

October 12, 1978

Director  
BATF  
Washington, D.C. 20226

10/16/78  
Regulations

Dear Sir:

Application for the establishment of "Augusta" as an American Viticultural Area is hereby petitioned by the undersigned. Such request is made under the new provisions set forth in Part 4, Chapter 1, of Title 27-Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms regulations, dealing with "Appellation of Origin" as a part of labeling and advertising.

The petitioners are the proprietors of Augusta, Missouri's only two bonded wineries who grow and vinify grapes for their wine within a limited area whose output is recognized by the wine consumers of the nearby metropolitan St. Louis area, most of the State of Missouri, and adjacent Illinois, and draws visitors from across the nation and numerous other countries for reasons that mark Augusta as a distinctive quality wine source.

This distinction and recognition is both contemporary and the renaissance of an historic past during which wines of this small area won international, as well as national, acclaim.

The petitioners seek recognition of their district as a viticultural area because their choice of its soil, weather and discrete protective setting has enabled them to fulfill their goals of producing wines in keeping with the viticultural and oenological objectives each winery has set for itself. They believe that the physical attributes of this are a natural peninsula-like microcosm as singular as most designated districts of the Old World.

In further support of our petition we submit the following information:

- (i) Evidence that the name of the viticultural area is locally and/or nationally known as referring to the area specified in the application...
  - (a) There are presently two bonded wineries in the proposed Augusta area. Mount Pleasant Vineyards (bonded 1968) is within the corporate limits of the Town of Augusta, Mo., and Montelle Vineyards (bonded 1975), is approximately 2½ miles west of the Town limits. Both wineries have always used the address of Augusta, Missouri and have featured this name "Augusta" on their labels, back labels and advertising material so that the wineries and their viticultural area have always been inseparably associated with one another. See exhibit (i.a.)
  - (b) Leon Adams, who has written the only definitive modern book on American wines (The Wines of America, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston, 1973) refers to Augusta, Missouri and its historical and present importance. See Exhibit (i.b.)

- (c) Leon Adams also includes a map in The Wine of America which is entitled "Vineyard Districts of Missouri". "Augusta" is shown prominently as a vineyard district. See exhibit (i.c.)
  - (d) There have been numerous newspaper and magazine articles over the years which have all stressed the importance of the "Augusta area" and which have all helped to create an awareness of the unique wines produced in the Augusta, Missouri area. See exhibit (i.d.)
- (ii) Historical or current evidence that the boundaries of the viticultural area are as specified in the application...
- (a) Although pre-prohibition evidence is very difficult to obtain, to the best of our knowledge all of the pre-prohibition wineries which used the name "Augusta" were within the boundaries of the proposed Augusta viticultural area. Of certainty is the fact that four of the five wineries which won medals, and international recognition at the St. Louis Worlds Fair in 1903, were located in the Augusta area. All used the name "Augusta" as their address. See exhibit (ii.a.)
  - (b) All wineries within the proposed area now use the name "Augusta". There are no wineries outside the proposed area who now use the name "Augusta".
  - (c) The closest winery, outside of the proposed area, is 41 miles due west at the town of Hermann, Missouri, which is several counties away. The closest vineyard, outside of the proposed area, is 27 miles to the south which is across the Missouri River and in a different county.
- (iii) Evidence relating to the geographical features (climate, soil, elevation, physical features, etc.) which distinguish the viticultural features of the proposed area from surrounding areas...
- (a) The nearest viticultural area of any importance would be in the area of St. James, Mo., which is 65 miles to the south of the Augusta area. The State of Missouri is cut in half, from west to east, by the Missouri River. The Augusta area is the only grape growing region north of the river. It is the only grape growing region that is on the soil forming material known as "Loess and glacial till" (See maps in exhibit (iii.a.)
  - (b) The proposed Augusta viticultural area is separated from its immediate environs by several unique geographical features. (See map in exhibit (iii.b.) If one refers to the map in exhibit iii.b., one sees that Augusta is located at the southern most point of the Missouri River on a great bend in the River. From a geographical standpoint, the Missouri River, and its broad valley, form a natural western, southern, and eastern boundary for the proposed district. Geographically, the northern boundary is formed by a highly

- (iii.b. Con't) irregular ridge of hills which rise approximately 250 feet above the fertile vineyard lands on which grapes are presently planted. The brown shaded areas within the district are virtually free of spring frosts, the area to the north of the ridge is not. The soil on the ridges to the north of the proposed area is predominately of the "Lindley-Keswick-Harton" type, while the soil within the area is predominately "Menfro and Winfield". (See exhibit iii.b.2)
- (c) Ten years ago, Mount Pleasant Vineyards had to abandon a vineyard located only 4 miles north of Augusta (outside the boundaries of the proposed area) because of extremely hostile soil and climate conditions. A few isolated, small vineyards have been planted outside the proposed area in recent years, but all have been abandoned due to similar hostile conditions outside the proposed area; there is today little doubt that grapes can be grown commercially only within the boundaries of the proposed district.
- (iv) The specific boundaries of the viticultural area, based on features which can be found on U.S. Geological Survey (U.S.G.S.) maps of the largest applicable scale; and (v) a copy of the appropriate U.S.G.S. map with the boundaries prominently marked...

Although the proposed Augusta viticultural area is well defined by geographical features, the irregularity of many of these, such as the ridges, would make it difficult to define the area in a readily understandable way. Therefore all of the boundaries of the district are lines which are well defined on the U.S.G.S. maps. These boundaries err in the direction of inclusiveness rather than exclusiveness, but we feel the error is very slight and that it is preferable to be slightly generous with the boundaries. Also obvious is the fact that not all of the land within the district is suitable for viticulture, such as ponds, streets, houses, a piece of the river and State highway 94 none of which could support viticulture in the state of the art in which we know it today.

We submit two U.S.G.S. maps: the first entitled WASHINGTON EAST, MO.; the second LABADIE, MO.

The boundaries begin at a point on the WASHINGTON EAST, MO. map  $5\frac{1}{4}$  inches from the left margin and  $8\frac{3}{4}$  inches from the bottom margin marked "start" on the map. This point of beginning is the point at which the St. Charles Co. line, the Warren Co. line, and the Franklin Co. line intersect.

The western boundary of the district is formed by the St. Charles Co.- Warren Co. line and this western boundary runs from the point of beginning north to a red line identified on the map as " T 45 N - T 44 N " ( $10\frac{1}{4}$  inches north). The line T 45 N - T 44 N now forms the northern boundary of the area on the WASHINGTON EAST, MO. map. The southern boundary on this map is the St. Charles Co.- Franklin Co. line.

