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Frona Eunice Wait: "Herculean Deeds of Worthwhile Achievement"

by *John Maher*

[*Along with Agoston Haraszthy's Grape Culture, Wines, and Wine-Making (1862), George Husmann's Grape Culture and Wine-Making in California (1888), T. Hart Hyatt's Handbook of Grape Culture (1867), and Emmet Rixford's The Winepress and the Cellar (1883), Frona Eunice Wait's Wines and Vines of California (1889) make up the unquestionable cornerstones of California wine literature. It may seem strange that our author of this first in-depth study of Frona Eunice Wait, new Tendril John Maher, was born in Argentina, grew up in Peru, educated in England, lectured at the University of London, and now lives in Valencia, Spain, where he has more than a keen interest in the wines of the area. But, read on....* — Ed.]

Frona as a Footnote

FRONA EUNICE WAIT [1859–1946] first entered my consciousness in 2007 as a passing reference in a collection of articles on the wines of the Valencia region in Spain that I was preparing for publication. I felt that I might not be alone in not knowing who she was, and so set about adding a footnote. I discovered that she was the author of a significant nineteenth-century book about Californian wine, *Wines & Vines of California, or a Treatise on the Ethics of Wine Drinking* (S.F.: Bancroft Company, 1889; reprinted Howell-North Books, 1973), a work described by Thomas Pinney in the WTQuarterly (July 2005), as "full of information and must still be read by anyone with an interest in the history of California winemaking."

I was also intrigued by the opening lines of "A Competitor," a squib by Ambrose Bierce:

> Mrs. Frona Eunice Wait,
> My legs are not so very straight;
> My spine, I'm sorry to observe,
> Maintains a most rebellious curve;
> My neck is skinny, and my bust
> Would justify a husband's trust.

At the time I was unable to establish what was behind Bierce's satirical verse, and surmised that it was something to do with votes for women. In the footnote I vaguely left it as "her involvement in women's issues." My curiosity had been pricked, however. I bought and read a copy of *In Old Vintage Days*, a novel which Frona Eunice Wait (now as Frona Eunice Wait Colburn, and in her late seventies) had lavishly produced in 1937 by the eminent San Francisco printer John Henry Nash. The novel is perhaps more interesting for its insights into the agricultural and commercial lives and challenges of the winegrower protagonists than as a work of fiction, but it does convey her lasting interest in, and affection for, the wines of California. The foreword specifically refers to *Wines & Vines of California* and her return "to the scenes of my first attempt at authorship."

I am almost ashamed to confess in the bibliophile pages of the Wayward Tendrils Quarterly that it was while preparing an ebook edition of *Valencia. Land of Wine* that I renewed my acquaintance with the relevant footnote. I had another go at finding out about Frona Eunice Wait, and what lay behind the Bierce poem. There proved to be far more information

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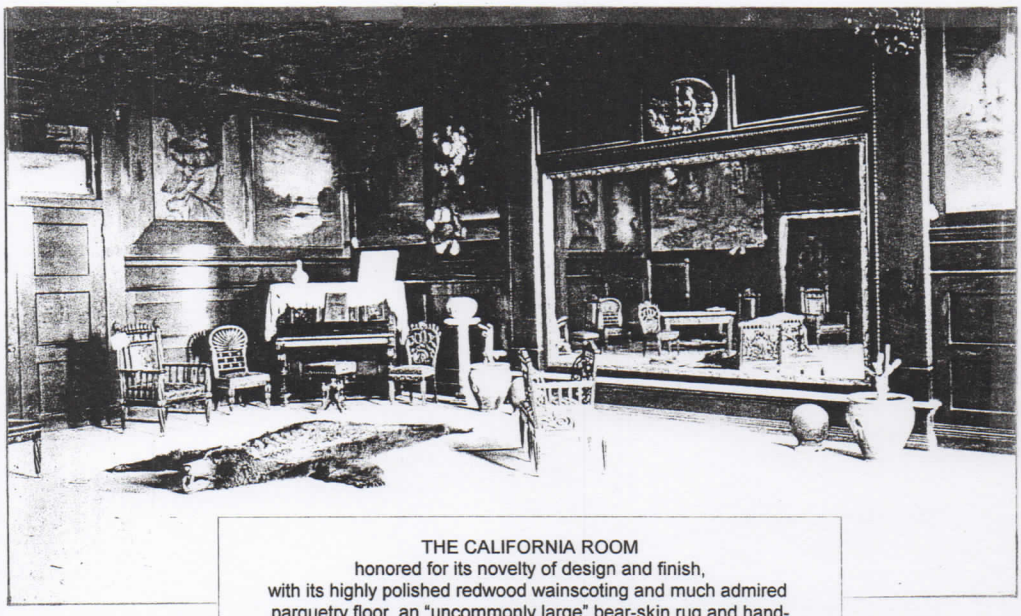
available four years after I had first struggled to find her history. As I began to piece together the jigsaw, a picture gradually emerged of a remarkable person and life, in which Californian wine was merely one constant among a dizzying array of enthusiasms, activities and achievements. She seemed, in her epic and multi-faceted career, almost to embody the rise and development of the state of California itself, from rough and ready frontier country to dynamic pacesetter.

Frona Eunice Wait and the Chicago World's Fair: "Head Venus-herder of the State"

I was finally able to establish the context to Bierce's lines. It was not about women's suffrage, though this was a subject on which Frona Wait held characteristically strong views, but a response to a typically inspired piece of promotion. It transpired that Frona Eunice Wait was "an alternate member of the National Board of Lady Managers" for the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, in which capacity she was the driving force behind the California Room in the Woman's Building. "This room had been planned, designed, and exhibits therefor secured, by Mrs. Frona E. Wait, of San Francisco," was the summing up of the *Final Report of the California World's Fair Commission*. The success of the California Room—variously known as the Redwood Room or the Cactus Room, as it was panelled in redwood and the "coloring and decorative scheme" were inspired by the cactus—was the culmination of an arduous undertaking by Frona Wait. There were the usual personal and financial tensions characteristic of committees of this kind. I think it is also possible to surmise that Frona Wait's combination of efficiency and verve may have been viewed as high-handedness and limelight-seeking by some of her more staid and socially elevated fellow members. It might be imagined that references such as that in the Sacramento Daily Union (17 February 1893) to the "unaided efforts of Mrs. Frona Eunice Wait" may not have been universally well received by the other Lady Managers:

> There is one place in the World's Fair where California will lead and that is in the Woman's Building. Through the unaided efforts of Mrs. Frona Eunice Wait, alternate Lady Manager of the National Commission, this State has secured the first choice of the three reception-rooms on the second floor of the Woman's Building, and she has secured contributions to the amount of $20,000...

The San Francisco Call (11 April 1893) reported "Mrs. Waite [*sic*] said she was credibly informed that M. H. de Young had stated that he would pay $10,000 if necessary, to prevent her from taking charge of the California Room in the Woman's Building." Illuminatingly, the same article reported that the fourteen contributors of items for the California Room were "enthusiastically in favor of Mrs. Waite [*sic*], and said they wanted her to have complete control and supervision of the exhibit." The same paper on 18 April 1893 announced that "the long dispute between Mrs. E. Frona Wait and the board of Lady Managers of the World's Fair Commission has been settled at last by the voluntary retirement of Mrs. Wait from all active part in the work." Frona Eunice Wait did, how-



THE CALIFORNIA ROOM
honored for its novelty of design and finish,
with its highly polished redwood wainscoting and much admired
parquetry floor, an "uncommonly large" bear-skin rug and hand-
carved furniture, all enhanced with vases of growing cacti,
paintings by California artists, and the great seal of the State
hung above a massive, richly framed glass plate mirror

ever, eventually win the day, using the funds she had raised to deliver and set up the California Room.

It is perhaps the article in the San Francisco Call (22 Feb 1893) announcing Frona Eunice Wait's idea of a "highly interesting beauty contest" to find and sculpt the "most perfect type of physical beauty among the native daughters of California"—the competition to find a "California Venus" that inspired Ambrose Bierce's satirical wit (the last verse of "A Competitor" begins "Mrs. Frona Eunice Wait,/ Head Venus-herder of the State")—that best suggests the preeminence that Frona Wait had established among the California members of the Woman's Board of the World's Fair Commission. The article continued:

> Mrs. Waite [*sic*] is widely known as an alternate member from California of the Woman's Board of the World's Fair Commission and as the author of the plan of finishing one of the reception-rooms in the Woman's Building as a California Room. From her plan, by the way, sprang the movements among the women of New York and Ohio to furnish similar rooms, and this plan suggested to Princess Christian of England, Mme. Carnot of France, and the Empress of Japan the idea of furnishing other parts of that building in conjunction with other women of their own countries.

Her name was broadcast far and wide. The West Coast Times of Canterbury, New Zealand, wrote on 2 May 1892, "Mrs Frona Wait, one of the lady managers of California, has offered to finish in redwood one of the large reception rooms in the Woman's Building."

In addition to the global impact of her plans for the California Room in the Woman's Building, her idea for a "California Venus" contest apparently caused an immediate frenzy among the young women of California, observed with amused delight by commentators. All contestants' photographs and measurements were to be sent to Frona Wait—her views on female beauty were held with characteristic firmness; the ideal woman should measure "Height 5 feet 6 inches, weight 145 pounds, bust 36 inches, waist 24 to 25 inches, hips 46, wrist 6, ankle 8, calf 14; she should wear a 4½ shoe and a 6 glove."

S.F. Call, Dec. 1896

As I was looking into the fascinating story of the "California Venus," quite a melodrama in itself, I began to ask myself larger questions about Frona Eunice Wait. Where had she come from to write first a work on California wine and then turn into the force behind the California Room in the Woman's Building of the Chicago World's Fair, rendering the cream of Californian female society into frustrated and ineffectual bystanders?

From Woodland to Walla Walla

My interest in Frona Eunice Wait had now moved from being essentially wine-related to embrace a broader desire to find out as much as I could about her. Thomas Pinney had written accurately in his 2005 WTQ article, "In the course of her long life she did many remarkable things, beginning with her work as the first woman reporter on the San Francisco Examiner; later she worked for the San Francisco Call and the San Francisco Chronicle." However, the title and tenor of the article rather convey a picture of an imposingly comfortable grande dame—authoress, committee lady and banker's wife. This is a reflection of an image that Frona Wait had carefully cultivated since her second marriage in 1900, but it does not reflect the epic dimension of her life. The constructed narrative is well expressed in an article by Agnes Manney Tenney in the February 1926 Overland Monthly / Out West Magazine, "Mrs. Frona Eunice Wait Colburn, A Typical Western Woman Yet Different." This piece includes a description of the sixty-six-year-old Mrs. Frederick H. Colburn as "a tall, superbly erect gentlewoman who moved gracefully through the rooms of her obviously cared-for home." Doubtless as communicated to the author by her subject, the article suggests that this derives from well-born and wealthy parentage. It is stated that her father "James Lafayette Smith, whose ancestors, the Knoles family of Booneville, Tenn., were Hugenot refugees from Provence, France, arriving in America before the Revolution, came to California in 1850, and was an extensive owner of mines and cattle," while "Mrs. Colburn's mother was Susan Kelly Norris, daughter of Elizabeth Adams, a descendent of John Quincy Adams, and inherited the ancestral characteristics." It charts a Whiggish historical narrative in which the subject's "girlhood was moulded in the direction which later was destined to reflect upon her creations."

And yet, why would an extensive owner of mines and cattle arrive and settle in rural California in 1850? Eunice Sophronia ("Frona") Smith was born on 19 August 1859 in Woodland, Yolo County, in the greater Sacramento Valley. The first resident, the Kentuckian "Uncle Johnny" Morris, had come to what would later become Woodland in 1851. The town plat of Woodland was not filed until 1863. The local history site states: A few Americans moved into the lower Sacramento Valley in the early 1840s, settling on land granted to them by the Mexican government, but none of them came to what is now Woodland until after 1850, the year California became a state and Yolo County was established.

The whole of Yolo County had a population of 4,716 in 1860 according to the census of that year. Frona was born not long after the inclusion of California as part of the U.S.A. Just as the state itself began with rough and ready immigration, it is fair to assume that Frona Eunice Wait's early years were not spent idyllically scampering around vineyards. The gold-driven early immigration "stopped short of Yolo County...of all the counties bordering the Sacramento River, Yolo County maintained the slowest population growth."

That the Smith family did not prosper here can be deduced from the fact that they are next encountered in Dayton, near Walla Walla, Washington. Here Eunice Sophronia Smith married John Courtland Wait on 3 August 1875, shortly before her 16th birthday.

Dayton was at the time little more than a stop on the stage line, a town of "hardscrabble settlers":

> Dayton was nonetheless an uncivilized place of materialist ambition enveloped in dust from never-ending winds. The school closed when residents refused to pay taxes. 'Young hoodlums,' the loutish offspring of prosperous farmers, loitered about and 'soiled doves' occupied their own well-patronized quarter, separated from respectable folk by an appropriately festering ditch.

The population of Dayton was 526 (106 families) by the spring of 1877, according to a report filed by the county assessor. The 1880 United States Census gave Dayton a population of 996.

This same census identified the twenty-year-old E. S. Wait as being a housewife with two young children, one daughter, Myretta ("Etta"), aged five and an eleven-month old baby (incorrectly identified as a girl named Bessie, but in fact a son, Sylvester James, known as "Vessie"):

Census Records 1880 Census Dayton, Columbia, Washington. Page 121B

Name	Race	Sex	Age	Relat	Mar Sta	Occupation	Place of Birth Self	Father	Mother
WAIT E S	W	F	20	-----	M	Keeps House	Cal.	Misso.	Tenn.
" Etta	W	F	5	Dau	S	----------	Wash.	Oregon	Cal.
" Bessie S	W	F	11m	Dau	S	----------	Wash.	Oregon	Cal.

John Courtland Wait was the son of gristmill owner Sylvester Mather Wait. The two children appear to have been named after John C. Wait's sister Myraetta and Frona's father-in-law. There seems little in this picture of frontier family life—volunteer militias had been organized in Dayton in 1877 for protection during the Nez Percé War—to suggest the future career of Frona Eunice Wait. Only a couple of months after the census, tragedy struck the Wait household. The infant Vessie died following an accident with hot water:

> Died in this city, Oct 18th, 1880, Sylvester James, only son of J.C. and Eunice S. Wait, age 1y1m20d. Last Saturday evening, Vessie, only son of J.C. and E.S. Wait, fell into a pan of hot water and was severely though not fatally scalded about the head and shoulders. The little fellow had been croupy for several days and in the excitement following the accident caught a little cold which brought on a severe attack of the croup. Never very strong, he was unable to withstand these joint afflictions, and sank peacefully to rest Monday morning. Mr. Wait was at Spangle, Spokane county, but in obedience to a telegram, reached home Tuesday evening. The funeral took place Wednesday, from the M.E. Church, Rev. J.C. Van Patten officiating.

Getting on the Staff

With this sad incident, the first part of Frona Eunice Smith Wait's life can be said to have concluded. She is next to be encountered back in California. Her steps can be followed by her autobiographical article "Getting on the Staff" in the November 1923 issue of Overland Monthly / Out West Magazine, along with the February 1926 article by Agnes Tenney previously referred to. According to Tenney, "at the age of twenty, pecuniary reverses prompted her to seek a future in the writing world. Engaging with the 'Santa Rosa Republican'...Mrs. Colburn learned the rudiments of construction work as a typesetter." Frona Eunice Wait Colburn herself refers to this period as follows, "I learned to set type, and worked two years at the case. After that I went to the Bancroft Company [San Francisco]."

Behind these bald terms and mention of "pecuniary reverses" lay the drama of the young Frona Eunice Wait fleeing Washington and her marriage to make her way in the world following the death of her infant son. 1880 was also the year that her parents divorced, having separated in 1878. It was acrimonious. James Lafayette Smith claimed she was having an affair with the town doctor. The night watchman testified that he saw men coming and going all hours of the night to her house. He tells of a conversation with her where she says she could, "part a dozen families inside a half an hour." There were five children: in descending order of age Frona, Lorenzo, James, Norah and Frances May, aged nine. Frances was the only child that had continued living

with the mother, but James Lafayette subsequently received custody. In his testimony he stated:

> She refuses to dress the child Frances May in a comfortable manner and lets her run neglected about the street. The child is a cripple. Has had her leg amputated above the knee. She has been sick about four years and has needed much attention and care. I have had to buy her clothes. Defendant had some money when we separated. I have paid the child Frances's doctor bills and medicine in large sums. Got her clothes last winter and given her presents from time to time. As long as I keep my health I am able to take care of my minor children as I always have done it.

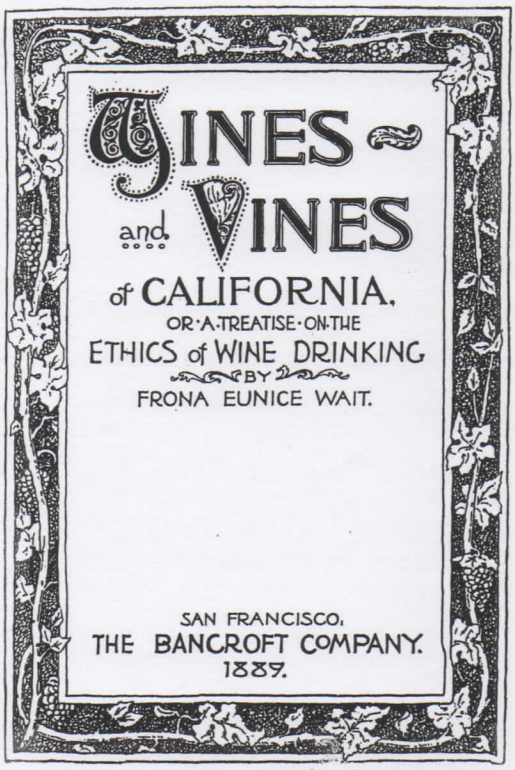
These cannot have been comfortable times for Frona Eunice Wait. It is hard to establish from her subsequent long writing and public career that she had ever spent time in Washington. The only fleeting reference I have found is in "Getting on the Staff":

> With all this preliminary training it is not surprising that the first article I submitted was accepted. It was an account of a love affair I had witnessed among the Nez Perce Indians. The story appeared in a Sunday issue of the Morning Call, and I was paid $25 for it.

