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Vinaceous Correspondents:

Martin Ray's Friendships with Eminent Oenophiles

The Third Article in a Series / Fourteenth Section

by Barbara Marinacci

This long-running series (since April 2003) is based primarily on California winegrower Martin Ray's correspondence, much of it now archived in Special Collections at the UC Davis Library. Following the Introduction, the second article, in four parts, covered MR's primarily epistolary relationship with East Coast wine authority Julian Street during the early to mid-1940s. (The Princeton Library holds these extraordinary letters.) Subsequently, this lengthy article portrays the close friendship between MR and UC Davis enology professor Maynard Amerine, begun in the late 1930s. In this installment the growing conflict between them—over MR's strident push within toward forcing the creation of quality control standards in premium winemaking—reaches its climax. Barbara Marinacci, who was Martin Ray's stepdaughter, co-authored with her mother, Eleanor Ray, Vineyards in the Sky: The Life of Legendary Winemaker Martin Ray (1993; new edition, Mountain Vines Publishing, 2006).

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

- 14 -



s spring moved into the summer of 1955, in his letters to Maynard Amerine, Martin Ray initially seemed almost oblivious to the evidence that his enologist friend's interest in maintaining their former intimacy was on a steep decline. During most of June and into

July, as he'd often done before, MR kept writing to him about various topics—occasionally berating Maynard whenever he felt he deserved, and might even benefit from, this scolding. But he was saying less than before about the Wine Quality Control Fight that he and Eleanor had been waging since April with members of the higher-quality section of the commercial wine industry enlisted by Louis Gomberg in the new group called the Premium Wine Producers of California.

MR could work up, anyway, other matters to involve Maynard, such as asking him to invite to his

home for dinner—and wine, of course—the lead performers in *The Teahouse of the August Moon*. Burgess Meredith and Scott McKay, whom the Rays had recently befriended along with their wives (see #8), would soon be in Sacramento with the troupe during its West Coast circuit. But even this transaction had caused friction between the two friends. When MR thanked "Pelly"—University of Washington English Prof. Angelo Pellegrini—for having entertained the actors in Seattle, he said, "Eleanor and I do so much appreciate your having



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them at your home and, as you well know, they enjoyed themselves and you, completely." But he couldn't resist adding further commentary, starting with Meredith's report on Maynard and ending with his own harsh assessment of physical and mental health factors that he felt now ailed the UC Davis wine-science professor.

Amerine seems to have tried hard to give them a fine day but he did not impress them sufficiently to stir up the same warmth, which after all is a rare thing. We do not think Amerine is really well, since his long illness just before taking off on his sabbatical [yearlong, starting at the end of 1953]. He has since had a recurrence of the fever and he is very impatient with everything around him and talks of his summer lecture of one hour each day as if it is a herculean endeavor, whereas once he thought nothing of any challenge. [Amerine's health-threatening condition appears to have been chronic prostatitis.]

MR's observations and commentary then became even more personal—and critical.

His references to women grow continually more caustic and uncalled for and he gathers around him more single men of the same tendencies only those older and more so developed in all the unfortunate mannerisms of bachelors who have not managed to adjust themselves to the unnatural lives they lead. We are really quite worried over him sometimes. He is bitter about so many things it becomes almost impossible to be free with him as always we have been these past 20 years.

(Readers might be reminded that in contexts like this one, when MR used the plural pronoun "we" he often meant *both* Elsie, his deceased first wife, and Eleanor, his wife since 1951.)

MR went on to describe Amerine's prior impatience and irritation over the road-show actors' inability to pin down, several weeks in advance, the dates when they'd be able to dine at his home in Davis while in Sacramento. But finally Meredith had come up with the 4th of July, which had suited Amerine fine. However ...

Maynard never thanked me for the introduction, never even mentioned to me the day they had with him, merely said, "We had a very nice time" when I asked him about it. [MR would often call MA on the telephone.] Burgess on the other hand was so satisfyingly expressive and thanked us for arranging the day for him. So it goes with people. I always think of the suicide's note: "People are just no damned good!" Of course, I do not feel that way. But there are times when we see the trend of developments in old friends and when we are obliged to take it and in silence, when it does seem that life could be made so much better with just a little effort. [7/14/55]

(It should be noted that in this same time period, and earlier, MR had written backbiting remarks about

Pellegrini to Maynard, too. Such was the customary nature of his gossiping, and sometimes ER's as well, in letters and in talk. Everyone's appearance, conversation, behavior, and background were scrutinized, probably to detect character flaws that might cause future problems—and therefore were predictable. Even when imbibing great quantities of wine and dominating the conversation, MR's eyes and ears worked overtime. But while storing away various perceptions his brain frequently distorted whatever had been picked up, as later accusations and outbursts would reveal, perhaps resulting in a ruptured relationship.)

Still, MR had sent appreciative thanks to Amerine, adding mention of a proposed new winegrowing partnership.

Talked to Burgess and Scott on the phone day before yesterday. They told me about their party with you and your conversations. They thanked me again. In a way, I should thank you for this very good friendship because you told me you had heard him [BM] on the radio or over TV and that you thought he was a good guy. Through him we have now reestablished our old friendship with John Steinbeck and we have had three letters from John since. [This correspondence was covered in #13.] Burgess may well get into the wine business, yet. He told me he would like to get in with me. He might have been just the person I was looking for. [See #7.] But as things are going, I don't think I want anyone. We are doing well enough so I can manage pretty well myself. Orders are continuing to come in by themselves. Last month I had no time to sell and we had a damned good month—all from write in [customers' wine purchase orders]. And in the south [L.A.] this last week I opened up some more damned good accounts. [7/10/55]

MR would continue to consider the financial and social attractions, and the national publicity possibilities as well, of partnering with Burgess Meredith. (Actually, the origin of the Rays' inspiration to create what became the Mount Eden Vineyards corporation five years later is traceable to this time, with Meredith becoming an early member/shareholder.) New attention to Martin Ray and his extraordinary wines was being stirred up by John Melville's *Guide to California Wines*, by MR's rigorous new marketing forays away from Mt. Eden when he sold both aged and newly released vintages, and by his fierce personal verbal and written combat with the wine industry over quality control, which he and Eleanor widely publicized through multi-duplicated communications with wine retailers and connoisseurs, who then shared them with others. "Rusty" Ray was becoming an iconic figure among urbane wine drinkers disappointed, disillusioned, and



NEWS & NOTES



Whatever Fortune sends,
Let me have a Good Store of Wine,
Sweet Books and Hosts of Friends.

Welcome, new Tendrils! The University of California Bio-Science & Natural Resources Library (Berkeley) is a new member/subscriber. Our archive of library holdings of the Wayward Tendrils Quarterly has grown to some one dozen institutions. Cheers!

History of the Wineries of San Diego County is the title of Tendril Richard Carrico's illustrated 19-page booklet (2007) on the wines and wineries of this historic winegrowing area of California. Copies are available from Richard at rbrujo@sbcglobal.net \$7 postpaid to U.S. address.

FORGERIES: WINE, NOT BOOKS!

A couple of issues ago (Vol.17 No.3) Tendril Jack Fairchild wrote a short commentary about a Wall Street Journal article on the "Thomas Jefferson Bottles" scandal. Two fine follow-up articles have been brought to our attention, and are must reads. "The Jefferson Bottles. How Could One Collector Find So Much Rare Fine Wine?" by Patrick R. Keefe, in The New Yorker (September 3 & 10, 2007); and "Fooling the Experts" by Margaret Rand, in Decanter (November 2007). A great book is in the making!

HOW DID WE FORGET THIS ONE ?!!

First published in 1936, translated into over sixty languages and a classic children's favorite to this day, *The Story of Ferdinand* the peaceable bull, written by Munro Leaf with illustrations by Robert Lawson, is a wine story! Ferdinand did not like to rumble and tumble with the other bulls, he liked to sit in the shade of his favorite cork tree, and quietly smell the flowers. See back cover of this issue for an illustrative sampling! (For more on corks, read Bob Foster's review this issue of George Taber's superb new work, *To Cork or Not to Cork*.)

REWARD !! SAINTSBURY DUST JACKETS!!

Bibliographer and Tendril Isaac Oelgart needs only two editions of George Saintsbury's *Notes on a Cellar-Book* to complete his collection and allow him to proceed with his bibliography of Saintsbury's classic work on wine. He is missing the dust jackets for the November 1920 and the 1927 editions. If any Tendril has a copy of either (not particularly scarce or costly), Isaac is willing to pay a premium price!

Contact Isaac at isaacoelgart@gmail.com and know you have contributed to the completion of a great bibliographic work!

The Treasures of Bordeaux

by the revered wine authority, Harry Waugh [1904–2001], was produced by Les Amis du Vin under the direction of Ron Fonte and Phyllis Stirman, and printed in Washington, DC, c1980, in an edition of 1000 copies. It has lately come to attention. This 11" x 8½" black-plastic-spiral-bound book "concentrates on the wines of the Official Classification of 1855" and presents sixty of "The Great Red Wines of Bordeaux" in a 2-page-per-château format: one page has descriptive text, the facing page displays a tipped-in label and a postcard view of the château. The publisher states, "Not all the Châteaux have postcards. In addition, a few refused to give 1000 labels. Therefore we have reproduced those few labels ourselves, with the idea that you eventually will find the original to make this collector's book complete." It is now a rather scarce book (why was the flimsy spiral binding and card covers used in the first place, does anyone know?!). So far, no two copies examined have the same labels and/or postcards included/missing. Are there any Tendril members who were members of Les Amis du Vin when the book was published? Can you give us the story behind this book?

Wine in Portugal: Past and Present

Winemaking Expertise is the title of a fascinating new book written by João Paulo Martins and published by CTT Correios de Portugal / Post Office Collector's Club, 2006 (Portuguese and English language editions). This is a top-flight book, printed on heavy, cream-colored paper (no shiny bright white in this gem!) and gloriously illustrated throughout in color, sepia-tones, and black & white. Included as part of the book's artwork are a number of sets of genuine, wine-related Portuguese commemorative postage stamps that have been issued over the years. It is a grand idea, and a fabulous book. 2500 numbered copies in English. Available from CTT (45 euros) email: lojavirtual@ctt.pt.

Books on Fire: The Destruction

of Libraries throughout History by Lucien Polastron (Inner Traditions, 2007, 384 pp. \$24.95; reviewed in The Economist, 10.27.2007) has been brought to our attention by Tendril Nina Wemyss. This book is an "enthraling and terrifying," three-millennia-chronicle of the "willful or careless" destruction of some of the world's greatest libraries. We can only wonder how many invaluable grape growing and wine making texts were thus lost forever.

PAMPHLET STORAGE??

An email from a fellow Tendril asks: "How should I store my pamphlet-type materials? Is there a preferred way?" Please allow your Editor to contribute some thoughts on this, with a request for Tendril responses. Pamphlets, especially those with fragile, or aged, paper covers, do not fare well merely mingled-in with their larger brothers and sisters, the bound books. Often, a collection of pamphlet material on a specific subject (a winegrowing region, or viticultural bulletins, for example) might be more useful if kept together. Depending on the number of pamphlets, this can be accomplished easily in a 3-ring binder and clear "sheet protectors" for each item; or in an upright case made specially to hold periodicals. Using either of these methods, or even filed on the shelf, I find the clear archival "comic book" sleeves, with cardboard inserts for support, essential for good keeping. (Previously, we were reminded that we should never use zip-lock bags to store our materials. Books and paper like to breathe; there is no breathing in a zip-lock.) Some of my more common, 20th century pamphlets are housed in a filing cabinet drawer, by author, being careful not to crowd, and to use the protective sleeves. For some of the very old, fragile, important, or rare items, an individually designed clam-shell box or folding cover can be made to provide a proper home. Any of these systems will work to protect your pamphlets...just don't throw them willy-nilly on the shelf or stuff them into a file drawer! Tendril thoughts?



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 \$25 USA and Canada; \$30 overseas. Permission to reprint is requested. Please address all correspondence to THE WAYWARD TENDRILS, Box 9023, Santa Rosa, CA. 95405 USA. E-m: tendrils@jps.net. Editor and Publisher: Gail Unzelman. —

A TALE OF TWO PIRATES

by Gail Unzelman



As we have noted on several occasions, John Carter's *ABC for Book Collectors* should be considered an essential reference book for every collector and his library, large or small. (I presently use the 7th edition, 1994, "with corrections, additions ... by Nicolas Barker.") The book's entries are arranged alphabetically, with helpful cross-references; any question or terminology about a book is easily found. To wit:

Pirated Edition, Piracy

"A term commonly applied (sometimes with, sometimes without, legal accuracy) to an edition produced and marketed without the authority of, or payment to, the author. Piracy has decreased with the development of international protection of author's copyright; but the ease with which a text can be replicated, by computer or photolithography, has led to a revival..."

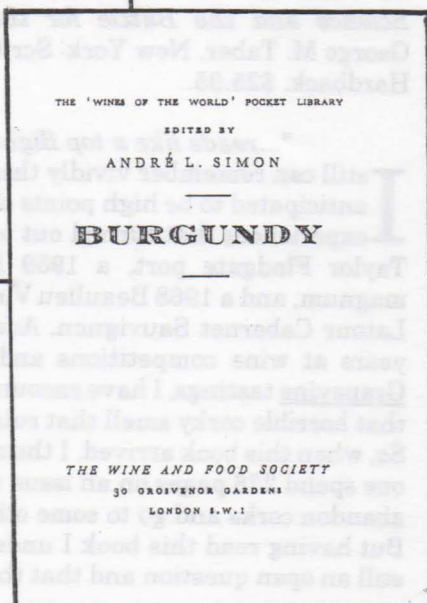
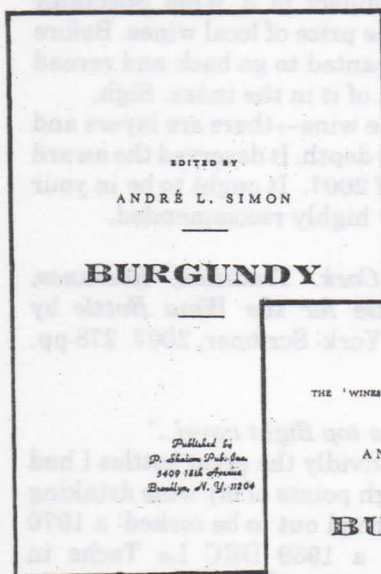
Interestingly, two occasions of pirated books have recently come to hand—and all the titles are by André L. Simon (1877–1970).

