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Ferdinand A. Haber: An Illustrated Biography

A Book Review by *Marvin Collins*

[*It is a pleasure to again welcome Marvin Collins to our Quarterly. In the past we have appreciated his well-researched, informative articles on Charles Wetmore, Ben Truman,* Grapes & Grape Vines of California *(1877) and "A Grand Old Journal: Pacific Wine & Spirit Review," among other treasures. We hope soon to see the fruits of his diligent researches in his long-awaited book.* — Ed.]

ALLAN GREEN IS A SINGULAR MAN. He wears the singular ring signifying that his team has won the Senior League baseball world championship four times. Allan covers centerfield for the Greenwood Ridge Dragons and they play hardball in major league parks across the country. The team was named for the dragon fountain that his architect father, Aaron Green, presented to Frank Lloyd Wright. Mrs. Wright had the sculpture plumbed for propane so that the dragon breathed fire.

Allan Green is also the proprietor of the Greenwood Ridge Vineyards nestled in the western hills of Anderson Valley. He has said that he doesn't remember his first wine but he never forgot the dragon. A fierce-eyed dragon slithers along the bottom border of his self-designed wine labels. Allan might be the personification of "Little Jackie Paper who loved that dragon Puff..."

He grows Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and White Riesling, and makes Zinfandel as well. Greenwood Ridge wines have been amply awarded for their merit.

Allan's wines are not the family's sole expression of love for California viticulture. One hundred and twenty-five years ago his great-grandfather was one of California's greatest wine men, Ferdinand Abraham Haber. Mr. Haber's efforts and skill put Gustave Niebaum's Inglenook vineyard on the wine map.

The Green family was fortunate in that Mr. Haber left a large collection of documents and ephemera, and Allan has used his professional graphic design skills to weave them into a pictorial saga of surpassing beauty, a showcase of rare jewels and family love. Other authors with deep historical connections have made works founded on intense research, such as Brian McGinty's studies of his Haraszthy relations. In "Ferdinand A. Haber, An Illustrated Biography," Green lets his visual narrative speak for itself, with plenty of air around the large format documents and photographs reproduced on weighty enameled stock. The reader can almost feel the scratch of nib against the now dog-eared and browning paper and hear the click of ancient shutters.

The images are supported by an excellent text written by Ronald Cannon. The lovely cursive of the original documents has been carefully transcribed throughout the book. There are also groupings of family portraits and other photographs, and a Haber genealogy, in this finely bound book of 194 twelve-inch-square pages. In the spirit of full disclosure, I contributed original research to the project.

Green lays these letters and certificates before the reader in chronological order, letting the weight of evidence build and a life emerge. Many families have boxes of old photographs, some have scrapbooks of newspaper clippings, but letters and documents are more the stuff of research archives, tucked into acid-

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free boxes and file folders, to be handled with white gloves under the stern gaze of the librarian.

Here we see full-scale documents lovingly reproduced: correspondence, banquet menus, patent applications, hand-tinted travel photos, all of which bring us into the wine world of the late nineteenth century, linking Ferdinand to the highest level of California viticulture.

I consider Ferdinand Haber a member of one of that small cadre who strove to enlighten the nation to the excellence and purity of California's natural wines when the emerging industry needed their help. The Wetmore brothers, Eugene Hilgard, and Haraszthy *pere et fil* combined showmanship and education to reach a national audience. But I think the achievements of Haber are more directly comparable to those of another California great, Frederick Pohndorff.

Both knew winemaking from the inside out. Pohndorff had European experience and worked for Charles Krug. Haber was mentored in the cellars of Arpad Haraszthy. Both were writers of grace and facility and spoke multiple languages. Both were called upon to be the face of California wines at national and international expositions, and had the trust and faith of the wine men they represented.

FERDINAND HABER 1839–1914

Ferdinand Haber was born on the Fourth of July in 1839 and grew up in a Jewish mercantile family in ante-bellum New Orleans. Father Abraham and his partners specialized in supplying goods to country stores and peddlers, and prospered. By 1860 Abraham owned four slaves. Ferdinand entered the business at age twenty as a clerk.

The election of Lincoln resulted in the secession of the southern states, with Louisiana leaving the Union in January of 1861. The family business supplied blankets and clothing to the Confederacy.

Young Ferdinand enlisted into the Louisiana Guards in April, and was stationed near the strategic Navy Yard at Norfolk, Virginia. In July, this son of the South wrote home in a clear hand about the threat of the North, "If the Lincolnites persist in the idea that they can exterminate or subdue us they will be so badly whipped that they will never recover the shock." A month later Haber requested a discharge from service, "for reason of chronic affection of kidneys and bladder," but the examining physician posted in his report that "prostration of the nervous system from excessive venery" as the cause. He was honorably discharged on September 1st and returned to the family business, his sworn allegiance to the Confederacy intact, only to watch the firm slowly unravel as the elder Haber was unable to renew his dwindling stock or collect from creditors.

While his father's business was failing in Union-occupied New Orleans, Haber gained entry into the smuggling center of Matamoros, Mexico, where New York goods could safely circumvent the Union blockade by entering overland into the Confederate States, and cotton could be shipped to Europe, via Havana. The Mexican trade brought him a degree of prosperity and at war's end, the finances of twenty-six-year-old Haber were sound enough to allow him to go out on his own. He formed Ferd. A. Haber & Co., in 1867 to manufacture clothing and deal in household furnishings. In November he took German-born Setta Liebman, of Mobile, as his fair-haired bride.

Now came a decade of respectable commercial and family life. Six children were born to him in the Crescent City. He became active in civic affairs and petitioned the chamber of commerce to find markets abroad for domestic goods. Haber was always looking for new opportunities, but by the summer of 1876, New Orleans was too constricted a financial center for his ambition and Haber chafed for greener pastures. He had decided San Francisco would be a suitable spring board for his energies. It was a place where a man who once held Southern sympathies could invent himself anew in the industries of the West.

One of his business associates started his farewell letter to Haber, of July, 1876, with an alternating tone of encouragement and caution: "You having decided to leave this, the home of your youth and your manhood, and to seek elsewhere that success, which let me say, your energy, your intelligence, and fidelity should command, I am desirous of being of some service to you. San Francisco's gain is New Orleans loss...I should ever rejoice in the fulfillment of your hopes, and commanding you to Him who directs all the events of life, and without whose blessing all our efforts are vain, always remembering there is something better than worldly prosperity."

Whether Haber was looking for something better than worldly prosperity is open to question, but we can read that the president of the Louisiana National Bank of New Orleans sent him off to the Pacific Slope with the recommendation that Haber had "worked faithfully and efficiently in all measures calculated to promote the public good."

Haber arrived in San Francisco in late 1876 and, soon sent for Setta and the children. He found employment in the stock brokerage of Hamden H. Noble & Co., in which the junior partner was wine man-in-the-making Henry Epstein. Henry Epstein had manufactured IXL bitters on Front Street as early as 1869, and Isador Landsberger, with his business partner Simon Epstein, Henry's father, absorbed the IXL business by 1876. Buena Vista alums Landsberger and Arpad Haraszthy had joined forces to manufacture and market sparkling wine nine years earlier (January 1867), and Ferdinand must have been awash in the exciting ferment of California's coming industry.

Isador Landsberger withdrew from his partnership with Arpad Haraszthy in 1880, and was replaced by the eager Epstein, who had travelled in Europe from 1876 to 1878, studying the various wine production regions on his prolonged wedding trip. Epstein brought Ferdinand with him as the manager of the newly organized Arpad Haraszthy & Co, makers of the immortal "Eclipse" sparkling wine.

Haber remained with Haraszthy, *et al.*, until 1883 when he moved to a new firm set up by Gustave Niebaum to market his Inglenook brand of still wines and brandies. Alfred Greenebaum had been an agent in the Aleutian Islands for Niebaum's Alaska Commercial Company, and was an extended member of the families of Niebaum's Jewish partners. The fit was a good one. Greenebaum, ten years Haber's junior, assumed the financial duties of the business and Haber, by now a recognized connoisseur, took on the duties of the company palate.

That the pair operated as Captain Niebaum intended can be seen from quotes from Frona Wait and from Greenebaum himself. "Alfred Greenebaum & Co., who have the sole agency for the celebrated Inglenook Vineyard in Napa Valley, and also for the Sunny Slope Vineyard (L.J. Rose & Co.), Los Angeles County, need no recommendation to an already appreciative public. The other member of the firm, Mr. F.A. Haber, is without a peer as a wine taster, and both men unite in effort to keep only the highest grade of California wines."

Greenebaum himself described the partnership: "I started three years ago in the California wine business. Mr. F. A. Haber has been connected with the California wine business ten years. He is thoroughly conversant with the business in all its details. He is my partner. He is manager of the New York house. I am the resident partner. Mr. Haber comes out here to select the wines. He is an expert in the business."

It was in New York in October of 1886 that Haber orchestrated his own "Judgment at Paris," by introducing Inglenook wines to the collected wine merchants of the city, who with no little degree of surprise "pronounced them the best California wines that had ever been shown here." This was a breakthrough for all California winegrowers. A few years later he returned from another sales trip and told his fellow wine men that "the merits of California wines are being more and more appreciated. The experimental stage of winemaking in California had passed, and the testimony of Eastern experts is that some of our products are superior to those of France." This was valuable testimony, indeed, for only a handful of his colleagues interacted with so many dealers in distant cities, where their consumers were so tied to European wines.

Haber's professional reputation and connections increased throughout the late 1880s. He was acquainted with all of the State Viticultural Commissioners, and their programs to promote California wine in the East and abroad. He attended their annual conventions and he was generous in sharing his knowledge. He lectured and wrote articles about his wide experience in making and selling wine. Haber could exhort when necessary but he never seemed to use the bully pulpit to scold his fellow wine men.

"We must continue to strive for higher excellence until the products of our most favored districts shall have reached that degree of perfection that need not suffer by comparison with the imported article. Some of California's wines possess that order of merit now, but there is much poor, green, unsound and impure wine dumped on the eastern market as first class California wine, and, unfortunately, it is upon these that the general consumer bases his estimate of our production."

1888 was a year of political change in the State. Incoming Governor Robert H. Waterman believed the sitting Board of Viticultural Commissioners was a "benefit society" for the Wetmore Brothers and their friends, and was decidedly against reappointing Board President Arpad Haraszthy to another term. Haraszthy resigned, but the winemaking fraternity rallied around him with a grand banquet in his honor at Pioneer Hall on August 2nd.

The chefs at the Palace Hotel provided the viands, eleven types of California wine were consumed, including Eclipse, and Ferdinand A. Haber was among the guests consisting of a "who's who" of California viticulture. An anarchist bomb exploded in the hall would have wiped out the industry.

Haber knew everybody. A few months later he attended the Annual Chamber of Commerce banquet as one of 135 guests composed of the elite of San Francisco's "Merchant Meritocracy." Building a new life in San Francisco had clearly been the right move.

His New Orleans French was of great utility when

Governor Waterman appointed Haber the California Commissioner to the 1889 Exposition Universelle de Paris, with the mandate to organize a stand-alone exhibit to show the estimated ten million visitors that California had come of age in international commerce. Committees were appointed, budgets were approved, plans were laid and the State Legislature was asked to appropriate $50,000 for the project with Waterman's approval. Months of squabbling before a looming deadline failed to raise the needed funds, and Haber, hands tied and undoubtedly with a fair amount of disgust, threw in the towel and resigned his commission in April 1889. He didn't go to the fair in Paris as the California Commissioner, but bonds had been forged and lessons learned that would stand him in good stead four years later.

Meanwhile Greenebaum & Co. seemingly went from strength to strength, but in truth, Greenebaum's business was being propped up by silent partners, chief among them Greenebaum's father-in-law, Simon Levy. Greenebaum was over-extended, with costly branch agencies in New York and Chicago, and when creditors forced his insolvency in June 1892, Greenebaum admitted that he had only survived for the last four years because of outside loans he could not repay.

Niebaum and Haber had seen the writing on the wall and in May 1890, Haber retired from A. Greenebaum & Co. to take over exclusive distribution of Inglenook products. Greenebaum lost his biggest seller and the jewel of his portfolio. Inglenook wines had been awarded a silver medal at the Paris Exposition of 1889, entered proudly under the name of A. Greenebaum & Co. A few years later Greenebaum resurfaced as a principal in another business associated with the Alaska Commercial Company, the Alaska Codfish Company, and in this endeavor he did well. It makes one wonder about the definition of the term "salty tannins."

Niebaum gave Haber free rein to shape the Inglenook line as he saw best, in managing the winery and blending the wines, as well as in promotion and sales. These were halcyon days for Inglenook. The orders for wines from this celebrated vineyard exceeded the supply. Haber placed Inglenook on the lists of hotels, railroad dining cars, and the salons of ocean steamers—outlets patronized by wealthy customers who would spread the good word. The trade journals reported on carloads of cases sent east, and on the full orderbooks brought back from extended trips by Haber and his travelers. Returning from his last trip east for Greenebaum, Haber reported that he had sold three thousand cases of Inglenook wine alone.

The journals also wrote about his new establishment at 122 Sansome Street, just a couple of short blocks from the seat of the Alaska Commercial Company at 310 Sansome. *Pacific Wine & Spirits Review* commented on his sampling and sales rooms: "His offices are the pink of elegance and are unsurpassed by any in the San Francisco trade, for refinement of taste and completeness of detail in furnishing. They consist of a suite of three apartments, the first containing handsome show cases displaying the various wines and brandies in glass, produced by Inglenook. Back of this is the counting room and from which opens Mr. Haber's private office. This is fitted up in admirable aesthetic taste, which has provided all the comforts and luxuries, a striking feature of the furnishing being a fine and perfectly equipped sideboard. A large and well-appointed cellar calculated for the storage and handling of choice wines completes the establishment."

The growth of giant expositions or fairs in this period was a development of competitive nationalism between countries and regionalism between American states. It was imperative that the United States equal the great Paris Exposition of 1889, and planning started in 1890 for a "World's Fair" to celebrate the five hundredth anniversary of the first voyage of Columbus. Chicago was to be the host city, and the fair was hopefully to open by late 1892.

California wine officials started organizing in a timely manner but were building their exhibit by remote control. The amount of space assigned to the California exhibit was considerably less than they had asked for, and their desire for a unified California exhibit was fragmented when major producers like Leland Stanford of Vina and Gustave Niebaum established notable exhibits of their own in a separate location. Although Niebaum's wine brought home no awards. Haber gained useful experience in creating the Inglenook exhibit, and came back to California with a lot of credibility in managing exhibitions under his belt

The California wine men were particularly furious about the judging of the competition, the aspect of the fair that mattered to them most. They desperately wanted their wines to be judged by foreign experts who would tell the world what California had achieved, but instead got ex-California Governor Romauldo Pacheco, whom they feared would be given sole responsibility for the California entries. In the end the jury gave so many awards that California winemakers felt them meaningless.

The general dissatisfaction with the results sent Charles Wetmore, the most energetic of the State Viticultural Commissioners, scurrying to Chicago, where he pleaded the State's case to the British Legation. It was agreed that Charles Oldham, one of the London experts with some knowledge of Californian wines, would evaluate and write-up all 300 California entries. Oldham's detailed report

contained both praise and cautions, but was exactly what was needed to prove to the world that California wines were at least as good as the young wines of France, Italy and Spain.

John T. Doyle, President of the State Board of Viticultural Commissioners, was still displeased with the results obtained in Chicago. His year-end report registered his disappointment, in "that whatever good may have resulted to the State from the exhibits made at the Columbian Exposition in other departments, so far as the wine industry was concerned, they were a total failure." California was not going to make that mistake again.

Haber's three and one half years in charge of the fortunes of Inglenook ended when the siren song of a world's fair called again. Like the doges of old Venice, San Francisco's capitalists had begun to dream of controlling all the resources of the Pacific Basin. These riches would flow through the port of their imperial city, leaving substantial profits in their counting houses. Michael De Young, the ambitious publisher of the San Francisco Chronicle, had been one of California's officials at the Chicago fair, and realized that the dream could best be furthered by hosting a major exposition of their own. Chicago was drawing to a close in mid-1893, and he rightly considered that many exhibitors would be willing to ship their existing wares overland to an exposition scheduled to open in late January of 1894. A fresh site of 180 acres was carved out of the west end of Golden Gate Park, and the design and construction was pushed through, in those pre-city planning days, as fast as possible.

Enjoying the 1894 Viticultural Palace, San Francisco

On September 26, 1893, a letter to De Young urging the appointment of Haber as Chief of the Viticultural Department was signed by a dozen distinguished producers, with Niebaum's name leading the list. A notice announcing Haber's resignation from the Inglenook Agency was sent out to clients on October 4th. Fourteen days later, letters went out to potential exhibitors from Haber's new office in the Mills Building asking for their participation in the grand California exhibit set to open January 1st. All of these documents are in Green's book.

