

the



WAYWARD TENDRILS

Newsletter

Vol.2 No.3

A WINE BOOK COLLECTOR'S CLUB

Sept 1992

THE SONOMA COUNTY WINE LIBRARY COLLECTION

by Bo Simons
c1992



In Search of Wine Knowledge: An association of wine growers wants to inform the California Governor and Legislature about the nature and extent of the phylloxera crisis. They wish to shed light, not generate heat, and want articles

and reviews of the literature that are cogent, evaluative and do not require a PhD in entomology to understand. They want not only the current information, but also source material from when the root louse ravaged California vineyards in the 1870s, '80s, and '90s.

The publicity staff of a winery wants to promote its new offering of Rhone-type wines, but can find very little information other than shallow tasting notes and cursory descriptions of the Rhone varietals. They would particularly like to see how the different soil and climate conditions of California influence these grapes -- Syrah, Mourvedre, Cinsault and Grenache among the reds; the Viognier, Condrieu, Marsanne and Roussane among the whites -- into wines, and how these wines differ from those produced on the Cote du Rhone.

A writer is putting finishing touches on a book-length history of the Dry Creek Valley. He has most of the primary sources located and has conducted extensive interviews with old-timers. He wants some

quotes or excerpts from the literature of wine, extending back maybe even to Roman times, to give his narrative resonance and put the 150 year history of growing wine grapes in Dry Creek Valley in the context of the millennia of the history of wine.

A wine writer crafts an article on mulled wine and needs to know the history of flavored and heated wines. He has heard that in the Middle Ages wine was heated, flavored with clove and other spices, strained through cloth, and thought to cure various ailments. He needs some authoritative sources to nail down this hearsay.

A Sonoma County grape grower plans to put several dozen acres under the vine. He has chosen Pinot Noir as the grape and wants to find the latest research done both on selecting the correct Pinot Noir clones and on the latest methods of trellising the vine. There are impressive bodies of research done both on clonal trials: selecting the most promising clones of a particular grape variety; and on canopy management: creating in the vineyard through training, trellising and spacing, an artful arrangement of the vegetative matter that will increase yield and improve quality. The grower knows the research exists but not how to tap into it.

These informational needs were satisfied at the Sonoma County Wine Library, a special collection and service of the Sonoma County Library. Supported in part through subscriptions of local growers, wineries and other wine-related busi-

nesses, the library seeks to support research and development within the local wine industry, provide marketing and other essential business information, collect materials on the history of winemaking around the world and preserve the rich heritage of local grape growing and wine making.

History: The idea for this wine library began in 1975 when Mildred Howie, writer and publicist, and George Vare, then president of Geyser Peak Winery, helped form the Russian River Wine Road, a group of area wineries united to reduce unnecessary competition and attract visitors to the area. Howie and Vare came to know Sonoma County's wine history, an exquisite and varied tale that begins with the Russians and the Spanish, includes Hungarian counts, Mexican generals, English mystics, montebanks and utopians of various national origins, the brothers Gallo and the family Sebastiani, and has its share of dark secrets and inspiring moments. Howie saw in the area's wine history a bountiful cultural resource that needed to be preserved. Industry people agreed that such a rich heritage deserved a home, and that the industry would benefit from a cooperatively financed business and technical library. Another factor was that since the '60s Napa had had a wine library, and Sonoma has always had a second banana, we-try-harder attitude about anything Napa did. After persuading all the Sonoma wine industry people that allying the wine library with the public library would bring a professional approach and offer the advantages of networking, Howie sought out David Sabsay, Director of the Sonoma County Public Library. He became an enthusiastic supporter, and helped establish the framework under which such a special library would become part of the public library system. Wineries, grape growers and wine-related businesses may subscribe to the Wine Library, making possible through their efforts a first class research facility that would be beyond the reach of any one of them. Sabsay was also able to provide the wine library a home. Healdsburg needed a new public library building, and an extra thousand square feet for the Wine Library

were included in the plans for the new building.

Libraries, Wine and All that Jazz:

Fund raising efforts began in earnest. The Sonoma County Wine Library Association was formed. The Association has recently changed its name to the Wine Library Associates of Sonoma County (WLASC). While subscribing directly to the Wine Library is the way industry shows its support, individuals may join the Associates, help the Library and participate in the WLASC's exciting events. In 1981, the same year that WLASC incorporated, the first Sonoma County Wine Auction was put on by the Healdsburg Kiwanis Club to benefit the yet-to-be-born Wine Library. In 1983 WLASC mounted the first annual edition of its enormously successful "Polo, Wine & All that Jazz" events, a combination polo match, wine tasting and jazz concert. Through these and other events, WLASC have raised and spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to help make the Sonoma County Wine Library a success.

Library Opens! The new Healdsburg Regional Library opened in November, 1988, and the Sonoma County Wine Library was officially dedicated in February, 1989. In the several years since then, the Library has handled tens of thousands of informational requests, and its patrons have checked out many more thousands of circulating books. Many researchers have used the rare books and the Wine Information Files at the Library. The word is getting out. The Library has acquired a reputation as an excellent business and technical library, an impressive historical archive and a richly rewarding browsing collection for both the wine professional and the oenophile.

Purpose, Collections, Activities. The Library's stated purpose includes: provide the latest information on the science and technology of making wine and growing grapes; make accessible materials on the business of wine, including marketing and economics; and collect and preserve the history of wine-making and grape growing world-wide with a special emphasis on Sonoma

County. Because it serves as a business and technical library, the Library emphasizes magazines and journals, the most current sources of information. The library subscribes to eighty periodicals in five languages covering all aspects of wine: from viticulture to microbiology, from analytical chemistry to food technology, from wine appreciation to wine marketing - the library's journals keep its users current.

The book collection is equally impressive. There are approximately 3,000 books on wine and related topics in nine languages. They range from beautiful old treasures in red morocco to current, highly technical works in utilitarian bindings.

