relationship lasted until 1913 when the C.W.A. gained full control of I.S.C.)

Other C.W.A. stories abound. At the corporation's giant 3rd and Bryant plant the solid concrete floors and walls, aided by a plugged sewer line, made the cellar

WINE SAVED from the FIRE

Buy them now *Delay may mean disappointment* *Mail your orders now*

Old wines are better than new.
Milder—riper—finer in taste, flavor and aroma.
Old wines inspire to wit and wisdom and speech and laughter.
Old wines give the post-prandial speaker his theme and inspiration.
Old wines conduce to the cultivation of friendships.
Old wines aid digestion—assist the alimentary process and develop good feeling.
Old wines grace the tables of Monarch and Statesman.
Old wines are sought by those with cultivated taste.
Old wines, rare vintages, demand big prices the world over.
This is an opportunity none ever had before.
An opportunity none will ever have again.
The wines we saved—in bottles—from the debris of our building were mellowed and ripened and aged by the heat.
We are offering them to the public as souvenirs of the great fire; as products of California, perfected to their highest degree.
Of course we shall not refuse orders from connoisseurs who will wish to take advantage of such an offer to stock their wine cellars; still we'd prefer if 2500 families should each have a case of these superior wines.
The prices quoted are for **free delivery** anywhere on the Pacific Coast.

For shipment East, add one dollar per case.
Order at once; shipments will be made promptly, in order of receipt.
Send your friends a case of wine, a souvenir of California and the great fire.
This offer cannot be duplicated—we do not sell to the consumer—except in this particular instance.
The wines are in the same condition as when recovered from the debris, and not relabeled, but are carefully wrapped in paper containing newspaper clipping herewith quoted.
They are packed in cases of 12 quarts and 24 pints.

	Case of 12 Quarts	Case of 24 Pints.
RED WINES		
Claret	$6.50	$7.50
Zinfandel	$7.50	$8.50
Burgundy	$8.00	$9.00
Cabernet	$9.00	$10.00
La Loma	$12.00	$13.00
Chateau Hilcrest	$12.50	$13.50
Private Stock Claret	$10.00	$11.00
WHITE WINES		
Sauterne	$9.50	$10.50
Haut Sauterne	$11.50	$12.50
SWEET WINES		
Sherry	$8.50	$9.50
Angelica	$7.50	$8.50

California Wine Association

180 Townsend Street, SAN FRANCISCO

Article from the San Francisco Chronicle, Sunday May 13th, 1906.

WINE MELLOWED BY THE FIRE.

California Wine Association Has Burgundy and Other Wines Greatly Improved.

It cost the California Wine Association about $1,000 a bottle to bring to superexcellent maturity a few thousand dozens of its stock out of the hundreds of thousands of bottles contained in its former vaults on Third street, near Townsend. Although the process was an expensive one, it was ageing at a rate which has never before been equaled. The procedure pursued was that of fire, and it was performed on April 18th.

When the flames had performed their work those bottles of wine which had neither burst nor melted nor lost their corks were withdrawn from the furnace and transferred to the Casa Calwa building of the California Wine Association at 180 Townsend street. There they were piled up as relics of the conflagration, and an opportunity for testing opinins as to the character of their contents was given by the drawing of corks from samples of various kinds and brands of the fire proof wines. The results were uniformly favorable, though varying as to the kinds of wine which had come safely through the furnace process. All of the dry wines were found to have been much benefited, but when the Burgundy came to be tasted it was discovered that the California product had achieved a mellowness which surpassed that of the far-famed vintage of France. The sweet wine varieties were even more advantaged by the heating process, and this was especially noticeable in the case of the sherries, which have nothing to envy of their Spanish progenitor. The connoisseur may enjoy the results, but it is certain that the winemakers will prefer to continue their normal manner of producing their stock.

It is estimated that there were about 15,000,000 gallons of wine destroyed in San Francisco by the fire. Of these 15,000,000 gallons, 10,000,000 were in the vaults of the California Wine Association or its associates, and the remaining 5,000,000 gallons were held by smaller concerns and individuals.

into a two-million-gallon wine vat as the wooden tanks and casks came apart in the fire storm. Louis Wetmore came down from Stockton where he ran the multi-million-gallon George West & Son wine operations in the Central Valley, since 1902 part of the C.W.A. (Louis was Charles Wetmore's son, and later general manager of the entire C.W.A.) He quickly put together a remarkable operation. First, he rented several large barges from the town of Crockett, and had them tugged down to the city. He ordered a hole chopped into the side of the wine depot and put together a great line of hoses that he ran down to the waterfront. Then the wine was pumped out of the cellar and down to the barges, and the barges towed to the port of Stockton, where young Wetmore distilled the wine into fortifying brandy for the C.W.A.'s sweet wine production in the valley.

After the Calwa Cellars were cleaned out, the workers found some of the C.W.A. bottled wine intact. The story goes that 35,000 of the 250,000 total were saved. The company's public relations people spread the word that the super-heating and cooling had produced a strangely high quality wine. They announced to the press, "Of course this is a very expensive way to produce fine wines, and the Association will certainly not endeavor to repeat their success." These wines were supposedly cased with a special label as a souvenir of the disaster. (I have never seen any such label. Neither have I read anything about their later release or heard a word from anyone who has ever seen one.)

Roll Out the Barrel

The most enduring earthquake & fire tale about alcoholic beverages concerns whiskey. The A. P. Hotaling Company liquor warehouse sat next to the U.S. Appraiser's Building near Montgomery and Jackson streets. Federal troops were under orders to save the major U.S. government structures, primarily by dynamiting anything nearby whose ignition might threaten them. Inside the Hotaling building were almost three thousand barrels of whiskey. Wednesday morning Edward Lind, the Hotaling manager, arrived on the scene greeted by nearby volleys of dynamite explosions as the troops merrily blasted away. It soon became abundantly clear that the dynamiting itself was setting off a series of fires that were racing through adjacent buildings along Montgomery street. Meanwhile Lind and his men were spraying water from a nearby cistern onto the walls and roof of his warehouse. The next day the military received orders to blow up the Hotaling Building. But Lind was able to convince the officer in charge that the whiskey was as volatile and explosive as dynamite and that to ignite the place would mean the doom of the Appraiser's Building. The officer agreed to a delay and Lind's assistants hired a gang of men to roll the whiskey barrels down the street to a vacant lot. To discourage looters, the army supplied Lind's men with pistols. In Lind's words, their gang was "a mixed lot" that included a safecracker who later opened the Hotaling safe for the manager.

Twelve hundred barrels made it to the vacant lot on Thursday. That night the exposed barrels were saved from the flying cinders by water sprays pumped from a navy tugboat. Friday morning the barrels on the second floor were lowered by rope and pulley. Several broke, to the delight of all who had a handy container. To speed things up the mayor lifted his prohibition order, allowing Lind to supply his barrel rollers with infusions of ale and stout. They moved a thousand more by noon. As the fires bore down again that afternoon, a few hundred more were taken from the warehouse and lined up outside. The end was obviously near. Lind now ordered his men to assist in the removal of records from the Appraiser's Building.

Suddenly the wind changed and the two buildings were spared. Hotaling's cache was the only stock of whiskey in the city not destroyed.

The wonderful outcome was later memorialized by a bit of doggerel verse, which has been handed down through the years and which we'll probably hear oft repeated in the media this month. I heard it as a boy from my great-grandfather but didn't understand what it meant.

> If the Good Lord really spanked our town
> For being rather frisky,
> Why did He burn the churches down
> And save Hotaling's whiskey?

FRANCIS
Five days through fire and earthquake, without food, in the Hotel St. Francis wine cellars, San Francisco

The Shaken Countryside

The great wine quake in the rest of Northern California was not as costly in gallonage as in San Francisco. But the temblor was just as destructive in some places. Luckily outside the city, fires were not a major factor in the hurt.

Sonoma County

All nine counties that make up the Bay Area suffered from the great quake. In the wine country, Sonoma County was hit hardest. The town of Santa Rosa, on soft alluvial soil, was reduced to "heaps of bricks and crumbling mortar" and virtually destroyed. Some of the most spectacular earthquake photographs were taken there, where the destruction and death total, proportionately, far exceeded those of San Francisco. In 1907, G. K. Gilbert, America's greatest geologist at the time, wrote that the devastation "was greater than in any other section ...." Jack London, a local resident, agreed. "Santa Rosa got it worse than San Francisco." The million-gallon De Turk Winery, located near downtown Santa Rosa, was an almost total loss.

Outside Santa Rosa in the county, losses were also heavy. Practically every winery in the Sebastopol area was damaged. West of Santa Rosa, the Lehn Winery lost 45,000 gallons, while their larger Forestville facility lost 500,000. Near Healdsburg, the impressive, architecturally designed Paxton Winery was substantially damaged and not restored. To the north, the giant California Wine Association winery at Geyserville reported heavy damage. At Asti, while the Italian-Swiss Colony winery saw no harm, their giant half-million-gallon underground storage vat cracked; subsequent repairs left the tank in three sections and short 200,000 gallons of storage capacity. In Glen Ellen, the lovely old stone Tokay Winery of Kohler & Frohling was badly damaged and closed down. Buena Vista Cellars, just outside the town of Sonoma, had not produced wine since the 1880s, but three of the historic tunnels had survived through the years. They collapsed in the quake and have never been excavated. We can only guess at what is buried in these long forgotten ruins.

Napa County

Across the hills to the east, Napa County experienced far less damage. (Such has always been the case when a major earthquake strikes northern California.) But there was some sharp hurt here and there. In Oakville, the French-American Wine Co.—which was almost uniquely spared in San Francisco—had the foundations give way at its Brun & Chaix Winery. Five of its 25,000-gallon tanks collapsed, and over 100,000 gallons of red wine from the 1905 vintage were lost. In the St. Helena area, the Beringer Winery was the most severely damaged. And the roof of Mrs. Beringer's Rhine House was smashed when her chimney collapsed. (See photo in my *Napa Wine*, p.167.) In fact, the St. Helena Star calculated that 80% of the chimneys in the area went down. North of town, the huge Greystone Wine Cellars held up well, although some of its tunnels caved in. Across the highway the Charles Krug Winery suffered cracked walls and minor damage. In Napa City, one of the walls of the Lisbon Winery came down. The large Migliavacca Winery on the Napa River waterfront was heavily damaged, while just up the way the Uncle Sam Wine Cellar, Charles Carpy's old plant now part of the C.W.A., was untouched.

Probably the greatest hurt to Napa wine families came from the loss of their homes in San Francisco. The Claus Schilling, Charles Carpy, and W. S. Keyes mansions are good examples. Frederick Hess's beautiful stone La Jota Winery on Howell Mountain came through intact, but his home, offices, and newspaper plant (San Francisco Demokrat) in the city were gone. He changed residence to Alameda.

The East Bay

The East Bay was knocked around some. If Oakland had been as fully developed on fill land then as it was at the time of the 1989 Loma Prieta quake, disaster would have been the result. As it turned out, the Oakland/Berkeley/Alameda area became the temporary home-away-from-home for hundreds of San Francisco firms. A directory the size of a telephone book listing these business was published in the fall. Entries for wine and liquor firms were numerous.

The East Bay's winery disaster, the worst in the entire state, took place south of Oakland near Mission San Jose. In 1881 Juan Gallegos acquired the historic E. L. Beard estate and expanded its vineyards to 600 acres. Three years later he built his great Palmdale Winery, for a while probably the largest in the world, with vintages between 500,000 and 800,000 gallons. It was smashed so badly in the earthquake that its owners, after 1905 Lachman & Jacobi and later Henry Lachman himself, gave up trying to reactivate the unstable structure. The winery's remarkable ruins still exist. (See winery ruins, Sullivan, *Companion to California Wine*, p.97.)

The South Bay

Across the bay at Palo Alto, Stanford University had many of its grander structures wrecked: the Memorial Church, the new gymnasium, and the library, among many others. But the basic educational facilities and classrooms were minimally harmed. Most of the severe damage came to the structures built using a hard sandstone rock quarried in nearby Almaden Valley. An engineer's report stated the damage to Stanford's grand buildings resulted from "a

disregard of simple construction principles ...." But one of the great structures on the campus came through nicely and still stands today, the massive Stanford Winery built in 1888. (See photo in my *Like Modern Edens*, p.18.)

To the south, structures in the Santa Clara Valley were hit hard. More than a hundred people died when the Agnews State Hospital collapsed. In downtown San Jose, the proportionate quake destruction was easily as great as in San Francisco, but San Jose had no great fires. The wineries out in the countryside were damaged far less than those in the northern counties. The Novitiate Winery above Los Gatos sustained the most damage.

One of the most startling effects of the wine quake was seen in Paul Masson's downtown San Jose Champagne wine cellar in the Vendome Hotel basement. The neat rows of aging wine were stacked eighteen bottles high and three deep. Sixty-three thousand smashed bottles, undergoing their secondary fermentation, came down in a monstrous sparkling eruption.

The shake in the Santa Cruz Mountains was severe in places, but winery structures there were not of the rigid sort that normally suffered the most. Even the area's largest, the Ben Lomond Winery near Felton, was not seriously damaged. Fruit and wine growing had replaced the earlier lumbering industry in these mountains by the 1880s. By 1890 there were more than thirty small wineries in the district and most depended on the South Pacific Coast Railroad to take their barrels of new wine down to the larger producers in the Santa Clara Valley. On April 18th two of the railroad tunnels along the line collapsed, and the tracks became an attraction for photographers wanting to illustrate the massive effects of the quake. For the next two years the wineries had to find other means for getting their wines to market.

In the hills above Saratoga the quake altered the landscape in several places. The James Welch vineyard near Congress Springs split in two, half of it dropping cleanly forty feet down from the other half. Both parts of the vineyard continued to produce. Farther down the canyon was the only winery destroyed in the area. In 1866 an impressive stone structure was built next to Saratoga Creek, a combination grist mill and tannery. In 1885 it became the Saratoga Wine Company. In 1906 it became a pile of rubble—but soon put to good use by Paul Masson.

The Frenchman had bought vineyard land in 1896 in the hills above Saratoga, and in 1905 he began construction of a large winery on the property. The quake supplied him with building material from two sources. One was the Saratoga Wine Co.; the other was St. Patrick's Church in San Jose, which also had lots of useful rubble. The church's 12th century Romanesque portal, brought around the Horn from Spain, became the portal to Masson's new winery, which still stands, the site of a popular concert series.

The Rest of the Year

We have already seen the quick flow of vinous activity to the East Bay and the northern counties in the few weeks after the quake. Most wine houses, whatever they had lost, were genuinely dedicated to survival and revival. Meanwhile the immediate requirements for survival had to be paid for. At the moment the national economy was in good shape; credit was available from a momentarily healthy banking system. And local banks were able to help more than was first thought possible. A.P. Giannini's Bank of Italy (later Bank of America) and Andrea Sbarboro's (I.S.C.) Banca Italo-Americana were quick to come to the assistance of many small wine operations. The C.W.A., financially sound, had no trouble maintaining their lines of credit to do regular business. But the question of insurance coverage and the payment of claims was the most pressing financial problem facing all the damaged wine operations in the Bay Area. These companies, large and small, had to round up capital to rebuild.

The initial reaction of most insurance companies was that they had little or no obligation to pay for losses visited on the holders of their fire insurance policies. No one had earthquake insurance in those days and most fire insurance policies specifically precluded claims to cover quake damage. The insurance companies really stiffened their backs after April 24 when the San Francisco Real Estate Board decided that there had not been a serious earthquake. The San Francisco Chronicle thought that most city leaders had agreed that the disaster should be termed "'The Great Fire,' and not 'The Great Earthquake.'" Such thinking by the city fathers developed at the weeks passed. They knew that fires were a problem faced by all large cities; earthquakes were treacherous, unannounced. A city prone to great earthquakes was unsafe, not a place that would attract long term investment. Philip Fradkin has convincingly demonstrated that the extent and cost of the disaster was officially suppressed. He quotes a member of a committee of scientists who later investigated the disaster. "The result of our investigation was so startling that we never published the report—it would ruin the commercial prospects of San Francisco."

All of the city's wine establishments of any size had fire insurance, although many were underinsured. To rebuild, they all, specially the C.W.A., had to be properly compensated. The C.W.A. led the way in the fight. Some of the more than two hundred insurance firms involved, with centers outside California, simply closed shop here and refused to pay; a few chose bankruptcy. C.W.A. president Percy Morgan later

declared that their "names should remain graven on the memory of the insuring world."

It was a long fight, but eventually most insurance companies accepted the fact that, by far, most of the damage done to the industry in the city came from fires. However, this position became settled only after courts held that coverage was valid even if the fires were caused by the earthquake. Eventually an adjusters committee representing many of the leading companies agreed that 90% of the insured damage was caused by the fires and the reckless dynamiting. None of the large wine firms was broken by the disaster. The C.W.A. gradually collected its insurance money, the final payoff coming in 1910. President Morgan had the checks photographed and framed. (See "Morgan's trophy" photo in Peninou & Unzelman, *C.W.A.*, p.102.)

