



# WAYWARD TENDRILS QUARTERLY

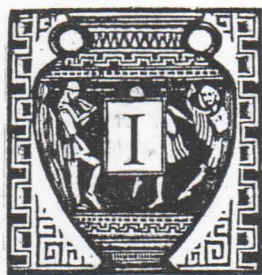
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## WINE & CIVILIZATION Wine's Rich Relationship with the Arts by Nina Wemyss

[This address, accompanied by a brilliant color-slide presentation, was given by wine historian and vintage Tendril, Nina Wemyss, to the Society of Medical Friends of Wine, San Francisco, on 18 March 1998, and published in the Society *Bulletin* Vol.40 No.2, Fall 1998. The Society's kind permission to reprint is appreciated. — Ed.]



would like to give you a brief glimpse into wine's history and its rich relationship with the arts. Alexandre Dumas, the 19<sup>th</sup> century writer famed for his adventure novels, also wrote a dictionary of cuisine, *Grand Dictionnaire de Cuisine* (Paris, 1873), in which he said, "Wine is the intellectual

part of the meal; meats are merely the material part." The grape vine is one of nature's most miraculous gifts, unique in providing fresh fruit for eating, dried fruit for storing, and, through the magic of its own fermentation, wine to enhance our lives. Wine in all its remarkable aspects embodies the universality of human culture, experience, and achievement.

The history of wine reflects the history of mankind: wine has been part of the civilizing process for at least 7,000 years. Wine is a natural beverage that can be taken to overindulgence, but in moderation it rewards us kindly as a food for the body and the spirit. It can be grown in the poorest soils that will support little else—and so helped spread populations and advance economies. Hugh Johnson discusses this in his book, *Vintage: The Story of Wine* (New York / London, 1989; subsequent editions 1991, 1998). This work is a great resource—a wealth of information with history, anecdotes, and biography.

Early man hunted and gathered before he cultivated crops. Scholars theorize that the cultivation of the vine was, in part, responsible for our evolution from nomadic hunter to agrarian settler. Evidence of

grape seeds has been found in prehistoric caves. Research on the oldest, scientifically-dated wine vessel so far discovered was recently released. It provides the world's earliest chemical evidence for wine, according to Professor Patrick McGovern of the Applied Science Center for Archeology at the University of Pennsylvania Museum, who, with his colleagues, conducted the research. The pot, with a volume of about 2½ gallons, was found in the mud and brick ruins of an archeological site in Northern Iran, and dates from 5000 to 5400 BC, thus pushing the scientific evidence for wine back two millennia. In the jar was a yellowish residue, the remains of tartaric acid, found in quantity only in grapes. Was this grape juice or wine? Prof. McGovern found, as well, remains of terebinth resin which indicates wine. According to Pliny, the ancient Roman scholar (AD 23-79), Romans preserved their wines by adding resins, which were anti-microbial. [EDITOR: See *Wine into Words*, p.290, for Jim Gabler's comments on Pliny's "unrivaled" work, *Natural History*.] Thus, Prof. McGovern believes, the ancients thought



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resins would be helpful in preserving wines. See the scholarly essays in *The Origins and Ancient History of Wine*, edited by Patrick McGovern, Stuart Fleming, and Solomon Katz (Luxembourg, 1995). [EDITOR: Prof. McGovern has since published *Ancient Wine. The Search for the Origins of Viniculture*. See review this issue.]

How old is wine? That is, winemaking as an intentional human activity? According to Prof. McGovern and others, wine dates from the late Stone Age in the Near East, the Neolithic period when humans had their first settled communities based on agriculture, domesticated animals, the use of sophisticated stone tools and pottery. As soon as man began to settle down and live in communities, he made wine. Prof. McGovern writes, "Fermentation, in particular, helped preserve foods and make them more nutritious. ... as long as Neolithic wine enthusiasts practiced more moderation than Noah, they were better nourished and less prone to sickness than those who abstained" (*The Sciences*, Nov/Dec 1996).

It is thought that grape vines were first domesticated (cultivated) in the regions that today make up Iran, Iraq, Georgia, and Armenia. Wine growing was brought to Mesopotamia, the fertile valley between the Tigris and the Euphrates, where rulers and nobility enjoyed its pleasures. Vines were trained to grow up trees—a practice that is continued in parts of the world today. We severely prune vines for decreased quantity and consequently improved quality. One of the earliest works of literature, the Sumerian epic of Gilgamesh, written about 2000 BC, attributes to wine the power to make humans immortal. The tree of life the hero searched for was a grape vine found in a bliss-filled vineyard:

Amethyst it bore as its fruit,  
Grape vine was trellised, good to behold.  
Lapis lazuli it bore as grape clusters,  
Fruit it bore, magnificent to look upon.

Before the first pyramids were built, wine was enjoyed by royalty in Egypt, perhaps as early as 2700 BC. Egypt was vineless and winegrowing was introduced probably from Canaan. The earliest people to inhabit the Nile River Valley were grain farmers. Their barley crops insured an adequate supply of beer for the masses. Wine was reserved for royalty, nobility, and the priesthood for use in their daily life and religious rituals. For example, Ramses II offered 20,000 wine jars to the gods, and 40,000 wine jars were used for temple rituals. Prescriptions for wine-based medicines have been found on papyri and stone tablets. Wine was also an important burial provision of the kings. Tomb walls were painted with scenes depicting favorite pastimes with hopes that these would be continued in the afterlife. The Pharaohs

believed you could take it with you! And they had buried with them food, drink, clothing, and weapons. Tomb paintings reveal that today's viticulture and enology are based on ancient practices and methods. Grapes were emptied into vats made of baked mud or clay, while stompers crushed the grapes to the rhythms created by singers and musicians.

Moderation was an important part of the Egyptian ethic. Athenaeus, a third century Greek historian, wrote: "Among the Egyptians of ancient times, any gathering was conducted with moderation ... They dined while seated using the simplest and most helpful food, and drinking only as much as would be sufficient to promote good cheer."

When Howard Carter entered the tomb of Tutankhamon in 1922 (one of the few tombs still intact), he found several dozen clay wine jars. They were some of the most important artifacts to come out of the tombs for Egyptologists and historians as well as enophiles, according to Leonard Lesko in his fascinating book, *King Tut's Wine Cellar* (Berkeley, 1977). These vessels were significant discoveries because of their detailed labels—26 of the 36 jars were labeled—indicating vineyard, vintage date, winemaker's name, and even the intended purpose of the wine. Some jar labels described the wine as "good" or "sweet" and one jar was labeled "for merry making." This was the Golden Age of Egyptian history and wine was the prestige drink of the rulers in this life and the next.



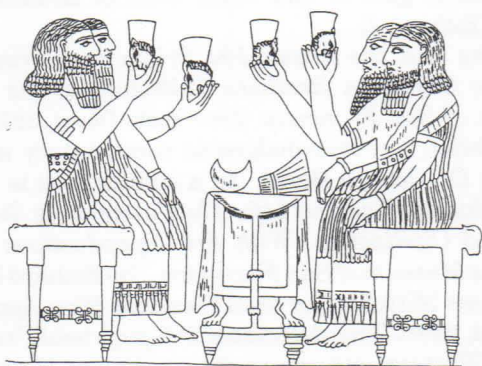
Wine also had a great importance to the Greeks. They were renowned for their pottery which was important for storing, aging, and transporting wine. Wine, considered a food to the Greeks, was basic to their diet and central to celebration and religious ritual. It was also

considered to be of medicinal value. The two most influential doctors of the ancient world, Hippocrates and Galen, were convinced of wine's value as a medicine. They variously considered it important to a healthy diet, as an antiseptic, as a vehicle for administering drugs, and as a tranquilizer. In fact, the earliest printed book on wine, *Liber de Vinis*, was written by a physician, Arnald of Villanova (1235–1311). (For a scholarly and engaging view of the author and his work, see *The Earliest Printed Book on Wine, by Arnald of Villanova...Now for the First Time rendered into English...by Henry E. Sigerist, M.D., with Facsimile of the Original Edition, 1478* [New York: Schuman's, 1943]). Greek wine was strong and high in alcohol and was generally diluted with water. There were strict rules for mixing. Wine could be beneficial or



dangerous, depending on its use. As Paracelsus, a German physician wrote in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, “Whether wine is a nourishment, medicine, or poison, is a matter of dosage.”

The “Golden Mean” was the keynote of Classical Greek civilization. Moderation was taken seriously. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, Eubulus, in one of his plays, has Dionysus exclaim: “Three bowls only do I mix for the temperate: one to health which they empty first, the second to love and pleasure, the third to sleep. When this one is drunk up, wise guests go home. The fourth bowl is ours no longer but belongs to violence, the fifth to uproar, the sixth to drunken revel, the seventh to black eyes, the eighth is the policeman’s, the ninth to madness and the hurling of furniture.”



“BANQUET SCENE, 8<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY BC”  
From *Drink & Be Merry...*

It was the philosophical Greeks who fully appreciated the power of wine to enhance communication. The word “symposium,” loosely translated from the Greek, means “drinking together.” In his work, *The Deipnosophists, or Banquet of the Learned*, first published in Venice in 1514 (English translation in 1854), Athenaeus describes a symposium of twenty-one artists, writers, musicians, and surgeons discussing all things that should adorn a banquet. Amongst others, foods, celebrated cooks, famous gastronomists, and the virtues and qualities of wines are subjects of their discourses. [EDITOR: An English language edition of *The Deipnosophists* (XV books in 7 volumes) is readily available from the Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, MA.]

Euripedes wrote, “Where there is no wine, love perishes, and everything else that is pleasant to man.” Dionysus, the Greek wine god, attracted a large following of people who used the potency of the grape to enhance their spiritual community. Unfortunately, a cult emerged that disregarded moderation. However, Greek drama grew out of the Dionysian celebrations of dancing, music, and rites, thus making Dionysus the patron of drama. Greek pottery was the canvas of the day for artists, and a myriad of vessels with magnificent paintings of banquets, rituals, symposia,

and myths have survived to give us a visual understanding of the culture of wine in ancient Greece.

With the rise of Rome, Italy became the center of the wine world. (For a well-researched, documented study of wine’s cultural importance in the Roman world, see *Vinum: The Story of Roman Wine* (ArtFlair, 2001) by Stuart Fleming, Scientific Director of the University of Pennsylvania Museum). Pompeii was an important resort and port with a thriving wine industry—more than a hundred wine bars and twenty wine shops served this town of 20,000 people. Buried by an eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 AD, Pompeii was not rediscovered until 1748. The site has provided important information on Roman life, and wonderful examples of Roman art—mosaics, wall paintings, pottery. Beautiful objects for the storing and serving of wine illustrate the glory of Roman civilization.

Wine was an important item of trade of the ancient world. Tens of thousands of amphoras of wine were shipped throughout the Mediterranean. A new field of study, deep sea archeology, has enabled researchers to explore the Mediterranean floor, hitherto beyond their reach. A team lead by Dr. Ballard, who found the Titanic, discovered a great concentration of ancient shipwrecks, five from Roman times, off the coast of Sicily. Many wine amphoras were part of the cargo. Wine’s remarkable history—its rich religious, artistic, commercial, social, and medicinal connections—continues to unfold today.

