

# the WAYWARD TENDRILS Newsletter

Vol.7 No.1

A WINE BOOK COLLECTOR'S SOCIETY

January 1997

[This four-part essay on the history of these ephemeral pieces is continued from our last issue...]

## NOTES ON NEWSLETTERS

by  
Philephemera

### PART II



he earliest surviving wine newsletter that I know of was put out by the New York wine merchant and writer Fredrick Cozzens from 1854 to 1861, under the simple title of Cozzens' Wine Press ("Wine Press", for obvious and irresistible reasons, is far and away the leading title-phrase in the literature of wine). Fellow Tendril Roy Brady, whose collecting triumphs are legendary, succeeded in acquiring a file of this newsletter, which can now be studied in the library at the University of California, Fresno, along with many other of Brady's splendid trophies. The Wine Press conforms precisely to my definition of the newsletter: it lists wines for sale by Cozzens at his New York store, but the main object is entertainment and instruction. It is filled with comic sketches (Cozzens published at least two collections of comic writings: *The Sparrowgrass Papers*, 1856, and *The Sayings of Dr. Bushwhacker*, 1867), articles on the lore of wine, and, to Cozzens' great credit, information about the wines of the then-struggling, infant American wine industry. Cozzens took a patriotic interest in native wines, and did what he could to promote them, including not just the relatively-familiar Catawba of Nicholas Longworth from Cincinnati but wines from Kentucky, Virginia, New York, and North Carolina as well.

Another early wine newsletter, one that does not, so far as I can tell, survive, was published by the egregious Thomas Lake Harris, founder of the Fountain Grove Winery in Santa Rosa. According to

an article on Harris in the *Illustrated History of Sonoma County* (Chicago, Lewis Publishing Co., 1889), the winery published the Fountain Grove Wine Press—"an illustrated journal...published in Santa Rosa and New York ... devoted exclusively to these viticultural interests" (p. 366). Unfortunately, this reference is the only evidence I know for the existence of the title: there is no entry for it in the National Union Catalog or in the Union List of Serials, and I have not encountered a copy in any library known to me. Nor is it mentioned by Harris's biographer, Herbert Schneider. Perhaps Harris only imagined it, or perhaps the interviewer misunderstood. Yet Harris was a confirmed believer in the power of print; his own writings were published in wholesale numbers, so it is at least likely that a Fountain Grove Wine Press was a part of his activity. I cherish a faint hope that I may one day see a copy. Harris held that his wine was not mere fruit juice but a fluid infused with a divine aura having all sorts of transcendental virtues. Did such talk appear in the newsletter? or did it stay at the level of mere prose sense? I imagine that it was fairly restrained, for whatever Harris may have said to the initiated, he seems to have been shrewd enough in his relation to the gentiles and would not have gone out of his way to provoke them.

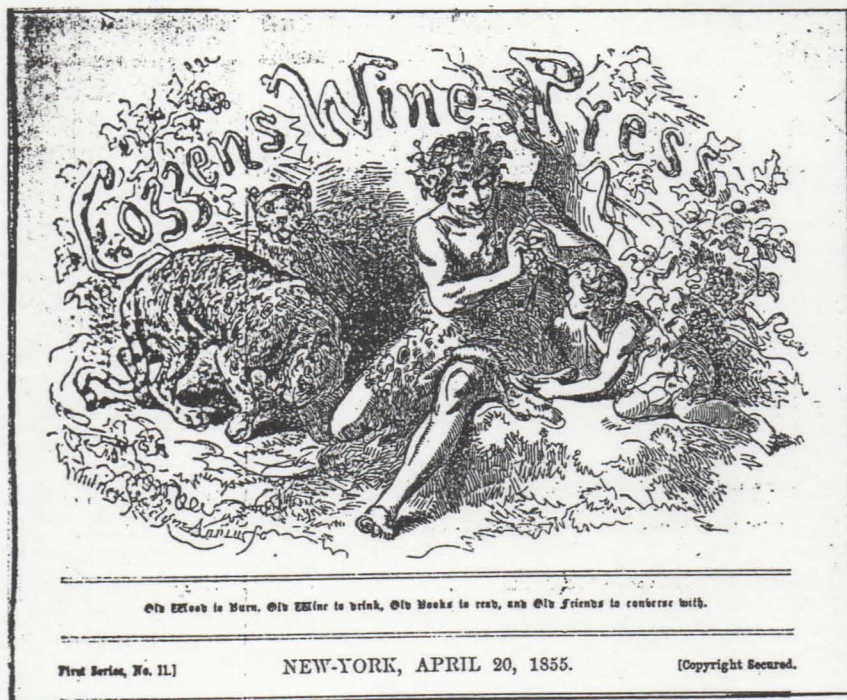
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I am not aware of any other newsletters in the pre-Prohibition era, though there must have been some. Prohibition, of course, put an end to all the



literature of wine during the fourteen years that it afflicted the country. And after Repeal the recovery of a vigorous state of health was a slow process for the wine industry. First the depression, then the war years, had to be endured. The industry remained at a sort of subsistence level without the margin of security and leisure that would allow it to do creative and inventive things. Not until the '50s did the idea of the newsletter again begin to grow and take shape. *Bottles and Bins*, of which we have already spoken, seems to have been the first to appear, but that statement is wide open to correction. It is perhaps significant that Francis Gould, its creator, was not native to the industry but came as an outsider. Most of his life had been lived on the east coast, and when he fetched up in the Napa Valley he could see in it possibilities that were not apparent to the locals, who took it all for granted.



[Cozens Wine Press, 1854-1861]

Frank Schoonmaker, the begetter of the next significant newsletter, was also an outsider, though he had a long-established commercial interest in the wines of California. Originally a writer of travel books, Schoonmaker was able, through his researches in Europe, to acquire a knowledge of wine that was denied to those Americans who stayed home during Prohibition. Upon the passage of Repeal he put that knowledge to good use by establishing an importing firm dealing in the wines of Europe, especially those of Germany. At the same time he took a serious interest in the future of American winemaking. Even better, he wrote about wine for an American public

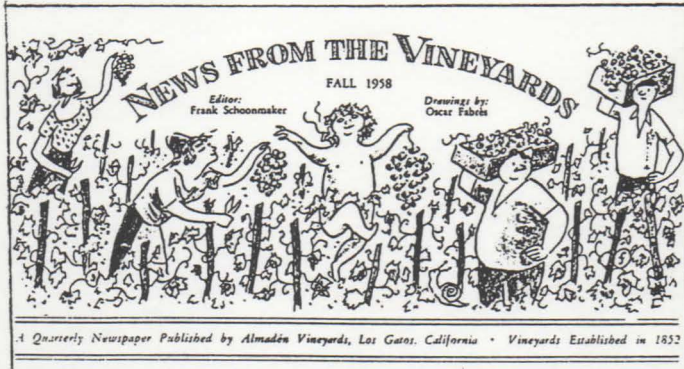
badly in need of instruction and yet without—or almost without—competent teachers. Among the American wine writers of the 1930s, only Philip Wagner, whose *American Wines and How To Make Them* was published just months before Repeal, deserves to be mentioned in the same breath with Schoonmaker. In collaboration with Tom Marvel, Schoonmaker published *The Complete Wine Book* in 1934, which had hopeful things to say about American wines ("California ... is one of the most interesting regions, viticulturally, in the entire world"). Seven years later, Schoonmaker and Marvel published *American Wines*, which remained determinedly hopeful, even though seven years of Repeal had produced little from California or New York to justify that hope.

The outbreak of the war in Europe in 1939, however, gave Schoonmaker a compelling reason to do something about American wines. His supplies as an importer were now cut off, and if he was to stay in business it would be as a dealer in American wine, like it or not. Schoonmaker now scoured New York, Ohio, and California looking for winegrowers who would go along with his ideas. No more European names, but instead those of the grape variety that had produced the wine and of the region where it had grown; and, as far as possible, a premium price for the better varieties. Thus, directly through Schoonmaker's work, the country was introduced for the first time since Repeal (there had been much varietal labelling before Prohibition) to such novelties as Lake Erie Islands Catawba, Canandaigua Lake Delaware, and Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. How profound and far-reaching an effect this turn of things has had upon the wine trade in America is a subject I think not yet properly understood, but it is outside my scope here.

