

Statistics on crime from the National Center for Health Statistics, Washington, D.C.

William R. Burleigh

---

SIX GLASSES OF WINE PER BOTTLE  
(Part II)

January 3, 2000

John W. Vester

Those who heard the first paper in this series, "Six Glasses of Wine Per Bottle", may remember that that title arose from a Greek writer, Eubulus. In about 375 BC, he wrote, "Three Bowls 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 bowl is drunk up, wise guests go home." The quote goes on to list the serious and dangerous consequences of further bowls. This is said to be the origin of the figure of three drinks of wine as an appropriate amount at a sitting. Containing enough wine to provide three glasses each for two people is the current size of wine bottles. That quotation, of course, is the source of the title of this series which was undertaken because I am tired of being intimidated when a waiter hands me a wine list.

The previous paper ended at the end of the fourteenth century when the identification and naming of grape varieties began. The first of these were the Pinots-Gris and Noir. These grew in Burgundy, as did the next grape to be named, the Gamay. The Cistercian Order of monks was a major force in the development and spread of vineyards. They spread into what is now Germany, and the first and most lustrous was the Abbey of Eberbach in a forested valley in the hills of the Rheingau. Its founders were Burgundians sent out by St. Bernard from Clairvaux in 1136. Within 30 years of its foundation, their dedication and efficiency

resulted in a dozen satellites and, eventually, became the center of a monastic network with 200 establishments along the Rhine between Worms and Cologne. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Abbey Eberbach was the largest wine-growing establishment in the world. In all likelihood, the monks originally planted vines from Burgundy, but they did not do well. They soon discovered that nothing they could do in the Rheingau could make really satisfactory red wine. Accordingly, they planted white grapes on the steepest slopes and found that the Rheingau was made for white wine. Today the region is synonymous with the Riesling. The Ebernach wine set the standards for the region. From its own little harbor at Reichartshausen, the Abby's three boats relayed countless barrels to the sellers in Cologne. A measure in the importance of this trade can be found in the fact that, by 1500, its vines only covered 2.8% of its huge domain of 23,000 acres, yet they contributed three-fourths of its entire agricultural income.

In terms of wine making, Bordeaux and England were almost literally married in the Middle Ages. There is no reason why wine should not be grown in England. At the present time, however, there are only three commercial vineyards - Beaulieu, Hambledon in Hampshire, and Horam in Sussex. The climate is no more unsuitable for the vine than it is in the northern Rhine Vineyards of Germany. Wine used to be grown in England on a large scale and might easily be a normal part of British agriculture today had it not been for the marriage of King Henry II of England to Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine in 1152. Prior to that time there had been rather extensive wine making and vineyards in England. In the Eleventh Century, William the Conqueror's acre-by-acre survey of his new English realm mentioned a total of 42 vineyards. It is reasonable to believe that the Anglo-Saxons had been growing wines there since the Roman times. Vineyards were an accepted accompaniment to any castle or monastery in the south. The Royal Windsor Castle made its own wine in the twelfth century, and the Cistercian Abbey of Beaulieu near Southampton on the south coast, naturally, had a vineyard. It seems that the Archbishop of Canterbury had the most vineyards but probably none was commercial and no tasting notes have

survived. The acquisition of Bordeaux discouraged the extension of wine growing in England but by the sixteenth century there were 139 vineyards owned by the Crown, noblemen, and the Church. The monasteries were dissolved in the 1530's and the local nobility appropriated their vineyards. A survey in 1586 concluded that wine growing was declining, not due to the climate or the exhaustion of the soil but to the sloth of the inhabitants.

It was really, ultimately, the easy access to the superior wines of the Bordeaux that essentially stifled the winemaking industry in England. In 1152, Eleanor of Aquitaine married Henry Plantagenet, Duke of Normandy and Count of Anjou. In 1154 he became King Henry II of England and she, Queen Eleanor. The famous link between England and Bordeaux was made.