During the Middle Ages, the monks became wine growers, allowing viticulture to survive and spread. Monasteries acquired vast land holdings, many planted to vineyards. In the medieval world wine was wealth, for the Church and nobility. Helen Bettinson, historian and BBC producer, working on her doctorate in the history of medicine, has written a fascinating paper titled *Wine in Medieval Medicine*. She states that wine had a significant role in the culture and economy of Europe in the Middle Ages in both daily

and spiritual life. It had a special status over all other beverages because it was the safest beverage as well as the most potent form of alcohol before the discovery of distillation, and because of its religious connection. “Arab, Jewish, and Christian doctors worked within a tradition of medicine largely shaped by the classical Greek and Roman writers. According to this tra-



“BACCHUS” by de VALDEZ, 18<sup>TH</sup> C



dition...medicine consisted of three instruments: diet, medication, and surgery. Wine played a part in all three." Again, moderation was the key. Wine was beneficial but excess was dangerous to both the body and the soul. Moderation was an important theme in all the great wine civilizations and continues to be so.

The emergence of the Italian Renaissance brought renewed interest in classical culture, and the wine god—Dionysus to the Greeks, Bacchus to the Romans—became an appealing subject to artists such as Caravaggio, Michelangelo, and Velasquez. With exploration and settlement, European culture spread throughout the world and with it the knowledge and appreciation of wine. The Spanish expanded the frontiers of Christianity in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, bringing the so-called Mission grape, a *vitis vinifera*, with them to the new world. Wine continued to be an incentive to and an object of trade. (Hugh Johnson relates that Magellan spent 40% of the cost of his planned sea voyage on wine. This was great wisdom—he knew that to get around the world, he would need more wine than weapons!)

A new middle class of wealthy merchants emerged, and the appreciation and enjoyment of wine was central. The 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries brought a rise in fashion, wit, and manners which are beautifully reflected in the paintings of the time. Throughout history, wine was synonymous with gracious living, and magnificent objects for enjoying wine were created. Artists brought a new vision to the world and wine was used to express friendship and sharing. Wine is symbolic, sacred, suggestive, and seductive. It is a symbol of fertility and promise, of everyday pleasures, and divine mysteries. It is a source of truth, beauty, and joy, an inspiration to artists and lovers.

Enjoying a glass of wine connects us with 7,000 years of human history and culture as well as with the joys of the moment. Wine is life—a *votre santé!*



A TENDRIL ADDENDUM: Four modern-day wine exhibition catalogues—issued to accompany exhibitions of the same title, well-written, lavishly illustrated, and highly recommended—reflect the history, joys, and inspirations of wine.

■ The Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt Museum catalogue, *Wine: Celebration and Ceremony* (New York, 1985, 127 pp), contains essays by Hugh Johnson ("A Gift of the Gods"), Dora J. Janson ("Visions of the Vine: A Symbolic History"), and David McFadden ("Celebration & Ceremony: The Patterns of Ritual"). The Foreword sets the scene: "Wine connects us

historically to ancient civilizations, geographically to distant parts of the globe, and spiritually to the myths and beliefs that form our culture."

■ The exhibition catalogue of the Israel Museum, *Drink and Be Merry: Wine and Beer in Ancient Times* (Jerusalem, 1999, 136 pp.), "is devoted to the central role of wine and beer in our lives—in religious rites, in festivities, and in everyday life—and covers some 5000 years of drinking culture."

■ In 1983, the Goldsmiths' Company, in association with the Vintners' Company, mounted a glorious exhibit in London, *The Goldsmith & the Grape: Silver in the Service of Wine* (London: Goldsmiths' Co., 1983, 47 pp). The magnificent specimens of gold and silver wine service date from 2500 BC. "And they gave them drink in vessels of gold ... and royal wine in abundance." (Book of Esther 1.7).

■ *Wine and the Artist: 104 Prints and Drawings from the Christian Brothers Collection at the Wine Museum of San Francisco* (New York: Dover, 1979, 135 pp). A brief, but knowledgeable commentary is provided by Dr. Joseph Baird. In a similar vein is ■ *In Celebration of Wine and Life: The Fascinating Story of Wine and Civilization. With Art Reproductions from The Wine Museum of San Francisco...* by Richard Lamb and Ernest Mittelberger (San Francisco: Wine Appreciation Guild, 1980). This delectable 255-page book "relates wine to Western culture, to the mythology of ancient Greece and Rome, and to its ecclesiastical heritage reaching back to pre-Biblical time."



"GRAPE TREADING & PRESSING, 6<sup>TH</sup> C., A.D."

From *Vinum: The Story of Roman Wine...*





Welcome, new Tendrils! **George Buehler** (Brookline, MA. [gvbuehler@aol.com](mailto:gvbuehler@aol.com)), a member of the Board of Directors of the Elizabeth Bishop Wine Resource Center Library at Boston University School of Hospitality, says he is often called upon to do historical research on California wineries. Our ongoing series by Barbara Marinacci on Martin Ray brought the W-T to his attention. **Richard Pepper** (Old Stratford, UK. [rp@bwec.co.uk](mailto:rp@bwec.co.uk)) has been collecting for a short three years, but has already gathered some 150 titles in his growing collection. **James Simpson** (Sharon, CT. [jsimpson02@earthlink.net](mailto:jsimpson02@earthlink.net)), a ten-year collector, counts about 300 books in his library. **Thomas Burke** (Eureka, CA. [sercial04@hotmail.com](mailto:sercial04@hotmail.com)) has been collecting English & French titles for five years. **John Danza's** (Naperville, IL. [jdanza@wideopenwest.com](mailto:jdanza@wideopenwest.com)) special collecting interest is André L. Simon, his contemporaries, and The Saintsbury Club. He writes: "I have been at this only for about four years and the challenge is quite fun." **Sandra Jordan** ([sjordan@jordancos.com](mailto:sjordan@jordancos.com) or [info@jordanwinery.com](mailto:info@jordanwinery.com)), creative director of Wine Country Traditions (fine, handcrafted wine-country-inspired "heirlooms of tomorrow"), notes a special interest in the literature of wine antiques. And, we welcome the venerable Piccadilly antiquarian booksellers, **Henry Sotheran** ([amcg@sotherans.co.uk](mailto:amcg@sotherans.co.uk)). ROSTER NOTE: **Laurie Ackermann**, retired this year from the Constitutional Court of South Africa, can now be reached at [lwhack@iafrica.com](mailto:lwhack@iafrica.com). He hopes "to be able to spend a little more time on my wine book collection, a South African Wine Bibliography, and a list of duplicate South African wine books."

#### AN INVITATION

is extended to all Tendrils to attend a special day in celebration of *The Brady Book: Selections from Roy Brady's Unpublished Writings on Wine* (Nomis Press, for the Wine Librarians Assn, 2003). This event will be hosted by Tendril and Special Collections Librarian, **Danette Cook Adamson**, at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, California, on Thursday afternoon, October 28<sup>th</sup>. The program will feature Prof. **Tom Pinney**, editor of *The Brady Book*, who will speak on Roy Brady and Southern California wine history, and **Nina Wemyss**, who will give a slide presentation, "A 7000-Year History of Wine and Its Rich Relationship with the Arts." A wine tasting and a viewing of the library's Wine Industry Collection and Southern California Wine History Exhibits are also planned. For further information and reservations contact Danette at 909-869-3109 / [dcadamson@csupomona.edu](mailto:dcadamson@csupomona.edu).

#### NEW WINE LIBRARY AT SOUTHERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

As part of the Southern Oregon University Library Expansion and Enhancement Project, the new Hannon Library (with over 120,000 square feet) will house a newly founded library of wine and viticulture books—a valuable resource for this budding southern Oregon winegrowing region. The man behind the new wine library is Tendril **Willard Brown**, a retired Oregon physician with a passionate interest in wine, who presented to the university a core of nearly 400 books—many originally part of the Bern C. Ramey Library (see W-TQ April 2003 and January 2004). The collection includes books on viticulture, wine production, wine marketing, wines of geographical areas, and wine appreciation. Will, who has contributed several accounts on Northwest U.S. wine literature to our *Quarterly*, is researching a book on the history of wine production in Oregon. Kudos to all!

#### WINE BOOK AWARDS!!

Our acclaimed "wine book of the centuries," the second edition of **James Gabler's** *Wine Into Words*, is reaping awards! The Gourmand World Cookbooks Award for 2004 has awarded *Wine Into Words* "3 stars" — the highest rating, and one of only seven books in English to receive 3 stars. The other wine book in English awarded 3 stars is *Grape Man of Texas: The Life of T. V. Munson* by Sherrie McLeRoy and Roy Renfro (see review this issue). Congratulations, Jim!

#### "PHILOS BLAKE" VERIFIED

A question recently arose as to the authorship of the two books by "Philos Blake," *Guide to American Corkscrew Patents. Vol.1: 1860-1895* and *Vol.2: 1896-1920* (New Castle, DE: Bottlescrew Press, 1978; 1981). They have been long attributed to Homer Babbidge, the co-author of *Corkscrews for Collectors* (Bernard Watney and Homer Babbidge, London/NY: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1981). It is stated on the dust jacket of *Corkscrews* that Homer Babbidge used "Philos Blake" as a pseudonym. But your editor was recently surprised to be told that Paul Shaub (from New Castle, Delaware, and an early member of the International Correspondence of Corkscrew Addicts), using the pseudonym "Philos Blake" (the actual 1860 patentee for one of the earliest known U.S. patent corkscrews), compiled the two volumes. A letter to Mr. Shaub has cleared up the mystery. He kindly provided the facts: Paul Shaub and Homer Babbidge (together) produced the two-volume *Guide*. The idea originated with Babbidge, Shaub designed the books and handled the publication (300 copies of each volume), and Babbidge, under his oft-used pseudonym "Philos Blake," wrote the text. Paul concluded his



letter: "Homer would be very, very amused by the stir-up that his old friend Philos has made." NOTE: Mr. Shaub has a few copies of this very elusive two-volume set for sale: \$250 + \$5 postage — Paul Shaub, Box 12, New Castle, DE 19720.

#### RECENT FINDS

■ **A Good Year** (NY: Knopf, 2004) is a new novel by Peter Mayle of *A Year in Provence* fame. Billed as a "fascinating tale of the hugely lucrative and competitive boutique-wine trade" in Provence, our resident critic was not convinced. He says "they should have titled this dull, little nothing of a book *Languid Lark in the Languedoc*." ■ Not a new release, but a recent find is **Wine People** by Stephen Brook (NY: Vendome, 2001). This is an interesting collection of forty portraits of individuals involved in all aspects of wine production and consumption: proprietors, producers, merchants, writers, a collector, an auctioneer, and a sommelier. A good read that is superbly illustrated. **Bacchus. A Biography** by Andrew Dalby (London: British Museum Press, 2003, £15). 166 pp. Including [8] pp of colour illustrations. Well-researched, with some twenty pages given to "Life Notes," "Sources," "Further Reading," "List of Illustrations," and "Index." "The life story of the strangely powerful wine-god Bacchus—seducer, magician, merrymaker—as never before told." [d.j.] Author Dalby, an ancient historian by training, has written award-winning books about the history of food and gastronomy in Greece and the Roman world.