(iv) Con't Referring now to the LABADIE, MO. map, we again pick up the northern boundary line "T 45 N - T 44 N" (3 5/8 inches below the northwest margin of the map). We follow the northern boundary line east for 3 3/16th inches until we come to a line designated as R 1 E - R 2 E, which line runs north and south and forms the eastern boundary of the area. We follow this line south for 4 1/16 th inches until it ends. At this point we must construct our own line running south which would be a natural extention of line R 1 E - R 2 E. This constructed line would take us 3 1/2 south until we intersected the St. Charles Co. - Franklin Co. line which forms the southern boundary on both maps.

We request your consideration of our petition and we will be happy to answer any questions. Clayton Byers can be reached at [REDACTED]. Lucian W. Dressel can be reached at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. Please call collect if there are any questions. We remain

Sincerely yours,

[REDACTED]  
Clayton W. Byers  
Montelle Vineyards, Inc.  
Rt. 1 Box 94  
Augusta, Missouri 63332

Sincerely yours,

[REDACTED]  
Lucian W. Dressel  
Mount Pleasant Vineyards  
Augusta, Missouri 63332

# Montelle Vineyards, Inc.

Augusta, Missouri 63332

(314) 228-4464

Clayton Byers  
President and  
Vintner

Nissel Byers  
Treasurer and  
Vineyard Manager



*Mount Pleasant Wine Co.*  
*Augusta, Missouri*

## Our Beginning Was in 1881

In the period before prohibition, when Missouri ranked as the second largest wine producing state in the nation, there were no fewer than eleven wineries in the Town of Augusta. The largest, and most famous of these was Mount Pleasant whose wine had won medals at the Columbian Exposition in 1893 and the Saint Louis World's Fair of 1904.



The German Emigrants who set out the vineyards in 1860, and built the cellars and winery in 1881, had a definite goal in mind. They wanted to build a small, Old World type winery and concentrate on the production of limited quantities of quality wine, both of the European and American type.

Today, at Mount Pleasant, our goal is the same.



*Mount Pleasant Wine Co.*  
*Augusta, Mo. 63332*



A dry red dinner wine made from the Munch grape, which was developed in 1888 by Thomas Volnay Munson, and named for the founder of Mount Pleasant.

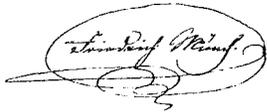
**MÜNCH**

Dry Red  
 Dinner Wine



Vintage 1975

Alcohol by Volume  
 12% — Table Wine



PRODUCED AND BOTTLED BY  
 MOUNT PLEASANT VINEYARDS, AUGUSTA, MISSOURI

The Mount Pleasant vineyards and winery are located at the old German settlement of Augusta, Missouri, 30 miles west of Saint Louis. There, nestled among the hills on the north side of the Missouri River, are the historic vineyards, established in 1860, and the vaulted wine cellars of brick and stone, built in 1881.

Before prohibition, when Missouri ranked as the second largest wine producing state in the nation, Mount Pleasant wines were marketed coast to coast. Bottles of Mount Pleasant wine from this period proudly bear medals won at the Columbian Exposition of 1893, and the Saint Louis World's Fair of 1904.

Today, as in the past, we strive to produce good, sound, clean tasting vintage wines of the type that one might enjoy at a small local winery in France or Germany.

All of our wines are guaranteed indefinitely and may be returned to us at any time if you are not fully satisfied.

*Lucian W. Dursel*



Montelle's  
**GOLDEN  
 MIRACLAIR**

DRY TABLE WINE

Made and bottled at  
**Montelle Vineyards**

U.S. Bonded Winery (Mo.) No. 100  
 Augusta, Missouri

by Nissel Byers and Clayton Byers

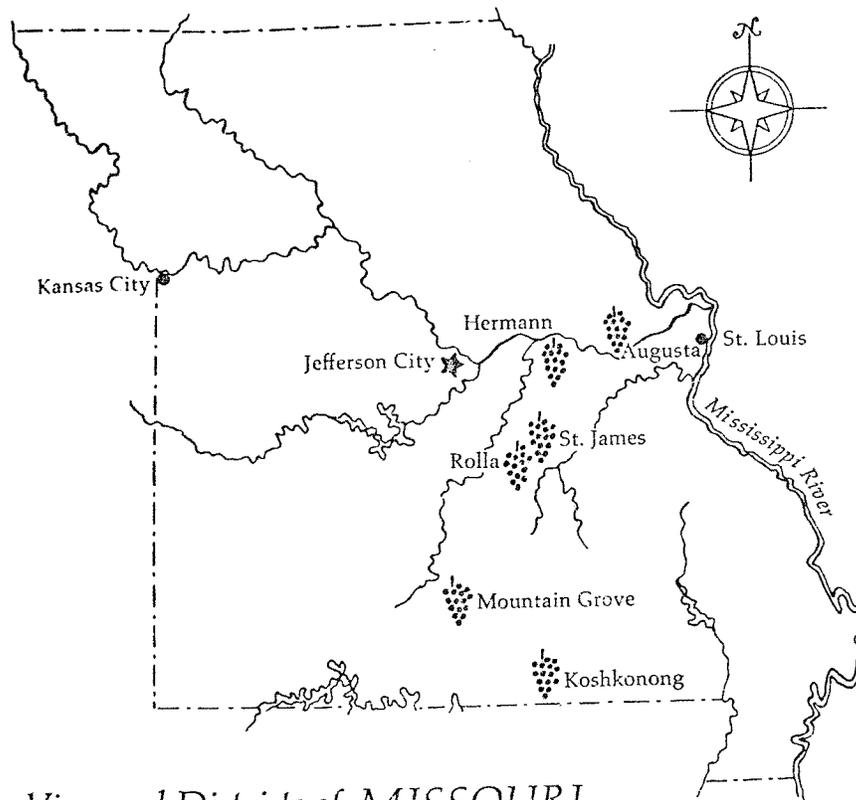
Alcohol 11.5% by Volume

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 of midwestern gar-  
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 vines on the Gasconade  
 hboring farmers growing  
 e tasting and a tour of its  
 own wine museum.



*Vineyard Districts of MISSOURI*



Wine has been part of the flavor of Hermann since grapes were first planted there by Jacob Fugger in 1843. Many of its citizens, including the Helds, rear their children by "the Hermann formula: the first year wine, the second year wine and sauerkraut." The revival of Hermann's "days of wine and glory" is now celebrated on the third weekend of each May with German bands, folk dancing, knackwurst, and a house tour of "Little Germany."

