

Newsletter

Vol.8 No.4

A WINE BOOK COLLECTOR'S SOCIETY

October 1998

# WINES at the FRENCH COURT in 1820 by Maynard A. Amerine

[As we have noted in a prior issue, Maynard Amerine (1911-1998), esteemed professor of viticulture at the University of California at Davis and a man of many talents, was a passionate collector and scholar of the literature of wine. The following article first appeared in the August 1958 issue of <u>Wine and Food</u>. We extend our sincere thanks to the I.W. & F.S. for permission to reprint this fascinating account of a work—though a familiar title to collectors of cookbooks—is not likely known to many wine book collectors. — Ed.]



apoleon was emperor in 1806 when a M. A. Viard published Le Cuisinier Impérial, ou l'art de faire, et la pâtisserie pour toutes les fortunes.... His cookbook was an immediate success. A second edition followed in 1807, and a third revised and enlarged edition

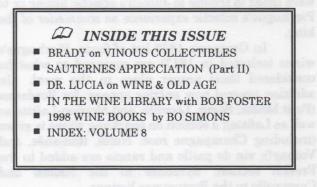
in 1808. Vicaire and Bitting, those indefatigable recorders of gastronomical bibliography, record thirty-two editions. From the fifth to the twenty-first the title was *Le Cuisinier Royal*..., corresponding to the reigns of Louis XVIII, Charles X, and Louis-Philippe. With the twenty-second edition, dated 1853, but published in 1852, the title had become *Le Cuisinier National*, corresponding to the end of the Second Republic in 1852. From the twenty-third edition of 1854 to the thirty-first edition the title is once again, *Le Cuisinier Impérial* (adding *de la ville et de la campagne*), corresponding to the empire under Napoleon III. Finally, the last (thirty-second) edition of 1875, reverts to the title *Le Cuisinier National*, a change obviously dictated by the start of

the third Republic in 1871.

The authors also changed a number of times. M. Fouret was co-author of the ninth edition of 1817, and M. Pierhugue, sommelier du roi, added a list of wines to this edition. This list was continued in later editions. Délan became the third author with the fourteenth and enlarged edition of 1832. This edition also includes a section on the serving of wines by M. Grignon, a Parisian restaurateur. Finally, starting with the twenty-second edition of 1852 a M. Benardi participated.

The recipes are elaborate as befitted the period and the Court. In the fourteenth edition, there are 561 pages of recipes, and only nine are devoted to wine. But these few pages give us a considerable amount of information regarding the wines which Pierhugue, as *sommelier* to the king, considered acceptable at the table of Louis XVIII.

A brief review by Pierre Andrieu of the tenth edition of 1820, in <u>La Journée Vinicole</u> for 31 January 1957, brought this volume to our attention. The rarity of the book is attested to by the fact that only the third edition of 1808 and the fourteenth edition of 1832 are in the Library of Congress in Washington. (Bitting gives 1831 as the date of publication of this edition, but 1832 is given on the title-page.)



The real importance of Pierhugue's notice on the wines recommended for service to the king is their eclectic nature. Of Pierhugue's original list, fifty-four wines are French, fifteen Spanish, eight Portuguese (including Madeira), seven Italian, four Greek, two South African (Cape and Constance), and one each from Cyprus, Hungary, and Persia. The sources of the rosés and vermouth listed are not stated. Thus thirty-nine of the ninety-three identifiable listings are of non-French origin. Note, moreover, that German wines are omitted although Rhine is mentioned in the text. This eclectic selection also reflected Pierhugue's personal philosophy that there is something good in each wine.

Pierhugue also commented learnedly about the character and proper service of the various wines. The Bordeaux reds are described as *âpre* and *austère* and good for the stomach, still Champagne is delicate and perfumed and potent, Burgundy is very odorous and aphrodistic, Languedoc wines are alcoholic, etc. Burgundy was preferred over Bordeaux, and still Champagne to sparkling. Reds were often served before whites, except when oysters were served first.

Of course, France was more internationallyminded at that period. Napoleon's empire had extended over most of Europe. This would not account for the importation of Greek, South African, or Persian wines but the "empire" obviously did not prejudice the French against non-French wines. Finally, this listing demonstrates again the extent of the wine trade of Europe and the reputation of many minor wines. There is still another possible explanation for this extensive listing of wines, but this can only be deduced from a footnote in the fourteenth edition of 1832, referring the reader to the third edition of Jullien's encyclopedic Topographie de tous Vignobles connus ... published in the same year and previously published in 1816 and 1822. This and the same author's Manuel du Sommelier, published in 1813 and 1817, undoubtedly provided Pierhugue with adequate material for his "selection" of wines. Perhaps we shall never know how many of the wines were listed in tribute to Jullien's eclectic listing or to Pierhugue's eclectic experience as sommelier of the king.

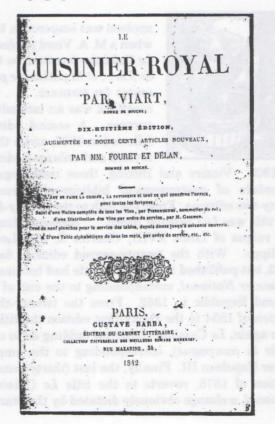
In Grignon's 1832 list of foods, Pierhugue's wines (selected in 1817) are assigned to what he considered their proper place in the meal. In addition several new entries appear: for Bordeaux (Petit Médoc, Ségur, Léoville, and Mouton-Lafitte as well as Lafitte); a section on sparkling wines is given (including Champagne rosé. Nuits, Romanée, and Volnay!); vin de paille and rancio are added to the French section; Syracuse to the Italian and Carcavello to the Portuguese listings.

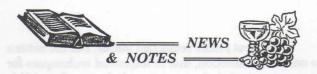
The recommended order of service of the dishes and wines reflects the gargantuan dinners

which prevailed in France at the time. Absinthe and vermouth are recommended before the soup, no less than twelve wines may accompany oysters, eighteen or more are suitable for the first service, Madeira and rhum are for the *coup du milieu*, forty-eight can be used for the second service (including port), six sparkling wines may accompany the third service, and thirty dessert wines are suitable for the end of the meal. Naturally, not all those suggested were served at one time, but the number available is impressive.

No one needs to discuss the pre-eminent place of French concepts in gastronomy. It is well known how they adapted and adopted recipes from a dozen countries in developing their cuisine. It may come, then, as a surprise to some that 138 years ago the French Court was also accustomed to drink appreciatively a large number of wines of the most diversified sources—a concept which all wine producers could take to heart today. Provincialism should not be allowed to affect our wine service.

