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Editorial

Allan P. McLean reflects on links with past pints

Years ago as a reporter on *The Scotsman* in Edinburgh, something caught my eye through the window of the office library where old newspaper files and other documents were kept for reference. An unusually bright day had cast some light into the canyon of Fleshmarket Close outside and I saw something on the wall of the Jingling Geordie pub opposite. It was faded, barely noticeable, lettering displaying a previous title for the pub on the tenement wall, positioned where it might originally have been glimpsed from the foot of the steps opposite the Market Street exit of Waverley station.

The faded white letters declared: "Suburban Luncheon Bar". Why? This was bang in the middle of town, yet it was called the Suburban Bar. And why the addition of that word "luncheon"? Surely, the licensee David Scrimgeour had startled 1960s Edinburgh by introducing the concept of a pub serving proper lunches when he renamed the premises Jingling Geordie after Sir Walter Scott's description of the cash-jangling George Heriot, the rich founder of that school. So why "luncheon" for an earlier generation of pub-goers?

"Suburban" was easily explained. The pub was frequented earlier in the twentieth century by commuters who paused for a swift half on their way home to such suburbs of Edinburgh as Morningside. They walked down Fleshmarket Close steps on their way from the offices and courts of the Old Town to catch a local train from the suburban platforms of the station just below - formerly platforms 20 and 21 but now platforms 8 and 9, known to this day by railway workers as "the Sub" (or "Suburban"). If those drinking commuters missed a train at 15 minutes past the hour they could always catch another at 45 minutes past!

It took me a long time to discover that the word "luncheon" had been painted onto the pub title in bygone years to promote the fact that the pub had been one of a very few to introduce the concept of proper food in the Edwardian era. The aim was to entice customers into the pub who might otherwise have gone home by train for lunch (as some still did up to 1962, exploiting the fact that for the holder of a season ticket, its "commuted"

price allowed an extra return journey in the middle of each working day without extra cost). After the withdrawal of passenger trains on the suburban circle line in 1962, the concept of office workers going home for lunch tended to go out of fashion and so there was a ready market for "Scrim" when he promoted lunch in the pub as an apparently revolutionary new concept.

These musings have been inspired by thoughts about connections that interlink different aspects of life and of history, brought to mind by researches outlined elsewhere in this Journal into what happened when some brewers had to make way for 19th century expansion of the railways in central Edinburgh. Drybrough's proved a notable example, doing a deal with a railway company to quit the North Back of the Canongate and develop a new brewery in 1892 on the Craigmillar side of Duddingston, adjacent to the tracks of a railway that was built for freight but was also used by suburban passenger trains.

Those commuters would pass the Drybrough's Brewery and others in the Duddingston/Craigmillar area on their way home to Morningside if their train was an Outer Circle one going clockwise round the suburban line. If they went home anti-clockwise on an Inner Circle train, they would instead pass Bernard's beside the line close to the station at Gorgie.

When visiting family in New Zealand a few months ago, I kept my eyes open for history just as much as back home in Edinburgh. In Dunedin (the "Edinburgh of The South") I spotted in a pub an enamel advertising panel for Tennent's Lager. Although apparently Edwardian or perhaps late Victorian, it was a modern reproduction. But other evidence I found proved that Scottish beers had been favourite imports to Dunedin in the 19th century, with deliveries of Tennent's ales being advertised among ship's cargoes brought from the old country in the 1850s. A brewery visit confirmed that Dunedin had once been New Zealand's top brewing centre, and had even shipped ale to Glasgow in the 1880s.

Shipping. Two-way long-distance traffic in beer. Now there's some more historic thoughts for future research! Time to reach for a glass of beer and contemplate connections past and present...

The history of British lager

Ron Pattison discusses the growth of lager in Great Britain at Glasgow Beer Week

Introduction

Scotland was one of the first places outside southern Germany where lager was brewed. Scotland even managed to beat Denmark and Bohemia (Pilsen). For the first 100 years or more, British lager was a niche product, brewed in minute quantities. For specialist producers, it could be a lucrative business. But it took a long time to win over the mass of the public.

1830s - Sedlmayr's friend

The first lager brewed in Britain was in Edinburgh in 1835. And it's connected with one of the seminal events in the history of lager: Gabriel Sedlmayr's visit to Britain in the 1830s to check out advances in brewing technology. In 1833, Sedlmayr stayed for a month with brewer John Muir in Edinburgh. The two men hit it off and Sedlmayr learned all about Scottish Ale brewing¹.

After getting back to Munich, in 1835 Sedlmayr sent Muir bottom-fermenting yeast. Following Sedlmayr's instructions, Muir proceeded to brew lager in his brewery at 28 North Back of Canongate. Customers were amazed at how crystal clear the beer was². Given that he'd learned how to brew from a Munich brewer, Muir's lager would almost certainly have been dark, like all Munich lagers were at the time. Unfortunately, there were problems with propagating the yeast and the experiment ended. Back in Munich, Sedlmayr used what Muir had taught him to brew Scotch Ale. Sadly, it doesn't seem to have gone beyond the experimental stage³.

1860s - Vienna Beer arrives

It was only in the 1860s that lager became regularly available to drinkers in

¹ *Die Spaten-Brauerei 1397 - 1997*, by Wolfgang Behringer, 1997, p. 163.

² *Die Spaten-Brauerei 1397 - 1997*, by Wolfgang Behringer, 1997, p. 167.

³ *Die Spaten-Brauerei 1397 - 1997*, by Wolfgang Behringer, 1997, p. 173.

Britain. Two events were the catalyst to lager's arrival: the 1867 Great Exhibition in Paris and the hot summer of 1868. One of the big hits at the Paris Exhibition was the Vienna beer hall. Inspired by its success, similar beer halls began to spring up in Paris⁴. British visitors to the exhibition were suitably impressed. A particularly hot summer the following year made cool lager beer seem particularly inviting.

By the end of 1868 there were five places selling Viennese lager in London, two on the Strand and three in the City⁵. The beer they sold was Märzen, either from Dreher's brewery in Schwechat or from Liesing⁶:

	DREHER BEER, bought at the Vienna Restaurant, 395 Strand.	LIESING BEER, bought at the Crown Coffee-house, 41 Holborn.
Specific gravity	1,019.76	1,019.11
Alcohol	4.43	4.45
Acetic acid	0.12	0.13
Extract	7.05	6.82
Original gravity	1,062.27	1,061.67

Table 1. Comparison of Dreher and Liesing Beers

Some things never change. The Austrian Märzen sold in London was more expensive than locally-brewed beer. A pint of Dreher or Liesing Märzen would cost you 6d⁷. A pint of Mild Ale, also with a gravity in the low 1060s, was only 2d, a third of the price⁸. Looking at the wholesale price of Vienna Lager, it's not surprising that it retailed at three times the price of Mild. The importer paid £5 6s. 6d for a 36-gallon barrel, almost exactly triple the 36s. a 36-gallon barrel of Mild Ale would cost.

⁴ *Birmingham Daily Post*, 1869, Wednesday 27 January, p. 6.

⁵ *Newcastle Guardian and Tyne Mercury*, 1868, Saturday 3 October, 1868, p. 2.

⁶ *Birmingham Daily Post*, 1869, Wednesday 27 January, p. 6.

⁷ *Birmingham Daily Post*, 1869, Wednesday 27 January, p. 6.

⁸ *British Medical Journal*, 1870, Vol. 1, p. 68.

It didn't take long for lager to spread outside London. In December 1868, the Bavarian Beer Hall, at 204 Oxford Street, Manchester was advertising "Genuine Bavarian Lager, Vienna & Bock Beer"⁹. In March 1869 a "well-known establishment in Miller Street", Glasgow had started selling Vienna beer¹⁰.

1870s and 1880s - British lager returns

Lager was brewed in Britain once again in the 1870s. The first documented case was at Joseph Spink and Sons of the Brownroyd Brewery, Bradford in 1877¹¹, though this proved to be just a brief experiment.

The next brewer to give lager a try stayed the course a little longer. That was William Younger of Edinburgh, who started brewing a Pilsener in 1879, using yeast acquired from Carlsberg¹². The date is significant. In the 1870s exports of Scottish Pale Ale started to come under pressure due to competition from continental lager. Exports of German beer tripled between 1873 and 1887¹³. Younger's response was to brew a lager of their own.

Younger brewed two different strengths of lager, PX at 1058° and PXX at 1068°. Despite not having a specialist lager brewhouse, these did employ a sort of decoction mash. They were fermented at proper lager temperature, in the low 40s Fahrenheit¹⁴. However after a few years they abandoned lager brewing, only to return to it well into the 20th century.

Tennent's, who had been brewing lager since 1885¹⁵, went a step further. They constructed a state of the art Lager brewery in 1889, with the help of a firm of brewery equipment manufacturers from Augsburg¹⁶. It's no coincidence that Scottish brewers were the first to seriously brew lager. They were much more dependent on the export trade than brewers in

⁹ *Bradford Observer*, 1868, Thursday 24 December, p. 2.

¹⁰ *Dundee Courier*, 1869, Tuesday 23 March, p. 2.

¹¹ *Amber, Gold and Black*, by Martyn Cornell, 2008, p. 212.

¹² *Amber, Gold and Black*, by Martyn Cornell, 2008, pp. 212-213.

¹³ *Scottish Brewing Archive Journal*, 1998, Vol. 1, p. 4.

¹⁴ *William Younger brewing record*, Scottish Brewing Archive, ref. WY/6/1/3/9.

¹⁵ *Amber, Gold and Black*, by Martyn Cornell, 2008, p. 216.

¹⁶ *Scottish Brewing Archive Journal*, 1998, Vol. 1 1998, p. 5.

England. It was vital that they adapt their output to the demands of export markets.



Figure 1. Advert for Tennent's Lager in the Motherwell Times, 2nd September 1904.

The story of the other successful lager start-up is quite different. The Wrexham Lager Brewery's founders were immigrants from central Europe who wanted to brew beer for their countrymen living in Britain¹⁷. The anticipated market in Britain never materialised and by the 1890s most of their production was either being exported or sold to the military¹⁸. Unlike most of the early lager-only breweries, Tennent's and Wrexham were a long-term success. Wrexham lasted until 2000 and Tennent's is still around.

Many attempts at lager brewing were financial disasters, ending in enormous losses. The St. Anne's Well Brewery of Exeter started advertising their own lager in 1881. The last adverts appeared in 1891, after which time they had presumably discontinued their lager. The Bayerische Lager Beer Brewery in Eltham, Kent, opened in 1881 and closed in 1888¹⁹. The Austro-Bavarian Lager Beer and Crystal Ice Company in Tottenham, London,

¹⁷ http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/heritage/brewery_tour/lager_brewery.htm

¹⁸ *Wrexham Advertiser*, 1890, Saturday 25 October, p. 5.

¹⁹ *Amber, Gold and Black*, by Martyn Cornell, 2008, p. 213.

brewed from 1882 to 1895²⁰; the Kaiser Lager Beer Co. which lasted from 1884 to 1890²¹; and The English Lager Beer Brewery which started brewing at Batheaston in 1890 and went bankrupt in 1893²².

1880s and 1890s - lager imports boom

Lager really began to take off in the 1880s and 1890s, moving out of specialist clubs and restaurants and into the mainstream. Though it should be pointed out that, despite a huge percentage increase, the absolute quantities of lager sold were still quite small.

Exact figures for lager imports don't exist, as no differentiation was made in the figures between top- and bottom-fermenting beer. However, Britain brewed top-fermenting beers to a higher standard than anyone else. There was simply no need to import them. Which means we can be pretty certain that the vast majority of imports were lager.

