

# the WAYWARD TENDRILS Newsletter

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## WINE WRITING: MORE Means DIFFERENT — and SOMETIMES WORSE

by *Nicholas Faith*

*[This essay originally appeared in Wine Perspectives, a 1987 advertising booklet of the British publishing firm, Mitchell Beazley. Nicholas Faith began his writing career as a financial journalist and is the author of several notable books on wine, including The Winemasters (1978), Château Margaux (1980), Victorian Vineyard: Château Loudenne and the Gilbeys (1983), Pocket Guide to Cognac & other Brandies (1987), and Latour (1991). His comments can be read with interest today, and we appreciate his permission to reprint them. - Ed.]*



GIVEN HOW MUCH THERE IS of it about, it is surprising that writing about wine has been a professional business for only a relatively few years. That's not to say there wasn't any wine writing before every paper and magazine felt obliged to offer advice on the

subject. Yet, obviously, the ability to earn your living depends on the size of the audience. And the recent growth in regular wine buying (and only regular buyers will want advice enough to read about the subject) started from a tiny base.

This is not just a British phenomenon. The French had virtually no tradition of writing about wine at all until very recently — in 1960 Roger Dion had to dig into his own pocket to finance the publication of his great book *L'Histoire de la Vigne et du Vin en France*. They naturally produced a great many technical works on cultivating the vines and making the wine, but works aimed at the general public were (and largely are) confined to tastes and tasting. The French, like the Americans, lack that body of general wine literature involving history, geology, viticulture and honest, dispassionate

opinions that are the chief glory of British wine writing.

Unfortunately the very growth of "professional" wine writers here may have stunted wine writing itself. For "professional" in this sense does not necessarily mean being good at your job but simply depending on it for your living, not the same thing at all.

Unfortunately, too, the vast majority of the readers of wine columns (and, alas, wine books) are interested only in well-presented, crisply written information and advice. They are not interested in the story of wines, how they came about, how they're made, the remarkable personalities behind each bottle. It is as though travel writing, another genre traditionally dominated by British writers, had been confused with guide books. There is obviously a need for both. When I went around Yugoslavia, my head deep in Rebecca West's masterpiece about the country, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, I knew jolly well I needed a guide book as well.

*"... the British owe their incomparable heritage of fine writing about fine wines to a long line of...wine merchants..."*

It would be tragic if we failed to admit the need for both types of writing, for the British owe their incomparable heritage of fine writing about fine wines to a long line of "amateurs," wine merchants

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and connoisseurs, with the former making far and away the greatest contribution. Neither group, of course, depended on its scribbles for its living. That's not to say they weren't scholarly in their approach. The real pioneers were a handful of Victorian wine merchants, notably Cyrus Redding and Charles Tovey, who were providing guidance to the bewildering multiplicity of wines already available to British drinkers. Today's wine writers owe a great debt of gratitude to these merchants. They wrote vigorously and clearly, and their opinions (and their facts) are still invaluable. So are those of the nearest to a professional wine writer in Victorian times, Charles Dickens' friend Henry Vizetelly, who wrote splendid (and beautifully produced) books, most notably on Champagne. But he was primarily a general journalist, and his wine writings came second to his prodigious output of books and articles on other subjects.

The second — and to me rather nefarious — tradition was set by Professor George Saintsbury, the patron saint of wine bores. His own compilation, *Notes on a Cellar-Book*, remains a delightful browse, but unfortunately became a model for many other, less tolerant, less all-embracing talents. Saintsbury himself was an enthusiast, able to convey his likes and dislikes over a wide range of alcoholic beverages, quite prepared to discuss such esoteric subjects as Spanish cider with some seriousness. His successors, such as the Irish barrister Maurice Healy, H. Warner Allen and the journalist Morton Shand, largely confined themselves to a handful of great wine-growing areas, above all Bordeaux. Unfortunately, too, their styles were somewhat florid, and what Cyril Ray, that superb journalist-turned-wine-writer, called the Baroque School of wine writing transformed wine drinking itself into so pretentious an affair that whole generations were deterred from taking the subject seriously.

But it was André Simon who cast his spell over the entire wine business for the first 65 years of this century. His long life divides into two: the nearly 30 years during which he represented the then-great house of Pommery & Greno; and the even longer period after 1932, when he was sacked by the head of the firm, the ineffable Marquis Melchior de Polignac.

While with Pommery, Simon produced a number of scholarly works including a history of the champagne trade in Britain and, even more important, the only attempt ever made at a history of the wine trade in this country (unbelievably, despite the ever-growing interest in the subject, no one has ever attempted to bring Simon's work, which fades out in the 18th century, up to date). But after 1932 he had to live off his wits. He founded the Wine &

Food Society, but relied largely on his writings, which inevitably became thinner and more repetitive in his old age (he was over 50 when he was sacked, and dominated the wine writing scene until he died in 1970).

At the time, his only competition came from Saintsbury's disciples. As a result the best books of the inter-War years were written by two wine merchants. Charles Walter Berry's accounts of his travels *In Search of Wine* (1935) were straightforward and well-written — although he could have written a much more fascinating book on his family firm, Berry Bros. & Rudd. And another wine merchant, Ian Maxwell Campbell, provided us with a splendid evocation of the world of the Chartrons in Bordeaux, its delights rather hidden by the coyness of its title, *Wayward Tendrils of the Vine* (1947).

A new strain emerged immediately after the war with Raymond Postgate's Good Food Guides. Postgate was more interested in wine than food, and was the true pioneer of consumer guidance to wine drinking. He was that rarest of animals, a British socialist unashamedly interested in wine.

*"... the first serious wine critic  
ever employed by a national paper."*

But it was the sacking of another fifty-year-old — this time Eddie Penning-Rowell, formerly managing director of a by-no-means unsuccessful publishing company — that marks the start of the modern era of more professional wine writing. Eddie was first hired by the editor of *Country Life*; then, in 1964, he was taken on by John Higgins, himself a notable wine lover, to write a regular wine column for the *Financial Times*. Eddie immediately established himself as the first serious wine critic ever employed by a national paper. He combines a deep love of wine with total outspokenness (whenever two or more wine writers are gathered together they invariably swap the latest "Eddieism") and a ferocious integrity.

None of these virtues would have been adequate without an enormous depth of knowledge and an articulate pen. His *Wines of Bordeaux* (the first edition in 1970, the fifth in 1985) managed to combine what I would call the "guide book" tradition

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with considerable insight into the history behind Bordeaux's wines. Without such insight, even a guide book is really rather pointless, an aid to those not truly interested in the subject, but merely trying to keep abreast of a fashionable social trend.

*"... there is room for every type of wine writing, apart from the semi-literate listing of different vintages."*

This is not to be exclusivist, for there is room for every type of wine writing, apart from the semi-literate listing of different vintages. The past couple of decades have witnessed some extraordinary achievements. The first, of course, was Hugh Johnson's *World Atlas of Wine* (1971) which, literally, transformed the world's perceptions of wines almost overnight. The second was that marvelous book by Burton Anderson, *Vino* (1980) which, miraculously, managed to combine a love and understanding of Italian wines with an equal appreciation of the individual wine-makers (who in Italy, more than any other country, matter far more than the descriptions on the labels).

Moreover, one old tradition has continued. The Master of Wine examination obviously includes an element of fluency in expression (and also, I suspect, of showmanship), and many a newly qualified MW assumes that the magic letters make him or her a writer as well as an authority on wine. It's not necessarily true, even though the merchant-writer still flourishes, as witness the two excellent recent books, *Life Beyond Lambrusco* (1985) by Nick Belfrage and *Anatomy of the Wine Trade* (1985) by Simon Loftus. Indeed, because MWs have mastered the making and tasting of wine they can, at their best, take these for granted and look at the subject more broadly.

But the every-MW-is-a-writer assumption also helps to blur the distinction between knowing about wine and writing about it, and in the past the strength of the association between wine merchants and wine writing was that not every merchant felt he was equipped to put pen to paper.

"He was" equipped, the male usage, reveals another, and this time wholly welcome, revolution: the present superiority of women (in numbers anyway) in the wine-writing business. It is difficult to convey to the mass of well-equipped, confident, successful young women wine writers just how lucky they are, how much they owe to pioneers, notably Pamela Van Dyke Price, who were treated very much as second-class citizens even twenty years ago. The upper-class chaps who then dominated the wine trade were, as a class, misogynists, wanting to keep women in their place.

The women were lucky as well as clever. Wine writing was not then a highly regarded business, so the women, were, in general, simply brighter and more articulate than their male counterparts. They also brought to the business a sense of the importance of looking at wine and food together.

So, there is richness in the mix, room for everything from guide books (of which, possibly, we have too many) to writing about wine for its own sake, without mentioning the price or the availability of the wines discussed — a genre which, alas, has almost disappeared. 🍷



NEWS  
& NOTES



With joy we **Welcome!** our new members: **Anne Dickerson Lind** (California), **Robert H. Smith** (Connecticut), **Michael Channing** (California) and from Japan, **Shigeru Kai**. See the enclosed updated **1998 Wayward Tendrils Roster** for new and old member information.

With great sadness we announce the recent loss of two special wine friends, **Roy Brady** (1918-1998) and **Maynard Amerine** (1911-1998). Their contributions to the literature of wine, and its collection development, are almost immeasurable. (See personal appreciations following.)