Older Books: Many of the older items in the collection were part of the Library of the Vintner's Club of San Francisco. These books were bought by the Sonoma County Library with the help of the Sonoma County Wine Library Associates in 1984 before the Sonoma County Wine Library even had a home. Among the treasures from the Vintner's Club Collection is an English law, "Limiting and Setling [sic] the Price of Wine," passed in 1656 by one of Oliver Cromwell's Parliaments. There is also William Prince's *Treatise on the Vine* (New York: T & J Swords, 1830), an important early work in American viticulture. William Robert Prince, proprietor of the Prince Nursery and Linnean Botanic Garden on Long Island, described in detail hundreds of European and American grape varieties. The early mention in this work of "Zinfandel" helps discredit Arpad Haraszthy's claim that his father introduced Zinfandel into this country decades later at Buena Vista. Other treasures from the Vintner's Collection include the seven volumes of Viala and Vermorel's *Traite General de Viticulture: Ampelographie* (Paris: Masson et Cie, 1901-1910) with their magnificent, lush color plates of grapes.

The Library has actively acquired books to amplify the Vintner's Club Collection. Recent acquisitions include the second edition of Louis Pasteur's *Etude sur le Vin* (Paris: F.Savy, 1873) with its color

plates of what Pasteur saw when he turned his microscope upon wine. The Library has also bought a copy of *Libri de Rei Rustica* printed by Aldus Manutius in Venice, 1514. There is a gastronomic diary of A.J.A. Symons, co-founder with Andre Simon of the Wine & Food Society, recording the meals and wines that Andre, AJ, Maurice Healy, Ian Campbell and others enjoyed in 1935. Another recent addition is the exquisite *Mon Docteur le Vin* (Paris: Draeger Freres, 1936) with its vibrant watercolors by Dufy and its text glorifying the medicinal properties of wine some sixty years before Morley Safer discovered the French Paradox.

The Library also recently purchased the two volumes of Chaptal's *Traite Theorique et Pratique sur la Culture de la Vigne* (Paris: Delalain Fils, 1801). Chaptal was Napoleon's Minister of the Interior, and we remember him best for lending his name to the process of chaptalization, or the adding of sugar to must to increase the alcoholic content of the wine. Chaptal should be remembered for more: he organized the French production of gun powder; he developed the method of extracting sugar from beets; he built the wings of the Tuileries and the quays of the Seine. His *Traite* was the working manual of the vine and wine, the "first general treatise we can properly call modern," according to Hugh Johnson, who went on to attribute its success to the fact that "the chemist who set out the principles, as far as they were known, never lost sight of the particulars." (*Vintage: The Story of Wine*. London: Mitchell Beazley, 1989).

The older items in the collection are housed separately, processed archivally and enjoy a level of cataloguing that is truly impressive. Indeed, in a project started this last summer, the Library is adding to its online-cataloguing of these items: to the full MARC (library talk for Machine Readable Cataloguing) record of each rare book in the collection, we are adding notes on provenance, condition, bibliographical citations, as well as an annotation that

summarizes each book's content and importance to the history of wine, and as an artifact in the history of the book. We may at some future date transfer this data and print an elegant catalogue in book form of the collection.

New Materials, New Activities: Among the current works there are copies of *Impact's* various wine marketing studies, technical symposia on subjects from canopy management to winery financing and Rhone winemaking. The library tries to purchase nearly all new trade books on wine in English, and more selectively from French, German, Italian and Spanish. The Library also houses a growing collection of fiction with a wine setting.

In addition to books and magazines, the Library has CD-ROM databases dealing with viticulture and enology, helping provide access to articles in the technical wine literature. Maps, micro-film, video-cassette recordings and a nascent wine label collection help round out the collections. The Library creates and maintains a pamphlet file called the Wine Information File. This file contains clippings, the results of database searches, promotional material and historical documents from area wineries. The file is divided into four sections dealing with company specific topics, the history, technical, and business aspects of wine.

To make these materials truly accessible requires information professionals. I am the librarian in charge of building the collections and providing reference at the Wine Library. There are three other full-time librarians in the Healdsburg Library, and they all are familiar with the Wine Library. Reference service is available in person and by phone every hour the Library is open.

The holdings of the Library are catalogued to full -- and in the case of the rarer books, beyond -- Library of Congress standards and are available on the Sonoma County Library's Dynix online public access catalog. Terminals are in libraries throughout the County, but if you have a computer and a modem, you can dial in and

browse the holdings from anywhere over the telephone lines.

The Wine Library Associates of Sonoma County are starting to pursue an ambitious Oral History program. Members of the Oral History committee intend to interview those living treasures who have made the Sonoma wine industry what it is today. As a first step, the committee has sought and received a grant to transcribe, edit, index and publish several interviews. Historian William Heintz has interviewed hundreds of people in the Sonoma County wine industry over the past several decades. He has chosen five of his best, and the Sonoma County Wineries Foundation has awarded a grant of several thousand dollars to bring these out as handsome books modeled on the University of California's Oral History Series.

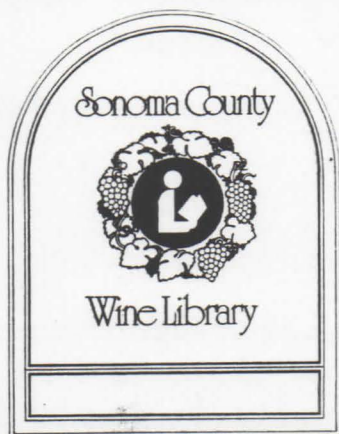
The WLASC is sponsoring a series of educational programs at the Library. Its first effort, a panel discussion on "Women in the Business of Wine," was a rousing success. Future topics include the craft and business of writing about wine, agricultural labor, and ampelography. The Associates have also sponsored programs on the Zinfandels and sparkling wines of Sonoma County.

An Invitation, Addresses, Hours: Please visit us if you are in the area. Join the Sonoma County Wine Library Association either as an individual or subscribe to the Wine Library if your business is closely tied to the Sonoma County wine industry. The Library participates in inter-library loan, so those parts of its collections which circulate are available to you through your local library.

The Sonoma County Wine Library, located in the Healdsburg Regional Library, Center and Piper Streets, Healdsburg, CA 95448, is open 9:30 AM to 9:00 PM Monday through Thursday; 9:30 AM to 6:00 PM Friday and Saturday. Call us at 707-433-3772. Our fax number is 707-433-1005. For detailed information on dialup, including other phone numbers throughout Sonoma County, please contact us. Inter-

library Loan requests should originate from your local library and be addressed to the county library headquarters: Sonoma County Library, Third & E Streets, Santa Rosa, CA 95404.

