



WAYWARD TENDRILS QUARTERLY

Vol.18 No.2

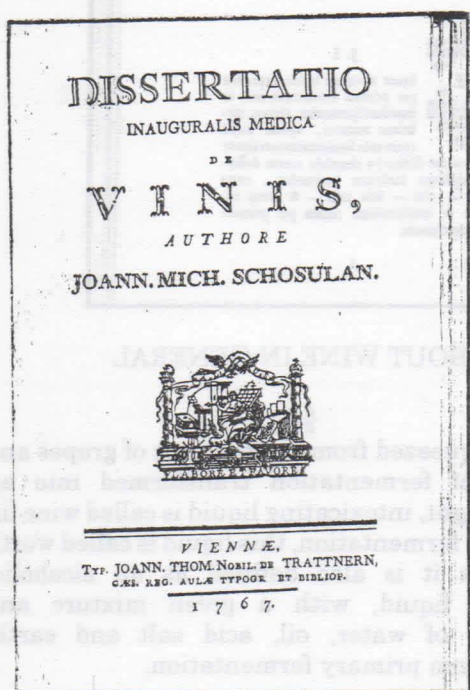
A WINE BOOK COLLECTOR'S SOCIETY

April 2008

Dissertatio Inauguralis Medica de Vinis by Joann. Mich. Schosulan (Vienna, 1767)

Now Translated into English for the First Time:
With an Introduction and a Note on the Translator
by Erik Skovenborg

[Danish physician Erik Skovenborg is a long-time collector and student of "wine & health" literature, from the earliest days to the present. He has compiled an exceptional collection and database of these works, and periodically, pulls out a special title to share with fellow Tendrils. The text that follows, the first English-language printing of this early work, was translated from its original Latin by Dr. Skovenborg's friend, Piero Perron. — Ed.]



Introduction

Medieval medical teaching started as a "studium generale" including Theology, Canon and Civil Law, Arts, Medicine and other lawful faculties. Some of the early masters may have professed medicine, but, at first, teaching was sporadic and probably linked more with astrology

than with clinical practice. Most doctors were trained through apprenticeships, receiving several years of training before they were officially considered physicians. The access to textbooks of anatomy and medicine was the preserve of educated doctors who knew Latin. Surgeons were lower ranked in status, being professional barbers in the vast majority of cases, people who had no classical education and no access to university and scientific works. In 1687, the great scientist Isaac Newton published his *Principia Mathematica* in Latin; during the 18th and 19th centuries, Latin remained the language of dissertations and classical scholarship.

A doctorate in medicine was granted by the European universities. Little is known of the regulations for this degree, but initially a thesis written in Latin was demanded. The first recorded M.D. at St. Andrews University, Scotland, is John



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- BOOK PROVENANCE by Nina Wemyss
- VINTAGE GHOST STORY by G. Unzelman
- WOMEN & WINE by Liz Thach
- REVIEWS / BURGUNDY BOOKS by Fielden
- BOOKS & BOTTLES by F. McMillin
- WINE TALES by W. Johnson
- MARTIN RAY ET AL, cont. by B. Marinacci



Arbuthnot, who submitted his thesis (*Theses Medicae de Secretione Animalis*) to St. Andrews in 1681. The subjects of medieval medical dissertations were often related to anatomy and chemistry, but few were topics of direct importance to the medical care of the sick. One such small tract appeared in 1761 in Vienna, *De Inventu Novo*, in which Leopold Auenbrugger (1722-1809) described percussion as a means by which the alterations of the thoracic organs could be observed in living patients. Six years later, his fellow townsman, Joann. Mich. Schosulan, found it "indeed very difficult to choose the subject" for his "inaugural address" and doubtful he should take "the subject of wines, considering that few people have been dealing with wine in their works." The topic of wine, however, was not that uncommon. A thesis on Hungarian wine (*Dissertatio Physico-Medica Inauguralis de Vino Hungarico Soproniensi*) was submitted by Friderici Lüdii (physician in Basel) in 1715, and in 1758 Dr. Joannis Gowdie published his *Dissertatio Medica Inauguralis de Vino* in Edinburgh.

Schosulan's *Dissertatio Inauguralis Medica de Vinis*, a small octavo booklet of 55 pages, devotes the first XXVII paragraphs to Wine in General, then De Vino Hungarico §§ XXVIII-XXXVIII, De Vinis Italicis §§ XXXIX-XL, De Vinis Galliae §§ XLI-XLIII, De Vinis Hispaniae §§ XLIV-XLV, De Vinis Germaniae §§ XLVI-LII and De Vinis Austriacis §§ LIII-LV. Paragraphs LVI-LXXX elaborate on the medical virtues of wine in general while paragraphs LXXXI-XCI give directions on the medical use of wine from the various countries. The dissertation ends with five paragraphs on De Artificiis (Vina Emendandi) describing how wines were "corrected" with examples as "the pernicious suggestion to sweeten wine with lead acids." For your enlightened reading, Schosulan's first twenty-two paragraphs are here presented.

The Translation of *Dissertatio de Vinis*

INAUGURAL MEDICAL ADDRESS ABOUT WINES,

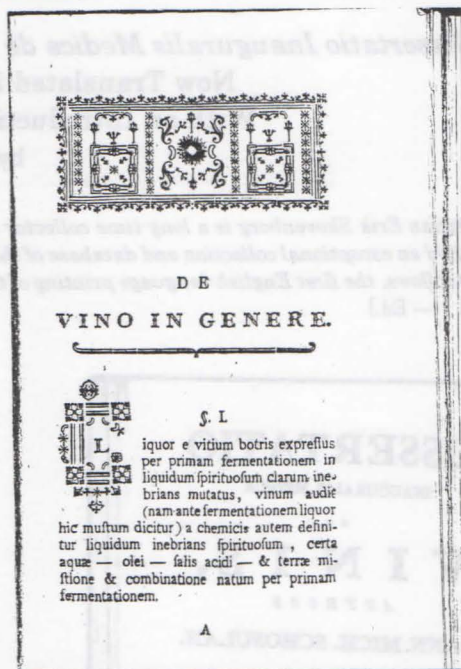
BY
JOHN MICHAEL SCHOSULAN.

VIENNA

PRINTER JOHN THOMAS Nobleman of TRATTNERN
1767

I found it indeed very difficult to choose the subject for the inaugural address; as a matter of fact, about what can one dissertate, a candidate of medicine, lacking solid experience until now? Undoubtedly

many subjects occurred to me, of which some were already dealt with by such men whose footprints nobody is allowed to follow, unless he wants to ruin his reputation. Other subjects indeed looked so hard to explore it was as if I wanted take upon my shoulders an excessive burden. Doubtful, I took the subject of wines, considering that few people have been dealing with wine in their works. If some public success occurs then I shall have achieved my end; in any case, I hope to distinguish myself by offering to other people with sharper minds the pretext for investigating this matter more exactly in the future. Stay healthy!



ABOUT WINE IN GENERAL

§ I

The liquid squeezed from the bunches of grapes and by means of fermentation transformed into an alcoholic, bright, intoxicating liquid is called wine (in effect, before fermentation, this liquid is called wort). By chemists it is also defined as an alcoholic, intoxicating liquid, with a given mixture and combination of water, oil, acid salt and earth, originated from primary fermentation.

§ II

This liquid, as defined above, is widely used by us, the Germans and by almost all the inhabitants of the Earth and rightfully because, after water, wine is a beverage very much appropriate to our nature; in fact, wine also has advantages over water, since not only is it humidifying and thirst quenching but also, at the same time, it feeds and fortifies the body if

consumed in the right quantity; not to mention all the things which, for the merit of different wines, are used in medicine; I will expand later on other wine attributes; now only I would like to say that this liquid, if used in an appropriate quantity can infer wonderful effects, but that, nevertheless, if we abuse this nectar, it can produce amazing harms.

§ III

These good things depend on the excellence of the wine, which can be defined in two ways; one is made by the right proportion of the constituent elements and by the abundance of the alcoholic part, the other is made by observation, which presents the different medical properties of the different wines, whereby the same wine can be good and profitable for one but harmful to another, even if our ancestors wanted to recall the good characteristics with the phrase CST [in Latin, COS: Color, Odor, Sapor]; as a matter of fact the wine proves its excellence with Colour, Smell and Taste. To which the school of Salerno is adding others, stating: the wine is evaluated on the basis of smell, colour, brightness and taste or also: if you want good wines, these five things are praised in them: strength, good appearance, fragrance, freshness and seasoning. But we find few wines with all these characteristics.

§ IV

Considering that wine can usually produce many beneficial effects and many damages in our body, I have decided to describe the elements which are constituting the wine, to explain the defects of harmful elements and how to remedy them, to investigate the methods of conservation and, together and individually, the factors constituting good wine, eliminating defects or reducing them. In one other chapter, I will relate about the great many kinds of wine everybody knows and, after adding their history, finally I will talk about medical properties, not only of the wine generally, but also of the preparation.

§ V

Wine, investigated according to the standards of chemical science, has the following constituents, exactly: water, alcohol, acid salt, oil and earth; of which the right union and combination will produce the excellence of wine; because really if one or other element is in excess the wine can't be defined as good; it is necessary to consider attentively the remedies for the defects that occur this way, remedies which, if used properly, can lead to a very perfect nectar, everywhere perfect for its excellence. And, considering that wine defects are found in the constituents of wine itself, we must consider the grapes and the wort elaborated from them.

§ VI

We refer now to the first element highlighted by chemical analysis, water, for which wines either for the characteristics of wort (excess of the watery part) are faulty in the same way: the watery wort does not produce generous wine or also if a wine, recommended to everybody for its generous nature by the avaricious and eager-for-profit innkeepers, diluted with water, is weakened.

§ VII

The correction of the excess of this constituent can be tried in many ways; it can be made partly in the grapes, partly in the wort, partly in the liquid already fermented. As this defect must be hidden in the grapes themselves, when the juice has a quantity of watery part higher than the right level, it is advisable, before ripening, to break the ends of the roots, in this way the grapes are deprived of the otherwise plentiful water (even if this advice requires great effort and free time), or to leave the grapes exposed to the sun for a longer time and to harvest them later, but we have to report that this can't happen in our regions because the grapes can be attacked by the moist and colder autumn storm instead of being corrected by the required drying up.

§ VIII

One other method to remedy this defect could happen in the wort; if the wort is too watery. The experience suggests to remove the abundant water through evaporation but there are few suppliers who don't avoid this suggestion because doing this they would fill many pots less. Another suggestion is to prepare the wort extract from different pots because, distributed in remaining pots in equal proportion, it favours the exit of the watery part. A very good method, I think, really will be to throw the watery wort on better and more generous bases; this method is used by many people with a very good result.

§ IX

If wine is faulty for water excess, it is advised by many people to modify the alcohol of wine by infusion; what happens next, I leave the judgment to the chemical experts, as other people, starting from completely different advice, say that, if the wine alcohol is infused, we can't hope anything good to happen, and that alcohol can't be mixed with the remaining constituents, unless during fermentation, and for this reason they made experiments which proved that wines are smelling of alcohol if corrected this way, but it is not my proposal to settle a chemical controversy.

§ X

Lastly, the advice is given to freeze the wine's watery excess, an operation moreover called concentration.

This method was invented by chance, because only the water is freezing while usually the other constituents go to one or other side if the cask is tied up strongly enough by iron rings and is filled by wine, leaving some space empty and exposed continuously to cold or the vessel is closed in a faulty way. So, after exposing the vessel to cold for 5 or 6 days, the frozen water goes in the outside part of the vessel and, in the middle, a very concentrated and very good wine is held, which comes out after piercing the ice. It is worth noting that this fact must principally be understood about generous and very old wine, that if only the water is converted into ice, after removing it, the active and alcoholic constituent is concentrating more. About that we have many significant examples in many locations in France. Certainly near Geneva there are wines called "Franginer" of a very healthy nature. During one year and in the winter they are exposed to open air in vessels, because the local inhabitants think that the roughness is corrected and the alcoholic content is improved by the cold vehemence.

§ XI

The second constituent is the acid salt which, if abundant in wine, is corrected in many different ways, dictated by chemists. Anyway, anything can be referred about this subject, but the greatest remedy is ageing, which is well known to the Austrians; from everyday experience we learn that wine sweetens by ageing. About the pernicious suggestion to sweeten wine with lead acids I will speak elsewhere.

§ XII

Oil is defined as a third constituent. Can wines have defects because of oil? To many people this seems incredible, and rather people think that if wine should abound in some part, it has to abound in oil and, convinced by common sense, they think the more oil there is in wine, the more generous is the wine.

§ XIII

The forth constituent is earth; if it is in excess, wines become nasty and sour; for this defect we do not know an easy remedy, except the fact of mixing this wine with a quantity ten times bigger of better quality wine. This defect mainly originates because many people are extracting the juice with a press until the juice of the other nasty and sour parts (like stalks, grape seeds, grapes etc.) is added to the generous juice of nectar by the strength of pressing.

§ XIV

The fifth constituent is alcohol [Latin: Spiritus inflammabilis], which doesn't show until the wine is studied by chemical analysis; this analysis is known by experts, so I decided only to declare that wine is as

generous as the amount of alcohol that it contains.

§ XV

We have seen now to what extent wines can have defects due to their constituents; they are anyway subject to other defects, even if there is a very exact proportion, mixture and combination of these elements, because we may see that by an external cause, a considerable defect is caused; so I will, first of all, refer to the origin of these defects and after I will try to show the things that can favour the integrity and conservation of the wine.

§ XVI

Now air deserves a special section; really a full volume would be needed, to explain how greatly air is altering substances and can destroy the mixture of blends. What evils are arising, if surgeons do not protect wounds from the excess air? And do acidulous and healthy waters not lose all their quality and taste, if we allow the air access? So, it is necessary to protect wines with great care and attention from the free access of air.

§ XVII

The difference in air is anyway big, as taught by experience; of course wines are changed by the summer air; if there has been a long, rainy season there are problems for wine; if, on the contrary, it is a cold, dry and clear air, there are not problems of the same intensity for wines. An amazing phenomenon happens in wines in the period when the vine is blossoming; it happens as a matter of fact that, as the sweeter wines are fermenting, some of them are streaming out of casks or are breaking them with irreparable damage. This effect must not be ascribed to the flower but rather to the condition of the air which, when the vine is blossoming, is shaken by a very penetrating and inconstant health. For this reason it is necessary to keep casks and their rings under observation, so that the casks are not breaking. Is the gravity and lightness of air fixed in liquids, now keeping them together now releasing them from constraints, so creating an internal movement? Many explanations about lightning, air and winds could be presented, if the limits of this booklet should allow it.

§ XVIII

Without doubt it will not be difficult to give the reason why casks always must be kept completely full as an effusion of this kind can happen. In order to avoid it in some wines, some people are filling casks with carefully washed and cleaned stones but not without a big advantage and profit for any kind of wine. At last it is not blameworthy what also is suggested, to pour in olive oil so that the surface is protected.