The direct effect of the disaster on the wine industry itself was intense but short lived. By the spring of 1909 Morgan was able to announce that the business of the entire industry was running smoothly. But for a while there was chaos.

The loss of some 15,000,000 gallons of wine was an immediate shock to prices. By mid-May prices had soared, even though industry leaders warned against taking advantage of the situation. Italian-Swiss Colony's Pietro Rossi and Andrea Sbarboro led the attack on price gouging, but they had little control of the extended wholesale and retail markets. Their stand in this matter says something about these men and their interest in the long-term health of the industry, since I.S.C. came through the disaster almost unscathed, and more than any other leading producer was in a position to take advantage. And although its losses were heavy, the C.W.A.'s huge reserve wine resources in Napa and Santa Clara counties, and in the Central Valley, made it possible for them to send two hundred carloads of bulk wine to eastern markets by mid-May.

But shortages caused the price of wine in second and third hands to skyrocket. The result was a powerful new penetration by eastern wine producers into areas normally dependent on California sources. The New Orleans market, long having played a major part in disposing of California's inexpensive red wines, now turned to Missouri and Ohio.

Another condition that hurt California producers was the east-west chaos in the railroad system—through July the lines were clogged with rail cars heading west with building materials. And when the California vintage got under way in the fall of 1906, many women and school children made good money in the vineyards, as the normal rural labor supply was sucked into the Bay Area by the high wages being paid in construction work. It is also worth noting that the 1906 vintage was a good one, in quantity and quality, and grape prices went through the roof. When spring came, vineyard planting, which had been on a fairly steady upswing since 1898, accelerated.

Another quake-caused problem that plagued the wine men in the Bay Area was the destruction of tens of thousands of barrels, casks, and tanks. All but one of the city's cooperage houses had been destroyed, along with huge reserves of oak. Almost immediately the mains sources for this oak in Tennessee and Arkansas jacked up their prices by an average of 40%. Even cooperage firms outside San Francisco were working overtime. The St. Helena Star reported that the local cooperage company was producing a hundred barrels a day and couldn't keep up with the orders. The upshot was a powerful swing back to the use of redwood for larger tanks. The P.W.&S.R. noted that many industry heads were impressed by the fact that large redwood tanks could be built for three cents per gallon; the same container in oak cost almost seven cents. The use of foreign oak for California wine was still fifty years away.

A very positive national event took place in Washington, D.C. on June 30 when President Roosevelt signed into law the Pure Food and Drug Act. The quake-battered California wine men beamed to read that, "any statement, design, or device ... which shall be false or misleading in any particular" was now illegal on food products, including wine. The law specifically prohibited false geographical labeling. Mislabeled wine was banned from interstate and foreign commerce. No longer would eastern wine be legally allowed to sport California labels. More importantly, perhaps, eastern bottlers could no longer bottle bulk California wine and slap on French labels.

A Changing Industrial Geography

The fact that San Francisco's wine industry was almost completely shut down, and that there were still millions of gallons of wine around the state, meant that some adjustments had to be made immediately. Major producers all over the state, even in Southern California, were finding ways of getting their wines to market, almost entirely in bulk. The California Wine Association's facilities in Napa, in San Jose, at Gilroy, and in the Central Valley made the adjustment without much problem. They, like all producers, were moved to send their rough young 1905 red wines onto the market months earlier than was usual.

At Napa City the large industrial plants of Migliavacca and Uncle Sam Winery (formerly of Charles Carpy, now C.W.A.) had been producing large amounts of wine from Central Valley grapes for years. Now production was cranked up and facilities expanded to handle the increased tonnage of grapes being hauled by barge from the Central Valley.

The St. Helena Star marveled at the increased profits many local wineries were experiencing after the 1906 vintage. They specifically named Beringer, Ewer & Son (later Beaulieu), Larkmead (later Kornell), and Forni (later Freemark Abbey) as leading beneficiaries of the temporary shortages. The newspaper wondered if the many new and fancy automobiles seen on Napa Valley roads in the spring of 1907 were the result of this uptick in local prosperity.

Even before the quake there had been talk among wine men about changing the way the industry did business, that is, changing its geography. The firm of Lachman & Jacobi seems to have led the way. Its relationship to the industry in 1906 was similar to Italian-Swiss Colony. It had functioned as a major independent for years, but in 1900 the C.W.A. acquired fifty percent of the Lachman & Jacobi stock, yet allowed the firm to keep its autonomy and its brands. Upon the death of founder Frederick Jacobi in 1911, the C.W.A. acquired the rest of the Lachman & Jacobi stock.

In 1906 Lachman & Jacobi had a 2.5 million-gallon, well-equipped cellar and offices at 2nd and Bryant streets in San Francisco. It appears that even before the quake its managers were working on a plan to acquire property in Petaluma for the construction of a large wine depot to serve as a blending, aging, and bottling facility for its Sonoma wineries to the north. Petaluma provided easy access to railroad and maritime connections. The earthquake encouraged them to adjust their thinking and to create a much larger plant that would lessen their dependence on a large presence in the city. They rushed construction and had the plant ready to handle two million gallons from the 1906 vintage. In a short time its capacity was raised to four million gallons.

Not all the large firms relocated. Before the year was out C. Schilling & Co. had built a giant cellar in the Potrero district of the city that could store two million gallons, mostly from Sonoma and Napa counties. The Ciocca-Lombarda Wine Co. also began construction of a large wine depot at Green and Battery streets. Their Sonoma County wine sources soon expanded when they took over the old Walden Winery in Geyserville, today the site of Geyser Peak Winery. And, wine had begun to return to places in the city that could handle it. By the end of July, the P.W.&S.R. calculated that almost a million gallons had come to town.

Percy Morgan had different ideas for the California Wine Association. The earthquake had solidified Morgans' view that the C.W.A. would not rebuild in San Francisco. True, the new Calwa Building at 3rd and Townsend streets was not badly damaged; it would be fixed up and serve as the Association's new headquarters and as a bottling plant. But since the 1890s, Morgan had envisioned the consolidation of the C.W.A.'s seven San Francisco wine facilities "under one economy-saving roof." Now he would create that roof across the bay.

Winehaven

Morgan and his managers had very definite criteria for selecting the place where the concentration of the C.W.A.'s future efforts should be located. First, it had to be on the east side of the bay, so that it would have an easy connection to the national railroad system, whose western terminus was Oakland. For years, to move their wine out of San Francisco to the rest of the country by rail, they had to send cars down the peninsula to the Santa Clara Valley, and then headed them, usually indirectly, in the right direction.

Next, the center should have easy access to deep-water maritime commerce. The United States would soon be cutting a canal across the Isthmus of Panama, and when this project was finished, California ports would have a direct route to the gulf ports, the East Cost, and Europe.

Finally, the new complex must be located in the northern part of the Bay Area so that the cool weather there would continue to afford the climatic advantage the wine cellars of San Francisco had enjoyed.

Morgan found an almost perfect place to establish "Winehaven," as the new plant was to be called. In September a 47-acre piece of land on the San Pablo Peninsula, just west of the town of Richmond, was purchased. (Today, travelers heading east on the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge can look to their left as they approach the terminus and see the buildings of the great Winehaven. Seen from a distance, they seem not much different than they appeared in 1917 when the last of them was completed.)

As construction began, Morgan announced the ten-million-gallon capacity facility and the effects of its operations would make the San Francisco Bay the "Bordeaux of the Pacific."On September 2, 1907, the C.W.A. held the formal dedication ceremonies. Everyone who was anyone in the Northern California wine, financial, and political world was invited.

The first order of construction was to create a plant to handle the grapes coming in from the 1907 harvest, which would eventually total 25,000 tons (and four million gallons of wine). Winehaven couldn't yet hold this amount, and a good part was transferred to C.W.A. facilities in other locations. In 1908 Winehaven readily crushed 45,000 tons.

When finished, the main building accommodated the huge storage cellar, the fermenting facility, bottling lines, receiving and shipping stations, and offices. The giant red brick structure was adorned with crenelated parapets with turrets on the corners.

Other buildings housed the sherry ovens, cooperage shops, and distillery. When completed, there were thirty-five operational buildings. A long dock, on which a narrow-gauge electric railroad hauled wine to the waiting steamships, stretched out into the bay.

The great complex had only a few years of life as the "greatest winery in the world." With the coming of Prohibition, the C.W.A. gradually shut down production after the 1919 vintage. The Calwa Corporation, formed to dispose of the C.W.A.'s vast properties, was not able to find a buyer for the property until 1941. In that year the government stepped in and acquired the facility and hundreds of adjoining acres, for the war effort. This became the U.S. Navy Fuel Depot.

When the depot went out of operation in 1998, the property covered over 400 acres. Six years later the government gave the valuable property to the City of Richmond, whose city council struck a deal with a development company that built Indian casinos. Their intent was to convert Winehaven into a huge pleasure estate by the bay, with hotels shops, restaurants, conference center, and casinos. Environmental groups opposed the plan, and the battle is still raging. Winehaven, however, still stands crenelated and turreted as it was almost one hundred years ago.

The Last Hurrah

The United States and the California wine industry enjoyed almost continuous and increasing prosperity between 1897 and 1915. The hopes for a new canal in Panama and its opening in 1914 did much to boost confidence nationally and in the Golden State. A stock market crash followed by a banking panic in 1907 was the sort of thing that in the past had signaled the coming of a serious depression. It didn't come. California and its wine industry did not suffer the temporary anxiety felt by the rest of the country. The P.W.&S.R. hardly took notice of the effects of the brief panic. The editor noted in passing that the state's strong banks were proof against what was ailing the East Coast.

Not surprisingly the excitement over the Panama Canal gave birth to plans for a grand world's fair to celebrate its opening. Where better than San Francisco as the site for such a celebration? And the city fathers, who mounted the drive to bring the event there, did not hide their aim to show the rest of the world that northern California and the city by the bay had fully recovered from the 1906 disaster.

The campaign to land the event was a clever combination of honest pride and economic self interest. Most of the Bay Area lent a hand in the effort. The leaders of the state's wine industry took an active part in the planning and in the event itself. The canal and the increased foreign trade since the war with Spain in 1898 seemed to herald an expanded world market for California wine. How better to show the world that the wine industry had recovered and to display the excellence of its products than an international exposition on its own home ground?

San Francisco launched its bid to host the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (P.P.I.E.) in April 1910 by raising five million dollars in a two-hour get-together at the Merchant's Exchange. Eventually the amount reached seventeen million, with a promise of no need for federal funds.

Congress would select the site. At first there were several cities in the fight but within a year only San Francisco and New Orleans were still in the ring. The city's lobbyists descended on Washington with a well-planned PR campaign and lots of appealing California-produced gifts. Chief among these were cases of California wine. By a 188–159 vote the House gave the bid to San Francisco.

In July 1912 the wine industry formed a California Viticultural Exhibit Association, whose many directors included Paul Masson, Chas. Bundschu, and C. H. Wente. The next month, wine district committees were formed all over the state. They began to gather a grand showing of wine exhibits, representing individual producers and specific wine districts, to be displayed in the California Building and in the Food Products Building of the Exposition.

In 1913 Horatio Stoll, later the founder of Wines & Vines, took a crew out into the state's wine districts and filmed the story of California wine. It would be

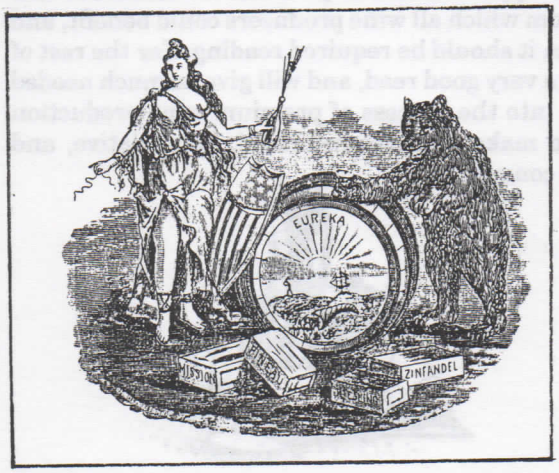
shown throughout the months of the Exposition as a theater in the wine industry's roof garden. The wine story did not stress the "we survived and flourished" theme of the fair. Rather it emphasized the vineyard and the small family producer in a bucolic and healthy setting. All of this was aimed at countering the prohibitionist argument that the wine industry was part and parcel of the liquor trade.

Wine tasting was also offered in the roof garden. The thousands of guests were served by courteous and nicely attired young women. The prohibitionist press had a paroxysm of moral outrage at this situation.

July 14, Bastille Day, was Wine Day at the P.P.I.E., when the awards of excellence were presented to California wine producers. This celebration coincided with the International Congress of Viticulture held in San Francisco. The conference might have been a great international event, but the bloody storm of World War I had begun and most European countries were not represented. Those who did attend were given a grand tour of the Bay Area wine country that included a trip to Winehaven.

Awards for California wines were poured out in staggering numbers. Gold medals, of which there were 170, were only third in the hierarchy of awards. Above them were Grand Prize (20) and Medal of Honor (50). Italian-Swiss Colony was first in the top category with five; Inglenook took the greatest number of golds, twenty.

When the great fair ended in December, California wine men were satisfied with their showing to the world. They had survived the Great Wine Quake, they had recovered, they were flourishing. Charles Bundschu's doleful words of April 22, 1906, would have been forgotten. "I shall never forget the thunderbolt of wrath smashing the last hope of my life forever ... such a business cannot be redeemed by the bright hopes for the future." But within five years of the P.P.I.E., the gathering storm of prohibition did produce a thunderbolt of wrath more devastating to the California wine industry than the earthquake and fire.



MAKING GREAT WINE IN AMERICA

A Book Review

by *Willard Brown*

[Tendril Will Brown lives in the heart of the southern Oregon wine country and has had an adult-life-long abiding passion for wine and everything about it—its making, its history, its literature. We welcome his latest contribution to our Quarterly. — Ed.]

The Great Wines of America: The Top Forty Vintners, Vineyards, and Vintages by Paul Lukacs. 2005. Cloth. 447 pp. $25.

This book by Paul Lukacs is his second. His previous one, award winning *American Vintage: The Rise of American Wine* published in 2000, chronicled the ascendancy of American wine, as it achieved international acclaim. The author is Chair of the English Department at Loyola College in Maryland, and wine columnist for The Washington Times, and Washingtonian magazine.

In this book, Lukacs takes on a formidable task in identifying the top forty wines of America, and telling the story of each. His idea was to portray high quality American wine through a set of detailed but miniature vignettes—he profiles forty individual wines rather than wineries. Criteria for selection included price, critics' scores, and geographical location, but he largely discounted the former. In his words, he "tried to choose wines of inherent high quality as well as significance, which had to be regional, historical, or both." Every wine in the book is "representative... tasting of itself and more ...a grape variety, or a place, style, or winemaking decision." The forty wines selected were not only distinctive, but represented the diversity of varietals, regions, and styles that defines contemporary American wine at its best. In addition, the wines he selected had to have had a ten-year record of excellence to be chosen.

Not unexpectedly, California wineries dominated the selections with twenty-nine wines, of which fourteen were from the Napa Valley, and five from Sonoma. Oregon and Washington accounted for six, leaving the rest of the country with five selections from New York, Virginia, Michigan and Missouri. Thirteen grape varieties were profiled along with sparkling wines and red and white Bordeaux-type blends. Not surprisingly, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay made up over half of the selections.

In his first book the author gave us the story of the rise of American wine to international respectability; in this one he tells us why it happened and why

American wines are so good. It is unfortunate that he chose to focus on forty specific wines, as the selections are controversial from the start. Except for a few exalted wines like Harlan, Phelps Insignia, Stags Leap, and a few others, many of the remaining choices are certain to stimulate argument. For example, Wine Spectator's Ultimate Buying Guide (February 2006), reviewed some of these same wines and awarded scores well below 90, the critics' standard of excellence. The author pointed out that he did not consider much critics' scores in his selections, but the fact remains that the wine-consuming public does rely upon them. In any case, there is little likelihood that there could ever be any kind of consensus on the "top forty" American wines. The author could have entitled the book something like "Making Great Wine in America" or "Great American Wines: How They are Made," or simply leaving off the "Top Forty" in the title might have been judicious.

Notwithstanding the choice of wines, the author presents his case for these selections in a series of vignettes of ten pages each, telling the story of the vintners, vineyards, and vintages. In many cases he offers the historical background of the winery and its founders, or of the region and its significance. There is no bibliography, and there are no footnotes so one must take his history on faith. The text is over four hundred pages in length. The vignettes are very well researched and well written. The author apparently spent considerable time visiting the wineries and vineyards, tasting the wines of these and other producers, and interviewing the owners, winemakers and vineyardists.

The importance of this book lies not so much with the selections, but with the insights gleaned from his interviews. In reading through all of them, a pattern emerged...that is, there was a fairly consistent thought process at work here with the best wine people. In general he found them (the owners, viticulturists, and winemakers, or one person who is all of the above) to be dedicated and highly focused. Their goal was to make the best wines possible! In addition they were well-prepared for the task, often with a sense of history, and a profound sense of place.