[This is the fifth in our series on the Wine Libraries of the World. Sincere thanks to Bo Simons for giving us this in-depth view of the Sonoma County Wine Library. All Wayward Tendril members are invited to join in this Series and tell us about their collections. --GGU]



BOOKS & BOTTLES

By Fred McMillin

In my Saturday seminars we taste wines and discuss associated literature: we match wine and books. Here are some of the winning pairs of recent months. If you can't locate something you want, phone and I'll tell you where I got mine.

1. South Africa - The Book: *1992 South African Wine Guide*, John Platter. The Wine: Blaauwklippen Winery (25 miles east of Cape Town) 1991 Chardonnay, \$15. Surprising intensity.

2. Brazil - The Book: *Wine Regions of the Southern Hemisphere*, H.J. de Blij. The Wine: Marcus James 1989 Brazilian Chardonnay, \$5. Not complex, but a very good buy.

3. International - The Book: *Chardonnay, Your International Guide* by Alan Young. The Wine: 1990 Rodney Strong Reserve Chardonnay, \$20: the first RESERVE Chardonnay ever produced by this Sonoma County winery. This one IS complex (and memorable).

4. Spain - The Book: *The New Wines of Spain* by Tony Lord. The Wine: Temp-ranillo is Spain's best red-wine varietal, and it shows beautifully in the 1985 "Conde de Valdemar," \$8.

5. France & California - The Book: *The Wines of Bordeaux*, by John Baxevanis contains a wealth of information, such as Bordeaux Merlot acreage being about twice that of Cabernet Sauvignon. Speaking of Merlot, here are three California wineries that have done something special with that grape in their 1989 vintage: Clos Pegase (\$16), Conn Creek (\$18) and Arrowood (\$25). Satiny but vigorous.

6. International - The Book: *Wine and the Vine: An Historical Geography of Viticulture and the Wine Trade*, awesome scholarship by Tim Unwin. The one photograph in the book of an Americana winery is that of Robert Mondavi. The Wine: the best Mondavi in our recent tastings was a gentle giant, a 1989 Reserve Pinot Noir, \$22.

7. Australia - The Book: *Wine Atlas of Australia & New Zealand*, James Halliday. The Wine: Coonawarra is one of the smallest wine districts in Australia (1 mi. by 8 mi.), yet it makes some of the biggest Cabs in the country. If you doubt this, try Rosemount Estates 1989 Coonawarra Show Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, \$15. Bliss in a bottle!



Quick, take an Alka-Seltzer!

They are astoundingly vivid, undeflected, radiantly, seethingly alive on the palate, not just larger than life, but realer than reality. Drinking them I have been moved to every emotion under the sun: wonder, sadness in the face of such utter beauty, frustration when the wine was so celestially multifaceted I couldn't assimilate all the flavors, shattering excitement at the sheer electricity, helpless yielding at the total seductiveness, tears of gladness, sorrow and almost rage at one special wine that was so fiercely beautiful I felt I couldn't rise up high enough to meet it. -- Terry Theise, quoted in the Companion Review. [from a recent issue of the *New Yorker*]

OUR MEMBERS WRITE . . .

Dear Gail,

"You've gone and done it again!! Vol.2 No.2 is filled with information of great interest to me as it must be to others. I am particularly glad to read about the POW and the Shields Library items.

For some years I have been skirting the idea of a record of the BW numbers issued -- as any listing of them shows so many missing. What has happened to them? I guess no one cares. I'm a nut to want to see it done, but now that it is available, I just might take it on! (The BATF records, that is.)

As an aside, my niece in Oregon has a scanner and her husband will be glad to scan the Zin book if no one else closer comes out of the woods. I'll write Bob.

Cheers!, John Sarles

Angela Stewart writes for our help in finding a needed book: *Visitenkarten des Weines*, 1966?, written by Herman Jung and published by C. Lange, Duisburg, Germany. She sends her thanks!

Millard Cohen responds to Bob Foster re the Zin scanner: Dear Bob, Although I can't help you now, I expect to have a scanner sometime within the next six to nine months and will be happy to work with you then. -- Sincerely, Millard Cohen, Publisher *IWFS Newsletter of the Americas*.

Owen Smith, a new Tendril, enclosed a kind note with his application questionnaire: "I learned a lot from the first two Newsletters. Thank you. And, I love the word Oenotypophily! Here's another word for canopy management: viticouture." Owen added that "he would like to see even a photocopy of the article "Useless Grape Varieties" by William Prince that appeared in *Home Gardener* (or *Practical Gardener*?) in 1863."

Jim Gabler took a moment from his busy schedule to send along his dues and some kind words -- both appreciated. "Thought the last issue of the Wayward Tendrils super -- very interesting reading."

Bo Simons

THE WAYWARD TENDRILS

Dear Bo,

In catching up on my reading (the first edition of W-T Newsletter), I enjoyed very much the Zinfandel Bibliography. I noted that you missed the little book: *California Wine List, Zinfandels: A Consumer's Guide to 125 Zinfandels*, published by Cheshire Booksellers, 1980. I believe that the tasting notes and ratings to be quite valuable. We have a few copies left and would be happy to offer them to W-T members at \$3 each postpaid. Or, both the *Zinfandel Selections: 20 Award Winning Zinfandels* and the above book for \$5 postpaid. Foreign shipments would need to add \$2 more for postage.

--Very best regards, Elliott Mackey



-- NEWS & NOTES --

The Cookbook Cottage in Louisville, Kentucky, sent us their latest catalog and Newsletter in which they tell us that the Cottage "founded in 1987, is the South's oldest, continuously operating bookstore dedicated solely to the world of comestible literature. We house an ever-changing stock of about 15,000 items...in many languages, spanning the hundreds of years of printed history." Their address is 1279 Bardstown Road, Louisville, KY, 40204.