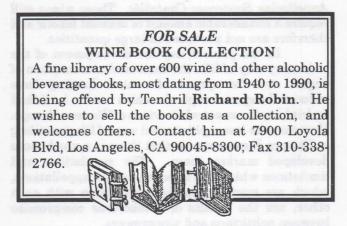
[Editor end-note: In addition to the informative bibliographical notes of Bitting and Vicaire mentioned by Amerine, William Cagle, in his 1990 bibliography, <u>A Matter of Taste</u>, identifies M. A. Viard as Alexandre Viard. Cagle also notes that in the 18th edition of 1842, Viard has become Viart on the title page.]





Welcome! new members: A collector with a special love for the Nicolas wine lists joins us: Robert Muzzy (1550 Loring Street, San Diego, CA 92109-1329; 619-488-1233, FAX 619-488-0147. Member Sean Thackrey introduced Mel Knox (505 - 29th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94121; 415-751-6306, FAX 415-221-5873) to our group. He has been collecting English-language wine books for some twenty-five years. Membership also has been extended to John R. Curtis, Jr. (P.O. Box KP, Williamsburg, VA 23187). And, we welcome back Steve Sztukowski (16 E. Division St., Fond du Lac, Wisconsin 54935; 920-921-9449, FAX 920-921-4023), who was an original 1990 Tendril. He notes his special interests are books on France, California, Wine Antiques and Corkscrews, and he is happy to be "reinstated." Please add these new members to your rosters.

• Roster Update: Tendril Isaac Oelgart writes that having recently survived a move, he may never buy another book (don't believe him!). His new address: Two Spencer Road, Hanover, N.H. 03755. All other numbers remain the same.



• Our thanks to **Leonard Bernstein** for providing the grand rear-cover of this issue. He is curious if anyone can tell us more about "Invalid Port" featured on this Gilbey's poster.

## SO. CALIFORNIA WINE HISTORY

• Tom Pinney sent a note about the new wine collection project of the library at California Polytechnic University, Pomona. They have decided to undertake a collection on the history and activity of the winemaking industry in Southern California, an often-neglected area of California's wine history. They hope to mount an exhibit this fall. If any Tendrils have materials they wish to donate to this worthy effort, get in touch with the Special Collections Librarian: Danette Cook Adamson, University Library, Cal Poly Pomona, 3801 W. Temple Ave, Pomona, CA 91768-4080. Fax 909-869-6922 or  $\cong$  909-869-2087.

■ Sandra Holtkamp of Holtkamp Books, a general used bookstore in St. Paul, Minnesota, contacted us. She has some three dozen 20th century books on wine that she would like to sell. For a list and prices, contact her via e-mail: HoltkampBk@aol.com or **\*** / fax 651-227-8057.

## **NEW WINE BOOKS of NOTE**

Our spirited Tendril in London, Hugo Dunn-Meynell, sent information on some recent releases. (See also Bo Simons' list of new wine books in this issue.) Hugo, in particular, notes "even in this era of proliferating wine literature, a new work on Madeira is an event" and highly recommends Madeira by Alex Liddell (Faber, 1998). He praises Italian Wines 1998, edited by Gambero Rosso (Slow Food/Grub Street), the first English language edition of the "most comprehensive guide to the estates producing the best that Italy makes." Included in its 600 pages are tasting notes on over 8,500 wines vintaged between 1970 and 1995. And, Tom Stevenson gets a salute for The New Sotheby's Wine Encyclopaedia, six hundred pages of complete satisfaction.

#### GWYNN'S BURGUNDY: A Follow-up

■ Special thanks to **Paul Cerza** for sending a photocopy of a Stephen Gwynn book in his collection. (See article by Gordon Jones on Gwynn and Burgundy in our July 1998 <u>Newsletter</u>.) Paul's heretofore unknown printing is a lovely, privately printed 22page booklet in hand-sewn wrappers entitled *Burgundy and Its Wines* (Reprinted by permission of the Proprietors of <u>Blackwood's Magazine</u>), inscribed by the author. A very nice treasure.



- 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. --

## An HISTORICAL APPRECIATION of SWEET WINES

## by Jeffrey Benson

[Continued from our last issue, we conclude Benson's distinguished essay on the wines of Sauternes "researched from numerous old and rare published literature." — Ed.]



he major sweet wines from Central Europe were fashionable in the numerous princely houses of the day, but it was difficult to persuade this clientele to buy from revolutionary France. Despite the efforts taken by several Sauternes producers after

1830 to promote quality, prices remained low until the enormous success of the 1847 Yquem at the Russian Court, after which the fashion for Sauternes was launched throughout Europe.

During this period the mildew disease known as Oidium swept through the vineyards least disposed to the production of sweet wines. At the same time Bordeaux trade was entering a period of great expansion under Napoleon III. The demand for sweet Sauternes very soon increased and prices showed a considerable rise (2000 - 4000 gold Francs per barrel). The production of dry wine in the Sauternes region virtually ceased except for those years when conditions were not favourable enough for the production of sweet wine.

The fame of the Sauternes was recognized with the Imperial Classification of 1855 which selected, for the first Universal Exhibition, only Sauternes, Bommes, Barsac, Preignac and Fargues from the entire Gironde area.

The 1855 classification preserved the "Grand Vins Blancs" appellation and the district appellations, but the merchants spread the use of the Sauternes appellation. Towards 1860 the Sauternes, Bommes and Barsac appellations were still being used; by 1870 they had been reduced to only Sauternes and Barsac, and after 1880 all sweet Bordeaux wines were referred to as Sauternes, and this eventually extended to wines from Russia, South Africa, Canada and California.

By the end of the 19th century, phylloxera and then mildew had run down the production of Sauternes wines, helped by the general social crises which were putting a brake on the wine trade. As a result some of the vineyards ceased to exist, for example the Pinaud growth at Sauternes. At first prices remained stable, but the return to normal production, due to improved techniques for disease control, led to a general slump after 1900. Legislation was then introduced to protect wine appellations.

With the divergent points of view of wine merchants who treated Sauternes like any other sweet white Graves wine, and consumers seeking a return to the old local classifications, producers in 1908 started up a wine producers' association for the Sauternes and Barsac areas, which required that the Sauternes appellation should be reserved for wine producers from the five following communes: Sauternes, Bommes, Barsac, Preignac and Fargues. However, Barsac kept its own appellation which was interchangeable with that of Sauternes.

