

THE INSTITUTE OF
MASTERS
of **WINE**

Were the causes of the 1911 Champagne riots essentially economic?

© The Institute of Masters of Wine 2015. No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission. This publication was produced for private purpose and its accuracy and completeness is not guaranteed by the Institute. It is not intended to be relied on by third parties and the Institute accepts no liability in relation to its use.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
1) Introduction	3
2) Methodology	6
3) Secondary sources	11
4) Champagne within the context of the wider community	17
5) Primary research	20
I. The long-term economic context	20
II. Grape and wine price data	25
III. Agricultural earnings per hectare	28
IV. Agricultural profits per hectare	29
V. Cost of living	31
VI. Worker action	33
VII. The level of fraud	34
6) Discussion and conclusion	36
7) Bibliography	39
8) Appendices	43
Appendix 1: Total Champagne shipments	43
Appendix 2: Marne Department agricultural statistics	44
Appendix 3: Epernay market prices	47
Appendix 4: Marne Champagne and sparkling wine shipments	48
Appendix 5: Approved research paper proposal	49

1. INTRODUCTION

In late 1910 and the first half of 1911, Champagne vigneronns voiced their discontent through large public meetings and direct action: several thousand hectolitres of wine “went down the gutter”¹, between 35,000 and 40,000 vines were destroyed, and a number of Champagne houses including Ayala and Deutz were looted and burned down. Insured costs exceeded 2.1 million francs².

Tension had been simmering in the region as a “result of crises between 1900 and 1911, involving fraudulent production and falling [grape] prices”³. Vignerons were increasingly frustrated that wines from outside the region were being sold and marketed as Champagne, and delimitation – the creation of what would later be known as an appellation – was considered to be a solution.

The legal basis for delimitation was established in 1905. The Loi de Repression des Fraudes made the mislabelling of the origin of any product illegal, which provided the foundation for regional appellations. In 1908, Champagne became the first wine region to be delimited but the boundary excluded growers in the Aube department. While Aube producers were angry at their exclusion from the region and would riot separately to their Marne counterparts in 1911, even those vigneronns within the delimited area were increasingly frustrated: the delimitation failed to prevent the influx of 'foreign' wines, which was a factor in depressed grape prices. The 1908 law required “complementary measures” to become effective but these were not implemented by the French government until February 1911. Vignerons were frustrated by this delay as well as the continued sale of wines that were “wrongfully baptized Champagne”⁴.

The issue of wine fraud and a wave of support for delimitation was not unique to Champagne

¹ Nollevalle, J. (1961) '1911: L'Agitation dans le vignoble Champenois', *La Champagne Viticole*, Syndicat Général des Vignerons de la Champagne, p18.

² *ibid.*

³ Guy, K.M. (2003) *When Champagne Became French*, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, p7.

⁴ Union des Maisons de Champagne (n.d.) *The Twentieth Century: Revolution in the Vineyard*. Retrieved from http://www.maisons-champagne.com/en/bonal_gb/pages/05/02-01 Viewed 1 Feb 2015.

during this period, and the revolt will be examined in the wider context of the French wine community. Demonstrations in France's Midi in 1907 “culminated in over half a million people protesting in Montpellier against low prices and the sale of artificial wine”⁵. In other regions of France, including Bordeaux and Burgundy, producers of ordinary wines were also meeting to demand delimitation, being unable to compete against low-priced wines from the Midi and beyond.

While vignerons shouted “down with fraud”⁶ during the Champagne riots, fraudulent production was not the only reason for their discontent. While the 1880s and 1890s had been “golden years for both growers and producers”⁷, the discovery of phylloxera on the Aisne-Marne border in 1890 led to rising costs and a decline in productivity at the same time as sales were rising, encouraging less reputable négociants to look beyond the region for wine to meet market demand. In addition, a string of poor vintages in the first decade of the 20th century, culminating in the almost non-existent harvests of 1908 and 1910, worsened vignerons' financial situation. “For growers it was a catastrophe. And, as if to taunt them, the importation of fake wine continued.”⁸

Grape growers were not the only ones to be affected by poor weather and disease in 1910. Many agricultural products including wheat, oats, potatoes and honey experienced a poor season. A local newspaper called the region's annual harvests an “agricultural calamity”⁹. There was also disquiet in the towns of the Marne and across France during the period, with a range of social and labour movements emerging in the late 19th century. There was a “rising tide of labour militancy”¹⁰ and in Reims and Epernay, rail and postal workers, factory hands and members of the local wool industry

⁵ Simpson, J. (2004) 'Phylloxera, price volatility and institutional innovation in France's domestic wine markets: 1870-1911', *Economic History and Institutions Series 02*, No. 04-46, p2.

⁶ Fradet, D. (2011) *1911 en Champagne: Chronique d'une Révolution*, Reims, Fradet, p12

⁷ Simpson, J. (2011) *Creating Wine: The Emergence of a World Industry: 1840-1914*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, p133.

⁸ Liszek, S. (1995) *Champagne: un siècle d'histoire sociale*, VO Editions: Montreuil, p33.

⁹ ADM Delta 486, *L'Indicateur de l'Est*, 21 Aug 1910.

¹⁰ Sowerwine, C. (2001) *France since 1870: Culture, Society and the Making of the Republic*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, p81.

resorted to strikes, with most calling for higher wages and better working conditions¹¹.

This research paper seeks to further the understanding of the causation of the 1911 revolt in the Marne department by investigating the economic conditions of vignerons and to examine if hardship – often cited as a major factor in the resort to action – was indeed a reality for grape growers in 1910/11. This has never been attempted by any work relating to the revolt. It will do this by quantifying the economic circumstances of grape growers through harvest statistics, grape price data provided in primary documents, and using information contained in contemporary newspaper reports. To contextualise the economic circumstances of vignerons, the paper will also take the unprecedented step of comparing the incomes and profits of vignerons with other farmers in the region. This will bring to light primary sources and data not previously used in relation to the 1911 revolt and enhance our understanding of the relative importance of economic factors as a cause of the unrest.

The study focuses on the causes of the revolt in the Marne department only. Vignerons in the Aube department rioted separately, incited by their exclusion from the delimited Champagne area. While it would have been interesting to include the Aube in the study, it would not have allowed such extensive research to have been undertaken and detailed within the allotted word limit.

The steps taken to conduct the research will firstly be outlined in the methodology section. The secondary sources chapter then considers the existing academic works that address the causes of the 1911 riots, followed by an overview of the Marne within the wider context of the French community. The primary research section reveals the author's own findings and analysis of the economic conditions of Marne-based vignerons in 1910/11, which is followed by a concluding chapter, assessing if the riots were essentially economic in nature.

¹¹ ADM 194M 16, *Grèves diverses*, 1909.

2. METHODOLOGY

To gain a greater understanding of the economic conditions of vignerons living in the Marne department, the research was conducted in three stages:

- Secondary research: gathering and reviewing existing secondary sources to understand the events and assimilate the different interpretations of the causes of the 1911 riots;
- Primary research: searching for, and selecting, primary documents relevant to the aims of the paper;
- Data analysis: evaluation and selection of non-statistical sources; a quantitative analysis of statistical information collated and organised into tables and graphs.

Secondary research

Chapters five and six of Kolleen M Guy's work *When Champagne Became French* provided a useful starting point for secondary research. Her bibliographic essay also suggested other secondary and primary sources that would be useful to this research paper. Many publications covering the riots are descriptive¹² rather than analytical in nature. Interest groups in the region have also financed a number of works and it was necessary to be conscious of their inherent biases¹³. The literature review provides a summary of the current body of work, existing knowledge, and an analysis of these sources.

The author's second language is French, which was essential, as the majority of the secondary literature, and all the primary sources, addressing the Champagne riots are in French. All French source-derived quotes that appear in English in this paper are the author's own translation.

¹² Such as Fradet, D. (2011) *1911 en Champagne: Chronique d'une Révolution*, Reims, Fradet.

¹³ Publications published by interest groups in the region include a) Liszek, S. (1995) *Champagne: un siècle d'histoire sociale*, VO Editions: Montreuil, written on behalf of the CGT, and b) Nollevale, J. (1961) '1911: L'Agitation dans le vignoble champenois', *La Champagne Viticole*, published by the Syndicat Général des Vignerons de la Champagne.

Primary research

In addition to secondary sources, it was essential to source primary documents housed in archives to further the understanding of this period.

The French National Library has a vast collection of its documents online, which can be viewed on its website (www.gallica.bnf.fr). The government's Statistical Yearbook, published annually by the predecessor of France's National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies, *Statistique Générale de la France*, proved invaluable. It provided raw data on yields, harvest sizes, and average prices for all major agricultural products including wine, wheat and oats across every department in France. The data was collated and organised into tabular form for comparative analysis.

The Marne department's archives in Chalons-en-Champagne were fundamental to the primary research. Series M in the archives had an extensive selection of relevant documents including:

- Annual agricultural statistical returns by district and department;
- Surveys addressing themes including the cost of living, wages, living and working conditions, and strike action;
- Letters to and from the prefect's office;
- Police records.

The archive's Delta series included full runs of local newspapers and periodicals. Regional newspaper *Le Réveil de la Marne* contained daily articles covering the local wine industry in 1910 and 1911. Agricultural journals including *Le Cultivateur de la Champagne* were also rich with information on the costs of farming during the period.

The Raoul Chandon de Brialles collection at Epernay's Médiathèque was also a valuable source, including its collection of newspapers from the period. Weekly editions of the grower-run

publication *Le Vigneron Champenois* proved particularly useful for illuminating the key issues of the period for local producers, as well as localised grape and wine prices.

The author requested but was not afforded access to the private records of Champagne houses during the period at the archives of the Syndicats des Grandes Marques de Champagne. Guy also had difficulty gaining access to private business archives during her research, noting: “In an image-conscious industry, firms are much more reluctant to share information on the modern era, particularly around the period of the 1911 riots”¹⁴.

Moët & Chandon kindly provided access to its archive in Epernay. This paper is not focused on the Champagne houses, although records of prices paid for grapes by Moët did serve to corroborate data from other sources.

It was also not possible to access the contemporary journal *Révue de Viticulture*, housed by the wine trade association the Comité interprofessionnel du vin de Champagne, which was undergoing laboratory restoration during the research period.

Reliability of primary information

“The quality of any statistical study relies on the care with which the figures were originally recorded.”¹⁵ The accuracy of the national statistics during this period was often dependent on the local mayor and prefects supervising the process of filing returns to the national statistics office. Similarly, local statistics relied upon the accuracy of those providing and inputting the data.

The research uncovered minor discrepancies in some harvest returns between the national statistics and local figures, which were then examined further in order to find consensus. For example, it

¹⁴ Guy, K. *When Champagne Became French*, p236.

¹⁵ Drame, S. et al. (1991) *Un siècle de blé en France: 1825-1913*, Paris, Economica, p235.

should be noted that the region's total vineyard area recorded annually varies between sources (as some areas were not included in some surveys) if there was no fruit harvested: in 1910, for example, the village of Ambonnay had “nothing to harvest, nothing to declare”¹⁶ and thus the department's official vineyard area in 1910 fell accordingly.

In addition, until 1907 government statistics did not separate *vin ordinaire* from *vin de qualité*, which had an impact on the average price information provided.