In the official version, hers is a story of smooth and inexorable advancement. Again, from "Getting on the Staff": "My first salary was $1.75 a week, the only time in my life I was ever overpaid. Eighteen years later when I quit the newspaper game, I was earning $300 a month." She referred to her time at the Bancroft Company as being where she "learned the mechanics of bookmaking. I also learned the division of words, capitalization, punctuation and the other niceties of composition. I handled a great deal of manuscript and noted the style of well known writers."

It seems probable that it was in her apprenticeship in typesetting and book production that Frona Eunice Wait began to gain the education, indeed erudition, that would stand her in such good stead as journalist, author, lecturer, debater and prominent Californian. Her autodidactic opportunities rose further when she began working at the Bancroft Company. This publishing company had been passed on by the historian and ethnologist Hubert Howe Bancroft to his brother A.L. Bancroft in 1868. Hubert H. Bancroft dedicated himself to a great history of California and other works focusing on the native American traditions of the Pacific coast. He worked with a team of researchers to enable his great output, and it is probable that Frona Eunice Wait came under his wing. She stated herself that

> she owes much to the association and personal guidance of Mr. Hubert Howe Bancroft, when in the early part of her career she was in constant contact with men of similar importance in the literary field.



"The work is a very excellent one and does credit to both author and publisher. It is endorsed by the State Viticultural Commission, and is valuable because it deals with wine from the standpoint of the drinker, rather than the maker. In paper, 50 cents; limited number in cloth, $1." – S.F. Alta, Oct 1889

The Bancroft Company commissioned and published Frona Eunice Wait's first book in 1889, *Wines & Vines of California*, as well as ensuring its commercial success by preselling to the relevant wineries the print run of 500 copies. The publication marked the culmination of an extraordinary personal journey in that decade. Over its course she had moved from the production side to the editorial side in the male-dominated worlds of printing, journalism and publishing. This required cunning as well as ability:

> and only the other day a bright young woman, Frona Eunice Wait, who had worked her way, step by step, from the type-font to the editing of a department, said to me: "Oh, yes! I find that the more obscure that I make myself the better it is for me. Men don't like to feel that a woman is around when they are busy at their work, and so I dress plainly and keep all the rustle out of my skirts that I possibly can.

She also wrote vividly of the various ruses she deployed in getting her big break in journalism, the covering of Governor Bartlett's inaugural ball in

Sacramento. Since Bartlett was inaugurated and also died in 1887, that helps to ascertain when she was finally put on the staff of the San Francisco Examiner (having received offers from the Call and the Chronicle in the wake of her Bartlett scoop). She thus became in 1887 one of only two female staff journalists in San Francisco, having been on a $5 retainer previously, supplemented according to the space her copy occupied in the paper. 1887 was also the year that George Hearst, after being elected to the Senate, gave the Examiner to his son William Randolph.

She had previously impressed her male colleagues with her grasp of international affairs, having proved herself the only correspondent equipped to editorialize on the Panjdeh Incident in the "Great Game" of cloak and dagger rivalry over the control of Central Asia that was played by Britain and Russia throughout the nineteenth century. The Panjdeh Scare brought the two countries to the brink of war in 1885. Frona Eunice Wait went on to write anonymous editorials on world affairs to a readership that would not have credited that a woman could do so:

> If the great unwashed had known the sources of some of the comments on foreign affairs they would have gone up in the air, every prejudiced man among them. It will take a long time to make the public understand that a woman can think in terms of world consciousness.

By 1890, then, Frona Eunice Wait had achieved professional success. It was in this year that she was appointed a Lady Alternate to the Board of Lady Managers for California of the World's Columbian Commission. The San Francisco Call of 8 July 1890 included in its list of "some of the local 400" who attended the glittering first night of the play "Captain Swift" at the Baldwin Theatre, as the occupiers of Box 3, "E. J. Baldwin, the Misses Anita and Bertha Baldwin, Mrs. Frona E. Waite [*sic*], Miss Waite [*sic*], Baroness von Wrede, Kuhne Beveridge and daughter." This is also a rare instance of Frona Eunice Wait being seen in public with her daughter, indeed the only reference to them jointly that I have come across.

Wine, World's Fairs, Women, Writing and More

The 1890s saw Frona Eunice Wait active on a dizzying array of fronts. There is a sense of someone straining every sinew to make a good living and a good name for herself. As we have seen, she was at the forefront of all aspects of the California Room in the 1893 Chicago World's Fair between 1890 and 1893. *Wines & Vines of California* saw her increasingly recognized as a significant defender and promoter of the wines of the state. The Pacific Wine and Spirit Review of January 26 1891 includes this reference:

> An article in the 'Argonaut' of a recent date, descriptive of the Inglenook vineyard has been widely read by the wine producers and merchants of this State. The excellence of the Inglenook wines, the beauties of the vineyard and the completeness of the vaults were all described in an exceedingly apt and convincing manner. The article in question was written by Frona E. Waite [*sic*]...

At the same time, she was becoming a spokeswoman for women's issues. She was appointed a "Special Agent of the Labor Bureau to inquire into the condition of the working girls and women of this city." The quality of her work was as sterling as ever. The Biennial Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of California for the years 1891–92 stated:

> In conclusion, I desire to make public acknowledgment of indebtedness to Deputy Charles W. Adams for faithful and untiring devotion to duty, and to special agents T. B. O'Brien for aid in important work and for data gathered, and Mrs. Frona E. Wait for valuable services and intelligent assistance in both field and office.

In 1893, on the back of her achievements in that year's Chicago World's Fair, she was appointed by San Francisco Mayor Ellert as "temporary chairman of the Woman's Auxiliary of the proposed Mid-winter Fair." She must have been gratified that the 1894 Mid-winter International Exposition contained a Viticulture Palace that was "without doubt the most harmonious and effective exhibit of wines and brandies ever made in California or in any other Exposition."

From the mid-1890s she was active in the Free Silver Movement. In a brief aside conveying Frona Eunice Wait's characteristic all-embracing range, the S. F. Call (22 Aug 1895) reported, "Mrs. Frona Eunice Waite [*sic*] was presented and spoke briefly about European finances and the indemnity settlement between China and Japan." The Call (5 Oct 1896) reported, "Mrs. Frona Eunice Waite [*sic*] has been authorized by the campaign committee of the Silver Party to organize the women of San Francisco into auxiliary clubs to assist in the work of distributing literature and securing votes for silver." In between these reports, on 18 July 1896, the same paper told its readers that Frona Eunice Wait "will lecture on Health and Beauty." In December 1896, the Call had "Mrs. Frona Eunice Waite [*sic*] signifying her desire to speak again for the cause of Cuba." The Mechanics' Institute Report for January 1897 referred to Frona Eunice Waite [*sic*] giving an illustrated lecture on "Cuba and the Cubans."

As if all that were not enough, 1897 was also the year of Frona Eunice Wait's very different second book, *Yermah, the Dorado*, dedicated to "the memory

of my dear father, James Lafayette Smith." Alongside Frona Eunice Wait's energy and efficiency there was a mystical, spiritual dimension not unusual for the time, which this novel, with its mystical Dorado —around which she published three separate books—represents. The Dorado concept derives from the notion of a lost, ancient, idealized Californian people come from Atlantis. A review in The Bookman in 1898 began:

> The first impression of the book is the enormous amount of study it represents. Every page is laden with the fruits of the author's research into antiquities, gathered even from sources as remote and as elusive as the origin of symbolism in religion. It is, however, the history and the tradition of California which furnish the leading motive of the work.

The reviewer finished the assessment with the statement, "But it is hardly as a story that Mrs. Wait's work will claim serious attention. It must be rather by reason of its learning, its mysticism, and its poetic quality." Others were less kind. Another reviewer wrote, "It is saying little to say that this is the most absurd volume ever printed on the Coast."

Even in this, it might be said that Frona Eunice Wait was quintessentially Californian. Her researches into Native American myth under Hubert H. Bancroft had channelled a fin-de-siècle mythopoetic sensibility that it is all too easy to overlook in the committee lady and future banker's wife. Her recollections of the literary scene of this period show her to have been an active participant.

Meanwhile, Frona Eunice Wait continued to promote Californian wine in the eastern states. The S. F. Call (28 Dec 1898) reported under "Californians in New York" that "Mrs. Frona Eunice Wait is at the Waldorf, where she will make her headquarters while lecturing in this city for the California State Board of Horticulture." In February 1899 she explained to the House Commerce Committee the interest of the wine-growers of the Pacific coast in the construction of the Nicaragua canal, in order to enable Californian wines to compete with Spanish wines in the French import market.

At the same time she was involving herself and the women of California in the planning of the state's Golden Jubilee celebration:

> The Women Will Work.
>
> Mrs. Frona Eunice Wait Pledges the Efficient Support of the Sisterhood.
>
> Mrs. Frona Eunice Wait, a thoroughly representative California woman, who has had much experience in matters of this kind, she having been one of the National Commissioners of the late World's Fair at Chicago, is thoroughly pleased with the grand project in view to celebrate California's golden jubilee as a sovereign State of the Union. When seen on this subject yesterday she said: "It is a brilliant conception, and there is no reason why it should not be carried out to a most successful conclusion. In such an undertaking, of course, the women of the State will be expected to do their share to contribute to the success of the enterprise, and you may take my word for it that the women of California will not be found wanting when it becomes time for them to do their part in making a creditable showing for their beloved State.

From Frona Eunice Wait to Mrs Frederick H. Colburn

The arrival of the new century saw her involved in another World's Fair, the 1900 Paris Exposition Universelle, but that year saw a far more significant moment in the trajectory of Frona Eunice Wait. She became Mrs. Frederick H. Colburn on 31 October 1900, on marrying for a second time. Mr. Colburn is the banker referred to in the title of Thomas Pinney's "The Junior Enologist & the Banker's Wife" (WTQ July 2005). That profession lay some time in the future at the time of the marriage. At twenty-nine, having been born on 21 June 1871 in New Hampshire, Frederick H. Colburn was considerably younger than his forty-one-year-old bride, and was just five years older than her daughter. He had been to high school in Brattleboro, Vermont, and at the age of sixteen entered the employ of the Springfield Printing & Binding Company of Springfield, Massachusetts. He worked there for a decade, and then in 1898 headed to Alaska, before arriving in San Francisco, still struggling to make his way in the world. It was not until 1905 that he became assistant secretary of the California Bankers Association. At the time of the marriage, it was his wife who had the greater material means and reputation. The marriage should be seen as reflecting Frona Eunice Wait's adventurous, poetical side rather than consolidating her social ascent. The wedding itself was by no means conventional, as the reference below to a second wedding ceremony performed by a medium indicates. The following is the affectionate tribute, "'Frona Eunice' a Bride," in The Pacific Wine & Spirit Review of 30 November 1900:

> The Winemen of the State will read with interest the announcement that their old time energetic and enterprising friend of the Viticultural industry of California, Mrs. Frona Eunice Waite [*sic*], has changed her name and again become a blushing bride. The fortunate captor of her heart is Frederick Henry Colburn, of Springfield, Mass., who is managerially connected with an English Syndicate doing business in Mexico and Central America.
>
> With the exception of the lamented Kate Field, the

former Mrs. Waite [*sic*] has done more to attract the attention of the people of the East to the vinous products of California than any other one woman. For a long period she traveled throughout the Eastern States representing the Board of Horticulture delivering illustrated lectures on the Wines and Vines of the Golden State. There is no doubt her work was of considerable value in arousing interest in the subject in fallow fields. The couple were married twice—first by a Civil Judge after which there was a spiritual service, performed by Mrs. Colby, a medium. The function was highly interesting and brilliant, surpassing anything of the kind ever seen in this city.

We shall all miss "Frona Eunice" from her chosen work, but we cannot afford to be selfish, so she is bidden Godspeed to enjoy many years of happiness.

Perhaps it was a shared background in printing alongside their rather different interests in Mexico and Central America that brought the couple together. Or they may have been conscious of a mutual psychological dependency. It is interesting to read from a short story by Frona Eunice Wait, published many years later in 1928, the sentence "He had a mother complex, and would, if he ever married, select a woman older than himself." This gives pause for thought coming from a mother who had lost one child in infancy and had a distant relationship with her surviving daughter, as discussed below.

The newlyweds had a dramatic honeymoon:

On the author's wedding tour with Mr. Frederick H. Colburn, into the tropics of Mexico and Guatemala, 350 miles of which was on mule-back into the interior, they spent a night on the actual spot where the wonderful white king of her legend was said to have built a temple. Her stay in these regions permitted the continuation of her research which extended over all the important Museums of America, including the famous collection of the Duc de Loubat in the Museum of Natural History, New York, containing Pre-historic American antiquities and books on the subject.

The trip neatly merged Frona Eunice's interest in Native American mythology, and her vision of Dorado and the white king Yermah, with the more commercial interests of her husband. Though a biographical note states that "during the period between 1901 and 1903 he was engaged in the exporting of fine hard woods from Mexico and Central America and also served as manager of the Tabasco Agriculture Company," these are the years when the rubber boom was at its peak. After the honeymoon a slim volume of twenty-eight pages by Mr. and Mrs. Frederick H. Colburn (illustrated with photographs taken by the authors) was published by Planting Company Publications, *La Zacualpa (the beautiful forest) of Soconusco. An Interesting and Authentic Description of a Mule-back Ride through the Quaint, Little Known Department of Soconusco, Mexico.* Despite these efforts, it would appear that Frederick Colburn's Central American speculations did not prosper. The S. F. Call of 28 January 1903 included the announcement that "Frederick H. Colburn, a clerk of this city, filed notice of bankruptcy in the United States District Court yesterday. His assets are $220 and his liabilities $724." These first few years of Frona Eunice Wait's second marriage were far from providing financial security, though she is on record as stating that she earned $300 a month as a journalist at around this time. In 1902 she was still engaged in journalism. There appeared an article signed by Frona Eunice Wait, and not Mrs. Frederick Colburn as subsequently, titled "The New Fashion Leaders" in Club Life, "a paper worthy to breathe through its pages to the public the greatness of woman's work in the Woman's Clubs of San Francisco and Alameda County." The journal's New Year's greeting is a verse by Frona Eunice Wait which, while lacking any merit as poetry, is included here on account of the passing mention to the vine:

Fair of face is she who sits
'Neath vine-clad bowers in this sundown land.
Eager and ready and willing to give
To every woman a helping hand.
She gayly kisses her finger-tips, too.
And says from her heart,
"Here's my love to you!"

Returning to the fortunes of Mr. Colburn, it would be interesting to know how he went from bankruptcy in 1903 to assistant secretary of the California Bankers Association in 1905, before going on to hold the position of secretary to the California Bankers Association from 1911 to 1925. From 1907 he also held the position of assistant secretary of the Associated Savings Banks of San Francisco. In 1911 he was made assistant manager of the San Francisco Clearing House, of which he was subsequently appointed manager in 1915. He was also a charter member of the "Law and Order" Group. His most dramatic public moment was a murky intervention with a sledgehammer to exaggerate minor bomb damage at the outset of what would become the celebrated "Tom Mooney Case."

Yet, in 1904 he was Assistant Secretary and manager of the San Francisco Exhibit at the St. Louis World's Fair. It is hard not to see the hand of Mrs. Frederick H. Colburn in this appointment, and quite possibly in the efficient undertaking of the responsibilities.

It has not been possible to ascertain how the

"ever-popular" Mr. Colburn began his lengthy career in banking. Mrs. Frederick H. Colburn relinquished her journalistic activities, in favour of lecturing and broader cultural matters, as she adopted the "Club Woman" persona that increasingly came to define her. Wine remained a feature of her life. As seen above, just before her wedding she had been involved in the 1900 Paris Exposition Universelle:

> In 1900 [she] was employed by the California Commissioners to assist in the collection of the State Exhibit at the Paris International Exposition, and at her urgent request, the California wine makers sent exhibits to compete with the ordinary wines of the world. The result was six gold medals and the establishment of the precedent of California wines being the best made for table use.

Despite the personal and professional challenges posed by her becoming Mrs. Frederick Colburn, these were triumphantly overcome. Perhaps the apogee of her literary career was the "Frona Eunice Wait Colburn Day" celebrated by the Pacific Coast's women's press association on 11 October 1909. This took the form of the reading and discussion of "the works of this California author." The proceedings opened with "Getting on the 'Local Staff' (a personal experience)" by Frona Eunice Wait herself, no doubt an early version of her 1923 article. This was followed by "Financial and Other Editorials" presented by James K. Lynch, vice-president of the First National Bank of San Francisco, read by Miss Nevada Heffron. Then came a reading of "With the California Wine Makers" by Cavalier Andrea Sbarboro, president of the California Grape Growers' Association and of Italian-Swiss Colony. There was also music and readings from Frona Eunice Wait's verses, as well as from her "Dorado" stories. It must have been a grand moment for the fifty-year-old protagonist.

Wine, Suffrage, Temperance and Prohibition

As was shown by the involvement of the eminent Andrea Sbarboro in the tribute paid that day, wine was still very much part of Frona Eunice Wait's professional life. Despite having become accustomed to her unflagging energy, it was a surprise to come across a report in New Zealand's Ohinemuri Gazette (10 June 1908) under the title "Woman's Curious Profession." The article reported that "Mrs. Wait was making a tour of the country on a commission to lecture in every [New Zealand] State regarding the wine industry of California. The Commission came to her unasked from the Governor of that State." Perhaps throwing caution to the winds on finding herself so far from home, we learn more in this brief snippet about her attitude and involvement than in virtually any other publication of hers beyond *Wines & Vines of California*. It is worth quoting at length:

> To be a professional wine-taster and yet a strong advocate and follower of the strictest temperance principles; to take wine into the mouth all day long day after day, and yet never swallow it—this is the paradox which Mrs. Frona Eunice Wait, of California, has presented steadily for a period of ten years.
>
> That she sees nothing at all paradoxical in this unusual state of affairs furnishes a fresh element of interest in regard to her peculiar work.
>
> Mrs. Wait, who is one of the professional wine tasters in the world, was originally a journalist, and slipped into the work of critically tasting the wine which she had always held before in abhorrence, if not contempt, quite by accident; visiting near some vineyards she was asked to write a book about wines and wine making. Pleading her entire ignorance of the subject as reason for her refusal, which she did not wish to seem ungracious, she was surprised by an opportunity to spend six months in the vineyards studying the matter and at terms so advantageous that she hesitated to persist in her refusal. By the time the period of study had expired and the book had been written she was a recognized authority upon wines and wine flavours.
>
> The work of professional wine-tasting came gradually to her after that.
>
> At the present time Mrs. Wait, whose technical opinion is highly valued by wine students all over America, is making a tour of the country on a commission to lecture in every State regarding the wine industry in California. The commission came to her unasked from the Governor of that State.