§ XIX

Many other remedies are suggested to prevent the damages which are caused to wine by the air, such as to light alcohol or sulphur in a way that air is expelled or destroyed in casks. There are different ways to carry out this operation: 1) linen covered by melted sulphur is lit, depending on the size of the cask; 2) other people are preparing somehow aromatic spices, sprinkling a cloth and lighting it; 3) other people are using only nutmeg or other aromatic essences instead of sulphur, a method which for me is not to be approved, because empyreumatic oil [made by organic substances which, when heated, tend to carbonise, with an unpleasant smell] can be produced which can transmit to wine a nauseating smell; 4) other people are lighting alcohol while others are preferring even different methods. But Cl. Neumann reckons all these things needless and that the sulphur alone is fulfilling the scope.

§ XX

It is also worth noting the fact that red wine does not tolerate sulphur, because the colour of red wine is destroyed. And while we see that not all the colours of vegetables are destroyed if sulphur is lit, or at least most of them remain unchanged the red rose, subject to lit sulphur, takes on a whitish colour.

§ XXI

Besides, to the history of wine belongs its colour. The colour, red, sky-blue or of this kind must not be derived from the grapes' juice, but from skin or better from pigment contained in the skin. To prove the truth of this statement I will do a simple experiment: take mixed grapes, red, black or sky-blue; squeeze the juice out of them calmly; never will you obtain red or sky-blue wine but always green wine, because no foreign pigment is changing this colour.

Some wine can then be conserved longer, others less. The Rhine wine not only lasts 100 years, but also is not easily altered by mixing with wines of another kind (they must not be sweet and prone to fermentation), while the Italian, French, the majority of Hungarian, the Neckar and the Moselle wines easily, while mixed, are deviating from their nature and are not tolerating the mixture with other wines and the sweeter ones mixed with acids become vinegar. Lastly, this thing is to be noted about containers, that new, recently made casks can be of use for wort, because they are not blocking the following fermentation, but are not fit for receiving the very old wine, because in them it is easily deteriorating.

§ XXII

Having reviewed these things, which refer to the constituents of wines, to the correction of their defects and to the conservation methods, I am obliged

to talk about those things that allow us to distinguish the wines made good by these precautions; in order to allow anybody to know better which wines are profitable and healthier for the human body, I deemed it necessary to bring some notes and characteristics of not little importance. First, it will be healthy the wine which: 1) has a pleasant and comforting smell; 2) received and kept in the mouth, is leaving on the tongue a soft astringent action and for the penetrating strength is going to the nostrils and head; 3) is transparent, limpid and provided with natural colour; 4) more quickly goes through the kidneys and on the following day is provoking in the body some humidity or some sweat or is making the guts more slippery; 5) is not leaving any pain or exhaustion to the head or to other limbs; 6) is stimulating appetite and is helping the digestion; 7) if drunk in more generous quantities is not inducing calculus or gout.

A NOTE ON THE TRANSLATOR: Piero Perron, a native Italian, is a nuclear engineer who has spent almost all of his professional life in the brewing industry. He studied Latin in high school for eight years, and has been practicing it ever since—sometimes to the dismay of family members at the dinner table. During the past several years, while making an investigation into the 10th century Saracens in the Provence and the Alps regions, he translated many

early Latin texts using the ten-volume, *Du Cange Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis* (first published in 1678). Even though president of Asobirra (Italian Brewers Association) and past president of the Brewers of Europe, he gratefully acknowledges the role of wine among alcoholic bev-

12 DISSERTATIO DE VINO

Denique de vasis idnotandum venit, quod vasa nova & recenter facta possint infervere pro multo, quia inde fermentatio subsequens non impeditur, sed vino vetusto excipiendo inepta sunt, facile enim ibidem corrumpuntur.

§ XXII.

Recentis iis, quae circa vinorum principia, horum peccantium correctionem & modum conservandi versantur, ordo postulat, ut de iis sermonem injiciam, quae vasa his cautelis bona reddita discernere valeant, ut igitur eo melius quisque cognoscere possit, quoniam vasa ex his aut aliis corpori humano proficua & salutaria sint, certas quasdam notas & characteres adferre non exigui momenti duxi. Primum igitur salubre vinum erit illud, quod grato & reficiente odore praeditum est; 1^o quod receptum & detentum in ore relinquit in lingua blandam adfrictionem, & ob vim penetrantem nares & caput pervadit; 2^o si pellucidum & clarum est, & naturali praeditum colore; 3^o quod citius pertranfit renes, & altero die madorem vel sudorem quemdam in corpore excitat, vel alvum lubricam reddit; 4^o quando nullum dolorem vel lassitudinem in capite, vel membro quodam relinquit; 5^o quod appetitum excitat, & concoctionem adjuvat; 6^o

erages. He enjoyed translating Dr. Schosulan's thesis and discovering how many medical properties were attributed to wine in 1767. He reports that during this translation, realizing how beneficial wine is for almost all diseases, he has nonetheless been able to stay a moderate, even if dedicated, consumer. Saluté!

EDITOR NOTE: As Erik Skovenborg indicated when he first proposed this article and translation for publication in our WTQ, Schosulan's *Dissertatio Inauguralis Medica de Vinis* is quite scarce. We know of only three copies in institutional libraries (National Library of Medicine, University of California at Davis, and Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich). On my library catalogue card I have a notation of four copies being sold: The Leon Lambert Sale, 1966; H. P. Kraus Bookseller, 1988 (Unzelman copy); Cooks Books Cat.56, 1991 (to a Spanish antiquarian bookseller); and Wine & Food Library, 2003 (Skovenborg copy). The title was located in only one wine bibliography, Schoene's *Bibliographie zur Geschichte des Weines*. While André Simon lists several wine-related dissertations in his *Bibliothecas*, he does not list Schosulan's work. We are indebted to Erik Skovenborg for this interesting, rare, and important treasure of wine literature.



From: REDDING, *Every Man His Own Butler*, 1839.

"Books, we know,
Are a substantial world, both pure and good;
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness will grow."
TENNYSON.



NEWS & NOTES



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

Welcome, new Tendrils! Compliments of a gift subscription from Robert Muzzy, we welcome **John Robinson**. Professor **Liz Thach** (lizthach@aol.com) celebrates her new Tendril membership with her first WTQ contribution, "The Ancient Connection Between Women and Wine" (see page 8).

Shenandoah Valley and Amador Wine Country by Kimberley Wooten and R. Scott Baxter is a new title in the "Images of America" series from Arcadia Publishing (2008, \$20). Among the many pioneers presented in this photographic, "deep-rooted" history of winegrowing in California's Amador County is Tendril **Leon Sobon** and his family. Many of the 200 photos are from the collections of local families, and never before published. At the end is a listing of present-day wineries in the region, and a short list of References. Alas, as is so often the case with Arcadia publications, an Index to the book is not provided. Still, this is a fine addition to the California Wine History bookshelf.

Konstantin Frank Historic Book Collection to Cornell University, New York

We recently received word that "the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station – Frank A. Lee Library has newfound wealth: a collection of 132 books donated by the Dr. Konstantin Frank Vinifera Wine Cellars and the Frank family." Of special note are French and Russian ampelographies and a multi-volume history of horticulture in Russia—many of the books with Frank's handwritten notes on grape varieties and vineyard practices. For details of the collection see www.news.cornell.edu/stories/Feb08/winebooks.jo.html.

2008 WINE LITERARY AWARD

is being presented to **Charles L. Sullivan** for his exceptional contribution to the literature of wine. Among his many, and valuable, works are *A Companion to California Wine: An Encyclopedia of Wine and Winemaking from the Mission Period to the Present* (1998)—"a thoroughly researched and authoritative work ... an essential reference for everyone interested in California wine." [Gabler, p.358]. *Like Modern Edens: Winegrowing in Santa Clara*

Valley and Santa Cruz Mountains, 1798–1981 (1982); *Napa Wine: A History from Mission Days to Present* (1994). The 2nd edition, enlarged and brought up to date, is due out this year. *Zinfandel: A History of a Grape and Its Wine* won the Veuve Clicquot Wine Book of the Year Award (2003). Tendrils will recall that this definitive history was first published as a nine-part series in *The Wayward Tendrils* (1999–2001). Charles has also written over 100 articles for other wine and history journals, including *Wine Spectator*, *Wines & Vines*, *California Historical Society Quarterly*, and the *Journal of the American Wine Society*. Charles Sullivan's California Wine History research database, containing over 30,000 citations to primary source materials, is available on the web at Winefiles.org. Our heartiest congratulations to Charles, who joins a prestigious group of Wine Literary Award laureates, including Leon Adams, Harry Waugh, Hugh Johnson, Gerald Asher, Jancis Robinson, Robert Lawrence Balzer, Michael Broadbent, and Tom Stevenson.

"PIRATES" STILL AFLOAT!

In our January WTQ we brought up the issue of pirated editions of works by André Simon. A quick recent search of the Kessinger Publishing Reprint website, found the offending Simon title, *History of the Wine Trade in England, Vol.2*, available once again, now joined by *In Vino Veritas*. There are several 19th century wine titles available (Husmann, Phin, Thudichum, Denman, Anstie, and others), but also listed are 20th century titles by Massee and Churchill that were printed in the 1960s. Although "reading copies" of earlier works could be appreciated (see *Judge Lynch* below), we do not understand Kessinger's copyright position on the later books. Also, may we complain about the very plain, gaudy and unattractive, glossy paperback covers used on these reprints—a terrible blight to any decent bookshelf!



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, P.O. Box 9023, Santa Rosa, CA. 95405 USA. tendrils@jps.net. Editor and Publisher: Gail Unzelman. —

EARLIEST CALIFORNIA WINE NOVEL: "a poor affair"

Judge Lynch: A Romance of the California Vineyards written by George H. Jessop and published in 1889 (Chicago: Belford, Clarke, & Co./London: Longmans, Green) takes the honor of being the first novel to have a California wine setting. Tendril Thomas Pinney critiques the book in his *History of Wine in America: From the Beginnings to Prohibition*, (Berkeley: U.C. Press, 1989, p.368): "It is a poor affair, melodramatic and conventional; and though Jessop was a Californian, he shows no authentic understanding of the scene. The setting is somewhere in southern California, on the western slope of the Coast Range; a few purple patches of description about vines and wine cellars are sewn onto the fiction from time to time, though otherwise the story might just as well have transpired in the High Sierra—or in Patagonia, for that matter. But the book is at least interesting as evidence that California, as early as 1889, and as far away as London, was popularly thought of as a land of vineyards." Almost impossible to find in its original edition, *Judge Lynch* is now available as one of the Kessinger Publishing's Rare Reprints series (see above notice).

THE POET OF BACCHUS by Kenneth Hare

[In our rather loosely bunched theme this issue of Gods and Goddesses, Greeks and Ghosts, among other worthies, we present an excerpt of "The Poet of Bacchus," which was published in the Spring 1945 number of *Wine & Food*, London. Our gracious thanks for their kind permission to reprint. — Ed.]

*A wineless board begets no merry thought
And who will dance until the wine be brought?*

NONNOS: *The Dionysiaks*. Bk.12.1.260.

Nonnos of Panopolis: how musically the Greek syllables glide, with a chime as of a rippling brook that courses over the pebbles! Nonnos of Panopolis—the City of Pan—the Singer of Dionysus! Though he lived in the mid-fourteenth century, he composed in the pure Greek of Homer. Where was Panopolis? The learned Frenchman, Count Marcellus, the poet's translator and commentator, identifies it with the modern Akhmin [in Egypt, on the Nile River]. However that be, the city as Nonnos knew it, is no more. The towers have fallen; the moat is dry; but the song remains!

To dip into the *Dionysiaks* is a memorable experience. I say "dip" because I sometimes fancy

continued on p.15 —

The Ancient Connection Between Women and Wine

by Liz Thach

[With this article, we welcome our newest Tendril member and Quarterly contributor. Dr. Thach is a professor in the Wine Business Center at Sonoma State University, and has published numerous articles in wine business and marketing journals. She is also a 2nd year candidate in the Masters of Wine program. The enchanting wine goddess drawing that graces the back cover of this issue is by recognized wildlife, landscape, and portrait artist Vivian Olsen, mother of our author. Please see www.vivianolsen.com for a portfolio of her exquisite work. Our sincerest Tendril thanks to both author and artist! — Ed.]



ost historians now agree that wine was most likely discovered by a woman. However what is often left out of the history books are the ancient stories of the goddesses of wine—the majority of whom came into

being centuries before Bacchus and Dionysus.

Modern technology and carbon-dating has helped us prove that wine from cultivated grapes was being made in what is now modern-day Georgia, in the Caucasus Mountains around 6,000 B.C. There are also reports of wine remains in Armenia, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and China which claim to be older than those found in Georgia—though there is some confusion over whether it is grape, rice, date, or honey wine. Regardless of the birthplace of wine, it is commonly agreed that because women were involved in the gathering of berries, grapes, and other crops that it was most likely a woman who picked some grapes and placed them in a pottery container in a cool dark corner. When she remembered to check the container a few weeks later, she found a fermented beverage that had a delightful flavor and a pleasant inebriating effect. Thus wine was born.

From Persia, there is an ancient legend documented in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* that supports a woman discovering wine. She was a member of the harem in the palace of King Jamshid, and she suffered from severe migraine headaches. One day the king found that a jar containing his favorite grapes had a strange smell and was foaming. Alarmed he ordered that it be set aside as unsafe to eat. When the woman heard of this, she decided to drink from the container in an effort to end her life

with the poison inside. Instead she found the taste of the beverage very delightful. Furthermore, it cured her headache and put her in a joyful mood. When she told King Jamshid, he tasted the “wine” as well and then ordered that more should be made and shared with the whole court.

Gestin

It was from this same part of the world, in the Sumerian Empire in what is modern-day Iraq, that the most ancient goddess of wine is first mentioned. Her name was Gestin and she was being worshiped as early as 3000 BC. Gestin—which translates as wine, vine, and/or grape—is also mentioned in the ancient Indus manuscript, the *Rig Veda*. Experts believe that it is quite reasonable that the first gods of wine were women, because the oldest deities were female agriculture goddesses of the earth and fertility. Gestin was very likely born from this agriculture base, and over the centuries came to represent wine.

Gestin is also mentioned later in Akkadian texts as Geshtinanna, goddess of wine and fertility. The Akkadian language was spoken by the Assyrians who lived in modern-day Turkey, northern Iraq and Syria.

Paget

Later, in 1500 BC, we find mention of another wine goddess, Paget, in the same part of the world. The clay tablets refer to her as working in the vineyard and helping to make wine.

Siduri

Then around 300 to 400 BC as wine became more prominent in Sumeria, a new wine goddess, Siduri, is described as living near the city of Ur. She is reported as welcoming the hero in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* to a garden with the tree of life which is hung with ruby red fruit with tendrils. Siduri is referred to as the Maker of Wine.

Renen-utet and Ernutet

Across the deserts in Egypt the wine goddess Renen-utet is mentioned on hieroglyphic tablets as blessing the wine as early as 1300 BC. Interestingly she is known as both a wine and snake goddess. She usually had a small shrine near the wine press and often her figure would appear on the spout where the grape juice flowed into the receiving tank. She is sometimes joined by Ernutet, the Egyptian goddess of plenty, in blessing the grape harvest.

Myrtos

In the Mediterranean, on the island of Crete, the Goddess of Myrtos appears in archeological sites dated from 1500 B.C. Statues of her were placed outside rooms that were dedicated to winemaking.

