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EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN

A Small Inconsequential Look at the Vinous Consequences of San Diego County, California

by Gordon Jones

[Gordon and Dorothy Jones have been collecting books on wine and American history for several decades. Recently, they pulled one of the more obscure titles from their bookshelf and now favor us with this legendary essay. — Ed.]

 $\mathbf{T}_{ ext{HE FOLLOWING}}$ obituary appeared late 1998 in the San Francisco Chronicle:

Gasper Ferrara, Sr.

A funeral Mass will be conducted today in southern California for Gasper Ferrara, Sr., one of the State's pioneering winegrape growers.

Mr. Ferrara died Wednesday in Escondido after a long illness. He was 74.

Mr. Ferrara farmed grapes and made wine in San Diego County, the State's oldest viticultural region. He grew a variety of grapes and made wines from all of them at his family winery in Escondido but achieved particular renown with his Muscat of Alexandria wines.

"Poppa helped put Escondido on the map with Muscat of Alexandria," said Ferrara's son, Gasper Ferrara, Jr. "We still farm the grape today."

Gasper Ferrara, Jr. said the family will continue to run the winery in the traditions established by his father.

The funeral Mass will be at 10 a.m. at the Church of St. Timothy in Escondido.

It seems appropriate that Mr. Ferrara's Mass would be held at St. Timothy's (use a little wine for thy stomach's sake).

The Muscat grape should have put Escondido on the map long ago. In 1891 there were 177 grape growers in San Diego County; of these growers, 168 grew Muscat, but not one of them was listed as making wine. The Muscat was the favored raisin grape of the day, and the San Diego area was a major producer. About this time there began to be heavy plantings of Thompson Seedless grapes in Fresno County to the north, and ultimately the Muscat lost the raisin war.

Meanwhile, back in San Diego County, there were nine growers who planted various other wine grapes. Eight of these are listed as making wine. Of particular interest is Mr. G.F. Merriam of Twin Oaks, owner of the Chula Vista Winery, who had sixty-five acres planted to vines. He considerably outdid his fellow growers as his acreage encompassed forty-five varieties of grapes.



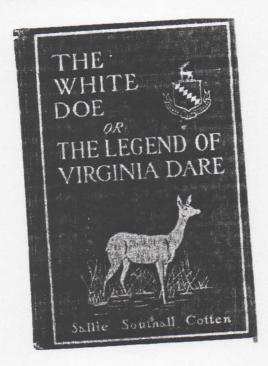
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A period book extolling California (J.J. Owen, 1899) printed a full-page picture illustrating "The largest vineyard in the State, San Diego County." Unfortunately, there was no further identification.

The county's vinous activity declined after the early boom. While the end of Prohibition saw a small revival, according to wine historian Charles Sullivan only Ferrara and Bernardo wineries survived, and the wine acreage in 1973 was but eightyseven acres. "... a most unlikely looking wine book"

Notwithstanding, San Diego was kind to my wife and me. In a bookstore here we found a most unlikely looking wine book — The White Doe: The Fate of Virginia Dare. An Indian Legend. by Sallie Southall Cotten (Philadelphia, 1901). It is a small octavo, eighty-nine pages, bound in dark red cloth. The front cover and spine are printed in white: title, author, a doe, and a coat of arms. Rubber stamped on the fly-leaf is "COMPLIMENTS OF GARRETT & CO. PIONEER AMERICAN WINE GROWERS, NORFOLK, VA. PRODUCERS OF THE FAMOUS VIRGINIA DARE BRAND OF SCUPPERNONG WINE."



The book, along with the legend, is practically a history of the Scuppernong grape. And Garrett & Co. made the most of that grape using it to make Virginia Dare the largest selling American wine prior to Prohibition. This volume was apparently given away between 1905 and 1913 when Garrett & Co. was headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia.

Garrett & Co. was the creation of Paul Garrett (1863-1940). In 1865 Garrett's father and uncle purchased the Medoc Vineyard, the first commercial vineyard in North Carolina, established in 1835. At fourteen Garrett quit school and went to work at the winery. Later he became the winery salesman, traveling through the South, giving tastes of Scuppernong wine to saloon keepers. He sold so successfully that in 1900 he disposed of the winery's entire output, thereby earning a very large commission - on which the company defaulted.

Under the circumstances, Garrett left and

established his own winery at Littleton and then at Chockoyotte, North Carolina, under the name of Garrett & Co. The next nineteen years saw Garrett & Co. grow to include wineries in North Carolina, Virginia, New York, California, Ohio, and Missouri, with a total capacity of ten million gallons.

"Scuppernong ... the finest wine in the world"

It was during this time that Garrett thought that Scuppernong was "the finest wine in the world" but he realized that the name meant nothing to potential customers. He tried spelling it Escapernong. He tried Minnehaha and then Pocahontas with no great improvement. At last, because Scuppernong was the first American wine, he named it for the first American child born of English parents -Virginia Dare. Virginia Dare wine, both red and white, became the most popular wine in America.

Then came Prohibition. Garrett held on with Virginia Dare Tonic, grape drink, flavoring extract, and grape concentrate for home winemaking.

In 1931 he was a leader in the group of surviving wineries called Fruit Industries, Inc. that produced a concentrate called Vine-Glo. Full-page advertisements offered home delivery and guaranteed consumer satisfaction - Port, Virginia Dare, Muscatel, Tokay, Sauterne, Riesling, Claret, Burgundy — it's legal! Unfortunately, the Drys also saw the ads and brought pressure in Washington. The Fruit Industries office in San Francisco received an official government telephone call, "Quit, now, today, as of this minute." So died Vine-Glo.

When the 18th amendment was repealed in 1933 Garrett was the only vintner prepared to sell his wine in every "wet" state.

Scuppernong grapes had become difficult to obtain in the quantity needed, so Virginia Dare became more and more bland with the blending of New York and California grapes. Still, the name was so well known that it sold 600,000 cases a year and provided great financial success for Paul Garrett until his death in 1940. The company eventually disappeared, and the Virginia Dare brand is now

owned by Canandaigua.

Now, back to the book and its rather strange coverage of the Scuppernong grape. The first part is a review of early American history prior to the founding of Jamestown in 1607. The author was a great admirer of Sir Walter Raleigh. (His coat of arms appears on the cover.) She recounts how Raleigh was given a grant by Queen Elizabeth for all the land from Nova Scotia to Florida in 1584. That land was then called Virginia, for the Virgin Queen. His first exploratory expedition was also in 1584 under the command of Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe who landed on Roanoke Island on the coast of what is now North Carolina. A failed attempt at colonization was tried in 1585; in 1587 a larger effort was made and a colony was established.

The Legend of Virginia Dare

It was in the Roanoke colony in 1587 that Virginia Dare was born, the first person of English ancestry to be born in the New World.

Mysteriously, by the end of 1590 the colony had vanished leaving only the word Croatoan carved on a tree. It was believed that they had become a part of an Indian tribe with a similar name. However, it was never proved, and they became known as the Lost Colony. The fate of Virginia Dare was never learned, but from this tragedy came what is probably the first American legend, "The White Doe."

It is a tale of Virginia Dare belonging to the Indian tribe. She is loved by a young brave, Okisko. She is also loved by Chico, an evil old magician. Chico turns Virginia into a white deer. Okisko hires Wanaudon, the magician of Pomouik, to make a magic arrow that will restore Virginia to her old self.

A white-doe hunt takes place. Okisko has his magic arrow, but there is another hunter, Wanchese, who knows it takes a silver arrow to kill a white doe. Both men shoot at the same time; both arrows hit the white doe. Before their very eyes the doe turns into Virginia, with the arrows piercing her heart. She dies and is buried by Okisko.

Okisko tends her grave and one day finds "a tiny shoot with leaflets." He cares for it and it turns out to be a grape vine with blood-red juice. Okisko drinks the juice and is thereby united with Virginia.

This, of course, explains the origin of the red Scuppernong grape which was previously only known to be white.

There are a dozen pages of the book devoted to the Scuppernong grape including pictures entitled, A Scuppernong Vineyard, Roanoak Island; Old "Mother" Scuppernong Vine; Among the Scuppernongs – A Modern Vineyard; and A "Virginia Dare" Vineyard.

The beginnings of America seem always related to grapes. About 1000 AD, Leif the Lucky, son of Eric the Red, discovered a land where there was "no lack of grapes or vines." The landing area is believed to have been Rhode Island or Massachusetts. The grapes were not identified and it was too far north for the Muscadine grape.

In 1524 Giovanni da Verrazano, the Florentine navigator, explored the Cape Fear River Valley of North Carolina for France. He reported many vines growing naturally there and that "without all doubt they would yield excellent wines."

The next record of American grapes is the

account of Captain James Hawkins, who visited Spanish settlements in Florida in 1565. He speaks of the wild vine and how twenty hogsheads of wine were made by the Spaniards. It is almost certain that this was the Scuppernong.

Amadas and Barlowe, sent out by Raleigh in 1584, described the North Carolina coast: "We viewed the land about us, being where we first landed very sandy and low towards the water side, but so full of grapes as the very beating and surge of the sea overflowed them, of which we found such plenty, as well there as in all places else, both on the sand and on the green soil, on the hills as in the plains, as well on every little shrub, as also climbing towards the tops of high cedars, that I think in all the world the like abundance is not to be found."

A few years later Thomas Hariot gave a detailed account of mercantile possibilities in the new world. Among these he mentions grapes, and concludes, "when they are planted and husbanded as they ought, a principal commodity of wine may be raised."

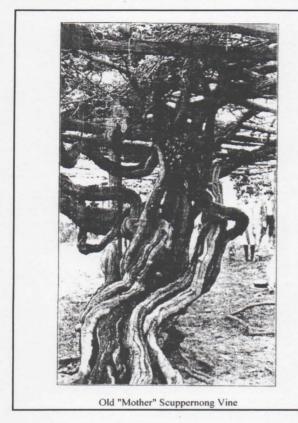
Hariot's comments evoked the following statement from our 1901 book: "The manifest destiny of North Carolina as the rival of Southern France in the production of wines seems to be inevitable. The marvel is how it has been so long delayed after Hariot's special mention of such possibilities."

Things didn't exactly work out that way for the Scuppernong until Paul Garrett came along with Virginia Dare. Historically, Scuppernong was a slow starter, not even getting its name until about 1800. It was named for a town, which was named for a river, which was named for a tree. Ascopo was the Algonquin Indian name for the sweet bay tree. Ascuponung, meaning place of the Ascopo, appeared on old maps of North Carolina. Later maps spelled it Cuscoponung, then Cusponung, next Scuponung and Scupuning and finally Scuppernong.