"Wine as a Temperance Agent" is the title of chapter five of *Wines & Vines of California*. The civilizing aspect of wine consumption, especially at home, as opposed to the ravages caused to health and home by saloons and their wares, was a key aspect of the promotion of wine at this time, as being associated with moderate consumption as compared to spirits. Prohibition and the women's suffrage movement were making great headway across the U.S.A., California becoming the sixth state to extend the vote to women in 1911. Frona Eunice Wait was firmly opposed to both causes. Anne Benjamin writes in *A History of the Anti-Suffrage Movement in the United States from 1895–1920* a sentence in which the first word conveys the neglect to which Frona Eunice Wait had been subject outside the world of Californian wine:

> A Mrs. Frederick H. Colburn, press chairman of the San Francisco district of the Federation of Woman's Clubs, wrote an article entitled, "80% of the Women in California Do Not Want the Vote."

She is extensively quoted in the Journal and Republican of Lowville, New York, in October 1915. What she says is intriguing. Having described Mrs. Frederick H. Colburn as being "widely known as a lecturer and an archaeologist" and having "written several books," the article quotes her as saying:

> If we had a referendum now I would vote against suffrage, based on actual experience.
>
> You have only to consider the position of women before and since equal suffrage. Take their legal status: Before, a widow could file a homestead on her husband's estate and exempt $5,000 from any debt whatever. Today, a wife may be sued for alimony; she must assume responsibility and pay rent and house bills if her husband fails to do so. It is possible for a husband to run her into debt. He may even buy a ring for another woman and make his wife pay for it. A wife cannot exempt a single cent. And if her husband dies she is liable for his debts...
>
> The effect on the individual woman has been marked. It has put lines in her face; sharpened her temper; given her a hawk-like expression, and lowered the whole tone of the public relationship of men and women...
>
> The thing that hurts me most is the silent, stunned attitude of men toward women today. They look at women as though wondering what she would do next. You see it in the attitude of employers of women, who no longer show them deference, since they now insist on taking care of themselves.

One wonders whether her first marriage as a young girl to the unreliable John Courtland Wait, as well as her second husband's bankruptcy in the early years of their marriage, may not underlie to some extent her heartfelt comments.

Though, as we have seen, her views were based on more than concern at the powerful strand of support for the prohibition of alcohol that ran through the long fight for women's right to vote, the two may well have been connected. Could the arrival of Prohibition have been the subject referred to in her account of the end of her friendship with the pioneering lawyer, Clara Foltz:

> Mrs. Clara Shortridge Foltz, Madge Morris Wagner and I were young women together. We were life-long friends and often met and exchanged views on life in general. Seldom did we agree, but we allowed each other elbow room good naturedly. For example Mrs. Foltz was an ardent suffragist. I was not in favor of woman suffrage at all. Mrs. Foltz said: 'Frona Wait, you are one of the brightest women I know, but you are all wrong on woman suffrage. All right, Clara Foltz, wait and see,' I always replied.
>
> The last time I saw Mrs. Foltz, she asked me to come and dine with her at the Palace Hotel, a spot we both loved. I took her a handful of LaFrance roses. After dinner, upstairs in her room, I said: 'Well, now Clara Foltz, what do you think of woman suffrage?' She put her hands over her face and answered. 'Frona Wait, I am ashamed!" My answer was, 'Clara Foltz, I thought you would be,' and so ended a beautiful friendship.

New Woman(hood) and White Knights

It is interesting to read that Foltz often used the phrase "new woman." She is recorded as having commented "that the reason there was so much talk about the new woman after 1893 is that the [Chicago World's] Fair had stirred 'unusual activity in thought'." Despite her views on women's suffrage, Frona Eunice Wait's forceful physical and intellectual presence can be seen as quintessentially representative of the "new woman."

Barbara Babcock's *Woman Lawyer: The Trials of Clara* refers to Jack London's "heroines and their strong adventurous natures," recommending Andrew J. Furer's article "Jack London's New Woman: A Little Lady With a Big Stick." Furer posits that London was "an ardent feminist." He further explains that the heroine of London's first novel, *A Daughter of the Snows* (1902) was named Frona, and "Frona Wait was said to be the model for an independent, physically strong woman." Frona Eunice Wait did give a talk to a convention of the League of Western Writers in 1929 on her "close friend" Jack London. Frona Welse certainly shares Frona Eunice Wait's views on women and politics, "I am no woman's right's creature; and I stand, not for the new woman, but for the new womanhood."

To the modern reader, the most startling words that London put in the mouth of Frona Welse are her lengthy and impassioned declamations on the subject of race. It is worth remembering that such beliefs were common currency at the time, however untenable subsequently. Here is one of Frona Welse's speeches:

> We are a race of doers and fighters, of globe-encirclers and zone-conquerors. We toil and struggle, and stand by the toil and struggle no matter how hopeless it may be. While we are persistent and resistant, we are so made that we fit ourselves to the most diverse conditions. Will the Indian, the Negro, or the Mongol ever conquer the Teuton? Surely not! The Indian has persistence without variability; if he does not modify he dies, if he does try to modify he dies anyway. The Negro has adaptability, but he is servile and must be led. As for the Chinese, they

are permanent. All that the other races are not, the Anglo-Saxon, or Teuton if you please, is. All that the other races have not, the Teuton has. What race is to rise up and overwhelm us?

There is more in similar vein. One wonders whether the young Jack London may not have heard Frona Eunice Wait speaking along these lines in literary circles. Her "Dorado" books are replete with passages of this sort. These were beliefs that she clung to. Here she is in 1930 writing about Kaiser Wilhelm:

> And in the United States are there no representatives of that great secret brotherhood which has held the Kaiser in their best constructive and sustaining thought? ...Aside from the consolation of a devout religious belief, the Kaiser must subconsciously feel the impact of commiseration and understanding sympathy of thousands of unseen friends. In the darkest hours little groups of men and women in every State in the Union sent waves of helpful thoughts to the Kaiser and his advisors. None of these silent workers were Germans. They are not politicians, self-seekers, or even Pacifists. They only ask that right shall prevail, that truth shall triumph and the on-going of the race shall proceed unhindered...This is the toast these mental workers give to the Kaiser: "Here's to the great White Knight of this Dispensation Leader of the White Race the Kaiser, Wilhelm II of Germany, God bless him!"

Frona again expounded her mystic racial beliefs in the *New Overland Trail* in 1930, when referring to the imminent engagement of the West with the East:

> The westward sweep of empire paused at the water's edge, but the lap and swish of the Pacific beckons onward. Off out yonder in the inscrutable land of the Lotus Eaters is the cradle of the Aryans, and the urge to return to it comes like an insistent clarion call to the youth of the race.

The possibilities of heading "off out yonder" had no doubt been given concrete expression by a flight in 1928 to Los Angeles in a Western Air Express Fokker Trimotor, after which she commented, "the buzz and whirr of the motors reduced us all to sign language." But more significantly, it is clear that Frona Eunice Wait was steeped in Madam Blavatsky's theosophical beliefs relating to "root races," the "Golden Age of Atlantis," and how the current fifth root race, the Aryan, had emerged from Atlantis. The notion suffuses her "Dorado" writings, and can also be seen as underlying her interest in Native American myths and artefacts, Mount Lassen volcano, and even wine. These are also blended with a knowledge of American mythology probably first acquired during her time working for Hubert H. Bancroft, who writes of the Atlantis myth and the Toltec Aztlan.

Race mother and real mother

In the same article of July 1928, Frona Eunice Wait refers repeatedly to the "race mother," and to how the "mothers of men have always molded the civilization and progress of any period of history." Frona Eunice Wait, following the death of her baby son in 1880, was mother to one daughter, Myretta, born in 1876. Without entering into too many details, it would seem that Myretta did not fit easily into Frona Eunice Wait's image of herself, her professional trajectory or her general enthusiasms.

Jacque Madison, a descendant of Myretta's father from his third marriage, has done excellent research on matters relating to the family. I quote the following from our correspondence:

> From an application to enter Northfield School for Girls in Massachusetts, it reads, "What schools has she attended and how long? Convent in Santa Rosa, Cal from 5½ yrs to 7. Public schools San Fransisco, Mills Seminary, CAL Girls High School, San Francisco, Long Island Hospital 2 yrs and graduated."

We can see from this that Frona brought the five-year-old Myretta with her when she went to Santa Rosa in late 1880. Her California schooling appears conventional enough, but there is some mystery about her time at Northfield School for Girls, which she attended from 1899 to 1904, between the ages of twenty-two and twenty-five, rather old to be a schoolgirl. A letter accompanying the application that Myretta join the school refers to her being poor, and she describes herself in her application letter as "making her own way." Perhaps Myretta's presence was not convenient once Frederick Colburn entered the scene. She graduated from Syracuse University in 1908. She had a child at the age of forty in 1917, fathered by a Mr. Jennings who employed her as a nanny in New York. She was sent to Seattle by Mr. Jennings to have the baby, subsequently returning to California where she worked as a nurse, and brought up her son. Frona Eunice Wait does not appear to be visibly present in Myretta's adult life, and according to the latter's granddaughter "she didn't get along with her mother, Frona."

This is not the place to engage directly with Frona Eunice Wait's family relationships, but it is worth mentioning the contrast between the constructed genteel life of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick H. Colburn in the 1920s and 1930s and the messier background.

"Herculean deeds of worth-while achievement"

On the surface, the last twenty-five years or so of Frona Eunice Wait's life are as described in Maynard Amerine's Introduction to the 1973 reprint edition of *Wines & Vines of California* and in

the article by Thomas Pinney in the WTQuarterly, as a now quite venerable cultural presence. A quick recap of her activities conveys something of her social and intellectual profile.

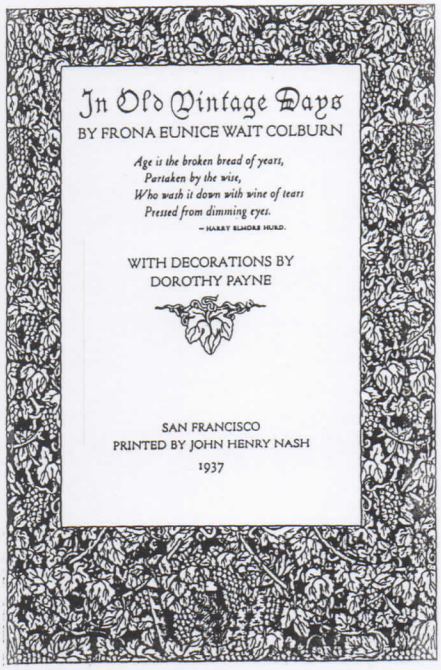
In 1922 she published *The Kingship of Mount Lassen* (the publisher, Nemo Publishing Co., has the same business address as Frederick Colburn), an interesting book on the volcano that combines popular geology (somewhat predictably, she was president of the Woman's Auxiliary of the Mt. Lassen Research Society) with her now familiar cosmic side:

> Here the Master plans for a civilization higher than all that has gone before it. Here, too, is the urge to herculean deeds of worth-while achievement. Here is the obligation to live up to California's opportunity for supreme leadership.

Further conveying the continuity in her interest, and a certain forgivable self-regard, towards the end of the book a section from *Yermah, the Dorado* is included, describing an imaginary eruption 10,000 years ago. In a brief final parenthesis the author adds:

> When *Yermah, the Dorado* first appeared, Mr. Edmund Gosse, in the London Atheneum, pronounced this description of a catastrophe as equaling Bulwer-Lytton's *Last Days of Pompeii*, which he cited as one of the great classics in the English language. Edmund Gosse ranks as the greatest living literary critic in England.

Frona Eunice Wait Colburn continued indefatigably to write, to lecture, to organize prize essay competitions and more throughout the 1920s and '30s. In 1926, in her capacity as president of the San Francisco branch of the League of American Pen Women, she gave the first North American reading of the Peruvian epic poem "Ollantay," she established the Frona Wait Colburn prizes to "be awarded the three best stories concerning the cultural life of Northern California from 1870 to 1890," and to quote Thomas Pinney again, she "had a brief career as a radio broadcaster on literary topics, and served as president of the Western Authors' League and the League of American Pen Women." From 1927 to 1929 she set up and personally oversaw the highly successful San Francisco Book Fair; the third edition of 1929 attracted over 200,000 visitors. In 1932 she lectured to the California Historical Society on "The Wives of 'The Big Four'." No doubt invigorated by the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, we know from Maynard Amerine and Thomas Pinney that, having published her novel *In Old Vintage Days* in 1937, she lectured students at Davis in 1938, despite the death of her husband while in New York in November 1937. In 1939 "Mrs. Frederick Henry Colburn...gave her basket collection of approximately 400 pieces to the Interior Museum." She was also a major donor to the Native American Collection of the Leland Stanford Jr Museum (now Cantor Center for Visual Arts).



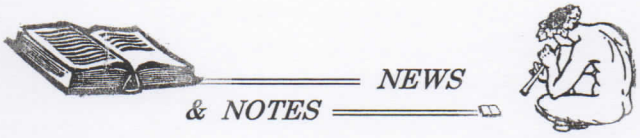
The last years and beyond

One cannot but imagine that the Second World War, and the genocidal distortion of the race theories that she had been so interested in, must have been a grim backdrop to her ninth decade. I have been unable to find any information regarding the activities of our protagonist during the 1940s up to her death in 1946. As Thomas Pinney noted, there appear to have been no obituaries. There is a final mystery. According to a quote from the granddaughter of Myretta Wait Smith (who took her maternal grandfather's surname) on the Wait family genealogy website that has been so useful in furnishing personal information, "Frona had left instructions and money for expenses ... after she died. She was cremated and then my father took a train to Washington, DC with her ashes and spread them on the Potomac River." What lies behind the choice of Washington, DC, as the final resting place for her remains, rather than her beloved California? As ever, the remarkable Frona Eunice Wait remains uncategorizable to the end.

Rather than finish with her death, perhaps a last nod to her mystical beliefs might be allowed. There are many New Age websites devoted to the notion of San Francisco as the site of Tlamco and related Atlantis myths, identifying the locations of key temples and sites, at which devotees gather. These are based on the map and locations created by Frona Eunice Wait for her "Yermah" books. She might have been gratified that though she was forgotten at the time of her death, her name and her study of Californian wine live on among wine bibliophiles, and her treasured mystical novel and beliefs (and occasionally her name, misspelled as "Fiona") echo among cosmic visionaries.

All in all, not bad going for a footnote.

[*Visit John Maher at his lively, informative website:* www.winesofvalencia.com. — Ed.]



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

We **Welcome** new Tendrils **Don** and **Samantha Lindgren**, proprietors of Rabelais Fine Books on Food & Drink (Portland, ME, info@RabelaisBooks.com). Their website is vintage delicious. Joining us also is **Roy Cloud**, the man responsible for Vintage '59 Imports, Washington DC (cloud@vintage59.com) and a new, first-time wine author. See "Just Released" following.

WAYWARD TENDRILS *WEBSITE*!!

Dear Tendrils: It is a great pleasure for your Editor to announce the launching of our WT web presence: www.waywardtendrils.com. Check it out, I think you will be quite pleased. Your thoughts and suggestions are always welcome. Also please note that www.gailunzelman.com and her companion site www.nomispress.com are up there, too. — Gail

C. W. BERRY INSCRIPTION

Dear Editor Gail: I was reading the latest edition of WTQ and saw the note about Nina Wemyss' copy of *In Search of Wine* by Charles Walter Berry, and his presentation inscription taken from Pierre-Jean de Beranger—"Flow Wine, Smile Woman, and the universe is consoled!" This rung a bell with me and I took down from the shelf my books written by CWB. Sure enough, my copy of *Viniana*—the third impression of the second edition, from 1934—has the same inscription. It's inscribed "To E.P. Wright, with the author's compliments. Chas W. Berry." CWB must have liked this quotation and used it repeatedly. It might be interesting to ask all the members to contact you if they have a similar inscription in one of their CWB books. Best regards, John Danza.

SO THAT WE ALL KNOW

To the Editor: I read Bob Foster's review of Michael Schuster, *Wine Tasting Uncorked: Guided Tasting Course and Tips* with some interest. I have not seen the work reviewed, and it may well be as shockingly terrible as Mr Foster implies. I do, however, find Mr Foster's rather scathing comment about Mr Schuster unfortunate. He dismisses Mr Schuster's comments about judges and their penchant to underrate light, delicate wines with the following response: 'Oh? I have judged more than ten wine competitions a year for many years and have found the judges well aware that light, delicate wines can be lost amongst big, extracted wines and have seen them repeatedly look for and find these lighter gems. I have yet to see this author on the judging circuit, so I question the basis for his claim.' Mr Foster, and the readers of his review, may wish to know the following. Mr Schuster holds the Bordeaux University Tasting Diploma; he translated from the French the classic and seminal work by Emile Peynaud, *The Taste of Wine: the Art and Science of Wine Appreciation*; he runs the three-day course on blind tasting for candidates for the Master of Wine; he writes the Bordeaux *en primeur* reports for The World of Fine Wine, accounted the finest wine periodical in the world; he chairs the International Panel for Bordeaux for the Decanter Wine Awards, as well as judging at other international wine competitions; and his book, *Essential Winetasting*, won three major awards. This track record is perhaps of more importance than the regrettable fact that Mr Foster has failed to meet him at some of his own competitions. Yours, Kathleen Burk.

Bob Foster replied: It seems that Mr. Schuster has no experience in judging wine competitions in the U.S. Yet his comments covered any and all wine competitions. Over-reaching is over-reaching regardless of the author's other qualifications. The myth that all competitions overlook lighter wines is simply perpetuated by this section of his work. Bob.

