

# the WAYWARD TENDRILS Newsletter

Vol.7 No.2

A WINE BOOK COLLECTOR'S SOCIETY

April 1997

## PROFESSOR FULLER REVISITED

by  
Loyde H. Hartley



Thank you for publishing a review of Robert Fuller's new book *Religion and Wine* [see Vol.7 No.1, January 1997 "A Cranky Review" by Linda W. Stevens]. As a wine lover and a professor in a theological seminary, I find both religion and wine fascinating topics. Collecting books that deal with

the two in tandem, however, is discouraging. It consists mainly of the ponderous prohibition literature endlessly enumerating the perils of pathological drinking, in which I have little interest (does anyone want my batch of these?).

Fuller's book is refreshing because it lifts the level of discourse beyond the tired old debate: Is or is not wine drinking acceptable to this or that religious body? He writes, of course, from the comparative religion perspective typical in university departments of religious studies. This perspective, which paints with a broad brush, often falls prey to the criticism of local or sectarian historians who say their particular viewpoints have been presented unfairly or, worse, linked in an uncomplimentary way to some offensive group. "You left out Bacchus, Swedenborg and Hahnemann who must not be overlooked," or "You said the philosophy of Muench was derived from Emerson, and it's clearly parallel" — such are the barbs hurled at comparative religionists. These criticisms, often accurate and useful as far as they go, miss the more important points of works like Fuller's. They fail to state whether apt comparisons are drawn; in this instance, whether Fuller makes the case 1) that wine culture is in some sense religious or like a religion, and 2) that religion is in some way profoundly influenced by wine.

So, does Fuller pull it off? Perhaps, but I'm unconvinced. For the sake of the discussion, then, let me list some of my reservations. First, it would have

been helpful if Fuller had carefully defined "wine culture." Is there, I wonder, something that can be called wine culture? Do people associated with the production and consumption of wine make up a culture any more than those associated with, say, tobacco or cheese or Harley Davidson motorcycles? Such aggregates of people share common interests and speak their peculiar argots. Sometimes they wear funny hats, too. They may even have well-established rituals, such as in courts of law, but it seems to me a little overblown to call them cultures, even in a popular or provisional sense. The wine festivals, ceremonies, and ritual-laden tasting groups in which Fuller finds a popular religion may, just as easily, be thought of as hobby groups. While hobby groups are elements of the broader culture, few would argue they have a culture of their own and we gain little by describing them that way.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- News & Notes / Duplicates & Wants
- A Remembrance of Philip Wagner
- Philephemera on Newsletters, Part III
- Wine Bookplates by E. Skovenborg
- Special Book Offers!
- Books & Bottles by F. McMillin
- Cataloguing Our Collections
- The Mad Riddler

Fuller does better at defining popular religion. "It consists ... of a *people's* spontaneous tendency to create new means of celebrating life, of treasuring things for their intrinsic significance rather than their instrumental value, and of pushing beyond the boundaries of daily routine to catch glimpses of the innate beauty of human existence" (p.103, italics mine). Do the persons associated with wine production and consumption constitute "a people" in this sense? Not in my experience; not any more so than those associated with any other highly

commercialized product. A people, even in the sense of a popular religion, consists of individuals interconnected with each other in all the detailed complexities of their lives and existence — birth, aging, death, sex, fear, disappointment, forgiveness, and the like. To say that wine culture exhibits at least some religion-like behavior does not suffice to clinch the argument Fuller attempts. Many groups devoted to a sport or hobby, despite their occasional religion-like actions, in no way resemble a religion because they are not a people. So, I remain unpersuaded that wine culture has achieved the status of a popular religion or that the people involved with wine make up a culture.

— ". . . religion does not . . . particularly ennoble or distinguish wine; neither does religion require fine wines." —

If people connected with wine are not construable as popular religion, can one argue the other direction successfully? How profoundly has wine, in particular fine wine, influenced religion? Here, indeed, there is some warrant for careful historical and theological study. Wine associates with religion in at least four ways—as sacrament, as gift, as ritual remembrance, and as inducer of religious experience. In all these regards I contend, contrary to Fuller, religion does not through this association particularly ennoble or distinguish wine; neither does religion require fine wines. Wine is unremarkable, commonplace in religious observances and little differentiated from other potables and comestibles.

Wine symbolism is central to Christian sacramental worship, Jesus having chosen it when, after supper with his disciples, he took a cup and said, "This is my blood." Christians believe that the wine used in the sacrament becomes God's blood (transubstantiation) or that God's real presence is in the wine (consubstantiation) or that the wine symbolizes God (memorial). Whether the wine is fermented or not matters little, theologically speaking. In actual practice most celebrants in traditions that use fermented wine for the Eucharist would, if none were available, use unfermented wine. Such practice receives ecclesiastical approval in countries where alcohol is prohibited (e.g., Islamic nations and India) or in such sites as prisons where theft of wine could be problematic. Increasingly the reverse is true, too. Once, when I was a visiting minister in a Methodist congregation, the communion stewards provided me with peach brandy instead of Welch's for their Eucharist! Wine was a most common beverage in Jesus' time. Its commonness, its lowliness is what makes it suitable as a symbol, not its elegance or fine breeding.

Wine, moreover, is not the only element. There is also bread, which is equally central to Christian belief. As with the wine, it is revered not for what it is but for what it becomes as the result of the liturgy. Both bread and wine are humble elements made holy. Also symbolizing God is fire, smoke, living water, the vine, and a very long train of others; so wine, lacking exclusive rights, must take its place among many symbols. Very little is written about the actual wine used for the Eucharist, except some minimal purity standards specified in ecclesiastical law. By way of contrast, tomes about the Eucharist exist. Of course, the church's requirement for Eucharistic wine has at some points in history provided the opportunity for production in excess of this specific demand, to the delight of those who resided nearby. Fuller notes these occasions with appropriate appreciation. Let us hope, though, that we never again have to approach the church to say, "Give us this day our daily 750mls."

Beyond its close association with God's identity, wine is also the gift of God for human enjoyment. In this regard Christianity is similar to many other religions. As a gift, though, wine's status is no higher than other gifts — water, milk and honey, the fattened calf, the land and the like. God's gifts are ordinary and basic. Wine is as common as dirt and not as important, in the minds of Biblical writers (this overstatement will give those who want to disagree with me something to shoot at). Christian ascetics, moreover, deprived themselves not only of wine to prove their earnestness, but of the other gifts as well, as far as was humanly possible.

Wine at ritual remembrances, while important, is no more important than other foods consumed. In the Jewish Passover meal, the Seder, each food consumed recalls a part of the story. Wine, though present, is not preeminent over, say, bitter herbs.

— "Give a Lafite to a lout and you get a drunken lout, not a Luther." —

How about wine's ability to arouse religious experience? Karl Barth, a noted Swiss Protestant theologian, alleged, "Good beer makes good theology." Can wine inspire the same? To the extent that mild intoxication loosens the tongue and encourages people to say what is on their mind, perhaps it's true. Religion thrives amid such honesty of emotion and intellect. But I suppose the presence of alcohol in wine stimulates this response, not the wine in its totality. Some mushrooms, with no alcohol at all, may excite even better theology. True, gatherings assembled to drink wine are, often, more civil than

cont'd page 9



■ **Welcome!** to our new members from the four corners of the United States: **Rory Callahan** (New York, NY) has been collecting for 20 years and joined our club at the urging of member John Buechsenstein. **Jacques Bergier** (New York, NY) is now a Tendril, compliments of Isaac Oelgart. **Eduardo Ramirez**, a Chicago "bibliophile by nature," was inspired to start a wine book collection when he found a copy of Jim Gabler's *Wine into Words*. **Scott Toberman** (Atlanta, GA) joined the Tendrils through John Thorne, Bookseller. **Mary Gilliam** (Proprietor of Franklin Gilliam-Rare Books in Charlottesville, VA), who has "always loved wine and food books," is delighted to become a Tendril. Fellow Virginian, **Jerry Kantor**, of Norfolk, VA, enthusiastically sent in his membership — and ordered a complete run of the back issues of the *Newsletter*. Coastal Californian **Richard Gilbo** (Richard Gilbo-Bookseller) discovered our group thanks to member Elliot Mackey. Richard writes that he issues catalogs on Food & Drink and welcomes want lists. And, thanks to Jeff Kellgren, **Mort Friedman** (Paso Robles, CA)—"wine buff, book collector, home winemaker & wine course instructor"—was introduced to our group. For full details of our new members, see the enclosed newly-revised edition of the **Wayward Tendrils Membership Roster**.

#### ■ **New WINE BOOK BIBLIOGRAPHY Available**

"Knowledge is of two kinds. We know a subject ourselves or we know where we can find information upon it." - SAMUEL JOHNSON

*A Bibliography on Grapes, Wines, Other Alcoholic Beverages, and Temperance: Works Published in the United States Before 1901* by Maynard Amerine and Axel Borg [Berkeley: U.C. Press, 1996. 294 pp. \$50]. Intended for "scholars, researchers, booksellers and bibliophiles interested in viticulture, enology...and the temperance movements," this "fairly comprehensive" reference work has been many years in the making. It is whole-heartedly welcomed and recommended. As a bonus, Tendril **Jeffrey Kellgren** (Specialty Books Co., P.O. Box 616, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520; FAX 914-271-5125; Phone 914-271-5121) has generously offered to provide this important book to Wayward Tendril members at a 20% discount (plus shipping). A toast to Jeff!

