

# from father(s) to son(s)

## The Engels, companions of the vine

CHÂTEAU DU CLOS DE VOUGEOT, MARCH 14, 2019

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To speak of the Engel family is to recall everything that the wine of Burgundy and the village of Vosne-Romanée represents, but also the involvement for over 80 years in the “*Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin*” (which one could translate as the “*Brotherhood of the Knights of the Wine-Tasting Cup*”); which is based very nearby, at the Château du Clos de Vougeot.

René Engel bore the title of “*Camerlingue*” within the “*Grand Conseil*” of the Brotherhood, and had held it for most of his life. A competent winemaker, his practice acquired on the job, he taught for many years as a professor of oenology at the Faculty of Sciences of Dijon. His strong Burgundian accent, his humour and his bonhomie meant he always delighted the “*Chapître*” dinners he attended. A respected writer with his “*Propos sur l’Art du Bien Boire*” (“*Notes on the Art of Drinking*”), and “*Vosne-Romanée*”, of which he was the dean, the poet, the chronicler. The last of the elders, he died at the age of 94.

His son Pierre succeeded him as proprietor of the estate. He would also join the ranks of the “*Grand Conseil*” of the “*Confrérie*” in 1946 with the title of “*Cellérier*”. Each “*Chapître*” meeting, he loved to recount in his deep voice the history of the Château du Clos de Vougeot and the

Cistercian monks who built it. Committed to his fellow citizens, he was mayor of the village of Vosne-Romanée for 12 years, and later participated in the creation of the group “*Les Jeunes Professionnels de la Vigne*” he chaired for 4 years. He died far too early, at the age of 53.

At the age of just 25, Philippe courageously took up the baton with the goal of sustaining the estate’s prominence. This he accomplished with talent, commitment and passion, but also with a great deal of wisdom. When you are responsible for Clos-Vougeot, for Grands-Échezeaux, for Échezeaux, and for Vosne Les Brulées, you can only be driven towards excellence, and that is what Philippe achieved. He also joined the members of the “*Grand Conseil*”, bearing the title of his father. Again tragedy befell the family, and he left us before the age of 50.

To taste a wine from Domaine Engel is more than to taste a wine of Burgundy. Each bottle resembles the man who brought it into the world: there is a man, there is a terroir, and there is the *climat* that brings the two together.

*Louis-Marc Chevignard*

*Grand Connétable de la Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin*

# one land and a family...

## Domaine René Engel

MARCH 2019



### The Domaine

Cultivating vines from four different villages of the Côte d'Or (Vosne-Romanée, Flagey-Echézeaux, Vougeot and Boncourt-le-Bois), Domaine Engel is an estate located at the heart of the most prestigious vineyards of the Côte de Nuits, in the historical Burgundy wine-growing region, between Gevrey-Chambertin and Nuits-Saint-Georges.

To speak of the Domaine Engel is to testify to a story of family succession, and the figures of René, Pierre and Philippe, the three men who handed down this wine-growing heritage from father to son. All three had strong personalities forged by taking over the reins of the estate at a young age, and leaving their unique imprint and style on it. All sought to make improvements through research, while respecting the ancestral tradition and the original character of the *terroir*. The three generations brought a social dimension to the heart of their profession, with their deep involvement in the community to which they belonged, each contributing in their own way to the knowledge and the economy of the *Grands Vins de Bourgogne*.

### René

René Engel was born on March 8 1894 in Dijon, to parents originally from Alsace. His father, Alexandre Engel, was a wine-broker who died when René was just three years old. In 1904 his mother, Marie-Eugénie, remarried François (known as Paul) Faiveley, a wine-maker and owner of vineyards at Vosne-Romanée, who brought him up and passed on his knowledge, and later the vines. When still a young man, he set his sights on taking over the family profession, and studied viticulture at school between 1908 and 1911.

In 1914 he had just turned twenty when he was sent away to the war. He was taken prisoner. Upon his return, he commenced his career as a winemaker. He was 24 years old. Starting in 1919, and over the following twenty years, he proceeded to acquire a series of plots adjoining the family property, progressively expanding the original estate he inherited and bought back. In this way, he acquired the notable vineyards of Échézeaux (April 15 1919, sold by Fournier-Dupont), Clos de Vougeot (March 1 1920, sold by consorts

Bocquet), and Grands-Échézeaux (April 6 1922, sold in bare ownership by Faiveley-Wodley).

Armed with his knowledge of viticulture, reinforced by a curious and scientific spirit, he experimented together with a group of winemaker friends on innovative methods to perfect both the production and the promotion of wine. Thus, in 1933, in a context of national commercial crisis which in Burgundy saw wines being stored, unable to be sold, he launched a citizen initiative intended to promote the wines of the region, in conjunction with local proprietors Camille Rodier, Jacques Prieur and Georges Faiveley. The creation of the *Journées du Vin* and *Banquets de Vignerons* was followed by the idea to create a more wide-ranging association, in the tradition of the medieval brotherhoods, as a tribute to the wine knowledge, techniques and learning handed down from the Cistercian monks. This association took the spiritual patronage of Rabelais: the *Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin* was founded

in 1934, combining quality and good humour: René Engel was given the title of *Grand Camerlingue*. He contributed to the Brotherhood's establishment at the Château du Clos de Vougeot.