The first, and most flagrant, was a series of books published in the 1980s/1990s(?) by P. Shalom Publications, Brooklyn, New York. The titles are gilt-stamped on the front covers: *All About Burgundy*, *All About Claret*, *All About Sauternes*, and *All About Champagne*. In actuality, the four books are facsimile reprints of four titles from the Simon-edited "Wines of the World Pocket Library," published by The Wine and Food Society in London (First Series, 1949–1950): *Burgundy*, *Claret*, *Sauternes*, and *Champagne*. All evidence of the original publisher has been removed from the title page (along with "The Wines of the World Pocket Library" heading), and the colophon page included in all books of the series has been eliminated. Stamped at the bottom of the title page is the name and address of "P. Shalom Pub. Inc." The books are rather crudely constructed, and the gilt stamping to the front cover is over-sized, messy, and garish. (The *Champagne* book has been enlarged from the original, standard 6¼" x 4½" size, and measures 7¼" x 5".)

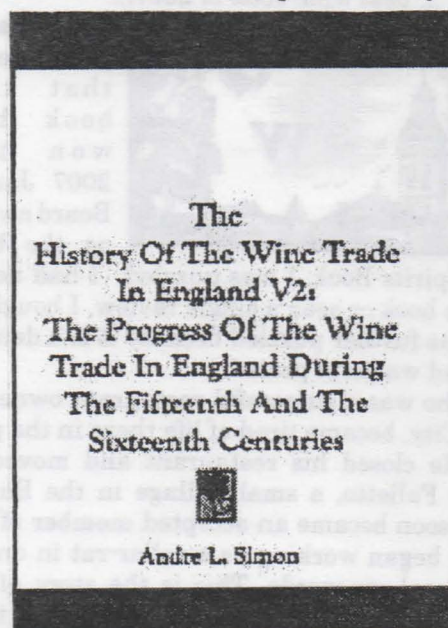
I had found the *Champagne* book quite a while ago, and took such little note of it that it was never even catalogued into our library—so I know not when or where I bought it. It was shoved off to live in the "unimportant book" section. A number of years ago it arose from these dreary digs, and caught my atten-

tion. I then recognized it as an unknown reprint of Simon's little book from the Pocket Library.

A telephone call to the Shalom publishing house brought, what I thought to be, either completely uninterested, or evasive, replies. Since no publication date was indicated in the book, I inquired about this. "Ten years or so ago." For whom? "Ourselves." How many copies printed? "Do not know." Are other titles available? "Yes, we have *Sherry, Sauternes, Burgundy, and Claret*." Cost? "\$10.50 each." Then, strangely, they asked if I knew André Simon, and if he knew about Shalom's publication of his books. (André Simon had died in 1970!) After receiving the ordered books, I came to see why they might be a little concerned about their "Pocket Library" publishing venture, and copyright infringement. (*Sherry* was never sent, so do not know if it exists.) A recent search of the internet for Shalom publications turned up three more Simon "works": *All About Hock*, *All About South Africa*, and *All About Wines*—all "Temporarily Unavailable to Order." The first two are obviously reprints of two more titles from the Pocket Library, but having no further description of *All About Wines* (and Simon wrote no such title), I am left wondering. How far did Shalom proceed in these reprints? Do Tendrils have other similar titles?



Last September I was alerted to our second suspicious character by fellow Tendril John Thorne. Available on the internet, he said, was a facsimile reprint of André Simon's *History of the Wine Trade in England. Vol. II. The Progress of the Wine Trade in England during the 15th and the 16th Centuries*, originally published in 1907 (London: Wyman & Sons) and reprinted (legally) in 1964 (London: Holland Press). This internet paperback copy was "printed on demand" and published by Kessinger



Publishing (Kila, Montana, USA) as part of their Legacy Reprint Series. The publisher's description for books of the Legacy Series stated: "This scarce antiquarian book is included in our special Legacy Reprint Series. In the interest of creating a more extensive selection of rare historical book reprints, we have chosen to reproduce this title even though it may possibly have occasional imperfections such as missing and blurred pages ... missing text, poor pictures, markings ... and other reproduction issues beyond our control. Because this work is culturally important, we have made it available as a part of our commitment to protecting, preserving, and promoting the world's literature." All good and grand; but they should have checked infringement of copyright. On their website, under "Copyright Questions," Kessinger invites dialog for copyright infringement "complaints." Someone must have complained about the Simon title, for it was immediately removed from the amazon.com listing and from the Kessinger website, and is no longer available. Notwithstanding, the firm does provide a valuable service to "publish and preserve thousands of rare, scarce, and out-of-print books"—several on wine. Their website collection of titles is worth a view.

IN THE WINE LIBRARY

by

Bob Foster

Romancing the Vine: Life, Love, and Transformation in the Vineyards of Barolo by Alan Tardi. Illustrations by Pierflavio Gallina. New York: St. Martins Press, 2006. 348 pp. Hardback. \$25.95.

"... best wine book of 2007..."



When I read a press release that this book had won the 2007 James Beard award as the best Wine and Spirits Book, I was puzzled. I had never heard of the book or seen a single review. I bought a copy and was further puzzled because it is a delight and deserved waves of praise.

Tardi, who was a successful restaurant owner in New York City, became tired of life there in the post 9/11 era. He closed his restaurant and moved to Castiglione Falletto, a small village in the Barolo region. He soon became an accepted member of the village and began working as a cellar-rat in one of the small local vineyards. This is the story of his transformation from a lonely New Yorker to a member of the village community, who has a deep love affair not only with a local woman but also with the place and its culture.

Tardi's narrative covers his day to day life in the village while including discussions of the history of the region, its wines, the vineyard practices, the local characters, and the special feeling of place and time. Thus, the book is continually moving at several levels. It is a journal of events but it also teaches the reader about tiny details of rural winemaking and life in a village where traditions have continued for centuries. Moreover, being a chef, the author intersperses the text with recipes for the memorable dishes he enjoys while in the village.

There are interesting chapters on special events and individuals. His recounting of finding truffles and then selling them on the day of the Truffle Festival in dark parking lots on side streets (rather than the organized sales events) is the best I have ever read on this topic. It is a classic. There is another chapter on the grappa producer of the region that is equally fascinating.

Tardi's dealings with the Italian government in an attempt to extend his visa and to obtain recognition of his Italian citizenship leave the reader shaking a

head at the complexity and the absurdity of it all. It is so bizarre as to be comical.

But the book ends leaving the reader dangling. Tardi is torn between his desire to return to New York and his deep love for his Italian girlfriend. The issue remains unresolved and everyone is left pondering Tardi's choices.

I was troubled by the fact that while there were some drawings of the region at the beginning of various sections of the book, and wonderful illustrations by Tardi's neighbor and friend, Pierflavio Gallina, there were no photographs of any of the main characters. But, it turns out that there is a website, <http://www.alantardi.com> that contains, among other things, photos of these people who played such a role in the author's story. However, the photo of his great love, Ivana, shows only the back of her head. One is left with only a verbal description. In this regard it should be noted that Tardi is quite candid about his relationship with her to the point of almost conveying too much information. "...when I am inside her, connected to her like a root drawn down into the earth, I look into her eyes and feel I am looking through them into her innermost self." Whew! Hardly what one expects in a wine book!

My only serious complaint is that while there is an index, it simply omits far too much. At one point the author discusses the impact of a *Wine Spectator* rating of a vintage on the price of local wines. Before writing this review, I wanted to go back and reread it. Not a single mention of it in the index. Sigh.

This book is like a fine wine—there are layers and layers of complexity and depth. It deserved the award as the best wine book of 2007. It ought to be in your wine book library. Very highly recommended.

To Cork or Not to Cork. Tradition, Romance, Science and the Battle for the Wine Bottle by George M. Taber. New York: Scribner, 2007. 278 pp. Hardback. \$25.95.

"...reads like a top flight novel..."

I still can remember vividly the great bottles I had anticipated to be high points of my wine drinking experiences that turned out to be corked: a 1970 Taylor Fladgate port, a 1959 DRC La Tache in magnum, and a 1968 Beaulieu Vineyards Georges de Latour Cabernet Sauvignon. Additionally, over the years at wine competitions and at the *California Grapevine* tastings, I have encountered, far too often, that horrible corky smell that ruined so many wines. So, when this book arrived, I thought, how can someone spend 278 pages on an issue that is so obvious—abandon corks and go to some other form of closure. But having read this book I understand the issue is still an open question and that there is no consensus

amongst winemakers.

The author begins by looking at the chemical that causes corkiness in wine: 2,4,6-trichloroanisole (TCA). It is a chemical that is one of the most aromatic substances in the world. A trained wine taster can smell it in levels as low as one part per trillion in a bottle of wine. A single teaspoon of TCA can taint the entire annual American wine production.

Taber then proceeds to a detailed historical review of the various devices that have been used over the centuries to close wine containers and to allow wine to age. He explains how the wine industry finally settled on cork, and discusses its attributes and weaknesses, including TCA and random oxidation (a condition that lets in too much air causing flat, lackluster bottles). It wasn't until the 1980s that a Swiss researcher identified the chemical TCA and found that it was the cause of corkiness in wines.

Taber shows that astonishingly, the cork industry's response to the problem was to simply ignore the issue. Then in the 1980s when Portugal was going through a massive social and political revolution, most of the cork-producing forests were taken from their owners and turned over to local labor committees who lacked the skills to properly harvest and cure the cork. The incidents of corks infested with TCA jumped rapidly. Customers began returning bottles to retailers or the wineries complaining of cork tainted bottles. Finally the cork industry began to take the problem seriously.

Taber spends most of the rest of the work explaining the various efforts to either improve corks or find alternative closures. The cork fields have been taken back from the socialist styled local committees and are in the hands of large companies who have spent millions of dollars to eliminate TCA from their products. Numerous other closing devices have come forward, and the author carefully discusses their pros and cons. Interestingly, it appears that white wines seem to do better with synthetic closures than reds. Reds can take on "reduced" (sulfury) smells when bottled with some of these devices. It's a complex tale, very well told.

Taber also notes that there are sources of TCA (or closely related chemicals) that can come from other sources in a winery such as wooden storage pallets, siding, or even improperly cleaned hoses. Several wineries have had to spend considerable amounts of money replacing all of these TCA sources as well.

This is an important work. Every wine lover needs to read it to understand the issue and the various responses wineries are undertaking. There is a battle going on that will determine what wine closure will be used in the future. Taber outlines the war, but the outcome is still to be determined.

The only disappointing aspect of the work is the index. It is far less detailed than it should be for a work of this importance. For example, winemaker Ken Burnap is mentioned in but a single sentence on a single page and he is in the index. But noted wine writer Dan Berger is in the book but not in the index. The author talks about *brettanomyces* on six or seven different pages but the term is not in the index while other wine terms are included... How someone decided what went into the index and what did not seems unfathomable.

For such an important and scholarly book to have a weak index is a shame and detracts from its role as a reference tool.

Regardless of this flaw, the rest of the work is superb. It reads like a top flight novel. It is a must buy for any wine lover. Very highly recommended.

California's Central Coast: The Ultimate Winery Guide from Santa Barbara to Paso Robles by Mira A. Honeycutt. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2007. 117 pp. Softback. \$22.95. It is simple? Don't go wine touring in the Central Coast of California without this book. It's that good! ... This is a top notch guidebook. Why can't all guidebooks be this good? Very highly recommended.

John Schreiner's Okanagan Wine Tour Guide. 2nd ed. Vancouver: Whitecap Books, 2007. 264 pp. Softback. \$19.95. This work suffers by comparison to the one above. It's not that it's bad, but it's just that it could be so much better. No maps, no color photos, no sections on places to dine or explore. It's kind of like vanilla pudding. It gets the basic job done but is seldom exciting or interesting.

[Bob Foster, a founding member of the Wayward Tendrils in 1990, writes a regular wine book review column for the San Diego-based *California Grapevine*. Our sincere thanks to Bob and this excellent periodical for their always kind permission to reprint his reviews. — Ed.]



Books are a delightful society. If you go into a room filled with books, even without taking them down from their shelves, they seem to speak to you, to welcome you.

— William E. Gladstone

Another Round from "The Barchives"

by *Brian Rea*

[Our resident Barguru enjoyed a 60-year career in the "adult beverage" industry. During that time, in addition to a Barchive of tavern jokes and drink recipes, he amassed a formidable collection of drink-related books, ephemera, and collectibles. We welcome another round! — Ed.]

NEW AND IMPROVED BARTENDER'S MANUAL

OR
HOW TO MIX DRINKS
OF THE
PRESENT STYLE

AND
*Containing a valuable list of instructions
and hints of the author in reference
to attending bar, and also a large list
of mix-drinks together with a com-
plete list of bar utensils, wines,
liquors, ales, mixtures, &c.*

HARRY JOHNSON
PUBLISHER & PROFESSIONAL BARTENDER
AND
INSTRUCTOR OF THE ART HOW TO TEND BAR.

This book was self-published in 1882 by the author, who was a competitor of the famous author/bartender Jerry Thomas, and their lives had quite similar patterns. They both entered the drink/saloon trade in the 1840s, worked in San Francisco during the Gold Rush, were employed as bartenders in a number of other cities (New York, Boston, Chicago, New Orleans, Louisville, St. Louis, etc.), had numerous copies of their books published, were extremely proud of their bartender skills, and both became saloon owners.