Ferdinand had accomplished great things in building the reputation of Inglenook and this new challenge would use his talents for organizing and teamwork to the fullest extent. This time Haber was given control and a workable budget and the only roller coaster ride was on the giant Firth wheel in the amusement section of the fair. Niebaum and his business partners at the Alaska Commercial Company were among the capitalists who guaranteed the necessary start-up money to get the fair through the planning stages. A fanciful pavilion was erected behind the Hall of Agriculture as the exclusive home of the California Wine Exhibit. Visitors were greeted by Mercury and Bacchus astride a world covered in grape vines, and encouraged to sample California's best in the German Weinstübe.

On the opening day, Haber took the podium after the welcoming speech of Director-General Michael De Young. He said that a nation of wine-drinkers would be in no need of prohibition laws. He then raised his glass of sparkling wine and saluted Washington, D.C. journalist Kate Field, with the sincere thanks of the California wine-growers. For several years she had taken her message of "The Gospel of Grape," which encouraged temperance through wine-drinking, to large audiences up and down the Eastern seaboard. Stepping down, Haber feelingly proclaimed "All Honor to Kate Field."

The Midwinter International Exposition was a success for San Francisco. The wine men were pleased with the attractiveness of the building and its displays and with the outcome of the wine competition. Thousands of fairgoers went on their way with the understanding that California wines were good, and a goodly amount of it was in their baggage going home.

Haber must have seen a future for himself in

exhibition work, for in the midst of assembling the Wine Palace he filed the documents to incorporate a new business which he called the San Francisco Carnival Company, for the purpose of presenting spectacular entertainments, street processions and masquerades. When he resigned his position with the Fair he was selling life insurance for a New York company, but by 1895 he was back on Sansome Street, dealing in specialty liquors and fine cigars.

When the Mayor came calling with a new project in 1896, he jumped. How could he resist the offer to organize a week-long Carnival of the Pacific for that Fall, in Golden Gate Park? Michael De Young was again one of the promoters, and Haber worked diligently through the summer of 1896, putting together committees and raising funds, but the City's collective merchant associations wanted it postponed to the Spring, and then indefinitely.

We next learn that Haber incorporated the California Pharmacal Company of San Francisco in June of 1899, whose product was an alcohol based elixir called the Life of Orange, "an old Southern remedy successfully used to allay fever and assuage thirst." Haber and his sons Albert and Henry ran the Pharmacal Company into the new century, but despite favorable mentions in medical journals, the company wasn't listed in the city directories after 1901.

The details of the Life of Orange exhausts Allan Green's trove of Haber memorabilia, save one, and he and Cannon close their text with the statement that Ferdinand quietly retired to hearth and home. But this was not so. Why Haber left no documentation on his life's crowning achievement we cannot know. It is interesting to speculate about the things a person holds to the end, awaiting the discovery of their legacy by future generations. People want to be known, but they want to control the context and stand in future memory in a certain slant of light.

Haber's slant of light was to be once again nominated for the directorship of a California wine exhibit, that of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, to open in April 1904.

The industry was not the same as the one Haber had served a decade before. The terrible depression of 1893 had pressed some California vintners to the wall, old age and retirement had taken others out of the fray. The majority of wine was sold for less than it cost to produce it. The bills for replanting phylloxerated vineyards were beyond the purse or the will of many. New corporate business models replaced the old sole proprietorships of the landed gentry. The California Wine Association led by Percy Morgan brought stability to the market, paying growers a living wage and giving consumers the choice of reliable wines graded "Standard" and "Extra."

This time around, the State was willing to make every effort to promote its cornucopia of products and resources at the upcoming exposition. Joseph A. Filcher was appointed by Governor Pardee to take complete charge of establishing a comprehensive display of the wealth of California, and the new commissioner set to work with a relish. Filcher knew Haber from their mutual collaboration at the Midwinter Fair, and selected him to head the committee charged with making a display of California wine in the agricultural building "which will be artistic, classic and unique."

Haber was a member of the joint committee of industry leaders which sent out on February 20th a fund-raising circular frankly requesting support to get the exhibit off the ground. "It now rests with those interested in our industry to make the California wine exhibit the success it ought to be, and to show to the world that California is the 'home of the grape' and that its future production of wines and brandies is unlimited...Owing to the limited State appropriation and the demand on the commission from other industries...a share of the burden of the expense, therefore must be borne by the wine men, and your committee looks to you for generous financial aid."

Enough subscribers responded with donations that Haber was able to shift his base of operations to St. Louis in April, where he confronted scarce labor, slow delivery of materials, and bad weather. Construction of the wine temple was still under way when the Fair opened its gates on April 30th, with Manager Haber praying for all to be in readiness by the end of May.

In an interview with San Francisco Call reporter Paul Edwards, Haber laid out what he wished the display to achieve, in what sounded like a commentary on his entire professional career. "Mine will be a campaign of education," said Mr. Haber. "I want to teach the people from sections where wine does not flow as it does in California that the juice of the grape does not produce intemperance....Wine drinking in moderation is beneficial, and crime and degradation never thrive where the grape purples under the sun of autumn.

"I intend that those who are really interested in the industry shall sample our best wines, that they may learn that no spot on earth produces any better wines than those of California. For those who love good wine there can be no stronger argument made for California's product than its sampling. Those who visit the temple will also be instructed as to prices, shipping, production and everything else that may be of interest to them and of aid to the industry. California's wine producers are going to reap much benefit from the actual demonstration that will he made here."

The wine temple was opened at the end of May,

and it did all it was hoped to do by giving the visiting multitudes a taste of California wine. As usual, the sparkling and sweet wines were the popular favorites.

From a public relations perspective, the exhibit was a success, but a heavy cloud laden with unfinished business loomed on the horizon of the wine competition. The French had always been justifiably touchy about the free use of French wine names by California vintners. The Exposition of Paris in 1889 had already seen intense wrangling over this point, when Monsieur Gustave Kester, the president of the Paris wine jury, threw out all the California wines with French place names. At St. Louis, Judge Kester and his colleagues took a very determined stand that all California wines bearing the names of French districts, and without such modifying descriptors as used by Cresta Blanca's "Sauterne Souvenir," should be banned from the judging. His demand disqualified a great number of entries from the competition. It looked very dark for the Golden State for several days as recriminations and negotiations flew back and forth. The greatest wine taster on the Pacific Coast, Henry Lachman, one of the members of the firm Lachman & Jacobi, was dispatched by fast train to St. Louis as an emissary and peacemaker.

Lachman and Haber worked a miracle. A long conference was held immediately after Lachman's arrival between some of the French jurors, Superintendent Haber and Lachman, and points of dispute were amicably settled. Haber's linguistic talents again paid dividends. The French juror conceded to California that as long as the wines bearing typical French labels also bore the name California so prominently that there could be no possible deception, they could be reinstated in the competition.

It didn't hurt that the 21-member jury elected Henry Lachman as its chairman, or that M. Kester was chosen as the vice-chair. There was no question this time about whether the jurists had international wine qualifications. The competition came off without further difficulties, and California took away more awards for its wines than any other state or country. Three California wine companies won the Grand Prize: Winfield S. Keyes & Son (Liparita) for Howell Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon, Dresel & Co., Sonoma, for its whites from German varieties, and Paul Masson Champagne Co. of San Jose. One can wonder if Mr. Masson felt himself exempt from the *contretemps* over wine names.

For California wines, the Louisiana Purchase Exposition was a huge fulfilment. It was the beginning of the California industry really thinking about giving its wines genuine California names, but that issue continued for another eighty years, when California sparkling wine was substituted for Champagne. As we can tell from Haber's comments at both the Midwinter and the Louisiana fairs , the forces of prohibition were slowly encircling the industry.

While researching this story, I discovered a short article in the San Francisco Call reporting that Clarence Wetmore, Pietro Rossi and Charles Bundschu had commissioned a custom silver goblet as a gift to commemorate Haber's work at St Louis. The cup was duly delivered to Mr. Haber in April 1905. I wondered if this miraculous object had survived and had found its way over the years to his descendants. I wrote an email to Allan Green about my discovery, assuming it was long lost since Green did not mention the St. Louis adventure in his book. I asked him "Wouldn't it be a treasure to have and to hold?" Allan's terse reply came within the hour. "I have it and yes it is!!" He attached four photos of the goblet, showing it in all its glorious detail, from the relief of grape vines and clusters to the leering head of a satyr-like Bacchus. Engraved on the bowl was the legend, "From the Joint Viticultural Exhibitors of California to Ferdinand A. Haber in remembrance of the Golden Wine Temple–Louisiana Purchase Exposition, Saint Louis, 1904."

The goblet must have been a cherished keepsake for Haber. To see such a relic that had been literally touched by four luminaries from the pre-prohibition days of California winegrowing sent a little shiver down my spine.

The spring of 1915 was a time of astonishing tensions. San Francisco celebrated its rise from the ashes, and the opening of its new sea lane to the East, with an epic fair, decorated with spires of light strung along the shore of the Golden Gate. The state's wine industry had been reformulated and corporatized, and the scourge of phylloxera brought under control. California was truly ready to take on the world, but a major part of the Old World was enflamed in a conflagration of incalculably vaster proportion than that of 1906.

In May, a competition of hundreds of wines, domestic and foreign, was judged by an international panel of ten experts. Haber's old comrade-in-arms Henry Lachman was a member of the jury, making one last star turn before passing away in July. Haber had died in 1914 and Niebaum had been gone some seven years, yet Herman Lange of the Benjamin Arnhold Company, the agency that had brought Inglenook back into the market after Niebaum's death, made twenty-two entries and collected twenty-two medals for their efforts.

Four years later the madness in Europe would wind down to be replaced by madness at home in an episode of social engineering that would leave an indelible mark on the American character. No amount of educating the public or Kate Field's Gospel of the Grape could do a single thing about the Eighteenth Amendment when it was ratified in 1919. Still, for a long moment, the Panama-Pacific International Exposition and the triumph of Inglenook would remain fitting memorials for the stirring life of Ferdinand Abraham Haber.

Ferdinand A. Haber. An Illustrated Biography. Edited by Allan W. Green. Narrative by Ronald Cannon. 2012. Privately published by Allan W. Green, Mendocino Co., CA. 193 pp. 12" x 12". Rich black cloth, in illustrated gray-toned dust jacket. An exquisitely produced book, in a very limited edition. Allan Green is graciously offering several copies of the very few remaining to the Wayward Tendrils at his cost of $160. Please email Allan with your order: allan@greenwoodridge.com.

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PADEREWSKI AT PASO ROBLES
by *Brian McGinty*

EDITOR: Tendril Brian McGinty, a prolific and well-received author on a wide range of subjects, and most familiar to our Society for his books on the two Haraszthys—Agoston and Arpad—has a book on Paderewski that we should consider for our book-shelves. He is kindly offering copies to our membership for $15, including shipping. He is happy to inscribe at your request. See contact information below. Brian wrote the following note for us:

I NEVER HEARD PADEREWSKI play in person, although I knew people who had attended his concerts and had vivid memories and a very high impression of him. He played all across the world, in Europe, in South America, in Australia, and many, many times in the United States. I listened to his records (old 78 rpms) and was convinced that he was one of the great musicians of his, or any other, age. I knew, also, that Paderewski had served at the end of World War I as delegate from his native Poland to the Versailles Peace Conference, and shortly thereafter he became the first premier of the newly independent republic of Poland. I was therefore fascinated when I discovered that Paderewski owned large tracts of land in the hills around Paso Robles, California; that he made his home-away-from home in the grand old Paso Robles Hot Springs Hotel (a magnificent Victorian edifice that burned to the ground in 1940, the year before Paderewski died). And I was even more delighted when I learned that Paderewski was one of the first viticulturalists in Paso Robles. He was, in fact, one of the first men to cultivate Zinfandel vines in the area (although his most productive crop there was always almonds). As I listened to Paderewski's music, I read about his life in Paso Robles, why he first came there and what he did after he came. I talked to some old-timers in Paso Robles who had personal memories of him, and I made special trips to Paso Robles, to neighboring San Luis Obispo, and to the California State Library in Sacramento to read newspaper accounts of his contacts with the town. He was beloved there. And then I set my pen to paper. The result was *Paderewski at Paso Robles: A Great Pianist's Home Away From Home in California*, a slender paperback that I published (under the imprint of Overland Books) in 2004. I have received some very nice comments from people who have read it, people who remember Paderewski, and people who still hold his memory dear—as I do.

Please mail your orders to Brian McGinty, 8144 E. Mercer Lane, Scottsdale, AZ 85260, with a check payable to Brian McGinty. $15 per copy.

NEWS & NOTES

Welcome, new Tendril members! **Kryss Speegle** (kryss.speegle@gmail.com), a Fresno, CA, winemaker, collects mainly contemporary books, with a special interest in Madeira, Champagne, California's Central Valley, and Viticulture & Enology. We thank Tendrils Marty Schlabach and Mary Jean Welser at Cornell University for their gift membership to **Michelle Moyer** (michelle.moyer@wsu.edu), viticulturist with the Irrigated Agriculture Research & Extension Center, Washington State University. Also, Tendril thanks to Graeme MacDonald for his gift membership to **Tegan Passalacqua** (Napa, CA).

WTQ INDEX VOL.22 ONLINE

Arranged by Author, Subject, and Books Reviewed/ Noted, a 5-page Index for Vol.22 (2012) of our WTQuarterly is now available online at the WT website. Also online are the Indexes for all previous volumes.

HUGO DUNN-MEYNELL [1926–2013]

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Hugo Dunn-Meynell, esteemed past Chairman and Executive Director of the International Wine & Food Society, and a grand friend of wine and books. A member of the Circle of Wine Writers and the founder of the Guild of Food Writers, Hugo, in the fledgling years of our Wine Book Collector's Society, was an early subscriber and most kind in his support and generous in his reporting of the new, and old, wine literature in England for our Wayward Tendrils publication. He will be remembered with fondness, and appreciation.

EPHEMERA?

What is ephemera, we ask? Ephemera is a term used to describe a wide range of minor, everyday documents intended for one-time or short-term use. The variety is enormous. Considering here only the items that relate to the wine industry (and leaving out valentines, theatre programs & tickets, baseball cards and the like), we still have a grand list to attract our collecting fingers—trade cards, postcards (Pre-Prohibition American cards represent an outstanding historical archive), pamphlets, broadsides, posters, billheads, letters (engraved letterheads are often works of art, while documenting historical aspects of the business), envelopes (particularly appealing are those with turn-of-the-century engraved return addresses), periodicals (ads, images, articles), poster stamps (superb graphics), sheet music (there are some with a wine theme!), early trade catalogs (featuring everything needed for winery or vineyard), labels (wine labels, crate labels), photographs, advertisements (most of the early periodicals are loaded with interesting and eye-pleasing ads), newspapers (only if you have lots of storage space), timetables (old railway schedules for wine country regions record towns long gone but at one time figured importantly in the wine trade), brochures (zillions of these!), stocks, bonds, maps, bank checks, calendars (some of the Pre-Prohibition die-cut promotional calendars are jewels to behold), bookplates (we all treasure our books with a wine-connected bookplate or stamp), business cards, and probably more. Collecting ephemera brings history to life, and documents it for the future. (Enjoy Christopher Fielden's article this issue, "Vintage Ephemera.")

A VERY SPECIAL OFFERING !

Available to WT members are a limited number of the classically elegant, hand-bound edition of ***Soul of the Vine. Wine in Literature. A Selection***, edited by Nina Wemyss and illustrated by Margrit Biever Mondavi. (Oakville, CA: Robert Mondavi Winery, 1988). [60] pp. 7½ x 10¾ [oblong]. The first edition of *Soul of the Vine* was printed in 1988 in an edition of 1100 copies by Peter Rutledge Koch, one of the foremost fine press craftsmen in the United States. The edition included 100 copies printed on watermarked Arches text, of which only 50 copies—the other 50 were never bound and are now lost—were "specially bound in a visible structure non-adhesive binding by Shelley Hoyt [brilliant artist-bookbinder]," and numbered and signed by Robert Mondavi. This deliciously handsome book is unobtainable in the marketplace. Tendril **Nina Wemyss** is generously offering a few of the only remaining copies to fellow Tendrils, for $550 each. Contact her at ninawemyss@earthlink.net.

"Bacchus opens the gates of the heart."
— HORACE (65–68 B.C.)

SONOMA WINE & THE BUENA VISTA STORY

Watch for the publication this fall of the latest book from historian Charles Sullivan, *Sonoma Wine & the Buena Vista Story*—a valuable new reference for Sonoma County wine history and an in-depth look at Buena Vista Winery & Vineyards. (See Charles' "Wine in California: The Early Years: Sonoma County" this issue, beginning page 20.)