Very scarce book for sale:

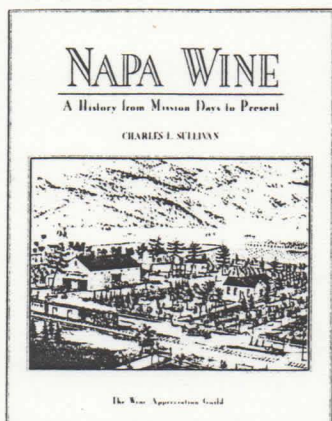
Copy No.49 of John Windle's 1980 limited edition facsimile reprint of Bosqui's 1877 *Grapes & Grape Vines of California* is being offered for sale by James L. Johnson for \$1275. It is bound in red quarter morocco and cloth lettered in gilt, in mint condition. Contact him at 24595 Soquel-San Jose Rd, Los Gatos, Cal 95030. (408) 353-2103.

In the June 1992 issue of *Decanter* magazine Colin Parnell reviewed a new facsimile edition of the rare 1876 classic Port wine book, *O Douro Ilustrado*, by Visconde de Villa Maior.

This facsimile is published by and available from the Instituto do Vinho do Porto [IVP], for \$12000 [escudos] plus \$2000 [escudos] for mailing. To order, send your check to IVP, Rua de Ferreira Borges, 4000 Porto, Portugal. You can also request their list of available publications.

AT LONG LAST!!

Further good news from Elliott at Wine Appreciation Guild: Tendril member Chas. Sullivan's eagerly-awaited book on the history of Napa Valley wine is being readied for a pre-Christmas December release. Thank you, Charles, the Napa Valley Wine Library, and the Wine Appreciation Guild.



NAPA WINE — A History from Mission Days to Present

by Charles L. Sullivan Illustrated by Earl Thollander Foreword by Robert Mondavi

NAPA WINE, A History from Mission Days to Present, Charles L. Sullivan. The Napa Valley of California has been recognized as a premier wine producing area since the 1870s. This is the first book to carefully examine and explain how Napa acquired this unique reputation: The soils, climate, grapes, and human resources that have built this panorama of viticultural excellence over 160 years. The earliest settlers, the Spanish missionaries and a parade of fascinating characters and geniuses provide a true story of intrigue and adventure better than any fiction. Meticulously researched by a prominent professor of California history, this book is based on all original research sources, old newspapers, court documents and oral histories. From the pioneer days of 1836 to 1860 to the modern wine boom of the 1970s to 1991, it is all there. No punches are pulled. Very entertaining for any reader and absolutely essential for anyone interested in wine or California history. This book will become a basic reference. It is produced under the guidance of the Napa Wine Library and is beautifully illustrated with original drawings by Earl Thollander and hundreds of historic photos. Vintage charts from 1880 to 1991, over 25 tables detailing acreage, production statistics, grape income and more. 400 pp. hardbound.

#6686

\$29.95

ISBN# 0-932664-70-9

The Newsletter is pleased to announce that our own W-T, Michael A. Amorose -- enthusiastic wine taster and generous contributor to wine literature -- has produced a new wine tasting guide: *A Guide to Recent Vintage Premium Wines*, 1992,

published by The Foundation for the National Technology Medal. He spent over 700 hours tasting 1100 wines, choosing 990 to include in this 119-page guide. It is not available to the general public but Michael is happy to offer copies to Tendril members for \$20 each (incl 1st class post). Or, a box of 20 copies for \$400 (Christmas is coming, he reminds us!) Write him at One Sansome Street, #3300, San Francisco, CA 94104. He will be delighted to inscribe your copy.

**WINE BOOK EVENT
AT
CALIFORNIA ANTIQUARIAN
BOOK FAIR**

Mark your calendars for the weekend of February 19-21, 1993 for the California Antiquarian Book Fair in San Francisco. WAYWARD TENDRILS is planning a special event to coincide with the Book Fair. The event will include an evening of fine wine and food, a noted wine book writer, and a tour of a major wine library. As we go to press details are not set. We will inform all members once all the arrangements are solid.

--TO THE READER--

Who faulteth not, liveth not; who mendeth faults is commended: The Printer hath faulted a little; it may be the author oversighted more. Thy paine, Reader, is the least; then erre not thou most by misconstruing or sharpe censuring; least thou be more uncharitable, then either of them hath been heedlesse.--Robartes on Tythes, 1613. Or, please beare with us while your Editor learnes a new computer. With kinde thanks.

--THE WAYWARD TENDRILS is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1990 for Wine Book Collectors. Yearly membership dues are \$10 and include subscription to the WAYWARD TENDRILS Newsletter, published quarterly. Permission to reprint is requested. Please address all correspondence to THE WAYWARD TENDRILS, P.O. Box 9023, Santa Rosa, CA 95405 USA. Editor: Gail Unzelman. Assistant Editor: Bo Simons.--



IN THE WINE LIBRARY



by Bob Foster

Bonded Wineries and Bonded Wine Cellars Authorized to Operate, *Printed by the Department of the Treasury, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF), Publication 5120.12, 1990, 58 pages, Free.* Every United States winery must have a license from the federal government in order to operate. This free list, published by the BATF sets forth, state by state, every bonded winery by its license number. At first, publication of this list might seem to be a waste of taxpayer dollars, but for wine buffs the document can be a superb consumer aid. Recently, a well known mid-west wine store was advertising a Pinot Noir under a store brand label. The advertisement stated that this was excess production from a renown California producers whose pinot noirs were on strict allocation to most retail outlets. The ad was designed to conjure up images of excess production from places like Calera, Chalone or Williams-Selyem. However, in the small corner of every box was the notation B.W. 4594. Using this BATF document revealed that the wine came from Franciscan Vineyards in Rutherford. This fine producer is hardly in the stratosphere of Pinot Noir so clearly implied by the ad.

The document will work well for consumers using this method, except for those retail outlets who have their own bonded winery number, purchase juice, and do their own bottling (often the case with Southern California's legendary Trader Joe's Markets). But for those instances where the wine is made for a store or restaurant by a particular winery this document is the key to unlocking the mystery.

One drawback is that the document was printed in October 1990, so it does not contain the newest licenses that have been issued. However, a new edition is scheduled within the next two years. A second problem comes from the fact that all that is listed is the bonded winery, the name of the winery and its place of operation. No formal post office address or telephone number is provided. But in most instances, this barest of information will answer the question, "Who really made this juice?" To obtain this document write to BATF Distribution Center, 7943 Angus Court, Springfield, VA 22153 and request document ATF P 5120.1. Very highly recommended.