Data analysis

Non-statistical data

Documents including newspapers and letters were gathered to understand the context, causes and events of 1910/11. These documents were appraised, according to parameters including the author, intended audience, date of publication, document purpose and content. *Le Vigneron Champenois*, for example, was a weekly newspaper, published for grape growers. It is rich with information on grape prices and highlights the key issues of the day but inevitably has inherent biases due to its authors and intended audience.

Statistical data

Statistical data collected from various secondary and primary sources was collated and organised into tables and graphs to form the basis of a new quantitative analysis of the economic conditions of vignerons in 1910/11. The intentions of each document were considered in the same manner as non-statistical sources.

The statistical analysis aimed to:

- a) Assess the economic circumstances of vignerons in the Marne in 1910/11;
- b) Investigate the costs and revenue of grape growers using local and national government

¹⁶ *Le Réveil de la Marne*, 9 Dec 1910.

statistics.

- c) Compare earnings per hectare on farms and vineyards in the Marne. The revenues, costs and profits per hectare of mixed farms earnings were found in the region's agricultural journal *Le Cultivateur de la Champagne*. The reader should be aware that the farms cited were featured in the journal for winning medals for best practice from the local agricultural association. However, information on agricultural profits per hectare was not found elsewhere.
- d) Examine the cost of living in the Marne in 1910/11 based on Epernay market price information, published regularly in regional newspapers.
- e) Estimate the level of fraudulent activity in 1910/11. In this study, fraud refers to Marne-based négociants importing outside base wine that was made sparkling in Champagne cellars and sold as Champagne. However, fraud was – and still is – a sensitive issue in Champagne. Without access to private business records and the loss of some documents during the World Wars, this will be an estimate, based on government figures and existing calculations.

3. SECONDARY SOURCES

Fraud, the delimitation of the Champagne region, and the almost non-existent harvest of 1910 are widely acknowledged as contributing factors to the riots in 1911. However, the primary cause of the unrest has been a source of disagreement between academics. Some claim the riots were an ideological struggle, while others suggest patriotism was the principal cause. The structural imbalance of the Champagne industry has also been credited with inciting the riots, and widespread hardship – *la misère* – is frequently cited as fundamental to the revolt. These themes will be explored more fully in this chapter.

Ideological causes

A number of contemporaries and historians have asserted that the unrest in 1911 in the Champagne region was influenced by ideology. From the proclamation of the Third Republic in 1870, a range of social movements emerged, accelerating political awareness within both the urban and rural populations. Syndicalism – or trade unionism – gained a wide following in the last third of the 19th century, bringing workers together in the new Bourses du Travail (Labour Exchanges). These Bourses were spaces where workers could go to find work but they were also “a space for political development, further training and unions”¹⁷. The Federation of Bourses had 400,000 members by 1892. “By 1907, there were 157 Bourses.”¹⁸ Socialism also gained a foothold in French politics, controlling “200 city councils”¹⁹ by 1914. New leaders emerged including Jean Jaurès, who would later launch the national daily newspaper *L'Humanité*, one of a number of publications, which claimed the Champagne riots were driven by socialism in 1911.

The politicisation of workers and peasants in late 19th century France and its influence on vignerons in Champagne has been examined by a number of historians. Writing in 1952, Russian historian P. Koukharski acknowledges the economic distress of vignerons in the region in the period up to and

¹⁷ Sowerwine, C., p78.

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p75

including 1911, concluding that the unrest had “at its base, an economic character. But that is not to say that the movement was a purely economic struggle”²⁰. He was convinced that “the movement of Champagne vigneron...was part of mass peasant action at the start of the twentieth century”²¹. He claimed: “in its scope and its form of struggle, it was a revolutionary action of smallholders and the poorest farmers, it was one of the most powerful demonstrations of the class struggle in the French countryside in the imperial period before the war”²².

Koukharski's class-focused analysis was published in a journal founded by the French Communist party and thus contains inherent biases. There were some individuals involved in the unrest, including a number of figureheads – such as Emile Moreau, a vigneron from Aÿ – who were ideologically driven. However Guy argues: “Peasants – whether property owners or wage labourers or both – were united against négociants. But this unity was only within a clearly defined area of Champagne viticole; peasants outside this area who hoped to sell grapes for Champagne were equally seen as the enemy, intent on fraudulent production. And not even all the négociants were enemies”²³.

There were left-wing symbols and socialist political tendencies during meetings and protests in 1911: the red flag was flown and the French socialist anthem *L'Internationale* was sung. Socialist publications of the day including daily newspapers *L'Humanité* and *L'Observateur* claimed that the riots were ideologically motivated, and encouraged vignerons to rise up against the owners of capital. Yet academics writing in *Le Mouvement Social*, a quarterly journal focused on the history of collective movements, failed to be convinced. Jacques Girault concluded that socialism played a limited and tardy role in the 1911 riots, struggling to find any convincing evidence of deep-rooted

²⁰ Koukharski, P. (1952) ‘Le mouvement paysan en France en 1911’, *Questions D'Histoire*, No.1, p160.

²¹ *ibid.*

²² *ibid.*, p175.

²³ Guy, *When Champagne Became French*, p160.

socialism among the vine growing community. Socialism remained a “limited phenomenon”²⁴. His analysis of electoral records in the Aube suggests that the socialist political movement had stagnated in the wine region during the period 1906 to 1910. While socialist phrases adorned placards at the 8 April 1911 protest in Troyes, for example, Girault noted: “The Socialists played an important role in these actions”, but “at no moment did they think about playing a leading role”²⁵.

In the same issue of *Le Mouvement Social*, Jacqueline SAILLET also concluded that socialism had a limited influence on those participating in the revolt in the Marne. She concedes that individuals like Moreau “could have had some influence”²⁶ at a local level, and the distribution of Socialist newspapers including Jaures' *L'Humanité*, *L'Observateur* and *La Guerre Sociale* would have “undoubtedly contributed to a mentality in favour of the riots”²⁷. However, socialists did not have “a large audience among vignerons”²⁸ in Champagne, and socialist symbols including the red flag and *L'Internationale* were used “without worrying too much about their deeper meaning”, she asserted, noting that Michel Lecacheur, the vice-president of the Fédération des Vignerons “ripped up the red flag [during a meeting] and not one vigneron attempted to replace it”²⁹.

Patriotic cause

The most comprehensive academic work in the English language on the causes of the revolt in 1911, by Kolleen Guy, considered the issue of delimitation of Champagne – and other wine regions – in the context of regional and national identity. Guy acknowledged a number of historical, political, social and economic factors in the resort to violent action, but ultimately concluded the cause of the events was the expression of French and regional identity. Fraudulent activity – producing “Champagne” from grapes and wines not produced in the region – did indeed challenge

²⁴ Girault, J. (1969), ‘Le rôle du socialisme dans la révolte des vignerons de l'Aube’, *Le Mouvement Social*, 67 (Apr-Jun), p97.

²⁵ *ibid.*, p103.

²⁶ SAILLET, J. (1969) ‘Les composantes du mouvement dans la Marne’, *Le Mouvement Social*, 67 (Apr-Jun), p84.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p86.

²⁸ *ibid.*, p85.

²⁹ *ibid.*, p85.

the notion of what constituted the Champagne region and who had membership of that community.

The events and rhetoric during 1911 demonstrate that “fraud” and calls for delimitation were central themes for protesting vigneron but it could be argued that the average vigneron wanted to protect his livelihood and to ease his hunger³⁰ rather than seeking “to define the boundaries of the Champagne community and the position of that community within the French nation”³¹.

Structural causes

It is generally accepted that the structure of the Champagne industry in the late 19th century contributed to the economic distress of grape growers in the early twentieth century. Most growers sold their harvest to a small number of houses “that possessed the necessary capital and skills to produce and market Champagne”³².

Economic historian James Simpson noted that the 1880s and 1890s were “golden years for both growers and producers”³³. However, the “growers' prosperity was ended by the appearance of phylloxera and subsequent decline in local harvests. So that the rapidly developing demand for cheap Champagne from the 1890s in the domestic French market encouraged the houses to look elsewhere for their grapes”³⁴.

In 1911, vigneron targeted the cellars of négociants that were thought to be engaging in fraudulent production. However, one contemporary, Isaie Richon, the secretary of the Bourse d'Épernay, proposed that the négociants were not the victims but the instigators of the unrest. He claimed that négociants stood to reap great financial benefit from delimitation and that they incited the action.

³⁰ Liszek, S. (1995) *Champagne: Un siècle d'histoire sociale*, Montreuil, VO Editions, p33. “Apaiser notre faim” is a line from *La Champenoise*, quoted by Liszek. It was a song sung to the tune of *L'Internationale* by vigneron in the streets in 1911.

³¹ Guy, K.M. (1997) 'Wine, Work and Wealth: Class Relations and Modernization in the Champagne Wine Industry', *Business and Economic History*, 26 (2). p301.

³² Simpson, J. (2011) *Creating Wine*, p138.

³³ *ibid.*, p133.

³⁴ *ibid.*

He claimed that authorities did not react as strongly as they ought in 1911, leading to the conclusion that there was an agreement between négociants and the troops. He also claimed that events were aggrandised and the riots – and subsequent trials – allowed négociants to promote Champagne's new virginity. The losses incurred, he wrote, would be compensated through higher prices for Champagne, leading to greater profits for négociants but not the vigneron. This was a view that influenced Koukharski's evaluation but this theory is unsubstantiated by primary documents. Saillet noted: “There is not one shred of evidence in the departmental archives of meetings between négociants and law enforcement officials, which tried to stop the riots by all means possible”³⁵. Indeed, the archives include numerous letters from négociants requesting police protection.

Economic causes

Both contemporaries and academics have acknowledged the hardship of vigneron in late 1910 and early 1911, following the harvest of 1910, which yielded less than 10,000hl compared with an average of 447,000hl between 1897 and 1901. “Poverty became atrocious”³⁶, according to the 1961 account of events by Jean Nollevalle, then the secretary of the Syndicat Général des Vignerons, who concluded that fraud and hardship were the two major causes of the events in 1911.

Saillet also concluded in her social history-based work on the participants that the riots “were the result of vigneron exasperated by poverty”³⁷. While Koukharski argued that the unrest was a demonstration of class struggle, he also noted that in the latter half of 1911, direct action waned. He attributed the easing of tensions thus: “The more abundant harvest improved the material situation a little for farmers. The 1911 riots, therefore, had, at its base, an economic character”³⁸.

The long-term financial situation of growers, the economic implications of fraud and the atrocious

³⁵ *ibid.*, p85.

³⁶ Nollevalle, *op.cit.*, p5.

³⁷ Saillet, *op.cit.*, p85.

³⁸ Koukharski, *op.cit.*, p175.

harvest of 1910 have not been fully examined nor contextualised in relation to other workers and farmers in the region. Simpson's study of Champagne in the period leading up to 1911 is the most comprehensive analysis of statistical information on production and sales, and aimed to quantify the extent of fraud. He concluded that “the bitterness of the events of 1911 can be explained by the desperation of growers in the Marne and the Aube as they faced both disastrous harvests and low prices, at a time when sales were booming”³⁹.

