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A History of *Weinbau* in the Lower Missouri Valley: From
Dutzow to Hermann.

Todd J. Brown

M.A., History Department, University of Missouri-St.Louis, 2011

A Thesis Submitted to The Graduate School of the University of
Missouri-Saint Louis in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the
degree Master of Arts in History.

April 2011

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Thesis Abstract:

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The thesis presented is a history focusing on the rise of German immigration, wine growing and production or *Weinbau*, in the lower Missouri valley from Dutzow, Missouri to Hermann, Missouri, and the connection between the nineteenth century Missouri Germans and the rise of the Missouri wine industry.



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Introduction:

Situated at the confluence of the Mississippi, Missouri and Illinois Rivers, the city of Saint Louis became the starting point for all voyages heading west in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It was through Saint Louis that Lewis and Clark began and ended their journeys and where the Santa Fe Trail brought goods and wealth out of the American West. Flowing past of Saint Louis, across the state of Missouri, through Great Plains, to Montana, is the great Missouri River. The Missouri River was used to carry goods and western bound immigrants to the plains and beyond in search of land to farm and those who sought to begin anew in the wilderness across the continental divide. German immigrants coming to the lower Missouri valley initially wanted to create a new German state though this did not take place. Coming to America meant retaining what it meant to be German while pursuing profit. The result was the Americanization of the Germans coming to Missouri though grape culture and wine production was used as a means of cultural preservation.

Missouri was important to American history for many reasons. It was once the edge of the known wilderness and the center of the fur trade in America, and the last bastion of civilization before entering the great beyond. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 led Missouri into the Union of the United States in 1821 and at the heart over the slave question. Missouri was at the crossroads of the nation and the Mississippi River was used to send goods both north and south for destinations beyond.

As immigrants traveled from east to west (or even south to north up the Mississippi River from Louisiana), some groups of immigrants found Missouri the

ideal place in which to raise a family, grow crops, and engage in husbandry. Such was the case of the early German settlers. In 1825, German immigrant Gottfried Duden travelled along the Missouri and settled for a period in what today is known as Dutzow, Missouri, within the central Missouri Valley. His travels and observations would be written in his treatise, *Bericht über eine Reise nach den Westlichen Staaten Nordamerika's* or the *Report of a Journey to the Western States of North America*.¹

The book was a romantic dissertation on the Missouri valley from Dutzow, Missouri, to the town of Hermann, Missouri, situated on the river some 60 miles south and west of Dutzow.² The region was touted by Duden as being an excellent area in which to grow crops and raise cattle with the Missouri River being compared to the Rhine River of his native homeland. Though many books about opportunities in America were in circulation in Germany at the time, Duden's book would initiate the large migration of Germans into Missouri and the Missouri Valley that would change Missouri politically, socially, and economically.

Beginning in the late 1820s and early 1830s, German immigrants would flow into Missouri and with them their culture, religion, and ways of life. Among the Germans that settled in the region was the family of George Husmann. Husmann would become the "father" of not only the Missouri wine industry but the California wine industry as well. Husmann would write his now famous books, *American Grape Growing and Wine Making* and *The Cultivation of the Native Grape and Manufacture*

¹ Gottfried Duden. *Report of a Journey to the Western States of North America*. (Columbia, MO: State Historical Society, 1919).

² Hermann was founded in 1837. The romanticism of Duden's book can be found in his using nature as tool for enticement; the rivers, the flora and fauna, and plentiful land were all portrayed to encourage immigration.

of *American Wines*.³ Both books became instrumental in the planting, growing and cultivation of grapes in Missouri and later, California. Husmann, subsequently a member on the board of agriculture at the University of Missouri, would also produce a monthly journal of wine making and production known as the *Grape Culturalist* which ran from January 1869 until June 1871.

Viticulture in Missouri as a means of profit was not realized until after German immigration to Missouri. German immigrants were happy with liquor distilled from local grains such as maize, but the hard work and additional resources needed to grow grapes and produce wine did not take place until the middle of the nineteenth century.⁴ Industrious, focused, fiercely independent, and better-off monetarily than other immigrants coming into Missouri, German immigrants became successful merchants and farmers. Viticulture was one of those successes.

Why Missouri? Germans came to Missouri drawn by reasonably priced land, plentiful water, and the opportunity to make a good living. Good living for Missouri Germans was defined by autonomy, wealth by effort, and a land of overall prosperity; opportunities not available in Germany. This was after all, the age of the pioneer. To strike out and subdue the land for the greater glory of God was not secondary to other priorities of the age, but a true mission of destiny.

³ George Husmann. *American Grape Growing and Wine Making*. (New York: Orange Judd Company, 1883); *The Cultivation of the Native Grape and Manufacture of American Wines* (New York: Geo. E. Woodward, 191 Broadway, 1870).

⁴ Wine was made and sold for profit in the Ohio valley beginning in the late 1820s using German labor but was limited in success. Missouri's Germans would make the industry successful.

Hermann and areas along the Missouri River would gradually become the nation's leading producer of wine. This was due in large part to Missouri's climate, and the skills of the German immigrants. Unfortunately, this industry was on a collision course with the Temperance Movement. For German immigrants, this attack was cultural as well as economic. For hard working German Protestants, wine was not a social problem. Thus what began as an effort to Germanize the land of Missouri evaded Missouri Germans.

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University of Missouri -St.Louis
April 22, 2011

Pictures and Graphs:

Table of contents page: “Elvira Grape,” from the Bushberg Catalogue, *Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue of American Grape-Vines with Brief directions for Their Culture by Bush & Son & Meissner*. Bushberg, Jefferson County., MO: R.P Studley Company, 1869.

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The Rheingau Region,” Picture from German Wikipedia, GNU licensed. Accessed on April 10, 2010 from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Rheingau.jpg>

Chapter 4: Weinbau in the Lower Missouri Valley

The first cover of the *Grape Culturalist* of George Husmann: January, 1869: University of Missouri, Columbia.

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Joseph Poletti, *An Interdisciplinary Study of the Missouri Wine Industry from 1650-1980*, German Populations Highest in the State of Missouri by County and the Influence of German Immigration.

“Oak Glenn Winery,” taken by author on 6/30/2010.

“A Row in the Vineyard of Neil Brown, Marthasville,” taken by author 6/19/2010.

“Picture at the Back of Stone Hill Winery,” taken by the author on 6/25/2010.

Chapter 1:

Introduction to Early American Wine History

American Wine in the Beginning

The story of grape growing in North America, that is the planting and harvesting of grapes for various uses, begins with the first European inhabitants on the North American continent. Wine growing in America initially was taken by Europeans who hoped to produce the same varieties that were produced in the old world; much to the dismay of these early viticulture pioneers, European varieties were not productive and the process and evolution of grape growing in the early history of the United States was long and frustrating. The best grapes for growing in the Americas were the indigenous grape varieties. As viticulture spread across America, different hybrids were produced and different geographical areas produced different crops and at varying rates. However, when grape growing entered the California region, European varieties began to proliferate. The exceptional weather and irrigation would turn the semi-desert of the Western United States into one of the most productive wine producing regions of the world, a Marc Reisner has argued.¹

U.S. viticulture has undergone many changes since the Vikings first introduced the European grape variety to North America.² There is by now a general agreement of historians of viticulture in both the nineteenth and twentieth century's

¹ For a prolific explanation of the role of water history in the west, see Marc Reisner's book, *Cadillac Desert: The American West and its Disappearing Water* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1986).

² Wine's history in the United States could be seen as part of the push to conquer the land or only another story in the assimilation of foreign cultures and the complete destruction of others.

that the Vikings may have brought or discovered grapes in the area known today as Newfoundland.³ What exactly was brought or discovered is perhaps more accurately described as a point of contention. Leif Ericson, one is told from the Sagas, discovered and named the area as *Vinland* or “Wineland.” A fellow traveler by the name of Tyrker, a German, is said to have found *vinber* – or ‘grapes’ as translated from the Old Norse into English. It may be more accurate perhaps that the grapes found were actually cranberries or even the interpretation of *vinber* – as in some texts – may more precisely mean *meadow* or *grasslands*.⁴ The importance of this early history may be more for those historians of the Sagas and what transpired for the early Vikings of North America, for *Vinland* was not the best place to have a vineyard.

Although North America possesses a good temperate climate in which to grow grapes, it would take hybrid grape varieties and new technology to establish a true vineyard. In fact, North America has more species of native vines than anywhere else in the world, about thirty, or half of the total number found throughout the world.⁵ It is the prolific and ubiquitous *Vitis vinifera* that for thousands of years was grown and used by ancient in the old world to produce an elixir of the gods. It is *vinifera* that

³ Thomas Pinney, *A History of Wine in America: From the Beginnings to Prohibition* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1989) 3. Whether the grapes brought or discovered by the Vikings is still a mystery.

⁴ Pinney, *A History of Wine*, 6. It is interesting to note too that most authors, who write about early wine history, always seem to begin with the Vikings.

⁵ “A Review of the Origin of Interspecific Hybrid Grape Varieties,” *American Wine Society*, Manual No. 10 (Royal Oak, Mich., 1981) 2. George Ordish, “The Great Wine Blight” (London, 1972) 8. Quoted from T. Pinney.

has been grown and changed over the millennia more than any other varietal; some estimates having upwards of 8000 different types. Such seeds have been found in the tombs of the ancient pharaohs and is the type that Noah planted after the great flood.

⁶ *Vinifera* has given the world specific ‘noble’ lines of grapes such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Riesling, Chardonnay, and Burgundy; many of these grapes have been further defined and categorized according to the regions of cultivation, such as Burgundy. The most well known and prolific grapes in North America are: *Vitis Lubrusca*, *Vitis rotundifolia* (round leaf), *Vitis riparia* (river bank), *Vitis vulpina* (known as the “fox-grape” and the most common of riparia), *Vitis aestivalis* (the summer grape), *Vitis Cordifolia* (the winter grape), and *Vitis rupestris* or sand grape.⁷

Grapes that grew wild in North America were quite different than their Middle-Eastern, European, and Asian cousins. Grapes that grew wild in North America were in all likelihood, but a minor part of the hunter-gatherer diet of ancient Americans. These grapes were smaller and held less intrinsic sugars than *vinifera*. On the other hand, American grapes seem to grow in the most unlikely of places and have adapted to a variety of geographical circumstances; from short, stubby species that grow in sand and arid soils to types that grow over one-hundred feet tall into trees to support them.⁸

Early American colonists found grape cultivation incredibly distressing and even the best farmers and agriculturalists of the early period were not successful.

⁶ Pinney, *A History of Wine in America*, 5.

⁷ Pinney, *A History of Wine in America*, 7-8.

⁸ Ibid., Pinney.

Thomas Pinney explains that early cultivation of the European species of grapes in the Americas was almost impossible – which in many cases, is still true today – largely because of disease. A historical case in point was the attempt of cultivation by Sir Nathaniel Johnson. Governor of South Carolina for six years (d. 1713) and known for his prowess in agriculture and astute business practices, Johnson was an experimenter with plants and crops and set about planting “a considerable vineyard.”

⁹ Johnson was one of the first to try to grow grapes commercially for winemaking using native species; in this case, the native ‘black-grape’ of South Carolina, but in the end, Johnson did not succeed. As hard as he tried, disease and rot ruined his efforts. Johnson’s daughter, after she inherited his land after his death, said:

she married; and her husband destroyed the vineyard and orchard to apply the soil to Turkey-corn.¹⁰

Turkey-corn was practical, fulfilled an immediate need, and was not a crop that generally failed. It was also cheap. Planting vines for profit was a gamble and average farmers were not gamblers when it came to eating and living season to season. There were early attempts by many colonists, especially the early Germans and French, in the eastern seaboard states and as far west as Southern Illinois, to produce large quantities of wine; that is, quantities beyond local consumption. Subsidies and support were encouraged as early as the 1730s when Governor Gabriel Johnston argued that his land had “brought wine and silk to a good degree of

⁹ Ibid., Pinney, *Narratives of Early Carolina.* Sally, Ed, p. 310.

¹⁰ Robert Bolling, “Pieces Concerning Vineyards” (MS Huntington Library), p. 118.

perfection,” and looked for additional funds to make his experiments work.

Unfortunately, Johnston was ineffectual as a politician and a farmer and his efforts never came to fruition.¹¹ Although George Washington had written off wine growing as *bad debt* in 1772, one native Virginian, Robert Beverly, did have some success on his ‘Beverly Estates’ producing up to 400 gallons in 1715. Understanding what we know about wine now, this meant Beverly produced about one ton an acre and could hardly be deemed a success as early colonists still used old world growing techniques and methods of production. After the American Revolution, the typical grape grower would be German or French and one particular Frenchman, named Peter Legaux, would be the first to establish a commercial vineyard in America.

Legaux (1748-1827) by all early accounts was not a pleasant man and his bombastic personality and self assuredness frayed any relationships he had produced along the way. Having little luck on his 206 acres at Spring Mill, in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, Legaux had, by 1802, such backers as Alexander Hamilton, Benjamin Rush, and Aaron Burr. Legaux had successfully secured an act of legislature allowing him to form a company – the *Pennsylvania Wine Company* – to garner public support by selling stock at \$20 per share in 1793. He started with vines imported from Médoc and would later try, with little success, vines from Burgundy, Champagne and Bordeaux. As late as 1805, William Lee, the American consul in Bordeaux, sent 4500 cuttings to Legaux from Château Margaux, Château Lafite and Château Haut-Brion – the cuttings did not take. What grape would work to some

¹¹ Ibid., Pinney, 61-62. (“Colonial Records of Georgia,”22, part 2:144 (19 May, 1739). This was one of several attempts in the early colonies of more affluent farmers to grow and cultivate grapes for commercial purposes and the prevailing spirit of the time.

degree for Legaux was the *Constantia* or *Alexander*; the grape later to be known as the *Cape of Good Hope*, the believed region of origin for the hybrid.¹²

The legacy of Legaux was his determination, his eye toward commercialization of grape growing, and the successful cultivation of the Cape grape. Legaux died in 1827 with his vineyard being bought by his son-in-law and Legaux's 40 years of wine growing coming to naught.¹³ It was the Cape grape and Legaux's vineyard that would become the source of the grape that spread throughout the East and ultimately supplied vines for vineyards in New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky. Moreover, it was simply Legaux's determination that would inspire many others at the turn of the nineteenth century to undertake the challenge of growing grapes for a sustainable wine production. Among those that would use the techniques and ideas of Legaux was George Rapp, the famous leader of the group known as the *Harmonists*.¹⁴

The Harmonists are of interesting historical note for two particular reasons in the history of American wine. The Harmonists left Germany to come to the United States in 1803 and combine two familiar elements: immigrants that are an organized group, this one skilled in viticulture, and the idealism of religion (and agriculture) as an impetus for communal cohesion.¹⁵ Settling in Indiana near the Wabash River,

¹² The origin of this grape is not fully known and is most likely a hybrid of several native species of the Cape Area.

¹³ Pinney, *A History of Wine*, 114.

¹⁴ Pinney, *A History of Wine*, 130.

