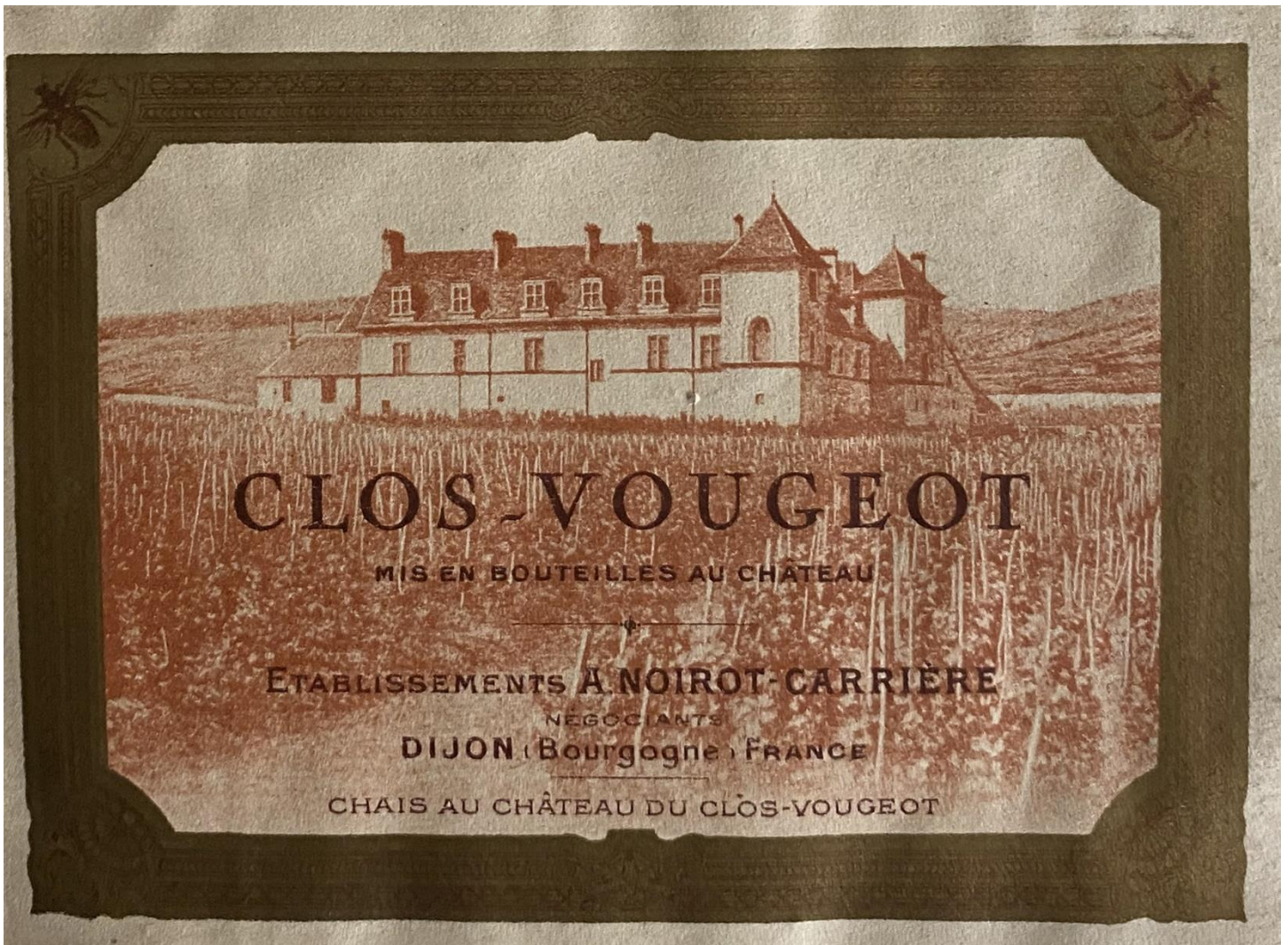


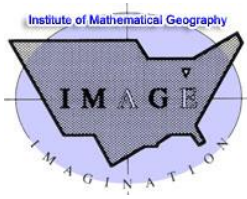
Wine Label Booklet



Sandra Lach Arlinghaus

Introduction

In the early to mid-1950s, I was fortunate to live in Paris, France, with my parents, Donald F. and Alma S. Lach. My father was a Professor of History at the University of Chicago and held research grants to go to Europe and use the great libraries there in his quest of the influence of Asia on Europe. We were based in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale for him) and were there in 1949-50; 1952-53, and 1956. When my father spent days in the library, my mother went first to millinery school (and hats she created featured on magazine covers) and then in 1950 began working for the Grand Diplôme at Le Cordon Bleu. I went to French schools or stayed with the French family from whom we rented a small set of rooms. Among other things, my parents soon began drinking and buying bottles



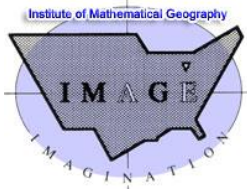
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of wine. I learned to drink it (at the age of 6 years), along with the French children we lived with, as half and half—half wine and half Evian.

By nature, I am a collector; so were both of my parents. Collections are fun while they are being created; there is a sense of satisfaction at recognizing and completing series or sets. I had been collecting stamps and coins since I was four. As my parents collected wine, I enjoyed both the outside of the bottle as well as its contents. By 1956, at the age of 12, I had extended collecting interests elsewhere; in addition to world-wide (not just USA) stamps and coins, I had added maps as items to collect, and finally, in 1956, wine labels. I had learned handwriting in both French (Petit Ecole du Pere Castor; Ecole Alsacienne) and American schools (University of Chicago Laboratory Schools) and beginning calligraphy (using templates and Indian Ink to create lettering), as well as regional history and paired geography. Wine labels offered a unique collecting experience within that context. Adult collecting experience combined maps and stamps (in articles in the *Carto-Philatelist*, (1993, 1994 Arlinghaus) guided by the wise and kind hand of Miklos Pinther) and an appreciation of the difficulty of communicating the content of a map in a physically tiny area. The wine label book, however, represented the first effort that led me to develop an appreciation for the deeper values a collection might hold; as something one could look back on and have it evoke a sense not only of the circumstances of acquisition of an item but also of the geography, culture, and history surrounding it. What appears below is the wine label booklet I created in 1956 (at the age of 12), on quadrilled paper in a spiral-bound 'cahier' from school. Comments added during the past year offer a few reflections.