■ **BOOKPLATE SURVEY!!** Great things are in the making! Enclosed with the *Newsletter* is a

Members Bookplate Survey prepared by **Isaac Oelgart** and **Gail Unzelman**, assisted by bookplate aficionado *extraordinaire* **Erik Skovenborg**. [See his article this issue.] Please be encouraged to complete and return the questionnaire! If our books do not yet have a bookplate, let's be inspired to get them one!

■ In his now-famous article ("Wine Literature Reviewed: Old & Rare Wine Books") featured in our September 1996 *Newsletter*, **Mannie Berk** highly recommended "an excellent guide to collecting old books," *Understanding Book Collecting* by Grant Uden, published in 1982. A ready source for this book is The Spoon River Press, 2319-C W. Rohmann Ave, Peoria, IL 61604-5072. 309-672-2665 or FAX 309-672-7853. They specialize in books on book collecting, and offer many useful titles in their frequent catalogs.

■ If you didn't see the March issue of **Biblio**, you should try to find a copy. The magazine did a splendid job of reprinting **Mannie's** essay (above). The article is illustrated with superb color photographs, estimated-price valuations are provided for many of the books, and a complimentary notice of our **Wayward Tendrils** organization is prominently displayed—the issue rates a spot on your library shelf.

#### ■ **New GASTRONOMY BIBLIOGRAPHY!!**

*Gastronomia. Eine Bibliographie der Deutschsprachigen Gastronomie*, "the first comprehensive bibliography on German imprints relating to cooking and the preparation of food," is, with love and hard labor, "finally" finished, published and for sale by our Swiss Tendril **Hans Weiss** (Bibliotheca Gastronomica, Winzerstrasse 5, CH-8049 Zurich). More than 4000 books, from 1485 to 1914, with their respective editions, are listed; many entries include commentaries and author biographical details. In quarto, the 700 pages are enhanced with 32 full-color plates plus black and white illustrations throughout the text. All of the books are described in German; a User's Guide in English and French is provided. (Books on wine, beer, distillation, coffee, tea, etc. are not included.) Hans is deservedly proud of this significant bibliography, and offers it at \$US210 (English-language brochure with ordering details available).



-- 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. --

■ **Wine book donations sought!** Joel Stewart requests our attention: The Hilton School of Restaurant & Hotel Management at the University of Houston is seeking wine books for its library. The Hilton Foundation "matches" donations' value for the upkeep of the collection. Contact Joel (see Roster) for the details.

■ Yearly dues payments are often accompanied by notes to the Editor—some printable, all appreciated. Robert Fraker of Savoy Books sends "Congratulations on the continuing fine work. The *Newsletter* has achieved a nice balance between genuine bibliographic substance and an essential sense of the fun of it all. It's a pleasure to renew!" Steve Burnstein cracks "Keep up the 'grape' work!"

■ From Delaware, Tendril Joseph Lynch suggests two "ideas for the *Newsletter*." First, an "Author Spotlight" series, providing brief biographical information on the chosen author and a listing of his/her known works. Updates, omissions, corrections by members could follow. He would also like to see a member dialog on systems and techniques for cataloguing our wine book collections, e.g., "Old Card Catalogue to New Computer Software." We begin the dialog in this issue, and look forward to member input on this sometimes perplexing collecting chore.

■ **CONGRATULATIONS, WINNERS!!** of the contest to provide a caption for the rear cover of our last issue: Vernon Singleton gives us a wishful warning: "What a place for a bibliophile during an earthquake!" Bob Andrews cleverly puns: "Alcohol 12% by Volume."

■ **BACCHUS WOULD BE PLEASED!!** *VINEXLIBRIS Bookplates with Wine Motifs* by Erik Skovenborg is available through a special arrangement with Isaac Oelgart's The Port Lover's Library. Privately printed in Denmark in an edition of 800 copies, this is a wine book lover's book! Skovenborg's essay reflects his abiding interest in and affection for wine and wine bookplates. The text is written in Danish and English, set in Baskerville type, and printed on mat finished paper. The covers are printed in four colors on good cover stock. Thirty-seven bookplates are featured: 29 are reproduced in black and white, and 8 are full-color, tipped-in original bookplates. When published in 1991, it was not widely distributed; we now have a chance to own a copy of this well-written, charming book. \$22.50, postpaid. Contact Isaac. FAX 603-643-4401 or phone 603-643-2175.

■ Copies of the Yolla Bolly Press limited edition printing of J.M. Scott's *The Man Who Made Wine* are still available. Contact Gail Unzelman if you did not receive the special mailing on this fine book.

---

### WINE BOOKS WANTED, PLEASE!!

■ Warren Winiarski would like a copy of the 1933 first edition of Philip Wagner's *American Wines and How to Make Them*. FAX 707-257-7501.

■ The Sonoma County Wine Library is searching for several books about wine labels: *Wine, Spirit & Sauce Labels of the 18th & 19th C*, by Herbert Dent, 1933; Michel Logoz, *Wine Label Design: 500 Labels*, 1984; and *Wine Labels* by E. Whitworth, 1966. Other needed titles are Henri Enjalbert, *The Great Bordeaux Wines of St.Emilion, Pomerol & Fronsac*, 1985; Ernest Peninou, *Wine-making in California. III: The California Wine Association*, 1954; John F. Adams, *Essay on Brewing, Vintage & Distillation*, 1970. Contact Zita Eastman, 707-433-3772 or FAX 707-433-7946.

■ Gail Unzelman is looking for a good, used copy of *In Celebration of Wine & Life* by Richard Lamb and Ernest Mittelberger. FAX 707-544-2723.

---

### DUPLICATES! DUPLICATES! DUPLICATES!

■ Joseph Lynch has organized his duplicates and has a list available. His e-mail address is ehwr00a@prodigy.com, or, ☎ / FAX 302-478-3137.

■ Gail Unzelman - Thomas Jefferson & Wine in Early America, 24-page pamphlet issued in 1976 by the Christian Bros. Wine Museum, San Francisco. "California Wine-Making" by Edwards Roberts, a 4-page supplement to the March 1889 *Harper's Weekly*. Also, two "fine press" items... William Morris & His "Praise of Wine.", Ward Ritchie Press of Los Angeles, 1958, one of 300 copies, 11 pp. A Note on Wagner the Gourmet by Phil T. Hanna, printed by Grant Dahlstrom, 1948 for members of the Zamorano Club, 9 pp. She writes that her list of duplicates has been trimmed very nicely, but there is still a multi-page list available. FAX 707-544-2723.

■ Contact Loyde "Bud" Hartley for a copy of his current list of almost two-dozen duplicates. ☎ 717-393-5797.

■ SPECIAL INVITATION to all TENDRILS!!

Member **Leo Lambiel** has a unique setting for his wine and his wine books—The Lambiel Home Museum on Orcas Island, in the San Juan Islands, Washington. He has built a 6-walled room to house his "modest" wine book collection; his wine cellar is adjacent. These are no ordinary rooms. A three hundred and seventy square foot hand-painted mural covers the six walls of the library. Artist Jean Putnam worked 5 hours a day, 5 days a week, for 13 months to complete this magnificent scene depicting the twenty-eight varieties of grapes that make ("in my opinion," says Leo) the world's finest wines. These painted grape vines, laden with ripe clusters, climb the walls and spill out onto a ceiling trellis. In the wine cellar, the walls and ceiling are covered with wine labels; the floor and the backs of the doors are covered with corks. Leo cordially invites all Wayward Tendrils who might be in the area to call (360-376-4544) for a special tour of his library, wine cellar and museum of San Juan County artists.



[This black & white reproduction of the color photo sent by Leo is shamefully negligent in giving us a true picture of the splendors adorning his library walls...]

■ A LETTER OF THANKS from **Isaac Oelgart**: I would like to thank the Tendrils who responded to my bibliographical inquiry regarding Hector Bolitho's *Wine of the Douro* [London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1956]. (See January 1997 Newsletter.)

Of 21 copies included in this survey I have personally examined 13 copies; 8 copies were reported to me by Tendril members. Of the 21 copies, seven were bound with maroon cloth, 14 with white paper over boards.

All of the maroon copies had the same spine stamping, as did all of the white copies. There appears to be no stamping variations within either version, and there appears to be no internal difference between the maroon and white copies.

Of the 7 maroon copies, two copies have the words "Printed in Great Britain" rubber-stamped below the printed line "Printed at the Ditchling Press" on the verso of the title page. I suspect these copies were destined for export—likely to the United States—and thus marked to indicate the country where the book was produced, which is sometimes different from where it was published.

Of the 21 copies, only one, in maroon cloth, was inscribed, dated and included a note—and a significant note it turned out to be. This book was signed "Christmas Day, 1956" and included a note from the author stating that "...the first copies arrived yesterday." On the basis of the inscription one would be tempted to say that the maroon cloth is the first edition, first issue. Yet, this still does not address the question of precedence: the white paper over boards could have been published simultaneously with the maroon cloth. This is yet to be determined.

But, certainly, they are binding variants. The publishing records, if they are still intact, may or may not address this binding issue. Inquiries to the Ditchling Press and the publisher have gone unanswered. I have not been able to locate the author, though I must admit I have only spent a modest amount of time in this effort.

Such are the difficulties of the bibliographer.

[s] Sincerely, Isaac Oelgart



**BACK ISSUES** of the *Newsletter*  
(Vol.1, 1991 - Vol.6, 1996) are  
available at \$15 per year.



## NOTES ON NEWSLETTERS

by Philephemera

### PART III

[Mr. Philephemera's essay is continued from our last issue. - Ed.]