¹⁵ Many immigrants came to the Americas as farmers from religious communities, such as Quakers, Huguenots, et al. What set the Harmonists apart was their background in viticulture and the

twenty-five miles from the Ohio River, New Harmony made Indiana the unchallenged leader in the first period of commercial wine production in the United States.¹⁶ The Harmonists first began the use of hillside vineyards in neat stone-walled terraces; this was a common practice of viticulture for Germans in Europe but novel to the United States.¹⁷ Here, the Cape grape was grown from cuttings from Legaux's vineyards. But the Harmonists, with all their hard work and knowledge, did not last. There were few hands, once again failed to grow European grapes in North America (like *Riesling*). The other problems included an increasing need to stabilize the finished product with additional sugars and alcohol, and disagreement in the community. Rapp finally sold the community to a Welsh mill owner and socialist – Robert Owen.¹⁸

In Ohio, known as the Rhineland of America even before the advent of wine production in Missouri, Nicholas Longworth began working with the Catawba grape as early as 1825.¹⁹ Longworth's legacy was twofold. First, like Legaux, he sought to establish a commercial vineyard in Ohio and with his sparkling Catawba, won national recognition by proving wine could be produced successfully and

use of the land that would be re-created by later wine growers like those that founded wineries in Hermann, Missouri, and other locals settled by German immigrants.

¹⁶ The wine growing community flourished between 1815 and 1825 and is a prime example of a German, wine cultivating community. Another community of success in the state of Indiana at the time was that of Vevay, a Swiss community founded by Jean-Jacques Dufour.

¹⁷ Ibid., Pinney.

¹⁸ It was here that Owen sought to establish his own utopian community based on his revolutionary ideals.

¹⁹ Pinney, *A History of Wine*, 158.

commercially. Second, was Longworth's influence on the later grape growers and wine producers of Missouri. Cincinnati, like St. Louis, was a river city and attracted German immigration as the expansion west continued.²⁰

Missouri became the edge of the frontier west for many immigrants. For others going west later in the nineteenth century, it was a starting point. Saint Louis late eighteenth century had become the fur trading capital of the world, rivaled perhaps by Quebec, where many of the beaver pelts were then shipped to European destinations. The confluence of the Missouri, Illinois and Mississippi Rivers in Saint Louis was a seductive and engaging locale for those seeking adventure, profit, and in the greater part of the future state, productive farmland.

The Spanish were the first Europeans to arrive and stay in Missouri. Later, through fur trade and lead mining, the French were the next Europeans to influence the area. The fur trade would greatly diminish in the Mississippi Valley by the mid nineteenth century due to over hunting and the near extinction of the beaver not only in the heartland but later, further west in future states like Colorado and New Mexico. Profit, according to William Cronon, was the driving force or impetus for western expansion. Cronon mentions this drive, specifically for land, in his book, *Changes in the Land*:

The imperative here was not just the biblical injunction to 'fill the earth and

²⁰ Ohio's wine industry is an entire story unto itself. Unfortunately, Longworth exploited German labor and wine knowledge as an attempt to further his own, personal gain. His successors were more successful than he but Longworth used many of the early techniques of American wine production that greatly advanced the art and science of wine making such as adding sugar (Gallicizing) and making wine into champagne (*méthode champenoise*) to make the finished product palatable.

subdue it.' Colonists were moved to transform the soil by a property system that taught them to treat the land as capital.²¹

But what was the intent of the new immigrants to Missouri? The Germans that would enter Missouri in the first part of the nineteenth century were indeed looking for a new beginning and most certainly looking for farmland to raise their families. Viticulture and wine production were very much part of the German and French traditions. How viticulture was perceived and whether or not wine production fell into the same category of wine-for-profit as did other agricultural endeavors will be examined later.

Wine production before 1800 would have been commodified the same as any other agricultural product but for the difficulty of cultivating European species largely due to disease and weather. Many early colonists (pre- American Revolutionary War) including both Germans and French, continued old world traditions of viticulture and the connection with ethnic identity and a greater sense of community. To grow grapes for wine production in America in general and later in Missouri in particular, some necessary conditions had to be in place. As mentioned, one of the primary variables is a hearty native species. Second, or perhaps equally important, is the environment in which the grape is cultivated.

The specific development of the Missouri wine industry took place in direct relationship to the states physiography. Environmental aspects such as climate, soil, and topography played a significant role in determining grape

²¹ William Cronon, *Changes in the Land, Indians, Colonists and the Ecology of New England*, 77.

variety, costs of production and ultimately, the quality of the wine.²²

Most of the information that one has about early wine production in Missouri and Southern Illinois initiated by immigrants comes from travel letters and journals, some as early as the 1650s. As mentioned earlier, the French were some of the earliest settlers in the region. Yet French settlements in Missouri did not produce great quantities of wine nor develop communities that had as a central part of their culture; Germans were more productive in this sense. Four individuals describe viticulture in the region between 1750 and the early 1800s; Jean Bernard Bossu, John Bradbury, Henry M. Brackenridge and Henry Schoolcraft. Bossu describes the Kaskaskia:

Along the rivers there are many grapevines that climb high on the trees that

When those in the Illinois country are cut down, single stem yields a whole barrel of wine...

This is confirmed by an 1850 census of the French in the region that in:

1769, the French settlers in the Illinois River Valley made upwards of 100 hogsheads of strong wine from the American wild grape.²³

Brackenridge found wine production across from Kaskaskia, in Ste. Genevieve, almost non-existent and those grapes grown were of the wild variety and often went “unpicked.” Breckenridge mentions in the 1790s that:

²² Poletti, *Missouri Wine Industry*, 14.

²³ Poletti, *Missouri Wine Industry*, 74. “United States House of Representatives, Abstract of the Seventh Census, 1850” (Washington D. C, Robert Armstrong, 1853).

To the north of the village (Ste. Genevieve) forming its boundary...at most yielding a scanty vintage of winter grapes for the birds who linger here until blown away by the breath of the season...[and] only dwarf vines of the poor hills that are fruitful.

The French were making wine but not in large quantities for selling and were making wine from wild grape varieties. John Bradbury does describe the varieties being grown in Missouri at the time and that the French "...have made a considerable quantity of wine from it by collecting the wild fruit." Schoolcraft in the early 1800s describes the making of the wine by the settlers and the adding of large amounts of sugar, lemon juice and even raisins before casking for six-months, no doubt producing a lower quality of wine made from wild grapes and not much better than the wine made with similar treatments in the Eastern United States.²⁴ Why did the French not develop wine to greater degree in Missouri? The French were certainly known around the world for making wine but the main cause for not producing wine to any extent in Missouri was governmental restriction. The Jesuits, according to Poletti, had planted a vineyard in Kaskaskia in 1794 but:

The French government had ordered the vineyard destroyed for fear that the vine culture might spread in America and hurt the wine trade in France.²⁵

²⁴ The previous letters and journal entries were gleaned from Poletti in: H.M Brackenridge, *Recollections of Persons and Places in the West*, 2nd edition. J.B Bossu, *Travels in the Interior of North America: 1751-1762*; John ...Bradbury, *Travels in the Interior of America in the Years 1809, 1810 and 1811* –(1819). Henry R. Schoolcraft, *A view of the Lead Mines of Missouri*.

²⁵ Quoted in *Vineyards and Wine Making in the United States, in 1860 census of the United States*; Agriculture of the United States in 1860 (United States government printing office, 1864)74.

Other factors certainly played a role rather than a far away government controlling French immigrants. One possibility may have been the French that settled in Kaskaskia and in Ste. Genevieve were from the Northwestern parts of France and these settlers simply did not have the background for viticulture. These French settlers were traders in goods with the local Amerindian population and others were farmers, who grew wheat, corn, rye, barley, and some animals like cattle, hogs, and chickens. Viticulture is rarely mentioned. The main reason, according to Poletti, was that there was little market for wine in Missouri at the time of early French settlement.

Producing wine meant time taken away from other agricultural duties - as mentioned above - and raising animals. This could be costly as large scale viticulture was at best, uncertain. Further, whiskey on the frontier was more plentiful and cheaper, hence wine was not produced. Yet in the 1820s, some wines were beginning to be produced in such places as St. Stanislaus in Florissant, Missouri, and several other small, isolated wineries throughout the Missouri Territory. Viticulture would change greatly in Missouri after 1820.²⁶

²⁶ Wine production, according to Poletti, started at the St. Stanislaus religious community in 1823 and continued until 1960 and is an example of wine being produced for cultural (religious in this case) reasons. The other early winery in the state was the Missouri Wine Company started in 1832 in Saint Louis.

Chapter 2:

A Brief Environmental History of the Lower Missouri Valley

Early Formation and Climate of Missouri

Missouri was part of a larger land mass known as Laurasia, itself a section of the original Pangaea.¹ About 200 million years ago, Laurasia, a northern supercontinent would hold what would become most of North America and Europe while the southern portion, Gondwana, would break away becoming modern South America, Africa, India, Antarctica, Australia, and New Zealand. Missouri formed within the Laurasian super continent and changed and evolved over the next several millions of years. The separation of the major landmasses due to continental drift would isolate and evolve different species of animals and plants and in some cases where the species may be the related to plants in Europe, would develop specific characteristics peculiar to isolated environments.²

The Missouri Ozarks formed some 1.65 billion years ago in what is known as the Precambrian Era; the period after this era is known as the Cambrian Era, going back some 600 million years.³ As the Ozark Mountain chain developed, grew, and changed over millennia, and then eroded and changed again, volcanoes spewed molten rock to the surface for over 500 million years and created the Saint Francois

¹ Jon L. Hawker, *Missouri Landscapes: A Tour through Time* (Rolla, Missouri: Missouri Department of Natural Resources, 1992) 50.

² The development of related species that develop independently of each other is of primary importance to understanding grape varieties later in the narrative. An example would be Missouri's Lizard Tail, a native plant, formed independently and distinctly in Missouri though the plant has ancestral cousins in Europe. *Vitis Vinifera* and *Vitis Lubrusca* are related grape species but as one will see, European vines could not be grown with success in North America. What would work would be the grafting and cross-breeding of the species.

³ Hawker, *Missouri Landscapes*, 58.

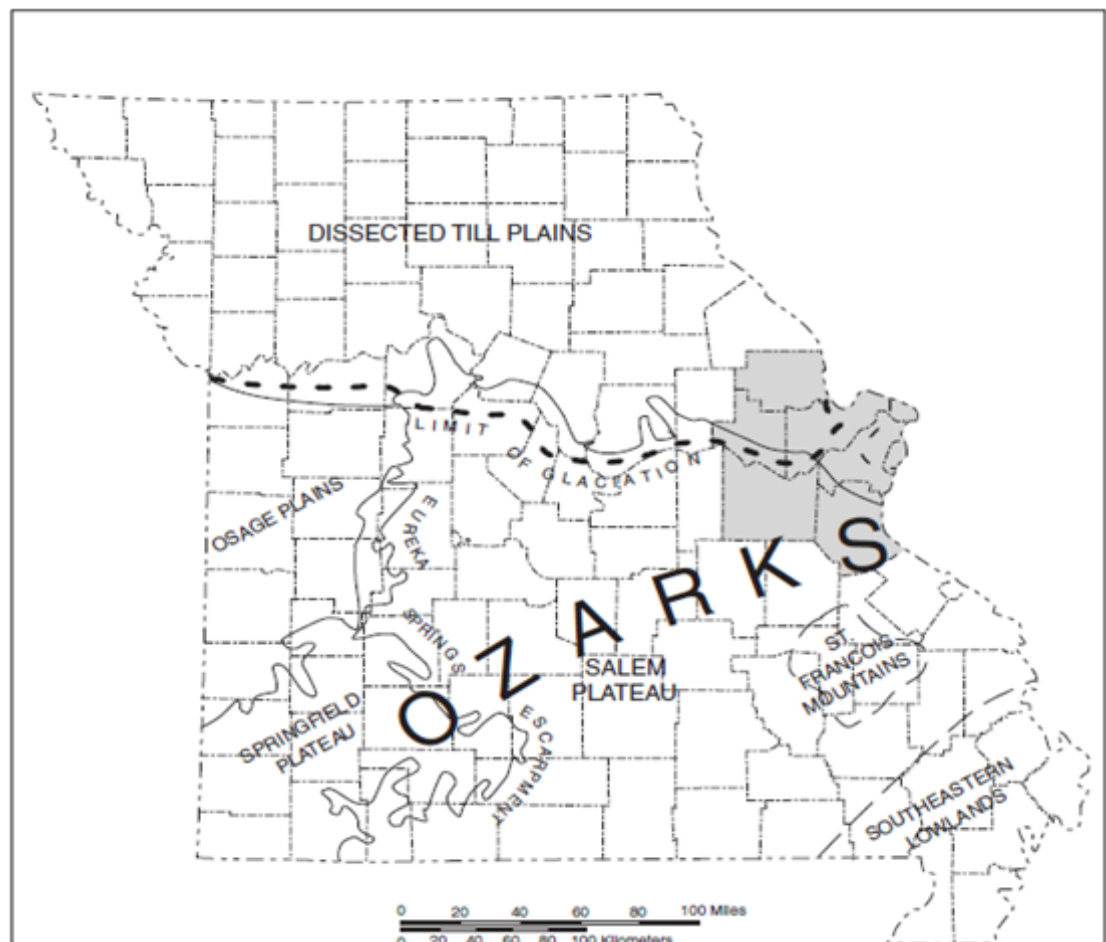
Mountains. The volcanic and inland sea environment of Missouri would create the base of the state that included the formation of lead as seen in the area around Galena, Missouri, the world renowned red granite of Graniteville, and later during the Carboniferous Era, the plants and small animals that created the state's huge coal deposits. The large inland seas that covered the state in many different periods would form the basis of the sedimentary layers of dolomite, limestone, and the oldest sedimentary rocks known in Missouri, the Lamotte Sandstone.⁴

The climate and soils across the state today make up a complex patchwork of variable temperatures and rainfall amounts. Missouri is divided into four main 'provinces' for the ease of understanding the state's formation, its plant life, and its natural resources, including water.⁵ Graphic (3.1) shows the division in the state's sections being divided into four parts with the last glacial period ending some 10,000 years ago. Glaciers came as far south as Saint Charles County in Missouri and were crucial in the formation of the lower Missouri Valley and indeed, the formation of not only the Mississippi River, but the formation of the Missouri River in the state.⁶

⁴ Hawker, *Missouri Landscapes*, 75. Other rocks formed too in Missouri including: gneiss, calcite, aragonite, and shales, among others. A very diverse and unique formation of rocks and plants evolved in Missouri that is distinct from almost anywhere on the planet because of its vicinity and evolutionary history.

⁵ The provinces are, topographically, North Missouri Glacial (and loessial regions), the South West Missouri Prairie region, the Ozark Region, and the Southeast Missouri Lowland region.

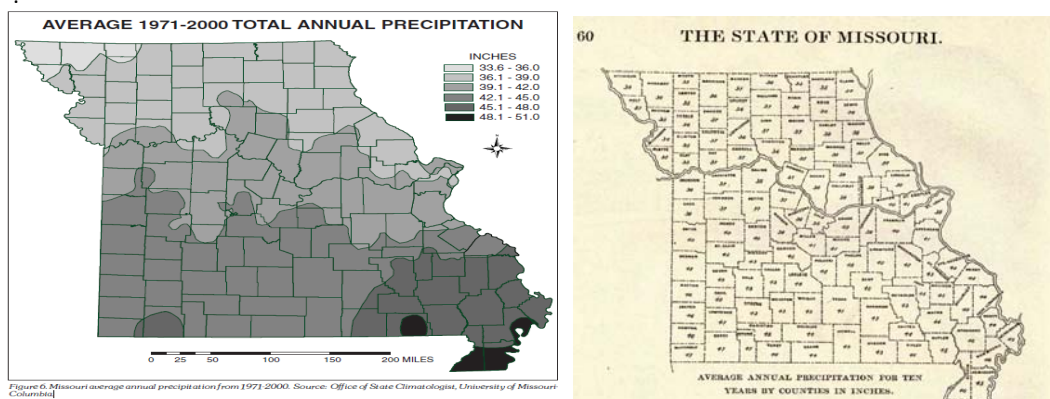
⁶ Missouri Department of Natural Resources, "*Topics in Water Use: Eastern Missouri*" (Rolla, MO: 2002) 17. The *Kansas Glaciation* is the name of the period given to the formation of the soils in Northern Missouri down into the counties of the Lower Missouri valley. The graph here is marked for water sources and those counties 'grayed-out' in the graph are only part of the counties in question. Source: MU Agricultural Experiment Station Publications: the Soils of Missouri, Columbia, MO (January, 1929) 7.