Horticulturist William Prince commented in 1830: "This grape is a native of the north-eastern part of North Carolina, and grows spontaneously on Roanoke Island and its vicinity, and formerly was called the Roanoke Grape; but, as its excellence as a wine grape was first tested at Scuppernong, the grape has obtained that name abroad. The particular excellence of it is the richness of the grape, and the longevity and hardiness of the vine. The vines in North Carolina are never pruned, and receive little attention otherwise. If they were pruned, and properly attended to, a far greater abundance of fruit would be produced."

In 1909 T.V. Munson, the dean of American grape growers, thought the flavor and odor musky, different from "foxy" of Labrusca and much more agreeable, and very much liked by Southerners.

However, another authority, U.P. Hedrick, said in 1924, "... to a palate accustomed to other grapes, it is not very acceptable, having a musky flavor and a somewhat repugnant odor, which, with familiarity, becomes quite agreeable."



Dr. Maynard Amerine noted that the grape has a unique intense fruity flavor.

It was thought that after the repeal of Prohibition the Scuppernong might be a major crop in the southern states. The Department of Agriculture made a strange effort to build its production. They sent out bulletins covering canning, making grape juice, jelly, marmalade, catsup and flavoring syrup. Somehow, they failed to note that wine could be made from it.

So, there languished the Scuppernong. Once it was known as Vitis Rotundifolia. (It does roll trippingly from the tongue.) It has now been changed to Muscadinia Rotundifolia, having a slightly different molecular structure from Vitis Vinifera, Vitis Labrusca, et al.

There could be a second coming of Scuppernong and other Muscadinia — their rootstocks may be the answer to several vineyard problems. Experiments are being conducted under the direction of Dr. Andrew Walker of the University of California, Davis, to solve the chromosomal difficulty of grafting Muscadinia to Vitis vinifera. When this can be achieved there will be rootstock that is resistant to phylloxera, Pierce's disease (PD), and nematodes. Phylloxera can be controlled by planting with rootstock already existing, but presently there is no way to control PD—a bacterial disease which is doing much damage to individual vines, causing the leaves to dry up and subsequently the death of the vine. Nematodes are plant parasites that attack the roots, diminishing the vines ability to absorb water and nourishment.

Vineyardists and wineries are looking forward with great anticipation to this Muscadinia rootstock. With it many problems will be solved and assure a continuing supply of good grapes.

So, back to San Diego County. Our little book has led us on a tour of history, grapes, wine, and Virginia Dare. Thank you, Sally Southall Cotten and Garrett & Co.

(My regret in this article is that I was unable to fit in Vitis Aestivalis Bourquiniana, the only thing I missed.)

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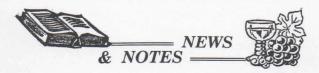
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[Editor's Note: We searched, but were unable to come up with biographical information about Sallie Southall Cotten. Members??]



WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS! Stephen Werner (1526 Comstock Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024; 310-556-0570) is a university professor of French, whose special collecting interest is Cocks & Féret. Allan E. Shields (2444 Beverly Ave., Clovis, CA 93611), though he doesn't consider himself an "official" collector, is most certainly a scholarly fellow with a huge and long-time interest in wine and anything written about it. Jack Fairchild (2283 Foothill Blvd. Calistoga, CA 94515) is wine educator for a Napa Valley winery. PLEASE NOTE MEMBER CONTACT UPDATES - New addresses: John Sarles, 2248 Knolls Hills Circle, Santa Rosa, CA 95405-8309; Edward C. Heine, Ismaninger Str. 74, 81675 Munich, Germany. Richard Kaplan, 1999 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 2600, Los Angeles, CA 90067. His new 310-201-8938; fax: 310-201-8922; e-mail: rkaplan@anet.net. Robert Hutton has a new e-mail address: rhutton@home.com.

ATTENTION ALL TENDRILS Your editor now has e-mail: tendrils@jps.net

Notes on SULLIVAN on ZINFANDEL

Not surprisingly, the first installment of Charles Sullivan's history of Zinfandel (July 1999 issue) has brought forth numerous responses. Inspired to search through his wine books, Tendril Sean Thackrey sent us his studied "Notes on Zinfandel" (see this issue). Bob Hutton, who has a special interest in the eastern European wines and vineyards, comments: "I was very interested in the article on Zinfandel, particularly about the speculation of its origin in Croatia. The grape referred to is Plavac mali [correcting your editor's horrendous spelling goof!], which is widely grown along the Dalmation coast. There is some doubt among ampelographers as to a direct connection between Plavac mali, and Primitivo or Zinfandel, but there seems to be a large number of clones in Plavac mali, and that may account for the confusion. I am in the process of working up a presentation on "Wines of Croatia" for the AWS conference in November ... I'm going to mention this Plavac mali connection in it. By the way, the Hungarian connection is that Croatis, for all practical purposes, was part of Hungary during the Austro-Hungarian empire, (Slovenia was part of Austria) and the rest of what was to become Yugoslavia was occupied by the Turks." Ron Unzelman, with a special interest in California wine history, wrote: "Superb contribution

by Sullivan! I am curious about the identity of the Sonoma journalist / historian who wrote the 1885 article in the *San Francisco Evening Post* that Charles mentions (p.2), and, who was the neighbor?" Naturally, Charles had the answers at hand: "Robert A. Thompson was the author of the article; William Boggs was the neighbor." In Installment Two, "Ho! for California!," this issue, we shall meet Mr. Boggs.

A SPECTACULAR CATALOGUE

"Drink and Be Merry. Wine and Beer in Ancient Times." Produced on the occasion of a major exhibition at the Israel Musem in Jerusalem (June thru December 1999) "tracing the development of wine and beer from the dawn of civilization in the 4th millennium BCE until the spread of Islam in the 7th century CE," with a particular focus on the origins and history of wine and beer in the Holy Land and its neighboring cultures, this full-color 136-page (10½" x 8½") finely produced catalogue is indeed "an appropriate – and appropriately celebratory – way to herald the start of the new Millennium." It can be ordered directly from the Museum (Cat.417): P.O.B. 71117, Hakirya, Jerusalem 91710. 2 972-26708883; Fax 972-25630764. Or, an e-mail to the director, James Snyder, works: jsnyder@imj.org.il. At \$36.80 plus \$12 shipping (U.S.A.), it is not inexpensive; but, for the interested, it is well worth the cost.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL HELP, PLEASE!

Our indefatigable bibliographer, Isaac Oelgart, writes: "HELP! needed for a bibliography on George Saintsbury's *Notes on a Cellar Book*. Anyone who has copies of the following *Notes* dust jackets, please contact me. (W) 603.643.4755, (H) 603.643.2175, or email: pll@valley.net.

 July 1920
 Aug 1920
 Nov 1920

 May 1921
 Jan 1923
 Oct 1924

 Mar 1927
 Dec 1933
 Dec 1934

 and the 1951 edition.
 Dec 1934

DUPLICATES! Compleat Imbibers!!

On a recent visit to England, **Tom Pinney** purchased a complete set of Cyril Ray's *Compleat Imbibers* – knowing, of course, he had a similar set at home. He is now ready to offer one set to a fellow Tendril. Contact him for details. **2** 909.621.2039 or email: tpinney@pomona.edu.

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... NEWS & NOTES continued ...

$\label{eq:future_articles} FUTURE\ ARTICLES~?$ WE HAVE TOPICS — WE NEED WRITERS

While doing some unrelated research, your editor came across the mention of an article in a 1938 issue of Signature, a typography / graphic arts magazine, entitled "The Publications of the Établissements Nicolas, Wine Merchants, Paris." Tendril Bo Simons, wine librarian extraordinaire, tracked down a copy of the article, which contains an illustrated catalogue and bibliographic description of the Nicolas publications up to that date. This wonderful article, along with other collected Nicolas material, awaits the interested and eager Tendril who would like to contribute an up-to-date accounting of these gorgeous imprints. Perhaps one of our members who has a complete run of the Nicolas wine catalogues?? A second suggested article for our Newsletter: "Alfred A. Knopf & His Wine Publications." How many wine titles were issued by this great American publisher, gourmet, and connoisseur of wine? We have learned that Knopf's papers are housed at the University of Texas (Austin), including correspondence between authors and publisher and other related material. In 1995 the library presented an exhibition drawn from the Knopf papers; the accompanying catalogue contained a section on "Knopf Cooks," devoted to some of the books on food and wine he published. Was Shand's Book of French Wines in 1928 his first? The Tendrils should know more about Knopf and his list of wine books. Another subject that should be of interest to most members: "A Bibliographic Survey of Old Maps (of France, Italy, Germany, other wine regions?) Printed in Early Wine Books." In addition to bibliographically documenting the existence of such maps in individual wine books, a study of their development presents itself. When and where were the earliest maps of vineyard regions published in a book? And, for that matter, when / what was The Earliest Wine Book Collection? One might have to first define "collection," and there are several avenues to explore - private, institutional, public (libraries); auction catalogues (not necessarily one library, yet a collection nonetheless). Could be challenging. And very interesting. Perhaps a librarian Tendril could go for this one?

Champagne Booklet QUERY

Tendril Joe Lynch has raised an interesting question regarding a circa-1920s booklet, *The Champagne Vine Country and Champagne Wine* by Georges Chappaz and Alexandre Henriot. Gabler lists this (G15980) and shows Moët Chandon, 1920.

Joe's copy has a title page showing Charles Heidsieck, leading him to ask if perhaps this informational / promotional booklet was issued by the major champagne houses with their own title page. Do Tendril members have copies showing other champagne houses? Let Joe know! e-mail: EHWR00A@prodigy.com.

Brady Book Collection: UPDATE

In 1968 California State University at Fresno acquired the substantial wine library of legendary collector, Roy Brady. Brady wrote at the time, "The considerable task of classifying and cataloguing it for use will probably not be finished for more than a year." (In 1981 he quipped, "Not yet.") Now, an unbelievable thirty years after the acquisition, we have received the most gratifying news that the collection is indeed being catalogued! For making this happen, we toast Allan E. Shields, Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus, and devoted patron of the library and the wine education program at Fresno, and Walter Ficklin of Ficklin Winery, age-old friend of Roy Brady. Cheers!!

Vinexlibris AVAILABLE

The Port Lover's Library of Isaac Oelgart has a few copies of fellow Tendril Erik Skovenborg's delightful booklet on wine bookplates available at \$20, postpaid. Originally published in 1991 in a limited edition of 800 copies, *Vinexlibris* is illustrated with twenty-five black and white bookplates and eight tipped-in original bookplates in color. Contact him via email: pll@valley.net or 2603.643.4755. [See Isaac's essay and Tendril survey report on bookplates this issue.]

