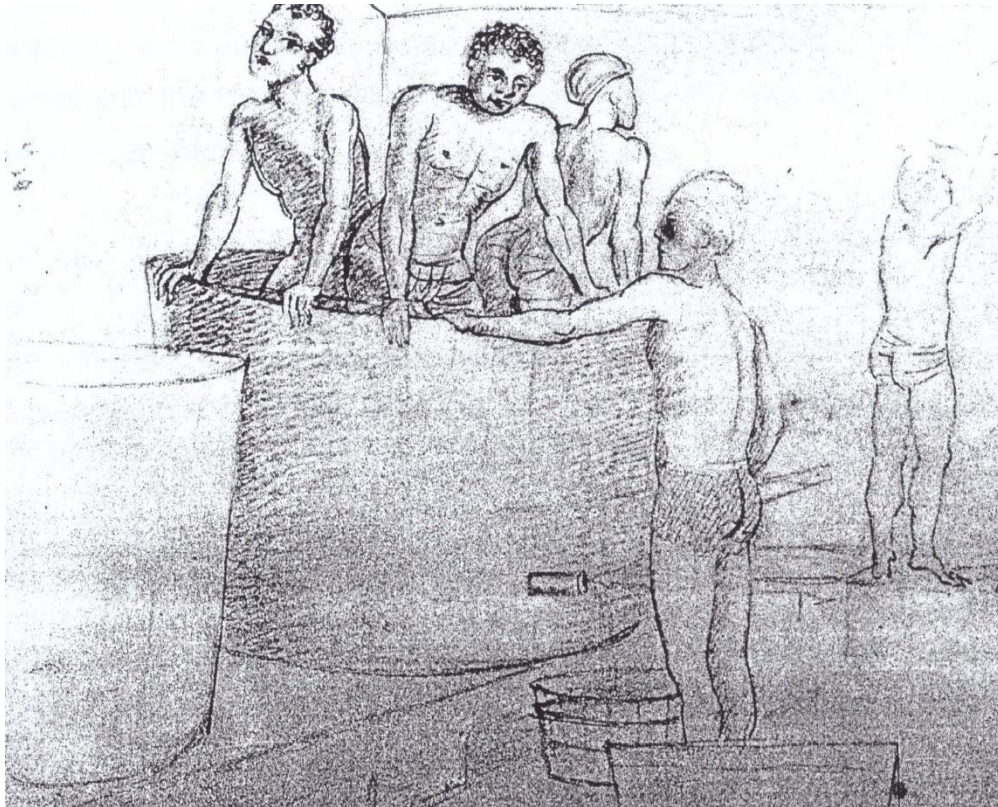


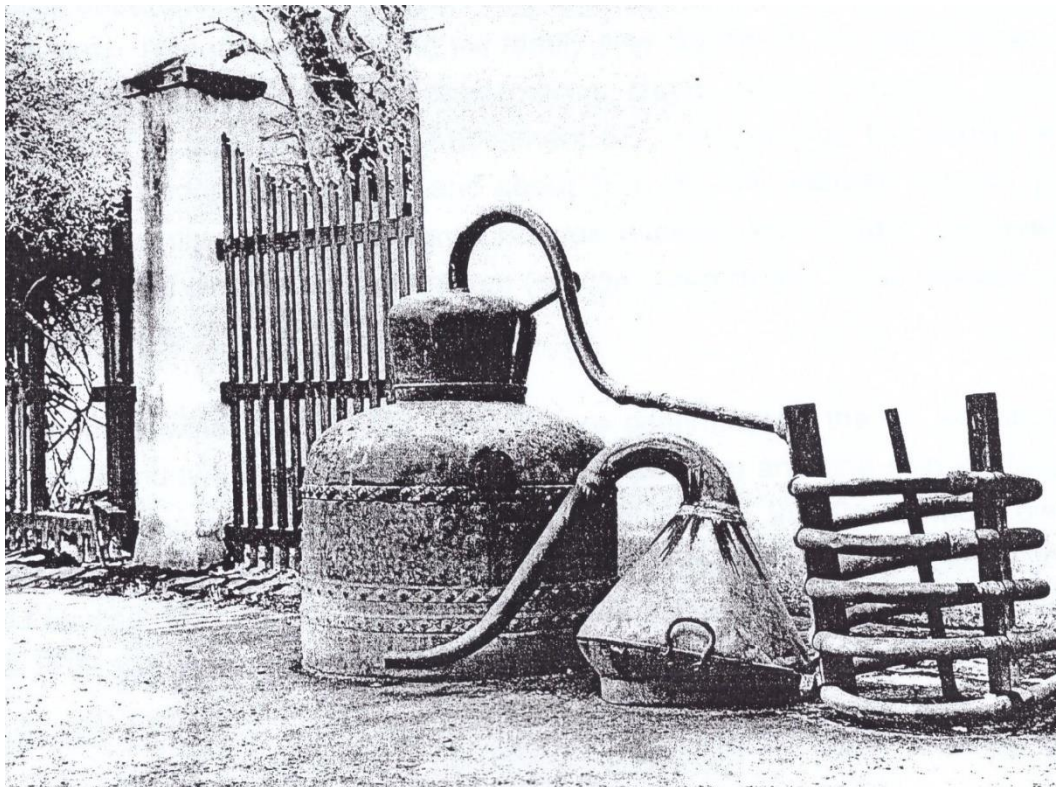
## **18<sup>th</sup> Century Winemaking**