Various lawsuits, then laws enacted between 1909 and 1936, defined the scope of Sauternes appellation and eliminated Sauternes products in neighboring communes not accepted by the Numerous laws and regulations association. prevented the Sauternes appellation being used, even in Sauternes itself, for wines from badly sited vineyards, wines which were not sweet enough, wines which did not come up to standard when they were tasted, and for wines which were over-produced, etc. From 1935 onwards, wines meeting all the necessary requirements carried on their label Appellation Sauternes Contrôlée. These wines still require a considerable amount of manual labour and therefore are not produced in large quantities.

In the present day the development of the sedentary way of life, the increased consumption of sugar, and the spread of central heating have reduced the special euphoria which used to be linked to drinking the sweet white wines of Western Europe. However, the less sophisticated way of life prevailing in Eastern Europe means that there is a much more developed market there. The regulations and limitations which still affect the many appellations, which are more or less in competition with each other, are the results of a laborious compromise between politicians and vinegrowers.

In spite of all the legislation and divergence in our social habits, it is the high reputation of a few great vintages that has given Sauternes its worldwide fame. The Sauternes vineyards are one of the wonders of the world, a wonder upheld by just a small number of dedicated winegrowers working under precarious and difficult conditions, due to the fact that they require the right climatic conditions to produce the *pourriture noble*, and in addition the appellation for the area only allows the production of twenty-five hectolitres per hectare, as compared to the Médoc which is allowed forty hectolitres per hectare. The variety and antiquity of some of the Sauternes properties somewhat hinders the adaptation to modern economic conditions, but they add charm to an area which is already picturesque and well merits a visit, indeed the connoisseur of wine should take the opportunity to sample its products.

A return to the economisation of energy resources, and to a more traditional approach to gastronomy, will mean that the great sweet white wines will be appreciated once again, but there is no need to wait for these more stoical times, for a fondness of the great wines of Sauternes can be considered a true sign of cultural refinement.

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Wine & Spirit Trade Record. Clarets & Sauternes, London, 1920.

J. Benson & A. Mackenzie. Sauternes, London, 1990 [of course, a must for suggested reading].

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# Zinfandel Bordeaux Portugal

# IN THE WINE LIBRARY

### by Bob Foster



Zinfandel, A Reference Guide to California Zinfandel by Cathleen Francisco, 1998. Wine Key Publications, Post Office Box 14999, Santa Rosa, CA. Softback, 274 pages, \$14.95.

This book is exactly what the title states. It is a reference guide to nearly 100 producers of Zinfandel. For each of these wineries there is a data block giving the address, the phone number and a fax number. This is followed by a section briefly describing the history of the winery and a listing of the owner and the winemaker. A short section sets forth the winery's guiding philosophy. Next come detailed blocks of information on the wines they released in 1997 (primarily from the 1995 vintage). The information includes appellation, vineyard designation, composition (varietals used in the final blend), vinification techniques and maturation. This is followed by the technical details on the wine such as alcohol, residual sugar, brix at harvest, harvest date, bottling date, release date, production and suggested retail price. Finally, a section giving the winemaker's notes and suggested food pairings is given.

The author is merely a data gatherer and offers no personal evaluations or comments on any of the wines. As such, she is no better than her sources. Sometimes the winemaker's comments are interesting, sometime little more than public relations babble. Consider the suggestion of the Heitz Wine Cellars on food pairing for its Zinfandel: "Heitz Cellars Zinfandel belongs on sociable dinner tables in all seasons with a wide array of foods." To say this is useless pablum may be an understatement. I wish the author had pushed her sources for more relevant, helpful material.

Having said all of this, the question arises as to what use a winelover can make of this book? It certainly presents a vast amount of data, but without tasting notes and containing only self-serving praise for each wine, there is little to spark an interest in trying a particular bottle. And since it is so specific as to certain wines, it will soon be outdated as the wines mentioned disappear from the retail shelves. On the other hand, it offers an interesting glimpse into current winemaking techniques that may prove useful in the future as an accounting of the winemaking activities in the 1990s. Recommended with reservations. The Bordeaux Atlas and Encyclopaedia of Châteaux by Hubrecht Duijker and Michael Broadbent. St. Martin's Press, New York, 1998. Hardback, 400 pages, \$50.

Bordeaux lovers rejoice! This book is the definitive work on the châteaux of Bordeaux. If you buy only one reference book this decade on Bordeaux, buy this book. It is superb!

It is as if the authors seamlessly melded together ideas from two earlier works: the maps from The World Atlas of Wine and the detailed factual material from Cocks et Feret's Bordeaux and Its Wines. The result is stunning. The book opens with short essays on Bordeaux in context to the world of wines, the zones and classifications, and the environment. The introduction finishes with an analysis, often overlooked in other works, on the wine trade in Bordeaux and its impact on prices. But the core of the book is the following twenty sections on each of the major producing regions within Bordeaux. For each section there is an opening essay, normally by Michael Broadbent, discussing the region, its history and geography, an overview of vintages in this century and a listing of his personal favorites. As is always true with Broadbent the material is lively and interesting with a warmth and charm. This is followed by a detailed map for each region, showing the location of each châteaux and its holdings. The maps are so detailed that virtually every building in each region is shown. The colors are vivid and the detail stunning. In accompanying text there is an entry for each châteaux. The entry includes its classification, the name of the owner, the phone number and fax, the total area, the total case production, the grapes used, and any second wines or other wines produced. This is followed by a short paragraph describing the wines that are produced. In reading this evaluative paragraph readers must remember that the authors are unabashed Bordeaux lovers not given to strident criticism. They seem to always find something nice to say about each producer. For example in the entry on Ch. Manyot (St. Emilion) they write, "Somewhat rustic wine, rather dour, a little bitter, with no very long finish-but it is aromatic." While there are many gorgeous photographs of the châteaux, there is nary a single wine label in the entire work.

Interspersed within these encyclopedic entries are data blocks with additional information on the region or on the grapes of the region or on sources for more information on a region. But often all that is given is the name and the telephone number for a local syndicat viticole. While such information might be quite useful for a bilingual Englishman calling from across the channel, it is of limited value for an American half a globe away. These small matters aside, this book is glorious. It is studded with excellent, readable maps, gorgeous color photos and top notch text. The best reference book on Bordeaux in decades. Very highly recommended.

Portugal's Wines & Winemakers, Port, Madeira & Regional Wines by Richard Mayson. The Wine Appreciation Guild, San Francisco, 1998. Hardback, 250 pages, \$34.95.