BOOKPLATE Website!!

Just heard from John Roberts that he has recently, "in a moment of madness," put onto his website a "Bookplate Page" where collectors' bookplates are displayed. You can access it from his index page at www.winebooks.co.uk.

FROM THE MAD RIDDLER (jUST for tHe W-T!)

Barbaresco for you
Barolo for me
I raise up my glass
For the world to see
I feel on fire
My taste buds set free
As Descartes should have said
"Je bois donc je suis."

A Few Notes on Zinfandel: The Name by Sean H. Thackrey

["Inspired of course by Charles Sullivan's article in the July *Newsletter*, I send along these notes. I have no clue what use the notes are, any more than I know why I wrote them, except that it was so much more fun than what I was supposed to be doing on a Sunday." *Introduction completed. Read on.* — Ed.]

- 1. Although I am a California winemaker, my book and manuscript collection is confined nearly entirely to European texts related to winemaking prior to phylloxera. But just because that's not where most research on Zinfandel is done, I thought a note or two might be useful.
- 2. A while ago I purchased a comparatively early attempt at classifying & describing the wine & table grapes of Germany: L. von Babo & J. Metzger, Die Wein- und Tafeltrauben der deutschen Weinberge und Gärten, Mannheim, 1836. It had been in Niebaum's collection at Inglenook, but in the great tradition of book collectors everywhere, he apparently felt it was just a bit much to actually read what he bought; in any case, he hadn't read this one, since the pages were uncut. I felt, after 160-odd years, it was high time. As I reached the very last page, the end of the index, my eye was caught by the third to the last entry: "Zürifandel."
- 3. So, I turned to p.105. As is the lot of so many indexes, there was, in fact, no "Zürifandel" where it was indexed as being; but there was "Zirifandel," given as one of many synonyms for Sylvaner. This intrigued me. In what I myself refer to as my handwriting, although my friends deny there is such a thing properly so-called "ri" and "n" are much the same, and in my own defence, I don't think that's uncommon; thus it didn't seem at all unlikely that vines labelled "Zirifandel" might be read as "Zinfandel."
- 4. But why Sylvaner? Reading on in Babo & Metzger, "Sylvaner" is given not as an authentic and original name, but as being itself only a synonym in what is now Germany for a family of "Austrian" (i.e., Austro-Hungarian) grapes, called in Austria, "Zierfahnler." The authors list four types of Sylvaner: Grüner Sylvaner, Gelber Sylvaner, Rother Sylvaner, and Blauer Sylvaner. From the descriptions, it is difficult to see precisely why these are grouped together under the name "Sylvaner," except that all are conceded to be Austrian & called "Zierfahnler" in their native land. In fact, another synonym given is "Oestreicher," which the authors footnote as, "Auf die Abstammung in Oestreich hindeutend" i.e., "indicating its origin in Austria."

- 5. So, from Babo & Metzger, we are left with the information that there were, in the Austro-Hungarian Empire prior to 1836, both "red" and "blue" varieties of a grape or grapes called, among other things, "Zirifandel," which even my computer can make into "Zinfandel," if you don't mind a dotted "n" see: "Zirifandel!" & which my pen can make into Zinfandel without dotting anything, as usual.
- 6. Babo & Metzger cite "Heintl. 170." as their authority for the Zierfahnler synonym, "Zirifandel"; but before going off there, it's well worth asking what, after all, "Zierfahnler" means to begin with. Well, "zier" means dear, nice, or pleasant, and "Fahne" means flag or banner, so "Zier~fahnler" (or ~ fähnler) means "nice little flag-waver," & thus differs from most flag-wavers by being nice, and from most grapes by being a flag-waver. This last little joke will be appreciated only by those winemakers, such as myself, who are ampelographically clueless, but must pretend otherwise; after all, when walking out with grape-growers into their Ancient Vineyards to see "how the Zin's doing," it's bad form not to know when we're looking at the Zin. The clue - among others of far greater merit to such ampelographers, if any, who aren't clueless - is to hope for wind, & to look for those little flags, meaning a certain peculiarity of Zin leaves to turn and flutter. Just a suggestion.

Also, I must note in passing that since even blue flagwaver "einen guten weissen und bei geeigneter Behandlung einen haltbaren rothen Wein gibt" — i.e., "yields a good white wine and even with appropriate care a tenable red one," Bob Trinchero may not actually be the inventor of White Zinfandel, and I truly don't mind saving his immortal soul by saying so.

After all, I'm just speculating.

- 6. The "Heintl. 170" cited above refers to Franz Ritter von Heintl. Der Weinbau des österreichischen Kaiserthums, published privately in Vienna by its excessively eccentric author in two volumes, the first in 1821, the second in 1835. "170" refers to p.170 of volume 1, where von Heintl begins his discussion of Zierfahnler with the green, continuing on p.171 with the red, the black or blue, and the yellow, listing the last as "Der gelbe Zirifandel," without further comment. He does go on to list (pp.177-181) other grapes grown regionally in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, incidentally including, among the 66 varieties planted in Dalamatia, "Plavaz mali czerni (kleine schwarze Kerntraube)," with no indication that this grape, believed by some modern viticultural Croats to be Original Zin itself, was believed as of 1821 to bear any relation to Sylvaner, Zierfahnler, or Zirifandel, at all.
 - 7. In my own collection, I can find no

mention of Zierfahnler, Zirifandel or any of its aliases prior to von Heintl, except in Mitterpacher, Elementa Rei Rusticæ in usum Academiarum Regni Hungariæ. Buda, 1779, where (Vol.2, p.22) "rothe Zierfahnler" tops Mitterpacher's list of Hungarian wine-grapes as a synonym for Pliny's uva rhætica [give me a break!], followed by, p.24, "Cyribotri nigri (schwarze Zierfahnler) folio rugoso, quinquelobato, subtus lanuginoso; racemo conferto, acino rotundo; pulpa succulenta, duracina, sapida," followed by "Cyribotrus viridis (grüne Zierfahnler) ... ", p.29. I had really hoped to find something in Wolff Helmhard von Hohberg's Georgica Curiosa Aucta (1st ed. 1682, 5th & last, 1715-16), since he was an Austrian aristocrat with a considerable interest in vineyards; but he concludes that since different villages either call the same grape by different names or use the same name to refer to different grapes, there's no purpose in even discussing grape varieties by name, and I could see his point.

- 8. In summary, I think it's fair to conclude that by the late 18th century, there was an Austro-Hungarian red wine grape named "Zirifandel," and that "Zinfandel" was almost certainly a corruption of that name. Whether Zinfandel was also that grape is certainly unknown, but obviously worth investigation, for example, by a DNA comparison of Zinfandel with various permutations of Sylvaner.
- 9. This hasn't gotten us very far, but I've had a pleasant evening, so I'd like to conclude with another book, unrelated except in being fully as obscure as every other book I've mentioned; namely, Frédéric de Chambrier, De la Culture de la Vigne, dans l'Antiquité, au Moyen Age et au Temps Présent..., Neuchâtel, 1844. De Chambrier has gone to what is clearly a great deal of effort to prepare his anthology of classic texts on viticulture because he feels the citizens of Neuchâtel should pay far more attention to their vines; yet he has few illusions, and the excellent prose style that so often accompanies their loss. As he says in concluding his introduction, "Il y a sans doute beaucoup de Neuchâtelois auxquels ce volume n'apprendra rien. S'il intéresse quelques amis de la vigne, il aura produit ses fruits; s'il reste entièrement stérile, eh bien, qu'il aille dormir avec tant d'autres, sous cette paisible poussière qui est l'apanage assurédes livres où il n'y a que de bonnes intentions" — "No doubt there are many citizens of Neuchâtel to whom this book will teach nothing. If it interests some few friends of the vine, it shall have borne fruit; if it remains sterile, well then, may it go off to sleep among so many others, under that peaceful dust that is the sure reward of books that had only good intentions."



BOOKS & BOTTLES by Fred McMillin

A 19th Century Potpourri

The Book — Some 19th century highlights from France and Italy:

- Bottles exploding in the Moët cellar in 1833? 35%!
- Phylloxera: Italy suffered far less than France from the louse's invasion. As late as 1912 less than 10% of her vines were dead or dying.
- Adulteration in the early 1800s: Excellent Chiantis once shipped to England lost their market partly because dishonest merchants added water to them, "there being no chastity belts suitable for wine barrels." In 1819 the famous Clos de Chambertin produced 100 casks of wine, but 3,000 casks were sold under its name.
- Litigation: In 1843 Veuve Clicquot successfully sued a Loire vintner for labeling his sparkler "Champagne."

These tidbits are from *The Red and the White. The History of Wine in France and Italy in the Nineteenth Century*, written by New York State University (Buffalo) European history professor Leo A. Loubère. Published in 1978, the 400-page book includes 33 tables, many quite original. Some of their implications:

- The professor examined the major French wine districts from 1820 to 1910. Two regions tied for the greatest decade, Côte d'Or and Champagne. And, the best decade was the same for each, 1900-1910. Overall, the poorest decade was the 1820s.
- Progress during the century was far from smooth. Another study quantified what the vintners found out the hard way. The professor's data showed that wine production in France was "a particularly hazardous enterprise. It was the least stable in growth of all agricultural produce in the country, with a coefficient of variation more than four times higher that other crops." Data show the districts with the most speed bumps were Touraine, Maconnais, and the Côte d'Or.
- On Italian viticulture: "Italy in the 19th century stood for an old viticultural tradition, essentially adopted from that of the ancient Romans ... [who] even in their great vineyards, had hung their vines

Bookplates Revisited and The Wayward Tendrils Bookplate Survey

by Isaac Oelgart

[In 1997 Tendril Oelgart put together a members' survey questionnaire on bookplates. Along with his very interesting report on the survey responses, he shares his passion for books, book collecting, and bookplates. And, brings us news of a forthcoming booklet featuring Tendril bookplates! — Ed.]



he fact that we all have subscribed, and continue to subscribe, to the Wayward Tendrils attests to our more than casual interest in wine, and more specifically, in wine books. I confess that our Newsletter is the only periodical of the dozen or so I get

that I read from cover to cover. That our Newsletter deals exclusively with the collecting of wine books has everything to do with it.

We Tendrils are all collectors or purveyors of wine books, to some degree. Certainly, some of us are more so than others. I count myself as a more so. Those of us who are reluctant to call ourselves book collectors are book collectors none the less. At least under my definition, which goes like this: If you have more than three books on a subject, and you are not interested in selling, giving, or throwing them away, at least for the undefined present, and that reading and/or owning, usually a combination of both, gives a measure of satisfaction, enjoyment or pleasure, then you are a book collector, like it or not, dedicated, serious or modest.