John Splinter Stavorinus (Voyages to the East Indies, 1798) visited Stellenbosch and Drakenstein and described the winemaking that he saw here:

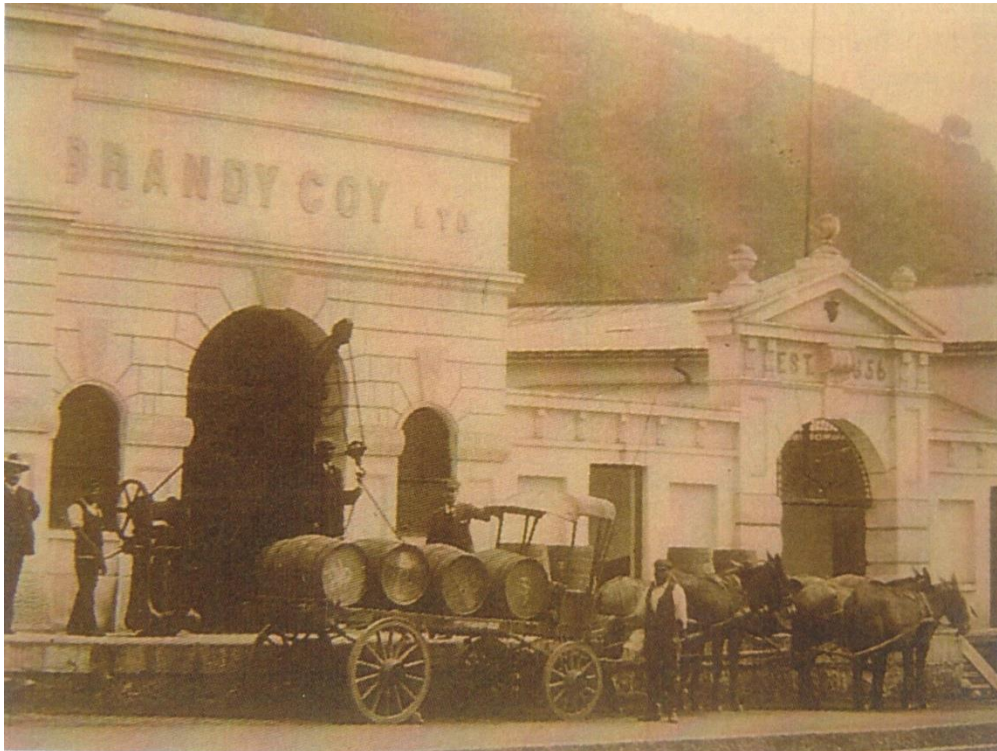
“I have observed that we never drank any wine of one and the same flavour, at two different places; every soil that produces wine, gives a different taste to it. The vines, which are planted by themselves, like currant bushes, are set in rows, three feet from each other, and when they are pruned are not more than two, or two and a half, feet above the ground. They are planted in rows, and not close to each other, in order to afford room for the labourers to go between them, to weed the ground, without damaging the vines. A thousand of them, it is calculated, will produce a leaguer of wine, and sometimes more... The pressing of the grapes is performed in a more simple manner here than in Europe. The slaves gather them, and put them into a vessel, the bottom and sides of which are bored full of holes; this is set in the inside of a larger one, upon a crosspiece of wood laid at the bottom of the latter; this outside vessel has a spigot and faucet, through which the juice, as fast as it is pressed out, runs into a tub placed beneath. The grapes being heaped up, in the inner vessel, to the brim, three or four slaves, after having washed their feet in a tub of water standing at the side, get upon the fruit, and holding themselves fast by a rope fixed to the ceiling, trample upon it, and squeeze out the juice as long as they are able. In the meantime the must that runs out is put into large high vessels to ferment. If the aperture be obstructed by grapes, or stalks, so that the juice cannot easily run out, they push them away with a stick, to the end of which a few brushes are fixed. The trodden grapes, before they are further pressed, are put upon a course strainer, made of rattans, on which they are rubbed with the hand, till the husks go through it, the stalks remaining behind, which are thrown away as they are supposed to make the wine austere and bitter. The husks are then put into the fermenting vessel, which the next morning is in full fermentation; during this process the thick parts subside, and the must grows clear, when it is barrelled off, being first filtered through a wicker basket. The grounds remaining in the fermenting vessel are afterwards put into a square vessel pierced full of holes, and placed in a larger one with a spigot and a faucet at the side; at the top there is a screw of wood or metal, by means of which the last drop of juice is pressed out from the husks. From the dregs and husks that remain over from the last pressing, brandy is distilled. No yeast is used for accelerating the fermentation.”



Sketch by artist Charles D'Oyly showing wine-making c.1835 during the time of the apprenticeship of 'freed' slaves. Grapes were pressed with bare feet, juice emptied into smaller vats, which were poured into large fermenting vats ("kuipe") in background. (Opperman 1968:237)



Brandy distilling equipment at Groot Constantia (Opperman 1968:326) Similar items are mentioned in the tax certificates and other deeds for Diamant Farm.



A typical scene of wine-farmers delivering their vats of wine to the Co-ops in Main Street, Paarl, c.1900. (Oberholtser & Breda 1987:83)

References:

Oberholtser A.G. & Van Breda P, Paarl Valley 1687-1987, Pretoria, HSRC, 1987

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