Year	Barrels
1860	3,592
1870	5,058
1880	10,742
1890	35,081
1895	44,399
1900	50,875

Source: *Brewers Almanack, 1928, p.115*

Table 2. British beer imports

Before 1868 minimal quantities of beer were being imported: just 3,500 barrels. In 1880 they had increased to 10,000 barrels a year. Between 1880 and 1890 imports more than trebled to 35,000 barrels. Growth levelled off after that, but still increased by another 15,000 barrels in the 1890s, reaching 50,000 barrels by 1900.

²⁰ *Amber, Gold and Black*, by Martyn Cornell, 2008, p. 214.

²¹ *The Brewing Industry 1830-1980*, by T.R Gourvish and T.G Wilson, 1994, p.177.

²² *The Brewing Industry 1830-1980*, by T.R Gourvish and T.G Wilson, 1994, p. 177.

One significant change since the early days of the 1860s was the type of lager imported. At first the Vienna style of amber Lager had been most popular, followed by the dark Munich type. By 1890 Pilsner had become the preferred lager²³, which mirrored trends in the rest of Europe.

1900 - 1914 Allsopp's great gamble

The 19th century ended with one of the most significant events in British Lager brewing: the building of Allsopp's lager brewery, which was completed in 1899. Allsopp was one of the most renowned Pale Ale brewers, second only in size to Guinness and Bass. Their move into bottom fermentation must have made some of their competitors stop and think.

ALLSOPP'S ALES
IN BOTTLE.

LAGER BEER.
 PER DOZ. PINTS 3/6
 PER DOZ. ½ PINTS 2/3

EAST INDIA PALE ALE.
 PER DOZ. PINTS 3/6
 PER DOZ. ½ PINTS 1/9

LIGHT DINNER ALE.
 PER DOZ. PINTS 2/6
 PER DOZ. ½ PINTS 1/6

SPECIAL—4½ GALLON CASKS 3/9 AND 4/3.

SOUTHERN'S STORES,
 FAMILY GROCERS AND WINE AND
 SPIRIT MERCHANTS,
THE CROSS, GLOUCESTER.

Telephone 189. Telegrams—Southern, Gloucester.

Figure 2. Advert for Allsopp's bottled ales

Considering the consumption of lager in Britain at the time, the new brewery was huge, capable of brewing 50,000 barrels a year²⁴. To put that

²³ *Wrexham Advertiser*, 1890, Saturday 25 October, p. 5.

²⁴ *Western Brewer*, 1899, December 15th, p. 500.

into context, in 1935 the total output of Lager in Britain was just 114,000 barrels²⁵. Though it's likely that Allsopp, which was a big exporter, also had its eye on foreign markets.

The Gloucester Citizen of 4th June 1900 advertised Allsopp's Lager Beer, East India Pale Ale and Light Dinner Ale. Despite Allsopp's Lager costing the same as their IPA, a very reasonable 3.5d per pint bottle, sales didn't take off as anticipated.

WW I - Foreign supplies dry up

By the early 20th century, despite the construction of lager breweries in Britain, a large quantity was still imported. Throughout most of the Edwardian period imports averaged around 50,000 barrels annually. By 1914 this had increased to 74,000 barrels²⁶. WW I threw the trade in imported lager into crisis. That's because two of the main sources - the German and Austrian Empires - were the enemy. The third important supplier, Denmark, was a dangerous sea-crossing away. So Barclay Perkins began experimenting with lager brewing in 1915. They made a few trial brews of Lager in their small brewhouse. Some with a decoction mash, others with an infusion mash²⁷. It didn't go any further than the experimental stage, but after the war ended they built a lager brewhouse and started brewing commercially.

It wasn't just imported lager that the war caused problems for lager breweries in Britain had their own worries, as many employed Germans in technical posts. Tennent's chief chemist, Arno Singewald was interned²⁸. The fate of brewer Jostus Wilhelm Kolb at the Wrexham Lager Brewery was bizarre. A naturalised British citizen, he was conscripted despite having served in the German army as a young man and the pleas of the brewery that he was irreplaceable²⁹.

²⁵ *Western Daily Press*, 1936, Wednesday 10 June, p. 12.

²⁶ *Brewers' Almanack*, 1928, p. 115.

²⁷ *Barclay Perkins brewing record*, London Metropolitan Archives, ref. ACC/2305/01/605/1.

²⁸ *Scottish Brewing Archive Journal*, 1998, Vol. 1, p. 9.

²⁹ *Weekly Dispatch*, 1917, February 11.

1920s - Graham's and Barclay's Lager

Graham's Golden Lager

Allsopp's Lager brewery opened in 1899, just as Allsopp was starting to get into serious financial difficulties. They did have a degree of success with their lager, especially in export markets, but their Pale Ale trade collapsed. Between 1900 and 1910 Allsopp's sales fell by 40%³⁰. By 1911 a receiver had been appointed to run the business³¹.

In 1912, John Calder of Calder's Brewery in Alloa was brought in to run Allsopp. This forged a link between Allsopp and Alloa that was to play a key role in the later formation of Allied Breweries. It also brought lager brewing to Alloa, for in 1921 Allsopp's Lager plant, which had lain idle in Burton, was moved to Arrol's Brewery, where John Calder was also a director³². In 1927 a new beer was brewed in Arrol's lager brewery - Graham's Golden Lager³³. It was a big success.

As Arrol's were brewing all their lagers, it's no surprise that Allsopp's took a controlling interest in the company in 1930, even before their 1934 merger with Ind Coope³⁴. Arrol's was completely bought out in 1951³⁵ and the brewery converted to a lager-only plant³⁶. In 1959, Graham's Golden Lager was rebranded as Skol, though for a while it had the ungainly name of Graham's Skol Lager³⁷. It became the main Lager of Ind Coope and later the whole Allied Breweries group.

Barclay's London Lager

Barclay's opened their lager brew house in 1921 and employed a Danish brewer, Arthur Henius, to run it. The first brew was just 64 barrels. To put

³⁰ *The British Brewing Industry, 1830-1980*, by T. R. Gourvish and R. G. Wilson, p. 304.

³¹ *The British Brewing Industry, 1830-1980*, by T. R. Gourvish and R. G. Wilson, 1994, Page 305.

³² *Alloa Ale*, by Charles McMaster, 1985, p. 16.

³³ *Alloa Ale*, by Charles McMaster, 1985, p. 18.

³⁴ *Alloa Ale*, by Charles McMaster, 1985, p. 18.

³⁵ *Alloa Ale*, by Charles McMaster, 1985, p. 20.

³⁶ *Alloa Ale*, by Charles McMaster, 1985, p. 18.

³⁷ *Amber, Gold and Black*, by Martyn Cornell, 2008, p. 221.

this into context, batches of X Ale in the same year varied between 600 and 1,200 barrels. In its first 12 months of operation, Barclays Lager brewery produced 3,000 barrels. Or about as much as three batches of X Ale³⁸. They brewed three different types of lager: Export at 1050°, Dark at 1049° and Special Dark (also called Munich) at 1057°³⁹. Two out of the three were dark, only Export being pale.

Building a Lager plant was a brave decision by Barclay's. At the very moment Barclay's were building theirs, Allsopp's Lager brewery, bought at great expense in the 1890s, lay idle in Burton⁴⁰.

1930s – Lager brewers ask for help

During the 1930s there were various attempts to promote lager brewing in Britain through legislation. Either by lowering the excise duty on British-brewed lager or raising the import duty on foreign Lager⁴¹. The former was never implemented due to the difficulty in coming up with a legal definition of lager⁴². However in 1936 an extra £1 a bulk barrel import duty was imposed on beer from outside the Empire⁴³. British lager brewers felt that the system of taxation put them at a disadvantage relative to their competitors. Continental brewers, they said, only paid tax when their beer arrived in Britain, while British brewers paid tax as soon as the wort hit the fermenter.

In 1936 there were just six breweries producing lager in Britain. Between them they brewed 114,000 barrels in 1935⁴⁴. Who were these brewers? Arrol, Tennent, Barclay Perkins, the Red Tower Lager Brewery in Manchester, the Wrexham Lager Brewery and Jeffrey of Edinburgh. That's an impressive three out of six for Scotland. Graham's, Barclay's, Tennent's and Wrexham lagers were marketed nationally, unusual at a time when brewing was still very regional.

³⁸ London Metropolitan Archives, ref. ACC/2305/01/637.

³⁹ London Metropolitan Archives, ref. ACC/2305/01/637.

⁴⁰ *Alloa Ale*, by Charles McMaster, 1985, p. 16.

⁴¹ *Western Daily Press*, 1936, Wednesday 10 June, p. 12.

⁴² *Brewers' Journal*, 1934, p. 339.

⁴³ *The Brewing Industry 1830-1980*, by T.R Gourvish and T.G Wilson, 1994, p. 339.

⁴⁴ *Western Daily Press*, 1936, Wednesday 10 June, page 12.

I happen to know the import figures for a year or two earlier:

1932-3 22,486 standard barrels
 1933-4 32,480 standard barrels⁴⁵

Adjusting those to more useful bulk barrels (assuming a gravity of imported lager of 1048), I make that 25,765 barrels in 1932-33 and 37,217 barrels in 1933-34. Of course, that's all imports from the Continent, but it's safe to assume the vast majority was Lager. Despite their complaints, the lager market was now dominated by British brewers.

These are the grists of Barclay Perkins lagers in the mid 1930s:

Year	1934	1934	1934	1935	1935
Beer	Export lager	Draught	Dark lager	Draught	Dark lager
Style	Export	Lager	Munchener	Lager	Munchener
OG	17.83	11.62	20.72	15.7	20.79
OG	1049.4	1032.2	1057.4	1043.5	1057.6
FG	4.33	4.69	8.48	3.97	6.86
FG	1012	1013	1023.5	1011	1019
ABV	4.95	2.54	4.48	4.3	5.11
App. attenuation	75.71%	59.63%	59.06%	74.71%	67.01%
Hops (lbs)/qtr	6	5.47	4.68	5.47	4.68
Hops (lbs)/brl	1.11	0.99	1.19	0.95	1.15
Barrels	205.75	187.5	104.25	196.5	107.75
Hops (lbs)	228	186	124	186	124
Qtrs malt	38	34	26.5	34	26.5
Boil time (hours)	2	2	1.5	2	1.5
Pitch temp	46	46	46	45	45
Pale malt		17	10	11	10
Crystal malt			5		5
Lager malt	29	17	11	23	11
Caramel	0.03			0.03	

Table 3. Barclay Perkins lagers 1934-1935

⁴⁵ *Brewers' Journal*, 1934, p. 324.

WW II - Imports dry up again

In World War II there were shortages of raw materials and limits placed on output and on the strength of beer. Most breweries trimmed down their ranges – which led to Porter’s extinction in London, Whitbread brewing their last Porter in September 1940⁴⁶.

Beer	Style	Barrels	%
XX	Mild	45,043	19.63%
X	Mild	2,598	1.13%
DBA	Brown Ale	37,603	16.38%
PA FEST	Best Bitter	1,018	0.44%
PGA		9,308	4.06%
PA (T)	Best Bitter	23,608	10.29%
XLK	Bitter	13,562	5.91%
IPA	IPA	27,661	12.05%
KKKK	Strong Ale	872	0.38%
KK (B)	Old Ale	3,946	1.72%
KK (T)	Burton	2,715	1.18%
IBS EX	Russian Stout	686	0.30%
BBS EX	Export Stout	77	0.03%
LS	London Stout	14,327	6.24%
Lager	Lager	46,486	20.25%
Total		229,510	

Source: Document ACC/2305/1/675 held at the London Metropolitan Archives

Note: Year ending March 31st

Table 4. Barclay Perkins output by beer 1956

⁴⁶ *Whitbread brewing record*. London Metropolitan Archives, ref. LMA/4453/D/09/126.