That sense of place often led to a search for the perfect site to plant the grape variety which they had in mind, often a personal preference. In other cases the place was already in their possession for other reasons, and the search was for the variety that was likely to perform best on the site. Terroir was an important element here as well since many specific types of soil or soil/climate combinations were sought. For example, Josh Jensen traveled all over California looking for the limestone soil in which to plant his Pinot Noir for Calera while the owners of Dolce looked for a humid site so they could make botrytised dessert wines. (Their site would not have been suitable for other wine types.) In most cases a happy combination of site selection, terroir and grape variety resulted in premier grapes being produced.

Once planted, vine husbandry became paramount, and most of these premium vineyards are managed very carefully with attention to clonal and rootstock selection, canopy management, and low yield, with flawless ripe fruit as the primary objective.

After reaching the winery these premium grapes were converted to premium wines. The winemakers are an interesting and eclectic group. Many of them trained at Davis or Fresno, but the majority seem to be idealists with various backgrounds, who either apprenticed or were self-taught. Many of the winemakers employ small-batch fermentation in separate lots to maximize control over the process. Minimalist handling was common, and there was often the use of native yeast. The stylistic approaches differed, some winemakers used European wines as models, while others tried to produce wines that were representative of the place or terroir from which they came. Many wanted the wines to be benchmarks for their variety. Balance, complexity, and elegance were most often the characteristics sought. Blending for type and consistency across vintages was common. When bolder flavors were the goal, winemakers found them in the use of extended maceration and/or the use of a high percentage of new oak during conservation. [EDITOR NOTE: A quite descriptive Aussie term for barrel aging, or the time wine spends in the barrel between pressing and bottling.] Thus, while there were many different approaches to the production of fine wines, there were more similarities than differences, and all had the common goal of the highest quality.

In the end, the author accomplished his goal by heightening our awareness of the factors involved in the production of fine wine. They are the same the world over and demonstrate that the best wines can only be the result of planning, dedication, knowledge, and skill applied artistically. There are lessons in this book from which all wine producers could benefit, and for them it should be required reading. For the rest of us, it is a very good read, and will give us much needed insight into the process of premium wine production so as to make us more informed, appreciative, and critical consumers.

NEWS & NOTES

Welcome, new Tendrils! William (Bill) Beezley (beezley@u.arizona.edu) has joined us with enthusiastic news of his research project and interest in "any book in any language about Malbec."

"I love that journal!"

A special thanks to all Tendrils who accompanied their renewals with good wishes for the new year and appreciation for our WTQuarterly — ▪ "The last issue of Tendrils was great! I love that journal!" ▪ "Thank you for the Indexes! They are of tremendous use." ▪ "Enjoyable all the time!" ▪ "Looking forward to another good year of WTQ!" ▪ "Thanks for so many fascinating and helpful issues! I look forward to each one!" ▪ "Thanks for yet another year of good company with WT." ▪ "Membership in WT remains one of the great pleasures of lengthening years!"

ASHMOLEAN LABEL CATALOGUE

Long-time collector and student of decanter labels, **Bill Duprey**, has sent notice of a new, and worthy, catalogue published by The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, in conjunction with The Wine Label Circle society. Entitled, *The Marshall Collection of Labels for Wines, Spirits, Sauces & Toilet Waters—Catalogue and Commentary*, the 52-page spiral bound publication is a "record and celebration of the Marshall Collection" begun in 1921 and presented to the Ashmolean Museum in 1957. Of particular interest is the fine assembly of wine labels, a favorite of Mrs. Marshall. To order, contact Declan McCarthy at the Museum: dec.mccarthy@ashmolean-museum.oxford.ac.uk. Credit cards accepted. £7.50 + S/H.

WANTED, *PLEASE*!

Bill Duprey is searching for a copy of Marjery James' *Studies in the Medieval Wine Trade* (Oxford, 1971), and hopes a fellow Tendril has a duplicate copy. Contact him at 419-238-6779 (sorry, no e-mail).

Bibliographic TID-BIT

The 1971 publication by Potpourri Press, *Wine and Cheese Book,* is not included in James Gabler's *Wine Into Words*, although from information received from Tendril **Joe Lynch**, it probably qualifies. About two-thirds of the book is wine, the other cheese. There are sections (with maps) on the wines of France, Italy, Germany, and the U.S.; on wine glasses, and on reading wine labels, &c. Interestingly, Joe has two copies of the book, one with the title page listing Irena Chalmers as author, the other listing Irena Kirshman as author. A recent inquiring e-mail to Ms. Chalmers brings an explanation: "Irena Kirshman was my name after my first marriage (there were three). I subsequently decided to stick to my "maiden" name, Irena Chalmers-Taylor. I dropped the Taylor bit. Thank you for asking." Our Tendril thanks to Joe for this bibliographic update.

VINTNER, VINTS ?

British Tendril **Christopher Fielden** has alerted our attention to a most interesting discussion, initiated by our own **Bob Ross**, on Jancis Robinson's website (www.jancisrobinson.com) about the origin of the use of the word "vintner" in the United States to mean someone who produces (as opposed to sells) wine.

Free SPANISH WINE GUIDE

Wines from Spain USA is offering (to U.S. residents only) complimentary copies of their120-page *Far from Ordinary Wine Guide 2005-2006*. Order at their website www.winesfromspainusa.com, and "become a Spanish wine connoisseur—for free." Our thanks to **Joe Lynch** for this tip.

NEW BOOKS IN BRIEF

We mention these new titles that await a proper review in our journal. ▪ *Franco Biondi Santi: The Gentleman of Brunello* by Kerin O'Keefe (Bergamo, Italy: Veronelli, 2005, 118 pp) tells the story of one of the world's greatest wines, Brunello de Montalcino, and its celebrated producer Franco Biondi Santi. ▪*The Wines of the Northern Rhône*, by John Livingstone-Learmonth (Berkeley: U.C. Press, 2005, 704 pp), who first wrote on the "largely neglected" Rhône wines in 1978 (235 pages expanded to 689 pages by the 3rd revised edition in 1993); this volume is a comprehensive and authoritative survey of the wine estates, the winemakers, and their wines. ▪ *In the Shade of the Vines: A Selection of Essays and Photographs with an Illustrated History of the Napa Valley* is an elegant, first-flight production from Bill Harlan on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Meadowood, Napa Valley (268 pp, 12 x 10, $75). Orders can be placed at www.meadowood.com ▪ And, the book that our resident critic cannot put down, *The Science of Wine: From Vine to Glass* by Jamie Goode (Berkeley: U.C. Press, 2005, 216 pp; London: Mitchell Beazley), engagingly presents to a wide audience the "scientific and technological innovations that are now influencing how grapes are grown and how wine is made."

THE WAYWARD TENDRILS is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1990 for Wine Book Collectors. Yearly Membership / Subscription to the WAYWARD TENDRILS QUARTERLY (ISSN 1552-9460) 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. —

DUPLICATES!! DUPLICATES!!

John Danza (630-357-9269 / jdanza@wideopenwest.com) has sent us a list of some very good duplicates that need proper new homes. All prices include U.S. domestic shipping; international shipping will be additional. Reasonable offers entertained. Contact him for further information. [The "G" numbers refer to Gabler *Wine into Words*, 2nd ed.]

André Simon titles

Wine in Shakespeare's Days and Shakespeare's Plays (London: Curwen Press, 1964). A reprint of the 1931 edition, with a number of illustrations and woodcuts added. Published for Shakespeare's 400th birthday. Cloth, no d.j. (as issued). Edges bumped, small light droplet stains on front cover, larger stain on back cover. Slight foxing on RFEP. Tight binding. Gabler: G39452. $15.

In the Twilight (London: Michael Joseph, 1969). The second autobiography of the author. Includes a full bibliography of his works at the end. A scarce copy signed by the author in a huge signature on the FFEP. Hugh Johnson states that Andre's signatures on this book are large and extend from bottom to top of the page because André was blind at this point and couldn't really judge where he was signing. Dust jacket missing a ¾" piece at the spine, pink stain on the rear, currently preserved in a mylar cover. Edges bumped. A tight copy. G39160. $40.

Wine and Spirits. The Connoisseur's Textbook (London: Duckworth, 1919). Corners and edges bumped, rubbed. Binding at the covers a little delicate and exposed at the free end papers, remainder in good shape. A good copy, no d.j. G39406. $30.

How to Enjoy Wine (London: Newman Neame, 1952). 1st ed. Stiff board covers with no d.j. (as issued). Heavily worn edges and corners. Covers rubbed, spine chipped at top and bottom; epp foxed. Front cover slightly raised. Actually better than it sounds. Binding is v.g. A good reading copy of an uncommon title. G39120. $20.

The Wines of France (France: French Government, 1939). Reprint of the 1935 Wine & Food Society publication which was commissioned, published, and distributed by the French government. First edition thus. Stiff paper covers. Very clean copy with tight staple binding. G39480. $15.

Partners – A Guide to the Game of Wine & Food Match-making (London: Curwen Press, 1951). 1st ed. Printed for the Wine & Food Society. Stiff paper covers, no d.j. (as issued). Near-fine copy. G39280. $40.

English Fare & French Wines (London: Newman Neame, 1955). 1st ed. A couple of small stains to covers; pages unaffected. D.j. has slight chips, some foxing and an old muted stain on rear. G38980. $15.

What about Wine? (London: Newman Neame, 1953). Cloth boards a bit grubby with a slight raising. Foxing on ends of pages. Bookplate ("John Danza"). G39390. $15. A second copy, a good reading copy only. Grubby, stained boards, foxing, writing, underlining. $10.

George Saintsbury titles

A Scrap Book (London: Macmillan, 1922). 1st ed., first impression. See Gabler p.317 for a description of this collection of "scraps" containing much about good wines and good books. A very good, tight copy, many pages still uncut at the top; some foxing to epp. D.j. with a few chips and a couple of small missing pieces. Bookplate ("John Danza"). Scarce in this condition with the original d.j. G37145. $50.

A Last Vintage (London: Methuen, 1950). Edited by John Oliver, Arthur Clark, and Augustus Muir. 1st ed. A collection of previously unpublished essays and papers written by George Saintsbury, a few of which deal with wine but many more about books. Of importance is a reprint of the oration given at the 27th meeting of The Saintsbury Club on 23rd October 1945 by David Nichol Smith in celebration of Saintsbury's 100th birthday. Very good, tight copy; d.j. a bit grubby and chipped. Not listed by Gabler. $25.

Titles by other authors

Grossman's Guide to Wines, Spirits and Beer by Harold J. Grossman (New York: Sherman & Spoerer, 1940). Fine first edition in a very good later edition (1943) d.j. by Scribners. I don't know how they got paired up. Inscribed by the author "To Knight Willy with all sincere good wishes Harold J. Grossman." G22480. $35.

Hugh Johnson's Pocket Wine Book 1992 by Hugh Johnson (London: Mitchell Beazley, 1992). Special edition printed for British Airways exclusively for presentation to passengers on the Concorde. Bound in black calf by W.A. Gould Ltd., with the Concorde insignia on the cover. In a box, along with the presentation card by British Airways. Fine. G25510. $35.

Wilson (Bill) Duprey has the following duplicates. Contact him at 419-238-6779 (sorry, no e-mail).

Saintsbury, George. ***Notes on a Cellar-Book***. Mayflower Books, 1978. $15.

Simon, André. ***Wines of the World***. McGraw-Hill, 1968. Quarto, cloth. $25.

These paper-covered copies offered at $10 each:

Anderson, B. ***Wines of Italy***. Simon & Schuster, 1992.

Broadbent, Michael. ***Wine Tasting.*** Rev.ed. 1977.

Brown, Michael & Sybil. ***Food & Wine of France: Bordeaux to Pays-Basque***. Exeter Books, 1980.

Church, Ruth Ellen. ***Wines of the Midwest***. 1982.

Delaforce, J. ***The Factory House of Oporto***. 1979.

Faith, Nicholas. ***Ch. Margaux***. Christies, 1980. P.b.

Littlewood & Penning-Rowsell. ***Mouton-Baronne Philippe***. Christies, 1982.

Silverman, H. ***Pride of the Wineries***. 1980. 1st ed. "The first region-by-region analysis & listing of California wines."

Sutcliff, Serena. ***Guide to the Wines of Burgundy***. Simon & Schuster, 1992. ■

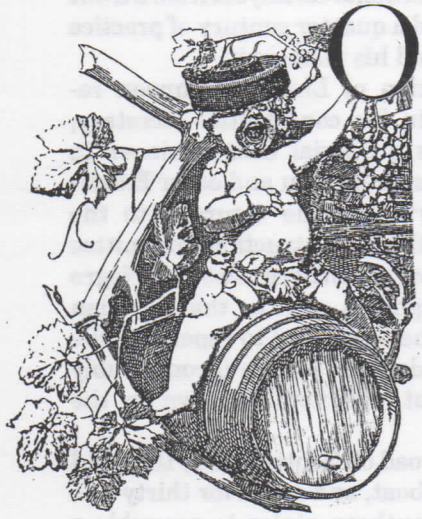
The Man Who Ate, and Drank, California: Major Benjamin C. Truman

by

Marvin Collins

[Marvin Collins has found a consuming passion—the involved, fascinating stories of California's wine history. His initial research into the life of Hamden McIntyre has led him to an intriguing and notable cast of supporting characters. We are pleased to make the acquaintance of Major Ben Truman. — Ed.]

PART I



Once there was a man who loved California, or rather was so in love with his own view of the place, that he wrote a dozen books about how phenomenally fine California was, suggesting in no uncertain terms that everyone elsewhere would be foolish not to immediately relocate to the Pacific Slope. California was the greatest place to live in the world.

He is remembered today as having had something to do with California wines. A few of his books have been reissued in recent years. But in his career of half-a-century, Ben C. Truman was a hugely popular writer of adventure stories, fiction and journalism. He was considered one of the great gourmets of the American West. His opinions on food and wine were legendary. Barkeeps and Maitres d'hotel were honored to host him in their establishments. He was spoken of as portly, as having girth—a photo of him with wife Augusta and daughter Georgie showed a man whose waistcoat sloped towards his knees. When he died in Los Angeles in 1916, his old employer, the New York Times, described him as "a famous writer."

The journey started for Benjamin Cummings Truman on October 25, 1835, in Providence, Rhode Island. He was one of five children born to Henry and Susan (Cummings) Truman, who were native to Rhode Island, and were educated, if not wealthy, parents. Young Ben was an eager reader and a ready learner. By 17 he was teaching at District School #9 in Merrimack County, New Hampshire; by 18 he was the school principal. The next year he had learned to set type and had written his first story for a newspaper.

Truman in the Bohemian Brigade

In 1860 he was regularly employed in newspaper work at Philadelphia by John W. Forney, who recognized his storytelling abilities. At the outbreak of the war, Col. Forney pulled strings with the War Department to have Ben accredited as a field correspondent, called a "Special," and with great rapidity he found his métier as a war reporter.

He was one of a corps of 150 Northern press "Specials," vying for recognition and entrée to important events and personalities and racing for telegraph connections to their far-flung papers. They became famous as the "Bohemian Brigade," and many of them became the most influential journalists and writers for the remainder of the century. His evident verbal fluency and ability to connect with highly placed strangers often resulted in exclusive stories for his papers. Generals confided in him. Truman traded information for access.

He developed an admiration for the principles and leadership of Andrew Johnson, who must have seen the right stuff in Truman. When Johnson was made Military Governor of Tennessee in March 1862, Truman became his staff officer at the rank of Captain and the Governor's acting confidential secretary. Truman understood that Johnson had the ability to become a national figure and he met with Mr. Lincoln to lobby the President in favor of Johnson's 1864 nomination for Vice President. During the summer of 1863, Forney made young Truman the manager of his Washington Chronicle, and Truman wrote that he made at least eight Sunday visits to the White House in which Lincoln never failed to ask him for accounts of Johnson's heroism and his management of Tennessee.

By the end of the conflict Truman was said to know every general of both armies, North and South, and was considered one of the best "Specials" in the theater. Henry Raymond, publisher of the New York Times, wanted what Truman had to offer and hired him away from Col. Forney's chain of papers at the fabulous salary of $100 a week. Truman repaid the compliment by filing100 stories with the Times during the last six months of the war.

In late 1865 he was elected Major of a loyal white regiment in Tennessee and ended his wartime service as Provost Marshal in Nashville serving with men like Gen. John Miller and Gen. Lovell Rousseau. He had met Miller, later to become Collector in San Francisco and President of the Alaska Commercial Co., at the battle of Stone River.