#### WINE BOOK COLLECTION FOR SALE!

Vintage Tendril **Kenneth Hark** has made that difficult decision: he is selling his wine library, a fine selection of some 250 twentieth century wine books gathered during almost thirty years of collecting. He wishes to sell the books as a lot. This is a great opportunity for a beginning collector to add a substantial number of desired titles to his library. Please contact Ken at [harkx@bellsouth.net](mailto:harkx@bellsouth.net) for a list of the books and further details.



THE WAYWARD TENDRILS is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1990 for Wine Book Collectors. Yearly Membership / Subscription to the WAYWARD TENDRILS QUARTERLY is \$20 USA and Canada; \$25 overseas. Permission to reprint is requested. Please address all correspondence to THE WAYWARD TENDRILS, Box 9023, Santa Rosa, CA. 95405 USA. FAX 707-544-2723. E-mail: [tendrils@jps.net](mailto:tendrils@jps.net). Editor and Publisher: Gail Unzelman. —

#### EDWARD HALE REMEMBERED!

Who was Edward Hale?" asked **Rae Fahlenius** in his article on vinous bookplates last issue. Tendril and wine author **Christopher Fielden** kindly responded: "Edward Matthew Blagden (Ted) Hale was a good friend of mine whom I first met more than thirty years ago when I was working in Burgundy. He had a small collection of wine books, amongst which were some that I dearly coveted! I think it is fair to say that Ted Hale was a maverick in the wine trade. He had served in the Hong Kong police and he returned to Britain to run his wife's family wine company, Edward Giddings, in Wiltshire. Sadly for the company, "Far From the Madding Crowd" was filmed locally and Ted offered unstinting hospitality to the cast and direction. This was hospitality that the company could not afford, and the company was sold to the local brewers, Wadworths. Ted went on to buy for the fine-wine division of John Harvey in Bristol, which enjoyed amongst its customers the royal yacht *Britannia* and the Glyndebourne Opera. After a stint in Bristol, Ted was based at Harvey's office in Pall Mall in London, where he threw sumptuous picnic lunches with cheese and pork pies from Paxton and Whitfield in Jermyn Street. The bottles were drawn from Harvey's cellar. In the end the cost of Ted's hospitality became too much for his masters and he was dismissed, on the grounds that he had not told them that he had been banned from driving six months previously. He then went into business on his own account, but, unsurprisingly, this was not a success. For me, Ted was at his best as an educator, and witness to this is the number of successful Masters of Wine who served as his assistant at Harvey's. These include Jane Hunt, Angela Muir and Arabella Woodrow. They all have fond memories of Ted—but less fond of his driving, which was at best erratic. I am not sure whether he wrote much about wine, but he contributed the piece on Italy in the *Harvey's Pocket Guide to Wine*, which I edited in 1981." — A grand wineman, Edward Hale. And now, thanks to Christopher Fielden, those of us who have wine books carrying Hale's distinctive bookplate can know and appreciate him.







## **BOOKS & BOTTLES**

by  
**Fred McMillin**

**The Books:** *Valley of the Golden Mummies* by Zahi Hawass (NY: H. Abrams, 2002, 32 pp) and *Shipwrecks in the Bodrum Museum of Underwater Archaeology* by Prof. George F. Bass (Ankara: Donmez Offset, 1996, 96 pp).

### **Valley of the Golden Mummies...**

- Even King Tut (1352–1336 B.C.) had wine brought in from the renowned, remote desert oasis of Bahariya. But where was this Napa Valley of ancient Egypt?
- 1988 A.D. — Some 230 miles southwest of Cairo, a donkey stumbled across a hole while crossing the desert. It proved to be the site of the large Oasis of Baharia!
- Bes was the Egyptian god of wine (and other pleasures). Yet, no temple dedicated to Bes was ever found.
- 1988 again — In the oasis, a resident brought to the archeologists a piece of basalt bearing the first seal of King Tut ever found in the region. Racing to the point of origin, a drab mound of debris, the excited professionals soon realized they had discovered (the only known) temple to Bes in all of Egypt.

### **The Wine Wealth of Bahariya**

The wine sales went so well that many affluent residents could follow the King Tut model and have the head and shoulders of their mummies clad in gold foil. Hence, the title of our book, *Valley of the Golden Mummies*. It deals primarily with the Greco-Roman period, when first the Greeks and then the Romans, ruled Egypt (Alexander the Great opened the period in 332 BC, and Roman rule ended in 395 AD).

Happily, those excavations also uncovered a “wine factory,” so we know quite a bit about their wine-making. Tidbits:

- They used egg whites to clarify white wines.
- They conducted many of their operations after sunset.
- Wine basins with bottom spouts were located so blends could be made into a third basin.

### **Three Grades of Wines**

The Romans made the following three grades of wines:

1. First harvest grapes made the best wine. It was the only wine not diluted with water.
2. Second harvest grapes were pressed with a wooden lid. The wine yield was increased by adding water.
3. And finally, wine for the poor was made by adding water to the sediment and then pressing it again. I wonder if they increased sales by calling it TWO BUCK TUT?

### **Shipwrecks in the Bodrum Museum...**

- 1958 — In the deep blue sea at the southwest corner of Turkey, sponge diver Kemal Aras discovered what proved to be a Bronze Age shipwreck. Little did he realize that it would lead to the creation of the most important underwater archeological museum in the world. What has this to do with TWO BUCK TUT?

On that Turkish coast about 300 A.D., while fine wine was being made by Romans at Bahariya, a Roman ship laden with 1,000 wine amphoras (Latin for two-handled vessel), ripped its bottom open on a reef where the sponge divers would find it 17 centuries later. A wonderful little book about the museum’s displays will charm all wine history buffs. A tidbit: The turnip-shaped amphoras full of wine were heavy. So to pour, both ends of the jar—the open mouth and the pointed, closed bottom tip—were grasped. In time, a ceramic ball was attached to the tip-end. Later still, the wine thief was invented: wine in the amphora could be removed without having to tip it!

**The Bottles:** By 300 A.D., when those thousand Roman amphoras slipped into the Turkish sea, other Romans had initiated, or upgraded, winegrowing throughout western Europe. Here are some recent winners from six of those wine regions.

1<sup>st</sup> — BURGUNDY, FRANCE: Pinot Noir from California’s Russian River Valley: Gary Farrell, Rochioli Vineyard, 2002. \$50.

2<sup>nd</sup> — RHONE VALLEY, FRANCE: Syrah, alias Shiraz grown in Australia: Tyrell’s McLaren Vale Reserve, 2001. \$25.

3<sup>rd</sup> — BORDEAUX, FRANCE: Cabernet Sauvignon from the Napa Valley: Huntington Winery, 2002. \$20.

4<sup>th</sup> — LOIRE VALLEY, FRANCE: Sauvignon Blanc grown in California: Canyon Road, 2003. \$9.

5<sup>th</sup> — ITALY: Castello di Gabbiano, Riserva Chianti Classico (100% Sangiovese), 2001. \$17.

6<sup>th</sup> — SPAIN: Marques de Arienzo Rioja, Crianza, 2001. \$10.





**MARTIN RAY:  
A CON ARTIST, EVEN A CROOK?**

by *Barbara Marinacci*



ur Editor, Gail Unzelman, suggested, perhaps somewhat slyly, that I undertake to write a commentary with a provocative title like this one—spinning off from Roy Brady’s delightful reminiscence about his amicable association with vintner Martin Ray in the late 1950s. The

piece is among five dozen selections in *The Brady Book: Selections from Roy Brady’s Unpublished Writings on Wine* [Nomis Press for the Wine Librarians Assn., 2003] whose introduction by Thomas Pinney provides a fine overview of Brady’s life-in-wine.

The *W-TQ* has already presented, in the April 2004 issue, Bob Foster’s enthusiastic review of this winsome assemblage of Roy Brady’s wine writings, most of them written between 1950 and 1998. (This same issue also contains Pinney’s intriguing portrayal of Brady as a “born collector.”) *The Brady Book* is handsomely designed, illustrated, and printed. It features tipped-in reproductions of colorful antique wine labels that once had been Brady’s and now belong to Special Collections at U.C. Davis. (The book’s 14 are a miniscule representation of some 50,000+ in the total Brady bunch. Among them is the notorious label Martin Ray used on a 1936 Paul Masson “still dry red” wine that had lifted the artwork of an old Schloss Johannisberg label!)

Taking up the subject of Martin Ray, about midway in the book in a section called “The New California,” Roy Brady started out in this manner:

Martin Ray was a crook, or, better, a con artist. I don’t think he conned people primarily to make money, but his deepest satisfaction came from conning them carefully, thoughtfully, and exquisitely; it was an artistic performance. He was also, at his best, a great winemaker. Perhaps he could have been as great a winemaker as he painted himself to be, but the joyous scalawag kept breaking through. His motto might have been, I could not love thee wine so much, loved I not conning more.

I should now tell readers who don’t know me, or of me, that I’m “Rusty” Ray’s stepdaughter. Contrary to my own disposition (MR and I were *never* compatible), even before Eleanor Ray’s death in 2000 I became the primary gatekeeper, even promoter, of MR’s durable reputation as a wine purist. In the early 1990s I helped my mother prepare and publish her memoir/biography, *Vineyards in the Sky*. Then in the late ’90s I spent a year going through the Rays’ extensive and amazing correspondence, as well as other materials—mainly

post-1952, since two fires had destroyed most previous records, including those from MR’s Paul Masson-ownership period. These materials are now housed within Special Collections at U.C. Davis as the Martin and Eleanor Ray Papers. Currently, I’m writing a series of articles for *W-TQ* focusing on MR’s own writings, particularly his letters to friends. Therefore, I surely qualify to comment upon Roy Brady’s assertion regarding MR’s character, whether in concurrence with or in irate denial of his blatant allegation.

Brady indicated his view of MR in his review of Eleanor Ray’s *Vineyards in the Sky*, printed in *Wayward Tendrils* in April 1993 as “Martin Ray Reviewed.”

Her well told story captures his joy of everyday life, his ebullience, his constant rising above setbacks, and his extraordinary ability to flame enthusiasm in others. He was also a visionary, a showman, and a con man....

Was Martin Ray a great winemaker? I think he could have been, but other circumstances apart, his imp sometimes caused him to make a point rather than a great wine.

For years, many of Martin Ray’s wines had been so vibrantly authentic, especially compared with other California wines, that their reputation sold them. After the early ’50s, aided by Eleanor Ray’s publicity efforts, MR effectively promoted his wines, and wine aficionados eagerly sought and bought them, willing to pay whatever he asked for them. Made in limited amounts, they didn’t need to be widely distributed or mass-marketed. For a long time their prices seemed outrageous; then the Wine Revolution’s new “boutique” wineries began following suit.

Was MR a con artist, as Brady maintained (though humorously so)? In the past he had been a super-salesman of advertising and then of stocks and bonds, whether by inclination or circumstance. He had the salesman’s gifts for banter, spotting and charming potential customers or cajoling current clients, then moving in for the sell and to close the deal. After he became a vintner, he’d still do selling well, though saying that he hated it and got sick after doing it.

There’s a difference in intentions, of course, between skillful salespeople and con artists. The former, to radiate honest enthusiasm, like to believe that the product they’re trying to sell is the best or, if not, that it has good value for the price. Con men, on the other hand, are poised to commit a fraud when they prey upon gullible people, to sell snake oil or the Brooklyn Bridge. They often succeed because confidence schemes’ victims are usually greedy themselves; they think they’re getting a terrific bargain.