The pottery pieces that have survived show her as having a large bell-shaped body with a long slender neck and she cradles a jug of wine.

Dionysus and Bacchus

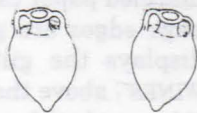
What is intriguing about these wine goddesses is how little is known about them, whereas Dionysus and Bacchus have much more coverage in the literature. It is possible that this is because they are more recent. The earliest records of Dionysus, the Greek wine god, show he appeared around 500 BC in the Greek Islands, whereas Gestin dates from 3000 BC. However, the concept of Dionysus, as a child god who was born of a mortal woman and a god, is very ancient and can be traced back 9000 years. These depictions however—which are amazingly similar to the images of Mother Mary with the Baby Jesus—do not include wine. Dionysus as a wine god came later. Indeed, another legend says that Dionysus came from the lands near Sumeria to the islands of Greece. Is Dionysus somehow connected with Gestin, Paget and Siduri?

Bacchus, the Roman name for Dionysus, became known in the literature around 200 BC, as the Greek Empire was fading. Other wine gods included Osiris from Egypt and I-Ti from China.

Women and Wine

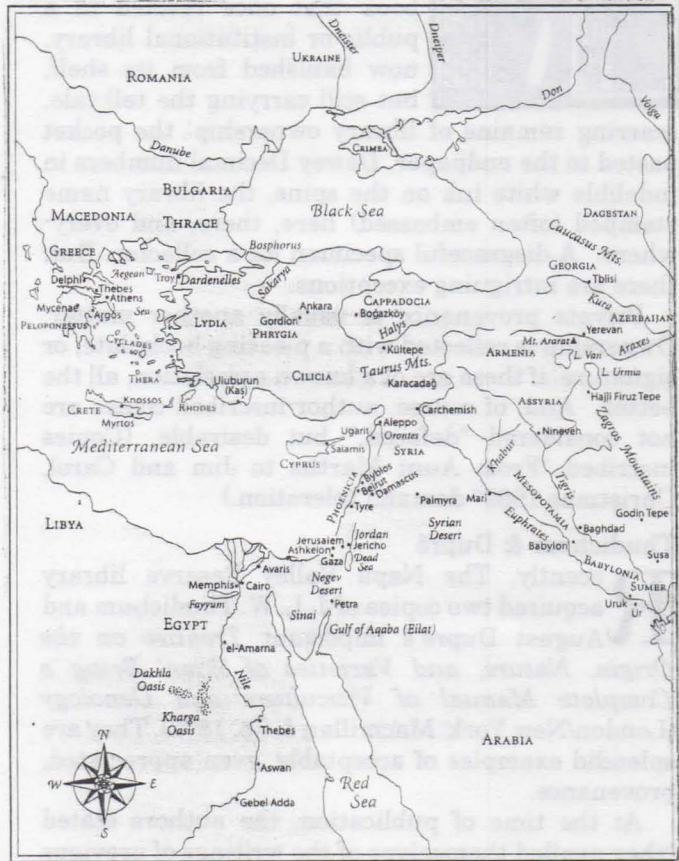
So what are the implications of these ancient connections between women and wine? Why have the ancient wine goddesses been lost in the history of time? Is it because culture changed towards a more masculine image, which gave rise to the male wine gods? Is this why in the period of the Roman Empire, women were banned from drinking wine? Indeed, a husband who caught his wife drinking wine could legally kill her on the spot. And the depiction of the raging Bacchanalia rites, in which women chased after Bacchus in drunken ecstasy while they tore animals to shreds is hardly flattering to women.

So perhaps it is time to resurrect the image of the ancient wine goddesses, and the blessings of a plentiful harvest and the joy that wine can bring in moderation. After all, the cultural tides of the world have changed again, and today in wine-drinking countries, women are the primary purchasers of wine. The connection between women and wine has always been there. Today it is growing stronger, with a focus on friendship, romance, health, and balance.



REFERENCES

- Barnet, R. D. "A Winged Goddess of Wine on an Electrum Plaque," *Anatolian Studies*, Vol. 30, 1980: Special Number in Honour of the Seventieth Birthday of Professor O. R. Gurney, pp. 169-178.
- Hackin, J. *Asiatic Mythology*. London: George G. Harrap & Co., 1932.
- Johnson, Hugh. *The Story of Wine*. UK: Octopus Publishing Group, 1989.
- McGovern, Patrick E. *Ancient Wine: The Search for the Origins of Viticulture*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003.
- Ushanas, E. R. *The Indus Script and the Rg-Veda*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1997.
- Younger, William. *Gods, Men, and Wine*. Ohio: The Wine & Food Society Ltd., 1966.



"PRINCIPAL AREAS OF THE OLD WORLD WHERE VITICULTURE BEGAN"

Courtesy of Patrick McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, p. xviii



"EX-LIBRARY, OTHERWISE FINE":

BOOK PROVENANCE

by Nina Wemyss

[For several years, vintage Tendril and noted wine historian Nina Wemyss has been overseeing the development of a first-class library at The Napa Valley Reserve, a private membership winery near St. Helena, California. We welcome this second contribution to our *Quarterly*. For her excellent earlier presentation, "Wine & Civilization: Wine's Rich Relationship with the Arts", see Vol. 14 #4. — Ed.]



Wayward Tendril members are certainly familiar with the bookseller's description "ex-library, with usual markings, otherwise a fine copy..." The bookseller has in his hands a book that once resided in a public or institutional library, now banished from its shelf, but still carrying the tell-tale, scarring remains of library ownership: the pocket pasted to the endpaper, Dewey Decimal numbers in indelible white ink on the spine, the library name stamped (often embossed) here, there, and everywhere. A disgraceful specimen for a collector. But, there are intriguing exceptions.

Private provenance is usually another matter. Ownership is reflected with a pleasing bookplate, or signature; if these are of a known association, all the better. And, of course, author-inscribed copies are not considered "defaced," but desirable. (Copies inscribed "From Aunt Martha to Jim and Carol, Christmas 1999" demand toleration.)

Thudichum & Dupré

Recently, The Napa Valley Reserve library acquired two copies of J. L. W. Thudichum and August Dupré's important *Treatise on the Origin, Nature, and Varieties of Wine: Being a Complete Manual of Viticulture and Oenology* (London/New York: Macmillan & Co, 1872). They are splendid examples of acceptable, even appreciated, provenance.

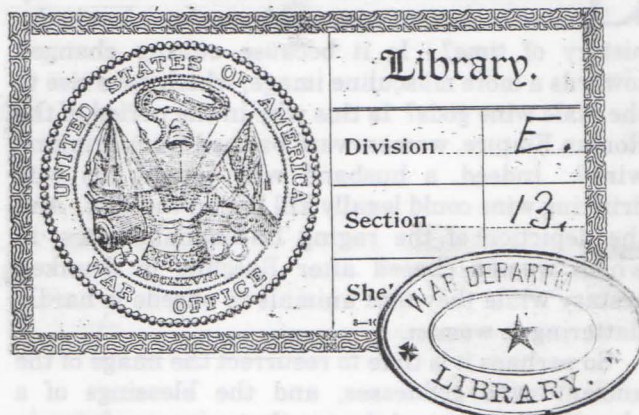
At the time of publication, the authors stated "they availed themselves of the writings of previous authors for the purpose of guiding or supplementing their observations, and ... they have consulted and used nearly two hundred out of the six hundred works which compose the world's œnological literature." We wish they would have listed these works—it would have given us an informative insight into pre-1900 wine literature. One pioneering work they surely examined was William Speechly's *Treatise on the Culture of the Vine* published in 1790, "a model

of the sound, practical, well-written and beautifully printed manual" [Gabler, p.350], and later called the most important work published during the 18th century on the culture of the vine. More on Speechly in a moment.

In his 1913 *Bibliotheca Vinaria*, André Simon said this about Thudichum & Dupré's book: "Thudichum was a medical practitioner and Dupré a Professor of Chemistry; their work is a valuable contribution to the literature of the Wine Trade, chiefly as a résumé of all that had been written in England, during the 1860s, in favour of 'Natural Wines,' and also of what had been published in France and Germany about viticulture and the art of wine-making. There are many blemishes in the book, due to the fact that the two authors lacked all practical knowledge of wine, and were too ready to ignore or deny what they failed to understand or were unable to explain scientifically. With all its faults, this book is nevertheless the most comprehensive modern treatise on the vine and its fruit in the English language."

Provenance

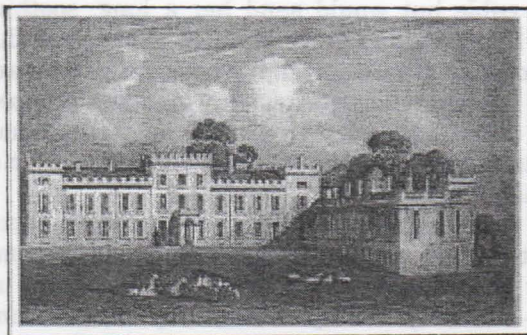
Our first copy of Thudichum & Dupré, in a handsome binding of red $\frac{3}{4}$ leather and cloth, bears the bookplate of the "United States of America War Office Library," while oval stamps labeled "War Department Library" mark several pages of the book, including the title page. Such an interesting association! "Make Wine, not War!"



The second *Treatise* has a splendid ducal provenance. It bears the engraved armorial bookplate of Welbeck Abbey, one of the great stately manors of England, in Nottinghamshire, and home to the Dukes of Portland. The binding is exquisite: $\frac{3}{4}$ black morocco and marbled boards, with the very pleasing marbled paper carried through to the endpapers; all page edges are gilt. The spine, with raised bands, displays the gilt title: "THUDICHUM & DUPRE ON WINES"; above the title, also in gilt, is the royal letter 'P' topped with an ornate crown. This lovely book at one time graced the shelves of the library of the 5th Duke of Portland.

William Henry Bentinck, the first Duke of Portland, attained Peerage in 1716. The 3rd Duke of Portland (1738–1809) was the most famous, as statesman and Prime Minister, and it was during his tenure that William Speechly, "Gardener to the Duke of Portland," wrote his 1790 *Treatise on the Culture of the Vine*, while he managed the grand gardens at Welbeck Abbey. Speechly dedicated his opus to the Duke in gratitude for his encouragement and the use of "his Grace's noble library." History tells us that the 5th Duke, who was the master of Welbeck Abbey from 1854–1879 (and the owner of our Thudichum & Dupré), was "an eccentric recluse, who shunned visitors." Yet he employed thousands of workmen to carry out his grandiose projects at the estate, including the establishment of 22 acres of kitchen gardens, and the excavation of several miles of elaborate underground chambers and tunnels that housed a library, art gallery, opulent ballroom, and a billiard room large enough for a dozen full-size tables. The library, of magnificent construction and the work of many years, was divided into five large rooms, one opening on to the next, to form a grand hall, 236 feet long and lit by brilliant chandeliers.

Here, in these titled surroundings, Thudichum & Dupré's valued *Treatise* resided with kindred, magnificently bound books, on a stunning estate. This book's provenance has opened a world of fascinating connections and remarkable history.



WELBECK ABBEY, 1829

NOTE: There is a wealth of information available on the internet about Welbeck Abbey and the Dukes of Portland.

UNZELMAN, *cont. from p. 12* —

rather reserved, I anticipated, in his smart prep school blazer. Very different from the trusting baby who had trotted round the room in his blue pyjamas on my last night at home.

"Robin can stay up a little longer," Anne had said. "This is a special occasion."

"Yes," said Richard; "we must have a bottle of the 1912."

On any special occasion, grave or gay, Richard would open a bottle or two of the famous 1912. There had been, Richard would say, no year to equal it. If only his father had realized soon enough and bought more ... I remembered how, on that distant evening in 1943, he had said: "I've only a dozen left now, But I shall save a bottle for the day you come back."

"When will Uncle Jonathan come back?" asked Robin.

"Quite soon," I said.

"How soon is quite soon?"

"When the war's over. The time will pass very quickly."

This, then, was the family to which I was returning after so long. My sister, her gentle husband, and nephew Robin. And, of course, the last bottle of 1912. How wonderful it would be to sit with them all again, hearing Richard's quiet voice tell of the crops or the summer's cricket, persuading Robin to take me back into his life and to talk of his school and friends, and drinking the noblest of all wines from Anne's beautiful glass. I was not ashamed that I thought almost as much of the wine as of the people I loved, for that bottle of wine had become a symbol to me as the years went on. It was the symbol of my return; when it appeared, cradled in Richard's careful hands, it would be a sign that the years of pain were finally done and that at last and forever I was home. What more seemly offering to the returning soldier and what more fitting object for this thoughts? Wine, that maketh glad the heart of a man.....



A VINTAGE GHOST STORY

by Gail Unzelman



s often happens, while researching something else, another fascinating wine literature tidbit pops-up: this one a reference to *The Oxford Book of English Ghost Stories*, chosen by Michael Cox and R. A. Gilbert [Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1987, 504 pp]. Their anthology presents forty-two of the very best English ghost stories, written between 1829 and 1968—stories that “combine a serious literary purpose with the plain intention of arousing pleasing fear at the doings of the dead.” Being quite unfamiliar with the literature of the ghost, I appreciated the very informative and interesting introduction by compilers Cox and Gilbert that “demonstrates the historical development as well as the major themes and characteristics” of the genre. They ask and answer the questions: “What is a ghost story?” “... a good ghost story?” “... a successful ghost story?”

Among the selections is *The Bottle of 1912*, written by Simon Arthur Raven (1927–2001) and first published in 1961. Raven, an English novelist, essayist, dramatist, raconteur, and bon vivant, enjoyed a forty-year writing career during which his “mischievous and often cruel delight in the outrageous” and his “fascination for the supernatural” frequently caused “controversy, amusement, and offence.” His captivating tale takes up a mere five pages: the first half of the story is presented below; the W-T reader must secure the book to read the ghostly ending. But a serious question remains: is this the only wine ghost story, or are there others floating out there?

The Bottle of 1912

by Simon Raven

In the Spring of 1947 I returned, you might say, from the dead. Never mind what I had been doing. I suppose you would call me a spy; I had penetrated into a world so remote that it was a long time before I learned of the end of the war, and even longer before my task was done and I could make my way back, by slow and careful stages, to the Headquarters in Delhi. Here they were in the fever which precedes departure, for India would be independent in a few months; and besides being thus preoccupied, they were rather embarrassed to see me.

“We didn’t expect to see *you* again,” said Stetson accusingly; “we gave *you* up last summer.”

“It all took longer than we thought.”

“Evidently. How long will it take you to make out your report?”

“A week ... ten days. And then I suppose I can go home?”

“Yes,” said Stetson, “you can go home.”

“By the way,” I said, “you should have all my mail here. I gave this as my holding address.”

“We did have it. But we sent it off to your next of kin when we ceased to expect you back. A married sister in Kent, I think?”

“That’s right.”

“You’ll just have to wait a few days longer for your bills. After all, you’ve waited some years already....”