• 3 •

Another historic Missouri winery was reopened in 1968 at Augusta, a town of German heritage on the Missouri River bluffs thirty miles west of St. Louis. The proprietor is young accountant Lucian Dressel, who became enamored of wine during his travels in Europe. On completing his studies at Harvard and Columbia,

he recognized the trend to wine-drinking in America and decided to become a winegrower. Touring with his wife Eva, he found the place at Augusta where there were eleven wineries before Prohibition. An old brick cellar with underground storage vaults was for sale; it had been converted into an apartment house. The Dressels bought the place and discovered it was originally the Mount Pleasant Vineyard winery of Friedrich Muench, a famous Lutheran minister and hybridizer of grapes, who once wrote a book on wine in German, its title in English, *School for American Grape Culture*. The winery was built by Muench in 1881, and his prize-winning wines were known from coast to coast.

The Dressels have replanted a dozen acres of the Mount Pleasant Vineyard with French hybrids, Virginia Seedling, and with an experimental patch of Vinifera, including Johannisberg Riesling and Chardonnay. They plan eventually to specialize in the wines of whichever grape varieties grow best. They have opened a tasting room and are selling mostly their estate-bottled, vintage-dated "Emigré" table wines made of the French-American grapes.

• 4 •

Wine grapes are being planted again in the part of Missouri's Ozark Plateau known as Big Prairie, where the principal grapes grown now are Concords for the Welch co-operative's grape juice plant at Springdale, Arkansas.

Near St. James, where the Ozark Grape Festival is held each September, Concord-grower William B. Stoltz began adding wine varieties in 1965 to his seventy-acre vineyard three miles northeast of town. He planted mainly such Labrusca types as Missouri Riesling, Catawba, and Delaware, but also some French and New York State hybrids. In 1968 he opened the 5000-gallon Stoltz Vineyard Winery and introduced several native Ozark table wines, which he named for his grapes, and also an "Old-Fashioned Missouri Sweet Grape Wine." Stoltz soon found that many people in the area especially liked those of his wines with the least Labrusca flavor. He now has planted more French hybrids and has expanded his winery to 10,000 gallons.

• 5 •

A second winery opened at St. James in 1970 and began producing the only champagne made wholly of Missouri grapes. It is James and Patricia Hofherr's St. James Winery, on the access road beside Interstate Highway 44.

Hofherr holds a Texas. He had five denheier winery at made champagne fo He chose the Big I cause most of Miss

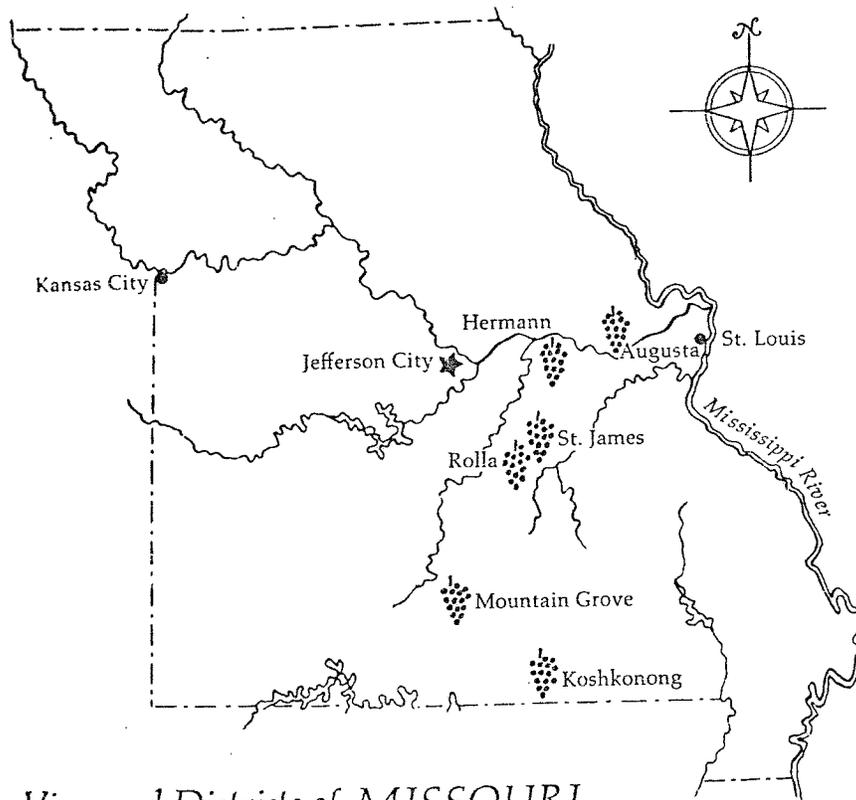
The St. James W ground up, with an makes three bottle-champagne and an best of the three. F through a list of six and berry wines. Bt called Cascade, wh drinkers of Bordea vineyard of Vinifer the Ozarks, but fo flavors of Catawba

The newest wine. Peaceful Bend Vine ville, a few miles so structure with a Du sides of the cellar, a

Dr. Arneson, prof Washington Univer learned about wine; for their home use it years through Europ in 1951 he purcha; Wagner and planted

Dr. Arneson mak several hybrids. His white is called Court Ozark mountain stre of Missouri vinicultu Husmann's career. M, originally namec river takes at the dc

Another sign that that the state's bigge



*Vineyard Districts of MISSOURI*



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vines on the Gasconade  
hboring farmers growing  
ne tasting and a tour of its  
own wine museum.

# Missouri: An Eiswein State

By Frank J. Prial

\*1978, New York Times News Service

## words on wine

NEW YORK

One of the cardinal rules of the newspaper business is to avoid superlatives in reporting. Calling something "the first," "the biggest," "the youngest" or anything else with "est" at the end can only lead to trouble. Someone always writes in to tell of something older, bigger or younger.

Recently I mentioned an Eiswein (or ice wine) made last year by Edmeads Vineyard in California as a "first" for that state. Well, it may still be a first for California, but it appears that there have been at least two other American Eisweins in recent years.

Eiswein, by the way, is a wine made from grapes that have been left on the vine for extra ripening and then caught by a frost and been frozen. The water in the grape is frozen and often drops away, leaving only concentrated juice and sugar, which produces an enormously rich wine.

Eisweins are never common but they do occur from time to time in the vineyards of Germany, Alsace and even Austria. Some of the Alsatian growers delight in showing guests their pickers, bundled to the ears, working in snow-covered vineyards, gathering the grapes to make the rare wine.