In 1935, René was invited to take an "interim position" teaching œnology at the Faculty of Sciences at the University of Dijon. He would in fact remain there for 35 years and would train many generations of students. In particular, he would take under his wing his young neighbour Henri Jayer, a future *pape des vigneron*s, enabling him to be among the first to train for a qualification in œnology, and passing on his knowledge about wine production and tasting.

Meanwhile, he showed a pioneering spirit, setting up an œnology laboratory on his own estate, while providing his advice to many winegrowers from the surrounding area.

A cultured, literate man, he wrote a regular column, "*The vine and the wine*" in the regional daily paper *Le Bien public*. He will publish three specialised books: *Vade-Mecum de l'œnologue* (1959),

*Propos sur l'Art du bien boire* (1971) and *Vosne-Romanée* (1980).

His work to promote viticulture was recognised by the French state, which made him *Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur* in 1951 and *Officier* in 1972, on which occasion he was praised for his "*humour, gentility and great kindness*".

## Pierre

Of René Engel's marriage to Antoinette Vercely two children were born, a girl, Paulette, in 1923, and a boy, Pierre, in 1927. After having studied law and trained in œnology, Pierre was called to follow in his father's footsteps in 1949. He was 22 years old. He had recently married Michèle Guillien, the daughter of industrialists from Dijon, and the couple raised their four children on the estate – Claire, born in 1951, Brigitte, born in 1952, Philippe, born in 1955 and Frédéric, born in 1961 – sharing their roof in Vosne with René and Antoinette.

Just like his father, Pierre took over the family estate at a young age, hol-

ding the land – the vineyards of Vosne-Romanée, Flagey-Echézeaux, Vougeot and Boncourt-le-Bois – under a sharecropping contract for a renewable period of 18 years. He became responsible for the pruning, planting, harvesting, wine-making and sale of the wines.

While Pierre had taken over the vineyards in order to continue the family tradition, his passions lay in many areas. His commitment to others and especially the wine community lead him to create the group *Les Jeunes Professionnels de la Vigne*. He was particularly involved in the political life of the village, in 1959 becoming Mayor of Vosne, a position he would hold for two successive terms. He was a public man and a great orator, who devoted himself to his official duties. He was keen to continue the family involvement in the promotion of Burgundy wines, particularly through the *Tastevin* brotherhood, where he held the title of *Grand Cellérier*, participating alongside René and later his son Philippe in the *Chapîtres* (dinners), and other celebrations.

The 1970s were a difficult period for viticulture in general, and at Domaine Engel, the majority of the wines were sold to negociants. For Pierre, this situation was further complicated by his state of health, which weakened progressively until his death in 1981, at the age of 53. He left behind the memory of a cultivated and respected man, steeped in humour, just like his father. His deeply original character meant he was at once a poet, an adventurer, and a magician at the whim of his eclectic passions.

## Philippe

The eldest son of Pierre, Philippe took an interest in the family wine business from an early age. He studied at the *Lycée Viticole* in Beaune and at the age of 19, in 1974, began working alongside his sick father in order to help maintain the Domaine. Upon Pierre's premature death, Philippe took over the estate with the assistance of his mother, Michèle, while his brother Frédéric would later offer his support, over a period of five years.

Half of the 7.5-hectare estate (7.5874 ha) was growing *Premier Cru* and *Grand Cru* wines, distributed across some of the region's most renowned appellations:

- Clos-Vougeot (*Grand Cru*): 1.3696 ha
- Grands-Échezeaux (*Grand Cru*): 0.5 ha
- Échezeaux (*Grand Cru*): 0.5515 ha
- Vosne-Romanée Les Brulées (*Premier Cru*): 1.1741 ha

It also produced a Vosne-Romanée Village wine – from a mosaic of plots, composing a total of 2.868 hectares – and as a complement to this, the vineyard of *Les Glapigny*

(1.1242 hectares) in Boncourt-le-Bois (adjacent to Vosne-Romanée) produced *Bourgogne Grand Ordinaire*, a wine exclusively produced for family consumption.

There began a new period for the Engel household. Philippe strived to renew the processes used up to date, both in the vineyard and in the vat room. Inspired by the production techniques he had discovered in the United States, he implemented new methods across the Domaine: grafting, soil remediation program. He improved the winemaking techniques, by sorting all the grapes on a sorting-table, and a full de-stemming (depending on the years), resulting in a decrease in yields, which however had never been excessive at the time of his father and grandfather. He chose pigeage rather than pumping-over, reduced the use of sulphur during wine-making, and introduced gentle filtration. He modernised the equipment, acquiring new oak barrels for the tending of part of the harvest, depending on the vintage.

By the end of the 1980s, the entire output was being bottled and sold from the estate. To instil a new dynamism and enhance public relations, Domaine Engel renewed its logo at this time, and new labels were designed.

The results spoke for themselves – Philippe Engel established his reputation and the estate's wines are placed amongst the best of Vosne, even in difficult years. In line with the family's commitment to promoting the wines of Burgundy, Philippe becomes a member of the *Tastevin Fraternity*, taking up the

title of *Grand Cellerier* previously held by his father.