In 1941 Schoonmaker was associated with Louis Benoist in the purchase of Almaden Vineyards and so could begin to carry out his ideas directly on how California wines were to be improved. The war interrupted Schoonmaker's work for Almaden, but afterwards he returned and continued to help direct it towards higher levels. The Almaden labels were derived from Schoonmaker's earlier varietal labels, and, to come at last to the point of this excursus, Schoonmaker undertook to produce an Almaden newsletter: he would not only help to improve the quality of American wine, he would improve the knowledge of the American wine drinker. I do not know when it began publication—my earliest number



is Spring 1955—nor do I know when it ceased—my last is undated but comes, I think, from 1972. Schoonmaker called it News from the Vineyards: A Quarterly Newspaper. By 1959 it had ceased to be a quarterly but was instead published twice a year, not always regularly.

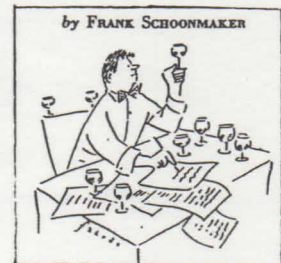


News from the Vineyards was the antithesis of Bottles and Bins, for the commercial purpose was unashamedly prominent. It was distributed largely through liquor stores, who might have their name imprinted on a blank space headed "Compliments of"; it was, in the early days at least, printed on cheap newsprint; it was illustrated, originally with cartoons by Oscar Fabres, later with color photography; and it frankly promoted Almaden wines. But it did so in a well-informed way, and it did much else besides. Schoonmaker was the son of a college professor, and he loved to teach. Luckily, unlike many teachers, he wrote an admirable prose: clear, literate, unaffected, emphatic. You always learned something from anything he wrote (I still go to his *Encyclopedia of Wine* as my starting point whenever I have a question to investigate), and he touched many subjects: wine-tasting vocabulary, the Pinot grape, vintage dating, the physics of corkscrews, the history of wine in America. Incidentally, News from the Vineyards for Spring 1961 contains an appreciative article on its remote predecessor, Cozzens' Wine Press, a file of which was then said to be in the Almaden library (where, one wonders, is it now?). Some of the positions that Schoonmaker took can be seen as rather self-serving now, but who cares? He was always interesting, always wrote as one having authority.

News from the Vineyards was not entirely Schoonmaker's private domain, though he gave it its character. Among the other contributors one may mention Maynard Amerine, Helen Evans Brown, and James Beard. Schoonmaker's name disappears as editor of News from the Vineyards after 1966, but then re-appears on an undated issue (from 1969). According to Irving Marcus, Schoonmaker had had to miss an issue owing to ill-health, and could manage

only one number in 1969 (Wines and Vines, November 1969, p. 37). The press-run for News from the Vineyards was then 700,000 copies, 185,000 of which went to subscribers and the rest to wholesalers and retailers for distribution. Does anyone now have a complete run? Almaden has disappeared into the collection of labels owned by Canandaigua; Schoonmaker died, to the great loss of American wine writing, in 1976; the early News from the Vineyards was printed on a fast-disintegrating newsprint. How quickly such bright and vivid things fade.

It sometimes happens in the history of literary forms that the very earliest examples are almost fully developed: the essay sprang full-grown from the brow of Montaigne, and the possibilities of the novel were pretty thoroughly explored by its 18th-century inventors. Between them, Bottles and Bins and News from the Vineyards may be said to have done the same thing for the wine newsletter. At one extreme was Schoonmaker's brisk, emphatic instruction in the correct view of things; at the other, the insinuating, gentlemanly reticence of Francis Gould. Both writers felt free to expatiate as their fancies took them, emphasizing the necessary freedom of the newsletter from a simple commercial purpose, and both exploited the interest in things associated with wine—corks, bottles, people, places, books, manners, morals, legislation and so on through a practically endless series. There have been many refinements and differing emphases in the design and content of wine newsletters since, but nothing that I can think of that is not at least by implication present in the exemplary work of Gould and Schoonmaker. They are the Plato and Aristotle of the genre. 🍷



[*Phlephemera encourages Tendrils to send in corrections and additions.* - Ed.]

— THE WAYWARD TENDRILS is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1990 for Wine Book Collectors. Yearly Membership/Subscription to THE WAYWARD TENDRILS Newsletter is \$15 USA and Canada; \$20 Overseas. Permission to reprint is requested. Please address all correspondence to THE WAYWARD TENDRILS, Box 9023, Santa Rosa, CA 95405 USA. FAX 707-544-2723. Editor: Gail Unzelman. Assistant Editor: Bo Simons. —





■ **WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!** Two bookseller firms, specializing in gastronomy and wine, have recently joined us. **Louis & Clark, Booksellers** (Lillian A. Clark, P.O. Box 5093, Madison, WI 53705; 608-231-6850) have a growing stock of "old, rare and out-of-print books on cookery, gastronomy, wine & other beverages, the food industry, household management and domestic history" in all Western languages. They write that their new specialty is "appealing and refreshing after years of study in airier reaches of poetry and prose." **Vin & Gastronomie — Antiquarian Books, Paper & Artifacts** (Marjorie P. Adams / Michael Adams, P.O. Box 40, Lancaster, MA 01523; Tel/Fax 508-368-4225), spotlight their wine-related ephemera: "early merchants' trade cards, old wine labels, broadsides, publicity flyers, correspondence, checks & stock certificates, restaurant menus, tax stamps, etc...". Their first catalogue will be issued this Spring. We send thanks to Tendril **Robert Hutton** for introducing our group to Vin & Gastronomie at the annual conference of the American Wine Society.

■ **Biblio TO REPRINT BERK!** In our October issue, we noted the excellent new monthly, Biblio - The Magazine for Collectors of Books.... We sent their editor a complimentary copy of our October *Newsletter*, proposing an informative mention of THE WAYWARD TENDRILS collectors group in their publication (with a circulation of 30,000!). We quote from the letter received from Editor Colleen Sell: "I have just finished reading the October 1996 issue of your newsletter. I commend you on a delightful publication and thank you for your complimentary review of Biblio. ... We would like to adapt and reprint in Biblio Mr. Berk's excellent article 'Wine Literature Reviewed: Old and Rare Wine Books.'" Look for Mannie's article, with book price-valuations added, in the March issue of Biblio. Kudos to **Mannie Berk** for a superb article...

■ The **Wine Institute's** Research Manager, Christopher Wirth, sent his compliments on the October issue: "I was able to read your October 1996 *Wayward Tendrils Newsletter*, which was passed along by our librarian Robert Zerkowitz. I enjoyed the lead article ["Old & Rare Wine Books"] a great deal. The library at the Wine Institute contains some of the books mentioned, and it was wonderful to get background on the authors and the importance of the publications themselves. Looking forward to the next issue."

■ Our sincere thanks to **Isaac Oelgart** for our January issue insert: a reprint of The Wine Trade Club's pocket guide, The Wine Butler's 14 Points (ca late-1920s or early '30s). These "keepsakes" are a splendid addition to our *Newsletter*—we encourage other members, who have in their collections similar items suitable as inserts, to send a reprint copy to the Editor.

■ Congratulations! to **Tendril Warren Winarski**, recipient of the American Wine Society Award of Merit at their annual conference.

A new MEMBERSHIP ROSTER will be mailed in April. Please send in any updates as soon as possible!!

■ **RARE 17th C. FOOD & DRINK BOOK FOR SALE!** *Directions for Health, Natural and Artificial...* [by W. Vaughan]. London: Thos. Harper for John Harison, 1633. "Seventh Edition." First published in 1600, with subsequent editions in 1602, 1607, 1611, and 1617. All are very scarce. Much of the text concerns food and drink, with sections on wine, cider, etc. Simon *Gastronomica* notes the 1626 edition (p.142). \$3950. Contact Mary Cooper Gilliam at Franklin Gilliam - Rare Books, 218 South Street, Charlottesville, VA 22902; Tel/Fax 804-979-2512.

■ **A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INQUIRY** for all Tendrils: **Isaac Oelgart** writes, "I am interested in trying to determine which, if any, binding state of Hector Bolitho's *The Wine of the Douro* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1956), constitutes the first edition, first issue. I have examined 11 copies of *Wine of the Douro*, two of which are bound in maroon cloth with gilt lettering and 9 are bound with white (cream or light ivory) paper over boards with dark green (?) or black printing on the spine. None of the copies I examined were dated (via inscription). I would like to ask all Wayward Tendrils if they could check their copies for binding type and whether their copies are signed and dated, and report to me what they have. If the book is dated, a photocopy of the inscription would be greatly appreciated. I hope that our dealer-members will participate as well. I will make a brief report in a future issue of the *Newsletter*. Thank you, [s] I. Oelgart." Fax 603-643-4401 / Tel 603-643-2175.