It would be very useful, I think, to try to classify contemporary newsletters beyond the global distinction just made. It is enough to say that they cover the range from the quirkily personal to the decorously public, and that they take a variety of tones—perky, flippant, reflective, earnest, folksy. There are many other variables that might be noted. Some appear regularly, others not; some evidently have the benefit of a professional editorial staff, while others quite evidently do not; some are illustrated in color; some take up technical questions, and so on. They are by no means all to my taste, but it would be both impertinent and idle here to spend time illustrating my dislikes. What I would like to do instead, in the rest of this sketch, is to describe a few of the newsletters that I have found particularly attractive or instructive.

— "... *Cellar Notes* was always irregular, not only in its habits of publication but in its expression and opinions." —

The first that always comes to my mind is not, I think, likely to be very widely known: *Cellar Notes*, published by Presque Isle Wine Cellars (North East, Pennsylvania) from 1964 to 1976. Publication was scheduled for five times a year (subscription \$1), but *Cellar Notes* was always irregular, not only in its habits of publication but in its expression and opinions. These belonged to the editor, William Konnerth, one of the partners in the Presque Isle Wine Cellars. That is all I know about him, but to judge from his literary presence, he was someone special: opinionated but observant; pedantic but witty; conservative but up-to-date, and a whole row of other contradictions. He could also write. Come to think of it, he reminds me of another cross-grained, cantankerous, opinionated, observant, greatly-gifted writer, the Englishman William Cobbett (1763-1835). Once Konnerth got well-started, there was no knowing where he might end up. An item on mechanical harvesting (November 1965) leads him to this, among

a variety of other reflections on invention and human need (and I swear that this is the first thing that I came across when I looked into my file of *Cellar Notes*):

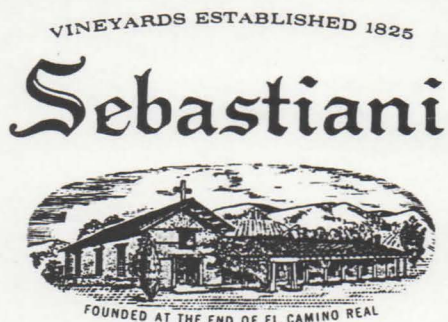
The city dweller, living comfortably on the backs of the peasants—likes to believe that each shiny gadget is a brilliant solution to a deep necessity. But the peasant knows better. He knows that invention is the mother of necessity and not the other way around. Deep in his soul he knows that the whole complex structure away from the soil is a burden, a luxury, perhaps an excrescence. The Pyramids of Gizeh, the towers of Babylon on the Hudson, are they not the same empty conceits of idlers who neglected their gardens? And is the Great Wall of China either more or less an expression of idle hands engaged in mischief, than, say, a belt of satellites around the earth? Is the lone guard in his stone parapet in the empty reaches of Mongolia any more preposterous than Telstar in outer space?

Or, take this from the very next issue of *Cellar Notes*, the topic now being "drunkenness" (how many wine newsletters are prepared to take that one on?):

It seems to me that most of the writers on drunkenness smell more of the library and the laboratory than they do of the saloon. And I am not willing to accept observations made in the "tank" at the local hoosegow, or in the Monday morning lineup at magistrate's court, as having any relevancy either. One might just as well study copulation in a maternity ward!

Not your usual stuff, I think you will agree. And Konnerth kept it up without apparent effort, no matter what the subject. He writes on such things as hybrid grape varieties, on fining, on alcohol, on pruning and training, on propagation—all the regular topics. But somehow the whole world keeps getting in, no matter what the ostensible business. I well remember a series on "Wine Drinking" (March-August 1967) which still seems to me a model personal essay, full of color and prejudice, but kept sound by good sense and much information. That led to a series on "Wine Tasting," and that to one, a really marvelous one, on "The Corner Saloon" (Winter 1970-Spring 1972). Konnerth retired in 1975, after which one more number of *Cellar Notes* appeared, with the announcement that it would be the last. "We would like to continue," so the announcement ran, "but do

not feel able to maintain it." Quite right. When the artist is gone, the enterprise is over.



## VINEYARDS

Very different was the Sebastiani Vineyards newsletter (like "Corti Brothers", without a distinguishing name), published from January 1973 to Spring 1986 (at least my file ends with that number). This was a newsletter that belonged wholly to the period after the great wine boom had hit the country. It assumes, for the first time among the newsletters that I know of, that there is an audience out there that wants to know everything about wine and winemaking, and the Sebastiani newsletter is eager to oblige. The tone throughout is one of serious engagement with a readership that does not want to be condescended to but instead wants to be told in detail about conditions, methods, techniques—no matter how specialized. The editor was Sam J. Sebastiani, and he communicated with wonderful effect the excitement of carrying on the work of growing grapes and making wine. The number for January 1978, for example, is devoted to water in the vineyards, with a table of the annual rainfall in the Sonoma Valley, a description of drip irrigation, and an explanation of how an intrusion of salt water was dealt with in the Sebastiani vineyards. Francis Gould would have shaken his head in disbelieving wonder.

In succeeding months, Sam Sebastiani goes on enthusiastically with vivid accounts of



## TRUMPETVINE WINES

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 1982

VOL. 4, NO. 10

how a bottle is corked, how cooperage is measured, how tanks are cleaned, how a new site is prepared for vine planting. Altogether, the sequence makes a very instructive text on the technology of California wine making in the '70s and '80s. There was much else, too: sketches of the wine-making personnel, descriptions of new wines, recipes, and so on. But the

emphasis remained squarely on how things were done, in the vineyard and in the winery. By the date of the tenth anniversary of the newsletter it was being sent to 125,000 subscribers.

The end came in 1986, when a family crisis resulted in the exclusion of Sam Sebastiani from participation in the family winery. At least one number of the newsletter appeared after his departure, but it was—as, according to the thesis of this article, it had to be—a different creature. Whether the newsletter was maintained after that I don't know.

Not to neglect the contributions of the wine merchants, as opposed to the wine makers, I must say at least a brief word about one remarkable entry from that quarter. Trumpet Vine Wines, of Berkeley, now sadly no longer in business, published Trumpetvine Wines: the Monthly Newsletter, from March 1979 to November 1989. The store closed its doors in January 1990, depriving us of one of the most original and amusing of all newsletters. It was, I suppose, essentially Berkeleian: hip, literate, laid back, irreverent, yet committed to what it thought important—that is, good wine, especially California wine. The number for November 1982 gives an idea of what it was like. The subject is hangovers, and the treatment is in this mode:

And so the white-smocked dwarf with the botrytised nose says: "Would you like them all sewed up, then? It will certainly help uncomplicate your life." A bolt of neural electricity and a flash of white light behind my eyeballs jolt me into...consciousness? The first waking thought of "How long have I been staring at the ceiling?" is quickly washed over by waves of clarity confirming the brilliance of my life decisions: how nice not to be a neurosurgeon or a corporate lawyer.

The eloquence and inventiveness of the prose

in some numbers of the Trumpetvine was so high that it could hardly be sustained month after

month. But it was never less than lively and it was always well-informed. Sometimes the main item would be narrative—a visit to the vineyards, for example; sometimes it would be calmly expository—an account of the work of the Wine Institute; sometimes it would be original reporting, as in the two-part series on the Berkeley enterprise called "Wine and the

People." Was all this the work of a single artist? or did it come from the combined contributions of the bright young men who operated the store? Good work, after all, can come from a collaboration, as the history of all the arts shows.

One answer to the question was given in the number for February 1986, when the Trumpetvine, pausing to take stock of its career, revealed that it was written "by a gentleman named Axel Wentworth, a retired schoolteacher who lives on Milvia St. in Berkeley." Another answer appeared two years later (December 1988) in a valedictory essay signed by Stanley Hock, one of the proprietors, who was then leaving for new pastures. The newsletter, he says, was always a collaboration among the owners of the shop, "four demonstrably overeducated, seriously aimless young men" who wanted to sell wine:

From the beginning, the TVW newsletter served as a vehicle for the expression of the collective social conscience, frustrated literary ambition, and overall what-else-have-we-got-to-do attitude of its authors.

Hock's departure evidently took some of the energy out of the newsletter. In its last year, 1989, there is no February number, and the final four numbers are bi-monthly instead of monthly. But they are still readable. In my file of the Trumpetvine I find an unsigned, undated note from someone at the Trumpetvine store, evidently in reply to my asking about a missing number of the newsletter. "Due to general sloth," it says, "there was no Vol.6 #12." That, I think, tells you what the Trumpetvine atmosphere was. It was in reality full of energy, but the people there liked to call it "sloth" — an engaging affectation.

### *A Further Note . . .*

The first two instalments of "Notes on Newsletters" have stimulated several most interesting responses. Christopher Wirth, of the Wine Institute, has produced a copy (xerographic) from the Institute's files of that most-ardently-to-be-desired item, the Fountaingrove Wine News (not Press, as my reference gave it). The copy is of Vol.1 No.3, dated Santa Rosa, California, and 62 Vesey Street, New York (the address of Fountaingrove's New York agency), May 1889. To judge from this one example, the Wine News appears to approach the idea of a catalog more nearly than that of a newsletter as I have defined those things, but we will gladly stretch a point. It is pleasing to have its existence confirmed. (See illustration rear cover of this issue.)

Tendril Richard Kaplan has instructed my ignorance by sending a copy of Bohemian Life, Vol.1 No.1 (September 1939), a newsletter published by the Bohemian Distributing Company of Los Angeles and conducted by one "Savarin St.Sure" — better known as M.F.K. Fisher (what, one wonders is the point of that pseudonym? I get the "Savarin," but why "St.Sure"?)