After much royal family squabbling, the second son of Henry and Eleanor, Richard, became King of both the Aquitaine and England. He was also known as Richard the Lionhearted and he made Bordeaux his base. He first made Bordeaux wine his household wine, but since he lived almost constantly in France when he was not away on a crusade, he did not popularize Bordeaux wine in England. When he was killed in battle, the youngest sibling, John Lackland, became King of England, and he first gave Bordeaux merchants a fair chance at the English market. He exempted Bordeaux, Bayonne and Dax, the three ship owning towns of the region that was now called Gascony. This was in exchange for their support against the King of France. Over the space of ten years, he ordered increasing amounts of wine from Bordeaux and in 1215, the year of the Magna Carta, he ordered 120 tonneaux of wine from France. What is a tonneaux? This is the same as the English tun - a measure of wine described as 252 gallons of 900 liters. A cask this size is unmanageable, so it is broken down for shipping into four "hogsheads" of 225 liters each. In modern terms, a tonneaux equals 100 cases of a dozen bottles of wine. A barrique, or hogshead, holds 25 such cases. The ships that did the carrying in the wine fleets of the Middle Ages were called "cogs" or roundships. Their capacity was measured in the number of tuns they could carry, sometimes over 200 in a big ship. The wine with which England fell in love was

known as "Clairet", or "Claret". Clairet was originally made as a vin rosé. The grapes, both red and white, were trodden in the usual way and the wine fermented at first in the vat on the skins for no longer than 24 hours. Then the pale liquid was run off into barrels to ferment as clear juice. The wine was, thus, a pale pink, clear wine, and the fact that it was clear gave rise to the name of Clairet which became Claret. The wine consumption of England in the fourteenth century was incredible - somewhere in the neighborhood of 40,000 tonneaux. At a conservative estimate, that was six bottles of Clairet for each man, woman and child in England. The English also consumed large quantities of wine from Anjou and the Rhine wines from Germany. England must have been a very jolly place at this time. By 1453, the Hundred Years' War was over and the English were swept from France. The shipments of wine to England were down to 10,000 tons a year and never reached the high peak of the mid-fourteenth century.

The Crusades, from 1097 and lasting 200 years, provided the initial impetus for the growing and selling of wines from the Mediterranean. The travelers needed wine on the way to the Holy Land. They found it all along whichever route they took and rediscovered the qualities of sweetness and strength that the ancients had so much appreciated. After the success of the first crusade, from 1097 to 1099, the monastic orders moved in and planted vineyards with the same single-mindedness as they were doing at the same time in Burgundy and Germany. At first there was not a great deal of discrimination among the wines from these different sources throughout the eastern Mediterranean. The term most generally applied to them was Malmsey or Malvasia. The word is a corruption of Monemvasia, a Byzantine fortress town on the southwestern corner of the Peloponese. The grape variety that produced these wines was the Malvasia, which has maintained its name and identity throughout the centuries. The other Mediterranean grape that has survived is the Muscat. It was, and still is, used for wine all over the Mediterranean. The grape gets its name from the Italian word, moscato, which means, "smelling of musk". This same haunting aroma occurs in many melons, apples, pears, and even roses, besides grapes. They are all called "musky". Sweet wines were made in all the

islands that were of lesser quality. The most highly prized, however, were the Muscatels and the Malmseys. Another popular wine of the time was made in Tuscany and was called Vernaccia and was described as Italy's native Malmsey. This was called Vernage by the English and was also highly prized.