So it's interesting to see what happened to Barclay Perkins, one of the big players in the lager trade. They started the war with an enormous range of draught beers: Porter, Stout, five Mild Ales, two Bitters and two Burtons. In November 1940 two Milds and Best Bitter were discontinued⁴⁷. Porter didn't last much longer.

A price list from 1943 shows that they were still brewing their full pre-war set of five lagers: bottled Light and Dark Lager; draught Export, Light and Dark Lager⁴⁸. The draught lager came in metric-sized barrels of 5.5 and 11 gallons. The brewery also supplied CO2 cylinders to serve the beer⁴⁹. The fact that they retained all their lagers while paring down the varieties of other styles demonstrates how important lager was.

1950s - Waiting for the lager boom

Lager remained much a minority drink during the 1950s, accounting for 1% at most of beer sales. But during the 1950s, lager became increasingly important to Barclay's. In 1956, they brewed 229,510 barrels of beer, of which 46,486 barrels were lager. It formed 20% of their output and was their biggest seller, beating Mild into second place by 1,500 barrels⁵⁰.

Carling Black Label arrives

Graham's Golden Lager and Barclay's Lager remained leading brands, but that was soon to change. Canadian Eddie Taylor's acquisition of a British brewing empire began when he let the Hope & Anchor Brewery in Sheffield brew Carling Black Label under licence in 1952⁵¹. Initially, it had a very reasonable gravity of 1042. Taylor began buying other breweries and their pubs. The group he put together eventually merged with Charrington and later Bass to become Bass Charrington, the largest brewing enterprise in Britain. Carling was chosen as the group's main lager, catapulting it to

⁴⁷ *Barclay Perkins circular letter*. London Metropolitan Archives, ref. ACC/2305/01/521/1

⁴⁸ *Barclay Perkins circular letter*. London Metropolitan Archives, ref. ACC/2305/01/521/1

⁴⁹ *Barclay Perkins price list*. London Metropolitan Archives, ref. ACC/2305/01/521/1

⁵⁰ London Metropolitan Archives, document ACC/2305/1/675.

⁵¹ *The Brewing Industry 1830 - 1980*, by T.R Gourvish and T.G Wilson, 1994, p. 467.

become the leading lager brand, a position it still holds today. It wasn't good news for Tennent's, whom Taylor bought in 1963⁵². Tennent's had been a national Lager brand before the war, but it was pushed into the background by the selection of Carling Black Label as Bass Charrington's flagship lager.

1960s - Everyone joins in

Regional Brewers

The *Whitbread Gravity Book*, packed with analyses of other brewers' beers, gives us an insight into exactly what was being brewed in Britain from the 1920s to the late 1960s. Around 1960, suddenly there are pages full of lagers. Imported lagers, big brands like Barclays, Skol and Black Label. Then there are things like Lacon's Lager, Hall & Woodhouse Brock Lager, Tolly Cobbold Kroner Lager, Eldridge Pope's König Pilsener Lager, Flowers Lager, Lees Lager and Greene King Lager⁵³. This tells us that many quite small regional breweries were making lagers.

The period covered by these analyses - 1961 to 1962 - is exactly when lager was beginning its move from the periphery of Britain's beer culture to the mainstream. Why else would relatively small concerns like Hall & Woodhouse, Tolly Cobbold and Lacon's have been brewing a lager? What the *Gravity Book* doesn't tell us is how these Lagers were brewed. Given the size of the breweries, I doubt many were bottom-fermented. As for decoction mashing, well they wouldn't have the equipment to do it unless, like Barclay Perkins, they'd built a brewhouse specifically for that purpose.

In the 1960s there's quite a big spread in gravities, ranging from 1032 to 1045. By the 1970s, most lagers barely scraped over 1030. With the exception of Flowers, all are pretty well attenuated. The big brewers' lagers were a bit lower in gravity than those from regional brewers and were all below average gravity of 1037°: McEwan MY Export Lager 1034°, Skol 1034°, Carling Black Label 1036°, Tennent's Lager 1037°, Harp Lager 1036°⁵⁴.

⁵² *The Brewing Industry 1830 - 1980*, by T.R Gourvish and T.G Wilson, 1994, p. 473.

⁵³ *Whitbread Gravity book*, Metropolitan Archives, ref. LMA/4453/D/02/002.

⁵⁴ *Whitbread Gravity book*, London Metropolitan Archives, ref. LMA/4453/D/02/002.

Harp Lager

The Harp Lager consortium was formed in 1961 by Guinness, Courage, Scottish & Newcastle and Bass. Harp became the main draught lager for all four companies. When Courage, which had taken over Barclay Perkins in the 1950s, became involved in the consortium, it spelled doom for Barclay's London Lager as a brand.

The good news is that the brewers at Guinness sent a very detailed set of instructions about how to brew Harp to Barclays. What's fascinating is just how closely they stuck to continental brewing methods. There was a single decoction mash. Primary fermentation was at 43–47° F so I think we can be sure they were using a bottom-fermenting yeast. It was then lagered for between 5 and 12 weeks, with the temperature being lowered from 35–39° F to 30° F. After 2 days the lagering vessels were bunged, which carbonated the beer without the need for force carbonation⁵⁵. Soon after they'd started brewing Harp they did trial brews with an infusion mash to see if it made any difference. It didn't, at least in the opinion of Barclay's brewers, and decoction was discontinued⁵⁶.

1970s - Lager hits the mainstream

By the end of the 1960s lager still only accounted for 6% of consumption⁵⁷. In 1971 Mild outsold lager almost two to one⁵⁸. The 1970s was the decade when lager moved away from being a niche product to become one of the most popular types of beer on sale.

By the beginning of the 1980s lager was catching up with Bitter in terms of popularity. 1989 was one of the most significant years in British brewing history as that was the first year sales of bottom-fermenting beer exceeded those of top-fermenting beer⁵⁹. But lager's ascent didn't stop there. In 2003 two-thirds of beer sold in Britain was lager⁶⁰. In Scotland, lager rose in

⁵⁵ London Metropolitan Archives, ref. ACC/2305/19/069.

⁵⁶ London Metropolitan Archives, ref. ACC/2305/19/069.

⁵⁷ *The Brewers' Society Statistical Handbook*, 1990, p. 17

⁵⁸ *Statistical Handbook of the British Beer and Pub Association*, 2003, p. 21; *The Brewers' Society Statistical Handbook*, 1988, p. 17

⁵⁹ *The Brewers' Society Statistical Handbook*, 2011, p. 17.

⁶⁰ *The Brewers' Society Statistical Handbook*, 2011, p. 17.

popularity more quickly than in the rest of the country. By 1977, when lager made up 24.5% of national sales⁶¹, in Scotland it was 40%⁶².

Conclusion

Lager has been regularly available in Britain for almost 150 years, but it's only in the last forty that it's had any real significance in terms of quantity brewed. Brewers had long been predicting a bright future for lager in Britain but it took much longer to be realised than anyone expected. Ultimately, it was a combination of factors that made it the nation's favourite style of beer:

- The concentration of the brewing industry
- Move to drinking at home rather than in the pub
- Cheap, canned supermarket beer
- Increased foreign travel
- Demographic change, as old drinkers die and new drinkers have different preferences

But, if the past has taught us anything, it's that all beer styles have their rise and their fall. It's hard to see lager going anywhere but down in the future. Changes – particularly demographic ones –work against it.

*This is a shortened version of Ron Pattinson's talk on the history of British lager which he gave at Glasgow Beer Week in September 2012, transcribed by Robbie Pickering. The full text has been published under the title **Lager!** The full book contains the unabridged text of Ron's talk, plus another hundred pages of source material. It's the only in-depth history of British lager yet written. The book can be purchased from lulu.com for £24.20 (hardcover) and £10.24 (paperback). A Kindle edition is available from Amazon.*

⁶¹ *The Brewers' Society Statistical Handbook*, 1990, p. 17

⁶² *A History of the Brewing Industry in Scotland*, by Ian Donnachie, 1998, p. 244.

The life and times of a Wort Runner

James Rafferty tells *John Martin* what life was like working as a Wort Runner at the Holyrood Brewery in Edinburgh and explaining his duties during his career there

Introduction

The purpose of a Wort Runner is to run the wort from the hop drainer to the fermentation vessels, although the job did entail many other duties.

John Martin first met James Rafferty last year after James answered a call for help in identifying a chimney in a photograph taken from Arthur's Seat looking towards Calton Hill. The photograph was posted on the EdinPhoto web site.



Figure 1. A view of Younger's Park Stores towards Abbey Brewery

A short history of Holyrood Brewery

William Younger & Co Ltd, one of Edinburgh's more famous brewers was based at Abbey Brewery at the bottom of the Royal Mile and purchased the

adjacent premises of brewer Alexander Berwick in 1858 and built Holyrood Brewery, which ran between the Canongate and the South Back, now Holyrood Road.

In 1931 William Younger & Co merged with William McEwan & Co to form Scottish Brewers Ltd. In 1960 Scottish Brewers then merged with Newcastle Breweries to form Scottish & Newcastle (S&N) which went on to become the largest brewing company in the UK.

Holyrood Brewery was closed in 1986 due to continued low volume and the site being inflexible, as a result the production was transferred to other breweries in the company.

Many of the brewery buildings still stand today and have been converted into a variety of uses, housing, a hotel, restaurants and business premises.

Working in the brewery

JM. James, can you tell me about your early life before you started work?

JR. I was born in Edinburgh's Old Town on the High Street, better known as part of the Royal Mile. I attended Milton House Primary School and little did I know at that time that my first job would be a stone's throw from the school playground. I then went to James Clark's Secondary School and left when I was 15.

In my early years the Royal Mile was a bustling area with busier shops and more industry compared with today, with a number of breweries, printing and chemical works. The remnants of the carters (horse and carts) making deliveries were still in evidence. I can also remember men rolling barrels on Holyrood Road.

JM. When did you start work at Holyrood Brewery and what was your first job?

JR. I started work in 1959 at Holyrood Brewery as a "sample boy" about 2 weeks after leaving school. The job involved taking beer samples from the brewery to the laboratory, washing the sample bottles and keeping the sample room clean and running errands for the brewers.

The working day was from 7:30am until 4:30pm on weekdays and from 7:30am to 12:00 noon on Saturdays. My first day passed very quickly and

over the course of a week I was shown "the ropes" by Tom Walker the previous sample boy. After that I was then left to get on with it.

After two years a new sample boy was employed and I was then moved to undertake the general jobs in the brewery. This was good, as I was able to gain more experience on all the different tasks within the brewing process. This was before automation and where all the jobs were many and varied.

JM. What were your best memories of working life in the brewery?

JR. Life in the brewery was the best time of my working life. I don't think there was a day when you did not have a smile on your face. The majority of the people I worked with were great, very friendly and helpful.

The work was varied ranging from, clearing the mash from the mash tuns by hand, wearing just swimming trunks and a pair of clogs that were two sizes too big, (the clogs that is, not the trunks) to climbing inside a tanker just returned from Newcastle with the fumes still present. Health and safety was not such a big deal in those days.

JM. Do you have any amusing stories during your working time at the brewery?

JR. During the first month when I started work I remember someone asking me to report to the Engineering Store and to ask for "a long stand". After about 10 minutes standing, I then realised someone had played a practical joke on me. I was then more wary after that.

At Christmas time the sample boys were asked to provide entertainment to the workers by either singing a song or to recite a poem, much to my embarrassment.

JM. Can you name any of your work colleagues, including who you reported to and the Head Brewer during your time?