*As seen by Savarin St. Sure*  
Published by Bohemian Distributing Co., 2060 East Forty-ninth Street, Los Angeles  
NUMBER 1 SEPTEMBER, 1939

Published monthly, Bohemian Life ran to a total of 172 numbers, from September 1939 to August 1957. Whether Mrs. Fisher remained as editor for all that time I do not know, but it seems most unlikely. Richard also sent a few pages of the "index" to Bohemian Life from September 1939 to August 1943. The range of the index is most impressive—from "Adieu to Oysters" through "Cannibal Sandwich, the," and "Life Among the Vines," to a "Rebuke to Garlic." Obviously, the scope of the newsletter was not limited to wine, so it can't be listed among the wine newsletters; but here, as in the case of the Fountaingrove Wine News, who cares about rules? The sample I have seen makes me wonder how much of what M.F.K. Fisher published in Bohemian Life worked its way into her books? And if not much of it did, then wouldn't it be worthwhile to go through the files of the newsletter to make a selection for reprinting? Richard Kaplan will, one hopes, take up the work.



*Published as the spirit moves by James E. Beard, Printer and self-styled Wine Amateur*  
VOLUME I ST. HELENA, CALIFORNIA, AUGUST, 1950 NUMBER 2

To Richard Kaplan I also owe a copy of the Napa Valley Wine Press, which, according to the subtitle, was "published as the spirit moves by James E. Beard, Printer and self-styled Wine Amateur." The first number appeared in July 1949, the second not until August 1950. I do not have any further bibliographic detail, though the entry for the Napa Valley Wine Press in the 3rd edition of the Union List of Serials, 1965, shows it as then still in course of

publication. Beard, as most Tendrils will know, was also the printer of Krug's Bottles and Bins. The Napa Valley Wine Press, also like Bottles and Bins, contained ornaments and illustrations by Mallette Dean. The style of the Napa Valley Wine Press, to judge from a single number, was determinedly casual, "dedicated to the idea that wine is fun." Wine was Beard's hobby; his profession was printing, and he says that printing was the "secondary theme" of the Napa Valley Wine Press, though how prominent it might in fact have been one could learn only by consulting a complete file. Beard's combination of wine and printing reminds one of André Simon, whose first love was printing. One thinks also of Alfred Knopf, who, though a publisher rather than a printer, cared greatly about fine printing and fine wine. Are there other instances of this combination?

Tendril Roy Brady writes to inform us of the Mayacamas Bulletin, whose beginnings he places some time in 1948—the first numbers are undated—and thus holds to be the first of modern winery newsletters. As he wrote in the *University of California / Sotheby Book of California Wine*, through the pages of the Mayacamas Bulletin "early followers of Mayacamas suffered and triumphed with the Taylor family as they struggled to establish a new winery" (p.317). Brady also mentions the Napa Valley Gazette, published by Beaulieu Vineyards, as belonging to "about the same time" as the Mayacamas Bulletin but evidently of no very long life. Does anyone have a file of it?

Finally, both Roy and Tendril Darrel Rosander correct my discussion of Schoonmaker's News from the Vineyards by pointing out that it began life as News from the Wine Country (1948-1955), and was published, at least in the first few years (to 1951?) not by Almaden Vineyards but by Schoonmaker's own importing firm. Darrel asks when the newsletter changed from ...Wine Country to ...Vineyards, and this raises an interesting question in itself: Can one be sure that the two are the same publication, or two distinct publications? Brady says that the University

of California at Fresno has a full run of ...Wine Country, 1948-1955. An inquiry at Fresno should give us an answer...

— Philephemera

[Please note that the wine newsletter illustrations are reduced. - Ed.]



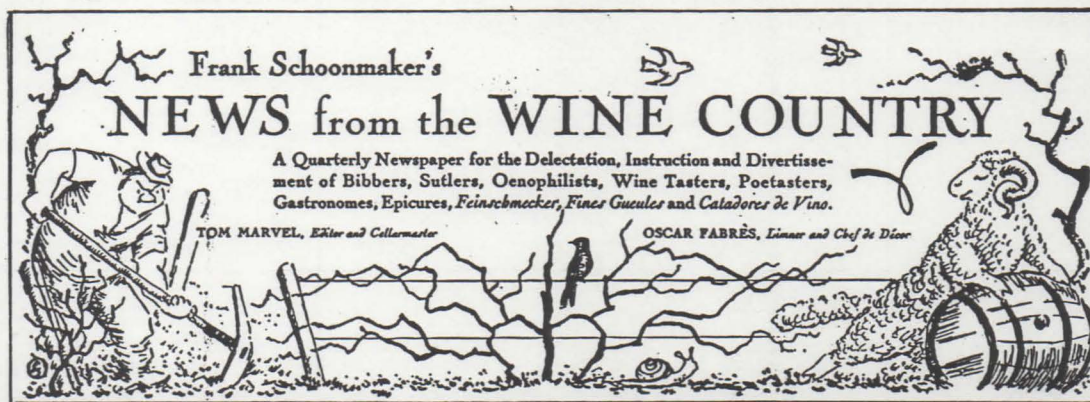
#### Hartley cont'd —

those assembled to drink other alcoholic beverages. A search for the origins of this civility should begin among the participants' preexisting values and lifestyles, however, not in the bottle. Give a Lafite to a lout and you get a drunken lout, not a Luther.

Like most other symbols, wine is associated with religion because it is prosaic, humble, modest, unpretentious, unassuming, plain, ordinary and simple; not because it is powerful, luxurious, complex, opulent, spicy, elegant, rich and has a good nose. Claims about the illustrious importance of wine in religion are unwarranted. My brief arguments for this commonness of wine in religion rely, admittedly, on my reading of Judaism and Christianity. I think I could do the same with other religions as well, say Greek mythology, but that can wait for another time. Meanwhile, I'll place Fuller's book on my shelf along with such other titles as: *Religion and Bread*, *Religion and Eggs*, *Religion and Milk*, *Religion and Soda Pop*, *Religion and ...* .

[Robert C. Fuller, *Religion and Wine. A Cultural History of Wine Drinking in the United States*, Knoxville: University of Tenn. Press, 1996, 140 pp.]

[Loyde "Bud" Hartley, a Wayward Tendril since 1993, is a professor of Religion and Society at Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, PA. His collection of wine books, with titles in English, French, German and Spanish, continues to grow and is frequently referred to. - Ed.]



## BOOKPLATES with WINE MOTIFS

*How to Commission Them — How to Use Them — How to Collect Them — How to Love Them*

by Erik Skovenborg



How grateful I am to have still with me, on my shelves, so many old friends, the books which I have been collecting all my life. There are, I know, many bibliophiles who have a far greater number of books than I have, but I cannot imagine anybody having assembled a more representative collection of books of wine interest, not only books dealing exclusively with viticulture and winemaking, but others in which wine is considered from the moral, social, economic, and medical angles. Thus although the Bible cannot be called a 'wine book,' I did not hesitate to buy, which I had the chance to do so, a beautiful folio of Gutenberg's Bible, printed at Mainz between 1450 and 1455, with Isaiah's description of the planting of a vineyard."

So wrote André Simon about his lifetime passion of collecting wine books — which could also aptly define a WAYWARD TENDRIL. Obviously André cared for his wine books and he did not hesitate to commission a bookplate for his beloved books.

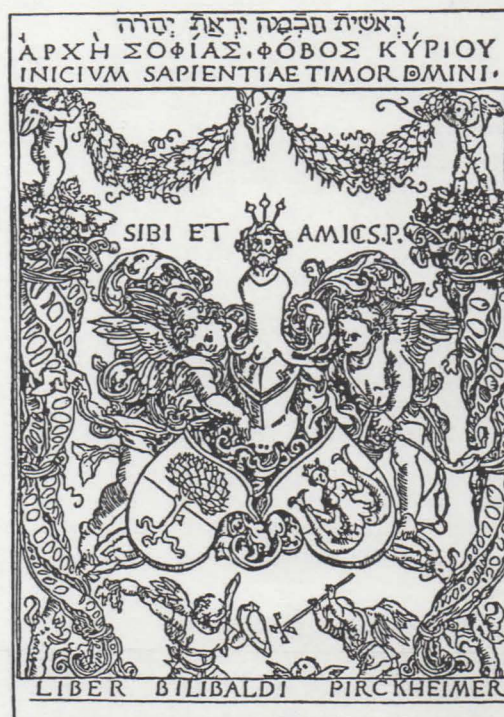


The artist is unknown, but the motif is right and proper for a "bibulous bibliophile" — an old vine with clusters of grapes, a medallion with an inscription, and a few books in the corner. The design has one flaw though: the owner's name is represented with initials only. Since the prime function of a bookplate is to assist the proper return of the book to its rightful owner, that kind of guesswork with initials, picture puzzles or whatever is not recommended.

*Rule #1:* A bookplate should display the name of the owner loud and clear.

### *Sibi et amicis*

Our Wayward Tendrils would be non-existent without Gutenberg's stroke of genius in 1440. With his invention—the casting of separate metal types—Gutenberg initiated the art of printing books like the beautiful Bible André Simon had the good fortune to purchase. Since wine drinking and the growing of grapes are essential parts of the German culture, it is no wonder that one of the early German bookplates—the woodcut by Albrecht Dürer from 1502 for his friend Willibald Pirckheimer—is a coat of arms decorated with cornucopias of grapes and vines. During this time the artists were learned people, well-trained in Latin and Greek, and with a thorough knowledge of history and symbolics. Dürer (1471-1528) is no exception, and he has taken the opportunity to show some of his language skills. Observe Pirckheimer's motto: *Sibi et Amicis* (for himself and his friends). Bookplates should be a passport to friendship and not a mark of nasty protectiveness.