The two vineyards in this country which produced Eiswein before Edmeads are in unlikely wine-producing areas: Maryland and Missouri. The Maryland came from Montbray Wine Cellars, near Westminster, and was made from riesling grapes. The Missouri wine came from Mt. Pleasant Vineyards at Augusta, 30 miles west of St. Louis, which is all I was able to find out about it.

Eisweins are, if not a freak of nature, a rare and relatively unimportant phenomenon in the wine world. What is more interesting here is the fact that they have been produced in places not normally associated with serious wine making. In fact, Maryland is the birthplace of modern French-hybrid wine production in this country — at Philip Wagner's Boordy Vineyard — and has been the scene of some serious experimentation with vinifera vines, the kind that produce the fine wines of Europe and California. G. Hamilton Mowbray, the owner of Montbray, has produced both hybrids and viniferas with considerable success, according to people who have tasted them.

Missouri at one time was an important source of table wines. Mt. Pleasant Vineyard, for example, was one of 11 wineries in Augusta before prohibition. There were then, according to Leon Adams, the historian of American wines, wineries in 48 Missouri counties. Earlier, Missouri had been the source of thousands of the phylloxera-resistant vines that were used to revive the devastated vineyards of Europe after the great phylloxera epidemic of the 1860's and 1880's.

In a somewhat different vein, an extraordinary list of old bordeaux wines arrived on this desk recently from William Pelzer, who, for reasons known best to him, calls his firm Miami Beach Rare Wines Inc., even though he's situated on Long Island. Pelzer has put together a formidable collection of bottles from which retailers may choose, dating back to the first half of the 19th century. Some of them are obviously one-of-a-kind

items but they are of interest to us consumers because they put the prices of old wines in proper perspective.

Every time a rare bottle sells for \$10,000 or more at a publicized auction, it is well to keep in mind that most of these wines are available elsewhere at far lower prices. For example, Miami Beach Rare Wines offers a magnum of the 1864 Chateau Margaux for \$1,556. Presumably a retailer would take about 50 percent on that for a retail tab of around \$2,400. A lot of money for a wine of questionable drinkability but far less than some auction prices.

Miami Beach Rare Wines is asking \$600 for a 1870 Lafite, \$307 for an 1870 Latour and \$125 for an 1894 Chateau Ausone. One New York City retailer is asking \$163 for that same Ausone, a markup of about 30 percent. The Miami Beach Rare Wines list includes nine 1929's, including both regular bottles and magnums of Lafite, Margaux and Mouton. There are 25 different 1959's and almost 50 1961's, including regular bottles and magnums from many chateaux and even some jeroboams of Chateau Leoville-Las-Cases. If this sort of thing interests you, ask your retailer to investigate. Just bear in mind that very old wines are often of more historical interest than tasting pleasure.

Finally, this week, two conflicting reports on what people drink on trains. Transportation Displays Inc., an agency that handles advertising space in most trains and terminals in the New York area, said recently its surveys showed commuters preferred red or rose wines to white: 45.7 percent for red or rose and 41.8 for white. The others had no preference.

On the other hand, Conrail, the people who run the trains and buy the wine, said commuters prefer white by a margin of 20 to 1.

Particularly interesting is Conrail's dissection of the drinking habits of the three branches of the three commuter lines that used to be operated by the New Haven and Penn Central. New Haven riders prefer white wine to Scotch, the next best seller. Hudson division drinkers consume more vodka than either white wine or Scotch, and Harlem line commuters prefer beer to everything else. So much for sociology.

## Missouri Wine Winners

SEDALIA, Mo.

Missouri State Fair winners in the wine competition:

**DRY WHITE** — Emigre White, 1974, Mt. Pleasant Vineyard, Augusta, Mo.; Aurore, St. James Winery, St. James, Mo.; Gasconade White, Stone Hill Wine Co., Hermann, Mo.

**DRY RED** — Emigre Red, 1973, Mt. Pleasant Vineyard; Norton's Seedling, Stone Hill Wine Co.; Meramec, Peaceful Bend Vineyard, Steelville, Mo.

**DRY ROSE** — Emigre Rose, 1976, Mt. Pleasant Vineyard; Rose, Stone Hill Wine Co.; Rose, Rosati Winery, St. James, Mo.

**SWEET WHITE** — Niagara, Weston Wine Co., Weston, Mo.; Niagara, Stone Hill Wine Co.; White Concord, 1975, Mt. Pleasant Vineyard.

**SWEET RED** — Bardenheier's

Old Fashioned Grape, Bardenheier's Wine Cellars, St. Louis; Concord, Stone Hill Wine Co.; Old Fashioned Concord, Rosati Winery.

**SWEET ROSE** — Bardenheier's Pink Catawba, Bardenheier Wine Cellars; Catawba, Stone Hill Wine Co.; Mt. Pleasant Rose, 1974, Mt. Pleasant Vineyard.

**LIMITED PRODUCTION RED** (less than 500 gallons in one year) — Cynthianna, 1976, Mt. Pleasant Vineyard; Bardenheier Baco Noir, Bardenheier Wine Cellars; Natural Burgundy, Green Valley Vineyards, Portland, Mo.

**FRUIT AND BERRY** — Apple Wine, Weston Wine Cellars, Weston, Mo.; Peachy Vino, Stone Hill Wine Co.; Blackberry Wine, St. James Winery.

**SPARKLING** — Pink Champagne, St. James Winery. (only entry).

# about wine...

**AUL ZIMMERMAN**  
The restaurant was dark and sub-  
with off-black lighting and the  
of prices you don't expect in St.  
s. The food was very, very good.  
was, oh, maybe two weeks ago.  
humbled through the wine list at  
ony's — that was the name of the  
e — and it was nicely chosen, and  
I saw a listing for 1973 Miraclair  
Montelle Vineyards, Augusta,  
At \$8.75 it was the cheapest red  
e on the list. Never in my life had I  
ted a Missouri wine. Naturally I  
to have it.  
The captain gave me a knowing  
He, as if he and I shared some  
at secret, and when I tasted the  
e I knew why he was smiling.  
eful now . . . it's easy to get  
ried away . . . I don't want to lose  
pective . . . but let me say that I  
remember the instances when I  
ve run into absolute sleepers;  
ckers, actually . . . I remember

getting a half bottle of 1961 Inglenook  
Red Pinot for \$2.25 at poor, now  
defunct Sayat Nova in the Village. I  
remember the first time I had a really  
fresh Moscato Naturale in a restau-  
rant near Asti. And I remember the  
shock waves that hit me when I tasted  
this Miraclair Red from Missouri.  
A dark, fruity, aromatic wine; a

whole production of this wine — six  
cases. You ought to pay him a  
visit.”  
And that's how, two days later, I  
found myself creeping along the old  
River Bottom Road next to the levee  
by the Missouri River's north shore,  
at 7:45 a.m. I had to make it an early  
one; I had to cover the NCAA basket-