Port Wine Quintas of the Douro, *Alex Liddell with photographs by Janet Price, Sotheby's Publications in association with the Wine Appreciation Guild, London and San Francisco, 1992, 226 pages, hardback, \$39.95.*

After the publication of Jim Suckling's excellent book, *Vintage Port*, I had thought we had reached the final realm for port books. I mean how much further could one go after a book that had tasting notes on every port made in the last one hundred years and detailed profiles of each of the major port houses? But what many port lovers often lose sight of is the fact that the port houses are, for the most part, merely blending and aging facilities. The actual growing of the grapes and the making of the initial wine occurs miles up the Douro river on a myriad of small farms known as quintas. These quintas, virtually unmentioned in books on port for nearly one hundred years, are the focus of this book.

The book begins with a definitional dilemma: what is

single farm often comprised of several non-adjointing pieces of acreage. The author estimates that there are over 2000 such quintas along the Douro River. Unlike many of the chateaux of Bordeaux the modern quintas tend to be far less ornate and far more functional, some almost primitive.

The authors begin by tracing the historical emergence of the quintas. What is particularly interesting here is the use of stunning color photographs and liberal quotes from very old works about port so as to contrast prior eras with the modern age. Another section covers the layout of a typical quinta and a discussion of the quinta's staff. Rather than stop with such hard empirical materials, the books spends a fair amount of time discussing life on the quinta for the average worker. (American readers will immediately note striking parallels to the use of underpaid, underfed and poorly clothed Hispanic laborers over the years in California.)

But the heart of the book comes with detailed profiles of seventy-two of the largest or most prestigious of the quintas. Each quinta has a written profile varying in length from four paragraphs to four pages. These sections cover the history of the quinta, the layout and notable features of the quinta and mention of the main individuals involved. Rather than clutter these sections of the book with mounds of technical data, all of that material is compiled in half page charts for each quinta at the back of the book. The charts have a wealth of information from the altitude of the vineyard to the percentage of each grape varietal planted.

One interesting feature is that the profiles of the quintas are laid out in geographic order with directions on how to get from one quinta to the next clearly explained. Additionally, detailed touring information for each quinta is given. (Only a few are open to the casual visitor.) The book concludes with an excellent bibliography and index.

What more could a port lover ask for? This is a well written book on an unexplored topic filled with valuable information and profuse color photographs. This is an absolute must for the dedicated port buff. Very highly recommended.

Encyclopedia of Spanish and Portuguese Wines, *Kathryn McWhirter and Charles Metcalfe, A Fireside Book (Simon and Schuster), New York, 1992, 128 pp., paperback, \$12.95.* Under the direction of noted English wine writer Oz Clarke, Simon and Schuster in association with Webster's Wine Guides (London) are publishing regional guides on each of the major wine regions of the world. The first book in the series was Oz Clarke's widely acclaimed book, *The New Encyclopedia of French Wines*. This second book by a husband and wife team is divided into two major sections; one long one on Spain and a slightly smaller section on Portugal. Both parts are set out in the same encyclopedia format as the first book in the set. There are entries for regions, producers, varietals and individual wines. Each entry is illustrated by either a color photograph, a map or a color reproduction of a wine label. The book is designed as a transition work for those emerging wine buffs in need of more information than is available in most general regional texts but not needing the details found in Duijker's book. The writing is crisp and detailed but lacks that witty flair in the books actually authored by Clarke himself. The maps are very general and look as if they were produced by a water color artist rather than a cartographer. Nevertheless, for the newer wine buff there is a wealth of solid, if

-- CORNERS BUMPED AND WORN --
by Ruth Walker



These passages from the diary of William Hutton, a stocking maker who became a noted Birmingham bookseller, author, and bookbinder are excerpted from an account of his life in a book entitled *Men Who Have Risen: A Book for Boys*. It has no author, nor copyright date listed on the title page. However, it was printed in London, so stated.

I found this humble book during one of my browses in a favorite old used-bookshop many years ago. Hutton's account of his career change and the flavor of the hard times he overcame fascinated me. His motto "Despair of nothing that you would attain, Unwearied diligence your point will gain" has inspired me to keep going through many "challenges" in my life.

By the way, this book was rebounded years ago by someone who valued it also. It is one of those mid-Victorian red bindings with a gold stamped front board, bumped and worn corners, of course.

HUTTON THE BOOKSELLER: PASSAGES FROM THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM HUTTON.

1741. What the mind is bent upon obtaining, the hand seldom fails in accomplishing. I detested the frame, as totally unsuitable to my temper; therefore I produced no more profit than necessity demanded. I made shift, however, with a little overwork and a little credit, to raise a genteel suit of clothes, fully adequate to the sphere in which I moved. The girls eyed me with some attention; nay, I eyed myself as much as any of them.

1746. An inclination for books began to expand; but here, as in music and dress, money was wanting. The first article of purchase was three volumes of the "Gentleman's Magazine," 1742, 3, and 4. As I could not afford to pay for binding, I fastened them together in a most cobbled style. These afforded me a treat. I could only raise books of small

value, and these in worn-out bindings. I learned to patch, procured paste, varnish, &c, and brought them into tolerable order; erected shelves, and arranged them in the best manner I was able. If I purchased shabby books, it is no wonder that I dealt with a shabby bookseller, who kept his working apparatus in his shop. It is no wonder, too, if by repeated visits I became acquainted with this shabby bookseller, and often saw him at work; but it is a wonder and a fact, that I never saw him perform one act but I could perform it myself; so strong was the desire to attain the art. I made no secret of my progress, and the bookseller rather encouraged me, and for two reasons: I bought such rubbish as nobody else would; and he had often an opportunity of selling me a cast-off tool for a shilling, not worth a penny. As I was below every degree of opposition, a rivalry was out of the question. The first book I bound was a very small one, Shakespeare's "Venus and Adonis." I showed it to the bookseller. He seemed surprised. I could see jealousy in his eye. However, he recovered in a moment. He had no doubt but I should break. He offered me a worn-down press for two shillings, which no man could use, and which was laid by for the fire. I considered the nature of its construction, bought it, and paid the two shillings. I then asked him to favour me with a hammer and a pin, which he brought with half a conquering smile and half a sneer. I drove out the garter-pin, which, being galled, prevented the press from working, and turned another square, which perfectly cured the press. He said in anger, "If I had known, you should not have had it." However, I could see he consoled himself with the idea that all must return in the end. This proved for forty-two years my best binding press. I now purchased a tolerable genteel suit of clothes, and was so careful of them, lest I should not be able to procure another, that they continued my best for five years. The stocking-frame being my own,

and trade being dead, the hosiers would not employ me; they could scarcely employ their own frames. To think that I should have served seven years to a trade at which I could not get bread. My sister took a house, and, to soften the rent, my brother and I lodged with her.