Yes, I thought: four years. Ever since 1943, when I left England, reported to Stetson, and went off into

the hills. A few days more would hardly matter. But I should like to have read the letters from my sister; to have heard the news of her husband and my little nephew and the farm in Kent. And there was another thing—something that had not really occurred to me in the mountains but was obvious now that I was aback in the familiar world: my sister would think I was dead. Or at best missing. In 1946 she would have received the parcel with my mail in it, along with a polite letter from Stetson—“...Very much regret ... has failed to report back ... must reluctantly conclude ...” So that for all I knew there was a tablet bearing my name on the church wall by now. How awkward it was coming back from the dead.

No wonder Stetson had been so put out. But it would be easier with my sister: I would not shock her with a cable but would send her a long, soothing letter. She wouldn’t have time to reply, but that didn’t matter. She would have been prepared...and gently. I would tell her to keep my mail and to expect me in about ten days—I should be flown home, Stetson said—and that I should warn her as soon as I reached London.

So I wrote to my sister; then I settled to my report for Stetson; and nine days later I left by air for home.

And so now at last I was to see them all again—the only family I had. My sister Anne, Richard her husband, my nephew (and my godson) Robin. Robin had been five when I left in 1943, a merry, bubbling infant; now he would be nine, gravely dressed in grey shorts and knee-stockings,

continued on p. 11 —



**BOOKS &
BOTTLES**
by
Fred McMillin

WINE WIT ... AND WISDOM

The Book: *Desert Island Wine* by Miles Lambert-Gócs. Williamsburg, VA: Ambeli Press, 2007. Distributed by Wine Appreciation Guild. p.b., \$14.95.

Exactly two years ago, in our April 2006 issue, we visited the entertaining and "affectionate travelogue of Greece's country wine, food, and colorful characters" written by Grecophile Miles Lambert-Gócs, *Greek Salad: A Dionysian Travelogue*, published in 2004. Earlier, he had written *The Wines of Greece*, an "award-winning account of the vineyards, grape varieties, producers, wineries, and wines." Now, with *Desert Island Wine*, the author invites all to enjoy the lighter side of wine—190 pages of highly original mirth.

In this glorious romp through the world of wine, from ancient days to the present, we are enlightened and entertained with visits to Dionysus, Socrates, Pliny, Thomas Jefferson, André Jullien, Aristotle, H. Warner Allen, Captain Ahab, "Mr. Corky" and other noted masters and writers of wine. Complexity, acidity, noble food and drink, non-conformism, forgeries, geo-enology, and the absurdities of contemporary wine writing are all topics of the author's scrutiny and satirical insights.

The opening chapter comes "Live from Olympus" when CNN presents the first-ever interview with Dionysus, whose "place is a shambles—we can only imagine the ruckus the gods kicked up last night..."

Later on, the author admits that "nothing could be more damning of me as a contemporary enophile than the difficulty I have applying the latest rallying chimp of wine folks, 'Drink less, but drink better.' Drinking less is not a problem as such, but I always end up drinking more trying to determine whether I am drinking better. I suffer from Quality Recognition Deficiency Syndrome."

He reminds us that "wine complexity" is not a 21st century phenomenon: "Let's not leave the wrong impression about the age of our fascination with complexity. Even the ancient Greeks were onto its scent. From the 5th century B.C. we have the evidence of a poem by Hermippus, in which he elatedly praised an aged wine for smelling at once of violet, rose, and hyacinth."

In his chapter called "Colonial Food Fingered as White Zin Culprit," the author reports: "At a press conference in Williamsburg, Virginia, an official delegation of California wine professionals announced that Early American food may be the root of all White Zin. As a result, the outlook for the ridiculed and embattled wine type is the rosiest it has been in years." (The Zins of Our Fathers!)

In "Acid Reign" ("Never in the history of wine was there a time when acidity was not appreciated"), he explains "There must be something hormonal about it. I, at least, was most active in seeking it between the ages of 15 and 30. I am speaking of course about the darling constituent of today's wine lover: acidity."

The book's final chapter, "Wine Bore Bonus — Discovery of Cabernet's Ancient Greek Ancestor" (and all kidding aside here), is a "factual, sourced account of the Greek origin of Cabernet...with specific identification of the Greek grape variety from which it is descended."

The Bottles: Since Lambert-Gócs ends his book with the "no kidding" chapter about Cabernet, we end with the best five Cabernet Sauvignons recently tasted in my San Francisco City College classes.

- 1st — Jarvis Reserve, Napa Valley, 2001. \$160.
- 2nd — Smith & Hook, Central Cost, 2005. \$25.
- 3rd — Steele Wines, Lake County, 2004. \$32.
- 4th — Kenwood Vineyards, Sonoma Co., 2004. \$18.
- 5th — Ch.Julien Wine Estate, Monterey, 2005. \$10.

EDITOR NOTE: Throughout this work, the learned Mr. Lambert-Gócs quotes extensively from classical authors and has provided a useful bibliography for readers. All editions cited are from the Loeb Classical Library, published by Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

- Athenaeus: *The Deipnosophists*, Vol.II, Vol.VII.
Columella: *De Re Rustica*, Vol.I.
Hippocrates: *Regimen*, Vol.IV.
Horace: *Satires*.
Pausanias: *Description of Greece*, Vol.III.
Pliny: *Natural History*, Vol.IV.
Plutarch: *Moralia*, Vol.VIII.
Theophrastus: *Concerning Odours*, Vol.II.
Xenophon: *Memorabilia*, Vol.IV.





WINE TALES by Warren R. Johnson

[In this installment of "Wine Tales," our super sleuth of wine fiction has uncovered another two titles, vintage 1993, for us to enjoy. You are invited to investigate his Second Harvest website and its fine database of Novels, Mysteries, Romances, Poems, Toasts, Anthologies, and other such entertaining works. — Ed.]

■ **Vintage Polo** by Jerry Kennealy. New York: St. Martins Press, 1993. 246 pp.

Another sparkling-wine facility has opened in Sonoma County, California, to great aplomb. Baroni Estates has a hotel and golf course to go with its new winery building. The winery itself has been around for a long time, having survived Prohibition, recessions, droughts and attempts of foreign takeover. Angelo Baroni has succeeded where other wineries have failed. Now semi-retired, he sees the new wine building as the capstone of his career. Yet, there are those who resent his success.

Nick Polo, a former San Francisco police officer and now a private investigator, has tagged along with his sometimes on-again, off-again, lady friend Jane Tobin, to attend the gala weekend opening. Jane is a journalist with the *San Francisco Bulletin*; she is also one knockout of a looker—all heads turn when she enters a room. Baroni Jr., thinking Jane deserves him, comes on strong. She deftly—Judo chop style—sets him in his place. Let's get one thing clear: Jane will choose her partners.

Early in the weekend Nick Polo, summoned by Baroni Sr. to a private talk, learns that someone is trying to bring the winery to its knees. Baroni has had a tank of Chardonnay salted, irrigation systems dismantled, and theft. He and his son have attempted to check this out but with no luck, and the investigator hired by their lawyer has found nothing. Baroni wants someone with imagination and guts to get to the bottom of this. He thinks Polo is his man.

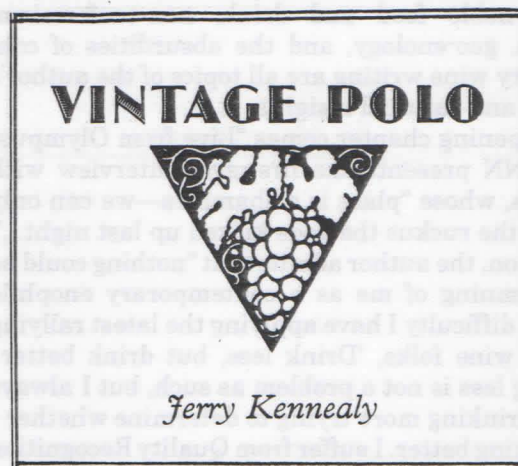
The gala affair is disrupted by the sound of a large explosion—the new winery building is flattened, clearly the work of an arsonist. Baroni is convinced that the motive is revenge for the car crash that crippled him and killed his companion, Linda Cado. But Linda's son Jimmy is already in prison and her daughter, Dolores, married to Baroni Jr., has asked for a divorce and will likely get a large settlement from that. Dolores is connected to gambler Paul Tobias. He gets killed, but Polo discovers that Tobias has been bugging Dolores' home. Why?

Add to this mix Victor Mardesa, another mobster

who got shouldered out of Nevada and is now running his own casino operation in Emeryville, across the bay from San Francisco. Mardesa is well known for his crime operations and money skimming, but the police have been unable to prove anything. When Polo goes to the casino to find out about this operation, he ends up at the bottom of some stairs he doesn't remember falling down. Shortly thereafter, Jimmy escapes from prison.

An absolutely delightful character in this book is Mrs. Diamonte, Polo's tenant in San Francisco. She is secretive, curmudgeonly and highly eccentric; she serves as a protector, doctor, and occasional cook for Polo. She also sides with him in this adventure. Polo's lawyer, Collin Wilcox (another mystery writer) and Inspector Paul Paulsen, Polo's ex-partner in the SFPD, make for two more colorful characters. Polo is a guy who goes where angels fear to tread, and some of his moves seem pretty stupid. In addition to the stairs incident, he gets shot at, handcuffed, beat over the head with a frying pan, and left for dead in a car which has plunged off a bridge into freezing water. But, he always survives.

Author Jerry Kennealy, a real-life private investigator in the San Francisco Bay Area for many years, has used his experiences to feed his Nick Polo crime novels. He is likely also to be a reader: his books have the taste of the classics of Dashiell Hammett and Ross Macdonald. If you like mysteries with a tight plot, multiple puzzles, and a sparse, contemporary vernacular, you should enjoy the dozen-plus Nick Polo series.



■ **Murder in the Napa Valley.** A Margaret Barlow Mystery, by David Osborn. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993. 174 pp.

Not just another murder in a winery, David Osborn's novel is a step above many of the works of this genre. He has captured the spirit of the wine valley, its people and winemaking. Best

yet, he has created a winery unlike most wineries (Christian Brothers a possible exception). His is a former 200-year-old monastery, complete with chapel and underground crypts and passages. Entering this scene is Margaret Barlow, a 50-ish journalist and amateur sleuth.

Margaret is visiting the Napa Valley to go hot-air ballooning, and then tour the Abbaye de Ste. Denise as part of a freelance photo-journalism project. When she arrives at the winery, she finds the owners in a heated discussion. These owners are the Selridges—John and his wife Elissa, John's former wife Hester, and John's brother, Bryant. It quickly becomes apparent that there are problems at the winery and each of the four co-owners have their own fix-it plan. For the past several seasons there have been strange goings-on at the winery—sabotage really—including the destruction of vintages by a pesticide in the fermentation vats, burned acres of vines, and the death of a migrant worker who seemed to know something about all these events.

Shortly after another round of these family "discussions," Hester is found cruelly murdered in the destemmer-crusher machine. Now the police have to be involved. Consequently, Margaret and the family are sequestered behind the gates of the winery. Also locked-in is a young woman named Lureen, a mysterious relative of some kind. Margaret can't help but get involved. A neighbor, who has longed for the winery's property, is a chief suspect. So is one of the large winery owners in the Central Valley—a recluse who lives within a giant walled compound—and produces huge amounts of boxed wines while relishing a boutique winery in the Napa Valley. Margaret decides she has to get in to see him. So she rents a glider and sails right in, claiming she had to make a forced landing. She fools nobody, including the owner.

Back at the winery, Margaret comes to believe that someone within the winery is likely a brutal murderer. But who? She finds herself caught up in family greed, dark secrets, corrupt power—as well as another murder, a secretary at the winery who catches Margaret snooping in the offices late at night. In a fast-paced ending, Margaret gets trapped in the cloister cellars by the killer, or killers. . .

Murder in the Napa Valley is David Osborn's third mystery novel, the first with a winery setting. His characters are real next-door neighbor types. Especially delightful is the local newspaper journalist, a grand character in his own right. Together, he and Margaret uncover a Swiss man posing as a Frenchman, and secret love affairs. Osborn masterfully twists and turns the plot and keeps the tensions alive and intriguing. There is a drive to read the book in one sitting. You won't be disappointed. ■

BACCHUS, continued from p. 7—

that no one ever read the poem in its entirety, save Nonnos who composed it! Yet "dipping" is delightful. It is like sauntering through some princely gallery, and viewing works which rival those of such later masters as Botticelli, and Titian, and Tintoretto.

If today one detects few people reading the *Dionysiads*, as they haste, of a morning, after buses or taxis, or climb into airliners, it is doubtless because the poet's approach to life is too leisurely for the Age of Speed. Disdaining as a mere epigram, the epic of twelve books, Nonnos presents us with twenty-four! Dionysus, the Hero, is not born until the eighth; and he has not invented wine before the twelfth. Assume now that this stupendous achievement is complete, and let us watch him presenting his gift to the other Immortals, in rivalry with Aristaeus, a son of Phoebus, who has invented mead.

"The braggart inventor of honey ... strove for the palm of victory with Dionysus, the Pourer-Forth-of-Wine." Now, Dionysus approaches!

"It rejoiced their souls to drink great floods of the limpid and abundant liquor: and there was nothing but the pouring forth of wine throughout the livelong day! They steeped themselves in wine, marvelling at its suavity, and they kept continually calling for one cup after another; their hearts enchanted, in untiring bliss! Zeus had admired indeed the labour of the honey-dropping bees, but he gave the palm of victory for the Bacchic draught, for that assuages care!"

Later, Dionysus finds himself in a "city without roofs" ... he is amongst a crew of wild goat-herds who dwell in caves. Now Broggos, an aged goatherd, instinctively realizes that he is in the presence of a divinity. With reverend piety, he drags from its pen a woolly-fleeced sheep and makes ready for sacrifice. In commiseration for his poverty, the God stays his hand, but accepts his offer of hospitality. Dionysus eats insatiably of the abject meats set before him for a regale: unripe olives swimming in brine, a cheese yet moist from the press. But when Broggos produces a bowl of warm goat's milk, and proceeds to temper it with snow, the Giver-of-Joy feels that things have gone far enough!

"Accept, Old Man," cries Dionysus, "*this* gift! It chases care! You will not desire milk when you taste this odorous dew. This is the earthly counterpart of that Nectar which Ganymede draws in Heaven to rejoice the heart of mighty Zeus!"

And with bounteous hand, the God pours forth the honey-breathing wine, and instructs his new disciple in the craft of making it.



Amidst the Confusion of André Simon's 'Wines of the World' Pocket Library Series

by Gail Unzelman

A recent conversation with Tendril Joseph Lynch to help him clarify his holdings of the *Pocket Library* series, edited by André L. Simon and published by the Wine & Food Society, London, 1949–1951, sent us digging through our multiple copies to compare notes. Several years ago, while researching the preparation of a new, detailed bibliography of Simon's works, I reviewed all of the issues of *Wine & Food*, the quarterly of the Wine & Food Society and a valuable chronicle of Simon's publications during these years (1934 onward). So with some notes on the series that proved to be useful, we offer the following information to fellow "confused" Tendrils.

André Simon announced the 'Wines of the World' *Pocket Library* in the Autumn 1949 issue of *Wine & Food*. It was to be a planned series of twenty-four "attractive little books" (bound in colorful paper-covered boards), "each fifteen pages and two thousand words in length dealing with one or more of the famous wines of the world, published for those Society members who have no time to read and no room for books!" Each book in the series, designed by Newman Neame, displays similar title page and colophon page layouts, each has a relevant map at the front, and each binding is graced with a front cover title printed inside a small decorative border that suggests an antique bottle-ticket. The Library was presented in two "series."