The period they worked as bartenders could be considered the formative years of cocktail/mixed drink development, and their books no doubt inspired other bartenders to improve their job skills, as well as create recipes, garnishes, service techniques, and quite a few weird drink titles. These two gentlemen must be given credit for the golden age, or the half-century of saloon success from 1860 to 1910. After

1910 the various temperance movements began to seriously, and negatively, impact the relationship between the saloonkeeper and the customer.

Mr. Thomas' book was first published in 1862 [see Vol.12 #4, October 2002], and Mr. Johnson's book in 1882. Obviously they both knew each other, worked in competitive saloons, constantly marketed their capabilities, and over the years developed a rather intense rivalry, each considering himself the more professional. Mr. Johnson even claimed he had published an earlier *Bartender's Manual* in 1862, while employed in San Francisco, and that the book had sold 10,000 copies in less than two months. As of this date, no such book has surfaced, either in a library, private collection, or archive. Interestingly though, the title of his 1882 book reads, *New And Improved Bartender's Manual*, so maybe the claimed earlier book could have been titled simply *Bartender's Manual*. Possible...or just a marketing gimmick, or a pique of jealousy over Mr. Thomas' earlier book.

An interesting aspect of Mr. Johnson's book is that it was printed in English and German. It would appear that Mr. Johnson, or one of his advisors, realized that the second largest group of people involved in the saloon trade (after the Americans, British and Irish, all English speaking), were second generation Germans and immigrants. The trade was not difficult to master, did not involve capital investment, and generated an instant cash flow. And there were always breweries and distillers that would offer financing assistance, for featuring their brands.

The First Operations Manual for Barkeepers

The most important element of Mr. Johnson's book is that it can be considered to be the first barkeeper/saloonkeeper operations manual, and the first to list rules and regulations. Mr. Johnson was a successful Saloonkeeper (Mr. Thomas was not), and his book provided a structured formula for operating a Saloon.

Johnson's Introduction followed the format established by earlier authors, with the usual amount of modesty in extolling one's capabilities, to wit:

A Short Sketch By The Publisher Of The Barkeeper's Manual.

In presenting this manual to the public, I beg the indulgence for making a few remarks in regard to myself having been in the Hotel and Saloon business, in various capacities since my boyhood, studying and practicing the tastes and fancies of the public in regard to drinking, and having traveled all over this and other countries, I have after careful preparation, time and expense, compiled this work, which I challenge any party to criticize against or find one receipt which is not fully and completely prepared. I have been

employed in some of the most prominent, leading and first class Hotels and Saloons in this city as well as all other parts of the United States and other countries, from which I have the highest letters of recommendation, as to my complete knowledge of managing a Saloon, and preparing drinks of every kind and form.

This work will clearly show how to prepare, mix, and serve every drink known to be desired by the public, or at the present day, in style; I have prepared every drink in a plain, straight-forward manner, that is known all over the world, such as popular Mixed Drinks, Cocktails, Punches, Fancy drinks, &c. In addition the book will give you the entire and complete instructions to be observed in tending bar, in regard how to conduct yourself, what to do in opening a saloon in the morning, how to serve and wait on customers, and all the plain details connected with the business, that any person contemplating entering the business of bartender, has a complete and valuable guide. In the work you will also find all the Bar Utensils, Liquors, Glass and Silverware you require, the different brands of mixtures and beverages you will use and how you use them, and also a large list of valuable hints to bartenders, how to keep a Saloon, in what manner to construct it, and in fact every item that is of any use whatever from the moment you become a bartender to the requirements of the present day. I have also made it my profession for many years to teach and learn the art of tending bar to any party having an inclination to do so; in the past few years I have taught a great number of parties the profession, and I can with pride refer to them, as to my fitness as an instructor of Bartending. In conclusion, let me say, that this work will not only be very valuable to the entire profession it is intended for, but will prove to great advantage to all families, and all the public in general, as a complete guide in preparing or mixing drinks; it will contain nothing but the most respectable and interesting reading. I remain, Your obedient servant
HARRY JOHNSON

Amen!

After Mr. Johnson's Short Sketch is the Index (Table of Contents), where the first 31 items are Rules, Hints, or Lists related to the Saloon operation, followed by 157 drink recipes, encompassing most drink categories:

Cobblers (wine, sugar, fruit juices, crushed ice)
Cocktails (spirits, sugar, bitters, ice or water)
Crustas (spirits, bitters, sugar or syrup, lemon juice, ice or water)

Fizzes (lemon/lime juice, egg white, sugar, spirits, shaved ice, soda/siphon)

Fixes (sugar, lemon, spirits, ice or water)

Flips (rum, sugar, beer, egg optional, usually served hot)

Juleps (sugar, spirit, ice or water, mint)

Noggs (rum, brandy, sugar, milk, nutmeg, hot or cold)

Pousse Cafes (layered various cordials according to weight/viscosity)

Punches (spirits, sugar, lemon or oranges, pineapple, ice or water)

Sangarees (Madeira, sugar, nutmeg or other spices, ice or water)

Slings (spirits, lemon, sugar, ice or water)

Smashes (spirits, sugar, mint, ice or water)

Sours (sugar, lemon, spirits, ice or water)

Toddys (ye olde basic sugar, spirits, ice or water)

How to Attend Bar

Item No.1. How To Attend Bar — in regard to the general appearance of the bartender, and how to conduct themselves at all times when on duty, &c. The author of this work has after careful deliberation compiled the annexed rules connected with properly managing a saloon, and would suggest the following instructions in regard to tending a bar. He has endeavored to the best of his ability to state them in a perfectly plain and straight-forward manner, and it must be understood that in tending bar, the business must be carried on in a systematically and proper manner, the same as in any other business.

When serving customers at any time, it is of the highest importance for a bartender to be strictly polite and attentive in all his ways and doings, and especially in his manner of speech, by giving prompt answers to all questions, as far as lay in his power, be cheerful, have a bright and pleasant countenance, and again, it is of very great importance to be of a neat, clean, and tidy address, as that will prove more to the interest of the bartender than any other matter; have a pleasant and cheerful word with everyone, as that will also draw considerable, with customers, and prove to the advantage of the bartender serving them.

It is also proper that when a party steps up to the bar, it is the bartender's place to set before the customer a glass of ice water, then in a polite and genteel manner find out what he may desire, and if any mixed drinks should be called for, the barkeeper's duty is, to mix and prepare them above the counter, and let the customer or parties see them, and they should be prepared in such a quick and scientific way, as to draw attraction; and it must also be the bartender's duty to see that the

glasses and everything used with the drinks are perfectly clean, the glasses bright and polished up; then, when the customer has finished and left the bar, the bartender's duty is, to clean well and thoroughly wipe up the counter, so that it will have a good and neat appearance again; and then, if the time should allow the bartender to do so, he should clean the glasses used in a well and clean manner, so to have them ready again when desired; then, in regard to the bench, which is an important branch of managing a bar properly, it is the bartender's utmost duty to have his bench cleared up and in good trim at all times, which he will find a very good advantage, if done so properly, and have everything handy and in good shape.

This sort of makes me want to go back to work, as when I started tending bar in the late 1940s, a long, long, long time ago, we always placed a glass of water in front of the customer before they ordered, and it was a very nice touch.

The bench discussed above is the work bench, or underbar below the bar top, or counter, where most of the items for making a drink are located.

Proper Measuring: The Gigger

No.2. Rules In Reference To A Gigger—

In all my receipts of the various drinks, you will find the words "wine glass" as the article to be used in mixing drinks; now, the word "wine glass" is only proper to be used in compiling those receipts, but the only proper article to be used for measuring the mixture is a gigger; it is made of silver-plated metal, looks like a sherry glass, with the exception of not having as long a stem, and is more durable, as it is impossible to break it, and is used by all first-class bartenders, with the exception of those who are first-class experts in mixing drinks, and are so active, as to measure without any gigger or glass whatever.

This is probably the first mention of a gigger (read jigger). The jigger would allow owner/managers some form of portion control of the spirits being poured, and result in a more uniform tasting drink. But as Mr. Johnson mentions above, if the bartender is a first-class expert in mixing drinks, he can still free pour.

Yet, in all the recipes listed in the book, only the "wine glass" is listed as the measuring tool, with no mention of the gigger. By the way, recipes were listed in the maddening non-categorical and/or alphabetical sequence. Arrgghh !!!!

No.21. Instructions relative to *Bowels* [bowls, obviously a typo] containing Punches. [We shall skip this section...]

What'll Ya Have?!

No.23. Instruction In Regard To Finding Out The Desire Of The Customers' Styles Of Drinks, &c.

The greatest satisfaction to a customer lies with the bartender accomplishing this, which is done in a very slight manner, simply by asking what kind of drink he desires, and in what manner he desires to have it mixed, especially in cocktails, sours, and punches; also it is understood for the bartender to ask the party if he desires his drink stiff, strong, or medium, and must use his own judgement in regard to preparing it, and at all times make it his special point to study the taste of his customers, and strictly obey them, and make all drinks to their taste. By following this rule, the bartender will soon find out that he will gain the esteem and respect of his patrons.

It would be interesting to know the portion differences between stiff, strong, and medium. And, were different prices charged for them?

The Perfect List of Ingredients

No.30. List Of Liquors, &c. Required In Saloons—

The annexed list of liquors will be found to be complete in the different brands, as well as a thorough and perfect list of wines, mineral waters, syrups, cordials, mixtures, bitters, ales, porters, sundries, fruits, etc., and great care and attention has been paid to give them in a precise and plain manner.

LIQUORS—Brandy, different brands if required, Rye Whiskey, Bourbon Whiskey, Irish Whiskey, Scotch Whiskey, Holland Gin, Old Tom Gin, Jamaica Rum, St. Croix Rum, Medford Rum, Apple Jack or Brandy, Black Berry, Arrac, Alcohol.

Hmmm, no Vodka? Those were the days when the average drinker would not consume a spirit he could not see or smell, or was tasteless.

WINES—Champagne, Claret Wines, Rhine and Moselle Wines, Madeira, Hungarian Wines (red and white), Sauterne, Sherry, Burgundy, Port Wines (red or white), Bordeaux Wines, California Wines, Catawba Wines, Tokay Wines, Spanish Wines.

I guess no Mad Dog, Annie Green Springs, Boone's Farm, Muscatel, Thunderbird, and other fine aperitif wines were in the market then! It would be interesting to be able to determine what California wines were being served, as well as the white Port.

ALES AND PORTERS—Imported Bass Ales in casks and bottles, Imp. Guinnesses extra, Stout in cases and bottles, Muir & Sons Scotch Ales, Robert Younger's Scotch Ales, Stock Ales, New and Old

Ales, Porter, Lagerbeer.

Fortunately no light beers. If you wanted one, just add ice or water to your regular beer.

CORDIALS—Absinthe, Benedictine, Chartreuse (green and yellow), Russian Kimmel, Berlin Gilka, Curacao (red and white), Annisette, Maraschino, Vermouth, Kirschwasser, Danziger Goldwasser, Mint Cordial, Crème de Noyau, Vanilla. (These are the principal ones used for mixing purposes, and if others are required they can be procured.)

MINERAL WATERS—Belfast Ginger Ale, Domestic Ginger Ale, Kissinger Water, Apollinaris Water, Congress Water, Imp. Selters Water, Vichy Water, Syphon Selters Water, Lemonade And Plain Soda Water, Sarsaparilla, Cider, Carbonic Acid Syphon, Hathorn Water.

And we think we presently have too many waters. Following the above items there is a list of Syrups, Bitters, Fruits, Mixtures, and Sundries, *i.e.* Segars, Tobaccos.

Necessary Utensils for a First Class Saloon

No.31. List Of The Utensils In Complete Form Used In Saloons, &c.

In giving the annexed list of the different utensils used in the various saloons, it has been the author's object to clearly present them in a plain and distinct manner. It must not be understood that all those articles hereto annexed must absolutely be required in every establishment, but are only indispensable in those places where the demand will call for them; in other words, the most prominent places and first class saloons, and in any other place where the business requires it.

Hold on readers...

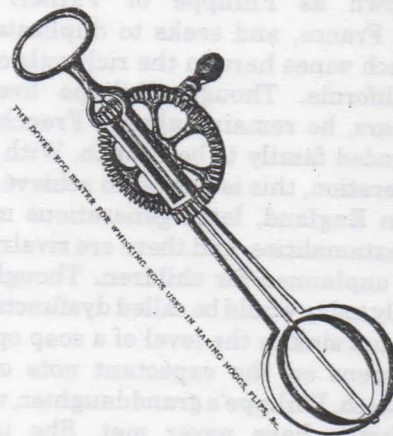
Liquor Measures—Gallon, Half-gallon, Quart, Pint, Half-pint, Gill, Half-gill. Liquor Pump, Mallet, Filtering Bag or Paper, Beer and Ale Faucets, Brace and Bit, Liquor Gauge, Gimlet, Beer and Ale Measures, Bung Starter, Rubber Hose for drawing liquor, Liquor Thieves, Thermometer, Funnels, Corkscrews, Hot Water Kettle, Bar Pitchers, Lemon Squeezers, Beer or Ale Vent, Ice Pick, Ice Cooler, Ice Shaver, Ice Scoop, Liquor Gigger, Shaker, Long, twisted and short Bar Spoons, Julep and Milk Punch Strainers, Spice Dish or Castor, Ale Mugs, Cork Pullers, Glass and Scrubbing Brush, Corks and Stoppers (different sizes), Cork Press, Champagne Faucets for drawing Wine out of bottles, Molasses Jugs or Pitchers, Honey or Syrup Pitchers, Lemon Knives, Sugar Spoons, Sugar Tongues [typo], Egg Beaters, Sugar Pails, Nutmeg Box, Nutmeg

Grinder, Cracker Bowls, Sugar Bowls, Punch or Tom and Jerry Bowls, Pepper Boxes, Fruit Dishes, Punch Ladles, Duster and Broom, Silver Brush, Segar Cutter, Mop Handle and Wringer, Glass Towels, Rollers, &c., Spittoons, Fancy Fruit Forks, Fancy Segar Plate or Basket, Liquor Labels, Pails for waste, &c., Match Boxes and Matches, Comb And Brush, Toilet Paper, Whiting for cleaning Silver ware, Wrapping Paper for Bottle Goods, Toothpicks, Twine, Writing Paper, Envelopes, Postal Cards and Stamps, Ink, Mucilage, &c., Business Cards, Business Directory, Newspapers, Set of Books, Wash Soap, Demijohns (large and small), Bar Bottles, Mixture Bottles, Quart Flasks, Pint Flasks, Half-pint flasks, Segar Bags, Julep Straws, Sponge, Window Brush, Dust Pan, Shot for cleaning bottles, Stepladder, Waiters.