1747. It had been the pride of my life, ever since pride commenced, to wear a watch. I bought a silver one for thirty-five shillings. It went ill. I kept it four years, then that and a guinea for another, which went as ill. I afterwards exchanged this for a brass one, which going no better, I sold it for five shillings; and to complete the watch farce, I gave the five shillings away, and went without a watch thirty years.

This year I began to dip into rhyme. The stream was pleasant, though I doubt whether it flowed from Helicon. Many little pieces were the produce of my pen, which perhaps pleased; however, they gave no offence, for they slept on my shelf till the rioters burnt them in 1791.

1748. Every soul who knew me scoffed at the idea of my bookbinding, except my sister, who encouraged and aided; otherwise I must have sunk under it. I considered that I was naturally of a frugal temper; that I could watch every penny; live up a little; that I hated stocking-making, but not bookbinding; that if I continued at the frame, I was certain to be poor; and if I ventured to leave it, I could not be so. My only fear was lest I should draw in my friends; for I had nothing of my own. I had frequently heard that every man had, some time or other in his life, an opportunity of rising. As this was a received opinion, I would not contradict it. I had, however, watched many years for the high tide of my affairs, but thought it never yet had reached me. I still pursued the two trades. Hurt to see my three volumes of magazines in so degraded a state, I took them to pieces, and clothed them in a superior dress.

1749. It was now time to look out for a future place of residence. A large town must be the mark, or there would be no room for exertion. London was thought of. This was rejected for two reasons. I could not venture into such a place

without a capital, and my work was not likely to pass among a crowd of judges. My plan was to fix upon some market town, within a stage of Nottingham, and open shop there on the market day, till I should be better prepared to begin the world at Birmingham.

I fixed upon Southwell as the first step of elevation. It was fourteen miles distant, and the town as despicable as the road to it. I went over to Michaelmas, took a shop at the rate of twenty shillings a year, sent a few boards for shelves, a few tools, and about two hundredweight of *trash*, which might be dignified with the name of *books*, and worth, perhaps, a year's rent of my shop. I was my own joiner, put up the shelves and their furniture, and in one day became the most eminent bookseller in the place.

During this rainy winter, I set out at five every Saturday morning, carried a burden of from three pounds' weight to thirty, opened shop at ten, starved in it all day upon bread, cheese, and half-a-pint of ale, took in from one to six shillings, shut up at four, and, by trudging through the solitary night and the deep roads five hours more, I arrived at Nottingham by nine, where I always found a mess of milk porridge by the fire, prepared by my valuable sister. Nothing short of a surprising resolution and rigid economy could have carried me through this scene.

1750. Returning to Nottingham, I gave warning to quit at Southwell, and prepared for a total change of life. On the 10th of April, I entered Birmingham for the third time, to try if I could be accommodated with a small shop. If I could procure any situation, I should be on the way of procuring a better. On the 11th I travelled the streets of Birmingham, agreed with Mrs. Dix for the lesser half of her shop, No.6 in Bull Street, at one shilling a week; and slept at Lichfield on my way back to Nottingham.

On May 13th, Mr. Rudsdall, a dissenting minister of Gainsborough, with whom my sister had lived as a servant, travelling from Nottingham to Stamford, requested my company, and offered to pay my expenses, and give me eighteen pence

a day for my time. The afternoon was wet in the extreme. He asked why I did not bring my great-coat. Shame forbade an answer, or I could have said I had none. The water completely soaked through my clothes, but, not being able to penetrate the skin, it filled my boots. Arriving at the inn, every traveller, I found, was wet; and every one produced a change of apparel but me. I was obliged to sit the whole evening in my drenched garments, and to put them on nearly as wet the next morning! What could I expect but destruction? Fortunately I sustained no injury.

It happened that Mr. Rudsdall now declined housekeeping, his wife being dead. He told my sister that he should part with the refuse of his library, and would sell it to me. She replied, "He has no money." "We will not differ about that. Let him come to Gainsborough; he shall have the books at his own price." I walked to Gainsborough on the 15th of May, stayed there the 16th, and came back on the 17th.

The books were about two hundred pounds' weight. Mr. Rudsdall gave me his corn-chest for their deposit; and for payment drew the following note, which I signed: "I promise to pay to Ambrose Rudsdall, one pound seven shillings, when I am able." Mr. Rudsdall observed, "You never need pay this note if you only say you are not able." The books made a better show, and were more valuable than all I possessed beside.

I had now a most severe trial to undergo: parting with my friends, and residing wholly among strangers. May 23rd I left Nottingham, and I arrived at Birmingham on the 25th. Having little to do but look into the street, it seemed singular to see thousands of faces pass, and not one that I knew. I had entered a new world.

I had two friends, Mr. Dowler, a surgeon, who resided opposite me, and Mr. Grace, a hosier at the Gateway, in the High Street. Great consequences often arise from small things. The house adjoining that of Mr. Grace's was to be let. My friends urged me to take it. I was frightened at the rent, eight pounds. However, one drew, and the other pushed, till they placed me there. A small house

is too large for a man without furniture, and a small rent may be too large for an income which has nothing certain in it but the smallness. Having felt the extreme of poverty, I dreaded nothing so much; but I believed I had seized the tide, and I was unwilling to stop. Here I pursued business in a more elevated style, and with more success.

1756. Robert Bage, an old and intimate friend, and a paper-maker, took me to his inn, where we spent the evening. He proposed that I should sell paper for him, which I might either buy on my own account, or sell on his by commission. As I could spare one or two hundred pounds, I chose to purchase; therefore appropriated a room for the reception of goods, and hung out a sign -

The Paper Warehouse. From this small hint I followed the stroke forty years, and acquired an ample fortune.