JR. When I first started work the head brewer was Walter Harris and the assistant head was a Mr. Robertson. The other brewers were Balfour Thomson, Derek Townsend, Pat Castle and Brian Whitty. My foreman was Arthur Burman and the shift foremen were Chris Anderson, George Barclay and Dick Alcorn.

J. Stirling Gardiner became the head brewer after the retirement of Walter Harris and then followed by Bob Denholm and Les Hutcheon. Other notable brewers during my career were John Chambers, John Lamond, Jim Eccles, Jock Millican and Neil Ballantyne. It was good to see that many of the above rose to prominence within the company:

Pat Castle - Production Director at Fountain and Tyne Breweries and then Group Logistics Director.

J. Stirling Gardiner following retirement was an adviser on building a brewery in Iran prior to the revolution. After leaving Iran he was involved in Broughton Brewery during its early days.

Bob Denholm became the Head Brewer for the Harp Lager plant that was built adjacent to Holyrood Brewery and then responsible for Group purchases of raw materials.

Les Hutcheon was the Holyrood Head Brewer and oversaw the closure of Holyrood Brewery before taking up a role in Procurement.

John Chambers was Production Director at both Holyrood and Royal Breweries and went on to become the Group Production Director, responsible for all breweries within S&N.

John Lamond was Production Director at the Royal Brewery in Manchester

Jock Millican was Production Director at Tyne followed by Group Logistics Director and then Director for Waverley Vintners the wines and spirits division.

Neil Ballantyne was Production Director at Home Brewery, Nottingham, and then Matthew Brown Brewery, Blackburn and then Group Personnel Director.

JM. Please explain your duties as a Wort Runner.

JR. Wort running was a two-man job, one to run the wort from the hop drainer to the tuns and the other to cut the wort to the required gravity. When the wort had been in the hop drainer for the required time to let the hops settle, the copperhead foreman would then let you know the wort was ready to be transferred to the fermentation vessels, anything from 1 to 5 vessels depending on the brew.

The wort had to be temperature controlled at about 62 degrees Fahrenheit. This was achieved by running the wort through a paraflow where the hot wort would pass through stainless steel plates in one direction and cold water in the other direction. The wort was then pumped to the tuns through the overhead pipe system with another smaller pipe into each tun. The smaller pipe had a control valve as each tun had to be filled with equal amounts. When the last copper had been run into the tuns the pipework had to be stripped down and cleaned and reset for the next brew.

The wort in the fermenters then had to be cut marginally by adding cold liquor (water) bit by bit, from an overhead pipeline, until the correct original gravity was achieved. When nearing the required gravity the water hose would be withdrawn. Samples were taken to test the gravity and when close to the target gravity the more samples were taken, always remembering the old maxim, you can always add more but you can't take it back out again. When all vessels were cut to the required gravity, the shift brewer would then verify the gravity; take a reading of the temperature and the volume in the vessel before entering the details in the "brewers bible" as well as the Excise book.

JM. What beers were brewed at Holyrood Brewery?

JR. The brewing capacity was 60 brews per week and each brew was 600 barrels although production did vary throughout the year. Leading up to summer and Christmas were the busiest periods. As Holyrood Brewery had no packaging facility, all beers were either piped underground to the packaging plant at Park Stores where Dynamic Earth now is or tanked to Fountain and Newcastle breweries.

Lager was transferred to the adjacent plant when the Harp Lager Brewery at Milton House was built in the early 1970s for fermentation and maturation and to ensure that the yeast and other lager characteristics were not compromised. The lager wort continued to be produced in the Holyrood brew house then pumped to the lager tun room whereas the ales went to the Holyrood tun room where my job as a Wort Runner took place.

The following were the main beers brewed, including the beer code, used in all internal documents at the brewing stage:

XXPS - Tartan Special
M5/B - Export
PA - Pale Ale
Brown Ale and Sweet Stout
DCA - Double Century Ale
Beers brewed for Belgium
Majority Ales
Harp Lager
MCL - McEwan's Cavalier Lager
Kestrel Lager

Interesting to note that Majority Ale was a tradition of William Younger's with the production of a special brew when the son of a Main Board Director was born. The brew was stored in casks until the "coming of age" party when the casks were broached and the well-matured high gravity (125 OG) ale was consumed. In some instances, the odd cask was bottled and the cork sealed for a future occasion.

JM. What were the biggest changes you experienced during your working career?

JR. This has to be automation, which was introduced during the 1960s. My last job with the brewery was a Panel Controller. The whole process was automated from the intake of raw materials to the finished product and the only manual intervention was flicking switches and taking samples. However the obvious downside was the reduction of workers to such an extent that the brewery was more like a ghost town.

JM. When did you leave Holyrood Brewery?

JR. I left the company and took redundancy when the brewery started to close down in 1985. I then joined the Royal Bank of Scotland working in the Registration department.

JM. How would you summarise your career at Holyrood Brewery?

JR. The biggest change I noticed during the 26 years I worked at Holyrood was the gradual introduction of plant automation, which although it did improve the efficiency, it resulted in fewer people working in the brewery.

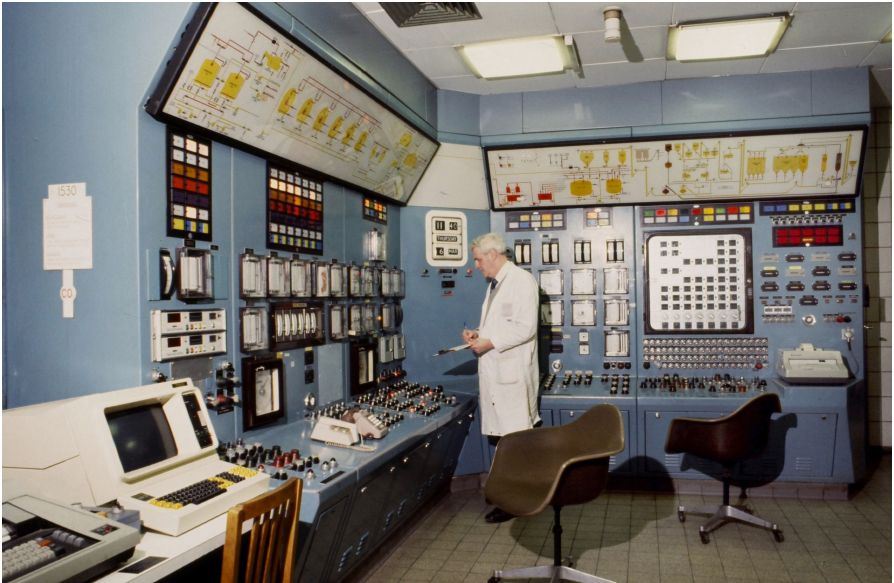


Figure 2. The nerve centre of automated plant control at Younger's.

There was a great sense of teamwork within the workforce, which was encouraged at every opportunity. When I was 16 the company sent me on the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme for a month at Burghead near Lossiemouth. The scheme helped to develop people and encouraged team building.

I have many happy memories working in the brewery and enjoyed every minute.

JM. Many thanks, James.

The wheels on the train go round and round ...

Allan McLean explores links with breweries along Edinburgh's circle line and finds out why Drybrough's took the track to pastures new

Introduction

What goes around comes around. This is a time of growth for the Scottish brewing industry with new breweries opening. It is a time of expansion, too, for our railways with substantial building work at Edinburgh's two main stations to cope with rising demand for rail travel.

It has happened before - about 120 years ago. In the run-up to the Diamond Jubilee of the Queen - Victoria, that is! - work started to rebuild Edinburgh Waverley station and prepare for extra platforms at Haymarket. That was to help cope with increased demand for train travel after the opening in 1890 of the Forth Bridge.

It was boom time for breweries too, with the brewing trade bursting out from the confines of Edinburgh's traditional production areas for pastures new in the Duddingston and Craigmillar areas. Research among Scottish Brewing Archive files held by Glasgow University Archive Services has matched railway studies to confirm that the growth in Edinburgh of the brewing and railway industries was interlinked in the 1890s.

You scratch my back ...

Intriguingly, brewers and railway managers found that problems they both faced could be turned to mutual advantage. For some brewers, the problem was the lack of room to grow under the rocky slopes of Calton Hill, while for the managers of the North British Railway company, the problem was the lack of room to build new tracks in the same area and an extra tunnel through that very hill.

The North British - a Scottish company which also had interests in the North of England - wanted to win goods traffic from the expansion of the brewing industry. The "NB" tended to cast envious eyes at its rivals the Caledonian Railway (known as "The Caley") whose tracks had long been linked to the William McEwan brewery at Fountainbridge and the

Caledonian Brewery of Lorimer & Clark at Slateford Road.

In the case of Drybrough & Company Ltd, the solution was particularly neat. By clearing out of the Craig End Brewery at what was known as the North Back of the Canongate, now Calton Road, that brewing business made way for the railway to expand eastwards from the enlarged Waverley station. And by moving to a big, new brewery at Duddingston, fresh business was provided for a stretch of railway that had been built as a bypass of congested Edinburgh for goods trains.

Rather than indulge in a slanging match over the railway company wanting to knock the brewery down, Drybrough and the North British did a deal, the benefits of which were to be felt for another three-quarters of a century. Drybrough got a spanking, brand new brewery and the "NB" cleared the way for additional tracks, a new bridge and a second tunnel under Calton Hill to parallel the original one of 1846. The "NB" and its successors won business carrying grain and hops to Duddingston, casks and bottles of ale from there, and empties back again. There was also money to be earned by the railway from taking workers to and from the brewery because there was little local housing, 40 years or so before Craigmillar began to develop as a major area for council houses.

Drybrough was not the only brewer to up sticks and grow at Duddingston and Craigmillar but it was particularly significant because of its relationship with the "NB". The railway company helped pay for the move, although only in part because there was also real commercial benefit for Drybrough from the switch to large, purpose-built premises. It might be said there was also rather a lot of self-interest for the "NB" for all that revenue to be generated at Duddingston.

An intriguing clue as to the significance of all this is to be found in the Drybrough archives from the 1890s. There, amongst many pages of detailed information from Drybrough's architects, there are references to meetings to discuss plans for a siding to connect the new railway to the adjacent tracks of the Edinburgh Suburban & South Side Junction Railway (known to this day as "the Sub").

Before full planning could press ahead for the brewery itself, the layout of the railway tracks had to be confirmed. So that was important. But what's

this among the voluminous details provided by R Hamilton Paterson, Brewers Architect and Engineer of 10a George Street, Edinburgh, to justify the costs involved? The entry for 9 February 1891 is: "To meeting Mr Drybrough and arranging to call for Mr Walker NBR anent railway lye at Duddingston." The meeting with Mr Walker took place on 18 February. On 30 October that year we find: "Calling for Mr Wieland along with Mr Drybrough anent railway sidings".

The significance of these entries becomes apparent when the identities of the railway gentlemen are followed up in records elsewhere. John Walker was the General Manager of the "NB". George B Wieland was Company Secretary of the "NB". In the wider railway industry across Britain Messrs Wieland and Walker were held in exceptionally high regard. That the top men should be involved in preparations for a siding for goods wagons indicates the considerable importance of the project.

A later meeting involved James Bell, the railway company's chief engineer, and by 13 January 1893 it is a case of "meeting Inspector Kerr NBR". But everything started right at the very top.

Redevelopment of the Craig End Brewery site

Leaving aside the architects' fascinating details of instalments paid on various dates and bills settled for such essentials as masonry, bricks, water pipes, drainage, gas supplies and brewing plant, I turned to the North British Railway Study Group for help. Donald Cattanach, one of the group's members who is researching the history of Waverley station along with Allan Rodgers, kindly provided preliminary fruits of this work. Through Andrew Boyd, a member of the study group's committee, Mr Cattanach drew attention to the following "NB" Board meeting entry for 28 April 1892:

"Waverley Station - Drybrough & Coy's Brewery.