What all of these wines had in common was more important than what set them apart. In the Mediterranean sun, their grapes reached a very high sugar content which was encouraged by late harvesting and often boosted by half-drying the bunches before they were trodden into juice. The grapes were ripe at the end of July but were not picked until September. When they were gathered, they were put on the roofs of the houses to remain in the sun for the space of three days to consume whatever water may remain in them. The wine, in other words, was made from raisins. Natural fermentation of the juice from these dried grapes could achieve as much as 17% alcohol (34 proof). This was almost twice the strength of northern wines and there would still be unfermented sugar even at this strength. This combination of sweetness and a warm glow as it went down was strong drink indeed - probably the strongest anyone had tasted until the later introduction of distilled spirits. It also had a more important quality. It would keep and travel long distances without turning sour. Its high alcohol content preserved it and made it capable of maturing. These wines were expensive. Vernage, for example, sold for at least twice the price of Claret. In terms of prestige, the sweet wines came first, Rhine wine second, and Claret was the everyday drink in England.

In the thirteenth century, the main shippers of the sweet Mediterranean wine were Genoa, Pisa, and Venice. They shipped their wines in ever-larger galleys, some of them carrying a thousand tuns or more. The galleys of these three cities engaged in pitched battles and, ultimately, Venice came off best. When England lost Bordeaux, the Venetians saw an opportunity. Without delay, the Venetian sent the English King eight butts of their finest wine. (One butt held 130 gallons of wine.) England took the bait and, by the end of the Fifteenth Century, Malmsey was all the rage in England. Besides, Pisa and Genoa, Florence entered the trade. Even more competition for Venice began to appear in the form of

sweet wines being made in Spain and Portugal. Even under Moorish rule, Spain and Portugal had always been rich with vines. As the re-conquest of Spain proceeding southward progressed, more and more monasteries and vineyards were built and planted. It was not until the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, however, that significant export of wines occurred. The first wine from the Iberian Peninsula to become popular in England was Ribadavia. It was light and acidic. Another one of the time was from a little further south at Viana do Castelo, actually quite similar to Ribadavia. Another wine that emerged was from the town of Osoye and was probably a Muscatel from vines replanted from the eastern Mediterranean. A fourth newcomer was Bastardo or Bastard. This name is taken from the grape known as the Bastardo. It was a cheap wine, more than likely made of wine with honey added to it as a substitute for Muscatel.

These original Spanish wines were produced for local consumption. Toward the close of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, the Venetian monopoly of the sweet-wine trade from the eastern Mediterranean was in trouble. The Turks had already taken Constantinople. Since Venice could no longer guarantee its trade with the eastern Mediterranean, the sweet-wine supply for all of Europe was in the balance. England, with the loss of Bordeaux, had lost its prime source of all wine. The Spanish seized the opportunity with both hands and began producing strong, sweet wines for export. The Spanish word for export was "saca" and this was the origin of the generic name "sack". The Spanish even called some of their wine Romania or Rumney - a frank admission that they were imitating Greek wine and attempting to capture that market. Seville, Cadiz, Sanlucar and Jerez would become the world's great source of luxury wine. The Duke of Medina Sidonia set in motion commercial efforts and quality controls to encourage the sale of this Spanish wine. Sherry was the anglicization of the name Jerez. The Spanish had also taken over the Canary Islands and planted their volcanic soil with vines from Crete. Canary sack became almost as popular in London and Antwerp as sherry sack. Sir Francis Drake attacked the Port of Cadiz and brought home 2900 butts of sack that had been waiting on shore for loading. For years afterwards, sack, in England, was advertised as "authentic Cadiz". Sherris-sack was the favorite

beverage of Falstaff and he spoke glowingly of it in Henry the IV. At a maximum natural alcoholic strength of 16% of so, Elizabethan sack would have had something of the character and "weight" of a present day montilla. The best Spanish sherry today comes from a belt of chalk soil west of, and close to, Jerez. Aging was not part of the manufacture of that wine but the goal was freshness and strength. Probably the wine started to grow "flora" the peculiar floating white yeast that gives modern "fino" its essential character. Sack, at that time, was what is classed today as an "Oloroso". That word means pungent. It was also normally and naturally dry - hence the addition of sugar at the Boar's Head Tavern. All sherries are also fortified by the addition of varying amounts of alcohol. The development of high-quality sherry, carefully matured, started soon after and not in Jerez, but in Bristol, England. By 1634 the wine that was sold as "Bristol Milk" must surely have been softened, if not by time, at least by the vintner's art.

