

# the WAYWARD TENDRILS Newsletter

Vol.5 No.2

A WINE BOOK COLLECTOR'S CLUB

April 1995

## THE "BUSHBERG CATALOGUES" by Gail Unzelman



during the mid-to-late 1800s, the Bushberg Vineyards & Nursery Co. in Missouri was one of the largest and most successful grape vine nurseries in the United States. Their extensive experimental vineyards and grapevine stock production made it also one of the most important. Between 1869 and 1895, in addition to their regularly issued "Grape Vine Price Lists," the firm published four editions of their commonly called "Bushberg Catalogue," which horticultural historian U.P. Hedrick called "more popular and useful than any other book on American grapes." Historically, the pages of these four catalogues chronicle the grape and wine industry during a time of great change in both America and Europe.

Almost 100 years later, acquiring copies of these Bushberg Catalogues roused my curiosity and prodded me to search for the location, identity and history of Bushberg.

Isidor Bush, in partnership with his son Raphael, established the Bushberg Vineyards and Grape Nurseries in 1865. Several years before, Bush had sent his 15 year-old son to live and apprentice with the noted grape culturist and nurseryman, George Husmann, in Hermann, Missouri. In the 1868 *Annual Report of the Missouri State Board of Agriculture*, Bush described the founding of Bushberg:

...in this State the County of Jefferson, with its high limestone bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River, and the ridge of hills next and parallel thereto, will soon occupy a foremost rank [in the grape growing regions of the United States]. When the U.S. Land Surveyors passed over its hilly, rough land, they classed them as "unfit for cultivation," and up to very recently its inhabitants

thought them without value, except for their dense forest of oak and hickory, which they cut and sold as firewood. Such a piece of land I bought four years ago, now known as Bushberg, at about \$30 per acre, a price then deemed excessive notwithstanding its proximity to St. Louis, its possessing a station of the Iron Mountain Railroad and an excellent steamboat landing, the Mississippi River bordering it on the east. But my friend, Mr. Husmann, had examined the land for me, and on his judgment my son and I safely relied, as to its superior adaptability for grape and fruit culture.

Over the next few years the steep hillsides became terraced vineyards. In 1868, after extending their vineyards "cautiously and gradually," they had nine acres planted to hardy American varieties - Concord, Norton's Virginia Seedling, Herbemont, Hartford, Catawba, Delaware, Cynthiana, and others - numbering over 8,000 vines. Bush reported that they had also planted four acres in pears and three acres in small fruits. They set aside one acre for a "variety patch" to test new grape varieties, both American and European, and hoped "to make it one of the most complete experimental vineyards and be both useful and interesting to horticulturists."

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Isidor Bush - a prominent businessman and citizen of St. Louis, an ardent and politically active supporter of the Union during the Civil War - was born in Prague in 1822. The only son of a wealthy Jewish cotton merchant, Bush had received a privileged education by private tutors and notable scholars of his day. At the age of 15, young Isidor was introduced to the printing and publishing business when his family moved to Vienna and established one of the world's largest publishing houses. He enjoyed the familiar company of scholars and poets, and edited works of the most eminent Jewish writers. During the Revolution of 1848, his liberal activities, including printing and distributing radical promotional materials, caused him to flee to America with his wife Theresa and their 4 year old son, Raphael. Upon their arrival in New York City in January 1849, he opened a small stationery and book shop, and soon thereafter began publishing the first U.S. Jewish weekly newspaper, the Israeli Herald. At the end of the year he moved permanently to St. Louis where he pursued several successful business ventures, including wholesale grocery and hardware, and real estate; he founded the People's Savings Bank, and served as Director and General Agent for the St. Louis & Iron Mountain Railroad. During the Civil War years he was elected a delegate to the State Constitutional Conventions of 1861 and 1865, and proudly served, with his friend George Husmann, on the committee to frame Missouri's Emancipation Ordinance.

In 1865 Isidor Bush decided to pursue a new career and "devote his energies to wines and vines." He acquired the tract of land 20 miles south of St. Louis on the bluffs of the Mississippi River that he named Bushberg and would transform into the world famous Bushberg Vineyards and Nursery. At this same time he became an active investor in the Bluffton Wine Company, a spirited co-operative vineyard and winery enterprise founded by George Husmann in Montgomery County, across the Missouri River from the state's wine capital, Hermann. And, within a few years Bush had established a large, flourishing wholesale wine cellar and champagne depot in St. Louis, called Isidor Bush & Co.

Bushberg Vineyards & Nursery, under the proprietorship of Isidor Bush and Son, issued their first Catalogue in 1869: *Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue of Grape Vines, Small Fruit, and Seed Potatoes, Cultivated and For Sale at the Bushberg Vineyards & Orchards, Jefferson Co., Mo. With Brief Directions for Planting and Cultivating*. Bush announced in the Foreword that their business had been highly satisfactory, and "desiring to return our thanks to our customers" and "to respond to a desire often expressed by our correspondents,...a fine Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue is presented." In an

effort to "produce something better than a mere price list," the firm "spared not time, labor and money in preparing it." Regarding its title, T.V. Munson, the prominent Texas pioneer in grape propagation and classification, later wrote Bush that "your modesty in simply calling it a 'Catalogue' does the great work an injustice. It is a most complete and valuable treatise on American grapes."

This first Bushberg Catalogue, like the others that followed, contains two sections: the Grape Manual and the Descriptive Catalogue. The Manual has 18 pages of illustrated, practical, instructive information for the grape grower - including articles on vine pruning by George Husmann, and on grape vine insects by C.V. Riley, the Missouri State Entomologist who would become a major figure in the world-wide battle against phylloxera (and be decorated by the French for his efforts). The Descriptive Catalogue of Grapes contains 27 pages and describes almost 100 varieties. It seems likely that the rather large 10" x 7" format was chosen for the Catalogue to enhance the graphic illustrations. The many full-page woodcuts and engravings of leafed grape clusters are excellent, and beautifully printed by R.P. Studley & Co. of St. Louis. (In a business advertisement in the 1895 fourth edition, Studley proudly stated that he had printed all of the Bushberg Catalogues.) The first edition was issued in wrappers, with the title eclectically printed within a busy, decorative grape-vine border. A German translation, provided by Friedrich Muench (fellow Missouri grape culturist and author of *School for American Grape Culture*, 1865), was also available. Price: English or German edition, 25 cents.

Six years elapsed - "embracing the most disastrous and the most favorable seasons to grape culture" - before the second Bushberg Catalogue was issued in 1875. The new catalogue reflected several changes. Gustav Meissner had joined the firm in 1872 and the company name was changed to Bush & Son & Meissner. The less-wordy title page (but still period-dressed in a variety of typefaces) now read *Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue of American Grape-Vines, With Brief Directions for Their Culture*. The firm's reputation and business as grape growers and propagators had grown to such dimensions that they discarded all other fruit culture and now devoted all of their grounds and attention to grape culture exclusively. The major influence in this decision was "above all, one circumstance, the discovery of the Grape Root-louse, the Phylloxera, [that] has led to a new, **radical** study of the American grape-vines."

The Catalogue was expanded to 80 pages and embellished with a chromo-lithographed frontispiece of the Elvira grape. The Manual includes a scholarly classification of grapes, "The True Grape-Vines of the



U.S." by St. Louis botanist and physician, Dr. Geo. Engelmann, which Messrs. Bush and Meissner "earnestly recommended" that all growers study to properly select the grape-vine best suited to their locale - "we must warn against the error of considering any variety fit for universal cultivation." A timely historical addition to the Manual is a 4-page detailed description and history of the invading *Phylloxera vastatrix*, "unknown when the first edition of this little work was written." The lively illustrations and text were once again taken from Riley's reports as State Entomologist. In this 2nd edition the Descriptive Catalogue has grown to almost 50 pages and describes over 200 grape varieties: these varietal portraits are advertised as "the most complete descriptions that so far have appeared."

In 1873, Jules Planchon, the respected professor from Montpellier, spent two months in the eastern United States, with C.V. Riley as his guide, studying the "complex question" of "phylloxera and American vines." [His *Les Vignes Américaines, leur Culture, leur Résistance au Phylloxera*, 1875, records this visit. See also Chas. Sullivan's article "Two Frenchmen in America, *W-T Newsletter*, Vol.2 No.1, March 1992.] Planchon was undoubtedly responsible for the issue of a French edition of the Bushberg Catalogue in 1876: translated and published in France as *Les Vignes Américaines. Catalogue Illustré et Descriptif. Avec de Brèves Indications sur leur Culture*.