#### A CATALOG OF CHILEAN WINES

■ Three inscribed copies of the 1997, 3rd edition of this 68-page informative catalog/book, written by Thomas McDermott, Gerwin Neumann, and Tendril **Michael Amorose** (extraordinary educational missionary of wine), have been generously donated by Michael to be awarded to the winners of our "QUOTABLE QUIZ" contest in this issue! Privately published in a limited supply and not readily available, the book is chock-full of wine ratings (by variety) and first-hand information on the wineries. Many of these Chilean wines are now being distributed world-wide and are true values. But, fair warning, we have only three copies of the book for the first three winners!

#### NEW ZEALAND WINE BOOK

■ Lucky **Joseph Lynch** recently visited the beautiful wine country of New Zealand and sends word of a recommended publication, *Te Mata: The First Hundred Years* (1997, written by Keith Stewart), celebrating the centennial anniversary of



this premium wine estate. Joe added that John Buck, Te Mata's owner, was a most gracious host whose wines are now available in the U.S. Copies of this full-color, glossy, soft-covered book can be ordered from the publisher, Godwit Publishing Ltd., P. O. Box 34-683, Birkenhead, Auckland, New Zealand.

#### RARE WORK ON TOKAY REISSUED

■ Possibly one of the rarest and most important writings in the English language on Tokay, the unique Hungarian sweet wine, is "An Account of the Tokay and other Wines of Hungary" written by Sylvester Douglass and published in the 1773 *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*. It was this 11-page essay that provided Sir Edward Barry with most of what he wrote about Tokay in his classic 18th century wine book, *Observations . . . on the Wines of the Ancients* (1775). A limited edition of 100 hand-numbered, soft bound copies of this rare essay has been reprinted by Mannie Berk and his Rare Wine Company, and are available for \$12.50 each. 1-800-999-4342

#### Underground Wine Journal DISCOUNT

■ Tendril member, Christine Graham, publisher of *The Underground Wine Journal* - "The Independent and Definitive Guide to the World's Finest Wines and Spirits and Much More!," is offering a special discount-subscription rate to all Wayward Tendril members. Regularly \$48/year for six issues, Tendrils can sign up for a new one-year subscription for \$36. Contact Christine ☎ 626-441-6617 or fax 626-441-6765.

#### PUBLISHER WANTED!

■ London Tendril member and noted wine author, Jeffrey Benson (*Sauternes: A Study of the Great Sweet White Wines of Bordeaux*, 1979; *The Wines of Saint-Émilion and Pomerol*, 1983, both co-authored with Alastair MacKenzie), has ready for publication a revised edition of *Saint-Émilion*, but is having bad luck in finding a publisher. Perhaps a Wayward Tendril member might have knowledge of a party interested in such a project? Jeffrey would appreciate all thoughts and suggestions, and can be reached at ☎ 0181-673-4439 or fax 0181-675-5543.

#### "ENOPHILATELY"

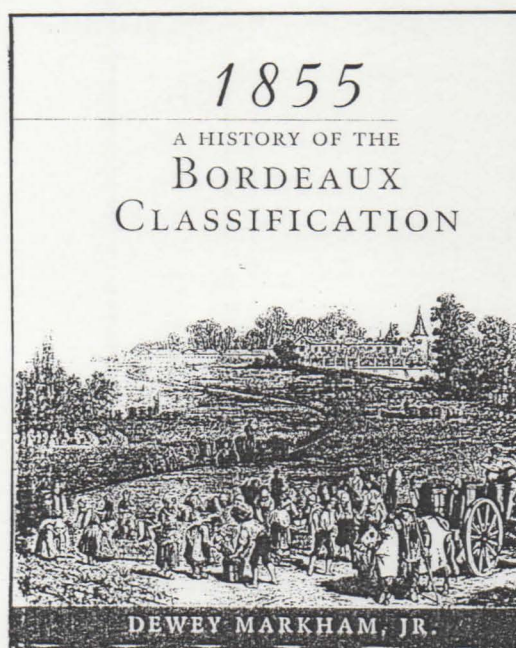
■ Chris Wirth, Research Director at the Wine Institute in San Francisco, sends news of two very interesting articles that he recommends to Tendril members. In the Nov/Dec 1997 issue of *Wine East* is a great article, "Enophilately" by James Crum, on collecting postage stamps with wine-related images. Here's another exciting printed-wine-collecting area

for us to explore! The other article (in the Spring 1998 issue of the *Newsletter of the Friends of the Bancroft Library*) is a scholarly look at "The Digital Scriptorium" where, with "new-fangled technology," ancient manuscripts can be studied on the Internet. A truly amazing concept! The Digital Scriptorium's web site address is: [sunsite.berkeley.edu/Scriptorium](http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/Scriptorium).

#### 1855 CLASSIFICATION:

##### The MYTH & The FACTS

■ In our January 1998 *Newsletter*, Marts Beekley gave us a pre-publication profile and interview with Dewey Markham, Jr., the author of the recently published *1855: A History of the Bordeaux Classification* (in French, *1855: Histoire d'un Classement des Vins de Bordeaux*) [New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1998, 535 pp; Paris / Bordeaux: Féret]. Now, with apologies for an over-crowded schedule that did not permit time for an intended full review of the book for our *Newsletter*, Tendril Gérard Crochet, professor at the Lycée Agricole et Viticole in Bordeaux and friend of the author, kindly sent along a few words (biased as they may be, he warns) about Dewey Markham's new book: "In two words, let us say that it is not intended to be a polemical piece of writing; there are no extraordinary revelations. This is maybe the disappointment about the book! No trial in sight, no headline in tabloids, no material for a talk show on TV!. Who wants to write such a book nowadays? Its immense merit lies in the fact that Dewey has unambiguously and once and for all written the true story and facts about this mythical classification.



*1855: A Classification* is going to be the reference



book on the subject. From now on, nothing can be written without mention of this publication. As an archeologist, he has un-earthed all available first-hand informations, brushed them clean of all the dust accumulated over the years through hearsay, and here they lie on display for everybody to contemplate. No one can complain about that!" With his letter, Gérard enclosed the following brief review of 1855 which appeared (in English) in the prestigious French wine quarterly, *L'Amateur de Bordeaux*, published by Nicholas Faith. Faith writes, "So what did happen in 1855? It took a young American historian and wine-lover, Dewey Markham, to explore so quintessentially French a subject. He discovered that the whole process was a great muddle, the accidental by-product of the 1855 Exhibition, so much so that the wines were displayed in an annex devoted to preserved foods. The choice was imposed by the Bordeaux trade, anxious to recover from the chaos of the previous few years, when the old order - reinforced in the classification - had largely broken down, at a time when the French bourgeoisie was aching for order to be reestablished after the revolution of 1848. Markham brings to light the strenuous, albeit ultimately unsuccessful, efforts made by the improbably-named Monplaisir Goudal of Lafite to establish his estate's independence from the trade. He also shows how what had originally been conceived as simply one classification amongst many others, was transformed into the monument we know today. Finally, and amusingly, he shows how Madame Villeneuve of Cantemerle managed to ensure that her wine was included in the classification after the Exhibition."

[Dec '97 issue, which also contains a lengthy review in French. Our sincere thanks to Nicholas Faith for allowing us to reprint his review. Contact him at 22 rue des Reculettes, 75013 Paris; fax 01 43 31 41 15 for subscription information. -Ed.]

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### DUPLICATES! DUPLICATES!!

■ **Christopher Fielden** has available for exchange: Rozier, François. *Mémoire sur la meilleure manière de faire et de gouverner les vins*. Paris, 1770. In original wrappers, rather frayed.  
Béguillet, Edmé. *Nouveau Traité de la Vigne*. 3rd.ed. Dijon, 1773.  
Stehlin, Paul et al. *La Route du Vin - Alsace*. Paris, 1966. #1030/3500, in slipcase.  
Klein, G. *L'Art du Vignoble Alsacien*. Garnier, 1979. In slipcase.

■ **Linda Walker Stevens** offers these duplicates: Lamb & Mittelberger. *In Celebration of Wine and Life*, p.b.  
Schoenman, Theodore. *The Father of California Wine: Agoston Haraszthy*.  
Munson, T.V. *Foundations of American Grape Culture*. As new, leatherette bound.  
U.S.D.A. *Patent Office Report*, 1860. Also, *Report for the Year 1904*, and ...*for the Year 1925*.

■ **Charles Sullivan** has duplicate numbers of several issues of the *American Journal of Enology & Viticulture* and is happy to send them to the first Tendril who wants them for the shipping cost. There are 61 numbers total, some duplicates, from 1960 to 1988, but are most heavily concentrated in the period 1965 to 1972. Most are in excellent condition, but a few copies have tell-tale marks of wine-lab splashing.

■ **Joseph Lynch** has a five-page list of duplicates, hard-bound and paper-bound, mostly 20th century titles and a few 19th century. Contact him for a copy of the complete list. Here are a few:  
Adams, Leon. *The Wines of America*. sev.eds.  
Allen, H. Warner. *Natural Red Wines*. (other titles).  
Boswell, Peyton. *Wine Maker's Manual*.  
Churchill, Creighton. *The World of Wine*.  
Fadiman, C. *Dionysus*.  
Halasz, Zoltar. *Hungarian Wine*.  
Hedrick, U.P. *Grapes & Wine from Home Vineyards*.  
Johnson, Hugh. (several titles, editions).  
Rainbird, George. *Sherry & the Wines of Spain*.  
Ray, Cyril. *Compleat Imbibers* #1, #3, #5, #16.  
Rogers, J.R. *Wines of Bordeaux*.  
Schoonmaker, Frank. (several titles, eds.)  
Seltman, Chas. *Wine in the Ancient World*.  
Simon, André. *Wine & the Wine Trade*, 1934.  
Simon, André. *A Wine Primer*. (other titles).  
Teiser & Harroun. *Winemaking in California*.  
Thompson, Bob. *Notes on a Calif. Cellarbook*.  
Thompson, Bob. *California Wines*. (other titles).  
Warner, Chas. *Winegrowers of France...since 1875*.  
Waugh, Alex. *In Praise of Wine*.  
Waugh, Harry. *Diary of a Winetaster*.