Indeed, sales of Champagne were rising to record highs despite meagre harvests in the years preceding the riots. However, it was the domestic market – thirsty for cheaper and thus lower-quality wines from Champagne – leading the growth. This trend caused less reputable firms to look outside the region for cheaper wine, according to Simpson. While small harvests should have led to an increase in price per kilo of grapes for growers, prices remained low due to this outsourcing.

In chapter 4 of *The Business of Champagne*, David Menival, an economist based in Reims, attributes the unrest in 1911 to the short harvests, phylloxera and depressed prices “...the production of Champagne was restricted by harsh climatic conditions, causing regular crop failures. This was dramatically aggravated by the troubles linked to the phylloxera crisis. Paradoxically, the drop in grape production led to a reduction in the price of a kilo of grapes due to the use of grapes from other regions (Anjou, Midi) by négociants. This led to several riots by growers and a real instability of production until the eve of the Second World War”⁴⁰.

This paper aims to quantify the hardship these short harvests, phylloxera and fraudulent activity had on growers in Champagne to answer the question of whether the riots were essentially economic in nature.

³⁹ Simpson, *Creating Wine*, p153

⁴⁰ Menival, D. (2012) ‘The economic perspective on Champagne’, in Charters, S. (ed.) *The Business of Champagne*, Oxon, Routledge, p36.

4. CHAMPAGNE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE WIDER COMMUNITY

The events of 1910/1911 should not be viewed in isolation. There was disquiet within the wider French viticultural community in the first decade of the 20th century, fuelled by a combination of trade unionism and socialism, fraudulent activity and depressed grape prices. The disquiet led to mass demonstrations in both the Marne and the Midi.

While prices in the Midi were the lowest across France in the first decade of the 20th century, all wine regions – across all wine quality levels – experienced significant price decreases. Figure 1, sourced from the government’s annual statistics, shows that the average price achieved per hectolitre fell by at least one-third and were sometimes below half the price earned in the 1890s.

Figure 1. Annual wine production and average wine prices, 1890-1907

Year	Production France (hl)	Av.price per hl (Fr)	Production Midi (hl)	Av.price per hl (Fr)	Production Gironde (hl)	Av.price per hl (Fr)
1890-99	35,980	29	12,509	16	2,575	35
1900	67,353	19	24,494	7	5,738	20
1901	57,964	16	20,235	5	4,308	15
1902	39,884	21	15,305	10	2,867	23
1903	35,402	27	13,340	25	2,097	38
1904	66,017	19	26,782	6	4,521	22
1905	56,066	15	21,708	7	4,300	16
1906	52,079	18	16,175	6	3,507	22
1907	66,070	17	30,547	9	5,439	20

Source: *Annuaire Statistique 1900-1908*; Warner, C. (1960) *The Winegrowers of France and the Government Since 1875*, p20.

It was not only grape and wine prices that fell in the first decade of the 20th century. There had been a widespread long-term decline in the value of vineyard properties, which was hastened after 1901.

Caziot’s 1914 survey of land values shows significant price decreases for properties across Bordeaux, Burgundy, the Midi, the Rhône, the Loire and Champagne. In some instances, values declined more than 50% in a 20-year period⁴¹.

⁴¹ Caziot, P. (1914) *La Valeur de la Terre en France*, Paris, Baillière et fils, pp434-441.

Over the long-term, the cost of grubbing up, replanting and the subsequent loss of harvests placed a heavy financial burden on growers across France. The shortages caused by phylloxera during its height in each region encouraged merchants to find alternative sources to produce wine, which they were “reluctant to surrender when production recovered”⁴². By 1900, the Midi had recovered to pre-phylloxera levels and production was up by 130% compared with 1862, due to more productive varieties. The average yield in the Midi was 49hl/ha compared to 27hl/ha across France between 1900-1909⁴³. Despite this return to productivity, wine merchants continued to ‘stretch’ wines by adding sugar and water to increase volumes, as well as making wine from raisins. This adulteration led to overproduction issues.

In contrast, a grape shortage was one of the major issues in Champagne in 1911, which was caused by both phylloxera and other vine diseases. Phylloxera arrived late in the Marne. In 1900, just 61ha of vines had been infected and the financial implications of treatment and replanting were extant at the time of the Champagne revolt, unlike the Midi protests.

Figure 2. Phylloxera-affected vines in Marne department

Year	Affected vines (ha)
1892	2
1898	31
1900	61
1905	3,000
1911	6,500

Source: Desbois-Thibault, C. (2011) 1911-2011: Du Déséquilibre au Consensus, p14

While merchants in the Midi had adulterated wine to increase volumes, less scrupulous merchants in the Marne were committing their own form of fraud – importing outside base wines and later selling them as Champagne. Producers of ordinary wine in Bordeaux faced a similar problem to vigneron in the Marne: they were unable to compete with the cheap wines that merchants were

⁴² Simpson, *Phylloxera, price volatility and institutional innovation*, p2.

⁴³ *ibid.*, p14.

importing from the Midi and Algeria, which were later sold as cheap Bordeaux wines. Both Marne and Bordeaux growers saw delimitation through government intervention as a desirable measure to protect their livelihoods. However, Warner notes “important as the victory over fraud was, it did not of itself insure a healthy wine industry” in the future.⁴⁴

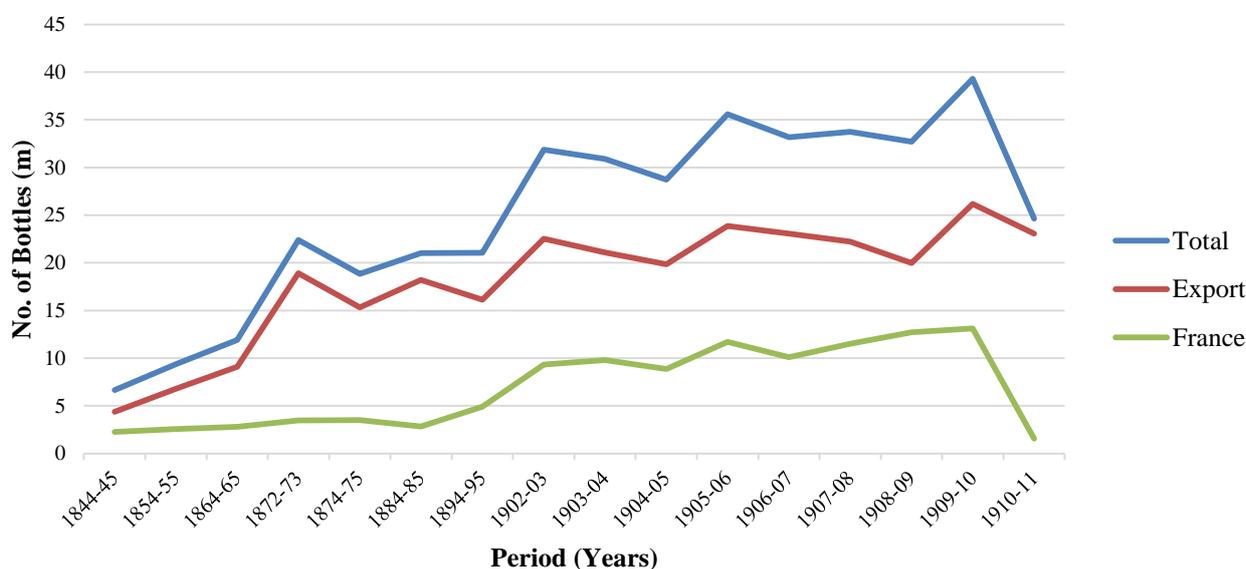
⁴⁴ Warner, C. (1960) *The Winegrowers of France and the Government Since 1875*, New York, Columbia University Press, p49.

5. PRIMARY RESEARCH

I. The long-term economic context

Champagne sales reached a record high of more than 39 million bottles in 1909-10 (Figure 3), government figures show – an increase of almost 100% in 15 years and 400% in 45 years – yet vigneronns were “in a state close to poverty”⁴⁵ after a string of poor harvests culminating in 1910, which yielded less than 1hl/ha,

Figure 3. Total Champagne shipments, 1844 – 1911



Source: *Annuaire Statistique, 1901-1910*; Simon, A. (1962), *The history of Champagne, See Appendix 1.*

Négociants, who owned the means of making and marketing Champagne, profited from the rising demand from the domestic and export markets. However the separation of grape growing and winemaking in the Champagne region meant that vigneronns did not benefit from the wine’s growing popularity. On the contrary, data collected from local grower journals suggest grape prices remained low in the first decade of the 20th century, even in years of short supply. The purchase of wines from outside the region by négociants was blamed for keeping prices low; delimitation was perceived to be the solution, according to regular reports in the regional newspaper *Le Réveil de la Marne* and the grower-run publication *Le Vigneron Champenois*.

⁴⁵ Nollevale, op.cit., p5.

At the same time as growers' income was falling, costs had increased in the vineyard. Phylloxera was first discovered on the Marne border in 1890 and, despite an industry-wide effort to address the problem, had infected more than 6,000ha of vines – equivalent to more than 40% of the Marne's total vineyard area by 1910 (see Figure 2) and 2,000ha of vineyard had been replanted on American roots⁴⁶. From 1898, syndicated growers could receive assistance through the Association Viticole Champenoise (AVC). A group of 23 négociants each contributed between 1,000 and 5,000Fr annually, which was distributed mainly in the form of American rootstocks to replant vineyards, and carbon disulphide to treat phylloxera-affected vineyards. The Service du Phylloxera calculated that 2,303ha had been treated with carbon disulphide in 1904⁴⁷, which nearly tripled to 6,358ha by 1913, a contemporary survey found⁴⁸. The cost of applying carbon disulphide increased growers' costs: a 1910 report of a Côte des Blancs vineyard stated that the additional cost of applying the requisite 300kg per hectare was 180Fr including labour costs⁴⁹. However, carbon disulphide treatments were only a temporary solution. Replanting was essential in the longer term.

The AVC provided American rootstocks to many syndicated growers. In the years 1900 to 1910, more than 4250 kilometres of wood worth 186,105Fr were given to local syndicates, according to the author's calculations based on annual AVC figures⁵⁰ (see Figure 4). This was equivalent to 386,913 metres and 16,919Fr annually. One metre provided a little more than five rootstocks, which the author estimated to be 21.2 million vines in this 11-year period, or 1.93 million new vines each year. Government data documented that the average number of vines per hectare in the Marne was 38,600 in 1899⁵¹ and on this basis the AVC only provided enough material to replant 550ha of vineyard. However, replanting did not take place at such high densities, as growers moved from a

⁴⁶ Lheureux, L. (1906) *Les syndicats dans le viticole Champenoise*, Paris, Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, p79.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p89.

⁴⁸ Survey filed in ADM 154 M 22.

⁴⁹ ADM Delta 262/7, *Le Cultivateur de la Champagne*, 1 Oct 1910.

⁵⁰ Annual figures cited in Chappaz, G. (1952) *Le vignoble et le vin de Champagne*, Paris, Louis Larmat, p109.

⁵¹ *Annuaire Statistique*, 1900.

system of close-planted vines “en foule” to more widely spaced rows. The Comité interprofessionnel du vin de Champagne, notes that the vines were replanted at an average density of 8,000 vines per hectare⁵² and thus the AVC had supplied enough rootstock for 2,660ha by 1910 whereas only 2,000ha had been replanted. Unfortunately, a total of 6,500ha had been infected at that time but the AVC’s annual supply of grafting wood would dramatically increase in the years up to and following World War I.