Graphic 3.1 Physiographic provinces of Missouri: Here Missouri is divided into provinces at the end of the last period of Glaciation. Source: Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Geological Survey and Resource Assessment Division.

The period when the soil was created during the thousands of year's process in the lower Missouri valley located in Saint Charles, Warren, Crawford, Gasconade,

and Montgomery Counties, is referred to as the Kansas Glaciation. These soils are characterized by layers or *horizons*. Glacial soils are largely loess soils and are made of the rocks from which they are derived and from the weathering process; fertility is directly related to the amount of lime found in the soil.⁷ Consistent rainfall and temperatures are important for viticulture and the state of Missouri, though fairly consistent, precipitation changes greatly from the north of the state to the south.



Graph 3.2 Precipitation: Annual rainfall in Missouri for the years 1971-2000. The graph on the right shows precipitation by county in 1902. Very little has changed in rainfall amounts over 100 years. Sources: Left, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, University of Missouri-Rolla. Right, Walter Williams. *The State of Missouri: An Autobiography*, edited for the Louisiana Exposition Columbia, MO: E.W Stephens, 1904.

⁷ F.M. McDavid, "The Soils of Missouri," *University of Missouri Agricultural Experiment* (January, 1929), 24. According to the report, very fertile soil has the following compositions: nitrogen 5000 lbs., phosphorus 2000 lbs., and potassium at 30,000 lbs., per 2 million lbs. of soil at approximately 7 inches over an acre. The fertile glaciated soils of the Lower Missouri Valley combined with the proximity of the Missouri River offer a high probability of success for grape cultivation. Even the soils in the hills of Missouri offer enough nutrients for cultivation thanks to thousands of years of alluvial deposits.

Precipitation in 1902, during the height of Missouri grape cultivation, can be seen to the right of graph 3.2.⁸ In the counties of the lower Missouri valley, including Gasconade, Montgomery, Warren, and Saint Charles Counties, the average rainfall for the twenty-nine years between 1971 and 2000, was 39.1-41.0 inches. In 1902, the average based on ten years (1892 to 1902), the average was almost exactly the same; very little change over 120 years. The comparison in rainfall amounts demonstrates Missouri could still support grape varieties that were so important to grape culture at the turn of the twentieth century.

⁸ Walter Williams, *The State of Missouri: An Autobiography, edited for the Louisiana Exposition* (Columbia, MO: E.W Stephens, 1904) 61.

Early Inhabitants and Native Missourians

The Missouri River was named for the aboriginal American Indians of the area and would become the official name of the state in 1821. Ancient man lived in and around the rivers of Missouri at least as far back as *Clovis Man* which is demonstrated through archeological evidence found at Kimmswick in 1979 dating back 12,000 years.⁹ The Mississippian Period and the Mound Builders were part of the history of the Midwest and Missouri (Illinois) as early as 2500 B.C.E.¹⁰ Information about the Missouri Indians themselves is less clear and little is known

⁹ Graham, Russell W., C. Vance Haynes, Donald Lee Johnson, Marvin Kay. *Kimmswick: A Clovis-Mastodon Association in Eastern Missouri*. *Science*, New Series, Vol. 213, No. 4512 (Sep. 4, 1981), pp. 1115-1117 Published by: American Association for the Advancement of Science Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1686656>

Kimmswick evidence has shown that Mastodons were hunted in a deciduous and meadow habitat by the early Indians and fits the 12,000 year old estimate. The most famous Mastodon skeleton found in Missouri is on display in London.

¹⁰ Barrie E. Kavasch. *The Mound Builders of North America: 4000 Years of American Indian Art, Science, Engineering and Spirituality Reflected in Majestic Earthworks & Artifacts* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2004)31.

about the people that would eventually assimilate with other tribes, die of disease, or be killed by other Indian groups such as the Sauk and Foxes. The Missouris were part of the Missouri-Osage group of peoples speaking a Siouan language and first encountered by the Spanish and French. The Missouris were part of larger group of peoples that migrated out of the Great Lakes region due to economic pressures of the French in Canada around the mid sixteenth century.¹¹

The name Missouri, which meant “people of the wooden canoes,” was Algonquin in origin and given by the French to this group of people. The tribe settled in the ‘bend’ of the Missouri River near the Osage River near modern Jefferson City. Étienne de Bourgmont who lived with the Missouri and took a native wife, described them as “not very numerous and of very good blood and are more alert than any other tribe.”¹² They were different than their contemporaries in that they were a less warlike people and grew beans, pumpkins, and corn; the Missouri created pottery and were considered good hunters and an intelligent, beautiful people. Yet by the time of Gottfried Duden, few Indians were seen in the lower Missouri valley. Duden mentions:

No doubt you are surprised that I have hardly uttered a syllable about the Indians. Who in Germany would believe that a person could live a whole year

¹¹ James Neil Primm. *Lion of the Valley: St. Louis, Missouri, 1764-1980* (St. Louis, Missouri Historical Press, 1981) prologues.

This group included the Osage, Missouri, Kansas, Otoes, Iowas and the Omahas.

¹² Primm, *Lion*, 2.

De Bourgmont lived with the Missouri in 1712.

on the far-away Missouri, without having been visited a single time by Indians...It is probable however, that in my neighborhood no Indian has been seen for ten years. To be sure groups of them are seen almost every week canoeing down the Missouri, to trade their wares in St. Louis, or to get their income from lands they have given up...Thus I saw a number of Sac [sic] Indians, on their way home, near St. Charles, where they had pitched their tents. In St. Louis one often sees Osage, Kansas, Fox, Sioux and other Indians...In the state of Missouri, which is to be clearly distinguished from the territory of the Missouri River, however, there are but few Indians living. Some fifteen miles from here, on the south side of the Missouri, there was a Shawnee village of fifteen dwellings. Some time ago they changed their residence to a site more than one hundred miles to the west of here. I know of no other tribe west of the Mississippi that is nearer to me than this tribe of the Shawnee.¹³

Duden continues to tell the story of how a local, a Mr. Ramsey, described an Indian attack on his farm during the war in 1814. The Indians were “incited” by the British against the Americans and bloodshed ensued, with women and children being scalped, including his own grandson. Despite these rare occurrences, the Anglos had pushed the Indians further west across the state. These Indians would have witnessed

¹³ Duden, *The Report*, 62-63. Gottfried Duden would write the book that began the greater part of German immigration to Missouri. His background and story will be given in greater detail to follow later in the narrative.

the several forts erected along the Missouri. These forts evaded any hope of living peaceably among the whites.¹⁴

Being scalped by Indians seemed a real fear for those Germans considering migration to Missouri. Goebel examines the stories of those Native Americans that lived in the area before and after German immigration into the Missouri Valley. By the 1830s, most had moved to the “Indian Territory” west of Missouri and Arkansas. These *refugees* were not permitted to even enter the state for hunting without written permission from the governor but many still traveled the waterways in search of food and occasional trading. Some Indian families attempted farming on a small scale with one to two acres under cultivation and did so with basic hand tools as the Indians “used not the plow and did not know how to use one.”¹⁵

The Native Americans by the time of the Germans arrival had already taken on the mythical attributes attached to them by the Europeans. Those who did meet them found them mysterious, stoic, and long-suffering. Theodore Bates had befriended an Indian coming up the river one particular day and though the Indian spoke little English, Bates understood he and his family or four were hungry; the Indian’s rifle had been broken and he could not hunt. Bates fed the family and years later when a steamboat crowded with Indians passed his landing place, that same

¹⁴ Duden goes on to explain how the Indians scalped their enemies and the effects of scalping if one was fortunate (or unfortunate) enough to survive the awful attack.

¹⁵ Goebel, *Menschenleben*, Chapter 8, 1. The failure to take full advantage of the land, according to Europeans, was seen as a waste. This is also a statement that reveals a sense of superiority of Europeans who viewed the Native Americans as violent, godless and in need of guidance like children. If assimilation was not possible then destruction was seen as simply the “will of God.”

Indian along with many others rushed ashore to show their thankfulness and greeted him with a hearty “how, how.”¹⁶

Further up the imposing Missouri River, the Native Americans lived in large numbers and their cultures were still very much intact if not in constant retreat. Brackenridge described the Arikara in detail reporting on their long, black hair which sometimes reached their heels with perfectly fit bodies, bronzed by the sun. Similar descriptions would be made by the first settlers across the plains, such as Francis Parkman, Jr., in his classic tale of, *The Oregon Trail*.¹⁷

Goebel, Duden and many other early nineteenth century writers were indeed romantics. Romanticism, beginning with Goethe, reacted to the Enlightenment and Classicism of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Reading the literature of the early explorers and immigrants, one is struck by the verbiage given to beauty, abundance, and life. There is no doubt hyperbole and exaggerations were used by early writers to sell literature and entice others to follow behind, though the

¹⁶ Goebel, *Menschenleben*, Chapter 8, 3.

“How, how” was short for the English, “How do you do?” Goebel explains how the Indians wasted nothing and had a proclivity for unborn, fetal deer as a delicacy. He understood even then that the once great Indians of the Missouri River seemed to be a downtrodden and beaten people but still very proud and had awesomeness in their very presence.

¹⁷ Francis Parkman, Jr., *The Oregon Trail*, (New York: Putnam, 1849).

Arikara were a tribe forming the northern group of the Caddoan linguistic family. In language they differ only dialectically from the Pawnee. They were a group encountered by Lewis and Clark yet by 1871 the tribe numbered 1,650; by 1888 they were reduced to 500, and the census of 1904 gives the population as 380. The importance of this information demonstrates the dichotomy of the nineteenth century as a century of advancement and progression but often at the cost of others. <http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/tribes/nations/arikara.htm>

abundance and depth of the early American wilderness must have truly been awe inspiring. What is missing is the lack of concern with the plight of the Native Americans and even the struggles of the numerous slaves found throughout the south and in the Missouri territory. Native Americans were largely seen as part of the very same environment as the buffalo, waterways and vegetation. The far west was yet another frontier to be subdued and subjected to the will of God or rather, the will of those seeking a new life, profit or both. Unfortunately, this meant that those with technology and a sense of Manifest Destiny would conquer regardless of the cost to those living in the wilderness.

Early Explorers of the Missouri Valley

In 1799, Daniel Boone arrived in Missouri and the inchoate stirrings of westward expansion born and fostered by his pioneering spirit would set in motion the immense wave of immigration that would soon follow. That same year, twenty German and Swiss Lutheran and Mennonite families entered Missouri after a long trek west from North Carolina. These first settlers built their homes on the White Water River in southern Missouri and were the first Germans to cross the Mississippi River.¹⁸ German immigrants of the period who traveled to Missouri were of many trades and disciplines, including lawyers, doctors, teachers, and farmers. These immigrants traveled so far from home came because of two main reasons: to take advantage of reasonably cheap land and to escape the political and economic instabilities of the European continent.¹⁹

Before the Germans came *en masse* into the Missouri valley later in the 1830s, the area along the Missouri River was becoming the next commencement point west. The early travelers were astonished by the river, the woods around them, and the seemingly endless expanse westward. Wild grapes and grapevines were mentioned in

¹⁸ Robyn Burnett and Ken Luebbering. *German Settlement in Missouri: New Land, Old Ways* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1996). The original site is present day Cape Girardeau and Bollinger Counties.

¹⁹ Burnett and Luebbering, *German Settlement*, 2.

their writings. Lewis and Clark were first to fully explore the region and followed the path westward clearing the way for future migration.

The plants seen by Lewis and Clark were those used for their journey and necessary for their survival.²⁰ Lewis and Clark were given instructions by Thomas Jefferson to gather as much information as possible about the new frontier and this included the flora and fauna; wild grapes were certainly noticed. Jefferson commented that, “Other object’s worthy of notice will be the soil & face of the country, its growth and vegetable productions...” Noted in their journals for Wednesday May 30, 1804 was the comment ...

The Soil is good the timber is Cotton-wood, Secamore [sic], hickory [sic] & white walnut &.C. Some Grape vines, Rushes &.C— .²¹

Before the waves of immigrants would head west and change the American landscape both figuratively and literally, Lewis and Clark followed the eminent Missouri River through the lower valley, making notes along the way and unknowingly setting the course for both Missouri and westward expansion that would change American history. This is important because the area in which Lewis and Clark traveled was the path that would lead across the west, the path that continued out of Saint Louis proper – ‘The Gateway to the West’ – and it was through this

²⁰ Bruce Palmer, “Missouri’s First Botanists,” *Missouri Conservationist*, Volume 66, Issue 1 (January 2005) 24.

²¹ Gary Moulton, “The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition,” *University of Nebraska Press*, (2007), <http://lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu/index.html>. The vines were seen in what would be present day Callaway County, Missouri. Lewis and Clark made some 65 references to grapes and grape vines on their journey to and from the Pacific coast.

beautiful, ancient, quiet lower Missouri valley that gave birth to a ‘second’ United States. At this nexus the mid-Missouri Germans would settle and change the social and economic role of the state. In the process they established a wine industry.

Among the earliest of Anglo travelers along the Missouri was Henry Marie Brackenridge. Brackenridge would travel up the Missouri River with Manuel Lisa from Wednesday April 3, 1811 through August 1811. The party was in pursuit of Wilson P. Hunt, who was working for John Jacob Astor. After overtaking the Hunt party in early June, an argument between Lisa and Hunt would send the Brackenridge party back to St. Louis.²² H.M. Brackenridge had met Manuel Lisa in St. Louis after moving from Pennsylvania. Brackenridge had studied law before coming to St. Louis and by sheer kismet met Manuel Lisa – who was at the time working for the Missouri Fur Company. Brackenridge was invited along and agreed to the adventure out of sheer “curiosity.”²³

The lower Missouri valley was described in daily journal entries by Brackenridge and although on occasion mentions grapes or vines in his Missouri travels, he often spoke to the beauty and verdure of the river and the many inhabitants who lived in and around her life-giving waters. One of the first villages Brackenridge passes through is La Charrette. Located sixty miles above St. Louis and the first

²² Henry Marie Brackenridge, *Views of Louisiana* (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, Inc., 1966) preface. The book was originally published in 1814 in conjunction with his book, *Journal of a Voyage Up the Missouri River*. Brackenridge was along for the curiosity of the trip and the argument between Lisa and Hunt was not explained in the journal. One could deduce the argument was over money, who was going to be in charge of the journey or even something personal between the men.