■ **CENSUS ON CROFT'S TREATISE....** An additional request from our ardent bibliographer of Port, **Isaac Oelgart**: "Which editions of John Croft's *Treatise on the Wines of Portugal...* (1787, 1788, 1940, 1942) do our Tendril members have? Are there other variant or unknown versions of this work that



members have or know about that have escaped bibliographical notice? Photocopies of title pages would be greatly appreciated. Thank you, [s] Isaac."

#### ■ A TENDRIL TIP ON CATALOGUING:

Dear Editor: I keep a catalogue card-file of the books in my collection. The front of a 3 x 5 index card contains the usual information: author, title, publication data, book description (pages, size, binding, condition, etc.), purchase date, from whom, and price paid. The reverse of the card is used for noting references to the book: standard bibliographies (Gabler, Simon, Bitting, et al), auction catalogues (Oberlé, Crahan, etc.), book-sellers' catalogue notations and prices, historical references to the book (Hedrick's History of Horticulture in America and Bailey's Evolution of Our Native Fruits give details on many U.S. wine books and their authors; Longone's exhibition catalogue American Cookbooks and Wine Books 1797-1950 and Elisabeth Woodburn's 1981 catalogue, U.S. Alcoholic Beverage & Grape Collection, are further good sources for interesting information on the American wine books). Since the appearance of the Wayward Tendrils Newsletter, I now include it as a reference: e.g., "See W-T Newsletter, Vol.3 #4, article by T.Pinney," or, "See Book Review by Bob Foster, Vol.5 #1," or "See Vol.6 #4 'Old & Rare Wine Books.'" Thank you for this valuable reference material. *Signed*, A Devoted Tendril.

#### ■ CAN WE SOLVE THIS MYSTERY?!

London Tendril **Jeffrey Benson** asks for help: "I have acquired an old hand-blown mid-18th century burgundy shaped bottle filled to the neck with a liquid. The bottle is clearly labelled as follows:

DARDANELLES

ABYDOS

1883

I have searched through my own books and can find no reference whatsoever to the above. I wonder if the members can help me solve this mystery." Fax: 0181-675-5543. Tele: 0181-673-4439.

■ **John Thorne**, loyal and spirited English bookseller Tendril member, has included a further Wayward Tendrils Society mention in his latest catalogue, and has volunteered his help in answering initial over-seas enquiries. Thanks, John!

■ **NOM DE PLUME IDENTITY ?!** He signed himself Epicuri de Grege Porcus. Who was he? **Linda Walker Stevens** hopes the Tendrils can help her with this one. Epicuri de Porcus, a correspondent to the Emporium, sent two letters on wine in 1813 to Thos. Cooper, the editor/publisher. He also wrote other essays, mostly on French cookery.

Seemingly well-educated (a doctor?), and familiar with London and France, he is an American, possibly a Philadelphian. Can we identify him?

■ **UPDATE: USED BOOK LOVER'S GUIDE** [of the U.S.] Series. With the publication of their sixth guide, ...Guide to the Central States (464 pages), the series now covers the entire United States, and features over 6,000 dealers. Previously published guides are New England, the Mid-Atlantic States, South Atlantic States, the Midwest, and the Pacific Coast States, written by David and Susan Siegel. The publishers state that the books in this series are "the most comprehensive guides to used book dealers available in print today...". [See our review of the Guide to the Pacific Coast States in Vol.6, #1.] Write: Susan Siegel, Book Hunter Press, P.O. Box 193, Yorktown, New York 10598. Fax: 914-245-2630. Tele: 914-245-6608.

■ Of interest to those Tendrils who also collect cook books — **The Cook Book Collectors Club of America**, formed in 1990, publishes (monthly) a ten-page, home-style newsletter with information on both old and new cook books. Membership / subscription is \$25 per year (inquire about foreign rates). Write Cook Book Collectors of America, P.O. Box 56, St.James, MO 65559, USA.

■ **The Port Lover's Library** (the printing and publishing arm of Tendril and Port lover, Isaac Oelgart) has recently issued "the second in a series of pamphlet reprints on the history, production, distribution and enjoyment of Port wine." **PURE PORT WINE, The Vintaging and After Treatment of the Wine and Its Invaluable Properties**, was originally published in London in 1884 by the Chiswick Press as a promotional booklet for Sandeman & Co. This facsimile reprint edition is limited to 120 numbered copies for sale (\$15). J.L.K. Cockburn's little known pamphlet originally published in 1902, **Port Wine. From the Vineyard to the Decanter**, is the first issue of the series (\$15). Our compliments to the Port Lover's Library for providing these quality reprints of scarce Port titles. Write: 3 Dunster Terrace, Hanover, NH 03755; Fax 603-643-4401.

■ Did anyone else see the headline? **"IS OLD-BOOK MOLD HALLUCINOGENIC?"** The antiquarian book community is abuzz following the publication of a paper in the British medical journal, The Lancet, stating the possibility that "fungal hallucinogens" in old books could lead to "enhancement of enlightenment." "Experts on the various fungi that feed on the pages and on the covers of books are increasingly convinced that you can get high—or at



least a little wacky—by sniffing old books." "It would take more than a brief sniff [to reach enlightenment]," reported one health authority, but "there are no studies to tell how much or how long before strange behavior takes hold." Haven't you always wondered why the smell of old books is so captivatingly delicious?

■ **A THOUGHT ON BOOK FAIRS...** Are the WAYWARD TENDRIL members missing a fine opportunity to get together at the numerous ABAA Book Fairs held each year? Of course, not all members attend all fairs, but if we could establish a plan for meeting, it would be so simple! A meeting place, a modest reception, and time to talk to each other is all that is needed. . . Will someone volunteer?

■ **JANUARY IS ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME !!** A renewal form is enclosed. Our Treasurer has furnished us with a 1996 Year-End Report, which we pass along:

TOTAL EXPENSES - \$1,890.

Printing - \$1,125.

Postage / Fax - \$640.

Supplies - \$60.

Misc - \$65.

TOTAL INCOME - \$1600.

Dues - \$1,440.

Back Issues - \$160.

BANK BALANCE - \$435.

We produced 68 pages (4 issues) of the *Newsletter*, plus a yearly Membership Roster for 125 members (22 of whom are "Booksellers").

## DUPLICATES! DUPLICATES! DUPLICATES!

■ Where are those **DUPLICATE LISTS**? You may have duplicate copies of books, neglected and banished to a lonely corner, that are **WANTED!** Find them a proper home — list them in the *Newsletter*!

■ **Gail Unzelman** (Fax 707-544-2723) can offer the following duplicates for trade or sale:

Fletcher, W. PORT: AN INTRODUCTION..., 1978.

Giulian, B. CORKSCREWS OF THE 18th CENTURY, 1995.

Gordon, A. OF VINES & MISSIONS, 1971.

GRAPES & GRAPE VINES OF CALIFORNIA, the 1981 Harcourt Brace Jovanovich reprint.

Hedrick, U.P. MANUAL OF AMERICAN GRAPE GROWING, 1919.

James, Margery. STUDIES IN THE MEDIEVAL WINE TRADE, 1971.

Koebel, W.H. MADEIRA: OLD & NEW, 1909.

----- PORTUGAL ITS LAND & PEOPLE, 1909.

Lake, Max. VINE & SCALPEL, 1967.

Sanceau, E. BRITISH FACTORY OPORTO, 1970.

And, there are others! She will send a list, just ask!

■ **Isaac Oelgart** (Fax 603-643-4401) has some Port pamphlet duplicates:

Peixoto, Gouvea. CONSIDERACOES SOBRE A ARTE DE PROVAR, 1943. 65 pp.