53-year old winemaker named  
Clayton Byers, his 25-year old son,  
Brian, his sister-in-law who used to  
teach English Lit at Southern Illinois  
but now prunes vines, and his wife,  
who teaches first grade at nearby  
Washington, “the corn cob pipe capital  
of the U.S.”  
I've heard stories like that of Mr.

wine maker. He checked out vineyard  
sites in the Napa Valley . . . “\$5000 an  
acre for undeveloped land, and noth-  
ing really to prove there,” he says. He  
checked out the lower Rio Grande,  
where he could plant a heavy coarse  
grape called the Black Malvaise, and  
with spectacular success produce a  
wine something like those of Algeria.

He planted 54 varieties of Fren  
Hybrids, unwanted children  
France, but capable of fine quality  
the U.S. He experimented. He kept  
production low, concentrating on  
yield-per-acre one third that of C  
lifornia or France. His first crush  
that '73 Miraclair Red was even me  
carefully done . . . only half his n  
mal wine-to-acre ratio, a verital  
Chateau d'Yquem of red wines. T  
haunting taste I couldn't pin do  
came from a grape called Bur  
7705, a rare and delicate grape, di  
cult to cultivate.

## Never in my life had I tasted a Missouri wine

blend of French Hybrid grapes that  
started off rather soft and pleasant  
and gradually picked up a haunting  
kind of taste . . . hypnotic, actually  
. . . you just wanted to keep drinking  
more and more. A wine in perfect  
balance and harmony. A song, a gem  
— and Missouri yet! Hey, what the  
hell's going on there?

ball finals in St. Louis, 50 miles away,  
that night.  
It was a creepy feeling. The flood  
waters had formed pools alongside  
the road; a heavy fog was rising like  
steam. It reminded me of the Ever-  
glades. I expected to see an alligator  
come crawling out.  
On the bluffs overlooking a broad  
plain that leads to the Missouri, I  
found Montelle Vineyards. Five acres  
of vines. A small, rough-hewn winery,  
a farmhouse and a neat little chalet, a

Eyers before. I've heard it from Dick  
Graff of Chalone, who simply couldn't  
stand working in a bank any more,  
and Domaine Dujac's Jacques  
Sysses, who got tired of the Parisian  
high life. These people are dedicated  
and single-minded, and their purity of  
purpose is reflected in their wines.  
And so it was with Mr. Byers, who  
sent most of his life as a newspaper-  
man and field man for various social  
service programs. He got bitten by  
te bug. He went from wine buff to

Then he tuned in on the Northern  
Missouri River, once a hotbed of  
small wineries, until prohibition killed  
all that. He found a farm with an  
abandoned patch of land that had been  
cleared but never planted in vines.  
Buffalo grass and wild onions — but  
what soil! Pure glacial, high-mineral  
loess, and if you went down deep  
enough you struck a vein of Ordovi-  
cian limestone. When he turned the  
topsoil he found arrowheads and  
relics of the Osage and Illini Indians.  
He had found his place.

We tasted two of his whites —  
1974-'75 blend of four hybrids. It ha  
kind of softness that grows on y  
Then a '76 . . . biting, more tart, ve  
young. Then his '77 red, in bary  
Lighter than that fabulous '73, I  
bearing the hints of that Burdin ch  
acter.

I spoke to Anthony Amaritto, the  
owner. What's with Montelle Vine-  
yards? “Owned by a guy named  
Clayton Byers,” he said. “We got his

This was eight years ago. He exper-  
imented with grape varieties. The  
humidity was too high for the Europe-  
an viniferas, the Chardonnays and  
Rieslings. He wanted nothing to do  
with the Concord grapes, which grow  
like mad but taste like grape jam —  
and which form the bases of the big  
Missouri tourist-trap wineries on the  
road to the Ozarks.

When I got back to St. Louis t  
afternoon I went to Anthony's a  
begged the owner to let me buy  
couple of bottles. “You went to  
vineyard,” he said, and I nodded.  
sold me two — at cost — \$4.99 per  
I am looking at those bottles now,  
I write this. I am reminded of  
words of Charles G. Finney, in “  
Circus of Dr. Leo”: “You wonder  
the fantasies that dwell in mu  
waters.”  
And on bluffs overlooking the M  
souri.

# His Success Is

# Hanging On The Vine

By Jack Rice  
Of the Post-Dispatch Staff

The sign at the foot of the hill identifies what is at the top: "Montelle Vineyard, U.S. Bonded Winery (Mo.) No. 100." The sign is three miles west of Augusta, on the bottom road beside the Missouri River, and fronts a 20-acre parcel that Clayton Byers traveled 19,000 miles to find, about 35 miles from where he was living in Clayton.

Byers was public relations officer for the Human Development Corporation at the time but it was not the customary round-about style of public relations work that led him to ramble on so. He was a man on a search mission, looking for a place to plant vines, harvest grapes and make wine. He knew about the wine-soaked past of the Augusta area, and its nineteenth-century German settlers. At the height of its pre-Prohibition culture the town had 11 wine cellars, fermenting the fruit of the vineyards that took well to the glacier-endowed hills on the north side of the Missouri.

Knowledge of Augusta did not satisfy Byers. He felt obliged to do research. In 1967 and 1968 he and his wife, Nissell, went to every area in the United States that had survived the Volstead Act and made a name for itself as wine-making country, while the Missouri area had let its name die with the vines.

"We wore out a Volvo station wagon, looking," said Byers. "We went to up-state New York, the Finger Lakes area. We went to Lower Michigan — we went to New Mexico, in the area of the Franklin Mountains; we went to four sections in Ohio, and we were helped there by reading the research work that's been done on wine at Ohio State, and we went to the Napa Valley in California, of course."

The "of course" of the Napa Valley is its long romance as a wine-maker's natural habitat. Everything grows in the Napa Valley's welcoming air, except

subdivisions, to the frustration and disgust of developers from San Francisco. They tried, but in the late 1940s the people who liked the valley the way it was out-lobbied the city slickers. The state legislature declared the area an "agricultural conservancy district," meaning that the pears and the apples and, most of all the grape vines, were safe from bulldozing.