²³ Brackenridge, *Views of Louisiana*, forward.

major stop after St. Charles, Charrette was a fur trading village founded in the late eighteenth century by French fur traders and was one of the first sites to be granted Indian trade rights. Brackenridge found some thirty families there when he arrived on Monday April 8, 1811. The families consisted of American Indians, African Americans, French, Spanish and Germans and it was from this village some men were chosen to map the Santa Fe Trail.²⁴

Brackenridge describes buffalo herds in the distance sounding as “distant, roaring thunder,” herds of deer, great Bald Eagles, large fish, and cliffs over one-hundred feet high. Brackenridge mentioned:

...The Missouri in now what the Ohio was once, the Paradise of hunters.²⁵

The lower Missouri Valley was still a wilderness, and though in the beginning throes of an onslaught of her resources. Amidst the wilderness and the concern for the future of the area, grapes were mentioned. On his journey along the Missouri, Brackenridge stated:

There is a grape on the Missouri, found in the prairies, which ripens in the month of June, as far north as latitude 40°. It is very sweet and pleasant. A hundred writers have spoken of the vines of the Illinois, with strange exaggeration. This forms a part of the picture of romancing writers who first described Louisiana. Father Hennepin describes the sugar cane, as growing

²⁴ Lowell M. Schake. “La Charrette: A History of the American Gateway Visited by Lewis and Clark, Daniel Boone, Zebulon Pike. Warren County, Missouri Genealogy and History,” (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2006). http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mowarren/la_charette.htm

²⁵ Henry Marie Brackenridge, *Views of Louisiana*, (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, INC. 1966), 219.

spontaneously on the banks of the Mississippi, and tells of purple clusters of grapes, imparting their rich hues to the gliding wave. Notwithstanding the figure the vines of this country have made in description, they are very little different from those of the United States...²⁶

This grape would have been found further west than in the areas surrounding the counties of St. Charles, Warren, Gasconade, and Montgomery, but one feels that grapes were considered important in the minds of the early settlers and explorers and carried a special meaning to them. A special meaning because with all the flora and fauna about, why take the time to mention the grapes at all? Perhaps this tie with grapes demonstrates an attachment to European culture or some connection with the biblical Noah. This was an era when the consciousness of the travelers would certainly have been influenced by the power of early American Protestantism and any connection in the wider world to the Bible would have been noticed. What was certain was that wild grape would soon be seen as a business venture and turn Missouri's wild lands into money.

Gottfried Duden would have the greatest influence on German immigration to Missouri and, while St. Louis would play an important role in this process, the lower Missouri valley would benefit the most from German talents. In the Missouri valley

²⁶ Brackenridge, *Views*, 60. The grape seen was unknown to Brackenridge but most likely *rupestris*.

The Father Hennepin mentioned by Brackenridge made journeys into the region in the mid-18th century but, Poletti points out in his dissertation, *An Interdisciplinary Study of the Missouri Wine Industry from 1640-1989*, that Hennepin's observations may have been largely taken from previous explorers like La Salle. Therefore, only Brackenridge has been quoted here. Along with Brackenridge were John Bradbury and Henry Schoolcraft.

the Germans would come slowly at first and then in larger numbers. These new immigrants would influence new communities, increase farming production, change architecture, play a crucial role in fighting for the rights of individuals during the Civil War and lead Missouri to become the third largest wine producer in the world by the late nineteenth century.

Chapter 3:

Gottfried Duden and the Coming of the Germans to Missouri

Gottfried Duden

German immigrants began coming in larger numbers to Missouri between 1830 and 1860. Crucial to the success of the German immigrant communities was a dedication to family and community, an intense work ethic, education as a vehicle for advancement, and the want and drive to be successful, which increasingly meant business success. The Germans settled not only in Saint Louis where many Germans became prosperous, involved citizens, but settled along the Missouri River, out toward the center of the territory, where farming along the river bottoms were ideal for husbandry and raising crops. After Gottfried Duden's report, *Bericht über eine Reise nach den westlichen Staaten Nordamerika's* or the *Report of a Journey to the Western States of North America*, German immigration exploded in the Missouri valley and brought the men and women that would change this region forever.¹ Missouri Germans were perhaps the most influential immigrants of Missouri in the nineteenth century.

Yet before the commercial successes of the Missouri wine industry by the latter half of the nineteenth century, German immigrants faced many hardships in the Missouri territory. The legacy left by this large immigration of Germans comes from men such as Gottfried Duden, Frederick Muench, William and Michael Poeschel,

¹ Gottfried Duden as translated by William G. Bek. *Report of a Journey to the Western States of North America* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1919).

*James W. Goodrich. *Report on a Journey to the Western States of North America, and a Stay of Several Years Along the Missouri (During the Years 1824, '25, '26, and 1827) Gottfried Duden* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1980). This second translation is used against the translation by William G. Bek. The information from Bek's translation will be justified by the Goodrich translation. Though the information presented in this thesis is largely the same between the two translations for what is presented, Dr. Steven Rowan of the University of Missouri-St. Louis, has pointed out several flaws with the Bek translation and advised comparison between the two for accuracy. Going forward, any large deviation between the translations will be noted in the footnotes.

Jacob Fugger, Jacob and George Rommel, Alex Kaiser, George Riefenstahl, Carl Tuebner, and George Hussmann. In order to better understand the unfolding story of German immigration into Missouri and the later commercial successes, a context of the period is necessary. Gottfried Duden and the land he encountered will be our first examination followed by the personages of other prominent, early first generation German immigrants, including Frederick Muench and George Hussmann and their significant influence on Missouri history.

Gottfried Duden was born in Remscheid, Duchy of Berg Rhine Province, in the year 1785. After attending the gymnasium at Dortmund, he studied law in Düsseldorf, Heidelberg, and Göttingen between the years 1806-1810. In 1811 he was made Justice of the Peace in Mulheim near the river Ruhr followed by his incorporation into Prussian service in 1812; here he fought against the armies of Napoleon and rose to the rank of adjutant.² After the war, he resumed his duties as Justice of the Peace and then to the position of Proctor of the State until 1823, keeping his residence in Cologne. It was as Proctor that Duden began to question the root cause of crime in his region and sought to find ways to remedy the poor conditions that he believed lie at the center of the controversy. The importance of his position and his ruminations set in motion the events that led to his immigration to America and the cascade of German immigrants to follow.

Duden stated:

By careful reflection I had come to the conclusion that most of the evils from which the inhabitants of Europe and especially of Germany are suffering, arise

² Duden, *The Report*, 2.

from the effects of an excess of population...I was of the opinion that the emigrants of Europe would have to direct themselves to those regions where the mass of natives is also seeking new homesteads.^{3*}

Duden understood that land just west of the Alleghany Mountains was fetching high prices whereas land in the far west, the area then known as Missouri, was still very reasonable and open. Along with his companion Louis Eversmann, an agriculturalist, Duden came to Saint Louis in October 1824. Duden further ventured fifty miles west of the Mississippi and Missouri junctions to Montgomery County, close to the current town of Dutzow.⁴ Duden's focus was to be primarily a farmer but he also helped the local population with his knowledge of the law and of medicine. Along with Eversmann, Duden scrutinized and documented the flora and fauna of the region.⁵ Noticed among and within the sylvan landscape was the presence of wild grapes which grew to great heights in the trees; the want and the need however, to start long-term cultivation, had yet to be undertaken.

Duden's journey to America, as mentioned, was an undertaking to relieve himself of the overpopulated, economic, and political stresses of Germany. Yet Duden had three main reasons for believing his report could help enterprising

³ Duden, *Report*, 3.

*Goodrich, *A Report on the Journey*, 6, 9 & 10. "In my earlier thinking I had become convinced that most of the evils from which the inhabitants of Europe, and particularly those of Germany, suffer are due to overpopulation...I was especially of the opinion that emigration from Europe had to be directed to the same regions where most of the natives were also looking for new homes, just as Europeans in their initial adjustment looked upon the natives as models."

⁴ Duden's farm was located on Lake Creek in Warren County.

⁵ Eversmann, according to Gert Goebel, married an American girl from a good family and to the consternation of most of the first generation German immigrants, was one of the first Germans in Missouri to own slaves.

Germans. First was his belief that North America and Missouri (which became a state in 1821), in particular, had the climate, fertility of soil, reasonably priced land, and natural waterways conducive to the German *mindset*. Second, Duden wished to inform his audience of the difficulties and expenses of life in the forest and prairies of Missouri, and how best to overcome environmental obstacles. Third, was his paternalistic nature to offer advice on dealing with the inhabitants – both native American and the often backward American’s themselves – along with how to guard against wild animals, sickness, how best to work to the point where physical labor could be minimalized, and the possibilities of higher education with an increasing intellectual atmosphere.⁶

What can be ascertained from Duden’s Report and his eventual departure from Missouri was that in the end, Duden never fully integrated himself into the hardships and challenges of the pioneer west. He was after all an intellectual, and being one of the first German inhabitants of the area, neither found solace in the few Pennsylvanian Germans in the vicinity nor acclimated to the rigors of the American West. The fact that Duden was accustomed to the niceties of civilization with libraries and being in intellectual circles, along with more populous surroundings, seems ironic. What is agreed upon by contemporaries of Duden and those who have written about him was Duden’s impact on igniting the fires of curiosity that began the flow of Germans into Missouri. How could potential immigrants resist his invitations?

I do not conceal the fact from you that the entire life of the inhabitants of these

⁶ Duden, *The Report*, 11.

regions seemed to me like a dream at first... Even now, after I have had three months to examine conditions more closely, it seems to me almost a fantasy when I consider what nature offers man here... acorns as big as hen's eggs and wild grapevines... heavy with sweet fruit.⁷

⁷ Missouri Wine Country, "German Author Favors Settlement in Missouri," 2006-2010: Retrieved on June 1, 2010 from <http://www.missouriwinecountry.com/articles/history/>

German Immigration Begins in Earnest

Was Duden the first to write about Missouri to European Germans? What was the general consensus about moving across the world to begin anew in a strange, largely uninhabited (by Anglos) land? Could soil, water, prairie, and forest be enough to draw thousands to the outskirts of the known wilderness? Alfred Crosby in *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*, begins his thesis of European expansion by quoting *The Triads of Ireland*. He notes:

Three Slender things that best support the world: the slender stream of milk from the cow's dug into the pail, the slender blade of corn upon the ground; the slender thread over the hand of a skilled woman.⁸

Missouri was seen as such an opportunity. The Germans who came to Missouri had in their hearts the dream and hope of autonomy to raise cattle, crops, and determine their own destinies. In his first letter dated May 30, 1824, Duden wrote of these expectations:

I am prepared to find Europeans in the United States, and I entertain the belief, that the political advantage of this land is founded upon fortunate external and material conditions rather than upon the internal advantage of its inhabitants. In general I do not expect to find any other advantage for the settler than that he can acquire fertile tract of land cheaply and that he can be

⁸ Alfred Crosby. *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900* (New York: University of Cambridge Press, 1986) 8.

rather free in the selection of such tracts of land in regard to ease of comforts of living conditions. Moreover, I expect to find an absence of oppressive taxes, and in general a freedom of trade and of occupation, such as will never exist in Europe. ^{9*}

These hopes for a better life elsewhere were on the minds of many Germans of the period. Before Duden, Prince Paul Wilhelm of Württemberg wrote an account of North America between 1822 and 1824. This treatise mentioned or confirmed many of the same observations of Duden and added to the growing immigration fervor of Duden's account. Duden himself postulated and referenced the letters of Timothy Flint, a preacher who was among the first German settlers on the White Water River. ¹⁰

The area of Duden's settlement in Warren County was ideal for the first émigrés. The landscape of Warren County from East to West is a dividing ridge separating the flow of waters of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. It was here too, that the first Germans began to take up residence, making it a principal site of the great Western Movement. ¹¹The first German farmers coming to Warren were later known as the "Latin" farmers. This was due to the fact that these first settlers in

⁹ Duden, *The Report*, The First Letter.

*Goodrich, *A Report on the Journey*, 17. "I am prepared to find Europeans in the United States and am of the opinion that the political situation in that country is based more on favorable economic conditions than on the personal superiority of its inhabitants. In general, I expect no other advantage for the settler than that he can purchase fertile land at a low price and that he will be rather unrestricted in the selection of this land and its location with respect to trade, as well as to health and the amenities of life. Also, I expect freedom from oppressive taxation and in general independence in trade and industry such as will never be found in Europe."

¹⁰ Duden, *The Report*, 135.

¹¹ *Historic Sites of Warren County Missouri: A Bicentennial Project* (Warrenton, MO: Warren County Historical Society, 1976) 7.

Central and Eastern Missouri were often highly educated-and generally not used to farm work with Duden being the first German-University educated man in Missouri. Germans who settled in Missouri did so largely in groups or societies; among the earliest and most influential in the Missouri valley were the Berlin, Giessner, and Philadelphia Settlement Societies.¹²

Choosing the area by intellectual means was certainly important. Water was the key and any future farmer would recognize this as the most rudimentary of facts. However, these first Latin farmers were far from being experts. A contemporary of the time commented:

...among the Latin farmers, those who got the good land deserved no praise and those who got the poor land deserved no criticism: not one of them was a competent judge of land.¹³

Most future immigrants did not possess the degree of education of these first settlers, but most were capable and intelligent and had a better understanding of what was needed to be successful in an environment that was not as perfect as Duden may have suggested. In fact, Duden was later greatly criticized for not fully explaining the dangers of the frontier, and for deemphasizing the hardships. Duden's work was read at a time of political unrest in the Germany the 1830s.¹⁴ Many Germans who were drawn to Missouri were disappointed, and some failed to prosper. Others, as mentioned by Goebel, came believing that Missouri had a "Sicilian climate" that

¹² Burnett and Luebbering, *German Settlement*, 27.

¹³ Burnett and Luebbering, *German Settlement*, 23.

¹⁴ Germany was yet a united nation but rather a loose confederation of some 300 different entities.

obviated the need feather beds.¹⁵ Duden addressed these criticisms when he wrote, *Self-Accusation because of his American Report of Travel, as a Warning against further indiscrete Emigration.*¹⁶

When the Giessner Society came to St. Louis, Germans were already present, but they were few in numbers. Most Germans stayed because of the high wages paid for labor in Saint Louis, which were much higher than those being paid in Germany at the time. Food was also very reasonable and early settlers must have recognized the truth in the maxim, “*ubi bene, ibi patria.*”¹⁷ Many Germans, who had come to Missouri initially, moved back across the river into Illinois to buy land because Missouri was, after all, a slave state. This fact brought many Missouri Germans to the forefront of the fight against slavery during the Civil War. Many of those who did stay moved west but no farther than Warren or Franklin Counties, with Warren on the north side of the Missouri River and Franklin on the south side of the river.¹⁸

Germans also settled on the left bank of the Missouri in Montgomery County, and the counties of Gasconade, Osage, and Cole on the right bank of the river. Yet good land to farm was interspersed between the very hilly and rocky soils of this region as mentioned, and many of these early settlers had no idea of what to look for when it came to good farmland. As migration continued, earlier settlers were happy to see fellow countryman, as many in the region spoke little or no English. Poor land did

¹⁵ Duden, *The Report*, 134. Goebel as mentioned here is Gert Goebel, an early chronicler of early German settlement in Missouri.

¹⁶ Published in 1837. This was the last part of his critique of Alexis de Tocqueville’s “*Democracy in America*,” Part 1“(1835).

¹⁷ Goebel, *Langer Als ein Menschenleben in Missouri*, Chapter 4, 2. “Where it is well, there is my country.”

¹⁸ Goebel, *Langer Menschenleben*, 2.

not stop the headstrong, determined settlers in the region. Along the length of the river and on many prairies, the land was more than generous. However, for those that did not ‘accidentally’ get good farm land, much work was needed to transform the landscape; this included deforestation in many areas to make room for farmland, and the hope of producing crops and raising cattle. Later farmers took advantage of the circumstances and grew the only crop that would suit the unforgiving ground of the area--grapes.