A Selection of Vintage Wine Books Recommended for Our Pleasure

by *Jeffrey Benson*

[*Jeffrey Benson, longtime Tendril member and respected author of several fine wine books, has sent us a splendid assortment of vintage books that he found especially appealing during his "reading/re-reading year of 2012." The titles are presented here in no particular order, embellished with Jeffrey's annotations. Enjoy!* — Ed.]

▪ *Notes on a Cellar-Book* by George Saintsbury (1845–1933). London, the 1920 1st ed. and the 1931 edition with the Note to the 3rd Edition.

Much has been written about this wonderful book: it is a masterpiece of superb writing with an in-depth understanding of each subject on which Saintsbury wrote. The additional notes in the 3rd edition underline his modesty tempered with a subtle sense of humour.

▪ *Vintage Wise. A Postscript to Saintsbury's Notes on a Cellar Book* by André L. Simon (1877–1970). London, 1945.

As the subtitle suggests, this is a follow-up to Saintsbury's book, superbly compiled and written with great feeling and emotion coming from Simon's love of wine.

▪ *Almanach du Franc Buveur* by Léon Baranger and André L. Simon. Paris, 1926.

The brown card-bound 'Almanach for the Honest Drinker' —written in French, with superb illustrations by Daragnès and other celebrated artists—is a collection of drink recipes from various regions of France, together with very interesting comments on wines and spirits, including European consumption figures. It also has hints on medicinal properties, and poems from various contributing writers.

This gem of a book concludes with some classic wine merchants' adverts, many of whom sadly no longer exist.

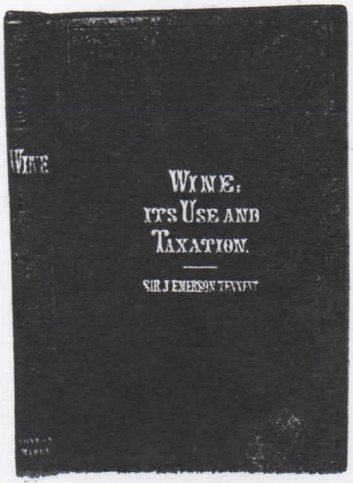
▪ *Dinners and Diners: Where and How to Dine in London* by Lieut.-Col. Newnham-Davis [Nathaniel Newnham-Davis, 1854–1917]. London, 1899.

Not a wine book as such, but where he dined, who he entertained, and his reviews of these restaurants for the Pall Mall Gazette—this debonaire food writer and gourmet was probably one of the first restaurant critics. Also a man with an enormous appetite—he often ate a large lunch, dinner, and supper, all accompanied by a selection of very fine wines.

▪ *Studies on Fermentation* by Louis Pasteur (1822–1895). Trans. with the Author's Sanction by Frank Faulkner and D. Constable Robb. London, 1879.

The definitive work not only on experiments of the juice from grapes—relating to particularly the French winegrowing regions of Arbois and Jura—but also the diseases of beer, their causes and means of preventing them. An interesting 402 pages of exacting information together with superb drawings and plates.

▪ *Wine, Its Use and Taxation. An Inquiry into the Operation of the Wine Duties on Consumption and Revenue* by Sir James Emerson Tennent (1804–1869). London, 1855.



Called by Simon 'a most valuable contribution to the history of the English Wine Trade' [*Vinaria*, p.181], it is a fascinating insight into the various aspects of this subject, with chapters such as: 'Opinion in France as to the probable effects of a further reduction in duty on the consumption of wine in England.' 'A review of the national taste in England for strong wines.' 'Should wine be taxed as a "Luxury" or as one of the "Necessaries of Life"?'

▪ *Manuel Complet de la Cuisinière Bourgeoise* by Mademoiselle Catherine. Paris, 1840.

Not so much a book on wine itself but a delight-

ful guide to service and what to serve with each dish in France, Italy, and England. Also instructions for the governor of the wine cellar regarding the manner in which to serve wines and how to taste and bottle wines in one's own wine cellar.

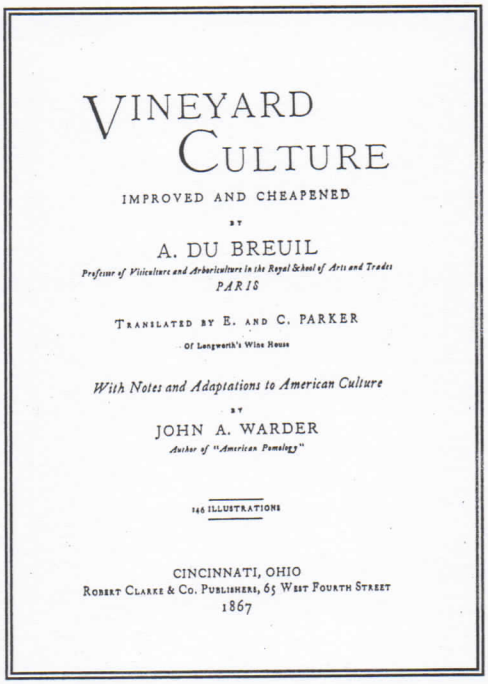
▪ *La Gotha des Vins de France* by Maurice des Ombiaux (1868–1943). Paris, 1925.

Written in French, the book is filled with beautiful illustrations covering the mystique of wine, poetry relating to wine, the benefits of wine, wine in antiquity, fraudulent wines, and comments on the regions of France.

▪ *Vineyard Culture. Improved and Cheapened* by A. du Breuil. Cincinnati, Ohio, 1867.

Alphonse du Breuil (1811–1890), a professor of viticulture and arboriculture at the Royal School of Arts and Trades, Paris, originally published this book in French in 1863.

A comprehensive study of vine growing in France and U.S.A. covering soil, the choice of vine, grafting, pruning, pests and diseases, it is a fascinating insight into viticulture in the 19th century.



VINEYARD
CULTURE

IMPROVED AND CHEAPENED

BY

A. DU BREUIL

Professor of Viticulture and Arboriculture in the Royal School of Arts and Trades
PARIS

TRANSLATED BY E. AND C. PARKER

Of Longworth's Wine House

With Notes and Adaptations to American Culture

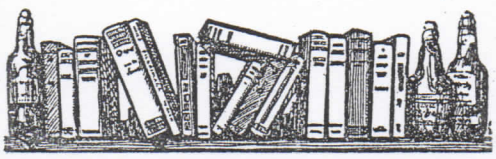
BY

JOHN A. WARDER

Author of "American Pomology"

146 ILLUSTRATIONS

CINCINNATI, OHIO
ROBERT CLARKE & CO. PUBLISHERS, 65 WEST FOURTH STREET
1867



American Wine: The Ultimate Companion

A Review by *Will Brown*

"... a monumental project..."

THE BOOK BEFORE US is *American Wine: The Ultimate Companion to the Wines and Wineries of the United States* by Jancis Robinson & Linda Murphy. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012. 278 pp. Cloth. $31.50.

Here is the first book, as far as I am aware, devoted to a comprehensive review of the grapes and wines produced in the United States. Up to now, many volumes have been devoted to the wines of the most prominent regions in the U.S., e.g., California, the Pacific Northwest, New York and a few others while the rest of the wine-producing states were ignored. Even Hugh Johnson's and Jancis Robinson's venerable *World Atlas of Wine*, from which this book is strongly derivative, devotes no coverage to wines outside the main four wine-producing American states.

The principal author, Jancis Robinson, should be no stranger to anyone with a minimum exposure to books about wine, having authored many definitive books on grapes and wine including most recently, *Wine Grapes* (2013), the successor to her *Vines, Grapes and Wines* of 1986. Linda Murphy is less well known but has solid credentials as proprietor of Vineyard and Winery Management magazine, wine columnist of WineReviewOnline.com, and former wine editor of the San Francisco Chronicle among her many accomplishments.

The *raison d'etre* for this book appears to be that in 2011 the United States became the leading country in the world in wine consumption while at the same time maintaining its position as the world's fourth largest wine producer. In addition, wine is now being produced in every American state.

The format of the book after an introductory chapter is to cover five regions of the U.S.: West, Southwest, Midwest, Southeast and Northeast. Each region is then subdivided into its states and then further to their American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) and other wine-producing districts. There are 278 pages including the index, but there are no footnotes or endnotes, and no bibliography. Unsurprisingly over half the book is devoted to California. Much space is consumed by maps and photographs of wine country and there is a plethora of "snapshots," which are informative boxes of information on the vineyards and wineries of the region under discussion, listing vineyard acreage,

varieties produced, and best varieties for the area. The snapshots also list "Trailblazers" or historical wineries in the region, "Steady Hands" which are the reliable wineries, "Superstars" and "Ones to Watch." Unfortunately, from over seven thousand wineries now in the U. S., only a selected few could be mentioned. The maps are the central features and in appearance identical to the cartography found in *The World Atlas of Wine*.

Within each subdivision under discussion in the text, factors of history, geography, geology, soil types, climate, viticulture, winemaking practices and important persons are covered. Every state is mentioned, even North Dakota, the last state in.

The writing and publication of this book had to have been a monumental project involving extensive research, personal visits to the wine districts, collation of facts with the maps and photography, and many other considerations. The authors deserve our respect and kudos for their efforts. I suspect that Linda Murphy was the primary author of this effort because of her residence in the U.S. and her professional connections. I somehow cannot imagine that Jancis Robinson with her global commitments would have had time for a substantial input beyond editorial supervision. In researching and compiling facts for a project of this nature, it is inevitable that some mistakes and errors will occur. In this book the historical research is fairly superficial in the areas with which I am conversant. The most egregious error in my opinion is the propagation of the Junipero Serra myth. While it is true that Serra established the first of the chain of Alta California Missions in 1769 at San Diego, it is a myth that he was the father of viticulture for these Missions. This subject has been well-researched by Roy Brady and the results published nearly thirty years ago. Brady has informed us that grapevines were not planted at the missions before 1778 and the first vintage was produced in 1782, not at San Diego but at San Juan Capistrano Mission.[1]

Any book about wineries is a moving target. Some of this material is probably already out of date and the whole project will need to be repeated starting about now. Like painting the Golden Gate Bridge, it is a never ending project.

Overall I liked the book, notwithstanding some historical misinformation, because it gave me a new appreciation of the emergence of new wine districts some of which could or already have reached star potential. For example the Finger Lakes District of New York which for years produced ho-hum wines from *V. labrusca* and French hybrids is now capable of world class Rieslings thanks to the work of Dr. Konstantine Frank. I am also enthusiastic about the potential of the wines from the Old Mission and Leelanau Peninsulas in northern Michigan because of the combination of grapes and climate effects there, and I like the potential that the Norton grape has in regions that are marginal for the production of wines from *vinifera* grapes. The states of the middle eastern seaboard, especially Virginia, are also on the cusp of breaking into the upper echelons of American quality wines. Another exciting development is that of the hybrid vines which have emerged that are capable of withstanding temperatures well below those that will kill *vinifera* vines. The bottom line here is that although these hybrids will not likely produce superstar wines, they could allow for the maturation of the wine industries throughout the cold weather zones of the country, which has the potential to encourage the use of wine as an alternate beverage in places where it has not been so in the past.

This book is aimed at the buyers of *The World Atlas of Wine* and readers of Jancis Robinson who are probably numerous. It is a book of general interest and will appeal to wine buyers and drinkers who have an interest in knowing more about the American wines they are purchasing, particularly if they live in places where great wines are not being produced at present. The wine geek will still find regional tomes on California, Northwest, and New York wines more to their liking and wine historians can always turn to the writings of Thomas Pinney and Charles Sullivan.

Available only in hardback at present, the book is a $31.50 bargain at Amazon.com.

NOTES

1. Brady, Roy. (1984) "Alta California's First Vintage." IN: *The University of California/Sotheby Book of California Wine*. D. Muscatine, M.A. Amerine and B.Thompson, eds. Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press/Sotheby Publications.

"A little library, growing larger every year, is an honourable part of a man's history. It is a man's duty to have books. A library is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of life." — HENRY W. BEECHER (1813–1887)

Tim Hanni: *Why You Like the Wines You Like*

A Review by
George Caloyannidis

[*Be inspired by these Tendril thoughts from George Caloyannidis to pull the following referenced classic wine books from your bookshelves and savor their contents, or, if they are missing from your library, to seek them out.* — Ed.]

"I am on a mission to pair wines with the diner, not the dinner"

ORIGINATING AT THE BREAK of the 19th century, first in France (Grimod de la Reyniere, *Almanach des Gourmandes*, 1803–1825; Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste*, 1826) and picked up by the British (Cyrus Redding, *A History and Description of Modern Wines*, 1833; Alexander Webber, *Wine,* 1888), interest in the relation of wine and food was revived in the early 20th century (André Simon, *The Art of Good Living*, 1930; Paul de Cassagnac, *French Wines,* 1936), but these were more or less general directions, and they lay dormant through WW II until the 1980s. Then, the movement picked up steam in the United States and eventually mushroomed into an authoritarian etiquette. A provocative study of how we can be liberated from this top-down directive of liking certain wines and their pairings with certain food is the subject of Tim Hanni's book.

Despite the fact that just about every wine writer agrees that the concept is overplayed and that consuming the wines you like with the foods you like is quite acceptable, they also all agree that if one observes a handful of certain basic rules *regardless of the taster*, the pleasure can be enhanced. This line can be found in Karen MacNeil's *Wine Bible*, Robert Parker's *Wine Buying Guide* or Jancis Robinson's *The Oxford Companion to Wine.* Ever since, the "correct" etiquette of proper pairings has been flooding the wine periodicals and "expert" literature and has invaded the fine dining scene. That is what upsets Hanni the most. In the meantime, the movement has evolved into a huge business which is hard to dislodge to the detriment of a more liberated and empowered consumer.

Hanni's book is being portrayed as iconoclastic and revolutionary (the Saint Helena Star, 2/14/2013, claimed Hanni's book "un-pairs" wine and food). But this un-pairing—limited and specific as it is—is only a by-product of the fascinating research Hanni and others have engaged in over the past couple of decades about how we taste in general.

Hanni is quite an unusual combination; not only a Master of Wine but also a trained chef, paired with a scientific bent for research motivated and guided by common sense. He is a recovering alcoholic who according to a Wall Street Journal interview in 2008 had not drunk wine in 14 years.

Why You Like the Wines You Like is a culmination of decades-long involvement with the subject as reflected in past papers Hanni has written: *The Cause and Effect of Wine and Food* (1991), *The Components of Food and Wine Flavor* (2010) and *Wine With Food*, part of a course he developed for the Wine & Spirits Education Trust in 2012 which he calls, *New Wine Fundamentals.*[1] In fact, his book which is formatted as a manual with space for notes following each chapter is indeed provocative—mostly in its style—but not new in its fundamental premise which is that the taste of everything from food to wine is individual, therefore there are no wines which are universally perfect and by extension that wine and food pairings are equally individual rather than subject to any rules.

What is new is the fact that Hanni backs it with research. It is hard to find fault with his basic premise: If it is perfectly normal for people to have different likes and dislikes for different foods, why should wine be different? If one can not make the statement that specific dishes are universally perfect, why should a specific bottle of wine be different; so different in fact that it can be assigned a specific score?

Hanni goes beyond the obviously intuitive. Research has shown that people have widely different numbers of taste receptors, 3,000 being average, ranging from as few as 500 to 11,000 for what Hanni calls *hyper-sensitive tasters*—he insists that none are "better" tasters than the others—they simply have different *sensitivity quotients.* Depending on the degree of sensitivity, the five primary tastes are experienced in different degrees of intensity, or often not at all, leading to varying preferences in wine, food and their pairings. Hanni calls these *variations in sensory physiology.* He thus puts into question the foundation of the independent quality of any given bottle of wine.

If one's *sensitivity quotient* is very high, one is very sensitive to high levels of tannins (bitterness) or alcohol (burning). According to Hanni, no score by any expert will render such a wine enjoyable to that person. To that, he adds the factor of *sensory psychology* which determines preferences based on past experiences starting from childhood and evolving over time. By administering a number of tests (provided in the book) Hanni says one's *Vinotype* can be identified and thus the general character of the

wines one prefers. While he does not dispute that there are good and bad wine and food pairings, such pairings are not universal as "experts" declare them, but rather individual.

One would think that once the objective criteria for wine quality or for food and wine pairings have been taken away from the hands of dictating "experts," one ought to feel liberated. But no sooner did we taste that freedom, we find ourselves captive to our own psychosomatic make-up. Does this shift mean that at any given time, while we are free to choose, we are not free to like?