With the first edition of this book in 1993, the author Richard Mayson, a young British writer, established himself as the expert on the wines of Portugal. This new revised edition of the earlier work shows again the depths of his knowledge and understanding for this emerging region.

Given the escalating wine prices from better known regions, more and more wines from Portugal are turning up on American shelves and this book provides an excellent guide to the entire country.

Mayson begins with a brief overview of Portugal's history and its impact on the wine industry. He discusses the modern trends, including the rapid growth of single quinta wines (both in port and elsewhere in the country). He then has a section on the major vineyards, grapes and styles of wine produced throughout the country. There is a detailed and well illustrated section on winemaking techniques used in Portugal. Within this section there is a detailed discussion on port including the new techniques being introduced to make production less labor intensive. There are several detailed chapters on port production, producers and vintages; and the emerging regions, including the table wines of the Douro, are covered.

I found the final sections detailing the emerging table wine industry to be particularly intriguing. Mayson covers each of the regions, evaluating the major producers in a very frank and candid manner. He never hesitates to note poor wine making or absurdly high yields. An added plus for these regions are short sections on places to stay and places to dine (with notes on particularly enticing regional dishes). Portugal is a region to watch and Mayson is the man to chronicle its emergence. There is a wealth of solid, interesting information here. Highly recommended.

[Bob Foster, a founding member of the Wayward Tendrils, writes a regular wine book review column for the <u>California Grapevine</u>. We appreciate their generous permission to reprint Bob's reviews. — Ed.]

## WANTED for 1999: ARTICLES!!

The *Newsletter* asks Wayward Tendril members to consider submitting articles on the following suggested subjects. (The Editor has a file on many of these — contact her.)

- Cocks & Féret—the authors and the editions of their "Bordeaux bible."
- Wine Museums and their Literature/Publications (Martini, Christian Bros/Seagrams, Harvey's, Mouton-Rothschild, Cooper-Hewitt, Beaune Museum of Wine, Bratislava, etc.).

Fêtes de Vevay and the Programs.

Nicolas Wine Lists—the story, the issues, the artists. Ampelographies.

Wine Countries: A Selective Bibliography of Wine Literature, country by country. We have covered Madeira ...we should begin now on the rest of the world! Choose a country and send a checklist.

Collecting Wine Ephemera —Stamps, Postcards, pre-20th century periodical illustrations, & such.

- Book Auctions—Buying & Selling; important past auctions (Schraemli, Simon, Crahan, Lambert, Fritsch ...).
- Wine and Grape Book Illustrators.
- Wine in Art.

Wine & Early Medicine.

- Writings on Wine in Antiquity.
- Wine Libraries of the World (personal, private or public).
- Wine Author Series—continue our coverage of wine authors: select your author and tell us about him/her, with a checklist of works.
- Crossword Puzzle: Wine Books, Authors, Quotes.
- Wine Book Reviews: New books, old books, rare books.

OR, ANY OTHER TOPIC THAT COMES TO MIND!

Editor Note: A while back Tendril Millard Cohen told a little story in the W & F Society Newsletter, as he reminded the members "this is your newsletter" and as editor / publisher he could only work with what he received. As a friendly jostle for us Tendrils, we reprint the story entitled THAT'S NOT MY JOB. "There were four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done."



## SOME NEW WINE BOOKS: A List Compiled by

**Bo Simons** 

[Founding Tendril Bo Simons is wine librarian at the Sonoma County Wine Library in Healdsburg. — Ed.]

Aged in Oak : The Story of the Santa Barbara County Wine Industry. Otis L. Graham, Jr., et al. Santa Barbara: Graduate Program in Public Historical Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara, Santa Ynez, Calif. Published by Santa Barbara County Vintners' Association, 1998.

> Handsome trade paperback focusing on the Santa Barbara wine industry.

Beckett, Fiona. Wine by Style: A Practical Guide to Choosing Wine by Flavour, Weight and Color. London: Mitchell Beazley, 1998.

> Ms. Beckett, a British wine journalist, takes four basic white wine and five basic red wine styles and explores the world of wine through them.

The Barrel and the Wine II: Scientific Advances of a Traditional Art: Recent Findings on Aging and Stabilizing Wine Barrels. Napa, CA: Seguin Moreau USA, 1995.

The Barrel and the Wine III: The Taste of Synergy: Continued Study Regarding the Influence of Oak and Barrel Aging of Wines. Napa, CA: Seguin Moreau USA, 1998.

> I include these partly out of guilt. In an earlier offering in the Wayward Tendrils Newsletter, I cited, in a bibliography on oak in wine making, the first volume of this series which came out in 1994. I was unaware of the second two volumes. Then someone in Trieste, Italy, saw the bibliography on the Sonoma County Wine Library's web site. http://www.sonoma.ca.us/wine.html and called me, expressing interest in The Barrel and the Wine. Trying to get a copy for the man in Trieste, I called Seguin Moreau USA in Napa, and was made aware of the two subsequent volumes. These are great compilations of technical information, of interest mainly to professional wine makers.

Chappellet, Molly. *Gardens of the Wine Country*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1998.

Several years ago Molly Chappellet came out with A Vineyard Garden, a lavish wine-lifestyle book centered around her garden at Chappellet Vineyards in Napa Valley. In this new offering she explores other vineyard gardens.

Cusick, Heidi Haughy. *Mendocino: The Ultimate Wine and Food Lovers Guide*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1997.

> Cusick looks lightly at the Mendocino wine country. It is interesting that she missed my favorite Mendocino winery while Hugh Johnson (see below), with a world-wide focus, included it.

Johnson, Hugh. *The Modern Encyclopedia of Wine*. 4th Edition. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998.

The usual professional and complete offering from Johnson.

Johnson, Linda. The Wine Collector's Handbook: Storing and Enjoying Wine at Home. New York: The Lyons Press, 1997.

Kennedy, Philip F. The Wine Song in Classical Arabic Poetry: Abu Nuwas and the Literary Tradition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997. For the serious scholar only.

Markham, Dewey. 1855: A History of the Bordeaux Classification. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1998.

Mayson, Richard. Portugal's Wine and Wine Makers: Port, Madeira and Regional Wines. New Revised Edition. San Francisco: Wine Appreciation Guild, 1998.

> Another edition of Mayson's knowledgeable look at Port and other Portuguese wines.

McGinty, Brian. Strong Wine: The Life and Legend of Agoston Haraszthy. Stanford, CA: Stanford Univer-sity Press, 1998.

Mondavi, Robert. *Harvests of Joy: My Passion for Excellence*. With Paul Chutkow. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1998.