1763. We took several pleasurable journeys; among others, one at Aston, and in a superior style to what we had done before. This is the peculiar privilege of us Birmingham men: if ever we acquire five pounds extraordinary, we take care to show it.

1764. Every man has his hobby-horse, and it is no disgrace prudently to ride him. He is the prudent man who can introduce cheap pleasures without impeding business. About ten of us, intimate friends, amused ourselves with playing at tennis. Entertained with the diversion, we erected a tennis-court, and met on fine evenings for amusement, without expense. I was constituted steward of our little fraternity. My family continued their journeys, and were in a prosperous state.



Lust in the Must and Blood on the Vines: Some Recent Wine Genre Fiction

by Bo Simons

Gatsby's Vineyard. by A. E. Maxwell.
New York: Doubleday, 1987. Also in
Paperback: New York: Bantam Books, 1988.

*The Bacchus Club Mystery: A further
Adventure of Sherlock Holmes.* by
Wayne Howell. Montreal: Kylix Media, 1991.

Emma Chizzit and the Napa Nemesis. by
Mary Bowen Hall. New York: Walker, 1992.

Tangled Vines. by Janet Dailey. Boston:
Little Brown, 1992.

One of the icons of Twentieth Century American literature, Jay Gatsby, is invoked in the title and first two paragraphs of A.E. Maxwell's mystery *Gatsby's Vineyard*, but the point Maxwell makes with Fitzgerald's character is simply that he would "have loved the Napa Valley." The same qualities of old line wealth and prestige that Gatsby sought to buy into in East Egg abound in Napa, but in Napa social entree requires less genealogy. "The vintage of the money if Napa is a lot less important than the vintage of the wines that are stored and poured there." Using Gatsby does not make the book great, but, if the book fails to transcend genre, it remains an engrossing read with the wine setting a fairly accurate and believable portrait of the Napa's wine industry.

Maxwell's series hero, Fiddler, narrates the novel and stars in it. Fiddler lives an independently wealthy life rescuing those that he deems need rescuing. He got his wealth from an uncle who died making a large marijuana transaction. Fiddler completed the transaction that ended Uncle Jake's life, and with the help of his on-again off-again lover and wife, Fiora, a financial whiz, he turned the pile of dope money into a fortune respectable both for its size and apparently respectable origins. During one

of the off-again periods with Fiora, Fiddler had taken up with Sandra Autry, heiress to the Deep Purple Vineyard, a legendary plot of land in Napa whose grapes helped make the 1974 Paris tasting the watershed point in the international recognition of California wine. The novel opens several years after their love affair with Fiddler discovering a bottle of Deep Purple at Trader Joe's at \$6.99, coyly advertised as "Deep and Rich and Purple and So Cheap." Fiddler knows Sandra is in trouble if she is forced to dump Deep Purple into Trader Joe's at a quarter its normal price.

Sure enough, Sandra is up to her pips in debt as a result of having mortgaged her vineyard to open up a restaurant, a restaurant that has had such bad luck one might think that it has been deliberately sabotaged. Fiddler convinces his former wife and now lover Fiona who is so good with money to accompany him on the rescue mission to Napa. As they arrive someone tries to burn down Sandra's restaurant. The next day phylloxera is discovered on the vines of Deep Purple.

The cast of suspicious characters slither out of the vines rapidly. There's a nouveau riche neighbor of Sandra's who is surprisingly magnanimous in his offer to help by buying Deep Purple. There's Sandra's ex-husband, a 'class A' son-of-a bitch named Bob "Bulldog" Ramsey, the scion of a Sonoma wine family, who would like nothing better than to get his hands on Deep Purple. There's the viticulture professor who discovered the phylloxera on Deep Purple's vines...or did he put them there to bolster his theory about the blight's spread? There is Guy Rocheford, a Bordeaux vigneron whose wine came in second to Deep Purple in the 1974 Paris tasting who is now buying into the Napa Valley. There's Cynthia Forbes, a blonde with the "overripe appeal that marks the late-harvest grapes," and whose restaurants have put Napa "on the culinary leader board with their innovative foods and theatrical presentations," and who is justifiably fearful of Sandra's culinary skills.

The narrative moves quickly. Action crops up convincingly. The essential mystery, who is trying to ruin Sandra, has enough twists to satisfy the mystery lover. And Sandra, a believable lovely innocent, is portrayed so that one cares about the outcome.

Maxwell presents a large ammount of reasonably accurate wine background. At times

it seems the author wants to fill his narrative with every bit of wine lore he assimilated, and it makes the book a bit chunky. If the phylloxera gambit plays out a bit more melodramatically than today's current grim reality, Maxwell was writing this five years ago when phylloxera was a bit more science fiction than it is now. His afterword credits Bernard and Belle Rhodes of Bella Oaks and wine writer Bob Thompson, among others, with helping him acquire his wine knowledge.

Fiddler and Fiona have a satisfying tension between them. Fiddler puts himself in the way of violence and commits violence to help his friends. Fiona loves Fiddler but cannot stand his brutal risk taking. Fiddler is appalled by Fiona's much cleaner penchant for fiscal violence. Both of their skills are put to use to help Sandra. The book is a sprightly, intriguing if not compelling read. Recommended.

Wayne Howell, a Canadian physician and oenophile, has written an immensely enjoyable foray into the world of wine and Sherlock Holmes titled *The Bacchus Club Mystery*. Since Arthur Conan Doyle forsook writing any more Sherlock Holmes mysteries after just four book length mysteries and a few dozen short stories, hundreds of writers have tried to continue the adventures of the vastly popular detective narrated by the bumbling but amiable Watson. Only a few have succeeded in coming close to the charm and verve of the original. Happily Howell's book is one of the success stories.

Howell gets the bumptious, earnest tone of Dr. Watson down convincingly and charmingly. Watson must be a little dense to both allow the reader to see things in the story the good doctor cannot and to show off the brilliance of Holmes. Yet Watson cannot be a fool. The reader must like Watson for a Holmes book to work. Howell's Watson manages well.