The Dutch had been mere vassals of the Spanish for almost a century. But, in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, William the Silent and his two sons united the seven northern provinces of what is now the Netherlands against Spain and the Inquisition and harried them out of the country. The Dutch became the greatest merchants in the world and had a fleet of some 10,000 ships. It was not to be thought, though, that the Dutch led coldly efficient lives on their quarterdecks and in their counting houses. They were famous for their guzzling of food, drink and the use of preposterous amounts of tobacco. They also had a passion for rare flowers and joy in every sensual delight. The tulips and the paintings of that country give testimony for the latter. Their initial favorite was sweet Rhine wine, but wars so devastated Germany that that country had little wine to export. It was in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century that wine, as Germany's national drink, was largely replaced by beer.

For the bulk supplies the Dutch needed to furnish all their northern clients and to sell in their own taverns, they turned to the West Coast of France and its hinterland. While the English had looked only for traditional red claret, the Dutch wanted things done differently. They bought huge quantities of white wine, the sweeter the better, and even huger quantities of

ordinary wine suitable for distilling into brandy. As all are aware, the origin of the word "brandy" is from the Dutch "brandewijn" or, burnt wine. The Dutch buying power and preference for white wine persuaded many of Bordeaux's farmers to switch from red grapes to white, but especially so in Sauternes. They used the trick of burning sulfur candles in the barrels before it was filled to keep the sweet wines stable and to prevent them from finishing their fermentation on the way to the customer. For economy and efficiency, the Dutch looked for areas where timber was plentiful as well as the proper grapes. Armagnac was a forest region with no proud wine tradition. This was distilled into brandy and taken by wagons to the nearest rivers. The chalky slopes south and east of Cognac were available for huge harvest of distilling wine and with plenty of firewood for the stills. Brandy was easy to make from non-descript wine and was much easier to transport. What turned the corner for cognac and raised it from being just another spirit to a beverage of world renown, was the interest of the English and the Irish who insisted on much more painstaking methods of distilling and aging of the spirit in oak barrels. The Cognac region was still providing the thin wines shipped from La Rochelle. This Cogniacke wine was unique in that it became palatable after only two distillations, which allowed it to keep at least some of its original winery character. Aging it in oak barrels helped as did the addition of a little sugar, too. Most wines when distilled in simple stills needed a number of distillations to get rid of foul tasting "congeners". Any good flavor was destroyed with the bad. This also led the Dutch to invent another ultimately extremely popular drink, gin. To cover the bad flavor of simple distilled wines, they added juniper berries to produce a new flavor. The French word for juniper was genevre and led to the name gin. Jean Martell came from Jersey in 1715 to settle in Cognac. In 1765, the Irishman, Richard Hennessy, moved his shop from Bordeaux to Cognac. About this time, the French decided to get into the wine business and increased their wine fleet. The Dutch took their custom elsewhere and went prospecting anew in Spain and Portugal. Jerez, Malaga, the Canary Islands, and Lisbon prospered from this change. In 1675 the Dutch had led them to open another chapter. They bought red wine from the hills of the Douro in Portugal at its river-mouth port, Oporto.

Up until the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, all wine was transported in barrels. It was perishable and had to be sold quickly. There were rare exceptions, such as the merchants of Venice who dealt with strong wines, and the abbots of the Rhine who possess cold cellars and enormous casks. For everyone else, the first axiom of shipping wine was to ship it quickly.

Wine, exposed to air, rapidly turned to vinegar. The reason for this was several of the bacteria that it contains but in particular one called *Acetobacter aceti*. The low temperature of the cold Rhineland cellars helped to slow this reaction. Also, the giant barrels, kept full by "topping off" provided a greater volume of liquid with a smaller surface area exposed to the air. The high alcohol content is also protective, hence the longer life of strong wines. The sulfur dioxide used to "brimstone" the barrels also inhibited the reproduction of bacteria. The Germans empirically knew that air was bad for wine. They kept their casks full by topping-off. If that was not possible, they even dropped stones, well washed in wine, into the bunghole to replace the air and keep the cask full.