Mondavi's autobiography reveals his engaging personality.

Mondavi, Robert, and Margrit Biever Mondavi. Seasons of the Vineyard: Celebrations and Recipes from the Robert Mondavi Winery. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

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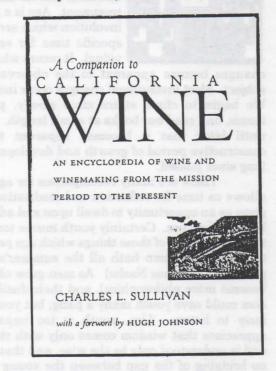
> This will be the handbook that all turn to for quick reference on the California wine industry.

Ulin, Robert C. Vintages and Traditions: An Ethnohistory of Southwest French Wine Cooperatives. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996. Wine: Nutrition and Therapeutic Benefits. Tom R. Watkins, Editor. American Chemical Society Symposium Series, Number 661. Washington, DC: American Chemical Society, 1997.

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> Zraly's fourth edition of this popular work. It's the one I usually reach for when someone wants a quick introduction to wine.

Zraly, Rosemary. Champagne Uncorked! An Insider's Guide to Champagne. Nashville: Favorite Recipes Press, 1998.



## The MAD RIDDLER Informs ...

i just met a visitor from new Orleans
he told me that people from the ninth parish there
are called YATS because they greet you with a loud WHERE YAT DAHLIN
i told him that i just read the famous new Orleans biography of RUBY YAT by omar kayam
he wasn't impressed

[COURTESY of GORDON JONES]

## BALM FOR THE AUTUMNAL YEARS

## by Salvatore P. Lucia, M.D.\*

[This article by Dr. Lucia (1902-1984) originally appeared in the May, 1963 issue of <u>Western Medicine</u>. He gives an interesting look at some early medical writers who encouraged the daily use of wine. - Ed.]



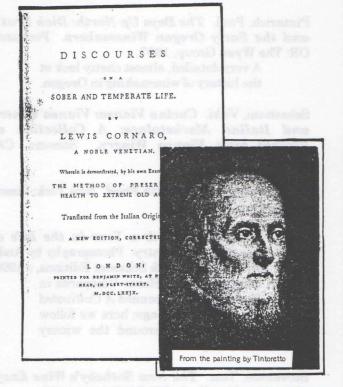
HAT IS AGE? Is one as old as his arteries or as old as his desires? Many have discoursed on the subject, its diseases, and its methods of treatment. Age is a period of involution which arrives at a specific time for each individual. It occurs when senile

changes become apparent to the observer or the subject. Most involutional changes occur insidiously. We begin to climb stairs more slowly, play less tennis, and read our books at arm's length. It is not until later that it becomes apparent that the constructive period of growth and development has long since passed.

There are many recompenses for aging — it allows us time for reflection and meditation, and it gives us an opportunity to dwell upon and admire the bounty of nature. Certainly youth moves too fast for the appreciation of those things which age permits us to enjoy. "Autumn hath all the summer's fruitful pleasure." (Thomas Nashe) As men grow older they become more philosophical, and their distilled wisdom could save youth many a pang, but youth is too busy to listen. Also, youth is too impatient to appreciate that wisdom comes only with the years, and is understood only by the wise, and that there is no bridging of the gap between the young and the old. The appraisal of youth by the elderly is more accurate, although it may be intolerant, than the appraisal of age by youth, which is impossible. Therefore, age should take its rewards with proper understanding and with the knowledge that only the elderly can appreciate age, and that the hasty decisions of youth are inconsequential. The braying of youth is definite evidence of insecurity; the measured silence of age, the acknowledgment of its humility.

Jane Ellen Harrison said: "Old age, believe me, is a good and pleasant time. It is true that you are gently shouldered off the stage, but then you are given *such* a comfortable front stall as spectator, and, if you have really played your part, you are more content to sit down and watch." It may be that age should also be defined as the time for contemplation.

After the decision of what constitutes age and what diseases are characteristic of it, we come to the consideration of care and management. Nearly all geriatricians are in accord that older people do not take kindly to radical methods of treatment. William R. Houston, in that provocative monograph *The Art* of *Treatment*, said: "Generally speaking, aggressive treatments are not of good counsel for elderly people." Sufficient fluid, food, warmth, sleep, a little alcohol, and a mild sedative are enough. The phrase, "a little alcohol" brings me to my subject: *Balm for the Autumnal Years*.



Let me begin with the story of Luigi Cornaro, whose detailed report of his personal experience with the use of wine made him famous enough to be granted a place in the Encyclopedia Britannica. Cornaro was a Venetian nobleman who lived from 1467 to 1566. His youth was rather free and dissolute, and at the age of 40, after a severe illness, his medical advisors predicted an early demise, unless he mended his ways. He reduced his diet to a daily allowance of 12 ounces of solid food and 14 ounces of wine, and later further reduced his solid food, until at times he was taking only a liberal measure of wine and an egg daily; he found that he could support his life and strength readily on this fare. At the age of 83 he wrote his treatise on The Sure and Certain Method of Attaining a Long and Healthful Life, the English translation of which went through numerous editions. This successful book was followed by three

others on the same subject, composed at the ages of 86, 91, and 96, respectively. The English author Addison said of them that they are written "with such a spirit of cheerfulness, religion, and good sense, as are the natural concomitants of temperance and sobriety." Cornaro died at Padua late in his nineties.

His two premises, that older people need little solid food and that wine is of benefit to them, have received some scientific corroboration. It is known that after a period of growth is passed, it is quite unnecessary to eat large quantities of food, and it has been demonstrated that the beneficial action of alcoholic beverages on the body in general and particularly on the blood vessels and heart in the senescent are more effective than many medications. Cornaro said that he found his daily glass of wine a necessity, and when he did not have it, he felt an inner uneasiness which gradually developed into a distinct feeling of being unwell. He further states that before the new vintage, when the preceding year's wine had become scarce, he acquired a facultative ullage (the air space above the wine enclosed in a cask), so to speak, and he became so weak and languid that his physicians declared he could not possibly survive many days and gave him up; but with the advent of the new vintage, and taking the same quantity of its wine, he very quickly recovered his usual strength and spirits.

This is reminiscent of another story told of an old monk, Brother Francois, who lived a happy life and enjoyed a generous daily measure of wine. Following a change of abbots, the new abbot, Brother Vincent, reduced the daily allowance of his charges; whereupon Brother Francois became unhappy, grew weak, and finally died. There was no demonstrable cause of death, but one of the monks suggested that Francois' death was due to too much ullage.