### WANTED, PLEASE!!

■ **Fred McMillin** is looking for Schoonmaker. He has *American Wines* and *Encyclopedia*, but would like copies of any other titles, in any condition.  
■ **Charles (Chuck) Barr** would like all titles by Frederick Bioletti, U.P. Hedrick, and Chas. Wetmore. He also needs a copy of Idwal Jones' *The Vineyard*.

[NOTE: See your 1998 Roster for contact information for all Tendrils.]



# An APPRECIATION and REMEMBRANCE of MAYNARD A. AMERINE [1911 - 1998]

by Axel Borg

**AN APPRECIATION:** On September 14th, 1991, the room in Shields Library housing the grape growing and wine making collection was named in honor of Dr. Maynard Andrew Amerine, Professor Emeritus of Viticulture and Enology at the University of California, Davis.

Dr. Amerine was an acknowledged authority on both the cultural and technical aspects of grape growing and wine making. Over the last half century, he made the most singularly significant contributions of any one individual to the California wine industry. His accomplishments have been a major factor in California wines gaining their present status in the world community.

Born in San Jose, California, on October 30, 1911, Dr. Amerine was raised in the San Joaquin Valley near the town of Modesto. He completed his bachelor of science degree at the University of California, Berkeley in 1932. Prior to completion of his Ph.D. in 1935, Dr. Amerine was hired by Dr. Albert J. Winkler to work in the newly formed Department of Viticulture and Enology at U.C. Davis, created to give assistance to the California wine industry, which was just recovering from the restrictions of prohibition. He was appointed full professor in 1952 and was chair of the department from 1957 to 1962.

Dr. Amerine was initially engaged to explore the question of which grape varieties were best suited to the wide range of climatic conditions in California. The results of this work were published in the journal *Hilgardia* in 1944. Over time, the determination of grape growing regions and the adoption of recommended varieties resulted in a significant improvement in the quality of grapes grown for wine production and a corresponding improvement in the quality of California wine. Another major work, *Wines: Their Sensory Evaluation*, co-authored in 1976 with mathematician Edward B. Roessler, initiated the objective study of taste analysis. Dr. Amerine, a prolific scholar, had an extensive publication record which continued until just before his death, over twenty-five years after his retirement.

Dr. Amerine is recognized as an outstanding teacher and he has left a legacy to the state of California and the world through the hundreds of students he has trained who have become wine makers and grape growers.

One of Dr. Amerine's most important contributions to the Shields Library has been his

enduring interest in the viticulture and enology collection and his dedication to its excellence. In 1972, he donated to Peter J. Shields Library his personal collection of over 3,000 books and pamphlets, many of which are rare and significant works on grape growing and wine making.

In 1951, Dr. Amerine co-authored a *Check List of Books and Pamphlets on Grapes and Wine and Related Subjects* with Louise B. Wheeler, a librarian at Shields Library. His most recent book, *A Bibliography on Grapes, Wines, other Alcoholic Beverages, and Temperance: Works Published in the United States before 1901* (1996), was also co-authored with a Shields Library librarian, Axel E. Borg. With his vast knowledge of the literature, he has also generously continued to assist librarians responsible for the subject areas of grapes and wine.

Dr. Amerine was a distinguished scientist and scholar, a remarkable teacher, a prolific author, and an accomplished bibliographer. He died on March 11, 1998.

**A REMEMBRANCE:** Maynard Amerine was a mentor, a teacher who took the time to also be a friend. He felt strongly that the Wine Bibliographer of a collection that was essentially his creation know as much as possible about the issues involved in the subject areas of grapes and wine as the books themselves. Not only did he advise me about the books and journals to be added to the collection, he took the time to teach me about the issues involved. I remember getting an hour-long lecture on relative resistance in terms of phylloxera; on another occasion he explained the various 'political issues' involved in the neo-prohibition movement, and on still another visit to the library we spent over an hour discussing the various histories of wine in California.

Maynard was a bibliographer that would put most librarians to shame. He knew more about the intricacies of card catalogs, indexes and bibliographies than most librarians of the 'old school' and certainly all of the librarians of today's on-line catalogs and automated indexes. He knew that knowledge predated that what is on computers and for that reason his bibliographies, both in his books and those published separately, are invaluable to the scholar, book collector and eno-bibliophile.

Maynard was a bibliophile who appreciated books; however, he did not feel that the book was inviolate. His marginal notes, scattered throughout his books are wonderful to read. I feel perhaps, that he did not intend anyone else to see the notes, because the kindness that he showed when critiquing others was not present. In other words, his notes were blunt and to the point.

Maynard was very concerned about people,



people that worked in the library, people that worked in the Department of Viticulture and Enology, and people that had worked for him or been associated with him. He took the time to remember people and to inquire about them. When my daughter was born, he sent her a copy of his little book on California Wine (Wines of the World Pocket Library series, edited by André Simon, 1951). I hope that someday she will have the sense of books, history and wine to truly appreciate the magnitude of his gift.

Maynard's greatest gift to me was his time and intellect, something that I will always treasure and hopefully always use.

*[Axel Borg has been the Wine Bibliographer at the Shields Library, U.C. Davis since 1988. He earned his undergraduate degree in Ancient & Medieval History from Pomona College (where he took an expository writing class from Tom Pinney), and his Masters of Library Science from U.C. Berkeley. Descended from a fifth generation California family, Axel has a deep interest in California history, particularly its agricultural and printing past. Ed.]*

### A Medical Friend of Wine Salutes Dr. MAYNARD A. AMERINE

by Paul Scholten, M.D.

Dr. Maynard A. Amerine, a long-time honorary member of the Society of Medical Friends of Wine (San Francisco) and a giant in the California wine industry, died at 87 years of age on March 11, 1998. When Leon Adams and twelve local physicians founded the Medical Friends in 1939, Dr. Amerine aided them to make connections with the wine industry and to set the form of the Society's meetings. He addressed the Society on scientific subjects on four occasions, the last at the 40th Anniversary meeting in 1979.

Dr. Amerine grew up in Modesto and went to school with the Gallo brothers, Ernest and Julio. He received his Ph.D. in grape science from the University of California, Berkeley, and in 1935 became the first wine researcher at U.C., Davis. Prohibition had just ended and California wines ranged from ordinary to awful. If one man can be said to have revived the wine industry and made California one of the world's fine wine areas, it was Maynard Amerine through his research, teaching and writings. He was the author of sixteen books and over 400 scientific papers; his work is still used as text books by viticulture schools and vintners world wide. He measured the effect of climate on

different varieties of grapes and with Dr. Albert Winkler divided California into five regions and a number of micro-climates depending on the number of degree-hours that the sun shone during the growing season. This "region" system has been invaluable in showing which premium grapes will best produce in a certain area, and has been adapted all over the world. He researched sensory perception in relation to taste and smell and was the co-author of the definitive book on the subject.

Dr. Amerine's advice was sought by foreign governments desirous of improving their wine industries, and he surveyed and advised the vintners of Algeria, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Japan, New Zealand, Russia, South Africa and Yugoslavia.

*[Tendril Paul Scholten—San Francisco physician, long-time member and historian of the Society of Medical Friends of Wine, and well-known figure in numerous wine and food circles—has published over two hundred articles on medicine, wine, food, travel, history, politics, apiculture and Sherlock Holmes. If you want to know where to have a fine meal in the S.F. Bay area (or anywhere else!), Paul is the man to ask. - Ed]*



### ENOLOGY, OENOLOGY or ÆNOLOGY

by

Maynard A. Amerine



ictionaries are not very consistent in their spelling of *enology*. Webster's Second New International (1934) and New Collegiate (1951) used *oenology*, *oenological*, and *oenologist*. Webster's Third (1961) gives *oenology* only as a variant of *enology*. *Enology* is the only word of this derivation, however, which it defines with this spelling. Inconsistently, it then lists

"oenologist 1: fermentologist 2: one versed in enology." It also includes *oenophile* and *oneophilist* (a connoisseur of wine) and *oenotherapy* (use of wine for therapeutic purposes).

On the other hand, the 1933 edition of the Oxford English Dictionary used the diphthong *æ* and



defined *œnology*, *œnological*, *œnomancy* (divination by means of wine), *œnomania* (either a mania for wine or other intoxicating drink or a mania resulting from intoxication), *œnomaniac* (the person suffering from the same), *œnometer* (a hydrometer for measuring alcoholic strength), *œnophilist*, *œnophobist* (one who has a dread of, or aversion to, wine) and *œnopoetic* (pertaining to wine).