"Re the taking over of Messrs Drybrough & Coy's premises for the enlargement of the Waverley Station, and for which a claim of £80,000 had been made, it was reported that the claim had been compromised for £37,200, Messrs Drybrough to have right to the water in well No. 1, or otherwise to receive an additional sum of £1,500."

The SBA files in Glasgow include basic plans for insurance purposes of the Craig End Brewery, one of which shows a water tank, another showing a "cellar under railway arch" but the location of well No. 1 is not clear from these.

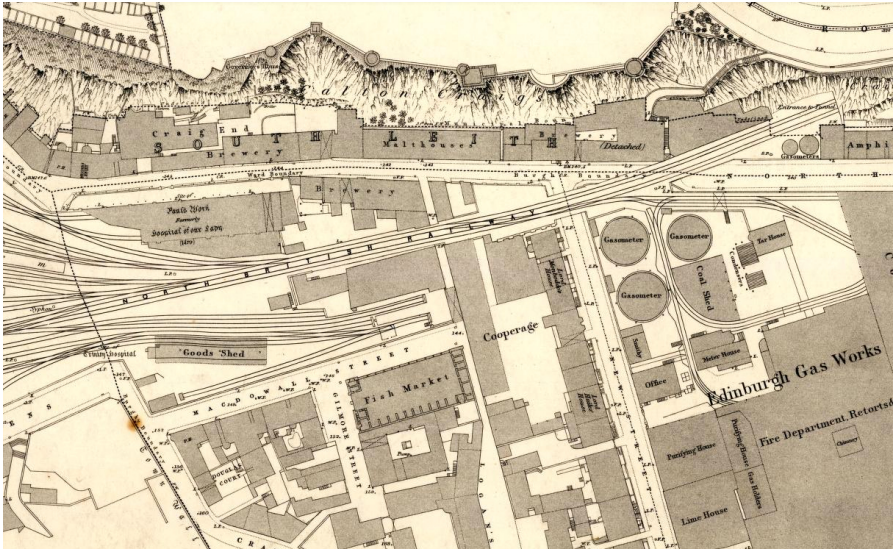


Figure 1. 1877 map showing the location of the Craig End Brewery.

Records of the City of Edinburgh Council include detailed maps of the area. These were drawn to my attention by one of the SBAA committee members, Neil Lawrence. One for 1877 shows the original alignments of the railway and the road. On the north side, between the road and the then Calton Gaol and the corner of Calton Burial Ground, the Craig End Brewery is clearly seen. Further east there is a malt house and another brewery before the road goes under the railway. To the south is Edinburgh Gas Works, while to the north after the railway has disappeared into tunnel, there is the Calton Hill Brewery. A map of 1893 shows changes under way with the railway properties expanding and main brewery buildings at Craig End demolished.

Information in the SBA archives shows that James Drybrough had brewed in Tolbooth Wynd and moved to the south side of Canongate North Back

in 1782. Andrew Drybrough acquired Craig End in 1874 from Steel Coulson, who moved to Croft-an-Righ near the Palace of Holyroodhouse. It was in December 1895 that Drybrough & Co Ltd was registered as a limited liability company.

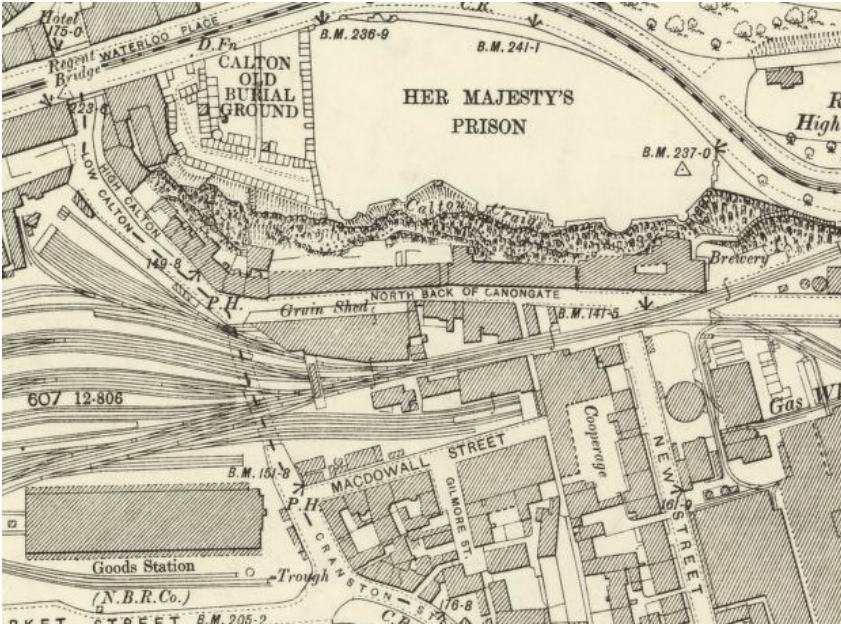


Figure 2. 1893 map showing the location of the Craig End Brewery.

Drybrough and its railway links

For more information on Drybrough and its railway connections, I turned to the book *The Edinburgh Suburban and South Side Junction Railway* by A. A. Maclean. Originally a separate company, this was the business behind what became the Suburban Circle of the North British Railway. It served as a bypass to take freight clear of the busy passenger tracks through the city centre, but it also provided passenger services as a result of links to other tracks west of Haymarket and on the east side of Edinburgh, allowing trains to make a circuit through Waverley, Haymarket, Gorgie, Craiglockhart, Morningside, Newington, Duddingston, Portobello and back to Waverley, or down to Leith.

Opened to freight on 31 October 1884 and passengers on 1 December 1884, the line is still there and continues to provide a bypass for a significant number of freight trains every day although regular passenger trains were withdrawn on and from 10 September 1962, more than six months before publication of the famous, or infamous, Beeching Report: *The Reshaping of British Railways*.

In his book, published by the Oakwood Press, Mr Maclean (no relation) gives considerable details on the companies that had sidings served by this railway, including breweries, which were mostly, but not all, at Duddingston and Craigmillar. Brewing was already established before Drybrough moved out from town. A connection had opened between the railway and the Craigmillar Brewery of William Murray in March 1888 and the Edinburgh Malting Company opened a siding in August 1892 for its premises next to Duddingston station, just west of the Craigmillar Brewery. The arrival of Drybrough's from 1892 was therefore a logical stage of brewing development in the area, where water was found to be right for the production of ale. John Somerville's North British, McLachlan's Castle, W. & J. Raeburn's (later Robert Younger's) and Robert Deuchar's were among breweries that also established railway siding connections, as well as several maltsters and the Brewers Food Supply Company. There were other connections with the remaining route of part of the former "Innocent Line", the Edinburgh & Dalkeith Railway, which had a junction with "the Sub" in the Duddingston area and took goods trains past Duddingston Loch and down through a tunnel as far as St Leonards. Altogether seven breweries came to have railway sidings in the Duddingston/Craigmillar area.

Mr Maclean records that there were other locations of railway and brewing interest. Thomas and James Bernard set up brewing in the North Back of the Canongate in 1840 but their site was later found to be in the way of railway expansion. In 1888, Bernard's Edinburgh Brewery opened on the east side of the suburban railway at Gorgie, on the north side of Slateford Road. Between 1889 and 1906 there was another brewery to the north, set up by Daniel Bernard following a family dispute.

Access by rail was easy from "the Sub" to many parts of Scotland and England, using links with the rest of the North British Railway's network

east and south of Edinburgh to head off towards Newcastle or the Borders and Carlisle, and on the west of Edinburgh to head for Glasgow or over the Forth Bridge to Fife and the North. This allowed the breweries involved to serve markets over a wide area. But by the 1960s it was all different. As well as the shake-up of the brewing industry that was to see so many breweries close, including all those mentioned here, except the Caledonian Brewery at Slateford Road, there was radical change on the railways, too. Motorised road distribution had developed after the First World War. At first, rail was still preferred for the longer hauls, but by the 1960s the nationalised railways were keen to get rid of much of their freight carryings on the grounds that rail should concentrate only on more suitable bulk traffics. Many railway customers were already switched or switching to road.

In the 1960s, those breweries around "the Sub" that had not already closed were to lose their siding connections, with all brewing industry haulage now on road. In the Drybrough archives, part of the story is revealed in records of deliveries and returns by road, rail and sea. By 1956, lorry deliveries are prominent and by 1961-62, we find the lorries of J. D. Banks and Highland Haulage busy handling transport that would once have gone by rail. For example, on 28 March 1961, we find draught beer supplies for Arbroath, Alyth and Forfar heading off by road.

A century and more ago, the "NB" and "Caley" railway companies were sending nightly "ale trains" to England from Edinburgh. That traffic, along with almost all of the original breweries, is no more. New breweries are still opening, and railways are growing in new ways too, but much else is so very different.

The West Barns Brewery

Jim Lawrie looks at one of the less well known breweries in East Lothian

Introduction

The village of West Barns is within the county of East Lothian (formerly Haddingtonshire) and lies one and a half miles west of Dunbar and less than a mile west of Belhaven village. The West Barns brewery started as a distillery that was established at the east end of the village in 1798 by Taylor & Walker, distillers. Around that same period Taylor & Walker also tenanted the Linton Distillery at Linton (now called East Linton) but only until 1799. The partnership of Taylor & Walker was the first of four separate partnerships to control the West Barns distillery over the following four decades.

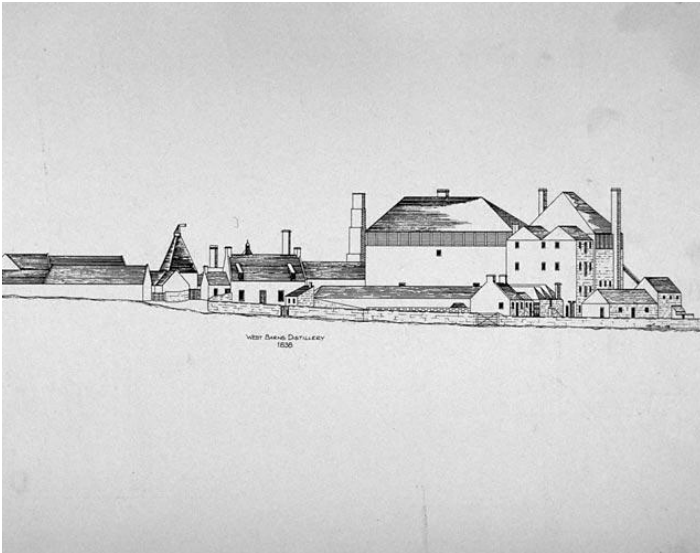


Figure 1. West Barns distillery appears on the right of this 1838 drawing. The old windmill and Distillery House (at Bielside) can be seen left of the centre. Published courtesy of the John Gray Centre, Haddington.

The Taylor & Walker partnership lasted several years. In 1813 the business was operating under the name of Andrew Taylor & Company. The distilling business was flourishing. The Journals of the House of Commons clearly indicated that 57,045 gallons of spirits was produced at West Barns distillery in 1818. On 20 May 1819 the business of Andrew Taylor & Company was dissolved and between 1819 and 1833 Andrew Taylor was acting on his own account. Taylor had several cothouses on the site (small dwelling houses occupied by cottars who were allowed free residence whilst employed at the distillery.) In addition the commercial premises included a malting kiln and brewhouse as well as stables and byres.