According to the tests suggested in the book, I would be classified as a *Sensitive Vinotype* which is the category which enjoys the widest range of wines, but as usual, categorization has problems. Robert Parker is classified as a *Tolerant Vinotype*, placing him in the lowest sensitivity category, one which has no sensory problem with—in fact enjoys—big, alcoholic wines. However, Parker is also a great fan of sweet wines as his high scores for such wines indicate and that places him in the diametrically opposite spectrum of sensitivity, that of the *Sweet Vinotype*. This is a difficult corner for Hanni to get out of. He is compelled to introduce a number of exceptions to his *Vinotyping* to which an inordinate portion of the book is devoted. For his concept to work, he has to admit to *constantly evolving, overlapping,* or *conflicted Vinotypes* and to the *plasticity* of the categories. Nevertheless, Hanni is unshaken in his conviction that his palate-typing system constitutes a new paradigm replacing current *delusions* as he calls them, one by which a sommelier would inquire of a diner's *Vinotype*, and accordingly, suggest guaranteed enjoyable wines rather than the conventionally "correct" ones.

The paradigm that truth rests with the taster is hardly new. In *My Life with Wine*, 1972, Francis Gould, whom M.F.K. Fisher places "within the impressive quartette" of Brillat-Savarin, Sam Ward and André Simon, had already summed it up: "Unfortunately, a few willful people foster the idea that they, and they alone, are the wine authorities and the sole keepers of the art of wine drinking. These self-crowned kings of Babylon have scared the everlasting daylights out of timid souls. There is no such thing as a wine authority. You and you alone are the authority on what is, or is not delectable to your palate." New is Hanni's attempt to "prove" the point by supporting it with science, and though his rather authoritative style seems to preclude room for argument, it nevertheless merits some scrutiny.

Just as palates and tasting sensors on the tongue vary widely from individual to individual as he correctly points out, research has shown that an equally important factor in the perception of flavor is the sense of smell, something Hanni briefly acknowledges but does not explore with the rigor it merits.

While we perceive only five tastes through the mouth, we perceive hundreds of smells, even in miniscule quantities, through the nasal passages, the *concha*. The *concha* guide odors to the *olfactory bulb* (dogs have roughly seventeen times the size of humans) in the brain and this is where smell is perceived. Both organs can vary vastly in individuals in efficiency and size, just as the receptors on the tongue, and *together* they influence the way we perceive flavor. A diminished or not quite healthy *concha* or a smaller *olfactory bulb* might well cancel out a large number of tongue receptors and an individual's overall sensitivity to flavor. Similar research has shown that women are indeed more sensitive to smells than men which may translate into a higher level of sensitivity to flavor, something Hanni disputes.

Research into the comprehensive olfactory system —smell and taste—is still to be rigorously explored before we can claim a more definitive science-based system on the perception of flavor.

Hanni devotes an entire chapter on what he calls *delusions,* referring to the way societies cling to old paradigms (such as a flat earth) that were subsequently replaced by others and includes his new theory as one to replace current *delusions* about wine and food.

In the classic treaty on the subject, Thomas Kuhn's 1962 *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, explains the process by which a scientific theory is replaced by another. In cases where an accepted paradigm no longer works, scientists first resort to one exception after another to the theory in their effort to explain away mounting evidence against it. The flat earth, the earth-centered universe, phlogiston, the nature of light, etc. are some examples. As shown earlier, Hanni devotes page upon page on exceptions to his *Vinotype* categories. This renders them quite suspect as a *delusion* replacing paradigm.

And then, as we thought that experts had left the field of pairings to the ordinary consumer, he devotes tens of pages in explaining, through science, how one can tweak foods by, for example, adding lemon, salt etc. to make the experience of pairing more palatable according to one's *Vinotype*. Though in itself not contradictory, we find ourselves back into the hands of the experts we were trying to escape from.

Hanni also believes that the rewarding pairing of local foods with local wines is a myth; but in 1999, as the movement of "proper" pairings was getting in full swing, I began posing the same basic questions to myself as those Hanni was already engaged in. I was intrigued by a couple of quotes in the February 1999

issue of the Wine Spectator which struck me as presumptive and contradictory. The reviewer, an American, referring to Rieslings from the Wachau in Austria, wrote: "These *trocken*, or dry, wines can be severe and are best served with food," but in an unrelated article a couple of pages over, chef Eberhard Mueller of Lutece, a German, proclaimed: "It's tough to find a good food match for really dry wines." Who was right and who was wrong? In fact, it occurred to me that these diametrically opposite statements had their roots in cultural origins.

Whether both wine and food at a local level have evolved to complement each other is quite contrary to my personal experience. Once again to quote Gould: "One cardinal principle must be stressed; drink the wines of the area wherever you may be. Every wine, great or small, tastes best on its native heath and when accompanied by the local food specialties."

Wine pairing "experts" differ in their preferences from country to country both today and at different times in history. Hanni's book leaves this issue unexplored, since to him it is only the individual's physical and psychic make up that are the determining factors in the equation.

History receives almost no reference. The past 200-year record is rich in pairings as they were served at the best tables in Europe or at private dinners by connoisseurs and gourmet clubs. They were all over the map which might support Hanni's premise.

Foods which today, at least in this country, are considered difficult to match with wine—such as eggs, celery or artichokes—were having a field day in the late 19th to the middle of the 20th century. Charles Walter Berry, *In Search of Wine*, 1935, raves about a lunch with M. Chapoutier when a 1921 La Sizeranne was served with celery au gratin, and a 1929 Hermitage with an artichoke-stuffed chicken. Ian Campbell, *Tendrils of the Vine*, still salivated in 1948 over the memory of a 1938 dinner "to meet a Jeroboam of 1864 Lafite" with creamed mushrooms and an asparagus-cheese soufflé. And a no lesser than André Simon, *Tables of Content*, 1933, lists among his greatest meals, wines with egg dishes, especially an omelet with a 1905 Ausone.

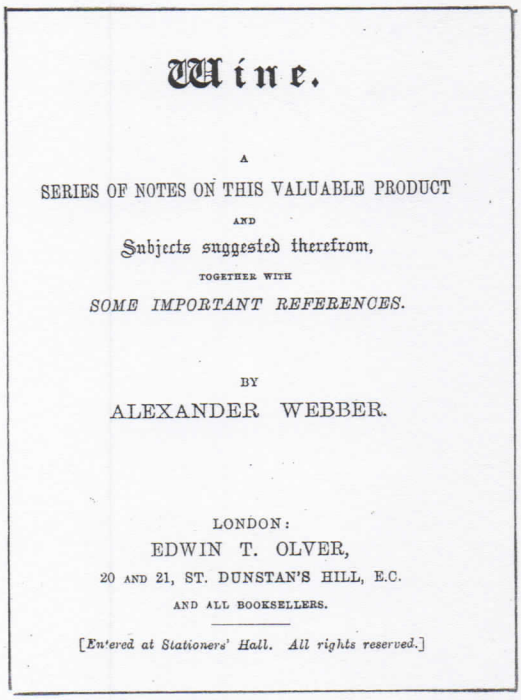
While both the French and the English were in agreement for over 100 years for Sherry and Madeira being the wines of choice with soup, it wasn't always that way. Until the early 19th century, the wine of choice was Riesling. Brillat-Savarin describes a monumental ten-hour lunch where "as a surprise" he served Madeira with the soup, "following recent novelties introduced by Prince de Talleyrand." Nevertheless, this did not curb André Simon's epiphany of onion soup with a 1924 Haut Brion.

On the flip side, popular pairings today were not so some time ago. "This dish is not suitable for wine tasting, because like eggs, it tends to drown perfume." Cassagnac is talking about Sauternes with foie gras! For H. Warner Allen, *Through the Wine Glass*, 1954, that "marriage (with Côte-Rôtie) set angels singing to the sounds of trumpets." Yet for Harvey Steiman in that same 1999 Wine Spectator issue, it was: "*Against all odds*, red wine (Shiraz) and foie gras made one of the great matches." As for Champagne—somewhat sweeter in style at Savarin's time—it must be served at the end rather at the beginning of a meal: "Stimulating in its first effect but stupefying in those which follow." True to the cultural heritage of the national icon, President Mitterrand served Champagne to Margaret Thatcher with profiteroles, and to Helmut Kohl with a marjolaine.

In the end, I like to quote Hanni when he writes: *Here is what I would like you to take from this chapter* (Chapter 6). *It's just wine for cryin' out loud.* This is what I recommend taking from the entire book. One must not underestimate its significance, especially coming from a person of Hanni's credibility.

NOTES

1. www.youtube.com/watch?v= AcebqOTmzGI.



Wine.

A

SERIES OF NOTES ON THIS VALUABLE PRODUCT

AND

Subjects suggested therefrom,

TOGETHER WITH

SOME IMPORTANT REFERENCES.

BY

ALEXANDER WEBBER.

LONDON:

EDWIN T. OLVER,

20 AND 21, ST. DUNSTAN'S HILL, E.C.

AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

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Title page: *Wine. A Series of Notes on This Valuable Product and Subjects Suggested Therefrom...* Written by Alexander Webber, London, 1888

Sir Winston, Bubbles and Books
by *Nina Wemyss*

[*This splendid note emerged from Nina's passion for Winston Churchill, and his 3-volume biography by William Manchester and Paul Reid.* — Ed.]

WINSTON CHURCHILL–legendary statesman, brilliant orator, prolific writer and accomplished artist–had a lifelong attachment to books and champagne (particularly Pol Roger).

Churchill was a successful war correspondent, journalist and author of 43 book-length works in 72 volumes. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for his six-volume history, *The Second World War.*

Sir Winston had an impressive capacity for alcohol, though he never abused it. He allowed the myth of formidable consumption to persist, even embellishing it himself. As Prime Minister, during the Second World War, Churchill had his favorite tipple, Pol Roger, always close by, even having cases sent with him when he travelled. He famously borrowed Napoleon's words to describe his passion, "In defeat I need it, in victory I deserve it."

In 1944, at a luncheon given by the British Ambassador to Paris, Duff Cooper, the Prime Minister was introduced to Odette Pol Roger and they became life-long friends. Churchill had been a loyal customer of the firm since 1908, but now, each year on his birthday, Odette would send him a case of his favorite vintage 1928 until supplies ran out in 1958. Churchill kept a stable of race horses and named his favorite filly after Odette. When he died in 1965, Pol Roger in tribute to their most famous and loyal customer, added a black border to the labels of all bottles of "white foil" sold in the United Kingdom. In 1984 the firm introduced the *Cuvée Sir Winston Churchill.*

Of books, Winston Churchill wrote (no doubt with flute in hand):

> "If you cannot read all your books, at any rate handle, or as it were, fondle them–peer into them, let them fall open where they will, read from the first sentence that arrests the eye, set them back on the shelves with your own hands, arrange them on your own plan so that if you do not know what is in them, you at least know where they are. Let them be your friends; let them at any rate be your acquaintances. If they cannot enter the circle of your life, do not deny them at least a nod of recognition." [Manchester and Reid, *The Last Lion: Winston Spencer Churchill,* 3 vols. 1983–2012. v.1, 1983]

[EDITOR: To accompany this Churchill quote, unquestionably one of the best paragraphs ever written about books, read on for a brief visit with Sir Winston's friend, Duff Cooper, and perhaps some of the best lines ever written on wine.]

"Wine a Loyal Friend"
by Duff Cooper

[*The following, excerpted from Old Men Forget, the autobiography of Alfred Duff Cooper (Viscount Norwich), was gleaned from Frank Schoonmaker's News from the Wine Country (August 1957). Duff Cooper [1890–1954], "statesman, diplomat, ambassador to France, writer, a figure in two World Wars, and close friend of Winston Churchill, was married to the most renowned beauty of his day, actress Lady Diana Manners Cooper." He was also a cherished friend of André Simon and Hilaire Belloc and an esteemed member of the Wine & Food Society in London.* — Ed.]

I HAVE ALREADY MADE MENTION of the happiness I have derived throughout my life from literature, and I should here, perhaps, acknowledge the consolation I have never failed to find in the fermented juice of the grape. Writing in my sixty-fourth year, I can truthfully say that since I reached the age of discretion I have consistently drunk more than most people would say was good for me. Nor do I regret it. Wine has been to me a firm friend and a wise counsellor. Wine has lit up for me the pages of literature, and revealed in life romance lurking in the commonplace. Wine has made me bold but not foolish; has induced me to say silly things but not to do them. Under its influence words have often come too easily which had better not have been spoken, and letters have been written which had better not have been sent. But if such small indiscretions standing in the debit column of wine's account were added up, they would amount to nothing in comparison with the vast accumulation on the credit side.

I am proud that Hilaire Belloc's *Heroic Poem in Praise of Wine* should have been dedicated to me. I transcribe the first lines:

> To exalt, enthrone, establish and defend,
> To welcome home mankind's mysterious friend:
> Wine, true begetter of all arts that be;
> Wine, privilege of the completely free;
> Wine, the recorder; Wine the sagely strong;
> Wine, bright avenger of sly-dealing wrong–
> Awake, Ausonian Muse, and sing the vineyard song!

This mysterious friend has proved a very loyal one to me and to all those, I believe, who do not abuse friendship...

VINTAGE EPHEMERA

by Christopher Fielden

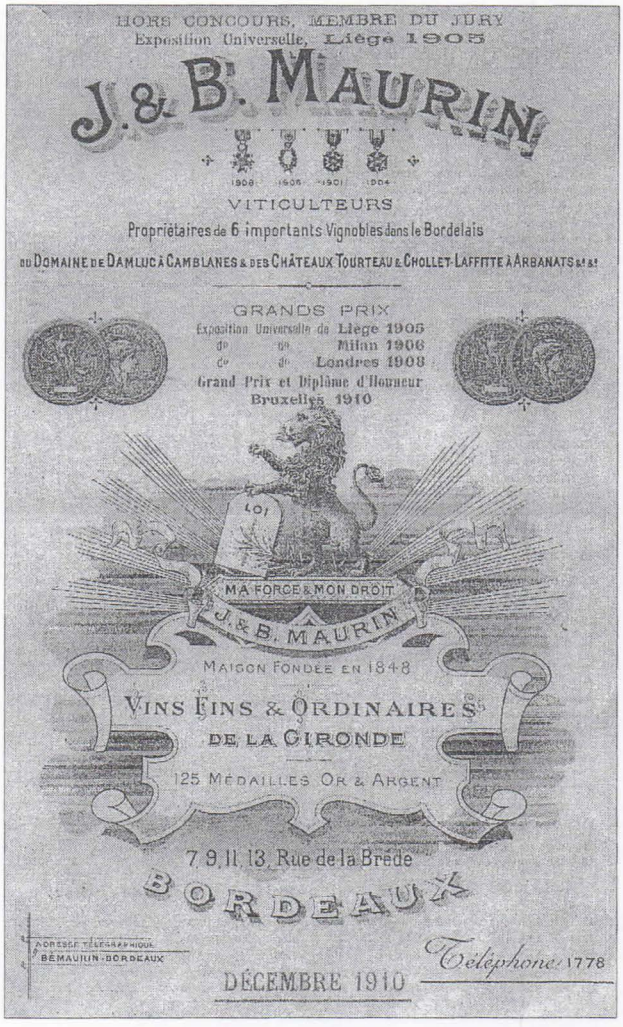
MY FATHER WAS A stamp collector, specialising in early British ones from the Victorian era, but the only one I have inherited from him is a not uncommon 1d brown, franked with the date 9th March 1843. What makes this special for me is the fact that it has been stuck on the back of what appears to be a circular, offering wines to the trade. Sadly, not very much of this remains, but we can get an idea of the comparative values of French wines at the time. Perhaps surprisingly, "Burgundy, Red and White," of unspecified provenance and vintage, was on offer at 75s to 84s the dozen, duty paid, whilst Lafitte and Latour of the 1837 vintage cost 65s to 68s; and "Leoville, Larose, &c." of the same vintage were 54s to 60s. "Hermitage, Red and White," which were very fashionable in Victorian times rated at the same prices as the Burgundies.

Champagne, too, provides some surprises: "1st Quality, Sparkling and Creaming" was 60s to 65s the dozen and the 2nd Quality 48s to 56s. Unspecified Moëts were 67s and, most expensive of all, "Silleri sec, perfectly still, according to age" 84s to 95s. Also available were Sparkling Burgundies and Hermitage at prices similar to, but in some instances above, those of Champagne.

Further price comparisons can be made from two price-lists that I have, dated December 1910, from the Bordeaux *négociant* J. & B. Maurin and its sister house in Beaune. Despite some enquiries, I can find no information about this company which had its cellars in the rue de la Brède in Bordeaux, well away from the Quai des Chartrons, where most of the major shippers were based. It claimed to be the owner of six important vineyards in the Bordelais, but only one of these Château Tourteau, in the Graves, appears to be still in existence and a letter to its current owner elicited no response.

This was a time of hardship for the wine-trade and most of the wine was offered in cask, for as many as six different vintages. As a guarantee to their authenticity, the wines from other than their own properties, were offered in casks bearing the individual brands of the châteaux concerned. None of the current 1er Grand Crus Classés were offered in bulk, though Mouton Rothschild 1906 could be purchased for 1500 francs the hogshead, Figeac for 1000 francs and Pichon Longueville for 850 francs.