*"Thudichum was called 'our medical œnologist in 1865' . . ."*

The New Oxford gives the first use of *oinological* as 1824 in an article by O'Doherty in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine:<sup>2</sup> " . . . the awful ignorance which most men manifest whenever the different branches of oinological science happen to be tabled in the common course of Christian conversation." In *The School of Good Living* in 1814, "œnology of British wines" is used and "oi" spelling seems to have disappeared. Thudichum was called "our medical œnologist" in 1865 in the London magazine The Saturday Review, and he used *œnological* and *œnopoetic* in his 1894 book on wines. Thackeray in *The Virginian* called himself a "modest œnophilist" in 1859. And in 1867 Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine in a fine but unsigned article entitled "Intemperance and Intolerance" castigated "the English and American oinophobists."<sup>3</sup> Gaule in his book *Magastrom* in 1652 had defined oinomancy as divining by wine. *œnomancy* was used by Brande in his *Dictionary of Science, Literature and Art* in 1842,<sup>4</sup> and Webster's Supplement of 1880 lists *œnomania*. J. Miller in a book on alcohol written in 1857 reports "a lady who had become a frightful oinomaniac," but the actual use of the word is inferred. The first direct use apparently was in the third edition of Bucknill and Tuck's *Manual of Psychological Medicine* in 1874.

The New Oxford notes that *œno* is the combining form of *oinos* or wine and that it is "used in a few scientific and quasi-scientific compounds of rare occurrence." For *enology* in the New Oxford the reader is referred to *œnology*. The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English in its third edition in 1934, as in its earlier versions, did not consider any of these words of sufficient value to list!

Funk & Wagnall's New Standard Dictionary (1946) used only *enology*, *enological*, and *enologist*. Their 1908 edition gave only *enology*, but listed *œnology* as an alternative spelling. Inconsistently it then defined *œnological*, *œnomancy*, *œnomania*, *œnometer*, *œnophilist* ("one who is too fond of wine; a wine bibber") and *œnophlygia* (intoxication, drunkenness, drunken apoplexy). The 1923 edition continued these and added *œnophobist*.

As late as the fifteenth edition of Cassell's New English Dictionary in 1949 the spelling remained *œnology*, *œnologist*, etc., obviously influenced by the practice of The Oxford English Dictionary.

In other languages F. Helbach published *Oenographia, Weinkeller oder Kunstbuch vom Wein* in 1607; L. Meyssonier his *Oenologie, ou discours du vin* in 1636; H. Guarinonius *Hydroœnogramia triumphants, seu aquae vinique* in 1640; and J. H. Mulphinius *Oeno-logia id est Vini dissertation* in 1667. Many French books using *œnologie* were published in the nineteenth century.

The 1831 edition of Samuel Johnson's Dictionary of the English Language listed neither *enology* nor *œnology*, but Bailey's Universal Etymological English Dictionary of 1724 admitted *œnopolist*, "a vintner."<sup>5</sup>

*"The etymology of these words is clear enough . . ."*

The etymology of these words is clear enough: the Greek *oinos* or wine and *logis* or knowledge. In the 19th century, as English spelling began to be simplified, the ligatures *œ* and *æ* were simplified to *oe* or *ae* or simply to *e* alone. Thus *œconomics* became *oeconomics*, and later *economics*, and *œcology* evolved to *oecology* and then to *ecology*.

In France the ligature has been retained in a few words, and specifically in *œnologie*. It has been dropped in Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. In Great Britain the *oe* has been retained in many words. In this country the Manual of Style of the University of Chicago Press of 1904 led the way in simplifying the spelling of many words. Apparently Charles Mills Gayley, who was Professor of English at the University of California at Berkeley and a member of the Editorial Committee, recommended many of these new spellings to the University Press. Certainly *œnology* and *œnology* were not used at the University of California. That institution seems first to have printed *enology* in an official publication in the Register for 1904-1905. Here Edmund H. Twight has the title of Lecturer in Zymology and Enology, "vinification and the manufacture of grape products, including unfermented grape juice [!], sparkling wines, etc." Following Repeal the word was again used officially in titles, for courses, and for a building at the University of California at Davis. After World War II the American Society of Enologists was organized and the word has been generally accepted.

With the simplification of the diphthong *œ* to *e* now nearly universal, there can be little justification for *œnology*, still less for *œnology*. The definitions of *enology*, *enological*, and *enologist* are clear enough and their use common enough to justify



inclusion in even abridged dictionaries. *Enomania*, *enomaniac*, *enotherapy*, *enometer*, *enophobist* and *enophilist* (and *enophile*) appear to have very limited utility although *enophilist* might often be usefully employed. *Enophylgia*, *enopoetic*, *enomel* (a mixture of honey and wine), and *enopolist* are probably obsolete and may well be allowed to stay that way.

1. *Fermentologist* sounds like a coined Americanism.
2. The article was a sixteen-page review of Alexander Henderson's famous book *The History of Ancient and Modern Wines*. Odoherly recommended that the reader might drink right through the book!
3. "Moses and Mohammed forbade pork . . . while the English and American oinophobists set Moses and Mohammed at defiance . . . These people are as tolerant as inquisitors."
4. "A mode of divination among the Greeks, from the colour, sound, etc. of the wine poured out in libations." The *Century Dictionary* of 1913 defined *œnomancy* in almost identical wording.
5. *Vintner* is correctly defined here as "a Seller of Wine, or Tavern-Keeper" from the Italian *vinatiere* and the Latin *vinarius*. In California *Vintner* is frequently used incorrectly for a wine producer. Ash in his *New and Complete Dictionary of the English Language* of 1775 also lists *œnopolist*.

[This studious essay by the distinguished Dr. Amerine is reprinted from *Wine & Food: A Gastronomical Quarterly* (No.122, Summer 1964), with the kind permission of the Wine & Food Society. For a less-scientific Amerine look at wine, see our *W-T Newsletter* (Vol. 4 No.4, October 1994), for his review of two vintage California wine novels. - Ed.]

## IN MEMORY of ROY BRADY 1918 - 1998

Colman Andrews, friend of Roy Brady and editor of the gastronomical magazine, *Saveur*, wrote a piece for the November/December 1995 issue called "The Last Madeira Tasting," in which he paid tribute to his old friend and . . .

"... madeiraphile extraordinaire Roy Brady, who is sort of a reluctant cult figure in the California wine community—a man who was buying, tasting, drinking and writing sensibly about wine when most of today's hotshot wine bozos were still working on chocolate milk.

Brady, 77, is a laconic, avuncularly curmudgeonly former systems analyst, with snow-white hair and whiskers. He has written scores of articles and scholarly papers on wine over the years, and was once the editor of a small Los Angeles-based wine

magazine. But he is perhaps best known in wine circles not as a writer but as what the French would call a personage—a "somebody." He's the guy you want to sit next to at a tasting if you really want to learn something (not that he'll make it easy); he's the guy whose dry wit—the only thing about him that is, he would probably interject—and no-nonsense assessments of wine you're likely to remember long after you've forgotten whether the pouilly was *fuissé* or *fumé*.

Don't expect long-winded, flowery declamations on the subject, however. If you ask Brady why he doesn't like a wine he's just dumped from his glass, he's apt to look at you as if you'd just asked him why he doesn't like toothaches, and then say, "Because it's no damn good." If you rhapsodize about a wine's "flavors" of, say, raspberry or mint, he'll ask you "How many flavors does a raspberry have?" And this is one of his favorite jokes: Did you hear the one about the wine writer who was so fat that when he died, they couldn't find a coffin big enough to bury him in? Well, they gave him an enema and buried him in a shoe box.

Though he'll probably consider this libelous, Brady is the closest thing I have to a wine mentor. At countless meals and wine events over the years, he has taught me (by example, not pedagogy) to judge a wine by what it smells and tastes like, not by my expectations for it or by what the label says—and then to keep my mouth shut about my judgment unless I have something intelligent to say. This is much more difficult, and much less common—even (or maybe especially) among professionals—than you might think.

There is a certain irony involved in Brady's love for madeira, because another of his trademarks is that he doesn't much like old wine in general. Once, he even wrote an article (later expanded into a limited-edition book) called *Old Wine, Fine Wine?* in which that rhetorical question was pretty plainly answered in the negative. But for madeira he makes an exception."

[Special thanks to Colman Andrews and *Saveur* for permission to reprint this excerpt. Tendrils are invited to send Brady reminiscences for publication in our next *Newsletter*. - Ed.]

ROY BRADY MEMORIAL SERVICE  
Saturday, June 6th, 1998  
11 a.m. at the University Club  
California State University, Northridge



# ROY BRADY — MEMORIES and ANECDOTES

by Darrell Corti

[Tendril Corti, iconoclast scholar merchant of Sacramento, Calif., is himself a unique figure in the world of food and wine. Roy Brady tells the story of their sharing the oldest wine he had ever had: "The oldest wine I have had was a 1769 Mountain Malaga from Christie's. The vintage is interesting because it is the year Fr. Serra made the first Spanish settlement in California. Several years ago Darrell Corti was down and wanted to see my cellar. I said, 'If there's anything you'd like to try, feel free.' He did, choosing the 1769. I said something inspired like, 'Aber natürlich.' I was in a good mood, having just got one up on the Corti. His license plate reads, 'oinos.' Mine is 'woinos,' the Mycenaean form a thousand years older than classical Greek." - Ed.]



can't remember exactly when I met Roy Brady. I knew of him long before we met. His article on wine collecting and building his cellar published in Gourmet magazine ("A Modest Cellar," November 1965) had fascinated me. The account of the sale of Roy's collection of wine books to Fresno State College was unique at the time and garnered space in the few wine publications available.