The Berlin Society established the town of Dutzow in the 1830s and was led by Johann Wilhelm Bock. Bock was a wealthy land owner and named the town after his estate in Mecklenburg, Germany.¹⁹ Yet Bock was not the leader long remembered in the region. The leaders most remembered were the leaders of the Giessner Societies. The first, led by Paul Follenius, was a lawyer who brought immigrants up the Mississippi to Missouri from New Orleans to meet Frederick Muench, the leader of the second group. Muench had with him sixty families and he, together with Follenius, headed west to settle in the Duden farm area of Warren County.²⁰

Frederick Muench was born in a small village in Hessen-Darmstadt, on June 25, 1799, and was the son of a Protestant minister. In addition to the education given him by his father, he completed three years of education at the *Gymnasium* at Darmstadt and an additional two years at the University of Giessen in 1816. It was at Giessen that he met Paul Follenius and the two became good friends. Muench’s ideology was shaped by Paul’s father, Charles Follen, a leader of a movement for

¹⁹ Burnett & Luebbering, *German Settlement*, 24.

²⁰ Burnett & Luebbering, *German Settlement*, 24. Follen would Latinize his name to Follenius and would die of typhoid in 1844. Muench said of his dear friend that, “He learned to swing an axe as well as any man.”

German nationalism at the University of Giessen.²¹ Worth noting here, too, was the reason for emigration to America by Follenius and Muench. The purpose (hope) seems to have been to establish a German *state*, at least ideologically, though this hope of a new German state quickly withered. Political unrest, overpopulation, and a lack of any real, personal economic success in Germany combined with their personal philosophies, drove the pair across the sea.²²

These beliefs were with Muench all his life. Realism in regard to religion, hard work, autonomy, anti-slavery mores, and self-determination for reaping the benefits of this hard work to better himself and his family, were made manifest in his attitudes toward farming, family life, and later, success in viticulture. The Giessen Society formed by Muench and Follenius was comprised of some 500 members, and after an arduous overseas journey to America, fraught with the perils and tribulations associated with such an enterprise, arrived in America in 1834. Muench and Follenius soon met with their particular groups after a long journey and eventually settled in Dutzow, despite the fact that both groups were harassed by the scourge of the day, cholera.²³

The groups settled on Lake Creek, close to present day Marthasville.

Muench's brother, George, joined his brother a few years later in 1837. The three

²¹ Walter Barlow Stevens. *Centennial History of Missouri: The Center State, One-Hundred Years of Union, 1820-1921*, Vol. VI (Saint Louis: SJ Clark, 1921), 110. Charles Follen would become the first head of the German Department at Harvard.

²² In regards to religion, Muench and Follenius seemed to have been religious- realists or what could better be described as positivists and great supporters of ethical culture. The "state" is mentioned in the organizing papers of the Giessen Society in Germany, but soon dropped the idea in the face of its improbability.

²³ Access Genealogy, "Centennial History of Missouri." Additionally, Muench would meet Johann Bock- aforementioned as the founder of Dutzow- in Cincinnati making his way back from Philadelphia after retrieving his family, to take them Warren County and urged Muench along to settle in the area.

men, Follenius, Muench and his brother George, also a theological graduate of Giessen University, formed what Carl Schurz has referred to as the “Latin Settlement,” and referred to Frederick Muench as “the highest type of Latin farmer.”

²⁴ Muench was certainly a “Latin” farmer. He was, for all intents and purposes, a highly philosophical and introspective man. Though he tended a 120 acre farm on Lake Creek, he was quite politically active and spent spare time--as such--reading and helping others achieve what could be called a Fourieristic ideal.

Muench was soon instrumental in community activities and it was here that his political philosophy became apparent. In addition to being a Missouri State Representative, Muench had written for, and contributed to, several publications under the pen name “Far West” including *Lichtfreund*, published by Edward Muehl in Hermann, Missouri, and the *Westliche Post*, whose editor was Dr. Emil Pretorius, an intimate friend of Muench. ²⁵ This was in addition to his own work, *A Treatise on Religion and Christianity, Orthodoxy and Rationalism* and his autobiography. ²⁶ Another work of Muench parallel to his passion for philosophy and politics, was *American Grape Culture*, one of the first works of its kind to appear in this country. ²⁷ Muench reflects on the purpose of writing the book in the preface and states:

²⁴ From the memoirs of Carl Schurz; Schurz was a contemporary of Muench and a farmer in the region.

²⁵ Access Genealogy, *Centennial History of Missouri*.

²⁶ *The Autobiography of Frederick Muench*: Translated from the German by Ralph Gregory (August 1964).

²⁷ Frederick Muench, “*School for American Grape Culture: Brief but Thorough Practical Guide to the Laying Out of Vineyards, the Treatment of Vines, and the Production of Wine in North America*” (Saint Louis: Conrad Witter, 1859). The earliest full volume was written by John Adlum, who influenced men such as Nicholas Longworth in Cincinnati, wrote his book, *A Memoir on the Cultivation of the Vine in America and the Best Mode of Making Wine*, in 1823.



Frederick Muench (1799-1881)

In Germany, I lived far from the vine growing regions, but here I have been drawn to the grapevine by a peculiar attraction. My idea was, that too many of our countrymen, who, in the common agriculture of this country, find but little satisfaction, or who find themselves but poorly compensated for the rough, hard labor necessary to it, the culture of the grape would afford an easier, and at the same time a more remunerative employment; that thereby their social life would be ennobled, and that finally, in the State in which I live, a new obstacle to slave labor would be raised, by the extension of this new branch of freemen's industry.²⁸

For Muench, growing grapes was more than just a way to make money-- though money was important; growing grapes was a way to tie oneself to the land, provide for one's family, a noble enterprise to ward off the demons of servitude and

²⁸

Muench, *School*, Preface.

comply with a life philosophy that America in general and Missouri specifically was a place of new beginnings, and a place of discovery for self actualization. Muench was considered an abolitionist and, in 1856, traveled the Midwest along with Frederick Hecker to support Missouri as a free-state. Elected to the state senate in 1861, Muench served until the end of the Civil War and additionally on the board of immigration.²⁹

Frederick Muench was a pivotal figure in the Missouri valley in the nineteenth century. There were many others that worked and toiled in the land and hills that wined, climbed and precipitously fell from ridge to ridge along the Missouri River. Many German families came into the region with the same dreams and hopes that Duden, Muench, and others had come to fulfill. Many came because family or acquaintances had gone before them. Duden's book began the avalanche of migration, but there were voices that warned of Missouri and the dangers of the Missouri valley and surrounding area. Rumors persisted in the east of poisonous snakes, forests with vicious wild animals, and the constant fear of Indian attacks. Though some American Indians were known to pounce upon the lone hunter or small band of travelers along the upper part of the river, most stories seem to have been exaggerations and perhaps shadows of earlier, colonial captive narratives.

Another of the German immigrant families influenced by Gottfried Duden's book was the Husmanns. In 1826, Louise Charlotte Wesselhoeft married Johann Heinrich Martin Husmann. Johann was a schoolmaster in Meyenburg and Charlotte became his second wife and mother to Johann's five children from a previous

²⁹ Access Genealogy, *Centennial History of Missouri*. Muench would lose a son at the Battle of Wilson's Creek fighting under Colonel Franz Sigel in 1861.

marriage. On November 4, 1827 Johann George Hermann Carl Husmann was born to the couple who, by 1836, made the momentous decision to come to America via the German Settlement Society of Philadelphia.³⁰ The possibility of coming to America lay with the connection to Johann George Wesselhoeft who was the publisher of Philadelphia's *Alte und Neue Welt*, a weekly publication. Stock was purchased in the Philadelphia Society by both Johann and his son Frederich to make the journey and evidence demonstrates that Duden's book was a major influence on the family and was read often by Johann Husmann.³¹



George Husmann (1827-1902)

The Husmanns made their journey to America aboard the ship *Clementine*, leaving the harbor of Bremerhaven in the summer of 1837. Everything was riding on this journey, for the Husmanns and although father Husmann was an educated,

³⁰ Linda Walker Stevens, "The Making of a Superior Immigrant: George Husmann, 1837-1854," *Missouri Historical Review*, Vol. 89 (Oct 1994- July 1995): 120.

³¹ Stevens, *George Husmann*, 122.

J.G. Wesselhoeft was the nephew of Johann Carl Wesselhoeft and additionally connected by marriage to Friedrich Frommann. The Wesselhoeft clan was of a patrician class in Germany with literary links in Jena. Of Carl's less fortunate Charlotte's son was born and it was she that married Johann Husmann. L.W. Stevens offers evidence in reference to Goethe having been a friend of the Wesselhoeft family. Johann Georg Wesselhoeft had migrated earlier to America and settled in Philadelphia.

determined, and confident teacher in Meyenburg, the journey to an unknown land in the “Far West” must have filled the family with tremendous anticipation and fear of the unknown. The family landed in New York on Staten Island in September 1837. Already the trees were turning fall colors--a much different view than, as Husmann later recalled, “the somber tints of northern Germany, where Spring [sic] is the most beautiful season of the year.”³²

The Husmanns were newcomers to the New World, but they loved the land and farming. The German connection between God, land, and destiny were part of the Husmann family soul. A connection that was strengthened by the religious freedom of German Romanticism and piety that helped give rise to the Second Great Awakening taking hold across America.³³ Husmann and his family started a garden and small nursery upon reaching Saint Louis in late 1837 and early 1838, and by the spring, were raising garden vegetables on land rented from the Soulard family. The Husmanns also produced butter and cheese for sale in the markets of downtown Saint Louis. Here, the young George Husmann hauled the products eight miles roundtrip each day to help support the family. It was here the young, seemingly sickly and skinny lad hardened to the work of the wilderness that lie ahead of him and his family. In November of the same year, the Husmanns moved to be with the others of the *Deutsche Ansiedlungs-Gesellschaft zu Philadelphia* in Hermann, Missouri. There,

³² Stevens, *The Making of a Superior Immigrant*, 123.

³³ The Second Great Awakening is generally accepted to have taken place between the years 1820-1860, and became a defining ‘religious movement’ in the 19th century. This movement, with deep rooted feelings of God, patriotism, (Republicanism) and manifest destiny, helped define the social and political climate of America’s configuration in the period and gave rise to (influenced) America becoming a world power.

they were joined with other members of their family, like the Wesselhoeft's, and began anew.

Earlier, at home in Meyenburg, father Husmann had been given several pieces of land as remuneration in addition to his salary as a schoolmaster. Here, he planted a garden, raised some crops, and tended to some cattle. The Husmann family spent many hours tending the property. The family, including young George, took many walks on the property. Martin Husmann's students often joined them. Later, as a professor at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Husmann recalled those days and said:

It was those precious meanderings that instilled in his mind an abiding love for the beauties of the earth and “a habit to ‘look from nature up to nature’s God.”³⁴

Such memories influenced George Husmann and his intellectual pursuits all his life.³⁵

Husmann was a man of logic, using knowledge gained to benefit the people tending the land for human benefit; nineteenth century positivism and classicalism combined. Husmann embraced nature as did other American philosophers, like John Muir and Ralph Waldo Emerson, but from a modern scientific approach. For George

³⁴ Stevens, *The Making of a Superior Immigrant*, 125. Quoted from George Husmann, “The Knowledge of Plant Life,” *Fourteenth Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture of the State of Missouri, for the year 1879* (Jefferson City: Carter & Regan, 1880) 25.

Husmann, in 1865, served as a charter member and vice-president of the Missouri Board of Agriculture.

³⁵ Stevens, *The Story of Wine*, 35. Husmann's first book in 1866, *The Cultivation of the Native Grape and the manufacture of American Wines*.

Husmanns views led to his success in wine production both in Missouri and later in California. George Husmanns love of nature on the one hand, and his practical and scientific approach on the other, influenced the American wine industry in Missouri and across the country.

George Husmann credited his father, Martin Husmann, for giving the new inhabitants of Hermann, the idea of planting grapes as a means of farming and making a living:

Well I do remember, when I was a boy, some fourteen years old, how often my father would enter into conversation with vintners from the old country, about the feasibility of grape culture in Missouri. He always contended that grapes should succeed well here, as the woods were full of wild grapes, some of very fair quality, and this would indicate a soil and climate favorable to the vine. They would ridicule the idea and assert that labor was too high here, even if the vines would succeed, to make it pay; but they could not shake his faith in the ultimate success of grape culture.³⁶

Whether the anecdote is true is lost to time. What is certainly true is the influence George's father had upon him. This influence of his father combined with George Husmann's early education and experiences prepared him for creating successful nurseries in Hermann, Sedalia, and Bluffton, Missouri, and his unique approach to problems that faced the early Hermann colonists. The Husmanns were one of many families that came to Hermann to change the land and environment

³⁶ George Husmann, *The Cultivation of the Native Grape and Manufacture of American Wines* (New York: George E. Woodward, 1870) 17.

around them in the wilderness that was Missouri. Gottfried Duden's book started the immigration of Missouri Germans but it was Martin Husmann's vision, education, teaching prowess, and gift of insight that changed his young son George's life, and in turn, changed the history of Missouri.



Rheingau Region: From German Wikipedia, GNU licensed. Accessed on April 10, 2010 from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Rheingau.jpg>



Senator Kit Bond Bridge on the Missouri River: Hermann, Missouri. Photo by Todd Brown.

Chapter 4:

Weinbau in the Lower Missouri Valley

Early Hermann and the Beginning of *Weinbau*: 1837-1848

Between the years 1840 and 1880, Missouri went through significant changes before immigration to the state began to slow. By the 1840s, Hermann, Missouri, would have its own charter and be inaugurated as one of Missouri's most successful German communities. Augusta, Missouri, had one of the state's first wineries, which was owned and operated by the brother of Frederick Muench, George Muench. The early Latin famers gave birth to Missouri viticulture - or rather *Weinbau* – by taking a 'scientific' approach.¹ New grapes were found and propagated; others were grafted to existing types giving rise to new varieties. The Missouri wine industry grew dramatically leaving the state among the top three wine producing states in the country. The key state players, the Germans, were central in the industries success.²

The population of Missouri's Germans began to change as the early settler's offspring matured and new settlers arrived, influenced by books such as Gottfried Duden's. Wine production became a commercial enterprise, though some scholars disagree about the actual intent of the Germans in making wine. Was producing wine a cultural vestige or a commercial venture? Was *Weinbau* peculiar to German immigrants? How did the Missouri wine industry change and develop? What ultimately happened to the Missouri wine industry by the early 1900s?

¹ Siegmur Muehl 'Winegrowing in the Hermann Area: Early Years Chronicle,' *Missouri Historical Review* 87 (April 1993)233. *Weinbau* is a German word that means "winegrowing." The word also means 'viticulture' (*grape growing*) and 'viniculture' or making wine. Going forward, the word *Weinbau* will be used to explain both terms.

² Ohio and California were other large wine producing states at the time.

In 1837, a small group of Germans settled in the narrow valley of Fraine Creek, Gasconade County, and started to build a town.³ The group was part of a reconnoiter looking for farm land to move the balance of the larger group, the German Settlement Society of Philadelphia, to fertile lands. William Bek described the society:

They were, for the most part, newcomers who still believed in "*Deutschland, [Deutschland] uber alles.*" The "*Deutsche Gesellschaft*" had existed in Philadelphia since December 26, 1764. But its purpose was to aid and protect German immigrants. The organization, which we purpose to deal with, had nothing whatsoever to do with the *Deutsche Gesellschaft*. It was formally organized at Philadelphia, August 27, 1836, as the *Deutsche Ansiedlungs-Gesellschaft zu Philadelphia*. Its avowed purpose was to carry out those plans which the foreign societies had failed to promote, namely, the establishment of a colony in some portion of the United States preferably in the "Far West," a colony which should be characteristically German in every particular.⁴

The reason why the site was chosen is still somewhat of a mystery. The ground was hilly and the soil rocky. As for agriculture, there were plenty of other sites that could have been more advantageous. The thought expressed by Goebel,

³ Goebel, *Menschenleben*, Chapter 22, 11.