Basically, Brady knew MR in a social context, when his skills as a “showman” host—spellbinding raconteur, robust gourmand, and indefatigable wine drinker—were at their prime and in impressive display. This



theatricality combined with his fervent belief in California's potential for producing great wines and his savagely critical perspective on its wine industry's mostly dismal history and drab current status, to convey to visitors a vision of possible future glories in the making of wine. Several accounts of MR's powers of enchantment have found their way into books—notably that of Jack and Jamie Davies' inspiring "conversion experience" that eventually took them to Schramsberg, as told at the start of James Conaway's *Napa*.

But the entertaining "imp" that Brady found in MR sometimes acted less like a mischievous child who played too many pranks and talked too grandly, and more like a malicious fiend. He'd get outraged and insulting whenever anyone dared to challenge him in his opinions and facts, authoritarian stance, or the claimed perfection of some wine of his. He also worked to manipulate and control the people around him. Banishing those who resisted coming under his spell, he thought and behaved like a cult leader. Brady doesn't seem to have experienced this darker side of MR, though he doubtless heard about it. And like numerous others, he was fascinated with MR, even if ambivalent. He hoped to capture some of this personal history for the record:

Everyone, and they were many, who had any dealings with Martin Ray had stories about him. I thought to collect them, and was promised copies of letters and notes, but to the last person they fell mute. The reason, I surmise, is that after thinking about it they felt used and abused by Martin, and in consequence felt foolish. Not a few were overtly hostile from the start. I am certainly not particularly wise in the ways of the world, but I never had any illusions about Martin. I thoroughly enjoyed him; he is a splendid character to have in one's memory, but he was not one to have business dealings with....

It's regrettable that Brady failed in this anecdote-collecting endeavor. He'd have done better by taping conversations while interviewees were imbibing wine, gathering up their colorful tales about MR, whether first-hand, second-hand, or beyond. There was a legion of them, some of which are still circulating. Some people surely described MR's antics, diatribes, or other

prodigious behaviors in journals or in letters to friends. But have any survived? What *is* extant, though, are hundreds of copies of letters that Martin and Eleanor Ray wrote to or received from friends, strangers who became loyal customers, wine industry or media people, academics, and detractors. Carbon copies were routinely made, then filed away, of letters or even short notes they sent out. These report on events, proclaim MR's opinions, and describe his interactions with people—which often terminated badly, in mutual disaffection.

Thus both sides of the Rays' correspondence with Roy Brady were preserved (in a folder now at UC Davis). ER even sent out an effervescent letter from him as a publicity release after retyping it as a "master" for her duplicating machine. (This was pre-computer time, as well as prior to copyright law holding that letters are the property of writers, not recipients.) Here's some of what Roy told the Rays in his letter of July 7, 1958:

At a blind tasting of Champagnes held by the Wine and Food Society last fall I put a Krug 1952 first and Devaux Brut 1952 second. Having the latter on hand I decided to try it with Madame Pinot 1953. Well, I have to admit that the result surprised me. I expected the Devaux to win. Not only did it come in second but a distant second. The remarkable character and vigor of your wine outclassed it completely. A little after I put Madame Pinot against Piper Heidsieck Brut 1952. Same conclusion! (It is only quite recently that I have felt affluent enough to drink two bottles of Champagne once in a while.)

Not much more than a year later, Brady's friendship with MR began petering out. He had declined the lure of investing in Martin Ray's plan for the Mt. Eden Vineyards Corporation. Member-shareholders—a prospective two dozen wine-loving married couples—were to sign up to contribute monthly installments of \$100 apiece, eventually adding up to an investment of \$10,000. They'd thereby acquire a piece of the great new wine estate to be created on Rusty Ray's mountain acreage above Saratoga, overlooking Santa Clara Valley.

Brady's instincts probably warned him of perils and conflicts ahead. He must have felt that MR was "conning" him into investing in a dubious empire-building



proposal. As his summary goes in *The Brady Book*:

I initiated the acquaintance because of what I heard of him as a great wine maker, and he brought it to an end when he finally realized that I was adamant about not investing in his Mt. Eden scheme—I last saw him when he showed me the site of the Mt. Eden “Chateau.” I spoke to him a few times after that and got occasional pronouncements for some time after, but I was not to see him again in the remaining sixteen years of his life.

Eleanor Ray, when making up a list in the 1980s of “oldtime contacts with MR,” including ones who would surely have negative things to say to a researcher, made Roy Brady #2 (after the Wine Institute’s Leon Adams). She must have picked up on Brady’s disapproval of the Mt. Eden Vineyards (MtEV) venture, for she noted:

He’s writing quite a bit these days about wines; we were friends in early period thru ’50s; after forming MtEV no time for old friends or new outside MtEV. I recall last time he phoned wanting to come up having to tell him how it was; no contact ever after. He might have opinions anti.

True, Martin Ray as a conversationalist could often sound like a confidence man. But as a winemaker was he also a deliberate con artist, as Brady seemed to see him? I don’t think so, because he himself *believed* in the supreme value of what he was selling—whether his handcrafted, pure-varietal wines or his vision of a splendid wine *domaine* atop Mt. Eden. He didn’t intend to hoodwink or cheat customers when he sold his vintages at much higher prices than the market’s standard ones for California wines ... or when he solicited shareholders for MtEV, which he and Eleanor had founded in 1960 as a means to expand considerably the vineyard acreage in their half-section of 320 acres. Using both the corporation and the value of his land as collateral, MR secured a large bank loan so he could create vineyards and also to build a commercial wine cellar, with a chateau above it intended as a social center that could provide special lodging for MtEV members—whom he initially regarded as privileged acolytes rather than cold-eyed investors.

MR’s early invitation to Roy Brady to buy into MtEV wasn’t a deliberate attempt to engage him in a confidence game. Both Rays hoped, genuinely and intensely, for the success and longevity of the organization they were launching. They were delighted with the prospect of welcoming people they were fond of into their winegrowing home, to partake of both celebrations and hands-on work (though few, in fact, ever did the latter). Moreover, it should be pointed out that when MtEV shareholders wished to withdraw from membership, MR sought replacements to buy up their shares, so that their investment thus far could be fully returned.

Over time, however, a number of the shareholders became disenchanted—disturbed by MR’s variously

autocratic, erratic, duplicitous, and offensive behaviors. He had begun, in stages, to distrust some of them, believing them conniving and rapacious, or simply unsuitable as members. The Ray letters of the period provide ample evidence that MR was becoming physically, mentally, and emotionally exhausted from the strenuous work he had undertaken on behalf of MtEV, and this condition exacerbated his intrinsic paranoia.

MtEV shareholders also questioned the soundness of wines MR was making, comparing them unfavorably with others’ wines—for by the mid-1960s the aim of achieving high quality in California wine, which MR had championed almost alone for 30 years, was catching on with both consumers and vintners. MR was simply unable to recognize, or admit, that any of his wines were inferior, defective, or downright spoiled. And he adamantly refused to accept the proposed assistant winemaker for MtEV—young Dick Graff, of eventual Chalone fame.

In 1967 the Rays, outvoted by dissident shareholders, lost control of the corporation they had started, so they exited it. The whole complex, long-enduring drama, including litigation, of Mount Eden Vineyards’ early years, both during and after Martin Ray’s reign—and with a tragic outcome as far as the Rays were concerned—is yet to be told, through both documents and personal remembrances. In desperate attempts first to hold onto power, then to regain or retain as much of his mountain as possible, MR engaged in real estate finagling that some people regarded as swindling schemes, for he customarily locked land buyers into purchase agreements that wouldn’t convey title deeds until he was fully paid. Such convoluted and disputatious ploys rarely if ever ended in his favor. If indeed he had once had talent and success as salesman or con artist, he’d now lost it.

In his review of *Vineyards in the Sky*, Brady showed empathy for MR in his sorry fall from grace:

In some ways Martin Ray resembles Agoston Haraszthy a century earlier. Both were promoters and enthusiasts. Martin was the better practitioner of his art and, I have no doubt, a great deal more fun. Haraszthy went to Nicaragua and was eaten by alligators; Martin stayed on his mountain and was eaten by his disciples. Both bitter ways to go.

MR’s ability to captivate wine lovers and his dark, Machiavellian side were only two parts to his multifaceted and paradoxical character. Whatever the explanations may be for Martin Ray’s fixating in the mid-1930s upon making the best wines that California, and therefore America, could produce, his was a unique dedication and enduring passion. Sometimes in his letters he expressed how he found his truest and deepest satisfaction in the painstaking, mostly solitary toil required in vineyard and cellar. At



such times he was removed from the noisy social interactions that elicited the inveterate salesman in him. Under stress while playing the role of a forceful and voluble host, he would overindulge in wine drinking and then act like a buffoon or tyrant. Adverse outcomes in people's experiences with him were apt to give him the reputation of being a con artist, even a crook.

MR wasn't a charlatan or a showman when as a winegrower he worked quietly among his vines. But that fellow wasn't the inimitable and legendary Rusty Ray.

[EDITOR NOTE: *Our on-going series by Barbara Marinacci, Vinaceous Correspondents: Martin Ray's Friendships with Eminent Oenophiles, will resume in our January 2005 issue, when we will enjoy a further look into the Martin Ray - Maynard Amerine relationship.* — Ed.]



**OREGON VITICULTURE**  
A BOOK REVIEW  
by Will Brown

*Oregon Viticulture* by Edward W. Hellman, ed. Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 2003. The book is new, and available at many booksellers. \$45.

This is the long awaited revision of the fine series published by the Oregon Winegrowers Association. The fourth edition (1992) was reviewed here in October 2002 (Vol.12 No.4). This iteration is being called a first edition but is the fifth of the series. New editor Edward Hellman, Ph.D., of Oregon State University, also authored a number of the articles within. Dr. Hellman has since moved to Texas A&M and Texas Tech universities.

This has always been a signature publication by the Oregon Winegrowers Association. It was originally issued at a time in the history of Oregon wine grape growing when it became the bible in the field. This had much to do with the fact that there was no other place to turn for the intrepid few who were the pioneers of that industry. The standard in the field, Albert J. Winkler's *General Viticulture* (Berkeley: U.C. Press, 1962), focused on California conditions, and had little relevant to say about cool climate viticulture. So the Oregon growers wrote their own book.

The edition covers virtually every aspect of vineyard planning, development and management. Authors are drawn from the community of wine grape growers as well as academic and extension specialists from Oregon State and other Oregon universities. Viticulture, agricultural economics, entomology, plant pathology,

geography, climatology and enology are all represented.

Rigorous editing has resulted in strong efforts by most authors. I found the entries on economics, site assessment, wine growing regions, varieties and clones, and evaluation of wine grape maturity to be particularly well done. Some of the features of earlier editions are gone, but have been updated with more current thinking.

The book is directed at individuals growing or planning to grow wine grapes in Oregon, but it would serve as well a wider audience of those planning to get into the wine production business anywhere. Just reading the chapter on economics might discourage the faint of heart from proceeding.

*Oregon Viticulture* should be mandatory reading for anyone in the business of wine production in Oregon, but it might appeal to students of viticulture and enology, wine consumers and connoisseurs of Oregon wines as well.