The following glassware is required: Champagne Goblets, Champagne Cocktail Glasses, Champagne Wine Glasses, John or Tom Collins Glasses, Julep or Cobbler Glasses, Claret Wine Glasses, Rhine Wine Glasses, Port Wine Glasses, Sherry Wine Glasses, Mineral Water Glasses, Absinthe Glasses, Cocktail and Sour Glasses, Hot Water Glasses, Whiskey Glasses, Pony Brandy Glasses, Cordial Glasses, Water Glasses, Hot Apple Toddy Glasses, Porter and Beer Glasses, Pony Glasses.

One has to admit that this is an all encompassing inventory, and where do you store it all? These were the days when whiskey was shipped in barrels, and the Saloonkeeper or Bartender had to constantly fill and refill bottles, attach labels, and cork same, and.....sometimes *doctor* products. And where is the hydrometer, a crucial tool for proofing liquor. Also noted, where is the Plumbers Helper?

Possibly in a future article we will review all the uses of this formidable list of utensils. And, remember, I speak from experience: when I first tended bar, the beer barrels were wooden.





WINE TALES by Warren R. Johnson

[In this installment of "Wine Tales," our super sleuth of wine fiction reports on two titles deserving a spot on our bookshelves. Check his *Second Harvest* website for a fine database of Novels, Mysteries, Romances, Poems, Toasts, Anthologies, and other such entertaining works. — Ed.]

The Cup and the Sword by Alice Tisdale Hobart [1882–1967]. New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1942. 1st ed. 400 pp.



our generations of a French wine family in California seem to be the prototype for a plethora of fiction books since this work was published in 1942. However, this novel exhibits strength and a height to which many later novels do not rise. (*The Cup and the Sword* is also the first work by

a major novelist to use the California wine industry as a background.)

Here, we have the Rambeau family with large wineries in both the San Joaquin and Napa valleys, dominated by the titular Jean-Philippe Rambeau. In truth, this family could have been Italian or Spanish just as easily as French. The main character is actually the wine business. All four generations rise and fall with the prosperity and decline of the family enterprise. The novel is set in the years between the two world wars, the time of Prohibition, the time of making wine for the consumer, then for the Church and then again for the public. Jean-Philippe (generally known as Philippe or Father) has migrated from France, and seeks to duplicate the success of French wines here in the rich soils of the valleys of California. Though Philippe lives in America 50 years, he remains always French and wants his extended family to be French. With each successive generation, this is harder to achieve. One son is living in England, later generations marry those of other nationalities, and there are rivalries in romance, and unplanned-for children. Though the Rambeau family today would be called dysfunctional, the novel does not sink to the level of a soap opera.

The story opens on the expectant note of the arrival of Elizabeth, Philippe's granddaughter, whom he and the family have never met. She is the

daughter of the son in England. The son has remarried, moved to France, and sent his daughter to be reared in America. Will she be a Rambeau? Will she fit into the family? Elizabeth is resentful of being sent away from her beloved father and does not take immediately to the family. Philippe's daughter Martha is the matron of the household and rules with an iron hand (and is the least likable character in the novel). Elizabeth becomes the apple of her grandfather's eye, as well as a love interest of her cousins. The love that twists and turns throughout the story, as well as the daily lives of the large family, make for intriguing reading.

Rising above all of this is the wine business, the real soul of the family. The grapes, the vineyards and the wineries determine all. Alice Hobart is knowledgeable and comfortable writing about the wine industry. The novel deals with the good years and the bad years, the good grapes and the lesser grapes, the production of wine for consumption and for the altar. Unlike many later works, *The Cup and the Sword* develops the relationships with the other grape growers and wineries in both valleys. Whatever the nationality, the growers work together to support the industry. Later, jealousies develop, competition arises, the big growers try to squeeze out the smaller growers, and friction grows. But finally, cooperation wins for the sake of the entire industry.

Is this historical fiction? Is there a model for the Rambeaus? In hind sight, it is easy to start naming the names of those larger entities operating in the two valleys. Only one true family name is mentioned in the book. Maybe only the nationality is changed to protect the innocent. Yet, it is likely best not to go down that road but to enjoy the story for what it is—a warm, all too true story of the development of California's grape and wine industry.

[Editor Note: In 1959 *The Cup and the Sword* was issued in paperback as *This Earth is Mine*, the title of the movie of the same year starring Rock Hudson, Jean Simmons, and Claude Rains.]

"overflows with wine and food..."

Dying on the Vine by Peter King. New York: St. Martin's, 1998. 234 pp.

Upon arrival, the gourmet detective finds that the courtyard is not deserted. There is a man leaning against the wheel of an old cart. One arm is draped over the wheel (I imagine one foot crossed over the other, perhaps a stick of straw in his mouth). He eyes the detective. The detective speaks to him in French; no response. He tries Spanish; still no response. Portuguese, German. Nothing. An old dog comes up and nuzzles the man on the leg. The arm drops off the wheel, the knees buckle, he slides

slowly to the ground, never taking his eyes off the detective. The man is dead.

Such is the gourmet detective's welcome to the Willesford Winery in Saint Symphorien, Provence. He is immediately a suspect. Posing as a journalist writing a story on vineyards owned by British investors in southern France, the GD has, fortunately, faxed ahead that he would be arriving to interview the staff of the winery. Out of the mayhem that results from a body being found in the courtyard, one of the workers announces that he had found the man, Emil LaPlace, alive but in great pain, outside the caves bordering the vineyard. The worker had rushed back to get a cart and had brought Emil to the winery. Emil's clothes are torn and blood streaked. He must have been attacked by sangliers.

Sangliers are wild boars, found in Provence. They have large tusks, can weigh up to 500 pounds, hunt in packs and are considered very dangerous. It is felt that they may live in the myriad caves on the property. The GD is removed from the suspect list. The gourmet detective, who has no other name, is actually a food writer and does his detective work in restaurants, kitchens and food markets. He has, however, been tapped by the Willesford Group in London to go to their winery in Provence to discover why the company has been receiving unsolicited offers of a buyout. Each offer has been rejected but then followed by another, larger offer, going beyond the value of the property. The offers have been coming from the Peregrine Winery, a very small winery surrounded by the much larger Willesford Winery. Peregrine Winery is registered in Monte Carlo, a country which gives no information on their registrants.

As the GD begins his detective work, he encounters any number of other non-wine events and happenings which he tries to follow to their conclusion. His reason for being in Provence becomes more suspect. The GD simply says he is a free lance writer and thinks that each of these stories could find a place for him in various magazines. Throughout the book, he shows his interest in the foods and wines of Provence and describes many luscious meals. He encounters the rich and powerful, the famous and the infamous. Among these is a man who is a dowser. This man has been dowsing on the Willesford property. The winery has no lack of water for irrigation, no known earth minerals, nothing for which one would normally dows.

Along the way, the GD falls into a vat of red wine, is likely the intended victim by a crossbow, but he refuses to relent on his explorations. He meets a beautiful woman and together they explore the forbidding caves. It is rumored that they contain the legendary treasure of the Knights Templar. They

attend a party on a large yacht, learn that its owner is, among other things, head of a courier company which delivers anything, anywhere, in the fastest time possible, though the use of well-trained sports car drivers and ultralight airplanes. The GD gets trapped at the home of this yacht owner with no way out. Who is this man?

Yet, the real question is why does the little winery want to buyout the large winery? It makes no sense; they presumably do not have the money. Or do they? Why are they dowsing on the property?

Peter King has written eight gourmet detective novels to date. They are particularly rich in food and murder. *Dying on the Vine* overflows with wine and food. The book is best read on a full stomach to inhibit hunger pains.

*Washington Wines and Wineries:
The Essential Guide
A Review by Will Brown*

[Will Brown is a retired physician and vintage contributor to the *WTQ* whose love of wine—its production, its history and its literature—is contagious. He is enjoying the latest chapter in his life as winemaker for a small Southern Oregon winery. We welcome his latest review. — Ed.]



here was a time, not so long ago, when books about wine from the American north-west lumped Oregon and Washington wineries together, and often included those from Idaho and British Columbia as well. Today there are so many wineries in the northwest (well over 1,000), that lumping is no longer a viable strategy, and we will see more books on the wines and wineries of the individual states or dominions. This book is of the new genre.

The author, Paul Gregutt, is probably the best qualified writer on the wines of Washington because he lives in the state, has written previous books on the subject, and has been the wine columnist for the *Seattle Times* for a number of years. He is an unabashed booster of these wines.

His book is not one that reads easily from cover to cover because it is more of a reference tool than a good read. The first few chapters are more accessible because they cover the basics, such as the history of Washington wines, the current AVAs, the grapes being grown, and the author's opinion of what are the ten best vineyards.

The majority of the text consists of profiles of some one hundred wineries the author has selected that meet his criteria for inclusion. The basis for inclusion is a 100-point rating system that he describes in detail, but does not exist elsewhere in the wine world. The wineries selected and reviewed are probably the best ones, but only represent about one fourth of the total number of wineries in the state. Unfortunately for the other three fourths they will only benefit indirectly from the publication of Gregutt's book. The profiles contain significant information about the wineries and vary in length from one half to two pages. At the conclusion of the book there are two interesting chapters, the first on the influence of foreign-trained winemakers on the Washington industry, and the second on the future of the state's wineries in the big picture of the world wine industry.

My first encounter with Washington wine was around 1978 when I discovered Chateau St Michelle's 1975 Cabernet Sauvignon selling for about five dollars. I found the quality and value of the wine to be exemplary, and bought a lot of it. Today I still feel that Washington wines are superb and represent great bargains when compared to California wines of the same varietals. A few of the Washington wineries like Quilceda Creek, Betz Family, and Leonetti have reached cult status like their Napa counterparts, and are difficult to obtain, but they are still relative bargains. The main problem I have found with the Washington wines is their limited distribution. For residents of Seattle, there is no problem, but even in a wine-enlightened region like southern Oregon where I live, their availability, aside from Chateau St Michelle and Columbia Crest, is limited to a few labels in a few quality wine shops. A workable strategy for wine lovers and collectors might be to read this book, identify a few wineries that appeal to them, get on their mailing list and buy current releases by phone or internet, providing that they live in states where such is possible.

In summary, I found this book to be very well written, insightful and potentially very useful. It would have been more informative if there had been at least a listing of the other Washington wineries along with some minimal information about them.

I recommend the book highly to all wine lovers, but primarily as a reference for those seeking very high quality wines that are still relative bargains in today's competitive wine market.

Paul Gregutt. *Washington Wines and Wineries: The Essential Guide*. Berkeley: U.C. Press, 2007. 328 pp. Hardback. \$34.95.

NOTES FROM A DEPLETED LIBRARY

by

Christopher Fielden

[In his Introduction to *Is This the Wine You Ordered, Sir? The Dark Side of the Wine Trade* (1989), author Fielden states, "The drinking of wine is only part of the whole pleasure. For me reading about it is another, and the collection of old wine books on the subject is yet another." In 2003 he donated his 30-year collection to the Institute of Masters of Wine; his depleted, yet growing once again, library provides welcome reviews for *Tendril* readers. — Ed.]

HAVING HAD A FALLOW SUMMER, the onset of autumn has enabled me to catch up on both vineyards visits and on wine reading. Here are some of the fruits of the two activities.

First Big Crush

Given the success of its wines on world markets, it is often difficult to understand just how short is the history of quality wine production in New Zealand. It is only just over thirty years ago that serious commercial plantings were made in Marlborough and one of the early pioneers was Allan Scott, who worked as a vineyard manager for both of the dominant players in the region, Montana and Corbans. In 1990, with his wife Cathie, he launched his own label, which is now sold around the world. It must be hard to judge their reaction when they received a letter from a twenty-nine-year-old American journalist asking if he could work with them for a year and write a book about the experience. The result is *First Big Crush* by Eric Arnold, who subsequently went on to work for The Wine Spectator.

For me this is a book written on two different levels. Firstly it is a detailed look at a year's cycle in the life of a winery and its vineyards, written by an admitted novice. He was thrown in at the deep end, arriving at the beginning of the harvest. On the other level, it is the story of a young American, determined to enjoy himself. For anyone who wants to get a clear picture of how wine arrives in the bottle, from the clearing of vineyard land and the planting of vines, to the harvest and vinification, this is a fascinating book, enriched by the fact that the author has gone beyond the bounds of the winery family to seek out information. Such additional information as the value of wine competitions (and which wines go best with the broad variety of meat pies that are dear to each New Zealander's heart) give added value.

On the other hand, this information has to be dredged from a mass of reminiscences of the exploits of a young, single man in New Zealand, out to live life to the full. There is a very helpful glossary at the end

of the book explaining the meaning of the technical wine terms. I would have welcomed another glossary explaining many of the words and expressions apparently used to describe parts of the anatomy and sexual activities. (It is a long time since I was twenty-nine and the vocabulary has changed!)