The range of wines on offer in bottle was comparatively limited. Amongst the red wines Haut-Brion was regularly the most expensive, followed by Margaux and Lafite. Ch. Pétrus of the 1905 vintage seems a particular bargain at 5.50 francs the bottle. The Barsac, Ch. Coutet 1890 is 10 francs and the Yquem 1895 just 9.



Other oddities come under the heading Vins de Liqueur. Available for purchase were Madère de Jérez, Porto de Jérez and Malaga de Jérez, as well as real Madeira, Port and Malaga at a franc a bottle more expensive.

The Burgundy price-list is headed "*Sans engagement à cause de la hausse*" — "Prices offered subject to confirmation, because of the increase." This raised a wry smile while I showed it to a present day Beaune *négociant*. I think he wished he could cover himself in such a way! Again most of the wine is offered in cask but only in three vintages, with their particularly recommending the 1906, which they suggest are worthy successors to those of the 1870 vintage! Strangely, they rate their Pommard (together with Chambertin and Clos Vougeot) as a *grand cru*, whilst such wines Musigny, Richebourg and Bonnesmares (sic) are not given this status, though their prices reflect it.

Once again, the sparkling wines on offer reflect their

popularity at that time. Those available include Chambertin mousseux as a red, white or rosé wine and Romanée in red or white formats.

One other piece of ephemera that I inherited from my father is a vintage booklet for the Ecu de France restaurant in Paris dated 1938. The introduction says, "May this little booklet help our clients and their friends to choose and appreciate their wines." It gives appreciations for every vintage from 1908 to 1937 for the wines of Chablis, Alsace, Red Bordeaux, Red Burgundy, Anjou, Sauternes and Champagne, with a basic suggestion as to what they might best accompany, e.g. Chablis with oysters and Champagne

★

LE
BORDEAUX
ROUGE
EST LE VIN DES
ROTIS ET DES
GRILLADES

BORDEAUX ROUGE

1908 PASSABLE	1923 BON
1909 PASSABLE	1924 PARFAIT
1910 MÉDIOCRE	1925 PASSABLE
1911 BON	1926 BON
1912 MÉDIOCRE	1927 MÉDIOCRE
1913 MÉDIOCRE	1928 EXCELLENT
1914 PASSABLE	1929 PARFAIT
1915 MAUVAIS	1930 MAUVAIS
1916 PASSABLE	1931 MÉDIOCRE
1917 PLAISANT	1932 MAUVAIS
1918 PASSABLE	1933 BON
1919 PASSABLE	1934 EXCELLENT
1920 PARFAIT	1935 PASSABLE
1921 BON	1936 PASSABLE
1922 PASSABLE	1937 BON

A Guide to the Vintages, Restaurant Ecu de France, Paris & London 1938

all through a meal. If the restaurant were to produce such a list now, would they include Anjou and exclude White Burgundy and the Rhône? The vintage descriptions are all one word, with the range being: Bad, Mediocre, Passable, Pleasant, Good, Perfect and Excellent. (To be honest, I am not sure I have these in the right order!) I see that for both Bordeaux and Burgundy the 1929 is rated as Perfect, whilst the 1928 is Excellent—suggesting that perfection has it over excellence by a short nose! The booklet's final recommendation is its sister restaurant with the same name in Jermyn Street, London; a regular haunt of André Simon and a training ground for many of Britain's best chefs. To make a reservation there, telephone Whitehall 2837, but do not be surprised if you do not get through. ▪

FRENCH WINES.

		℔ *Hhd. in Bond.*	℔ *Do. Duty pa.*
Claret, Lafitte & Latour	...1837.....	£48..	65s à 66
Leoville Larose &c.	"	£38..	54s à 60s
St Julien, St. Estephe, &c.		£12 à £24..	42s à 48s
Sauterne and Barsac..1st growth		£25 à £30..	46s à 54s

IN THE WINE LIBRARY

by *Bob Foster*

Divine Vintage: Following the Wine Trail from Genesis to the Modern Age by Randall Heskett and Joel Butler. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. 274 pp., hardback, $27.

" ... a fascinating journey..."

This book begins with a lengthy analysis of what can be determined about the beginning of wine consumption and production based on the Bible and other ancient historical records. The second portion of the book is a journey through the regions where grape cultivation and wine making began. The authors—Heskett, a biblical scholar, and Butler, a Master of Wine (MW)—taste wines now made in those regions and compare it to what those wines may have tasted like long ago.

The first portion of the work is, in large measure, premised on the Bible. It accepts that the writings in that work are historically accurate. Without opening a theological debate, I would have liked to have read something about the reliability of that document as a data source upon which an author could draw conclusions about the earliest days of wine making and wine drinking.

Realizing that some of this material could be rather dry and complex, the authors have broken the chapters into small subsections with very clever subtitles. I especially liked "You Bet Your Shir-Az the Persians Gave Them Wine."

It was interesting to read how involved the Egyptians were in wine drinking. Vineyard and vintage differentiations were common. Certain wines were more highly praised than others.

I think most wine lovers are aware that the Roman Empire had a large wine trade. But the authors carefully calculate the size of this enterprise. With the development of glass amphorae and corks, the wine trade flourished. By the end of the first century Rome itself had a million inhabitants who were consuming 23 million gallons a year. The population of the Roman Empire reached 50 to 65 million inhabitants. Assuming a mere 15% of that number were adult males, consumption would have been 800 to 900 million gallons of wine a year. By comparison, in 2011 in the United States, the total consumption was 746 million gallons. Moreover, as was true in Egypt, a hierarchy developed with certain wines highly prized, and others considered more ordinary destined for everyday consumption.

In the second part of the book the authors survey the wines now being produced in the regions where all of these wine enterprises began. But within this

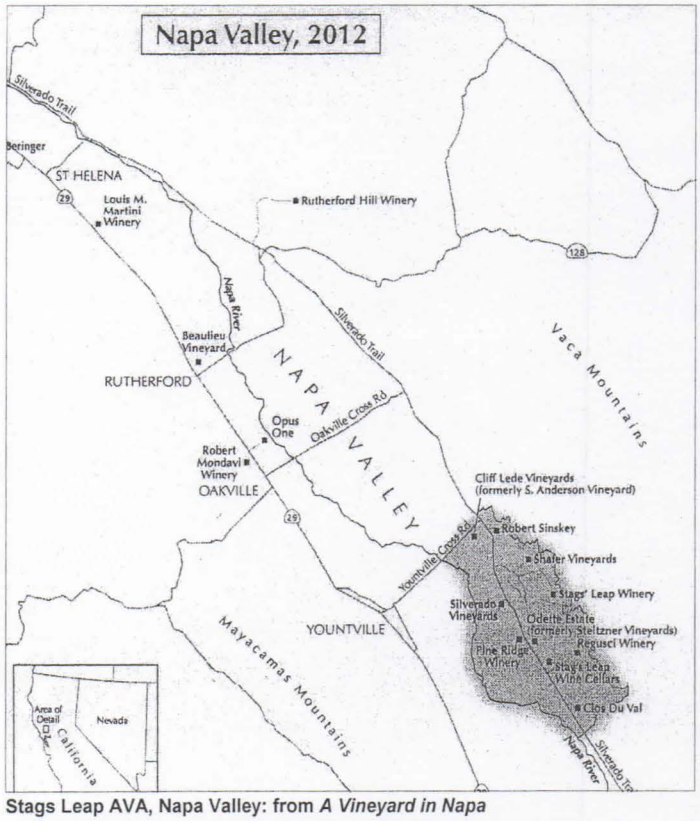
section is a fascinating section called, "Seriously, What Would Jesus Drink?" The authors attempt to use grapes present in the ancient world, vinify them in the old, traditional way and taste the results. The traditional way included the addition of sea water and herbs to boiled grape extract. The surprising result? The authors found the wine "wonderfully delicious."

This is a fascinating journey covering the very beginning of grape growing and wine cultivation. There is a wealth of information assisted by color photographs and a solid index. Highly recommended.

A Vineyard in Napa by Doug Shafer and Andy Demsky. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012. 264 pp., hardback, $29.95.

" ... interesting and informative ..."

This is the story of how Shafer Vineyards grew from almost nothing to one of the major producers in the Napa Valley. As is true for so many of the wineries in California, the family made its start-up money elsewhere. Here, John Shafer, the founder, was one of the heirs of the Scott-Foresman company. (Interestingly nowhere in this book, other than this vague reference, is there any discussion of funding. While no one expects to see the family's tax returns, the work reads as if money, bank charges or interest payments were never a concern. Having heard numerous winemakers decry the financial squeeze put on them by banks and other financial institutions, it would have been interesting to see how the Shafers avoided or handled this situation.)



Stags Leap AVA, Napa Valley: from *A Vineyard in Napa*

The book carefully chronicles the initial decisions of what grapes to plant and where to plant them on the property. The family's continual commitment to quality is shown again and again. They recalled much of the 1984 and 1985 production when they discovered it had a sulfite problem.

There is detailed discussion about the lawsuits and problems over the use of the term Stags Leap. In the course of this the author offers several interesting ideas about the source of the geographic-based name including one based on a man named W. H. Stagg who once lived nearby.

When the federal government first began setting up American Viticulture Areas (AVA) the proposed lines were thought to be drawn to include areas with similarities in soil, climate, winds, and elevation. It proved to be a difficult, politically charged, lawyer filled process. Shafer carefully notes the intricacies of the conflict over the Stags Leap AVA. It is a story filled with pitched legal battles seemingly motivated by, among other things, greed. Indeed one grower ended up shorting the Shafers five tons of Cabernet because he had to raise money to pay off his share of the litigation costs.

There are some marvelous tidbits in this book. I learned, for the first time, that in World War II there was a German P.O.W. camp in Napa. The prisoners were rented out to do work in some of the vineyards. There are also stories about the early days of the Napa Valley Wine Auction and the Napa Valley Wine Technical Group.

While there are detailed discussions about the winery and events in the vineyard, there are only occasional references to the personal struggles of the Shafers. Suddenly we are told of John Shafer's divorce and remarriage. Similarly the same is true for Doug Shafer's divorce and remarriage.

In recent years, the Shafer Hillside Cabernet has become one of the cult wines of California. It sells for over $200 a bottle. There is no question that it is a superb wine, but the book offers no explanation or justification for this sky-high price. Perhaps the fact that it is now a cult wine is all the justification that the winery needed.

In any event, the story of how a small family-owned piece of land emerged into one of the top Napa wineries is interesting and informative. There are

continued on p. 31 —

Wine in California: The Early Years
The San Francisco Bay Area
Part I: Sonoma, 1855–1878
by *Charles L. Sullivan*

[*With this, the 13th installment of our great history of the early years of California wine, we reach the premier fine-wine growing area of the state, those counties located around the San Francisco Bay. As in previous chapters, extensive, informative footnotes, and a substantial library of references (all recommended for WT bookshelves), are provided.* — Ed.]

CALIFORNIA'S POSITION AS THE GREATEST large-scale wine region in the Western Hemisphere is unchallenged. Yet so far in this study I have focused on areas in the state where winegrowing is still important but are not considered a significant contributor to the state's image of preeminence.

By the end of the 1860s it was believed by many that the very best California wine was being produced in the coastal valleys around the San Francisco Bay Area. By the end of the 1870s this belief among California wine connoisseurs was general, especially about the image of table wines.

THERE WERE SEVERAL distinct subregions here, each developing a reputation for its own wines, mostly for their dry table wines, and most of those red. The term before World War I for this great region was The North Coast. Today Treasury Department regulations limit this term to what was earlier dubbed The North Bay, that is, Sonoma, Napa, Mendocino and Lake Counties, and a small piece of Solano County.

The other subregions of the Bay Area were usually termed South Bay and East Bay. The former was applied to the Santa Clara Valley around the town of San Jose and the eastern slopes of the Santa Cruz Mountains, these being mostly in Santa Clara County and a portion of San Mateo County. The East Bay area referred to the lowlands along the bay south of Oakland and the valleys to the east near Martinez and Walnut Creek. The Livermore Valley came late to the vine, in the 1880s.

Sonoma County—The Fledgling Leader

We begin with Sonoma for several reasons. In the twenty-three-year period covered by this chapter, Sonoma County rose to become the state's leader in wine production. In 1855 the county had less than a hundred acres of grapes. Santa Clara County might claim the palm as the region's wine-growing pioneer, since it had a forty-year head start on Sonoma. But the northern county's role, and that of its charismatic winegrowing leader in the 1855–1860 wine boomlet, made the county the center of popular interest in the rise of this fledgling agricultural industry. Wine historians, and the press then and later, have acknowledged Sonoma County's centrality in these early years.

We have already had several glimpses of Sonoma viticulture before 1850.[1] The late start in this field began with the planting of the Sonoma Mission's vineyard after 1823. The pioneer after 1834 was Mariano Vallejo, the *comandante general* of the *frontera del norte*, an area which included almost all of today's Sonoma and Napa Counties. He founded the little *pueblo* of Sonoma in 1835 and built his first home facing its plaza. Nearby he planted a small vineyard, whose vines supplied sufficient grapes for his family for eating and for wine. He made enough wine to trade with his neighbors for other necessities. By the early 1850s he had built a fine new home west of town and transformed the old soldiers' barracks on the plaza into a winery building. There his Indian workers produced several hundred gallons of wine annually, along with some brandy from a still he had acquired from John Sutter.[2]

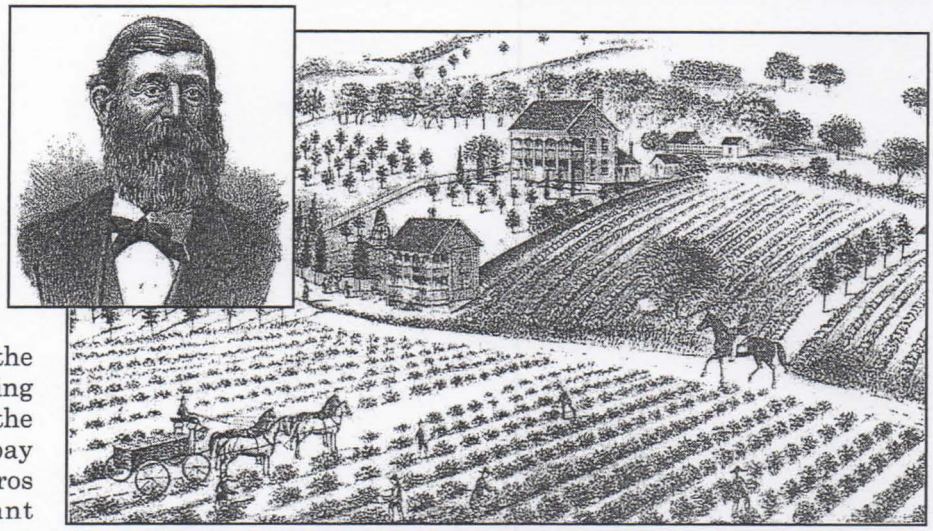
Viticultural pioneer that he was, Vallejo was far more important in the county's early history as the man who supervised the orderly distribution, subdivision and settlement of the vast lands under his control between 1834 and 1846. He did this through a continuous series of land grants to his California friends, to his family and to foreign newcomers, especially Americans. By 1846 virtually all the map of non-mountainous Sonoma County was covered by sparsely populated land grant ranchos, whose titles were almost all later confirmed. And all the Sonoma pueblo land, covering 17,712 acres, was liberally distributed to new settlers, mostly outside the plaza area. On these lands was where the new vineyards of the 1850s were concentrated

There were several other Sonoma vineyardists worth noting before the little wine boom after 1855. Best remembered was Vallejo's brother-in-law, Jacob Leese, who had a small vineyard west of town near Sonoma Creek and made wine in a rude shed. He was, nevertheless, probably the first American to produce

Sonoma wine. He later acquired a piece of land east of town that would become what was for years, after 1857, California's most famous winery.

Nicholas Carriger

In 1847 Leese set another young man on the road to winegrowing when he sold vine cuttings to Nicholas Carriger, who also settled west of town. By 1850 he had a producing vineyard and five years later was making wine commercially; by 1863 his 93 acres of vines made his vineyard the fourth largest in the county. By the end of the 1870s he had 150 acres in vines and a three-story stone winery with a 180,000-gallon capacity. The operation is unique historically since it was the only one of Sonoma's pioneer wineries to stay the course and thrive into the 20th century.[3]



Pioneer Nicholas Carriger and his 93-acre vineyard near Sonoma City

Sonoma County has a complicated geography. The Sonoma Valley, where most of the county's pioneer winegrowing took place, opens out from the town of Sonoma to the great bay to the south and the Carneros area, today an important viticultural region in its own right. The upper valley, above the town of Sonoma, is called the Valley of the Moon which gradually narrows in a northwesterly direction toward the city of Santa Rosa, passing through the villages of Glen Ellen and Kenwood.