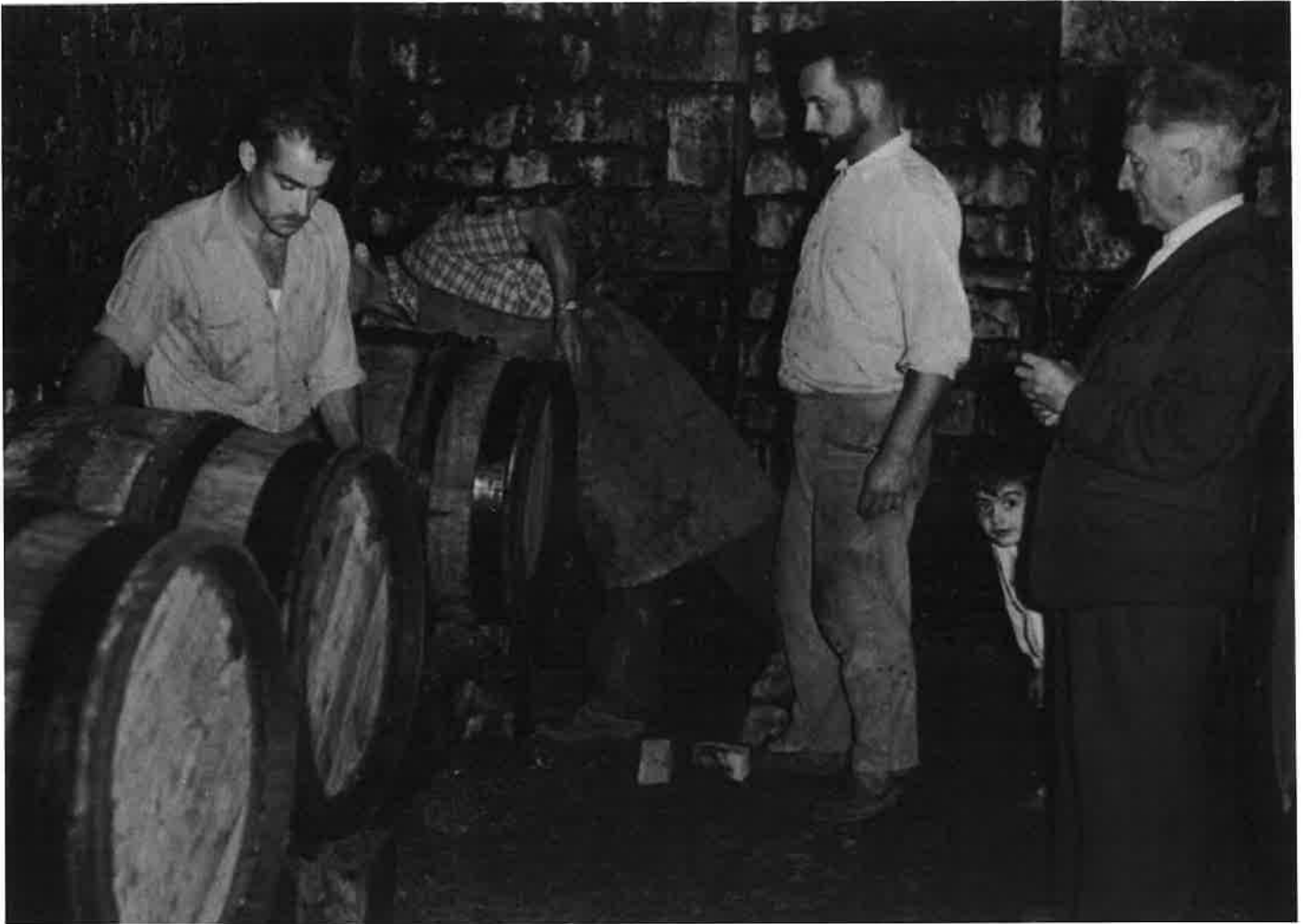
His sudden death in 2005 at the age of 49 plunged the family into disarray and cruelly cut short the new lease of life on which the Domaine Engel had embarked.

As a result, the 2004 vintage brought to an abrupt close the story of an estate that has long been essential to the landscape of *La Côte* and of the entire Burgundy region.

## Michèle

In relation to the Engel trilogy, the figure of Michèle Engel has been key, forming a discreet but enormously effective link in the transmission of the family's winegrowing heritage. As an attentive observer during the period her husband was in charge, she displayed great strength of character and true *savoir-faire* to take up the baton and help to put the estate in order alongside Philippe after the death of Pierre. Similarly committed to public life (as a municipal councillor in Vosne), she maintained the family household and acted as a skilled intermediary between the three generations of men who successively managed the estate.

The sale of the estate in 2006 due to the lack of an heir remains a source of great sadness for her. François Pinault bought only the vineyards, to create the Domaine d'Eugénie. The house, including the cellar and vat room, remain the property of the Engel family. With the sale of the last bottles in direct provenance from the Domaine's cellar, a chapter in the twentieth-century history of Burgundy wine heritage has finally closed. •



— Vosne-Romanée, early 1960's —

(from right to left) René, Philippe as a boy and Pierre in the underground vaulted cellar at the Domaine, supervising the racking of the barrels by Bernard Demanet and his son Pierre.