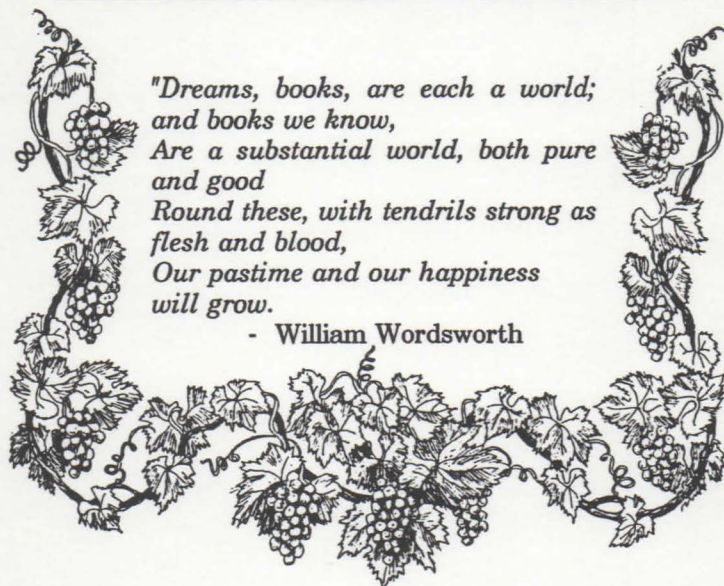
Ramos & Ribeiro. DETERMINACAO DOS ACUCARES REDUTORES NO VINHO DO PORTO, 1945. 36 pp.

Valente, Vasco. GOV. SIR NICHOLAS TRENT, APOLOGISTA DO VINHO, 1949. 40 pp.

## — WANTED, PLEASE!! —

■ **Ron Unzelman** is seeking a copy of Wasserman's ITALY'S NOBLE RED WINES - the 1992 second edition. Fax 707-544-2723. "Thanks!"

■ **LAMENT WANTED:** "We are so crowded with matter for this number that several interesting communications must be laid over. Send in your articles; they are always appreciated and will find a place some time, if not immediately." (*George Husmann, The Grape Culturist, 1869.*) The *Wayward Tendrils Newsletter* wishes for "lay-over" material! - Your Editor.





**A CRANKY REVIEW**  
by  
**Linda Walker Stevens**

*RELIGION AND WINE: A Cultural History of Wine Drinking in the United States*, by Robert Fuller. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1996. Paper, \$15; Cloth, \$30.

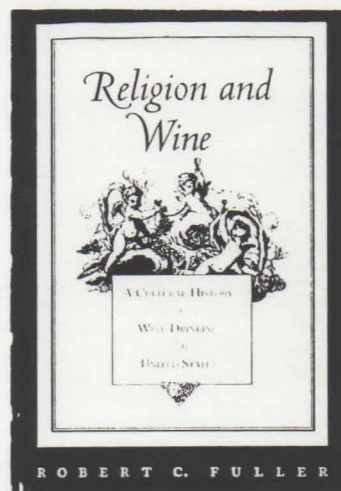


I'm peeved. Let me first acknowledge my fretful grudges against Professor Fuller's offering before I compliment its contribution.

Despite being known occasionally to revel in the finer aesthetics of wine, I take umbrage at the premise of this book, which serves to further mystify wine and its cultural significance, and to make of it a formidable chimera, thereby further confounding two centuries of effort on the part of American winemakers to place wine in its deserved context as a healthful food and most appropriate mealtime beverage. Early in his treatise Fuller makes the intimidating claim that, "Wine drinking required (and still requires), among other things, an accumulated knowledge of the special characteristics of each vintage, different geographical peculiarities, and previous tastings of similar wines." Good gracious, what a Catch 22 conundrum for the aspiring winebibber! I entertain visions of some Calvinistic hierarchy of chosen wine tasters, selected at the whim of the Almighty to be implanted with this privileged and irrevocable knowledge at birth. On the contrary, my experience suggests that drinking wine (and even enjoying it) requires only opening, pouring, and sipping—and one can, if necessary, dispense with the pouring. No doubt the author's stipulations lend added wine appreciation for experienced tipplers but, as an apt comparison, I've enjoyed good victuals—plain or fancy—for several decades without aspiring to the culinary expertise of Julia Child or Jacques Pépin. So also is it with that most satisfying of foods, wine.

Serious wine historians will be disappointed in Fuller's treatment, which relies on secondary sources, is often misinformed or misleading, and lacks the depth and richness—the ring of authenticity—which the wealth of original source materials available could supply. I missed discussion of a few fascinating aspects of our cultural wine history which I'd hoped to find elucidated (e.g. the nineteenth century *ménage à trois* among the followers of Bacchus, Swedenborg, and Hahnemann [homeopathy], for one). I found the reasons given for the prohibition movement accurate and insightful, as far as they go; but I maintain that any discussion of the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act which ignores the role of World War I in

inciting nativist backlash against German-American wine and beer interests creates a lopsided view of American history. (Note that I contribute from a Missouri-German winetown in the environs of Anheuser-Busch, so am sensitized in this regard.) One of the few primary sources cited, George Husmann's "The Knowledge of Plant Life," is misrepresented in Fuller's conclusion as a "lecture on viniculture," when in fact it is the text of a talk given to teaching candidates, on the desirability of acquainting school children with general botany and horticulture. Such abuse of accuracy cannot but cast suspicion over the documentation and research methods employed.



In the area of attribution of ideas, Professor Fuller's Anglo-American bias is showing. His failure to recognize the complex philosophical and ideological background carried to our shores by the vast numbers of nineteenth-century German immigrants leads him to credit Johnny-come-lately Ralph Waldo Emerson and his New England Transcendentalist cadre with forming the views of Missouri-German wine luminary Friedrich Muench. In fact, Papa Muench and others like him took their philosophy from a German forerunner, rationalist Georg Hegel, himself an intellectual descendant of Kant. As well as being a Lutheran minister and religious free-thinker, Muench was a card-carrying member of the Hegelian philosophers' group in St. Louis prior to beginning correspondence with a Unitarian minister who espoused New England Transcendentalism. Clearly the development of Muench's school of thought—which is similar but not identical to Emerson's—is parallel rather than derivative. Such awareness is essential to an accurate understanding of the relationship between wine and religion among the German-American population whose collective enterprise and individual opinions dominated the American wine industry for upwards of a century, spanning its most important



period of development.

When Dr. Fuller sticks to what he knows best—the predominately WASP-ish religious history of our nation—I glean interesting and useful insights from his text. I particularly enjoyed his sorting out of "ascetic" versus "aesthetic" values, his elucidation of the evangelical movement, and his discussion of wine as a vehicle for "popular" or "cultural" religion. Lamentably, his text lapses into academic parlance and psycho-sociological lingo with dismaying frequency and makes certain points repetitively. The author's attractive recounting of wine use in the Amana colonies and his emphasis on the sociological concept of "jollification" refreshingly undercut the arcane aspects of wine enjoyment he touts in his opening, but thereby create contradictions to his original premise. I'd advise readers to absorb the footnotes along with the text: many are indispensable to a thorough understanding, and at least one (Chapter One, number 1, to be exact) is curiously contradictory of the text—as it should be.

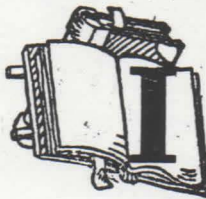
Overall, Dr. Fuller must be thanked for providing this handy compendium of ideas on the relationship between wine and religion. His conclusions provide engaging food for thought, and The Notes and Suggested Readings sections serve as a useful bibliography of sources for further study of this intriguing topic. I'd hesitate to recommend this book as a stocking-stuffer for novice wine aficionados, however: it requires being put in context. Rather than filling a gap, I believe this short volume points up the opening for a future authoritative work on the history of this complex phenomenon, as evidenced in the culture, the work, and the words of our American viniculturists.

Meanwhile, fellow Tendrils, in the interest of better public relations let's keep what the author identifies as intellectual, ritualistic, and socially elitist motives for wine tasting decently behind closed doors (or confined to these esteemed pages) and publicly proclaim only the vital and inviting image of wine drinking evoked by friend Husmann, who repeatedly praised the fruit of the vine for inspiring "innocent hilarity." I'll drink to that.

*Note:* The writer wishes to salve one last trampled toe by stating that—winery hype notwithstanding—Friedrich Muench died prior to the founding of Mount Pleasant Winery at Augusta, Missouri in 1881. While he ardently hybridized grapes, and authored *Amerikanische Weinbauschule* (*School for American Grape Culture*) in 1865, he did not found any winery. Linda prays Tendril members will not contribute to the promulgation of this widespread wine myth. She thinks she's mastered her pique now... A glass of wine should help. 🍷

## IN THE WINE LIBRARY: A RAVE REVIEW by Bob Foster

*Vineyard Tales: Reflections on Wine*, by Gerald Asher. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1996. 287 pages, hardback, \$22.95.