In the upper portion of the valley, the earliest winegrower of note was one of the historically most important. William McPherson Hill came to San Francisco in 1849 with a degree from the University of Pennsylvania, and three years later bought a large tract of land near what became Glen Ellen. He started with a peach orchard in 1854; vines came soon thereafter. He began planting "foreign" table grape varieties, true European vinifera, brought to California from New England nurseries. Just as we have seen in the Sierra Foothills, such varieties, with a few exceptions, had little potential for making good table wine. But Hill, like a few others, recognized the Zinfandel as the great exception. It was his particular favorite in the 1860s. In 1871 he received special praise for his Zinfandel from Edward J. Wickson, later head of viticultural research at the University of California. He wrote that Hill's Zinfandel was "superior to any" of the California produced table wines he and his friends had tasted.[4]

1855 Wine Boomlet

The wine boomlet in California after 1855 was a statewide phenomenon. For the public it was triggered in January of that year by an article in the state's only agricultural newspaper, the California Farmer. Its publisher, James L. L. Warren, himself a former Boston nurseryman, headed the article, "Cultivators of California! Plant Your Vineyards. Begin Now...No better investment can be made..."[5]

Earlier he had targeted Sonoma as an excellent area to heed his challenge. In one article he focused his attention on a small winegrowing operation east of town then owned by a certain Julius Rose.

The first vines on Rose's property might have been planted in the 1830s. Jacob Leese had acquired the place in 1841, planted more vines, and erected a frame building he used as a winery. Rose bought the property in 1853 and expanded the vineyard to twelve acres—small, but one of the largest in the county then. Profits in local viticulture in the 1850s were earned primarily by selling fresh grapes for eating. For a while this was a sizzling market for almost every vineyardist in the Sonoma Valley, particularly Vallejo, Rose, Leese, and Carriger. San Francisco and the Gold Country couldn't get enough of these grapes.

Rose was serious about producing wine, and in 1856 made 5,000 gallons under the eye of an "experienced German winemaker." By then his place was being called "Buena Vista," but the origins of the name are in doubt. Rose knew that an official of the U.S. Mint in San Francisco had previously visited Gen. Vallejo and liked the *comandante's* wine. After this official tasted Rose's 1856 vintage he began negotiating to buy Buena Vista and closed the deal in 1857. The new owner was Agoston Haraszthy.[6]

Agoston Haraszthy and Buena Vista

It has often been written that Haraszthy was the pioneer of Sonoma winegrowing and personally caused the little boom in viticulture there after 1855. This is not true. But more than any other single person he was responsible for the lower Sonoma Valley's viticultural growth from less than 100 acres to 2,000 acres of vines in the five years after he purchased Buena Vista.[7] This he succeeded through his example and by his public advocacy of winegrowing, greatly assisted by the editorial muscle of James Warren and his California Farmer, and of the Alta California, San Francisco's leading newspaper.

Haraszthy was an experienced farmer and nurseryman, with a wide knowledge of intensive and extensive agriculture. He had also previously exhibited a keen interest in winegrowing, which he had demonstrated long before his arrival in Sonoma.

He first arrived in the United States in 1840, the twenty-eight-year-old son of an old but untitled Hungarian family. His homeland was the Vojvodina, a largely Hungarian portion of the Austrian Empire. He made his way to the rapidly growing Wisconsin Territory and established impressive and profitable economic roots. In 1842 he returned home and brought his wife and three children back to Sauk City, of which he was the founder. In 1849 he and his family headed overland to California and settled in San Diego.

The aristocratic family made quite an impression in that dusty little town. He had called himself "Count" in Wisconsin, a title to which he had no claim. In California he settled for the more democratic sounding "Colonel," an honorific that made better sense, since he had been an officer in the Wisconsin militia. In 19th century America, Colonels in state and territorial militias were a dime a dozen. James Warren of the California Farmer was always "Col. Warren," for his casual and non-combatant service in the Massachusetts militia.

In San Diego Haraszthy operated a livery stable and a butcher shop. In 1850 he was elected sheriff. He was fascinated by California's beautiful Mediterranean climate, a far cry from that of Wisconsin or Hungary. He planted an orchard and a small vineyard just outside town. But the rough frontier life was too much for his wife and their younger children, whom he sent back to live with friends in New Jersey.

In 1852 Haraszthy was elected to the State Assembly and headed north. The area's lively economic activity convinced him to settle there. He first bought land near San Francisco's Mission Dolores and immediately started planting onions and cabbages. He called the place "Las Flores." He also bought "rooted grape vines–the largest you have," from Col. Warren.[8]

He made good money selling his Las Flores vegetables and even better money brokering fresh grape deals. In 1852 that tasty fruit was selling for $400 per ton, five times more than grapes had brought in 1850.[9] He couldn't ripen grapes at Las Flores, so in 1853 he bought land in the hilly uplands to the south, the Crystal Springs area.

Meanwhile horticulture began to take a back seat in Haraszthy's affairs. A loyal Democrat with good connections in San Francisco, he was able to acquire appointment to the post of U. S. Assayer for the mint there. All evidence indicates that he served honestly and efficiently in that position, but the Treasury agent there suspected Haraszthy was responsible for shortages in bullion at the mint. With interest in Sonoma on the rise, he submitted his resignation in January 1857, just days before he acquired the Buena Vista property. He was acquitted of wrongdoing in the subsequent trial.

One of the State's Largest

Haraszthy added to his Buena Vista property by acquiring several hundred acres of adjoining land and by 1859 he was able to buy a huge piece of land east of Buena Vista, up into the foothills and across into Napa County. Now totaling about 6000 acres, Haraszthy's holdings amounted to one of the largest agricultural estates in California.

From the outset he aimed at creating an immense, complex agricultural operation. He grew wheat and ran cattle, but the main focus of his interest was on viticulture. He transferred a large number of vines from his Crystal Springs property and just weeks after acquiring the Rose property he had son Attila plant twenty-five vineyard acres almost all to the Mission variety. He also acquired a large number of the soon-to-be almost ubiquitous "foreign" table varieties arriving to California nurseries from New England. There may have been a few Zinfandel vines included, but there is not a jot of contemporary evidence to support such a possibility. The almost mythic notion that Haraszthy introduced that variety to California from Hungary has long since been deposited in the dust-bin of history.

Most of his grapes went into the fresh fruit market in 1857, but he did make about 4,000 gallons of wine. Sixty more acres were planted in early 1858; Buena Vista now had more than half of the grape vines in the Sonoma Valley. He had also begun digging tunnels into the mountainside to store his future vintages. In 1858 he produced 12,000 gallons of wine, even though he sold sixty tons of grapes on the fresh market. Only the German Anaheim Colony in Los Angeles County had a larger vineyard operation than Buena Vista. He added another hundred acres in the winter of 1859-1860.

By that time the Sonoma Valley had vineyards

covering almost a thousand acres, as many more farmers joined the mild viticultural boom. Vallejo expanded his own vineyard and hired an experienced Italian manager to tend it. He also met a French homeopathic physician who had experience making wine. Victor J. Fauré was responsible for Vallejo winning most of the awards for Sonoma wine at local and regional fairs before 1860. After that date, and for several years, Buena Vista was the Sonoma leader for such honors.

Fauré also produced a fairly successful sparkling wine, but its production was too costly a process for Vallejo to seriously go commercial with it. An interest in producing such a wine, to compete with the large amount of California imports of sparklers from France, grew in the late 1850s. Commercially it started in Los Angeles where Pierre and Jean-Louis Sainsevain began producing their "Sparkling California" in 1855.[10]

Haraszthy also thought Buena Vista should produce a "champagne," which became the common term for the Golden State's sparklers then and later. As early as 1858 he described his experiments, making a trial sparkler from his 1857 vintage. But he did not commit Buena Vista to commercial production until 1862 when his son Arpad came home from France, where he had been studying Champagne production. Like the Sainsevain operation, Arpad's sparklers proved a costly failure and cost him his job at Buena Vista. But in 1865 he joined forces with San Francisco wine dealer Isador Landsberger, a combination that produced "Eclipse," California's first sparkling success.[11]

Better Wine Grape Varieties

It did not take long for those involved in Sonoma viticulture after 1855 to realize that at least part of their future depended on finding better wine grape varieties. For a while many looked to the "foreign" vinifera varieties brought west from New England. Mostly table grapes, few added to the state's wine quality. As yet there was no movement in Sonoma to import really fine wine grapes, such as Riesling and Cabernet Sauvignon, as had taken place in the Santa Clara Valley in the 1850s. The newly formed, and short-lived, Sonoma Horticultural Society decided to buy a load of those aforesaid "foreign" varieties from Napa's Joseph Osborne, a New Englander with a solid tie to another New England importer in San Francisco.

The Society's secretary, William Boggs, owned land near Buena Vista and later won a premium for the best Sonoma vineyard in 1861. Late in 1859 he traveled to Napa to accompany two wagon loads of cuttings from Osborne's Oak Knoll Ranch. There were muscats, Chasselas, Reine de Nice, Black Hamburg and many other table varieties, including some "Zinfindal." Boggs stored the load, but found later that the cruel winter of 1859–1860 had wiped out almost all of the shipment, except the Zinfindal. He planted these and in 1862 he had enough grapes to make a small batch of wine. Boggs and his Missouri friends thought they tasted too tart for wine and took them to Victor Fauré to trade for some of Mariano Vallejo's vinegar.

The Frenchman then made Sonoma wine history by telling Boggs that they were precisely the sort needed to make a good red table wine, a claret. He also suggested to Boggs that they might really be a red Bordeaux variety. Fauré made a small batch of wine and the word was soon out all over the Sonoma Valley. Within a few years there were not enough Zinfandel cuttings in the valley to meet the demand.

At the same time San Jose nurseryman Antoine Delmas was making a wine from a New England import, the Black St. Peters, later found to be identical to the Zinfandel. At the 1859 State Fair it won the first premium for red wine. The incredulous judges wondered how such a fine wine could be made from grapes "selected more as table fruit than for winemaking."[12]

By the end of the fifties Haraszthy was having good success marketing and promoting his Buena Vista wines. In 1860 he had a depot and a retail outlet on Market Street in San Francisco. The California Farmer claimed that Buena Vista wines were "becoming favorites with those formerly used to the best French wine."

But Haraszthy knew that if Californians were to make really good wine they had to have plenty of the best wine vinifera varieties, like Riesling and Cabernet. He also hoped the new state government would actively support and give assistance to its agricultural interests; he called for the state to establish agricultural schools. Using viticulture as an example, he suggested that such schools might collect, test and distribute vines to the appropriate regions of California. Many farmers had followed Col. Warren's call to plant vines, but if they were to put in more than an acre or so, they faced the nagging problem of "What to plant–here!" Between 1858 and 1860 Haraszthy developed what he hoped might be a solution to this problem.

In January 1861 the master of Buena Vista presented a resolution to the California Agricultural Society which asked it to use its auspices to have the legislature create a viticultural commission. One commissioner should go to Europe to collect varieties of grapes associated with Europe's finest wines. He also called for the state to sponsor a system to secure and distribute the vines collected. He also suggested that the legislature fund the entire operation.

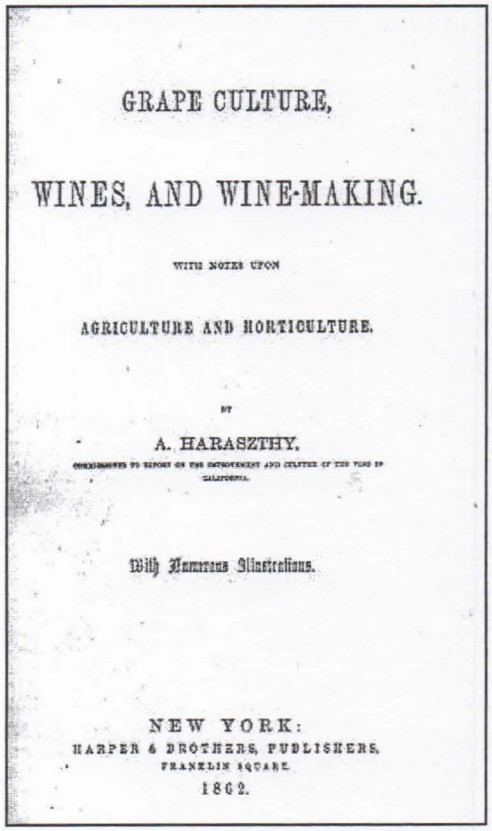
The agricultural Society supported the idea and

passed it on to the legislature. A watered-down form of the resolution was approved by both houses, but it did not authorize the collection of vines. And the costs accumulated by the European commissioner were to be his alone, for he "shall not ask for, or receive, any pay, or other compensation...." Governor John Downey signed the bill into law and immediately appointed Haraszthy as commissioner for Europe. His sole task was to gather information on the best examples of European viticulture and wine production.[13]

The Gathering of the Vines

Haraszthy now planned a grand family adventure in Europe. He would take his wife Eleanora and their eighteen-year-old daughter Ida. Since it was clear that the legislature intended him to act on his own, he tried to raise money through advertisements in the press which promised specimens of European vines and fruit trees for those who would advance him money to cover their cost. He got virtually no response to this "pig-in-a-poke." But on March 2 charges against him for his operations at the U.S. Mint were dropped and he was free to use his various properties as collateral to borrow money for the trip. He also decided to write a book covering the European adventure and sold the idea to Harper & Bros., the New York publisher.

Just before the family sailed from San Francisco in June 1861, Agoston wrote an article for the California Farmer addressed to the people of Sonoma and California. On the trip he would promote California business and agriculture and urge European investment in the Golden State. He promised to broadcast the future of California as a producer of world class wines, specifically drawing attention to Sonoma as the future center of such development.[14]


GRAPE CULTURE,

WINES, AND WINE-MAKING.

WITH NOTES UPON

AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE.

BY

A. HARASZTHY,

COMMISSIONER TO REPORT ON THE IMPROVEMENT AND CULTURE OF THE VINE IN CALIFORNIA.

With Numerous Illustrations.

NEW YORK:
HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS,
FRANKLIN SQUARE.
1862.

When the family arrived in France they were joined by son Arpad, and they were off to Burgundy and the Rhineland. At Hochheim they visited a large producer of sparkling wine, where, it transpired, their host was Hermann Dresel, the brother of Buena Vista's winegrowing neighbor, Emil Dresel. They all would surely have been surprised to know that Emil would later succeed Haraszthy as superintendent at Buena Vista.[15]

They also visited Switzerland, Italy and Spain. Along the way Haraszthy purchased vines and had them sent on to Le Havre, where they were transshipped to San Francisco.

Haraszthy arrived at that port December 5, 1862. A few days later it began raining and did not let up until late January, causing the greatest flooding in California's recorded history. The Central Valley was a lake, but Sonoma was simply drenched. The state had also weathered a political storm in Haraszthy's absence.

While at sea as the Haraszthys headed for Europe, the Civil War had burst into an all-out conflict. The legislature that made Haraszthy a commissioner had been controlled by Democrats, many of whom had been sympathetic to the Southern cause. Two weeks before the vines arrived in San Francisco, Republican Governor Leland Stanford and the new pro-Union legislature were sworn in. Democrat Haraszthy's plea for compensation for his expenses and for money to pay for the vines was solidly rejected by the Republican legislators. Confederate battlefield successes and a very tight state budget put these new representatives in no mood to pay for a Hungarian nobleman's family vacation in Europe. Historian Brian McGinty has shown that Haraszthy's connection to pro-Southern Democrats influenced the rejection of his requests. But he has argued persuasively that it was more a question of farming representatives being outvoted by the mining bloc and their fellows. Haraszthy had no claim on state money, and he knew it. His commission specifically forbade him even to ask.[16]

The tragedy in this affair was not concerned with Haraszthy's finances. It was that the huge collection of vines eventually came to nothing. That the collection acted as any kind of basis for the development of California's great wine industry, as it has been often claimed, is once again supported by not a jot of contemporary historical evidence.[17]

A significant number of the imported vines were planted at Buena Vista. We have no idea what the varieties were, or how many. Later when Commissioner Charles Wetmore tried to find any vineyardists in the

1870s or early 1880s who had acquired any of the 1862 imports, he could find only two, and these men had planted table varieties.

Had the legislature followed through on Warren's and Haraszthy's advice to establish some kind of agency to test and distribute the vines, the huge importation might have had a practical effect on the future of the state's wine industry. Nevertheless, all of Haraszthy's goals expressed in promoting his European adventure were prescient. But it was not until the years after 1875, when Professor Eugene Hilgard arrived at the University of California, that virtually all of Haraszthy's hopes for California agriculture were fulfilled by the Berkeley scholars and their supporters. I have no doubt that Haraszthy's earlier efforts were well remembered in those days.