Since the last edition of Winkler's *General Viticulture* is now thirty years old, and the other standard works in the field originate in France and Australia, this publication moves to the head of the list for American books on viticulture; but it will be most relevant in the northwest, where cooler conditions prevail. It cannot be more highly recommended to the target audience.

Two publications by Gregory V. Jones, Ph.D., of Southern Oregon University might appeal to collectors of viticultural esoterica—although they remain valuable resources to the wine industry in southern Oregon: ■ *Site Characteristics of Vineyards in the Rogue and Applegate Valley American Viticultural Areas* (2001) and ■ *Umpqua Valley AVA: A GPS and GIS Vineyard Mapping and Analysis of Varietal, Climate, Landscape, and Management Characteristics* (2003).

Jones, a geographer and climatologist, has done a superlative job and provided a valuable service to the industry. Climatic factors, soils, vineyard surveys and grape varieties are identified in each of the AVAs. By using Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and grower surveys, the author was able to develop an in-depth Geographical Information System (GIS) database, which can and will be expanded to accommodate changes over time.

Funding for both of these projects was provided by the local chapters of the Oregon Winegrowers Assn. and the Oregon Wine Advisory Board. Persons interested in obtaining these publications might contact Dr. Jones at Southern Oregon University, Department of Geography, Ashland, OR 97520. ■



**“With All Good Wishes”  
INSCRIBED ANDRÉ SIMON BOOKS**

[The idea for this investigation of inscribed André L. Simon books originated with new Tendril member, John Danza, who, as a long-time member of the Wine & Food Society, has a special interest in the works of Simon. To no one's surprise, most of the following personally inscribed books were presented by Simon to fellow Wine & Food Society members. We invited several Tendrils to send in their favorite inscriptions—we now hope all readers will be inspired to send in theirs. Enjoy! — Ed.]

From *ABC for Book Collectors*, by John Carter. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. rev. New York: Knopf, 1977) — INSCRIBED COPY: Unless specifically qualified, this term means that the copy has been autographed or inscribed by the author. It often implies, further, that the copy has been inscribed to somebody or for somebody, or that a sentiment of some kind accompanies the signature. — PRESENTATION COPY: When used without qualification, this may always be taken to mean that the book was the gift of the author. But only a book spontaneously presented properly qualifies for the description; one merely signed in response to an owner's request is called an inscribed copy.

**FROM THE LIBRARY OF JOHN DANZA**

*A Dictionary of Wine* (1935, Curwen Press). This copy is inscribed from André Simon to A.J.A. Symons, the co-founder of the Wine & Food Society, with A.J.A. Symons' bookplate on the inside front cover. “To my still very young – yet already old friend – A.J.A. Symons whose assistance and insistence are chiefly responsible for the publication of this book. André Simon. 28 Novber 1935.”



*Wines and Liqueurs from A to Z* (1935, Curwen Press) is inscribed “To Ward Ritchie with all best wishes, André L. Simon. Los Angeles 18-1-35.” This was the second publication of the year-old Wine & Food Society (W&FS). André Simon had made his first trip to the USA in December 1934 to try to get some American branches established. It is documented in the Society's quarterly journal, *Wine & Food*, that André was in Southern California in January 1935 and helped found the Los Angeles branch on 22 January 1935. In 1935, Ward Ritchie (1905–1996) was already a respected member of the local gastronomic circles, as well as a fine press printer, book designer, author, and publisher. Simon would have appreciated all of these talents.

*Star Chamber Revels* (1937, Watch Hill Press). One of only 275 privately printed copies, it is inscribed to

Maurice Healy, a co-founder of The Saintsbury Club and an original member of the Wine & Food Society Advisory Council: “To my very dear friend Maurice Healy with every good wish and affectionate regards. André Simon. Christmas 1937.” At the end of the Introduction, the printed “A.L.S” has been lined through once by hand and the signature “André L. Simon” handwritten underneath.

*By Request* (1957, Curwen Press). This is not an inscribed copy, but is a presentation copy from Simon to a Mr. Presland. Loosely inserted in the book is a letter addressed to “W. A. Presland Esq., 88 Lansdowne Way, London” and dated 8th December 1958: “Dear Mr. Presland, We are now back in London and my wife has asked me to thank you very much for the samples of table coverings which you were good enough to send her. She also asks me to tell you that she has now decided to leave the table alone as it is, but she would like Mrs. Presland to accept a copy of the book which I am sending to you for her with this letter. Yours sincerely, André L. Simon.”

*Wine in Shakespeare's Days and Shakespeare's Plays* (1964, Curwen Press). Privately printed for André Simon on the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, this is a reprint of his 1931 version written for Ye Sette of Odd Volumes, an English literary dining club. The inscription reads “For Charlie Williams with the best wishes of his oldest friend André L. Simon, Christmas 1964.”

The next three books I list not because they are particularly special, but because they are all inscribed to the same person. The books were published years apart, indicating some acquaintance between Simon and the recipient. *Bottlescrew Days* (1926, Duckworth) is inscribed “To R. S. Hargreaves from André L. Simon with all good wishes.” *Champagne* (1934, Constable) is inscribed “To R. S. Hargreaves from André L. Simon.” *Vintagewise* (1945, Michael Joseph) is inscribed “To R. S. Hargreaves from André L. Simon, Christmas 1945.”

**FROM THE LIBRARY OF GAIL UNZELMAN**

*Bibliotheca Bacchica* (1927, 1932). This two-volume set of Simon's bibliography of pre-1600 works on wine and related subjects is inscribed “To Phil Townsend Hanna, André L. Simon.” Phil Hanna (d.1957) was a noted Southern California bibliophile, whose interest in food and wine led him to direct the affairs of the Los Angeles branch of the Wine & Food Society from 1935 to 1955. He had a fine collection of gastronomy books that he left to his good friend and fellow wine and gastronomy book collector, Marcus E. Crahan. This set was auctioned at the 1984 Sotheby Sale of Crahan's library, and again at the 1986 “Re-Sale,”

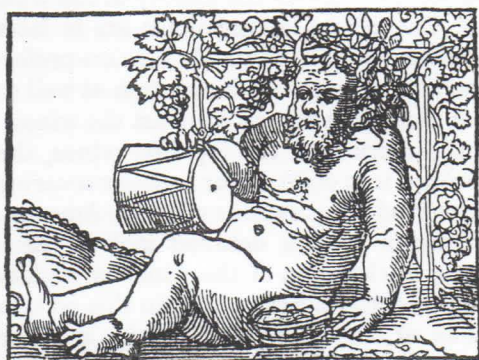


when it most likely came into the possession of Harry Schraemli (1904–1995), the great Swiss collector of books on food and wine. The two volumes carry Schraemli's bookplate (reduced here).



*The Art of Good Living* (1929, Constable) and *Port* (1934, Constable) have been inscribed "To R. Makepeace Lott, His Book." From what I could glean from the early issues of *Wine & Food*, Mr. Lott established the first provincial branch of the W & F Society, in Liverpool in late 1934. He was a frequent contributor to the Society journal, and, as a member of the *Saintsbury Club* gave an Oration, October 1935.

*Wine in Shakespeare's Days and Shakespeare's Plays* (1931, Curwen Press). No.16 of 199 copies of this 35-page delight (only 6"x4½") is "presented unto" Stephen Gaselee by André L. Simon. Sir Stephen Gaselee (1882–1943), described by Simon as "*bon vivant*, tutor, translator of Petronius, and man of the world," was a mainstay of the early W&FS, serving on the Advisory Council and authoring several articles for *Wine & Food*. Sir Stephen also served as Librarian of the Foreign Office, 1920–1943.



[*Wine in Shakespeare's Days...Plays*, 1931]

*Notes on the Late J. Pierpont Morgan's Cellar Book 1906* (1944, Curwen Press). Inscribed by Simon "To my good friend, Harold Price," with a presentation slip laid-in: "Compliments of André L. Simon, Wine & Food Society, Little Hedgecourt." So—Mr. Price,

noted San Francisco attorney and oenophile, and a founder of the San Francisco chapter of the W & F Society in 1935, did not even have to pay for his copy of this special, very limited edition book (200 copies) printed for the members of the *Saintsbury Club*!?

*The Star Chamber Dinner Accounts* (1959, George Rainbird). This lovely book, with its title page printed in red and black, is inscribed "For Lady Swann, with all best wishes, 1/1/1960. André L. Simon." Laid-in are two letters from Simon to "My Dear Lady Swann" (dated 1965), one in response to her question about the genuineness of her friend's bottle of Napoleon Brandy ("...there has been a great many phoney bottles of Napoleon Brandy, and I think that the best thing to do is to pull the cork and enjoy its contents."), the other an invitation to come with her friends "tonight for a chat and a glass of wine." I do not know who Lady Swann was, other than a dear friend of A.L.S.

*Madeira Wine, Cakes & Sauce* (co-author: Elizabeth Craig; Constable, 1933) and *A Wine Primer* (Michael Joseph, 1946) are both inscribed to the distinguished American journalist, author and *bon vivant*, Julian Street (1879–1947): "For my friend Julian Street, with all best wishes and affectionate greetings." Street helped found the New York branch of the W&FS in December 1934.

#### FROM THE LIBRARY OF JEFFREY BENSON

*By Request* (1957, Curwen Press). Mounted inside the front cover of this copy of Simon's first autobiography is a letter: "My dear Warner Allen, Thank you so much for your kind gift. Please accept this latest (not the last yet) book of mine. Yours ever, André Simon." H. Warner Allen (1881–1968), esteemed English wine author whose books are legendary today, served on the W&FS Advisory Council beginning in 1934, and contributed numerous articles to Simon's *Wine & Food Quarterly* over the years.

#### FROM THE LIBRARY OF HUGH JOHNSON

... very few of my A.L.S. books are signed; I can't think why. I have one, *The Wines, Vineyards & Vignerons of Australia* inscribed to me "with all good wishes" in February 1967. And I have my precious copy of *In the Twilight* (1969, Curwen Press), the book I edited, with his great handsome autograph slanting up the half-title page, but not personalized. At that point he couldn't see to do more than an autograph.



## WINE IN PRINT

by  
Hudson Cattell



*Spinning the Bottle: Case Studies in Wine Public Relations*, edited and with some chapters written by Harvey Posert and Paul Franson. St. Helena, CA: HPPR Press, 2004. 220 pp. Softbound. \$39.95.

*"...a lot of wisdom packed into these pages"*

Harvey Posert's name is one of the best known in wine public relations. He served as PR director of California's Wine Institute from 1975 to 1980, and then held a similar position at Robert Mondavi Winery until he began his own consulting firm in 1996. Paul Franson, who also lives in Napa Valley, had a long career in public relations before deciding to become a freelance writer specializing in wine and wine-related subjects. According to Harvey, the idea for this book came to him when he was writing the story of Charles "Two-Buck Chuck" Shaw for *Wines and Vines*. A chapter based on this article is included in the present volume.