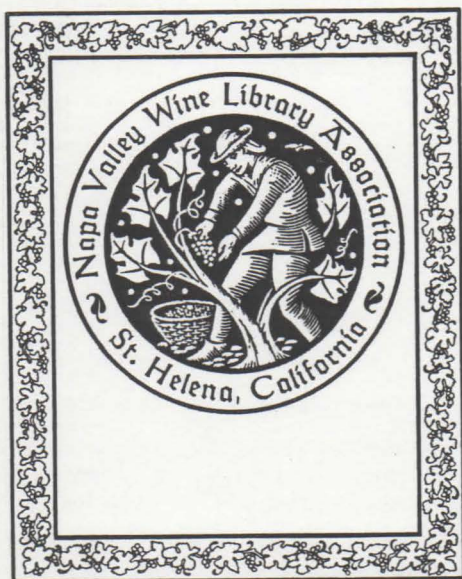


Bilibald is a generous friend quite in harmony with the

ancient toast: "May we never want a friend, nor a bottle to share with him." *Liber* means book, so the plate is meant for Bilibald's books. The same message is often sent by adding the word *Ex Libris* to the design of the plate. *Ex Libris*—spelled in two words with no hyphen—is Latin for "of books," implying the "owner of these books." The same message may be sent with English phrases like "N.N.'s book" — "Her book" — "Belongs to" — "From the library of" — "From the books of" et cetera. When you write about bookplates as a concept, you may use *exlibris* written in one word without capital letters. *Rule #2*: In a bookplate design, the words *Ex Libris* are written in two words, using capital letters, and no hyphen.

### A Thing of Beauty

Most wine districts boast a beautiful countryside with idyllic hamlets inhabited by friendly people. The optimistic and positive culture of wine often influences the art of the region, the loving care of gardens and vineyards, the architecture of castles and patrician homes, the design of decanters and drinking cups, the local dishes, the abundance of fine restaurants—in all, a haven for the good things in life. California's Napa Valley is a fine example of this tradition. In the center of this wine valley you will find St. Helena, a town living by and living for wine.



One of its main attractions for a Wayward Tendril is the Wine Library founded by the Napa Valley Wine Library Association. In a time when most libraries have succumbed to practical methods of book identification, like ugly stamps or the ubiquitous bar codes, it is a pleasant surprise to find hundreds of wine books decorated with an excellent bookplate designed by Mallette Dean. The serene motif—a vintner picking grapes—has been printed in the rich ruby colour that

a bottle of noble red wine achieves after several years of maturation in the wine cellar. There is a lesson to learn in the Wine Library of St. Helena: in caring for their books, Wayward Tendrils should give priority to beauty at the expense of the practical and opt for bookplates instead of bar codes. *Rule #3*: "A bookplate should be a thing of beauty and a joy forever, so the first cost need not or should not be a matter of much consideration" (Walter Hamilton, 1894).

### The Art of Boring

Leaving the cost out of account could mean choosing an expensive technique of bookplate execution like copper engraving. In the reproduction here presented, a fair amount of the intricate engraved collage for wine merchant Francis Berry will be lost, but the artist, Lord Badely, spared no pains in depicting the wine merchant's home ground.

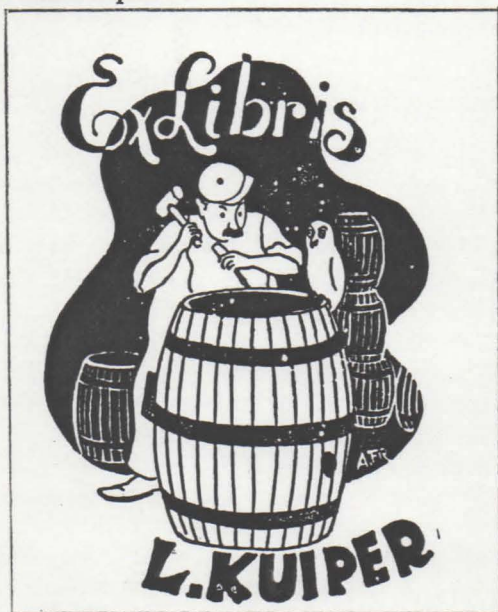


According to James Wilson, the English antiquarian bookseller and bookplate expert, Francis L. Berry (1876-1936) joined the family firm circa 1894, greatly increased its export business and friendship with Continental suppliers, and was for many years a senior partner. Berry's Wimbledon home was filled with the fruits of his collecting and connoisseurship, and his circle of friends included distinguished artists. His bookplate is a compilation of his life and work. The topmost vignette shows the interior of Berry Brothers & Rudd wine shop in St. James's Street; below it is the exterior of the shop with St. James's Palace beyond. The composition includes vine and floral ornament, antique scenic prints and wine goblets (collecting interests), and some new and old wine bottles. The

artist has put his name and the year of origin on a ribbon below to the right: "J.F. Badely 26." All of this is very interesting; however, to tell it all is the art of boring. This is a pitfall to avoid when commissioning a bookplate. Do not make the task of the artist impossible by asking for a design with a picture of your home, a symbol of your work, a reference to your kids, a full pictorial coverage of your many hobbies, some old books, a wise owl—and maybe your Zodiac sign just to finish the collage. Eventually you and your friends will be bored stiff by the messy design, and any sensible artist would resist such an approach. Just remember one thing: if you need a professional bookplate, and a bookplate for wine books, plus a bookplate for detective stories, etc., it is perfectly all right to have more than one bookplate. Indeed, the author of this article has more than fifty personal exlibris! *Rule #4: Keep the motif simple.*

### A Cooper for Mr. Kuiper

The working cooper is a good example of a plain and pretty bookplate motif. The Dutch artist, A. Frederiks, also managed to put a pictorial pun in the design; such bookplates are called "redende exlibris" or "exlibris parlantes." The use of a pictorial pun is common in exlibris art as it is in heraldry, e.g. the Bowes-Lyon family crest bears a shield quartered with bows and lions, a "canting coats of arms." For once we will let the owl pass.



Academic symbols like the owl (the bird of wisdom), the laurel wreath (symbolizing the art of poetry), oil lamps (a signal of education and knowledge) have been hackneyed by repetition; likewise, conventional themes involving piles of books or similar subjects should be avoided. A Wayward Tendril would not even dream of such trivial

bookplate themes. Just imagine the abundance of motifs in the *terroir*, the vines in the vineyard, the workers picking grapes, the wine press, fermentation vats, wines maturing in *barriques*, the bottling and cellaring, and last but not least, the pouring and drinking.

Allan Jordan's handsome woodcut for Karl Weidenhofer is another fine example of a black and white wine motif. There is a lot to say in favor of the black and white exlibris design. They are less demanding for the artist, they are cheaper to print, they are suitable for most books, and the risk of becoming bored with the design over the years is notoriously less with the simple black and white design. *Rule #5: Avoid the owls and pay attention to an attractive black and white wine motif.*



### A Question of Size

The correct place for the bookplate in any book is the center of the inside front cover, not on the free endpaper, which may curl. Care should be taken to place it properly. It should be attached by a colorless glue intended for use with paper and photos. Pre-glued paper is not recommended. (We all can imagine the disastrous results of a bunch of pre-glued bookplates stored in a damp place.)

The original size of Dürer's exlibris for W. Pirckheimer is 20 x 14 cm (8" x 5½"). Obviously that is not a very practical size for a bookplate to be tipped into modern books. The measurements of a rather large book like *The Oxford Companion to Wine* are 25 x 19 cm (10" x 7½"), while *Hugh Johnson's Pocket Wine Book* at 19.5 x 9.5 cm should be a good fit for any pocket, but a bad fit for Pirckheimer's bookplate. A bookplate 8-10 cm (3-4") tall and 6-7 cm (2½-3") wide would be handy for most modern books.

It is all a question of size—as one of Moses' spies in the land of Canaan remarked at the sight of a very large cluster of grapes. The scene in the exlibris of German lawyer, Joachim Kretz, of two scouts carrying an enormous bunch of grapes, is a very popular wine bookplate. It is designed by the Polish artist Zbigniew Dolatowski, who has specialized in detailed linocuts in book-friendly sizes.



In his linocut for Josef de Belder, a Dutch bookplate collector, Dolatowski has illustrated the famous quote by Benjamin Franklin: "Behold the rain, which descends from Heaven upon our vineyards, and which enters into the vine-roots to be changed into wine; a constant proof that God loves us and loves to see us happy."



**Rule #6:** Make sure that your bookplate is designed in a handy size, and take care to place it properly on the inside front cover of the book.

#### The Right Man for the Job

"The writing of one's name in a book is sacrilege. The writing of anything else, unless it be an

inscription by the author, is an abomination. But no book, however fine, is marred by a seemly bookplate. On the contrary, it is often much enhanced," the Belgian artist Mark Severin wrote in 1972. He was one of the right men for the job and created wonderful exlibris in woodcut and copper engraving. Since his death, we have to look elsewhere for the right man. Few are so lucky as the author of these lines to have amongst his patients a talented advertising designer. The rules of good advertising are these: listen to the client, use clear and concise illustrations, draw perfect letters and add colour with syle. Combining these qualifications with a deep insight into the technical graphic process, Per Christensen had the sure recipe for an excellent book-plate designer. He has enhanced my wine books with a friendly Dionysus whose smile cheers the reader every time the book is opened.