JUST RELEASED

▪ *Dying on the Vine. How Phylloxera Transformed Wine* (U.C. Press, 2011, 336 pp, photographs, maps, tables, hardback, $39.95), by University of Missouri-Kansas City Professor of Philosophy George Gale, is a new look at the "150 years of scientific warfare against the grapevine's worst enemy: phylloxera." ▪ A more relaxing read is *To Burgundy and Back Again: A Tale of Wine, France, and Brotherhood* by Roy Cloud (Lyons Press, 224 pp, paperback, $16.95). Described as a "gentle, heart-warming account," it is the first book by Roy Cloud, a new Tendril and proprietor of Vintage '59 Imports, Washington DC.

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An Oregon *Rogue* and a Washington *Essential*

Reviewed by

Will Brown

[*Southern Oregonian Will Brown, a retired physician and winemaker with a special love for the Northwest wine country and its history, regularly reports on the wine literature of the area. See his "History Timeline for Wine in the Rogue Valley AVA" at the Rogue Valley Winegrowers Assn website.* — Ed.]

Rogue Valley Wine by M.J. Daspit and Eric Weisinger. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011. 128 pp. Card covers.

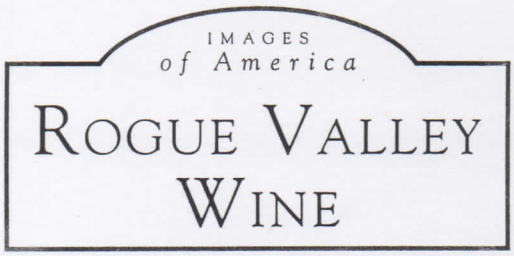
THIS THIN BOOK IS THE FIRST to be published about the wine industry of Oregon's Rogue Valley. The Arcadia Press publishing house, established in 1993, is best known for its popular *Images in America* series which chronicles the history of communities around the U.S. Arcadia's mission states that "with more than two hundred vintage black and white photographs, each title celebrates a town or region, bringing to life the people, places and events that define that community." Over seven thousand titles have been published since the founding of the company.

The authors, M.J. Daspit and Eric Weisinger, followed the publisher's set formula. Daspit is a writer living in Ashland, Oregon, while Weisinger, a former Rogue Valley winemaker, is currently alternating between consulting in the Rogue Valley and making wine in New Zealand.

After an informative introduction, the book is divided into four chapters. The first deals with the history of wine in the Valley from the beginnings in the mid-19th century through the Prohibition era. The second, continuing the historic motif, incorporates a sort of a travelogue through the wine districts of the Rogue and Applegate Valley AVAs with accompanying maps which are marginally informative. The third chapter is a paean to a few individuals who have contributed to the development of the industry (including this reviewer and his winemaking mentor), and the last is a photo montage of a number of venues including wine shops, wine bars, tasting rooms and wine events.

While primarily a book of photographs there is enough text to explain the photos and to advance the historical theme, albeit somewhat superficially. The authors did a fine job of locating these old photos and the historic dialog is well written and largely free of errors. There is a very short bibliography and an index that lists only the wineries mentioned in the text.

Rogue Valley Wine is just a beginning and could segue to a more scholarly history of this developing wine region, particularly if many of the historic photos are employed. I do not anticipate that this book will have a great deal of appeal to wine lovers beyond the southern Oregon region since Rogue Valley wines are neither well known nor distributed widely at present. But that was not really the intent of the publisher as I interpret it. It is a book about local history for local people. The publisher's list price is $21.99 but it is available from Amazon for under $13. Overall I liked the book, but I shoulder the bias of being part of the Rogue Valley wine industry.



Washington Wines and Wineries: The Essential Guide, 2nd ed. by Paul Gregutt. Berkeley: U.C. Press, 2010. 331 pp. Hard cover.

PAUL GREGUTT'S SECOND EDITION of his *Essential Guide* follows the original by only three years. (This reviewer noted that book in the WT Quarterly Jan 2008 issue.) Why so soon a 2nd edition? Well, as the author says, quoting Bob Dylan, "things have changed." Nothing could be truer in the rapidly evolving northwest wine scene. Washington now claims over seven hundred wineries and forty thousand acres of vineyards and is still growing. It trails only California in both categories and left neighboring Oregon behind some years ago.

Author Paul Gregutt, the doyen of Washington wine writers who has been writing about Washington wines for several decades, is the wine columnist for the Seattle Times, and a contributing editor for Wine Enthusiast. He holds an Advanced Certificate from the London-based Wine and Spirits Education Trust. Gregutt tells us that in 2005, he and Mrs. G. purchased an old farmhouse in Walla Walla County not very far north of the city of Walla Walla, where they spend half their time. The significance of this is that they are now living at least part time in arguably the best wine region of the state. But to get there from Seattle, their primary residence, they have to travel through the length of the Washington wine country, no small feat—but keeping him in touch with the industry and its movers and shakers as they go. If the reader has never visited this wine country of eastern Washington, it is a formidable drive from Seattle to Walla Walla, with miles of sagebrush along the way and not many vineyards to be seen.

cont. on page 19 —

BOOKS &
BOTTLES
by
Fred McMillin

[EDITOR'S NOTE: *In this Books & Bottles column, Professor Fred pulls two more favorite books from his reference shelf and gives us some highlights, in the form of questions and answers. In each set, one statement is false. Three correct earns you an A.*]

The Book: ***Wine For Dummies*** by Ed McCarthy and Mary Ewing-Mulligan. California: IDG Books Worldwide, 1995. 402 pp.

Bubbling Beauties (Chapter 13)

a) The quickest, most efficient way of making a sparkling wine involves conducting the second fermentation in large, closed, pressurized tanks. This method is called the bulk method, tank method, *cave close* (meaning closed tank in French) or *charmat* method, after the Frenchman Eugene Charmat, inventor of the process.

b) Bitterness on the finish of a sparkling wine is a sign of high quality.

c) Non-vintage (NV) Champagne–any champagne without a vintage year in the label–accounts for 85 percent of all Champagne produced.

d) Sparkling wine is made in the United States in almost as many states as still wine, but the two states most famous for their "bubbles" are California and New York.

WHICH IS FALSE?

b) Any impression of bitterness on the finish of a sparkling wine is a sign of low quality.

Answers to Ten Common Questions about Wine (Chapter 21)

a) When should I drink this wine? The answer, for most wines, is "Anytime now."

b) Is wine fattening? A glass of dry wine contains about 50% water.

c) Sulfur has been an important winemaking tool since Roman times.

d) If you wish to limit your consumption of sulfites, dry red wines should be your first choice.

WHICH IS FALSE?

b) A glass of dry wine contains about 85% water.

The Book: ***The Wine Bible*** by Karen MacNeil. New York: Workman Publishing, 2001. 910 pp.

Mastering Wine–How Wine Is Made (Chapter 1)

a) Wine has been with us for almost 1,000 years.

b) Yet the natural, complex process by which wine is made–fermentation–has been understood for only a little more than 150 years.

c) It was not until the 1850s–when Louis Pasteur's research in microbiology linked sugar's conversion to alcohol (fermentation) to the living organisms called yeasts–that winemaking moved out of the realm of the occult and into the realm of science.

d) Up until World War II, most wines were made according to two classic methods, one for white wine, the other for red.

WHICH IS FALSE?

a) Wine has been with us for over 5,000 years.

Australia (Chapter 11)

a) The Australian industry changed radically in the 1960s as high-quality dry wines became the focus.

b) By the mid-1980s the Australian wines–especially the country's fruit-packed Chardonnays, honeyed Semillons, and ripe, plumy Shirazes–were known throughout the world.

c) About seventeen varieties of grapes are grown in Australia.

d) Australians consume about two and a half times as much wine per capita as Americans do.

WHICH IS FALSE?

c) Australia grows some seventy varieties of grapes.

The Bottles: Here are a few related wines that sparked a keen interest in my Wine Appreciation classes at the Fort Mason campus of San Francisco City College.

- 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon. Down Under Bronco, Southeast Australia. $3.
- 2007 Shiraz. Down Under Bronco, Southeast Australia. $3.
- 2008 Sauvignon Blanc. Monkey Bay Wines, New Zealand-Marlborough. $7.
- NV Sec. Korbel Champagne Cellars, CA. $12.
- 2009 Viognier. Bariah Family Vineyard, South Australia. $15.
- 2008 Marilyn Merlot. Marilyn Wines (Nova Wines), Napa Valley. $29.
- 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon. Peju Province, Napa Valley. $45.
- 2003 J. Schram Sparkling Wine, Schramsberg Vineyards, CA. North Coast. $100.

RICHARD ROTHER: A LIFE WITH WINE AND ART

by

Erik Skovenborg

[*Anyone familiar with the wine books of Ado Kraemer (1898–1972) will immediately recognize the name of woodcut artist Richard Rother, whose joyful, boldly lined woodcuts illustrate these wondrous books published in the 1950s and '60s in Würzburg celebrating the wines of Franconia. For our illustrated look into the life and works of this talented craftsman, we send sincerest Tendril thanks to Erik Skovenborg, retired Danish physician and life-long advocate of wine & health, and an admirer of the many wine-themed works of Rother. Enjoy!* — Ed.]

RICHARD ROTHER was born in 1890 in Bieber, a town in the mountains of Spessart—the western limit of the wine district of Franken, one of the thirteen major wine regions of Germany. The heart of winegrowing-Franken is included in the *Bereich Maindreieck*, following the three-cornered meandering of the river Main, with magnificent Würzburg as its wine capital.

The Franken landscape offers a richness of flora and fauna, vineyards, and charming small villages; the Franken way of life was to mold Richard Rother both as a person and as an artist. During his teen years of 1907–1910 he learned drawing and modeling as a student of the *Nürnberg Kunstgewerbeschule* (Nürnberg Arts & Crafts School), but with family financial pinches, he was forced to seek work in the studios of sculptors in Munich and Frankfurt. From 1910–1913 Rother studied as a sculptor at the Art Academy of Munich. A few years later, his budding career was interrupted by World War I, where the young trooper was wounded in battle in 1917 in the Champagne region.

After the war Rother began a career as a sculptor in Kitzingen, and only by coincidence was he turned toward the pursuit of graphic art. The birth of his first child in 1922, his daughter Gertraud, filled him with an ecstatic joy which he wanted to share with family and friends. Accordingly, Richard Rother's first woodcut was a *Geburtsanzeige* (birth announcement) to celebrate his new baby girl. It was a work of art, praised by his fellow citizens, and several close friends encouraged Rother to seek a career as an artist in the commercial graphic arts field. Once established, Rother often charged very modestly, or not at all, for his woodcuts, leaving him with a very small income to support his family; he wisely lessened this hardship by gaining employment, with a regular salary, as a teacher at the *Würzburg Kunst- und Handwerkerschule* (Würzburg Arts and Crafts School).

A life with grapes and winegrowers

The Franken countryside is a melting pot of nature and culture creating a unique symbiosis. The small wine villages are placed on the banks of the river Main as pearls on a string. The local people have their blood mixed with Franken wine during daily visits to bustling *weinstuben* (wine bars). The Franken winegrowers know how to work hard; they also know how to play hard, especially at the local wine festivals celebrating the end of the harvest. Living in close relationship to the winegrowers was instrumental in fine-tuning Rother's way of life. He became a keen observer of the everyday activities in the vineyard and the cellar, and he often used a sharp sense of humour to picture his fellow citizens at work, or while eating and drinking with family and friends. Rother's wine motifs surfaced everywhere—in books, bookplates, leaflets and restaurant wine cards.

The people prominent in Rother's woodcut artistry were down-to-earth, revealing a hint of their vices as well as their virtues. He was an impartial observer, never accusing or judging. The wit in his woodcuts is not one of sarcasm or ridicule, but is filled with a sense of sympathy and the warm, forgiving attitude of a mature, sensitive nature. His graphic figures boldly radiate the joy and wisdom of life, and his works of art reflect an artist wreathed in smiles and a deep love for the Franken wineland and its people.

Such a prodigious outpouring of woodcuts with a wine theme can only be created by an artist who is a true friend of wine. Rother was indeed inspired not only by the shape of the local Bocksbeutel but also by the delicious Franken wine in the bottle.

One Schoppen Frankenvin

When weather permits, the winegrowers of Franken make wonderful Silvaner, a lively wine with high acidity and elegance, from grapes harvested from *Muschelkalk* (limestone soil). The best quality wine of Franken is sold in the flagon-shaped "Bocksbeutel"—a German word playing on the resemblance of the bottle to a goat's scrotum. In 1806

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe wrote to his wife: "Send me some Würzburger wine, for no other really pleases my palate." When you ask for a "Schoppen" in Franken, the waiter will serve you a quarter-litre of wine, or one third of a Bochsbeutel. Richard Rother would drink no wine during the day, but every evening he enjoyed his Schoppen of Silvaner. Actually Rother considered his daily glasses of wine as a sort of medicine. When he was asked how he had managed to live happily for so many years, he answered: "What can I say? I never ate too much, I stopped smoking in time, I always worked hard—and then I never denied myself the regular Schoppen of Franken wine."

A master of woodcuts

In Europe, the woodcut, developed around 1400 A.D., is the oldest technique used for master prints; at the end of the century Albrecht Dürer brought the Western woodcut to a level that has never been surpassed. To create a woodcut, an image is carved into the surface of a block of wood made of the softer side-grain, with the printing parts remaining level with the surface while the non-printing parts are removed. The areas to show "white" are cut away with a knife or chisel, leaving the image to show in "black" at the original surface level. Ink is applied to the surface with an ink-covered roller, leaving ink upon the flat surface (black) but not in the non-printing (white) areas.

Würzburg Vintage Festival Promotion Poster Stamps

Later on, a technique developed known as wood engraving (xylography), in which the block is cut in the hard end-grain and the artist works with an engraver's burin to create very thin delicate lines. Richard Rother was always true to the original woodcut technique giving his work the lively, slightly irregular, pointed lines similar to the style of woodcuts from the early 15th century. His method of work is as plain and forceful as the wood blocks he used for his cuttings; and it is evident that Rother's training as a sculptor had a profound influence on the clearcut composition of his designs. Rother believed every

woodcut could be read as a story on it own; however, where words were needed, he knew how to fit in the letters and make them a part of the image. Colours and shades of grey did not belong in Rother's world; as an experienced woodcut artist he heartily accepted the limitations of the ancient ways of the craft.

The processes of transferring the sketch of an idea to the hard surface of a wood block not only demands physical strength but also a skilled hand and great self-discipline. A line incorrectly cut cannot be erased. Richard Rother combined a creative mind with a steady hand. His artistic skills helped him level the road from merry ideas to the final cut with his knife. His art is simple and honest as opposed to stylish and elaborate. He understood that an artist who chose to perform his craft by ploughing deep furrows in the hard surface of wood, has not set an easy path; he must strive for clarity and be spurred on by a strong will to express his ideas with just a plain line. Although devoid of sentimentality, Rother's woodcuts are often said to "smile through tears." One of his collections, 50 woodcuts published in 1929, has the fitting title, "Lachendes Holz" ("Laughing Wood").

The applied art of bookplates

For many artists the mere thought of applied art is equivalent to being under the yoke—a constricting cage for the free birds of art. Most people (and artists) tend to ignore the fact that a majority of the world's classic works of art were created as commissioned works, providing the artist with regular income. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was a music genius who has left a legacy unsurpassed in the world of classical music; however, what would be left of his legacy if you removed his "bread and butter" compositions? The multiplicity of Rother's production of commissioned woodcuts for New Years greetings, book illustrations, advertising folders, wine lists, poster stamps, and bookplates symbolizes the importance of applied art of fine quality. The creation of exlibris is an applied art per definition: a booklover commissions an artist to design a personal bookplate for his books, and most often the commission is

accompanied by specified wishes concerning the motif. Notably, many of Rother's woodcuts originated as illustrations for exlibris. [EDITOR NOTE: See Erik Skovenborg's excellent article "Bookplates with Wine Motifs" illustrated with numerous bookplates from his personal collection, in our April 1997 issue. (This article is now online for your reading pleasure.) Erik has also published a splendid 30-page booklet on the subject, *Vin Exlibris: Bookplates with Wine Motifs*, 1991.]

In Richard Rother's opinion it was the duty, and the privilege, of an artist to rise with the occasion and use his creativity to find satisfactory solutions to the various wishes of the commissioner. To be able to design a fine bookplate, he stated, an artist must possess four important qualifications:

- A perfect mastery of his artistic technique.
- A talent for composing new variations on a theme.
- A creative fantasy in combining the name, occupation and interests of the commissioner to form a fine, personal bookplate motif.
- A generous sense of humour acting as a birth-helper for the creative mind.

Laughing Wood

In 1957 Richard Rother was awarded the German Wine Culture Award, *Deutscher Weinkulturpreis*, and at the age of 85 he received the Cultural Award of his home town Würzburg. The old artist pursued his art of creating woodcuts until shortly before his passing away at the age of ninety in 1980. Reading the literature on Richard Rother and his woodcuts makes you realize how hard-working and productive he was, how varied the commissions were that he accepted, how great his creative genius proved to be, and how he managed to weave his gentle humour as a golden thread into most of his woodcuts.

Modesty was one of Richard Rother's virtues, both as an artist and as a man; but in his selection of motifs for woodcuts he does not hide his deep-rooted love of the Franken wineland and its people. He invites you to a relaxed stroll through the vineyards along the Main riverbank, and he will buy you a Schoppen Franken Silvaner in a convivial *weinstube*. Richard Rother was a keen observer of his native land, and better than most he understood how to express the feelings and situations of everyday life in Franken through his cutting knife and his laughing wood.

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A Sample Tasting of Ado Kraemer Wine Books Illustrated by Richard Rother

[Compliled by Gail Unzelman, Annotations by Eberhard Buehler]

Kraemer, Ado [1898–1972]. *Das Bocksbeutelbuch.* 2nd rev. ed. ... Hotzschnitten von Richard Rother. Würzburg: Stürtz, 1964. 188 pp. (1st ed. 1961).

A book about Franconia and its wines, as well as the drinking of it, its language, its music and poetry.

_____. *Escherndorf und Seine Weine.* Würzburg: Stürtz, 1964. 72 pp.

About a Franconian wine town, its history, vintages (beginning 1056), associations with Goethe, &c.

_____. *Frag den Wein. Ein Brevier fur Weinfreunde.* [*Ask about Wine: A Breviary for Wine Lovers*]. Würzburg: Stürtz, 1967. 2nd ed. 124 pp.

_____. *Glas für Glas.* Mit 26 Holzschitten von... Würzburg : Stürtz, 1969. 94 pp.

Wide-ranging essays on wine, including German grape varieties, the language of wine, on wine lists, on wine labels, &c.