*Spinning the Bottle*—and what a great title this is for a book on public relations—is a collection of 48 case histories, guidelines, and stories of public relations campaigns that make this book essential reading for anyone involved or interested in wine public relations, marketing, or winery management. Among the case histories given here are by Michaela Rodeno on St. Stupery's "Smellavision," Mark Chandler on building the name for Lodi Woodbridge, Michael Rubin on popularizing Australian wines in America, Millie Howie on the Russian River Wine Road, Don Ziraldo on Inniskillin icewine, and Paige Poulos on strategies that worked for her agency.

Among the guidelines based on years of experience are tips by Kimberly Flowers on dealing with the news media, Craig Root on increasing the PR value of the

tasting room, and Paul Franson on wine public relations. Many of the stories are instructional in themselves and are only stories because of the way they are written or because they are reminiscences. Jeanne Viner Bell's "Old Wines' Tales" reflects on her two decades in the 1960s and 1970s representing the Wine Institute in Washington. Peter Sichel tells of his experiences in public relations, notably the PR campaign promoting the Blue Nun label, and Keith Love relates a PR "failure" at Stimson Lane.

These are just some of the subjects included in this always engaging book. There is a lot of wisdom packed into these pages. Highly recommended.

[Our thanks to Hudson Cattell for permission to reprint his review which appeared in the May/June 2004 issue of *Wine East*. — Ed.]

## IN THE WINE LIBRARY

by  
Bob Foster



*South American Vineyards, Wineries & Wines*. Buenos Aires: Austral Spectator, 2003. 608 pp. Softbound. \$40.

*"why can't all wine guide books be this good?"*

What a great book! The authors have produced the very first comprehensive guide to all of the wines of South America. The book covers nearly 300 wineries from Argentina to Venezuela. More than 1,500 wines were tasted blind and rated by a panel of tasters from Argentina, Chile, Brazil, and Uruguay. The panel selected their 50 top wines, and the work begins with a detailed section on these wines.

However, the tasting notes for each of the winning wines are not in this section. Instead the reader is given information here about the history of the wine or the winery. The actual tasting notes are in later geographic-based sections in the book. I'd have preferred to have the tasting notes in this section as well so that the reader can compare and contrast the wines.

Following the section on the top fifty wines, the book is then broken into eight major sections covering each of the wine producing nations of South America. The chapter begins with a detailed map of each country showing the location of the wineries, and an overview of that country's wines. Within this section are descriptions of the land, the climate, and the vineyards. A detailed chart showing who makes which wines, varietal by varietal, is provided; the wines are scored on a one- to four-star system, some have tasting notes also. Follows is a section with entries on each of the producers: the history of the producer, the methods of wine making, and the size of the winery. (By the way, the book is bilingual—Spanish on the left-hand column, English on the right.)



There are multiple indexes at the back, including one that I have never encountered before, an “Onomastic Index” — a name index of the persons mentioned in the text. A real plus is a glossary that gives the English, Spanish, and Portuguese versions of more than 100 wine terms.

The authors traveled over 20,000 miles to taste the wines for this book. The time, energy, and effort put into *South American Vineyards, Wineries & Wines* shines through. Why can't all wine guide books be this good? Very highly recommended.

**Chile, The Art of Wine** by Sara Matthews. So. San Francisco: Wine Appreciation Guild, 2004. 127 pp. Hardback. \$40.

“...an exquisite work...”

There is no question that Sara Matthews is a very talented photographer. This work on Chile captures a feel for the land, the vineyards, the wineries, and the people.

The book, comprised almost entirely of gorgeous color photographs, is broken into nine major sections. Each section has a central theme, such as “The Flow” (which covers both water flowing down from the Andes to wine flowing within the winery) or “The Team” (which presents the faces and hands of the workers in the field and in the winery). Ms Matthews, who notes that she likes to shoot her photographs only when her shadow is taller than she is, has captured some lovely images.

The text that introduces each theme, as well as the captions for each photograph, are in both Spanish and English. The photograph captions sometimes leave the reader yearning for more. For example, there is a lovely close-up photograph of a glass bung in a barrel. There is a symbol on the glass. The caption, “In Almavia, glass bungs in barrels show the traditional mapucke symbol *Kultrun*,” poses more questions than it answers. Similarly, another caption tells the reader, “A unique legend surrounds the old Casillero del Diablo cellar.” Tell me, please tell me.

It is interesting to see how wine making in Chile has basic similarities to every other wine region in the world, and yet, at the same time, is profoundly different. The incredible backdrop of the soaring Andes adds a visual dimension that is stunning.

This is an exquisite work, crammed with superb photographs. When combined with the South American wine book reviewed above, a reader would have a perfect picture of the Chilean wine world. Highly recommended.

[Bob Foster's reviews appear regularly in the *California Grapevine*. With thanks, we reprint the above from the June/July & Aug/Sept issues. — Ed.]

## EMILE PEYNAUD (1912—2004)

### Missionary of Fine Wine

Professor Emile Peynaud, considered the single most influential figure in transforming wine-making practices in the post-WWII years and the father of modern enology in his native Bordeaux, died July 18 in Talence, France. He began his wine career at age 16 in the laboratory of Bordeaux wine négociant Maison Calvet; at 20 he published his first article in the *Revue de Viticulture*. In 1946 he presented his doctoral thesis explaining malolactic fermentation. He went on to work with renowned professor Jean Ribéreau-Gayon, co-founding the Bordeaux University Centre of Oenology, and contributing some 300 scientific articles and two book classics to the literature of wine. Though he was best known for his work as consultant to many famous Bordeaux wine estates, and to winemakers world-wide, his most important work may be as the author of *Le Goût de Vin* (Paris, 1983) and *Connaissance et Travail du Vin [Knowing and Making Wine]* (Paris, 1971; New York, 1984, English translation). *Le Goût de Vin* was published in English in 1987 as *The Taste of Wine. The Art and Science of Wine Appreciation* (London / SF). Its publication was hailed as a “major event for all serious wine lovers,” while the book was described as a “culmination of a lifetime’s work and experience, combining scientific fact and professional expertise with a rich sense of the history, tradition and culture of winemaking and wine appreciation. For the modern wine professional, the book is a master class on the science, procedures and vocabulary of the trade...for the amateur, it is both an essential work of reference and the key to enjoyment of this infinitely various subject.” In his Introduction, Michael Broadbent noted that Peynaud seems to have “a singular ability to explain complicated matters succinctly, with directness, patience and refreshing humility ... and a gentle sense of humour. He is patently a practical man and a great teacher, an academic who puts his knowledge to work, an authority of immense stature who has the unusual ability to talk, and write, simply and directly.” Hugh Johnson called Emile Peynaud a “philosopher of wine” who was “as wise about wine appreciation as he was about wine making: positive, open and generous.”



## In Search of the Vinicultural Garden of Eden

A BOOK REVIEW  
by Allan Shields

*Ancient Wine: The Search for the Origins of Viniculture* by Patrick E. McGovern. Princeton / Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003.



When Dean Rusk was still a history professor at Mills College in the 1930s, he published a widely read article on foreign policy titled, "Walking Backward Into the Future." Patrick E. McGovern has written a truly remarkable book on a similar theme: Striding forward into the remote

past. McGovern accomplishes much more than to prove (test) a cluster of hypotheses on the origins of viniculture. He fulgurates showers of hypotheses sprung from positive and negative discoveries he has succeeded in making, with, of course, the considerable help of his worldwide colleagues. When he calls his book, *Ancient Wine*, he means to refer to prehistoric potables over three-thousand years earlier than the commonly held date of origin. He gives a new meaning to the expression, "aged wine."

The speculum of his work is unquestionably ancient—Neolithic prehistory. He states in Chapter 12 "Molecular Archaeology, Wine, and a View of the Future," that "The history of civilization, in many ways, is the history of wine. Economically, religiously, socially, medically, and politically, the domesticated grapevine has intertwined itself with human culture from at least the Neolithic period and probably long before that. We recapitulate that history every time we pick up a glass of wine and savor the fruit of a Eurasian plant that has been cloned and transplanted again and again from its beginnings in the Near East more than 7000 years ago....This book attempts to illuminate the crucial but largely hidden 'prehistory' of the vinicultural record and then to follow these developments down through the Bronze and Iron Ages to the coming of the Greeks and Romans." (p. 299)

It is strongly recommended to the non-specialist reader that he begin this book by first reading the final chapter as preparation for facing the occasionally daunting, technical argot of the early chapters.

The future of the archaeology of wine lies in a critical, scientific, technological research into prehistory, which McGovern has done so much already to

advance. He states, "The only way to peel back the veil that hides enological prehistory before 3000 B. C. is to examine and critically evaluate archaeological remains from around the world." (p. 300)

There are important demands to place on any future researcher into the misty past of vinicultural history and a worldwide ampelography. With what new techniques, tools, chemical tests, even machinery are we admonished by McGovern to incorporate in such investigations? Throughout the book, McGovern provides a constant stream of examples from recent and current research. New scientific techniques, not the least being computer capabilities, have, in the past 35 years brought about great advances in both the physical and biological sciences to this point. McGovern states: "With the advent of high powered computer graphics programs, capable of handling and enhancing enormous databases, it may some day be possible to 'excavate' a site and analyze all the material without even putting a spade to it. In the last 20 years, the prospects for analyzing ancient organic remains have dramatically changed. A range of highly sensitive analytical tools—gas and liquid chromatographs, mass spectrometers, nuclear magnetic resonance instruments, DNA sequencers—has become standard laboratory equipment. Refinements in other techniques, such as infrared spectrometry, have also occurred. The upshot is that the modern archaeological scientist now has tools that can measure milli-, or even microgram, quantities of ancient organics. The applications of this new technology in archaeology, what can be referred to as molecular archaeology, are virtually endless." (p. 49)

Through a succession of highly detailed excursions into Neolithic prehistory, as well as established historical accounts, McGovern leads the reader to explanations of the probable origins of *vitis vinifera* in the wild *vitis vinifera L. subsp. sylvestris*, explanations of other grape varieties, the origin of viticulture, and the most plausible answer to the questions of when and where wine itself was first made. Throughout, the reader is invited to follow the solutions to these mysteries by means of a progressive revelation as though the discoveries were being found within the pages of the book. We are carried abroad into North Europe, Eurasia, especially Transcaucasia (where McGovern is prepared to believe the origins will ultimately be shown to lie), Egypt, Crete, Greece, Rome, Anatolia, the Holy Land, Mesopotamia (Iran, Iraq). (I found no reference to one other area others have found may be a source of viticulture: The Indus Valley.)

McGovern credits Robert Mondavi with organizing the 1991 conference, "The Origin and Ancient History of Wine," at the Robert Mondavi Winery where the incept for this book occurred to the author. The full



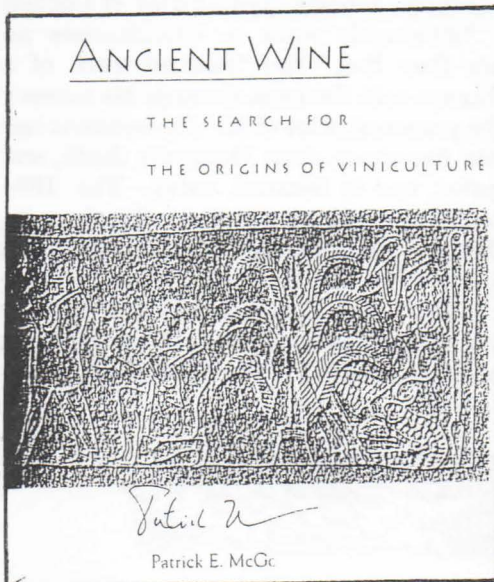
record of the 1991 conference was published in 1996 as *The Origins and Ancient History of Wine*, edited by Patrick E. McGovern, Stuart J. Fleming, Solomon H. Katz (Luxembourg: Gordon and Breach. Reprinted with a new foreword in 2000.) (Reviewed in the *Wayward Tendrils Newsletter*, Vol. 6 #4, by Hudson Cattell.) A major bibliography is included pp. 339-402.