The Byerses stayed in Napa Valley three weeks. They called on 14 wine makers and two of them, Joe Heitz and Robert Mondavi, have been instructive to Byers. Another, Justin Miller, has been inspiring. Some friends of Byers think it is charming, as is natural to the man, and quaint, for him to make a new career as a wine maker at the age of 51, but look forward to grieving for him. They know it will not work. Byers knows no such thing, and that is one of the values of having met Miller.

Miller is an Englishman. He is a well-aged, well-traveled Englishman. He was a test pilot for the Royal Flying Corps, during the first World War. Byers asked him one midnight, over an emptying bottle of wine, "What did you fly?" Miller said, "All of them," and showed Byers a room with wall-loads of pictures and plaques from the white-silk-scarf era of aviation. Miller the aviator took a far longer way around to the wine business than did Byers the P-R man. Miller joined the British Foreign Service and was posted to the South Sea islands.

He was a long way from England and such glories of Empire as imported ports and sherries. He pined away for decades in the beauty of islands made miserable by wines made from coconut milk, papaya, guava, breadfruit, pineapple. As every Army, Navy and Marine Corps veteran wine-taster knows, the native wines of the islands are excellent when used as torpedo juice. So Miller dreamed of grapes, and when he retired from the Foreign Service he came to the Napa Valley. He developed what he labeled "Millerway Wine," and he said it was Sparkling. The government said it



Paul Ovaitt of Jefferson

was carbonated and must be identified as such, like soda pop.

"He sued," Byers said, "and as far as I know is still carrying it on. The result won't be felt outside the valley; it's a Don Quixote war."

Byers smiled. He approves the wars of Miller, and of Don Quixote; he is their kinsman. He has had such wars. He once was asked by Internal Revenue men if he really thought they should take his wine-making seriously, as a business, not just a hobby, and what did he mean by allowing the wine to loaf about, doing nothing but grow older, and presenting it as a dependent, like child support? That ended happily, for Byers, with the granting of the Bonded Winery status. Now all he has to do is sell the public. He has grand plans of how to go about that.

He explained his plan, bigger than anything Miller or Don Quixote dreamed, as we sat in his office, and

## Brother's, But Not Her Problem

Dear Ann Landers: My brother and his girlfriend have been going together for over seven years. Mary Ann is a devout Catholic and Mark is Jewish, but not very devout. They are both in their late 20s and Mark is well off financially.

The problem is how they will raise their children. It isn't that Mark is so dedicated to the Jewish faith, he just says he doesn't want his children to be raised as gentiles. Mary Ann feels this is very unfair under the circumstances.

Please don't tell me to MYOB Mark

ann landers



dence that nonsmokers who breathe the air polluted by smokers for extended periods of time (weekends, and nights, especially) have to be friendly to smokers.

ADVICE TO MILLIONS WHO RUSH THROUGH LIFE

Take time to think — thoughts are the source of power.

Take time to play — play is the secret of perpetual youth.

Take time to read — Reading is the fountain of wisdom.

Take time to pray — prayer can be a rock of strength in time of trouble.

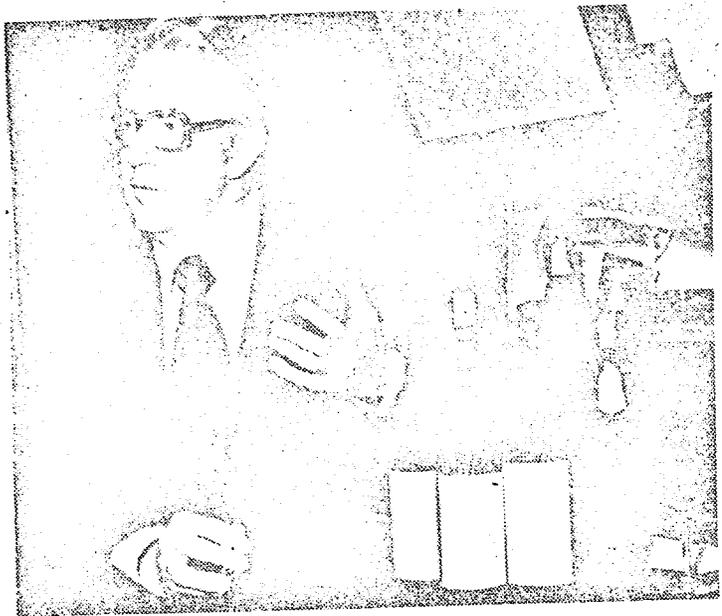
Take time to love — loving is what makes living worthwhile.



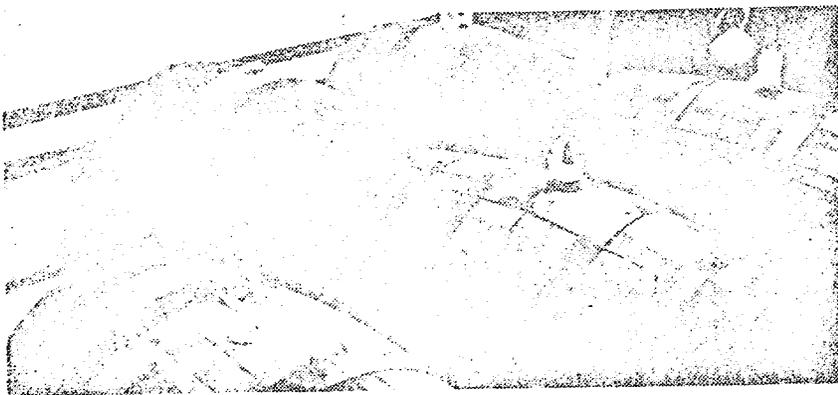
Five acres of vines grow on a hillside with a 35-degree slope at the Montelle Vineyard.



City is a worker in the vineyard.



Clayton Byers, with proof of his arguments at hand, talks of the satisfaction of making good wine.



On a hot day it is a cool pleasure to watch wine age in a cellar. (Post-Dispatch Photos by Ted Dargan)

tasting room, and library on one of the several hilltops of Montelle Vineyard. The building is new, one of the pre-packaged chalets city people put up for their weekends in the country. On one wall are architect's drawings of the winery. Byers hopes to start building soon. By soon he means 1980. He has the soul of the true wine maker; he will not rush things.

His wines have two outlets in St. Louis, the European Import Corp. on North Bemiston, and the Cheshire Cellars on Clayton Road. A third outlet is Droege's Market. That is at Washington, Mo. In the Byers grand design, the next distant move is to Washington, D. C., as the gateway to conquest of the wine-buying world at large. If he can find a market in Georgetown, and amid the

striped pants, he knows where to go from there: "Maybe, 10 years from now, to London, because it is the wine crossroads of the world. If we could be accepted in the wine-consuming ranks of London, that's — well, that's winning the Derby."