_____. *Greif zum Glase. Trinksprüche zum Wein.* Würzburg: Stürtz, 1965. 128 pp.

Toasts for wine drinkers.

_____. *Im Lande des Bocksbeutels. Ein Buch vom Land der Franken, von Wein und Weinkultur.* Würzburg: Halbig, 1957. 192 pp.

[Interesting aside: Hans Ambrosi, in his *Where the Great German Wines Grow* (1976), notes that in the Franken village of Sommerhausen, "the Bacchus Fountain, designed by Richard Rother winner of the Wine Culture Prize, has the features of Dr. Ado Kraemer, the author of various books on Franconian wine." — Ed.]

BROWN, *cont. from p.14* —

The second edition of this book, following the format of the first edition, has changed mostly by expansion. A 100-point scoring system used in the first edition has been dropped (for the better) in favor of a star system where the best wineries are given five stars and so on down. The number of wineries rated in this edition has grown from about one fourth of the state's wineries to about one third. That still leaves nearly five hundred wineries being more or less ignored. The author's reasoning is that the wineries reviewed represent rampant growth and improved quality. Apparently quality is still a problem with the other two thirds, not surprising when so many are small undercapitalized family operations where winemaking skills may be lacking.

The book falls into a genre of wine books that might be called "The Wines of ... California ... France ... Italy ... Spain etc." As such they are not so much books one curls up with at bedtime but they repose in a favored niche of the library where they are the latest references for wine regions the owner wishes to collect wines from, and needs the inside information to do so. Or it is a tome that one schleps to the wine shop along with the Wine Spectator and Wine Advocate. It is a reference book! The Washington Wine commission claims that Washington wines are available in all fifty states. If that is the case, then in the other forty-nine there is a strong need for this book since Washington wines are still largely unknown outside of Washington and parts of Oregon and might as well be from Mars. As in the first edition there is a history, maps of the American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) with a discussion of the characteristics of each, a chapter on the grapes grown, and a listing of the top twenty vineyards with the reasons they are distinguished. Most of the book is given over to varied-length vignettes of the wineries, of which twenty have been awarded five stars and forty-six, four stars. Many will recognize the anointed ones. In the rear of the book just before the index, the author lists his 100 best wines of the vintages 2006 through 2009.

On balance this is a very fine book notwithstanding that it is the opinions of a single author, albeit probably the most informed opinions on wine in the state of Washington. I can recommend it with few reservations. It belongs in the library of everyone considering themselves wine connoisseurs provided one is able to buy the wines. Stay tuned for a 3rd edition in 2013.

The Ultimate Sophist?
A Review by
George Caloyannidis

[*In previous issues, we have enjoyed several inspirational, investigative essays by George C. on the "elusive definitions" of "what constitutes a true wine and food lover" drawn from the pages of several of his favorite old wine books. He recently came across the new book* The Philosophy of Wine *and "thought it was worth reviewing." We welcome his pensive thoughts.* — Ed.]

The Philosophy of Wine. A Case of Truth, Beauty and Intoxication by Cain Todd. Montreal / Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press. 2010. 189pp. $29.95.

"...the kind of book title that gets me excited..."

CAIN TODD IS A LECTURER in philosophy at Lancaster University who developed an interest in wine as a graduate student representing Cambridge University on the blind-tasting varsity team.

This is the kind of book title that gets me excited. But, alas, it is a pretentious book which promises much and delivers little; definitely nothing that even the most peripatetic wine aficionado does not already know.

The Introduction is where the promises are made and they are formidable, mainly because Todd will "clear up the confusion, defend the objectivity of wine judgments and demystify and defend the nature of expertise."

Said "confusion" originates in statements he attributes to Tim Hanni, Jancis Robinson, and Hugh Johnson: "Wine is a subjective sport" (Robinson), and "There is no such thing as objective quality in wine" (Johnson). Todd says, no! Any given bottle of fine wine has a set, objective identity, and he will prove it.

Yet the methodology Todd employs is murky, circular and in the end fundamentally flawed. On the one hand he tries to convince us that a bottle of fine wine has an identity of its own regardless of how a taster perceives it and on the other hand he provides as *proof*, the opinions of "superstar tasters"—the arbiters of true identity. In other words, if supertasters describe a certain wine in the same terms, this is proof enough that the wine has an objective, standalone taste. The taste buds of ordinary mortals don't count because "you wouldn't expect someone who's been playing the piano for a year to tackle a Chopin Prelude, so why should wine be different?" Could it be that it is?

To his credit, he grapples with and gives several well publicized examples of disagreement among supertasters over a given wine. Issues like that compel him to resort to acrobatics in logic and the free use of terms which themselves need proof before they may be employed in proving other things.

While he is good at dissecting concepts, giving the impression of thoroughness by using terms such as, *response dependent, cognitive penetrability, inter-subjective agreement*, he is loose with the sequence of concepts where it counts.

For example he makes free use of the term "fine" wines—the rest of them he says, have no claim to objective identities—but "fine" in philosophical terms is one more concept in need of proof because itself is part of what he is trying to prove.

He is not offering any "objective" proof that supertasters—that is, people with extremely sensitive palates—are better qualified than others to discern the "true" identity of a given bottle of wine if there is one. He freely uses the term "when experts get things right." Isn't "right" the object of inquiry?

He gets around the issue of disagreements among supertasters—and for me it is the single interesting concept in the entire book—that wine may be a smorgasbord of taste elements for the taking by any given taster. However, in terms of what the book tries to prove, this concept is its death nail; if a given wine is different things to different palates, if even "experts" fail "to get it right," which is its *objective* identity?

Nevertheless, he does not give up easily. Our problem, he says, for not being able to accurately describe a wine is because "whereas sounds have dimensions of pitch, timbre and volume ...odors and tastes vary only in intensity ...this relative simplicity helps explain the marked quantitative and qualitative poverty of the vocabulary we can call on to describe tastes and smells." Odors and tastes vary only in intensity? Simplicity is more difficult to describe than complexity?

He wants us to believe that it is easier to describe in words the Chopin Prelude than the 1982 Latour. I can only say: try it!

Many questions arise. Todd makes a distinction between objective terms (like honey, pears) and subjective ones (like luscious, mouth-searing) in describing wine, but even so-called "objective" terms have fundamentally different interpretations. For example, it is not really clear what the exact taste of say, *apricots*, is. Are they supermarket apricots or ripe, off the tree *Blenheims*? A huge difference, especially because only a miniscule segment of the population has ever had the opportunity to taste the latter. What is the taste of *black fruits*, so often found in trade publications? Are they blueberries, blackberries, mulberries, plums, any one of them—and so fundamentally different from each other—or all of them mixed in a smoothie?

Consider also the fact, as I have experienced many

times myself, that the same wine may taste one way on a given day and a different way on another.

A couple of years ago, one of the members of our blind-tasting group of very experienced wine collectors and tasters, poured out of magnums, two glasses each of 1971 DRC La Tache, Richebourg and Romanée St Vivant. Only one of the seven tasters expressed suspicion that these may have been three rather than six different wines. Most expressed some preference to one glass over the other of the same wine out of the same bottle. What happened to the objective identity of arguably as "fine" wines as these are and as evaluated by highly skilled tasters?

In yet another experiment, we were served blind a "fine" wine and were asked to merely identify "objective" flavor components. When the identity of the wine was revealed along with the flavor components enumerated by one of the most famous "experts" in the trade, some matched and some didn't; even basic ones such as bitterness were not on the "expert's" list. Had the "expert" missed them? And if so, who was the real expert? More importantly, which "objective" flavors described the objective identity of the wine?

When the going gets tough, Todd flees to yet another commonly accepted concept; namely, that "wine should be judged within its classification." But how does this square-up with the stand-alone identity of a wine? Should not identity be independent of any external factor other than the taste of the wine in the bottle? Should my own identity be dependent on my Greek by birth classification?

By now, Todd's thesis has taken on so much water that it is sinking rapidly with concession after concession. He asks, "Is wine independent of our taste and smell experiences or somehow necessarily dependent on and constituted by them? The answer, as we shall see, is 'both'." A devastating admission.

If the book had not embarked on a journey which promised to prove the objectivity of wine, the remaining chapters might have been interesting, though there have been better writers to extol the magic of wine. Todd takes us on a trip in drawing similarities—or not—between music, painting and wine: 1982 Latour is Beethoven's Ninth, whereas Margaux is Brahms's Second Violin Sonata. He calls on Giacommetti's sculptures, Picasso's Guernica, Monet's Water Lilies, Joyce's Ulysses, even devotes several pages on Hume's experiments on the perception of color. As interesting such comparisons may be, they fail to help his cause.

In the end, he tells us: "I have been defending throughout this book the idea that wine tasting is not subjective, for there are standards, conventions and expertise that ensure objectivity ... I think we will find that there may sometimes be *more than one incompatible but equally well justified—and hence objective*—judgment" (emphasis mine). If this is not the ultimate sophism!

There are voices from Todd's own ranks of philosophers and psychologists who point to the subjectivity of all experience. In his marvelous book *Soul Dust: The Magic of Consciousness*, the eminent psychologist on the nature of consciousness and cognition, Nicholas Humphrey, postulates that "It is one's mind that projects phenomenal qualities onto external objects." One may want to take a cue from the fact that no two minds are alike! "Already back in the playground you were wondering how the world of colors might look to someone else," he tells us and quotes Oscar Wilde: "It is in the brain that everything takes place... It is in the brain that the poppy is red, ... the apple is odorous, ... the skylark sings."

Unable to bask in the triumph of proof, the book in its conclusion seeks solace in platitudes: "In understanding and appreciating wine, therefore, we thereby come to better understand and appreciate ourselves, and taste the unity of truth, beauty and the good (life)."

What Todd ultimately refuses to realize is that we owe this magic quality of wine precisely to the fact that it is a living thing, just as the taster is, ever changing, ever full of surprises and in many ways, bottled in a fascinatingly unpredictable identity.

Manzanilla: A Review
by *Scott Rosenbaum*

[*Scott Rosenbaum, whom we welcomed to our Tendril society in 2010, is happily entrenched in the study and pleasures of wine. He is a lecturer at the International Wine Center in New York City, and is the wine buyer for DrinkUPNY.com, a retailer that features numerous Manzanillas and Sherrys. We welcome his inaugural contribution to our* Quarterly. — Ed.]

Manzanilla by Christopher Fielden & Javier Hidalgo. London: Grub Street, 2010. 160pp. Hard cover. $26.95.

"...the first book that focuses solely on this wine..."

I VISITED SANLÚCAR DE BARRAMEDA in October of 2009 and was thrilled to have the opportunity to tour Bodegas Hidalgo-La Gitana. Javier Hidalgo, the winery's proprietor and winemaker, acted as a gracious host and most knowledgeable guide. Naturally, I was thrilled when he told me he had co-authored a volume about Manzanilla. Imagine my dismay, when at the gift shop, I discovered that *La Manzanilla–El Vino de Sanlúcar* was written entirely in Spanish. Anyone who loves Sherry and Manzanilla

—two related but distinct wines—knows that there exists a dearth of literature on the subject.

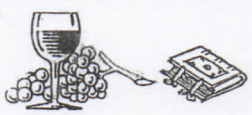
There have always been a number of books about other fortified wines available for those interested in learning more. Port aficionados could turn to the writings of Richard Mayson, while lovers of Madeira, long bereft of any current book detailing the wine, have welcomed the recent publication of Trevor Elliott's *The Wines of Madeira* and Mannie Berk's reissue of Nöel Cossart's *Madeira, The Island Vineyard*. By contrast, those who enjoyed the briny tang of a freshly-bottled Manzanilla were resigned to digging up the wonderful *Sherry* by Julian Jeffs, if they could even find a copy.

Manzanilla, though not a direct translation of *Manzanilla–El Vino de Sanlúcar*, shares much of the same material. This English-language version is the first book that focuses solely on this wine (by contrast, *Sherry* by Jeffs only possessed a 10-page chapter about Manzanilla). With nearly a dozen chapters detailing everything from the production of the wine to how to cook with it, *Manzanilla* is decidedly uneven—satisfyingly comprehensive in some places, yet frustratingly vague or repetitive in others.

The opening chapters successfully convey a sense of place and historical tradition that situate the seaside town of Sanlúcar de Barrameda in its own context rather than as second fiddle to Jerez de la Frontera (a seemingly common practice when it comes to writing about Sherry). A chapter on the etymology of Manzanilla possesses a depth that rivals Manuel González Gordon's treatment of the word Jerez in *Sherry: The Noble Wine*—no easy feat. Similarly, the sections on production and producer profiles are more than strong enough to warrant the purchase of this book.

A disappointing chapter titled "Manzanilla and Wine Tourism" is at odds with the majority text in that it seems as if its words were drawn directly from a travel agency brochure coaxing its readers to visit Andalucía. This unevenness surely stems from the fact that this work was written by two authors. My only other criticism is that for the emphasis put on geography, the book should have contained one or two substantive maps; it only possesses a rather small, pixilated one in the "Hints for the visitor" section.

Still, *Manzanilla* is impressive in its objectivity (something I would imagine is difficult to maintain given that one author is producer), meticulous research, and breadth. Its warmth and enthusiasm for a wine that is all too often simply regarded as a type of Sherry rather than its own distinct category is long overdue. Recommended.



IN THE WINE LIBRARY

by *Bob Foster*

When Wine Tastes Best. A Biodynamic Calendar for Wine Drinkers by Maria and Matthias Thun. Edinburgh: Floris Books, 2011. 48 pp. Softback. $8.

"root, flower, leaf and fruit"

WHAT IS IT ABOUT WINE and wine drinking that attracts such offbeat notions? We have seen pyramids made to hold wine as it ages. We've seen small magnets to attach to the neck of a bottle to mellow the wine. We've seen devices to age wines instantly, and now a scheme to only drink wines on certain days based on astrology.

The whole plan is based on dividing the various astrological signs into four groups. (Why four rather than three or five is never explained.) The four groups are called root, flower, leaf and fruit. (Why these names were assigned is never explained.) Each of these groups allegedly have peaks and valleys during the days (indeed even hour by hour). The authors claim that fruit and flower days are the best for drinking wine. They offer no proof or reasoning (ha!) for this claim other than an assertion that at least two major supermarket chains in the UK only taste wines on fruit and flower days. Wow, that is certainly high scientific proof and very convincing.

The book offers a chart showing hour by hour when the supposedly good times are to drink wine and the poor times to drink wine. I'd write more about this dribble but I'm moving from flower to root and I believe writing a book review in these circumstances is less than ideal.

Not recommended unless you believe in astrology, little green men in UFOs, and invasions of black helicopters.

The Art and Design of Contemporary Wine Labels by Tanya Scholes. Solano Beach, CA: Santa Monica Press, 2010. 287 pp. Hardback. $45.

"... a fascinating journey ..."

PAPER LABELS FOR WINE BOTTLES are a relatively new development. In the earliest times, marks were placed on the outside of earthenware urns or jugs. Later, when wine was sold primarily in barrels, silver bottle tickets were hung on the decanters of wine taken from their cellar cooperage to tell the diners what they were drinking. It was only after the development of the modern smooth-sided bottle that paper labels emerged. At first, such labels simply had the name of the winery or perhaps an

idyllic drawing of the winery. But in recent years there has been an explosion of creativity in the printed label.

The author, who spent over a decade in publicity and design, has assembled hundreds of modern labels to show this astonishing range of creativity in the marketplace. Each of the labels is lavishly presented in color. There are detailed written materials discussing the wine, the winery, and the components of the label. Side blocks of text give contact information on not only the winery but also on the graphic artist who produced the label. The labels run from the puzzling (Eric Kent Syrah) to the humorous (Molly Dooker from Australia).

This is a fascinating journey with the artistic designing talents that exist in our wine world today. Highly recommended.

The Finest Wines of California. A Regional Guide to the Best Producers and Their Wines by Stephen Brook. Berkeley: U.C. Press, 2011. 320 pp. Softback. $34.95.

"... an important contribution..."

THIS IS ANOTHER IN the Fine Wine Editions series of guides into the wine regions of the world. It also markets the continued dominance of the University of California Press in the wine publication arena.

This volume begins with seven short chapters that give an overview of California wine—ranging from the history of wine in California to a discussion of the various grape varieties being cultivated in the Golden State. I particularly liked the section titled "Wine Culture–A Democracy of Wine." Here Brook discusses how open and changeable the wine industry is in California. For example, in areas of France, because of regulations, specific regions can only produce certain wines: their choice of varietals is limited. But in California a winery is not so limited. If the phone rings and a grower is offering a huge load of Pinot Noir from Santa Lucia Highlands at a great price, a winery may suddenly find themselves in the Pinot Noir business for the first time. There are no legal limits to the choices.

I also liked a section the author titles "Style Wars." He talks about the fact that both Robert Parker and James Laube tend to like bigger, richer, higher alcohol wines and the impact this has had on winemaking in California. It is abundantly clear that winemakers are consciously altering their personal styles to get high scores from the Wine Spectator or the Wine Enthusiast. He notes that such styles are readily drinkable whereas lower alcohol, less ripe wines take longer to reach their optimum point of drinkability.

While these observations are interesting, the core of the book comes from the 250 pages profiling the author's selection of the finest wines of California. (Some may fault Brook's omissions of certain wineries, but no selection will satisfy every reader.) Grouped by region, the author profiles each of his chosen wineries. The page or two sections cover the history and the present owners of the winery. There are detailed tasting notes on the various wines tasted, but no numbers assigned. (As the author notes, "there is an inherent absurdity in scoring a product that, by its nature, is always changing.") As with the other volumes in the series, the book is profusely illustrated with gorgeous color photographs by John Wyand of the winemakers or owners of the various properties.

In the back of the book the author presents ten lists of his favorite wines. The lists include the expected (best Cabernets) to the unexpected (the best anything other than Cabernet or Chardonnay).

There are a few small issues. While the book mentions brettanomyces in the text, it is omitted from the glossary in the back. A reader wanting a definition is left wondering. Additionally, while there is an index, it only covers the winemakers and the wineries listed. So, a reader curious to see what the author thinks of Parker or Laube is left to flipping through page after page of text.

Nevertheless, this is an important contribution to the wine literature of California. Highly recommended.