Truman reported on the battles of Shiloh, Vicksburg, Missionary Ridge, and Stone's River/Murfreesboro. He had also covered the intense fighting at Atlanta and Mobile. His style as special correspondent was direct and informative. Truman filed this story

June 28, 1863, covering the Battle of Liberty Gap, Tennessee, in which Miller was badly wounded:

> On Thursday evening (June 24, 1863), heavy fighting took in Johnson's division, Col. John F. Miller's brigade bearing the brunt. The engagement lasted for over an hour, and took place near Bell Buckle. Col. Miller had just been transferred from Negley's to Johnson's division; he conducted himself as upon former occasions, and while making a charge was wounded seriously, a Minnie ball striking him above his left eye, and lodging in the head. This charge of Col. Miller is described as being brilliant, and adds to the luster of the laurels of that genuine soldier. In this fight we lost some hundred men killed and wounded, the enemy losing double that number.

In the story he wrote for the Times of March 5, 1864, he describes the fighting at Tunnel Hill, Tennessee, with a calm remove:

> Heavy skirmishing immediately ensued, and our cavalry ... behaved admirably, Morgan's and Dan McCook's brigades particularly distinguishing themselves for their daring and impetuosity. Before 12 A.M. the whole column emerged from the multiplicity of coves and gaps which abound in this country, and a series of cavalry fights took place until late in the afternoon. Yet the column still advanced, when a murderous crossfire from a half dozen rebel batteries opened upon the whole line.

The battle of Shiloh took place April 6 and 7, 1862. A fierce rain storm arrived the evening of April 7th. The complete toll of killed, wounded, and missing men was 23,746. The south lost its greatest military strategist Gen. Albert Johnston and the battle ended all preconceptions that the war would be short-lived. Ambrose Bierce and Col. Wills De Hass wrote brilliant accounts as participants.

Johnson had sent Truman south from Nashville to collect intelligence as his personal representative. He arrived at Shiloh after the fighting was over and the Confederate Army had retired from the field. This is how he remembered the scene in a Times memoir in 1890:

> Heavens! How it rained and how the battle roared. All was quiet when we arrived (the evening of April 7th). But what a sight! I shall never forget it. There were thousands of dead and dying and straggling, as far as the eye could reach in every direction. Horses and cannons and caissons and wheels seemed to be piled up all round and sometimes one upon another; here, there and everywhere; and half the giant trees had been felled or pierced by shot and shell. All the time the rain descended in torrents, and horses and mules and wagons and men actually slipped and rolled down the almost precipitous bluffs into the river.

Powerfully drawn, if melodramatic, this could equally well be a vision of one of Dante's Circles of Hell.

A few days later, he had the chance to meet General Grant in company with two other New York correspondents: "The General himself made five toddies, the ingredients of which were the juice from a can of peaches and what was termed commissary whiskey...and I declare that the concoction was several times repeated before a general retirement."

In 1895 Truman revisited the battle of Shiloh, "There are just two things on which all agree, and they are, the heroism of both armies, and that Shiloh was one of the three most desperate and important battles of the war." There is no doubt that Benjamin Truman witnessed the national cataclysm from a front row seat and that he had a quarter century of practice expanding the drama and his place in it.

After the assassination of Lincoln, Johnson requested Truman remain his confidential secretary, and sent him south as a Special Commissioner to implement the Freedman's Bureau and other Executive plans for reconstruction. He returned to the capitol to testify before the reconstruction Committee of the 39th Congress about Southern views on Negro suffrage. During the eighteen months that Truman assisted the President he continued to report for the Times — to our eyes today this was an inconceivably conflicted situation, but was not unknown in the 1860s.

Truman took to the road on September 1, 1865 and traveled by train, river boat, and coach for thirty-one weeks through eight Southern states to assemble a special report on "Conditions in the South" for Pres. Johnson. He interviewed hundreds of defeated soldiers, politicians, editors, preachers, plantation owners, freed slaves, and all manner of professionals to assess their loyalty to the Federal government. His instructions were to learn whether Southerners would unite with the United States in a fight against a foreign power such as England and whether the outcome of reconstruction would include the integration of the Negro population into the civic life of the country. The resulting report to Johnson is a stunning lesson in American history, more so when one realizes that its power is derived from the observations and conclusions of a writer not yet thirty-one years old. The Times published Truman's commentary as an open letter on May 8, 1866.

> There is a deep and steadily growing conviction in the minds of many of the most intelligent and thoughtful of the South—a conviction a stranger would seldom discover in the journals or public speeches of prominent men, but only in the still undercurrents of private conversation—that in the late war the hand of providence, the decrees of destiny, were against them—were steadfastly adverse to any separation of the Union. I confess this discovery gave me an unfeigned satisfaction such as no other I have made in the South...I know that there is a profound and abiding conviction gradually

gaining ground in the Southern mind that their late struggle was hopeless from the start—that it was contrary to the will of the infinite.

The Lighter Side of Truman

In July 1865, the Times sent him home to Rhode Island to write amusing gossip about the wealthy and the parvenus that took to the waters at Newport three months after peace was declared. Truman spared no one, all pretensions and foibles were exposed across class lines, but he seemed kinder to the simple soldier and the factory girl than to the nabobs arriving at the beach in handsome four-in-hands. While skewering the drunken loser at faro and the belle whose beauty was left in the changing cabana, his writing style is filled with the playful voice that we will hear for the rest of his career.

> Ah, here comes a rattling equipage, the lady drives, what a lovely creature—how divinely made; what a bust. She alights—what an ankle. There– there she goes this Venus—the sight of her produces a sort of melting luxuriance of ecstasy—into booth No. 24. Lord Gracious! Who is that, or what is that coming out of booth 24? She looks a shrimp. Where under the sun has that well turned ankle disappeared? Where is that heavenly bust? Alas, she has left most of herself in booth 24.

The Beau Monde

During his stint of Presidential service, Benjamin took a summer leave in 1866 and sailed on his first trip to Europe, where the Times correspondent, Dr. Johnson, introduced him to the Parisian Beau Monde. There he met Baron Hausmann, Alexander Dumas, père et fils, and Mme. George Sand, whose person and renown made a great impression on our 31-year-old bachelor.

> I should never forget this brilliant woman. She was small and plump, without being gross, and had magnificent shoulders. Her head was disproportionately large and she had big black eyes – profound, opaque, and with a fixity of expression. Her skin was the color of old ivory. Her hands were as pretty as I have ever seen in a woman, and she seemed to be exquisitely neat and careful of her personal appearance.

It was there in Paris, after five years of the deprivations and monotonies of war, that Truman discovered what he considered the true joys of the table, that food and drink were not all created equal and that such divine nourishment was worthy of study and consideration. It was there that Truman, the Bon Vivant, was born.

To the Promised Land

Johnson rewarded Truman for his loyalty and great public relations work with a plum patronage position: Special Agent of the Post Office for the entire Pacific Coast. At $5,000 a year (equal perhaps to $120,000 today), the posting compelled him to travel the entire length and breadth of the western United States.

Special Agents had long been used by departments of the Government in areas where distances were great and communications difficult. The Special Agent—equal parts policy maker, administrator and enforcer—had authority to act with a degree of independence and to make recommendations back to Washington.

After an overland crossing rich with adventure and stories to tell, Truman descended on San Francisco in time to welcome in the New Year, 1867. He quickly established himself at the Occidental Hotel, a meeting place for Easterners on the make for California riches. Ben opened an office in the Custom House, where again he moved into the circle of Gen. John Miller, now Collector of the Port and a fellow Johnson appointee.

By stage and by steamer, he visited every underserved district that had a congressman to complain to, and opened dozens of new post offices, established Star Route contracts for mail delivery by private companies, and appointed post masters. It was a wonderful job for a man whose thirst for adventure fueled his writing. He saw Indians, bandits, and the posses that pursued them. Germane to what concerns us here, he witnessed the emergence of California wine from a questionable liquid fermented in ox-hides into something that would hold the Major's attention for the rest of his days.

His status as Special Agent allowed him to hob-nob with the highest levels of San Francisco society and to observe them through the same lens he had turned upon their Newport counterparts. He filed regular Letters to the New York Times from California which were reprinted through exchanges with papers all over the United States. If his early criticism of West Coast behavior had ruffled West Coast plumage, he soon learned first hand what was expected of him.

One day when he was visiting the San Francisco cellars of the Eclipse Champagne Co., and while making notes during his interview with Arpad Haraszthy and Isador Landsberger, he noticed that the sampling room had filled up "with numerous Californians to whom I was not an agreeable visitor. They, in fact, jumped on me concerning sundry Letters of mine and asked me repeatedly what good I could do to California by such epistles. I found that their rooted idea was that every journalist who came to California was duty bound to write in such manner as to attract immigration and capital to their State. I asked them 'Why?' and they rejoined, 'What do you come to California for then?' And they continued, that if the country did not please me I ought not to stop in it." Mr. Haraszthy saved Truman on that

occasion from further contempt by agreeing with his views about how his wines might be improved, but I don't think Truman took lightly such interchanges. His fellow imbibers' questions about why he had come to California may well have turned the Major's sentiments in another, ultimately more fruitful, direction.

To the South Land

With General Grant's election in November 1868, Truman's term with the Post Office came to a close. Grant made new appointments to reward his supporters. Ben had to fall back on his writing to pay his expenses, which included in 1869 a new wife, California native Augusta Mallard. In 1870 he was sent to Washington as correspondent for the New York Times and the San Francisco Bulletin but soon returned to San Francisco where he was managing editor of the San Francisco Wave magazine. Next he went to San Diego and purchased one-half interest in the San Diego Weekly Bulletin, an interest that he held until the end of 1871. He remained in Southern California to become editor of the Los Angeles Evening Express. He was president and secretary of the Southern District of the Agricultural Society of California from 1873 to 1877.

There was nothing unusual for newsmen to be in constant search of greener pastures—jumping from masthead to masthead was the order of the day. Truman had become recognized as a consummate professional journalist. When baby daughter Georgie came along as the Christmas present of 1873, he was already his own boss as owner of Los Angeles's oldest paper, the Star, begun in 1851. Its Civil War editor had been imprisoned for Secessionist sympathies. The Star became his forum in 1872, a decade before Harrison Otis brought the Los Angeles Times to dominance in Southern California, and he ran it as a daily until he sold it in 1877. He headlined anti-Chinese violence in October 1872, which saw eighteen men lynched and Chinatown looted, as the "The Los Angeles Horror."

Truman demonstrated his commitment to his chosen city by becoming one of the first trustees of the "Thirty-eights," an eponymous group of Los Angeles movers and shakers that personally guaranteed the safety of the city by funding and manning the volunteer fire department. The fire department was housed in an old adobe in the center of the town, containing, besides the hose company and its equipments, the city and county jail, and the Star office, with the court house immediately opposite.

Publisher Truman became fascinated with the exploits of bandito Tiburcio Vasquez, whose gang had raided several towns in retribution for proclaimed white injustices towards Mexicans. Truman sold out the edition of May 15th, 1874, the day of his capture, to an electrified readership. While awaiting extradition for trial in San Francisco, Vasquez granted only three interviews. Even this Mexican outlaw was favorably impressed with Truman's fame and prestige, and the Star ably scooped the rest of the press of Southern California. Truman quickly formatted his news coverage into a best-selling book, *Tiburcio Vasquez, the Life, Adventures and Capture of the Great California Bandit and Murderer*, handily self-published on the *Star*'s press.

Bandits aside, the Star's great theme was the development of Los Angeles, and Truman's next turn would erase all the bad feelings from toes unwisely trod upon in his early Letters east.

An Occident of Edens

Booster and Boomer were terms cherished by the men who developed the American West. Some believed that a lie oft-repeated would be accepted, and perhaps while not literally untrue, the litany of oft-repeated sensibilities on the greatness of California fired the longings and desires of those who dreamed of relocating west. The Booster's job was to get them moving, to close up their lives and bank accounts elsewhere, and to make sure that new emigrants got to the station on time. The Boomer would take it from there, sub-dividing land-grant ranchos into townships where new influxes of cash would reward the forward thinking insight of those who had come earlier.

California to the Booster was unbelievably wonderful, a true land of milk and honey, a land that needed only people to produce overflowing cornucopias of profitable goods that could be sold to the rest of the world.

Our man Truman wrote, "Southern California constitutes one vast garden, cut up into a world of Edens. The ecstatic heart spontaneously exults at its glowing magnificence, and glories at the prospects of its future existence. Eastern people know nothing of this Paradise of the Occident."

Semi-Tropical California

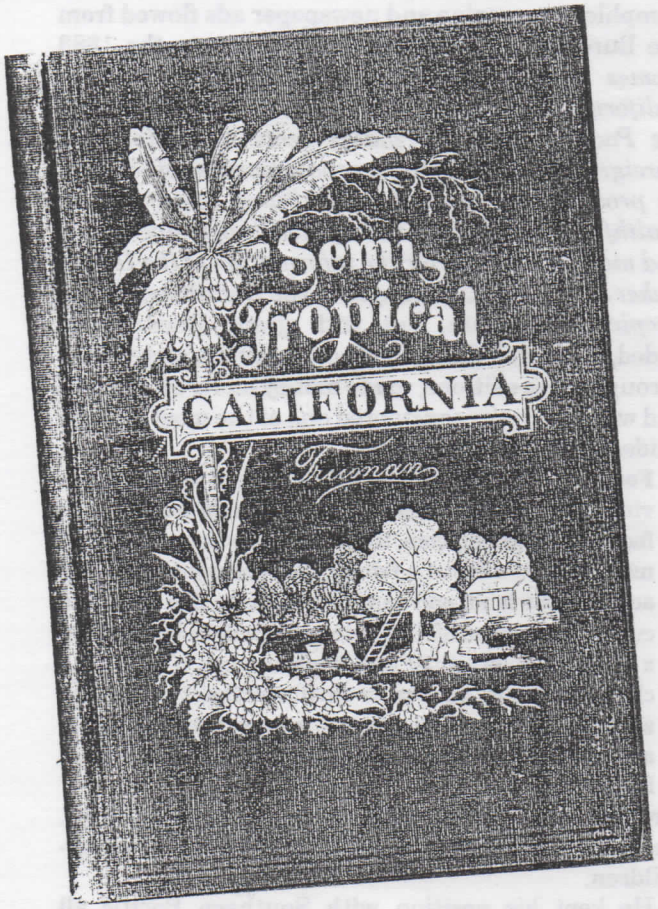
The same year that the unfortunate Spanish Robin Hood met his end, Truman made a tremendous splash with his guide, *Semi-Tropical California; Its Climate, Healthfulness, Productiveness, and Scenery; Its Magnificent Stretches of Vineyards and Groves of Semi-Tropical Fruits, Etc, Etc, Etc.* During his tenure at the Star, Truman and staff had accumulated a vast archive of information about the mines, residences, fruit orchards, vineyards, and ranches, general patterns of agriculture, sheep and cattle raising, irrigation, and mineral resources of the Los Angeles Basin. Truman wrapped this mass of data in come-hither prose described as "less gazetteer and more literary than one normally expects from such a work." His descriptive text was obviously sufficient; there is not one illustration in the book.

"Semi-tropical California" was defined as portions of Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, San Bernardino and San Diego counties, but the book devotes most of its attention to the city and county of Los Angeles and neighboring San Gabriel Valley and the towns of Anaheim, Wilmington, and San Bernardino.

In the introduction Truman put his intentions and reputation squarely on the line:

> Having traveled largely in Semi-tropical California, having examined closely and carefully its agricultural and pomological limits and advantages, and having written faithfully and elaborately of this land flowing with milk and honey, and where every man can sit under his own vine and fig tree, I have yielded to the earnest persuasions of friends and others and made a book. I have visited nearly every orange grove and vineyard in Los Angeles county and gathered my statistics in person. I pledge myself, as a writer of acknowledged reliability, and as a special correspondent of such famous and well known journals as the New York Times, the Philadelphia Press, Washington Chronicle and San Francisco Bulletin, who has visited almost all parts of the world in employ of one or the other of the above-named newspapers, that I have not made a statement in the following pages that is not true in every particular. I assert here, *everything* taken into consideration, that Los Angeles county, the heart of Semi-Tropical California, has no equal in the world. The over-going sun shines upon no region, of equal extent, which offers so many and such varied inducements to men in search of homes and health, as does the region entitled to the appellation of "Semi-Tropical California."

He used the Star as his platform to promote the book. "It is, without exception, the finest printed and finest cloth bound book ever turned out on the Pacific Coast." The lavish gilt-decorated front cover richly displayed the bounties of this garden of Eden. It was a great sales success for the A.L. Bancroft Company and had immense impact, paving the way for the great land booms to come. A reviewer in the San Francisco Chronicle stated, "After reading Major Truman's glowing account it requires some self control to prevent one from rushing off incontinently to the Southern Coast and forswearing San Francisco forever."



More Public Relations

In 1877, the Star under new hands, Ben and his family traveled to Washington, D.C. for the winter. In the Capitol he was again appointed to postal work which occupied him from 1877 to 1879. As usual, author Truman used his official travels to write a series for the Bulletin on the Oregon and Arizona Territories from the point of view of a tourist. The stories are replete with all the good reasons why one should visit these picturesque places; yet the trips had furnished him with all kinds of wonderful rigmarole about narrow escapes from howling savages and desperate dashes on lurching stage coaches that he used to full advantage in later books and magazines.