The third edition of the Bushberg Catalogue kept Isidor Bush from attending the annual meeting of the Missouri State Horticultural Society. He sent a letter apologizing for being unable to attend or to prepare a requested paper: he was too busy editing and proof-reading the catalogue for publication. When the third *Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue of American Grape Vines. A Grape Growers' Manual* was published, Bush & Son & Meissner unabashedly - and deservedly so - state in the Preface: "The Bushberg Catalogue has become a *vade mecum* of American grape-growers; it has also been translated into French and Italian, an honor probably never before bestowed on any nurseryman's fruit catalogue." With eight more years of experience and research at the nursery, they felt confident to issue a thoroughly revised edition. Engelmann updated his botanical classification of the American grape vine and re-wrote it for the Catalogue. An "exhaustive" article on grafting the vine, taken from the excellent French work of Aime Champin, is presented. The troublesome mildew and rot were further covered; a chapter on insects beneficial to the grape grower, plus an update on the phylloxera and other injurious insects, and, as requested, a few hints on wine making are included. Not to be outdone by the improved Manual,

the Descriptive Catalogue is "augmented far more...and includes all varieties which have ever received the attention of viticulturists, and even the novelties..." In all, the third edition has 153 pages, with more than 80 pages devoted to the description of over 300 grape varieties. Graced with several colored illustrations of grapes "drawn from nature for the Bushberg Catalogue," it is the most magnificent of the four editions. The edition soon sold out, and many orders for copies remained unfilled. Price still 25 cents, but now available, a cloth library edition for \$1.

When the fourth and final edition of Bushberg's "mere Grape Catalogue" appeared in 1895, twenty-five years after its first publication, the firm made no apologies for its re-publication, but did explain why this new edition was so long in making its appearance: while "we Americans rejoiced in having saved the French vine by our *Phylloxera*-resisting varieties,...our own were suffering...from rot and mildew so destructive and discouraging that grape growing East of the Rockies was considered a failure. At the same time the finest European grapes were grown so successfully in California that the price of wine and table grapes was reduced below the cost of their production in this part of the United States. Now, however, with the discovery of a remedy for grape diseases, renewed confidence has been inspired...and we yielded to the flattering demand for a new edition." The *Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue of American Grape Vines. A Grape Growers' Manual* is described as a largely new work "containing interesting, instructive and valuable information." The Manual now numbers 80 pages, with articles by Galloway of the U.S.D.A., C.V. Riley, and A. Champin. The essay on grape classification is continued by T.V. Munson, following the death of Geo. Engelmann. The Descriptive Catalogue - over 115 pages and 350 grape varieties - is hailed as a "complete dictionary of all American varieties, old and new."

The Bushberg Catalogues received praises and testimonials from leading horticulturists, grape-growers and nurserymen "that could fill a book". Samuel Miller, Horticultural Editor of *Colman's Rural World*, thought it "the most valuable work of the kind yet published in the English language" and could very well replace Husmann's work on grapes and wine as the most recommended. Robert Manning, Secretary of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, concluded that "it should be in every public library, and in the hands of every American grape grower." When printing these endorsements, Bush & Son & Meissner announced their deep regret over losing "a number of valuable testimonials destroyed by the great fire which laid our St. Louis office in ashes." Perhaps many copies of the Catalogue were also destroyed in the fire, contributing to their great scarcity today.



The death of Isidor Bush in 1898 signaled the end of Bushberg Vineyards and Nurseries . . . and the Catalogue.

Postscript: Through the guidance of a few old maps of Missouri, a couple of knowledgeable friends, and the gracious present-day owners of the Bushberg property, I did finally find Bushberg: I tramped over the steep hillsides where now only faint scars indicate the presence of the earlier vineyard terraces - the dense forest has reclaimed the land. But grape vines are still there, now growing with wild freedom, 20 to 30 feet up into the trees. Carved into the bank of an overgrown gully, three walls of the large stone wine cellar can yet be seen - if you know where to look. Down below the bluffs, along the Mississippi River's edge, I walked the old railroad track that continues to be used today, and spied a lonely, rusty, retired riverboat mooring. In this cove the large nursery warehouses and shipping facilities once stood, along with the several other buildings that made up the Bushberg station. Only a few old photographs - and scarce copies of the Bushberg Catalogues - remain to remind us of this once thriving enterprise.

#### THE BUSHBERG CATALOGUES: A CHECK-LIST

Isidor Bush & Son. *Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue of Grape Vines, Small Fruit, and Seed Potatoes, Cultivated and For Sale at the Bushberg Vineyards & Orchards, Jefferson Co., Mo. With Brief Directions for Planting and Cultivating.* St. Louis: R.P. Studley Co. Printers, 1869. 58 pp, [4] Price List, [10] Advertisements. 10x7. Illustrated. Printed and decorated wraps.

Isidor Bush & Son. 1st. ed. in German. Translated by Friedrich Muench of Missouri. 1869.

Isidor Bush & Son & Meissner. *Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue of American Grape Vines, with Brief Directions for their Culture.* 2nd.ed. St. Louis: R.P. Studley Co. Printers, 1875. 80 pp. + Ads. 10x7. Illustrated. With a colored frontis. Printed and decorated wraps.

Bush et Fils et Meissner. *Les Vignes Américaines. Catalogue Illustré et Descriptif avec de Brèves Indications sur leur Culture.* Ouvrage traduit de l'anglais par Louis Bazille, Revu et Annoté par J.E. Planchon. 1st. French ed. Montpellier: C. Coulet, 1876. 130 pp. 11x7 1/4. Printed and decorated wraps.

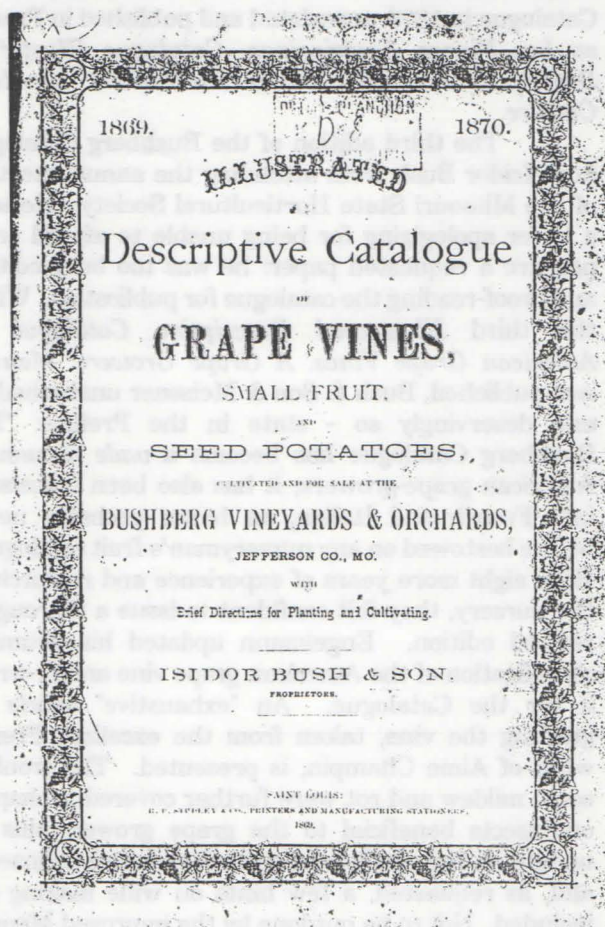
Bush & Son & Meissner. *Le Viti Americane. Catalogo Illustrato e Descrittivo con Un Brve Cenzo Sopra la Loro Coltura.* Opera tradotta dall'inglese da Farina e Comp. Castellanza: Presso Farina e Comp, 1881. 1st. Italian ed.

117 pp. 10x7. Illustrated.

Isidor Bush & Son & Meissner. *Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue of American Grape Vines. A Grape Growers' Manual.* 3rd.ed. St. Louis: R.P. Studley Co. Printers, 1883. 153 pp + Ads. 10x7. With several chromo-lithographed plates of grapes; illustrated throughout. Dark-green cloth with blind-stamped borders and gilt-stamped decorative title piece to front cover; spine lettered in gilt.

Bush et Fils et Meissner. *Catalogue Illustré et Descriptif des Vignes Américaines.* Ouvrage traduit de l'anglais par Louis Bazille, Revu et Annoté par J.E. Planchon. 2nd French ed. from the 3rd English ed. Montpellier: C. Coulet, 1885. 233 pp. With 3 colored plates.