The Accounts and papers relating to assessed taxes indicated that in the trading year of 1826/27 Andrew Taylor produced 601,190 gallons of spirits. From 1833 a new partnership was arranged utilising the previous name of Andrew Taylor & Company. Taylor was in control of the distilling plant until the late 1830s. Pigot's commercial directory of 1837 described the West Barns site as a "a large distillery". After Taylor's death the distillery closed.

Nelson's West Barns Brewery

In July 1838 the distilling property fell into the hands of landowner and farmer George Nelson of Wester Broomhouse near Spott village. Nelson's son Adam used part of the industrial site for farming purposes and around 1840 George's son Andrew converted the distillery into a brewery. In the early 1840s Andrew Nelson was supplying beer to several outlets in neighbouring villages as well as in the town of Dunbar. In 1841 he employed his younger brother John, then aged 15, as his assistant brewer. James Cochrane, who was his maltster, was one of numerous cottars who were resident at the brewery site. Following George Nelson's death the Trustees of his estate leased the brewery site to Cambuslang-born brewer, Alexander Lindsay.

Lindsay's West Barns Brewery

Mr Alexander Lindsay, brewer, born on 7 February 1802, was the son of Alexander Lindsay, senior, a farmer at Gateside, Cambuslang. Lindsay, junior, moved to West Barns from Argyle Street, Glasgow with his wife Margaret. His son James and daughter Marion, both in their 'teens joined

them. Alexander Lindsay and family took up residence in what was later to become known as 'Brewery House'. By 1851 he was employing six men.

Alex. Lindsay flourished as a brewer for several years. His local beer sales were increasing and in 1855 he asked the Trustees of the late George Nelson to sell the whole of the brewery property to him. The trustees agreed and Lindsay purchased the brewery outright in August of that year. For personal reasons Alex. Lindsay required to return to Glasgow and in the Spring of 1858 he advertised that the commercial brewing site was available for lease. He received an approach from Glaswegian brewer William Steel.

William Steel's West Barns Brewery

William Steel was born in Glasgow in 1827 the son of Thomas and Janet Steel née Barton. William was a product of the 'Steel' brewing family in the Calton district of Glasgow. His father Thomas was the master brewer and maltster at the Tureen Street Brewery, 35 Tureen Street, off the Gallowgate in Glasgow in the 1840s. It was agreed that William Steel would lease the West Barns brewery from Alexander Lindsay with effect from Whitsunday 1858 with payment of £150 per annum for 10 years. Steel's wife had tragically died early in May 1858 and later that month he moved to West Barns with his three young children.

In that same year, 1858, William Steel's older brother James had left Glasgow's Greenhead Brewery and moved to Edinburgh where he had purchased J & W Burnett's Craigend Brewery in North Back Canongate (now called Calton Road). William Steel quickly established himself - beer sales were good and he required to increase his staff.

WANTED - a couple of good steady workmen, wages fifteen shillings a week. Apply at Westbarns Brewery, near Dunbar

Figure 2. Advert from the Haddingtonshire Courier - 12 July 1861

INDIA PALE ALE - Families supplied with INDIA PALE ALE of the finest quality in casks containing 7, 14, 28 gallons.
William Steel, West Barns Brewery, Dunbar

Figure 3. Advert from the Haddingtonshire Courier - December 1863

William Steel – always a man for controversy!

William Steel's older brother James, who had acquired the Craighend Brewery in Edinburgh in 1858 had the reputation for being hotheaded, outspoken and argumentative. It would appear that William possessed some of the familial traits. He never hesitated to provide his opinions even although they had not been asked for.

William Steel made numerous appearances in court in the 1870s. In July 1870 an action was taken against him in a 'defamation of character' case where he was accused of using slanderous expressions with reference to a Belhaven publican's wife. He found himself before the Sheriff once again in February 1872. He alleged he was a victim of assault following a social evening in Dunbar. In November 1874 he was once again before the Sheriff at the Small Debt Court. He was charged that one of his brewery carts had careered into another vehicle causing damage. In 1876 he appeared in the Court of Session. On this occasion he was on the offensive. Following Alexander Lindsay's death the ownership of the brewery had passed to his daughter Mrs Marion Lindsay or Orr. Despite the fact that William Steel had tenanted the brewery for 17 years she sold the brewery without informing him of the sale. To compound matters the brewery and other buildings had been sold to Alexander Annandale, junior, the West Barns paper mill owner with whom relations had always been strained.

William Steel sued for potential loss of income and breach of contract. Steel won his case but still found himself renting the brewery from Annandale. The two men had a distinct dislike of each other.

Disaster strikes William Steel – brewery in jeopardy

In 1880 William Steel was taken seriously ill – a stroke had left him mentally impaired and partially paralysed. He was forced to retire from all aspects of brewing and was confined to his sickbed. Initially the brewing processes were carried out by his faithful staff but there was no-one to ensure that the management controls continued and the business started to suffer. News of Steel's poor health was conveyed to his son Thomas who was working in Glasgow. Thomas had in the 1880s worked as a general worker at the West Barns brewery. Thomas returned to West Barns to try and turn the business around. He took control over all business, sales and

technical matters. He paid his father's debts and soon discovered there was a long list of customers from whom payments for beer had not been collected.

It transpired that William Steel was seriously ill for more than two years and there was doubt as to whether he would ever recover from his illness. On the financial side the brewery never fully recovered and in the early Spring of 1883 severe financial difficulties ensued with unpaid bills mounting up. Thomas Steel was struggling to cope and the brewery had unpaid rent for several months. Alexander Annandale, junior, realising there were serious financial problems, acted swiftly and took the opportunity to advertise that the brewery was available for lease.

TO LET on lease with immediate entry

WESTBARNs BREWERY - within two miles of Dunbar.
The brewery has a plentiful supply of suitable water and brews well, is in good repair and compactly arranged and has a long established business.

There is a commodious dwelling house.

Application may be made to Messrs Scott, Bruce & Clover, W.S., 1 Hill Street, Edinburgh or to Mr Charles Notman, writer, Dunbar.

Figure 4. Advert announcing the lease of the Westbarns Brewery

In April 1883 Thomas Steel was declared bankrupt under the terms of the Bankruptcy (Scotland) Act of 1856 and his estate was ordered to be sequestrated. In the Haddingtonshire Courier of 27 April 1883 under the heading of "Scottish Bankrupt Sequestration" it announced that Thomas Steel was declared bankrupt and that creditors were to meet in the George Inn, Haddington on Thursday, May 3rd at 12 o'clock.

Given that the brewery and most of its fixings belonged to Alexander Annandale the full weight of the sequestration order fell on Thomas Steel's personal effects to the extent that his house, furnishings and personal objects were subject to sequestration. He was literally left with just the clothes on his back. Seven years after the brewery closed Annandale decided to sell off the whole stock of barrels.

SALE OF BARRELS

At West Barns Brewery, near Dunbar. On Tuesday 25th Nov. 1890

The subscribers have received instruction from Alexander Anmandale, esq., of Bielside to sell by public roup, as above, the whole stock of barrels, in all about 800, contained in the brewery above, viz - $\frac{1}{2}$ Firkins, Firkins, $\frac{1}{2}$ barrels, $\frac{3}{4}$ Hogsheads, Hogsheads, Butts etc. Nearly all are sound, in good condition and many are new.

Sale to commence at 2 o'clock prompt

BRAND & HENDERSON, auctioneers, Dunbar, 1890.

Figure 5. Advert announcing sale of barrels

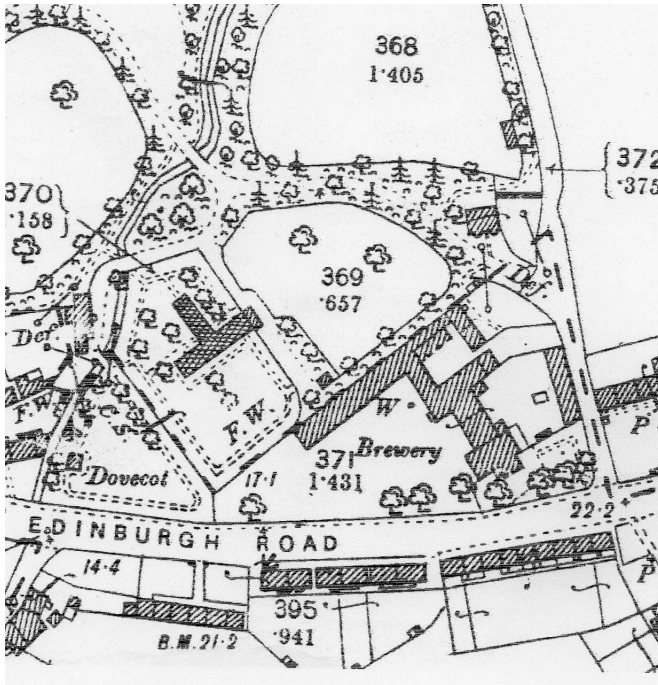


Figure 6. 1893 Ordnance survey map of West Barns showing the brewery ten years after its closure . Reproduced with permission of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland.

In the late eighteen-eighties Thomas Steel's father William was admitted to the Haddington District Asylum. He was resident there for many years. He died aged 64 on 2nd December 1895 from heart failure. After his sequestration Thomas Steel was left penniless and returned to Glasgow.

Less than a year after Alexander Annandale, junior, had advertised that the brewery was available for tenancy the brewery and maltings lease was taken up in 1884 by Alexander Hunter, brewer and maltster at Dudgeon & Co. at nearby Belhaven. This lease however lasted only one year. In the early 1900s ownership of the property passed to the Trustees of Mr & Mrs St. Clair. In 1901 the brewery property was leased to Robert Macadam who with his older brother William had established the British Malt Products Company in London in 1893. William and Robert were not Londoners. They were born in Haddington in 1865 and 1867 respectively. Their parents ran a grocers business at Nos. 27/28 High Street, Haddington. Robert had been tenancing the Bridge Street Maltings in Haddington's Nungate but moved to the former brewery at West Barns in 1901.



Figure 7. British Malt Products staff in 1901

British Malt Products Company remained at the former West Barns brewery site until 1910 when they moved to the west end of the village to the larger Beltonford Maltings property which had been sold to them by Dudgeon & Co.

The only original building that continues to exist at the former brewery/maltings site off the Sea Road at West Barns is 'Brewery Cottage'.



Figure 8. Brewery Cottage

Sources consulted

Register of Sasines 17 February 1814 Andrew Taylor, distiller

Register of Sasines 28 May 1875 disposition of West Barns brewery

Census records for William Steel, James Steel, Thomas Steel, Robert Macadam and William Macadam.

Dunbar valuation rolls 1883 to 1910

Journal of the House of Commons 1818

Government Accounts & papers for assessed taxes 1826/1827

Haddingtonshire Courier 12 July 1861, advertisement for 2 men, 9 August 1861 advertisement for Harvest beer, 4 December 1863 India Pale Ale, 18 November 1864 Shakespeare lecture, 1 July 1870 Defamation of Character case, 20 November 1874 Small Debt case, 7 January 1876 Court of Session court case re lease dispute, 15 March 1883 West Barns brewery for let, 27 April 1883 Scottish bankruptcy cases, 8 June 1883 bankruptcy examination of Thomas Steel, 12 October 1883 bankruptcy evidence by William Steel, 28 November 1890 sale of barrels at brewery, 14 September 1894 West Barns new Maltings, 13 December 1895 death of William Steel in Haddington, Ordnance survey maps of West Barns 1853, 1893, 1907, 1934.

Glasgow Past and Present Volume 2

East Lothian Life magazine Issue No.18 *Autumn 1995 Bielside House

Internet reference to West Barns brewery

Old Parish records for Nelson family and Andrew Taylor.

