



*The Story
of
Arnaud's*

Arnaud's Restaurant
Dans le Coeur du Vieux Carré de la Nouvelle Orléans

The Story of Arnaud's

Dedicated to

The Memory of its Founder

COUNT ARNAUD CAZENAVE

by

Germaine Cazenave Wells

June 27th, 1950

*“Petimus bene vivere
Quod petis hic est”*

ARNAUD'S RESTAURANT

801-825 Bienville Street

New Orleans, Louisiana



*Leon Bertrand Arnaud Cazenave,
founder of Arnaud's*

Count Arnaud Cazenave

It has been said that "the truly civilized man has no enemies." No phrase better describes Arnaud Cazenave, for he was a highly civilized man who made friends at every turn.

He was born in the French village of Bosdarros and he was christened Leon Bertrand Arnaud—a name that was eventually to be shortened to Arnaud and become known in every section of America.

A man's childhood influences his whole life, and Arnaud Cazenave's love of perfection had a firm root in the beauty that surrounded him from his earliest days. For Bosdarros was more than a French village on the outskirts of the famous city of Pau—residence of the Kings of Navarre. It was a village whose charming church and quaint houses were flanked by the grandeur of the Pyrenees and encircled by the beautiful vineyards of France.

Arnaud Cazenave Comes to America

When his fundamental education had been completed in private schools, Arnaud Cazenave was sent to Paris to study at the Lycée Napoleon. There his love of France deepened and that devotion to his native country remained with him all of his life. But he had a gay, adventurous spirit and he also had a great ambition. That ambition was to become a doctor and America beckoned to him as the land of great physicians.

Coming to the United States on the invitation of relatives, he found that before he could enter any school of medicine he must perfect his scanty knowledge of English. He entered St. Stanislaus college in Bay St. Louis and studied in preparation for his medical education. But he soon discovered that the years of study in a medical college would require funds that he did not possess. It was then that he decided to earn money by using his expert knowledge of the vineyards of France to sell

champagne and other wines. Traveling from city to city he came at last to New Orleans and here he found many things that reminded him of his beloved Paris. In this American city which held the flavor of the continent, he decided to live. From then on New Orleans was his home. In this city he married and in this city his only child was born.

When the opportunity presented itself for him to lease the old Absinthe House and open a café, he did not hesitate. His thorough knowledge of French food and his innovation in serving a small bottle of red wine gratis with each meal, attracted a large number of patrons. But he had lived beside the great Pyrenees mountains and he was not content with anything on a small scale. And so he dreamed of owning his own place—a dream that was realized when, in 1920, he bought the building at 811 Bienville street and opened the doors of the now famous Arnaud's Restaurant. The first chef was a woman, Madame Pierre, who knew the secrets of fine French and Spanish cuisines.

Count Arnaud's Success

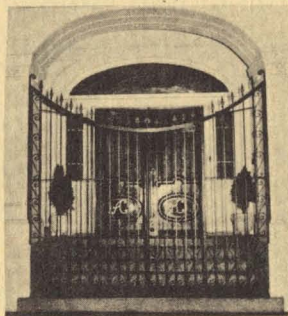
Year after year the prestige of Arnaud's increased—calling for more space—and year after year Arnaud Cazenave extended his property holdings until now they reach along Bienville Street from the corner of Bourbon to within a stone's throw of the corner of Dauphine.