Isidor Bush & Son & Meissner. *Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue of American Grape Vines. A Grape Growers' Manual.* 4th.ed. St. Louis: R.P. Studley Co. Printers, 1895. 208 pp. + Ads. 10x7. Frontis of Campbell's Early grape cluster by Western Photo Engraving Co. Illustrated throughout; some photo reproductions. Bright-green cloth, with blind-stamped borders and gilt-stamped decorative title piece to front cover; spine lettered in gilt.





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NEWS  
& NOTES

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The response to your Editor's plea for prompt payment of **1995 dues** was most gratifying...especially since many Tendrils took the opportunity to send in multi-year extensions (the bookkeeper is ecstatic!). Must remind the "late-bloomers," though, to get with it and send in your dues!

Compliments Dept! **George Hambrecht** (New York): "... wonderful job with the Newsletter. I look forward each time it arrives to seeing what you have thought up! Thanks." **John McGrew** (Penn) "especially appreciated **Chas. Sullivan's** listing from the U.S.D.A. Yearbooks [in the last issue]." Thanks again, Charles, for generously sharing your indexing efforts with the Tendrils.

**Dr. Peter Winding**, a new Tendril and publisher of the Danish journal on wines and spirits, *Vinbladet*, enthusiastically sent in memberships for three of his wine writers: **Lars Rosenberg**, **André Dewald**, and **Jan Soerensen**. Welcome to all!

Several new Directory/Dictionary guides that might be of interest for the reference shelf have recently been published and are available from the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America (50 Rockefeller Plaza, N.Y., N.Y. 10020): *International Directory of Antiquarian Booksellers*, 1994-95 edition, 12mo., 669 pp. \$35. The *Directory* lists members of the national associations of antiquarian booksellers in 20 countries, gives business details, including specialties and catalogue information. Edgar Franco is the compiler of a *Dictionary of Terms & Expressions Commonly Used in the Antiquarian Booktrade in French, English, German & Italian*, 8vo, 698 terms. \$35. Also available is Bernard Rosenthal's *Dictionary of Abbreviations Commonly Used by German and Italian Antiquarian Booksellers and Auctioneers*, 8vo, 33 pp in wraps. \$10. "...a significant contribution" in deciphering the catalogues of German & Italian booksellers who "are very fond of using abbreviations in their catalogues, sometimes on a rather lavish scale."

Recommended! In the latest issue of the *Missouri Historical Review* (Vol.89, No.2, Jan 1995) is a fine article by Tendril **Linda Walker Stevens** (MO) on the early years of George Husmann (1827-1902), pioneer grape culturist and winemaker, and author of several important treatises on the subject. "The Making of a Superior Immigrant: George Husmann, 1837-1854" is well-researched, with much new material, and a great read. A full-scale biography of Husmann is in the works. Copies of the *Review* are available from the State Historical Society of MO, 1020 Lowry Street, Columbia, MO 65201 for \$4 each.

A quick check with the Sonoma County Wine Library on the status of the publication of Gerald Asher's August talk: "hope to have it ready in the next few weeks."

Some **Recent Releases** brought to our attention by **Hugo Dunn-Meynell** and the IW&FS:

*Vino e Olio in Toscana*, 3rd edition, Casa Editrice il Fiore, 670 pp (no price given). Addresses, proprietors, specimen labels - "would be surprised if a single vigneron or oil producer is missed" in this door-stop size encyclopedia.

*Still Life with Bottle* by Ralph Steadman. Ebury, 160 pp, £19. "...poet, inspired artist, historian, humorist. Knowledgeable vinophile he may not be, but love turns to passion when his pen and brush speak of single malt whisky. A wonderful, original book..."

*Wines of South-West France* by Paul Strong. Kylie Cathie, 355 pp. £19. "A work of massive research, not a little scholarship, and a few surprises. A marvelous book for the traveler..."

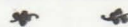
*Sotheby's World Wine Encyclopedia*. New, revised ed. 480 pp. £18. The first revision since 1988, this paperback edition is scholarly and readable.

*Bollinger* by Cyril Ray and Serena Sutcliffe. A new edition. Heinemann, 221 pp. £20. Sutcliffe "brings her skills to revision and updating of the 1988 edition."

**DUPLICATES!** Linda Stevens writes that she has an extra copy of the *1860 Patent Office Report* ("I did not get it for under \$10; but I didn't pay \$200 either!") Corners bumped, spine ends "gnawed" a bit, contents clean & tight. Will trade for 1854, '56, '57, '58 or '61 reports, or the 1866 *USDA Report*, or sell for \$60.

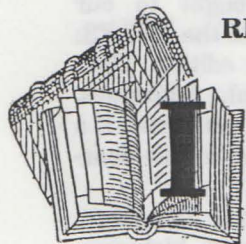
Gail Unzelman dups: 1) *Wine & the Artist. 104 Prints/Drawings from the Christian Bros. Collection*, 1979. Stiff wraps, 100 plates. 2) *116 Uncommon Books on Food & Drink* by Marcus Crahan, 1975. A splendid reference book. 3) *The Ratskeller in Bremen* by H. Entholt, 1930. 1st.English ed. B/W photo illustrations. 4) *Calif's Pioneer Wine Families* by Julius Jacobs, 1975. In: *Calif Historical Society Quarterly*, Vol.LIV, No.2. pp.139-174. Illus. 5) *Le Nobiliaire des Eaux-de-Vie et Liqueurs de France* by Maurice des Ombiaux, 1927. #130 of 500 copies. Calf and marbled boards. 6) *Wine in American Life* [Wine Institute], 1970. A wine symposium, with papers by Philip Wagner, Salvatore Lucia, Angelo Pellegrini, and others. 59 pp. Quarto.

Where are those **lists of duplicates** that members have "somewhere"? We want to see them! Deadline for the next Newsletter is June 30...send in your "Wants" and "Duplicates"!!





[The following article appeared in our first Newsletter (March 1991). Thinking it might be useful to our more recent members, we offer it again. Please also see Vol.3 No.4 and Vol.4 No.1 for two excellent, extended articles on wine book bibliography.]



## REFERENCE LIBRARY

If we were to list by order of importance the "basic tools" needed to assemble a fine library of wine books, the first item on the list should be a good reference library, beginning with bibliographies. Fortunately, there are a number of very useful bibliographies available to the wine book collector. (Sadly, some of them are becoming quite scarce, and therefore costly, but their value to the beginning and veteran collector alike is worth the expensive chase). All of the following books are highly recommended.

Simon, André L. *Bibliotheca Vinaria*. Originally published in 1913 in a limited edition of 180 copies, this edition is now rare. It was reprinted in an edition of 600 copies by Holland Press in 1979 using Simon's personal copy with his hand-written additions on the inter-leaved pages. Almost all the important works on wine, in most languages and from the earliest times, are listed.

----- *Bibliotheca Gastronomica*. First printed in 1953 (750 copies) and reprinted by Holland Press in 1978 (750 copies). Many wine items are included.

----- *Bibliotheca Bacchica*. Published in two volumes in 1927 and 1932, Simon's *Bacchica* covers wine-related books up to the year 1600. Only 275 copies were printed and it is a rare delight when you see the two-volume set for sale. The 1972 Holland Press reprint combines the two volumes into one. Illustrated with many wood-cuts and title-pages from these early books.

Vicaire, Georges. *Bibliographie Gastronomique*. First published in 1890, there have been reprints in 1954 and 1978. Vicaire covers works on food and drink from the beginning of printing to the year 1890. In French.

Gabler, James. *Wine into Words. A History & Bibliography of Wine Books in the English Language*, 1985. With 403 pages, this book is the premier reference for English language wine material. Includes a Short-Title Index and a Chronological Index.

Unzelman, Gail. *Wine & Gastronomy*. Based on the three André Simon *Bibliothecas*, this guide combines them into one manageable volume, with indexes by author, title, and date. Contains a Check List of the works of André Simon. Published in 1990 in an edition of 390 numbered copies.

Noling, A. W. *Beverage Literature. A Bibliography*. Published in 1971, this work has over 1200 titles relating to wine.

Schoene, Renate. *Bibliographie zur Geschichte des Weines*. Published in 1976, with three supplements (1978, 1982, 1984). In 1988 a 2nd edition was issued combining all four volumes into one, listing 14,713 entries. In German.

Instituto do Vinho do Porto. *Esboco de Uma Bibliografia*. Three volumes issued (alas, in fragile wraps) in 1945, 1947, 1952. The standard reference for books on the Oporto wine trade, but difficult to find.

Westbury, Lord. *Handlist of Italian Cookery Books*, 1963. Contains many Italian wine-related books, from the dawn of printing to the year 1860. Also useful for Italian works on wine is Giacomo Sormanni's *Catalogo Ragionato delle opere di Viticoltura ed Enologia*. Published in 1883, it is readily available in the 1983 reprint edition.