It was the advent of the bottles and corks in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century that marked a great step forward in winemaking. Wine in a bottle, securely corked, has only the small amounts of oxygen and carbon dioxide that were present when the stopper was put in place. The vinegar producing organisms slow to a stop and all the life processes of the organisms that make up the flavor and aroma of wine are allowed to progress slowly. This was particularly so if the bottle is kept in a cool place. Pigments, tannins, acids and natural organic compounds are inherently unstable. In the bottle, they will combine and re-combine to form new compounds. This is the blessed process of aging. At first, bottles were used only to transport wine from the barrel to the table. Italian clearglass was very fragile. The Dutch had the very practical idea of blowing bottles into square sectioned molds which packed well in cases without wasting space. That pattern still exists in a Dutch gin bottle. Why it was never a success for wine is not clear. Sir Robert Mancel, in the 1620's made his headquarters near England's best known coal mines at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in the northeast. These coal-fired

glass factories sprang up in many parts of the country, and it was found that the higher temperatures of coal fires made stronger glass if not so white as the Venetian style. In the 1630's, Sir Kenelm Digby started making bottles that were much thicker, heavier, stronger, darker, and cheaper than any known before. They were globular in shape and had a deep kick-up in the bottom where the blowpipe had been attached, and this made them very stable standing up. The next problem to be solved, now that decent bottles were available, was how to stopper them. Centuries before, the Roman's had used corks, but their use had been forgotten. Medieval paintings show that twists of cloth, cloth being tied over the top, and leather also was used, sometimes covered with sealing wax. Corks began to be mentioned in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and were referred to in some of Shakespeare's plays in 1600. Two of the strong drinks of the time were mead and methegelin, made from honey. These were stoppered with corks or glass ground to fit snugly. Mead has always been thought to be an aphrodisiac. This is said to be the origin of the term "honeymoon". A newlywed couple went off by themselves and drank mead for the duration of one full moon. This was to assure the likelihood of generation of progeny. Hence the term honeymoon. Ultimately, ground-glass stoppers were abandoned because they were usually impossible to extract without breaking the bottle. As a consequence, cork took over. It was realized that good cork was essential. By 1676, the following rules were known. Corks should be steeped in scalding water so that they will expand and then be placed in the bottles. After that, the bottle is to be stored lying on its side to preserve the moistness in the cork so that the air does not enter the bottle. Some stored their wines upside down, but this turned out not to be a good idea because all the sediment showed up in the first glass.

With the bottles still globular, wine had to be stored in shelves with holes to take the noses of upside-down bottles. Only two changes remained to be invented. First was the corkscrew and the second a cylindrical bottle that could be binned on its side and not upside-down. The latter evolved gradually over the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The first mention of a corkscrew in print was not until 1681. It was described as "a steel worm used for the drawing of corks out of bottles".

These steel worms had been in use for at least half a century for drawing bullets and wadding from firearms that had failed to fire.

Cork is the thick outer bark of the cork oak, *Quercus Suber*, a slow-growing evergreen tree that has evolved this spongy substance for protection and insulation, particularly against fire. The world's supply of cork is concentrated in the Western Mediterranean and the neighboring Atlantic coast. Portugal, above all, furnishes half of the total and almost all of the top-grade cork used in wine bottles. The records of the oldest surviving cork-importing firm, William Rankin and Sons, go back to 1813 when they bought 8000 acres of forest in Portugal.