Pigot's commercial directories 1825 and 1837

Picture of British Malt Products Staff in 1901 supplied by John Gray centre, Haddington

National Records of Scotland Sederunt book (Court book) re sequestration of Thomas Steel

National Records of Scotland maps of West Barns for 1804 and 1838.

*Jim Lawrie was born in Edinburgh and worked in life and pensions before retiring in 2007. Jim has been a public house historian for thirty-five years and a brewery historian for almost thirty years. Throughout the 1980s, when the Scottish Brewing Archive was in Edinburgh, Jim was the archive photographer (unpaid). From the early to mid 1990s he was editor of **Pints of View** (Edinburgh CAMRA's local magazine). Jim has already published a history of breweries in Musselburgh and Fisherrow (**Honesty Brewing, 2009**) and his second book, **Staggs**, is a history of Musselburgh's most famous public house. The book will be published later this year and will have around 130 pages containing numerous references to breweries that had a strong connection with the pub. For the past three years he has been researching and writing a history of the fourteen breweries, seven maltings and three distilleries that existed in Haddington. It was during this research that Jim established that the West Barns Brewery, near Dunbar, was a larger and more interesting brewery than had previously been thought.*

Drumdryan Brewery

Robin Thomas charts the history of the Drumdryan Brewery

Brewing in Edinburgh

Those who know Edinburgh's history will be aware that brewing was a significant industry in the city with as many as 40 breweries in operation in the late 1800s. Before the Act of Union with England in 1707, Scotland's drinking habits centred on wine, port and brandy, particularly from France, under the terms of the "Auld Alliance". It was mainly the very poor that drunk beer at that time. After the trade agreement with France had been broken, the drinking of beer became more widespread.

The Canongate and Craigmillar districts of Edinburgh were the two concentrated areas of breweries as a result of the unique supply of water that was suitable for brewing beer. The water came from an underground reservoir that became known as the "charmed circle". Large quantities of pure water were easily accessible through the thin layer of sandstone covering the lava below, caused by a geological fault. On the west side of the city this fault runs from the Grassmarket to Slateford and as a result a number of breweries took advantage of this water supply.

In the West Port, Tollcross and Fountainbridge areas of Edinburgh there were six breweries listed in the Williamson Street Directory of 1786-1788:

Fountainbridge	Alexander Scott Robert Semple
Wrights Houses and Lochrin	Charles Cock (Drumdryan Brewery)
West Port	David Cleghorn George Combe Peter Hardie Alexander Scott Robert Semple

Table 1. Breweries in West Port, Tollcross and Fountainbridge 1786-1788

The lands of Tollcross (*Tolcors*) and Drumdryan (*Dyndryan*) are steeped in history with the earliest reference being mentioned in a Royal Charter in 1439.

Before the West Port (originally named *Wester Portsburgh*) was built in the 16th century, which apart from its purposes of defence, functioned as a Toll point and what better place to exact dues than at this point of convergence of three of the most important trade routes to Edinburgh (Bread Street (formerly Orchard Field), East Fountainbridge and High Riggs. Where these roads met was called Main Point and the street sign depicted this, is still on view today.

A Tollbooth was situated on the west corner of Lady Lawson Street and the West Port after the Two Penny Custom was introduced in 1680 on every pint of beer sold or consumed in the town and outlying territories. This two-penny duty was to provide for the building of Parliament House.

The only other Toll point known in the area was Wrights Houses Toll on Leven Street opposite the appropriately named Old Toll Bar. This Toll was introduced in accordance with the 1755 Turnpike Act for the purposes of road repairs and development.

The lands of Drumdryan (Celtic name signifying a blackthorn ridge) was an 11 acre estate in an area we now call Tollcross today and stretched from Wrights Houses along Leven Street and Home Street to Tollcross and bounded on the east by the Meadows. In the 1730s, Patrick McDowall built a mansion called Drumdryan House on the site of the Kings Theatre, which was renamed Leven Lodge in 1750 when it was purchased by Alexander the 5th Earl of Leven, hence the street name Leven Street.

By 1788 the lands of Drumdryan were owned by James Home Rigg of Morton and Downfield near Cupar in Fife and whose family lived in Tarvit House south of Cupar. Tarvit Street that runs adjacent to the Kings Theatre was named after this family home. The mansion he occupied was built in 1774 and this was also named Drumdryan House. It was situated in what are now the back greens of the tenements of Drumdryan Street, Tarvit Street and Brougham Place. Drumdryan House was demolished in 1958.

Drumdryan Brewery

The Drumdryan Brewery was established in the 18th century, dating back to at least 1760 when Charles Cock was the brewer there. It is also documented that Charles Cock acquired "*Tenements at Drumdryan*" in 1781. (The word "*tenement*" covers a range of things, both with regard to

property and to the proprietorship, viz: a building of two or more storeys; a tenement of land; a vassal's tenement; a Superior's tenement; a leasehold tenement; a landlord's tenement). In this instance it appears to be an area or tenement of land. By 1802, extensive development of the property appears to have taken place, it being described as "a brewery, malt barn, kiln, coble and well, cellar, large close and a little dwelling house".

In 1806 ownership passed to his brother, James Coke of Neath, Glamorganshire, Wales. (social progress and/or Anglicisation being the reason for the modification in spelling of the respective surnames of Cock with Coke).

Twenty-eight years later and based on the Register of Sasines (an historical register of deeds affecting land and property), James Coke and still resident in Neath, Wales, conveyed the brewery back to the Scottish side of the family, to James Charles Coke. The following year he recorded another title to the brewery and is described as "*heir to Charles Coke, Brewer, Drumdryan, his grandfather*". Possibly Charles Coke's Will stipulated that the brewery pass to adult male offspring on his side of the family and that the title rested in Neath until James Charles Coke reached adulthood. Like his Welsh uncle, James Charles Coke didn't seem to play an active role in the operation of the brewery and by 1853 his place of residence is described as being "in Australia or elsewhere abroad".

In the late 1840s the brewery was sold to brewers, James Taylor and a James Crease, who previously was the head brewer of the Main Point Brewery. The brewery continued to flourish and traded under the name of Crease and Taylor. The brewery appears to have been prosperous, as expansion to the property took place in 1866 and 1873.

In 1866 a 3-storey dwelling house had been added. This house had been acquired in 1798 by James Haig, Distiller, Lochrin and was described as "*a large dwelling house betwixt Drumdryan House and Leven Lodge*". Although the Haig family signed the documents of conveyance in 1859, it was not until 1866 that the new owners formally recorded title to their new property.

James Haig's whisky distillery was on the opposite side of Leven Street to Drumdryan Brewery and was the largest distillery in Scotland at one time.

It was built in 1798 on the site of a much older brewery. This brewery was owned by Robert Gray and built in 1731 on the banks of the Dalry Burn at Lochrin, then described as Newbigging.

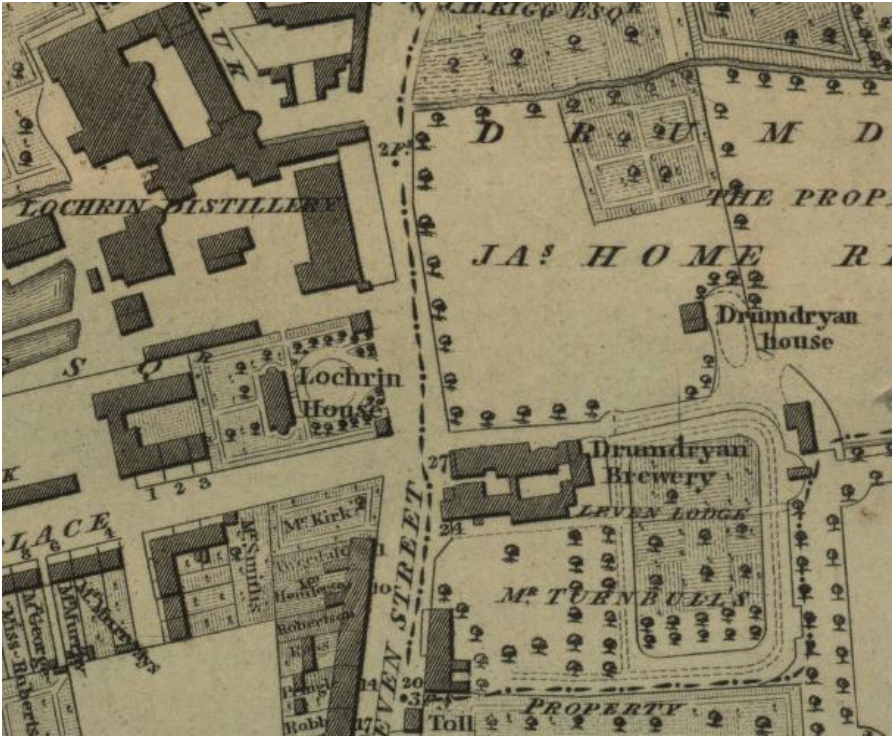


Figure 1. The location of the Drumdryan Brewery on Kirkwood's map of 1821

The Crease - Taylor partnership was dissolved in 1856 and James Taylor as the surviving brewer, set up a new partnership with John Anderson, then a resident at nearby No 3 Upper Gilmore Place. The Drumdryan Brewery was then commercially known as Taylor, Anderson & Co.

Although the brewery continued to flourish, the partnership was dissolved in 1870, as John Anderson wanted to set up his own brewing business and moved to Fisherrow, Musselburgh.

Ownership of the brewery including the 3-storey house, now converted into and forming part of the brewery, was sold in 1870 to a partnership of James Taylor, Hugh Henderson McLeod and Douglas Scott. McLeod sold his partnership in the firm in 1872, which then became known as Taylor, McLeod & Co. (why this, rather than Taylor, Scott & Co. is not evident).

It is known that Taylor, McLeod used the trademark of a lion rampant and was famous for its India Pale Ale.

In 1873 Taylor, Macleod & Co. acquired a *“dwelling house at Drumdryan, with cellar and little stable adjoining the north side of said house, on the east side of the Turnpike Road from Edinburgh to Wrights Houses”*. This was a more extensive property than might be thought from the above description. It also appears to have undergone extensive re-development between 1819 and 1841.

John Kirk, Brewer, Drumdryan had acquired this dwelling house in 1819, and perhaps the brewery was leased to begin with. Whether it was used as part of the adjoining brewery or merely as a place of residence, or both, is not clear. However it is extremely likely that it was used as part of the brewery for storage.

Ian Donnachie – A History of the Scottish Brewing Industry writes, *“ John Kirk of Drumdryan Brewery was a bit more ambitious (than the average) to his cost, because he over-reached himself and fell on hard times following the general crisis of 1825. He had customers in Fife, Angus, Perth and Aberdeen, as well as venturing into the English trade which was his undoing, for his agent there, one John Brown, owed him at least £600 and numerous other defaulting customers with nearly £4000”*.

Kirk was sequestered in 1826/27 and some of the loans which he had made in security of the brewery were still outstanding and being undertaken as part of the purchase price thereof as late as 1887. Despite said sequestration, Kirk must somehow have retained right to the property acquired in 1819, because in 1841 the title passed to his heir John Kirk, brewer, from Aberdeen.

Based on the Post Office directories and the Professions and Trade Directory a Thomas Cowper (ale brewer) is listed under Drumdryan, from 1832–1849. From 1836 onwards his son joined the business.

Perhaps the brewery was leased to Thomas Cowper, when John Kirk had become bankrupt in 1827.

The brewery property including the 3-storey house and the dwelling house was sold in 1887 by the now dissolved firm of Taylor, McLeod & Co. to James Taylor as an individual.



Figure 2. The corner of Tarvit Street and Leven Street, the site of the Kings Theatre today. The tall chimney of Drumdryan Brewery can be seen in the background.