The "First Series"

Ten books comprised the "First Series." *Champagne* and *Port* were issued in 1949; it is important to note that these two books differ from their subsequent followers in that they lack the spine titles seen on the 1950 and 1951 issues. Also note that many references to the Pocket Library series erroneously list the first series of ten books as published in 1950, ignoring the 1949 publication date of *Champagne* and *Port*. The eight other titles of the First Series, in order of their publication in 1950 are: *Sherry*, *South Africa*, *Claret*, *Sauternes*, *Burgundy*, *Hocks & Moselles*, *Brandy*, and *Rum*. By Autumn 1950, the ten books of the First Series were available, either singly at 2s 6d or at one Guinea for a set of any eight titles in an "attractive little case—navy blue [cloth] with gold lettering" or, later, "in a gaily coloured gift case" (see note at end). Most of the First Series titles enjoyed a second edition printing in 1951, but all the books were bound in either yellow or maroon colored paper boards, with black or white lettering, respectively. Interestingly, and confusingly, all of these second edition printings suggest, by the listing on their colophon pages, that Italy (Second Series) might be two books: I - Table Wines, and II - Dessert Wines. This heading does not appear in any of the Second Series colophons; Italy is just Italy, and was so printed as a single book in 1951.

The Books of the First Series

CHAMPAGNE

- 1949. Yellow boards; white lettering (no spine title).
- 1951. 2nd ed. Yellow boards; black lettering.

PORT

- 1949. Maroon boards; white lettering (no spine title).
- 1951. 2nd ed. Maroon boards; white lettering.

SHERRY

- 1950. Yellow boards; black lettering.
- There are two known issues of *Sherry*, 1950: one lists on the colophon page four titles "Published in 1950": *Sherry*, *South Africa*, *Claret*, *Sauternes*. The other lists eight titles: the above four, plus *Brandy*, *Rum*, *Burgundy*, and *Hocks & Moselles*.
- 1951. 2nd ed. Yellow boards; black lettering.

SOUTH AFRICA

- 1950. Maroon boards; white lettering.
- 1951. 2nd ed. Maroon boards; white lettering.

CLARET

- 1950. Maroon boards; white lettering.
- 1951. 2nd ed. Maroon boards; white lettering.

SAUTERNES

- 1950. Yellow boards; black lettering.
- 1951. 2nd ed. Yellow boards; black lettering.

BURGUNDY

- 1950. Maroon boards; white lettering.
- 1951. 2nd ed. Maroon boards; white lettering.

HOCKS & MOSELLES

- 1950. Yellow boards; black lettering.
- 1951. 2nd ed. Yellow boards; black lettering.

BRANDY

- 1950. Yellow boards; black lettering.
- 1951. Green boards; white lettering.
- On the colophon page, *Brandy* is now included (for whatever reason) in the Second Series, and omitted from the listing of First Series titles.

RUM

- 1950. Maroon boards; white lettering.
- One wonders why Rum was considered to be part of a wine library, and Hungary or Tokaj was not included?

The "Second Series"

Designated as the Second Series of the 'Wines of the World' Pocket Library, seven books were produced in 1951: *California*, *Italy*, *Loire*, *Madeira*, *Rhône*, *Switzerland*, and *Yugoslavia*. The books in the Second Series were bound in either green or red paper-covered boards, all with white lettering. With these seven titles, the originally proposed Library of twenty-four small books "to be printed in due time" was concluded, with seventeen titles. The Spring 1952 issue of *W & F* promised the remaining books, but they never appeared, and no further word of them was mentioned in the quarterly. (Simon was busy producing four other titles in 1952, and was obviously hard at work on his *Bibliotheca Gastronomica* published in early 1953.) Inexplicably, the colophon pages of the books of the Second Series present confusing bibliographic issues: *Brandy* is now listed as being part of the Second Series (showing 8 titles), and *Rum* has disappeared completely from either series (leaving each series with 8 titles).

The Books of the Second Series

CALIFORNIA

1951. Red boards; white lettering.

Written by Maynard A. Amerine (University of California professor of enology & viticulture and prominent member of the Wine & Food Society), this is the only book in the Simon-edited series to have an additional author listed on the title page.

ITALY

1951. Red boards; white lettering.

LOIRE

1951. Green boards; white lettering.

Title page: Alsace · Arbois la Loire · Monbazillac · Jurancon. Spine / cover title: *Loire*.

MADEIRA

1951. Red boards; white lettering.

RHÔNE

1951. Red boards; white lettering.

Title page: Rhône · Provence · Languedoc · Roussillon. Spine / cover title: *Rhône*.

SWITZERLAND

1951. Green boards; white lettering.

YUGOSLAVIA

1951. Green boards; white lettering.

NOTE: To date, two "gaily coloured" paper-covered slipcases have come to light: one with a red & green striped-paper pattern to the front and side panels, embellished with dainty Victorian decorations; the top and bottom sides are black. The front panel is labeled "Wines of the World — Andre Simon." (See illustration) The other case is done in blue, maroon, and yellow; the side panels show "world globes" in the center and bands along the top and bottom display different types of wine bottles from around the world. The front panel is labeled "Wines of the World — Wine & Food Society." If Tendrils have other examples, please send descriptions and/or scans! If anyone has information on additional or variant issues of the books themselves, please write! (See also "A Tale of Two Pirates" in Vol.18 No.1 / January 2008 *WTQ* for notes on some pirated copies of the Pocket Library books.)



"A little library, growing larger every year, is an honourable part of a man's history. It is a man's duty to have books. A library is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of life."

— HENRY W. BEECHER (1813–1887)

BOOK REVIEWS

by Christopher Fielden

[We welcome another fine harvest of wine book reviews from our astute keeper of a "once depleted," but now "rapidly reviving" library. — Ed.]

... a glass a day...

■ *The Healing Power of Champagne—History, Traditions, Biology and Diet*, by Dr. Tran Ky & Dr. F. Drouard; translated by Reginald Duquesnoy. Bristol: Savoir-Boire Ltd., 2006. 156 pp. £25.

Some years ago, somewhat out of the blue, I was told that I must never drink again. I have been brought up to believe that one should have trust in doctors and do what they say...so I gave up drink. After a year of total temperance, I asked for further tests to see how my health was progressing. According to my doctor, these suggested that, whilst there was a general improvement, in two directions my condition had deteriorated. I thought this demanded a second opinion and after two days of intensive tests at the local clinic, the medical team pronounced that all they could find wrong with me was excessive wind. I now know this is called *aerophagia* and the best way to treat this is by regularly taking a glass of Champagne. For this information I am indebted to *The Healing Power of Champagne* by Drs. Ky and Drouard.

There is scarcely anything new in a medical treatise on the beneficial effects and/or dangers of wine. Indeed the first book in English about wine (*A New Booke of the Natures and Properties of all Wines...*) was written in 1568 by William Turner, who had studied medicine at Cambridge and warned against the risks of drinking too much strong, sweet wine. In his day, Rhenish was the healthy alternative.

Personally, I have relied on steady ingestion of wine to maintain my health, but I find it comforting that such eminent professors are there to support me. It is also comforting to know that Champagne is the answer to a variety of medical problems, many more serious than burps. These include insomnia, constipation, obesity, old age, lack of libido, and appetite loss. I am prepared to take the authors' word for this, for reading through the book is not easy unless you are a hypochondriac. I need to know the solution, not the cause.

On the other hand, this is a book that should grace any wine library. It has a generous selection of light-hearted illustrations, depicting all aspects of Champagne as a wine that brings joy and gaiety; the chapter headings are blessed with an eclectic selection of wine quotations, many of them new to me.

"the key to the country"

■ *The Wine & Food Lover's Guide to Portugal*, by Charles Metcalfe & Kathryn McWhirter. Haywards Heath, Sussex: Inn House Publishing, 2007. \$25.

Portugal has been *terra incognita* for many wine lovers, but this guide opens up the country remarkably, talking not only about the producers and their wines, but also about wine shops, bars, restaurants and hotels. There are very few wine books that I would rate as absolutely essential, but this is one of them. Published by the authors (husband and wife team of Metcalfe and McWhirter), the guide's 440 pages are packed full of information, spiced with a host of colourful pictures. Until today, I would not have dared to venture out into the vineyard regions of Portugal, and this includes Madeira and the Azores, but now I have the key to the country in my hand.

"an ideal gift..."

■ *Through the Grapevine—An Illustrated Guide to Wine Grapes*, by Candace Ann Frasher. Spokane: Marquette Books, 2007. \$17.

Candace Frasher is a longstanding friend who first introduced me to the wines of Washington State. For many years she has been a wine educator in Spokane and now she has put this experience to good use, with a small book called *Through the Grapevine*. There are many who find the whole business of wine knowledge intimidating. Her book is something that should put such people totally at ease. The book, which might have had as its subtitle, *The Beginner's Guide to Grape Varieties*, takes eighteen varieties, gives a brief description of them and the wines they make, and offers suggestions as to the food that might accompany them best. There are colourful illustrations by artist Selina Shehan. The book would make an ideal gift for a girl hesitantly dipping her toe into wine for the first time. (I say a girl for I feel that this is a book created by women for women.) On the back cover, it says "This is the first in a series of illustrated wine books." I look forward to seeing future offerings.

... a dangerous addiction ...

■ *Les Grands Vins de Bourgogne—La Côte d'Or. Étude et Classement par Ordre de Mérite*, by R. Danguy & Charles Aubertin. Dijon: H. Armand, n.d. [1892].

The final book I want to mention is one that I have known for a long time. Indeed, I once owned a copy, which I gave away when I realised that my addiction to collecting antiquarian wine books was becoming dangerous. The fact that I recently was given another magnificent copy of *Les*

Grands Vins de Bourgogne might well set off my addiction again. For anyone trying to establish a collection of wine books on Burgundy this is one of the, perhaps four, essential components. (The other three would be Arnoux, Lavalley, and Morelot.***) This wonderful book, 662 pages in length and acknowledged as one of the most important, and complete, 19th century works on the wines of Burgundy, gives a detailed, village by village account of the Côte d'Or—the growers, vines, statistics, &c. Among the numerous illustrations throughout the book are folding “grand vues” of Dijon and Beaune, and a large 16"x29" fold-out map of the vineyards. I am proud to own this once again, but slightly frightened of the possible consequences!

** EDITOR NOTE: Christopher Fielden has a special passion for Burgundy and its wines, and is keenly familiar with its literature. Amongst the many wine titles CF has written (see Gabler, pp.132-133), two are on Burgundy: *Burgundy Vines and Wines*, with John Arlott (1976, 1978) and *White Burgundy* (1988). Here are a few bibliographical notes on the “other three” referred to above:

■ Claude Arnoux's *Dissertation sur la Situation de Bourgogne, sur les Vins...*, published in London in 1728, is acknowledged by CF in *White Burgundy* as “one of the first books specifically [written] about the wines of Burgundy.” Although a small book of only 55 pages, with a folding map of the Côte d'Or, it is full of history and information about the crus and the wines. The first edition is extremely rare; in 1978, after 250 years, a facsimile reprint was published in a limited edition of 150 copies. The first English translation of Arnoux's work was incorporated into the 2nd edition of Philip Miller's *The Gardener's Dictionary* in 1733.

■ *Histoire et Statistique de la Vigne et des Grands Vins de la Côte d'Or* by Dr. Jean Lavalley was published in Paris in 1855. This handsome, lavishly illustrated and printed two-volume work is a wealth of detailed information, including harvest dates, vintage assessments, and grape prices. Published the same year as Bordeaux's 1855 Classification, the all-important feature of the book is Lavalley's classification of the Côte d'Or. The companion “Album” contains a stunning fold-out map and a series of exquisite panoramic lithographs of the Côte d'Or. Copies of Lavalley have always been very scarce; a reprint edition of 500 numbered copies, with the map and lithographs reduced in size, was issued in 1982.

■ *Statistique de la Vigne dans le Département de la Côte d'Or* by Dr. [Jules] Morelot (Dijon, 1831). We are indebted to fellow Tendril Sean Thackrey and the

invaluable “archaeology of pleasures” on his website (www.wine-maker.net) for the following information on Morelot and his important treatise. Sean has transcribed an extensive extract from Morelot's book, including not only “virtually all of his winemaking instructions, but also his lengthy notes on the sensual qualities Burgundy should have.” This extract is prefaced with remarks about the doctor/winemaker/author, why “many of his *statistiques* are worth reading, even now,” and “what classic Burgundy was like.” We find that “Lavalley, 1855, lists a ‘Morelot’ as proprietor of vines in several locations within the Côte d'Or, including Le Montrachet, Volnay, Pommard, Beaune, &c...”. Notably, Morelot, in 1825, published *Statistique Oenologique de l'Arrondissement de Beaune*, which suggests he owned his vines around Beaune.

A conversation with Sean Thackrey brought the title ■ *Delle Viti di Vini di Borgogna e dell'acquavite Memoria di Domenico Sestini...* by Domenico Sestini (Milano, 1845), as a proposed addition to our list of essential Burgundy books. Sean notes that this 66-page book is “a wonderfully interesting little book, a reprint of the original edition of 1779” (the second earliest monograph on the wines of Burgundy), and is “arguably as important as the Arnoux in terms of understanding Burgundian winemaking in the 18th century.” Sestini translated into Italian a manuscript that was originally written in French by a Cistercian monk, and which was brought back to Florence by an envoy of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, who wanted to find out everything possible about winemaking in Burgundy.

Tendril members are encouraged to go to Sean Thackrey's website and enjoy the many treasured, ancient texts posted there.



Château de Chambolle-Musigny
Propriété de M. Frédéric MUGNIER de Dijon.

[From: DANGUY & AUBERTIN, 1892]

Vinaceous Correspondents:
Martin Ray's Friendships with Eminent Oenophiles
 The Third Article in a Series / Fifteenth Section
 by *Barbara Marinacci*

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

- 15 -

This installment continues the portrayal of the long, wine-focused friendship between California winegrower Martin Ray and enology professor Maynard A. Amerine of University of California, Davis. When considering the dwindling communication between them in the mid-1950s, it presents the rarely told story of what MR called his Wine Quality Control Fight. Aimed at the higher end of the state's wine industry, it occupied much of his and his wife Eleanor's time, attention, and efforts throughout much of 1955, and into the next year. The Rays had discounted Amerine's downright disapproval of their campaign tactics: attacking the practices and integrity of other wineries while enlisting support from the numerous wine retailers, writers, and wine connoisseurs who had tasted and appreciated the dramatic difference between Martin Ray's pure varietal wines and the far more widely distributed blended ones being labeled and sold as varietals.