Unless you are a very talented artist you should look for a professional as the right man for the job. A dilettante sketch tipped into your wine books will mar them for sure, and in the years to come you will have plenty of opportunity to regret that you did not look for the right man. Help can be found at *The American Society of Bookplate Collectors and Designers*, Cambridge Bookplate, Box 340, Cambridge, Mass 02238. Or you could try *The Society of Wood Engravers*, Box 355, Richmond, Surrey TW10 6LE, England. **Rule #7:** If you plan to commission a bookplate, look for a professional artist whose line of work suits your taste, and beware of dilettante work.



#### A Collector's Dream

By definition of Walter Hamilton, "the ideal collector is one who has money, taste and leisure." All Wayward Tendrils, I guess, are ideal collectors by

definition. In addition to the collecting of wine books, any Tendril should give some careful consideration to the idea of collecting bookplates with a wine motif. Strong ties connect the bookplate with books and the graphic arts. Most bookplates are original works of art printed in relatively small numbers. They do not demand a lot of space on your shelves. They may be bought at reasonable prices—however, the best way to collect exlibris is to commission a bookplate of high quality from a reputable artist and then exchange your plate with other bookplate owners. That method will also give you most fun.

But even with a flying start, you will find it next to impossible to top Norbert Lippoczy, an enthusiastic collector from Poland who, over decades, has been able to collect more than 5,000 bookplates with wine motifs. Descended from Hungarian vintners, Lippoczy gathered more than 1,000 books on wine culture in the Hungarian, Polish, German and Russian languages. His library of wine books and wine exlibris has been donated to the Wine Museum in Budapest. "No thing more excellent nor more valuable than wine was ever granted to mankind by God" was the opinion of the Greek philosopher Plato. This conception, *Vinum - Donum Dei*, is the motif of Otakar Marik's woodcut for the great collector and wine lover Norbert Lippoczy.



### The Lure of Bookplates

Even at this early stage it may be too late; you may have contracted an incurable infection of bookplate-virus already. Even if a few cases of spontaneous recovery have been reported, there is no known cure. So if you are nursing an ambition to commission a bookplate, perhaps you should think twice. You might still be able to resist the privilege it

confers of making you a patron.

Today we may envy, but we cannot emulate, figures like Lorenzo de Medici. But it is possible for us to commission from a living artist a personal bookplate exactly to our own wishes. Do not listen to people who have the strange notion that a book is complete without a bookplate. What is a book, they claim, without the reader. Contrary to a movie or a television play, any book needs the culture and the imagination of its reader as an active partner. The bookplate then is a document of the owner's taste, culture and personality and his way of rendering the book complete in cooperation with the author. So while the book represents the author, the bookplate represents the reader as the irreplaceable and vital partner in the book as a work of art.



The condition inflicted by the bookplate-virus is a chronic but not a fatal disease. You may live and collect for many years to come, and once in a while the fever in your blood will rise at the sight of wonderful bookplates like the figure cut in wood for Kunderman Jenö by the Bulgarian artist Pencho Koulekov. Just don't say you were not warned.

### Suggested Reading:

*American Artists of the Bookplate, 1970-1990.* Edited by James Keenan and Jacqueline Davis. Cambridge: Cambridge Bookplates, 1990.  
*The Golden Era of American Bookplate Design, 1890-1940.* William and Darlene Butler. Frederik-

shavn: The Bookplate Society & Forlaget Exlibristen, 1986.

*A Treasury of Bookplates from the Renaissance to the Present.* Fridolph Johnson. NY: Dover, 1977.

*Bookplates: A Selected Bibliography of the Periodical Literature.* Audry Arellanes, 1971.

*Engraved Bookplates - European Exlibris 1950-1970.*

Mark Severin & Anthony Reid. Middlesex: Private Libraries Assn, 1972.

*Owners of Books: The Dissipations of a Collector.*

Irene D. Andrews, 1936.

The MAD RIDDLER sends us  
a RHYME

a fellow once told me he loved champagne  
he drank it to celebrate  
how often is that i enquired forthwith  
and asked to elaborate

i drink for new years he beamed with pride  
i drink on my birthday too  
is that all i replied a little dismayed  
for all i count is two

two is enough he said in defense  
to do more would be quite bad  
for three would be decadent and four a sin  
but i could see that his eyes were sad

for 363 days of the year  
he grappled with misery and pain  
so i pulled out my gun and shot him dead  
then i toasted his soul with champagne

for what is a life that is only half lived  
colorless cloudy and gray  
but even two days could have saved his life  
but his champagne of choice was ANDRÉ.



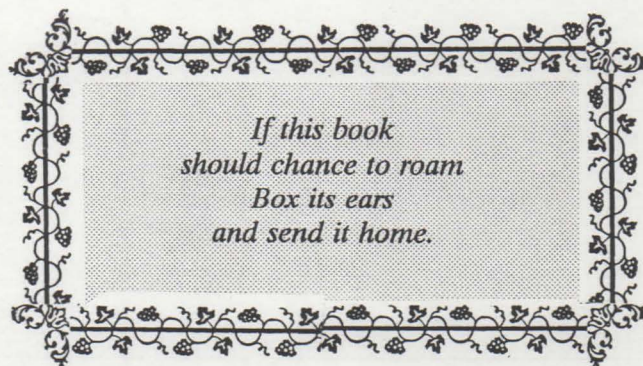
— The experience of a bookplate in full colour —

Artist: Zb. Dolatowski, Poland

Technique: Linocut in four colours,  
printed from the plate

Owner: Anne Katrine Skovenborg, Denmark

[The bookplate illustrations—some trimmed or reduced in size to fit the text columns—are reproduced from Erik's personal collection; the tipped-in bookplate is sent with his compliments. In 1991 our enthusiastic and knowledgeable collector published a charming 30-page booklet on wine bookplates, *Vin Exlibris. Bookplates with Wine Motifs* (See "News & Notes"). His wine book collecting interests are centered around books on the medical use of wine; he has lectured widely on the subject of wine and health, and in 1990 produced a fine booklet, *In Vino Sanitas*. Erik is compiling a checklist of books on wine & health, from the earliest times to the present. Cheers! - Ed.]



# An APPRECIATION of PHILIP MARSHALL WAGNER: 1904 - 1996

by Robert W. Hutton \*

[Tendrils Bob Hutton serves on the editorial board of the British quarterly *AIM - Alcohol in Moderation*, and has given us an inside look at the wine books in the Library of Congress ["Wine at the Library of Congress," Vol.6 No.3, July 1996]. When not tending to his duties as cataloger of wine books at LC, he can often be found cultivating the grape vines in his "backyard" Shooters Hill Vineyard. - Ed.]



Wine lovers from areas other than the east coast of the United States should be forgiven for their wonderment at the attention paid to Philip Marshall Wagner, who passed away on December 29, 1996, at the age of 92. In his own quiet way he performed nothing less than a revolution in grape growing and wine-

making in the areas of the United States where it had been considered impossible to grow *vinifera* grapes. Thomas Jefferson tried to grow *vinifera* grapes with no success, and so did many others. Eventually winegrowers in the east became resigned to deal only with old American grape varieties, such as Concord, Noah, Othello, Delaware, Catawba, etc. Wagner did his basic work as a complete amateur—and as a distinct sideline from his profession as a journalist with the Baltimore *Sun* newspapers. His revolution consisted of proving to eastern grape growers that the hybrid grapes developed in France early in the century as an answer to the phylloxera problem would allow eastern winemakers to produce wines free from the foxy flavors of the older eastern grapes.

Who was Philip Wagner, and how did he get this interest in winemaking and grape growing? First of all, he was a newspaperman. After a short stint with the Philadelphia *North American*, he spent the rest of his career with the Baltimore *Sun* papers—as correspondent, columnist and editor—until his retirement in 1964. His interest in wine started early, when, during Prohibition, he would buy California grapes from the Italian market in Baltimore and make wine. (It must be something to do with the profession. My father, who was an editorial cartoonist, had always advised me to plant grapes and make wine if I ever purchased some property. He felt that it was the one thing the federal government would let you do for free.) When Prohibition ended,

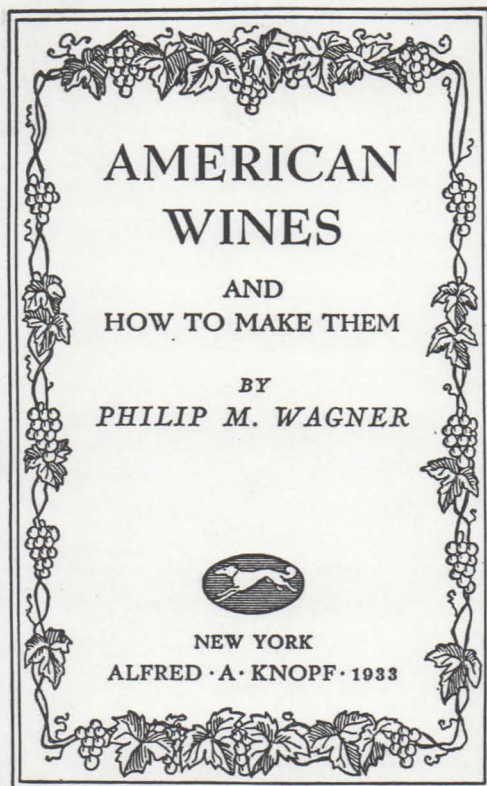
it became more difficult to obtain decent wine grapes since few were being shipped, and Wagner tried to use eastern (and foxy) grapes from local vineyards, including the ones he found on his new property in suburban Riderwood.