Our first encounter was probably at the Los Angeles County Fair wine judging. This would have been in the early 1970s. We ended up being put on the same panel tasting mainly dessert wines and brandies. From that time, the basis of the four-person panel was anchored by Roy, James Guymon, a U.C. Davis professor and California's distilling expert, myself and then a rotating fourth person.

My knowledge of Roy's background was next to nothing. I had vague ideas of his being involved with math and the Rand Corporation. But in the intervals at the tasting sessions, waiting for the panel to deliberate, or just plain waiting as happens on these occasions, we would talk and finally it came out that Roy was a mathematician. He would doodle on the paper-covered table and they were often times mathematical formulas. Not knowing anything more about math than arithmetic, I was fascinated. His trying to explain to me some of the elegances of higher math was really casting real pearls! It was as incomprehensible to me as my trying to learn to play bridge, next to impossible.

What was remarkable was that of the four-person panel, Roy, Jim and I would often give the

best wine of the flight a similar score. Frequently, this lead to our championing a particular wine for a sweepstakes award, the merits of which we would then have to convince the other tasters. Generally it was Roy's and Jim's prestige that carried the day.

In those early years it was disconcerting at times to try to get Roy to talk. He was usually more silent than talkative, and when talking to him, one never knew if he was off in another world, merely listening and digesting what you were saying, or had fallen asleep with his eyes open. One winemaker friend was so disconcerted by this habit that he remarked to me about one of Roy's visits, saying: "We sat in the living room for forty minutes, him not saying anything and me looking at him." When Roy did speak it was with the force of reasoned logic (the mathematician) and with such pithy comments that were so direct and pointed as to penetrate the rhinoceros-like hide of even the most obtuse. Wine writers, in particular, often fell prey to his stiletto-like wit. Most of the time you didn't even know you had been hit. It was rarely done maliciously, often times just out of his amused point of view. Even I was the object of such elegant, witty send-ups; one I will reproduce in its entirety. It has to do with a brief article about me written by an old friend Ruth Reichel, then writing for the Los Angeles Times. Roy read the article and sent the following note:

Dear Darrell:

I read Ruth Reichel's piece in the LA Times Sunday. It recalls one of my favorite stories about Johann von Neumann.

Since mathematics is a trifle distant from the center of the area of your expertise I will venture a little explanation. Von Neumann had one of the most extraordinary mathematical minds of the century. Everybody was overwhelmed by his intellect and charmed by his personality (unless they happened to be married to him). At the age of 24 he formulated quantum theory in terms of Hilbert space, and, like Luther, he loved "Wein, Weib und Gesang," though doubtless he would have reversed the order of the first two. He was clever enough to have got the family fortune out of Europe ahead of Hitler so he could indulge his penchant for giving parties in Princeton where he was a professor at the Institute for Advance Study.

The story: A colleague said, "Jonny is, of course, a demi-god, but he's studied humans so carefully that he can act just like one whenever he chooses.

Yr. obt. svt, Roy."

Roy's passion for wine labels and wine books endeared him to me more than he would know. At



most of the early tastings we both attended, he always left with empty bottles to remove the labels for his collection. He would then call me if a particular bottle I had supplied would not give up its label and ask for a copy. He generally was successful in removing labels and had devised ways of getting them off bottles. Only occasionally would he be stymied and then would come the call for a copy. The rigor with which he pursued his labels was remarkable. Even more so was their cataloguing. To a non-collector or a haphazard one, his systematic methodology was just short of mindboggling. On the other hand, what is collecting, real collecting, all about?

"... a remarkable piece of wine lore."

Possibly even more astonishing than just collecting thousands of wine labels, was the fact that most of the labels in his collection were from wines that Roy had actually drunk. The notes that followed the labels and the various wines really are a remarkable piece of wine lore. Roy was one of the few people I have known to actually note what he had drunk, annotate, and then catalogue his impressions with the actual label. For most wines, especially in the vintages of the mid-part of this century, his notes would show how wines develop and then get old. They would show his appreciation of wines drunk over a long period, rather than just the fleeting impression of wines tasted once and then forgotten about.

Roy came to Sacramento very infrequently. Two times that I remember quite well were in the early 1970s when he was the editor of Wine World magazine and we had a comprehensive Italian wine tasting at Montevina Winery in Amador County, and then in 1986 when he accompanied his wife, Betty, who was coming on academic business. It was this latter time that he was able to see my office library and I had the pleasure of showing off some of my few treasures. He was more impressed that I had a set of Atheneus' *The Diepnosophists* than anything else. It was then that I began to share with him some of my early California labels that he had not seen.

Forays into wine printing were a great pleasure for Roy. His truly magisterial pieces for the Sotheby/University of California *Book of California Wine* are models of their kind. His reasoned and carefully wrought date of 1782 for the first California wine vintage which appeared in that work has been used by only a few other writers. All of them have noted the reasoning behind it. California, however, still tries to use the patently incorrect, yet convenient, early date of 1769 as the beginning of viticulture, if not to say also winemaking, in our State.

He had his hand in a few productions of wine literature, notably in resurrecting forgotten texts that delighted him and that he wanted to see again appreciated. His reprint, in 1973, of Major Ben Truman's 1896 *See How It Sparkles*, the first wine book printed in Los Angeles, is a case in point. Roy's important contribution to the Corti Bros.' 1975 reprinting of S. Weir Mitchell's *A Madeira Party* gave the edition a marked character. It gave it a reason for existing. I had asked him what he thought of our project and his remark was that he had both of the early editions and that he had paid probably ten cents for them. His love of Madeira, and his great experience with it, made him a natural to write the two essays which are in our reprint. What is interesting is that he had never been to Madeira and was only to go much after *A Madeira Party* came out. (Betty Brady asked me if I had ever seen his unpublished article on their trip to Portugal and Madeira and I never have. In itself, this would be an entertaining piece for the Wayward Tendrils News-letter to print. - DC)

"You are a charmingly formidable chap."

Possibly the greatest pleasure I had ever heard Roy enjoy in his wine writing was the exchange of letters he had with Michael Broadbent which originated with a letter to the editor of the Journal of Gastronomy regarding old wine. This exchange ultimately led to the printing of the elegant little book *Old Wine, Fine Wine?* printed at the Santa Susanna Press at Northridge in 1990. It greatly pleased Roy that Broadbent accepted his humorous reply and conceded to Roy's points. In a letter to me, Roy wrote, "Modesty almost, but not quite, prevents quoting from his letter. 'Many thanks, for your long, reasoned, reasonable, yet obdurate letter. You are a charmingly formidable chap.' Unfortunately only he and I know that."

This was Roy's great gift with wine. He really was not impressed by a wine's label unless the wine was really excellent. The all too often sanctification of old vintages really bothered him. It was rare that he just didn't dismiss old wine as just not being drinkable. He often railed against the wine writer who, tasting clearly decrepit old wines, would write that they still "had five or ten years to go."

At a very important dinner in 1972 to open the triple magnum of Lafite 1868, a purchase at Christie's in London spearheaded by Barney Rhodes, Roy's comment to my question of how he liked the wine was typical: "For an old wine it was good." At one of the Alta California Wine & Food Society dinners, the Society that he tacitly headed, I remember an occasion at Valentino restaurant when Sid



Greenburg, a member with an impeccable cellar, had contributed possibly the most holy trio of German wines for dessert: all J. J. Prum wines, Wehlener Zeltinger Sonnubr 1938 Trockenbeerenauslese, the 1949, and the Wehlener Sonnenuhr 1959. As is typical with these wines, their color had darkened and they had the impressive, scented bouquet which is their hallmark. I was looking forward to the wines with great anticipation, never having had the opportunity to have them all at the same time. At their serving, Roy smelled, tasted and pronounced, "Too old and oxidized." This salvo left me stunned. I thought they were super and having sold the younger two, was impressed. The rest of the group merely stopped drinking them. Roy could do this to wine.

"... never met a tannin I didn't like..."

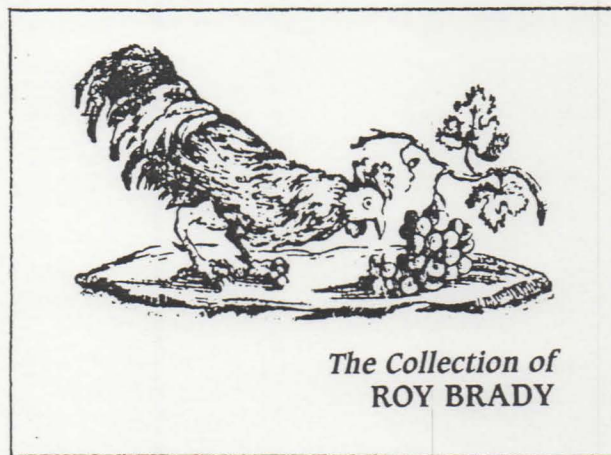
In recent years Roy began to decry the lack of tannin in today's red wines, especially those whose history he knew well. His comment of "never having met a tannin I didn't like" left him more perplexed than dismayed at current wine styles. His fondness for a particular wine, the Ficklin Raboso Piave made in the early 1950s, was often the paragon of how he liked his red wine. At the opposite end of the scale in California wines was the 1951 Beaulieu Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, which he had cellared a quantity of and had enjoyed to the last bottle. He must have had six or seven cases of it, and in this Roy was like the old British wine drinker in that he bought a quantity of a wine he liked and then got to know it well over a long time by drinking it up. His only negative comments to me of that 1951 came toward the end of the supply when it, not Roy, started to get old.