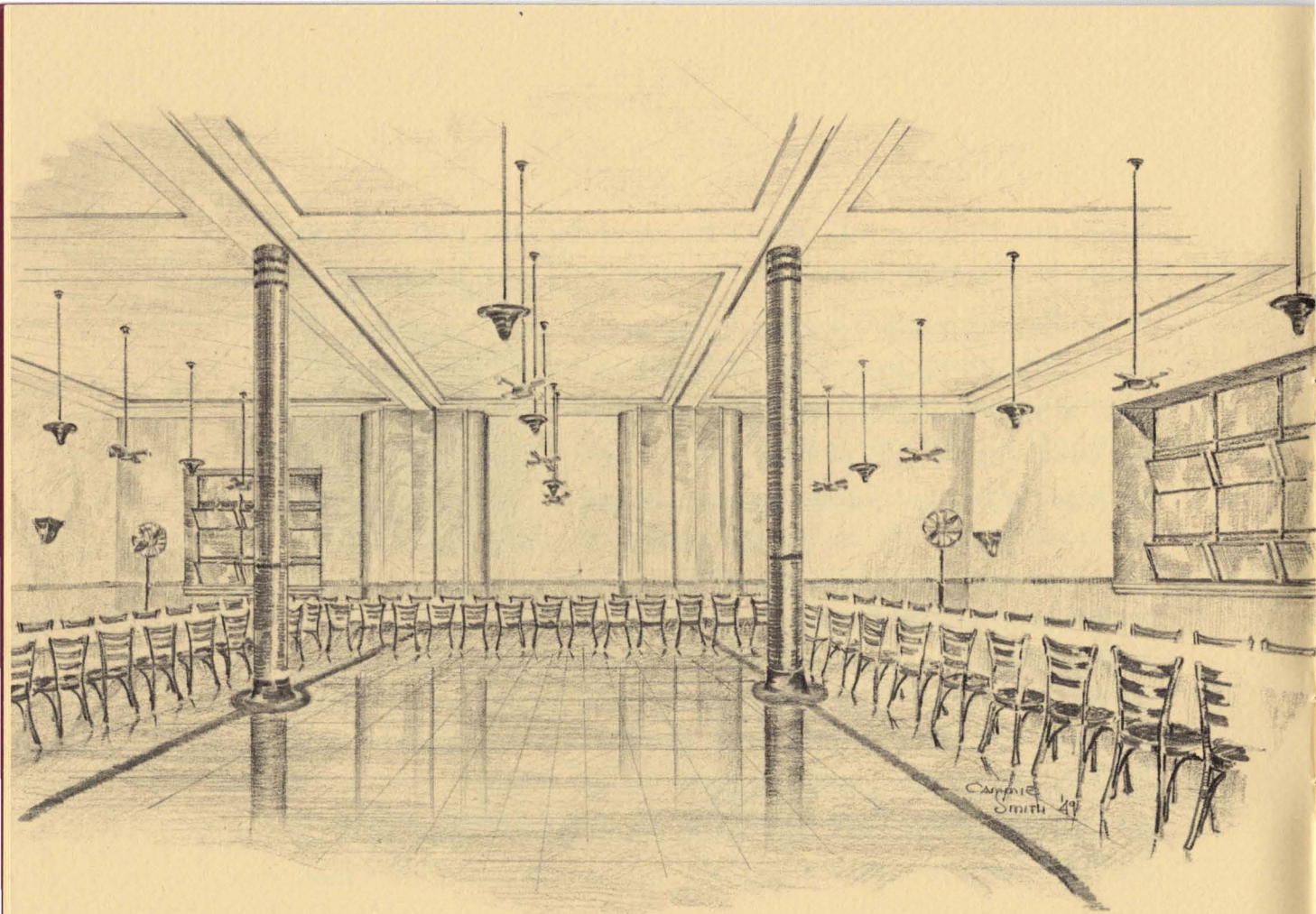
Some will tell you that his amazing success was due to his astuteness in management and planning. Some will tell you his success was due to the fact that he was an epicure and believed cooking was an art and "the soul of festivity at all times and to all ages." Some believe his success rested upon his knowledge of wines and his famous cellar. But all will agree that these things were insignificant when compared with the magical influence of his personality.

His personality has become a legend in New Orleans and many are the tales New Orleans relates about him. Tales of his wit and his ability as a raconteur, tales of the dishes with mysterious, delicious

flavors that he concocted, tales of the never depleted stock of wines chosen by him with infinite care.

Tales of his house (544 Esplanade) which held fine books, fine paintings and fine sculpture—a house lavishly equipped for his family yet containing for his personal use a single room so simple in its furnishings that one had but to enter it to know that the man who called that room his own was a man of meticulous taste. Tales of the multitude of keys kept in that room—each key labeled carefully—and tales of the books by famous authors autographed affectionately to Arnaud Cazenave. Tales of the drawings on his wide, bare table—drawings executed by him with the precision that would have made his hand an excellent surgeon's hand—of the medical books in his glassed book cases, books reflecting his never failing interest in medicine.





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The Count's Room, banquet hall at Arnaud's

Tales of the wardrobe of finely tailored suits worn by him with such distinction that he was known as the best dressed man in New Orleans, of the ever present carnation in his buttonhole and the cigar that he handled with such grace. Tales of the distinguished visitors from Europe and every part of America who would wait for his nightly appearance at 811 Bienville—wait for the moment when he would enter and greet his guests in the courtly manner that earned for him the city's affectionate title of "Count." Tales of old baptismal records in France showed that he might have claimed that title, if he had wished, long before New Orleans bestowed it on him.