What makes cork so ideal for sealing wine? Its lightness, its cleanness, the fact that it is available in vast quantities, is all-important. It is almost impermeable. It is smooth, yet it stays put in the neck of the bottle. It is unaffected by temperature and it rarely rots. Most important of all, it is uniquely elastic. Corking machines are based on this simple principle you can squeeze a cork enough to slip it easily into the bottle and it will immediately spring-out to fill the neck without a nook or cranny to spare. As for its life span, it very slowly goes brittle and crumbly over a period of between twenty and fifty years. Immaculately run cellars (some of the great Bordeaux Chateaux, for example) re-cork their stocks of old wines every twenty-five years or so and one or two even send experts to re-cork their old wine in customers' cellars. Many corks stay around for half a century.

Today the bark is cut into sheets from mature trees every nine or ten years in mid summer. The sheets are stacked to dry for three months and boiled in vats with fungicides. After several more months' storage in a dark, cold cellar, the corks are cut as plugs from the thickness of the bark.

Longest and best quality corks are graded for the best wine. Dust and scraps from the process are agglomerated to make cheap cork. For specialized use by champagne makers, extra-large corks are made of three layers glued together. A normal wine cork is 24mm in

diameter, compressed into an 18mm neck. For champagne, a 31mm cork is compressed into a 17.5mm neck with the upper third protruding in a characteristic bulging mushroom shape. The wedding of the cork and bottle making possible the still mysterious and absolutely essential process of aging casts it long shadow on rest of the history of wine making.

In the latter half of the Seventeenth Century, a new chapter in the history of wine began. The diarist, Samuel Pepys, who described an evening drinking at the Royall Oak Tavern in Lombard Street in the City of London with a friend, first described it. The next day, Pepys wrote the most momentous tasting note in the history of Bordeaux: "Drank assorted French wine called HoBryan (and he spelled it that way), that hath a good and most particular taste that I ever met with." Pepys was no great connoisseur, but a man who liked to be up with the fashion. He was the first to record a completely new kind of wine and that within a few years of its invention. What he had tasted was Haut-Brion, the first wine from Bordeaux ever to be sold under the name of the estate where it was made. This was the prototype of every Chateau wine from that day to this. The Pontac family had been in the ascendant for well over a century. In 1660, the Pontac in power was Arnaud. He was the Mayor of Bordeaux and the whole region of Guyenne circulated around its Parliament. As President, Arnaud's lifestyle and revenue were almost regal. His townhouse was the grandest of the city's mansions. Only slightly humbler and more important to our story, was his ancestral country house an hour's ride to the south. It was the stone-built chateau of Haut-Brion and had been placed by his great-grandfather on the meanest patch of gravel in the region that took its name from its parched and stony soil, the Graves.

Experience had shown that the arid, gritty, soil was as good for vines as it was poor for anything else. The Archbishop's estate close-by had been admired in centuries past but not until this Arnaud did anyone see fit to capitalize on this fact. Arnaud was very careful in the process by which his wine was made. He could limit his crop to gain more flavor and strength; he could reject moldy grapes and less successful barrels. He possessed a press and may presumably have judged it a

good idea to use a little pressed wine to stiffen his claret and give it more color and character. In all likelihood, he allowed the wine to stay in the vat longer and he kept his barrels topped right up to the bung.

Arnaud was really a marketer. In 1647 a committee had met to establish prices for the different wines of Bordeaux. Classes were broken into "growths". The first growths were the best and the higher-numbered ones were less excellent. Arnaud made Haut-Brion his "first-growth" wine. Then he lent his family name to this wine and those of his other properties. Some of these were from the north, largely undeveloped, Medoc, but this he sold simply as "Pontack". With these two wines, Arnaud attacked the London market. His timing was perfect. In 1660, the English had restored the monarchy. In 1665, the Great Plague had killed between 70,000 and 100,000 of London's inhabitants. The following year, the Great Fire laid waste 400 acres of the city. That was the very year that Pontack sent his son to open a tavern more luxurious than any seen in England before. It was under the sign of "Pontack's Head". It was a roaring success. It stood just behind the Old Bailey and seems to have remained in business for more than a century until it was demolished in 1780. Pontack's Head has been called London's first restaurant. Its prices for both food and wine were very high, but they were sought after by clientele of London's aristocracy and fashionable men of letters.