Dr. M. W. Thewlis has said: "Brandy or wine will usually improve the digestion in the aged if taken a short time before eating. Old people who do not take much exercise often suffer from weak digestion, and alcohol will improve it ... Many old persons suffer from indefinite symptoms which do not point to any definite disease ... This is particularly observed in town-dwellers who lead a sedentary life, spending most of their time indoors. In these cases wines or brandy, taken in small doses with food, will suppress many of these disagreeable symptoms." Either as a food, or medicine, or for its comfort-giving qualities, alcohol, properly administered, is one of the greatest provisions for the journey through old age. Some physicians even consider it absolutely necessary. Reflectively, Gratiano, in the Merchant of Venice, says:

## "With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come, And let my liver rather heat with wine, Than my heart cool with mortifying groans."

The artful physician must study his preparations of alcohol as he does those of digitalis, and he must accord to his study of wines, ales, and spirits the same serious attention he devotes to diet and hygiene.

Wine is a "ready-energy" food which requires the minimal metabolic effort on the part of the body. It not only brings warmth and a roseate outlook to its aged host, but it increases the flow of the digestive juices, acts as a diaphoretic and as a diureticfunctions apt to be defective in old age. Wine is quickly absorbed, utilized, and excreted - all of which are desirable effects - and because of its agreeable taste, it is pleasurable too. The oftenquoted Armand Trousseau regarded it as "the milk of the aged" in recognition of the fact that the beneficial physiologic reactions and effects of wine have long been appreciated. In his 1828 work [Dictionnaire des Alimens, Paris] Dr. Gardeton praised it by saying, "Wine is salutary for old persons, and feeble persons, because it strengthens and fortifies them greatly. In moderation, it dissipates melancholia and produces sleep." A century later (1928) Harlow Brooks commented that in disorders of the myocardium in old age, especially those associated with tachycardia, considerable relief may be afforded by the discreet use of alcoholic beverages. That these afford comfort to the patient should alone suffice as a reason for their use, provided of course that they do no harm. We may thus not only prolong life and comfort, but in addition materially add to the output of work in old age.

The nineteenth century English physician, Francis Anstie, in his book, On the Uses of Wine in Health and Disease [1870], said: "As a dietetic aid in the debility of old age, the more potent wines are even more remarkably useful [than in youth]. More particularly in the condition of sleeplessness, attended often with slow and inefficient digestion. and a tendency to stomach cramps, a generous and potent wine is often of great value. One very important effect of the highly etherized wines, which are at the same time of rather high alcoholic strength, is their power to produce tranquil and prolonged sleep in aged persons. Considering how simple a prescription this is (four glasses of sherry daily - one-half with some light food at supper time) it is surprising how often its value is ignored by medical men, though the popular custom of a nightcap or toddy for old people, even when they have been little accustomed to alcohol in their younger days, shows the existence of a need of this

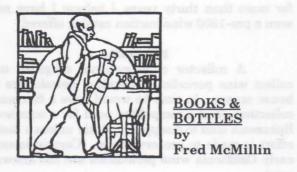
kind." Later, physician Sir William Roberts (1897) corroborated this impression: "Persons who during their youth and prime have only used alcohol occasionally, or have abstained entirely from it, find advantage in their declining years in a more systematic use of wine or spirits." Sir Humphrey Rolleston, who advised against the excessive use of alcoholic drinks, did have to admit in his monograph Medical Aspects of Old Age, that "Many centenarians, perhaps from inherent vitality, have been able to take alcohol in quantities that would be too much for ordinary mortals." He further stated: "No doubt total abstinence may suit some better and others worse. and while it certainly eliminates the problem of what is moderate, it may deprive some aged people of the help and comfort they would thus gain." Raymond Pearl, who harbored the same prejudice as Rolleston, had to admit after a detailed study, that longevity was not influenced negatively by the consumption of alcoholic beverages.

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Even persons who otherwise would prohibit the use of alcoholic beverages are forced to admit that wine is good for the aged. The Yale group (now at Rutgers University) which has been working on alcoholism, and which therefore carries a bias against the possible beneficial effects of alcoholic beverages, has come to a conclusion with which it would seem proper to close. Stated by doctors Howard Haggard and E. M. Jellinek, it is: "There is one condition, however, in which the utility of alcoholic beverages, in suitable moderation and low concentrations, is generally admitted and that is the bodily discomforts brought about by old age. The desire for food is increased; there is a mild euphoria, a cheerfulness, and decrease of anxiety; the feeling of chilliness is lessened by the flow of blood to the skin, and the mild sedative action of the alcohol relieves some of the aches and pains. Very small amounts of alcoholic beverages may add greatly to the comfort and peace of mind of the aged."

\*Professor of Medicine and Preventive Medicine and Chairman of the Department of Preventive Medicine at the University of California School of Medicine, San Francisco; Lecturer of Medical History and Bibliography, Dr. Lucia has been interested in the medical and nutritional value of wine for many years and is the author of "Wine as Food and Medicine." His interest has led him to a wide search of the medical literature concerned with wine and he has established a 15,000-item bibliography on the medical aspects of wine. His practical application of wine in medicine is based on his scholarly knowledge as well as on years of clinical experience.

[Editor's note: Professor Lucia, in a "major bibliographic effort dealing with an assembly of references relative to the effect of wine ... on ... the human body," (Introduction, Wine & the Digestive System) lists, in his several monographs on the medicinal therapy of wine, many authors and titles familiar to wine book collectors. He often gives brief biographical sketches of the authors and describes the wine-related medical contribution of the cited work. See his Wine as Food and Medicine (New York, 1954), History of Wine as Therapy (Philadelphia, 1964), and Wine and the Digestive System (San Francisco, 1970) for informative and valuable references to numerous works on wine, including those of Arnald of Villanova, William Turner, Tobias Whitaker, John Croft, William Sandford, Peter Shaw, Alexander Henderson, Thomas McMullen, Charles Tovey, James Denman, Edward Beckwith, Francis Anstie, Gaston Derys, Sir Edward Barry, George Saintsbury, H. Warner Allen, C. Walter Berry, Dr. Robert Druitt, Pliny, Columella, and an anonymous 18th century work entitled Observations Concerning the Medical Virtues of Wine in a Letter to Dr. Buchan, late 1785, by a Gentleman of the Faculty (London, 1786).] In his popular book, Wine and Your Well-Being (New York, 1971), Lucia provides, in addition to the medical references, a wine book list that "contains most of the titles presently available from publishers." As to the 15,000-item bibliography mentioned in the above note, your Editor has never been able to locate a copy. Does such a reference document exist?]