While a few of us may be, shall we say, somewhat selective in relating the full financial details of our acquisitions to our respective mates, it is no crime, nor sin, nor shortcoming, nor personality fault, nor cause for embarrassment, to be or to call one's self, a book collector. Indeed, book collectors, barring the extremely rare "excessively consumed / obsessive type," who can be, quite frankly, for all their eccentricities, fascinating, interesting and very captivating individuals, as attested in Nicholas A. Basbanes' excellent book. The Gentle Madness and in Werner Muensterberger's Collecting: An Unruly Passion. (See chapter, "One Copy of Everything.") Book collectors are generally quite reasonable people who enjoy, along with the acquisition of books and the pleasure of building a collection, the pursuit of knowledge. Furthermore, book collectors generally exhibit an inclination towards history in that they tend to place their collecting interests in an historical context. Book collectors have been responsible for many of the best bibliographies produced. In all honesty - even though their intentions were honorable — they have also produced some of the worst. However, their best works have overshadowed their worst. Book collectors have a venerable history of being generous with both their time and knowledge. Throughout history book collectors have demon-strated their generosity to humankind by giving their collections to public, private, academic, state, and national libraries. Most, and I dare say all, major book collections that I am aware of, have at their core, a benefacted collection - the seed from which great collections grow. Lennox, Astor, Huntington, Wiedner and Morgan are but a few of the recognized major collectors; more importantly, there are hundreds, no thousands, of lesser collectors whose good nature and generosity have given book collectors and book collecting its respected and honorable name. One that we Tendrils should embrace and be proud to be a part of.

Nothing defines civilization better than the book. The greater and more diverse the books and access to them, the greater the civilization. The greater the civilization, the more valued and revered books are, so much so, that throughout history buildings were specially erected to house and make books available. These buildings became libraries and great civilizations had great libraries. Whenever civilizations were overthrown, libraries were targets to be destroyed, books were usually ordered to be burned. The great library of Alexandria - destroyed. The Aztec and Mayan civilizations had books and libraries destroyed lest the world learn these new world "savages" had books, and indeed they did. If they have books, how could they be savages? If they have no books, then surely they must be godless savages and their gold could be taken in the name of an old world god.

Those who advocate the destruction of books – political and religious zealots and extremists – fear books the most. They know that nothing is more powerful or dangerous to their cause, as well as being essential to civilization and intellectual development, as a book.

Well, what does all this have to do with the Tendril bookplate survey, you ask. I'll tell you after a bit more.

The Bookplate

Within the ranks of those who openly and actively enjoy books and book collecting and all that is associated with it, are those who choose to indicate to some future collector, historian, or institution the provenance of the book at hand. The bookplate, like nothing else, has traditionally served that end almost from the beginning of printing. It serves kings, queens, heads of state, titans of industry, and venerable centers of learning as well as it does the humblest of collectors. On a lesser, more practical and more current level, the bookplate serves to inform the borrower, lest the borrower forget, who to return the book to.

A bookplate can be more than that. It can be a means of bringing together a group of books into a collection. It is a case where the sum of the whole, the collection, can be greater than the sum of the parts, the books. Thematic bookplates – in our case, wine bookplates – do that most eloquently. By design, the bookplate can reflect on the nature and personality of the collector and the collection.

Some feel there is presumptuousness and even a pretentiousness about adding one's name, by means of a bookplate, to a book. Some even feel that it detracts from a book's "pristineness" and its partner, "dollar value." I for one, would much rather have a beat up, covers detached, copy of Vizetelly's *Port & Madeira* with the bookplate of Charles Sellers followed by the bookplate of André Simon and my own bookplate, than a pristine copy of the same book. If the bookplates of Sellers and Simon are "wine" bookplates so much the better!

The most bookplates I have seen in one book

is six. On the surface that may seem and even look a bit overdone and less than attractive, but I find multiple bookplates much more appealing than single bookplates because they shed more history. Provenance has always played an important role in collecting and selling art objects and collectibles, and for a book that usually means a bookplate. Putting one's name, via a stamp, seal or label (bookplate), on an object in as old as collecting itself. The Chinese began indicating ownership of scrolls (the Chinese first cousin of the book) nearly 2000 years ago. By the T'ang dynasty, about 700 AD, the seeds of connoisseurship were well planted. Chinese collectors began adding the "chop" mark as well as comments to items in their collection. Some scrolls have twenty to thirty

Art of the Bookplate

years.

different marks, covering hundreds, even a thousand,

Bookplates of course can range in size, design and

production technique. At the apex of bookplates are those that are nicely executed and carry, in a small way or large, the theme of the subject of the collection. (See Erik Skovenborg's article "Bookplates with Wine Motifs" in the *Wayward Tendrils Newsletter*, Vol.7 No.2, as well as his book, *Vinexlibris*.) I do realize that "nicely executed" can be subjective, as all art in the broadest sense is subjective. However, I would suggest using the same principles used in viewing and evaluating art and fine bookmaking when viewing bookplates.

Bookplates are, or at least can be, small works of art. Woodcuts, etchings and engraved bookplates have been used for centuries, employing the very same production techniques used by Holbien, Rembrandt and Hogarth. While bookplates are usually printed on paper, I have seen gilt stamped leather bookplates that add considerably to the aesthetics of leather bindings. I believe the best bookplates are symbiotic in that the book and the bookplate enhance each other.

In as much as I design and produce books and my style in bookmaking is restrained and typographic, my bookplate is restrained and typographic, a bit smaller than most — more of a title page than a painting. My bookplate states the nature of the collection, "Vinho Do Porto," followed by a small bunch of grapes, with a touch of green and purple serving as decorative printer's devices, and lastly my name. I am in the process of commissioning an artist to do an etched bookplate for me featuring a barco rebalo, the distinctive Portuguese boat that hauls Port wine down the Douro River, in full sail, with just my initials in the sails.

In my view an attractive wine bookplate of a little known individual is better than a non-wine bookplate of a known individual. Certainly, Ernest Hemingway's non-wine bookplate would add more value to a book than Port author Geoffrey Tait's wine bookplate. But I would value Tait's copy more than Hemingway's and I believe Tait's book would contribute more to a Port book collection than Hemingway's.

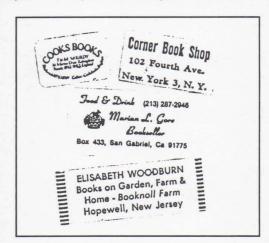
Within my Port book collection is a very small sub-collection of six books that I especially enjoy, books with wine bookplates. Owning a book once owned by someone else who enjoyed that book as well does give me some small pleasures. I wish I had more. Finding wine bookplates in books is quite difficult. Collecting loose wine bookplates is not so difficult; I have managed to acquire fifty-two, mostly by exchanging bookplates with other collectors.

Bookplates both in and out of books are collected mostly by individuals from within the book collecting community. Over the years, noted artists and illustrators such as Rockwell Kent, Grant Wood,

Kate Greenaway, Arthur Rackham, Lynn Ward and Ward Ritchie to name a few, have designed bookplates, and indeed, such bookplates can command considerable premiums depending on the artist.

Booksellers Tickets

Close cousins to bookplates are booksellers labels, or booksellers tickets, as they are sometimes called. They resemble bookplates, though generally much smaller in size, in that they are pasted into the book and provide some history of the book's origin. These usually include the bookseller's name and address and, in more recent times, telephone number. I suspect fax number and e-mail address will soon follow. Booksellers tickets are now a bit out of favor; however, Jan Longone of the Wine and Food Library and Tessa McKirdy of Cooks Books use them. I am in favor of them and would urge all booksellers to use them, recommending using those with plain backs that require the use of paste rather than the selfadhering types. One of my favorite books, Port, by William J. Todd (London, 1926) has three booksellers labels. The first one is William George's Sons Ltd., Bristol (England), who sold it to an unknown buyer. The next booksellers ticket indicates the book went across the Atlantic Ocean to the "International Wine Library, Booksellers to the Wine & Spirit Trade, Montreal, Canada." They sold it to an unknown buyer. Jan Longone acquired the book and sold it to me. Her ticket is attached to the inside rear cover. My bookplate is now present; the book's history, under my stewardship, is secured.



The bookplate collecting community is made up of numerous individuals, groups and societies, both large and small, on local, national and international levels. One directory of collectors and designers list 4000 individuals. There is an extensive and distinguished literature on bookplates, with a great many of the works being finely printed. A

short list of books on bookplates is given at end.

Wayward Tendrils Bookplate Survey Now, to the survey. With the May 1997 Newsletter

a bookplate survey was sent to all Tendrils. Sixteen of 131, or about 11%, responded. I am told that 10% is a good response, but, given the very specific nature of the Wayward Tendrils, I would have thought the response would have been higher.

Of the sixteen respondents, eleven have bookplates, five do not. Of the five who do not, four are

planning to have bookplates.

Of the eleven who use bookplates, eight of their bookplates are wine related and three are not. Two of those that are not, are generic types. Of the four considering having bookplates made, two indicated they would be wine related, while the other two did not state a design preference.

Of the eleven who have bookplates, six have used more than one bookplate: three collectors have two; one has four bookplates, and two have six.

With regards to preferences for production techniques, of the eleven who have bookplates, six were offset printed, two were pre-printed, two were etched, and one did not know (offset). Of the four collectors contemplating new bookplates, one is to be an etching and three are uncertain.

Of the sixteen surveyed, fourteen reported they paid attention to bookplates, while two did not. Eleven reported they thought bookplates added value to a book; five reported a bookplate could add or detract from the value of the book depending on whose bookplate it was; nobody reported a bookplate always detracts from the book. Twelve thought previous ownership, via a bookplate, is an important factor, four felt it wasn't. Interestingly, the opposite was true when asked if it was important to them if future collectors knew the provenance of their books, via a bookplate: eleven said it was not important, five said it was.

Five respondents reported they seek out wine bookplates, eleven do not. Six reported they would pay a premium for a book with a wine bookplate, two felt they might be willing to pay a premium, and eight reported they would not pay a premium.

Fourteen respondents reported the size of their collection: 8500, 3000, 2500, 1500, 1200, 1000 (3), 500, 400, 200 (2), 175, 130. Of these 21,305 books, 795, or a little under 4%, have a previous owner's bookplate. Of those, 136 have wine motif bookplates, which is a little over one-half of 1%. (It should be noted that the number 795 does not indicate 795 different bookplates; I suspect the number of different bookplates is considerably smaller.) An even smaller percentage have multiple bookplates, with only eight reports. Thus, we can

safely say that books with wine motif bookplates are scarce. Judging from my experience in the rare book trade, I suspect that wine book collectors are no different in their use of bookplates, and the collecting thereof, than other book collectors — excepting bookplate collectors of course.