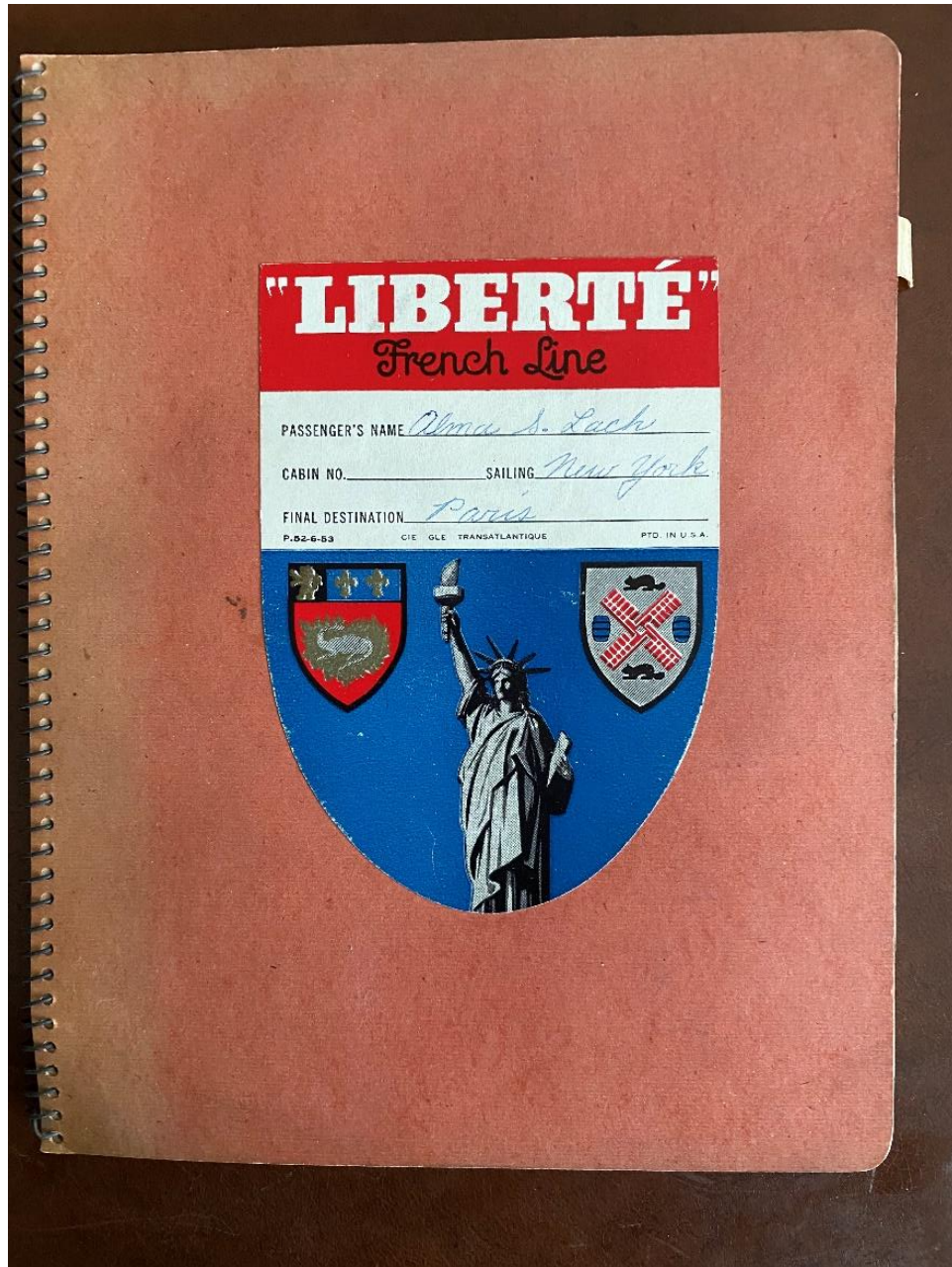
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Wine label booklet



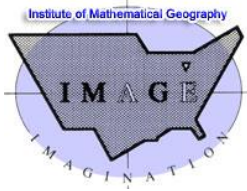
Luggage sticker, I filled out to indicate the start of the trip.



Miscellaneous luggage tags; the one on the right has a hole punched in it and a string tied to it that used to be tied into the spiral binding and used as a bookmark. That tag also contains the letter 'S' that I made using my recently acquired skills at using Indian Ink and a lettering template.



Two red table wines we often had for casual dinners. Quadrilled paper made lining up lettering easy; notice however, that even though it is relatively easy, still there were challenges to a beginner. The paper wrinkled as the glue dried out over the years. Rubber cement was used.



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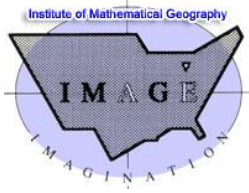
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Two more casual wines.



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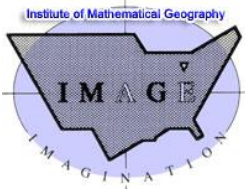
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Another casual wine on the left; a better wine that we found later, on the right, and enjoyed often.