Further valuable reference tools are the catalogues issued by auction houses for the sales of major wine book collections. Sotheby's catalogues for the L. Lambert library (1966), André Simon library (1981), Marcus Crahan collection (1984 & 1986), Lord Westbury (1965), and Schraemli (1972), and the 1937 Maggs catalogue, *Food & Drink through the Ages*, have substantial wine material. Gerard Oberle's sumptuous catalogue *Les Fastes de Bacchus et de Comus* (1990, in French) lists and illustrates many early and important wine books. Specialist book-sellers' catalogues prove helpful time after time, and make a valuable addition to any reference library.



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[In our October Newsletter we announced a research project being conducted by Dr. Ruth Ann Smith (Assoc. Professor, Dept of Marketing, Virginia Tech University) on the characteristics and behaviors of book collectors. In the introduction to her report, Dr. Smith acknowledges that "I am not a book collector, nor a collector of any description. I was, however, raised by a father who has carried on a life-long love affair with boats and who has accumulated quite a fleet of antique and classic wooden power boats. As I observed the great pleasure he derives from learning about, searching for, purchasing, restoring, and using his collection, it began to dawn on me that collecting is an interesting phenomenon worthy of the attention of a consumer behavior scholar." Dr. Smith has kindly sent us the following summary of her investigations into "the dynamics of book collecting."]

### PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE OF BOOK COLLECTORS: A RESEARCH SUMMARY by Dr. Ruth Ann Smith



his research was motivated by a wish to understand collecting in general, and book collecting in particular, as a unique form of consumer behavior. While most people own and use books to some extent, few people feel about books the way that collectors do. Nor do most consumers of books invest the time, effort, and money that collectors do in activities related to books. Although much has been written about collecting, and specifically about book collecting, I found that most accounts of the consumption aspects of this activity were neither intuitive nor satisfying.

The general theme that seemed to emerge from the literature was that collecting is a compulsive, or even addictive, form of consumption whose primary antecedent is materialism and which has only negative consequences for individual participants and for society as a whole. I was at a loss as to how to reconcile this viewpoint with the enormous popularity of collecting and with the obvious pleasure it brings to its participants. And, it seemed absurd to me to question the social value of collecting. The disparity between what I read and what I observed about collecting led me to undertake a series of three studies to attempt a clearer understanding of this consumption phenomenon.

In the first investigation, which I conducted last winter, I completed a series of lengthy interviews with collectors of various objects, including some book collectors. Based on these conversations, I developed some theoretical propositions about the antecedents and consequences of collecting that were tested in two

other studies. Interestingly, the interviews produced no evidence of the materialism and compulsiveness that have been attributed to collectors by other researchers. Rather, these conversations suggested that an important antecedent of collecting is what John Dewey refers to as an aesthetic experience (*Art as Experience*, NY: Minton, Balch & Co., 1934).

Dewey's use of this term is not meant to refer to the object or event experienced, but rather to the nature of the experience itself. An aesthetic experience involves a unique person-object interaction that goes beyond merely identifying an object and recognizing its function. An aesthetic experience involves perceiving the object as much more than just a utilitarian entity--one perceives the richness of its symbolic and perhaps historical meaning and views it as having intrinsic value apart from any intended function. An aesthetic experience takes your breath away. And you emerge from it fundamentally changed.

I expect that those of you who are book collectors will recognize elements of this kind of experience in your own relationship with books. Others who do not collect books undoubtedly have had such experiences involving other objects or events. It is this experience, I hypothesized, that differentiates collectors from others who consume an object in the "normal" way. While the interviews suggested some other factors that may also be antecedents of collecting, I chose to limit my focus to aesthetic experience at this stage in my research.

The interviews also led me to speculate about the consequences of collecting. There was substantial evidence suggesting that collecting performs an important role in collectors' personal development. Psychologists argue that people develop along two lines--differentiation and integration. Differentiation refers to the need we all have to establish ourselves as unique individuals while integration refers to our need to be involved in meaningful relationships with others. People engage in a variety of activities that serve one or both of these needs, and I hypothesized that collecting is such an activity. Thus, in contrast to the destructive outcomes attributed to collecting by other researchers, the interviews led me to believe that it has the potential to contribute in an important way to the well-being of its participants.

The first step in investigating the hypotheses that aesthetic experience is an antecedent of collecting and that personal development is a consequence was to develop a means to quantify levels of these highly abstract constructs. This was the purpose of the study that I conducted in the summer of 1994 and in which many of you participated. You will recall completing a lengthy questionnaire consisting of a large number of statements about books to which you



indicated your level of agreement or disagreement. You probably also remember feeling as though you were answering the same question over and over again! The redundancy was necessary to achieve the objective of developing reliable and valid measures of aesthetic experience and personal development which was the outcome of this study. The new, and much shorter, measures were used to test the hypotheses in the third study which I completed last fall.

Those of you who participated in this study also received a questionnaire that included a group of statements about books to which you were asked to indicate your level of agreement. In addition, however, you were asked some questions that had no obvious relationship to books or to collecting. These questions were developed by other researchers to assess materialism and compulsiveness and have been shown to be reliable and valid measures. I included them in order to evaluate the argument advanced by others that collectors are materialistic and compulsive.

Three groups of people participated in this study. One group consisted of book collectors who were contacted by a bookseller. The second group was composed of a randomly selected sample of nonacademic staff at the university where I am employed. Individuals in this group are not book collectors nor are they employed in occupations in which books play an important role. The third group consisted of a randomly selected sample of professors at this university. These people do not consider themselves to be book collectors even though they generally own large libraries and are engaged in a profession in which books are an indispensable element. Thus, each of the groups has a unique relationship with books and a comparison of their responses to the questionnaire provided a basis to evaluate the hypotheses.

The results were quite compelling. As expected, book collectors enjoyed aesthetic experiences with books to a significantly greater degree than did either group of noncollectors. Further, compared to the other two groups, book collectors reported that their books and their collecting activities were significantly more important in developing relationships with others and in distinguishing themselves as unique individuals. And, it probably will not surprise you to learn that there were no significant differences in the levels of materialism or compulsiveness across the three groups.

These findings are very consistent with my contention that aesthetic experience is an antecedent of collecting and personal development is its consequence. Surely there are many causes and effects of collecting that I have not investigated in this research and I do not mean to oversimplify a complex

phenomenon. I have, however, established the empirical basis for the skeleton of a theory about collecting as consumption that I hope to flesh out in future investigations. My findings provide no evidence that materialism and compulsiveness play any necessary role in collecting. Naturally, it is possible that some collectors do exhibit these qualities in extreme levels and there are, of course, documented cases of collectors engaging in activities that would seem to offer little social benefit. On the basis of my research, however, I feel justified in concluding that such instances are exceptions that cannot be generalized. ♪



### "NO DEFENSE...NO APOLOGY..."

A celebrated book collector reveals his collecting philosophy: "In the adoption of book collecting as an avocation, I have no defense to make and no apology to offer. On the contrary, I recommend this intensely interesting and absorbing pursuit to all who harbour the slightest inkling that it might prove pleasurable." *J.K. Lilly, Jr.*

### RARITY EXPLAINED!!

From the January 1884 *Rural Californian*: "A little pamphlet entitled "California Grapes and Wine" by Arpad Haraszthy, and "Champagne and Its Manufacture" by David W.C. Nesfield, was distributed broadcast on the streets of Los Angeles one day last month. The publishers might buy back their edition at small outlay, we think, from a gang of little boys who followed the distributor, and gathered up most of the books. The names of the authors of this work, especially the first, ought to entitle it to a more careful distribution." Maynard Amerine lists this Bosqui printed 30 page pamphlet in his 1969 essay, "An Introduction to the Pre-Repeal History of Grapes and Wines in California" (*Agri History*, Vol.43, No.2), and Gabler's bibliography includes it, but - does anyone have a copy? Would love to see it...

### "SIX BEST..."

Remember the 1919 book by Holworthy Hall and Hugh Kahler called *The Six Best Cellars*? It has been suggested that the WAYWARD TENDRILS borrow from this title and have a "Six Best Books in My Collection" Newsletter column. (The Canadian Corkscrew Collectors Club members actively share their "6 Best" with fellow members...) A list of your "Six Best," with perhaps a sentence or two explaining their privileged status - "value" is definitely not the sole criteria here! - is all we need to get started...



[Clive Coates writes and publishes the highly praised monthly guide to fine wines, *The Vine*. With his kind permission, we present the following excerpted article from his May 1991 issue.]