But no tale does full justice to Count Arnaud. For it was the combination of many qualities that gave him a firm place in New Orleans' history. It was his graciousness and his dignity; it was his versatility in all subjects; it was his wit and his *joie de vivre*; it was his kindness and his generosity and it was his loyalty to this city, this country and to the glory of his native land, France, that made him a man New Orleans will always remember.

Arnaud's Restaurant Today

When Count Arnaud died the tremendous task of continuing the restaurant was faced by his widow, Mrs. Arnaud Cazenave, and his daughter, Germaine Cazenave Wells. After a year, however, Mrs. Cazenave retired and the entire operation of the restaurant is now in Mrs. Wells' hands.

Inheriting her father's pride in the prestige of Arnaud's, Mrs. Wells declares: "This restaurant was not founded upon shifting sand. It was founded on the determination to serve the public well and give New Orleans a restaurant of international reputation."

Today Arnaud's offers you food and wine according to the fine tradition of excellent service that Count Arnaud insisted upon. Specialties of the place are Count Arnaud's own famous creations and still treasured are the Count's penciled notes on food. An epicure himself, these notes were sent from time to time to his chef and were always



Portrait of Count Arnaud

Two Generations of Arnaud's



Germaine Cazenave Wells, daughter of the Founder.

prefaced with the admonition: "I am not a cook—I give you the outline. We will improve or change if necessary."

From those notes evolved the dishes for which Arnaud's is famous. A few of them are as follows:

Shrimp Arnaud—shrimp with the famous Arnaud sauce.

Filet de Truite Vendôme—shrimp, mushrooms and claret wine combined with trout.

Supreme de Volaille en Papillote—chicken cooked in a paper bag with a marvelous white wine sauce.

Heart of Artichokes en Surprise—a surprisingly excellent way to serve artichokes.

Filet Mignon Clemenceau—steak at its best.

Oysters Bienville—a masterpiece of oysters.

Chicken Victoria—boned chicken with a delicious sauce.

Monts d'Amour, Rosalinde—peaches in a novel way.

Crepes Suzette Arnaud—the dessert to remember.

Not only are the Count's famous dishes served here but new dishes devised by Germaine Cazenave Wells are also here to continue the tradition of good food.

Canapé à la Irma, named in honor of her mother, is a savory shrimp and red wine concoction.

Pineapple Flambée, and *Apple Pie Flambée, à la Magdalene* are unusual and delicious desserts.

Water Cress Salad à la Germaine—the perfect salad.

... and to begin any meal, *Germaine's Special* is an excellent choice.

The Staff

Always generous, Count Arnaud never failed to give credit to his staff. Those who for twenty years or more have been loyal in the following the tradition of Arnaud's are:

Mrs. Magdalene Anna Willoz

Eddie Alcorn	Edw. L. Delaune	Eugene Lartigue	John Quinn
Isidore Ariatti	Stanley Greig	Michel Naretti	Octavia Sunseri
	Emile Theriot		

The Dining Rooms

Through the iron doorway one enters a tiled vestibule and on the right is the main dining room. Here one finds comfortable seats at snowy damasked tables.

Above the central fireplace hangs the portrait of Count Arnaud, painted by Mrs. Lizette Meyers. Those who see it feel the impact of his personality in the smile that endeared him to New Orleans—a smile captured on the canvas.

811 Bienville street is still the main dining room, but on the left is the popular Grill and to the right is the Richelieu room opened by Count Arnaud only a year before his death and named by him for the famous French Cardinal.

Upstairs are the private dining rooms which can be reserved for private parties and the huge banquet hall which seats two hundred and fifty guests. In all these dining rooms one finds perfect service which results from years of co-operation between Count Arnaud and his staff.