— Vosne-Romanée —

René with his son Pierre's wife, Michèle, who later would take the reins of the Domain with her son Philippe.

a conversation  
... with Michèle Engel  
and her daughters Claire and Brigitte

DIJON, FEBRUARY 15, 2019



**Julie Carpentier — René Engel was your father-in-law, you knew him well...**

Michèle Engel — René Engel was born in 1894. A winegrower at Vosne, for 35 years he was also Professor of Oenology at the Faculty of Sciences in Dijon. He took an interest in all kinds of scientific questions. He went to high school at Beaune (the same high school as my father went to, but in different years). It's hard to imagine today — becoming a Professor of Oenology without a degree in the subject! My father-in-law was asked to come and teach courses at the Faculty. He was called on for his knowledge, regardless of his lack of qualifications.

Brigitte Engel — It's funny because from time to time I run into people in Beaune who tell me they remember the oenology courses their parents took with our grandfather René Engel. He taught with Professor Bergeret, who along with Charles Quittanson — who worked for “La Prévention des Fraudes” (Fraud Prevention), were the best.

**Julie Carpentier — What was it that made oenology such a passion for him?**

Brigitte — Having inherited his father's vineyards, and being very curious by nature, he took a passionate interest in the subject. All his knowledge about oenology was totally self-taught.

He lost his father at the age of three: Alexandre Engel, a wine-broker in Dijon, died in 1897. His widow, Eugénie Wodey, originally from Alsace, had a tobacconists — la Civette — on Rue de la Liberté in Dijon. She went on to meet François Faiveley, known as “Paul”, wine-maker and owner of vineyards in and around Vosne-Romanée. When Paul Faiveley married Eugénie, he took the young René under his wing and raised him as his own son.

Later, Paul transferred the Estate to René, “Pépé”, as we children called our grandfather René, often told us this story that one day, Paul Faiveley asked him, “So, René, what do you want to do when you are older?” René replied “Take over the Estate.” His answer was delivered with such aplomb. For him, it was self-evident:

he would take over the Estate of his father-in-law.

Michèle — This story about the young René reminds me of the time when, following the death of my husband in 1981 my father-in-law (René) came to me and asked, “Michèle, what are you going to do now?” I answered without hesitation: “We carry on. With Philippe, we carry on.” My father-in-law was a little taken aback by my answer... And to tell the truth, I hadn't even had the time to see Philippe and to talk to him about it, but deep down I knew he'd agree, and that it was the right path to take.

I had no experience, but it seemed obvious we should replace my husband at the head of the Domaine. In the end, it was a little like what my mother had done upon the death of my father with the rennet factory in Dijon, taking over the management of the factory after the sudden death of her husband.

**What of the Tastevin association?**

Michèle — My father-in-law René Engel was one of the founding members of the

## ***“This group of friends included Jean Grivot, Henri Liger-Belair, Georges Mugneret, Jean Méo...”***

Tastevin association. At the time, the cellars of Burgundy were filled with wines that weren't selling and they had the idea of joining forces to promote Burgundy wines. With Georges Faiveley, Camille Rodier, Jacques Prieur and so on. Before they started meeting at the Château du Clos de Vougeot, the association would meet at Nuits-Saint-Georges.

**Julie Carpentier — What was your relationship with your father-in-law like?**

Michèle — He always intimidated me, with his bearing and his stern air. I recognised that he was a very intelligent man, very demanding, passionate and interesting. I regret not having listened to him closely enough.

Women always admired the bearing of this serious, upstanding man, who nevertheless had a great sense of humour. He had lots of funny stories to tell (always the same ones, but they still made us laugh).

At the Domaine, my father-in-law welcomed the staff early in the morning, gave out the instructions for the day, then disappeared into his office to read. He also wrote quite a lot. He had a weekly column in the local newspaper *Le Bien Public*.

René did a lot for wine-growing in the region. Wine-growers from across Vosne would come to see him, bringing samples when they had problems with

their wines, with fermentation and so on. An oenology laboratory on a wine estate in these days was something really pioneering.

**Tell me about your arrival at Vosne-Romanée.**

Michèle — I came to Vosne-Romanée when I married my husband in 1950. I was eighteen-and-a-half years old. We had met at Jean Grivot's, during a surprise party organised at the Grivot Estate, to which a friend was invited, and I went with her!

I was very young. I left behind my town life in Dijon. The life of my parents-in-law in the countryside was very different from everything I knew. Initially, we all lived together in Vosne under one same roof. That wasn't always easy: the mentalities of town and country folk were so different at that time. I was young, I didn't dare ask too many questions, and I just had to get used to this new environment.

In my new family, reading was important. My husband, Pierre, following a long day in the vineyard, would go to bed early at 8, after eating all together at 7 (when we were first married, we shared meals with my parents-in-law, before we set up our own apartment in the house). I remember that once my husband was in bed, I stayed in the little study with my parents-in-law. My father-in-law had his

head in a book, my mother-in-law would be reading *L'Écho de la Mode*, and I was encouraged to read *The Three Musketeers*, by my new family!