In 1879 he became chief of the literary bureau (read Public Relations) of the Southern Pacific Railway at a salary of $400 a month with a staff of writers under his direction. He was charged with finding ways to increase railway revenues by luring East Coast read-

ers west. Truman was liked and respected by Messrs. Crocker and Huntington who gave him great freedom in accomplishing his mission. Like Johnson before them, they recognized that Truman was the right man in the right place to materially help their cause.

A great outpouring of tourist guides, clever pamphlets, magazine and newspaper ads flowed from the Bureau, but the chief production was the 1883 *Homes and Happiness in the Golden State of California. Being a description of the Empire State of the Pacific coast:; Its inducements to Native and Foreign born emigrants; its productiveness of soil and its productions; Its vast agricultural resources; Its healthfulness of climate and equability of temperature; and many other facts for the information of the Home-seeker and Tourist.* Packaged in the tradition of *Semi-Tropical California*, but with grand illustrations added, it covered the marvels of the entire state, went through three editions, made money on its own behalf and was nationally considered one of the most reliable guides to the Golden State.

> Forty acres of land is enough for any man to handle as a vineyard – twenty acres of this land might be better, in fact; and the young man, the middle-aged man, or the old man, with or without a family, who can procure twenty acres of this land, and can for two years live upon and cultivate a portion of it as a vineyard, will be better off in a little while, healthier and happier, than if he were a clerk, mechanic, laborer, or small merchant in the city; and his children will be stronger in every way, and better able to fight the battle of life than they would be if raised in any city.

Mr. Truman, I have seen the light! I am moving West. Here is my money for an extra parcel for my grandchildren.

He kept his position with Southern Pacific all through the next decade, but that didn't mean Ben gave up any of his other activities. Time was made to found the Capital, a weekly devoted to the local affairs and people of Southern California. Life remained peripatetic for the Trumans. The 1880 census recorded Ben, Augusta, and Georgie as residents in a San Francisco boarding house; Ben listed his occupation as a journalist.

[*In the concluding installment next issue we shall become closer acquainted with Maj. Truman the wine man, his monumental wine series, and his final decades.* — Ed.]

MARINACCI, ***continued from p.35*** —

> regards our operations and you have most certainly contributed a very great deal in a great many ways. As we both grow older I hope this relationship can grow, too. I have always felt quite alone in our wine growing. There is not a single grower we could have a confidential conversation with. They have all lied about themselves whenever I have talked to them and jumped at the chance of carrying away to others any little problem I have confided. Everyone of us has our problems and it is a damned shame a couple growers can not discuss such things. Masson and Wetmore did. They even wrote in letters of their financial worries and one suggested remedies to the other.

Then MR returned to the theme of the need for further expansion in the near future, to enable him to improve the overall reputation of California's wine industry:

> Well, we can make money here but I know we must have more vineyards now, with costs rising and other growers grown so large their sales and advertising and talk drowns out a smaller volume. It has got to be worked out so that there is established once and for all that more than a trickle of fine wines can come out of California. Wente and Almaden and Paul Masson are proving the very opposite, as is Martini and the others. I can deliver Pinot Noir now at last. And I can turn out Cabernet and I can make a champagne that will stand with any. There remains only Chardonnay to develop! Now, I want to have 50 acres more of these vines. I am terribly anxious for you to taste through the cellar when you get back.

MR knew that Amerine would soon be leaving Germany and traveling elsewhere during the upcoming holiday season before heading for home on a ship going through the Panama Canal en route to San Francisco. He signed off the last letter to him of that year in this way:

> We would like to meet you in San Francisco and bring you down here over night then drive you up to Davis. Have you other plans? We both send you our love and best wishes for a gay Christmas, where ever it finds you. [11/28/54]

Amerine didn't take the Rays up on their offer. No doubt he was eager to spend time with friends while lodging at the Bohemian Club in The City, and then go off to his home in Davis, vacated now by its year-long renters. Soon he would resume his faculty position at the University. But the three of them would meet soon after the year 1955 began. It would prove to be a busy year for them all. And, for both their wine quality crusade and their close friendship, a highly challenging and ultimately perilous one.

[*To be continued next issue*]

IN THE WINE LIBRARY
by
Bob Foster

"belongs in the wine library of every Bordeaux lover"

The Wines of Bordeaux: Vintages and Tasting Notes, 1952-2003 by Clive Coates. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004. 720 pp, cloth. $60.

I always have this image of Clive Coates swimming upstream as he writes about the wines of Bordeaux for the wine lovers in the United States. As a group we seem to be so taken with big, ripe, highly extracted oaky wines with softer acids, that we have lost sight of the fact that the wines of Bordeaux for centuries were elegant wines that relied on style and elegance, not brut force. Coates is still the informed champion of the traditional style wines; wines that spoke of their place of origin, wines that did not taste like every other wine from that region or every other major wine growing region.

The reader must understand the author's perspective. But regardless of one's perspective on this key issue, it must be acknowledged that his work is superb. It belongs in the wine library of every Bordeaux lover. The work begins with a series of short chapters on topics such as the history of the region, the styles of the wines, the grape varieties, a description of a year in the vineyard, and a chapter on how wine is made. But this is not the same information we've seen in a thousand wine books. Coates demonstrates his mastery of the changes occurring in the region. For example, in the chapter on how wine is made he covers various techniques and the risks and benefits that go with them such as saigner (bleeding off some of the free juice to concentrate the must), concentrating machines that extract water from the juice, cold soak fermentation, the use of enzymes and ecoulage, the blending back of press juice from the skins during racking. His detailed presentation of these factors shows the depth of Coates knowledge and understanding.

The core of the book, covering nearly 400 pages, is an encyclopedic listing of virtually every wine producer in Bordeaux. For many there are exquisite line drawings of the style seen on labels such as Ch. Lafite-Rothschild. For every producer there is a block of data covering the name of the owner, the surface area under cultivation (and a listing of which varieties are grown), and a list of any second labels used by the château, other wines and the château's classification. Coates gives an overview of the style of wines produced and his evaluation. For example for Ch. Gloria he notes that its wines are medium-bodied, balanced and stylish. But he is not immune to pointing out weakness, describing one château's output as "humdrum."

The last major section of the book contains detailed tasting notes going back to 1952. For each year there is a written commentary covering such topics as the weather, a general assessment of the red and white wines, the style of the wines, Coates' favorites, and finally a discussion of the current prices. This is followed by pages of tasting notes. For each entry, he gives a score, a suggested window for drinking, and a written commentary on each wine. I just wish the section were differently organized. For example, if, in a tasting of 1982 wines, there was a 1961, he reports the tasting note for the 1961 amongst the notes for the 1982s. The note is not additionally posted in the chapter focusing on the 1961s. So a reader will have to work through the detailed index to be sure he or she has found every tasting note on a particular wine. In this respect the tasting notes are not as user friendly as they could be. Similarly, he reports a few tasting notes on wines he felt were slightly corked. Given that even slight corkiness can mute the fruit in a wine, why would an author not discard such a bottle, obtain a clean one and report on that bottle? Regardless, you have to give credit to Coates for describing the wines exactly as he sees them. For example for the 1995 Château Valandraud he comments "Very full colour. Hugely new oaky. Ripe. But what is underneath? Full fat but no dimension or class. And the oak dominates to the extent that it is astringent. Not for me." He gives it a score of twelve out of twenty.

Even for a Bordeaux lover who disagrees with Coates' assessment of the current style for so many of these wines, there is a wealth of information here that is important to a full understanding of the wines of this region as well as the numerous changes underway. Very highly recommended.

Château Lafite-Rothschild ★★★

OWNER: Domaines Barons de Rothschild; director: Charles Chevallier.
SURFACE AREA UNDER VINE: 103 ha – 71% Cabernet Sauvignon; 25% Merlot; 3% Cabernet Franc; 1% Petit Verdot.
SECOND WINE: Carruades de Lafite.
OTHER WINES: Château Duhart-Milon (Pauillac); Château L'Évangile (Pomerol); Château Rieussec (Sauternes).
CLASSIFICATION: Premier Cru (1855).

BOOKS & BOTTLES
by
Fred McMillin

"Rough, Rugged, and Robust"

The Book: ***Greek Salad. A Dionysian Travelogue***, by Miles Lambert-Gócs. San Francisco: Wine Appreciation Guild, 2004. 283pp. P.b. $15.

As we see and enjoy in this epicurean odyssey by Grecophile Lambert-Gócs, "rough, rugged, and robust" are apt descriptors of both the search for and the taste of the country wines of Greece.

▪ At Arachova—In the vintner's cellar he proudly offered me a pinkish, oxidized wine. I thought poorly of it though I managed to grin satisfaction.

Another vintner brought me a pitcher of his best wine, which was so far inclined toward blue that it vividly brought to life Homer's description of a "wine-dark sea."

Arachovite wine is not for soft living.

▪ At Rapscani (Mt. Olympus country)—The peasant wine I drank from a one-cup measuring mug was a rebuke to our notion that a vinous paragon needs to be an unrelieved experience in such attributes as "perfect balance" and "silky smoothness." Instead the wine had teeth and raw nerve, challenging the wine lover to show some of Zorba's gumption: "The god-devil sends you this choice morsel . . . You've got teeth. All right, put 'em into it."

▪ At Naoussa, Macedonia—Here in Macedonia I tasted two superb wines. You might start practicing the name of the local grape, Xynomavro . . . you won't sound any worse than my mother pronouncing Pinot Noir.

By now we hope you have developed a robust appetite for *Greek Salad*, and try it. It's an affectionate travelogue of Greece's country wine, food, and colorful characters.

The Bottles: "Greece and Grapes, a 4,000-Year Romance" was the title of a lecture-tasting I gave for the Commonwealth Club of California. Sure enough, the best red wine was from Naoussa, made from the Xynomavro. The best white was from the island of Santorini, which has a fascinating connection to the Lost Continent of Atlantis. *Greek Salad* devotes an entire chapter to the wind-swept island.

And a final Greek wine smile . . .

During a Greek wine class, one of the students raised her hand to say she was Greek and to ask if her female ancestors were allowed to drink wine. I responded, "Yes, they could. In fact, there even was an ancient adage: Greek ladies like their wine old and their lovers young." After a short pause, she replied, "So what's new?!"

FURTHER READING ABOUT GREEK WINES
(from Gabler, *Wine into Words*, 2nd ed, 2004)

Adams, Geoff. *Greek Wines: A Comprehensive Guide*. Kent, 2002. "Profiles 75 top Greek wine producers and hundreds of their wines."

Denman, James L. *What Should We Drink? An Inquiry...* London, 1868. "This is a criticism of Beckwith's book *Practical Notes on Wine* (1868), where Greek wines had all but been ignored. Denman, an agent for the Greek Archipelago Wine Co. never missed an opportunity to praise Greek wines..."

_____. *Wine and Its Counterfeits*. London, 1876. "A small book written in praise of Greek wines, and denouncing Sherry and Port because of the addition of brandy."

Druitt, Robert. *Report on the Cheap Wines from France, Italy, Austria, Greece, and Hungary; Their Quality, Wholesomeness, and Price, and Their Use in Diet and Medicine...* London, 1865. Also, 2nd ed, 1873. "Druitt, a member of the Royal College of Physicians, became interested in the subject of intemperance and bought inexpensive wine for his own drinking in order to ascertain what the public could buy for a moderate price..."

Franke, Peter and Marathaki, Irini. *Wine and Coins in Ancient Greece*. Athens, 1999. "Traces the history of wine in the ancient world, with references to ancient sources and the history of coins. Coin specimens are presented in five categories: vines, grapes, wine vessels, Dionysus, and Dionysus' retinue. Richly illustrated."

Kourakou-Dragona, Stavrola. *The Santorini of Santorini*. Athens, 1995. "Limited to 1500 copies."

_____. *Wine & European Culture. Bacchic Greece: Myths and Masterpieces*. Athens, 1991. "25-page booklet."

Lambert-Gócs, Miles. *The Wines of Greece*. London, 1990. An award-winning "account of the vineyards, grape varieties, producers, wineries, and the wines."

Lissarrague, F. *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet: Images of Wine and Ritual*. Princeton, 1991.

Logothetis, Basile. *The Development of the Vine and of Viticulture in Greece based on Archaeological Findings...* Thessalonike, 1970.

Manessis, Nico. *The Illustrated Greek Wine Book*. Athens, 1999. "An update of the author's 1995 *The Greek Wine Guide*."

Palmer, Ruth. *Wine in the Mycenaean Palace Economy*. Liege, 1994. "The Mycenaean civilization and winemaking in Greece."

Prickett, Jan L. *A Scientific and Technological Study of Topics Associated with the Grape in Greek and Roman Antiquity*. 1980.

[From *Wines & Coins in Ancient Greece*]

TWO JOYS REVIEWED

by ***Jack Fairchild***

[*Jack Fairchild, a Tendril since 1999, lives in the Napa Valley where he teaches wine education courses and collects wine books. Fittingly, his special collecting interest is wine history.* — Ed.]

Judgment of Paris: California vs France and the Historic 1976 Paris Tasting that Revolutionized Wine by George Taber. New York: Scribner, 2005. 326pp. $26.

How can one write an entire book about an afternoon's wine tasting? Indeed, the tasting itself takes-up only thirteen pages of this 326-page book. The answer is, with lots of filler and padding. Fortunately, the padding and fill are all first-rate. George M. Taber, Time magazine's man-on-the-spot who broke the story, provides a succinct history of California wine and excellent mini-biographies of the major players, plus a very competent overview of the global wine business. Old stuff for seasoned Tendrils, but written with style, verve, and panache.

Taber's book has been extensively reviewed, and the author has become a familiar face in the Napa Valley as he revisits old haunts and renews old friendships. Winning winemaker Mike Grgich has said that his life is divided into two parts, before Paris and after Paris. Indeed—an aphorism for California wine. Thank goodness that on 24 May 1976, in Paris, as he strolled toward the InterContinental Hotel, George Taber thought it "a perfectly wonderful way to spend an otherwise slow afternoon."

The Winemaker's Dance: Exploring Terroir in the Napa Valley by Jonathan Swinchatt and David G. Howell. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004. 229pp. $35.

The cover photograph on Swinchatt and Howell's *The Winemaker's Dance* is one of the most reproduced of the many Napa Valley views—looking east from Smith-Madrone vineyards high atop Spring Mountain across the valley to Mt. Saint Helena. With more gorgeous maps and photographs inside to explicate the text, this is a beautiful and esthetically pleasing book.

The authors are geologists. They also love wine, and the book is a brilliant synthesis of the two: how the terroir of the valley came to be and its effects on viticulture. The human element, how landowners, growers, and winemakers—the stewards of this land—interact with this environment is sympathetically and lovingly told.

In a book of this scope the authors may be forgiven one minor howler and one major flaw. Napa Valley is not "the second largest tourist attraction in California, surpassed only by Disneyland" (p.1). This hoary chestnut has been around far too long. Even the estimable James Conaway falls victim to it in his *Far Side of Eden* (2002, p.37). For the curious: Disneyland receives over thirteen million visitors a year. Napa ranks tenth among California counties with 3.87 million visitors, about the same as Knott's Berry Farm.

"Little did the growers know that AXR-1 ... had a fatal flaw, a hidden susceptibility to phylloxera that would not show up for twenty years" (p.132). It is truly surprising how many otherwise knowledgeable people have fallen victim to this canard. Even Karen MacNeil, in her encyclopedic *Wine Bible* (2001) gets it wrong—the "biotype B" excuse (p.25). The facts are simple: AXR-1 rootstock (Aramon x Rupestris Ganzin #1) has a vinifera parent, and therefore, *ipso facto*, could not be phylloxera resistant.

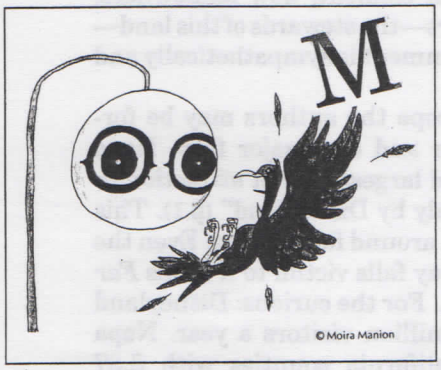
Second, for those who chose to find out the truth, it was there for the finding. Here is what the bible (*General Viticulture*, A. J. Winkler, et al) said in its first edition in 1962 and repeated in 1974: "That its resistance to phylloxera is not high has been demonstrated in other countries. In very dry, shallow soils, or where phylloxera can be very serious, it may do poorly or even fail." People chose to ignore this and instead hung their vinous hats on what followed: "The varieties grafted on it have been consistently high producers. For California conditions it would seem to be the nearest approach to an all-purpose rootstock in the coastal counties .... This is a case where the choice of a stock cannot be based entirely on its resistance to phylloxera" (p.687).