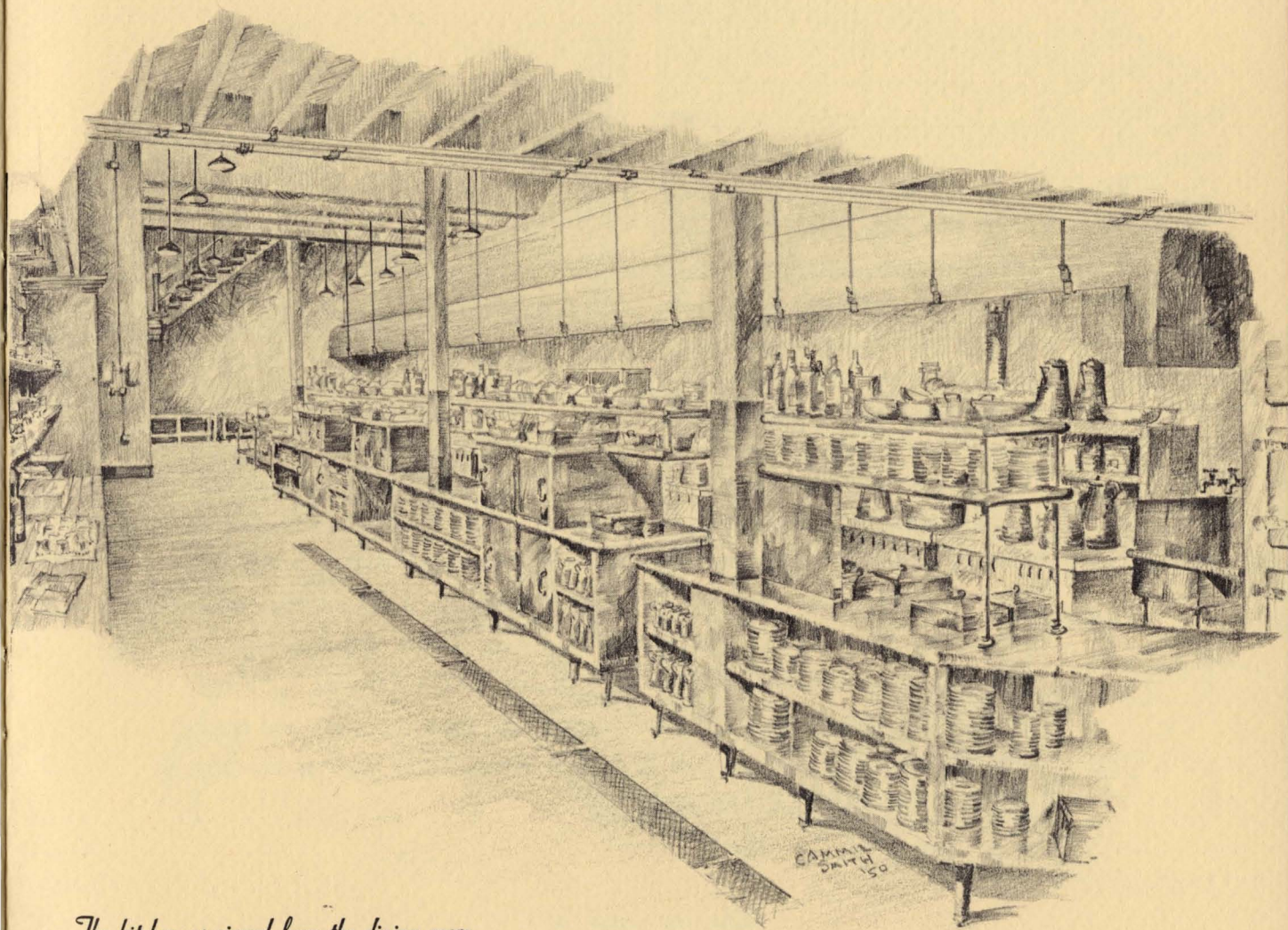
The Richelieu Room

Arnaud's Immaculate Kitchen

Modern and immaculately kept, the huge Arnaud kitchen combines efficiency with old world charm. The fine, giant kettles of aluminum banded in copper, the great fifty gallon boiler for stock—that indispensable base for the true chef's cooking—and the shining pots and pans show the best in modern kitchen equipment. But from this kitchen come culinary triumphs with old world flavors.

When Mme. Pierre died, Count Arnaud employed Louis Lamothe as chef and Jean Laune as his assistant. Both had been pupils of the Gardere Brothers, the renowned chefs of Napoleon, the Third.

At their deaths, Jean Baptiste Lauhle (born by strange coincidence in Count Arnaud's native village in France) was discovered in America by the Count and succeeded the famous Louis and Jean.