⁴ William Bek, *The German Settlement Society of Philadelphia, and its Colony, Hermann, Missouri* (Philadelphia, PA: Americana Germanica Press, 1907) 2. The goal of the society was to establish a German "state" (colony) in the United States. The second use of *Deutschland* here adds nothing to the translation.

Bek, and others was that Hermann was not far from other German settlements (Warren County, for instance). In addition the site was only eighty miles from St. Louis, the land was cheap, and many types of fruit trees grew in the area. Moreover, most Americans did not want the land because of the soil and the hilliness. The stockholders of the German Settlement Society were generally men of higher education, consisting of merchants, doctors, and attorneys. The shareholders had one main purpose in mind; to establish a German colony and retain their German heritage, as advised or intimated by Gottfried Duden. And, indeed, the 'Missouri Rhineland', or "little Germany", as their colony was dubbed, became more completely German in appearance and in quality of life than any other town along the lower Missouri river.⁵

Three deputies were dispatched to several possible locations in several states, with the spot in Hermann being chosen in 1837 by Mr. G.F Bayer. Bayer purchased 12,000 acres at \$1.25 per acre and all these lands were incorporated into Hermann by 1840.⁶ Arriving in winter on the last boat of the year, these first settlers found a stark and seemingly sterile land. The following spring, in 1838, an additional 230 persons came to the area. Almost immediately townspeople found they wanted control transferred from Philadelphia to Hermann. Increasingly the townspeople

⁵ Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and the United States Department of the Interior; National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Hermann Historic District (November 2006) 13.

⁶ George H. King, "History of Hermann," *Herman Advisor*, July 7, 1876.

Four families lived in what would become Hermann upon arrival. Of the early settlers that arrived in Hermann in 1837 was Conrad Riefenstahl. In 1838, new settlers included John Jacob Rommel, Jacob Fugger, Franz Langendoerfer, W.D Widorsprecher and the famous father of George Husmann, Martin H. Husmann. In 1839, the immigrants would include Michael Poeschel whom would later open and operate Stone Hill Winery.

wished for local control and the desire to join with local government and wanted to plot their own streets and buildings. In 1839, the Settlement Society in Philadelphia granted Hermann autonomy, but growth and the selling of lots slowed and the future of the town remained in doubt.⁷

Everything went well as long as the money that had been brought lasted...Many lived from hand to mouth and many would have turned their backs on the new town if they had [had] the means to get away.⁸

Many families settled along the upper portions of Berger Creek as well as the many creeks (including Fraine Creek), that emptied into the Gasconade. Thus over time, the northern part of Gasconade County became more densely populated. Because of the shift in population in Gasconade County due to German immigration in Hermann and the surrounding area, the courthouse and seat of government was moved from Mount Sterling to Hermann. This seemingly innocuous, commonsense moving of the county seat to Hermann was the first step in securing the future of the city. The law, stating that county seats were to be *centered* in the middle of the county, was a victory for the burgeoning city. These changes in circumstances were not entirely welcomed by the Americans which, adding insult to injury, additionally did not like the German insistence of working for themselves and avoiding slavery for general farming.⁹

⁷ MDNR, *Hermann Historic District*, 14.

⁸ Goebel, *Menschenleben*, Chapter 22-12.

⁹ Goebel, *Menschenleben*, Chapter 22-12.

Something was needed to increase revenue and help the new town grow and prosper in this unindustrialized and fledgling agricultural community. When the first settlers arrived in Hermann and settled on Fraine Creek, they noticed the trees filled with the huge wild grapes, even on the stony bluffs:

Since most of the colonists hailed from South Germany and Switzerland, these wild grapes may have reminded them of the vineyards of their old homes in the Rhine, Necker [sic], and Main, and awakened in them the idea of experimenting with raising of grapes.¹⁰

The influx of these early German settlers would make Hermann, “the cradle of grape culture in Missouri.”¹¹ Conrad Riefenstahl, John Jacob Rommel, Jacob Fugger, Franz Langendoerfer, W.D. Widorsprecher, Martin Husmann and Michael Poeschel, et al., had the vision and intellect to make Missouri wine production successful. They had the idea to sell plots of land for the cultivation of grapes.

In May 1844 the idea of selling "wine lots" were promoted... from 1844 to 1849 vacant town lots were repeatedly offered for planting grape vines, lots to be paid for in five years, without interest, one fifth of lot to be planted each year. No more than five lots were to go to an applicant. With the growing wine industry the economic situation in Hermann improved.¹²

Emil Muehl began the first German newspaper in Hermann called the, "*Hermener-
Wochenblatt*," which was pro-German, anti-slavery, and therefore not widely 'appreciated' by the Americans.

¹⁰ Goebel, *Menschenleben*, Chapter 23-1.

¹¹ Goebel, *Menschenleben*, Chapter 23-1.

¹² Anna Kemper Hesse, *Centenarians in Wood, Brick, and Stone* (Hermann, Missouri 1969) 5.

The community actively encouraged planting grapes by selling vacant lots for \$50 each with no interest and five years to pay the debt, if the owner agreed to establish a vineyard. Approximately 600 wine lots were sold.¹³ Grape fever soon hit Hermann. George Husmann, writing many years after the event, spoke of the very first vine planted in Hermann.

It was an Isabella, planted by a Mr. Fugger, on the corner of Main and Schiller streets, and trained over an arbor. It produced the first crop in 1845...and so plentifully did it bear, that several persons were encouraged by this apparent success, to plant vines.¹⁴

The planting by Fugger and its initial success did not go unnoticed in the small, ethnic, and tight-knit community of Hermann, and with Fugger's small but important action, the inhabitants of Hermann caught wine fever, and demonstrated the possibility of an industry to make a living. It was not, however, quite that simple. Many varieties of grapes were initially tried, such as the Isabella and Cape grapes, but these crops were small and did not produce as well as expected. Several European

¹³ Lucie T. Morton, "Winemaking Renaissance in Hermann, Missouri," *Historic Preservation*, (December 1984), 41.

¹⁴ George Husmann, *The Cultivation of the Native Grape and Manufacture of American Wines* (New York: Geo. E Woodward, 1870) 18.

The Isabella was a European varietal.

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service: National Register of Historic Places, Section 8, and page 3, William Poeschel House. By 1845, nearly 50,000 vines were planted in and around Hermann; that amount would triple in the following year.

grapes were experimented with, too, with little or no success. The first grape grown with success (at least initially), was the Catawba. Goebel explained:

The Virginia Seedling was tried, but not until it was learned how to treat this grape were its merits appreciated... The Catawba was introduced and when the vines bore a full crop for the first time, the general excitement was so great that you were led to believe the philosophers' stone had been discovered.¹⁵

William Poeschel, Langendorfer, Riefenstahl and Strecker, led the first successful venture of winemaking in Hermann. The Catawba was the grape soon planted all over the Hermann area with 1846 being the first year of successful winemaking Hermann.¹⁶ Poeschel had at this time but an acre under cultivation, but he was hugely successful in the amount of grapes he had on the trellises of his farm. The Catawba seemed an answer to everyone's prayers:

Everybody wanted to plant grapes now; an income of \$800 to \$1000 dollars from a single acre was an allurements that few could withstand; however the joy did not last long; the Catawba grape began to suffer from rot every summer and sometimes so extensively that scarcely anything remained.¹⁷

¹⁵ Goebel, *Menschenleben*, Chapter 23-1.

¹⁶ Joseph Poletti, *An Interdisciplinary Study of the Missouri Wine Industry, 1650-1989* (St. Louis University Dissertation, 1989: UMI Dissertation Services) 52. The initial source is from the History of Franklin, Jefferson, Washington, Crawford and Gasconade Counties, Missouri (Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1888; Reprint Edition: Cape Girardeau: Ramfre Press, 1958), 1112.

¹⁷ Goebel, *Menschenleben*, Chapter 23-2.

The immigrants believed that success would be theirs. Count Adelbert Baudissin, writing of the period, noted:

The great mass of wild grapes, together with its chalky soil found at Hermann in Missouri gave the impression that fine wine could be produced there in particular. A crowd of German wine-peasants permitted themselves to be misled to come there by exaggerated portrayals, and on its thin, almost unworkable soil a cute little German town arose with a plethora of small farms stretching in a belt around the little community. When the money the immigrants brought with them had been consumed but there was no trace of a wine harvest, young and old departed the hopeless, poor area to find their support somewhere else. The eventful year of 1848 was a true year of blessings for Hermann's vineyards; all the vines were festooned full with most splendid grapes; the barely-pressed juice was sold for good money to the Americans, always proud of the products of their homeland, and vintners who had three-quarters of an acre in wine-grapes took in two thousand dollars. This splendid success ran like wildfire through all of America, and the universal password was "Hermann!" The population revived immediately. A mass of friends and relatives of those already emigrated, and vineyards were put down everywhere.¹⁸

¹⁸ Graf Adelbert Baudissin, *Der Ansiedler im Missouri-Staate. Den deutschen Auswanderern Gewidmet* (Iserlohn: Julius Bädeker, 1854).

Translation of Graf Adelbert Baudissin's work was by the generosity of Dr. Steven Rowan of the University of Missouri-St.Louis.

And yet all was not well and the future of *Weinbau*, or even Hermann itself, was uncertain. Baudissin continued:

But the year 1848 came to be repeatedly longed for and desired, but in vain, and the wine harvests have failed every year since. Whoever walks through the woods in the autumn will find *only rotting* grapes on every wild vine. It is rare to find a vine with healthy fruit. The same scene is found again in the vineyards. The vines bloom aplenty, a mass of grapes commences, everything promises a fine harvest, but suddenly the grapes on the ground begin to rot, and then the grapes above them follow, and soon the best hopes of the vintner are betrayed. No one knows the source of this rot: some blame insects, then mildew that falls from the sky, then exhalations of the soil. It is strange that those vines grown next to houses seldom produce rotten grapes. It seems to me not improbable that the intense sunshine injures the grapes, and that one could avoid the rot to some extent by planting mulberry trees, under whose thick leaves they would find some shade. Through the uninterrupted failures of harvest, Hermann has become a place of misery that actually survives through immigrants from Germany. The land around Hermann is — as previously remarked — not worth developing, and yet a farm there costs from two to three thousand dollars. One can unfortunately report that Germans keep coming there, where the situation is dreadful — but where the land is

still high in cost.¹⁹

This observation is substantiated by George Husmann:

...the first partial crop from it (Catawba), in 1848 as so plentiful that everybody, almost, commenced planting vines, and often in very unfavorable localities. This, of course, had a bad influence on so capricious a variety as the Catawba: rot and mildew appeared, and many became discouraged, because they did not realize what they had anticipated. A number of unfavorable seasons brought grape growing almost to a standstill here.²⁰

Something had to be done, and a more responsive and disease free grape variety had to be found. The growers in Hermann were undaunted. The answer came quickly from a gentleman by the name of W.D Widersprecher who “introduced the Norton’s Virginia and several other varieties.”²¹ Among the men of Hermann who believed this much smaller, darker grape could be successful were Poeschel, Jacob Rommel and George Husmann. The origin of the grape (the Norton), according to Husmann, was originally from Virginia via a Dr. Kehr who after travelling to Cincinnati, gave the vine to a Mr. Heinrichs who in turn sent or gave the seedling to Mr. Widersprecher. The earliest account of the grape, not mentioned by Husmann, was the original producer of the varietal by a Dr. D. N. Norton of Richmond,

¹⁹ Baudissin, *Der Ansiedler im Missouri-Staate*, 1854. Both translations of Baudissin were from Dr. Steven Rowan of the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

²⁰ Husmann, *Cultivation of the Native Grape*, 18.

²¹ George H. King, *Herman Advisor* “History of Hermann,” July 7, 1876.

Virginia, before 1830.²² The grape was planted and initially had little success but the few bottles of wine that were produced were “found to be very good.” “What finally did work was the grafting and layering of the grape.”²³

Commercial *Weinbau* in Herman can be traced back to the early 1840s.²⁴ By 1848, some sixteen acres of vineyards were planted in Hermann – about 50,000 vines or the equivalent of 10,000 gallons of wine after processing. By 1849, 700,000 vines had been planted. The success of these early vines can be compared to the California Gold Rush, as “grape fever” hit Hermann like a thunderbolt and folks were planting vines as fast as possible in the scramble to make money.²⁵ By the mid 1840s, the three large players in the *Weinbau* industry were Saint Louis, Augusta, and Hermann, Missouri. It was no accident that these areas also had the largest population of German immigrants; good land was at a premium, but with the work ethic of the Germans and their fondness for the area west of St. Louis, what began to take place was the success of *Weinbau* locally, regionally, and nationally.

One of the early German settlers was a lawyer named Alexander Kayser, who resided in St. Louis. Kayser sponsored one of the state’s earliest wine competitions, and in 1847 four of the six finalists were from Hermann, Missouri. The first place

²² Thomas Pinney, *A History of Wine in America: From the Beginnings to Prohibition* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989) 177.

²³ Husmann, *Cultivation of the Grape*, 19.

²⁴ Poletti, *Missouri Wine Industry*, 46.

²⁵ Poletti, *Missouri Wine Industry*, 46. These original numbers come from the *Western*, a nineteenth century journal of agriculture) “The Vineyards of Hermann Missouri” *Western* 3 (October, 1849) 54.

winner was George Riefenstahl for his 1846 Catawba vintage appropriately named-- the *Riefenstahler*.²⁶ This was a time of great celebration in Hermann, and a gathering was held at Riefenstahl's hilltop vineyard where choruses of "*Crown With Leaves the Well-filled Cup*" rang across the vine-covered slopes.²⁷ Additionally:

...George Riefenstahl (and Poeschel) received a premium from a society in St. Louis, organized to encourage husbandry, of which Alex Kaiser [sic], a very worthy gentleman, was president.²⁸

The festive atmosphere continued in the fall of 1848 when Hermann hosted its first wine festival. Beginning on Friday, September 22, 1848, a young minister named William Helffrich attended the festivities. Helffrich was in town from Cincinnati on business and wrote:

Toward evening the procession to the festival began. In a long parade the citizens of Hermann and vicinity walked down the streets. At the head of the parade was a wagon pulled by four horses, which bore "Bacchus" seated on a large cask decorated with wreaths, grapevines, and flowers. He held a goblet in his hand, acting the drunkard. Musicians followed the big "Bacchus" wagon and then came the citizens. In front of the hall, a small theatre, the procession came to a halt. There was conversation and wine and beer drinking. In the evening there was a performance in the theater, followed by a

²⁶ Linda Walker Stevens, "The Story of Wine at Hermann," *Missouri Folklore Society Journal*, Vol. 21 (1999) 27.

²⁷ Stevens, *The Story of Wine at Hermann*, 27. The vintage would be sold for \$1.50 per gallon.

²⁸ Herman Advertiser, *Grape Culture*, History of Hermann.

