**Maréchal Foch**

**Grand Marshall Ferdinand Foch. Who was he?**

Field Marshal and Supreme Allied Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces on the continent of Europe at the end of WW I, Marshall Ferdinand Foch (1851-1929) was the Dwight D. Eisenhower of the First World War. On November 11\(^{th}\) we celebrate “Veteran’s Day”, formerly called “Armistice Day”, that commemorates the end of WW I as agreed in the *Armistice of Compiègne*. Its terms were essentially dictated by Field Marshall Foch and assured the complete German withdrawal from all of Belgium and France, including Alsace and Lorraine.

**Why is this wine grape named after him?**

French grape geneticist, Eugene Kuhlman (1858-1932), developed this variety in Alsace in the late 1800’s; it was introduced to America in 1921. While the details of his natural plant-breeding crosses were lost with his death, it is fairly certain that “Maréchal Foch” is the result of a cross between Riesling and Oberlin Noir, which in turn is a cross between Gamay and a wild American grape parent. From the Gamay comes the Beaujolais flavor, from the Riesling the light aromas, and from the wild American parent, vigor and disease resistance. Dr. Kuhlman may have felt that this particular grape, which had helped to liberate France and his home in Alsace from the scourge of Phylloxera in 19\(^{th}\) century, should be named after the General Foch who liberated both France and Alsace from the German armies at the dawn of the 20th.

**And what is Phylloxera?**

It is a microscopic bug that eats grape vine roots. But that is a longer story for another time..... Nevertheless, the saga of Phylloxera Vastatrix’s destruction of the world’s wine vineyards and their rebirth at the hands of dedicated scientists like Dr. Kuhlman is the very foundation of understanding today’s world of vineyards and wine.