Madeira and Sherry, and to a lesser extent Port, remained favorites to the last. Roy admired these intense and quite long-lived wines not because of their age necessarily, but because they were so companionable. In one of the occasions when we were at a tasting together—in fact, a San Francisco tasting of a number of vintages of Calon Segur in magnums—and Roy was present in his guise of editor of *Wine World*, I brought along a new series of sherry that we had gotten from Gonzalez Byass. These were some very old Palma and Palo Cortado wines. Roy's note to me after the tasting simply commented that the Calon vintages were good, some not as much as he had remembered, but that the sherries were the best he had tasted. I was thrilled.

In January of this year I picked Roy up and brought him with me to the Gambero Rosso tasting of the "Tre Bicchieri" awarded Italian wines at the Beverly Hills Hotel. We began at one end of the

room and went to the other. The wines were both red and white and some Roy even liked. He would always ask the price. When I would tell him, he would move slightly in the wheelchair and then take another sip. Then, the silence. Then, the pronouncement: "Bought a whole case of Yquem for that price once."

We will miss you, Roy Brady.



*The Collection of  
ROY BRADY*

[BRADY BOOKPLATE]

*Editor's Note:* Several of Roy Brady's classic articles on book-collecting and other matters bibliographic have been published in our *Newsletter*. . . they are always worth a re-read. In the January 1996 issue Bo Simons featured our consummate collector (wine books, wine labels, wine lists, menus) and compiled a select check-list of Brady's wine writings. In the collection of the Sonoma County Wine Library is a printed oral history, *Roy Brady: Wine Book Collector and Writer*, one of the Wine Library Associates of Sonoma County Oral History Series, with Brady articles and correspondence bound-in.



*From Alexander Webber, WINE, 1888 —*

Demonax was a Cretan philosopher; he resembled Socrates in his mode of thinking, and Diogenes in his way of life. He was asked, if it was allowable for wise men to drink wine. "Surely," said he, "you cannot think that nature made grapes only for fools."



## WHO said THAT?: A QUOTABLE QUIZ



or fun and prizes, we present this list of quotations to be matched with their respective authors. The first five Tendrils who respond with the most correct match-ups will be declared our winners! Wine books are our prizes. One clue: all of the quotes appeared, or were referred to, in our Newsletter. Cheers!

1. "A dyed-in-the-wool collector can no more survive without collecting than without eating. Collecting is like the gout—it may be controlled, but it can never be cured."

2. "I have received complaints, mild and other, of the frequency of my unexplained allusions....I can only plead that I follow the Golden Rule. Nothing pleases me so much as an allusion that I understand—except one that I don't and have to hunt up."

3. "Previous writers on wine have all laboured under one serious disadvantage—they have had little practical experience of the subject of which they profess to treat. ...facts should be confirmed by personal observation...the present writer...trusts that the result of his labours may operate as a check upon the fraudulent practices he has endeavoured to expose. ... We do not care to drink chymical messes under the name of wine."

4. "Often, when I look back on the first feeble beginnings of a grape culture here, the struggle with poverty, ignorance and all other serious impediments, my heart throbs with satisfaction at the results already gained and with glorious hopes for the future."

5. "My first bottle of Yquem was a 1906: a fairly good year. I decanted it; and the room was filled with a perfume that recalled the Arabian Nights. There is nothing that is exactly like the bouquet of Château Yquem; no garden could do it justice, and to talk of spices were an impertinence, or I would say that it embalms the air. There is nothing like it; nothing; nothing. It is the most beautiful wine God ever allowed man to make..."

6. "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!"

7. "My God, he's an impudent fella!  
— That girl that he showed round the cellar  
Lost her *status quo ante* Between the Chianti  
And the magnums of Valpolicella."

8. "Works published at home are totally inapplicable to this colony in their general practice, and are calculated to mislead if acted upon; the present work has...been undertaken with the view of obviating this evil."

9. "The best wine known in France...is the wine called claret. What are called the first growth clarets were twenty or thirty years ago most excellent wines but now are very much altered for the worse. ... The following are what are now reckoned the first growths, viz. Hautbrion, La Tour, La Fitte, Château Margaux. ...of all the wines of Burgundy, that called Romanée is most valued. It is cultivated on a spot near Dijon, the sole property of the Prince of Condé, and was usually laid up for his use."

10. "The ways of the tendril are tortuous and indeterminate; it clings to any chance object that takes its fancy, but only to help it to reach a further and higher one: eventually it finds itself twisting and turning in the air with nothing more to cling to...having accomplished its task as guide..."

11. Although "Grapes are, of course, dicotyledonous angiosperms ...wine is far more than...just a commodity. It contributes to sophisticated dining, enhances social interaction, challenges the senses and the intellect, and makes glad the heart of the moderate and well-balanced man or woman."

12. "...people who will live long, who will drink of the cup to the bottom, must expect to meet some of the usual dregs..."

13. "Nothing is so effective in keeping one young and full of lust as a discriminating palate thoroughly satisfied at least once a day."

14. "The obstacles that prevent regular wine use from becoming nationwide are outmoded state laws, relics of Prohibition, that hamper both the growing and distribution of wine. ... The obstacles will be removed only when enough Americans and their legislators come to realize that wine belongs with food. For table wine is used principally at mealtimes; it is the only true mealtime beverage. This can not be said of water, coffee, tea, soft drinks, beer, or of milk."

15. "I visited the principal cellars, and have



attempted to describe a few of the best known kinds. For above a week I lived within half an hour's walk of the most celebrated vineyards in Burgundy...At Beaune, I went to the Hôtel du Chevreuil, which I can confidently recommend for its strong smells, and excellently-cooked frogs."

16. "What really excited me...is you are allowed to exercise editorial discretion and stamp your personality on it, and some of your judgments, and you can shape it the way you think. I hope that I became a whiz at cross-referencing. It's not an unopinionated book. I hope that it is not a dry book. It was lovely taking wine outside just geography and varieties and include other disciplines: history and art and literature."

17. "We possess several good books on the culture of the vine and on the best procedures to follow in wine-making; but none, to my knowledge, deals with the characteristics which distinguish the wines of different vineyards, and still less the nuance of quality which is often noticed in the produce of adjacent crus...I have tried to fill this gap..."

18. "...the mellow lusciousness, the melody of intricate sweetness, the magic scents woven into one oblivious fragrance ... one sip of that wine silences all criticism, for it enchants the senses..."

19. "As a book collector of catholic tastes and some years' standing, it will be evident that I value very highly my small collection of Restaurant Wine Lists. I view with admiration, but without envy, my friend's superb Pliny, printed by Jensen, as I recall my Cecil '92 or Café Royal '08. ... Every collector, I suppose, when looking over his treasures is chastened by the memory of missed opportunities and glaring vacancies. I wonder if at the sale of the Café Voisin any bid was made for their famous Wine List, that fat, grubby volume where clarets seemed to range back almost to the days of Noah?"

20. "...and 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."

## THE AUTHORS

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Ian Maxwell Campbell, 1947.

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Jancis Robinson, 1995.

George Saintsbury, 1919.

Thos. George Shaw, 1863.

André Simon, 1966.

Charles Tovey, 1862.



"I LOVE  
EVERYTHING  
THAT'S OLD -  
FRIENDS,  
TIME, BOOKS &  
WINE."

-- Oliver Goldsmith





**BOOKS &  
BOTTLES**  
by  
Fred McMillin

**THE VIEW IN 1872**

**THE BOOK :** *A Treatise on the Origin, Nature, and Varieties of Wine: being a Complete Manual of Viticulture and Oenology* by J. L. W. Thudichum, M.D. and August Dupré, Ph.D., (London / New York: Macmillan & Co.), 1872.

Dr. Dupré was "a lecturer on chemistry at Westminster Hospital." His brother-in-law and London physician, Dr. John Louis William Thudichum, lectured and wrote about wine, emphasizing its health benefits. They collaborated on this "most comprehensive modern treatise on the vine and its fruit in the English language" [Simon *Vinaria*], which gives an engaging overall view of wine in 1872.

■ Chianti - The 760-page volume contains but one line about today's Tuscan favorite: "A good red wine is made at Chianti, from a peculiar grape." Today we know the dominant "peculiar grape" was the Sangiovese.

■ Carbenet Sauvignon - "While also spelled 'cabernet' we are inclined to consider 'carbenet' the commonest spelling, and add that the 'b' is pronounced so softly by the Girondais as to resemble an 'm'. The surname of 'Sauvignon' is derived from the similarity of its leaf and wood to the vine of that name."

■ Merlot - "The grape has its name from *merle* (a thrush), because this bird was a particular friend of the grapes of this vine." The authors already knew what I teach my classes today: "Merlot wine is lighter and earlier ready than that of the Carbenet; it wants durability, but its great property is to be soft and tender."

■ Profitability - The book reports the economics of making wine on one acre of land in Cincinnati county, where there are 1,200 acres of vines. [The figures will make a strong vintner weep.]

Annual interest on \$250/acre land -----	\$15.
Annual cultivation costs -----	\$60.
Cost of making the wine -----	\$25.
Total expense -----	\$100.

Sale of 200 gals of wine @ \$1/gal -----	\$200.
Profit -----	\$100.