Only five respondents answered the question, "Why is it important to you that future collectors know the provenance of your books?" The answers were in a similar historic vein: "Adds history to a book," "Keeps the chain alive," "I believe we all have a built-in desire for immortality," "It continues the cycle of the book's life history," "a pretty way to indicate ownership, and indicates a book's history," to which I readily agree.

For me it is also a matter of pride and pleasure. I take pride in the range and quality of the books and pride in the scope and direction of the collection. I find pleasure in the process of the acquisition of the books, pleasure in ownership – stewardship is a better word – of books, and pleasure in the knowing that I am building a fine collection. I like books and book collecting. That my books are wine books, and that I enjoy wine equally as well, is an added bonus. To paraphrase the eloquent Prof. Saintsbury, "There is no money better spent than on wine books."

In its own way unlike any other, the bookplate is capable of summing up, in a most aesthetic manner, the relationship a collector has with his/her collection, and in binding individual books into that collection. Thus I urge all Tendrils who have not considered wine bookplates to do so.

RECOMMENDED READING

[Thanks to Erik Skovenborg for providing inspiration and the following list.]

Bookplates in General

Engraved Bookplates. European Exlibris 1950-1970. Mark Severin and Anthoney Reid. Private Libraries Association, 1972.

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

The Golden Era of American Bookplate Design 1890-1940. Wm. E. and Darlene Butler. The Bookplate Society, 1986.

Wine Bookplates

Ex-Libris et Graphiques d'Occassions par la Vigne et le Vin. Dr. Semsey Andor. Budapest: Magyar Mezogazdasagi Muzeum, 1972.

24 Exlibris med Vin-Motiver. G. Jan Rheberger. Frederikshaven: Exlibristen. 1976.

Vinexlibris. Bookplates with Wine Motifs. Erik Skovenborg. Frederikshaven: Privately Printed, 1991.

Wijn Exlibris. Lou Hoelfnagles. Woremer, 1992.

An Open Letter of Thanks to Fellow Tendrils

The first order of business is to thank all of you who responded to the Wayward Tendrils Bookplate Survey. Our much appreciated thanks.

The second order of business is to further solicit your cooperation in a small but interesting project. A project which will, it is our hope, give some small pleasures to all who contribute to it. A project which in another small way will contribute to the coffers of the Wayward Tendrils. Perhaps most important, a project that records in an historical way the use of wine bookplates among Tendril members.

The project is thus: to produce a small, nicely done booklet illustrated with tipped-in bookplates of the Tendrils wishing to participate. The edition would be limited to 50 copies. Each participant would be asked to supply 50 bookplates and a tiny bit of text; for their part, they would receive two copies of the finished work, *The Wine Bookplates of the Wayward Tendrils*. Twenty-five copies, half of the edition, are for The Wayward Tendrils, and will be for sale to Tendril members at \$20 and to non-Tendrils, \$25. The cost of the production will be borne by The Port Lover's Library.

All Tendrils wishing to participate – even if you did not respond to the bookplate survey, and have a bookplate with a wine motif that you would like to have included in the upcoming booklet – please contact Isaac Oelgart at 603. 643.4755 (W) / 603.643.2175 (H) or email: pll@valley.net.

Tendril members who do not have wine bookplates, but would like a copy of the booklet, may reserve a copy by contacting Gail Unzelman.

Tendril-ly, Isaac Oelgart Gail Unzelman





THE ZINFANDEL: A HISTORY OF A GRAPE AND ITS WINE by Charles L. Sullivan

[We present the second installment of wine historian and Zinfanatic Charles Sullivan's history of the "darling" of California's wine industry and note his sources of early California wine literature. — Ed.]

CHAPTER 3 HO! FOR CALIFORNIA!



ohn Sutter's lads on the American River who discovered gold on January 24, 1848, were building a saw mill in the Sierra foothills to provide lumber for their boss who would sell it to the growing trickle of Americans who had been entering the Mexican

province cross country since 1841. Gold had actually been discovered in Mexico, just a few days before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo transferred Alta California to American rule. This sparsely populated land was ill-equipped to receive the thousands of Argonauts who would begin pouring into Northern California after the word of the discovery was fully broadcast in the summer of 1848.

The pastoral Mexican province had about 15.000 non-Indian inhabitants when James Marshall and his buddies made their historic discovery. Four years later the state census counted almost 225,000. Most of those who came to the Golden State in those years were young men looking for gold; a few of these did make their fortunes in the mines, but an overwhelming majority did not. To some of the newcomers it was clear from the beginning that surer wealth would come to those who supplied the Argonauts with tools to do their digging and with food to live on. Except for beef cattle the early Gold Rush California food supply was mostly imported. But some remarkable fortunes were made by those who could produce a field of potatoes or onions in these early years.

Fruit was another matter. You can't produce from scratch a pear, apple, or bunch of grapes as quickly as a sack of potatoes. And the orchards and vineyards of the ranchos and pueblos of Alta California could not begin to meet the needs of the new population. Most of the domestic fruit sources were located in what had previously been the far more populated Southern California. But the gold and the new markets were in the north.

New Englanders constituted one of the most

numerous, talented, and influential groups of newcomers to California during these years. Many brought with them a solid knowledge of fruit culture. It is instructive to read the names of the pioneers of horticulture in the new state and compare these with earlier membership rolls of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. Chief among these pioneers was James Lloyd Lafayette Warren (1805-1896), the man historian Walton Bean has dubbed the "godfather" of California agriculture, which, in the 1850s, was passing through a difficult infancy as the stepchild of mining and ranching. Warren's California Farmer, first published in 1854, was the new state's first agricultural publication, and is an important source of our knowledge of California viticulture in the 1850s. His wide circle of Yankee friends included several who would help supply Northern California with vineyard nursery stock. Of these Captain Frederick W. Macondray is the most important for this investigation. I shall take up his story shortly.

Warren arrived in the riotous village of San Francisco in 1849. He was quick to notice the remarkable climate and soils of California's coastal valleys. This was a Mediterranean climate, perfect for raising wine grapes. And like others he bemoaned the fact that the only grape variety then available was the Mission, which made a fair sweet wine but never a very good dry table wine. This variety was planted wherever there was a local rancho or pueblo in the old Mexican province and had been widely planted at the Franciscan missions here, the first of which had been established at San Diego in 1769, the last at Sonoma in 1823. Their vineyards had mostly declined or disappeared since the missions were secularized in the 1830s. And most of the commercial vineyards in the late 1840s were located in Southern California in and near Los Angeles.

Between 1852 and 1862 California nurserymen, hopeful vineyardists, and potential winemakers brought in loads of vinifera grape cuttings and rooted vines to correct this situation. The economic outlook was obvious. The adventurous young men who were pouring into California brought with them a prodigious thirst for alcoholic beverages. The figures on imported wine, beer, and spirits entering the state through the Port of San Francisco are staggering. In 1855 alone the annual total for still wine came to almost 14,000 barrels and 120,000 cases. There were also about 20,000 "baskets" of sparkling wine. The high prices paid for these vinous products were tempting and many Californians determined to try for a piece of this action. But anyone with a sense of taste and smell knew that the wines made from the local Mission grapes could not compete with the foreign imports, mostly from France, no matter how

mediocre the latter might be. And if we can trust the judgment of those on the scene who seem to have known good wine, the overwhelming majority of most imported wine was very mediocre.

There were two sources for early grape vine imports. The first was the East Coast, where there was, as we have seen, a small and flourishing viticultural industry aimed at the production of table grapes. The other source was continental Europe, specifically France and Germany, where, in the minds of the few who knew anything of such matters, the best wines in the world were produced. (A third, but less important, source was South America. Some Spanish varieties were brought north from Peru in early days.)

Word of the Gold Rush had hardly reached San Francisco when ships from the outside world began dropping anchor in the great bay there, many of them left abandoned, as the crew and officers headed off to the mines. There were others who sold what they had on board at marvelous prices and headed home for more.

Frederick Macondray

New England sea captains had been sailing the California coast for years and knew all the tricks of rounding the cape and tacking north. One of these was Frederick W. Macondray (1803-1862), who had first sailed into the Pacific in 1822 aboard the Panther. Later he visited California several times and took part in the profitable China trade between the Far East and New England. It was men like Macondray to whom historian John Walton Caughey was referring when he wrote, "For New Englanders the sea route to California was the natural one, both from habit and for convenience."

Macondray arrived in San Francisco and set about establishing his trading company, Macondray & Co., which still does business out of the Macondray building there. He was an old friend of James Warren, both having been longtime members of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. When Warren finally was able to establish the California Agricultural Society in 1854 and start promoting its state fairs, Macondray was the Society's first president.

In 1852 one of Macondray's imports to the Golden State from Boston included grape vines. By no means were these the chief element in this large horticultural shipment. Macondray was more interested in pears, apples and plums. Back in the old Bay State he had been something of a specialist with pears. These vines he brought in were, of course, thought at the time to be useful primarily for the production of table grapes. But he and James Warren were intent on giving them a fair and full trial to see what they could do in this new

environment. There was the Black Hamburgh, the Muscats of Alexandria, Frontignan and Cannon Hall, Chasselas, both black and white, and several others, one of which was the Zinfindal, which Boston viticulturists and nurserymen knew well and liked – as a table grape. ¹

There were many other shipments of vinifera varieties from New England. Anthony P. Smith (1812-1877) sailed from Boston in 1849 and in 1853 imported nursery stock for his historic Pomological Gardens near Sacramento. He is one of the sources for Zinfandel vines planted here and there in the Sierra Foothills between 1854 and 1860. His "Zeinfandall," exhibited at the 1858 State Fair, brought the vine's first official mention in California records. In 1860 he made his first wine from the variety. New Englander Wilson G. Flint also supplied Zinfandel vines to others in the Sacramento area. James R. Nickerson of Folsom was another, as was Charles Covilleaud of Marysville and Charles M. Weber of Stockton. ²

Weber was the first to show the "Zinfindal" in the San Jose area under that name, at the Santa Clara County Fair in 1860. But the vine was surely there under a different name. Bernard S. Fox, the superintendent of Boston's Hovey & Co., accompanied a huge shipment of nursery stock to California in 1852. He then established the San Jose Valley Nursery, for years Northern California's largest. Before long he was in print remarking on the wonderful way the Massachusetts vinifera vines took to the California environment. ³

His neighbor, Antoine Delmas, was a French nurseryman far more important in the history of California viticulture than Fox. (Fox's gravestone is decorated with a huge pear; Delmas's properly has several bunches of grapes.) His 1852 importation of French wine grapes was the first to Northern California and included "Cabrunet," "Merleau," Blanche," "Black Meunier," "La Folle "Charbonneau." In that same year he acquired a shipment from New England, perhaps through Bernard Fox, but Delmas never clearly identified his source. Thirty years later he thought that a certain mystery vine important to our investigation came from France, but I have my doubts. I think it was in his other New England imports.