## COLLECTING OLD WINE BOOKS: WHAT, HOW and WHERE

by Clive Coates, MW



I have been collecting books on wine for nearly 30 years. While I have never had a great deal of money to spend on this hobby I have over this time assembled quite a respectable collection, particularly in the areas which interest me most - French wines, especially Bordeaux, and port. Having most of the old Cocks and Férets and other similar volumes saves me journeying to the British Museum or the Institute of Masters of Wine library every time I am researching a château profile. These books, and all my old tasting notes, some of which go back 30 years or more, are my archive.

But it is not merely because they are useful to me that I collect old wine books. Many are works of art in their own right, stuffed with stylish or amusing line drawings - these I use to decorate "The Vine," as readers will have noticed. Others are elegantly written. All provide an insight into the history and changing fashions of the wines of the past and into the social life and mores of our ancestors who drank them. An appreciation of this is essential in the understanding of the present. It is even of use when we come to project the world of wine into the future.

Today, sadly for us impoverished collectors, old wine books are big business. The classics now fetch top prices. An original Henderson will cost you £495, and 1874 Cocks and Féret £425, Bertall's *La Vigne* even more, the lavishly illustrated Vizetelly champagne book a little less. Some of these are now available in facsimile edition, which is fine for those who want access to the facts or wish to reproduce the illustrations. But we collectors want the real thing. It means that when the few volumes which have been lying at the head of our wants list for a number of years do finally, surface, we have to think twice about whether we can afford it. But somehow the satisfaction of filling a gap is then greater. I doubt that a millionaire, who could sign a cheque for anything without a second's hesitation would get the same kick out of it as those of us who have to watch the pennies.

### Victorian Classics - and Earlier

The first books about wine: different wines, that is, as opposed to grape growing and wine-making,

date from the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Sir Edward Barry was a physician and a member of the Royal Society. His *Observations, Historical, Critical and Medical on the Wines of the Ancients, and the Analogy between them and Modern Wines*, appeared in 1775. The chapters on modern wines are hardly more than an appendix to what is largely a volume devoted to translations of passages written, by mainly, Latin and Gallo-Roman writers in the classical period. Robert Shannon, another doctor, followed 30 years later with a *Practical Treatise on Brewing, Distilling and Rectification...with an Appendix on the Culture and Preparation of Foreign Wines*. This book I don't have myself, more's the pity. It is a vast tome, three-quarters of which covers beer and other ales, spirits and "home-made" wines. But the section on the culture of European wines is the first extensive treatise in the literature. Shannon is a particular fan of Burgundy: "If I had the office of providing the king's wine, I would go to Burgundy to choose it." Chambertin is "the most valuable"; Montrachet the most "curious and delicious."

Similarly to Barry, Alexander Henderson, a Scot and yet another doctor of medicine, entitles his book *A History of Ancient and Modern Wines* (1824). The coverage of modern wines is altogether more extensive, however, and in preparation he visited the principal wine-growing districts of France, Germany and Italy. He could also draw on what I consider the first masterpiece on wine to be published, André Jullien's *Topographie de Tous les Vignobles Connus*, which first appeared in 1816. Jullien was a Parisian wine wholesaler, and his knowledge of French wines is encyclopaedic. The entire panoply of the world's wines is categorised into different classes of quality. Individual properties and growers, even down to relatively unimportant levels, are extensively listed. This became the source work for the rest of the century. Even the occasional errors persist.

These are the four original classics, and it is interesting to note that three were published in Britain and all three of these authors were medical men. If there is a forerunner to Jullien in France I do not know of it.

The successor to Alexander Henderson was Cyrus Redding. Redding was not a doctor but a journalist, and spent five years in Paris between 1814 and 1819 during which he travelled extensively in France and Italy. His *History and Description of Modern Wines* is the English equivalent of Jullien and was first published in 1833. Redding is precisely factual (the Bordeaux vineyard is 137,002 hectares in extent, producing 2,805,476 hectolitres, at 18.72 2/3 hectolitres per hectare, valued at 49,177,454 francs). He writes about the commerce in wine and its taxation (twice as much wine is drunk per head in



Bordeaux as in Paris as a result of the excessive duties in the capital); and he is not above putting the boot into what he considers inaccurate glosses in Henderson.

But the heart is engaged as well as the brain. "France," Redding says, "is the vineyard of the earth...the foremost in the art of making the juice which so gladdens the heart...(the wines) cheer and exhilarate, while they fascinate the palate of all but the coarse and vulgar with their delicate and delicious flavour. Their variety is great, and they stand on their own intrinsic merits."

By the time the works of the next generation of wine writers hit the bookshelves, the fans of the "juice which so gladdens the heart" were on the defensive. That insidious by-product of Victorian morality, the temperance movement, was in the ascendent. For the next 50 years most of the major works in the literature felt that they had to justify the health-giving properties of moderate wine-drinking rather than extol the sensual delights of the "delicate and delicious flavours." Hedonism was out. The certainty of the second rate was in. Charles Tovey, *Wine and Wine Countries*, 1862, and Thomas George Shaw, *Wine, the Vine and the Cellar*, 1863, were both wine merchants. Both rage against adulteration, suggesting that only a fraction of what is sold as Bordeaux, Burgundy, etc was genuine. These are refreshingly honest, direct books, not without wit and humility. Shaw has the honesty to admit that, "I often form a very erroneous opinion, and like a wine one day and dislike it the next." He has been convinced for 40 years that there is "an enormous amount of humbug" in wine-tasting and wine-talk. Tovey also wrote a very good book on Champagne [1870, *Champagne: Its History, Manufacture, Properties*].

The last great English writer of the nineteenth century was Henry Vizetelly. Vizetelly was first a journalist and later a publisher - he was eventually to be bankrupted and imprisoned for publishing the works of Zola in English - and originally visited the French vineyards in 1869 when he was commissioned to write a series of articles for the Pall Mall Gazette. He stayed on in Paris after the Franco-Prussian War, continued to travel widely, and wrote a series of profusely illustrated monographs: *Facts about Champagne*, *Facts about Sherry*, and *Facts about Port and Madeira*, all published in the late 1870s. His original volume, in 1875, was *The Wines of the World*; his two sons, Ernest Alfred and Arthur, published *The Wines of France* in 1908. Vizetelly was a true journalist. There was nothing he liked better than button-holing proprietors and ferreting out the facts. His books are astonishingly well researched. Refreshingly, he neither hypothesises nor relies on other people's opinions. He finds out for himself:

Victorian scientific curiosity at its best.

All the above are books which can be read and enjoyed as literature. At the same time, particularly in the Bordeaux region of France, a parallel sequence of *oeuvres* attempted to list and categorise all top vineyards and producers. These bear the same relation to the above as does a red Michelin Guide to a more general travel book. The information is valuable and fascinating, but the personality of the writer and his love for wine is missing.

### Works on Bordeaux

The works on Bordeaux begin with Wilhelm Franck and his *Traité sur les Vins du Médoc* (later extended to cover the *Autres Vins Rouges et Blancs du Département de la Gironde*), which first appeared in 1824 and was updated periodically until 1871. Franck was a wine merchant of German origin who lived in Bordeaux. When he comes to giving his own classification of the wines he cautiously opens: "We now arrive at the most sensitive part of our work."

Paguerre, a *courtier* or broker in Bordeaux, published only one edition of his *Classification et Description des Vins de Bordeaux* in 1828. His classification is taken, without acknowledgement, from Franck's 1824 edition; but Paguerre does cover the wines of Sauternes and the Libournais, not detailed by Franck until later editions.

The origins of what we now refer to as Cocks and Féret, the "bible of Bordeaux," lie in a small volume published in English by Charles Cocks, a schoolmaster, in 1846. *Bordeaux, its Wines and the Claret Country* devotes only some 40 per cent of its text to the wines, and that only in a circumspect way. The first edition of *Bordeaux et ses Vins, Classés par Ordre de Mérite* appeared in 1850. Editorship would eventually be taken on by Edouard Féret. It has been updated roughly every 10 years since, and the current edition encompasses some 1,800 pages. While the *ordre de mérite* remained the responsibility of Féret and his successors, the text written about the estates themselves was supplied by the proprietors, and, one assumes as not all the châteaux are either illustrated or commented on, they paid for the inclusion. Similar Cocks and Féret type volumes later appeared on Burgundy and other regions, but not with the same regularity; nor are they as illuminating, as the *ordre du mérite* element is lacking. A more satisfactory 19th century guide to Burgundy is Dr. Laval's *Vins de la Côte d'Or*, which appeared in 1855.