# CALIFORNIA'S CENTENARY WINE MEN

The Book: Robert Mondavi, *Harvests of Joy. My Passion for Excellence*, with Paul Chutkow. New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1998, \$27.

- 18th Century Father Junipero Serra, born 1713. His team brought the first wine vines into California and, about 1782, the Spanish missionaries made the State's first wine.
- 19th Century Count Agoston Haraszthy, born 1812. A man of great vision and action: he brought 100,000 European cuttings to California in his efforts to promote the planting of varietals, especially Zinfandel, that were superior to Father Serra's Mission grape. He founded the State's raisin industry with the introduction of the Muscat of Alexandria.
- 20th Century Robert Gerald Mondavi, born 1913. No other California vintner has come close to his combination of technical improvements (French oak, cold fermentation, etc.) and promotional achievements (the 364-page book covers this nicely).

## Why people call me "Rapid Robert"

In his own words, the essence of Robert Mondavi: "Too many corporate executives look for reasons to say no to new ideas. This is wrong. Business involves constant, unavoidable risk. Sometimes I decide right on the spot, in a matter of seconds. This can drive people around me nuts."

"Oh, how my way of working used to exasperate the [great] André Tchelistcheff! André was a scientist, patient, methodical. But as a business man, I needed answers I could implement today, now, this minute." André recalled, 'Bob came to me during the crush at Beaulieu ... excited, looking around with open eyes, absorbing everything. Quicksilver. He was quicksilver right from the beginning. He was very insistent with his ideas. Bob was too speedy for me." Another time, Baron Philippe de Rothschild invited Bob to meet him in Hawaii during a wholesalers convention. Bob went to the Baron's room, and was "totally taken aback" when Philippe asked if they could work together on a Cabernet Sauvignon project. Yet, in forty-five minutes they had agreed on a joint-venture which we know today as Opus One, certainly one of the most celebrated of California wines.

And then, "the crisis bit deep" (p.283): "I was just turning eighty years old. My company was in turmoil." Sorry, but to find out how Robert Gerald handled this one, you must get the book!

The Bottles: Those Mondavi decisions included the production of wine in many more areas than the Napa Valley: the Central Coast of California, the Midi of France, central Chile, etc. Here are the best of the Mondavi group from each area, recently tasted by my panel.

- 7th Chile, '95 Caliterra C.S., \$12.
- 6th Woodbridge Winery, '93 Portacinco (dessert), \$15.
- 5th France (Midi), Vichon, '96 Mediterranean Syrah, \$10.
- 4th Italian varietals grown in California: La Famiglia, Pinot Grigio, \$16.
- 3rd CA Central Coast, '97 Merlot, \$11.
- 2nd Napa Valley Reserve Chard., \$30.
- Winner Napa Valley, '95 Opus One, \$100.

**Postscript:** Who will be the leading California wine man of the 21st century? If history is any guide, we have two clues. First, watch the birth announcements in 2012 and 2013: the previous "centenary wine men" were born in 1713, 1812 and 1913. Second, check the candidates when they hit their fifties. Father Serra was fifty-four when he was chosen to take the cross (and the first vines) into California. Agoston was fifty when he catalogued those 100,000 vines from Europe and published his landmark *Grape Culture*, *Wines and Winemaking* in 1862. Robert Mondavi was fifty-two when he decided to found his own winery, which is so well documented in his autobiography, *Harvests of Joy*.



#### VINOUS COLLECTIBLES

### by Roy Brady

[Wine lover Roy Brady (1918-1998) was a consummate collector, organizer and writer. Some time ago he gave your Editor, for use in our <u>Newsletter</u>, several typed manuscripts of his thoughts on collecting. We shall enjoy them, piece by piece, and raise a toast to Brady. The following article combines two essays, one written in 1975, the other in 1983. — Ed.]



ssociated with wine is a host of highly collectible objects. Almost anyone should be able to find something to his taste. Some objects are common and inexpensive, some are rare and costly.

#### BOOKS

Books come first to mind. It is no great expense to keep up with the best of the current books, but collecting old books is another thing entirely. In the last couple of decades the classics of wine have appreciated twenty to a hundred fold. The highest price I have seen for a book was for *Grapes* and *Grape Vines* handsomely printed by Bosqui of San Francisco in 1873. It is one of the rarest of wine books, less than ten copies being known, and it fetched \$13,500.

#### CATALOGS

Old wine merchants' catalogs can be very interesting as a picture of another day, and older ones are sometimes sumptuously printed. They turn up in antiquarian bookshops at generally reasonable prices. Many interesting examples are in the \$5 to \$25 range. Restaurant wine lists are good, too.

Early nursery catalogs of grapevines were occasionally beautifully illustrated and in a few cases were practically treatises on the grape, even to having hard covers. Most notable were those of Bush & Son & Meissner's Bushberg Vineyards and Grape Nurseries near St. Louis in the late 19th century and of William R. Prince of New York earlier in the century. I believe the biggest collection of nursery catalogs is in the U.S.D.A. library at Beltsville, Maryland. Equally interesting are old, illustrated catalogs of winemaking equipment. Twenty years ago one could, with persistence, find a good many catalogs of these various kinds, but they have become very scarce and correspondingly expensive. Auction catalogs, too, are interesting but old ones seem to be Although Christie's has been exceedingly rare. holding wine auctions since the 1700s, and although I have been reading antiquarian bookseller's catalogs

for more than thirty years, I believe I have never seen a pre-1900 wine auction catalog offered.

#### **EPHEMERA**

A collector of exceptional diligence could collect wine periodicals including newsletters and house organs. In time he would have a fascinating collection—and a compelling need for a warehouse. Ephemera tend to disappear quickly unless a distinct effort is made to preserve them. Certain issues of early California wine periodicals are not known to exist.

#### WINE LABELS

Label collecting has grown rapidly from practically nothing half a dozen years ago. It can be a pleasant record of ones own drinking or it can take a more systematic course. One might try for a complete collection of Napa Valley labels or even of California labels. One can go for long vintage runs of particular labels. I have, for example, every Dom Pérignon label since the first vintage of 1921 and all Beaulieu Vineyards Private Reserve Cabernet labels since 1939. Enormous efforts have gone into label design in recent times, and many delightful labels have emerged (along with even more poor specimens). Labels, from Italy to Australia, have gone modern.