Fair warning, I should think. In any case, the whole topic is neatly detailed in Lewis Perdue's delicious little 1999 book, *The Wrath of Grapes* (Chapter 4). But I digress. *The Winemaker's Dance* is a beautiful book; lovely to look at and a joy to read. ■

Wine in Print
by
Hudson Cattell

"a romp through the vineyard year"

The Vineyard Book by Jack Johnston. Illustrated by Moira Manion. Westminster, MD: Acme Press, 2005. [42]pp. 12¼" x 9¼". Hardbound. 1000 copies. $25. (Can only be ordered from the publisher, Acme Press. e-mail: emily@carr.org. $25. + $2.50. S/H.)



any of our readers know the author, Jack Johnston, who with his wife Emily are the owners of Copernica Vineyards in Westminster, Maryland. This is a children's book telling the story of a year in a small vineyard, a vineyard that is called Copernica Vineyards that also has a cat named Truman Capuddy and a dog Oliver. Neither Jack nor Emily is mentioned by name, but one hopes that the misadventures befalling the grower in the book never happened to Jack.

The book starts by introducing some of the equipment used in the vineyard. After the vineyard is planted there are episodes involving spraying, encounters with birds and wildlife, harvesting, and pruning. The misadventures occur when, for example, the grower drills the post-holes too deep, gets tangled up in netting, or ends up spraying himself on a windy day.

More than 100 watercolor illustrations by Minnesota artist Moira Manion, many of them humorous or whimsical, are a major contribution in making the book entertaining for children (and perhaps serving as an object lesson for any adult who might be thinking about planting a vineyard).

Very little has been written for children about growing grapes, the best example being Lynne Tuft's *The Grapes Grow Sweet: A Child's First Harvest in Wine Country* (1996) which looks at a grape harvest in Napa Valley through the eyes of a four-year-old boy named Julian. In that book the author conveys the sense of wonder that a young boy might feel on experiencing a vineyard year for the first time. [See WTQ Vol.8 No.1 1998, and Wine East March-April 1998 for reviews of *The Grapes Grow Sweet.*]

By contrast, Jack's book is a romp through the vineyard year. Young children will fall in love with Truman and Oliver. This book is a real find for the younger set. Adults, too, in addition to friends of Jack and Emily, will find the book amusing.

"Ohio wine industry, past & present"

Ohio Wine Country Excursions by Patricia Latimer. Cincinnati, OH: Emmis Books, 2005. 240 pp. Soft cover. $25. www.emmisbooks.com.

With each passing year, guidebooks seem to be getting better and better. This guide to 65 Ohio wineries is one of the nicest I've seen.

The first part of the book has a number of informative essays, three of them historical: "First of the Ohio River Valley Visionaries" describes the contributions of Jean-Jacques Dufour, Nicholas Longworth and John Michael Meier; "Viticulture of Sandusky and the Erie Islands" discusses Datus Kelly, Peter and George Lonz, and Robert S. Gottersman; and "Winegrowing East of Cleveland" includes the Shakers and the Geneva farmers, ninety families known as the Lake Erie Jewish Community. The other two essays, "Vintner's Challenge" and "Ohio Vineyard Lands," discuss winemaking and grape growing in Ohio.

Most of the book, of course, is devoted to Ohio's sixty-five wineries. Each winery is given an average of three pages that includes a profile, a full color label, and very often a color photo. At the end of the profile is a large box that contains such basics as directions and hours open, but also additional information not usually found in other guides: events, brand names, method of harvesting, pressing and winemaking, fermentation, aging and cooperage, vineyard founding date, soil, grape varieties, and nearby places to visit.

The author, Patricia Latimer, is the founder of Patricia Latimer Associates, a public relations and strategic planning company in San Francisco. Her long association with wine includes serving as the Director of the Sherry Institute of Spain and authorship of *California Wineries. Vol. 2: Sonoma and Mendocino Counties* (1976). Her family connections in Ohio led to her interest in Ohio viticulture.

This book is the result of many interviews and is well-researched. In addition to being valuable as a guide to touring Ohio wineries, it is a contribution to the understanding of the Ohio grape and wine industry, past and present.

[These two reviews are reprinted, with thanks, from Hudson's "Wine in Print" column in the Nov-Dec 2005 issue of Wine East, the bi-monthly journal of "Grapes and Wine in Eastern North America." Subscription information: www.wine east.com. — Ed.]

DINNER WITH TWO 18TH C GOURMETS

A Book Review

by *Wilson G. Duprey*

[Wilson (Bill) Duprey, knows and appreciates the times and treasures of the 18th century. He is a former librarian and curator of rare books, manuscripts, prints and maps at Stanford University Library and New York Public Library, among others. A longtime collector and student of bottle tickets, he now lives happily retired, with his cat Friskie, at the family farm in Ohio. — Ed.]

Bibliographer, novelist, and wine historian James Gabler has produced another capital book. *An Evening with Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson—Dinner, Wine, and Conversation* is a marvelous mix of biography, travel, American diplomatic history, and wine history. The author has used a dream device to place a professor of American history, Jack Osborne—who is also a well-versed wine historian and connoisseur of wines—in the dining room of Thomas Jefferson's elegant mansion on the Champs-Elysees in Paris. His fellow dinner guest is Benjamin Franklin. Prof. Osborne is informed of the evening's menu and then asked to choose the wines for the dinner. Jack is familiar with the wines that Jefferson had acquired for his cellar and is honored with the request. The wines and the menu:

1783 Dorsey's Champagne	Aperitif
1784 Meursault Goute d'Or	Normandy oysters
1784 Montrachet	Spaghetti, tossed with olive oil, Parmesan cheese, and anchovies
1784 Haut Brion	Beef à la mode, served with
1784 Ch. Margaux	potatoes & two kinds of peas from Jefferson's garden
1784 Ch. Yquem	Ice cream in puff pastry.

The dinner produced lively conversation on into the night.

One of the most interesting parts of this book is Thomas Jefferson's story—mostly in his own words taken from his voluminous papers, both archived and published. He tells about his 3½ month trip through southern France and into northern Italy, over the icy Alps (part of the way by mule back), tasting wines and keeping meticulous notes on the wines and their histories. He canvassed the wines of Burgundy, the Médoc and Bordeaux, and everything in between, whether grand château or tiny vineyard. He checked the composition of the soils, met the owners and asked about vineyard practices, and often ordered wines to his liking for his Parisian cellar and his cellar at Monticello. He of course met many of the wine merchants, some of whom he had dealt with for years. He soon learned that buying wine bottled at the vineyard provided more certainty of getting what he ordered, for there was much blending of wines by the merchants. In Italy he learned of the wine Nebiule (today's Nebbiolo) among many others new to him. He was also able to smuggle out in his pockets some of the supposedly superior Piedmont rice to send home to a South Carolina friend—who planted it, and found Carolina's rice more to his liking.

Throughout this journey Jefferson visited all the natural, architectural, and historical elements, including ruins, arenas, temples, and the famous Roman aqueduct near Nimes. Wherever he went he attended the plays, operas, and other local entertainments; he ate in fine restaurants, if possible, and tasted the local wines. Like other travelers of the time, he suffered the indignities and barbarities of the taverns and hotels along the rural roads. But nonetheless, he enjoyed his time and received a first-hand glimpse of much of France and northern Italy.

Jefferson made a wine tour through Germany as well, again tasting and taking copious notes while he experienced the fine wines of the Moselle, Johannisberg, Hochheim, and Rudesheim. In addition to buying German wines for his cellars at Paris and Monticello, he bought vine shoots that he planted in his Paris garden, intending to transplant them to Monticello.

All through the evening, Professor Osborne imparted current (21st century) information to Jefferson and Franklin about the vineyards in France, Italy and Germany, and let them know that many of the great vineyards of the 18th century were still producing superb wines.

The professor asked many questions of his dinner companions. Their answers were straight forward, despite being asked often-intimate details of their lives, and those of their wives, children, friends, and enemies.

Jefferson was born an aristocrat, a Virginia planter, with thousands of acres of productive land; he owned slaves, and was an important figure in the often volatile Virginia legislature. Jefferson considered his three most important legacies (1) the Declaration of Independence (helped write it, and signed it), (2) the American Constitution (helped create), and (3) the founding and development of the University of Virginia at Charlottesville.

Franklin, on the other hand, was born in Boston and struggled to become a printer's apprentice at age fourteen. Eventually he arrived in Philadelphia and found success in the printing business. He went on to become postmaster, invent the Franklin stove and bifocal eye-glasses, do his electrical-lightning experiments, and become a first-class entrepreneur, able to retire at age 42. In 1754, now aged 48, he began his

long and illustrious career in public life. He was appointed in 1776 as American minister to France, where he served until 1785 when he then asked Congress to allow him to retire so he could return home, now an elderly man.

Jefferson succeeded him as minister. The two statesmen had been friends in Philadelphia at the time of the writing of the Declaration of Independence; Franklin enjoyed his new duty of introducing young Jefferson to the French ministry, intelligentsia, aristocratic and social circles—all vitally important in diplomatic relations. Jefferson stayed on at Paris as American minister until 1789, when he came back to the U.S. with his two daughters. He intended to return to Paris; but he became involved in national politics, was elected President, and would never see France again.

Conversation flowed during the evening. It seems that a favorite topic was the lady friends of both men. Jefferson, a new widower when he arrived in Paris, told of only one emotional affair, with Maria Cosway the famous artist. Alas, it did not survive. Franklin reminded the professor that he had married in Philadelphia, but his wife had a mortal fear of sea journeys and never joined him for his overseas assignments. Franklin's life in London suited him so well that he returned to Philadelphia only once, for two years. When he returned to London, his loving wife carried on his business affairs at home until her death. Franklin enjoyed the company of a fine lady friend, and named three: his London landlady, his neighbor in Passy, and the third was one of the most beautiful ladies in France (according to Abigail Adams). None of the ladies succumbed to his amorous eye, but all were extremely attentive friends.

We get a good picture of John Adams, the Massachusetts signer of the Declaration, and one time friend to Jefferson—they would become dire opponents in later presidential campaigns. A 700-mile journey with Jefferson's close Virginia friend, James Madison, is taken through the Revolutionary battle fields in New York and surrounding areas. Naval hero John Paul Jones is newly introduced in coastal English waters, and the Marquis de Lafayette is revealed in cloak and dagger activities.

Both Jefferson and Franklin speak long and well of George Washington, both as general and as President. While in France, Jefferson was honored to send French wines to the capitol for Washington's table. Later on Jefferson wrote a most informative letter to newly elected President Madison about the wines he should import for the White House, with names, dealers, agents, cost per bottle, and directions for bottling and shipping abroad. Among the wines Jefferson recommended was the famous Italian wine, Montepulciano from Tuscany.

There are almost one hundred vignette photos scattered throughout the book—views of cities of France, Italy, Germany, England, Scotland, Ireland, and the United States, and portraits of individuals—all reflecting the late 18th century scene of Jefferson and Franklin.

Following the elaborate and detailed bibliographic notes for the text, are a few extra bonuses: (1) the fascinating story about the bottle of Ch. Lafite 1787 with the embossed initials "Th.J." that sold for $156,450 at a New York auction; (2) recipes for Jefferson's Beef à la Mode, Browned Flour, and Mushroom Catsup (all from a new cookbook, *Dining at Monticello*).

In this fictional, but fact-based imaginative and fascinating journey, James Gabler provides a vivid portrait of Jefferson and Franklin as true gourmets, enjoying the finest of food and wine. Jefferson's almost four-month tasting extravaganza through the vineyards of France and Italy surely classes him as the 18th century's wine connoisseur *par excellence*. In a sense, the two gentlemen were the jet-setters of the eighteenth century!

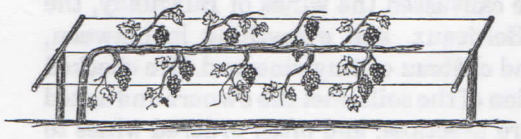
EDITOR NOTE: If Tendrils would like an autographed copy of *An Evening with Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson* (Bacchus Press, 2006, 334p. $29.95), contact Jim Gabler at bacchuspr@aol.com.

The Purple Page

by

Marts Beekley

A favorite book of grapes and wine
Has stakes and vines all in a line.
It sleeps by the couch and a pip of port,
Near the snacks as I watch the sports.
Then one night, in not much light,
A terrible thing, a terrible sight.
Knocked over the port onto my book of age.
And now I call it the PURPLE PAGE.



A "SIX GLASS" TRIBUTE!
A Book Review
by
Hudson Cattell

A History of the World in Six Glasses by Tom Standage. New York: Walker & Co., 2005. 312 pp. Hardbound, $25.

Quite simply, this is one of the most engaging books I've read in a long time. Forget the history part for a moment. Tom Standage tells the story of six drinks that have been important to humanity through the ages: beer, wine, spirits, coffee, tea, and cola (largely Coca-Cola), and ties each of them to an epoch in world history.

Beer is the drink from the dawn of civilization, discovered after the end of the last ice age around 10,000 B.C. when the Stone Age hunter-gatherers began gathering wild grains. Early beer must have had chaff and other debris floating on its surface because a pictogram dating back to 4000 B.C. shows two figures drinking beer through straws from a large pottery jar. The world's first cities were in Mesopotamia where beer was one form of currency and transactions were recorded on cuneiform tablets as early as 3400 B.C. That beer drinking was considered part of civilized life is evidenced in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, Gilgamesh being a Sumerian king who ruled around 2700 B.C. When the pyramids were constructed in Egypt two centuries later, the standard daily ration for a laborer was three or four loaves of bread and eight pints of beer.

For each of the drinks, Standage shows how it played an important part in world history. In both Mesopotamia and Egypt the surplus of grain led to the popularity of beer and its association with social interaction, something that continues today, especially in the life of the working man.

"one amphora at a time..."

Wine is identified with Ancient Greece and Rome. "Greek customs such as wine drinking were regarded as worthy of imitation by other cultures. So the ships that carried Greek wine were carrying Greek civilization, distributing it around the Mediterranean and beyond, one amphora at a time. Wine displaced beer to become the most civilized and sophisticated of drinks—a status it has maintained ever since, thanks to its association with the intellectual achievements of ancient Greece." In ancient Rome the link between the type of wine and the social status of the drinker was strengthened. By 70 A.D., Pliny the Elder estimated that there were eighty wines of note in the Roman world, two-thirds of which were grown in Italy. Interestingly, after the sack of Rome in 410 A.D. by the Visigoths, the Visigothic law code drawn up between the 5th and 7th centuries specified detailed punishments for anyone damaging a vineyard.

In subsequent chapters, spirits are identified with the Colonial period, rum before the American Revolution, and whiskey afterwards. Coffee dominated in the Age of Reason when scientists and intellectuals drank it in the calm, sober and respectable coffee-houses that opened starting in the mid-1660s. By 1800 nearly everyone in England was drinking tea, thanks in part to the British East India Company which made it increasingly available. Tea gardens replaced the coffee-house, and the ceremony and sophistication surrounding tea made it the preferred drink during the century when the British Empire was a global superpower.

The rise of the United States in the 20th century was mirrored by the rise of Coca-Cola, "the world's most valuable and recognized brand, which is universally regarded as the embodiment of America and its values."

This is the kind of romp through history that make Standage's book such a wonderful read. But the book is more than just a lively collection of interesting facts. It is a purposeful work of social history written by the technology editor of the British publication, The Economist. As he writes in his preface:

> As the tides of history have ebbed and flowed, different drinks have come to prominence in different times, places, and cultures, from stone-age villages to ancient Greek dining rooms or Enlightenment coffeehouses. Each one became popular when it met a particular need or aligned with an historical trend; in some cases, it then went on to influence the course of history in unexpected ways. Just as archaeologists divide history into different periods based on the use of different materials—the stone age, the bronze age, the iron age, and so on—it is also possible to divide world history into periods dominated by different drinks.

Standage wrote an epilogue to his book. "Six beverages have defined humankind's past," he wrote, "but which will embody its future?" His most likely candidate is water, and in a fitting finale to his book he discusses the future availability of water, the gulf in attitudes towards water between the developed and developing worlds, and the growing bottled water industry.

This book is truly a great read whether for pleasure or for is value as social history. It's worth a "six glass" tribute!

[Our Tendril thanks to Hudson Cattell for permission to reprint his review from the October 2005 issue of Wine East. — Ed.]

Vinaceous Correspondents:
Martin Ray's Friendships with Eminent Oenophiles

The Third Article in a Series / Seventh Section

by *Barbara Marinacci*

This segment continues a lengthy portrayal of the close relationship between California's quality-promoting winegrower Martin Ray and UC Davis's increasingly renowned enologist Maynard A. Amerine. It focuses mostly on their epistolary communications during the latter part of 1954, which Prof. Amerine, on sabbatical leave from UC Davis, spent mostly in Germany but also, for a time, in France. The author is Martin Ray's stepdaughter who, with her mother Eleanor Ray, wrote Vineyards in the Sky: The Life of Legendary Vintner Martin Ray (1993—available soon in a revised edition). *She continues to be grateful for assistance from UC Davis Library Special Collections, that archives the Ray Papers, and also thanks* WTQ *editor/publisher Gail Unzelman for her continuing interest, patience, and indulgence in publishing this series, based primarily on Martin Ray's own writing.*

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

-7-

s Maynard Amerine's year-long sabbatical stay in Europe reached its midway point in May, he left his residency in Spain to travel eastward to Italy and Yugoslavia, then head to the north, to spend time in Austria and Switzerland before settling down at Geisenheim-am-Rhein in Germany. There he would continue pursuing both wine research and winery-visiting jaunts in a favorable milieu.