This is not a book for the faint-hearted and, if you are thinking of launching your daughter into a career in wine, I suggest that you resist the temptation to buy the book. On the other hand, I have no doubt that an honest picture has been painted—and I know a number of the characters involved. A fascinating, but sometimes repellent, read.

Pinot Pioneers

During my recent visit to New Zealand, I spent a few days in the most southerly wine region in the world, Central Otago, home to many great Pinot Noirs. Here I met a number of the stars of *Pinot Pioneers—Tales of Determination and Perseverance from Central Otago*. Written by local journalist Ric Oram, this is the story of a wine region created, not by large companies, but by dogged individuals determined to produce wine in a region dismissed by the experts as being impossible. It is a tale of disaster after disaster—whole vineyards wiped out by rabbits or frost; of trial and error, before the right varieties and clones were discovered and of makeshift vinification, with filtration being carried out through silk knickers and vats warmed with electric blankets. The area is now having money poured into it by magnates and film stars. Twenty-five years ago it was teachers, nurses and journalists who had a dream. This is the story of this dream being, for the most part, fulfilled.

Wine Atlas of New Zealand

Michael Cooper has, through successive editions of *The Wines and Vineyards of New Zealand*, kept readers up to date with the rapid developments and expansion of production in the country over the past years. In a bid to consolidate this information, in 2002 he produced *Wine Atlas of New Zealand*. This is a magnificent book complemented by wonderful photographs by John McDermott. It profiles all the wine producing regions and wineries and contains a mass of fascinating historical and statistical information. It is a book that I will constantly refer to and I am proud to have it on my shelf. However, it does suffer from one major disadvantage—life in New Zealand is moving too fast for it. Take for example Central Otago: he profiles thirty-two different wineries; now there are more than eighty different labels on the market, with many more on the way. Again, in Marlborough there are more than 700 hectares of planted vineyards waiting to come into production

and a regular stream of growers seeking to get added value by selling wine under their own label, rather than the grapes they grow to existing wineries. This may be the essential book to have on New Zealand wine, but it must be used in conjunction with more up to date sources of information.

Burgundy

Returning, closer to home, I recently bought two small books on Burgundy and its wines: *Le Chemin des Vignes* by Claude Chapuis, and *Histoire du Vin de Bourgogne* by Jean-François Bazin. Claude Chapuis, who teaches French culture to foreign students at Dijon University, comes from a family who owns a domain in Aloxe-Corton. His *Vigneron en Bourgogne* won the literary prize of Chevaliers du Tastevin in 1980. His latest book is intriguingly sub-titled “*All you haven't been told so far about the wines of Burgundy*.” It turns out to be an interesting miscellany of pieces apparently randomly juxtaposed. Thus we have “A Burgundian called Voltaire” followed by “Should we believe in biodynamics?” There is also an interesting article on that important, but much-neglected, lynch-pin in the Burgundian wine-trade, the *courtier*, or broker. This is a dip-into book that contains much surprising information.

Over the past thirty-five years, Jean-François Bazin has written a string of books about Burgundy and its wines—and also one on the wines of California. This is not a straightforward history of Burgundy, but rather a random selection of pieces on various aspects of this history, but it looks not just at the past, but also at the future and he finishes with “The 13 revolutions to come.” Here he boldly lays out problems that he feels the Burgundian wine-trade must face up to. Should it still lay emphasis on the *cru*, as opposed to a brand? How should it see new world opposition? How must it deal with the problem of excessive yields? These are all pertinent questions posed by someone in the know. Again this is a book you can dip into and come out with joyous factual nuggets.

Beaujolais

Strictly speaking *Beaujolais en Dates et en Cartes* is not a wine book, but rather a book on a region where wine provides the life-blood. It is a glossy production, comprising historical maps and brief articles featuring aspects of life in the Beaujolais. Amongst those highlighted are Benoît Raclet, who in 1842 perfected his treatment against the *pyralis* moth which was ravaging the local vineyards, and Victor Vermorel, whose company, based in Villefranche-sur-Saône, was the leading producer of, largely ineffective equipment, in the fight against phylloxera. More recent history is the launch

of the first Beaujolais Nouveau in 1951. Scarcely an essential in the winelover's library, this book, nevertheless, contains much interesting, if mainly peripheral, information.

First Big Crush by Eric Arnold. New York: Scribners, 2007. \$US24.

Pinot Pioneers by Ric Oram. Auckland: New Holland Publishers, 2004. \$NZ25.

Wine Atlas of New Zealand by Michael Cooper. Auckland: Hodder Moa Beckett, 2002. \$NZ125.

Le Chemin des Vignes by Claude Chapuis. Dijon: Editions de Bourgogne, 2006. 14.50 euros.

Histoire du Vin de Bourgogne by Jean-François Bazin. Paris: Editions Jean-Paul Gisserot, 2002. 8.50 euros

Beaujolais en Dates et en Cartes. Lyon: EMCC, 2003. 15 euros.



BOOKS & BOTTLES

by

Fred McMillin

SEEING IS BELIEVING

The Book: *The Art of Terroir. A Portrait of California Vineyards*. Photographs by George Rose. Text by Rod Smith. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2007. 112 pp. Hardback. \$25.

Twice nominated for the Pulitzer Prize, award-winning photographer George Rose has produced for this book over 80 striking images that illustrate the five elements of *terroir* in California vineyards. These photographs provide an understanding of *terroir* that words alone cannot convey.

As for the words by Rod Smith, Rose accurately describes them as "a lyrical and illustrative essay on the art of *terroir*."

The Five Elements of Terroir

LIGHT. THE PHOTO: Sunset at a Sonoma Vineyard. THE WORDS: The sun doesn't make a sound. If space

were made of air, the rumble of that awesome furnace would be deafening even on earth, light-years away, but since there is no air in the universal vacuum to impede the awesome shock waves, the sun's great din goes unheard.

WATER: THE PHOTO: Snow blankets a Mendocino vineyard. THE WORDS: Like air, water is colorless and transparent. Yet it can be solid, liquid, or gas. It conforms to its container, be it an ocean or a creek bed.

ROCK: THE PHOTO: Calcareous rock in spring at Santa Barbara County. THE WORDS: The camera gives a surprising amount of information about the soil in a given place, and tells us something about the qualities we might expect to find in wines from each specific site.

AIR: THE PHOTO: Coastal fog approaches an Alexander Valley vineyard. THE WORDS: An invisible blend of gasses, air is in constant motion yet can only be felt when it moves with unusually focused force, and can only be seen when something it carries or touches gives it form: smoke, water vapor, dust, shivering trees, rippling fields, a cat's-paw on the river.

CULTIVATION. THE PHOTO: Bird-netting protects a Russian River Valley vineyard. THE WORDS: The human influence starts with the decision to plant a vineyard, and continues through all the countless choices that influence how the vines grow and what kind of wines they produce. Astute viewers of these images will note details like row orientation, vine spacing, trellis configuration, pruning style, and many other aspects of cultivation.

The Bottles: At last count, Jess Jackson's wine empire had expanded to twenty wineries on four continents. His Kendall-Jackson Wine Estates is the sponsor of this book. Estate labels that have scored particularly well in my San Francisco City College wine classes include: Edmeades, Pepi, La Crema, Matanzas Creek, Stonestreet, and Tapiz (Argentina). Of course, the flagship is the Kendall-Jackson label. The students have given high marks to the Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon. When I once asked Jess Jackson for one of his favorite food-wine combinations, he beamed: Herbed chicken with K.J. Sauvignon Blanc. Cheers!





WINE
IN
PRINT
by
Hudson Cattell

Wine Across America: A Photographic Road Trip by Charles O'Rear and Daphne Larkin. St. Helena, CA: Wineviews Publishing / Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 2007. 224 pp. Hardbound. \$35.

"a stunning portrait"

Three hundred gorgeous color photographs of wine country in all 50 states by Charles O'Rear, a National Geographic photographer for 25 years, make this book a stunning portrait of America's wine industry in the first decade of the 21st century. The husband and wife team of Chuck O'Rear and wine writer Daphne Larkin traveled 80,000 miles over a period of two years to create this splendid 9 x 11½" book.

The photographs of wineries, vineyards, landscapes and people cover six geographic areas of the United States: the Northeast, the Pacific Northwest, California, the Midwest, the West, and the South. Many of the photographs take up a full page and there are many two-page spreads. In addition, there are other photo features including three pages of wine labels, two pages of winery architecture, two pages of wine bottles with labels (one from each state), and winery doors with two fold-out pages. The nice geographical distribution of photographs, with a well-chosen range of subjects, accurately conveys the feeling that all 50 states constitute America's wine country.

Each section is prefaced with a short general introduction. The captions are well handled and are interesting, informative, and basically accurate. Unfortunately, the book is marred by historical inaccuracy. A prominent box on page 91 states that the first commercial vineyard in the U.S. was in Kentucky in 1798; that honor goes to Pierre Legaux's enterprise in Pennsylvania, which furnished the vines that were planted in Kentucky. Worse yet, there is a two-page "Wine Facts U.S.A." in the back of the book that lists the first winery in each state. More than 25% of these are wrong. In all fairness, the authors cannot be completely blamed for this: a footnote states that the information was reprinted from *Kevin Zraly's American Wine Guide*.

This book is obviously a labor of love, and the authors are to be commended for producing a very attractive book that promotes the wine industry of the entire country.

The Oxford Companion to Wine. Third Edition. Edited by Jancis Robinson. Oxford / NY: Oxford University Press, 2006. 814 pp. Hardbound. \$65.

"indispensable resource"

When a book comes out in a new edition, one question that always arises is how much has been revised and whether it is worth spending the money on the latest one. The first edition of Jancis Robinson's book, published in 1994, had 3,000 entries; the second edition in 1999 had 3,650; and this third edition has 3,900. Of the second edition entries, according to Robinson, more than three-quarters have been changed in some way and 40% have been changed "quite radically."

Oxford University Press was insistent that this edition not become heavier or more unwieldy than the last one, limiting the size increase in the number of pages to not more than 2%. This meant the "tightest of editing disciplines" which has had the result of making the book a "more concentrated wine resource." For the first time, Robinson has an assistant editor, Julia Harding, who passed the Master of Wine exam on her first attempt and was the top student of her year. She is credited with making "huge" improvements in the viticulture and enology sections of the book.

In addition to the tightening up, there have been some deletions. The long "fine wine investment" appendix is the 2nd edition has been omitted, as have all previous entries on brandy and other forms of distillation. Among the 300 or so new entries re those on "délestage," "co-fermentation," "direct shipping," "globalization," "websites," and "la crise viticole," the last named being France's wine crisis of the early 21st century.

"Ice wine" remains an entry, but "icewine" has been added to reflect Canada's version of ice wine. "Screw caps" now have their own entry as opposed to a reference to "stoppers."

The first and second editions of *The Oxford Companion to Wine* were reviewed in *Wine East* on their release, and as was the case with the first two editions, the present one remains an indispensable resource. For anyone who wants to keep up to date with the world of wine, there is enough new information in this third edition to warrant its purchase. Needless to say, this book remains a constant temptation to simply browse!

[Tendril Hudson Cattell is co-editor / publisher of the outstanding bi-monthly, *Wine East: News of Grapes & Wine in Eastern America*. The above reviews appeared in the Nov-Dec 2007 issue. Visit their website for publication details and subscription information. www.wineeast.com. — Ed.]

MARINACCI, *cont. from p.2* —

even disgusted with California's mongrelized, lack-luster (so-called) varietals.

When MR wrote to Pellegrini again in August, he complained that he was finding it "hard to do any work at all." Much as they craved ardent attention, the Rays were increasingly beset by people calling up and wanting to visit the winery and vineyards, and of course to buy wines directly from them, since it was often difficult to obtain them elsewhere. Eager visitors who had read Melville's guidebook might daringly drive up the two and a half miles on the narrow, winding, unpaved, rutted, rock-strewn mountain road—dry and dusty in the summertime, muddy and dangerously slippery in the rainy season—to arrive unannounced. Most turned out to be "professors and professionals—a whole new group of wine buyers among this class of people." [8/8/55]

Often the Rays then felt that these brave souls couldn't be turned away. Sometimes they got so carried away with an unexpected rapport with the friends of friends or even strangers that the drop-in guests were invited to stay for lunch or dinner, or even—when an impromptu party might last far into the night—to bed down in the redwood cabin below the main house. The original dwelling on Mt. Eden, it served as a guesthouse now, with its one big room's large picture windows providing gorgeous views of the northern reaches of Santa Clara Valley and the Diablo Range beyond it, foothills below and beyond the mountain, and south San Francisco Bay.

Usually, though, the Rays managed to deflect importunate phone callers by telling them that, regretfully, this was an inopportune time to come up the mountain—and persuading them instead to drop by the Argonaut wine and liquor shop on Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road. They were assured that its friendly proprietor, Ace Perry, would delight in escorting them outside and then pointing up westward, far off into the distance, at Martin Ray's mountaintop winery and home visible from that spot. And then at the highest altitude they'd see the long, dark green shape of the redwood-forested crest of the Santa Cruz Mountains as it now headed northwestwardly, to end near San Francisco. (This segment Eleanor Ray contrived to call the *Chaîne d'Or*, attributing the picturesque "chain of gold" term to MR's French-born mentor, Paul Masson.) And when Ace ceremoniously poured a sample libation for them to taste, they'd all raise their glasses to toast the Rays, who'd said they would—figuratively at least—return the greeting from on high. Then, of course, Ace had a plentiful selection of Martin Ray wines on hand to offer them for purchase, to take away and store as someday-potable keepsakes of this very special occasion.