I think Gerald Asher is one of the finest wine writers of our era. He writes about wine with warmth, style and an emphasis on enjoyment so seldom found in this age of points, medals and numbers. For years his elegant works have graced the pages of *Gourmet* magazine. This book is a compilation of the best of those writings.

One of the things that makes Asher's readings so pleasurable is that he doesn't just write about wine. He writes about his experience involving that wine. For example, his essay on Champagne begins with the story of a black tie party at a friend's house in London at which the music was jazz, the food was ripe peaches and the drink was Lanson's Champagne. "I was twenty-two and life was in Technicolor. We talked, we danced, we ate peaches; we listened to the music, admired each other and drank Champagne.... What is it about Champagne?" With this stylish introduction Asher then delves into the history of Champagne and the challenges facing the industry today.

Asher covers a wide range of topics in similar high style, including the Zinfandel grape, Château Haut-Brion, even Missouri wineries. But lest anyone think this book is only about wine producers, there are chapters on decanting, matching wine and food, and wine books in English.

This work is absolutely first rate. The publishers should have given it all out support but they didn't as the index is an insult to the reader. For example, in the chapter on wine books Asher spends ten pages discussing the major wine books that have been published in English. Scores of books are mentioned by both title and author. One would expect each of those works and each of those authors to have been in the index. Not a chance. The index simply says "Books 62-71." The same flaw is repeated for every section. As such, the index is worthless, little more than a rewrite of the table of contents. Somebody at Chronicle Books should hang their head in shame. Asher's world class writings deserved far better than this meager effort.

The rest of the book is excellent and belongs in every wine lover's library. It is a joy to read, and very highly recommended.

[We thank founding Tendril Bob Foster and the *California Grapevine* for permission to reprint Bob's wine book reviews. - Ed.]



## RECOLLECTIONS OF André Simon's *VINTAGEWISE*

by Roy Brady



ny list of essential wine books must include André Simon's *Vintagewise* (1945) just as it must include George Saintsbury's classic *Notes On a Cellar-Book* (1920). Simon called his work a *Postscript* to Saintsbury and published it in Saintsbury's centenary year. Simon was not a scholar of the

prodigious proportions of Saintsbury, but he was a merchant-scholar in the best English tradition (though French born). In preparing *The History of the Wine Trade in England* (3 volumes: 1906, 1907, 1909) he worked with original medieval documents.


The interbellum school of English writers about wine defined an age. Simon was the most prominent and most prolific of them. His slender volume of 174 pages, actually 158 subtracting index and whatall, sums up that age better than any other book. *Vintagewise* offers the most compendious account of the age and a sample of Simon's style, not rococo (actually there is not suitable word) like Saintsbury's, but much his own.

Saintsbury's province was all drinks alcoholic (if one may be permitted to use the word in any sense but pejorative in these Pecksniffian times.) Simon's first eight chapters cover essentially the same wines as Saintsbury's first six. They were sherry, port, Madeira, claret, Burgundy, and the finest white wines of France and Germany. If Simon ever tasted malt whisky, much less gin, we don't hear about it. Saintsbury was fond of and discriminating about both. Simon doesn't even mention Cognac though it appears in all his menus.

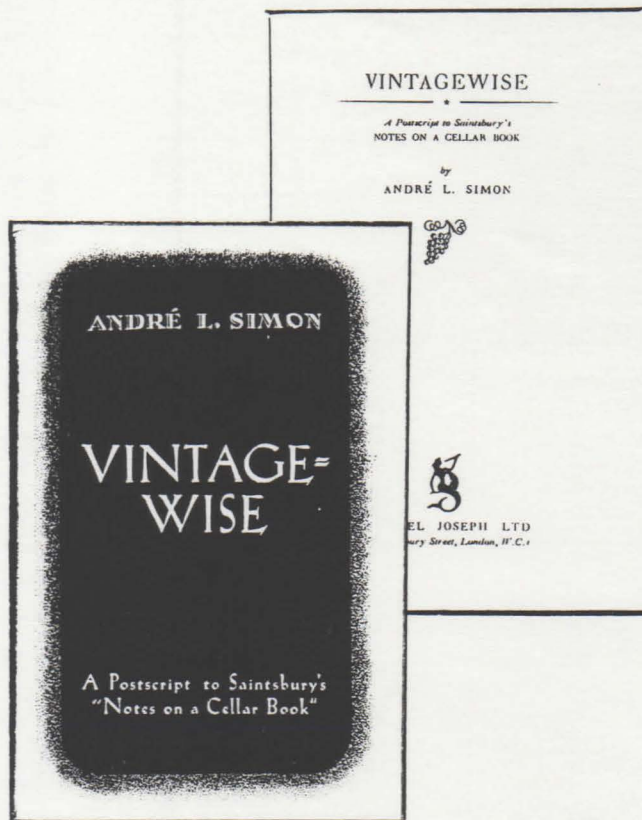
Simon must have kept detailed notes from his early years because he gives so many details. "The Haut Brion 1864 was a magnificent wine up to 1906, when the bin of it we had at Mark Lane came to an end." (p.63) "I do not remember any '89 in perfect condition later than November 1932, when Guy Knowles gave us a La Tâche of that vintage which was excellent." (p.109) I once asked Broadbent if he knew what happened to Simon's notes. He didn't think Simon kept notes unless working on a book, but the constant rain of details about wines, people, places and circumstances argue that he must have. Where are they? They would be of far greater intrinsic interest than Saintsbury's cellar book.

Simon and the English school seemed to feel some quasi-mystical nexus between greatness and longevity in wine. The fact that 1929 Burgundies were so good so young made him "rather nervous."

(p.119). He thought the motor car a deleterious influence on genteel living (pp.23-24), and he was doubtful about science in the winery. I am too, after a certain point. There was a story around at one time that some idiot persuaded Louis Petri to run that marvelous 1870 Angelica through an ion exchanger. The deadly principle is: if you got it use it.

The rest of the world Simon polishes off in a page and a half. (pp.162-163) He said, "I am of the opinion that fine wines can be made almost everywhere where the vine will grow and the grapes will ripen." He traveled widely and was hopefully polite about the local stuff he was offered, but I am sure that, in his heart of hearts, he did not believe that any plot on earth would ever challenge his beloved French *terroir*. He "tasted very good wine" at the Cape and in California, and "some admirable wines in Chile." The word "great" is far from that chapter. Another continuing theme is the progressive loss of individuality in French and German wines, and after tasting more than half a century of vintages, I'm ready to add California to that list. 

[For over fifty years Roy Brady has been an appreciative student of wine, and has filled his house—more than once—with collections of just about everything printed about wine. - Ed.]





# THOUGHTS and OBSERVATIONS on the NATURE of BIBLIOGRAPHY

## Relative to

### COLLECTORS of WINE BOOKS

#### Together with Brief Comments on

#### The Types of Bibliography,

#### Their Use, and the Role of Bibliography

by Isaac Oelgart ©



**B**ibliography, if you allow the analogy, is a lot like wine. There is good wine and there is good bibliography. There is bad wine and there is bad bibliography. Then again there is really good wine and really good bibliography, and really bad wine and really bad bibliography. And while there is really good wine there is no really good wine bibliography.

What separates the good from the bad is, like wine, totally dependent on what goes into it and, equally important, how it is made. Certainly, the knowledge of the wine maker is a very important factor. In bibliography knowledge is the critical factor and only factor. Knowledge, care and attention to detail in the making of both separate the good from the bad. Dedication, commitment to excellence, passion and exacting standards produce both really good wine and really good bibliography. Absolute dedication, unbridled passion and unrelenting standards produce truly outstanding wine and bibliography, rare as they both may be.

Bibliography means different things to different people. For most, it is a simple list of books at the end of a book that is relative to the contents of the book and for most people - *it hardly matters at all*. This is a truth I accept and can easily live with. I also accept that for some, and perhaps even less than some, bibliography—especially good bibliography—is the very heart and soul of book collecting. It can give life and meaning to books, book collecting, book collectors and book collections.