**Did you feel welcomed into this new family?**

Michèle — Yes, I was welcomed, even though my parents-in-law would probably have preferred their son to have married a woman who had some vines to her name! But in the end it was a little bit the same situation with René, who had married his beloved Antoinette Vercey, originally from Yonne, and who had no vines either, though she did have fields. My mother-in-law didn't work in the vines. Nor did I, except during the harvest periods. I'll always remember a Vosne-Romanée local saying, when I was suffering from a herniated disk: *‘It wasn't from working in the vines that you got that hernia!’*

**It can't have been easy for you to adapt to these new codes of conduct of the wine-growing milieu...**

Michèle — On my arrival, my mother-in-law took me to visit the various wine-growers the family knew, to introduce me. They'd told me: *‘Above all, you must greet everyone you meet, whether you know them or not.’* All that was new for me.

**Did you begin to learn about wine and the vine through the work of your hus-**

*“1985, of course. But also 1991 and 1992, which are two of the Estate’s great successes. 1978 as well.”*

**band Pierre, or had you already picked something up from your parents-in-law?**

Michèle — It was through my husband’s work on the Estate that I familiarised myself with vine cultivation and the whole milieu. But we didn’t work together — the Estate was his business. And then we had four children, who all grew up in Vosne, on the Estate.

It was only when my husband died that I began to work for the Domaine, properly speaking. Until then, I’d only helped out with the payroll, and of course with managing things during the harvest period.

**Pierre Engel was a wine-grower, but also a man of many talents.**

Michèle — My husband engaged in many activities in parallel to running the Estate. He was mayor of Vosne-Romanée, president of the Water Union, founder of the Round Table, of the Young Vine Professionals, of the Youth Centre... He was a literary man. He wrote wonderfully. During the Second World War, when he was 12 or 13, he had taken a course with the village priest, Father Krau. He was a man of great erudition, who had taken a small group of young people from the village under his wing and taught them French, Latin and Greek. This group of friends included Jean Grivot, Henri Liger-Belair, Georges Mugneret, Jean Méo... It was really thanks to Father Krau

that he deepened his literary knowledge and his oratory skills.

Brigitte — Our father was a very cultivated man. He read very widely, every day. For example, he loved *Sciences et Vie* magazine! He read newspapers, literature, comics... He’d learned the *Larousse dictionary* by heart. He was also very manual: he did a lot of handiwork, and he embarked on new challenges grounded in his reading, like the time he decided to install central heating all by himself at our house in Vosne.

He had multiple passions: wrought iron, aviation, scuba-diving, photography, skydiving, his œnology laboratory...

Michèle — My husband, who had his qualification in œnology, had completed his winemaking knowledge beside his father René, who was self-taught and highly skilled in this field.

Every year, my husband and I took part in a trip organised by winemakers as part of an œnology conference. Henri Jayer, by the way, was also part of these trips.

**Tell me about life on the Estate during the time of Pierre Engel.**

Michèle — My husband took over the Estate a few years after the war, before we got married. There weren’t a lot of staff available to work on the Estate. There was a group of labourers who were women, who were entrusted with “*baux*” [leases] which were certain *par-*

*celles* of vines which were allotted to them and which they were in charge of all year round, until just before the harvest. They pruned, picked, restored walls, etc.

In the cellar, alongside my husband Pierre, there was a small team of men who looked after the wines. When my husband took over the Estate, he basically sold the wines in bulk to the wine-brokers. Gradually, we worked more and more with individual clients, and we increased the volume of wines that we bottled ourselves. With the bulk sales, we secured the cash flow for the Domaine, which was something!

**To which négociants were the wines sold in your husband Pierre’s time?**

Michèle — There were several of them: Moillard, Jadot, Labouré-Roi, Mommessin, etc. But when it came to private clients, we invited them to the Domaine for wine tastings. The best clients were received by my husband and myself at the house. Initially, we sold our bottles mostly for export. It was upon Philippe’s arrival on the Estate in the mid-1970s that we significantly increased, year by year, the share of wines sold as Domaine-bottled.

Claire & Brigitte — Our brother Philippe had worked alongside our father during our father’s long illness. When our father died in 1981, he had been very

## *“The Estate’s wines have always had a reputation as quality wines.”*

tired for ten years, with serious problems in his eyes, and later his lungs. In the end he succumbed to heart disease.

### **What was your role in relation to your husband’s position as mayor?**

Michèle — I attended certain inaugurations and social events in the town with my husband as part of his duties as mayor of Vosne. After his death, I became a municipal councillor for two terms, for social welfare. That was a very rewarding experience for me.

### **How did the transition of the Estate from René to Pierre take place?**

Michèle — When Pierre took over the Domaine, he was barely twenty years old, and he was the only boy. My father-in-law retired from the Domaine fairly quickly, transferring responsibilities to my husband.

Claire — Something that few people know is that our father also studied law. Seeing that his son was interested in becoming a lawyer, our grandfather René began to sell off vineyards. Pierre, realising that a career as a lawyer would mean the end of the “Domaine René Engel”, then switched to winemaking, taking up the succession of his father at Vosne-Romanée out of filial duty.