A Visitor from France

In mid-summer a social commitment began to dominate both MR's and ER's attentions, distracting them from focusing entirely on the Wine Quality Fight. It centered on the impending arrival of Burgundian wine man Jean Latour's daughter, Christiane—nicknamed "Chris." Her uncle, Louis Latour III, had earlier visited MR in the mid-1940s, with his young son, Louis IV, while MR's first vineyard on Mt. Eden was still under development. And it was Louis who, through Amerine's help, had arranged for MR's noteworthy purchase of new Burgundian oak barrels in 1954 (see #7).

The Rays naturally spotted a fine opportunity for indirectly promoting Martin Ray wines, and they began to go all-out in sponsoring Mlle. Latour's trip to the West Coast, to include, of course, a stay on Mt. Eden. After arriving in the U.S. Chris first visited with Latour-connected people on the East Coast. She even stayed in the Boston area with Eleanor's Harvard-based son Peter and his wife, Terry (who had already met her the year before when visiting France). They reported to the Rays on their houseguest's helpfully intended but annoyingly slapdash ways, thus forewarning them about what they too would likely experience.

MR and ER devised a busy wine-centered itinerary for Chris in California. "Little did she know that she's serving such noble ends as propaganda for quality," ER wrote her son Barclay in mid-July. Designated as Chris's escort and chauffeur in both the Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay areas, he accepted the assignment manfully. She'd arrive in L.A. first, in mid-July, and from there drive north with Barclay, to stay in Saratoga with the Rays for some days at their Mt. Eden home, from which she'd make forays with Barclay into other nearby wine regions.

Initially MR doubtless hoped for a romance to blossom between the two young people, leading inevitably to a marriage linking him through his adopted son to the Latours' nobly ancestral Burgundian winemaking lineage. And the field was apparently clear for this now, since Barclay's engagement to Maria, a young German law student whom he'd met in Pasadena, had recently been broken. He had courted her in Germany the previous summer, in a whirlwind manner counseled by his stepfather, who had even supplied the diamond engagement ring—which had once been his first wife Elsie's. (#6) Barclay, who had witnessed the debacle that had ensued when Peter brought his bride to Mt. Eden during the past holiday period (#8), had begun to realize that it might be impossible for him ever to marry a woman whom Rusty would judge as acceptable—or who herself could countenance his cunning interrogations or dominating and demanding

behavior, which worsened when he was inebriated. Therefore, this 23-year-old young man, though obligingly undertaking his assignment as Christiane's California escort, was wary about getting too close to her, or maybe to any girl—knowing how anxious Rusty was for him to marry and start producing progeny, in accordance with his master plan for establishing a wine dynasty on Mt. Eden.

The Rays, having appointed themselves Mlle. Latour's social directors, worked feverishly on arranging special events for her in both the Southland and the Bay Area. Wine writer Robert Balzer and gourmet delicatessen proprietor Harold Jurgensen offered to put on grand dinners in her honor. Barclay could introduce Chris to celebrity scientists at Caltech in Pasadena, such as Nobel Prize laureate Dr. Linus Pauling. Although notably a chemist, he was also (among his multiple scientific identities) a crystallographer; therefore he'd become the adviser on geologist Barclay's doctoral dissertation on "The Crystal Structure of Zuniite." (Several years later, LP would become his father-in-law; the very prospect had precipitated a new family crisis caused by Rusty's patriarchal ban on the marriage.)

But the most dazzling event by far was the gala dinner party hosted by the Rays' new actor friend Burgess Meredith. It would feature both Louis Latour and Martin Ray wines. Since he'd been immersed in both science and trekking around the Great Outdoors throughout his youth, Barclay, as Chris's dinner date, hadn't a clue about the identity of the other guests—all movie stars, directors, and producers, plus a few spouses.

Here's how MR summarized the occasion in a letter to Amerine.

Eleanor wrote all the publicity for the papers that covered all the Hollywood entertainment we arranged and yesterday Burgess sent us a whole big envelope of newspaper stories and photographs which delighted her. The dinner Burgess gave [Christiane] turned out to be a dinner from midnight to dawn and there were 20 celebrities there including The Merediths, McKays, Tyrone Power, Merle Oberon, the David Selznicks [actress Jennifer Jones], Marlon Brando, John English, Charlton Heston, and God knows who else. The columnists picked up the story and it ran all over the country and ended up on the national broadcast of international news, so wrote Mrs. Freddy Wildman of New York who heard it on her radio there. So it looks like we gave the house of Latour some very good publicity. Wines drunk were named and those made by the Latours were named. Eleanor was afraid they would cut them out as commercial but they did not. It has been a lot of fun. But now we must get back to work on our other work. Sales were last month the largest we have ever had. [8/4/55]

Later in the month, when writing to the editor of *California Wineletter*, Charles van Kriedt, MR declared that it had been "perhaps the greatest wine dinner in all California history." [8/30/55] Like his wife, he tended toward hyperbole.

Scheduled to arrive at the Rays' home on Mt. Eden in late July, Chris would take a number of excursions with Barclay, as arranged by the Rays. A crucial destination, of course, had to be UC Davis, where Mlle. Latour could meet important professors and tour the winemaking research facilities and the experimental and archival vineyard collections. Inevitably, the Rays tried to involve Maynard in the plan, naturally expecting him to host her visit. But a significant sour note came into the Rays' strenuous preparations when Amerine acted irritated, apparently objecting to MR's take-charge attitude. During Amerine's sabbatical a year earlier, he had spent time with the Latour family. Wishing therefore to arrange for himself this get-together directly with Christiane, he complained to the Rays about not having heard from her; instead, he was receiving many instructions and requests from Martin. After all, he had already established his own personal connections with the Latour family!

MR tried to explain the situation and thus mollify him. But he started first with a sly comment, based on a recent phone talk with Mlle. Latour: "Maynard, she must have her eye on you, the way she spoke of you!"

She hesitated to write to you, although she now very well may. You are a young bachelor [MA by then, though, was 44] and she is not only an eligible gal but she has said that she and her family think you a terrific personality and guy. It is one thing to write you or plan to write to you at some distant time but when it comes right down to doing it, it can well seem to a French gal a bit forward. She does very much want to see you. [7/10/55]

Apparently the Rays still held hopes that Maynard would someday feel motivated and self-confident enough to marry, forsaking the "confirmed bachelor" status he was settling into. Surely there was a chance for him yet ... if only he'd meet just the right sort of attractive woman! (MR's early depiction of his friend's insecurities vis-à-vis females is given in #2, in the January 2005 *WTQ* issue.)

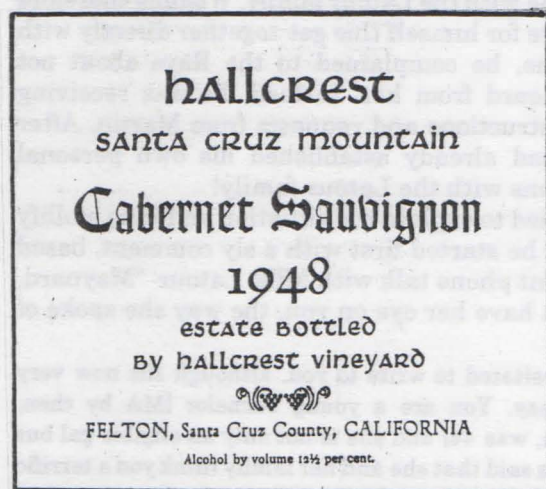
In the end, it had turned out that Maynard couldn't entertain Mlle. Latour at UC Davis after all, since he—a privileged member of the celebrated Bohemian Club—had signed up for a retreat session at the secluded Bohemian Grove that would take place during Chris's remaining available time in the San Francisco Bay area. So MR brought Mlle. Latour to Davis himself—having persuaded Dr. Albert Winkler to show her around the campus and provide

a luncheon at his home. This inconvenience furnished another occasion for a resentful MR outburst:

Look at the way you treated the Christiane matter! Telling me, her sponsor, that she must contact you, that she must contact Guyman [a UCD professor] on whom you tried to put her off! And all this after I had written you at length explaining our family relationships and why she naturally turned to us! You made it necessary for me to Drive all the way to Davis to see that she was properly entertained there. I said nothing then but I tell you now, I could hardly believe it. [7/26/55]

(As it turned out, Amerine later managed to make up for this absence of expected gallantry by dining with Chris Latour before her return to France.)

There were dinner parties galore on Mt. Eden. And to fill out some of the days, Barclay took Christiane to a few choice wineries. One was Hallcrest, near the town of Felton in the Santa Monica Mountains, where small amounts of pure Riesling were produced.



(Proprietor Chaffee Hall, an attorney, was one of the few California vintners MR approved of, though recognizing that this "gentleman" winegrower, quite unlike himself, rarely if ever did hands-on work in field or cellar.)

To set up visits to Napa and Livermore valleys MR had written friendly letters to three of the four wineries whose wines, winemaking, and wine marketing practices MR had specifically attacked in his two April letters to Gomberg, leading to discordant repercussions. (See # 9, 10, 11.) MR had made it clear that he himself wouldn't come—which doubtless made invitations likelier. Christiane and Barclay were graciously received at both Wentz and Beaulieu. Apparently, though, John Daniel of Inglenook declined to respond to MR's overture, since in his otherwise friendly letter he had reiterated previous charges about wrongly labeled, and therefore misleading, Inglenook wines.

MR wrote Amerine about these receptions, probably wanting to reassure his friend that once Quality Control came about, peace would surely descend on the California wine industry that he had recently roiled up.

Herman Wentz could hardly have been nicer to Barclay when he took Chris there. And the Marquise [de Pins, at Beaulieu] was most hospitable. Time will heal all things. Chris has told us of the hatred among the Burgundian growers generated by the fight there for their Appellation Controlee—which she says they fought to the bitter end. [7/26/55]

A few letters indicate that MR, though impressed with Mlle. Latour's surname and family connection, was now disillusioned about her potential as a future business ally. (He scarcely anticipated, anyway, the strong future entry of females into the wine business, nor would he have ever believed they could succeed as fine winemakers.) Writing to Peter on Chris's last day with them, while she and Barclay were off again to Napa Valley, he remarked on Chris's lack of genuine interest in wine or winegrowing; according to her, such apathy also characterized several young Latour boys, in line to take over the Latour enterprise someday. "They should be trained, and the interest should be developed even by now," MR remarked, disapprovingly. (He likened children to grapevines that required explicitly designed pruning and shaping so as to achieve satisfactory production at maturity. Already he was impatient for the time—in what he hoped was not the distant future—when he could start instructing and educating as yet unborn grandsons about winegrowing.) Then waxing philosophical, he commented, "Nothing is really what you think it is once you get inside of [a family]." [8/3/55] This had been true enough in his own birth family, and clearly Eleanor's as well; and in the coming year he'd again have to deal with an alarming rebellion starting up in his acquired family's ranks.

The farewell party put on for Christiane Latour at Mt. Eden included Burgess Meredith and visiting New York publisher Alfred Knopf. Hostess Eleanor kept steering the female guest of honor away from the kitchen. Although the young French woman always tried to help out, she had proved herself to be, as intra-familial correspondence shows, a domestic klutz—not to be trusted with fragile wine goblets and other prized dishware, and always apt to spill food and drink. As MR wrote to Peter right after her departure:

Chris has gone and we have left only the scorched earth! There was a final dinner last Sunday for her.... It was really a great success but we had to virtually tie Chris to her chair. Every time she started to get up I said, "No, don't touch the salad plates—Eleanor has no place

to put them as yet," etc. I could just see her sweeping them off the table with all the oil and vinegar going onto the rug! [8/4/55]

The Rays must have sighed with relief when their hosting responsibilities ended. But the last dinner party did provide a memorable scene that ER could recount much later:

Like Paul Masson, Martin usually dominated most talk at his table, possibly out of a sense of responsibility for keeping guests entertained. And he definitely resented it if someone cut in and tried to take over to any extent. (The only one ever to challenge him on this was Burgess Meredith.... As an actor he expected to occupy center stage and perpetually hold forth. After Martin had been talking for just too long, Burgess leaped to his feet and shouted, "Shut up! I want to talk!" Martin was stunned silly. But he thought it very funny, and let Burgess carry on. When this happened I glanced at Alfred Knopf, seated opposite Meredith, and he was so astonished that his eyeballs actually quivered!) [*Vineyards in the Sky*, 1st edition, 1993, p. 268]

Quality Control Gets Turned Over to UC Davis

During late June and July, while setting up and then supervising the social whirl he and Eleanor had arranged for Christiane Latour, Martin Ray was still negotiating with Louis Gomborg and, through him—he thought—with the Premium Wine Producers of California. He had also sent ample materials about his quality control agitations and proposals to Dr. Albert Winkler at UC Davis (see #12). The next step seems to have been agreed upon during a phone talk with Gomborg. Perhaps by then MR was weary of spending so much time and effort on the matter, particularly because of the waning possibility of getting prominent attention from the national press favorable to his grand QC cause (#13). It might not be so easy for him now to act upon his oft-expressed threat: to widely expose the member-wineries' deceptive practices should they reject quality control.

In mid-July Louis Gomborg had sent a note to Martin Ray that picked up on MR's prior suggestion that Dr. Winkler be summoned to present his ideas to the PWP about establishing new QC rules, since Amerine had balked at getting involved. (This too was presented in #13.)

Sorry for the delay in these advices. Contact has now been made with three of the four wineries concerned and they have all concurred in the suggestion that the matter be taken up with Dr. Winkler, as we discussed. (The fourth is away on a trip and won't be back for another 10 days or so but I am quite sure he would be inclined to go along with the other three.) Dr. Winkler, as you probably know, is regarded as the industry's chief advisor on such matters and I believe he would be

the logical starting point for initial consideration and evaluation of your plan. [7/15/55]

The news elicited soon afterwards this letter from MR to "My dear Lou":

I am tremendously gratified that you have brought about the successful conclusion of this long and bitter fight. Great credit is due you. You have now given the growers a face-saving solution and you have placed the plan exactly where it should be, in the hands of the University.... It had been my original suggestion that Dr. Amerine should be the man, but, as you say, Dr. Winkler is regarded as the industry's chief advisor on these matters, and there is no one to whom I would rather trust the future of the plan.