Figure 4. Total grafting wood provided by the AVC 1900-1910

Year	Grafting wood provided (metres)	Value (Fr)	Total rootstocks
1900	173,923	19,978	869,615
1901	121,500	10,667	607,500
1902	100,230	4,237	501,150
1903	166,500	5,262	832,500
1904	243,747	11,380	1,218,735
1905	250,000	10,412	1,250,000
1906	275,970	12,603	1,379,850
1907	550,300	23,662	2,751,500
1908	753,425	32,299	3,767,125
1909	700,120	22,449	3,500,600
1910	920,325	33,156	4,601,625
Total	4,256,040	186,105	21,280,200
Annual mean	386,913	16,919	1,934,563

Source: Chappaz, G., *Le vignoble et le vin*, p109; author’s own calculations in red

While the AVC provided the rootstocks for replanting, vigneronns had to pay for the new vines, the labour costs of ripping out and replanting vineyards, and there would be no crop harvested for at least three years after replanting. For many small growers, particularly those who produced *vin ordinaire*, this was not economically viable and they did not replant. This assertion is supported by the author’s calculations, based on government-sourced figures in Appendix 2, which show that the *vin ordinaire* crop fell from more than 20% of the Marne harvest as late as 1907 to less than 1% in

⁵² Comité interprofessionnel du vin de Champagne (n.d.) *La consécration de l’appellation Champagne*. Retrieved from <http://www.champagne.fr/fr/terroir-appellation/appellation/la-consécration-de-l-appellation-champagne> Viewed 1 May 2015.

1911⁵³.

From the early 1890s onwards, grape prices were falling across all winemaking villages. A village-by-village survey from 1880 to 1884 shows the range of prices paid, and it also reveals that grape prices were generally much higher in the late 19th century than they were in the early 20th century, despite Champagne sales almost doubling during this period. Grape growers blamed the fall in prices on the influx of outside base wines. A *pièce* (200-litre barrel) typically sold for 660Fr in Verzenay between 1880 and 1884 compared to 500-600Fr in 1906-1909. Similarly, in Rilly-la-Montagne, a *pièce* sold for 600Fr in 1880-84 while the equivalent weight of grapes were worth just 300Fr in 1906-09⁵⁴. This downward trend was repeated across the region's winemaking villages, the full survey revealed.

The author found contemporary reports indicating that growers had trouble covering their costs of production long before phylloxera had become widespread in the Marne and more than a decade before the devastating harvests of 1908 and 1910, as a result of reduced prices. For example, a study entitled "Six weeks in phylloxera country" cited a grower in Mesnil-sur-Oger facing financial difficulties after the 1895 harvest. "Although I sold my wine for 5,000Fr, with a good harvest of 10 pièces, I have a deficit of 2,000Fr. The wine prices are not high enough to cover costs. It costs 7,000Fr to tend my vines, buy fertiliser, replace the old vine posts and to live with my wife and children. In 1894, I was in profit by 4,000Fr but with a similar year next year all the savings I have accumulated from earlier harvests will have disappeared."⁵⁵ The evidence suggests that economic difficulties were a long-standing problem even for conscientious growers.

The fragmented nature of land ownership in Champagne should also be examined to better

⁵³ *Annuaire Statistique*, 1908-1912.

⁵⁴ Figures sourced from Berget, A. (1902) *La Cooperation dans la Viticulture Européenne; Etude d'Economie Rurale et d'Histoire Agronomique*, Lille, A.Devos, pp374-375, and Simpson, *Creating Wine*, p147.

⁵⁵ Dervin, G. (1896) *Six semaines en pays phylloxérés: étude sur la défense et la reconstitution des vignobles français atteints du phylloxéra, suivie de la Champagne devant l'invasion phylloxérique*, Reims, Dubois-Popliment, p296.

understand the circumstances of vigneron during this period. A survey conducted by Raoul Chandon de Brailles in the late 1890s reported that there were then 17,739 proprietors in the Marne and 14,430 – 81% – owned less than 1ha⁵⁶ (See Figure 5). While contemporaries correctly commented that the survey’s total number of vigneron seemed too few, the study was generally accepted as an accurate representation of the proportions of vineyard ownership. Phylloxera caused some to abandon grape growing and larger proprietors bought up land yet smallholdings continued to dominate the vineyard landscape on the eve of the unrest. Government figures reveal that there were still more than 20,500 grape growers in the Marne in 1910⁵⁷. However, a vineyard holding of less than 1ha was rarely sufficient in the first decade of the 20th century to support its owner and his family, and many had to take on a second job “with a fixed income so that they could be assured of their subsistence during lesser years”⁵⁸. A rural survey, found in the Chalons-en-Champagne archives, noted that 50% of small-vineyard owners in Champagne also worked for larger vine growers to supplement their income in 1910⁵⁹. In addition, many grape growers also farmed other agricultural crops such as wheat, rye and oats, as village-by-village agricultural returns attest. For example, Vertus cultivated as many hectares of oats as vines in 1910 (450ha), as well as 260ha of wheat, 175ha of rye, and 55ha of potatoes⁶⁰.

Figure 5. Distribution of vineyard land in the Marne

Holding Size (ha)	Category	No. of proprietors
Less than 1	Very small	14,430
1-5	Small	3,202
5-20	Medium	89
>20	Large	18

Source: ‘Series d’Etudes sue le Vigneron Champenois’ in *Révue de Viticulture, 1898-1900*, quoted in Berget, A, p378.

⁵⁶ Table sourced from Berget, A., op.cit., p478.

⁵⁷ *Annuaire Statistique*, 1911.

⁵⁸ Sallet, op.cit., pp.81-88.

⁵⁹ *Le Cultivateur de la Champagne*, op.cit., pp14-16.

⁶⁰ ADM 146 M 91 *Statistique agricole annuelle par arrondissement* (1910).

II. Grape and wine price data

Data provided in the French government's annual statistics showed that in 1910, the Marne department produced just 9,386hl of wine⁶¹. By gathering the annual statistics over a 10-year period, the author calculated that this figure was equivalent to 2.1% of the average annual crop of 431,247hl between 1901 and 1909⁶². The statistics reveal a tiny 1910 harvest, which is supported by many contemporary reports following the harvest. Articles within the Fédération des Syndicats Viticole-run publication *La Champagne Viticole* show that it was a disastrous year that was “completed destroyed following the invasion of mildew”⁶³. This miniscule crop followed a series of difficult seasons: rain at harvest had rotted part of the 1907 crop, 1908 was affected by mildew and 1909 was a small harvest of good quality.

Appendix 2 is a compilation of primary data gathered on harvest sizes in the first decade of the 20th century, and provided the information to calculate that the mean wholesale price for a hectolitre of the region's wine in 1910 was 222Fr, and the average earned per hectare of vines in this year was just 155Fr, based on the miniscule average yield of 0.7hl/ha. In contrast, the collected data and author's analysis indicates that the average earned per hectare between 1900-1909 was 2303Fr.

The calculations based on government figures for the Marne provide a general overview of the region as a whole. However, these statistics do not reveal the complex pricing structures across the region. Figures sourced from *Le Vigneron Champenois* during the primary research period provided a more detailed view of grape prices. For example, during the years 1906-1909, a period of small harvests, growers in the ‘crus de tout premier ordre’⁶⁴ villages, including Verzenay and Aÿ, earned 1.2-1.5Fr per kilogram (kg), equivalent to 500-600Fr per *pièce*, based on calculations that 400kg of

⁶¹ Annuaire Statistique, 1911.

⁶² Annuaire Statistique, 1901-10.

⁶³ *La Champagne Viticole*, September 1910.

⁶⁴ In 1873, the publication *La Vigne* published a classification of villages. Most highly rated were Aÿ, Cramant and Verzenay, categorised as ‘crus de tout premier ordre’. The villages of Avize, Dizy, Oger and Pierry were named premiers crus. Ambonnay, le Mesnil, Verzy and Mailly were categorised as deuxièmes crus. Union des Maisons de Champagne (n.d.) Retrieved from <http://www.maisons-champagne.com/bonal/pages/04/02-03> Viewed 12 Feb 2015.

grapes produced one *pièce*. In the premier cru-rated village of Hautvillers, the market value for one kilogram of grapes was 0.8Fr/kg or 320Fr per *pièce* while ‘Petite Marne’ grapes were valued at 0.35Fr/kg or 140Fr per *pièce*. This illustrates that prices varied significantly depending upon vineyard site during this period, based on a quality hierarchy that has since been formalised.

The body of evidence shows that the potential earnings of growers had fallen in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, due to falling grape prices and small harvests. Their costs had also increased due to phylloxera and a series of disease-affected vintages. The disastrous 1910 harvest compounded their precarious financial position, which was documented in grower journals and regional newspapers. For example, an article published in *Le Vigneron Champenois* calculated the input costs and the total revenue earned by the 114 vineyard owners in the village of Dizy in 1910. The cost to produce 1ha of grapes in Dizy and many other grands crus vineyards in 1910 was around 3,000-3,500Fr annually (See Figure 7), which would normally yield 20-25 hectolitres. The average input cost per hectare increased in 1910 due to more frequent spraying to treat disease and a lack of pickers at harvest time caused wages to rise from 4Fr daily to as much as 7.50Fr⁶⁵, the article noted. The report estimated that the cost to produce the village’s entire crop of 9522.4kg of grapes, equivalent to 48.6hl of wine in 1910 was 399,600Fr or 8,223Fr/hl. The revenue earned, based on a price of 250Fr/hl was 12,150Fr, representing a village deficit of 387,516Fr or 7,973Fr/hl. “The vigneron in Champagne has spent his last *sou*, acquiring debt over several years: what is he going to do to feed his family and how will he maintain his property, which has led him into hardship?”⁶⁶ asked the author.⁶⁷

In response to such hardship, there is some evidence that those living in winemaking villages left to find work in urban centres, a long-term trend that was echoed across rural France and western Europe. Koukharski calculated that 15,446 people left their Marne villages for towns between 1906

⁶⁵ *Le Vigneron Champenois*, 13 Oct 1910.

⁶⁶ *Le Vigneron Champenois*, 30 Nov 1910.

⁶⁷ *Le Vigneron Champenois*, 30 Nov 1910.

and 1911⁶⁸. However, census data from 1906 to 1911 showed small declines in population in winemaking villages but no mass exodus. For example, the Avize population fell by 149 residents from 2,743 to 2,594 between 1906 and 1911 while Damery and Venteuil each experienced a population decline of less than 10% during this period⁶⁹. There is anecdotal evidence that financial distress forced grape growers to look beyond the Marne for work: a newspaper article found in the Marne departmental archives entitled “Poverty in Champagne” reported “a group of 17 young people from Venteuil left from Damery station...for Algeria” to work in the country’s vineyards, grafting vines⁷⁰.

⁶⁸ Koukharski, op.cit., p165.