#### PRINTS

Prints make a very attractive collectible and can be found at almost any price level. But, one should be aware of his dealer before laying out any substantial sums. I was offered an "early 16th century" print which didn't look right. An expert put it ca.1800. The leading collection is in the San Francisco Wine Museum [subsequently sold to Seagram's, now dispersed — Ed.].

#### BOTTLE TICKETS

Bottle tickets have been collected for a long time and have a literature of their own (which also may be collected). They are the little silver or enamel tags bearing wine names and intended to be hung around the necks of decanters. Antiques tickets are in great demand and the finest examples fetch thousands of dollars.

#### CORKS

Some people collect branded corks. One might keep label, cork, and capsule together, but that would be a troublesome collection to house. Back before the German wine law of 1971 simplified things, I began a collection of German capsules. Some of the great estates like Schloss Johannisberg and Schloss Vollrads had elaborate coding systems to identify the level of the wine by the colors of the capsule. Our hyper-active cleaning lady threw out the budding collection so I decided to quit. [Brady's study from that time on was off-limits to the dedicated cleaning lady. — Ed.]

#### CORKSCREWS

Corkscrews have become so popular a collectible that they regularly appear at auctions. Several books have appeared, and there is an international society of collectors. Again, certain antique examples can run into a good deal of money.

## GLASSWARE

Wine glasses and decanters are a related field. Antiques are both expensive and difficult to house. Even modern glasses and decanters can absorb a fair amount of money, but one can, at least, have the pleasure of using them—if one has a strongenough stomach. I once saw two guests in a friend's home clink Baccarat glasses together breaking both, and, incidentally, dropping a hundred dollars worth of old Bordeaux on the tablecloth.

Though I do not know of any devotees, an interesting and inexpensive variety of glass collecting would be of the various special event glasses inscribed with the name and, it is to be hoped, the date of the event. Many fairs, tastings, restaurants, clubs, ships, and suchlike have their own glasses. There are many dated glasses for the meetings of the American Society of Enologists and graceful copas for the sherry *vendemia* in Jerez every September.

### POSTAL

I don't know of anyone else who does it, but because I receive a lot of mail with postal meters of a vinous theme I began saving them. There is also a fair number of postage stamps with wine or grape themes —though none American.

#### **OLD WINERY EQUIPMENT**

Old winemaking equipment is probably best left to museums, or wineries, since it is scarce and takes up a lot of room.

#### VINEYARD SOILS

A friend started a collection of vineyard soils, but I think he has dropped the project. In little phials on the mantel the soil of Romanée-Conti doesn't look any more exciting than that of east Bakersfield. Besides, there is probably some dreadful penalty for appropriating *la belle terre de France.*  The wine lover with collecting instincts has a wide choice of things to collect. They run from things that would make decorative little collections (a run of vintages of Lafite corks mounted on a plaque and hung on the cellar or dining room wall) to things that would make a very serious collection (rare books). Anyone can find some collectible suited to his tastes and resources. Consider the following.

### PUBLICATIONS

- 1. Books (current, rare, German, ampelographies, etc.)
- 2. Pamphlets
- 3. Postal cards (showing wineries, vineyards)
- 4. Wine merchant catalogs
- 5. Restaurant wine lists
- 6. Menus
- 7. Equipment catalogs
- 8. Advertising brochures
- 9. Maps
- 10. Cartoons (cut from magazines & newspapers)
- 11. Magazines
- 12. Ephemeral magazines (newsletters, winery house organs, merchant's periodicals, club newsletters, etc.)
- 13. Articles (cut from magazines & papers; particularly interesting if organized and from obscure sources that would not easily be found in the future.)

#### LABELS

- 1. From wines drunk
- 2. All possible
- 3. California
- 4. Bordeaux
- 5. Old (very scarce)
- 6. Etc. (the possibilities are boundless)

#### BOTTLES

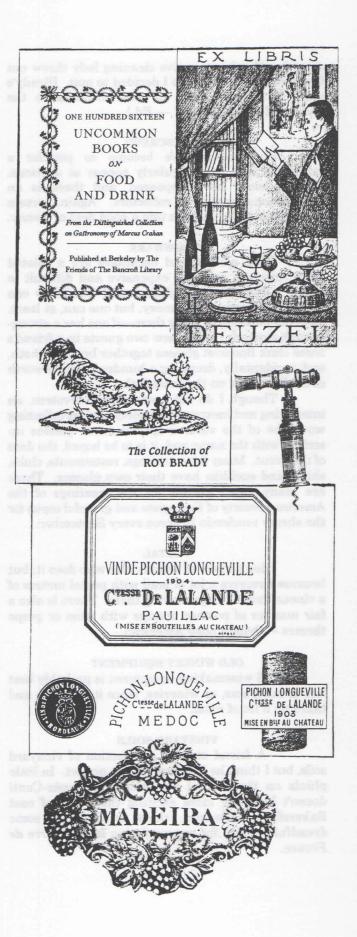
- 1. From memorable occasions, signed by participants
- 2. Old, with labels if possible
- 3. Stenciled vintage Madeira bottles
- 4. Magnums and larger
- 5. All classified Bordeaux
- 6. Etc.
- SOILS or ROCKS from FAMOUS VINEYARDS
- PICTURES (Self-taken)
- 1. Wineries
- 2. Wine people
- 3. Vines and vineyards
- CORKS (Branded)

Vinous Collectibles, cont'd.

- CAPSULES
- PRINTS / PAINTINGS
- BOOKPLATES with WINE THEME
- CORKSCREWS
- **BOTTLE TICKETS**
- SERVING UTENSILS
- 1. Glasses
- 2. Decanters
- 3. Coasters
- 4. Wine buckets and cisterns
- 5. Funnels
- 6. Etc.
- BRANDED WOOD CASE ENDS
- OLD VITICULTURAL TOOLS
- WOOD from VINES of FAMOUS VINEYARDS
- AUTOGRAPHS of WINE PEOPLE
- POSTAGE STAMPS with WINE or GRAPE INTEREST
- SEDIMENT (I wouldn't have thought of this myself, but I know a man who saves the sediment from notable old wines.)
- EXPERIENCES
- 1. Tasting (e.g., all the classified Médocs)
- 2. Travel (e.g., every winemaking town on the Mosel)



"We don't have any!"





# WAYWARD TENDRILS NEWSLETTER: INDEX VOL.8 (1998)

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> OLD BOOKS ARE BEST What though the print be not so bright, The paper dark, the binding slight. Our author, be he dull or sage, Returning from that distant age So lives again, we say of right: OLD BOOKS ARE BEST. — Beverly Chew