As I have told you, I will withdraw from any direct participation in whatever negotiations your group may have with the University. It is now all in your hands. But the interest of a great number of consumers and retailers has been aroused, and I shall not permit this interest to die. When you have finally worked out your plan they will be ready and anxious to support it as a commendable achievement. It is these consumers and retailers who must support the higher prices that must inevitably come as a triumphant result of a Quality Control plan. When your group can give them straight unblended authentic varietals they will be willing to pay well for them, and you will have gone a long way toward meeting any threat of imports. The great European growths will always hold their own, but the lesser ones will gradually be forced out of our market, which is as it should be.

Again, Lou, my heartfelt congratulations. [7/17/55]

So as things stood now, Maynard Amerine had been dropped as a major player in the future quality control negotiations with Gomborg's PWP group.

In a two-part letter that MR sent to Amerine toward the end of July there was this long paragraph. Obviously he assumed that Maynard had already received this Quality Control news from his colleague Albert Winkler.

As you no doubt know, the long and bitter fight to gain recognition of Quality Control has been won! Gomborg was able to get his [PWP] growers to agree to take up the plan for study and consideration at once if I would turn the entire matter over to the University at Davis. The growers thus have a means of saving face and the plan will be in the hands of the University where I had all along intended it should be when it came time to actually write the plan and adopt means of enforcement. I have had a long talk with Dr. Winkler and turned over to him the portfolio of material assembled on Quality Control, and he has agreed to meet with the Premium Wine Growers and work out with them whatever is to be agreed upon for improvements required. I think that the way it has worked out is best. Perhaps it could never have been done in any other way. You and I have

turned up too many ill feelings among growers in our efforts to expose mal practices [*sic*] and bring on reform, and they would never have accepted either of us as direct sponsors of Quality Control, I realize now. But I, for one, am happy to have contributed my part. And it will be apparent to all who have known your work that you have from the first fought for the same principals [*sic*], even though you and I did not work together. Now let us both lend Dr. Winkler and the Growers all our support wherever we can say a good word for what they are undertaking. [7/26/55]

A week earlier, MR had reported on the current conflict between him and Amerine in a letter to Boston wine retailer Russell S. Codman, showing he still hoped that ultimately his estranged friend would be brought back into preparing and instituting a viable QC plan.

An Iced-Over Friendship

Martin Ray's objections to Amerine's surly behavior over plans being made for Christiane Latour's impending visit had made just one more source of anger and disaffection between the two friends. But something even more drastic was going on with Amerine's connection with Martin Ray. In that summertime of 1955, both the epistolary chatter and squabbles in the letters from MR to Maynard Amerine, whether or not they were connected with 1955 Wine Quality Control Fight, went mostly unanswered.

Already in early May Amerine was realizing that he needed to separate himself both personally and professionally from the unseemly fracas that MR was intentionally stirring up. His position at UC Davis required maintaining good communications with wine industry people—especially a rapport with winemakers who worked with him on research projects. He began noticing that the respectful and usually friendly enough standing that he had enjoyed among such people was disappearing. His own oft-stated goal of getting quality standards finally accepted and enacted among the premium wineries was inevitably linked up now with Martin Ray's current agitations.

Here was the crux of the dispute between the two men: Did the goal, or end—finally introducing quality-control rules and enforcement procedures into the making and marketing of the wine industry's better wines—justify the rough tactics, or means, that Martin Ray was now forcefully employing, even threatening to blackmail reputations, to bring it all about? Amerine thought not. And he kept saying so to MR, who refused to consider, let alone countenance, that circumspect point of view.

So at some point during the barrage of letters from MR, Amerine told him over the telephone, that their

long friendship now had to be suspended. He said he felt distraught that the winery people were now ostracizing him. Here is how Eleanor Ray in her memoir/biography of Martin Ray later told of the shocking body blow to the two men's long-enduring friendship

Always in the past Maynard had backed Martin's efforts to perfect California's wines, providing vital moral support and technical advice. Now, in the fracas Martin had created over trying to induce the "premium" wineries to accept quality-control measures, Maynard evidently felt that the vintners' group considered him to be in collusion with Martin Ray. So one day Maynard telephoned Martin to say that all of them had stopped speaking to him. Consequently, he must put their relationship "on ice." Martin was thunderstruck, for he had not intended to involve Maynard personally in the conflict. [*Vineyards in the Sky*, 1st edition, 1993, p. 372] After that, things could never again be the same between them.

For some reason, MR felt motivated to compose an addendum to the letter to Maynard that he sent on July 26th (partially quoted in the previous subhead section). Typed on a separate page so that it could be private and more reproving. At the top MR had handwritten "NO COPIES TO ANYONE."

My conversation with Lou Gomberg and with Dr. Winkler today, as covered by my letter to you on that subject today, clearly establishes that *you have no grounds for ideas expressed to me today*. [Emphasis added to indicate that this surely was the date when Amerine declared his intention to put their friendship "on ice"; the earlier part of the letter had been written beforehand.] Everyone involved knows that you refused to support me and if this bothers you[,] you have no one to blame but yourself. I told you repeatedly that you should be the one making the fight and I literally begged you to alter your stand. Your attitude should have been that taken by Dr. Winkler. And I ask you again to forget your hurts and support the cause you have so long championed. Actually the industry would no more have accepted you than me, and for precisely the same reasons, and you are naive if you think so. I should have realized this just as you should have. But you should be proud of all you have done that has nettled some of the growers for you were right. I am proud of the part I have played, and the feelings of those who have opposed me bother me not at all. Actually they are turning, slowly perhaps, to a new and healthy feeling of respect for me.... However else some may feel about you, all respect you. Isn't that better than sticky sugar drops? I say that we have both accomplished a great deal and I believe it mad for you to say you are ruined or that I have in any way altered anyone's feelings about you. You are not well, you made a mistake and now you are acting like a child,

exaggerating [*sic*] the ills of your position, denying the friendships which are your most valuable possessions and blaming it all upon somebody else....

And now I tell you, Maynard, I shall continue to regard you as our dear friend. If you wish to be hostile you have turned against the basic philosophy you have supported for 20 years and I think you should have rest and reconsider. [7/26/55]

There's a curious document in the collection of the Amerine-MR/ER correspondence in the Ray Papers at UC Davis: the *original* letter quoted above. There are fold marks, showing it had gone through the mail in an envelope. And upon the left margin of this letter someone with a pen had set down a succession of question and exclamation marks, increasingly in multiples (e.g., !?! and ???)—and identical to ones MA had previously made in handwritten postcards and letters he'd sent to the Rays. So these were *his* comments on the contents of MR's tell-off letter. He'd responded to it only in this way, sending it back to its source—for what good would ever come from any arguing back against these professional and personal attacks?

And several weeks later, when MR wrote again to Dr. Winkler at Gomborg's behest, delegating to him the resolution of the controversial situation he had engendered, he made no explicit suggestion of enlisting Amerine as well in the work ahead.

Lou Gomborg has asked me to confirm to you the understanding between us relative to the proposed Quality Control which his Premium Winegrowers group has agreed to consider under your sponsorship. I asked Lou to write you a letter inviting you to appear before his group for a discussion of your ideas on Quality Control. He agreed to do so. It was my idea and understanding that this might be the beginning of a series of meetings between you as a study of the subject proceeded supported by University research and a practical consideration of the position of the growers.

Lou tells me he would like for his group your opinion and evaluation of Quality Control as you visualize it.

My interest in the matter has been turned over to you. All of you concerned know the suggestions I have made. I purposely confined and limited them because of the circumstances involved and to facilitate the agreement which we have reached. I wish to make it clear that beyond this I intend to support fully whatever you may propose, having the fullest confidence that a maximum good will be achieved for all. I believe that the University is the only logical and qualified authority. I think it best that you proceed in the undertaking without consultation with me further. And I propose the same to the growers. They have my assurance herewith that I will accept and support all that agreed between you.

I presume that any written reports will be available not only to the members of Lou's group but to prospective

members as well. In such case I would like to receive copies of any such reports as I have said that on the day Quality Control becomes a reality I will request membership in the group accepting it.

It is my hope that within a year the agreed upon controls may be written and accepted, in which case it would not be too much to hope for a wide line of varietals being available in the market, all under the label of QUALITY CONTROL within five years. With this in mind I will shortly advise those who have supported and followed my efforts to bring this about that it is now all in the hands of the University and the growers ... and that I have these hopes. I refer to a large group both within and without the actual trade.

Thanking you for your sincere consideration of all involved— [8/11/55]

Finally feeling relieved now of constantly and ardently manning his chosen battle post, Martin Ray could begin devoting far more attention again to his beloved vineyards, where the grapes were fast ripening. The sugar and acid in the Pinot Noir grapes were ready for initiating the Madame Pinot champagne cuvée.

In a letter to Angelo Pellegrini written three days earlier, MR reported how the PWP members had in effect denied a place for the eminent UC Davis enologist in any discussion or planning for quality control.

Because of Amerine's stand over the years against the very things I have been trying to eliminate, the growers specified it must be Dr. Winkler, Amerine's boss, with whom they would work. I fear Maynard has been hurt, but I guess he will get over it. [8/8/55]

MR was also guessing—hoping—that the ice treatment that Amerine had applied to their once warm friendship could get melted away over time, helped by some assiduous letter writing in which he'd try to avoid any mention of the QC battle.

An Inconvenient and Suspect Intrusion

The Rays wanted to believe, of course, that Maynard's putting their friendship "on ice" meant only a temporary hiatus in their intimate relations with him; that when all the brouhaha over quality control quieted down, they'd be back together as the old, comfortably familiar threesome. So for the remainder of 1955 from time to time they sent Amerine regular reports on their activities, asked questions, and issued invitations, hoping to eventually lure him back into their lair. Following a one-pager in August, MR still reined himself in; his letters to MA were limited to two pages each in September, October, and November. They may, though, have sometimes been accompanied by copies made of other people's letters that praised the Martin Ray wines.

In September MR's letter contained two paragraphs reporting on the ambitious young local winemaker, Dan Wheeler, who was farming a vineyard property in the Santa Cruz Mountains, owned by Dr. Schermerhorn, Chaffee Hall's physician brother-in-law, and who was now bonding his winery. MR said he had previously provided Wheeler with instructions on proper vine pruning, but it hadn't been properly carried out. Also, as a vintner who loathed encountering any traces of sulfur in wine and refused to use it as a sterilizer and stabilizer, MR reported this of Wheeler to Maynard:

He is a nut on sulphur. And despite his very casual and quiet manner he is a very determined character, with a wife backing him up who is more determined.... The last time he was here he told me our Madame Pinot Champagne has too much sulphur in it! Since it could not possibly have any detectable amount in it in springtime, I challenged him but with no apparent success. So I asked him to ask you how small an amount you can detect in a wine. [Minuscule amounts of sulfur in MR's wines could have come from his having sulfur-dusted immature grapes in springtime to prevent mildew, or from his having burned sulfur sticks within barrels to sterilize them for reuse, though they'd be well rinsed out.]

Over the years, MR frequently disparaged the wines, practices, and integrity of other vintners, whether well established ones or young aspirants. So it's nice to see more generosity of spirit here in his encouraging Maynard to meet with Dan Wheeler: "I rather believe he will listen to you if you are so inclined.... I would like very much to see the Wheelers make a go of that thing and I hope that you can steer them where they need help." [9/9/55]

In the following month MR's letter to Amerine started out with this:

We had a very good vintage, getting the Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon off with full sugar and high acidity. And the Chardonnay, too, seems very good. Sales continue splendid and it is all we can do to get the orders out, now with Will [MR's nephew] gone. You know, he went back into the Army! His brother Jim finally got his PhD, I probably told you. [Earlier, before he married Eleanor, MR had hoped that these two sons of his oldest brother Al (Alpheus), who as boys and young men had periodically worked for him, at both Paul Masson and Mt. Eden, would eventually take active roles in his winemaking enterprise.] Anyway, Barclay is coming home this week end with a friend so that we can have a Champagne bottling.

What he then told Maynard in detail was weirdly disquieting.

But what I am writing you about is a long inspection that we have been having. The Inspector just left and I thought I should write you about it. As a result of my

Quality Control activities a special inspector was sent down with instructions to tear everything apart and find everything possible. They proceeded on the assumption that since all the wines made before the Kew period were owned by Ray & Company and they were sold to a newly formed corporation, Martin Ray, Inc., the latter and present Company has no right to Vintage any of them. [These business arrangements, initiated by MR in 1949 with the Kew family because of Elsie's illness, were discussed in the July and October 2005 issues of *WTQ*.] But I was able to establish that they were sold in original containers and were not in any way treated and so it was I who saved the right to vintage them. They found that I am overfilling our bottles, as I have always known, and I rather disarmed them by writing them a letter on the spot admitting the practice as far back as 1936 and giving reasons and calling attention that several inspectors have in the past discussed this with me. I asked that they let me pay a tax on the sales during the life of this Corporation, on the few cc's overage shown by measuring the actual fill. It comes to perhaps \$9. They set up a little Chem Lab in the kitchen and ran alcohols on all our wines. It cost us a fortune on so many small lots.

No doubt when MR conveyed the next piece of news to Maynard he appreciated the irony involved.

But they could find over 14% in only one wine—the Amerine Cuvee of the Pinot Noir 1951 vintage. [This wine resulted from Maynard's having undertaken to vintage, with novice Peter's assistance, MR's very ripe, high-Brix Pinot noir grapes during the Rays' wedding trip that September, as told toward the end of #4.] They made a great deal of talk about this, despite the fact there was only three barrels of this particular wine. And samples were taken to their Chemist in San Francisco and today the inspector was at the same subject again. He took the card and I had not mentioned your name to him in any way. Only I saw him make note of your name. Nothing has been said about you or why your name is on the card. After all, there is no reason to attach any importance to it. But it may arise and I wanted you to know that they have the card and have made note of your name. I am to have a hearing. They say I should have cut the sugar with water! I told them I would not discuss it before the hearing.