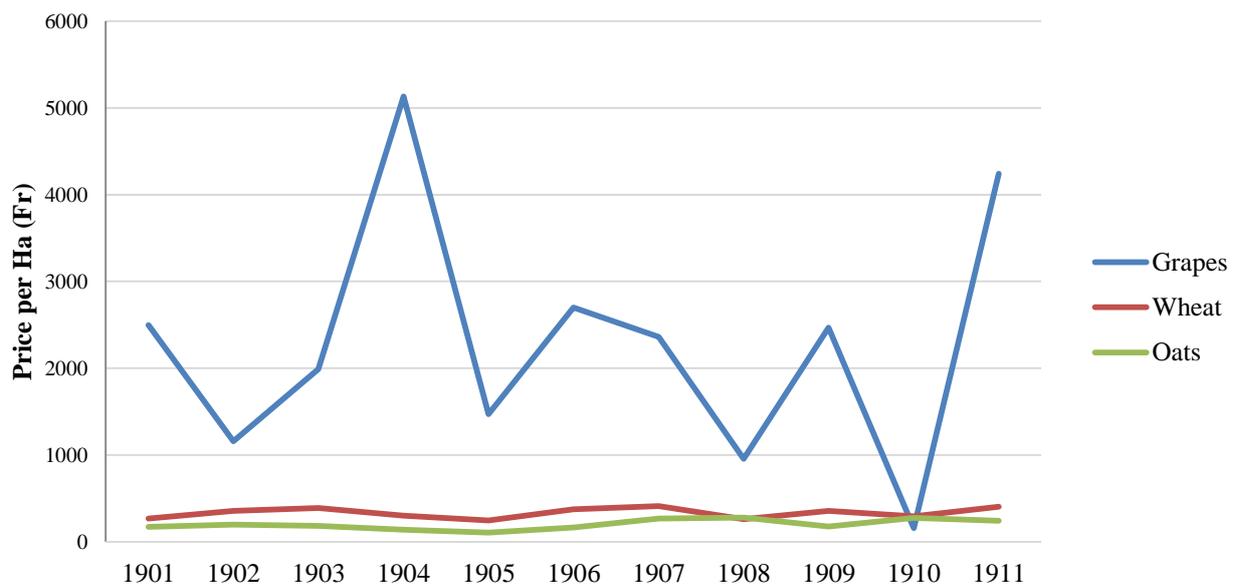
⁶⁹ *Le Réveil de la Marne*, 25 Apr 1911.

⁷⁰ *Le Réveil de la Marne*, 7 Jan 1911.

III. Agricultural earnings per hectare

Based on the government's annual statistical records, the average earned per hectare by grape growers in the Marne was generally much higher than other farmers in the region. The figures (see Appendix 2) reveal that wheat farmers earned between 14.8 and 18.9Fr/hl during the period 1901-10⁷¹, which the author calculated as between 266 and 411Fr/ha with a mean of 16.9Fr/hl or 325.4Fr/ha. The median income per ha was 327.8Fr. Using the same government data, oat farmers earned between 7.03 and 9.62Fr/hl between 1901 and 1910, and the author's calculations show earnings of between 104 and 277Fr/ha. The mean income for the 10-year period was 8.5Fr/hl or 194.6Fr/ha for oat farmers and the median was 177.7Fr/ha.

Figure 6. Annual value of grape, wheat and oat crops per ha, 1901-11



Source: *Annuaire Statistique, 1901-1912.*

The government data for wine, wheat and oat crops in the Marne during the first decade of the 1900s was used to create Figure 6. The graph reiterates that the average revenue of grape farmers was generally much higher per hectare than cereal farmers. However, it also reveals that the income from grape growing was also much more unpredictable than other agricultural products due to huge

⁷¹ *Annuaire Statistique, 1901-10.*

fluctuations in crop sizes and grape prices that are not experienced in modern viticulture. This created huge financial uncertainty for vigneron.

IV. Agricultural profits per hectare

While earnings per hectolitre and per hectare for all three crops provide an indicator of revenue and the variability of that revenue, it may be more helpful to perform a comparative analysis of costs and earnings for grape and cereal farmers to measure profit per hectare during this period.

Figure 7. Average yields and running costs of Marne vineyards

	Yields (hl/ha)	Cost (Fr/ha)	Cost (Fr/hl)
Grands crus	20-25	3,000-3,500	144
Moyens and petits crus	40-45	2,000-2,500	53

Source: Vitu, H. (1912) La question des délimitations régionales, quoted in Simpson, Creating Wine, p151.

The annual cost of running a grand cru- or premier cru-quality vineyard in the Marne was 3,000-3,500Fr and that estimate was “a bit low since phylloxera”⁷² and in years of disease pressure, which required more spraying, such as 1908 and 1910. Paradoxically, the growing seasons that were the most expensive to manage due to disease often resulted in lower grape prices because of the lower quality of the crop. In addition to lower grape prices, lower yields also contributed to reduced profitability in poor years. The cost of running a less prestigious vineyard was 2,000-2,500Fr (See Figure 7). A lesser vineyard was typically less densely planted than a grand cru site and would therefore require fewer inputs and less labour. A grower also commented in a contemporary survey that as the potential earnings of lesser sites was lower, it was imperative to reduce running costs: “as soon as one leaves the premiers crus where the sale of grapes is assured, it is necessary to reduce one’s costs”⁷³. It has been shown that the mean income for all Marne vineyards between 1901 and

⁷² Lheureux, op.cit., p8.

⁷³ ‘Rapport de M.Guichard au nom de la commission chargée de décerner la prime d’honneur et les culturaux dans la Marne en 1909’, *Le Cultivateur de la Champagne*, 1 Oct 1910.

1909 was 2,303Fr per hectare of vines. This revenue may have covered the lower overheads of a petit or moyen cru vineyard or provided a small profit in years that did not require extra inputs such as sprays to tackle disease. The evidence collected shows that grand cru vineyard owners could expect higher than average prices for their grapes but the challenging growing seasons and the small crop sizes from 1907 to 1909 reduced their potential earnings and the 1910 harvest compounded their long-standing financial distress.

While Figure 6 revealed that cereal farmers earned significantly less per hectare than grape growers, their outgoings were significantly lower. Firstly, agricultural land was much cheaper than vineyard land, as a rural survey in the departmental archives of the Marne highlighted⁷⁴. Furthermore, the annual cost of running farms in the Marne, which were generally mixed farms during this period, were much lower than vineyards as Figure 8 demonstrates. While agricultural land in the Marne was often fragmented, total farm holdings were much larger than vineyards: a rural farm was considered small if it was less than 20ha whereas a vineyard holding was deemed small if it was under 1ha⁷⁵, a contemporary agricultural journal stated. This combination of lower costs and larger holdings enabled cereal farmers to make consistent total annual profits.

Figure 8. Mixed farms in the Marne, 1909: costs, receipts and profits

Farm Location and size (ha)	Annual Costs (Fr/ha)	Annual Receipts (Fr/ha)	Profit (Fr/ha)	Total profit (Fr)
Athis, 100ha	210	240	30	3,000
Various, 34h	260	280	20	680
Venteuil, 138ha	130	85	45	6,210
Champaubert, 210ha	207	266	59	12,390

Source: *Le Cultivateur de la Champagne*, 1 Aug 1909; 1 Sept 1909.

⁷⁴ 'Bulletin des travaux des comices agricoles de Chalons-sur-Marne', *Le Cultivateur de Champagne*, (1909), vol.62. pp14-16.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p15.

V. Cost of living

The cost of living for an average working-class family of four in 1910 was 1,202Fr⁷⁶, according to a government survey. With the annual cost of running 1ha of moyen or petit crus vines standing at 2,000-2,500Fr, a grower would have to earn between 3,202 and 3,700Fr per ha to meet the subsistence needs of his family. In the first decade of the 1900s, the average earned per hectare, calculated from government figures, barely met the costs of production, and so many growers needed to supplement their income. Skilled male vineyard workers earned around 5Fr a day for 9.5 to 10 hours' work plus a wine and food allowance. Based on a 300-day working year, he could earn up to 1,500Fr a year, which would support his family. "But there wasn't always work. And when there was no work, they weren't paid. For others that offered their services every Monday on the marketplace of Epernay and Damery, the average weekly wage was 15Fr [720Fr per annum]. But if it rained three days out of six, they would only receive 7.50Fr [360Fr per annum]."⁷⁷

Even for those who had a secure job to supplement their vineyard income, the daily cost of living increased significantly in 1910 due to a disastrous wheat harvest across France, as well as an abysmal potato crop. Cool and wet weather conditions combined with hail in late spring to increase the incidence of disease and reduced the yield of many other agricultural crops as well as grapes. The scarcity of wheat forced prices up 17% between July and September 2010, which caused bread prices to increase from 2.2Fr/kg to 2.4Fr/kg, according to regular price reports from the Epernay market, found in regional newspapers during the period, which formed the basis for Figure 8. An active worker (*ouvrier de force*) and his four-person family consumed 600kg of bread every year⁷⁸, and on this basis (0.2Fr per kg x 600kg), the price rise would increase annual household outgoings by 120Fr per annum, equivalent to 24 days' work on the basis of a 1,500Fr annual salary. Figure 8

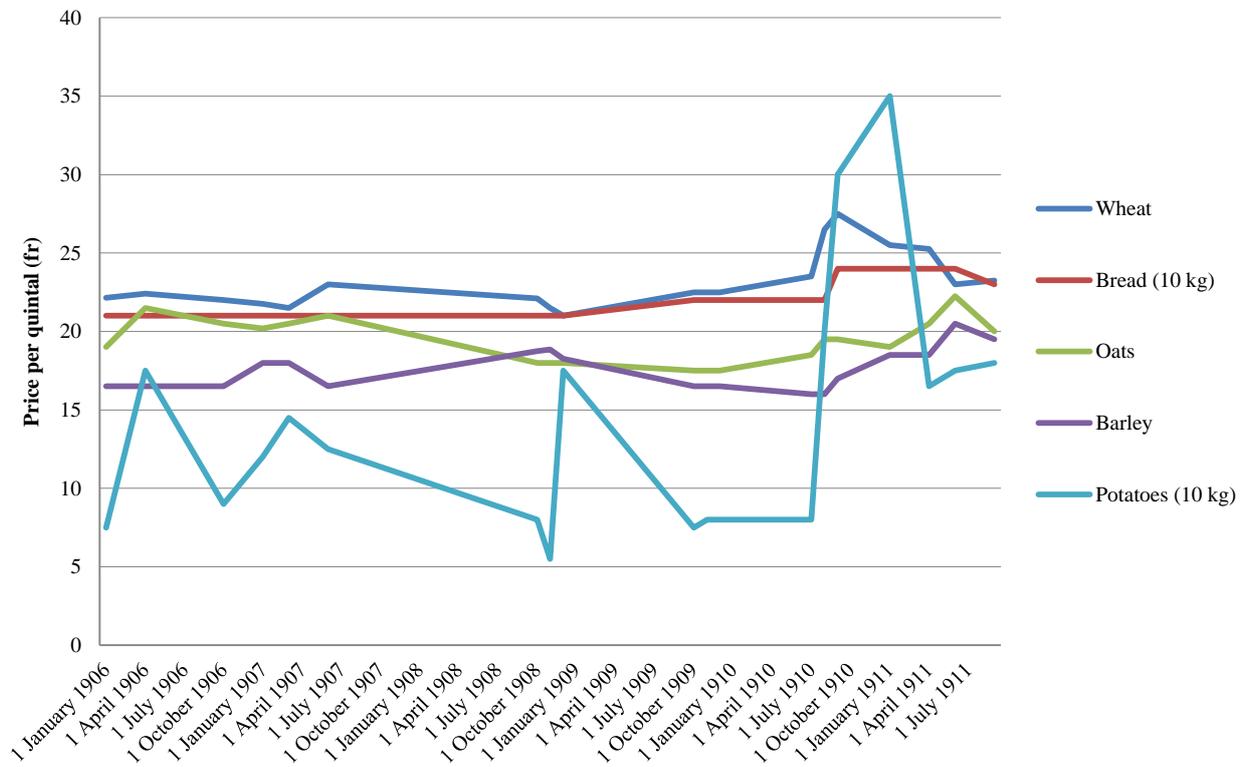
⁷⁶ Statistique Générale de la France, Ministère du travail et de la prévoyance sociale (1911) *Salaires et coût de l'existence à diverses époques, jusqu'en 1910*, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale.