*Martin Ray was author Barbara Marinacci's stepfather. First meeting "Rusty" Ray when she was 17 years old shortly before her mother's marriage to him, she regarded him with commingled fascination and rebellion, and soon distanced herself geographically not only from his vehement opinions and "dark" side, but also from the autocratic ways manifested in his new and unaccustomed patriarchal role. Later in life, after his death, she began to ponder the sources of his charismatic but flawed complexity and to appreciate his admirable qualities—especially when working on her mother's memoir/biography, *Vineyards in the Sky* (published in 1993 and still available), and then while spending a year going through the extensive Martin & Eleanor Ray Papers before turning them over in 1999 to Special Collections in UC Davis's General Library, which has copied many letters for her and granted permission to quote from them.*

As always, Marinacci is extremely grateful to Gail Unzelman for enabling her to publish successive segments of this long series, begun in 2004. She doubts that the California wine industry has produced other winemakers as pugnaciously impassioned in pushing for quality as Martin Ray... or so uniquely and eloquently prolific in their correspondence over many years. Certainly among a number of latter-day vintners he was, and still is, an influential and even inspirational figure.



artin Ray hoped that the rather fawning letter he'd written to André Simon in October of 1955 would persuade him to compose a disapproving commentary in the next quarterly issue of *Wine & Food*, sent out to Wine and Food Society members, on the other premium California wineries' evident evasion of accepting quality-

control measures that he'd been advocating for two decades now. Although Maynard Amerine often contributed pieces to *W&F*, if MR had asked him earlier to write about the QC war he'd begun waging, his friend would certainly have declined to do it. From the start, Maynard had made it clear that he objected to the strong-arm tactics and threats involved, along with MR's trying to undermine wineries' reputations through adverse publicity—and kept on telling him so (shown in segments 9–14 in *WTQ* October 2006–January 2008).

MR himself in fact had little respect for the Society's various urban branches, though he welcomed any support he might get from them for his

noble cause: upgrading the reputation of California's better wines through wineries' adoption of self-imposed quality controls, belated as it would be. The Society's memberships, he often declared (starting when he owned Paul Masson, from 1936 to 1943), consisted mainly of wine dilettantes and downright phonies. But naturally he was happy whenever members praised his wines, publicly in print, or privately—even while they used their connections with vintners like him to freeload on wineries' wares. For as he'd write bluntly to author John Melville in the following year:

You might be interested to know that I have virtually never sold any wine to any of the members of the Wine & Food Society. They are mostly beer and whiskey drinkers, who love wine only for the ceremony they are permitted to perform over it at their "state" dinners. Their membership is filled with men who have no home life, who are queer and out of balance socially. By mastering the phraseology of wines, and the lingo they talk, they are able to establish themselves as superior creatures, which they are not. [3/17/56]

Probably MR had never gone to any Society gatherings. His judgments came from socializing with a few member-officers, such as San Franciscan Harold Price, whom he'd known for years, and from

hearing other people's candid opinions—one of whom probably was Amerine. So if this was MR's cynical opinion of the Society's overall membership, what on earth did he think and say about its founding father?

MR's Perspective on André Simon

Unlike many other wine lovers on the planet, MR didn't revere the international Wine & Food Society's progenitor. He sometimes took verbal jabs at André Simon's high standing as both connoisseur and much-published author. In April of 1955, just before his Wine Quality Control Fight began heating up, he'd expressed a dubious assessment of Simon's current ability as an expert winetaster in a letter to oenophile Dr. Marcus Crahan, a psychiatrist and gourmand in Los Angeles who with his librarian wife avidly collected precious gastronomic and wine literature. [EDITOR NOTE: Marcus E. Crahan (1901-1978) will be the subject of an upcoming *WTQ* article.] Crahan had been corresponding with André Simon in an attempt to impress him with the caliber of some better California wines, and had told MR that he was shipping some off to England for Simon to evaluate. "I am really worried about those wines you are sending to Andre Simon," MR began.

You know, I do not know what any of them are, nor about Andre Simon himself. He is eighty years old and cannot any longer even sit through a dinner, let alone taste young and unknown wines. And you know he made his money by being the Pommery Greno agent for the British Empire. He devoted his life to being a French wine merchant in Great Britain. I do not see how it is possible for you to get at his hands treatment that you deserve. His name carries great prestige, but his age and prejudices make him a dangerous judge. California winegrowers sent wines over there before, you know, and nothing came of it.

And here MR inserted a remark that presaged a crucial future development in California winemaking, partly because he and his wines provided a working model for the "boutique" winery that would grow or buy fine winegrape varieties, and from them produce wines on a small scale, in an almost handcrafted manner—then sell them at high prices.

The only recognition we need concern ourselves with is that of our own country. If we can attract half a dozen young men of high ideals, determination and proper financial backing we can have, in fact, premium growers who won't need any artificial supports to hold them up.

Incidentally, in this letter MR had then gone on to praise UC Davis's work, and Maynard Amerine's in particular, in promoting wine quality—always done at the risk of making enemies in an industry that, after all, was partly financing the Viticulture & Enology Department's work in vine and wine

research, educational training, and outreach to both growers and vintners.

The University of California at Davis has done more to make the growers and the consuming public conscious of varieties and quality standards than all the money spent by the Wine Institute and the Wine Advisory Board. On the surface the two institutions profess to have a common interest, but it is my personal belief that they are opposing interests. And if you find any grower against Dr. Amerine, as you mentioned, it is a dead give-away that that grower cannot meet the quality standards advocated by Dr. Amerine and so wants to eliminate him, or anyone sponsoring high standards. [4/5/55]

MR liked so much what he'd written to Crahan that several weeks later he directly quoted two paragraphs from this letter when writing to John Melville: the first extract above and another one that had preceded and then precipitated the comments about Simon and Amerine. (The other paragraph he'd quoted to Melville will appear in a later subhead section. For, ironically, just as MR was composing this letter to Crahan, the entire sequence of events coming afterwards would challenge the close relationship he'd long enjoyed with Amerine.)

Although MR's dismissive remarks about Simon were expectable, he was never so obtuse that he'd neglect to steer a trusted envoy toward the British wine authority, because he'd calculate that benefit might accrue through the contact. And this would happen two years later, when his adopted son Peter Martin Ray was in England doing post-doc botanical research. Using a few letters of introduction MR had written earlier, Peter had visited some of Europe's prominent winegrowers. While at Harvard, too, he had become known to noted wine dealers and connoisseurs in the Boston area, and was even giving talks about winegrowing in Europe. Viewing PMR's wine-focused tangential avocation as a means of promoting his own wines, MR wanted it understood that he'd also be setting the stage for his and his twin brother's eventual inheritance of the wine estate. Though they could stay with their science careers, they'd always need to promote all the Martin Ray wines, past, present, and future.

It is my idea that the interest you should take in our wines should be similar to the interest you might have taken in the Dawn Redwood, had you rediscovered it in interior China and brought back to civilization the first seeds. You would be sending seeds or plants out to all the botanical world and you would be interested in furthering knowledge of it and you would naturally feel something like the sponsor of its establishment in every climate suited to its growing. So with our wines, not that you have discovered them, but you have such an interest in them. You are not "selling" them. You

are not even directly concerned with the financial problems surrounding their growth and marketing. But the wines you are interested in, because you know they are the best grown in the country and because they are grown by your family and you are quite naturally devoted to them even more so than you are to the great growths of the older wine countries. So, keep your interest in proper perspective but keep it vigorous and straightforward. The time must come when you and Barclay must, through your friends and your friends' friends, support a substantial portion of the sales of our vineyards, just as it was true with old Dr. Rixford. It may seem far away to you now but it is very near. [5/23/56]

So now MR expected him to initiate the same kind of contacts and subtle promoting in London through getting to know well-placed wine people, including renowned dealerships.

You will be having the dinner or luncheon at the Berry Bros. before long, I suppose, and we will have great interest in a report of the event. They will no doubt bring out some very rare vintages for you. It is a great source of satisfaction to see how very properly and well you have developed all these wine connections. You now know the great growers of Burgundy, Bordeaux and Germany, and you have developed genuine friendship with them all.

There was strategic value, then, in having Peter become acquainted with celebrated wine authorities. Such persons could boost and spread the reputation of Martin Ray's wines, to prove California's great winemaking potential. They'd also feel assured that this unique winery's future operations would be carried forward successfully into the distant future by this capable, enthusiastic, sophisticated young member of next Ray generation. So in his instructional letter to PMR, MR declared:

There remains after Berry Bros one more man I believe you two [here MR thoughtfully included Peter's wife, Terry] should know before he is dead. He is an old man already but no one has ever had quite the stature he has developed. He is Andre Simon, International head of the wine and Food Society.

When hearing from others that this brilliant young plant physiologist who had made friendships with notable European vintners was also a budding winemaker himself, Simon would indubitably recognize Peter's upcoming importance in the wine world—and therefore desire to meet him. So to explain his plan, MR first described Simon.

He has written dozens of books and booklets on all the various wines and spirits of the world. And while I have often disliked certain of his writings and have always regarded him as the very essence of all the over sophistication [*sic*] that has been built up around wines, he is never-the-less a great personage. So, I

think I will ask him to have you in for a little visit in his London home. He has written some very nice things about us and we have met many people over the years who are personal friends of his.

MR then counseled his son about desirable deportment, which would make an unsullied contrast to that of the usual wine fakers he always enjoyed caricaturing.

Being straight forward and genuine with these people of the wine world who occupy the very top positions at once places you not only in their favor but in this day and age it is great encouragement to these older people to know that there is in the world at least you two.... So accept it and understand it and then just go right on being your own natural selves. Guard always against becoming the phony sophisticate like Bob Knudsen, Harold Price, et al [frequent guests of the Rays, or else their hosts, and ostensibly MR's good friends]. Simon may very well be like that. But if he is, he is at least the greatest of them all! And in the years to come it will be well to be able to remember him and recall that you knew him. [8/25/57]

Peter and Terry Ray were indeed treated to an elegant midday meal in London at the Berry Bros. & Rudd, close to one of the royal palaces. As PMR now recalls it—

Other than the posh Edwardian appearance of the wood-paneled second-storey room where the dinner was held, and the impression that everything about the occasion was very friendly and pleasant (no commercial or other pressures), the main thing I remember about the dinner is that they opened and served a magnum of 1895 Chateau Lafite-Rothschild. This is of course a Premier Crus claret, so appropriately great expectations were associated with it. It also was one of the oldest wines I've ever had, and I remember it as having been magnificent, despite its age. They presumably had brought it up from their cellar containing a vast collection of remarkable wines, which had somehow survived the bombings of London in WWII. I did not, however, meet André Simon on that or any other occasion. But I certainly remember that MR deprecated him and claimed him to be a phony expert, his basis for which I do not know. [Email to BKM, 1/24/08]

MR, Wine Literature, and Current Winegrowing Practitioners

Martin Ray wouldn't have eagerly sought, and bought, Simon's books. His library holdings were scarcely those of an avid wine book collector—whether of historical, scholarly, technical, or popular wine publications; most of his books about wine to be invested in would have been given to him and needed a personal connection. Amerine over the years had often sent or lent him wine literature,

which he'd peruse. Yet MR liked books, as the Rays' sizable library shows. Busy though he always was, he'd try to get acquainted with worthwhile literature, whether classics or current. Often reading aloud to each other in the evening, he and his two sequential wives consumed much good fiction and nonfiction—in the latter category, especially biographies and history. He had good recall of what had been read, though he might reshape information to make it fit with already set opinions or distorted perspectives—particularly if the subject was wine or politics (past or present in either topic).

MR didn't regularly subscribe to the few trade journals of the times, such as *Wines & Vines* to keep abreast of personnel changes, the latest research, technological innovations, and marketing trends in the wine industry. (According to MR, an editor at *W&V*, sometime in the late 1930s, had told him that the magazine, under instructions from the Wine Institute, which helped underwrite its publication costs, could no longer accept either articles or even Paul Masson advertisements from him.)

Instead, MR's interest focused on gathering the state agriculture department's annual harvest and wine-production statistics on all major grape varieties—wine, table, and raisin types—so as to prove that even the better wineries used the latter two (particularly the superabundant Thompson Seedless grapes, in fresh, juice concentrate, or desiccated forms) for vintaging the overall huge gallonage produced. And because the state tracked specific winegrape acreages, he could also demonstrate that many wines labeled as fine varietals would actually have been grossly blended with inferior high-producing winegrapes, such as Chenin Blanc and Zinfandel. (So where did all the wine being marketed as Chardonnay come from, he argued, if the acreage was too low even to be statistically identified? And since MR considered the latter grape close to an abomination, he was invariably outraged whenever he detected dominant presence of "Zin" in wines claimed to be Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon.)

Rusty Ray preferred to stay aloof and get any industry news and gossip second- or third-hand (as he had received it for almost 20 years from Amerine). Also, as the absolute monarch of his own mountain, from the start of his winemaking career MR declined to attend meetings or go to banquets, where he might have socialized and exchanged information with winegrowing peers and other wine professionals. Distancing himself from others also made it easier to render harsh judgments about wines, along with the people who'd made them. And by holding court at dinners given on his secluded mountaintop, he could choose the dishes and wines to be served, along with

dominating the conversation among the Rays' captive yet invariably captivated guests.

The sophisticated André Simon for years had starred in a very different, broadly intercontinental, literary milieu. MR's disdainful attitude toward him and other wine sophisticates (whether they were genuine or pretentious) may have provided smoke-screens to conceal his own deep insecurities—even from himself. After all, his upbringing had been that of a California farm boy. And in spite of his admiration of the noble French and German wine estates and their products, he hadn't yet traveled to Europe (and never would, doubtless partly because he'd feel insecure far from his control center). But he could send letters introducing his adopted sons and favored friends whom he judged well qualified to meet with some of Europe's wine-royalty families. André Simon and the English (who didn't produce wine on their island, anyway) were just two of numerous persons and populations that MR tended to denigrate in both correspondence and conversation. He could proclaim, with fixated conviction, negative opinions about almost anything and anybody, including entire civilizations, nations, and racial or ethnic groups, as well as wineries' histories and wine people. Thus in early 1955, having heard that John Melville, like Dr. Crahan, was seeking to get wine-loving Brits' approval of certain California vintages, MR launched one of his mini-diatribes in a warning letter to him:

My feeling is that nothing out of America could ever please them. And on top of this if the wines were good, which I doubt, they would not admit it.... The California growers just don't seem to realize no one in his right mind is going to drink their blends and frauds when they have a taste and the money to buy better.... It's as if they are frantically trying to sell themselves that their wines are superior. And England has the pick of the French wines.

Then MR couldn't resist adding one more jab at America's Mother Country—over its apparent ingratitude for the U.S. generosity during WWII with Lend Lease and then joining up with Britain in the crucial fight against the Axis nations.

As for her press, you know it is 100% anti American. Why wouldn't it be, after we have saved their lives and given them so much! That is human nature. Lend a friend money and lose the friendship and the money.

The last comment was in line with MR's reluctance or refusal, based partly on adverse past experience, ever to lend money to anyone. (Later on, had he adhered to this dictum, he could have avoided the disastrous financial and personal entanglements and property losses that ensued from his co-founding the Mount Eden Vineyards Corporation.)

When ending his letter to Melville, MR returned to his great fixation on quality control, which had been mightily reactivated earlier in the month after he'd received Louis Gomberg's letter, memorandum, and telephone call. His final sentences show how encouraged he was by the enthusiastic approval of recipients of his recent mailings about instigating quality control.