Martin Ray missed his good friend Maynard's company, and he was reminded of that by the chatty postcards and discursive letters—which first had been handwritten until a typewriter was acquired in Switzerland—that he and Eleanor received frequently from him. Apart from being a boon companion who provided him with current news about the wine industry, Amerine had understood and strongly encouraged MR's determination to consistently produce high-caliber, pure-varietal wines that would demonstrate California's great potential for winemaking. Furthermore, the enologist had often helped MR in the past by offering technical advice; he also provided organoleptic or laboratory evaluations of various Ray-made wines, and supplied special yeasts cultured at UC Davis for properly launching fermentations.

MR had a copy of Amerine's schedule and itinerary and knew he intended to visit some of the French wine lands before heading for home. Now MR hoped to benefit again from Maynard's generous assistance.

Amerine as MR's Agent Abroad

In late June 1954, MR wrote a lengthy letter to Amerine. In it he made several requests that Maynard might be able to handle if indeed he did visit some of the French wine country, most particularly Burgundy.

> There are three things I'd like out of France. A bound set of Ampelography [Viala & Vermorel's *Traité Général de Viticulture. Ampélographie*. 7 vols. 1901–1910], preferably used if the cost could be cut sufficiently.... Then, we want 6 casks of approximately 66 gallons capacity each and of old oak whether or not used and in good condition. They should be sulphured with an extra heavy shot of SO_2 and bunged and strapped tight then shipped via boat direct to San Francisco with instructions to notify us upon arrival.... We want the regular Burgundian cask and made of the best wood. Of course, if they are new it would be best to ship them unbunged and unsulphured. The thicker they are and the harder the oak the better I'll like it. Then, I want the information I have never been able to get from anyone as to the extent Pinot Blanc is grown in Burgundy as versus Pinot Chardonnay. I'd like to know if the best growers favor one definitely over the other and if so do they grow both and blend or use one exclusively. I must graft our new St. George planting [on the] first of August and after that the knowledge will do me no good. I am going ahead with the Chardonnay if I have not advice to cause me to alter. But I have long suspected that the Pinot Blanc may be considered most favorable by at least some growers whose wine I have drunk from over there.

Then MR added another assignment specific to MA's present location.

> There is one thing I'd like very much out of Germany. In fact, I've got to have 100 filter pads of the dimensions: 16" x 16" and which I can use in my Seitz type filter. The pad should be the one they use not for the sharpest filtration such as would render the wine completely sterile [containing no live microorganisms] and like medicinal houses sometimes use but the pad that comes next, which is almost that sharp and yet through which I can pass a puncheon of white wine which has not cleared up [by] itself. I want a pad that will render a wine ready for bottling but not one that removes every yeast cell. There should be four holes, punched in each pad, one at each corner. [He made a sketch in the margin.]

> Our domestic pads simply will not do.... These pads are most important to us and if you can find out for sure what the best pad is and send me 100, well packed, it would be wonderful of you.

(Although MR always aimed to make white wines that needed no fining or filtering, he sometimes required technological assistance to achieve the satisfactory translucent clarity, and he didn't trust local sources. "Our filters in California are ruining what good whites I have tasted," he'd write MA later [8/10/54].)

Apparently it then occurred to MR that he might be requesting too much of his friend:

> Always I am asking favors of you. I wish you would ask some of us. I did send the vines you requested [Ruby Cabernet cuttings for a Portuguese grower] but that was very little.... [6/27/54]

The ampelography volumes were wanted to replace the ones burned in the recent house fire. This would be a straightforward task, if Amerine had time for it. The German filter pads (as commission #4) he could order for MR while in Geisenheim, the nation's center for winegrowing investigations and technological developments. That left two other errands for Amerine to accomplish if he would and could: one basically informational, the other rather demanding. Both—the identity of Burgundy's prime white grape and the acquisition of French oak barrels—were noteworthy, for reasons to be discussed later.

By the time he received MR's requests, Amerine must have been traveling in the south of France, on his way to Italy. In Florence he wrote out his response on several sheets of lined notepaper. The oak wine casks, he said, "will be rather expensive but I will see what can be done." Then:

> I expect (??) to go to Paris in mid September and will return to Germany via Beaune. I will get full information for you there, if I go. If not, I will enter into correspondence with someone in Beaune. As to the Pinot blanc vs Chardonnay, I don't know and will personally inspect the vines if I go there during the vintage. I have never been in Burgundy later than July 15th and that was in 1937 when the problem had not arisen. One cannot take the word of anyone on this because both names are used for both varieties in different vineyards and by different authorities.

Obviously MA hadn't noticed that MR needed to get by the end of July his findings about which white grape to grow in the new vineyard block. Still, he had said this:

> I have made white Burgundy-tasting wines from Chardonnay (you yourself have tasted the famous 1936 Livermore Chardonnay that I made). This and reading leads me to believe that the best white Burgundy is made from Chardonnay. Until someone (or I) does it from Pinot b. I stick. [7/12/54]

A month later, MR was still in a dither about whether to graft Chardonnay or Pinot Blanc budwood onto the hundreds of vigorous Rupestris St. George rootstock vines he'd started in the new vineyard section. Resistant to the phylloxera infestation that had devastated vineyards in Europe and California in the late 19th century, they now awaited being topped with some Vitus vinifera stock—to sprout vines that in several years would start supplying grapes for Martin Ray's production of both still and sparkling white wines.

Maynard not having perceived the urgency of his need for information, MR couldn't wait for any direct investigation in Burgundy. Yet MR also hadn't noticed MA's inference that he should go with Chardonnay. As the August days came on, he grew ever more edgy, for he had to do the field-grafting *now*—before the vintage season hit, usually by late August or early September, with all its work and distractions.

Planting Chardonnay on Mt. Eden

But why was Rusty Ray so worked up during the summer of 1954 over which of the two Burgundian fine white wine grapes, Chardonnay or Pinot Blanc? The choice MR had to make, in fact, was scarcely a "no-brainer" at the time. It must be realized or remembered that in the 1950s in the U.S., Chardonnay, so familiar (even over-familiar) nowadays to most American wine drinkers, was an obscure grape variety, known to very few wine producers, let alone consumers. (It's also interesting that Amerine had noted then that even French wine people seemed not to bother to distinguish between Chardonnay and Pinot Blanc in their vineyards or when vintaging.)

In the two decades following Repeal the statewide acreage occupied by Chardonnay and its grape tonnage produced in California (let alone elsewhere in the U.S.) were so miniscule that they weren't even listed separately in annual reports from the agricultural department—just grouped with the miscellaneous white wine grapes grown in the state. Yet prior to Prohibition the variety had been extensively planted in vineyards in the Livermore and Napa valleys, with its fermented juice often the main constituent in the better-quality so-called Chablis wines.

Paul Masson started his own plantings of both Chardonnay and Pinot Blanc in his mountain vineyards at La Cresta in Saratoga, most probably from cuttings he had brought over from France—though possibly he also got budwood from vineyards that belonged to Almaden, his wife's family's winery that he managed. (Masson's vineyards, both MR and Amerine had seen, contained a confusing miscellany of varieties and their variants.) After taking over Masson

in 1936, MR had supplies of the two major Burgundian white grape varieties to use in both his pure fine-varietal table wines and his sparkling wines (which still, and for a long time ahead, could legally be called champagnes, as Masson had done).

When marketing Masson's varietal wine Pinot Blanc, MR had added the French word *Vrai* (often in brackets), calling attention in writing and on labels to its status as the "true" variety and varietal—thus distinguishing it from wines made from inferior white grape varieties prevalent elsewhere and vintaged by the handful (then) of better wineries when making wine they labeled—or fraudulently labeled, as MR declared—Pinot Blanc. (He had asserted, for instance, that Beaulieu's Pinot Blanc in fact was made from Aligoté grapes.)

The 1936 federal regulation required that a wine in a bottle labeled as a varietal had to contain at least 51% of fermented juice from that particular grape variety. But the law had no teeth in it: no systematic government inspections of grapes or wines were made, no penalties exacted for infractions. Thus vintners could still label wines whatever they wanted. They could either be honestly misidentifying the grape varieties growing in vineyards or else be deliberately assigning fine-varietal names to wines made mostly from lowly grapes in order to charge higher prices.

As for Chardonnay, for some years after it first appeared as a varietal in the late 1930s it was known as "Pinot Chardonnay," as can be seen on old wine labels and long out-of-print books and articles. MR used this double name at both Masson and, for a few years, the new winery bearing his own name. Since Chardonnay could be blended legally (the 51% rule) and still be sold as a varietal, some of the grapes that wineries vintaged may well have been Chardonnay. However, the variety was notoriously a low producer; and because of Prohibition, anyway, it was rarely grown anywhere. So the Pinot Chardonnays produced by the better wineries probably used mostly Melon or Chenin Blanc grapes. The great exception in the late 1930s through the 1950s were the Chardonnays made by Martin Ray, first at Masson and then at his own small winery: these were the pure, 100% varietal. Always finding fault with other wineries' Pinot Chardonnays, MR pronounced that even if half or more of the wines therein was made from Chardonnay grapes, that variety's unique and delicate characteristics would be blended out—and then further destroyed by deleterious or shoddy winemaking practices.

But back now to 1954: By the second week of August in 1954 Eleanor rushed off a telegram to Maynard, reminding him of her spouse's urgent need to know which white grape variety to graft onto the waiting rootstock. The Rays, though, had a backup: Peter Martin Ray. Eleanor's son—adopted by MR a year earlier—would be traveling through the French wine country after attending a botanical conference in Paris, with introductions to the proprietors of several notable wineries, arranged in advance by MR (who had been visited in earlier years by both the Marquis de Lur Saluces and Louis Latour). ER now urged PMR to provide Rusty "instantly" with advice as to whether Latour used Chardonnay exclusively for Corton Charlemagne or whether part came from Pinot Blanc grapes. "He is going to bud next week," she said.

Peter handily came up with the crucial information just when it was needed. So MR now could reassure Amerine in his latest letter:

> You need not worry about the frantic SOS Eleanor sent regarding the Chardonnay versus Pinot Blanc matter. We will be just as interested in learning all you can find on the subject when you get to France. But Peter came through with a wire, "CHARLEMAGNE ONLY CHARDONNAY." This is after a visit with Louis Latour and it swayed me off my feet the day before we budded. Just finished budding the new Chardonnay block at noon today. [8/20/54]

MR had already conveyed his gratitude to PMR two days earlier:

> Thank you so much for the cable which arrived yesterday. It came just in time. We made the decision last night to bud Chardonnay. We had just about decided to turn to the Pinot Blanc vrai which I have grown so successfully for so many years. We had but a small planting of Chardonnay at the old place [Masson's] and I had not at that time developed a system of pruning which would provide a really satisfactory crop.... Then, there has always been the frustration of not being able to learn actually what the better growers of Burgundy have experienced in all there [*sic*] history with these two varieties. No one at Davis could tell me and Amerine doubted that anyone in Burgundy would give out reliable information. He has said he would go into some of the vineyards over there and see for himself. But no word from him on this subject has yet reached us. But with your wire I felt I could rely upon Louis Latour. You must rely upon such people until there is reason to doubt them. [8/18/54]

After sending his telegram in August about Latour's Corton-Charlemagne being a product exclusively of Chardonnay grapes, Peter Martin Ray wrote a detailed report to his adoptive father informing him, based on his talks with French viticultural experts, that in France the grape's name was *not* preceded by "Pinot." Unlike its appearance in the United States, Chardonnay, he said, was declared to have no familial relationship whatsoever with Pinot Noir and its other relatives and descendants, including Pinot Blanc. (However, in 1999 Carole Meredith's DNA research at UC Davis would famously disprove this assertion.)

So MR would take up a minor new cause in 1955 when he announced to the wine trade at large that the name "Pinot" should no longer precede that of Chardonnay on labels or when writing about either the grape variety or the varietal wine made from it. Other wineries began to follow suit. As for the enologist Maynard Amerine, he sent Martin a caustic note.

> Several years ago I told you that "Pinot" Chardonnay was a misnomer. It is correctly described & named in Hilgardia "Composition & Quality ..." (1944). You told me then I didn't know what I was talking about and not to interfere in "commercial" matters!!—M.A.A. [undated, but probably mid-1955].

Whence the Mt. Eden's Distinctive Chardonnay "Clone"?

Over the years, wine historians and writers, as well as wine aficionados, have sought the derivation of various distinctive Chardonnay clones—or "selections," as the term is now more properly called when grafting wood is obtained in a vineyard from different vines of the same variety with features that appear identical. A number of people, including winemakers, have become enchanted with the Chardonnay varietal wines made from the small, rather loosely clustered grapes sparsely produced on Mt. Eden (and vintaged in the acclaimed Mount Eden Vineyards Estate Chardonnay)—or else grown on vines that originated from cuttings gathered on Mt. Eden or from their scions cultivated elsewhere, transported to various viticultural areas far beyond the Santa Cruz Mountains. Where did this special type of Chardonnay vine originate?

What both Martin Ray and Maynard Amerine wrote about the Chardonnay budwood that MR had just grafted onto rootstock in his vineyard on Mt. Eden in the summer of 1954 provides clues that might lead to determining the still-elusive beginnings of what would later gain fame as "the Mt. Eden clone." MR told Maynard this:

> We used the wood that was originally obtained for the Smiths from Winkler at Davis. You will remember checking that particular record to see what its origin was with you at Davis and I was able to rely satisfactorily on that as an authentic and good Chardonnay. Furthermore, we pruned the Smith Chardonnay last year and it has a real fine crop on it this year, at 5 years of age. [8/20/54]

MR's statement that his Chardonnay grafts came from the Smiths' Saratoga vineyard, which he had planted five years earlier, takes the Mt. Eden grapevine's genealogy one definite step back in time. But the second clue—that the selection came from Davis—leads to complications. Where had the parent vines themselves originated? Interestingly, almost two years earlier, on November 18, 1952, Amerine had written a note to MR telling him specifically that the budwood for the Smith vineyard Chardonnay had come from "Block D" at UC Davis—which, records showed, had been "imported from France by Profs. Flossfeder and Bonnet." (Professors Leon O. Bonnet and Frederick Flossfeder were active in viticulture research prior to and during Prohibition.) And that was all he had said, probably in response to an earlier query from MR.

But here's a mystery that has yet to be solved. Elsewhere (notably in a letter to publisher Alfred Knopf, 6/27/56) MR declared that his Chardonnay planting on Mt. Eden had come from "grafting wood" that had originated from a vineyard in Pleasanton, a Livermore Valley property once owned by Theodore Gier. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries this prominent winegrower had developed extensive vineyards in Livermore Valley as well as Napa Valley. The former area he had especially planted to various fine white-grape varieties, including Chardonnay. A portion of his land there was later owned and farmed by Frank Garatti, who made his own commercial wines but also sold them in bulk to other wineries. In *Vineyards in the Sky* Eleanor Ray recounted MR's encounter with Garatti when he tried to buy some Chardonnay grapes, to illustrate the scurrilous doings during the many years when wines labeled as varietals were made from almost any type of grape—the cheaper and more abundant the better, since neither the federal nor state government, or the wine industry itself, enforced the 1936 varietal-blending regulation.

MR had purposely chosen to plant this Chardonnay selection in Saratoga because he well remembered that the wine Amerine had made from grapes picked in Garatti's vineyard, by him and Prof. Albert Winkler in 1936, was judged the best of *all* Chardonnays derived at that time from various vineyards around the state and vintaged at Davis—better even than the wine Amerine had made from the grapes he'd obtained

from MR at Paul Masson. And intent upon eventually replicating on his own wine estate this particular Chardonnay, in 1949 MR had requested grafting wood from UC Davis taken from offspring of Garatti's own vines. He would remind Amerine of this much later, when sending him a recently bottled Chardonnay for both laboratory and organoleptic evaluations:

> Virtually all our Chardonnay will have come from the wood you took from the Theodore Gier vineyard to Davis. And I have employed this stock because, perhaps 20 years ago, I tasted with you through all your Davis Chardonnay wines and we thought the best was the one from the Gier Pleasanton place of Garatti's. [10/12/59]

Furthermore, in 1954, when Amerine, in Germany, had basically encouraged MR to plant Chardonnay, not Pinot Blanc, he had written this, which went back to his winemaking research in the late 1930s:

> The only white wine that tasted like white Burgundy that I had ever made was from Chardonnay (from the Gier Place at Pleasanton and now pulled out). But the Chardonnay at Davis were (I am reasonably sure) from there or are the same. Ours bears well & your [*sic*] welcome to cuttings, buds, etc. [8/17/54]

Although Maynard acknowledged here the unique superiority of the Gier–Garatti Chardonnay, he also seemed to indicate that the actual lineage of the budwood that Winkler had given MR five years earlier to plant in the Smith vineyard might not be what MR had asked for. (And why in 1952 had he traced the Smith budwood back to the two Davis professors who had imported it from France, probably several decades earlier?)