We do know the names of the vines that Haraszthy collected. Only a small percentage would have been useful. Of the 487 varieties listed in his catalogue which was later published by Charles Wetmore in the 1881 revised edition of the *First Annual Report of the Board of State Viticultural Commissioners*, only thirty-one today are well-established in the winegrowing world. I believe the catalogue would have presented a confusing and indecipherable maze to the typical vineyardist. There was no way to tell if a variety was meant for wine, raisins or the table.[18]

Haraszthy Recovery Plan

Haraszthy was not slowed a bit by the legislature's lack of support. He had several large-scale ideas and he plunged ahead as soon as the Sonoma Valley dried out in the spring of 1862. He had a good way to relieve his financial pinch after he returned. The vast piece of land he had acquired east of Buena Vista covered thousands of acres, mostly mountainous terrain. But just east of Buena Vista was the Lovall Valley, a beautiful undeveloped area, perfect for winegrowing, as it is today. Haraszthy sold off several plots there at good prices, some of which the buyers had him plant straight to vineyard for them. Even before he left for Europe, he sold undeveloped Buena Vista land just east of town. Two of these buyers later made history. One was Charles Krug, who had owned neighboring land to Haraszthy's Crystal Springs property. In Sonoma he planted his Montebello Ranch to vines, but was soon off to Napa Valley to marry Carolina Bale, whose dowry of 540 acres was an attractive magnet. Krug sold his land to Moses Heller. He, and later his son, made wine there until 1895. The other was John Swett, a Yankee school teacher who was elected California Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1863. This father of the state's public education system later moved to the East Bay and developed his Hill Girt Vineyard, one of Contra Costa County's finest winegrowing establishments.[19]

Another of Haraszthy's land customers became one of Sonoma's greatest wine producers. Jacob Snyder had worked with Haraszthy at the mint and later bought seventy-four acres adjoining Buena Vista to the northwest. He called his estate El Cerrito Ranch and soon made it a wine-producing showplace for the Sonoma Valley. His red table wines, particularly his Zinfandel, were touted by many as the best in the valley in the 1870s. In 1872 the State Agricultural Society invited him to lead their tour of the Sonoma Valley. He later would serve as superintendent of Buena Vista.[20]

Rhinefarm

Emil Dresel was the man Snyder succeeded at Buena Vista. He was another newcomer to the Sonoma Valley and was seriously interested in winegrowing. He had formed a partnership with Jacob Gundlach in 1857 and they bought 400 acres of land about a mile south of Buena Vista in 1858, much of which today is part of the Carneros Viticultural Area. The partners called their spread Rhinefarm, although each held separate title to his portion of the estate. Emil Dresel died in 1869 and his brother Julius took his place. When the partnership divided in 1875, J. Gundlach & Co. was formed and Julius ran Dresel & Co.

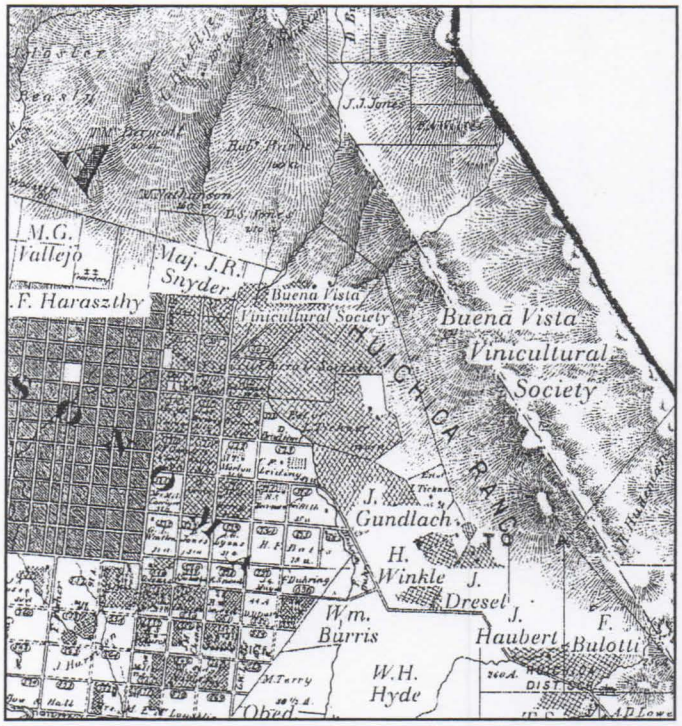
Emil and Julius Dresel had come to Texas after 1848. Theirs was a wine family, but in vain they tried to raise Riesling in Texas from vines Emil had brought from Germany. He went on to California in 1851 and, previously trained as an architect, he made a small fortune producing a series of lithograph collections, today treasured by collectors of California landscapes from the early years of statehood.[21]

There were four partners in the Rhinefarm operation at the outset, but two were soon out of the picture. The two remaining partners planted 85 acres of vines in the winter of 1858–1859, mostly to German varieties Gundlach had sent back from a recent trip to the Rhineland. He had been a very successful brewer in San Francisco and now handled the company's finances. Dresel was the wine master, producing some of the best light white table wines in the state. When he died in 1859 Rhinefarm's winery had a 200,000-gallon capacity. The Dresel and Gundlach families continued to prosper from their production of fine wines until Prohibition. We shall see Julius Dresel make history after 1878 as he helped lead the fight against phylloxera. In 1973 commercial winegrowing at the Rhinefarm was revived at the Gundlach-Bundschu Winery by descendants of the founders.

Rhinefarm in the late 1870s had actually become the center of a little German winegrowing community in the eastern Sonoma Valley, which included Henry Winkle, Jacob Haubert and Louis Tichener. Until

those years the Sonoma Valley was where almost all the county winegrowing action occurred. In 1863 the area had fifty-three wine producers. By 1868 the valley had almost 6,000 acres of wine grapes. Each year after 1860 saw the viticultural development of the valley grow steadily northward in the direction of the Santa Rosa area. In a later chapter we shall see the area between Santa Rosa and the Alexander Valley add more than 15,000 acres of wine grapes.

Most of the new vineyardists started as Nicholas Carriger had; they planted field crops, vegetable crops, ran cattle, planted small fruit orchards and grape vines. A few expanded their vineyards to a commercial size of ten acres or more. About 35% of the county's vineyardists had that much land in vines in the 1860s. The median size of the vineyards was 7.2 acres.



1877 Thompson Atlas showing Sonoma Vineyards east of town

In those days ten acres of vines would probably produce enough grapes to make about 15,000 gallons of wine. But many growers lacked the capital to build and equip a winery. For a few years they could find a market for their fruit as table grapes. As the years went by, more commonly they sold their grapes to local wineries. Others sold large amounts of grapes, particularly Zinfandel by the 1870s, to big-scale wine producers in San Francisco, such as Charles Kohler, Gottlieb Groezinger and Isador Landsberger. What we call today "custom crushing" was also practiced. Growers could contract a local winery to makeup their grapes on shares, then one or both would sell the resulting wine where they could. Victor Fauré made lots of such wine on shares, on top of what he made for Vallejo. In Sonoma City Camille Aguillon was the leader with a large adobe winery near the plaza. But he didn't own a vine.

Valley of the Moon

Earlier we looked at pioneer efforts west and north of Sonoma. In the 1860s there are several more worth noting north of Nicholas Carriger's operation. His neighbor, Oliver W. Craig, had caught the wine fever in 1860 and built a stone winery in 1865. He got his Riesling cuttings from Emil Dresel and was best known for his whites from that famed variety. His total production averaged about 25,000 gallons.[22]

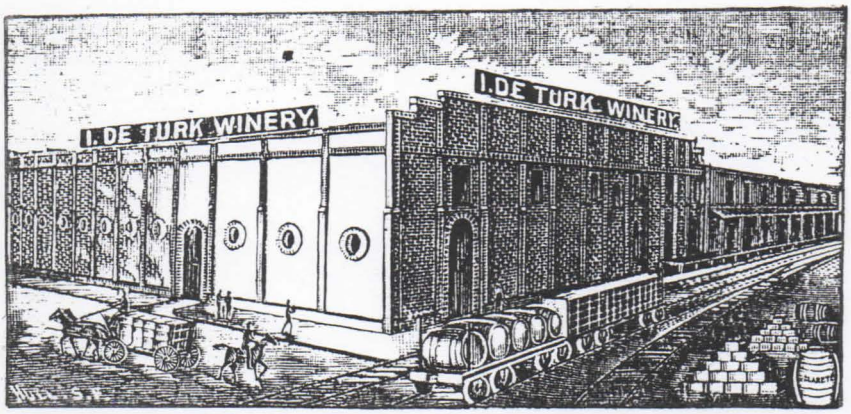
Every good history of California wine mentions an 1873 event in Craig's vineyard. Armed with a magnifying glass and a scientific text, he and Horatio Appleton, a Glen Ellen vineyardist, identified the tiny bugs on the roots of Craig's vines as Phylloxera vastatrix, "the Destroyer." Historian Ruth Teiser termed this event, "the incident that triggered the opening shot in the two-decade war to control the scourge."[23]

In the Valley of the Moon, around Glen Ellen, is where William McPherson's neighbor, Joshua Chauvet, settled in 1856. He planted a few vines in the 1860s, but did not produce wine until the 1870s, and tons of it then. His neighbor, Charles Justi, also planted vines in the 1860s and made wine. The Glen Ellen Tavern was his best customer, he being the owner. He was also Glen Ellen's first postmaster in 1871. Just to the east was a larger spread developed in the 1860s by Charles V. Stuart. His Scottish-born wife, Ellen Ann Stuart, gave her name to the property, Glen Ellen. Stuart changed the name to Glen Oaks when his wife's name took on a grander meaning.

Another Stuart neighbor was Jacob Warfield, a physician who planted sixteen acres of vines in 1862. After his death in 1878 his wife, Catherine, but always Kate, took over the winegrowing estate and became a close friend of another lady whose husband was the pioneer in the area, William Hood. He had acquired a huge portion of Los Guilicos land grant in 1849. A few years later he built a remarkable brick mansion, which stands today, California Landmark No.692. In the early sixties Hood planted forty acres of Mission vines and built a large winery; his distillery went up at the same time. His brandy was soon famous, but it may have been his personal downfall. In 1858 he had married teenager Eliza Shaw, and in the 1870s, as William fell victim to alcoholism, she took over complete control of the Hood estate. These three Glen Ellen women soon formed a

remarkable viticultural triumvirate, which I shall discuss in a later chapter.[24]

South of the Hood mansion a rough road headed west over the ridge to Bennett Valley, where several small vineyards were planted in the 1860s. Here Isaac De Turk planted sixteen acres in 1862 on his Yulupa



Ranch. Before the decade was out he had a 100,000-gallon winery facility that occupied one city block in Santa Rosa, and in the seventies he became the largest wine producer in Sonoma County.[25]

Buena Vista Vinicultural Society

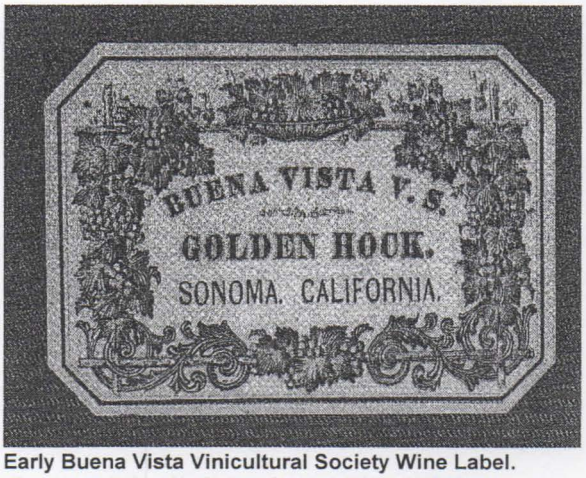
We must return to Buena Vista for one of the most dramatic and historically important Sonoma winegrowing stories of the era. After his return from Europe in 1862, Haraszthy continued selling property but was still in deep financial trouble. His solution, worked out with several San Francisco businessmen, was to go public with Buena Vista, to incorporate the operation and attract well-heeled investors as shareholders. His goal was to transform his large-scale agricultural estate into a world-class wine facility. First he had to make the place look like one. Within eighteen months he had replaced Rose's old press house with a great stone winery, today's California Historical Landmark No.392, and then the finest winery in California. In 1864 an even larger winery was built right next door. There would be nothing like these winery structures in California for another twenty years. The northern California press was full of laudatory and descriptive articles. After the 1863 vintage Buena Vista received national coverage in a long article in Harper's Magazine. It focused sharply on Arpad Haraszthy's champagne production, which ended in failure when his 1863 cuvée failed to sparkle.[26]

Incorporation of the estate as the Buena Vista Vinicultural Society (BVVS) took place March 23, 1863, the papers signed by Haraszthy and eight San Francisco businessmen. The new company paid Haraszthy and his wife 2600 of the 6000 shares for the entire property. The future looked bright indeed, at least in the promotional literature aimed at selling more shares.[27]

Vineyard expansion continued at Buena Vista, and wine production in 1864 hit 42,000 gallons. But the corporation showed no profit. Haraszthy had an idea he had picked up on the European trip, which he thought would increase production, boost wine quality and stimulate profits. He decided to take up "close-spacing" of vines in all the estate's vineyards. Rather than the 680 vines per acre spaced at eight-foot intervals, there would be 2,000 vines per acre, or more. Now there would be 237 acres of vines at close intervals. The result was an awkward disaster, with rows criss-crossing the vineyards and making the usually well-organized harvest a riot for the disciplined Chinese vineyard men. Spring cultivation was almost impossible; the horse teams could not operate in the clutter.[28]

By 1866 the BVVS board had decided that the close-spacing project had to end. Without outright firing Haraszthy they offered the superintendency to Emil Dresel, long a sharp critic of Haraszthy's experiment. He agreed to take the post if he could restore the vineyards to 680 vines per acre. He was a good choice. While BVVS had never shown a profit, Dresel's Rhinefarm had been orderly and prosperous.[29]

Haraszthy left Buena Vista in 1867, declared bankruptcy, and in 1868 headed south for Nicaragua to run a distillery producing spirits from sugar cane. After July 1869 he was never seen or heard from again; there has never been clear evidence to explain his disappearance.[30]



Early Buena Vista Vinicultural Society Wine Label. [Courtesy Brian McGinty, *Strong Wine*, 1978.]

Brian McGinty, Haraszthy's biographer, has asked this question about the Master of Buena Vista:

"Was he one of those men who are suited to launch businesses with great promise, but never see them through to their greatness—a gifted, even brilliant entrepreneur, but an erratic, undependable manager?" I unhesitatingly answer, "Yes." We shall pick up the Buena Vista story shortly.

The 1870s

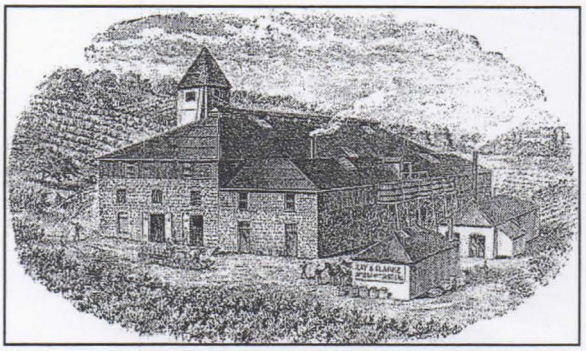
The 1870s was a complex decade for California winegrowers. The early years were fairly prosperous, but the failure of a great New York banking house in September 1873 triggered a national depression that lasted until 1878 and pushed many Sonoma vineyardists and wine producers to the wall. For many, this five-year period was a time to survive or get out. Total vineyard acreage in Sonoma County was static between 1868 and 1878, between 6,000 and 7,000 acres. But these numbers are deceptive. Vineyard acreage did grow between Santa Rosa and Healdsburg, but in the lower Sonoma Valley the phylloxera was on the march. Who would plant when there was no solution in sight? Buena Vista's vineyards were the oldest in the region and began to decline the earliest, for the destructive louse had been working there many years before it was officially discovered in 1873.

When Emil Dresel died in 1869 his brother, Julius, took over the estate. He arrived in California from Texas with a thorough understanding of viticulture and winemaking from his early days in Germany and his experimental work in Texas. There he had developed a powerful interest in the phylloxera and had, with others, developed an idea from his contacts with scientists and nurserymen in Missouri on how to defeat the "destroyer." After 1878 he became the successful Sonoma leader in the fight against the pest.

Hard times in the mid-seventies drove down land values to a point where many families held mortgages that were "under water"—the market value of their land was less than what was owed on the mortgage. It was a time when men with a solid capital position could buy good farm land at bargain prices.