Whatever it was, he called it the Black St. Peters, that variety so similar to the Zinfindal in New England in the 1840s. Whatever that variety was in 1860, two vineyards planted to it survived into the 1880s, and they were both clearly Zinfandel in the later years. One was the R. T. Pierce vineyard in the town of Santa Clara; the other was William McPherson Hill's planting near Glen Ellen in Sonoma County. 4

In 1856 Delmas also sent Black St. Peters cuttings to Victor Fauré, Mariano Vallejo's winemaker in Sonoma. A few years later Thomas Hart Hyatt, the publisher of the Pacific Rural Press, found both Zinfandel and Black St. Peters the varieties going into the Buena Vista winery's Sonoma Red Wine. The date of his visit was either 1865 or 1866, but by then, as we shall see, many Sonoma vineyardists were growing Zinfandel. Thus, some of Sonoma's Zinfandel came to that county from the San Jose area as Black St. Peters. Certainly, W. McP. Hill's Glen Ellen plantings did, as did Vallejo's. But by the mid-1860s it is impossible to trace all the possible sources. It is worth noting that by the late 1860s, after the Zinfandel was starting to get its rave notices, it was impossible to find any Black St. Peters in the Santa Clara Valley. It appears that the Black St. Peters vineyards all quietly became Zinfandel vineyards. But this was not a process, obviously, that received any kind of publicity; it is impossible to document it in narrative form. 5

BOOK NOTICES.

HYAT'S HAND-BOOK OF GRAPK CULTURE; or, Why, Where, When, and How to Plant and Cultivate a Vineyard, Manufacture Wires, etc. Especially adapted to the Wires, etc. Especially adapted to the State of California. By T. Hart Hyati. H. III. Bancroft & Co., San Francisco, Cal. 12mo, 279 pp.

Books devoted to grape culture are still fashion. The Eastern States have been pretty well supplied with the home-made article in the past half dozen years, and now California comes forward to help complete the list. HYATT'S HAND-BOOK GRAPE CULTURE; 08, California is without doubt one of the complete the list. California is without doubt one of the very best wine countries known, and Mr. Hynt's book will be read with interest by every one who has any inclination to go into the business of grape growing.

The volume before us is a very handsome, of nearly three hundred pages, filted with more or less valuable matter gathered from various sources. There is no doubt but that it will make many of our vine-WIT, WHERE, WHEN, AND HOW INEYARD, MANUFACTURE WINES, ETC. THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA 44, 4364, 70 705 but that it will make many of our vine partinat it will make many of our vine-UNITED STATES, GENERALLY. mate, and perhaps some may be tempted to migrate to a land where the grape, it is said, never fails to produce a T. HART HYATT. erop. We fear, however, that Mr. Hyatt has painted the subject in too brilliant colors, and few will ever realize the result which he promises to those who follow his We are told that no insect or disease is BAN FRANCISCO: IL BANCROFT AND COMPANY. we are told that no insect or discase is known to affect the grape in California, consequently they are always sure of a crop. This statement may be true at the present time, but that is no proof that it 1867. present time, but that is no proof that it will always be the case. Other sections of the country have at one time been exempt the country have at one time been exempt from such pests, but they are plentiful now, and in many instances the culture of the grape has been abandoned in consequence. Horticulturist, 1868

From this rather sketchy and selective synopsis of various introductions of Zinfandel to California the reader can logically infer that there were others. And there must have been. This narrative simply outlines the course of events as it appeared in the public record. So I have chosen to

focus on Macondray's introduction because it can be traced in the contemporary historical record and because in the 1880s those who could recall the confused horticultural events in the 1850s in California chose to award the palm to this adventurous and entrepreneurial sea captain.

It should be understood before we begin to follow the trail of Macondray's Zinfindal as it became Zinfandel that in the 1850s there was little talk about making wine from these New England vinifera. Most said they should be tried to see if any might work. But it was understood that great wine would probably come from great European wine varieties. I have already mentioned the Delmas vines to San Jose. The Pellier brothers, also French nurserymen in that town, also made an important importation. So did Almaden's Charles Lefranc in 1857, a huge load of first rate French vines. Several Germans, notably Emil Dresel in the Sonoma area, brought in White Riesling, Sylvaner, and Traminer vines before 1860. On the Napa side Samuel Brannan made a sizeable importation of European vines in 1860 for his vineyards near Calistoga. It is a sad fact that practically all the 1862 vines imported by Agoston Haraszthy to Buena Vista in Sonoma ended up right there in a tangled mass of commercially useless vineyard in the late 1860s. It is ironic that this importation by the Hungarian vintner had such little impact on California winegrowing and yet in later years it got practically all the press for its significance.

CHAPTER 4 "PLANT YOUR VINEYARDS! BEGIN NOW!"

Frederick Macondray built a small glass-enclosed grapery behind his new San Francisco home at Stockton and Washington Streets. There he began propagating his vines in the manner he had known in New England, but without added heat of forcing. The city's very cool summers and intrusive summer fog convinced him that he would never ripen grapes in open culture there. (People are still trying with poor results.)

Later he expanded his horticultural operations, which were by no means confined to viticulture. He bought land in San Mateo County, south of the city, and there built up his beautiful 260-acre Baywood estate where he created what the *Alta California* termed "the finest grapery in the state." ⁶

In 1855 Macondray's friend, James Warren, began a campaign in his *California Farmer* newspaper to promote viticulture and winegrowing in Northern California — "Cultivators of California! Plant your vineyards! Begin Now! No better investment can be made."

To promote the kind of systematic and intelligent agriculture which Warren had known in New England he helped local growers and breeders organize regional and county fairs where prizes were awarded in a broad range of categories. Eventually a series of districts were organized whose competitions led up to the State Fair, in the early years held in various parts of Northern California. These regional fairs invariably had medals, diplomas, and cash awards. There were always competitions among the best grapes, wines and brandies.

At first the wine awards could only go to products of the Mission grape, since that was the only kind of bearing vine there was here in the first years of the state and regional fairs. But very soon the imports began bearing. From that point on careful distinction was made in the categories of competition. "Native" grapes, meaning Mission grapes, did not compete in the same category as "foreign" grapes. This category was for vinifera varieties brought in after 1850. At first the only varieties seen were from the New England varieties brought in by Macondray and others. It was not until 1855 that there were any real European wine varieties to be seen, these from Antoine Delmas's 1852 importation. ⁷

By 1857 a clear pattern among the "foreign" grape varieties had developed at these competitions held around the San Francisco Bay Area, from San Jose to Napa and Sonoma. The winners were almost entirely predictable: F. W. Macondray, A. Delmas, A. P. Smith (Sacramento), and J. W. Osborne (Napa). Of course there were others, but I have added up the awards between 1854 and 1860 and these four won about 70% of them.

Joseph W. Osborne

We have met three of these men, but not the gentleman from Napa County. Joseph W. Osborne, also a New Englander, had acquired a huge tract of land north of Napa City in 1851. He was a close friend of Macondray's; when the sea captain was president of the California Agricultural Society, Osborne was its vice president.

Osborne was a brilliant man, interested in all aspects of agriculture and was said to have had the finest library on the subject in the state. He called his wonderful estate "Oak Knoll," and was awarded the medal for the best cultivated farm in California at the 1856 State Fair at San Jose. (Today the Trefethen Winery and vineyards rest on a portion of the old estate.)

Both Macondray and Osborne exhibited their Zinfindal grapes at the district and state fairs. After the competition at San Francisco's Mechanics Institute in 1857, James Warren rhapsodized over the captain's collection of "foreign" grapes. "They were truly superb, and reminded us of the exhibitions we had been engaged in in former years in the good old Bay State." That year the State Horticultural Society recommended the Zinfindal for further trial, but it is clear that their list of recommendations was not aimed at future wine-growers. 8

Osborne had acquired his "foreign" varieties from Macondray and he grafted them onto mature Mission vines. Thus did the Zinfandel arrive in Napa. But far more important was its arrival in Sonoma, for it was here that the variety's winemaking potential was nailed down, at least under this name.

Sonoma winegrowing from the Mission variety was fairly well established in the 1850s, but little resembling a wine industry had developed. Mariano Vallejo, the former Mexican commandant here, had a large vineyard and a real winery under the supervision of the already mentioned Victor Fauré. Beyond that there were several farmers making a few hundred gallons here and there and selling what they couldn't consume wherever they could.

In 1857 a new entrepreneurial spirit emerged in the Sonoma Valley. Led by men like Agoston Haraszthy, Emil Dresel, and Jacob Gundlach, a large number of locals and outside investors rightly came to see the Sonoma Valley as an ideal environment for the center of the new wine industry that they hoped would soon be flourishing in Northern California. Their product would be dry table wine and brandy. Their object was to compete with the huge flow European imports in quality and price.