See you soon, John. Keep up the good work and don't let me discourage you. But try to direct attention to our great chances for making fine wines here and keeping the market we have right here. To hell with what the English think. Better we consider here what our own people think. Got another batch of letters today, all applauding. We are going to force the issue! [5/22/55]

MR's basically unflattering opinion of Simon's winemaking knowledge is reflected in a letter Eleanor wrote, 16 years after the Rays' 1955 QC battle, to a Mrs. Russell Clarke, whose son, currently at the Air Force Academy, had expressed a "deep interest in wines" and was considering becoming a winemaker.

Perhaps some day you can come and bring him here, when he is on vacation with you. We would like very much to meet him. It will be difficult for him in his research to be able to sift actual fact from "old wives' tales" and the usual amateur explanation of winemaking techniques, as such have been passed along from one writer to another, none of whom know what they're talking about! Some who have even acquired quite a name as "authorities" such as Andre Simon actually are not even educated people, lack all knowledge of chemistry, biology, physics, even history—have no experience or even comprehension of basic facts about wine or its making, confuse grape varieties, etc. (He was a wine salesman all his life, until he made his success with his Wine & Food Society.)

And from here ER leapt into a generalization that both she and her husband often made.

So often the truth about winemaking is the very opposite to "authorities." Tell him not to accept the printed word as fact. Students naturally are inclined to give respect to authors. We sometimes wonder if all history is as absurdly incorrect as is history involving just this one subject that we happen to know first-hand—winegrowing. We suspect it is—and once current history goes back beyond those alive today, it becomes almost impossible to right all the errors. [4/24/71]

This provocative observation perhaps deserves pondering. Wine scholars and historians, when researching wines made before their time as experi-

enced imbibers, and perhaps never having even tasted them (whether in the wines' prime or past it), may rely unduly on printed texts and records of wine-contest outcomes that often were based on adroit, strategic promotions. Also, because MR, out of principle, for many years never submitted his table or sparkling wines for either private or public (such as county) competitive judgments, they are not listed among the gold-medal awards selected to identify those wines of outstanding quality that were produced in the state, and in the entire U.S. itself, from the late 1930s until the mid-1970s (the time of MR's death). Furthermore, wineries customarily set aside superior lots of varietals known to be far superior to ones made in highly blended bulk batches, which were then bottled, labeled as varietals, and shipped off to distributors and to retailers for public consumption. Such specially vintaged wines—to which the commercial releases could seem identical counterparts—would be reserved for use at important wine-judging venues or to impress influential visiting experts.

Wine scholars might also consider various reasons why mentions of Martin Ray and his pure-varietal wines were usually absent from mainstream coverage in books and periodicals about notable California wineries and wines. (The intriguing tale of Frank Schoonmaker's nastily deliberate excision in 1941 of an entire chapter he'd already written for *American Wines* about Martin Ray as proprietor of Paul Masson was told in the April 2004 *WTQ*.)

MR's hostility in his perennial quality-demanding stance alienated him not only from the potent influence-peddling Wine Institute and Wine Advisory Board, but also from most winery owners and the winemakers in their employ, who would go along with any blackballing of Ray—if they heard or thought about him at all. He was deliberately ostracized from recognition. (For whatever reasons, though, wine insider Louis Gomberg, starting in the late 1930s, appeared to genuinely esteem MR and his wines.) Additionally, Martin Ray wines didn't get wide attention anyway, since they were produced in comparatively minuscule amounts, were hard to find, and cost far too much compared with seemingly similar California varietals or champagnes. Therefore, by primarily researching the "official" sources of that period and depending on lists of contest winners, most wine writers and historians covering the score (and more) of years ranging between Prohibition's Repeal in 1933 and the first detectable signs of the oncoming, much-celebrated Wine Revolution, have failed to give Martin Ray, his wines, and his single-minded push for quality control their just due.

While MR Bullies, Amerine Carries On ...

If Maynard was unduly upset by Martin Ray's behavior, as he had indicated in that July phone conversation with his vintner friend, he wouldn't have permitted his feelings to interfere much with either his personal life or his professional work. For a while he had been composing a special essay for publication in the programme booklet commemorating the 1955 Vintage Tour of wineries to be taken by members of the combined San Francisco and Los Angeles Wine & Food societies on September 24th and 25th. Titled "The Well-Tempered Winebibber," it's both an eloquent statement about wine appreciation and a specific guide to tasting wines, for their individuality, quality, and comparison with others. It indicates the kind of philosophical yet impassioned discussions about wine that he must have had with MR in earlier, quieter times together, when the latter was unlikely to become obnoxiously inebriated.

Amerine began by saying that because works of art in general—music, painting, literature—have certain characteristics that distinguish great and lasting ones from those that are lesser and transitory, "The greater our understanding of these characteristics, the greater becomes our capacity for enjoyment and the wider our range of appreciation." The basic principles of aesthetics essentially involve "an appeal to our intellect that distinguishes the ordinary from the extraordinary, the short-lived from the timeless masters." And so, too, was the pleasure that people took in drinking wine, Amerine averred.

It is the thesis of this essay that our enjoyment of wines is also essentially intellectual and subject to aesthetic principles similar to those applying to any other work of art. Furthermore, that wines of the most diverse types may be judged by the same basic aesthetic standard providing we give to them the requisite experience. [p. 6]

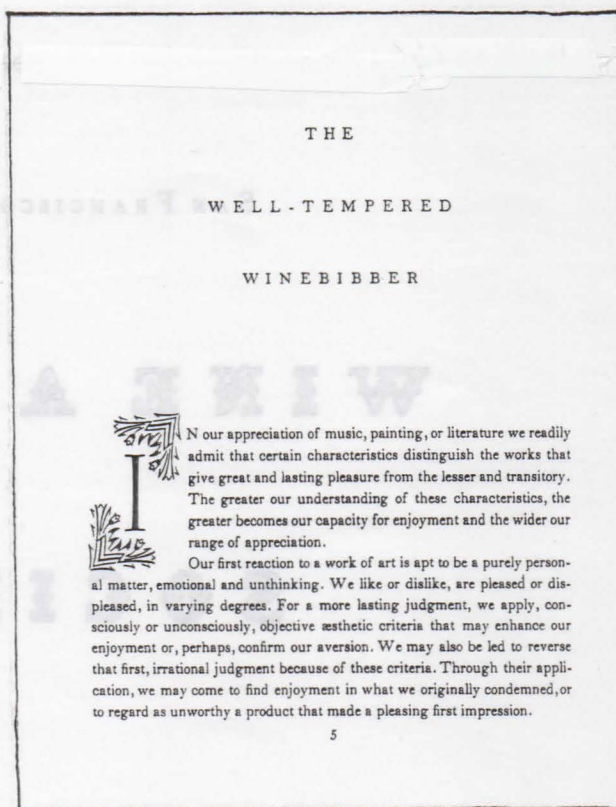
The author, however, had to admit that although numerous "learned treatises" expounded the principles of appreciating the arts—and here he even added cuisine, citing the M.F.K. Fisher's books about food—little was available on wine aesthetics. There were books presenting tradition and price, and in those making judgments on particular wines lacked explanations of the "foundations" behind them. So helpfully he now began to explicitly set down "a rational basis for distinguishing the good and the bad." As shown in earlier phases of his enological career, this Davis professor aimed to establish a scientific basis for judging both wine quality and the definite distinctions to be found among different types of wines, including varietals.

Why would he do so? In this passage Amerine seemed to agree with both Martin Ray's stand against the PWP's hucksterish plan to promote

California wines and the PWP's dislike of consumers' annoying penchant for buying French imports. And he also cautioned readers against believing that every wine made by a certain "brand" winery was bound to be superlative (and defect-free), compared with its winemaking competitors' products. (Was he recalling too how MR always claimed that of his wines?)

Furthermore, the modern huckster has brought to such an intensity the art of propagandizing as superlative the cheap and the poor that even the wry and experienced consumer may be fooled. (Oh yes, there are wine hucksters, too!) The intelligent wine drinker therefore owes it to himself to acquire some organoleptic skill and aesthetic appreciation in order to free himself from the merciless attentions of the salesmen who would have us believe that the expensive is good, that the imported is, *per se*, better, or that a certain brand of vintage is always, *ipso facto*, superior. [p. 6]

Through its 15 pages, Amerine's intellectually elegant essay carried literate wine imbibers through



— Maynard Amerine's essay appeared in the 1955 Vintage Tour program printed for members of the San Francisco and the Los Angeles Wine & Food societies. Following the "Winebibber" is the schedule of wineries, fare, and wines to be enjoyed during the tour, of which Amerine was the Chairman. The 24-page 12" x 9" booklet, an exquisite example of the fine press work of Grabhorn Press, San Francisco, was issued in an edition of only 100 copies. —

1955

VINTAGE TOUR

OF THE

SAN FRANCISCO AND LOS ANGELES

WINE AND FOOD

SOCIETIES



SEPTEMBER 24-25

such separate issues, in terms desirability or defects, as color, clarity or texture, odor (aroma, bouquet, foreign scents or off-odors), taste (acid or "dry," sweet, salty, astringent or bitter); the proper sequence of serving wines; the best type and size of wine glass for tasting, and defects; reasons for variations in personal taste. He also noted the important factor of experience in acquiring tasting ability.

Those who have learned to drink wine as a child usually have a wide range of appreciation, for they have begun this education of the palate early. The acquiring of prejudices and fixed tastes comes with age. A major evil of Prohibition is that it robbed so many of this natural habituation period. Beginning as adults, they must now go through a slower and more difficult training sequence in order to cultivate a taste for the more austere and complex types of wine. [p. 17]

Amerine, nearing his conclusion, described what makes a "fine wine" so fine, akin to the great works of art in other fields of human creativity—though the appreciation is necessarily ephemeral except in one's memory, to be experienced again only when an identical bottle is opened and its contents imbibed.

The fine wine has so many facets of goodness that we are continually finding new aspects of its quality. This is particularly true of red wines, and supremely so of well-aged red wines. Just as we return to a great painting or symphony again and again, each time making a new discovery, so, too, can we enrich our enjoyment of a fine wine—some new facet of its superior quality is revealed with repeated tasting. Moreover, the whole cannot be attained by merely adding up the individual parts.

Such an abundance of discovery leads to endless discussion. Try, on the other hand, to describe an ordinary wine. The difficulty is likely to be in finding anything specific to say. It is generally dismissed as not being very good, and we let it go at that. It is upon this level that we need not let aesthetic principles bother us in the least. We like them or not. We need not waste time praising or condemning them, for their potentialities—except for quenching our thirst (which is not unimportant)—are small. But about great wines there is always a great deal to say and, hence, to appreciate. Great wines are also distinguished from mediocre ones by having no perceptible defect. Inability to recognize defects, incidentally, is one of the faults of the inexperienced taster.

Finally, all truly fine wines are memorable. True, we also remember the characteristics of bad wines. But the point is that wines falling between these extremes drop out of mind. The wine that does not excite us enough to be remembered can never be great. [pp. 18-19]

Amerine then appropriately ended his discourse with that health-boosting toast, "*Prosit!*"

Ten years later, when Maynard Amerine published, with Vernon Singleton, the popular book *Wine: An Introduction for Americans* (University of California Press, 1965), for the penultimate chapter, "Wine Appreciation, Evaluation, and Service," he drew upon points made in this earlier essay. For several decades, Amerine's didactic services would be much in demand for conducting special classes to winegrowers in the technical aspects of critically evaluating wines. He also offered courses in Wine Appreciation to the lay public—part of the fast-growing and near-ubiquitous interest in wine tasting on the part of middle-class Americans.

Reprising MR's Wine Quality Fight

When Martin Ray wrote his letter (above) to Dr. Marcus Crahan in April of 1955, he also shared his initial reactions to the formation of the Premium Wine Producers of California. He had begun his typewritten, single-spaced letter of four pages by mentioning the invitation that he had recently received earlier by mail from Louis Gomberg, asking him to join this new promotion-bent group. Gomberg had enclosed his memorandum about the alarming expansion of competition from European wines and his plan for countering it. MR had only gotten around to really reading it carefully that morning—which then precipitated the following reaction (and more), which he shared with Crahan.

There is not a single authentic unblended Pinot Noir or Chardonnay grown in California which is worthy of mention except our own. Can you not see, then, why it is so important to make it known what fine wines are and that they can be grown in California? We must have new men in the industry, new growers. These so-called "premium winegrowers" we now have are bound together through organization, effort and lack of fine wine appreciation, and their objectives are not based on growing finer wines but rather on forcing the American public to accept products of uniform low quality.

Then came a coincidental interruption in MR's epistolary discourse: a phone call from Louis Gomberg. Not having received response yet from Ray, he wanted to talk with him directly.

You would be interested to know that even as I have been writing this letter, Mr. Gomberg telephoned me from San Francisco making a personal request that I join his group of growers in the effort which I have discussed. I told him just what I have told you. He then asked that he be permitted to use my name in soliciting other growers, representing that I favor their action; but I was obliged to decline his request. I told him that any time he wanted to bring anyone here important to the industry we would be happy to hold a luncheon for them, show them through tasting our

wines against the best European wines what can be done in California by confining efforts to actually growing fine wines as opposed to falsely claiming such. [4/5/55]

(It should be pointed out that almost two decades earlier, at Masson, MR had made a similarly self-confident, hospitable invitation to winegrowers to visit his own premises and there drink comparatively both his wines and excellent foreign ones as the best way to show them what California could do. But few ever took him up on it.)

And now in early November of 1955, six months after these letters to Crahan and Melville, MR was still in occasional contact with Louis Gomberg. Communication went on despite his suspicion that the PWP and the Wine Institute had managed to sabotage his and Eleanor's adroitly planned QC publicity blitz in the summertime. Clearly, though, he still held onto a faint hope that Dr. Winkler would soon be summoned to present ideas for initiating QC plan. Thus he could tell Amerine in one of his now-routine monthly communications—

Gomberg wrote an encouraging letter last week on the attitude of the growers. But I want to talk to Dr. Winkler before I accept any assurances about Quality Control. Gomberg says Dr. Winkler is preparing a report to the growers on my suggested plan and Gomberg no longer speaks of it in a questioning manner but rather as a thing that takes time. Perhaps he is thinking in terms of another 20 years. He did not say what he meant by time! I have begun to suspect Gomberg is giving me the run-around and is stalling. That is why I want to talk to Dr. Winkler. [11/12/55]

But in fact by then—although he didn't want to admit it yet to Maynard—MR was fairly sure that, despite Gomberg's seemingly positive attitude, the Premium Wine Producers wouldn't decide in favor of quality control, soon or ever. Earlier, Winkler had told him that nobody as yet had summoned him to the Wine Institute's headquarters in San Francisco, to present to the Premium Wine Producers group his ideas on how to go about establishing quality control measures within their ranks. So as early as the third week in October (as shown in his letter to Angelo Pellegrini; see #14 in January 2008 *WTQ*), MR was convinced that his efforts to win quality control had been deliberately "double-crossed" by the PWP group—probably under advisement from officers of its sheltering organization, the Wine Institute.

Doubtlessly brewing in Martin Ray's mind already was a plan to eloquently summarize this deplorable, wholly unacceptable rejection of QC—if that was how things were going to turn out.