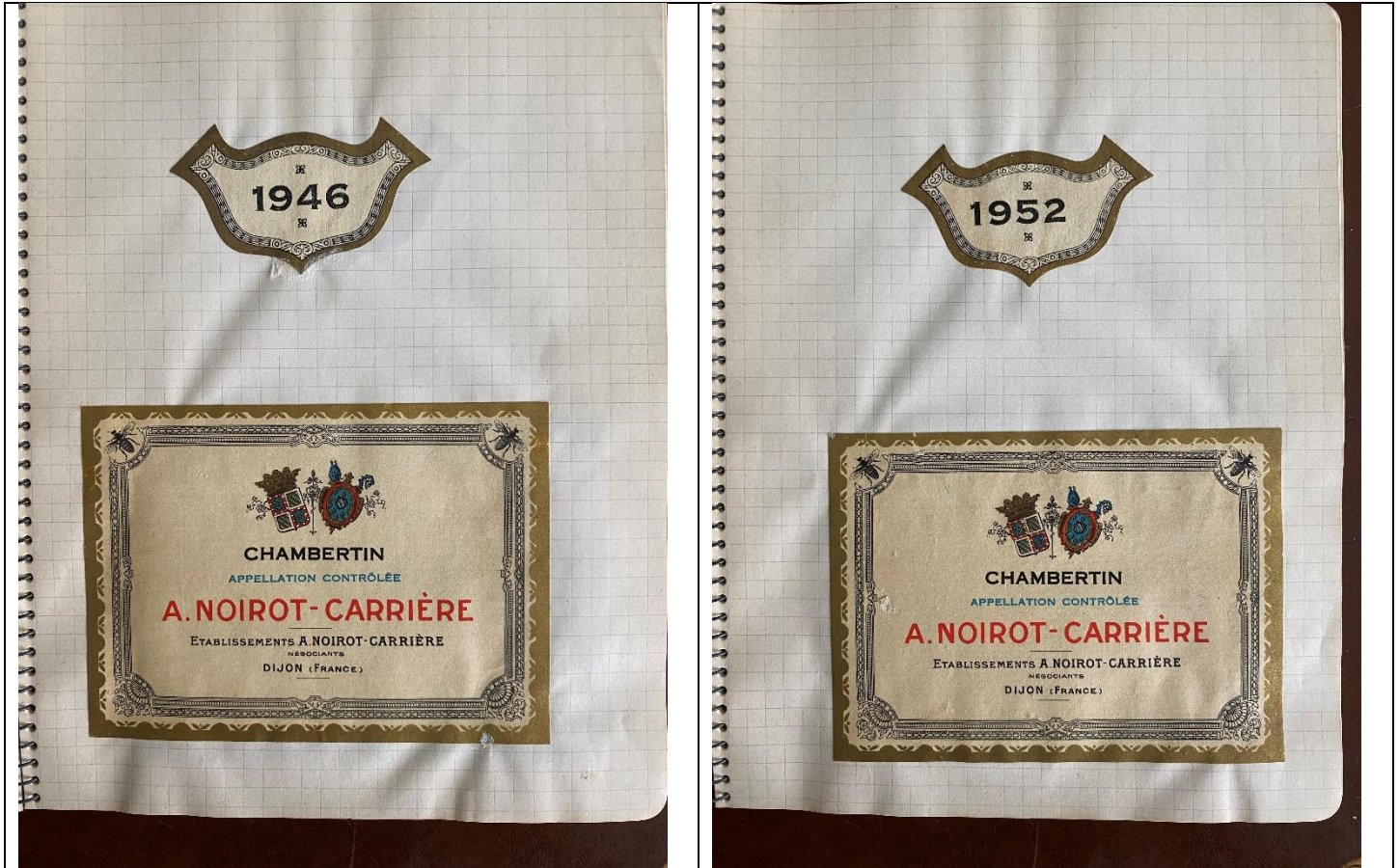


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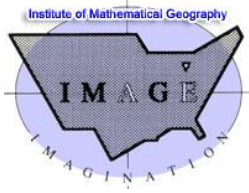
Two special wines, for Christmas and New Year's dinners, 1956.



A nice wine (left label) enjoyed on occasion (but more than once). The right label is the most special (and most outstanding) wine we had. It was for celebration when Mom had completed her Cordon Bleu examination for the Grand Diplome. Six years later, in 1962, we were to reflect once again on this particular bottle when Mom became a Chevalier de Tastevin, knighted as such in a ceremony at the Clos de Vougeot. She enjoyed wearing her Legion d'Honneur ribbons and rosette on the Paris bus and elsewhere to get preferential treatment. See the Appendix for related materials.



The wine on the left became the favorite daily table wine of my father. The wine on the right was a cheap wine, bought for the label (which I found interesting because of the bottle of wine 'inside' the man).



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Two nice wines we enjoyed periodically.



Both excellent wines enjoyed more than once. The wine on the left is not classified correctly. It should be in the white wines section. To stay true to the actual book, the error is retained.