[*The above reviews appeared in the April/May 2011 issue of the California Grapevine. Our sincere thanks to the Grapevine and Bob for their always kind permission to reprint reviews from their excellent periodical. Contact grapevine@san.rr.com for a sample issue and subscription information.* — Ed.]

CELEBRATION!

Welcome Home Borrowed Book — ***Anonymous***

I really am obliged to you for bringing back my book,
It moves me much to look whereon I thought no more to look;
It reminds me of the early time when it was lent to you,
When life was young and hope was fair, and this old book was new.

How well does memory recall the gilt that on it shone
The day I saw it, coveted, and bought it for my own;
And vividly I recollect you called around that day,
Admired it, then borrowed it, and carried it away!

And now it comes to me again across the lapse of time,
Wearing the somewhat battered look of those beyond their prime.
Old book, you need a rest—but ere you're laid upon the shelf,
Just try and hang together till I read you through myself.

Madeira, The Island Vineyard, 2nd ed.
A Review
by John Danza

[*Tendril and Madeira aficionado John Danza has given us a grand tour of fellow Tendril Mannie Berk's exceptional old/new book about the world of Madeira—the island and its wines. Our sincerest thanks to both gentlemen.* — Ed.]

Noël Cossart's Madeira, The Island Vineyard. New Introductory and Postscript Material by Emanuel Berk. Revised Second Edition. Sonoma, CA: The Rare Wine Co., 2011. 400 pp., 88 illustrations & 6 maps. Hardcover, with d.j. Available from The Rare Wine Co. $32.

ADEIRA (THE WINE) AND the United States share a bond that is unique in the world. Both practically owe their existence to each other, and they come from similar backgrounds. They both started in exile, needing to leave their European homelands and travel across the ocean to a far away place in order to come into their own and rise to their highest potential. It is not by accident that Madeira wines were the most favored of the American colonies and the Founding Fathers. They were like brothers, and hand-in-hand they achieved greatness together.

Mr. Berk knows this, and knows the struggle that Madeira, both the wine and the island, has endured to try to reattain the heights in popularity seen in the 1830s and 1840s. It is he who has embraced this Madeira tradition in America and has led the way in the reemergence of the great wines of Madeira through his company The Rare Wine Company. So it is fitting that he be the one to reissue arguably the greatest book about Madeira, *Madeira, The Island Vineyard* by Noël Cossart [1984]. But not just a reissue, as Mr. Berk has applied a skillful hand in improving the original edition with new facts not known at the time of its issue. He's done so in a way that augments the original while letting Cossart's work shine on its own.

In some ways, Mr. Berk and Mr. Cossart are alike. The chapter about Noël Cossart shows a man that dedicated his life to resurrecting the great Cossart Gordon company and keep it independent in the face of many adversities. This is not unlike Mannie Berk's work to resurrect Madeira wines in the U.S.

This book really reads like two books in one, with Mr. Cossart's original text and Mr. Berk's new work. Let's look at the original text first, then the new data.

Mr. Cossart starts off with a history of the island and the beginnings of agriculture on Madeira. He then plunges into a study of the beginning of the wine trade dating back to the 15th century. We then get a thorough review of the wine merchants that built the industry on the island. Many of these families are still in the wine business there, such as Blandy and Leacock, and of course Cossart. This consumes the beginning third of the book and provides an excellent foundation for the rest of the story.

Mr. Cossart gives us a brief history of the Madeiras that were sold to India, a major market for hundreds of years. He then goes on to tell us that the old Madeiras coming back from India had a much higher auction value in the early 19th century than identical wines coming from England. It was widely known by this time that heat and agitation greatly improved the characteristics of Madeira. Wines that had been to "the Indies" would have seen much more of this than other wines, so they could be expected to be much more complex, and valuable.

There is a significant chapter full of history of Madeira in North America. Mr. Cossart gives credit to Americans for having some of the best understanding of handling and enjoying Madeira in the world. He describes the major ports of America that became primary cities in the Madeira trade and ultimately the collection of Madeira. The 18th and early 19th century trade was concentrated around Boston, Charleston (referred to as Charlestown by Cossart), Baltimore and Savannah. So it was natural that the great collections of Madeiras would occur around these cities and that the best stories would originate there.

Perhaps one of the best examples of the "Society" around Madeira wines would be The Madeira Club of Savannah. Founded in 1950, this fellowship (males only, please—sorry ladies) share camaraderie around fine food, fine Madeira and literary expertise brought together in a monthly celebration of life's pleasures. We learn that the club benefits from the cellars of its members, holding some of the finest collections of Madeira in the world. The club's activities consist of a meeting at a member's home, where a fine dinner is served. Both before and after dinner a fine Madeira is served, such as a Cama de Lobos Solera 1792 and a Terrantez 1870. The dinner is followed by the reading of a paper written by one of the members on any subject the writer feels would be of interest. It is easy to sit back and vicariously enjoy the evening described.

We are also provided with quite a bit of information about some of the famous ship names that were involved in the Madeira trade. Throughout the early years all the way to the end of the 19th century, Madeira was labeled and marketed not by the grape variety but usually by the name of the ship the barrel had been transported upon, the name of the importer, or the places the wine had travelled to. So it was

common to find a wine marked "Jenny Lind 1849" (from the Gibson House Hotel wine list in 1856), "The Rebel 1840," or "Finest Old, full flavoured Cama de Lobos East India ex Star of Bengal, Calcutta, November 1877." Americans relied upon their keen taste and knowledge of Madeira to know what was in the bottle.

I found the two chapters about the vines and vineyards of Madeira to be very informative without being dry, technical stuff. Mr. Cossart explains the different vineyards on the island along with the type and quality of the grapes grown in each. He then takes this discussion fairly seamlessly into the very important topics of the two 19th century plagues that struck the vines, the Oidium fungus of 1852 and the Phylloxera in 1883. This information is expanded by a description of the personalities involved in the detection of the problems and those that were involved in their eradication and control. This last part was much more informative than the description one normally sees in wine books because of the "who did what" style in which it's presented.

The winemaking chapter is interesting in that the process of making Madeira is so different from the creation of any other wine in the world. Here Mr. Cossart mixes the technical with the romantic (but accurate), telling of how ocean voyages improved the wines and their quality. It is great to learn of the various ships that were used in the process, and how drinkers would compare similar wines that had traveled on different ships to determine the nuances of each. A special asset to this section is the explanation of the *estufagem* process that makes Madeira the unique wine that it is.

The last quarter of Mr. Cossart's work is dedicated to his experiences with great Madeiras, both vintage and solera. He gives us the benefit of his knowledge and the experience of his ancestors and friends to become familiar with some of the most famous and special Madeiras ever made. For a lover of history, these chapters just draw me in. The stories around the 1792 Napoleon, the Bianchi family wines, or special vintages of Terrantez are examples of information that only someone who lived a life in Madeira can share.

Are the historical accounts colored? Perhaps, but I think that still makes them valuable. Mr. Cossart is speaking not from an analytical historian's point of view but from a perspective of a person who has lived the history. While some points may be shaded or questionable, what he brings to the table is the stuff that creates the humanity of the people of Madeira and those who make up its wine trade.

If Mr. Cossart's book was all that you got in this edition, that would be reason enough to add this work to your collection. But wait, there's more! Mr. Berk has wrapped Cossart's original book with prefaces and appendices that take Cossart's material to an even higher level.

Mr. Berk starts with an important introduction to the edition to tell us what direction this second edition will take. He then follows this with a short, summarized history of Madeira and its wine industry. Lastly, he adds a fine biography of Noël Cossart ("Noël Cossart, A Life in Wine") where we are introduced to the author and his ancestors in a way that tells us that Noël Cossart is not just an expert on Madeira—he *is* Madeira. He has the history of Madeira running through his veins and in his DNA.

On the back end, Mr. Berk has added a number of appendices. Each of these expand on topics addressed by Mr. Cossart's original text. We have new information about individuals that Mr. Cossart knew and interacted with about Madeira, such as Roy Brady and John Delaforce. We also get new research on Madeira traditions such as the story around the 1792 Napoleon Madeira and the legendary Madeiras by William Neyle Habersham of Savannah.

I love the way Mr. Berk has handled the introduction of this material that was researched after the first edition of *Madeira, The Island Vineyard.* He has left the original Cossart text intact and then added the new, post-1984 material in the appendices for us to absorb separately. This is very respectful of Mr. Cossart's original work. Bravo to Mr. Berk.

The second edition of Noel Cossart's *Madeira, The Island Vineyard* belongs in the library of every person even remotely interested in Madeira wines. Those who are lucky enough to own a copy of the first edition should still get this one for the valuable additions by Mr. Berk. This is a significant study on the subject that should not be missed.

Noël Cossart's father & grandfather
From: Vizetelly, *Facts about Port and Madeira*, 1880

Wine in California: The Early Years
From Province to Statehood, 1846–1850
PART II
by *Charles L. Sullivan*

[*In the first four installments (April 2010–January 2011) of Charles Sullivan's never-before-published history of the early years of wine in California, we explored the Mission years, those humble "cradle years" of California winegrowing. This present chapter, begun last issue, documents California statehood and the early pioneers of the new state's fledgling wine industry. Extensive, informative footnotes, with a substantial library of sources, are provided at the end.* — Ed.]

THE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF GOLD SEEKERS who poured into California between 1848 and 1850 fall into many categories. In the main, most were Americans and most of these came overland. There were also Argonauts from all over the world. For reasons that will shortly be more clear, some categories stand out because they were soon to be associated with California wine and viticulture.

More Newcomers: Brannan and the Mormons

One group whose members mostly did not stay has a special place in this story—for what might have been. These were the Mormons. On February 4, 1846, the 450-ton *Brooklyn* sailed from New York bound for the Mexican province of Alta California. Aboard were 238 passengers, almost all Mormons, led by Elder Samuel Brannan (1819–1889), fleeing the limits of "this wicked nation." He had chartered the vessel for $1200 per month for a voyage that would last one week less than six months. The ship's hold was loaded with farm and mechanical implements, enough for 800 men. There were three flour mills, even a printing press. At almost the same time thousands of Mormons in Illinois began their trek across the Mississippi River in search of isolation and safety beyond the Rockies. Their goal was not absolutely set, but it is clear that if it was to be the lightly populated Central Valley of California, Brannan's expedition was to serve as an outpost.

When the *Brooklyn* anchored in San Francisco Bay, Brannan found his neighbor alongside to be the *Portsmouth* under Capt. John Montgomery, who had recently raised the American flag over the village of Yerba Buena and the old presidio. Bancroft reported that Elder Brannan's first remark was, "There is that damned flag again." In January 1847 Brannan reported to his superiors, still on their trek west, that a number of his company had "commenced a settlement on the River San Joaquin...which we call New Hope, ploughing and putting in other crops.... They hope to meet the main body by land some time during the coming season." In June Brannan went east to meet the Mormon leaders in hopes of keeping them on the road to California. He joined them just days before they arrived at Salt Lake. They made it clear to him that this was the place, not California.

On the trek from Illinois the Mormon leaders had learned of the war and now knew that California would be part of "Babylon." Brannan returned to California and stayed on, now a Mormon apostate, becoming one of the most colorful and controversial characters in the early years of statehood. In fact, he is the only part of the Mormon story in the Golden State with a noticeable influence on viticulture and winegrowing. We shall see that in the 1860s he was a leader in the development of the Napa Valley wine industry.[1]

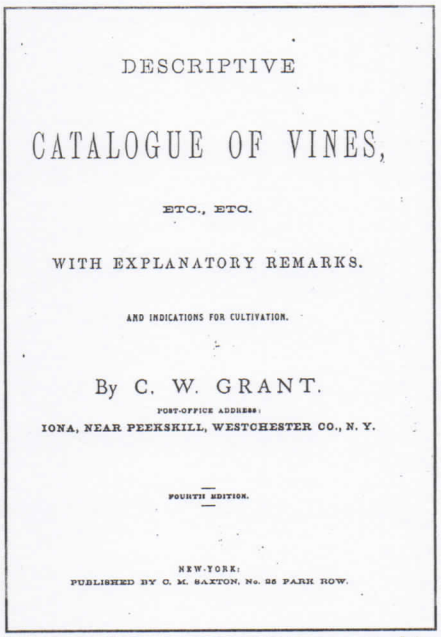
Clio, the Muse of history, is often a tease. One of her temptations is the "what if?" Modern historians usually resist this one, but it is difficult to view the combination of events I have just traced without taking the bait. First, a generally accepted idea must be put to rest. There was no absolute prohibition of alcoholic beverages among Mormons in the early days at Salt Lake. Mormon leaders encouraged the cultivation of wine grapes and the production of wine in southwest Utah from 1860 until about 1910. The first vines were planted near the town of St. George with Mission varieties brought from California. They also brought a wine press and a brandy distillery. They even brought an experienced winemaker from Germany, Johann Naegle. Although wine was consumed by the Mormons in these years, rules of sobriety were strictly enforced.[2]

What if the war with Mexico, and thus the American conquest of California, had been delayed by another two or three years? Would Mormon leaders have felt they were returning to "Babylon" by settling in large number in the almost deserted San Joaquin Valley in early 1846, a huge part of an almost empty Mexican province? What if the spring weather at Salt Lake had been grim and not so perfect? Might not New Hope have grown by the hundreds or thousands? And would Mormon leaders have hesitated in planting vast acres of wine grapes in this area, in 1850 designated San Joaquin County, today the home

of more first-class wine grapes than any other county in the Golden State?

New Englanders

Arrivals in other categories had an important impact on the future of wine in California. New Englanders were numerous among the Argonauts, and although they were far fewer than those from other regions of the country, their impact on the development of agriculture in the 1850s was profound. In part, their early numbers and importance can be traced to the longtime maritime connection between New England, particularly Boston, and the hide and tallow trade with California after 1822. New Englanders' influence on the state's early agricultural institutions can be followed back to the advanced state of farm organizations and agricultural publications in the American northeast, including New York state. New England nurseries were an important source of nursery stock brought to California in the 1850s, often by New England nurserymen who stayed on to reap the profits from their knowledge of horticulture. The founder of the state's agricultural society was a former Boston nurseryman. And rather surprisingly, most of the new grape varieties brought to California in the fifties came from New England nurseries.



DESCRIPTIVE

CATALOGUE OF VINES,

ETC., ETC.

WITH EXPLANATORY REMARKS.

AND INDICATIONS FOR CULTIVATION.

By C. W. GRANT.

POST-OFFICE ADDRESS:
IONA, NEAR PEEKSKILL, WESTCHESTER CO., N. Y.

FOURTH EDITION.

NEW-YORK:
PUBLISHED BY C. M. SAXTON, No. 25 PARK ROW.

Catalogue of Vines, c1850, C.W. Grant, one of the foremost nurseries for grape vines in the U.S.

The French and the Germans

Counting heads in California before 1860 was a very inexact process. The federal census of 1850 was a disaster there. The returns for San Francisco, Alameda/Contra Costa, and Santa Clara Counties were lost. We have no ready access to national origin statistics until the 1860 census. The final "official" population count in 1850 for the new state was 92,597, not including Indians. But Congress allowed a count of 165,000. In 1852 the state did its own census and counted 264,000. The best figure we can get for the foreign-born count in California for 1850 is about 22% of the total, a percentage that remained about the same in 1852.

Included in those percentages were two national groups, some of whose members are important for their contributions to the early California wine industry. These were the French and the Germans. We have a better picture of French immigration because there was a France in these years and there was a French consul in San Francisco. There would be no Germany until the 1870s brought the unification of the many German states. Before then Germany was simply a large area in central Europe where German was the chief language.

The unsettled political and economic conditions in western Europe in 1848–1849 favored emigration, and in France the government actually promoted the organization of companies of potential miners. The most famous of these was *Le Société du l'Ingot d'Or* which was credited with sending 3046 Frenchmen to California in 1853.[3] Bancroft noted that, although the French were not as numerous as the Germans during the Gold Rush years, they were important "especially for their horticultural interests." The hostility against the French in the mining areas caused them to migrate "to towns and viticultural districts."[4] A regular theme in the French consular reports from San Francisco was the huge amount of wine and liquor arriving through that port. They rejoiced particularly at the popularity of French red wine. In 1850 there was "an immense market increasing daily" for French brandy.[5] We shall see the good prices commanded for these products would act as an incentive to Californians, particularly in the north, to acquire a piece of this action. We shall also see that the Santa Clara Valley became a powerful magnet for French newcomers, particularly those with "horticultural interests."

It is not until the federal census of 1860 that we get a fairly clear picture of the foreign-born in California. This census counted 146,500 in that category. The English/Irish were the easy winners. Third place went to the Germans with 21,500. The French were fifth with 8500, a number indicating that a large percentage of Gallic Argonauts had returned to their homeland by 1860. The predominance of Germans among the continental Europeans began early in many areas of the state. In Los Angeles County the 1850 census, which was relatively accurate there, showed that the French "colony," with Vignes and the Sainsevains at its center, was outnumbered by new-

comers from the German states three to one. The same was true in Sonoma County. There and in Napa County the Teutonic newcomers took a leading part in the development of the local wine industries.

The number two position among the foreign-born in 1860 went to the Chinese, of whom about 35,000 were counted; actually they were probably far more numerous. They too would play an important role in California viticulture. In the northern counties they proved dependable agricultural workers, whose skills and precise attention made them particularly valuable in training and pruning vines. In southern California, by the mid-1860s, they had become important vineyard workers, as the demise of the Indian population continued its sad course.