Ball in the German style, at which the citizens of Hermann enjoyed themselves in the finest manner.²⁹

Gert Goebel, coming into Hermann at the time of Helffrich's observations on the very same day, wrote of the festivities:

I can recall the first wine festival in Hermann in the fall of 1848 very well. Dr. Gerling and I rode there to attend the festival and when we arrived in the evening, a six-pounder thundered greetings and congratulations over the hills and valleys. The news of the success had reached every place in Missouri where German was spoken; visitors from St. Louis arrived on steamboats. The next morning a cavalcade started out for the vineyard of Michael Poeschel and, when I saw the splendid display of grapes with my own eyes, I did not regret that I had made the long journey of twenty miles. At that time Mr. Poeschel lived three miles from town in an almost inappropriate ravine, which leads into Cole Creek and the Missouri...The profit from the harvest of this small vineyard was very large; good Catawba wine is nearly as good as Rhine wine, when properly treated, and it is in much demand and commands a good price.³⁰

²⁹ Stevens, *The Story of Wine at Hermann*, 29. Taken originally from William A. Helffrich, *Lebensbild aus dem Pennsylvanisch-Deutschen Predigerstand: oder Warrheit in Licht und Schatten*, Translated by Raymond E. Hollenbach (Allentown, PA: N. W.A und W. U. Helffrich, 1906) 6.).

³⁰ Goebel, *Menschenleben*, Chapter 23-2.

George Riefenstahl, William Poeschel and a new business partner, Johann Scherer, began what would become Stone Hill Winery. The winery started producing 75,000 gallons annually and by 1876, had reserves in storage of 150,000 gallons.³¹ At the height of Stone Hills' production, prior to Prohibition, the winery would top at over one million gallons; a huge economic boon to the town of Hermann.³²

Production of wine for personal, and after 1850, commercial use, was tied to the peculiarities of the German immigrants. Wine was an elixir for health. It was even shared with children, though diluted to avoid the extreme affects of alcohol. Wine was integral to German culture in general and especially beholden to those living in the Rhine district of Germany and to those who immigrated to the lower Missouri valley. Perhaps wine and wine productions were even necessary for the German immigrants as a connection to the Fatherland. This sentiment was expressed by David Lowenthal:

We need the past...to cope with present landscapes. We selectively perceive what we are accustomed to seeing; features and patterns in the landscape make sense to us because we share a history with them...But the past is not only recalled; it is incarnate in the things we build and the landscapes we create. We make our environment comfortable by incorporating memorabilia, and we feel at home with products when their camouflage evokes the old.³³

³¹ Herman Advertiser, *Grape Culture*, History of Hermann.

³² Stevens, *Wine at Hermann*, 37.

³³ Poletti, Missouri *Wine Industry*, 66. From David Lowenthal, "Past Time, Present Place: Landscape and Memory," *Geographical Review*, 65 (January 1975) 1 and 6.

Germans tried to connect with their past through *Weinbau*, architecture, language, German cultural societies, German publications, newspapers, and the insistence that German be spoken by the local populace and taught in school. Germans clearly tried to retain their own identity. Americans in the area were not concerned with the propagation of the vine or the future of viticulture. What can be stated with certainty is the very real and strong tie of one's heritage--as felt by the German immigrants--and the tie to one's environment for personal fulfillment. The Germans expressed this idea in terms of blood and soil, toil and persistence.

If the Germans tried to retain their culture, they nevertheless shared with the Americans a connection to the land, gaiety, fellowship, and the freedom to choose one's destiny; this was not necessarily found in the major population centers nor in the deep wilderness but rather somewhere in between. Closeness to nature reinvigorated virtue, Muench wrote:

To a person ordinarily use to labor there is hardly any occupation as attractive as that of the culture of the grape. The heaviest work falls in the cool seasons, and the summer work requires chiefly a skillful hand, care and judgment. One tends his vines as beloved children, delights in their thriving well, and sees with joy the luscious fruit develop. If it prove but moderately remunerative, the vine dresser, free lord of his own possessions, in daily intercourse with the peaceful nature, is a happier and more contented man than the thousands of those who, in our large cities, driven about by the thronging crowd, rarely attain true peace and serenity of mind. With the growth of the grape every nation elevates itself to a higher grade of civilization-brutality must vanish,

and human nature progresses.³⁴

In the mind of Muench and others, a peculiar philosophy permeated the early wine growers. *Weinbau* was a combination of German heritage, American pastoralism, a means of elevating current culture, and a way to make a living; a quasi-cultural, utopian socialist endeavor to lift and elevate the community for success. A conglomeration of many nineteenth century ideals seemingly rolled into a single purpose, even in politics as particularly anti-slavery legislation was put forth for the first time toward the end of the Civil War in the state of Missouri, by no less than Husmann himself.³⁵ The works of Muench and Husmann leave little doubt that as hard as the winegrowers worked to incorporate these grand ideals, Americanization would spread into the Missouri German subconscious, as Germans began making wine less for cultural reasons and more for commercial ones.

³⁴ Frederick Muench, *School for American Grape Culture: Brief but Thorough Practical Guide to the Laying Out of Vineyards, the Treatment of Vines, and the Production of Wine in North America* (Saint Louis: Conrad Witter, 1859) 10-11.

³⁵ Husmann served for a time as Quartermaster of the 4th Missouri Infantry Union Regiment. Towards the end of the war, Husmann was elected to the so-called Drake Convention, called to rewrite the Missouri Constitution. Husmann is credited with authoring Missouri's Emancipation Proclamation, which was adopted by the Drake Convention on January 11, 1865, and was the first legislative act of a former slave holding state that totally outlawed slavery. Source: http://www.mocivilwar.org/category/4/article/80-Husmann_George

Missouri Viticulture Grows: 1848-1870

In 1847, Alexander Kayser sponsored the St. Louis wine competition. In 1849, he announced a series of competitions to take place over the next three years. These contacts were aimed at the serious wine grower, not casual or novice farmer. Kayser specified that “mere dilettante wine growers are excluded from a participation in the premium...to encourage *those* who make the growth of the grape one with their regular *livelihood* pursuits.”³⁶ There was a fundamental change taking place in the wine industry of Missouri. In most cases, those growing vines for the production of wine approached the practice casually, believing that simply planting the vines in dense groups anywhere would bring about at least marginal success. In doing so, the thought was that by sheer chance one could become successful in the pursuit. As it turned out, most were sorely mistaken. Wine quality too was questionable as control over what was produced and sold was becoming an issue. Serious Missouri growers had relied heavily on the influential wine producers and experts of viticulture in Ohio and further east for production; this soon changed.³⁷

To solve these problems, the Germans of the Hermann area were open to solutions. The best minds of the area came together to look at the situation with fresh

³⁶ Muehl, *Winegrowing in the Hermann Area*, 241. The original quote is from, “To the Farmers of Missouri” *The Western Journal* (March 1849) 185.

³⁷ Nickolas Longworth and the grapes he was growing since the early 1820s brought Ohio to the forefront of wine production in the United States. Most “experts” in the field looked east for knowledge but this was quickly changing. For more information, see the final chapter of this treatise for early American wine history.

eyes and six men came to the forefront at this most pivotal time to access the situation: George Muench, William Poeschel, Isidor Busch, Jacob Rommel, Hermann Jaeger, and George Husmann. What they realized was that the answer was staring them in the face; Missouri native grape varieties, and other native species brought into the state of Missouri, could be used to graft and grow those vines needed for *Weinbau*. One of the most successful of these varieties brought into the state was the Norton grape.³⁸

It was about this time that the attention of some of our grape growers was drawn towards a small, insignificant looking grape...The vine seemed a rough customer, and its fruit insignificant when compared with the large bunch and berry of the Catawba, but we soon observed that it kept its foliage bright and green when that of the Catawba became sickly and dropped; and also, that no rot or mildew damaged the fruit, when that of the Catawba was nearly destroyed by it. A few tried to propagate it by cuttings, but generally failed to make it grow.³⁹

Nicholas Longworth of Cincinnati, the “Father of American Grape Culture,” according to Husmann, was not so enthusiastic about the grape that so many in Hermann thought could be the saving grace of their vineyards. Longworth had tried to

³⁸ Others too were critical to the success of wine in Missouri, namely, C.V Riley, George Engelmann, and even Edward Kemper. Emphasized here are the practical answers found for wine production that needed immediate attention to save the livelihoods of the farmers; this meant an answer to getting the vineyards back to full production to save the community and the development of commercial viniculture. Many grapes were developed over time to increase production and help insure success.

³⁹ Husmann, *Cultivation of the Grape*, 19.

grow the grape but did not care for the wine nor did he find the grape significant.

Husmann disagreed:

We thought that Mr. Longworth was human, and might be mistaken; and trusted as much to the evidence of our senses as to his verdict, therefore increased it as fast as we could, and the sequel proved we were right. After a few years more wine was made from it in larger quantities, found it much better than the first samples; and now that despised and condemned grape is the great variety for red wine, equal, if not superior to, the best Burgundy and Port; a wine of which good judges, heavy importers of the best European wines too, will tell you that it has not its equal among all the foreign wines...Need I name it? It is the Norton's Virginia.⁴⁰

George Husmann had the foresight to plant the Norton Seedling but it was Jacob Rommel who was the first to successfully plant and vint the grape and won several wine contests in the United States and in Europe.⁴¹ The Norton proved important for two reasons. First, the Norton was not seen as a good grape for wine production in. In spite of Longworth's lack of success with the grape, Missouri production of the Norton was a success. The result was the Norton would always have ties to the wine industry in Ohio and further to the east coast (in this case Virginia), but with the grapes success in Missouri, now begin to relegate Ohio and Ohio's previous influence in wine production gradually to the past. Second, the

⁴⁰ Husmann, *Cultivation of the Grape*, 19.

⁴¹ Pinney, *A History of Wine*, 177. Rommel and Husmann worked together to produce the first crops and further clarify and define the grape for commercial production.

opening to the east coast and thereafter looking south, opened the possibility to many other varietals to be tried and tested in Missouri; most notably the many white wines that would be produced in Missouri. Missouri broke its ties with the Ohio valley through independent action with the Norton and dared to find her own destiny. The Norton was not the first grape to win awards for Missouri, but it allowed for Missouri wines to be taken seriously, both at home and abroad.

The need for additional successful grape varietals began with Frederick Muench. Muench had grown many grapes on his farm in Warren County, and experimented with cross-breeding and grafting of several varieties of wild grapes. Alexander Kayser, knowing Muench's expertise on the matter, commissioned Muench in 1851 to travel to the Ozarks in search of new varietals to be grown in Herman. Muench was a good choice. Muench published in a variety of papers and journals and as aforementioned, wrote under the pseudonym "Far West" and wrote on several subjects, including vine growing.⁴² Muench made his two week journey through the Ozarks with expenses paid by Kayser. Muench and his companion, George Busch from Franklin County, set out on their two week adventure. Initially, Muench's impression was one of disappointment but events seemed to have turned around and the trip was in the end, successful.

Every day we were on the road we saw wild grapes growing around us. Most of these were so poor in quality that we almost lost heart. However, once we reached Springfield, we were taken on excursions into the surrounding

⁴² Siegmar Muehl, "The Wild Missouri Grape and Nineteenth-Century Viticulture," *Missouri Historical Review* Vol. 91 No. 4 (1997),373-384.

countryside. Here the scene changed markedly. Just a few hundred paces from the town we came across a thicket of pin oaks and other trees literally roofed with grape vines. Every vine, despite a similar outward appearance, turned out to be a different variety...

Muench continued:

Altogether, we brought back with us root stocks, cuttings and seeds of five different varieties. These could be given the following names: 1) Big Ozark, 2) Little Ozark, 3) Ozark Muscat, 4) Libanon, 5) Red Libanon...If all does not miscarry, which is not to be expected, we may hope eventually for a significant outcome with these new varieties.⁴³

Muench was one of the first early observers who knew the culture of the grape, as it pertained to the grapes of America. He used native species and he used native species to produce other varieties. Muench noted the importance of the varying characteristics of the indigenous grapes, and he understood that amalgamating European vines with other native species was the key to success. What today may seem rudimentary or common sense was in Muench's time a breakthrough. Additionally, Muench divided the Missouri grapes into "summer" (*Aestivalis*) and "winter" grapes. Winter grapes could be very sour but palatable after they were

⁴³ Muehl, *The Wild Missouri Grape*, 378.

Gallicized whereas the summer grapes, with some work using grafting, cutting and pruning, could also work.⁴⁴

Muench, in his famous book *School for American Grape Culture*, mentioned:

The German rules hold generally good, also, in this country, and it is due to their careful and judicious application, that the American grape has been raised to its present position. Nevertheless, we have here different conditions of climate, generally other species of vines, and besides, though a cheaper soil, much fewer laborers, and those we have are more expensive. Therefore, we must proceed somewhat differently in the treatment of the vine-often go to work less circumstantially; and even the German vine-dresser must here learn anew.⁴⁵

The commercialization of wine in Missouri took a long time. Wine, like any other agricultural product or natural resource, was bound to become a commodity in early America. Capital, experience, education, and the freedom to pursue personal interests, helped the process. Wine was not an early commercial success in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries because enough was not known about the propagation, grafting, and science of wine. The early colonists of Hermann and the lower Missouri valley did not intend on using the wild grapes for earning a living. Missouri had many natural resources to take advantage of such as lead, coal, and

⁴⁴ Gallicizing is the process of adding water to reduce acidity and adding sugar to increase the alcohol content after the fermentation process. The process is attributed to Dr Ludwig (Louis) Gall (1860), a French botanist and a technique championed by many early Missouri vintners including George Husmann.

⁴⁵ Muench, *School*, 6.

timber. Grapes and wine production, however, eventually became important income. Of the mentioned resources that have virtually changed the very nature of the state, wine production as seen in its *purest form* was the industry closest to preserving and working with the natural environment.⁴⁶

Husmann journeyed to California in 1851 as part of the rush westward in search of wealth and to observe the wine industry there. Husmann knew that the economy of wine and Hermann were entwined. What were needed however, were regulations, keen observations, and education. These same ideals, largely championed by George Husmann, became his legacy not only in Missouri, but in the state of California. By 2009, California exported \$911.8 million dollars of its wines making up 95 percent of total U.S. exports.⁴⁷

Husmann, after a brief hiatus in California, returned to the Hermann area to help his widowed sister, Josephine, run the farm, which she inherited from her husband, Carl Teubner. Teubner had started a fruit farm and nursery with his wife,

⁴⁶ Missouri had lost nearly half of its original virgin forests by the 1920s for railroad ties and fences. The loss of timber has literally changed the course of rivers in Missouri, and want of land by the early settlers drove the native Missouri Indians to the brink of extinction. Husbandry and the raising of crops have replaced the old landscape in Missouri. *Weinbau* was the *purest form* of agriculture because it was noble in every way, at least in the eyes of the Hermann, Germans. The advent of *Weinbau* in Missouri used the land and resources for the most part as they were found. Conservation efforts in recent years have helped to preserve what is left of the original forests (such as the Cypress trees and swamps in the Boot-heel) and the other natural landscapes in Missouri, including western prairie lands.