But first they needed better grapes. Partly to this purpose was the Sonoma Horticultural Society organized in 1859. Its first meeting was March 14 in Santa Rosa. There Haraszthy and Napa's Osborne spoke on the need for better varieties for wine production. Haraszthy was elected president and William Boggs was elected a director and secretary of the Society. He was an old timer, for those days, having arrived here in 1846 with his family. He had bought a tract of land next to the one Haraszthy later purchased in 1857 and became guite close to the Hungarian. Boggs was an avid vineyardist and a keen observer of the viticultural scene. As early as 1855 his Sonoma red wine, from Mission grapes, had won recognition from James Warren; in 1861 he was awarded the silver cup at the county fair for developing Sonoma's best small vineyard. I stress the importance of this pioneer from Missouri, for in the 1880s he was the man whose testimony set matters straight on the coming of the Zinfandel to California's North Coast region. 9

The Sonoma men knew the progress Osborne had been making at Oak Knoll with the New

England varieties he had acquired from Macondray. Accordingly, late in the 1859 season they contracted to buy cuttings from Osborne to act as the base for later propagation at the Society's Gardens. Osborne's gardener carefully labeled the cuttings and, with Boggs, drove them over to Sonoma, two wagon loads. The chief varieties were two kinds of Chasselas. Muscat of Alexandria, Reine de Nice, Red Lombardy, Black Hamburgh, and Zinfindal, Boggs stored them in the Gardens, adjacent to his property, but the spring frosts were cruel and most of the cuttings were killed. In fact, only the Zinfindal was unhurt. Boggs recalled that it "grew better in the nursery than any other variety." Later when these surviving vines had been planted in the Society vineyard and vielded enough grapes to make a little wine, Boggs took them to Victor Fauré, General Vallejo's winemaker. This was probably in 1862. Boggs and his friends thought that the acid on the Zinfindal was too high to make good wine, but Fauré told them that this was precisely what was needed to make a good claret. He also told Boggs that the grapes might be from a red Bordeaux variety. Later Boggs did not recall that the Frenchman had named any particular

Boggs later wrote that his original intention was to trade the grapes with Fauré for some vinegar. Later, after they had tasted the young wine Fauré had made from the grapes, Sonoma vineyardists quickly developed a solid respect for this strangely spelled variety. Fauré, of course, planted Zinfindal cuttings in 1863 for Vallejo, as did Haraszthy at Buena Vista. It was these vines in 1866 that Thomas Hart Hyatt saw growing at Vallejo's place, along with the Black St. Peters vines that Delmas had previously sent the General. ¹⁰

Meanwhile back in San Jose, Delmas' Black St. Peters had won the gold medal for the best red grapes at the Santa Clara County Fair. In 1858 he had already made some experimental wine from this variety and next year he decided to enter it in the State Fair competition. The committee awarded him the first prize, but in their report they were surprised that the French nurseryman's grapes "had been selected more as table fruit than for winemaking" when they were first planted. The *Alta California* was soon crowing that the Delmas red wine was the best claret in the state and that it could easily be taken for the French article. ¹¹

Thus it was that the Zinfandel, under various spellings and at least under one other name, came to be recognized in Northern California as a valuable red wine grape. It was not long before growers in the Sierra Foothills and the Sacramento Valley also discovered that it was something more than just another good table variety.

But the reader should not infer from the string of events and circumstances I have described that the importance of this discovery was understood by anyone at that time. It was only in retrospect that this importance became known, in the 1880s when the variety became the darling of the wine industry. But we shall see that the story then was purposefully obscured. For now, in the 1860s, the wine "industry" in the Sonoma, Napa, and Santa Clara Valleys was small potatoes.

To tell the tale of the Zinfandel during the 1860s is to pick and choose among scores of random references in the press. In the 1870s no one tried to reconstruct the history of this variety in California. It was not until the late seventies that the Zinfandel really became important, and not until the eighties was its preeminence manifest. I can't even fix the time when it became once and for all Zinfandel, sometime in the seventies.

In the 1860 Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society there were several references to the new grape. Folsom's James Nickerson now thought the "Black Zinfindal" the best variety they had for red table wine. Wilson Flint, a Sacramento New Englander also praised it. Even James Marshall, the man who discovered gold in 1848, had it in his Coloma nursery. There were also references to the Black St. Peters here and there in the Sierra Foothills, but none after the 1860s. The California Farmer had contained several references to the variety, but it had not attracted Warren's personal attention until he visited Charles Covilleaud's Marysville vineyard in 1861. His description of this "rare variety" was perfect and he also noted that it was from Germany. (Since Warren knew Prince and received his catalogues from Long Island, the reference makes perfect sense, because Prince had Gibbs getting it from "Germany"). 12

A non-event in the history of California Zinfandel was Agoston Haraszthy's 1861 trip to Europe, just about the time the guns at Fort Sumter were sounding the beginning of the Civil War. His purpose was to collect European vines of all sorts to test in the California environment. He had sought and received a commission from the state legislature, "as a dignity without emolument." But it did not authorize him to purchase vines, certainly not at state expense.

Before he left he advertised for subscribers to support his venture at fifty cents per vine. He apparently got very few takers, if any. When he returned he had a list of hundreds of varietals, both well known and obscure. But there was no mention of anything that might be taken for Zinfandel. In fact, there is no contemporary evidence that this most prolific of California wine writers between 1856 and

1866 ever mentioned the variety either in writing or in conversation.

"... gaining a bit of stature"

Between 1863 and 1867 there are clues that the Zinfandel was gaining a bit of stature beyond its discovery. By 1865 at the huge Natoma Vineyard near Folsom Benjamin Bugby had decided that Zinfandel was one of the top vines in California for red wine. The next year the California State Agricultural Commission lamented the fact that no more than 1% of the 1866 Sonoma wine crop would come from "foreign" varieties. But the report directed special praise for the wine being made there from the "Black Zinfandel." But in the mind of the *Alta California's* editors "much of California wine is bad." There were still more commercial vines in the hot lands of Los Angeles County than in Napa and Sonoma combined. ¹³

The first big year year for Zinfandel was 1867. The *Alta* asked Napa's Jacob Schram for the name of the best red grape available, and he told them it was the "Zenfenthal." Later he spelled it "Zinfendel." ¹⁴

On the Sonoma side William McPherson Hill made what I think was California's first really famous Zinfandel from vines he had planted in the early 1860s. Thomas Hart Hyatt discovered it in 1870. He recalled he had seen the Zinfandel growing in Sonoma in 1866. This is a portion of his review.

We sampled ... a bottle of wine from the cellar of Wm. Hill ... made from the Zinfandel grape, a new variety that is growing rapidly in favor with winemakers of this county. This wine ... was pronounced by the gentlemen who tasted it to be superior to any they had seen in the state. ¹⁵

Later the *Alta* thought that Hill's Zinfandel "would take the first premium at a National Exposition." Such language in years to come might be rejected as fulsome puffery. California newspapers became experts at booming the state's products. But at this moment in California wine history these writers were looking for a good wine any place they could find it. They were not touting the quality of California wine in general. That would come soon enough.

There had been a flurry of Zinfandel planting in Sonoma in 1867. What might have helped promote this rush was a USDA report appearing that year which praised the Zinfindal for making "a very fine red wine, resembling the finest brands of claret imported." During the dormant season of 1867-68 the *Alta* described a stampede of growers looking for

Zinfandel cuttings, "whose demand far exceeds supply." There was also talk in the press about using Zinfandel to upgrade the quality of ordinary Mission wine to produce an acceptable claret. That year Sonoma's John Snyder was awarded a silver medal at the Mechanics Institute for his "Zinfenthal." Next year J. H. Lockwood gave us our first descriptive picture of Zinfandel claret in his long report to the State Agricultural Society. "The two prominent excellencies of its wine are tartness and a peculiar and delightful flavor resembling the raspberry." This was the variety, he predicted, that would allow California to compete with the French imports. He discussed dozens of good wine grapes, but closed by remarking that if a winegrower could plant only one, it should be Zinfandel. 16

From a grower's point of view the most significant information about the variety concerned wholesale prices. At the end of the 1869 vintage new Sonoma Mission "claret" brought forty cents per gallon; new Zinfandel in bulk brought ninety cents.¹⁷

Press surveys of winegrowers in the early 1870s give a strong focus on the varieties favored in Northern California's coastal valleys. White wines in the German style were what the market most wanted; the vines to plant were the White Riesling for style and elegance, and the highly productive Burger (Elbling) for stretching and blending. For red table wine virtually everyone was touting the Zinfandel, straight or to upgrade lesser varieties, particularly the still ubiquitous Mission, which continued to be the number one variety in the Sonoma, Napa, and Santa Clara Valleys.

The other variety most often mentioned in these booming post-Civil War times was the Cinsaut, also spelled Cinsault. But back then it was usually referred to as the Malvoisie or Black Malvoisie. Today it is a variety widely planted in southern France. It is a good blending wine, and was so 125 years ago. Viticultural expert Jancis Robinson has given the variety faint praise for playing "third or fourth fiddle in blends of good Châteauneuf-du-Pape today." But in the 1870s it played an important second chair to the Zinfandel, and for a brief period in some winegrowers' minds was concert master. By the 1880s it had lost much of its quality luster and became a matter of concern to persons worried about the quality of California Zinfandel, since blends of the two were common and always, if we are to believe critics of that age, greatly inferior to straight Zinfandel.

In the early 1870s Sonoma was still the home of the best dry table wine in California, so far as the press and the leaders of the young and rather insignificant wine industry here were concerned. But Napa was catching up, particularly for red wine.

Sonoma whites, particularly if they had a good lacing of White Riesling or Sylvaner in their blends, were still champs. But in the mid-1870s the area around St. Helena in Napa Valley had edged into the lead for red wines. And there Zinfandel planting was frantic in these years.

Unfortunately for our nascent dry wine industry much of the rest of the 1870s was an economic disaster. The Panic of 1873 triggered America's first great industrial depression and the wine industry suffered from a collapse of consumer buying power and plummeting wine prices. To make it worse the vineyards planted before the crash came into full production when business conditions were at their worst. But through these unhappy years Zinfandel's reputation grew to a remarkable extent. Toward the end of this unhappy decade it became the basis for economic renewal for the California wine industry.

[To be continued next issue. - Ed.]

NOTES

- 1. San Francisco Bulletin, 5/1/1885, 5/5/1885; San Jose Herald, 5/1/1885; Napa County Reporter, 2/4/1884; St. Helena Star, 7/4/1884, 5/25/1885; California Farmer, 3/5/1858.
- 2. Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society for ... 1858. (Sacramento, 1859); California Farmer, 6/15/1854; Alta California, 10/12/1856; Sacramento Bee, 9/29/1857, 8/31/1858.
- 3. California Farmer, 11/30/1860, 10/10/1856.
- 4. San Jose Telegraph, 10/14/1857, 10/16/1859; Pacific Rural Press, 9/30/1882; San Francisco Merchant (later Pacific Wine & Spirit Review), 7/3/1885.
- 5. T. Hart Hyatt, *Handbook of Grape Culture* (San Francisco, 1867): 157, 162. [Hyatt's award-winning book, although published five years after Agoston Haraszthy's work, is rightfully called "California's first wine book."]
- 6. He sold the estate to John Parrott in 1860. He was the father of Tiburcio Parrot whose Miravalle winery on Spring Mountain above Napa produced one of California's greatest pre-Prohibition Cabernet Sauvignons.
- 7. California Farmer, 10/5/1855.
- 8. California Farmer, 9/18/1857.
- 9. California Wine, Wool & Stock Journal (June 1863): 107; California Farmer, 5/17/1855, 4/22/1859; Alta California, 9/29/1861; St. Helena Star, 6/8/1885.
- 10. Napa County Reporter, 7/4/1884; St. Helena Star, 6/8/1885; S. F. Evening Bulletin, 5/1/1885.
- 11. Transactions (1859): 269, 303; Alta California, 8/14/1860.