He had still more to say that he thought would interest Maynard.

After a long investigation they have been able to find nothing to pin on us other than the insignificant tax that may be levied on me for overfilling and the three barrels of 1951 Pinot Noir which showed 14% alcohol. And on the last, I have a previous inspector's word that their chemist had never yet found a wine analysed as 14%—he always reports excessive alcohols on table wines merely as 13.9 plus. And the inspector changed

the card to so read in his own handwriting. I still have that card! But they trumped up something that may cost me about \$2,000. They are arbitrarily determining that, since Ray & Company made certain of our present (pre Kew wines) inventory and it was transferred to the new company, Martin Ray, Inc., this constitutes being in the business of buying and selling wines not made by us. For this I had no license. And the special stamp tax amounts to \$250 per year for conducting such a business. This, with penalties, amounts to about \$2,000!

MR felt confident now in identifying for Amerine the person behind this time-consuming and costly intrusion into his cellar and the wines it contained in barrels and bottles.

The inspector told me on the side that his investigation came as a result of a letter written by Frank Schoonmaker to his friend John Huntington, the Deputy Chief of the A&T Unit [Alcohol Tax and Tobacco Dept] in Washington! Perhaps knowing this is not worth \$2,000 exactly. But it is always good to know what brings on evil acts. Now, in case I am asked to explain what your name on the card means, I will say that it was an honorary thing—I was not well enough at the time to have the vintage, you were visiting us and directed our son briefly in the making of that small token vintage. If you wish me to say otherwise, I will. [10/23/55]

(Schoonmaker's officious and venomous letter to MR sent earlier, in July, and the latter's forceful reply to it, were covered in #13.)

It's intriguing to find the apparent derivation of this investigation in a letter that Eleanor wrote to her son Peter almost a year later. Dan Wheeler with his wife and four children had just visited the Rays for dinner on Mt. Eden—finally departing at 3:30 a.m. ER first mentioned that Rusty would again be buying Chardonnay grapes from Wheeler.

Next year our own Chardonnay will be coming in sufficient quantity. But we're not telling them [the Wheelers] they are for our own use, but for a friend. We can't have Wheeler telling people in the industry we get any grapes from him.

ER's comment shows how MR didn't ever want other people—whether vintners, wine writers, or customers—to know that some of his wines actually were made from grapes that he had not grown, despite his claims that they'd originated in his own vineyards. Moreover, she then gave an instance of why. "Incidentally," she wrote, "it was Wheeler who started all that trouble we had over excess alcohol, etc."

The Rays heard from Dan Wheeler that in the previous year, when he invited various winery owners to his place and given out samplings of wines made from his vineyard grapes, Robert Mondavi, who had been there, asked to take some Martin Ray wine away with him to "analyze." Having then judged it

high in alcohol, and doubtless still angry over MR's attacks on Krug's and other wineries' blended varietals, he turned the wine over to Frank Schoonmaker, probably knowing he'd do something drastic with it.

... and Wheeler says Frankie-the-Schoon [the Rays' epithet for Schoonmaker] simply went wild!! This is just what he wanted, wrote the gov't. a letter on this, stirred up all our trouble. So you see this is how a person can cause one hell of a lot of trouble. Wheeler may or may not have intended this, but he buddies around with Mondavi, Goulet of Almaden ... and it's my own personal opinion that he is no friend of ours, is the kind of fellow who is trying to get in good with these more established men and wineries by feeding them with material they can use about us. [9/5/56]

No wonder MR often declared that he was singled out for persecution from organizations or individuals in the wine industry. After all, sometimes paranoid inclinations and ideation can be based on adverse real-life experiences.

Disillusionment Sets In

Now that the responsibility for discussing the desirability and logistics of setting up a quality control plan was going to be handled by the University of California at Davis, in the person of Dr. Albert Winkler, MR thought he could relax more in the back seat. Still, there was something disquieting about what Louis Gomborg had written to him when wishing to clarify the circumstances of the willingness of members of the Premium Wine Producers of California to summon Winkler.

In mid-August Gomborg sent a rather cautionary, and even foreboding, note to MR, letting him know that only four winery proprietors or their representatives, *not* the entire PWP membership, had invited Dr. Winkler of UC Davis to present ideas for a QC program.

Dr. Winkler is most welcome to attend and address any of the meetings of the Premium Wine Producers of California, on the subject of quality control or any other subject of his choosing. The group of four wineries (BV, Inglenook, Krug and Wente) to which your original remarks [*i.e.*, the April and May letters] were addressed is the group that confirmed my suggestion that the matter be referred to Dr. Winkler for study. I have no official connection with these four wineries. Our relations have been and are entirely informal, which brings me to the second point: The Premium Wine Producers of California, as such, has not as yet considered your plan, nor has it had any part in any of the negotiations up to this time. This is the organization of which I am the Secretary-Treasurer. [8/15/55]

Though no longer in the QC forefront, inevitably MR kept wondering about what was currently

happening to advance his great cause. When he called Dr. Winkler in early autumn and learned that he hadn't been asked yet to come to a PWP meeting at which he could present his ideas about creating and enforcing quality control within the membership ranks, thereby to move toward growing, making, and marketing better and honestly labeled varietal wines. At this, MR concluded that he had been cleverly outmaneuvered and hoodwinked by the Premium Wine Producers—or, even more likely, the California Wine Institute. Not only did it provide the meeting place, but it also had become the new organization's sponsor. It was apparent to MR that for all Gomberg's clear personal interest in and probable approval of his ideas for quality control (per his earlier letters to MR and MR's reports on their phone conversations), LG himself was basically a hireling; he was not empowered to force anything upon the membership that they didn't want.

So by late October, MR was sharing his downright suspicions with Angelo Pellegrini. And after giving him news about dismal decisions recently made among wine producers, he railed against the actions of persons in the wine industry who'd brought about the government inspectors' recent intrusion and fines—which repeated similar adverse experiences of his at Masson years before, and also set down what he'd report to Amerine on the following day.

The growers double crossed me. After I turned the Quality Control portfolio over to Dr. Winkler, they stalled and stalled and have done exactly nothing. But they have, through the Technical Advisory Committee of the Wine Institute voted unanimously to permit wines to be vintaged even though they not be 100% of a given year, just as varietals can be called whatever variety they may use to make up 51% of the wine! They think they have me licked, but they haven't. Shortly I shall make a further move. In the mean time, just in case you think they are not both malicious and determined to fight my efforts for reform, they have caused the Government to fall upon me in determined search for some cause they can use to bring me to grief....The inspector admitted to me he had instructions to "Find anything he could that I am doing that they can bring against me." What they do not know is that they cannot find anything beyond trivia and I am able and prepared to hold my own. When I fought the growers before they did exactly the same thing and it went on for two years. Until we can remove the criminal element from our industry, this thing will be turned on anyone that opposes them.

Then MR voiced the same bilious opinions about the other wine men he'd begun expressing much earlier to both Julian Street and Maynard Amerine—and added a tantalizing condemnatory tidbit.

It is interesting to realize that the public in general when viewing our growers think of them as such fine men. Little do they know them. These chaps with which I am concerned are hard babies and they stop at nothing. In my recent research into the history of one of them I learned that he had been caught red handed putting into one of the best known and most respected California brandies he makes a substance forbidden by law but which gives it the taste and nose of an older spirit. [ER later scribbled something illegible in the margin that identified the man.] He was forbidden ever again to set foot on a bonded premise. But he got out of it and no one ever heard of it. He was the same man who had used a deadly poison to preserve his wines and was caught at that some years ago. My information came from the Government Inspector who had all the facts.

Well, it's a great life, if you don't weaken! [10/22/55]

One is always apt to wonder to what degree MR's persistent paranoia distorted his perception and reporting. However, there surely is some factual truth in what he had written now to both Amerine and Pellegrini, and also told other people at this and other times about various industry abuses and persecutions.

André L. Simon

On the same day that MR composed the above letter to Pellegrini, indicating that he might be launching another one of his vehement volleys, MR wrote to the influential international wine authority André Simon, letting him know of the stalemate, or rather reversal, in QC progress.

Our very successful vintage now being over, I can answer your welcome letter of September 12, and give you a recent report on the status of my Quality Control fight. When last I wrote you I felt gratified at having turned over all material to Dr. Winkler of the University of California, as proposed by leaders of the Premium Wine group through Louis Gomberg.... However, after all seemed promisingly settled, and I wrote Gomberg congratulating him on the part he had played in bringing this about, he wrote me on August 15th a letter clearly exposing the insincerity of the group's leaders, for as you know from copies of my previous letters sent you, I at no time addressed my industry proposals to them individually but to them as a group.

So you see their move was merely a tactical maneuver pulled so as to get me removed from the picture, and thus, with pressure off, they could rest assured that the matter was sidestepped. They have made no contact with Dr. Winkler whatsoever, and thus he has not been asked officially to work out any Quality Control plan or do anything.

But you can be sure that I don't intend to let the matter

rest here. Shortly I shall give them another blast, if the inactivity continues, and send copies to the trade and to all individuals on my list interested in fine wine.

I know you would be interested to hear of the industry's latest effort, through the Wine Institute, to degrade our standards. It was proposed that it no longer be necessary to have a vintage wine 100% from a given year, but allow a small percentage of blend. This proposal met with no objections whatsoever, and it was given to a sub-committee [the TAC] to work out. Now, I suppose, it will become law before long. At this same meeting they turned down a suggestion that the minimum percentage of varietals in a vintage table wine be increased from 51 to 75 percent; the subcommittee after discussion reported that the wine industry was not ready at this time for such a move. Through all the years of California viticultural history they are never ready to move forward, but are always ready to go backwards—and instantly! [The meeting referred to was that of the Wine Institute's Technical Advisory Committee, on 5 August 1955, and MR mentioned the same two decisions in his letter to Pellegrini.]

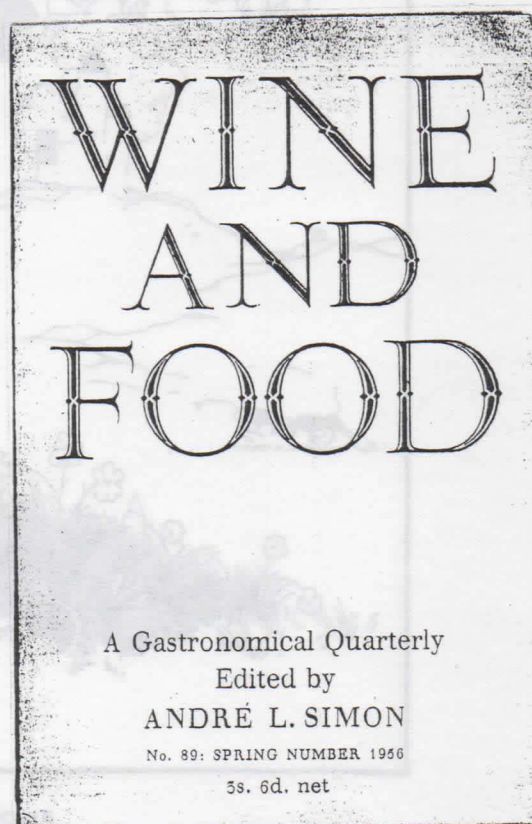
MR now set down what he hoped André Simon would do, and said why. As progenitor of the Wine and Food Society, with multiple active branches in various cities, Simon's support of quality control measures in an article to be published in a future issue of the *Wine and Food* newsletter might work wonders in rousing wine connoisseurs to join MR's embattled stance.

I tell you what goes on here in the hopes that you as leader of the largest group of wine enthusiasts in the world can make your magazine readers conscious of the tremendous pressures being exerted over the years to devalue all label names, standards and practices in the California industry. For it is only through public education and public demand that our evils will be eliminated. Most of our wineries still are run by Prohibition's bootleggers or their descendants, and they reflect still the thinking of that era, when the whole idea was to get by with all they could. They all drink spirits, not wine, and not having any idea of what a fine wine should taste like they assume in their ignorance that nobody else can judge, either. [Since MR didn't socialize with other winery owners and winemakers, this wholesale assertion, of course, seems absurdly unjustifiable.] Their entire efforts are expended in making quality claims, spending vast sums to this end. And unfortunately they have gotten by with their false claims for the most part, for many years. But I am greatly encouraged by the great number of people interested in learning about wines, today, and really believe that we are going to make progress in eliminating these evils, as more and more people become aware of the situation, and demand better wines.

Some concerted stand must be taken against malpractices in the industry, by recognizable groups of people. So far, for twenty years, I've never found one individual to stand with me in a fight for quality, believe it or not. [MR had clearly given up on Amerine by now. But also Amerine, as he'd pointed out to him, was not "of the industry."] In the late '30s I hired a group of lawyers to fight personally against the proposal to allow champagne to be made by the bulk process, but lost the fight. Now the law allows them to say "Naturally fermented in bulk"! Of course our sparkling wine over here should not even be called champagne, I always avoided it by merely labeling mine "Extra Dry" but soon a law was enacted making it compulsory to label any sparkling wine champagne. Gradually, like termites, these fellows eat away the meaning of all terms, all designations of quality, unless we put on a really effective war against them. [10/22/55]

With or without any help from André Simon, Martin Ray was going back into the battle for wine quality control as its fitting standard bearer.

[To be continued]



[*Wine and Food* was published quarterly by The Wine and Food Society over a 37-year period. Simon was editor for the first 116 numbers, from 1934–1962. The journal is a masterly archive of prominent wine and food writers of the day. — Ed.]



[UNDER THE CORK TREE]

"It was his favorite tree and he would sit in its shade all day and smell the flowers."

FROM: *The Story of Ferdinand* (See "News & Notes," p.3)