Land Tenure

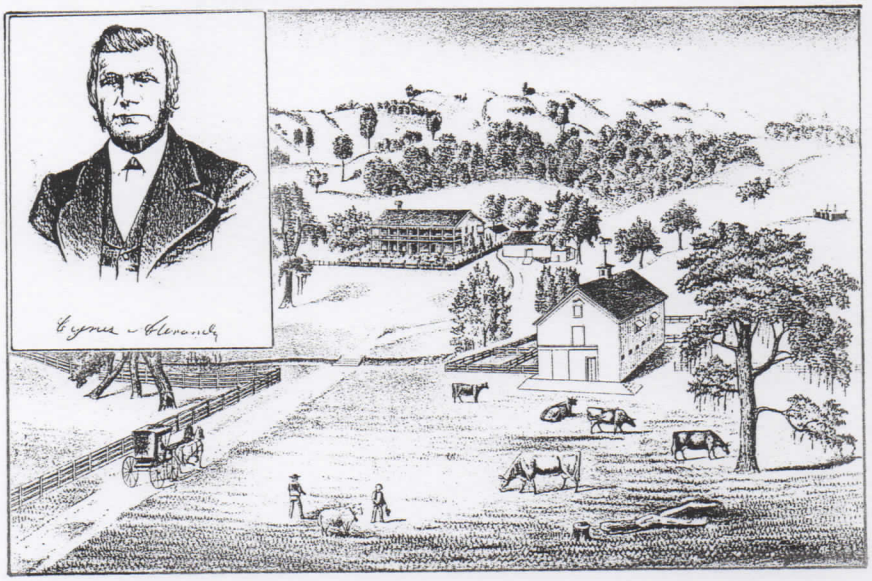
Between 1846 and 1850, and a few years thereafter, perhaps the most important historical development affecting the future of the California wine industry was the fairly orderly settling of matters concerning newcomers and land ownership in the areas where wine production would soon be important. Most histories of California correctly point to the general disorder in the state concerning land titles and agricultural development in the 1850s and 1860s. These conditions stem largely from an act of Congress in 1851 by which all claimants of land granted under Spain and Mexico were required to appear before a land commission and present proof of title. Overwhelmingly, most grant holders' titles were recognized, but the end results have generally been blasted by historians. "It was impossible for [an] agriculturist to get certain title to any real property." "One legitimate grant after the other was forfeited" because the claimant could not afford legal costs. "By the time a grant was confirmed, its original owner was usually bankrupt" (emphasis added).[6]

These generalizations appear exaggerated on their face, but for Sonoma, Napa, Santa Clara and Los Angeles counties they simply do not hold. And these are the counties that would lead the way in the development of California winegrowing in the 1850s and 1860s.[7]

It is generally accepted, and correctly so, that claimants did not receive their final government patents until an average of seventeen years after their hearing before the Land Commission. However, a questionable generalization one often encounters holds that most grantees of Hispanic descent had lost their lands by the 1860s.

Northern California — Sonoma County

First let us look at Sonoma County. This area did not open to settlement until the 1830s; there were no old land grants. Mariano Vallejo's handling of the grant process here after 1835 follows a clear pattern. A majority of the grantees of the land that would become wine country in this county were not of Hispanic origin. And most of those with Hispanic surnames were members of Vallejo's family or his friends. In Sonoma the seventeen-year generalization does not apply; five of the six large grants that would soon be home to important vineyard holdings received their government patents before 1860. These covered approximately 135,000 acres. The seventh, Los Guilicos in the upper Sonoma Valley, did not receive its patent until 1886. But this land, nevertheless, went through a process of orderly subdivision, as was the case of all but one of the other six. That was Rancho Cotate just south of Santa Rosa. Under Sheriff Thomas Page it remained undivided until 1870. The most northerly of these *ranchos* was Sotoyome, which was granted to Henry Fitch, a New England mariner who came to California in 1826. He received the grant in 1841. Four years later he conveyed title of a huge piece of this land east of the Russian River to Cyrus Alexander (1805–1872), who gave his name to this valley. In 1846 Alexander planted grape vines, the first in upper Sonoma County. But he made his fortune selling vegetables and livestock in the gold country. Today the Alexander Valley is a great land of vines famous for its Cabernet Sauvignon.[8]



Cyrus Alexander Ranch, Alexander Valley, Sonoma County

What of the smaller parcels held by numerous persons around the town of Sonoma? Here again the generalizations I have mentioned do not apply.

Sonoma was by Mexican law a *pueblo*, and as a legal entity owned four square leagues of land, a total of 17,713 acres. These could be granted or sold as the government of the *pueblo* saw fit. The Land Commission confirmed Sonoma's title, and settlers there who held deeds from the municipality had no further need to prove their ownership. Thus by the early 1850s ownership of the pioneer vineyards in and around town, those of Jacob Leese, Nicholas Carriger, Mariano Vallejo and several others, was secure.

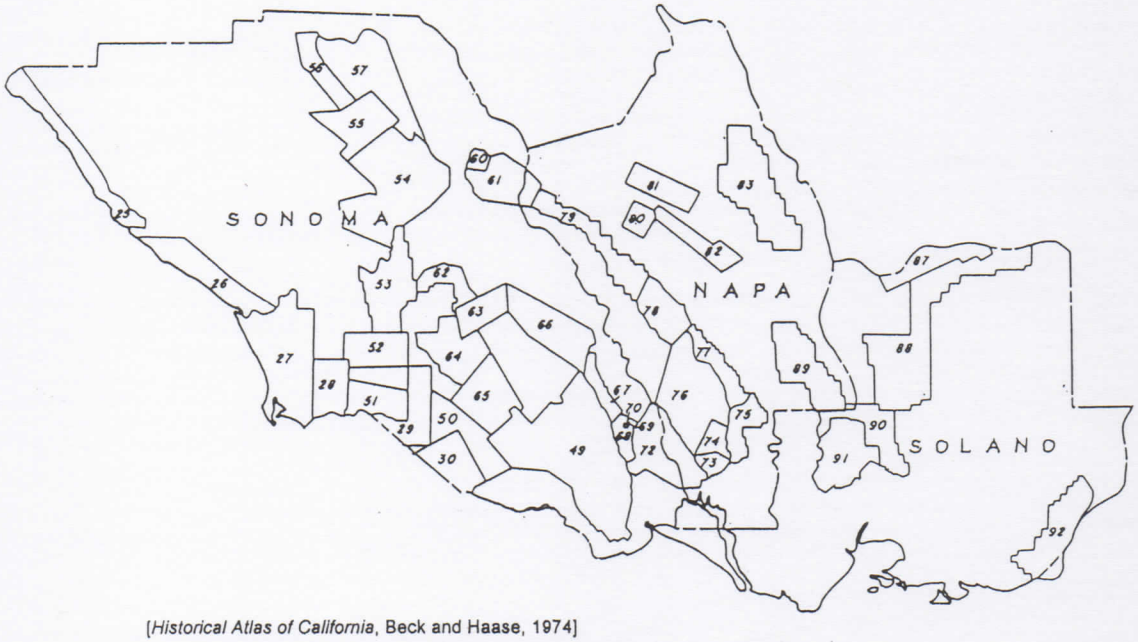
Napa County

Napa County history from 1846–1850 is similar to Sonoma County's but clearly different in a few important ways. The easterner contemplating an adventure in the California gold country in 1849 had little chance or reason ever to have heard of Napa, or even Sonoma. But next year they could read in Horace Greeley's New York Tribune that these valleys were "two of the finest agricultural districts of California." Bayard Taylor had come to California for five months in 1849 as Greeley's correspondent. When

MEXICAN LAND GRANTS

SONOMA COUNTY
Cotate, No.65
Los Guilicos, No.66
Huichica, No.72
Petaluma, No.49
Cabeza de Santa Rosa, No.63
Llano de Santa Rosa, No.64
Sotoyome, No.54
Mission Sonoma, No.70
Sonoma Pueblo Lands, No.68

NAPA COUNTY
Carne Humana, No.79
Catacula, No.82
Caymus, No.78
Entre Napa, No.74
Carneros, No.73 (Part of Entre Napa)
Huichica, No.72
La Jota, No.80
Napa, No.76



[*Historical Atlas of California*, Beck and Haase, 1974]

the young man got home he put his articles together and *El Dorado* was the result, published in 1850.[9]

Unlike Sonoma County, which has many valleys, Napa County is pretty much defined by its main valley. There had been but two *ranchos* granted in the upper valley, where viticulture would become almost a monoculture in later years. One was George Yount's (1794–1865) Rancho Caymus, previously described. The other went to Edward Bale (1811–1849), an English surgeon who landed at Monterey in 1837. He was naturalized and married Maria Soberanes, Mariano Vallejo's niece. In 1841 Vallejo presented Bale with a grant that covered almost all of the valley north of Rancho Caymus. The Indian name of the *ranchería* there was Calajomanes, which Bale twisted to name his *rancho* Carne Humana (human flesh).[10] Bale was a confirmed alcoholic and a mean rabble-rouser. Andrew Rolle labeled him a "boozer and something of a scamp."[11] Before Bale died in 1849 he had begun disposing of portions of his huge domain, a process continued by his widow in years to come. The orderly subdivision of this huge *rancho* came in spite of the fact that Mrs. Bale did not receive final patent on the grant until 1879. George Yount received his patent in 1863, but both his and Bale's confirmations of title from the Land Commission came years earlier. The Bale approach to their granted land was in sharp contrast to George Yount's land policy. Except for a few private transactions, mostly with family members, his *rancho* remained in tact until the 1870s. As a result we can see that the northern portion of Napa Valley developed at a faster pace than mid-valley.[12]

Below Rancho Caymus was Salvador Vallejo's Rancho Napa, which he sold off in orderly fashion. The most important sale went to Joseph Osborne in 1851, whose huge Oak Knoll Ranch soon became an important center of viticultural activity. Nicholas Higuera held the grant for the area to the south, where Napa City would grow up. Two other grants that figured soon in the early history of Napa wine were Joseph Chiles' 1844 Rancho Catacula in the hills east of the main valley, and to the north the Pope Valley grant in 1841 to William (Julian) Pope. In 1844 George Yount received a second grant, Rancho La Jota, atop Howell Mountain east of the valley, but it was not developed until the 1880s.

Rancho Soscol (Suscol) does fit the disorderly and unstable picture of land tenure conveyed by most general histories of California. It was granted to Mariano Vallejo in 1843 and covered about 50,000 acres, but with undetermined boundaries. It would have contained most of the land south of today's Highway 12 to the bay, including the current cities of Vallejo and Benicia, and of Mare island. Over the years Vallejo sold off and/or conveyed large portions of the grant, but by the mid-1850s questions of title brought hordes of squatters onto this land. Although the Land Commission accepted Vallejo's claim, the United States government did not. The case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1861. In a 5–4 decision the court majority held that "in every view we have been able to take of the case we are satisfied that the grant is one that should not be confirmed...." Later, local courts and Congress ruled that the transfers Vallejo had made should be confirmed on payment to the government of $1.25 per acre. Otherwise chaos would have resulted. This confirmation meant that title to one of Napa's most important pioneer horticultural enterprises, which I shall discuss in a later chapter, was secure.[13]

Unlike Sonoma there was no *pueblo* and therefore no *pueblo* lands in the Napa Valley. Napa City was first laid out by Nathan Coombs in 1848; a year before it had been a bean field on Nicholas Higuera's Rancho Entre Napa. Coombs bought a portion of the *rancho*, as did several others within the next few years. By 1854 Napa City was a little wooden town with about 350 residents. It faced the Napa River, which was navigable to this point and was served regularly by little steamers from the San Francisco Bay area.[14]

Before 1850 numerous settlers had moved into the valley, and a few had planted some grapes, mostly on land acquired from the Bale family. Chief among these was Florentine (Frank) Kellogg, who went to work for Bale in 1846, when Bale built a huge grist mill with a distinctive water wheel that is still one of Napa Valley's most important historical attractions. Kellogg did the iron work on the structure and received his land in payment. He planted grapes in 1849 and made small amounts of wine. Part of his property was acquired by W. W. Lyman in 1871, which became the site of his El Molino Winery. David Hudson (1845), Reason Tucker (1847) and John York (1848) also planted small vineyards on their Bale land. Charles Hopper did the same on a piece of Yount land in 1847. Although many writers have credited Dr. Bale with dabbling in viticulture, there is no evidence that any vines were planted on his home place until the early 1850s. East of the valley Joseph Chiles planted a few grapes in the valley that took his name. In Pope Valley Elias Barnett, who married William Pope's widow, also planted a small vineyard.[15]

Santa Clara County

About sixty miles southeast of Napa/Sonoma at the foot of San Francisco Bay was what used to be one of the most fertile agricultural lands in North America. The Santa Clara Valley, today's Silicon Valley, contained about 300 square miles of rich arable land in 1846, with a population of about 950 persons, not counting Indians. By 1848 there were 4000 inhabitants, by 1852 almost 7000. Before

1850 well over 90% of the population lived in or around San Jose, California's first *pueblo*. With statehood Santa Clara County was formed, then and now the largest in the Bay Area, one-third larger than Sonoma, which ranks number two in size. But this huge valley makes up less than one-fifth of the county land, which is mostly mountainous. It should also be noted that the east side of the valley reaches well into the East Bay lowlands of Alameda County, several miles north of Mission San Jose.[16]

Santa Clara Co.
[Sullivan, *Companion to California Wine*, 1998]

Except for the dusty *pueblo* and its surroundings, the Santa Clara Valley was practically deserted before 1850. Bayard Taylor rode through in 1849 to take a look at the meeting of the first state legislature in December. He rode down the west side of the valley and was able to get a meal at a little ranch near today's Mountain View. He noted that the Mexican family had "a fine patch of grapevines." A few days later he headed south from San Jose and stopped at the ranch of William Fisher, twelve miles below town. This was the Rancho Laguna Seca granted to Juan Alvirez in 1834. Fisher bought it in 1845 and was creating here a unique agricultural estate for this early year. Taylor was impressed by the two young orchards and the vineyard with about a thousand vines. Of the few older *ranchos* in the valley this vineyard was fairly typical. East of town Taylor might have found Jose Higuera's old vineyard on his Rancho Pala. His will, dated 1846, divided his 948 vines equally among his eleven children. If the American had looked-in just to the west he would have found the Bernal Family's Rancho Santa Teresa with a similar patch of vines. Just to the west was the Rancho San Juan Bautista where Isaac Branham bought land from the Narvaez Family in 1846 and began planting a few vines in an area south of town that would become a noted wine district in a few years. In 1848 Captain Henry Naglee, who had come to California with the New York Volunteer Regiment the year before, bought 140 acres of *pueblo* land east of the town center and set out fruit trees and vines.[17] Pierre Sainsevain (1819–1904) and his father-in-law, Antonio Suñol (1800–1865), also had nice vineyards in town, as did many others. It would be many years before the west side of the valley, today's Cupertino and Mountain View, opened to serious winegrowing. But the first vines planted there by an American went into the ground in 1848, the little vineyard the work of Elisha Stevens, the famous frontiersman who in 1844 had led the first wagon train ever to cross the Sierra.[18]

The valley may have been all but deserted in 1849, but San Jose was bustling in its new but short-lived role as state capital. "The dusty streets were thronged with people; goods, for lack of storage room, stood in large piles beside the doors; the sounds of saw and hammer, and the rattling of laden carts, were incessant." Taylor also noted the marked Gallic element in the old *pueblo*. There were French restaurants around the plaza that "hung out signs on little one-story shanties." We can see a part of the Gallic magnet, apart from the attraction of excellent arable land, in the Francophile Antonio Suñol. In 1844 Pierre Sainsevain had come north from Los Angeles; the next year he became Suñol's son-in-law. Sainsevain's new hotel became California's first, if temporary, statehouse in 1849. By 1852 there were more than a thousand French settlers in the county, some of whom had bought land from Suñol's 2000-acre Rancho de los Coches just west of the *pueblo* center.[19]

The great magnet, of course, was the valley itself, whose rich alluvial soils went down as much as one thousand feet in some places. No one who was coming to California and could read would have missed the continuous rolling of praise from guide books and descriptive works for the Valley of Hearts Delight, as it came to be known. Walter Colton is typical in his 1850 observations: "It is cultivated only in spots, but the immense yield in these is sufficient evidence of what the valley is capable." John Frost wrote in 1851 on San Jose, " In a greater degree than any of the other towns of California, it has all the evidence of a thriving and progressive place."[20]

There was a special class of entrepreneurs among those who could see the coming bonanza in the Santa Clara Valley. If fruit was to be part of this new wealth, nurseries would be absolutely necessary. They began appearing in San Jose in 1846–1850 and by the end of the decade so many had entered the field in and around the growing town "that it is hard to determine who was most important," the words of San Jose historian Clyde Arbuckle. But he cautiously gives the palm to Joseph Aram, who acquired land north of town in 1846 and was soon in business. Louis Pellier (1817–1872) established his City Gardens in

1850, the first of several French nurserymen at work in the "Garden City," the town's new nickname. This group of Americans and Frenchmen was soon so numerous that they established their own little trade association, The Pioneer Horticultural Society. Almost all were interested in promoting viticulture.[21]

Like other *pueblos,* San Jose, in theory, had four square leagues of public land which the town council might dispose of. There was plenty left when the new council took control in 1846; twelve strong, there were six Californios headed by Antonio Suñol, and six Americans headed by William Fisher and Isaac Branham. Newcomers easily acquired land in these early years with secure titles, as was the case in Sonoma. But as the years passed the size of the lands claimed by the town more than doubled. The map of the "Pueblo Lands of San Jose" published by the City Council in 1866 resembled a greedy politician's gerrymander, with arms of tracts claimed stretching into the foothills and more than 15 miles below town. The unsettled title to these lands was not resolved until 1884, when the government patent was finally issued. Fortunately for this study I find none of the upcoming viticultural developments involved in this legal confusion.[22]

The subdivision of Santa Clara County's large *ranchos*, whose lands would be largely involved in the coming viticultural expansion, was orderly. I have already mentioned Ranchos San Juan Bautista and Santa Teresa south of town, winegrowing hot-spots in the later 1850s. East of town, around today's Evergreen area, Rancho Yerba Buena also became important. The Bernals and the Chaboyas, patentees of the latter two, still had large holdings of their *rancho* land much later in the century. In fact, twenty-six of the final patentees to the county's land grant *ranchos* had Hispanic surnames.[23]

Southern California

Although the old *ranchos* of southern California remained the dominant feature of that area's society, the great cattle boom beginning in 1849 changed the quality of life for the *rancheros* and their families. The huge rise in beef prices brought on by the population explosion accompanying the Gold Rush in northern California "brought sudden, extravagant, and, in the end, ruinous prosperity" to most such families.[24] By the 1860s many had been gradually displaced by Americans, having lived beyond their means, unprepared for the lean years after 1856, to say nothing of the disastrous effects of flood and drought in but a few years.

It was these hardships that ruined most of the old Californio families, not the actions of the Land Commission. Most claimants here with grants predating 1842 had their titles confirmed by the commission and the courts. Some whose legal fees drove up their debts while cattle prices were tumbling after 1856 were forced to sell or subdivide at rock-bottom prices; huge spreads of cattle land had lost their value. But rarely did any of these hardships fall on land owners who were, or were about to become, seriously involved in commercial wine-growing.