⁷⁷ Liszek, op.cit., p46.

⁷⁸ Landouzy, L. (1905) *Hygiène sociale: Enquête sur l'alimentation d'une centaine ouvriers et employés Parisiens*, Paris, Masson, p61.

also shows the huge spike in potato prices and a simultaneous rise in other everyday foodstuffs on the eve of the unrest.

Figure 9. Epernay market prices by agricultural product, 1906-11



Source: *Le Réveil de la Marne, 1906-1911*. See table in Appendix 3 for details.

VI. Worker action

Many local newspaper articles in 1910 and 1911 addressed the rising cost of living and the impact this was having on working families⁷⁹. In this context, it is unsurprising that there was growing discontent across the Marne. This discontent was expressed through strikes, which had become an increasingly common feature of the French social and political landscape. The growing popularity of the socialist and trade unionist movements mobilised workers in the first decade of the 1900s in unprecedented numbers. “Before 1900, no year had ever seen 200,000 strikers.”⁸⁰ In 1906, 200,000 workers went on strike and, over the next three years, there were massive strikes with the greatest numbers recorded during the Midi winegrowers’ revolt of 1907. In the Marne departmental archives, newspaper reports and letters between the prefect and police dating from 1910 to 1912 detail many strikes by railway, postal, gas and wool workers, factory hands and weavers. These primary documents revealed common grievances including daily (and sickness) pay, working conditions and pensions. Clearly, direct action was not the preserve of vigneron in 1910/11. While the wine industry had a unique demand – delimitation – there was a common theme between the urban and rural working classes: protecting their income and alleviating their hardship.

⁷⁹ See issues of *L’Indicateur de l’Est* and *Le Réveil de la Marne* in 1910/11.

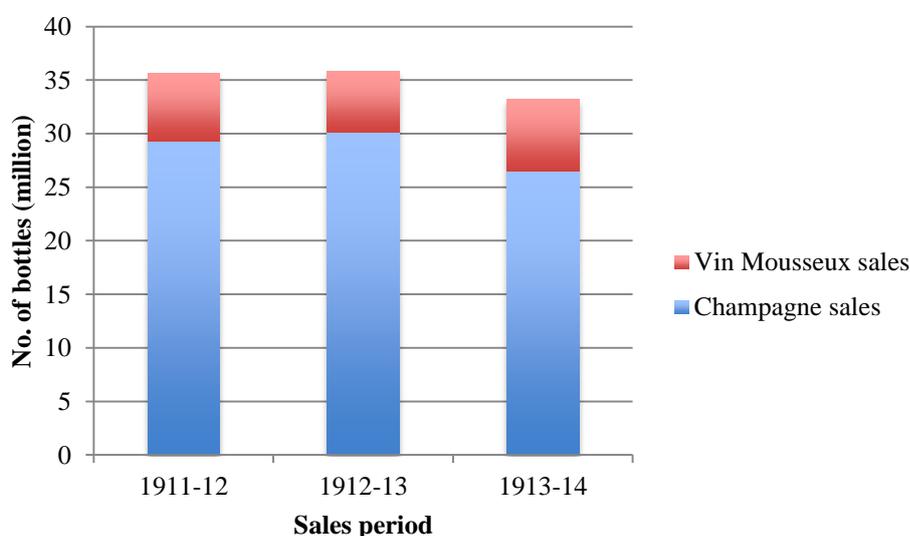
⁸⁰ Sowerwine, op.cit., p81.

VII. The level of fraud

During the Champagne riots, vignerons targeted négociants they believed were producing and selling Champagne that was made with wine sourced from outside the region. This practice was perceived to be a major cause of depressed grape prices and such wines were thought to be harmful to Champagne's reputation as a quality wine-producing region.

Due to the sensitive nature of fraud, it is difficult to quantify its extent before 1911 but estimates can be proposed. Simpson created a complex formula to calculate that as many as 17.8 million bottles – almost one in two sold annually in the years 1907 to 1911 – were made from grapes not grown in Champagne⁸¹. While Simpson admitted his calculation was not without problems, it implied that fraud was not a perceived threat but a real problem for growers.

Figure 10. Marne sparkling wine shipments by classification, 1911-14



Source: Simon, A. *The history of Champagne*, p111

Following the delimitation by the government in 1911, négociants were obliged to enter “wines from outside the Champagne country made sparkling in Champagne cellars”⁸² as *vin mousseux* (sparkling wine). The subsequent French excise figures may act as a guide to the extent of outside

⁸¹ Simpson, *Creating Wine*, pp147-149.

⁸² Simon, A. (1962) *The history of Champagne*, London, Ebury Press, p111.

purchasing taking place in the region before the unrest. Based on the data used to create Figure 9 (see Appendix 4), outside wines that were made sparkling in the Marne represented one in every six bottles that were shipped from the department in the period 1911-14. The figures in Appendix 4 reveal that the ratio of *vin mousseux* sales was much higher in the domestic market: one in two bottles of Marne wine sold in France was *vin mousseux*. This suggests that as much as 50% of the French market's "Champagne" consumption before 1911 could have been Champagne made from outside wines. However, these postulations have their failings. In the years following the riots and the highly publicised trials of a number of unscrupulous merchants, it could be suggested that the use of outside wines fell, and thus, the French excise figures do not accurately reflect the level of fraud prior to 1911. In addition, a more fruitful harvest in 1911 combined with a dip in domestic sales would have reduced the need to buy wines from beyond the region's new boundaries and may have led to a natural reduction in fraudulent practices. However, without access to private business records, and the likely loss or destruction of documents since 1911, the historian must accept that estimates based on the available evidence have to suffice despite their potential inadequacies.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research paper has brought to light new quantitative and qualitative primary evidence that shows that discontent within the vigneron community had long been fermenting in Champagne. Growers had experienced financial difficulty for at least two decades before 1911. In the shorter term, the data suggest that a string of poor harvests culminating in the disastrous 1910 harvest combined with a sudden increase in living costs triggered the unrest.

Resentment toward the region's merchants had been increasing within the grape-growing community, fuelled by figures showing that Champagne sales increased to record highs yet grape prices were falling, which growers attributed to an influx of outside wines. From the early 1890s, the primary data revealed that all vigneron, from petit- to grand-cru owners, earned less money for their grapes in 1906-09 than in 1880-84 despite their costs increasing over the period. Anecdotal evidence, including the experience of the Mesnil-sur-Oger grower, suggested that growers were struggling to meet their living costs long before 1910. In the first decade of the 1900s, the author's calculations based on government figures highlighted that the average earned per hectare was barely sufficient to cover the cost of running a disease-free moyen- or petit-cru vineyard. However, vine diseases, particularly fungal diseases, were common between 1907 and 1910, causing growers' costs to rise and their revenue to fall. Their hardship was then compounded by the tiny 1910 crop – which yielded just 2% of the 10-year average. The loss of crop was a financial disaster, as the experience of Dizy growers showed, which acted as a trigger for long-suffering growers.

Growers were also burdened with the rising cost of tackling phylloxera during this period, which must be considered as one of the long-term contributing factors in the resort to action. While the research showed that the AVC provided much-needed grafting wood for replanting vineyards, vigneron still had to cover the cost of the new vines and the labour costs associated with grubbing up and replanting. In addition, they had to wait a minimum of three years for the new vines to

produce their first crop. The collated government data suggests that this cost was too high for many, particularly *vin ordinaire* producers, who abandoned grape growing.

In contrast, the evidence suggests that other farmers in the Marne were not experiencing the same long-term hardship as grape growers, despite a poor wheat and potato harvest in 1910. The income from other types of farming in the Marne was much more reliable than grape growing. While grape growing could be very lucrative in a high-yielding year and when grape prices were buoyant, Champagne was, and remains, a marginal climate for viticulture, and the data showed there was extreme variability of yields in this period that are no longer experienced due to modern viticultural techniques. Market prices for other agricultural products were much more consistent in comparison. Furthermore, mixed farms were common in the Marne at this time, spreading the risk of crop failure with farmers planting a number of different cereals including wheat, oat and barley in addition to dairy and/or cattle farming. 1910 was a difficult year for some crops but the data suggests that farmers in the Marne were not experiencing long-term financial distress.

While the primary data showed that farmers and salaried workers enjoyed more consistent earnings, vignerons were not alone in experiencing economic hardship in 1910/11. The findings indicate that living costs in the Marne increased significantly in the months prior to the protests. Basic commodities including bread and potatoes increased in price, according to Epernay market data uncovered during the research period. The rising cost of living in late 1910 was a problem for all, but it served to exacerbate the hardship growers were already experiencing following a string of poor harvests culminating in the meagre 1910 vintage. While growers chanted “down with fraud” during demonstrations, they also called for “bread” and their “hunger to be eased”⁸³ and the figures reveal that it was indeed increasingly difficult to subsist.

While this paper has shown it is difficult to quantify the volume of fraud, the given estimates

⁸³ Liszek, op.cit., p35.

suggest that outside wines represented a significant amount of total Champagne sales in the period up to and including 1911. Growers hoped delimitation would put an end to this fraudulent activity and restore the normal supply-and-demand playing field, providing a fair price for their grapes and a sustainable living for their families. The call for an end to fraud through delimitation, which was a protectionist measure, was inspired by growers' economic interest. It was a stated objective of the winegrowing community in the Marne in 1911 yet fraudulent activity had been a long-standing issue in Champagne and had never before caused growers to rise up. The study's findings suggest that the 1910 grape harvest and the concurrent spike in living provided the impetus for long-suffering growers to resort to action.

In conclusion, there was not a single cause of the 1911 Champagne riots, although the economic conditions of grape growers did play the proximate role in the resort to action. Growers had been weighed down by the financial burden of phylloxera, fraudulent activity and short harvests in the first decade of the 20th century. The government's inaction over the implementation of delimitation was a contributing factor but the almost non-existent harvest of 1910, combined with rising living costs, provided the economic catalyst for embittered vigneron to act.

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Secondary sources

Cipolla, C. (1991) *Between History and Economics: An Introduction to Economic History*, New York, W.W.Norton.

Charle, C. (1994) *A Social History of France in the 19th Century*, Oxford, Berg.

Chappaz, G. (1951) *Le vignoble et le vin de Champagne*, Paris, Louis Larmat.

Desbois-Thibault, C., Melin, A. (2011) '1911-2011 Du déséquilibre au consensus' *La Champagne Viticole*, Hors-Serie.