He published his first book on the subject, *American Wines and How to Make Them*, in 1933—at the time the only English language book in print on making wine from grapes. Not one French hybrid grape is mentioned. The same can be said for his second book, published in 1937, *Wine Grapes, Their Selection, Cultivation and Enjoyment*—although he does suggest that French hybrids might be worth considering.

Why did Wagner do so much work with grapes and winemaking? He insisted that it was an avocation which was a perfect antidote to the frustrations of editing and writing for a daily newspaper. Nature's deadlines are of quite a different nature than a newspaper's. At any rate, his earlier experiences taught him that while purchased grapes can be used to make drinkable wines, growing the grapes yourself provides much more control over availability and quality. His middle experience showed him that old eastern grapes did not have the capability of making really palatable wines, no matter how much care was taken. His time as a correspondent in London in the late 1930s gave him a chance to do research on French hybrid grapes, both in England and in France. When he returned home, he began to put his research to work.

Boordy Vineyards—described by Wagner as "a small Maryland vineyard and its delightful products"—began in 1941, and produced its first commercial vintage about the time his first book on his experience with French hybrid grapes, *A Wine Growers Guide*, was published in 1945. As Hudson Cattell of *Wine East* puts it, two generations of grape growers were inspired by that book. It was followed in 1956 by *American Wines and How to Make Them*. I have used those books, and call them the bible for home winemakers. I have found no other publication which is written so clearly: when one is in need of a rapid and clear answer to a problem—as can happen only too quickly in the course of fermentation—Wagner provides a ready remedy. For instance, when you find that the sugar analysis of your must is on the low side, he has an easily translated table which will tell you how much sugar to add to the amount of must you are dealing with. A second edition of *A Winegrowers Guide* was published in 1965, with a thorough updating of his experience with hybrids since 1945. His final book on wine, *Grapes into Wine*, was published in 1976. As the cataloger of wine books at the Library of Congress, I thought at first—when the galley proof arrived for cataloging—that it was a

manual for a small commercial winery. When I saw who had written it, I realized it was intended for the serious amateur. While it is a rewriting of his previous books, and is as equally practical, he further provides the wine lover with chapters on the history of the wine grape, and on wine tasting and using wine.



Boordy Vineyards also provided those fortunate enough to find a wine store that carried Boordy wines a chance to see just what could be done with hybrid grapes and what kind of wine could be made from them. Alas, Wagner's wines seemed to be available only in selected outlets in Maryland and the District of Columbia. Philip Wagner did not want to make fancy wine; he wanted to make a wine you could drink with hamburgers—and Boordy wines were not fancy or expensive. They also tended to vary from bottle to bottle, since Wagner was known for bottling the wines as they came from the cellar, without too much care being taken as to which variety was being handled. He made white wine and red wine, and it was anyone's guess as to what had gone into the bottle from any particular batch.

Wagner's published works were not limited to practical winemaking, though little published work seems to have resulted from his career as editor and correspondent. In 1941 he edited a reprint of a medieval book on wine by William Turner, *A Book of Wines*, first published in 1568, the year of Turner's death. The Library of Congress subject heading for

this book is *Theriaca*, which refers to an antidote for poison. In 1942 Wagner wrote a brief, 7-page booklet on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad; and in 1966 he wrote another short work (48 pages) on Henry Mencken, his predecessor as editor of the *Baltimore Sun*.

At the 1977 American Wine Society Conference, where he had been given a major award, we talked briefly about his early newspaper days. When he found that my father had been a cartoonist in Philadelphia, he told me of his short career on the old Philadelphia *North American*. Apparently his editor severely disapproved of smoking. One morning as he was puffing away on a large cigar, he got warning of his boss approaching, and tossed the offending stogie out of the window. Unfortunately it landed on the roof, stayed there, and the ensuing fire and arrival of the fire department dramatically exposed his disagreeable habit to the editor. He allowed that this experience showed that he really wasn't cut out for Philadelphia journalism.

While Wagner felt that his mission was to promote the growing and use of French hybrid grapes in the eastern United States, it was for a thoroughly practical reason: experience had shown it to be difficult under existing conditions to grow *vinifera* grapes and to obtain a successful harvest. He never objected to anyone trying *vinifera*, and there is a section on growing *vinifera* in the east in the 1965 edition of *A Winegrowers Guide* mentioning the work of Konstantin Frank and his early efforts in growing *vinifera* in New York state quite favorably. Unfortunately, Dr. Frank and other partisans of *vinifera* grapes did not reciprocate, and tried to start a battle royal against Wagner and proponents of French hybrids. Events have proven that *vinifera* can be grown quite successfully in the east, and so Konstantin Frank has been vindicated. However, Wagner's vindication is shown by the many vineyards that grow French hybrids quite well, and even blend them with *vinifera* to make most interesting wines. What Wagner did, which is of prime importance to eastern winemaking, is to develop and popularize a type of grape which could be grown fairly easily and which would produce a palatable and saleable wine. When better grapes, in the form of the undeniably better *vinifera*—and more importantly, better cultivation techniques—arrived, there was an expanding market and growing consumer interest in eastern wines. The better wines now found a ready market which could appreciate them.

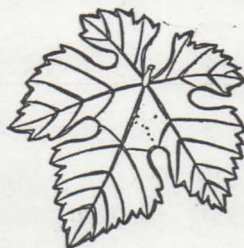
In short, probably no other person in the world, whose profession was not in viticulture, has had a greater influence on innovation in grape planting in an area the size of eastern North America, than Philip Wagner. Before him, eastern wine makers either

made decidedly foxy wines or tried, with varying degrees of success, to minimize the foxiness. After him, eastern wines were drinkable; and the way was paved for the many new and fine local wines which we now enjoy in many of the eastern states. 🍷

PHILIP MARSHALL WAGNER:  
A SHORT BIBLIOGRAPHY

- American Wines and How to Make Them.* New York: A. Knopf, 1933. 295 pp. Second, revised edition, 1936. 367 pp.
- "The Wines of California." *The American Mercury*, June 1933 (Vol.XXIX, No.114). New York: American Mercury Inc. pp.165-175.
- Wine Grapes. Their Selection, Cultivation and Enjoyment.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1937. 298 pp.
- A Book of Wines* by William Turner (1568). With a Modern English version of the text by the editors and a General Introduction by Sanford Larkey...and an Oenological Note by Philip M. Wagner. New York: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1941. 79 pp.
- It Worked for the B. & O.* Washington, U.S. Gov't Printing Office, 1942. 7 pp.
- A Wine-Growers' Guide.* New York: A. Knopf, 1945. 230 pp. Revised edition, 1965; reissued in 1972, 1982. Third revised edition, 1985; reissued, 1996.
- American Wines and Wine-Making.* New York: A. Knopf, 1956. (A revised version of *American Wines and How to Make Them.*)
- H. L. Mencken.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966. 48 pp.
- "Wines, Grape Vines and Climate." *Scientific American*, June, 1974.
- Grapes into Wine: A Guide to Winemaking in America.* New York: Knopf, 1976. 302 pp.
- "The Vine and Its Environments." Co-authored with Maynard A. Amerine. *U.C./Sotheby Book of California Wine.* Berkeley/London: U.S./Sotheby Press, 1984. pp.86-120.

Note: For further reading on Philip Wagner, see *Wines of America* by Leon Adams; *Wine East* [Jan-Feb, 1997 by Hudson Cattell; James Gabler, *Wine into Words*.]



**BOOKS &  
BOTTLES**  
by  
Fred McMillin

**There's No Storm in this Port**

**Prologue:** "The French, by first mixing their Wines with those of Spain, [caused] their Wines to lose their reputation. It is no wonder that Port Wines are now universally preferred to the French claret." Written 1775, by Sir Edward Barry, London physician, in his tome *Observations on the Wines of the Ancients and Modern Wines*.

"About the addition of brandy to Port...English merchants wish [Port] to feel like liquid fire...like inflamed gunpowder in the stomach." Written 1824, by Dr. Alexander Henderson, London physician, in his 408-page *History of Ancient and Modern Wines*.

**The Story:** So, the London physicians can tell us a lot about the development of Port. Sir Barry points to Portugal's gain over France as the supplier of choice—influenced also by frequent English-French clashes and the marriage of England's Charles II to a Portuguese princess, Catherine of Braganca in the 17th century.

As to Henderson's concern about "liquid fire," Port producers learned how to put it out: with age. The mellowing effects are particularly apparent in Tawny Port, the name referring to the brown hues the wine acquires with age.

Eight years after the publication of Dr. Henderson's book, one James Dow married the granddaughter of a major London wine merchant. Ultimately, James took over the business that was to bear his name.

**Serving Port:** Like Ginger and Fred, Port and cheese are a perfect pair. In the London Port houses, Port was served with blue-veined Stilton cheese and plain crackers. At Oporto, I sipped Tawny with thin slices of solid quince marmalade and sharp white cheese on semi-sweet crackers. There may be a better way to end a meal, but I have yet to meet it.

**Recommended Wine:** Dow Boardroom Finest Tawny Port, Oporto. \$17.

**P.S.:** Who was the first person to use the term TAWNY in literature? Charles Dickens, in 1844!

[Fred McMillin, veteran contributor to our *Newsletter*, has taught wine history for thirty years, and conducts regular wine tasting sessions. He is Northern California Editor for *American Wine on the Web*. - Ed.]

## From CARD CATALOGUE to COMPUTER:

### *Organizing Our Collections*

by Gail Unzelman



Eight years before the present-day age of computers and data base files, I collected wine books. Being admittedly a compulsive organizer, I catalogued the books from the very first: 3 x 5 index cards, housed in an old four-drawer, oak cabinet worked just fine.