The latter half of the nineteenth century was the heyday of the illustrated, what we would today call coffee-table book, on wine. Bertall's *La Vigne*, subtitled *Voyage Autour des Vins de France*, appeared in 1878. Splendidly illustrated with voluminous and amusing etchings, and with a text which at times is endearingly ribald, and always pleasantly discursive,



this is a delightful work, both to read and to look at. It is one of the prizes of my collection. Other visually magnificent volumes include the various *Les Richesses Gastronomiques de la France*, pseudonymously written by Charles Lorbac (his real name was Cabrol) and published in 1867. Alfred Danflou's *Les Grands Crus Bordelais* appeared in the same year, but is less attractive as the illustrations are photographs rather than line drawings. [Ed Note: Yet, this book is probably one of the earliest to use photographs to illustrate the châteaux.]

### The Twentieth Century

The two strands of wine writing in the modern era consist firstly of the André Simon school, a down-to-earth desire to communicate, to educate and to encourage knowledge, enjoyment and a wider consumption of wine - this is the dominant approach which governs today's authors - and the more donnish, elitist, often insufferably self-satisfied writing of such as Herbert Warner Allen, Charles Walter Berry and Maurice Healy: what Cyril Ray has referred to as the Gothic school of wine writing. Who today would dare to pen the following about Chambertin: "One hears the clang of armour in its depths; Mozart closes his clavacin when it is poured...but Bach moves towards the organ" (Maurice Healy). Sometimes this approach can be magnificently evocative, however. This is Warner Allen on Latour 1878: "Its colour was brilliant and deep, its bouquet fresh and exquisite, and over its palate its majestic yet delicate splendour stole as mysteriously as the sunset colours die the clouds. It left behind a fragrant memory, a gentle exhilaration and a philosophic certainty that all was right with the world."

The doyen of this school was a crusty old professor of English called George Saintsbury. His *Notes on a Cellar Book* was published when he was 75, retired, and his wine-drinking confined - whether on the advice of his doctor he does not say - to white wine and champagne. Saintsbury emerges from this book, effectively a diary of his drinking experiences, as a misogynist, right-wing, intellectual snob, yet it is endearing for all that. Saintsbury never liked Chambertin: it was Napoleon's favourite wine. And he loathed Napoleon.

For all their idiosyncrasies there is much to enjoy and even to instruct in the reminiscences and observations of this school of wine-writing. After all, there is nothing much to be gained from an out-of-date, purely factual account of a region and its wines, nor from accounts of old bottles which are not written with flair and wit. And books like these can still be picked up with relative ease and little expense.

[For a free sample issue of *The Vine*, write Clive Coates at No.8 The Mall, Ealing, London W5 2PJ.]



### BOOKS & BOTTLES

by  
Fred McMillin

### CLOUDY BAY IS A-OK

#### From the Books:

When missionary Samuel Marsden brought his faith and vines to Kerikeri, New Zealand, in 1814, he faced a formidable flock. It consisted chiefly of 400,000 large, fierce Maoris, augmented by a handful of unwelcome settlers, convicts who had escaped from prisons in Australia, 1200 miles to the northwest. Nevertheless, only five years later the missionary reported that "Our vines at Kerikeri are many." As for the Maoris, we have a first-hand report from a vessel that dropped anchor at Kerikeri a decade later. One of the passengers noted that, under the care of the Maoris attached to the local mission, the grapes were flourishing. The vessel was the H.M.S. Beagle and the observer was none other than Charles Darwin.

Thus did a newcomer bring winemaking to New Zealand...and newcomers are still improving it. Only ten years ago David Hohnen brought his Californian and Australian experience to the country. He subsequently produced what may be the land's most exciting new wine: the Cloudy Bay Sauvignon blanc. The *Slow Food Guide to Wine* reports "it is so popular that it is often sold out before having finished fermentation." (For sales locations in the USA phone 212-888-7575.)

References: *Wine in New Zealand* by Frank Thorpy. Auckland: Collins Bros., 1971. *Wine Atlas of Australia and New Zealand* by James Halliday. San Francisco: The Wine Appreciation Guild, 1991.

**About the Bottles:** Here's a list of California wineries (ranked by my Consumers' Tasting Panel) that make a fine Sauvignon blanc - alias Fumé blanc - in case you would like to compare one of them with the Cloudy Bay.

- 6th - Grgich Cellars
- 5th - Guenoc
- 4th - Raymond
- 3rd - Matanzas Creek
- 2nd - St. Clement
- 1st - Robt. Mondavi (try the Reserve).





# RIVERS and WINE, BOOKS and ONLINE by Bo Simons

I do not know much about gods but I think that the river  
Is a strong brown god-sullen, untamed and intractable...  
T.S. Eliot, from *The Dry Salvages*, *The Four Quartets*



drove alongside flooded vineyards near the Wohler Bridge on the Russian River listening to the radio. The surrounding vineyards were covered up to the tips of their trellis stakes in muddy roiling truculent water; the newly burst buds were floating away, eddying downstream. The voice on the car radio belonged to Clifford Stoll, author of *Silicon Snakeoil* and a guest on a radio talk show. He related cautionary tales of libraries being forsaken for computers. I had in the car some lovely old wine books I had recently purchased for the Sonoma County Wine Library. I also had with me the first draft of an article, titled "Chateau Cyberspace: Resources on Wine and Grapes on the Internet." The images of flood ravaged vineyards, the voice on the radio denouncing the burnished promises of cyberspace, the reassuring leather bound books, and my own involvement in the Internet combined to set me off on a meditation from which I have yet to emerge.

I remembered that in Florence in the 1966 flood, the Arno River spilled its banks and filled the Biblioteca Nazionale, where thousands of codices and incunabulae lay sleeping. The flood of information spewing from computers and the Internet seemed to be a similar sort of menace to well maintained books. Was the viscous virtual river of bits and data, this ultimate leveler, going to sweep up all the books in its gleaming embrace?

People disagreeing everywhere you look,  
Makes you wanna stop and read a book.  
Why only yesterday I saw somebody on the street  
Who was really shook.  
But this ol' river keeps on rollin' though,  
No matter what gets in the way and which  
way the wind does blow,  
And as long as it does, I'll just sit here and  
watch the river flow.

Bob Dylan, "Watching the River Flow"

I have some deep conflicts, serious doubts about computers and the future of books. I do not feel threatened, however, either as a librarian, or as a lover of books, by much of the computer-babble that

spews from cyber-hype merchants. The book is too good a piece of technology: paper impressed with ink, folded and cut, sewn or pasted together, stored between boards covered with cloth or leather or between paper. The book is compact, portable, accessible. You can get to any page of a book at any time you have it in your hand. You do not need to boot it up, plug it in, download it, change it from DOS to Windows to Macintosh. You do not need a password; you do not need keyboard or mouse skills. No computer nor any computer-aided device comes close to the glory and utility of the book.

Yet the computer has greatly aided the world of books and the world of libraries. Books of today could not be produced without computers. Books of tomorrow may be produced from computers directly to consumer demand. And libraries of the future may, in fact, be far more digital than I would like to admit. There is a wonderful advantage in having a well constructed bibliographic database that describes a collection. The publicly accessible online bibliographic database has largely replaced the card catalog. The computer catalog can be better than a card catalog in several ways. It allows you to combine terms and search on different access points to retrieve partially remembered titles. A computer catalog also has the enormous practical advantage in that it usually tells you whether the book is on the shelf. There remains a sad practical fact: for monetary reasons a computer catalog is rarely as good in its bibliographic craft as a card catalog. I don't think it has to be that way, but it is. Now the Internet offers, along with access to the online catalogs of the world's libraries, a bulging flood of information, a flood which threatens us all.

Free fall flow river flow,  
on and on it goes  
...yes the river knows.