For the serious or passionate book collector the study of bibliography is a natural progression within book collecting. I believe that it is a responsibility of the collector to study bibliography and to aspire to be a bibliographer. I say this because I believe that book collectors can make the very best bibliographers, but more on that later.

I should like to preface my comments and observations by stating that I am decidedly biased in favor of books: book making, book collecting, book

collectors, book collections and especially all matters bibliographical. The more so, if those books are on wine in general and Vinho do Porto, or Port wine, specifically. I am critical, sometimes overly critical, even critical to a fault in these matters. I believe that a critical nature is a very important—perhaps the single most important—element in being a good bibliographer and in making a good bibliography. The more critical the bibliographer, the better the bibliography—and the literature of wine and the collecting of wine books is better served.

This essay is not meant to be a manual on bibliography, nor is it meant to identify good or bad bibliographies by title. It is my intention and hope that it will provide collectors with enough "wine for thought" so they can better judge bibliography, and more importantly, that it may inspire them to look more closely at bibliography in general and wine bibliography specifically.

This said and biases stated, I offer my understanding of the types and styles of bibliography. Keeping in mind that these are my views, and while they may be strong, there is no penalty, imprisonment, fine or bibliographical hell for holding different views or, for that matter, for ill conceived, ineptly researched, poorly executed, haphazard, spurious or lacunal bibliography.

In order to fully understand the role of bibliography it is important, indeed critical, to understand what bibliography is, can and should be. It is equally important to understand what forms it can take and what ends it serves. A bibliography can be made up of any combination of the following aspects.

### Aspects of Bibliography

ENUMERATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY is an attempt to list all the books within given parameters and criteria. (More on defining parameters and criteria later.)

The enumerative bibliographer should know how to locate private and institutional collections, how to locate and consult collection, exhibition and sale catalogs, as well as other bibliographies, both within the field of study and outside the field. He should know how to recognize or at the very least suspect dubious or spurious entries. While the goal of



enumerative bibliography is to be complete, very rarely is that goal met. In some cases the gaps are so large as to prove the work useless.

All enumerative bibliography is descriptive to some degree, usually a lesser degree where no real effort is made to describe the work other than author, title, publisher place and year of publication. But, it can be descriptive in a truer bibliographical sense of the word. It can also be critical and historical.

Enumerative bibliography is most often arranged chronologically, then alphabetically by title within a given year. Numbers are often assigned for ease in referring to the titles, and it facilitates the concept that the earliest book on the subject is number one. When a bibliography is arranged chronologically, author and short title indices should be included to facilitate its use. An enumerative bibliography can also be arranged by author—chronologically within the span of the author's career—and should be supported by a short title and chronological indices.

The compiler of an enumerative bibliography need not be an expert on the subject. He does need to be an expert in locating the items defined by the parameters and criteria, and dogged in his determination to find them.

DESCRIPTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY is an attempt to physically describe a book in a consistent, predetermined manner so that the user of the bibliography will be able to get a physical idea, sometimes a very precise idea, of the item described. Such a description should leave nothing to the imagination. It should enable the user to determine the completeness of their copy or of a copy they contemplate acquiring, and to intelligently determine the edition status. Furthermore, they should be able to determine if their copy meets the standard, and if it varies, if that variation is a result of changes made after the book's production or if it is a legitimate variation, thus constituting a variant issue of the edition or a bibliographical unknown variant edition.

In descriptive bibliography every aspect of the book, in both text and binding, can and should be addressed. The degree of attention to the specifics depends on the style and nature of the entry format and the goal of the bibliography.

Before any books are examined, a bibliographical format needs to be established. The shape that format takes depends entirely upon the bibliographer and the intended use of the bibliography. Entry formats can and do vary considerably, from a few lines to a few pages, but once the entry format is established, all books must meet that format. All books must be examined first hand. In some cases, two or more copies of the same book have to be examined in order to form an opinion and many copies

would need to be examined to constitute a consensus.

The page size, the margins, the kind of printing, the kind and make of paper and the treatment of its edges, the end papers, the printer, the typeface(s), the head and tail bands, the binding size, the style and material of the binding, the embossing, the gilt stamping, the binding labels, the number, kind and placement of illustrations, the pagination sequence, the dust jacket or slipcase, etc., are all items that to varying degrees can be elaborated on, and may be a factor in edition status as well. The best descriptive bibliographies treat all aspects of the book thoroughly, intelligently and comprehensively.

Descriptive bibliography is usually incorporated into an enumerative author or subject bibliography. A descriptive bibliographer does not necessarily need to know the subject at hand. However, he does need to thoroughly know all about the history and techniques of printing, illustration, paper making, binding—indeed, all aspects of a book's production as well as the history of book making and publishing in general.

The descriptive component of the bibliography can constitute up to ninety per cent of the entry format, especially if full collations are required.

An example of a primarily descriptive bibliography would be *19th Century Embossed Bindings with a Wine Motif*.

CRITICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY is a component of bibliography where the bibliographer comments on the textual nature of the book—whether it is a good book or a bad book; whether it is a compilation of other peoples' works or an original work; and, most importantly, if it is an accurate and reliable work or not.

The best critical bibliographers are more often experts in their field with a thorough knowledge of their subject. They need not necessarily know descriptive or enumerative bibliography, though generally, individuals who are quite knowledgeable about a subject are familiar with the extent of the literature of that subject.

Critical bibliography is usually a component of the entry format. The author of the critical comments may not necessarily be the enumerative or descriptive bibliographer.

A bibliography with "criticalness" as its primary goal is uncommon. A likely title might be *One Hundred of the Most Important Books on Wine 1496-1996*. Not only would such a book have to identify these titles, it would have to indicate and justify why each book was included.

HISTORICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY takes critical bibliography one step further in that it attempts to place a specific book in its historical context. It further requires the bibliographer to be an historian



and know the political, economic and social events which influenced the literature and shaped the subject. Historical bibliography is usually a component of the entry format, although it can take the form of an essay. Historical bibliography should always be critical, but not all critical bibliography needs to be historical.

Historical bibliography can also include information on the historical aspects of the book's production, such as the first wine book to use chromolithography, or the first wine book printed from stereographic plates, or the first wine book printed in California, etc.

### Types of Bibliography

There are two types of bibliographies, author and subject.

AUTHOR BIBLIOGRAPHIES are for the most part self explanatory, such as *A Bibliography of André L. Simon*, which would include all editions, variants and relevant works. They can be qualified to cover a specific period of time, such as *A Bibliography of André L. Simon 1905 to 1930: The Early Years*, which covers his first twenty-five years; or further defined as *A Bibliography of the First Editions of André L. Simon*, in which only the first editions are treated and no attention is paid to second or later printings.

Author bibliographies are usually arranged chronologically. They should be supported by a title index. If the author had several publishers, then a publishers' index may be helpful as well. A good author bibliography should include several well researched support essays, such as: "The Role of André L. Simon in Wine Literature," "André L. Simon's Influence on the Wine Trade," and "A Brief Biography of André L. Simon," etc.

SUBJECT BIBLIOGRAPHIES treat a specific subject as defined by its parameters. It can be as broad as the bibliographer dares or as narrow as he is inclined. For example, within the subject of wine, there could be literally thousands of smaller subject bibliographies. Virtually any aspect of wine can be treated bibliographically. The only limitation would be the bibliographer's imagination and the parameters he or she may set.

Often, narrowly defined subject bibliographies are referred to as Selective Bibliographies. The principal advantage in intentionally limiting the scope of a bibliography is that the bibliographer will be able to treat the books in question more thoroughly.

Author and subject bibliographies are usually enumerative bibliographies first and foremost, and sometimes include—in various degrees of competency—aspects of descriptive, historical or critical bibliography.

### Parameters, Criteria and Entry Format

I believe that the success of a bibliography lies primarily with the bibliographer: first, in the bibliographer's ability to establish parameters, define criteria, and develop an entry format; and second, in the ability to act and deliver on the first.

#### Parameters

Defining the parameters is a relatively easy task, e.g.: All wine books in all languages; or, all wine books in the English language; or, all English language wine books of the 20th century; or, all English language Port books published in Portugal from 1918 to 1939; or, all the wine books by André L. Simon; or, *Medicine and Wine - A Bibliography*. In defining the parameters one should be aware of the scope or magnitude of the subject, as bibliographies in the process of being compiled are more likely to get bigger than smaller. For example, the first category could easily have 50,000 or more entries depending on criteria. The Instituto do Vinho do Porto bibliography of Port lists over 5,000 items through 1952, albeit many of which are incidental at best.