The book opens with Holmes and Watson enjoying a glass of Lafite 1886 when Holmes asks Watson in a paraphrase of the famous Thurber cartoon, "An interesting little wine, ...But does not its presumption amuse you?" Watson becomes confused. One does not call one of the *premier cru* Bordeaux Chateaux a little wine, Watson tells the detective. Holmes tells Watson to drink the wine not the label and what's in their glasses has

"a robust nature, hint of residual sugar, and disappointing aftertaste suggesting a high proportion of Cabernet Franc." Holmes goes on to tell Watson that there was no vintage 1886 for Chateau Lafite because phylloxera had decimated their vineyards. What they are drinking is some Bordeaux shipper's unscrupulous labeling of a "*cru bourgeois*" or a sturdy claret from the east shore of the Gironde." Watson becomes angry at Holmes smug trickery and challenges Holmes to identify a wine tasted blind that he, Watson, will retrieve from Holme's "not inconsiderable cellar." Holmes agrees, and when the good doctor brings back a carefully wrapped bottle of Cornas 1889, he correctly identifies it before even tasting it. Just how Holmes manages to do this is something you must read for yourself.

This opening gambit shows Howell has gotten both Holmes and his wine references down well. The book takes off from here when a London wine merchant named Bewdsley calls upon Holmes and seeks his assistance in clearing his name. Bewdsley is suspected in the murder of Lord Bream who was apparently brained in the cellars of the Bacchus Club with a bottle of 1878 Chateau Latour, last of the pre-phylloxera Latours. Bewdsley had means motive and opportunity to do in Bream, but Holmes believes in his innocence because Bewdsley, though of humble origins, has excellent taste and had gone to the cellars to retrieve a bottle to accompany lightly seasoned lamb and fresh Belgian endive. He would never have selected a Latour 1878 to accompany such delicate fare: "its tannic youthfulness would be an insult."

The plot that finally unravels involves the British Raj in India, Kali cults, several cases of the legendary year-of-the-comet burgundy (an 1858 Chambertin), and the complicity of titled aristocrats and Anglican clergy in a nefarious scheme that has gone undetected for decades. Howells conjures foggy, gaslit London with deft touches and the Bacchus Club as an Edwardian oenophile's playground whose members occasionally lose their reserve and become "*un peu Mouton*," an euphemism for roaring drunk. Howell manages to throw in a great amount of wine lore in such a manner that it is remarkable and integral to the plot, not at all ostentatious. He even manages to slip in a reference to 19th Century Napa at the end. Highly Recommended.

Mary Bowen Hall has written several books featuring a character named Emma Chizzit, an aging single woman from Sacramento who supplements her social security by salvaging victorian structures. In her latest, *Emma Chizzit and the Napa Nemesis*, Hall has put enough elements so that I should love the book: The Napa wine country, a missing Robert Louis Stevenson manuscript, an historical link between Stevenson and Thomas Lake Harris, the founder of Fountaingrove (utopian colony and winery), bits about the Bay Area book scene with the Argonaut and Holmes Book stores, the Silverado Museum, the Santa Rosa Library all provide background to Hall's story. Unfortunately the whole is considerably less than its parts in this case.

Briefly the action centers around the discovery that a missing RLS manuscript might exist. It seems Stevenson, while down on his luck, wrote a children's adventure book titled *The Silver King* on commission for Thomas Lake Harris. Harris had the book typeset, but in his hurried departure from Santa Rosa - Harris left town in a hurry because a sensationalist reporter infiltrated his cult/colony and reported sexual shenanigans - the manuscript and galleys were left behind. Now word has come out that the book exists. Emma Chizzit is drawn into a race to uncover the lost items.

It sounds like an intriguing premise - history, literature, architectural history, bibliography, wine lore could all figure, but the book reads like lead. The characters are all one-note cartoons. The research is perfunctory. Much of the action is unbelievable. A book like this makes me mad because it does a disservice to what I consider, if not sacred, then subjects deserving respect, wine and books. Not Recommended.

It's a mystery that the romance of wine seldom produces memorable literature. Any number of popular novels in the last several decades have taken the wine industry as their background. They are mostly of the Falcon Crest variety - full of sex and glitz and family feuds with a weak border of vines and a drizzle of wine. The wine industry in these novels could and probably should be some other industry such as the oil industry. Howard Fast's *Immigrant* books, *Sonoma* by Lawrence Sanders fall into this category. *Tangled*

Vines, a new book by romance author Janet Dailey, also fits the requirements of this vinous dynasty sub-genre. Apparently there was not enough glitz and sex in the wine industry alone so Ms. Dailey threw in the television industry as well to serve as dazzling, lifestyles-of-the-rich-and-wretched backdrops. Her heroine, Kelly Douglas, a TV reporter with a hidden past in the Napa Valley, is on the brink of becoming a nightly TV news anchor when her shameful past catches up with her.

Meanwhile, the 90-year-old matriarch of the Rutledge wine clan, Katherine, and her grandson, "ruggedly handsome vintner" Sam Rutledge are preparing to foreclose on Kelly's drunken father, Len Dougherty. Dougherty had inherited the ten acres of vineyards from his mother. The ten acre parcel was once part of the Rutledge estate. Dougherty's father had been killed in a freak accident at the winery, leaving his widow destitute and pregnant with Len. Iron-willed but soft hearted Katherine Rutledge had given the ten acres and a house to the widow out of pity and compassion. Now Len has grown up become a drunk and neglected his vineyard, mortgaged the property to the Rutledges, drunk up the proceeds of the mortgage and needs to come up with thirty thousand dollars quickly to retain his land. As he blearily bemoans his fate in a St. Helena bar called Big Eddie's by its denizens, he hazily recognizes the TV news reporter on the barroom tube. Could that beautiful vision be his long lost daughter?

Meanwhile...Katherine Rutledge's estranged son, Gil, also a ruggedly handsome vintner, prepares to outfox his mother and snag Baron Emile Fougère, owner of "Château Noir in France's famed Médoc region" into a strategic alliance to make world class wine in Napa with a first growth price tag.

All this stuff takes place in the first chapter. You see the plot set up and begin to grind. This is solid commercial storytelling. I found myself engrossed almost despite my reservations. If the cliches are thick and the characters either rugged or alluring or iron willed or drunken, and even if a lot of description goes into hairstyles, clothes and baggage, the story moves and things happen. The wine background, robust but thin, was disappointing as Holme's faux Lafite, yet the book moved. Romances are not my preferred reading, but this one was not bad. Recommended with Reservations.