So where and when did Mt. Eden's special Chardonnay genotype actually originate? Some diligent researcher might wish to pursue the precise derivation. But at least it's clear that it did *not* come either from Paul Masson's vineyard, as a direct import from Burgundy, or from Louis Latour, MR's friend of long-standing years—as Eleanor Ray later told Gerald Asher when he interviewed her about its origin for his article in Gourmet in May 1990: "Chardonnay: Buds, Twigs, and Clones."

MR: First in California to Import New French Oak Barrels

MR was delighted to get a typed message from Maynard in early October reporting on his success in ordering a half-dozen new French oak barrels for him. Probably it had helped that the prominent French wine man Louis-Noël Latour, with his young son (now Louis Latour IV), had visited Martin Ray and his new vineyard on Mt. Eden a few years earlier, and was favorably impressed. (The two men had established a personal relationship, which would be resumed in person again, when Latour for a time stayed with the Rays at Mt. Eden, and also through correspondence and other visiting Latours.) MA wrote:

> Your six barrels have been ordered and are being specially made for you. Mr. Latour and I personally visited the cooper and made the arrangements. They cost 7200 francs each, which at an exchange rate of 350 to the dollar comes out nearly $125 and in fact I have given Mr. Latour my personal check for this amount.
>
> Mr. Latour is arranging the shipping. They will be shipped to you in San Francisco. The prospective date of shipment is about November 20th, so you should have them as a New Year's day present....
>
> They will not be sulfured as they are new. They are made from well-aged oak, as this cooper has his own drying yard for his wood, which I saw. I have also asked Mr. Latour to ask the cooper to put some identifying mark on the casks to show that they were coopered here—possibly his initials, the village and the year.
>
> I hope that all of this proves satisfactory.

Then in a postcard Maynard reported: "In a dream last night I calculated 225 ÷ 3.8 and it comes out 59 gal. Where did you get 66 gal.? All (I think) Burgundy "pieces" are 225 liters." [10/19/54]

Having heard Maynard's good news about the acquisition of the oak barrels from Louis Latour, MR responded, explaining why he'd wanted them to begin with.

> You asked in a card where I got the idea of 66 gallons for the casks. I once had six of them that had been shipped from Beaune to Los Angeles filled with Burgundy. I paid 75¢ for each of them.... They were the best casks I ever had. The oak was different than any other I have seen. I was told by someone that it was the oak used in Burgundy and that the size of the casks is standard there. We need a cask smaller than a puncheon to properly finish for bottling either Pinot Noir or Cabernet-Sauvignon. And our barrels are so thin and the oak so poor and green to start out with it is discouraging. I am most happy over knowing you have arranged for us to have these. [11/7/54]

The six brand-new *pièces*—made by Louis Latour's cooper using aged, air-dried oak staves—would eventually arrive at the port of San Francisco in mid-February of 1955. It is significant, of course, that MR had initially planned to use these new barrels for aging his red wines, *not* for fermenting or finishing his white wines. But a chance factor that would alter MR's techniques in the future fermenting and aging of his Chardonnays would come in the 1955 vintage season, when he made an unexpected use of one of the new French oak barrels that Amerine had secured for him. Finding that he'd run completely out of empty barrels, MR filled one with some newly fermented Chardonnay, and was amazed later when he tasted it against wines from the same lot that had been put in older barrels.

It should be recognized that in the mid-1950s little attention indeed was being given yet to the intricate variations on the combination of oak and wine. The now-customary practice in certain high-end American wineries of actually fermenting Chardonnay in new French oak barrels was still far in the distance. California winemakers at the time paid little heed anyway to the special properties of different kinds of oak, whether old, new, or specially "toasted"—though they preferred oak to redwood, which was widely used when storing and aging wines, and some suspected that French oak was indeed preferable to American oak.

It is significant to mention here that MR had ordered and imported his French oak barrels barrels *a year* before the Hanzell Winery did so. Yet James Zellerbach's new, well-funded winery in Sonoma County and its winemaker, R. Bradford Webb, are almost invariably credited for pioneering this practice, beginning with their 1956 vintage. This is but one example of MR's failure to achieve, and hold, a significant place in California wine history, despite his high aims and accomplishments. Surely it is attributable to his adamantly principled refusal to join wine organizations and his disdain for networking with most of his winemaking peers—at whose wines he almost invariably directed insults.

Martin Ray Considers the Future

When MR revived, after selling Masson in 1943, his desire to have a bonded winery and make and sell fine table and sparkling wines, he needed to buy fine wine grape varieties from other vineyards—at least until he could fully develop his own on Mt. Eden. Some of these vineyards, like Rixford's at La Questa, were already well established. Others he either planted himself or else directed the planting, including selecting the grape varieties for them. However, he was always reluctant to reveal in publicity or to private customers that some of his high-priced wines actually had been vintaged from grapes not grown by him on his mountain.

Like other winemakers, MR didn't like having to depend upon grape supplies coming from outside his own control. He resented vineyard owners who demanded that he pick their underripe grapes right away, because wasps, birds, and raccoons were attacking the crop; or who wanted to delay harvesting because they had chosen a future time convenient to family members and friends who'd come and pick for free—and then delivered rotting grapes; or who had failed to sulfur-dust the vines adequately to prevent mildew. MR wanted, of course, to make the decision to pick based on his own Brix readings of the grapes' sugar, and on their acidity. And though he felt entitled to refuse delivery of seriously defective grapes that he'd agreed earlier to buy, he found himself paying for loads that had to be picked through carefully, with most grapes then unceremoniously dumped over the mountainside.

In 1954 MR wrote to MA in Germany that recently he had noted warning signs that two of the vineyard owners he bought grapes from annually might soon become unreliable sources.

> The Smiths by now have planted trees by many of their grape stakes—so we can see the writing on the wall there. And the Waylands' vines aren't being pruned properly. The old doctor doesn't look well. If something happens to him, heaven knows what will come of the vineyard. So we can't depend on grapes from anybody very far into the future. [10/20/54]

Thus MR's growing dissatisfaction made him anxious to expand his own operations on his mountain, where the half-section of land there (320 acres), held abundant acreage that could be bulldozed into vineyards. He could hardly wait to talk with Maynard about strategies for improving his sources of premium wine grapes.

MR often studied from afar what was going on across the canyon from him, and in the summer of 1954 he and Eleanor went over to the Paul Masson property that Seagram had owned since he'd sold it to the distillery corporation in 1943. He wanted to check on the changes introduced there. As he described the experience to Amerine:

> Yesterday I went over to our old place to look at their vines ... as I wanted them to see what we have achieved by our pruning as against the Masson system. They expect a man to do 400 vines a day. They leave no canes other than a long spur of perhaps 4 buds on each vine. We do 40 vines per day, leave long canes which we carefully tie. We have ten times the grapes Masson has. In fact, they have not a single full sized bunch on any of

their cabernet. Everything has gone into wood. It is a terrible thing to see that in their entire vineyard there is not a single block producing even a quarter crop. Everywhere they are throwing money away and they are getting nothing for it.

MR then reported on various alterations of the Masson chateau that had once been his and Elsie's home. The lavish additions to the headquarters of Seagram's winegrowing division in California included a third story, a much-expanded kitchen, a swimming pool, and a large platform or veranda that faced the foothills and the valley 1500 feet below—all appropriate for large-scale entertainment at corporate events. The winery too increasingly took on a more ceremonial function than a utilitarian one. (The public-welcoming Paul Masson Champagne Cellars was to be constructed within the town of Saratoga, far below and a few miles away, opening five years later, in 1959. And the greatly expanding Masson wine-growing operation itself was already moving southward to the Salinas Valley and Monterey County, with thousands of acres being developed into vineyards by Masson and other large-scale producers.)

The whole change in ambience at his "old place" both astounded and annoyed MR.

They entertain for 200 at a time and run greyhound buses in with their bar-tender and package store guests. They serve them sherry and Scotch and it is quite a thing to see what Seagrams does to work up their business. I told Eleanor and Will, "They have everything but a vineyard and a cellar of wines." What I could have done with the money they have spent on just the vineyard alone!

And envious in his own way, MR began expressing some estate-building aspirations of his own.

I'm going to have to do something on a little larger scale that will at least establish by comparison the difference between a merchandising system and a wine growing operation. By "larger scale" I mean larger than we have been doing. We'll have to get that lower 60 acres planted the next year or two and into Pinot Blanc and Folle Blanche or Pinot Chardonnay and Folle Blanche. Then we can distribute our wines a bit wider and show an effort a little more impressive. It will cost a lot and I will not go into debt. But perhaps I may find an Angel who would like to share in the thing. I am thinking best how to do it. [8/10/54]

Partly in response to this airmailed letter from MR, and thinking ahead to the approaching vintage time, Maynard wrote:

Don't work too hard during the vintage. Surely you can train someone to do the hard work... Hard physical work killed my father—plus other things—but there comes a time when you get tired twice as fast and recover half as slowly as you once did. That is the time to say "its later than you think" and SLOW DOWN!! [8/13/54]

Then, as if he'd been giving further thought to his previous cautionary instructions, a concerned MA, aware of MR's serious stress-caused health problems in earlier years, counseled MR in his next letter:

No matter what ideological motives drive you to work hard you owe it to yourself and your family* first to protect your health. When have you last had a good physical check up! Better do a little less and live longer, or at least easier. Amen. End of sermon for today. The best—Maynard * and your friends [8/26/54]

As Amerine was nearing the end of the year spent in Europe, MR sent a few letters in which he went into more detail about his ambitions for his wine-growing business. He was obviously giving some consideration as well to his friend's admonitions. But of course he had to explain why he often worked so devilishly hard at whatever needed doing—not so much for himself as for the future of fine winemaking in California.

As for working too much or too hard, your advice is good. I accept, it is correct. But I must work harder rather than less, before I can rest. If I get through the next 3 or four years without a heart attack or some other ghastly thing, I will then rest. But our sales are now ready to be developed. And there is no one but me to do it. When I have gotten them going again, I will put one of your young students on the job and start to rest. I would just as soon be dead now or any time as let all I have devoted myself to fail just with my thinking first of myself.

And now MR made as simple and strong a statement as he would ever make about his dedication to his kind of winemaking.

A man is no good without his work and my work will in the end be a failure unless I establish it so well it can continue without me. I am determined that fine wines shall not disappear from California and I don't know who in hell is going to insure that if I do not. Nor do I think that an egotistical statement. Rather, it is a shameful condition that plagues me relentlessly. I cannot buy a bottle of wine that is what its label proclaims and hardly one that I can drink with entire pleasure, once I go beyond Beaulieu. So, I look ahead, always ahead. Old 2004 is what they used to call me in Elsie's family. I will be 100 then. Perhaps you will be strong enough to attend the scattering of my ashes! (in this vineyard). [10/20/54]

In this letter, following her husband's heavy-duty discourse, ER added her own short note, knowing how their friend enjoyed a lighter touch in their letters—along, of course, with whatever gossip the Rays could share.

Dear Maynard, when Rusty wrote all this several days ago I said I had three things to tell you about, which I'd add to his—and now, with lapse of only a couple of days I can't recall ONE of them, isn't that ghastly? All very juicy tales, too, I'm sure! I'll try to bring them back, and send on to you later. Much love to you from both of us.

Formulating Plans

In one of Martin Ray's lengthy letters to Amerine in 1954 (this one seven pages, single-spaced), in a rush of words that left no time or thought for creating appropriate paragraphs, he set down his rambling, real estate- and money-oriented musings for Amerine's consideration—much as he used to do in his letters to Julian Street in the early 1940s. The document shows in detail MR's tendency to ruminate over and prognosticate future circumstances, including needs for money and task assistance, and thus start laying down plans to enable or forestall whatever might come.

> I have written of the decision to buy no more grapes. There must be some organization of purpose and for this discussion let us start there.... It follows logically that then we must grow more. For, our present vineyard will not ever afford us sufficient grapes to make enough wine to support the growing costs on all sides. Thus far, yes. We are getting $48 per case for our Pinot Noir and it is outselling our $24 La Montaña non vintage Cabernet, as is the Vintage Cabernet at $35. (Just shipped 10 cases of the latter to our Club.) But our family is growing. Soon there will be grandchildren, we expect.... Then consider that as our sales expand, we must entertain more. And as we get older we must hire much we now do ourselves. It is going to be more expensive every year as far as I can see into the future. So we must have more vineyard. Yet, I will not endanger our financial position by borrowing money. If nothing comes from our discussion of this subject, we will develop our land by very gradual steps. Out of earnings. But we are both 50 now and it looks to me like something more immediate should be considered. Then, we <u>have</u> all this land. We are paying taxes on it and they are increasing in an alarming way. It should be developed or sold. There is one quarter section we could sell for $75,000. That is about $500 per acre. And included in it is not less than 50 acres that is just the right situation and soil for whites. It could cost $50,000 to bring it in. To expand our cellar space to accommodate the increased production would cost another $50,000. Therefore we need $100,000. There is ample security to borrow for such an undertaking. But that would involve all we have and that I will not mortgage. We have no debts and we will not take on any. It is here we have been wiser than most growers. Always we have held our doings within the range of our purse.

And now, as he often had done in his letters to Julian Street during the Masson years, MR brought up the subject of searching for the right partner-investor to join him in his winemaking endeavors, hoping now that Maynard could find one.

> There remains, then, only the possibility of bringing in new capital, that is permanent invested capital.... You might say, I want an angel. Let us face it. Now, other people find angels. Why not us? Only I would prefer one that was capable of feeling pride in the undertaking and its results, it must be one who either knows or wants to know something about wines and can appreciate quality in taste of some range. And it would be best if the person could have a real pride and enthusiasm in the over all thing to the extent of contributing something more than just money.... Well, you meet a lot of people and you know what we would want in this line. Please let me know what you think and if you have any ideas. I would rather go into such a consideration without any idea of preconceived requirements beyond the one that I will not fool with any idea of sharing management or responsibility unless someone like yourself should turn up. It would be ideal, perfect.

MR finally brought his lengthy missive to a close by stating this recognition:

> Your advice on all these matters is much valued. You see,you have become so very much a part of our family you must accept even some of our problems. [11/7/54]

And Amerine soon wrote back:

> Yes, you will need more vineyard, not less, if you are not going to buy any grapes. I too do not want you to borrow. But where can we find a sympathetic "angel" in this modern world?... What you need is a <u>silent</u> partner. Trouble with too many people is that you would have to talk to them, socially. And God, how few people are worth having to talk to? I would think that you would be better off with someone between 50 and 60 who has a large and increasing income. He would not miss losses and investments over a period of ten years, when you would surely be in a position to begin to pay off. I think you might begin by drawing up some sort of prospectus, outlining your program in detail and your plans for liquidating the investment. I will think this over en route to California. [11/19/54]

MA added this newsy bit as a handwritten postscript, summarizing his latest jaunts: "Berlin is very lively, but oh! so badly bombed. Hamburg is 'mad'—better than Reno in 1935. Copenhagen is a shopper's paradise. Made me regret that I wasn't rich. Beautiful things. Good old wines too."

MR appreciated Maynard's continued interest in his winegrowing and looked forward to the time when he could sit again with his enologist friend—and get his advice and help in figuring out how best to expand his operation As he had done with Julian Street, MR also admitted how isolated and lonely he felt; and how much he appreciated Amerine's supportive encouragement of his high winemaking goals.

> You are most encouraging to consider what is really a problem for us here. For we must plant more vineyards and on a sound basis. It is a problem that can not be discussed with many people. When you get back we will have a good talk about it. Anyway, over the years you have come to occupy sort of an advisory position with

— continued, p.20

When the whirlpool of fire and flames burst forth
Taking block after block in its embrace
When from East to South and from West to North
The demon of Hell did race.
The holocaust also reached the Lachman Block
And hugged it to utter destruction
While proudly defying the earthquake shock
The Fire fiend had doomed its reduction.
When the block bearing the Lachman Face
With a self-made man's jovial smile
Fell thundering down from its lofty place
It landed right on top of the pile.
Old Lachman always landed on top
When the burdens of life he did share
Now when he landed he came to a stop
On the great rock-pile hurled through the air.
In the giant stone face true to life
That faced the elements in their strife
A grim look in the eyes seemed to say
'My, but I had a ball fall today.'

The San Francisco Lachman Building was graced with a stone bust of its founding father, Samuel Lachman, acknowledged guiding spirit and charitable leader of the California wine industry. When the 1906 earthquake toppled the great stone face, it landed right side up on a pile of bricks and rubble, and inspired Charles Bundschu to write the above lines. [Peninou & Unzelman, *California Wine Assn*, 2000]