As a general rule the more narrow or focused the parameters, the better the bibliography will be, and the better it serves its literature. The more narrowly parameters are established, the fewer the entries. With fewer entries more attention can be devoted to each entry—which for the most part is the reason for limiting the parameters in the first place, as well as being in the best interest of good bibliography.

#### Criteria

Defining criteria is not so easy a task. Criteria are those factors that determine whether or not a particular item is appropriate for inclusion in the bibliography. Items are for the most part books; but pamphlets, menus, wine lists, broadsides, product brochures, auction catalogues, bookseller catalogues, or any printed item may qualify for inclusion in a bibliography depending on criteria. Some of these are historically revealing and significant and decidedly worthy of inclusion, and others not.

In some cases a pamphlet could be longer and textually more important than a book. John Croft's pamphlet *A Treatise on the Wines of Portugal...* is longer and more significant than Hector Bolitho's book *Wine of the Douro*. If the criterion was established that only books would be included, then the somewhat absurd situation would arise of Croft's pamphlet being excluded, but Bolitho's book included.

An extremely broad definition of the criteria would have to be taken for *A Bibliography of André L. Simon*, for example. If the goal is to be comprehensive, then biographies, magazine articles, wine lists, menus, addresses, introductions, prefaces,



forewords and jacket blurbs would have to be included. Decisions about, dedications, acknowledgements and passing references to Simon in other books would have to be considered in the criteria process.

Travel narratives and travel guides in wine producing countries, cook books with wine as an ingredient, dictionaries, encyclopedias and horticultural books are just a few categories which present additional gray areas in establishing criteria for entry in a wine bibliography.

Criteria can be further obscured by the subjectivity of the bibliographer. One bibliographer may deem an item significant and worthy of inclusion and another bibliographer may not.

Establishing and defining criteria for inclusion is the most difficult task in bibliography, as it raises the most questions, presents the most problems and has the most gray areas.

### Entry Format

Once the criteria is set, the next task is to determine what information is to be included and how that information is going to be presented. How much information and how it is presented determines the bibliographical entry format. An entry format can be as simple as two or three lines, or as long as two or three pages. The more information you give on a specific book, the more pages the bibliography will have and the longer it will take to compile — and the more expensive it will be to produce and subsequently sell for. The more seriously that information is treated is directly related to how the bibliography is perceived and how it further serves its literature, collectors and book dealers.

When the parameters have been defined, the criteria established, and the entry format developed, work on the bibliography can begin.

### The Use and Misuse of Bibliography

In order to understand the use and misuse of bibliography we should understand who bibliographies are made for and who acquires them. The largest category is book collectors, closely followed and sometimes equalled by out-of-print and antiquarian booksellers, and then libraries.

LIBRARIES, by far, are the smallest category. From my experience library sales constitute one or two per cent of total sales. Three to four per cent of sales of an edition would be high. In some cases sales are less than one per cent. It is the collectors and booksellers who are the buyers and supporters of bibliographies.

COLLECTORS, for the most part, buy a bibliography because it helps them learn about the books they have and about what other books there are on the subject that they may be interested in reading or

acquiring. It can help them determine the edition status and completeness of their books.

In as much as bibliographies are often made by bookish people for bookish people or people who have an understanding of and appreciation of fine book making, they are often made to higher standards and are examples of fine book making themselves. Limitations are often small, 500 copies or less; 1,000 is a very large run for a bibliography. Thus some collectors acquire them because they are "nice" books. There are book collectors who collect books on books in general, and within that category there are collectors who collect bibliographies.

Speaking for myself I buy some bibliographies because I believe in supporting the work of other bibliographers, and I can't help but think that other collectors may well feel the same way. If they don't, they should.

BOOKSELLERS buy bibliographies for the same reason collectors do: to help them identify which specific editions of a book they have, or to determine the completeness of a book. Booksellers sometimes use bibliographies as sales tools, particularly when a bibliography has something good or significant to say about a book.

On occasion booksellers use bibliographies to sell books not listed in a given bibliography. We have all seen "Not in..." or "Unknown to..." in booksellers catalogues, sometimes accompanied by a premium price. I must confess that, as a bookseller, I have been guilty of this myself.

Certainly when "Not in..." refers to an excellent bibliography, "Not in..." has real meaning, and the item well may deserve a premium price and the bookseller commended for their astuteness. When "Not in..." refers to a weak bibliography, it should have less meaning, and unless the seller informs the buyer that the bibliography is weak, the buyer may be misled into viewing the item as rare or scarce or deserving of notice.

Collectors, especially collectors new to a field of collecting, look to booksellers and their catalogues, particularly "specialist booksellers" as authorities—much of which is rightly earned, as specialist booksellers have honorable bibliographical standards and have compiled excellent bibliographies. But, in as much as bibliography, both good and bad, is often taken for gospel, and poor bibliography is quoted as often as good bibliography, some disservice is done by quoting and citing poor bibliographies. When booksellers, who should know better, quote poor bibliographies—sometimes through lack of knowledge, sometimes because there is little else to quote—they do harm by giving validity to an otherwise weak work. When they recommend lesser bibliographical works and represent them as good works, they undermine



the value of good bibliographical work.

No matter how sincere or well meaning a bibliography may be, and no matter how useful it is in light of it being better than nothing or anything else, usefulness is not enough reason to lower bibliographical standards. While a work may be poor it still may be useful, indeed quite useful. However, I would not want to directly equate usefulness with good bibliography.

Many of the works called bibliographies—and it is true in wine—are essentially checklists. I do not want to dismiss checklists. I have compiled four. They have a very real and valued place within book collecting. They are not meant to be definitive nor are they meant to answer all questions about books. They serve as a listing of books on a given subject and not much more than that. Checklists should not be viewed as seriously as a bibliography, although there is a tendency for them to be so viewed, especially when the work calls itself a bibliography instead of a checklist or catalogue.

I may well be alone in this opinion, but I wholeheartedly believe that no bibliography is better than poor bibliography.

### Bibliographers

THE BOOK COLLECTOR is at once the best and worst bibliographer, and unfortunately, he is more often the latter. The collector, as well meaning as he may be, often does not have a full understanding of all that goes into making a good bibliography. This is especially true when the collector's subject—like wine—has little good bibliographical work.

The collector as bibliographer has produced excellent work in many fields of collecting. Certainly they are in the best position to do so having the inclination, passion and dedication required to do what is often tedious work, with the only reward being the knowledge of doing a good job.

LIBRARIANS, especially rare book or special collection librarians, are both buyers and makers of bibliographies. These are often produced by university presses and represent some of the best bibliographical work.

BOOKSELLERS, usually specialists within a chosen field, have compiled excellent bibliographies—in part because they have the benefit of knowing and using more and different bibliographies than collectors do, and they are more familiar with bibliographies in other fields than collectors are. In a few cases, booksellers have compiled bibliographies because they have a vested interest in raising the awareness and status of a literature—legitimizing and increasing participation in their field, which is often related to the increased salability and price of that body of literature as well, which, despite the potential for

higher prices, is good.


### The Role of Bibliography

In the strictest sense of the word, the role of bibliography is to gather into one place the information on a given body of literature under specific parameters. The extent of that information depends on criteria and entry format for inclusion in that bibliography. At its minimal level, bibliography should achieve that end. In our endeavor of collecting, many bibliographies have not, which reflects poorly on our field.

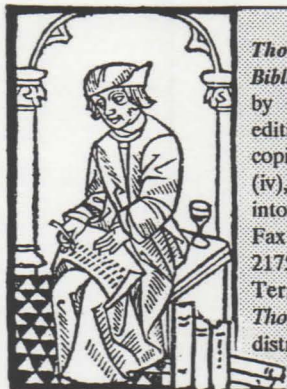
Good bibliography, at the least, is accurate, as nearly complete and true as possible to its goal, and helps maintain interest in the collecting of the books defined therein. It can add greater pleasure to collecting. Good bibliography can and does encourage better bibliography, and better bibliography encourages excellent bibliography.

At its best it not only further encourages the collecting and appreciation of the literature in question, it develops and recruits new collectors, now and in the future. Most importantly, it can elevate the stature and awareness of that body of literature in general, and should.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this essay, bibliography, especially good bibliography, is the very heart and soul of book collecting. It can give added pleasure, life and meaning to books, book collecting, book collectors and book collections.