Patrick McGovern is head of the Molecular Archaeology Laboratory in the Museum Applied Center for Archaeology (MASCA) at the University of Pennsylvania Museum. Based on the kinds of research he reports in *Ancient Wine*, his professional skills encompass chemistry, physics, history, soil analysis, archaeological methods, excavations, enology, aesthetics, viticulture, viniculture, philosophy, ancient religions, myths, poetry, pottery, and did I mention writing? Denominating him a polymath only begins to convey the requirements of his self-assigned office.

Obviously, this is not a bedside book to summon Morpheus, but one to consult as a reference and guide, and also one where it is possible to find inspiration from an exemplar. It is profusely illustrated, some in handsome, full color; numerous, clear maps are a constant help to the reader who may be geographically challenged by many exotic place names. A chapter by chapter bibliography relates references to the text. An index completes the aids.

For any reader who may have become myopically fastened on current events in the areas McGovern covers, such as the Holy Land, Iraq, or Greece, this amazing searchlight penetrating the mists of time before time will be a curative antidote. McGovern invites the reader to walk forward into the past of the infinite regression of human time, helping to search for that vinicultural Garden of Eden.

[Tendrils thanks once again to our unwearied W-TQ contributor. Look for his "Vintage" essay in the January 2005 issue. — Ed.]



## GRAPE MAN MERITS ATTENTION (Better Late Than Never)

A BOOK REVIEW  
by *Linda Walker Stevens*

[Linda Walker Stevens, a transplanted Napa Valley grape grower and writer, lives in Hermann, MO., in the heart of the Missouri wine country. We eagerly await her biography of George Husmann, Missouri and California wine industry pioneer. — Ed.]

***Grape Man of Texas. The Life of T. V. Munson*** by Sherrie S. McLeRoy and Roy E. Renfro. Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 2004. 288 pp. Hardbound. \$39.95.



*he Life of T. V. Munson* provides context that was previously lacking. It is an engaging saga of 19<sup>th</sup> century philosophy, values, science, and occupations. The pre-cradle to beyond-the-grave treatment is rendered more compelling by the writer's device of referring to her subject simply as

"Volney." Instantly, the reader is invited to share in the special sense of intimacy a biographer develops over time, in regard to her subject. Ah, we muse, settling in for a cozy read, here is a real person, whose story promises to offer more than a tiresome academic treatise or a superficial gloss of dates and incidents. And *Grape Man of Texas* keeps that implicit promise.

I will not pretend that I encountered this book with the pure disinterest ordinarily expected of a reviewer. My research on George Husmann naturally crossed paths and, briefly, joined forces with the fleshing out for this work. On September 15, 1999, Sherrie McLeRoy sent me a triumphant e-mail: "Yeahhh!!" shouted the subject line. Sherrie had just completed the first-ever biography of Thomas Volney Munson (1843–1913), well-known American grape classification and hybridizing expert. When I responded to her elation, little did either of us imagine that years of frustration lay yet ahead, before this project would manage to publicly air its unique contribution to history.

Despite earlier book proposal rejections from prestigious wine and agriculture presses, it seemed logical that the completed manuscript would quickly find an appreciative publisher. After all, Sherrie was already a seasoned author of several titles. Although she had not previously strayed onto the terrain of wine and grape growing, her collaborator, Roy Renfro, is an authority on their subject—working as Director of the T. V. Munson Viticulture and Enology Center in Denison, Texas.



Alas, *Grape Man of Texas* aged while searching for a home. Sherrie used the “bonus” time to polish the manuscript to an ever higher gleam. She tucked in additional tidbits of research. Finally, Eakin Press, a small local history publisher in Texas, recognized the book’s value and issued the present handsome edition late last spring. The book’s almost instantaneous acclaim—garnering a three-star rating from Gourmand, where it is short-listed for the prize in wine history this year—repaid Eakin’s faith and proved once again that meritorious works are no longer the special province of large university publishing houses that once readily nurtured them, for the sake of encouraging scholarship. In academe, as elsewhere, editors keep one wary eye on an arbitrary “list” that projects must fit into and the other on an ever more demanding set of profitability standards. Apparently, akin to their brethren in commercial publishing, merit is now least among their considerations. As collectors of fine wine books, we realize how commonly those publications depend on a tiny press or a determined and financially fit self-publisher.

Thomas Volney Munson’s story has risen above the ordinary expectations of a limited audience biography. Combining the digestible organization of a textbook with a clear and candid prose style, remarkable research, a treasury of illustrations, and an excellent bibliography, this book is a must-have reference.

Given this welcome foray into wine history, I feel ungrateful even to notice the book’s minor flaws—a wrong Husmann date, Norman Colman’s name consistently misspelled, and other such trifles. This book packs a wallop of information into an attractive format, so my mental blue penciling does not reflect on the overall integrity of the work.

Nor do I question the integrity of Munson. The authors frequently wink at his overblown ego, and his harmless infatuation with himself is clearly the worst of his character flaws. A fascinating anomaly emerges, regarding Munson’s receipt of the French Legion of Honor Chevalier du Merite Agricole award, for his help in resolving the phylloxera dilemma. According to his biographers, “Volney,” although proud of this medal, never spoke of it nor referred to it during his remaining lifetime. It does not take a psychology degree to recognize that when a blatant egotist avoids bragging about an international award the only likely explanation is that he is embarrassed. Having self-promotion as a guiding principle is one thing, but having it result in an award that one is keenly aware others equally deserve (C. V. Riley and George Husmann spring to mind) becomes a professional embarrassment. Munson’s unaccustomed reserve is telltale and does him credit.

*Grape Man of Texas* offers wine historians a wealth of opportunities for new insights and fills a gap in the

historical record. My sole complaint is that we had to wait longer than necessary to enjoy it.

The book is available postpaid on the Eakin Press website.

EDITOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC ADDENDUM: T. V. Munson, among all of his numerous contributions to the literature of the grape, is best remembered for his definitive work, *Foundations of American Grape Culture* (New York: Orange Judd, 1909). The authors of his biography have devoted several very informative pages to the making of this cornerstone of American grape culture. “In 1907 he began to write, pulling together decades of field notes, correspondence with other horticulturists and viticulturists ... He selected almost ninety life-size half-tone engravings of grapes and their components ... His daughter Viala...painstakingly typed all the material into book form, 252 pages in length.” Similar to our lament of today, there was not a ready publisher to be found. In his 1908–09 nursery catalog Munson stated he had “failed to get publishers of ordinary agricultural works to publish for him, fearing there is not enough demand for such a fine work to justify the undertaking.” With the assistance of his son, Will, Munson finally decided to publish the book himself “if 1,000 subscribers can be obtained to offset the cost of printing.” He described the planned work: “The first edition will be an autograph edition, with a good recent photo-engraving of the author. The printing will be on 100 pound coated book paper, bound in buckram, gold lettering on back and cover, costing delivered about what we ask for it, \$3. It is aimed to be and remain a classic on the subject.” Eventually he did hire Orange Judd, the New York agricultural and horticultural specialists, to publish it. Released in the fall of 1909, *Foundations* received positive reviews and testimonials from around the country. Liberty Hyde Bailey of Cornell called this “invaluable work to viticulturists no matter where they live,” the “faithful work of a lifetime.” Munson sold the book through his nursery catalog for the proposed price of \$3. *Foundations* has been reprinted five times since Munson’s death, and remains in print, and in demand, today. The 1934 edition, with a Foreword by the author’s daughter-in-law Minnie Munson, is called the “second edition.” It was re-printed in 1966, and reissued with corrections in 1974 and 1985. It was most recently reprinted by Eakin Press in 2001. The 1909 first edition is scarce and sought after by collectors. The \$3 original price is now around \$300.





## "The Finest Wines in the World are Homemade Wines"

### The Career of Philip M. Wagner

by Thomas Pinney

#### PART II

[The first installment of this "sketch" of Philip Wagner (1904-1996) and his viticultural work appeared in our July *Quarterly*. This concluding segment contains a checklist of Wagner's books and articles about food and wine. Thank you, Tom! — Ed.]

#### Phase the Third: Boordy Vineyards

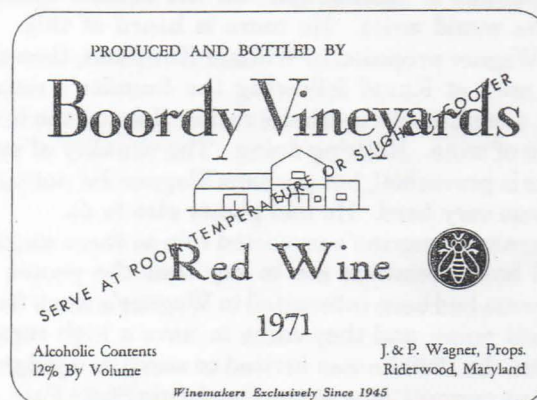
In 1943, ten years after he began the restoration of his Riderwood vineyard, Wagner began to find himself with more grapes than were needed for his own wine-making. In 1941, for example, he had made eleven different wines in the vintage of that year. The obvious solution was to set up a commercial winery, and this he and his wife determined to do as early as 1943, when the cornerstone of a winery building was laid. Though the enterprise was intended from the start to be self-sustaining—a genuine commercial operation rather than a mere hobby indulgence—Wagner never wavered in his view that its main function was educational, a close parallel to his work in instructing the nation in the virtues of French hybrid vines. Boordy Vineyards, as it was called, was not to be a showplace or the fulfillment of some grandiose fantasy; it was to be small, unpretentious, eminently practical, and it would show all interested parties that the thing could be done. The winery was bonded in 1945, and the first crush—of Baco grapes—produced the first commercial French hybrid wine in this country. Wagner's idea that the operation should remain small was adhered to. I have not seen exact figures; one source says that 8,000 gallons was the "peak" production; another says 14,000 gallons; yet another, 4,000 to 7,000 cases. All agree, however, that by ordinary commercial standards the production was small. The wine was not exclusively from French hybrids, since Wagner continued to grow some of the old American hybrids to use in varietals and in blends (and he never ceased to experiment with vinifera too). Because the operation remained small, Wagner could continue to experiment with small lots of a great variety of wines. Nor did he require a large staff to manage things. In the beginning, at least, Wagner was his own salesman and his own delivery service, and, though the reputation of Boordy Vineyards soon spread, its reliance was always upon the local market.