Due to the fortunes of war, the English had been without their beloved claret for ten years. When it was finally available, they did not hesitate to pay the very highest prices for the very best wines.

Up to this point, the Medoc only had a passing mention. It was sandy, gravelly, and, in the north, marshy. Dutch engineers, under contract drained the swamps. By the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, a handful of Bordeaux lawyers and politicians realized that the Medoc had a great future in winemaking. They began purchasing small parcels from the old aristocracy and consolidating them into large vineyard estates. The best regions for growing wine were small hills and the estates were named for them. Lafite, Lamotte and Brion were designated at this time. One entrepreneur assembled small parcels of land that were to become the future Chateau Margaux.

Arnaud de Mullet became proprietor of the estate of Latour known to future generations simply as that. This new wine nobility of the Medoc and Bordeaux copied the Dutch style of putting wines of all one kind in each vineyard and in straight rows so that oxen could pull a plow between them. Old Bordeaux vineyards had been planted "en foule", the French for higgledy-piggledy. This is workable only laboriously by hand with a spade. These estates all produced first growth wine. War broke out again in 1705 and by the later stages of that war it became clear to the proprietors in the Medoc that peace would bring them a fortune. The English appetite for this "new French claret" from the Medoc found an insatiable appetite in England. In 1709, a terrible winter froze northern Europe killing large numbers of the Bordeaux vines. The need to replant to be ready for the end of the war seized the Medoc and started what contemporaries described as a fury of planting. In the next 20 years, the Medoc we know today was born.

We have now reached only the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century and our allotted time has run out. Part III of this series if, to paraphrase the Whiffenpoofs, my life and voice shall last, will begin with the fascinating story of champagne.

#### References

1. Johnson, Hugh. Vintage: The Story of Wine. Simon and Schuster, New York, New York. 1989.
2. Johnson, Hugh. The World Atlas of Wine - 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Simon and Schuster, New York, New York. 1994.
3. Kramer, Matt. Making Sense of Wine. William Morrow and Company, Inc., New York. 1989.
4. Macropedia Britannica. Vol. 13, pp. 208-212. 1991.
5. Macropedia Britannica. Vol. 14, pp. 741-749. 1991.
6. Macropedia Britannica. Vol. 12, p. 703. 1991.

7. Ridgway, Judy. The Wine Tasting Class. Clarkson Potter/Publishers, New York. 1996.

---

THIS SPORTING LIFE

January 10, 2000

Allan M. Winkler

I've always loved the world of sport. Indeed, my very sense of identity is wrapped up with what Theodore Roosevelt called the "vigorous life." I've enjoyed playing games for as long as I can remember, but I can't imagine a day, or a week, or a month, going by without engaging in some sort of regular exercise. Those periods when I've been hurt - with a sports injury, of course - have driven me mad. It's as if I've been bound up in a tightly-wrapped ball of twine from which I can't escape. One of the discouraging things about growing old - or at least older - is that such periods seem to plague me with increasing frequency, and my body takes longer to heal from my self-inflicted wounds (though I realize that in this august - and aging - group such a complaint will hardly be taken seriously). But even as I've grown older, I've tried to remain as active as I can.

My love of sport is connected to the dynamics of my family life, past and present. My mother never, to my recollection, engaged in any kind of physical activity. But my father was something of an athlete in his prime - as he told me time and again - and I always kept the stories of his triumphs in mind. Among Donald Hall's wonderful collections of essays and poems is an elegant little volume entitled Fathers Playing Catch with Sons, and the title itself captures the timeless sense of parental involvement that was certainly part of my upbringing. In the title essay, Hall writes, in ways that resonate for us all: "My father and I played catch as I grew up. Like so much else between fathers and sons, playing catch was tender and tense at the same time." And yet, even as I sought to shape myself