Washington and London are not yet ready for the Byers wine. While he keeps the folks there waiting, he is auditioning his wines with the 9-0-5 people here. That is the least he can do for them, in simple justice and in gratitude. They lured him to where he is today, on a hilltop in Augusta. In 1961, when he was public relations director for the United Fund, Byers went to a 9-0-5 store for a bottle of dinner wine. As a campaigner for the needy, he made what he considered a proper buy, a modest little

Riesling for a modest little \$1.29.

"It was a '59 Berncasteler," said Byers. "It was excellent. I could say that little bottle of wine was the start of my interest, but actually it is a matter of that wine making me look back, as much as it led me to looking forward. I remembered sneaking, at the age of 10, to the cellar of our family farm in Michigan for the dandelion wine. After the Riesling, Nissell and I sampled more complicated stuff, and it became like a moving train; you can't get off. Not the alcoholic zip, though I appreciate that along the way, but what the wines represent.

"Wines are products of so many different lands, so many different soils, so many different people. I began reading books on wines, I read on wines an average of two hours every night, and by 1966 we had decided that to make wine ourselves would be joining a world-wide fraternity of men."

He joined the fraternity at Augusta in 1969. He called on Lucian and Eva Dressel, at Augusta. The Dressels were resurrecting the Mount Pleasant Winery.

"I asked Lucian if he would help us," Byers said. "I asked him over a bottle of Meursault I had brought, a wine calculated to encourage co-operation, and I also knew he would see through my guile. Lucian has helped us, and we found this land, virtually identical to his with 20-foot topsoil, within two months; it went with the swiftness of being destined."

He poured more of his red Montelle for me. It is a Big wine. To Destiny. It never tasted better."

# Missouri's Wine-Soaked Pa

By Nancy Mayer

Once upon a time, last century, St. Louis was a wine capital of the United States. A world-famous wine called Cook's Imperial was produced in Missouri. Its label read, "Cook's Imperial. America's Largest Wine Company. Unexcelled purity, flavor and bouquet. Imported in China, Japan, South America and Europe."

Missouri, then called the Imperial State, ranked second only to California as the largest wine-producing state. A native Missouri Riesling grape produced wine that reminded early German settlers of the Rhine Valley wines. The grape was first cultivated at Stone Hill Winery in Hermann, Mo., which at one time produced one-twelfth of the nation's wine.

The center of Missouri's wine-soaked past was Augusta, where grapes growing in the glacier-deposited soil near the banks of the Missouri River supported 11 wineries. The largest, Mount Pleasant Winery, won medals for its wine at the Columbian Exhibition in 1893 and at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904.

Wines carried the name of Missouri far and wide until Prohibition in 1920. In reference books on the history of wine making in America, the brief sections on Missouri summarize

the last 80 years of Missouri wine-making: "Missouri wineries never recovered from the Prohibition."

THAT STATEMENT was premature. The wines of Missouri's past were not nearly as good as they are today. During the last 10 years, Missouri vinters have been experimenting with blends of American and French hybrid grapes to produce quality wines. Contrasting with Missouri's early wines, which had a wild, harsh flavor, some contemporary Missouri wines taste like great table wines.

Although many Missouri vinters still produce sweet native wines, some of them are working on quality dinner wines, in the spirit of California and European wines. "Until recently, all Missouri wines had a foxy flavor that is undesirable in a good dinner wine," says Al Luggner, head wine buyer for Nine-O-Five liquor stores in St., Louis. "But there has been a remarkable improvement in the wines. (Missouri vinters) have done pretty well at producing a good dinner wine."

Missouri wines don't sell as well as European and California wines, Luggner says, but, "It is the goal of Missouri wines to compare with them."

Missouri vinters are learning to compete without imitating. Millard Gohen, president of Grape Expectations restaurant, says, "They learned it in California about five or six years ago, and now Missouri vinters are learning—that one should try to make the best wine from the product available, rather than make a poor imitation of a great wine."

At Grape Expectations, Cohen



serves 40 different wines by the glass. He says he will not serve any domestic wines labeled with a generic name. For instance, no American wine called Burgundy, Chablis or Champagne is served, because those are names of grapes grown in those regions of France.

"IT'S LIKE a Detroit-made Rolls Royce," Cohen says, shrugging his shoulders. "Missouri vinters are learning to be proud of the fact that they are from Missouri and proud of their methods of manufacturing. They should promote a good Missouri

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# ist, Bubbly Future



small, old-world winery that concentrates on the production of limited quantities of quality wine. "I wanted to produce the kind of wines I like to drink," he says. "And I can't stand any sweet, cough-syrupy kinds of wine."

Dressel was the first Missouri vintner to buy French hybrid grapes to produce a dry wine. Since imported grapes are restricted, he bought grapes from a nursery owned by Philip Wagner, editor of the Baltimore Sun, who brought European grapes to the United States in the 1930s. The dry table wines, made from Missouri Riesling and French hybrid grapes at Mount Pleasant, won all five dry wine awards at last year's Missouri State Fair.

**DURING** A tour of his winery, Dressel explains his machinery comes from France; although his 25-acre winery is as large as a wine-producing French chateau, it is tiny compared with American wineries. He laughs and says, "Gallo loses as much wine in evaporation in one day as we produce in an entire year."

Dressel's neighbor, vintner Clayton Byers of Montelle Winery, welcomes customers to come see what he jokingly refers to as "one of the most primitive wineries in the world."

A newcomer to the world of wines, Byers was in public relations in St. Louis when life became "obsessed with wine." Traveling to New York, Michigan, New Mexico and California to look for a place to produce wines, Byers finally settled in Augusta, about 35 miles from his home in Clayton.

Byers makes his wine in a 100-year-old cedar press, updated with a two-horse-power motor. The wines are aged in "what used to be the laundry room and smokehouse," he says. The young wines lie in whisky barrels, which Byers charmingly refers to by name,

wine instead of marketing a second-class wine that rides along on someone else's coat-tail," says Cohen, a taster and judge of Missouri wines at the Missouri State Fair.

For example, Cohen says Jim Hoffher at St. James Winery produces a sparkling wine that compares with the great sparkling wines of the world, but he wouldn't call it champagne.

Lucian Dressel is another well-known vintner. He and his wife, Eva, reopened Mount Pleasant winery in Augusta, Mo., in 1968, because, Dressel says, "It seemed logical and necessary to reopen a winery in Augusta, considering its history before Prohibition." Mount Pleasant offers two sweet Concord wines, but it specializes in European or California-type dry wines.