One of the agents in spreading a knowledge of Boordy Vineyards was Frank Schoonmaker, who offered a Boordy Delaware (the city was evidently not yet ready for a French hybrid wine) in New York in 1947. Schoonmaker also wrote persuasively about Boordy Vineyards in the first edition of his admirable *Encyclopedia of Wine* (1964):

The Boordy wines are American *vins de pays* in the

truest sense of the word, and it is to be regretted that the pattern set by their production has not been more widely followed, as it well could be, in scores of other areas all the way from New York to Nebraska and from Michigan to Texas. Made from carefully chosen varieties, well-vinified, with definite character but not much of the pronounced "Eastern grape" taste and aroma, the Boordy wines have grown steadily in popularity, and the entire production is now sold and consumed locally, in Baltimore, Washington, etc.

In the last edition of the *Encyclopedia* that he published before his death (the 6<sup>th</sup>, in 1975), Schoonmaker repeated his regret that the Boordy model had not been more widely followed. Had he lived a few years longer he might have seen reason to cancel the passage, for the many small wineries that have grown up across the country through farm winery legislation (first passed in Pennsylvania in 1968) are recognizable descendants of Boordy Vineyards. No doubt many of the people concerned in these wineries know nothing of Philip Wagner, but they are nevertheless indebted to his work and its now widely-diffused influence.



#### Phase the Fourth: A Statesman of Wine

Nineteen-forty-five, which saw the founding of Boordy Vineyards and the publication of *A Wine-Grower's Guide*, was the climactic year: the character of Wagner's work was now fully defined, and the means through which he would carry it on had been created. Wagner had another half-century to live, but there would be no more changes of direction or revolutionary introductions, only a widening effect of the work already done and an increasing recognition of the value of that work as the awards and



honors began to come in. He kept up the nursery, as mentioned, until 1994. The winery, Boordy Vineyards, was sold to friends in 1980, and, having been removed to a site farther away from Baltimore suburbia than Riderwood, continues to operate under the same name.

Wagner continued to write; the revisions of his two standard works, *A Wine-Grower's Guide* and *American Wines and Wine-Making* have already been mentioned. Besides that, he wrote on a wide variety of wine-related topics: "Food and Ritual" (1966); "The History of Wine Growing in America" (1969); "California Thirty Years Ago" (1981). Some of his articles were substantial pieces of enduring value, notably "Grape and Wine Production in the East" (1981) and, in collaboration with his friend Maynard Amerine, "The Vine and Its Environments" (1984).

One may regret several ideas and projects that failed to be written. In 1960 Wagner proposed to his publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, a book about phylloxera—Maynard Amerine to do the "historical and scientific spadework" and Wagner to do the writing. Knopf, alas, replied unenthusiastically, saying that wine books did not make any money, and so the idea went no further. A little later Wagner told Knopf about the ampelography being prepared by Harold Olmo at Davis: Olmo, Wagner said, could not write, but he and Amerine could help him if there were interest in the project. Apparently there was none. In 1962 Wagner suggested to the University of California Press that they publish a "monograph" on the French hybrids that he would write. No more is heard of this. In 1967 Wagner proposed to William Koshland, then the head man at Knopf following the founder's retirement, a book on the aesthetic rather than on the how-to side of wine. Nothing doing. The timidity of publishers is proverbial, but perhaps Wagner did not push his ideas very hard. He had plenty else to do.

Maynard Amerine's projected role in these unpublished books reminds me to say that the people in California had been interested in Wagner's work from an early point, and they came to have a high regard for him. In 1949 he was invited to serve as a judge in the wine competitions at the California State Fair, an invitation several times repeated. He was acquainted with all of the researchers at the University of California, Davis, from whom he learned much and to whom he had much to impart about vines and wines in the eastern states. In 1961 the University of California at Davis distinguished itself by inviting Wagner to serve as Regents' Lecturer that year; he did so, delivering lectures on eastern winegrowing and on H. L. Mencken (the lecture was the basis of the pamphlet he published on Mencken in 1966). He was so well-liked in this role that in 1964 he delivered another series of Regents' Lectures, this time at the invitation of the

University of California, Santa Barbara.

Formal lecturing was not a familiar mode for Wagner, but talks and speeches were. He gave many of these, to such audiences as the New York Horticultural Society, the American Society for Aesthetics, the Botanical Society of Washington, D.C., the Pittsburgh Academy of Medicine, and the Baltimore alumni of Johns Hopkins. In 1968 Wagner received the *Ordre de la Mérite Agricole* from the French government, and in 1975 the Award of Merit of the American Wine Society (an honor he declined to receive unless it were offered to him and his wife together). He and his wife frequently traveled to Europe, where he renewed or extended his acquaintance among growers, researchers, and winemakers. They visited France regularly, went to Russia in 1960, to Portugal in 1962, to Yugoslavia in 1970, and to Spain in 1971.

Not all was congratulation and honors in these years. After 1962, when Dr. Konstantin Frank opened his Vinifera Wine Cellars in the Finger Lakes region of New York and interested many eager would-be vinifera growers in his work, a foolish conflict between the champions of vinifera and the champions of the French hybrids was invented. Frank, an intolerant and dogmatic man, was happy to stand at the head of the restless vinifera troops. Wagner, who very sensibly treated the argument as factitious and therefore unworthy of refutation, steadily tried to direct attention to the real issue: discovering and cultivating the wine grapes best adapted to the varying conditions of the eastern states. In place of rhetoric he appealed to practice, as in this note printed on the back cover of the Boordy Nursery catalog of vines:

There exists a sort of vinifera cult. These people insist that the only grapes worth using for wine are the vinifera varieties.

This can be confusing. A good way to reduce the confusion is to plant some vinifera alongside your hybrids and decide for yourself (or let nature decide) which are right for you.

After some years of enduring ill-informed criticism, hostile remark, and downright insult for having served the cause of the French hybrids, Wagner was at last goaded to protest. The occasion was the national meeting of the American Wine Society in 1977, when Dr. Frank was in the audience (the two men were well-acquainted, Wagner having always kept in close touch with the growers and winemakers of New York). The vinifera zealots, he observed, had taken up an absolutist position: since the finest wines were made from vinifera, nothing but vinifera would do. They ignored two facts: most wine, including that from vinifera, is not "great" but just "wine." And there are places where, if one wishes to make wine, vinifera won't work. Would they, under these conditions,



prefer to do without wine? Speaking for himself—and for the many “who use wine regularly, as we use bread”—he would not. Practical people, he said, instead of adoring a lovely theory, set themselves to “discover the best grapes...that are capable of producing reliably in their location and yielding wine that may be priced competitively yet profitably”—exactly what Wagner had been doing all these years. There was, I think, no response to this eminently sensible argument.

In 1986, ten years before his death, Wagner made a gift of the greater part of his wine library to the New York Agricultural Experiment Station at Geneva; he had long urged the idea of developing a wine library for the eastern states, and now did something about it. He did not, however, make any provision for the large accumulation of papers that had been generated by his wine work: correspondence with uncounted numbers of interested people here and abroad; vineyard records, nursery records, winery records, notes, journals, and miscellaneous documents. This might all have been destroyed had it not been for the intervention of Wagner's friend Hudson Cattell, publisher of *Wine East*. Working with only a few days' grace, Cattell managed to save a substantial section of the Wagner Papers, as they may be called now, from the incinerator that awaited them, and arranged for their transfer to the Special Collections department of Cornell University. A few stray files of documents relating to the Boordy Nursery and Boordy Vineyards may also be found in Special Collections in the library of the University of Maryland, Baltimore Co., where a considerable collection of papers from Wagner's career as editor and journalist is also housed. Some interesting details of Wagner's work on his books and on his relations with the firm of Knopf may be found in the Knopf Papers at the University of Texas. Much of the information in this sketch and in the checklist that follows comes from the material now preserved at these libraries. There is much more to be learned, but by making a start I may possibly stir someone else to take up the work.

### Philip Wagner (1904-1996)

#### A Checklist of His Books and Articles about Food and Wine

The list that follows is certainly incomplete. As Hudson Cattell has written, “it would be difficult to assemble a complete bibliography for Philip Wagner even if one excluded his newspaper columns and editorials. He wrote many short articles for a wide range of publications and tended to forget what he had written or where it was published.”

## I. Books

1933. *American Wines and How to Make Them*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1933. 295pp.  
2<sup>nd</sup> ed., revised, 1936. 367pp.  
See also *American Wines and Wine-Making*, below, which is treated as the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of *American Wines and How to Make Them*.
1937. *Wine Grapes: Their Selection, Cultivation and Enjoyment*. N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace, [1937]. 298pp.
1945. *A Wine-Grower's Guide: Containing Chapters on the Past and Future of Wine-Growing in America, the Management of a Vineyard, and the Choice of Suitable Wine-Grape Varieties*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945. 230pp.  
2<sup>nd</sup> ed., revised, 1965; 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1984.
1956. *American Wines and Wine-Making*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956. 264pp.  
Identified as an “edition” [i. e., the 3<sup>rd</sup>] of *American Wines and How to Make Them*.  
4<sup>th</sup> ed., 1961; 5<sup>th</sup> ed., 1963.
1976. *Grapes into Wine: A Guide to Winemaking in America*. New York: Knopf, 1976. 302pp.  
The 1986 edition has additional material (e.g. Appendix O, on carbonic maceration).  
The final version of what began as *American Wines and How to Make Them*, 1933.

## II. Contributions to Books

1941. “An Oenological Note,” in William Turner, A *Book of Wines*, with an introduction by Sanford V. Larkey, M.D. New York: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1941. pp. xxiii-xxxvii.
1966. “Food and Ritual,” in Seymour M. Farber, Nancy L. Wilson, and Roger H. L. Wilson, eds., *Food and Civilization: A Symposium*. Springfield, IL: C. C. Thomas, 1966. pp. 60-72.  
Originally an address given 16 May at the Symposium on “Food and Civilization,” University of California Medical Center, San Francisco, 15-17 May 1964.
1969. “The History of Wine Growing in America,” in *Wine in American Life*. San Francisco: The Wine Institute, 1970. pp. 7-17.  
The proceedings of a symposium sponsored by The Wine Institute on the “bicentennial” of wine in California, 1969.
1977. “Wine Making (with a note on vinegar),” in *Gardening for Food and Fun*, Yearbook of Agriculture, United States Department of Agriculture [Washington, D.C., 1977], pp. 350-55.  
The note on vinegar, p. 355, is by John McGrew. (Print run of the volume was 245,000!).



1977. Article on T.V. Munson for *Encyclopedia Americana*.

1981. "Grapes and Wine Production in the East" in Maynard A. Amerine, ed., *Wine Production Technology in the United States*. Washington, D.C.: American Chemical Society, 1981. pp.193-224.

1984. Maynard A. Amerine and Philip M. Wagner, "The Vine and Its Environments," in D. Muscatine, M. A. Amerine, and B. Thompson, eds., *The University of California / Sotheby Book of California Wine*. Berkeley/London: U.C. Press/Sotheby, 1984. pp. 86-120.

### III. Articles

1933. "Wine from American Grapes," *American Mercury*, 28 (March 1933), 360-7.

1933. "The Wines of California," *American Mercury*, 29 (June 1933), 165-75.

This and the preceding item are chapters from *American Wines and How to Make Them*.

1935. "American Wines," *Wine and Food*, II (Winter 1935), 77-78.

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[THE VINTAGE: Harvesting from Staked Vines, Treading the Grapes, Filling and Tapping the Casks, while the Treader Samples the Fresh Fruit. 16<sup>th</sup> C woodcut. From *Wine: Celebration & Ceremony*]