Diart, S. (2010) *Histoire des relations interprofessionnelles Champenoises*, Reims, Broché.

Drame, S. et al. (1991) *Un siècle de blé en France: 1825-1913*, Paris, Economica.

Frader, Laura Levine. (1991) *Peasants and Protest: Agricultural Workers, Politics, and Unions in the Aude: 1850-1914*, Berkeley, University of California Press.

Fradet, D. (2011) *1911 en Champagne: Chronique d'une Révolution*, Reims, Fradet.

Garnotel J. (1985) *L'ascension d'une grande agriculture en Champagne*, Paris, Economica.

Girault, J. (1969) 'Le rôle du socialisme dans la révolte des vignerons de l'Aube', *Le Mouvement Social*. 67 (Apr-Jun) pp89-108.

Guy, K.M. (2003) *When Champagne Became French*, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press.

Guy, K.M. (1997) 'Wine, Work and Wealth: Class Relations and Modernization in the Champagne Wine Industry', *Business and Economic History*, 26 (2).

Harlaut, Y., Perron, F. (2010) *Les Révoltes du Champagne*, Langres, Editions Dominique Guéniot.

Hau, M. (1976) *La Croissance économique de la Champagne*, Paris, Editions Ophrys.

Heffer, J., Chanut, J-M., Mairesse, J. (1986) 'La culture du blé au milieu du XIXe siècle: rendement, prix, salaires et autres coûts', *Annales, Economies, Sociétés*. no.6, pp1273-1302.

Kladstrup, D. & P. (2005) *Champagne*, New York, Harper Collins.

Koukharski, P. (1952) 'Le mouvement paysan en France en 1911' *Questions D'Histoire*, no. 1. pp160-177.

Lachiver, M. (1998) *Vins, vignes et vignerons: histoire du vignoble français*, Poitiers, Fayard.

Lessard, E., Barbier, J-L. (1981) *Le Champagne: Agronomie, Economie*, Reims, CRDP.

Lheureux, L. (1906) *Les syndicats dans le viticole Champenoise*, Paris, Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence.

- Liszek, S. (1995) *Champagne: un siècle d'histoire sociale*, VO Editions, Montreuil.
- Loubere, L. (1978) *The red and the white: the history of wine in France and Italy in the nineteenth century*, State University of New York Press, Albany.
- Machi, L, McEvoy, B. (2009) *The Literature Review*, California, Corwin Press.
- Menival, D. (2012) 'The economic perspective on champagne' in Charters, S. (ed.) *The Business of Champagne*, Oxon, Routledge, pp36-50.
- Nollevalle, J. (1961) '1911: L'Agitation dans le vignoble champenois', *La Champagne Viticole*, Syndicat Général des Vignerons de la Champagne.
- Northcutt, W. (1996) *The Regions of France: A reference guide to history and culture*, Westport, Greenwood Press.
- Saillet, J. (Apr-June 1969) 'Les composantes du mouvement dans la Marne', *Le Mouvement Social*, 67, pp.81-88.
- Simon, A. (1962) *The history of Champagne*, London, Ebury Press.
- Simon, A. (1905) *History of the Champagne trade in England*, London, Wyman & Sons.
- Simpson, J. (2004) 'Phylloxera, price volatility and institutional innovation in France's domestic wine markets, 1870-1911', *Economic History and Institutions*, Series 02, No. 04-46.
- Simpson, J. (2011) *Creating Wine: The Emergence of a World Industry, 1840-1914*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press.
- Sowerwine, C (2001) *France since 1870: Culture, Society and the Making of the Republic*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Stanziani, A. (2003) 'Une fraude agro-alimentaire: la falsification du vin en France', *Révue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, vol. 50, no. 2, pp.154-186.
- Toutain, J-C. (1992) 'La production agricole de la France de 1810 à 1990: départements et régions', *Economies et sociétés*, A.F. no. 17, Tome III.
- Warner.C. (1960) *The Winegrowers of France and the Government Since 1875*, New York, Columbia University Press.
- Weber, E. (1976) *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France*, California, Stanford.
- Wolikow, C. (2010) La délimitation de la Champagne viticole, *Les cahiers de Villa Bissinger*, no. 1, pp139-158.

Web resources:

Union des Maisons de Champagne (n.d.) *The Twentieth Century: Revolution in the Vineyard*, Retrieved from http://www.maisons-champagne.com/en/bonal_gb/pages/05/02-01 Viewed 1 February 2015.

Comité interprofessionnel du vin de Champagne (n.d.) *La consécration de l'appellation Champagne*. Retrieved from <http://www.champagne.fr/fr/terroir-appellation/appellation/la-consécration-de-l-appellation-champagne> Viewed 1 May 2015.

Primary sources

Berget, A. (1902) *La Cooperation dans la Viticulture Européenne; Etude d'Economie Rurale et d'Histoire Agronomique*, Lille, A.Devos.

Caziot, P. (1914) *La Valeur de la Terre en France*, Paris, Baillière et fils.

Dervin, G. (1896) *Six semaines en pays phylloxérés, étude sur la défense et la reconstitution des vignobles français atteints du phylloxéra, suivie de la Champagne devant l'invasion phylloxérique*, Reims, Dubois-Popliment.

Archives Départementales de la Marne (ADM)

ADM 129 M 10 Pésage officiel des grains.

ADM 130 M 12 Approvisionnement en blé, 1891-1924.

ADM 130 M 24 Enquête sur la production panifiables, 1926.

ADM 134 M 4 Surveillance du coût de la vie. Hausse des prix des denrées alimentaires, 1911-12.

ADM 159 M 33 Enquête par communes sur la valeur moyenne de l'hectare de vignes depuis 10 ans et sur le prix moyen d'hectolitre de vie, 1891.

ADM 146 M 154 Statistique Agricole Annuelle. Etats récapitulatifs par arrondissements et pour le departement, 1902-04.

ADM 146 M 155 Statistique Agricole Annuelle, 1905-08.

ADM 146 M 156 Statistique Agricole Annuelle, 1909-12.

ADM 146 M 86, 91, 96 Statistique agricole annuelle par arrondissement, Chalons-sur-Marne.

ADM 155 M 1 Répression de la fraude dans le commerce des vins de Champagne, 1903-04.

ADM 155 M 2 Délimitation de la Champagne viticole, 1905-08.

ADM 155 M 5 Délimitation de la Champagne viticole, 1908-10.

ADM 155 M 6 Délimitation de la Champagne viticole, Janvier 1911.

ADM 155 M 7 Délimitation de la Champagne viticole, Fevrier-Mars 1911.

ADM 155 M 8 Délimitation de la Champagne viticole, Avril 1911.

ADM 155 M 9 Emeutes de Champagne, Avril 1911.

ADM 189 M 11 Statistiques et enquêtes relatives à la vie ouvrière et à la vie rurale.

ADM 189 M 21 Salaires de diverses catégories de travailleurs, 1912.

ADM 194 M 16 Grèves du personnel des postes et des chemins de fer. Grèves diverses, 1909.

ADM 195 M 1 Rapports sur le chômage dans l'industrie lainière à Reims, 1848-1912.

ADM 195 M 17 Grèves de l'industrie lainière, 1910-14; Grèves des ouvriers maréchaux-ferrants, 1912.

ADM Delta 486 Le Réveil de la Marne.

ADM Delta 486 L'Indicateur de l'Est.

ADM Delta 99/19 Annuaire de la Marne.

ADM Delta 262/6 & 262/7 Le Cultivateur de Champagne: Bulletin des travaux des comices agricoles de Chalons-sur-Marne.

ADM Delta 267/7 Bulletin de la société d'horticulture et de viticulture de l'arrondissement

d'Épernay, 1909-11.

Bibliothèque Raoul Chandon de Brialles, Médiathèque, Épernay

Le Vigneron Champenois.

Syndicat Général des Vignerons de la Champagne

La Champagne Viticole.

Bibliothèque Nationale de France online: www.gallica.bnf.fr

Statistique Générale de la France, Ministère du travail et de la prévoyance sociale (1900-1912)
Annuaire Statistique, vols 20-32, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale.

Permalinks

1900: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5508621x>

1901: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5503095m>

1902: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5503036r>

1903: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5508619v>

1904: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5510391b>

1905: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k55052117>

1906: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k58609102>

1907: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5505311k>

1908: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5504194v>

1909: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5504268q>

1910: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5505138j>

1911: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5505396p>

1912: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k55042872>

Statistique Générale de la France, Ministère du travail et de la prévoyance sociale (1911) *Salaires et coût de l'existence à diverses époques, jusqu'en 1910*, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale.

Landouzy, L. (1905) *Hygiène sociale: Enquête sur l'alimentation d'une centaine ouvriers et employés Parisiens*, Paris, Masson.

8. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Total Champagne shipments

Total Champagne shipments, 1844 – 1911 (bottles).

Year	France	Export	Total
1844-45	2,255,438	4,380,214	6,635,652
1854-55	2,552,743	6,795,773	9,348,516
1864-65	2,801,626	9,101,441	11,903,067
1872-73	3,464,059	18,917,779	22,381,838
1874-75	3,517,182	15,318,345	18,835,527
1884-85	2,822,601	18,189,256	21,011,857
1894-95	4,908,281	16,129,374	21,037,655
1902-03	9,335,412	22,523,746	31,859,158
1903-04	9,808,774	21,084,881	30,893,655
1904-05	8,864,947	19,845,852	28,710,799
1905-06	11,714,404	23,876,731	35,591,135
1906-07	10,114,548	23,056,847	33,171,395
1907-08	11,522,272	22,212,346	33,734,618
1908-09	12,713,024	19,992,314	32,705,338
1909-10	13,120,946	26,173,580	39,294,526
1910-11	1,551,787	23,066,523	24,618,310

Source: *Annuaire Statistique, 1901-11*; Simon, A. *The history of Champagne, p176-77*.

Appendix 2: Marne department agricultural statistics

I. Marne department wine harvest statistics: 1889 – 1911.

Year	Total ha	Total wine produced (hl)	Harvest value (Fr)	Hl/Ha mean (to nearest 0.1 hl)*	Mean wholesale price per hl**	Av earned per ha (Fr)***
1889-1892	-	205,000	-	-	-	-
1892-1896	-	463,000	-	-	-	-
1897-1906	-	465,585	-	-	-	-
1890-99****	15,166	368,872	-	24.3	-	-
1901	12,910	685,381	32,212,907	53.1	47.0	2,495.70
1902	14,329	297,195	16,602,817	20.7	55.9	1,156.41
1903	14,287	465,838	28,419,490	32.6	61.0	1,988.84
1904	14,928	851,373	76,623,570	57.0	90.0	5,130.00
1905	14,690	431,167	21,558,350	29.4	50.0	1,470.00
1906	15,174	455,220	40,969,800	30.0	90.0	2,700.00
1907	14,038	299,565	33,068,838	21.4	131.0	2,362.34
1908	13,870	127,281	13,520,529	9.0	123.0	956.03
1909	13,461	268,200	33,100,544	20.0	137.0	2,468.35
1910	13,463	9386	2,086,858	0.7	228.0	155.64
1911	13,127	138,667	56,010,724	10.5	406.0	4,241.19

Sources: *Annuaire Statistique 1902-1912*.