Dressel's goal was to have a

Please turn to page 28

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PRIZE WINNERS \_ ST. LOUIS WORLDS FAIR, 1903

(from Worlds Fair Archives, Jefferson Memorial Building, St. Louis)

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Otto Fuhr Winery, Augusta, Missouri

Alfred Nahm, Augusta, Missouri

Mount Pleasant Wine Company, Augusta, Missouri

Stone Hill Wine Co., Hermann, Mo.



**Baxter Cherty Silt Loam**

# SOILS of MISSOURI

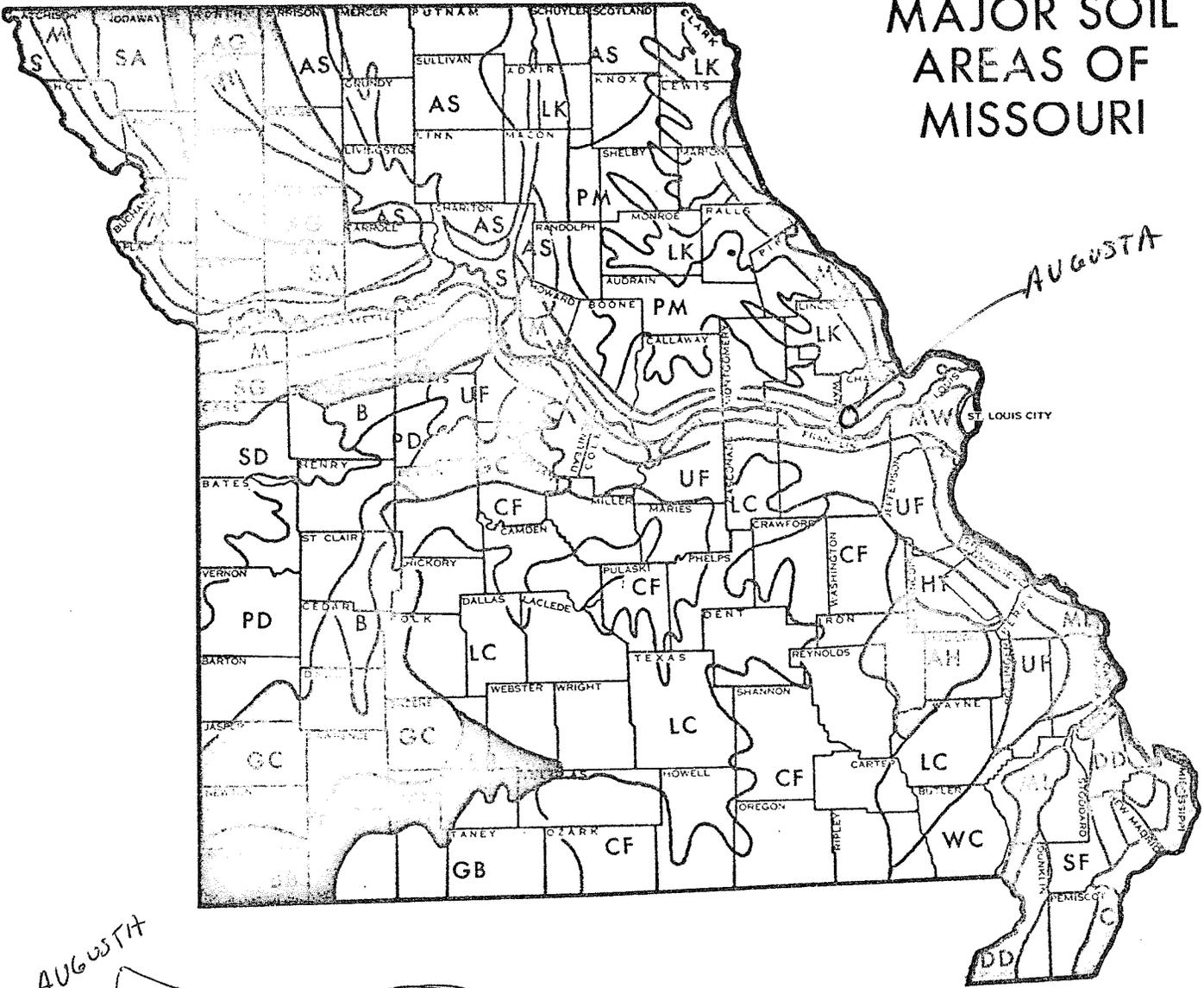
A Guide to Their Identification  
and Interpretation



**Menfro Silt Loam**

Extension Division  
University of Missouri

# MAJOR SOIL AREAS OF MISSOURI



## LEGEND

### NORTHERN MISSOURI LOESS AND LOESS-TILL LANDSCAPES

Prairie and Prairie-Forest Transition Natural Vegetation

- MA** Marshall-Knox  
Sharpsburg-Grundy-Adair-Shelby  
Sharpsburg-Grundy-Ladoga-Pershing  
Grundy-Pershing
- AS** Adair-Shelby-Grundy-Lagonda  
Adair-Shelby-Seymour-Edina and  
Armstrong-Gara-Pershing
- PM** Putnam-Mexico

Forest Natural Vegetation

- MW** Menfro-Winfield-Weldon
- LK** Lindley-Keswick-Hatton

### SOUTHERN MISSOURI RESIDUAL AND LOESS-RESIDUAL LANDSCAPES

Prairie and Prairie-Forest Transition Natural Vegetation

- SD** Summit-Newtonia-Parson-Dennis
- PD** Parsons-Dennis-Bates
- GC** Gerald-Craig-Eldon and  
Newtonia-Baxter

Forest Natural Vegetation

- B** Bolivar-Mandeville
- GB** Gasconade-Bodine-Clarksville
- LC** Lebanon-Nixa-Clarksville and  
Hobson-Clarksville
- CF** Clarksville-Fullerton-Talbott
- AH** Ashe-Tilsit-Hagerstown
- HT** Hagerstown-Tilsit
- UF** Union-Fullerton-McGirk
- MEM** Memphis-Loring

### ALLUVIAL VALLEY LANDSCAPES

Missouri and Upper Mississippi Rivers

- SH** Sarpy-Haynie-Onawa-Wabash

### Southeastern Missouri

- C** Commerce-Hayti-Caruthersville
- DD** Dexter-Dubbs-Dundee-Boskett
- SF** Sharkey-Alligator-Forrestdale
- WC** Waverly-Calhoun