### **Tell me about Philippe and the renewal of the Estate.**

Michèle — Philippe had always been a true passionate about vines and wine. He

had a lot of talent and practiced his profession with a lot of heart and determination. He made marvellous wines.

I’m thinking in particular about the 1985 vintage. A wonderful vintage that won recognition from the broader public and from the specialist press who praised his work more widely.

René, his grandfather, stayed by Philippe’s side until his death in 1986. In the mornings they would open the post together. During the day, he would regularly pass by the vat room, offering his advice to Philippe, particularly on the occasion of his first grape harvest, and his first ‘solo’ vinifications. Even if they sometimes disagreed, René was very proud of Philippe’s wines and accomplishments at the head of the Domaine.

Philippe had clearly been called to winemaking as a passion, and he worked with great determination on the Estate’s wines. Beginning in 1985, there was a succession of superb vintages that allowed Philippe’s talents to fully express themselves.

### **What was it like to co-manage the Estate with Philippe?**

Michèle — At Philippe’s side, I threw myself into the work for the Domaine. He took care of the vines and the wine-making. He also welcomed clients to the Estate for tastings.

Upon the death of my husband, the transition from Pierre to Philippe took place quite naturally, and he became an

accomplished man of the vineyard. He built on what he already knew how to do, having worked for 6 years on the Estate by his father’s side.

For the administrative side of things, however, he relied on me. It was a new field for me, and at the outset it was far from easy. I remember that Jean Grivot — my husband’s best friend — often came to lend a hand, and to show me how to fill out the different customs declarations, and so on.

I managed the whole hosting aspect during harvest time, as I’d already done in Pierre’s day. Hot meals, snacks out among the vines, beds, hot wine, and so on. About thirty people during harvest week, and about forty during the Paulée festivities.

As far as the wines are concerned, Philippe knew what he was doing and I didn’t give him advice. However, I did share my opinion on the wines when it came to opening one of his earlier vintages.

### **What would be the characteristics shared by Domaine René Engel’s wines over this trilogy of winemakers?**

Michèle — The Estate’s wines have always had a reputation as quality wines. It is true, however, that Philippe’s wines have become more internationally renowned than those of his father and grandfather. He had a different way of working — the pruning of the vines, the use of a sorting-table, stainless steel vats,

*“1955 was an exceptional vintage, and the wines produced by Pierre that year were truly remarkable. It was also the year Philippe was born.”*

the wine-presses, the partial ageing in new barrels, and so on. His generation spent a lot of time visiting cellars, there was more dialogue with his wine colleagues and friends. They shared advice and recommendations between winemakers.

**A common thread, something that unites these three generations of men working at Domaine René Engel?**

Michèle — As a matter of fact, each wine is unique to the winemaker who created it. The personalities of René, Pierre and Philippe are expressed differently over these three periods. All three of them were very different. The wines of Philippe were the finest and most delicate, with that fruit-seeking character that is so typical of them.

The link between the three would be their scientific research and openness to change and innovation, in their respective periods. Philippe, for his part, extensively modernised the cellar's equipment.

My husband was very successful with his wines in good years, and bought his first tractor jointly with Jean Grivot in the mid-1950s.

Before that, everything was done on horseback. The last horse on the Estate was known as Pompon.

Claire & Brigitte — We remember our horse Pompon, especially the day he was sent off to the butchers. ‘Pompon-sausage’ my sister and I said. We’ve

never been able to eat horse meat...

**What wines do you drink as a family?**

Michèle — I loved it when my husband brought up from the cellar bottles covered in that wonderful black moldy fluff. What’s more, we didn’t clean it off, we served the bottle just as it was!

When my husband was in charge, we drank wines from our own Estate, above all. During Philippe’s time, we tried a lot of bottles from other Estates, swapped with other winemakers. There was an openness and curiosity that arrived with the new generation.

Personally, I’ve always loved older wines.

**Domaine René Engel only produces red wines.**

Michèle — At the Domaine, it is all red. Pinot noir and a little bit of Gamay. Gamay was part of the permitted composition of *BGO* (Bourgogne Grand Ordinaire) which, in certain years, was truly excellent. This wine was not put on sale. It was solely for family consumption (even during Philippe’s time in charge), and made from our plot of vines (Glapigny).

**Do you enjoy the white wines of Burgundy? If so, which ones?**

Michèle — Yes! I particularly like the Meursaults and the wines from

the Corton family. In reds, my preference goes to Clos-Vougeot and also to Grands-Échezeaux.