Maintaining an Epistolary Connection

During the late summer and early fall of 1955 Martin Ray was plenty occupied with preparations for and then taking charge of the several vintages on Mt. Eden, as well as other projects—such as the increasing entertainment of visitors. It bothered him, though, that Amerine had stopped calling, as he often used to do. Maynard also mostly failed to respond to his letters, and on the rare occasions when he did write, his messages were superficial, unsatisfactory. After all, for years MR had considered MA his dearest friend and confidant, especially after Julian Street died in 1947. (And for six years, anyway, though convenient for subsequent archival purposes, that had been strictly an epistolary relationship until the Connecticut-based Streets visited Martin and Elsie in 1946, after WWII ended.) Martin would never forget that right after Elsie's death in the summer of 1951 Maynard had rushed to his side to console him in that all-night-long, wine-swilling, two-man wake.

Amerine had clearly put their friendship "on ice," as he'd told MR in July he needed to do, since important wine people weren't talking to him anymore—obviously thinking he was in cahoots with MR in pushing hard for the quality control measures that would adversely affect their business operations. This social ostracism came about despite the fact that Amerine from the start had disagreed with MR's methods, involving widely circulating written condemnations of other wineries' winemaking methods and deceptions in marketing "fraudulently" labeled varietals.

Of course MR thought—hoped—that Amerine only meant this social hiatus to be temporary, until his long-ongoing QC battle with the higher end of wine industry reached a conclusion pleasing to both of them, as for a time it appeared to be doing. He hadn't expected a real and sustained rupture. But since he was experiencing mostly silence on the other end of what used to be frequent communications, MR no longer wrote Maynard anywhere as often as before or said as much. He also refrained from making further personal attacks after his blast of July 26. And he didn't phone him, wishing to avoid either causing annoyance or being rebuffed outright.

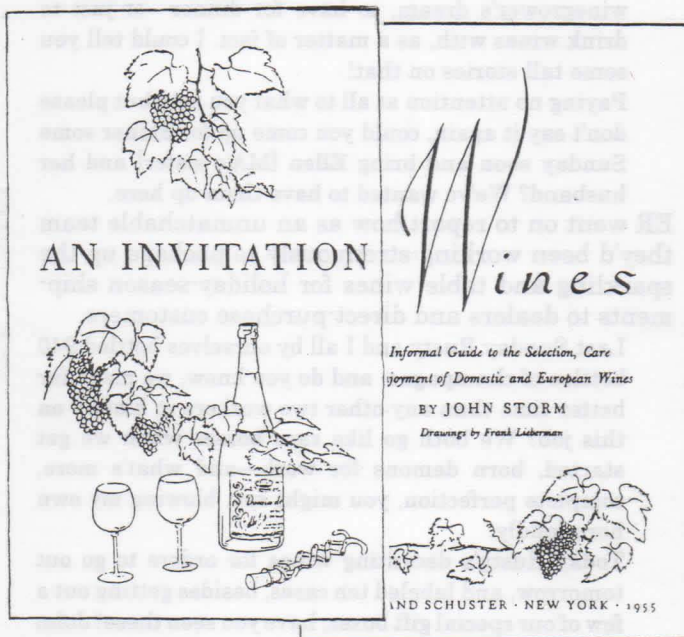
Carefully pacing his overtures, he now wrote Maynard only monthly. In October he had reported at length about the official winery inspectors' unexpected intrusion in his cellar. In mid-November he typed up a two-page letter to MR mostly giving miscellaneous news and observations. First, he told him about a small group of dedicated wine lovers in

Reno who intended to visit UC Davis next summer and were eager to meet Amerine. Then he moved on to the subject of wine writers and wine books. "Eleanor and I want to tell you that we liked your reviews in Andre Simon's *WINE AND FOOD*. [One was of Melville's *Guide to California Wines*, given as a sidebar in January 2007 *WTQ*.] Suppose you have seen John Storm's *INVITATION TO WINES*. He deliberately misquoted me." It's difficult to believe that MR would take offense at this comment which the author had made in a footnote:

Mr. Ray, whose impeccable taste has done a lot to raise the standards of winemaking in California, believes passionately that only by honest varietal labeling can California wines compete successfully with the fine wines of Europe.

What probably bothered MR came afterwards, because it implied that he took credit for a discovery that Amerine for some years had insistently told him, and which MR's adopted son Peter had confirmed when in France the previous year.

His [MR's] tireless research has lately revealed that the vine grown in California as the Pinot Chardonnay is not, in fact, the true Pinot. For this reason he now labels his wine simply Chardonnay. [*An Invitation to Wines*, 1955, p.121.]



Anyway, the statement gave MR the chance to do yet another critical riff on defects in wine literature. But it was followed at once by acknowledging that recent books like Melville's and Storm's were definitely raising consumers' interest in wines—and in Martin Ray wines in particular. No doubt, too, the special promotional efforts being mounted by both upscale California wineries and Gomberg's PWP

group were also having positive effects.

It makes one understand the action of Corporations, Agencies of the Government and even individuals, who employ publicity or press men to write hand-outs so that it can be insured that what is desired can be put across. But however bad our wine books, interest in wines grows with leaps and bounds....

Doubleday told me that Melville's book sales will reach 10,000 copies by year end. That is a big sale for a wine book. I am sure the second printing or the revised edition, when and if it comes, will show improvements. I have had a long talk with Melville and he has agreed to certain changes and I believe your criticism will have its influence on him, although I have not seen him since the Autumn number [of the Wine and Food Society's quarterly] came out.

(Of course MR would tell John Melville about Amerine's disgruntlement over the poor sales of his own book compared with JM's popular one.)

As before, MR's letters to Amerine document how the rapidly rising demand for Martin Ray wines in the mid-1950s had begun pressuring him to expand his vineyard domain in order to grow his business—the expected American way.

We have constant inquiries from all over the country now. Yesterday there were two wanting to buy. Our sales this year will be greater than what [wines] we have made—a situation both good and bad. We must somehow cut our sales deliberately or extend our vineyard. We will likely plant further in January. I have never liked one thing that effects [sic] all of us sooner or later: We must go on forever doing more and more and more or suffer the turn backward. Business always grows or starts to die. Even life is that way. It is the element of time in its determined effort.

Apart from that problematic attempt to force the wine industry to institute quality control, MR at least felt that he and his own varietal wines, both still and sparkling, had gained gratifying and financially rewarding attention during the past year. This had come about through several ways: his strenuous sales efforts among retailers; informative mailings that he and Eleanor had written and sent out to retailers and customers—especially about the need for QC regulations among California's finer wines; and favorable publicity given by others, both verbally and in print, notably Melville's guidebook to wineries and their wines that had sold well within the state and accelerated wine tourism.

Then MR's November letter veered in a social direction, hoping to bring Amerine back into his and ER's winegrowing life and ambience at their Thanksgiving table.

Now that recognition and success has come to our 10 year effort here on the Mountain, Eleanor and I want to share it with you. And I think the time has come for

an old time dinner and get together. And there is no better time than during the festive season we are about to enter. [11/12/55]

But would Maynard Amerine take this proffered bait?

Attempts to Resurrect and Repair a Sundered Relationship

After marrying MR four years earlier, Eleanor had often written to Maynard, especially when he was in Europe during all of 1954, for she too was very fond of him. Now, knowing well how much her husband was upset by the friendship's apparent breakup, she composed a note to send him on the same day Rusty would mail his (above). She tried to keep the tone flippantly stylish, as she had usually done before. So she devised nine mostly absurd questions for him to answer.

Dear Maynard:

1. Tell me this, what would cause this? An old cognac addict finds that suddenly any cognac burns holes in his/her stomach.
2. What is the proper thing to say when an arrogant socialite at a dinner party gives you a lecture on why Petri sherry tastes better than any imported sherry?
3. How can you account for this? Waking up and looking out the window I saw Frosty lazily chewing something, suddenly he jumped to his feet with surprise as a bird flew out of his mouth and away!
4. If while dancing with a seemingly sensible bachelor he cracked your finger causing permanent injury, what should you do? [Earlier in the year, Maynard had sprained or even broken ER's little finger as he twirled her around while they were dancing at his home.]
5. How soon can you normally distinguish sex in a kitten?
6. What do you think Woodward was doing (nude) out in the hallway?
7. Would you be flattered or insulted if you received a letter addressed to Dr. Maynard Morningstar, and why? [Herman Wouk's novel, *Marjorie Morningstar*, was a current bestseller. Some Ray acquaintance may have referred to Amerine using that ludicrously erroneous surname.]
8. Would you accept an invitation to come up for Thanksgiving dinner if I promised to play you a priceless recording of "Over the River and Through the Woods to Grandmother's House We Go"?
9. Do you consider it a natural phenomenon that as you grow older, people formerly cherished seem increasingly unbearable?

ER saved the really crucial question for number 10.
10. How should a wife go about trying to mend relations between her husband and his best friend who have tiffed but not over her?

Ten days later Maynard responded succinctly, in his

own hand and on Bohemian Club notepaper, to both of the Rays' letters.

Dear Rays: I am sorry I cannot come to dinner. Tis better this way lest there be any tiffs. I shall be glad to see the Reno people anytime and show them what I can of our work. Just so I know a few days in advance. I plan to be here until mid-August....

Alas, I cannot find adequate answers to Eleanor's 10 questions, except #10 which the 2nd sentence above covers.

Yours, Maynard a.a. [11/22/55]

Still hoping to bypass the hurtful relationship break, in early December Eleanor ignored MA's withdrawal from their lives and reported on recent doings to Amerine. ("Papa" was a fond nickname for Rusty Ray that she, and Elsie before her, sometimes used.)

Papa's working every day from about 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. in the cellar getting out what seems a mounting avalanche of holidays orders!!! So don't think he's forgetting you just because he hasn't gotten around to answering your nice note. We're about dead around here from crucial overwork, but happy happy, and would be still happier to see your smiling face up here—and it's no casual statement to say that you're exactly the only one who is the perfect answer to a winegrower's dream, to have for dinner—or just to drink wines with, as a matter of fact. I could tell you some tall stories on that!

Paying no attention at all to what you said but please don't say it again, could you come up for dinner some Sunday soon and bring Ellen [MA's sister] and her husband? We've wanted to have them up here.

ER went on to report how as an unmatchable team they'd been working strenuously to package up the sparkling and table wines for holiday-season shipments to dealers and direct-purchase customers.

Last Sunday Rusty and I all by ourselves bottled 940 bottles of champagne, and do you know, we made far better time than any other two workers in history on this job? We both go like race horses when we get started, born demons for work—and what's more, complete perfection, you might say, blowing my own horn loudly.

Today Rusty's decanting wines for orders to go out tomorrow, and labeled ten cases, besides getting out a few of our special gift boxes, have you seen these? John Esquin says it's the most beautiful wine package he's ever seen either here or in Europe, a shallow wooden box with the two champagnes and three still wines individually partitioned off as in a showcase, each bottle wrapped in cellophane appropriately colored to the wine—ah, they shimmer like rare jewels! A terrific job to get all this special box and liners made, not to speak of finding cellophane in exactly the colors we wanted—and then assemble everything perfectly—

most people would say it's far more work than it's worth—but there's a deep satisfaction in sheer beauty.

(In a letter written a few days earlier to Burgess Meredith, ER had told how the two of them had bottled a cask of champagne, then celebrated afterwards. "Rusty's so fussy that it's a rare person who can handle any one of the three separate operations involved to suit him," she said, "so it gets down to basic family members." [11/28/55])

Finally Eleanor came to the crucial issue with Maynard:

I've so many questions stored up to ask you that if you don't come soon I'll be forced to be a nuisance via the postal system! And not only questions, I've stories to tell you—like about our Thanksgiving. Nobody else will do, I insist it must be you, Maynard. Nobody could love you so much as your two lil friends up here on the mountain, so please say to hell with tiffs, leave them to chaps who really despise each other, and join forces with us up here for a rousing get-together in good old pre-holiday fashion! [12/4/55]

(Amerine was fortunate to have evaded the Rays' Thanksgiving feast. ER complained to Burgess Meredith that the various assembled guests, unnamed by her, caused a "frost" in that celebratory occasion. A half-year later, MR would detail in a letter to Maynard the several dramas that had transpired that day—to be presented in the next installment.)

ER signed her letter to Amerine, "With many flourishes of love from us both—" And sometime afterward, perhaps years later, ER handwrote this at the top of the carbon copy she'd retained, "Their friendship of long standing was almost killed by Martin's Quality Fight, trying for a Quality Control." *Almost* killed? It was near-dead by the end of 1955, though the Rays were unable yet to accept this sad reality and for some while would persist in their epistolary effort to reclaim Maynard as their intimate friend.

There was one route, though, through which Martin Ray would be able to sustain contact with Amerine, slight and occasional as it would be over the years. And that would be to ask for his opinion or advice from time to time in matters connected with the making of wine. Thus before terminating his November 1955 letter to Maynard (partially quoted earlier), MR posed a technical question that he hoped Dr. Amerine the enologist could answer.

Will you please write me a short explanation as to why our Pinot Noir red wine always finishes its fermentation so fast while the free-run (white) and press (pink) always ferment for from a month to six weeks. And why is the tourney [*sic*] always in the free-run and never in either the press or the wine fermented on the skins? If it were not for its absence in the wine fermented on the skins I would conclude

that the free run merely washes and carries it away. I would like your appraisal of the situation because I have not been able to get it out by early filtration into a sulphured puncheon. The experience goes back to 1937. I have never failed to find it and have always gotten it out as described. Once when I delayed the filtering the taste remained for several months perhaps a year or longer but gradually it then disappeared until finally I could no longer find it! [11/12/55]

Maynard's very brief response came in the note he had sent to the Rays on November 22nd. "Best explanation I can think of re press vs. free-run is that tannins act as partial antiseptic. Also free-run probably gets more organisms (from surfaces)." And over a half-century later, Peter Martin Ray, a retired Stanford plant physiology professor and former winemaker, now living in Fairbanks, Alaska, contributed the following commentary:

I remember that MR had a mistaken notion of the spelling of the wine disease called *tourné* in France (with an accent on the *e*, hence pronounced tour-NAY). This is the past participle of the verb *tourner*, which means both to turn, and (at least for milk) to turn sour. As I recall it, this disease is caused by a bacterium that grows as long chains of cells, creating in the infected wine an impression, macroscopically, of silkiness or silky threads when the wine is poured (making the chains of cells align with one another). Since it has a disagreeable flavor and aroma, my recollection is that MR was fearful of getting *tourné* infections in his wines. He must have had this happen some time in the past, since he described to me the silky appearance—which I haven't actually seen, since I never got a *tourné* infection. [Via email, 1/28/08]

Between the two formerly close friends there would be bouts of correspondence ahead of them. The folders containing letters and notes between MR and Maynard Amerine from 1956 on, until MR's death in early 1976—slim indeed compared with those of previous years—indicate that MA never failed to reply to MR's requests for technical information, nor did he decline to arrange for, and then report in some detail on, any Martin Ray wines sent to him for testing. But that wonderful camaraderie of old was never to be resumed.

[To be continued in the next issue]





"GODDESS OF WINE"

From an original drawing by Vivian Olsen, 2008.

(See "The Ancient Connection between Women & Wine" by Liz Thach, this issue)