Sounds easy, but these times **were** more difficult. The authors tell of the Jesuits planting a vineyard on the Mississippi; the French government "of the day caused it to be destroyed for fear of its making competition for the wines of France."

Wine history buffs may come across something new, too.

■ Champagne - The doctors mention a little 1718 book which indicates that "devil's wine" (*i.e.*, effervescent) was first made by Dom Perignon in 1695. The author, a M. Perrier, acknowledged that some believed the bubbles were achieved by bottling at a particular phase of the moon, others felt drugs were used. However, Perrier knows the true secret, given to him by Dom Perignon on his death bed. (Alas, it is not revealed.)

■ Discovery of Wine - The authors tell the Persian legend of grapes stored in a jar forming a bubbling, poisonous fluid. A distraught member of the king's harem attempts suicide by drinking it; the results are so pleasing that even the king becomes a "patron of wine." Details you might not have seen elsewhere: 1) The name of the lady who discovered wine was Gulnare, the Beautiful. 2) She was one of King Dschemschid's [sic] 700 wives!

Now, back to 1872. "The Persian vines grow low, and are rarely tied to stakes." I lived there exactly one hundred years later, and the grapes still grew beneath the leaves on the ground. Of course, the best known Persian grape is the Syrah, which rose to fame on France's Ermitage [sic] Hill. Surprisingly, our authors say that in 1872 the best grade red Ermitage is never sold as such - it is more profitable to ship it west for use in adulterating Bordeaux wines.

**Postscript:** Note that our book is the 1872 first edition, not the 1894 abridged version. André Simon was not impressed by the latter, commenting that it omitted most of the scientific data, "but retained the majority of the errors." [from James Gabler's *Wine into Words*]

**THE BOTTLES:** Here's a good example of each of the five kinds of wine -

Chianti - Castello di Gabbiano, Classico Riserva Oro, \$23.

Cabernet Sauvignon - Field Stone "Convivio", Alexander Valley, \$12.

Merlot - Cakebread Cellars '94, Napa Valley, \$28.

Champagne - Perrier Jouët "Fleur de Champagne" Brut '90, \$85.

Syrah - Sierra Vista '95, El Dorado Co., CA. \$9.50.

[Tendril Fred McMillin lives in San Francisco and is an avid "historical wine taster" and lecturer. For a fun-filled, informative wine-tasting evening, contact him at 415-563-5712. - Ed.]



## A Wine Librarian Reports on the SONOMA COUNTY WINE LIBRARY: Ten Years of Growth and Service

by  
*Bo Simons*



In October 1988, the new Healdsburg Regional Library opened its doors, and with it the Sonoma County Wine Library began life. This birth of the wine library followed fifteen years of hard work. The idea sprouted with the formation of the "Russian River Wine Road" in the early 1970s, and out of this group

came the seed idea of a cooperatively-financed library to celebrate the area's rich wine history and serve as a business and technical library to the wine industry.

Millie Howie, a publicist then working for Geyser Peak Winery and who had helped form the "Wine Road," nurtured this idea. Some wanted the library to be located in this winery or that one, while others held that it should be in a neutral site like a shopping mall. Millie convinced those involved that the proper place for a wine library was in a library, a public library. With the wine industry signed-on, Millie set out to convince the Sonoma County Library.

She approached David Sabsay, the Director of the Sonoma County Library system. Sabsay, a diminutive soft-spoken man with the face of a pensive bulldog, had built a library system from a bookmobile, with idealism, political savvy and an incredible will. In 1958 he became one of the youngest public library directors ever when he took command of the moribund Sonoma County Library—then only serving to supplement school libraries and provide rural library service to the unincorporated areas of the county. One by one, he absorbed all the city libraries in the county into the Sonoma County library system, and built the Library into an autonomous county agency. Between 1958 and 1983 he built seven new libraries and strengthened the library system.

Yet Sabsay was cool to the idea of a wine library. One can imagine what he must have thought: a collection of books devoted to alcoholic beverages in the public library? But Millie Howie had done her homework. Grapes and wine were in the process of passing dairy farming as the biggest industry in the county; the library, in the grand tradition of cooperative agriculture in Sonoma County, would reflect and support the county's main

industry. It would be the crown jewel in the Sonoma County Library system.

Once convinced, Sabsay became an ardent supporter. He conceived and implemented winery subscriptions whereby wineries and grape growers would pay annual dues, or subscriptions, based on size. But, most of all, Sabsay was able to provide a home for the wine library. The Healdsburg Library was the one remaining library in Sabsay's master plan for replacing the county's older wineries. With the support of the wine industry subscriptions, an extra 1,300 square feet was added to the drawing plans of the new Healdsburg library to house the Sonoma County Wine Library.

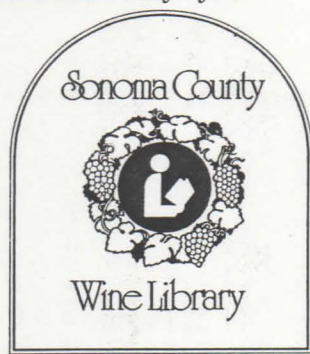
During the gestation period of the library between 1974 and 1988, the Sonoma County Wine Library Association (now called the Wine Library Associates of Sonoma County) was formed to be the "Friends of the Library." If subscriptions were the industry support for the budding library, then this group was the venue for individuals to help, and have a grand time doing it. Over the years the Association put on some stellar events and raised hundreds of thousands of dollars. They paid for \$30,000-worth of custom, pale oak bookcases and cabinets that house the wine library collection. They helped the library to acquire the prestigious Vintner's Club wine book collection, some one thousand books on wine in nine languages. The big fund raiser that the Association mounted for a number of years was "Polo, Wine and All that Jazz," an event that Henry Trione, an owner of Geyser Peak Winery, helped fashion. This popular event combined a polo match, a jazz concert, and a wine tasting—held each June throughout the 1980s. Beginning in 1995, the "Sonoma County Odyssey"—a day of food, wine, book sales and music in an oak grove setting surrounded by vineyards—has become the Associates' biggest fund raiser.

An interesting sidelight in the Wine Library's history is the Sonoma County Wine Auction. This event started as a Healdsburg Kiwanis-sponsored fund raiser for the library, but it soon out-grew their group and the Sonoma County Wineries Association was formed to produce the auction and promote Sonoma County wines. Proceeds from the auction have helped the Wine Library in many ways, including funding for an Oral History Series and "Ghost" Wineries photographs that record vanishing winery architecture, bibliographies on selected topics, book purchases, and a microfilm reader-printer.

I came to the Wine Library just before it was ready to open in 1988. I had been working at the Santa Rosa Central Library for about five years when the word reached me that they were looking for a librarian for this special library. I pitched myself to Sabsay as a prospective wine librarian, grossly



inflating my qualifications. Despite my hyperbole, I was given the assignment. For about a month, beginning in September 1988, I unpacked and shelved boxes of books and magazines, unboxed and filed mounds of clippings that would comprise the Wine Information Files. A wine library was being born before my eyes.



As wine librarian over the next six years, I helped acquire new books, old books, rare books, videos, wine labels, prints, microfilm and CD-ROMs with the guidance of the Wine Library Book Selection Committee (whose members included county grape growers and wine makers). I also answered countless questions about wine, and in the process became familiar with such subjects as wine chemistry, ampelography, canopy management, phylloxera, sulfides, sulfites, winery waste-water treatment, label approvals, the prohibition movement, the neo-prohibition movement, the history, geography, art, law and politics of wine.

Other duties, including a stint as Internet Librarian, called me away from the Wine Library from 1994 to 1997, but now I am back, and grateful to be returned to this special collection.

In 1994 Zita Eastman became the wine librarian and stayed through the end of 1997. With a fresh spirit and new ideas, she reorganized the Wine Information Files, became passionate about historical photographs, compiled bibliographies, helped tirelessly with fund raisers, and became dedicated to finding the right answers about wine.

The Sonoma County Wine Library has come a long way in its ten years of existence. Since the library opened in 1988, the number of books in the collection has tripled. Use and support from the industry has steadily increased. The library's reputation has grown. It has gained a web page and computer access to search the books. But the best lies ahead: technology beckons to make all the library's holdings accessible and interactive worldwide, and the support to insure that bright future lies there, waiting to be plucked like clusters of ripe Zinfandel.

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## DUE TO ARRIVE SUMMER, 1998!!

Alex Liddell, author of *Port Wine Quintas of the Douro* (London: Sotheby's, 1992), the first detailed study of the estates of the Douro region of Portugal, has now written *Madeira*, the first serious book on Madeira and its wines since Noel Cossart's 1984 *Madeira: The Island Vineyard* (now out of print and already highly collectible). The latest in a series of wine books published by Faber & Faber (London), the book skillfully narrates the history of the wine and of the island, gives a detailed account of wine production on the island today, profiles the leading madeira shippers, and provides tasting notes on over seventy vintage madeiras dating from 1715 to 1972. The U.K. publication price is £22.50 hardbound, £12.99 paperback. Of special interest to Wayward Tendrils members is a **100-copy limited edition** produced by the Rare Wine Company (by an exclusive arrangement with the London publisher). Printed on acid-free paper and housed in a distinctive binding and slipcase, the edition will be hand-numbered, and signed by Alex Liddell. List price for this limited edition is \$100, but Tendril **Mannie Berk**, proprietor of The Rare Wine Co., is offering the book to all Tendrils at a pre-publication price of \$80 per copy, plus shipping. Orders can be phoned 800-999-4342 or faxed 800-893-1501, for delivery this summer.