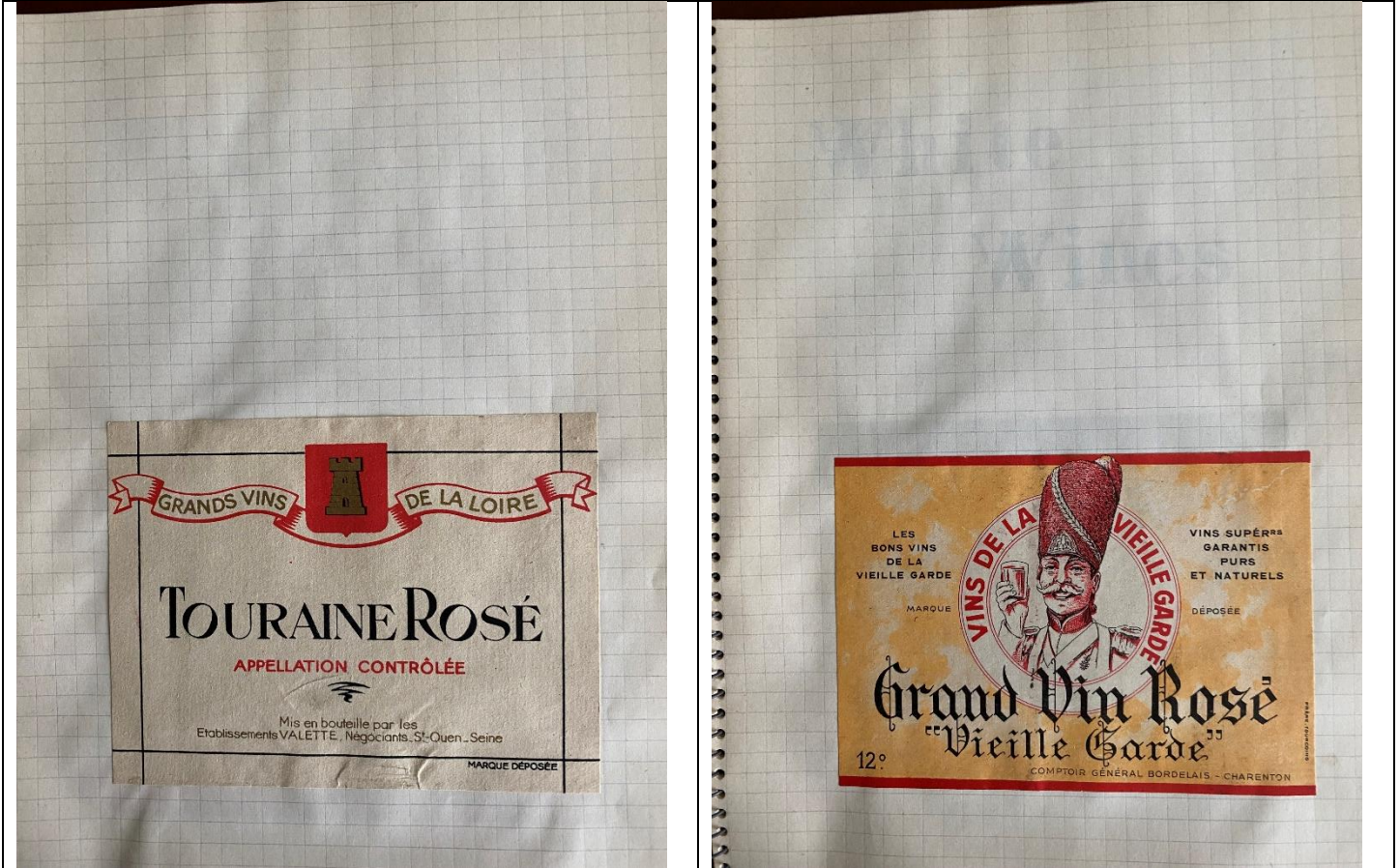
Another cheaper wine on the left and a better one on the right. It appears I enjoyed wine labels that showed human figures in association with wine. I also saved my allowance so I could purchase bottles (or have them purchased for me) that I could afford.



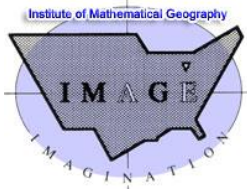
A table wine on the left and another of my purchases on the right.