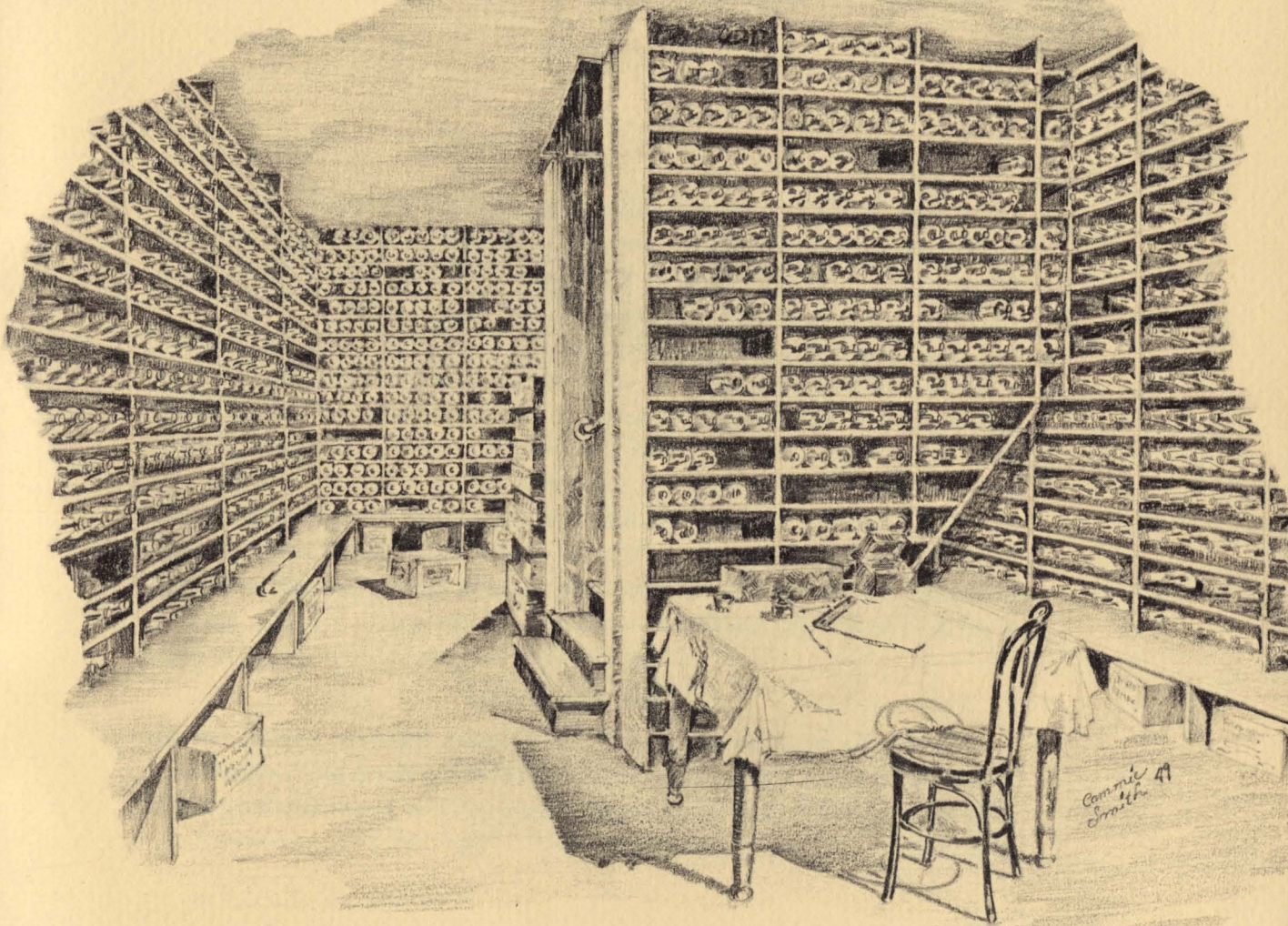


The kitchen as viewed from the dining room

The Count's History of Wines

Arnaud's famous cellar is the result of the Count's personal supervision. He chose the wines with infinite care and the restaurant's cellar was so fully stocked that when the first world war came and wine could not be obtained, Arnaud's restaurant could still supply its guests with the finest wines.