Jim Morrison, "Yes, The River Knows"

One of the books in my car as I drove by the drowned vineyards was *The Whole Art and Trade of Husbandry* by Conrad Heresbach. This is a translation of his *Rei Rusticae Libri Quatuor*, written in Latin and first printed in Cologne in 1570. It was translated into English by Barnaby Googe, a celebrated poet and translator of 16th century works, and published in England under the title *Foure Bookes of Husbandry*



in 1578: one of the earliest works in the English language on viticulture and wine-making. The edition I had in the car with me was printed in London in 1614. Under the grey black towers of cumulus, backlit by dramatic shafts of sun reflected in the water between the vine rows, I pulled over to the road's edge and stopped; I took the small blind tooled full-calf book out of its box and looked at it. The pages are somewhat browned at the edges and there is no margin to speak of surrounding the glutted text block of strident sturdy English Black Letter. Like many books of this time, the format is that of a dialogue. A number of voices discuss many aspects of agriculture. Heresbach, "Councillour to the High and Mightie Prince, the Duke of Cleve," seems to have consulted many classical sources, par for the course for books at this time. He also seems to have consulted contemporary sources and observed methods of farming around Germany - this was unusual for the time. As I mentioned, the book deals with all aspects of agriculture, but Heresbach begins the part concerning vine growing with a discussion of the controversy regarding the Classical or Biblical origin of grape cultivation. Was it Bacchus or Noah who invented the cultivation of the vine? "We that are taught by God's holy ward, to know that it was first found out by the Patriarke Noah immediately after the drowning of the world... The Heathen both most fairly and very fondly give the invention of the same unto the God Bacchus. But Noah lived many yeares before either Bacchus, Saturnus or Uranius were borne..." There is a circularity here, I mused. Vines drowning. The good Noah, inventing viticulture after saving humankind and all the animals from the flood. Then didn't Noah get good and drunk? And this has been construed by some as close to the second fall of man.

I picked up another of the books in the car, *Here Let Us Feast: A Book of Banquets* by M.F.K. Fisher (New York: Viking Press, 1946). In this lustrous anthology Fisher draws from all literature pieces she finds which are "concerned with man's fundamental need to celebrate the high points of his life by eating and drinking." One of the authors from whom she selects is François Rabelais. In the same way I seek to embrace both computers and books, so Rabelais and his "bacchic Christianity" sought to embrace both Christ and Bacchus. In her introduction to an excerpt from *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, Fisher quotes from Ronsard:

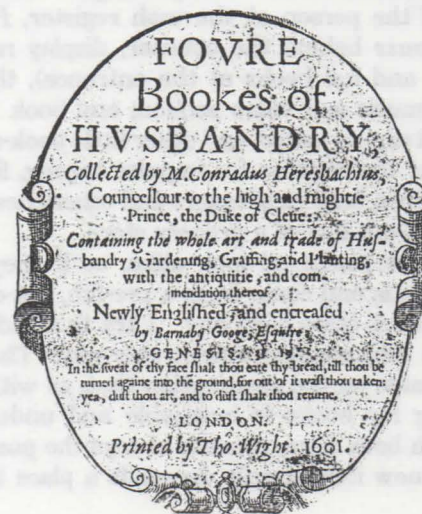
Surely, some vine will grow from out  
The paunch and belly of our stout  
Friend Rabelais, who never tried  
To curb his drinking ere he died.

I looked out beyond the submerged vines to the coursing flow of the river. There is something in the river, a presence that goes beyond logic, that can wear away mountains and unite opposites. Here sprawls and coils a god who can devastate and fertilize.

On the Internet there is a Club François Rabelais. They invoke the spirit of the besotted saint of humane drinkers in their name. Can a computer site be truly Rabelaisian? Can you virtually taste the wine and feel the fire in your belly? The club is based in Paris, through which courses the river Seine, and they have a World Wide Web site whose URL is <http://www.ensta.fr:80/-oinos>.

riverrun, past Eve and Adam's, from  
swerve of shore to bend of bay,  
brings us by a commodius vicus of  
recirculation back  
to Howth Castle and Environs.

James Joyce, *Finnegan's Wake*



## A DAY IN THE SONOMA COUNTY WINE COUNTRY with BOOKS, AUTHORS, WINE, FOOD, MUSIC!!

The Sonoma County Wine Library Associates is hosting the first Annual "Sonoma Odyssey" on Saturday afternoon June 3rd: Tables of Old Wine Books for sale ♦♦♦ Wine & Cook Book Authors (including Chas. Sullivan, Bob Thompson, Wm. Heintz, Norm Roby, Peter Reinhardt, Michele Anna Jordan, Margaret Smith, Viana la Place, Robt. Kourik) on hand to sell and sign their books ♦♦♦ Enjoy Wines from 30 of Sonoma County's Wineries, plus tasty Mediterranean Lifestyle Food, and Jazz! Tickets are \$15 for Library Associates members, \$25 for non-members (includes Membership). To reserve tickets and further information, call 707-433-0732.



## THE ANTIQUARIAN BOOK TRADE -- ONE COLLECTOR'S VIEW

by Sidney E. Berger

[We borrow this entertaining article from the August 17, 1992 issue of *AB Bookman's Weekly*. Berger, a true bookman, has degrees in medieval English literature and library science.]



One of the most compelling and magnetic places for a bibliophile is a bookstore. There are many kinds, all of which have various levels of magnetism for collectors.

I shall dispense quickly with those chains selling only new books. They are models of Madison Avenue hype and marketing psychology. Bright lights, sale signs over their "specials" and remaindered books, Muzak, careful layout (kids in the back where they won't disturb serious-minded adults, magazines and books on "health" -- i.e., bodily things -- under the scrutiny of the person at the cash register, *Playboy* and *Penthouse* behind the counter, display racks of bestsellers and hot books at the entrance), the new obligatory music and video section; and book marks, read-in-bed clip-on lamps, and other little book-related objects near the register for impulse buying, like the candy, lip gloss, batteries, razors and other cheap junk at the check-out line of a grocery store.

These places all look alike, as if they were made of plastic and come from a pre-fab, hot-off-the-press new-book-store company. I try to avoid them. But a true bibliomaniac cannot stay out. The book world operates on the assumption that, as with food, the craving for books is insatiable and undeniable. And as with book fairs, there is always the possibility that some new item simply demands a place in your library.

Of greater interest, however, are the stores dealing in "pre-owned" books (to borrow a term from the used-car industry). There are basically three types of such establishments: those which are truly antiquarian or rare book stores, those that call themselves purveyors of "used and out-of-print" books, and the more common variety of "used books" stores.

The antiquarian store, strictly speaking, sells antiques (e.g. 100-year old items), so the words "and rare" often appear in the place's designation. The stock is usually of good to excellent quality; the prices tend to be high; there are usually carpets and good lighting, lots of leather on the tidy shelves, an odor of sumptuousness, fine prints visible, and no sense of clutter or disarray. The proprietors run the gamut of garrulous to taciturn, friendly to hostile, modest to soaringly egocentric, distant and calmly removed to impatient and hovering, and, in general, your friend or

potentially your most avid foe, aiming his greedy paws at your pocket or purse.

Chances are you won't find bargains here. Just as at book fairs, the items they know well will be priced (on the high side of) appropriately, while the books in areas of their ignorance tend to be overpriced. For most of us buyers, these stores are irresistible in that we *must* enter them, but resistible in terms of our willingness to buy. People want bargains, and bargains are usually not to be had in these places.

Of course, I and many other collectors will gloatingly tell of purchases made of wonderfully underpriced books at these establishments. It will happen. But the chances are slim.

Proprietors of these stores, however, are also likely to be the best friends of collectors. Most antiquarian-book sellers are exceptionally knowledgeable in their fields, and are willing to help collectors build their libraries. I have found that many of them will even do so at their own expense. Some of the more interesting and desirable things in my own holdings came as gifts from dealers, or at no profit for the ones who had acquired the items for me.

And greed does not motivate many of these booksellers. I have seen some of the greatest acts of generosity from some of them. One dealer I knew would have rather given a valuable book to an academic library where he knew the book was badly needed in the collection than sell it for filthy lucre to a private party who would squirrel it away for a lifetime. For many of these booksellers, there is more pleasure in a well-placed volume than there is in the monetary profits they could make.

The used and out-of-print stores, for me, are much more appealing, despite the less elegant surrounding and the lower level of quality of their holdings. While their stocks have generally been combed (usually by the antiquarian dealers, their scouts, or canny collectors) for the rarities, they still offer one the hope of pulling the gem from the mine -- but it takes digging. Every dealer and collector has his stories of how he found a certain title at one of these places. For example, in a store specializing in Western Americana -- run by a dealer quite knowledgeable about that area -- I found Victor von Hagen's book *The Aztec and Maya Papermakers* for \$17.50. This is just one of dozens of such "I found" stories that I could recount. All collectors have such stories. So do the dealers.

These places distinguish the good from the great acquirer: the good one will get his bargains and will leave the store feeling content at his finds; the great one will quickly gravitate by instinct to the best books in the place, will make a small killing, and will leave there discontent, *knowing* there were other



treasures. Many a visit to an out-of-print bookstore has been cut short with the frustrating phrase "if I only had more time."

In stores like this I have mystically been drawn to shelves which contain books on subjects I am not interested in, only to find just the perfect book for my collection. In a great old -- now defunct -- used and out-of-print store in Sacramento (Liberty Books), I was once magnetized by the music section. I am definitely not interested in music books, but here I reached out and pulled only one book from the shelf -- within two minutes of having entered the shop.