We did not have many rose wines but did enjoy them on occasion, paired with appropriate food. We drank wine with food; not by itself.



The label on the right is another of my purchases; I had discovered a 'series' to collect.



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The focus of wine was on red wine. We had white wine with fish and other food and it was often the one on the right. My use of the lettering template has improved; the base line is straighter than it was earlier ("W" was difficult with ink-bleed problems); years later I would learn to appreciate the use of a beveled straightedge and T-square when I took cartography at Vassar College (with Elaine Bjorklund) using equipment from my school in France, and later as a graduate student in Geography at Wayne State University (Jack A. Licate, Advisor), and then at The University of Michigan (Waldo R. Tobler, Advior; Waldo R. Tobler and John D. Nystuen, Dissertation Co-Chairs).



I loved the after-dinner ceremony of B&B (Brandy and Benedictine). Along with French children, I had a 'canard'—not a 'duck' but a sugar cube soaked in brandy and set on fire. Sometimes, I also enjoyed the beverage, straight (as a twelve-year-old).



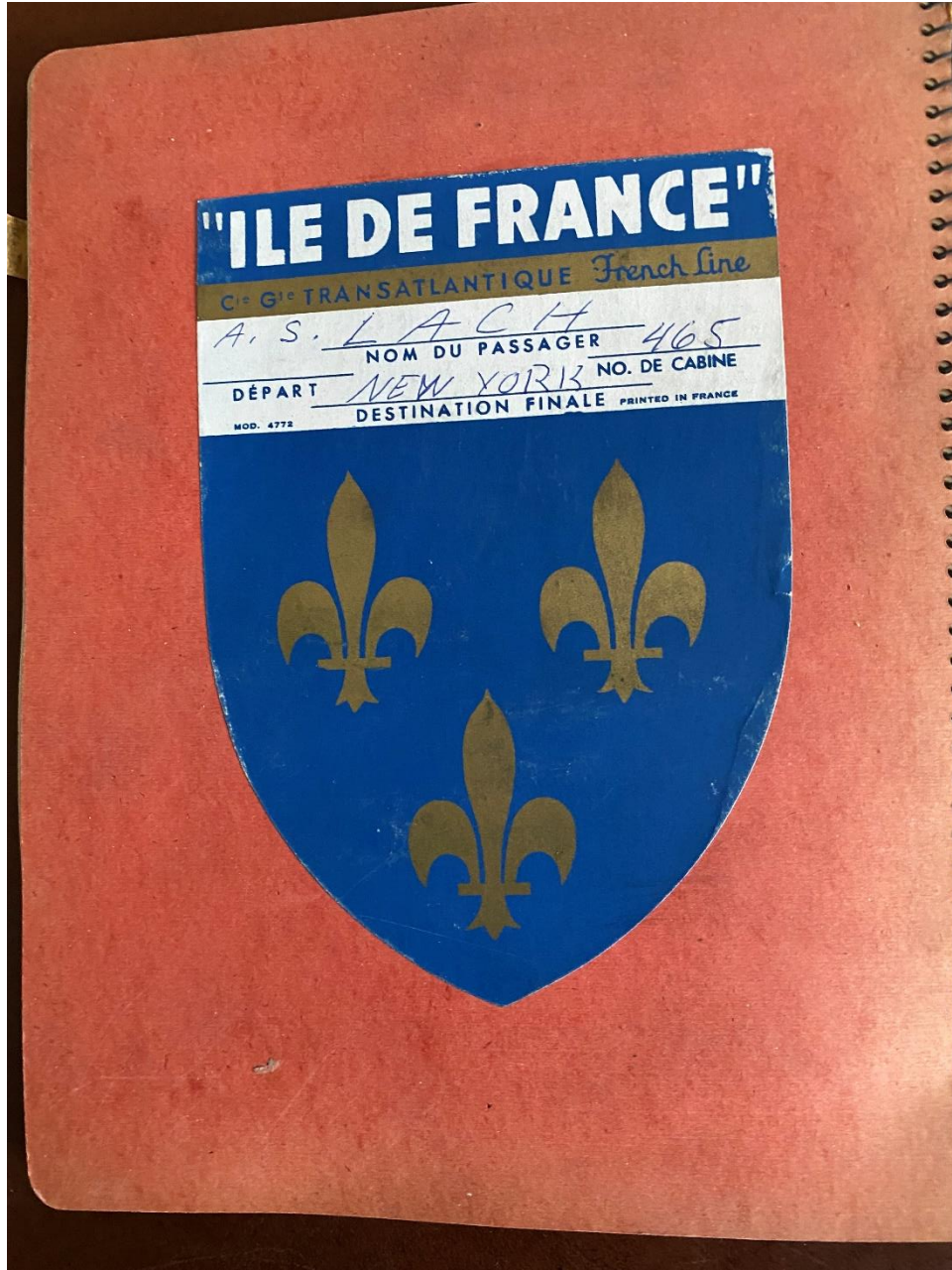
My parents routinely drank Remy Martin Cognac and on occasion, Delamain. Martell and Courvoisier were for 'canards'. We drank Evian every day (it came only in glass bottles). Tap water was not viewed as potable. My father refused to drink Vichy Water (the competition to Evian). There was no milk for me to drink. It was not pasteurized: one took a metal milk container to the local 'alimentation' and had some milk ladeled into it. There was no refrigeration in our home so we shopped twice a day. My mother would not allow me to drink unpasteurized milk; I refused to drink powdered milk, reconstituted with Evian, that she purchased at the PX in the American Embassy. I was quite happy with Evian and wine. Sometimes my father would give me beer when he came back from the library (timed with my exit from school) and took me out to a local café.