It is with this generation of wine book collectors and booksellers that the future of wine bibliography rests. 

*[Isaac Oelgart describes himself as a "book maker in a very traditional and classical sense. ...Books are and have been my life." Since the age of fifteen he has bought, sold, written about, compiled checklists and bibliographies, designed, produced and published books. He has enjoyed wine, particularly Port for over 25 years, and has collected the literature of Port for five years. His "Port Lover's Library" publishes literature on the wines of the Douro (see "News & Notes"). See below for information on a special limited edition of Isaac's essay. - Ed.]*



*Thoughts and Observations...on Bibliography* is to be privately printed by Oelgart in a numbered signed edition of 80 copies, of which 60 copies are for sale for \$25. 10x7, (iv), 1-15, (v). Nice paper, hand-sewn into a heavy wrapper, printed label. Fax 603-643-4401 or Tele 603-643-2175, or write him at 3 Dunster Terrace, Hanover, NH 03755. *Thoughts and Observations...* is distributed in the UK and Europe by John Roberts Wine Books.





**BOOKS &  
BOTTLES**  
by  
Fred McMillin

## GREAT GRAPES: THE CALIFORNIA CRUSH OF '95

**THE BOOK:** *Final Grape Crush Report, 1995 Crop.* California Dept. of Food & Agriculture, Sacramento, CA. Anne Veneman, Secretary.

We all pretty much know the California wine scene...Chardonnay...Cabernet...up-and-coming Merlot and Rhône Ranger types (Syrah, Viognier, etc). So what possible interest could a State stack of 1995 grape statistics have? Let's see.

### Prices

■ Was Chardonnay or Cabernet Sauvignon the most expensive grape in 1995? ANSWER: Are you kidding? They both averaged less than \$900 per ton. The State's second most expensive grape was Petite [sic] Verdot at \$1412, and the priciest of all was Mataro, alias Mourvèdre, at \$1418 per ton.

■ What county gets the highest prices for its grapes? ANSWER: The average price received for all grapes crushed was \$375 per ton. The county receiving the second highest return of \$1122 was Sonoma, and the top dollar of \$1282 went to Napa.

### Production

■ OK, so Chardonnay and Cabernet are not the most expensive grapes, but they are so popular they must be the most widely grown wine grapes in the State. Right? ANSWER: Wrong! Re red wine grapes, Cabernet Sauvignon production is only half of the top producer, Zinfandel. Regarding white, the Chardonnay crush was only about 60% of that of the leader, French Colombard (which is called simply "Colombard" in most of the world).

### 1995 vs 1994

■ I hear so much about Merlot, so it must have shown the greatest production increase in 1995? ANSWER: The Merlot crush in 1995 was about 20,000 tons greater than in 1994. However, the biggest increase, of 103,000 tons, was in Zinfandel. Surprisingly, Chardonnay showed a decline.

■ The total crush in 1995 was 11% higher than the crush in 1994. Was that an all-time high? ANSWER: No. The second largest year was 1992 and the largest was 1982. Look out for 2002!

■ Finally, the price of all California grapes was up 8%. What year had even higher prices? ANSWER: None, I'm sorry to say. The 1995 average price was the highest ever.

**THE BOTTLES:** Regarding the varietals mentioned above, here are wineries that have made some fine examples: Mouvèdre (Ridge, Cline); Petit Verdot (Guenoc); Zinfandel (Sobon Estate Fiddletown); Merlot (Rancho Siquoc, Sterling); Chardonnay (Lockwood Reserve, Louis Martini); Cabernet Sauvignon (Iron Horse, Santa Barbara Winery Reserve).

For copies of the *Final Grape Crush Report, 1995 Crop* write: California Agricultural Statistical Service, P.O. Box 942871, Sacramento, CA 94271-0001. Tele: 916-498-5177.



[Inspired by a lecture on the definition of art, our Tendril resident poet recorded his feelings on the subject... - Ed.]

## WINE ART ... Beauty is in the Taster's Tongue

Dirt of the Earth  
Feather of the Bird  
Crust of the Lady Bug  
Web of the Spider  
Kiss of the Bee  
Sun and Rain from God.  
Sweat and Shadow of the Master  
Grapes from the Vine  
Sweetness of the Oak  
Chamber of the Bottle  
They call it Wine.

— Marts Beekley, 1996





# **The SEARCH for RIXFORD: A JOURNEY Towards BIOGRAPHY** by Bo Simons



hat follows are the first faltering steps on this journey towards finding out more about the first book on wine-making published in California, and its author. I reveal them here in response to an editor's plea for material, and as an interesting quest for

Tendrils members. I hope to complete the journey in a later issue.

In July of 1996, the Smithsonian Institute was arranging a 20th Anniversary Celebration of the Paris Tasting of 1976. Warren Winiarski was asked to participate. His Stag's Leap Wine Cellars 1973 Cabernet Sauvignon had out-scored a 1970 Mouton-Rothschild and a 1970 Haut-Brion in the famous tasting that proved California wine to be the equal of any French wine. Winiarski wanted to prepare for this Celebration at the Smithsonian by reading the primal book on California winemaking, *The Wine Press and the Cellar*, and he did not have a copy. The Napa Valley Wine Library could not lend a copy; but when his assistant asked me if we had a copy at the Sonoma County Wine Library, I was happy to report that the Library had two copies, one of which was a reader's copy and we could arrange to loan it to Mr. Winiarski. This is what piqued my interest in this book and its author.

In 1883, *The Wine Press and the Cellar: A Manual for the Wine-Maker and Cellar-Man*—the first book on winemaking to be published in California—was published simultaneously by Payot, Upham & Co. in San Francisco and D. Van Nostrand in New York. It is easy to find out that the book garnered solid reviews. E.J. Wickson, Secretary of the California State Horticultural Society, effused: "Certainly there is nothing in the English language which can be at all compared with it as a guide." Arpad Haraszthy, President of the State Board of Viticultural Commissioners, called it "about the best book on viticulture that has been written for many a year."

The author was Emmet H[alsey] Rixford, and it was relatively easy to find out that Rixford planted a famous vineyard, La Questa, in Woodside (San Mateo County, south of San Francisco). The vineyard was planted to the same red Bordeaux varieties and in the same proportions as Château Margaux, and it went on to produce for many, many years. During the early years of this century wines from it were considered the finest California Cabernet blend.

Today remnant vines still survive in the yards of Woodside homes.

But who was this Rixford? What did he do? Was he doctor, or a lawyer? There are two Emmet Rixfords listed as authors in *Melvyl*, the online catalog for the University of California: Emmet H. Rixford, author of *The Wine Press and the Cellar* (whose dates, supplied by wine historian Charles Sullivan, are 1846-1928); and Emmet Rixford, born in 1865, who wrote a number of books on medical history and doctor biographies; delivered an address at the dedication of the Lane Medical Library at Stanford University in 1912; and in 1925 spoke before the California Historical Society on the beginnings of medical education in California.

Charles Sullivan and Thomas Pinney say Emmet H. Rixford was a lawyer; and Ron Unzelman recalls Maynard Amerine's notation that "Rixford was a prominent surgeon of San Francisco, who had become interested in the production of wine." ("Some Early Books about the California Wine Industry," *Book Club of California Quarterly Newsletter*, Summer 1951.) Which? Who?

Was Emmet H. Rixford the father of Emmet sans-H Rixford? Rixford Père would have been 19 or 20 years of age when his son was born—a young father, but still within the realms of possibility. Yet again, we find listed in the *Directory of California Grape Growers for 1888* a G.P. Rixford (of the *San Francisco Bulletin*), who had a vineyard in San Francisco County, and an L.P. Rixford who had a twenty-acre vineyard in Sonoma. Relationship? Brothers? Is Emmet-the-younger the son of G.P. or L.P.?

I have yet to do the research that will complete this biographical journey and send us on our way to explore Rixford's book, and I appeal to any Tendrils who may have knowledge of this family and their books to contact me: Bo Simons, Sonoma County Library, Fax 707-575-0431 or Tele 707-545-0831, Ext.525; e-mail: bo@sonoma.lib.ca.us.

Look for the completion of this journey in upcoming issues.





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Postal Card found at Oxford by Tessa McKirdy (Cooks Books, Rottingdean)

CAPTION? Send in your suggestions!