* The author checked the government statistics for hl/ha correlated using the sum total wine produced divided by vineyard area. In two cases, the government statistics were mathematically incorrect and the author used their own calculations.

** Mean wholesale price per hl (all wines) takes the harvest value and divides it by the number of hectares.

*** The average earned per ha was calculated using the mean wholesale price per hl (all wines) and multiplying by the number of hl/ha.

**** The 1890-99 figures were sourced and calculated from Lachiver, M., *Vins, vignes et vigneron*, p599 & 609.

II. Marne wine harvest: 1907-11, Vin Ordinaire (VO) and Vin de Qualité (VQ).⁺

Year	Hl/Ha mean (to nearest 0.1 hl)	Price VQ (Fr/hl)	Price VO (Fr/hl)	VO production (hl)	VQ production (hl)	VO (% of total crop)*	Value VO crop (Fr)	Value VQ crop (Fr)	Av. earned per ha VQ (Fr)*
1907	21.4	131	38	66,389	233,176	22.5	2,522,782	30,546,056	2,803.40
1908	9.0	123	41	26,037	101,244	20.5	1,067,517	12,453,012	1,107.00
1909	20.0	137	39	37,172	231,028	14.0	1,449,708	31,650,836	2,740.00
1910	0.7	228	50	875	8,961	9.0	43,750	2,043,108	159.60
1911	10.5	406	45	798	137,869	0.5	35,910	55,974,814	4263.00

Source: *Annuaire Statistique, 1908-1912.*

⁺ The French government did not separate *vin ordinaire* and *vin de qualité* statistics until 1907.

* Author's own calculations.

III. Marne department wheat harvest statistics: 1901 – 1911.

Year	Total ha	Total harvested (hl)	Total crop value (Fr)	Av production (hl/ha)	Crop value per hl (Fr)	Crop value per ha (Fr)*
1901	98,300	1,766,670	26,146,720	18.0	14.8	265.99
1902	96,915	2,211,816	34,592,802	23.0	15.6	356.94
1903	94,832	2,173,685	36,887,434	22.9	17.0	388.98
1904	96,855	1,816,031	29,201,778	18.8	16.1	301.50
1905	97,708	1,376,706	24,092,355	14.1	17.5	246.58
1906	97,129	2,136,838	36,904,000	22.0	17.1	375.10
1907	100,550	2,312,650	41,327,055	23.0	17.9	411.01
1908	100,680	1,610,880	26,096,260	16.0	16.2	259.20
1909	101,800	2,036,000	36,057,000	20.0	17.7	354.19
1910	99,900	1,559,400	29,419,600	15.6	18.9	294.40
1911	99,800	2,039,000	40,125,000	20.43	19.68	402.05

Source: *Annuaire Statistique, 1901-1911.*

* Author's own calculations.

IV. Marne department oat harvest statistics: 1901 – 1911.

Year	Total ha	Total harvested (hl)	Average production (hl/ha)	Crop value per hl (Fr)	Crop value per ha (Fr)*
1901	121,650	2,335,320	19.19	8.92	171.17
1902	118,557	2,636,906	22.24	8.8	195.71
1903	113,131	2,722,551	24	7.53	180.72
1904	114,593	2,268,941	19.8	7.03	139.19
1905	114,652	1,434,297	12.51	8.32	104.08
1906	115,514	1,963,738	17	9.62	163.54
1907	115,189	3,340,481	29	9.19	266.51
1908	115,740	3,819,420	33	8.42	277.86
1909	115,990	4,520,100	19	9.2	174.80
1910	116,330	3,856,300	33.15	8.23	272.82
1911	116,461	3,060,000	26.35	9.2	242.42

Source: *Annuaire Statistique, 1901-1911.*

* Author's own calculations.

Note that the total value of the oat crop was not provided by the government statistics, unlike wine and wheat

Appendix 3: Epernay market prices

Epernay market prices, agricultural products: 1906 – 1911, Francs. Per quintal unless stated

Product	Jan 1906	Apr 1906	Oct 1906	Jan 1907	Mar 1907	Jun 1907	Oct 1908	Nov 1908	Dec 1908
Wheat	22.15	22.40	22.00	21.75	21.50	23.00	22.10	21.50	21.00
Barley	16.50	16.50	16.50	18.00	18.00	16.50	18.75	18.85	18.25
Oats	19.00	21.50	20.50	16.15*	20.50	21.00	18.00	18.00	18.00
Bread**	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10
Potatoes**	0.75	1.75	0.90	1.20	1.45	1.25	0.80	0.55	1.75
Product	Oct 1909	Nov 1909	Dec 1909	Jul 1910	Aug 1910	Sep 1910	Jan 1911	Apr 1911	Jun 1911
Wheat	22.50	22.50	22.50	23.50	26.50	27.50	25.50	25.25	23.00
Barley	16.50	16.50	16.50	16.00	16.00	17.00	18.50	18.50	20.50
Oats	17.50	17.50	17.50	18.50	19.50	19.50	19.00	20.50	22.25
Bread**	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40
Potatoes**	0.75	0.80	0.80	0.80	2.00	3.00	3.50	1.65	1.75

Source: *Le Réveil de la Marne*: 1906: 15 Jan, 9 Apr, 15 Oct; 1907: 16 Jan, 19 Mar, 25 Jun; 1908: 6 Oct, 17 Nov, 15 Dec; 1909: 5 Oct, 16 Nov, 16 Dec; 1910: 31 July, 14 August, 16 Sept; 1911: 17 Jan, 4 April, 25 Jun, 5 Sept.

* Data was listed for 80kg oats.

** Product data is per kilogram.

Appendix 4: Marne Champagne and sparkling wine shipments

Marne Champagne and vin mousseux (sparkling wine) shipments: 1911 – 1914

Period	Wine Classification	Exports (bottles)	Domestic sales (bottles)	Total sales (bottles)
1911-12	Champagne	20,288,963	9,084,936	29,373,899
	Vin Mousseux	3,001,745	3,312,370	6,314,115
1912-13	Champagne	20,946,534	9,151,110	30,097,644
	Vin Mousseux	2,344,060	3,357,085	5,701,150
1913-14	Champagne	18,410,436	8,134,196	26,544,632
	Vin Mousseux	2,752,484	3,691,924	6,714,408

Source: Simon, A. (1962) The history of Champagne, p111.

Appendix 5: Approved Research Paper Proposal

Date submitted: 21 May 2014

Proposed Title: Were the causes of the 1911 Champagne riots essentially economic?

Define the question(s) that you are considering as the subject of your Research Paper:

The central theme of the unrest in Champagne in 1911 was the sale of Champagne that was not made from grapes grown in the region and the, as yet, undefined boundaries of the Champagne-producing regions.

The delimitation of the Champagne region was seen as a solution to the issue of wine fraud but wine fraud and adulteration were a long-standing issue.

Why then, did a long-standing issue boil over into violent action in 1911? Academics have previously argued that the origins originated in class antagonisms and nationalism.

This research paper aims to:

1. Examine the period up to and including 1911 to consider the reasons for discontent in Champagne;
2. Consider the unrest in Champagne in the context of disaffection in other wine producing regions, in particular the Midi and Bordeaux;
3. Investigate the economic conditions of grape growers in the Champagne region and evaluate if those involved in the unrest were suffering particular hardship at that time compared to a) the previous 10 years and b) other tradespeople and other agricultural activities in the region. It will

also seek to evaluate the cost of wine fraud/adulteration to local grape growers in an attempt to prove or disprove whether the unrest in 1911 was primarily economic.

Research Methodology:

To address aims 1 and 2:

Secondary sources will first be collated to provide background and context surrounding the period. I will then collate and examine primary sources from governmental archives, the archives of the Marne department, grower magazines from the period, Champagne house archives and the local newspaper.

To address the aims set out in 3:

To evaluate if wine growers were suffering particular hardship in 1911 compared with the previous 10 years, this will require data collection, organizing the data in tables or graphs and analysing them using straightforward formulae such as mean and/or median calculations, as well as evaluating the numbers in light of primary and secondary accounts of the financial circumstances of vignerons during the period.

The financial position of growers in the period can also be assessed from the late 1890s to 1911 using a combination of data from the government's *Annuaire Statistique*, available online through the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, and the Marne department's archives. The *Annuaire Statistique* provides annual data on grape prices in the Champagne region, the mean yield per hectare and total value of the crop, as well as the total number of growers in the region, while *La Champagne Viticole* and other sources give grape prices throughout the region. I will consider the earning potential of growers over time by calculating the mean, median and range of prices earned for grapes, as well as the abundance of the crop during each vintage. I will also consider if there

was a correlation between crop size and price paid, potentially using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Menival has suggested in *The Business of Champagne* (Routledge, 2012) that a reduction in crop due to the effect of phylloxera during this period did not lead to rising grape prices but a fall, caused by the influx of grapes from other regions.

The national government's annual statistics from the period also provide annual wage data as well as real wage and cost of living information for many professions in each department, which would provide an interesting comparison with vineyard workers – these will be collated for 1910 and 1911, and organized in a table, before calculating the mean and median wages of other professions in the department. This will be compared to vine workers' wages to establish the relative economic position of vine growers.

To make a direct comparison with other agricultural activities, wheat and oats were two of the major crops in the region, covering 216,000 hectares in the Marne department in 1911 compared with just 13,127ha of vineyards. The Government statistics for the department available through the Bibliothèque Nationale de France provide crop data: hectarage, harvest size and the average value of each crop in the department, which would enable a comparison of mean income per hectare annually, which could then be compared to the mean income of a vineyard per hectare. It is hoped that more information on input costs and profits from these three crops can be obtained during the course of the research.

In an attempt to estimate the cost of fraud, it is difficult to ascertain the cost before 1911. However, from 1911 onwards, wines made in Champagne from grapes purchased outside of Champagne had to be declared as *vin mousseux* and French excise figures can provide us with the total number of bottles that were “*vin mousseux*” and “Champagne.” An approximate value of the cost to the

region's grape growers can then be calculated. The totals for the years up to 1914 provide will be organized into a table coupled with price data from the period. With the help of an economist, I intend to generate estimated costs of fraud.

Potential to Contribute to the Body of Knowledge on Wine:

The series of events that took place in Champagne in 1911 have been documented by a small number of French historians in French but just one academic (Kolleen M. Guy) has analysed the events in the English language (Guy, K., *When Champagne Became French*, chapter six).

No historian has considered if the riots were actually economic in nature – were grape growers rioting because they were struggling to feed their families and feared losing their source of income in the future?

This research paper intends to consider the economic context of the riots to understand if economic adversity caused long-standing discontent to escalate into violence in 1911. This is a subject area that has not previously been addressed in relation to the riots.

Feasibility Issues:

Thus far, I have gathered a large number of secondary sources as well as the primary sources including many years of annual statistics from the French government and editions of the grower magazine *La Champagne Viticole*.

I have approached the French archives that hold the primary information to check that the material I require will be available at the time I am due to visit.

I am still awaiting information from Champagne houses at this time to ascertain if they have wage data for employees, as well as any qualitative information on the events of 1911. However, the wealth of primary data provided by the Bibliothèque Nationale de France provides adequate information for this to be feasible and the Chalons-sur-Marne archives have further indicated that I will be able to glean more information to answer the question satisfactorily.