**A particularly memorable vintage?**

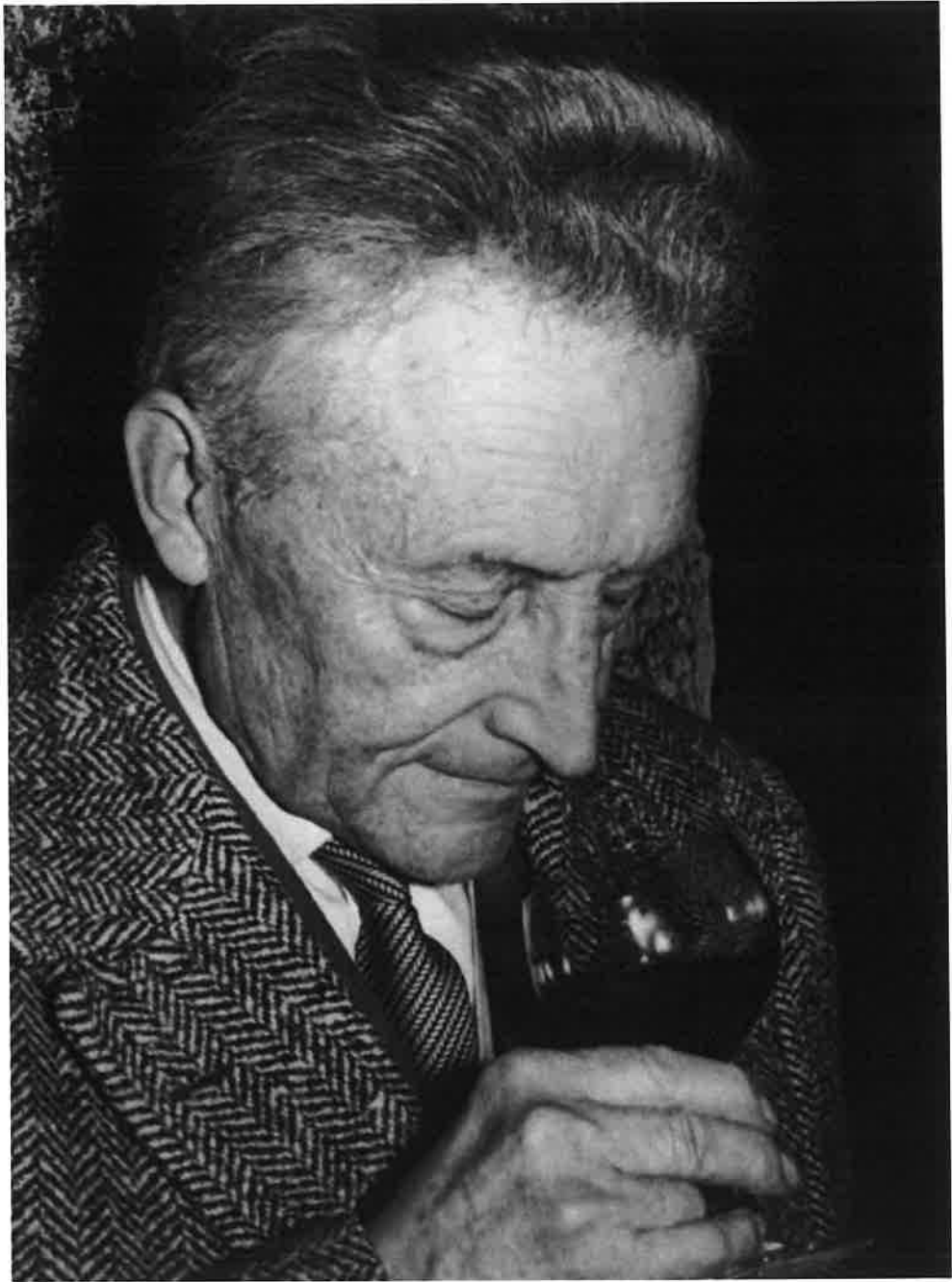
Michèle — 1985, of course. But also 1991 and 1992, which are two of the Estate’s great successes. 1978 as well.

1955 was an exceptional vintage, and the wines produced by Pierre that year were truly remarkable. It was also the year Philippe was born.

**When were the house and cellar built? And when was the Domaine René Engel born?**

Michèle — The house and underground vaulted cellar were built by Paul Faiveley between 1900 and 1910. The parents of Paul Faiveley were also winegrowers, and he inherited the Domaine from them.

We can establish the commencement of Domaine René Engel at around 1919. René began exploiting the vineyards of Paul Faiveley when he returned from the Great War (during which he had been mobilised, then taken prisoner and from which, ultimately, he escaped and returned to France towards the end of the conflict). Quite a few plots of vine were already in place from the time of Paul Faiveley, which Paul handed on to René. But René added to them with a number of purchases, as from 1919 (one hundred years ago!).



**ALBUM**

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7

Prelevant M<sup>r</sup> Joseph Claude Alphonse  
Gros notaire à Niels S<sup>t</sup> Georges sous signé  
Ont comparu

M<sup>r</sup> Michel Fournier propriétaire et Mad<sup>e</sup>  
Eugenie Jeanne Dupont son épouse qu'il autorise  
demeurant ensemble à Vosne Romanée

Lesquels ont par les présentes vendu avec  
désistement de la part de Mad<sup>e</sup> Fournier de son hypo-  
thèque légale sur les immeubles ci après désignés et  
de son droit de préférence et de suite sur le prix ci-  
après stipulé

à M<sup>r</sup> Jean René Engel propriétaire demeu-  
rant à Vosne Romanée

Ici présent et qui accepte

Les immeubles ci après situés sur le territoire  
de Flagey Échezeaux

1<sup>er</sup> En Orveaux section D n<sup>o</sup> 155 terre de dix ares  
cinq centiares environ joignant de nord Paul Faiveley  
de midi un sentier de levant Gaudemet et de couchant  
Paul Faiveley

2<sup>es</sup> Les Champs Traversins terre de quatre ares vingt  
huit centiares environ joignant de nord Henri La-  
marche de midi Galland Leirivain de levant Jayer  
Marchand et de couchant un sentier

Origine de propriété

*[Signature]*

— April 15, 1919. Deed of sale (extract) —

René Engel acquires 10 ares of Échezeaux "En Orveaux" and 4 ares of Échezeaux "Les Champs Traversins".