It was entitled *The Harmonizer*. It was not on music; it was by John F. Earhart, a printer who in 1897 was trying to show, on page after page, how different styles of type and ornament, printed in different colors of ink, harmonized with several colors of paper. As a music book it was \$15.

These shops will often have their "special books" case -- a padlocked glass case near the front of the store which contains the place's treasures. The special books are usually nicely bound volumes of Tennyson's poetry, crumbling books with some nice plates, a limited signed edition of the collected poems of Joseph Blow, an 1855 religious manual from Germany (old = valuable to many of these dealers), a "great" old thick-covered leather Bible lacking one of its clasps (which is no big deal since the front gilt-stamped cover is already detached), and whatever else the dealer thinks is "special" and valuable. I enter such establishments with great anticipation and leave them with reluctance.

The third kind of shop specializes in truly dead novels by forgotten writers, *National Geographics*, lots of paperbacks (especially mystery, sci-fi, and romance), dated textbooks, "fancy" but crumbling bindings, old magazine-cover illustrations shrink-wrapped against acidic cardboard, how-to books from the '40s and '50s on child rearing, bowling, car repair, and needlework, and other piles of *stuff*.

And I do mean piles. Items of all kinds will sometimes be piled on shelves or floors, often with no sense of order or categorization. The place will be musty and dusty, and you will desperately need to wash your hands when you leave.

The proprietors will usually be sitting at a card table somewhere, partly obscured by cartons of new acquisitions, sipping a beer or a soft drink, eating a hamburger or a coldcuts sandwich, and are often engulfed in wreaths of cigarette smoke. And in answer to "Do you have...?", you will either get a definitive NO (which is probably inaccurate) or a YES followed by convoluted directions on how to make your way through book-laden aisles to what you asked about. You have only a 50 percent chance of finding it. Sometimes a dealer will even stand up to point you

in the right direction.

A YES or NO cannot be trusted. You are likely to find *anything, anywhere* in these places. And that, along with their smell and their low prices, and the sense that untapped lodes of treasures can be mined here, all constitute their greatest appeal.

And the proprietors of these shops are usually characters, loaded with book lore -- the lore of the booksellers they have known; the stories of the treasures they have sold to the Rosenbachs, the Dawsons, and the Zeitlins; and the tales of the great tomes they could have had but let slip by. They talk of the good old days of the trade, when you could get treasures for reasonable prices; they complain about the high prices of today; they ramble on about the superior collections they have given birth to and fed, the highlights of their own bookselling ("Why, I sold him his first Doves Press"), and the details of all the great libraries they appraised in their past and in their dreams. When you select something from their stock, you usually hear, "That's a fine choice. Now, that one should go for \_\_\_\_\_. I think I underpriced it. You got a good one there." And usually they are right.

I often wonder what happens to their stock at their demise, for their places are generally the end of the line for most of their books. These stores have a life and a spirit of their own, with their sagging, messy shelves, their magnificent smells, their piles of cardboard cartons filled with the unknown, their haunting dark areas, the echoes of thousands of conversations, their images of the hordes of forgotten books of the distant past, the muffle of voices in the deep aisles, and their entrancing sense of allure, excitement, potential, and sadness.

One of these stores always beckoned to me on my frequent trips to Iowa and Nebraska, so I usually made the trip to Kansas City whenever I was within a couple hours' drive. The last time I was there, I discovered that the store had been sold. The stock and shelves were completely cleared out, the windows were partially soaped, and the building was condemned, dark, and hollow.

I was heartbroken and deeply shaken when I peered through the fog of soap and saw a dark empty cavern inside. I stood there for a long time, not knowing what to do or where to go, needing to talk to someone, and feeling the desperate need to get inside -- positive that some treasure had been overlooked when the place was sacked; it was in there, waiting for me to discover it.





[Tendril Bob Foster writes a regular column for the California Grapevine - "In the Wine Library." In the Feb-March 1995 issue, accompanying his tasting notes on some 1992 vintage Ports, Bob recommended the following books.]

## READING ABOUT PORT by Bob Foster

Those of you seeking to read more about vintage port should look for Andrew Jefford's *Port: An Essential Guide to the Classic Drink* (Exeter Books, New York, 1988). While originally published at \$10, I have seen it discounted as low as \$2 in some outlet bookstores. It's the best introductory book on port ever. There are sections on everything from the making of port to specific notes on each of the producers. It's lavishly illustrated with maps, photographs and drawings. Jefford, one of the best of the emerging group of English wine writers, writes with a lively and informative style. It's a must buy for the beginning port lover.

*Portugal's Wines & Winemakers* by Richard Mayson, (Wine Appreciation Guild, S.F., 1993), provides the most recent overview of new events in the Port trade. Although now slightly out of date, Jim Suckling's book, *Vintage Port*, (Wine Spectator Press, 1990), has a wealth of solid information and detailed tasting notes. *Port Wine Quintas of the Douro*, by Alex Liddell, published by Sotheby's Publications in association with the Wine Appreciation Guild in 1992, is the ultimate reference book for a dedicated port lover with its detailed descriptions of each of the ranches in the Douro Valley.

Should any of you be lucky enough to have access to wine book collections containing older, now out of print, volumes there are a number of gems that have been published in this century. *The Story of Port-The Englishman's Wine* by Sarah Bradford is a very scholarly well researched work with emphasis on the history of the region and the commercial realities of the 1970s. *Port* by George Robertson concentrates on the technical side of the port making but lacks any detailed notes on specific producers or vintages. *Rich, Rare and Red* by Ben Howkins fully covers the area, its producers and its history. But an added plus are sections on local food and local wines.

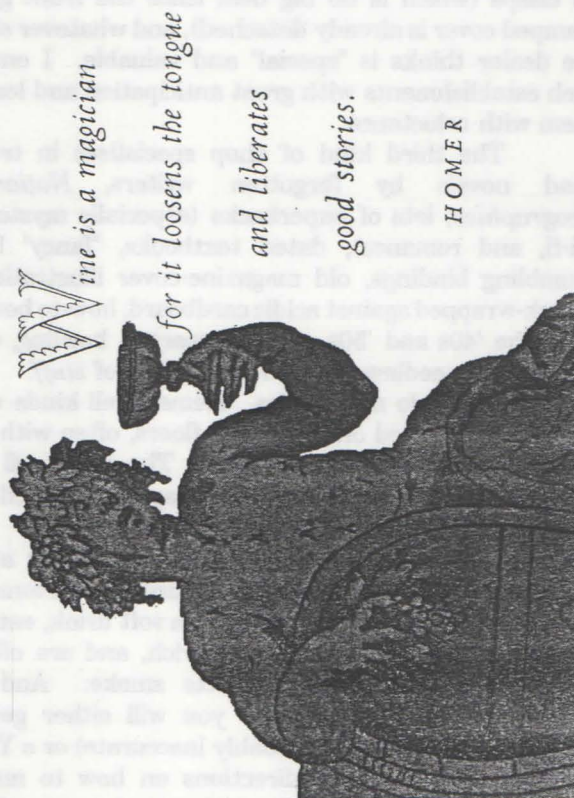
The grand daddy of all port books is the much sought after *Facts About Port and Madeira* by Henry Vizetelly published in 1880. It's a detailed journal of the author's trip to Portugal and Madeira in 1877. The book is greatly prized for its insightful text as well as its one hundred drawn-on-the-scene engravings of the region. The original, first edition is quite scarce and available only in the most complete antiquarian wine libraries on a par with the Napa Valley Wine

Library (St.Helena) or the Sonoma County Wine Library (Healdsburg). Fortunately, there is an affordable reprint edition published by Bacchus Press that can be ordered from your favorite wine book dealer for around \$45.



## "TOASTCARDS!"

A handsome set of hand-printed postcards has been brought to our attention by Tendril **Ruth Walker**. Developed and printed by Jennifer Garden at her Bluestocking Press on a 1920s Platen Press, each Toastcard features a quote "celebrating the pleasures of drinking wine, complemented by reproductions of prints and drawings gathered from the [once] Wine Museum of San Francisco." The 4 1/2 x 6 inch postcards are printed in a variety of fonts in two colors in shades of green & burgundy on heavy ivory cardstock, and are packaged in a set of 8 cards (four designs in duplicate). The price is \$12 per set. Contact Jennifer Garden, Blue Stocking Press, 2727 Sulphur Springs Ave, St.Helena, CA 94574; telephone 707-963-0962. (Wholesale prices available).



[Reduced]