From this cellar you are served rare Sauternes, sparkling pink Burgundy, Rhine wines and the finest Italian wines, *Chianti* (white) and *Chianti* (red) . . . here one finds Moselle wines and Alsace wines, the *Vins de Bourgogne* (Northern Burgundy), and the *Vins de Maconnais* (Southern Burgundy), and from this cellar comes the Champagne which Count Arnaud chose with such pride—*Veuve Cliquot* . . . *G. H. Mumms Cordon Rouge* . . . *Pol d'Arey, Cliquot Lucien*—these and many other famous champagnes can be had at Arnaud's as well as the best wines of North and South America.



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The famous wine cellar

Count Arnaud was not only a connoisseur of wines—he was a student of the history of the wine countries and his notes on wines and where they are produced are of tremendous interest. A few of his comments on wines and the wine countries are quoted here.

Red Bordeaux—also termed clarets—deriving from the French word *clairer* meaning light in color rather than dark red in hue . . . grown around and about Bordeaux in the department of La Gironde. This department is divided into six districts—the Medoc, Graves, Sauternes, Barsac, St. Emilion, Pomerol.

The Medoc district is probably the greatest wine district in the world—a small, dry, sandy strip of land North and South of Bordeaux. It is said that Bordeaux wine has such health giving properties that it is called "*le lait des vieillards*"—*the milk of the old*.

White Burgundies

White Burgundies are always dry. *Chablis*, the most popular white wine in this country (the American taste favoring dry wines) was favorably known as far back as the ninth century . . . it keeps for long years and never grows darker with age.

Burgundy (Red)

The difference between Bordeaux and Burgundy has been described accurately as follows—Bordeaux, *La Grande Dame*. Burgundy, *Le Grand Seigneur*. Bordeaux more subtle, delicate, more patrician . . . Burgundy, heady, vigorous, imperious . . . “the king of wines and the wine of kings.”

Rhine Wines

Rhine wines have a fine distinctive bouquet and possess the rare quality of stability. The Moselle wines, on the other hand—which are produced in the Moselle valley, from the city of Koblenz, where the Rhine and Moselle rivers meet, to the Luxemburg boundary—are more delicate, slightly acid at times, and it is claimed are at their best within the first eight or nine years of their existence.

Sauternes

Contrary to the belief instilled into some of us by our wine growers who make and advertise dry Sauternes, there is no such thing as French dry Sauternes. All Bordeaux white wines are sweet or semi-sweet, the

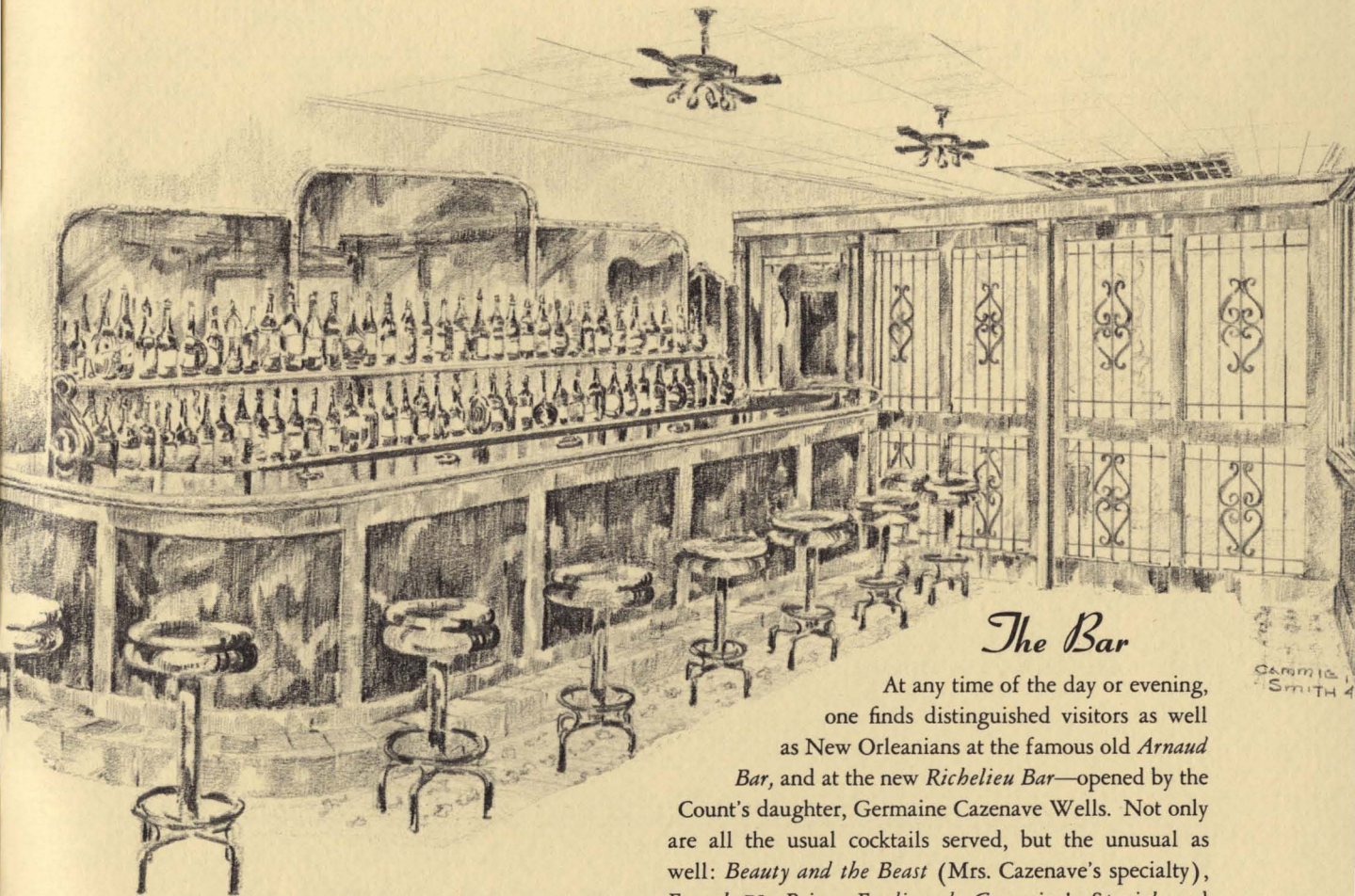
Graves being reputed about the dryest and that most celebrated of all wines "Chateau d'Yquem" the sweetest.