Los Angeles

Los Angeles as a *pueblo* was entitled to its four square leagues, and in 1849 there was still plenty of unappropriated land around the little town. Early in that year California's military governor indicated that the Los Angeles town council might sell any such land that made direct reference to a surveyed city map. The town's capable *alcalde*, Stephen C. Foster, had to reply that Los Angeles had no such map. Governor Bennet Riley (1787–1853) then sent Lt. Edward Ord (1818–1883), an experienced surveyor, to do the job, at the town's expense. Ord and his assistant, William Rich Hutton, did the survey and produced a remarkable map that clearly indicated the importance of viticulture to the *pueblo*. Hutton's letters and diary entries have been collected. His work with Ord, surveying "all the cultivated land between the hills and the river," and "from the vineyards to the hills" is laid out in detail. He even comments on the vineyards, "loaded but not yet ripe" in August. He finally noted in his diary on September 1 that "our map is finished and is a pretty one." Pretty indeed! and a very useful historical document. Ord presented the survey and map to the council two weeks later and collected his $3000, the money having been advanced to the city fathers by a group of local merchants. In November Los Angeles began auctioning off the open lots, only a few of which can be seen in the usual published representation of the map. In the first round enough was collected to pay off Ord's fee. But the town sold off its public land much sooner than had been predicted. In fact the city leaders kept selling after the four leagues were gone. But, unlike the situation in San Jose, the courts held the Angelinos to the traditional four.[25] Of course all the landowners with vineyards on Ord's map, and a few more not indicated, were not required to petition the Land Commission for a government patent.

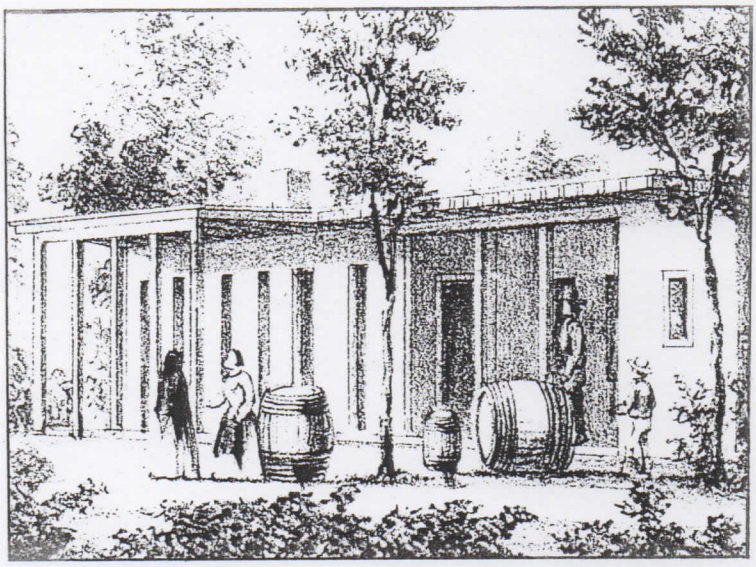
One can count more than fifty distinct vineyard holdings on the map. In a very few years there would be many more on the surveyed plots not normally shown in published renditions of Ord's map. So long as they were within the *pueblo's* original four square leagues their titles were clear. And I know of no landowner of any consequence who was not. Historian Pinney contends that in these early years winegrowing activity in Los Angeles "must have been visible and dominating to a degree that few, if any, American towns have since known." I can think of none.[26]

The impressive expansion of winegrowing in the Los Angeles area in the years immediately after 1850 provides us with the names of many new and larger operations that were not on the ground in that year. But it is worth our while to remember some of the noteworthy elements of the tiny wine industry in and around the old *pueblo* in the transition years before California experienced its first "wine boom."

The Vignes operation at El Aliso was still going strong, but Don Luis was seventy and thinking of retirement. Since Pierre Sainsevain had established himself firmly in San Jose since 1846, arrangements had been made for Jean-Louis Sainsevain (1817–1886), Pierre's older brother, to come to California and help his uncle. In 1850 the old man decided to sell the winery, vineyard and orchards and the next year put them on the market, without success.

Sainsevain Bros. Sparkling California wine featured the grizzly bear, a favourite subject on California wine labels in the 1800s

William Wolfskill (1798–1866) continued to expand his wine, brandy and orange business. His export of wine to San Francisco in 1849 established what for the local industry would shortly expand to six figures in annual gallons. He and others were also shipping huge quantities of fresh grapes to northern California every year. His neighbor, Louis Bouchet, a French cooper, had arrived in Los Angeles three years before Vignes. His little cellar and seven acres of vines were on Main Street. When he died in 1847, son Basilio took over and continued in operation into the 1860s. Leon Victor Prudhomme had a small cellar and vineyard on First Street. He was also well connected at Rancho Cucamonga, the son-in-law of *ranchero* Tiburcio Tapia. Although the Germans were more numerous here than the French in the 1850s, only Johann Gröningen's name was among those then prominent in the winemaking community. Actually he was better known around the *pueblo* as Juan Domingo, whose cellar was on Aliso Street. A native of the German kingdom of Hanover, he was said to have been shipwrecked off San Pedro in 1828, on a Sunday, and thus his nickname, Domingo. After his death in 1858 his widow Reymunda continued to run the family operation into the 1860s.[27]



Juan Domingo's Winery – From an 1857 Lithograph of Los Angeles

Of course by far in these early years the most numerous Los Angeles winemen were native Californios. Most notable, I think, were Cristóbal Aguilar, Antonio Coronel, Ysidro Reyes, and particularly Manuel Requeño, actually a native of the Yucatan, who came to Los Angeles in 1834 and began planting his 7000 vines south of Aliso Street. He produced small amounts of wine and eventually acquired a little still. If any producer here in the early fifties approached Vignes for a reputation of high quality wine and brandy it was Don Manuel. He later was awarded a special diploma by the California Agricultural Society for the superior quality of his wine. He had been the *pueblo's alcalde* in 1844, dying in 1876 at seventy-two years of age. To Bancroft he was always "a citizen of excellent standing and much local influence."[28]

Many of these men and their families and neighbors carried on their small winegrowing operations into the fifties and after.

[*to be continued next issue*]

NOTES _____

Please refer to the Notes in previous installments for complete citations to the sources.

1. Ray Allen Billington, *The Far Western Frontier*, New York, 1962, 195-200; Bernard de Voto, *The Year of Decision, 1846*, Boston, 1943, 40, 240-241, 463, 439; Bancroft, *History*, V, 469-472, 497, 544-554. I have not included information about the Mormon Battalion of the US Army which marched through the Southwest a few weeks behind Kearney. They were soon disbanded and most headed east to join their brethren at the Salt Lake.
2. Leon D. Adams, *The Wines of America* , Boston, 1973,

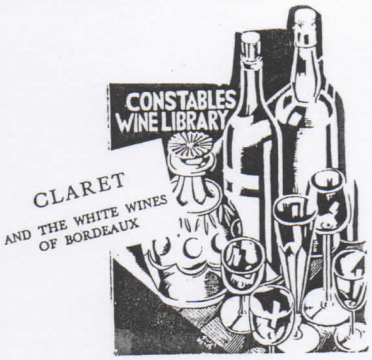
347-349. Adams acquired most of his information from contemporary Mormon sources.

3. Abraham P. Nasatir, *French Activities in California*, Stanford, 1945, 37, 406-407, 420-421, 555; Caughey, 358.
4. Bancroft, *History*, VII, 701; Nasatir, 283.
5. Nasatir, 289, 291-295, 407, 552, 559.
6. Caughey, 377; Cleland, *From Wilderness to Empire* , New York 1970, 162; Bean, 157.
7. California's counties do not now necessarily cover the same ground they covered in the 19th century. Thus, some geopolitical facts need notice. Napa County included Lake County until 1861. Amador was part of El Dorado until 1854. San Benito was part of Monterey until 1874. Alameda was formed from southern Contra Costa and northern Santa Clara in 1853. And by far the most important, today's Orange County was part of Los Angeles until 1889.
8. Robert A. Thompson, "History of Sonoma County, California." in *Historical Atlas Map of Sonoma, California*, Oakland, 1877, 14-23; J. P. Munro-Fraser, *History of Sonoma*, California, San Francisco, 1879, 146-159, 212-216; Bancroft, *History*, III, 739-740; Illustration from Charles Alexander, *Life and Times of Cyrus Alexander*, Los Angeles, 1967.
9. Taylor, 173.
10. Erwin Gudde wrote that this name was a good example of Bale's "gruesome sense of humor," at 25 and 27.
11. Rolle, 40.
12. Charles L. Sullivan, *Napa Wine*, San Francisco, 1994, 17-19, 22-23; Dean Albertson, "Dr. Edward Turner Bale, Incorrigible Californio," California Historical Society Quarterly, Vol. 28 (1949), 259-269; Bancroft, *History*, II, 708.
13. U.S. vs. Vallejo, 66 US 541, 1861; Bancroft denounced this decision and contended that the Supreme Court had examined the arguments in "a general, quibbling, absurd way." He also wrote that the decision was 7-2 against the claim, History, VI, 560.
14. C. A. Menefee, *Historical and Descriptive Sketch Book of Napa, Sonoma, Lake and Mendocino*, Napa City, 1873, 45-48, 51-53. Higuera's later story shows that not all the old Californios were cheated and milked of the profits from their ranchos. He, and later his family, still held 877 valuable acres of Napa land in 1879.
15. Peninou and Greenleaf, 33-34; Sullivan, *Napa Wine*, 23, 29, 59; Clarence Smith and Wallace Elliott, "History of Napa County, California," *Illustrations of Napa County*, Oakland, 1878, 2-3; Bancroft, *History*, IV, 782.
16. This fact was recognized by the U. S. Treasury Department in 1989 when it established boundaries for the Santa Clara Valley viticultural district. However, to avoid confusion I shall continue to refer to the historic Mission San Jose winegrowing area as part of the East Bay region.
17. Naglee's adventures in California during and after the war with Mexico are chronicled by Donald C. Biggs, *Conquer and Colonize*, San Rafael, California, 1977, 81-112. His well-publicized love life is discussed at 214-217. A very complete description of Naglee's private life and his later excellent work in viticulture and brandy production can be found in the Santa Clara County Pioneer Society prize essay by Susan Fischler, "Wine, Women and Naglee," 1977, housed in the California Room of the San Jose Public Library.
18. Taylor, 54, 100-102; Clyde Arbuckle, *History of San Jose*, San Jose, 1985, 176; Irving McKee, "Historic Wine Growers of Santa Clara County," California - Magazine of the Pacific, (September 1950); Frederic Hall, *The History of San Jose and Surroundings*, San Francisco, 1871, 368-369; Peninou and Greenleaf, 52-53.
19. Taylor, 161-162; Stephen M. Payne, *Santa Clara County–Harvest of Change*, Northridge, California, 76; Charles L. Sullivan, *Like Modern Edens*, Cupertino, 5, 12-13; Bancroft, *History*, V, 708-709.
20. Walter Colton, *Three Years in California*, New York, 1850, 263; John Frost, *History of the State of California*, Auburn, New York, 1851, 109.
21. Arbuckle, 163-154; Sullivan, *Like Modern Edens*, 15-23; J. P. Munro-Fraser, *History of Santa Clara County, California*, San Francisco, 1881, 77; Charles H. Shinn, "Early Horticulture in California," Overland Monthly, Vol. 6, No. 32 (August 1885), 119, 122.
22. Eugene T. Sawyer, *History of Santa Clara County, California*, Los Angeles, 1922, 65-68; Hall, 176-184; Munro-Fraser, *Santa Clara County*, 341-342, 370-372, 445.
23. For Santa Clara and several other counties such data can be accessed on the internet at www.lib.berkeley /eart/county name.
24. Cleland, *From Wilderness to Empire*, 149-151.
25. William R. Hutton, *Glances at California*, San Marino, 1942, 17-31; W.W. Robinson, *Land in California*, 205-206, 239-240.
26. Pinney, 253. The author takes us on nostalgic tour of these historic plots, calling on the reader to use "all of his imagination to reconstruct the vineyards that once fringed the river." Guiding us through the modern urban environment, he points out the street signs that commemorate the names of well known winegrowers from the days when Los Angeles was the "City of Vines," Keller, Bauchet, Kohler, Boyle, and, of course, Aliso, for Don Luis's El Aliso Vineyard.
27. Peninou and Greenleaf, 12-29, supplies much of this information on Los Angeles winegrowers, taken from the agricultural section of the United States Census of 1860; Bancroft *History*, II,726; III, 760; IV, 784; Rhoades, 83; Pinney, 245.
28. Bancroft, *History*, V, 691-692; Peninou and Greenleaf, 23; *Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society. . .1858*, Sacramento, 1859, 286.

NOTES FROM THE "OPEN TRENCH"

by *R. Hume Andrews*

[*R. Hume (Bob) Andrews has a profound love of a good word, as we have witnessed in his entertaining "Open Trench" columns in several of our earlier issues. We revisit his savoury offering of January 1994.* — Ed.]



O.K. YOU SEE AN "OPEN Trench" sign on the roadway and you are immediately alert for danger. You know this isn't a "Closed Trench" or a "Former Trench" or a "Retrench." This is a full-blown, life-threatening "Open Trench." The question then is: In what way does an "Open Trench" redundancy resemble *Claret and the White Wines of Bordeaux* by Maurice Healy (London: Constable, 1934)? The answer is: "None" or "In No Ways," whichever is grammatically more correct.

Healy's book is part of the popular Constable's Wine Library Series [see WTQ, v.19 #2], as edited and often written by André L. Simon. *Claret and the White Wines of Bordeaux* was evidently the best selling book of the series (and considered the best by Simon–perhaps for this reason?). Healy covers a lot of ground (in both senses) in this book of 160 pages, including a remarkable number of descriptions of specific wines and vintages. He discusses vineyard issues such as oidium and phylloxera, winemaking techniques, the 1855 Bordeaux classification, and each specific wine district of Bordeaux. He also makes suggestions for buying and storing Bordeaux wine.

This book is a joy of English prose. It has not a single numerical rating, not one use of the word "hedonistic," and not one reference to winery mailing lists, to cult wines, or to the positive value of mouth-stripping tannins. It has not one report of a competitive tasting in which Ch. Beaux Hauts soundly defeated Ch. Leoville-las-Cases. There is not a single "Open Trench" affront to our civilized perceptions. Healy's words paint an enduring and still relevant canvas of the wine experience.

ON THE FORUM FOR ENJOYING WINE: "...the pleasure of wine consists only partly of itself; the good talk that is inseparable from a wine-dinner is even more important than the wines that are served. Never bring up your better bottles if you are entertaining a man who cannot talk. Whisky and soda will do him much better. Keep your real treasures for a night when those few that are nearest to your heart can gather around your table, free from care, with latchkeys in their pockets and no last trains to catch."

ON THE SOIL OF BORDEAUX: "It is almost incredible, but the soil which has probably given the maximum of delight to the greatest number of men is a poor, miserable thing, in which apparently nothing else except pine trees can expect to flourish."

ON POURING THE LAST BOTTLE OF A TREASURED WINE to an American friend of his mother's: "I saw to the filling of our visitor's glass myself. I said 'filling'; but when the glass was less than half full I was interrupted, with a request that it should be filled up with soda-water. However, there was all the more wine for more reverent recipients."

DESCRIBING THE UNUSUAL LABEL OF THE 1924 CH. Mouton: "In 1924 the Bolshevist influence procured for itself a surprising manifestation at Château Mouton-Rothschild; the familiar thunderbolts were blazoned forth in all the colours of the rainbow, and nothing except the labels under which inferior sherry is sometimes shipped to South America could give any standard of comparison whereby to appraise the 'jazz' design."

ON SMOKERS: "My furniture is scarred all over with burns from cigarettes, lit this way as joss-sticks, and left to burn away my mantel-shelves, bookshelves, tables and all kinds of furniture. I think I possess nearly one hundred ash-trays, which are about the only object treated by a smoker with respect; their virginal innocence is rarely sullied."

QUOTING A FRIEND'S REACTION TO TASTING 1878 Latour from an Imperiale: "Healy! Healy! This is WINE!"

AND, THESE HAUNTING WORDS ON CH. D'YQUEM: "My first bottle of Yquem was a 1906: a fairly good year. I decanted it; and the room was filled with a perfume that recalled the Arabian Nights. There is nothing that is exactly like the bouquet of Ch. Yquem; no garden could do it justice, and to talk of spices were an impertinence, or I would say that it embalms the air. There is nothing like it; nothing; nothing. It is the most beautiful wine God ever allowed man to make; and it ought never to be drunk profanely."

No numerical rating, no price quotation, no lab analysis, and no rarity quotient could make me appreciate Ch. d'Yquem more.

Healy's words are powerful, evocative tools. When he describes tastings and dinners, you immediately remember occasions that left you with the same feelings. You recall the times when certain great wines gave you even greater pleasure because of the confluence of friends, lively discussions, useful traditions, and shared appreciation. And you long for the next tasting experience that could elicit the same pure joy expressed by Healy's friend: "Healy! Healy! This is WINE!"

Lavishly decorated frontispiece of Frona Eunice Wait Colburn
for her 1937 Limited Edition *In Old Vintage Days*
produced in the classic style of the don of San Francisco fine press printers, John Henry Nash
[see p.1, 12]

SPECIAL OFFER TO WAYWARD TENDRILS MEMBERS —

THE WINE OF SANTA CRUZ ISLAND

by
~~THOMAS PINNEY~~
Thomas Pinney
With a foreword by Marla Daily, and
illustrations and photographs from the
collection of the Santa Cruz Island Foundation.

The Santa Cruz Island Foundation
Santa Barbara: 1994

The Zamorano Club
Los Angeles: 1994

— this now rare, beautifully produced history of the winemaking days on Santa Cruz Island, off the coast of Santa Barbara, California, written by acclaimed wine historian Thomas Pinney, and published in 1994 in an edition of only 350 copies for the Zamorano Club of Los Angeles and the Santa Cruz Island Foundation. Prof. Pinney has made available to the WT membership—with proceeds to benefit the non-profit Wine Librarians Association—20 copies of this special book, signed by the author. 9 x 6. 101 pp. Illustrated. Burgundy cloth decorated & lettered in gilt. $110.

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