But over the years the collection grew and home computers came onto the scene. It was soon obvious that a computerized catalogue would be beneficial. It was a simple, but time consuming, matter to transfer the data on the index cards to the computer data base.

The original, basic format has been revised several times; each revision has provided additional informational categories for easier access and use of the books. The computer did not seem to mind this intrusion and gladly accepted the new sub-categories.

It must be understood that I am a barely-literate, unadventurous computer user who is completely content with a basic computer knowledge that satisfies my needs. I enjoy and appreciate—and use—the organizational ability of a computer data base, but I would never give up my 3 x 5 card catalogue.

The data-base software that I use in my IBM type machine is Professional File 2.0 (now almost ten years old, for goodness sake!). I am sure there are newer, better programs than my old reliable; I hope that Tendrils with more computer savvy will write and enlighten.

For each book record, I have the following fields: Author (Last, First, Middle)  
Title (Full)  
Short Title (used mainly for making lists)  
Date Published; Publisher; Place  
Edition; # of Pages  
Date Purchased; Source  
Cost; Present Value.

Following this basic bibliographical information, I have 25 "descriptive" categories that allow me to catalogue the books by subject and language, with notes on rarity and provenance. These categories are:


- Limitation (ltd/numbered copies, rarity noted)
- Provenance (inscriptions/bookplates)
- Fine Press
- Language
- USA Publication
- Bordeaux; Burgundy; California; Champagne;

- Italy; Port; Sherry/Madeira; Australia
- Distillation/Brandy
- Grape Diseases
- History
- Medical (wine & health)
- Bibliography
- Ampelography
- Wine Antiques/Art
- Cooperage/Equipment
- Fiction
- Toasts/Quotes
- Temperance/Prohibition
- Additional Notes (very brief).

Using this cataloguing system, I can sort and generate lists of the wine books in almost any number of ways, e.g.: Pre-1900 books on Port; Books printed in Italian; Phylloxera; Notable bookplates; Books purchased in any given year (with cost, value, book-seller included in wanted); Fine Press books; etc.etc.

But my primary source of ready reference is the card catalogue (filed by author). On the card front, along with the basic publishing and purchasing information, I enter a detailed description of the book: size, binding, condition, inscription or bookplate identification, etc. On the rear of the card are listed all known bibliographic references to the book, biographical information about the author, distinguishing notes about the book ("first book in English on wine"), and notations of prices quoted in booksellers and auction catalogues.

I realize that I could, of course, include all of this informational material in the computer record and do away with the card file. But, I thoroughly enjoy the easy access of the card catalogue—and its antique cabinet. The brass-pull drawers open effortlessly—my computer is not always on!

I look forward to hearing how other members keep track of their collections ... and I would love to know if there is a simpler way to do this. 



# FOUNTAIN GROVE WINE NEWS

Lay, Clarke & Co.

Vol. I. No. 3.

SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA & 62 VESEY ST., NEW YORK.

May, 1889.

## WINES AT 62 VESEY ST.

In our efforts to bring prominently before the buyers of fine table wines in New York the distinguished products of the Fountaingrove Vineyards, we have met with appreciative results entirely to our satisfaction, and for which we beg to express our hearty thanks to the Public, which honors us with an ever-increasing patronage.

In these pages will be found brief mention of this great Viticultural Enterprise, with illustrations of the Fountaingrove Winery and Business Residence; and appended a descriptive list of offerings for 1889, both of wines of old and approved standards and of new and special blends and combinations, which in our judgment will prove eminently acceptable, alike in price, quality, refreshing and agreeable character and tonic value.

We have just concluded arrangements with the Union Pacific Railroad, by which consignments from the Winery at Fountaingrove will be forwarded in refrigerator cars; thus preventing the deterioration which occurs to the more

## FOUNTAIN GROVE WINES, AT HOME AND ABROAD.

The Vintage of 1888 at Fountaingrove has proved to be equal to the superior vintages of former seasons. Its result is 225,000 gallons; all of high class Mountain Wines. The Burgundies, Clarets and Champagnes promise an unusual excellence.

We are supplying our Patrons for the present year from a stock of nearly 200,000 gallons, aged and matured wines, strictly of our own vintages, carefully handled in our Winery, at our Cellars in New York, or in Bonded Warehouse at Liverpool and Glasgow, Great Britain.

The Fountaingrove Vineyards are represented in Great Britain by Arthur A. Cuthbert Esq., Liverpool, who is authorised to make concessions to dealers for their sale of these wines.

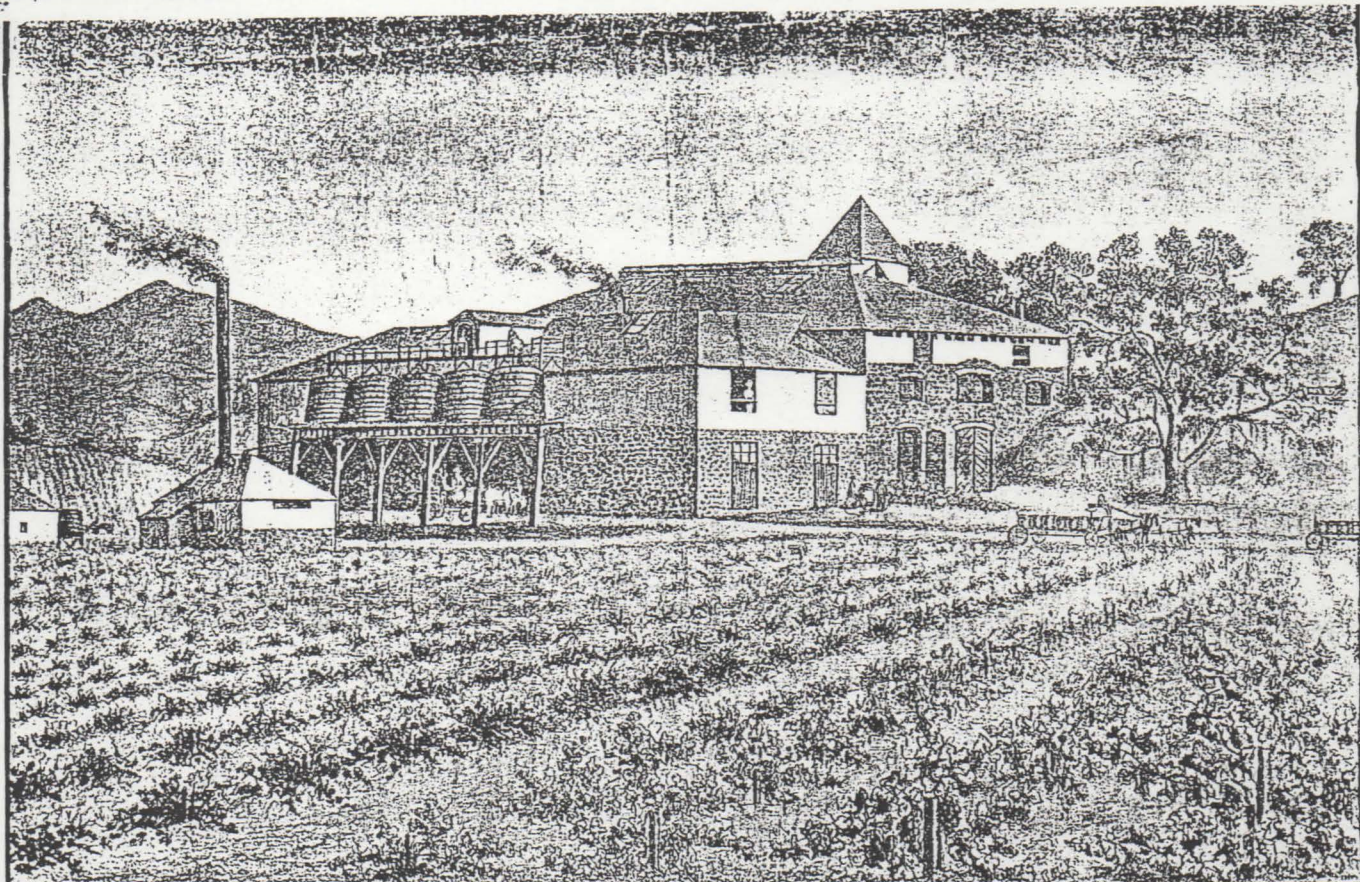
Messrs. C. W. Pearce, London; Savage and Co., Liverpool; and Green and Son, Boroughbridge, Yorkshire, deal in the Fountaingrove Wines exclusively. The old and distin-

ter, will also from present date make these wines a prominent feature in their trade. Messrs. McNish and Son, Glasgow, are engaged in their exclusive sale in Scotland.

Our vintages since their introduction in Great Britain have been welcomed, especially by the Medical Faculty and Journals, as pure, sound, abounding in the eminent vinous qualities, and possessed of remarkable hygienic values. Physicians of the highest distinction in New York, in the Middle and Western States and on the Pacific Coast, offer unsolicited testimonials to their beneficial advantages, both for the service of invalids and for table use.

Our Red Wines, submitted to Authorised Experts for comparison with valued and strictly genuine French Burgundies, have met this critical test with honor, and won the distinction of positive superiority.

It is an object of prime importance with us to maintain the established reputation of the Fountaingrove Wines, and to guard their patrons against imitations. Hence we make a point of supplying only such Firms in the Trade as are of



FOUNTAIN GROVE VINEYARDS

WINERY

NORTH VIEW