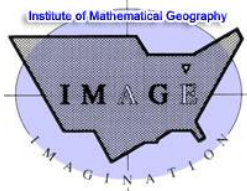
Cold carbonated beverages (soft drinks) were available at the local café. We did not have them at home because we had no way to keep them cold. The orange label meant flavored with orange.



The yellow label meant flavored with lemon. There were only two flavors. These three carbonated beverages my father was willing to order for me from the waiter. He steadfastly refused, however, to order the competition drink to Vittel—it was called “Psscht” in imitation of the noise the bottle made when the cap was popped off it. The letter ‘P’ was silent and the word was pronounced somewhat like ‘sheet’; evidently it reminded my father of a nasty word in English. He allowed me to order it and I did so frequently and giggled as I did so and watched my father look embarrassed. The waiters never figured it out.



Return trip, luggage sticker. Time to reflect on the different times in a different era and a different culture; never perfect, but always interesting, if one chose to focus on finding the merits, rather than the drawbacks, of the indigenous culture.



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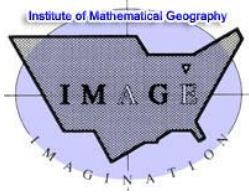
Appendix



Diploma, Le Cordon Bleu, Academie de Cuisine de Paris, Alma Lach, June 29, 1956

Alma Lach Papers

<https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/collex/exhibits/almalach/le-cordon-bleu/>



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Brooch worn by Alma at her celebration/diploma award at Le Cordon Bleu. Inlaid stone mosaic (probably Italian from 1952-53).

Diploma, Le Cordon Bleu, Academie de Cuisine de Paris, Alma Lach, June 29, 1956

Alma Lach Papers

<https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/collex/exhibits/almalach/le-cordon-bleu/>

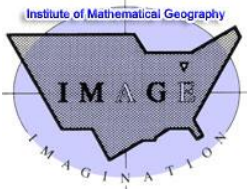
Madame Elisabeth Brassart, Proprietress, Le Cordon Bleu, left. Alma Lach center. Unknown woman, right.



Certificate: Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin, 1962

Alma Lach Papers

<https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/collex/exhibits/almalach/honors-and-accolades/>



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Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin, Award 1962

Alma Lach Papers

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Display case showing certificate and award above. The two wine glasses on the right are also part of the Chevalier du Tastevin paraphernalia and have the appropriate seal engraved on them.

Alma Lach's Kitchen, Transforming Taste

Exhibition on view from Sept. 19, 2016-Jan. 6, 2017 – The Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center. The University of Chicago Library.

<https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/collex/exhibits/almalach/>