— Previous page —

René Engel.



— Upper left —

René Engel in his oenological laboratory in 1940.

— Upper right —

Pierre Engel holding a wine pipette.

— Bottom left —

*La Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin*: to the right, René Engel and in the center, Camille Rodier.

— Bottom right —

The Engel trilogy: René in the center, his son Pierre to the right and his grandson, Philippe, to the left.

appelée les Châtaignes et pour joindre de nord M<sup>rs</sup> M<sup>l</sup>  
Milou et Fournier, de midi M<sup>r</sup> Mongeard Auguste,  
de levant plusieurs et de couchant un chemin, mesu-  
rant le prix principal de quatre vingt quatre mille  
trois cent soixante huit francs quarante centimes plus  
en sus ci \_\_\_\_\_ 84.368,40

M<sup>r</sup> M<sup>r</sup> Pierre Milou ancien notaire demeurant  
à Paris rue de Cligny n° 11 ici présent et qui accepte  
tout pour son compte personnel que pour celui de M<sup>r</sup>  
Louis Fournier propriétaire à Vougeot, gendre Fominot  
acquéreur inscrits et solidairement, trente quatre ares  
vingt quatre centiares à prendre dans la partie du Clos  
de Vougeot appelée les Montées pour joindre de nord  
M<sup>r</sup> Lécivain, de midi M<sup>lle</sup> Camuzet, de levant  
M<sup>rs</sup> Martini et de couchant l'allée qui conduit  
au château moyennant le prix principal de dix  
mille francs ci \_\_\_\_\_ 10.000

Frais en sus et aux clauses et conditions du cahier  
des charges et qui précède \_\_\_\_\_

M<sup>r</sup> René Engel demeurant à Vosme, Romanée,  
propriétaire ici présent et qui accepte \_\_\_\_\_

M<sup>r</sup> hectare trente six ares quatre vingt seize cen-  
tiares à prendre dans la partie du Clos de Vougeot  
appelée les Marets hauts pour joindre de nord M<sup>r</sup>  
Alexandre Treuhin, de midi M<sup>rs</sup> veuve Noëlat

— March 1st, 1920. Deed of sale (extract) —

[End of the sentence on next page: ... Mme, veuve Noëlat, de levant plusieurs, de couchant un chemin.]

René Engel acquires, along with 17 other buyers, a plot of vines of 1,3696 ha within the Clos de Vougeot at the Léonce Bocquet sale, during which a total of 14 ha of vines and the Château du Clos de Vougeot were sold.



— Upper left —

Pierre Engel racking wine in the Domaine's cellar.

— Upper right —

Philippe Engel assisting his father in racking wine.

— Bottom left —

Pierre Engel tasting wine, at 8 years old.

— Bottom right —

1965, Pierre Engel off to the vines with the workers during harvest, in the Domaine courtyard, Vosne-Romanée.

CHAMBRE  
DES DÉPUTÉS

MURET

~~XXIII~~ le 15 Septembre 1934.

COMMISSION DES FINANCES

Monsieur RENE ENGEL

à VOSNE-ROMANE

Cher Monsieur,

Mr Camille CERF, que j'ai eu le plaisir de revoir cette année, m'a dit que vous pourriez peut-être me céder quelques bouteilles de Cassis et quelques bouteilles de Vougeot.

Vous me feriez plaisir si vous pouviez me donner les indications de prix; je verrai si je puis passer une petite commande,

Et vous prie d'agréer, cher Monsieur, l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs;

Vincent Auriol  
VINCENT AURIOL  
Député  
3, rue Hamelin, 3  
PARIS

Président République

— September 15, 1934 —

Letter from President de la République Française-to-be, Vincent Auriol, asking René Engel the price of his cassis and wines.



— Above, 1969, Saint-Vincent Tournante. —

René to the left, Pierre to the right and young Frédéric in the center.

In the presence of Jacques Chevignard, *Grand Maître de la Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin*.

— Below, 1974, the 40th anniversary of the *Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin*. —

... and Philippe's induction were cause for ceremony, celebrating 3 generations of a same family of wine-makers as members of the *Confrérie*—a premiere, at the time, in its history.



— Above —

1930s, Pierre Engel in the vineyard.

— Below —

A sketch by René Engel of a medallion for his early slip labels.



— Above —

Pierre Engel (on the left) side by side with Henri Jayer (second to left), Vosne-Romanée,

— Below —

Philippe Engel in his vineyard.