⁴⁷ Wine Institute, "2009 U.S. Wine Exports Are Down But Positive Fourth Quarter Gives Cause For Optimism," March 12, 2010. Source: Wine Institute using data from U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Trade Data & Analysis. George Muench and his contribution cannot be overlooked or overstated; this was truly a team effort. Husmann however, understood the larger possibilities.
<http://www.wineinstitute.org/resources/pressroom/03122010>

but he died suddenly, prompting Husmann to return and care for his sister and her children. Husmann called Teubner's farm a "nucleus of fruit growing and wine making around Hermann."⁴⁸ Gold fever had struck Husmann as it had struck so many in the late 1840s, but in 1851, Husmann, hardened by his journeys west, had come back to Hermann to help his local community through education. After all, Poeschel himself had said during the days of *gold fever* that:

It is wonderful that so many of our citizens subject themselves to the privations and hardships incident in a trip to California, in search of gold, when it can be so easily obtained by dressing the vine, and pressing the delicious fluid from rich clusters of grapes, amide the pleasant hills and vallies [sic] of southern Missouri.⁴⁹

In an effort to stabilize quality and increase Hermann's wine prestige, Husmann was nominated as the first president of the Gasconade County Agricultural Society in 1854. This event, in addition to his contributions to horticultural journals around the country and his increasing connections with experts in the horticultural field throughout the U.S. and abroad, opened the way for Hermann *Weinbau* at the national level.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Stevens, *Story of Wine*, 27.

⁴⁹ Stevens, *Story of Wine*, 30. Source is from "The Vineyards of Hermann," *The Western Journal* 3.1 (October 1849) 53.

⁵⁰ Stevens, *The Story of Wine at Hermann*, 32. Husmann's knowledge of wine had grown tremendously. Husmann was elected as first president of the association by a group of grape and fruit growers from St. Louis. Husmann and Charles Manwaring founded the Missouri Pomological Society in 1858-59 and was recognized for his influence the establishment of the Gasconade County Winegrowers Association in 1873.

The Grape Culturalist, a journal produced by George Husmann (and contributor Isidor Bush), ran from January 1869 through June of 1871, and became one the nation's leading educational enterprises for aspiring viticulturalists and viniculturalists. The uniqueness of the journal was its approach. Letters from all around the country came in asking for information on *Weinbau* and in turn, the journal offered success stories and advice for readers. The journal reads like an 'Ann Landers' of *Weinbau* with editorial op-ed pieces, suggestions, nightmarish examples of experiments in growing gone array, and of course, advertisements for buying vines and supplies for the



The first cover of the *Grape Culturalist* of George Husmann: January, 1869, the first journal of its kind in America. Source: University of Missouri, Columbia.

industrious wine producer. The journal was read by the average yeoman farmer and correspondence was generally cordial. A subscriber wrote:

Mr. George Husmann, *Dear Sir:* - Having just received all the numbers of the Grape Culturalist up to December, I take the liberty to express my perfect satisfaction with the same, and you may consider me a life subscriber; it is just the journal every grape grower ought to read...⁵¹

Beyond the initial success of the journal, there was the growing business of Husmann and his association with Isidor Bush. Both men became successful operators of nurseries. Bush was an immigrant from Bohemia and came to America in 1849. After opening a successful general store in Carondolet, he purchased 100 acres of land in Bushberg, located in Jefferson County.⁵² Bush became interested in viticulture, probably through the influence of wine merchants in downtown Saint Louis. Grapes had been grown in the Carondolet area for many years. Bush established Bush & Company in 1870 which became one of Missouri's most successful nurseries. His greatest contribution, however, was the *Bushberg Catalogue*. The impact of the catalogue was twofold. First, the catalogue was botanical in nature and approached the subject of grape growing from a scientific as well as a commercial point of view and, second, was the only Missouri publication

⁵¹ Grape Culturalist, "A Letter from Arenzville, IL." December 29, 1869, published in January, Vol. II, 1870.

⁵² Poletti, *Missouri Wine Industry*, 77.

Isidor Bush was also a leading figure in the states Jewish community. He was a leading member of B'Nai Brithe.

that was read internationally, adding additional credence to Missouri *Weinbau* and the influence of Missouri's Germans, on the industry. Bush's advertisements helped pay for the *Grape Culturalist* and along with his catalogue, made Bush a wealthy man.⁵³

96 *Grape Culturist Advertising Sheet.*

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An Advertisement for the Bush nurseries, one will notice as well the books on sale for Husmann and Frederick Muench. *Grape Culturalist*, January, 1870. Source: Library, University of Missouri, Columbia.

⁵³ The Bushberg Catalogue was first printed in 1869. There were additional publications in: 1875, 1883, 1895, and 1898. The catalogue spoke to everything needed for grape growing including, the many varieties of grapes available, and sold, by Bush, and was considered the catalogue for 'experts' in the wine community. This target audience added additional credence and specialization for the grape grower and would mean henceforth that wine growing was leaving the grasp of the average yeoman farmer to the more specialized farmer; whether this was the intent of Bush is for speculation.

There is no mistake that wine in the latter part of the nineteenth century was becoming a business and the philosophical ties of soil and hard work were taking a secondary role. This change does not mean that these original, courageous individuals did not believe in their cause and reasons for *Weinbau*, quite the contrary. Yet what became evident was that grape growing had reached a new stage in development. For the first time in the history of the United States, wine was shown to be profitable and that achievement belonged to the Missouri Germans. Bush reprinted in 1875 the opening lines from the original 1869 edition:

We do not pretend to furnish 'better and cheaper vines than can be afforded by any other establishment.' We do not pretend that 'money-making is secondary with us,' we leave this to others; all we do claim is that we hope to merit a reasonable share of patronage, the continued confidence of our customers, and a fair profit... We have availed ourselves of the writings of our friend and teacher, Husmann, and of the works of Downing, Fuller, and many others, to whom due credit is given in the proper places; and while we lay little claim to originality, we hope that this Catalogue may afford pleasure and profit to some, at least, of those into whose hands it may come.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Isidor Bush, *Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue of American Grape-Vines with Brief directions for Their Culture by Bush & Son & Meissner* (Bushberg, Jefferson County., MO: R.P Studley Company, 1869) preface.

Of the many persons involved in the success of the Missouri wine industry, Hermann Jaeger appears and then disappears from the narrative but not before leaving his indelible mark and contribution. A Swiss immigrant coming to the U.S in 1865, Jaeger settled in Neosho County near Monark Springs, Missouri. The ever curious and itinerant Jaeger was interested in the production of grapes and approached the discipline with the knowledge that the grafting and cross breeding of species that were resistant to disease produced larger and healthier crops of grapes. Jaeger's influence was larger than his presence. In May of 1895, he disappeared, never to be heard from again.

Jaeger, who said, "I, Jaeger, work with God making better grapes,"⁵⁵ was important to the Missouri wine industry for three reasons. First he traveled outside of Missouri to both Texas and Oklahoma in search of hardy, disease free wild varieties. Upon his return, he traveled through the very same Ozarks as Frederick Muench to gather and use various types of grape stock that would result in producing over one-hundred different varieties.⁵⁶ Second, through his travels and experimentation changed the very face of the varying native species of grapes in Missouri by his experimentation, which included the *Aestivalis*, the frost or "possum" grape (*Cordifolia*), and the "riverside" or *Riparia* varieties, and he created additional new hybrid varieties that helped establish a base of stability for viticulturalists in the wine industry. Last, and the most far reaching, was Jaeger's curious nature and sense of

⁵⁵ Mark Parker, "Legend of Hermann Jaeger," *Missouri Ruralist*, April 2009, 34.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 34.

God given mission, which helped save the French and European wine industry that by the 1870s was on the verge collapse.⁵⁷

⁵⁷

Jaeger would win the Legion of Honor in France for his contributions in 1888.

The Economics of the Missouri Wine Industry

By the 1870s, the Germans created a viable wine industry after years of experimentation and false starts. Yet for the small grower, it remained a sideline pursuit, given the costs for anyone trying to start a vineyard, and was a daunting proposition. The readers of the *Grape Culturalist*, Muench's book, *School for American Grape Culture*, and *Bush's Catalogue*, would certainly have been excited about the possibilities of making good money from planting grapes. But there were certain realities with which a potential farmer would have to contend.

First, while winemaking looked good on paper, many did not have the startup capital needed to begin a vineyard. Second, if they did have the startup capital, it took many years for the vineyard to be productive, and these costs did not include the capital needed to live upon while the grapes matured. Third, disease and weather could affect crop's and even wipe out one's investment. Fourth, it was becoming evident to many in Hermann and the surrounding area that wine production should be viewed only as a supplement to other forms of income, at least for the average grower. It was a different story for the large producers. Fifth, with the amount of wine being produced in Missouri, other questions of costs arose, specifically, where would the wine be stored? This was an additional cost not discussed in the *Grape Culturalist* or the other literature, but must have become a real issue for those producing any large amount of wine that needed to be stored for long periods. The following is an

idealized table of costs adapted from the *Grape Culturalist*. It does not take into account all the capital needed to start a vineyard:

Gross Income	
7000 Lbs. @ \$0.04	\$280.00
(-) minus variable costs:	-\$ 30.00
<hr/>	
Total:	\$250.00
Fixed Costs:	
Land @ \$50.00 per acre:	\$ 50.00
Preparation:	100.00
Vines:	30.00
Cultivation:	110.00
Trellis:	125.00
Total: \$415.00 @ 10% Interest*	\$41.50
Variable Costs: (Labor).	\$80.00
Net Income:	<hr/> \$128.50

Capital for viticulture. Source: George Husmann and Charles H. Frings, ed., "Can Grape Growing Be Overdone? *Grape Culturalist* 1 (August, 1869)229-231.⁵⁸

A last factor of cost, only briefly mentioned by George Husmann in the *Grape Culturalist*, was the price of a gallon of wine produced from the crop. The Concord for instance, according to Husmann in 1869, was around 0.04 to .05 cents per gallon produced, with \$1.25 per gallon sold on the market.⁵⁹ Husmann speculated that lowering the price per gallon would increase the sales. Frederick Muench mentions Husmann in his book, *The School for American Grape Culture*:

⁵⁸ Adapted from Joseph Poletti, *Missouri Wine Industry*, 79.

Many other variables are not taken into consideration. An example would be the amount of vines per acre, which on a modern, small farm would be around 1000 vines per acre. The article written for the *Grape Culturalist* was given as a general idea of costs and expenditures. Other possible sources of income would have been selling: the vine cuttings, grapes, grape juice, must, vinegar, and if produced, wine by the gallon.

⁵⁹ Husmann, *Grape Culturalist*, 1 (August, 1869), 227.

Mr. G. Husmann, in Hermann, states in his "Culture of the Grape," the average net profits of the Catawba, in Hermann, of fourteen years, at \$280 per acre; that of the Virginia Seedling, after several years trying, at \$900, and that of the Concord at \$1036 per acre. He estimates the cost of establishing a vineyard at \$380 an acre, and the cost of labor, yearly, at \$50 per acre. The price of the seedling wine has in this calculation been set down at \$2 per gallon, and the price of the Concord grapes at twelve cents per pound.⁶⁰

The quote by Muench demonstrates an idealized view of wine production in Missouri. The reality for most farmers was quite different.

Yet for those farmers with the needed capital, *Weinbau* in Missouri was successful. The counties in 1870 where *Weinbau* was greatest can be seen in the following:

County Product	Gallons Produced	% of Total
Gasconade:	128,917	39.5*
Franklin:	75,954	23.3
Saint Louis:	46,836	14.4
Saint Charles:	16,335	5.0
Buchanan:	12,469	3.8
Jefferson:	6,426	2.0
Atchinson:	6,100	1.9
Sainte Genevieve:	5,009	1.5
Others:	28,127	8.6
Total:	326,173	100.0 ⁶¹

⁶⁰ Muench, *School*, 133. This was as of 1865.

Those counties most successful in *Weinbau*, also had the largest populations of German immigrants. Those counties were Gasconade, Franklin, and Saint Louis.⁶²

The success of the German efforts to create a viable industry in Missouri can be measured in another way, away that loops us back to the beginning of our story, before the Germans first began to experiment in grafting and cross-breeding native varieties with European varieties. In the 1870s, the French vineyards were devastated by *Phylloxera*. To save their industry, French farmers turned to their German-American counterparts in Missouri.

These same successful *Weinbau* farmers, George Husmann, Frederick Muench, and Hermann Jaeger, would save the vineyards of France from complete destruction by sending grape cuttings that combined Missouri and European species. The years from 1873 to 1876 were the period of greatest activity in this movement of cuttings from Missouri to France.⁶³ Not all vines shipped to France worked well against *Phylloxera*; after all, Missouri vines too were affected by the disease in varying degrees but never to the extent of the French *Vinifera*. Soil was a matter of concern too as many *Lubrusca* varieties did not grow well in chalky soil, such as in the region of *Champagne*. However, the grapes from Missouri that did the best, both

⁶¹ Source: Poletti, *Missouri Wine Industry*, 49. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census, Vol. III, *The Wealth and Industry of the United States, 1870* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872) 190 & 194. *Gasconade County produced 40 percent of the state's total wine production in 1870.

⁶² Poletti, *Missouri Wine Industry*, 63.

⁶³ Thomas Pinney, *A History of Wine in America: From the Beginnings to Prohibition* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989) 394.

root stock and vines, were the *riparia* and *rupestris* varieties. All the vines came out of the nurseries of Hermann Jaeger, and George Husmann.⁶⁴ Millions of root stock cuttings were shipped by Jaeger, sending over, “17 boxcars of hardy, Phyloxera root-louse resistant rootstock to France.”⁶⁵ Millions and millions more were sent from Husmann and his business partner Isidor Bush, making them very wealthy men. The French would eventually learn to grow the stock themselves and save the needed money for future endeavors.

French wine production was changed forever. Large landed estates dedicated to wine growing were lost or became smaller and many small wine producing farmers took to growing other crops. The result was smaller, more specialized viticulturalists in France, leaving better techniques, better crops, and better wine. In many ways, the epidemic helped the French wine industry. Throughout the world at the time of the great Phylloxera epidemic, Missouri and her German *Weinbau* experts were called upon to solve the problem. Though it is true that many states in the Union sent rootstock, New York, Virginia, and Texas, for instance, the combination of scientific knowledge and expertise were in the 1870s, the domain of the Germans from the lower Missouri valley.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Isidor Bush, a German immigrant, friend of Husmann, successful businessman, and leader in the Saint Louis Jewish community.

⁶⁵ Mark Parker, “Legend of Hermann Jaeger,” *Missouri Ruralist* April 2009,34.

⁶⁶ Hermann Jaeger was awarded the *French Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor*, the highest civilian award in France. George Husmann has two monuments dedicated in his honor and to the work of other Missouri contributors, in Montpellier, France. C.V Riley was given the *French Legion of Honor* and many other commendations for his dedication and contribution to French viticulture and in service to the French nation.



Oak Glenn Winery-Source:Taken by author on 6/30/2010. The Missouri River is in the background.



A modern vineyard in the Missouri valley: A row in the vineyard of Neil Brown, Marthasville: 6/19/2010.

Weinbau is still difficult for the small grower. My brother, Neil Brown is a grower of the *Chambourcin Grape* in Marthasville, Missouri, near modern Dutzow, at Franciscan Hills. His one acre farm yields about 8-10 ton of grapes annually. This is an unusually high yielding acre. The costs have varied and, until 2008, family and friends helped harvest the product. Not included in the estimate for Husmann, but a very real cost for the modern farmer, is the price of insecticides and the endless job of maintenance of the vines without paid labor. The growing of grapes for Neil Brown is a 'labor of love' and not a means of primary income. His grapes are sold to local growers and wine producers, such

as Sugar Creek Winery, located on the Missouri bottoms of the river, just off Highway 94 and above the Katy Trail near Defiance, Missouri. The example of this vineyard is given here to offer a modern comparison.



Spring at Stone Hill Winery: Grape vines on the northern slopes of the winery, facing the Missouri River: taken on 6/25/2010.

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