Champagne—The King of Kings

Champagne with its pale golden tint is made from black grapes. The coloring is in the skin and great care is taken in preparing the wine and letting it ferment apart from the mash.

The best part of the Champagne wine country lies some ninety miles east of Paris in the district of Rheims, Epernay and Chalons. By an official decree in 1911 it was declared that only wine made from grapes gathered within the boundaries of a certain zone could be called *Champagne*, the most famous of all French wines, since the days of Dom Perignon, the famed Benedictine cellar keeper of the Abbaye of Haute-Villars.

Champagne has been the table guest of kings, princes, marshals, poets, philosophers, wits and half wits, and pretty women and this wine of wines has never been better described than by the historian of the Abbaye in the ninth century who wrote, "It makes the cup glitter with the radiance of pearls."



The Bar

At any time of the day or evening, one finds distinguished visitors as well as New Orleanians at the famous old *Arnaud Bar*, and at the new *Richelieu Bar*—opened by the Count's daughter, Germaine Cazenave Wells. Not only are all the usual cocktails served, but the unusual as well: *Beauty and the Beast* (Mrs. Cazenave's specialty), *French 75*, *Prince Ferdinand*, *Germaine's Special*, and the Count's famous *Ambrosia*—the drink of the Gods.

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The Philosophy of Dining

The Art of Cooking is an art to be proud of. It is the soul of Festivity at all times and to all ages. Corneille, the great Classic, once exclaimed in an ecstasy of well being, after a good dinner: "Il y a tant de maitresses . . . Il n'y a qu'un diner."

Corneille was, we have no doubt, a dilettante in food, but was he not reflecting the placidity of old age when he paraphrased so lightly upon the masterpiece and Pride of the Creation . . . "Quot homines, tot sententiae."

Americans are prone to forget, in the ultra-rapidity and super-activity of modern life, trying to crowd eighty seconds of toil into one minute's time, that eating should be a pleasure, not a task to get over with in a hurry.

A dinner chosen according to one's needs, tastes and moods, well prepared and well served, is a joy to all senses and an impelling incentive to sound sleep, good health and long life. Therefore, at least once a day, preferably in the cool and quiet of the evening, one should throw all care to the winds, relax completely and dine leisurely and well.

"Au revoir, mes amis! Je vais vivre et diner en sage."

*Arnaud Cazenave
1876-1948*