[FROM THE BOOK OF THE WINE LABEL BY N. M. PENZER, 1947]



## OUR TEN TREASURES

by  
Gail Unzelman

[In the first issue of our Newsletter in March 1991, Jeffrey Benson suggested we run a regular column by Tendril members listing their "Top Ten Treasures" — not necessarily high-lighting the most expensive, or rarest, books in our collections, just our favorites, for any reason, or no reason! Perhaps our members were shy, or too busy, or couldn't decide on their top ten favorites—for whatever reason—the series never materialized. But it sounds like good fun, and good reading, doesn't it?]

We are pleased to reactivate the series with Ron and Gail Unzelman's "Top Ten," and extend a special invitation to all Tendrils to share their treasured wine books... - Ed.]

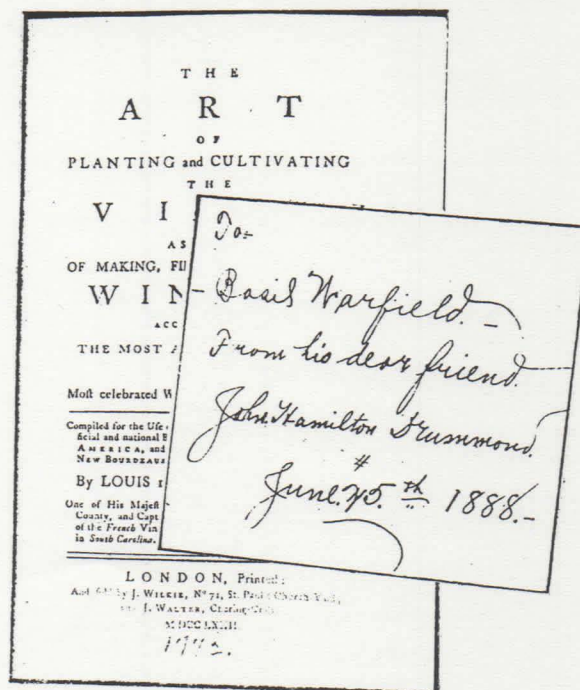
**FOR US**, choosing ten favorites from our 2500-or-so books on wine is not that difficult; it is the **stopping** at ten that causes consternation. Our library reflects more than thirty years of collecting experiences—almost every book has a special story to tell. I can already see that another ten books yearn to explain why they are also considered among our favorite treasures. Perhaps we'll give them their say at a later date, but for now we list, in no particular order, our "Ten Treasures."

1. Aunt Laura's *A Bunch of Grapes* (1863) is the smallest book in our library. The striking gilt-decorated cloth cover and gilt edges of this 1¼" x 1½" miniature gem caught my eye in the bookseller's display case. What was this tiny book with the words "Bunch of Grapes" on the cover? The first few pages tell you it is an old-fashioned Sunday-School-lesson-type story: Little Johnny, "who was a very good boy, always trying to help his [widowed] mother, and to be kind to everybody around him," saved his hard-earned pennies to buy a bunch of grapes for his sick friend. For this act of kindness, he was rewarded by the grape growing farmer with a twig from the grape vine and instruction on how to grow his own grapes. The young boy became a successful, well-to-do grape grower and nurseryman...



2. We both clearly recall the day in January 1982. A chilly, wintry afternoon in San Francisco, a small bookshop out in the Avenues. "Do you have any old

wine books?" "Sorry, no." (Pause) "Oh, yes, we just got this one back from having the spine repaired." It is undoubtedly the one book in our collection that we are the most attached to ... sentimental, really. An aged, leather bound copy of Louis de Saint Pierre's small book, *The Art of Planting and Cultivating the Vine* (1772), with an inscription that made my heart

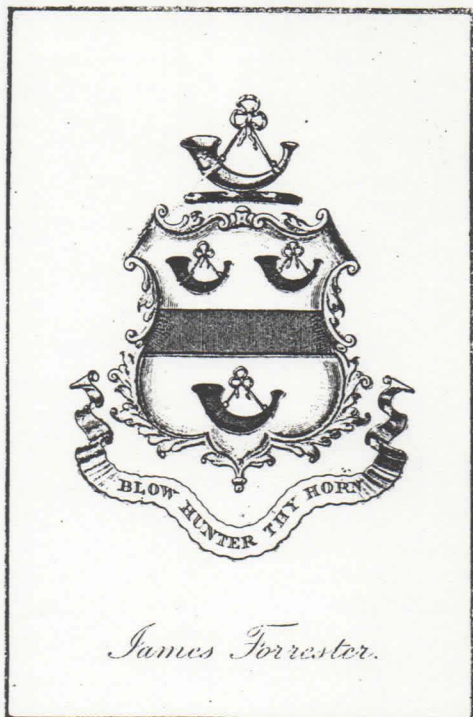


race — "To Basil Warfield, from his dear friend, John Hamilton Drummond, June 25th, 1888, Glen Ellen." A note in Warfield's handsome script, dated Jan. 1890, "Mr. D. left for Ireland on March 20th, 1888...He visited London and while there picked up this old book at an old bookstore on the Strand. He got back to Glen Ellen again on the 18th day of June, 1888. This was his last trip home as he died on December 20th, 1889." Both gentlemen were highly respected pioneer winegrowers, and neighbors, in Sonoma valley, one of our favorite historical California wine districts. (St. Pierre wrote this book for the practical use of the British colony at New Bordeaux, South Carolina; had he chosen to have it published in America rather than in London, it could be called the first U.S. book on wine.)

3. Because we realistically thought we would never own a copy, our first edition of John Adlum's *Memoir on the Cultivation of the Vine in America* (1823), the first American book on grape culture, enjoys the status of one of our most treasured. After you have wanted and searched for a book for so many years, when you finally acquire the elusive little rascal, it automatically becomes a treasured possession!



4. With our long-time affection for vintage Port, its history, and its literature, a cherished prize is Baron Joseph J. Forrester's own copy of *The Prize Essay on Portugal* (1854, 2nd ed). The bulging book is interleaved with pages of notes by the author, clippings, etc., and is graced with his bookplate. It is indeed humbling, and awe-inspiring, to be able to handle a book that was so intimately connected with its admired author. [Forrester Bookplate]



5. When Ron and I made our first visit to Europe in 1983, we arranged for a tour of the Harvey Museum in Bristol (Gail locked the car keys in the trunk of the rental car, we got to stay an extra day). The jewel of the tour, brightly displayed in a glass case, was the opened ampelography of B. C. Cincinato da Costa, *O Portugal Vinicola* (1900), the most beautiful book we had ever seen. "Someday, I hope we find a copy of that book," was all I could say. Although still hard for us to believe, that same Harvey copy of *Portugal Vinicola* has come to reside in our library today. We have given it an honored spot.

6. Edward Antill's eighty-page *Essay on the Cultivation of the Vine, and Making and Preserving of Wine...* was published in the first volume of the *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* in 1771, and is the first American printing on the vine or wine. It is also the only book we successfully bid on at the infamous 1984 Sotheby auction in New York of the Marcus Crahan Collection of Books on Food & Drink. Unbeknownst to the gathering bidders, there was a three-man consortium (representing a Nevada oil-heiress who wanted the collection and an instant library of gastronomy and wine literature) who were prepared to go to outrageous limits, and did, to acquire the books. A

miracle of heaven (or had they slipped-up on their homework?), they did not continue bidding on this book. Elisabeth Woodburn was seated in front of me; she and I dueled it out. Exciting memories...

7. When you walked into Leon Adams' apartment in Sausalito overlooking San Francisco Bay, you immediately smelled his ever-going pipe—it permeated the room and everything in it. We had come for a visit and to buy books (he was dispersing his collection). We brought home Leon's copy of the magnificent 1877 Edward Bosqui printing of *Grapes and Grape Vines of California*. Its full leather binding still offers, and probably always will, that stale-sweet aroma of smoked pipe tobacco.

8. Another California treasure is a copy of George Husmann's *Grape Culture and Wine Making in California* (1888), signed by him. Its attractive and distinctive Victorian-style binding—dark chocolate brown cloth with the spine lavished in gilt and a steel-engraved grape cluster boldly gilt-stamped to the front cover—gives a stylish appearance to this practical book on grape matters. With our special fondness for George Husmann, his life and his work, this signed copy is indeed treasured.

9. When we first began to seriously collect wine books in the mid-1970s, we happened upon a copy of the eye-catching, masterful John Henry Nash printing of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Silverado Squatters* (San Francisco, 1923). We fell in love with the book and the flamboyant printer. For many years we had a dual collecting passion, until we wisely sold the Nash books to concentrate on wine books. But his several wine-related book productions that we kept merit appreciation and bring joy.

10. Naturally, the most difficult selection is No.10. Is this the copy of Frona Eunice Wait's very elusive 1889 *Wines and Vines of California* we found at the local flea market for \$1.50? Or perhaps, the first book we purchased written in a foreign language (Bertall's *La Vigne*)? We had always promised to buy only what we could read, but it was too beautiful and we broke the rule, and forever opened the door to innumerable riches. Or, the first "box of books" that we ever bought—knowing we couldn't really afford to, but had to—books from the famed Inglenook Winery Library of Gustave Niebaum formed in the 1880s? And, there are, of course, others...