- 12. Transactions (1859): 213; (1860): 63-4, 306, 315; California Farmer, 9/27/1861.
- 13. Transactions, (1866-1867): 535-540.
- 14. Alta California, 5/6/1867. The editor noted here that the Zinfandel and Black St. Peters were now thought to be the same vine.
- 15. Pacific Rural Press, 12/23/1871.
- 16. Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture ... 1866. (Washington DC, 1867): 606; Alta California, 1/20/1868, 1/26/1868; Transactions (1870-1871): 507-511.
- 17. Alta California, 12/6/1869.

[PLEASE NOTE CORRECTION. Installment I (July 1999 Newsletter), Chapter 1, p.3 ¶4: Playac Mall should read Playac Mali — with editor's apologies.]

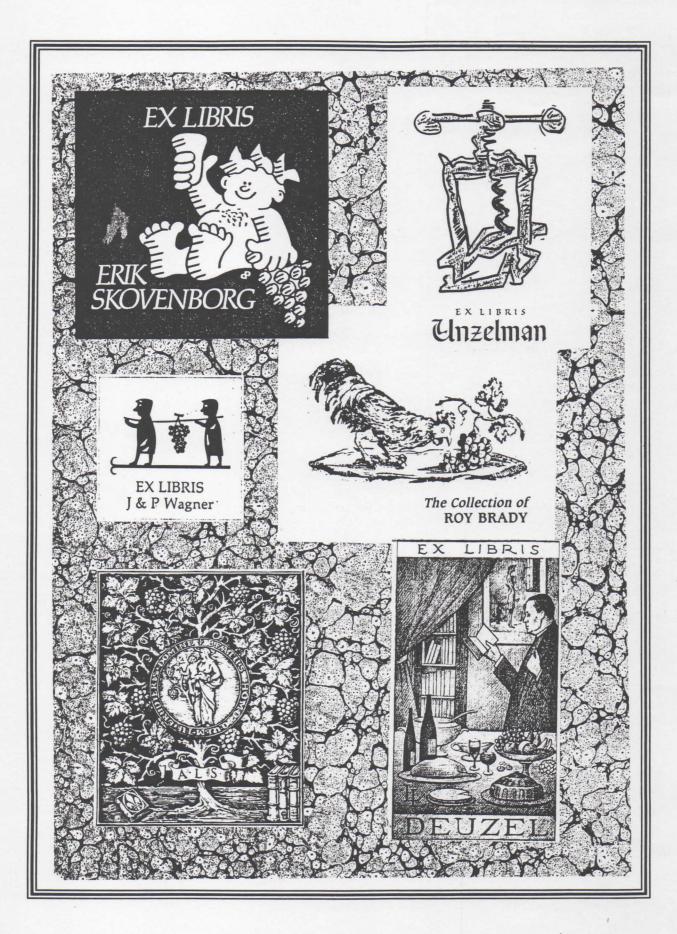
- Books & Bottles, continued from page 8 -

high on trees. [In the 19th century, not even] the celebrated Bettino Ricasoli, a name synonymous with excellent Italian wine, could bring the vines down from the trees." One area's claim to progress was merely changing to the maple tree for vine support. (Ricasoli's success was due more to the selection of quality varietals, such as Sangiovese, and not to revolutionary changes in how they were grown.)

The Bottles: Let's consider four varietals involved in the above mentioned wine districts — Sangiovese, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnary, and Pinot Noir. All four are alive and well in California. Here are some recent favorites:

- Chardonnay Chateau St. Jean Reserve, Robert Young Vineyard. \$57 (magnum).
- · Pinot Noir '96 Steele, Sangiocomo Vineyard. \$25.
- Pinot Noir '96 King Estate Reserve, Oregon. \$35.
- Sauvignon Blanc '97 Cakebread, Napa. \$14.
- · Sangiovese '97 L. Martini, Dunnigan Hills. \$14.







IN
THE
WINE
LIBRARY

by Bob Foster

"No region in California has ever had such detailed, thorough analysis of its history."

■ History of the Sonoma Viticultural District. The Grape Growers, the Wine Makers and the Vineyards, by Ernest P. Peninou. Nomis Press, 149 Gray Court, Santa Rosa, CA 95404. 707.546.1184. Hardback, 456 pp. \$60.

Ernest Peninou is among the very most respected wine historians of our generation. For over fifty years he has labored on this book — and the massive effort shows. The work is a triumph carefully covering the history of the Sonoma Viticultural District (comprising Sonoma, Marin, Lake, Mendocino, Humbolt, Trinity, Del Norte and Siskiyou counties) from the 1800s to the present.

The geographic scope of this book may seem a bit odd as modern wine lovers do not normally think of Lake or Mendocino counties as linked to Sonoma. But in the late 1800s the state was divided into seven major viticultural districts in order to promote the struggling industry. The Sonoma District included eight counties and stretched from Marin County along the coast to the Oregon border. This is the definition Peninou uses for this fine work.

It is amazing to read the diversity of enterprises that flourished in the region. The author gives a fascinating, detailed overview of each county. He begins with material on the source of the county's name. For example, although the common interpretation of the name Sonoma is the "Valley of the Moon," Peninou links it to the Wintun (a local Indian tribe) word for nose. The name came from a nickname the early Spanish explorers had for a local Indian chief. Following this introductory material he presents, in meticulous detail, information on every producer who ever existed in the region.

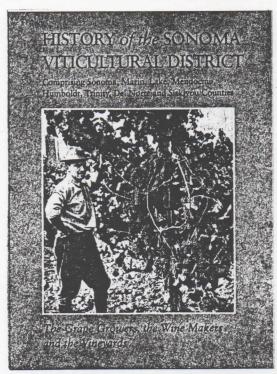
Within Sonoma County, the author breaks

the area into twenty-two sub-regions and develops the history of winegrowing and winemaking in each. Peninou covers the other seven counties in separate chapters.

The well-written text is highlighted by reproductions of advertisements and photographs from the early portion of this century. Additionally, many photos taken by the author show the current remains of many of the ghost wineries. It makes for fascinating reading of a history far more complex and involved than many modern wine lovers can imagine.

One of the prime sources for historians seeking to research the late 1800s in California winemaking has always been the "California Viticulture Commission Reports." But they are scarce and normally found only in major library collections. Peninou reproduces the surveys of 1888, 1891 and 1893 in the back of the book and provides a separate index for them.

No region in California has ever had such detailed, thorough analysis of its history. This book has a wealth of information that every wine buff with a penchant for history will want in his or her wine book library. Very highly recommended.



[Bob Foster is a founding Tendril and the wine book reviewer for the respected wine journal, California Grapevine. We appreciate their generous permission to reprint Bob's reviews. — Ed.]

U. S. Wine Industry: A BOOK REVIEW by Robert C. Ross

[Robert Ross, our dedicated collector of wine quotes, promises more "quotable visits with the famous" upon his return from the vineyard country of Italy. In the meantime, he sent the following book review. He promises more of these also. Salute! — Ed.]

■ The Wrath of Grapes. The Coming Wine Industry Shakeout and How to Take Advantage of It, by Lewis Perdue. Avon Books, June 1999, Paper, 254 pp. \$13.50.

This is a fascinating analysis of the world of American wine as an industry. Perdue has written seventeen books, including eleven novels, founded Wine Business Monthly and Insider, and publishes Wine Investment. He has been an aide to a U.S. Senator and a governor, taught journalism at Cornell and U.C.L.A., was a Washington correspondent for Dow Jones, Gannett and others, and acted as a wine importer and wholesaler.

Perdue's major theme: "Thou hast showed thy people hard things: thou has made us to drink the wine of astonishment." *Psalms* 60:3. He clearly describes the "hard things" he sees facing the U.S. wine industry: over-supply in the face of flat consumption, devastating vineyard diseases, an antiquated distribution system; attacks from antialcohol forces; and an inability to capitalize on wine's proven health benefits.

His description of the nine major wine industry trade groups - not including state, county and local organizations - and a recent history of their activities is particularly enlightening. He argues that these divisions show up as a spectacular string of economic, political and organizational failures. He points out that Gallo is the defining presence in the U.S. wine industry, often "an active contributor to the turmoil, but more often it lets the internecine war rage unabated, reasoning that the troubles of others can only help preserve its market dominance." He concludes that if you are looking at the wine industry as an investment, you must recognize that it cannot mount a concerted approach for anything - including meeting the gathering onslaught of neo-Prohibitionist attacks on alcohol in general.

Perdue describes the vulnerability of a grapevine called AxR1 to Phylloxera, despite several warnings from international researchers that it was vulnerable. He estimates the cost to tear out these vines and to replant to others at \$4 billion. He worries that the structural causes of the AxR1 problem still exist in American viticulture, which may lead to similar problems with other wine pests and diseases.

He reviews the evidence that wine is healthy, concludes that "people who drink in moderation live longer, healthier lives than either abstainers or heavy drinkers," and outlines several reasons why the message does not get through to consumers. For example, the total U.S. wine industry is about \$18 billion, advertising is about \$100 million and the anti-alcohol and drug groups have over \$3 billion in funds. The budget of the Center for Science in the Public Interest is \$18 million, twice the budget of all the wine trade associations combined.

His description of the three-tier system is worth the price of the book, for anyone who hasn't experienced it first hand. His conclusion: "The battle is between small shippers and the consumers they serve, and an entrenched, well-financed wholesalers" cartel whose money reaches into the pockets of legislators and public officials in every state and in the nation's capital. The outcome will most certainly affect your choices of wines and the prices you pay."

He argues that the profits for wineries during the past two years have come from increasing prices with tiny increases in unit volumes, so increasing profits cannot be sustained without increases in demand.

This background analysis leads to his basic economic conclusion: "Both wine and sex are best enjoyed for the sake of the love involved instead of the money.... You had better love wine because there is relatively little money to be made, and it is made by a very small handful of people This is not a warning against investing in either wine or the companies that produce it. The right investment can offer hours and years of enjoyment and reward. Just do it with your eyes (instead of your wallet) wide open and your investment goals focused on the horizon of pleasure rather than profit."

There are also chapters on the costs of getting wine from the ground into the bottle; the costs and possible rewards of investing in wine itself; an approach to investment research before investing in public wineries; and the risks to investors (and the benefits to sellers) of winery REITs. He reinforces his message with the view of venture capitalists about the wine business: "It's too small; the tiny growth potential is not worth the risk; returns are too small; your market is shrinking."

Well worth reading and perhaps studying, whatever your interest in American wine.