William McPherson Hill was able to expand his estate to almost 18,000 acres in these years. But his interest in winegrowing was focused sharply on high quality, and rarely had a vintage greater than 10,000 gallons. In 1874 an 800-acre spread just north of the Hill property was acquired by Charles Kohler. In doing so he moved the center of Kohler & Frohling, his gigantic pioneer Los Angeles wine company, to the north bay. He was convinced that table wine was the key to California's wine future, and he saw correctly that this future was destined to be worked out in the coastal valleys of the Bay Area. At his massive cellars in San Francisco, he had been making Sonoma red wine for several years, from purchased grapes, mostly Zinfandel. He bought the land on which Jackson Temple had his thirty-five-acre Tokay Vineyard. Kohler kept that strange and meaningless name and planted first-class varieties. A huge production facility was constructed and the vineyards eventually covered 350 acres.[31]

The rock-bottom prices for land above Santa Rosa were an attraction for one easterner with lots of cash. In 1858 Thomas Lake Harris had founded a religious colony, the Brotherhood of the New Life, and had produced small amounts of wine in New York on Lake Erie at Brocton. He came to California in 1875 with the idea of establishing a large agricultural colony and was able to buy 400 acres in the lower foothills north of Santa Rosa, for which he paid only $50 per



Fountaingrove Winery, Santa Rosa

acre. In these years he always had plenty of money since several of his followers had come to him with large fortunes The first agriculture at Fountaingrove was dairying. But Harris had picked up the scent of the coming boom in California wine and was soon planting vines. Within five years he had built a large winery whose eventual capacity was 600,000 gallons. We shall see more of Fountaingrove in a later chapter.[32]

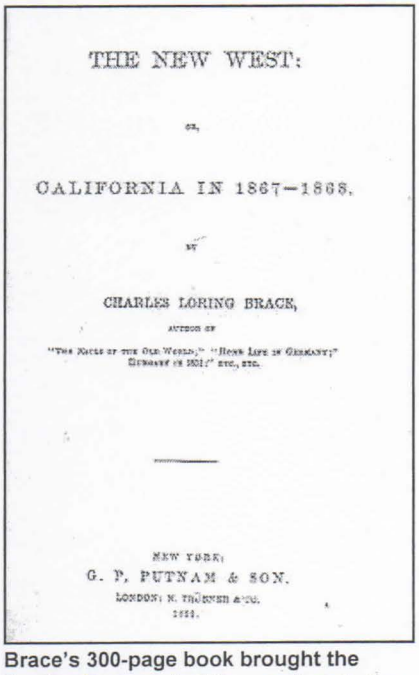
The most important Sonoma winegrowing area today that got its start in the 1870s was Dry Creek Valley, just west of Healdsburg. George Black planted vines there in 1869 and, with Alex Colson, built a small winery the next year. According to historian Jack Florence this was the second commercial winery north of Santa Rosa. By the mid-seventies there were sixteen small vineyards in Dry Creek. By 1883 there were fifty-four covering 807 acres. The boom of the eighties made Dry Creek real wine country.[33]

Downfall of Buena Vista

The greatest victim of the hard times in the 1870s and the deadly advance of the phylloxera was Buena Vista. The general public, the press and later writers put the blame for the end of BVVS on Haraszthy's mismanagement. This was a mistake. His son, Arpad, was correct in later continually defending his father against such charges. But in doing so he

concocted an image of a public figure based on historical claims that today are almost laughable. Agoston was not the father of California's great commercial wine industry of the 1880s. If anyone deserves such a sobriquet I believe it should be Charles Kohler. Haraszthy did not import the first collection of fine European wine grapes. All contemporary evidence from the 1850s awards that palm to San Jose's Antoine Delmas in 1852. And he certainly did not introduce Zinfandel to California from his native Austria-Hungary. We think we know that George Gibbs brought the vine to Long Island from Vienna. It was imported to California from New England in the 1850s by several of the state's nurserymen.

Agoston Haraszthy did not found the California wine industry, but no one contributed more to its very early growth. He and James Warren were its greatest early publicists. In advocating production of better wine he was the young industry's conscience, as Eugene Hilgard was years later. He practiced and publically advocated many vineyard and cellar techniques that became standard in California years later. He certainly was more responsible than any other individual for getting Sonoma winegrowing up and running in the 1850s.


THE NEW WEST:

or,

CALIFORNIA IN 1867–1868.

by

CHARLES LORING BRACE,

Author of

"The Races of the Old World," "Home Life in Germany," "Germany in 1851," etc., etc.

NEW YORK:
G. P. PUTNAM & SON.

Brace's 300-page book brought the Pacific Slope and all its wonders to the American people.

Haraszthy did leave Buena Vista vineyards in a mess in 1868 as the result of his "close-spacing" policy. But Emil Dresel soon had most of the clutter cleaned up. Charles Loring Brace, the noted social reformer, visited Buena Vista soon after Dresel took over and praised his work and the Buena Vista wines. He noted the heavy cost of the clean-up and remarked correctly that BVVS had never shown a profit, "and perhaps never will." But the estate's excellent wines, "were what counted, not dividends."[34]

Sonoma wine and grape prices rose slightly between 1870 and 1872. By 1871 Buena Vista had production soaring, 101,000 gallons, 160,000 in 1871. Prospects were good enough to hire Eadward Muybridge to produce a collection of photographs of the great winery. Today it is considered the greatest 19th century collection of winery and vineyard photographs in the world. But the public relations dividend was diminished by the national economic disaster. The country's over-expansion of productive capacity in agriculture meant falling prices, vanishing credit and unemployment. The full force of the disaster hit California in 1875.

At Buena Vista better wine grapes for better wine was an important goal. Mission varieties were grafted over to Gutedel and Burger to complement the already good stand of Riesling. White table wine in the German style was becoming a Sonoma Valley standard by 1874. Zinfandel acreage was also expanded at Buena Vista. By 1875 there was also considerable replanting of fairly large vineyard spots hit by phylloxera, some as large as a quarter acre. But there was as yet no remedy in clear sight for the scourge. For now it was replant and pray.[35] Where new vineyards were seen in the county was in the Healdsburg area where land was cheap and phylloxera had not appeared.

At the time of the onslaught of the 1875 depression, the BVVS had come under the control of William Ralston, the wealthy and powerful San Francisco financier. He controlled the great Bank of California and had started construction of San Francisco's Palace Hotel. He was also invested in several shaky enterprises, Buena Vista being one of his least unsound ventures. On August 26, 1875 Ralson's empire collapsed and his Bank of California went under. In the middle of the vintage, wine prices collapsed, with Buena Vista still holding most of its unsold 1874 wine. It was a huge vintage that gave Sonoma County the leadership in state wine production. Buena Vista made 203,000 gallons; the county totaled 1,800,000. Just when smaller crops might have been welcome, Sonoma's production was soaring.[36]

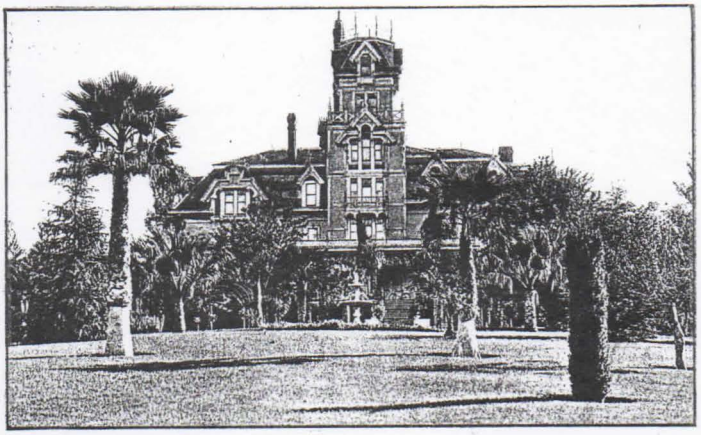
Looking back on the mid-seventies, Eugene Hilgard, the new Professor of Agriculture at the University of California, likened those years to his Sonoma audience as a time when it was more profitable for vineyardists to turn the hogs into vineyards than to pay to have their grapes harvested. It wasn't quite that bad all over Sonoma, but it was very bad.[37]

In 1877 with wine at wholesale prices of ten to fifteen cents per gallon, production was still high. The Bay Area press bemoaned what looked like the end of the region as the center of the state's fine wine production. "Full cellars and empty pockets" was

perfectly illustrated in 1877 at Buena Vista, as vineyard decline accelerated and production was down to 158,000 gallons. This had been the second drought year in a row. There was no thought by the Board to replant dead and dying vineyards. There was no money to do it and there was still no solution understood for the phylloxera infestation.

With the wine industry tottering and the two-year drought accelerating the death of the vineyards, the BVVS leaders saw no way out. On July 22, 1878 the trustees, still faced with loads of unpaid debt, announced their intention to unincorporate the company. There were still almost 6,000 acres of land with economic value, even as bare land.[39]

The land and buildings were sold to Robert C. Johnson in January 1879. He had been a member of the BVVS Board of Trustees and had a large fortune based on his father's iron works in San Francisco.[40] Johnson had no strong interest in winegrowing, but there was still activity for a while, even though the vineyards were now totally infested. In 1879 there were 57,000 gallons. Thereafter grapes were shipped to San Francisco wine producers. After 1883 Johnson and Buena Vista were out of the wine and grape business.[41]



The Johnson's Buena Vista Castle

Johnson and his wife were primarily art collectors. They sold off all but 300 acres of the estate and spent heavily to restore the land to its natural beauty. The great winery buildings were preserved and used to breed and keep carriage horses. The couple built a great mansion, which eventually burned down. The winery and press house passed through several owners until they were resuscitated for wine production by Frank and Antonia Bartholomew in 1943.[42]

Buena Vista's demise was due more to a perfect storm of bad luck than bad management. But if the trustees could have seen events and conditions over the next two years, they might have hung on. Between 1877 and 1882 Sonoma County's vineyard acreage almost doubled. By 1879 there were no more "full cellars and empty pockets." After the 1878 vintage the Pacific Rural Press wrote that, "a winemaker's face these days is a joyful thing to behold." The San Francisco press was now reporting booming land prices in Sonoma County. Good times were coming, but no one yet was predicting the massive wine boom that was on the way, which would help to change the face of Sonoma and Napa permanently.[43]

[*continued next issue – Napa Co.*]

NOTES

1. Wayward Tendrils Quarterly (WTQ), 10/2010, 24-25; 1/2011, 34; 7/2011, 28-20.
2. Madie Brown, "The Vineyards of Gen. M. G. Vallejo," California Historical Society Quarterly, 9/1937, 241-9; Ruth Teiser, *Winemaking in California*, 1983, 27-28; Charles L. Sullivan, *Sonoma Wine and the Buena Vista Story*, Ch. 1. This history is scheduled for publication in the fall of 2013 by the Wine Appreciation Guild of So. San Francisco.
3. C. A. Menefee, *Historical and Descriptive Sketch-Book of Napa, Sonoma....* Napa City, 1873, 298-299.
4. Pacific Rural Press, 12/23/1871; Alta California, 5/20/1870; Sullivan, *Zinfandel*, 28-29.
5. California Farmer, 1/11/1855.
6. California Farmer, 10/19/1854, 5/17/1855.
7. Brian McGinty, *Strong Wine: The Life & Legend of Agoston Haraszthy*, Stanford, 1998, 295-298.
8. James L. L. Warren Papers, Bancroft Library, Box 2, Haraszthy to Warren, 3/29/1852.
9. Alta California, 11/10/1852; Los Angeles Star, 9/15/1853.
10. See WTQ, 11/2011, 21-22.
11. See WTQ, 4/2012, 17-20 for that story.
12. Sullivan, *Zinfandel*, 33-36.
13. *California Agricultural Society Proceedings for 1860*, 16-18; Alta California, 2/5/1861.
14. California Farmer, 6/14/1861.
15. Agoston Haraszthy, *Grape Culture, Wines and Wine-Making....*, New York, 1862. Published soon after Haraszthy returned to California, portions of this book make excellent reading about the European excursion.
16. Pinney, *History of Wine in America*, 1989, 279-281.
17. *First Annual Report of the Board of State Viticultural Commissioners*, 2nd ed., rev., 1881, 184-188.
18. Op. cit., 65-67.
19. J.P. Munro-Fraser, *History of Sonoma County*, 1879, 460-1; Sonoma Democrat, 6/10/1865; Menefee, 298- 9.
20. Teiser, 73-74.
21. Alta California, 8/18/1860, 12/13/1862; California Farmer, 9/26/1860; Ernest Peninou, *History of the Sonoma Viticultural District....*, 1998, 71-73.
22. Alta California, 10/7/1871; Peninou, *Sonoma*, 72-73 has a good reference map of the area around Sonoma City showing the pioneer vineyardists in 1877.
23. Teiser, 74-75.

24. Sonoma Democrat, 8/21/1880; Peninou, *Sonoma*, 95 (map of the Glen Ellen area in 1877).
25. Teiser, 74-75.
26. Alta California, 7/28/1863, 9/21/1863; California Wine, Wool and Stock Journal, May 1863, 78-79; Harper's New Monthly Magazine, June 1864, 22-30; McGinty, *Strong Wine*, 400-401.
27. *Report of the Buena Vista Vinicultural Society Board of Trustees....*, San Francisco, June 24, 1863.
28. McGinty, *Strong Wine*, 409-411, 431-436; California Farmer, 3/1/1866.
29. *BVVS Report*, 1867; Peninou, *Sonoma*, 67-68.
30. Alta California, 8/6/1869, 8/26/1869, 8/17/1869. The family believed he was devoured by an alligator as he was attempting to cross a stream. This is the explanation most writers have hit upon, for the drama it adds to the story, I believe.
31. Teiser, 60; Peninou, *Sonoma*, 94-98.
32. Robert V. Hine, *California's Utopian Colonies*, Berkeley, 1983, 12-18; Pinney, *History*, 333-334.
33. Jack W. Florence, *A Noble Heritage*, Geyserville, 1993, 23-43; cf. Peninou, *Sonoma*, 158-164.
34. Charles Loring Brace, *The New West or California in 1867–1868*, New York, 1869, 260-266. Brace writes over 40 pages on wines, winemaking, and grape growing.
35. Alta California, 2/17/1873, 3/15/1875, 10/4/1875.
36. Vincent Carosso, *The California Wine Industry, 1830–1895*, Berkeley, 1951, 95-97.
37. Pacific Rural Press, 11/30/1878.
38. San Francisco Bulletin, 7/13/1877; Alta California, 8/28/1876; Sonoma Democrat, 6/6/1877.
39. San Francisco Bulletin and San Francisco Post, both 7/22/1878.

The Old Sonoma Barracks: "By the early 1850s [General Vallejo] had built a fine new home west of town and transformed the old soldiers' barracks on the plaza into a winery building. There his Indian workers produced several hundred gallons of wine annually, along with some brandy..." (p.17)

40. Sonoma Index, 1/8/1879.
41. Sonoma Index, 7/17/1880, 11/27/1880; Peninou, *Sonoma*, 70.
42. *Saga of Sonoma*, Sonoma Historical Society, 1954.
43. Pacific Rural Press, 11/30/1878, 10/28/1880; Healdsburg Weekly Enterprise, 11/22/1877; San Francisco Bulletin, 8/25/1879.

FOSTER, cont. from p.19 —
several black and white photos, one map and a so-so index. (I say this because while the text mentions several wine newsletters, including the Grapevine, and even quotes Dan Berger, there is no index-citing to any of this.) Highly recommended.

Power Entertaining: Secrets to Building Lasting Relationships, Hosting Unforgettable Events, and Closing Big Deals from America's 1st Master Sommelier by Eddie Osterland, M.S. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2012. 220 pp., hardback, $21.95.

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Eddie Osterland, America's very first Master Sommelier, has produced a terrific book aimed at top-level business individuals needing direction on hosting wine business events or business dinners. He offers creative, fresh ideas and insightful suggestions for staging such events. (After reading his explanation of why Caesar salad is so often pushed by hotels for their banquets, I may never eat another bite.) Even for those of us who have been involved in wine for some time, there is interesting and new material.

The second half of his book is more of a general treatise on wine making and wine drinking that is probably very familiar territory to most California Grapevine readers.

One of the things that makes this work so readable is Osterland's humor. In the introduction he describes his final departure from his student days in France. When his car runs out of coolant, he is forced to pour bottles of wine into the radiator to coax the vehicle to make it to the airport—the wines included a 1959 Lafite and a 1959 Mouton. But it was 1973 and these were only $10 bottles back then. Only a single bottle made it with Osterland to the airport and he drank that bottle on the plane trip home. Highly recommended.

[*Bob Foster, a founder of the Wayward Tendrils, has been the longtime reviewer of wine books—in addition to his duties on the weekly wine-tasting panel—for the* California Grapevine, *based in San Diego, CA. We send our Tendril thanks for their always generous permission to reprint Bob's reviews.* —Ed.]

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