The end seems to have come at the end of the 19th century, possibly due to difficulties in gaining adequate market for the beer or possibly due to the cramped site of the brewery, but more probably simply being part of a long term national trend. Beer production was coming from increasingly few, but ever-larger and urban-sited breweries. Ian Donnachie mentions there were 220 breweries in Scotland in 1860, but only 103 breweries remained in 1905.

In 1899 James Taylor sold the Drumdryan Brewery to J&G Stewart, Scotch Whisky Merchants, who in turn sold the property to Oliver Thomson, Corn Merchant. Then in 1905, Thomson sold it to the Edinburgh Construction Coy Ltd and again in 1906 sold to Robert Colburn Buchanan, Theatrical Director and others.

The brewery was demolished in 1905 to make way for the King's Theatre. The site would have been demolished much earlier had plans to bring a branch of the Union Canal through Tollcross been implemented. In 1813, Hugh Baird proposed that the branch be cut through Gilmore Place and across to the Meadows, but the idea was abandoned on the grounds of cost. During renovations to the King's Theatre, the Drumdryan Brewery well was located under the Orchestra pit!

However on a more sombre note it was discovered last year that two mirrors relating to the Taylor, MacLeod brewery that were on display in Bennets Bar are no longer and have "disappeared" and with it part of the heritage and a link to the brewery.

Rest in peace, Drumdryan Brewery et alia!

Robin Thomas was born in Swansea but emigrated with his family to Scotland at the age of 11, and settled in Edinburgh. When at school Robin emerged as a decent distance runner at both cross-country and road running. During Robin's student years at Edinburgh University he was addicted to running 100 miles per week and of course quenching his thirst with a beer or two. Robin's most vivid and nostalgic memory of Edinburgh in his early years was the ever-present smell of malting and brewing. Several years ago Robin Thomas was writing a contribution for his running club about Bennet's Bar at Tollcross, a famous Edinburgh institution, when he came across the Drumdryan Brewery. Robin then decided to conduct his own investigation of the brewery, which is the basis of this article. Robin is a Civil Servant at Registers of Scotland, working with conveying deeds and property records. Outside work, Robin still enjoys distance running and is the Secretary of the famous Hunters Bog Trotters.

*Robin wishes to thank Neil Lawrence for his knowledge and research of the Drumdryan Brewery and also Jim Lawrie for his book **Honesty Brewing: the history of the breweries, maltings and distilleries of Musselburgh and Fisherrow.***

McMullan and Sons' Kilsyth Business

Liam Murray and *Brian Murray* describe a business previously only known from a simple entry in a trade directory

Introduction

The town of Kilsyth sits on the south border of what was the county of Stirling at the foot of the Campsie Fells, bounded on the north by the Carron Water and on the south by the River Kelvin. In the early 19th century its main industry was hand loom weaving, but by the mid 19th century factories using power looms were established where many of those who had formerly done their weaving at home found employment. By 1900, however, because of the increased competition from other areas, both at home and from abroad, these Kilsyth factories had closed.

Fortunately, as the weaving industry declined, mining of coal and ironstone was being developed and Bairds, the major mine and iron manufacturer in Scotland who had come to Kilsyth in the 1860s, were gradually expanding their business eventually becoming the biggest employer in the area. In 1870, believing that they could not get enough labour from within Kilsyth, they started to bring in workers from Ireland. As a result of all the mining activity and the development of associated trades Kilsyth, by the end of the 19th century, had become a reasonably prosperous town with a population of around nine and a half thousand. It was to this town that Alexander McMullan came in 1864, to work as a contractor for Bairds and it was here that he was to build up a successful family business, a business which was to suffer when the town voted to become 'dry' in 1920.

Alexander McMullan's early career

The McMullan business was founded by Alexander McMullan, an immigrant from Northern Ireland. He was born in Antrim in 1841, the second son of Patrick McMullan, a cobbler, and his wife Jane. Antrim was not as severely affected by the Irish Famine of 1845 as the western counties of Ireland were (an expanding industrial Belfast helped provide a buffer) but nonetheless when Alexander turned fourteen and had completed his

schooling the family believed that there would be more opportunities for them in the industrial heartlands of Scotland where mining and steel manufacturing had been developing rapidly. And so the family came to Airdrie in 1855, ten years after the famine, settling in Rawyards, near to which there were newly opened up mines and ironworks.

Patrick continued to work as a cobbler working from the family home in Rawyards but Alexander started his working life as a drawer - the boy who 'drew' back the coal the collier had cut so that it could be loaded on to the bogey which was then taken to the surface. By 1861 he had become a qualified collier and in that year he married Alis, or Alice, Conner, a dairy maid who lived in Clays Cottages near to Rawyards, in St Patrick's Catholic Church in Airdrie.

Alexander's father died in 1862 and in the same year Alexander and Alis's first child, whom they named Patrick after his father, was born. By that time, living conditions in Airdrie, because of the rapid increase in the population, had been deteriorating; water supplies had become uncertain, sewage disposal was poor and drunkenness and crime rates were reputed to be amongst the worst in Scotland. At the time Alexander was working for Baird's, the great coal and ironstone mining company of central Scotland, and they had decided to open a new mine in Cumbernauld. As an experienced colliery worker who was already working for the company Alexander was able to find a job there and his widowed mother and his brother agreed to go with him and his family to Cumbernauld. There Alexander and Alis's second son John, who sadly died in infancy, was born and in the following year their third child, Charles, was born.

Four years later, in 1866, Baird's decided to re-develop an ironstone mine at Curriemore in Kilsyth which had been closed when its former proprietor had died in a horrific accident with some mining equipment. Baird's were expanding their mining activities at such a rate that they were finding it difficult to train enough managers and, until they could, they used contractors to help out. In business terms this meant that contractors had to produce set amounts of iron ore whilst using their own work force and for this they were paid a set sum for each contract. In order to re-open the mine, experienced colliers were needed and so, in 1866 at the age of 25, Alexander moved to Kilsyth to work under contract for Baird's.

Alexander's move into the licensed trade

Whilst he was still working as a contractor Alexander, in 1870, took his first steps towards becoming involved in the licensed trade when he and Alice decided to open a beer parlour in one of the rooms of the house which they were renting in Anderson Land in Newton Street. Small beer parlours such as this were not uncommon in those days. They were virtually just a room with an odd table and a few chairs, as often as not with no glasses and with the beer being drunk straight from the bottle. Alexander obviously hoped that those who were working for him at the time would use these facilities and to help run it and to keep it going as a family business, he invited his elder brother John to leave Cumbernauld and come to Kilsyth. The move was not a success. John had reservations about leaving his widowed mother to come and work for an ambitious brother and a few months after coming to Kilsyth, John decided to return to Cumbernauld and the small beer parlour had to be closed down.

Later that year Alexander took on the running of a small local railway which took coal from one of Baird's newly opened mines to the main railway line, and he continued to do this until 1874 when, with the help of a loan, he took over the tenancy of the Crown Inn on the High Street. He ran this successfully and in the following year he acquired the tenancy of premises at the Cross which had once been a spirit shop with a store and stables alongside. Eventually he began to produce his own blends of whisky which he sold from his spirit shop and the Crown Inn.

When his eldest son Patrick (see Figure 1.) turned eighteen in 1880 he expanded the business further by buying a public house and shop in Newton Street, and Patrick became tenant of this property, the pub being known as the Newton Vaults. Three years later Alexander's second son Charles joined the family business and, when he took over management of the premises in Newton Street, Patrick went off to Glasgow to learn more about the art of whisky blending. On his return Patrick took over the running of the blending plant and the management of the spirit shop at the Cross, with the shop and public house in Newton Street continuing to be managed by Charles. Alexander himself looked after the Crown in High Street and he retained overall control of the business with Charles and Patrick being employed by him as managers.



Figure 1. Alexander (left) and Patrick (right) McMullan

Expansion of the business

Patrick and Charles, who were now married and in their late twenties, were beginning to put forward proposals on how the business could be expanded further. Despite the fact that breweries in Scotland were at the time declining (in 1860 there had been 220, but by 1890 the number had fallen to 150) they persuaded their father that, with the retail outlets that they had, having their own brewery would add to the profitability of the

business, and so in 1892 they opened their own brewery at the Cross (see Figure 2).



Figure 2. The Cross, with the probable location of the brewery being on the south-west corner

At this time it must have appeared to many in Kilsyth that Alexander McMullan had by now built up a very successful family business and the purpose of their advertising in the local paper that year, the Kilsyth Chronicle, was to promote this view.

"A McMullan and sons, Brewers, wine and brandy merchants of the Cross and Newton Street have in store a blend of 10,000 gallons of whisky from the most famous distilleries of Scotland, of average 5 years. The whisky has been analysed and is declared to be of the purest blends on the market. We are now offering for sale this special blend. To more fully meet the requirements of our extensive trade we have received agencies for the following: Hygienic Irish Whiskey, the Spanish Companies invigorating wines and the famous Invalid Stout. We are giving

extraordinary value in Ales. Family orders thankfully received and promptly forwarded."

"A. McMullan and Sons, Brewers wine and brandy merchants, 9 Newton Street and the Cross, beg to announce they hold in bond considerable quantities of malt whisky from 200 of the largest Scottish Distillers. From these they have produced one of the finest blends on the market. Their success in this has been the result of the art acquired in one of the most respectable houses in Glasgow. They are able to sell their high class whisky at 2/3d, 2/6d and 2/9d per bottle. A. McM and Sons are agents for the Hygienic Irish Whiskey and the Spanish Vintage Co's Invigorating Wines. They hold the following proprietary whiskies in stock - The Union, Aberfeldy and Glencraigie which they sell at 3/- per bottle and 1/6d per half bottle, They guarantee to give the best value in wines. They sell no cheap trashy wine. Their Old Port and Sherry direct from the vintage they sell at 2/9 per bottle, pints at 1/3 each. their large stock of cordials of every kind are of the highest quality. Mac's Ales are brewed from the purest malt. Their Brewery has lately been fitted up at considerable expense with all the most modern improvements. There is now nothing wanting in this department. They are thus enabled to produce a beer equal to the best on the market. Mac and Sons give extraordinary terms for family orders and marriages etc. The price for bottled beer of the highest gravity and in the best conditions is 1/6 per dozen. Persons desirous of receiving honest value during Christmas and the New Year should not fail to purchase their liquors at these well known establishments. Please note our address. 9 Newton Street and The Cross."

Supporting this advert was an entry in a feature entitled, *Our Advertising Patron's Shop Window* in which the McMullan business was described:

"This business in every department receives the direct attention of the proprietor and is conducted with energy and enterprise. There is every convenience for the effective and economical working of a large and increasing business. The brewing plant is of modern description, the firm brewing both mild and bitter ales and porter which have an unsurpassed reputation for quality, strength and flavour. The popularity of 'Mac's' brewings are well attested by the continual demand on the resources of the establishment for their production."

A later advert rather imaginatively portrayed Valhalla, their main whisky blend as:

Alexander's business worries

Though all of this may have indicated that the business was thriving and that Alexander was playing a prominent role in its success he was in fact becoming increasingly worried and depressed about the viability of the business. In order to fund its expansion he had borrowed money and during 1893 there were several reports in the financial pages of Scottish newspapers indicating that the directors of Scottish banks were becoming increasingly worried that because they had invested heavily in Australia, a country that was now going through a period of financial instability, they may have to start calling in loans in order to retain fluidity.

He had another matter to worry about in that there were other rumours about the responsibility for the licensing of public houses and spirit shops - which until then had been the responsibility of the County Authorities - being transferred to local magistrates. Unfortunately a majority of the magistrates in Kilsyth were known to support the Temperance Movement and this meant that, if the rumours were true, then his business in Kilsyth would either be closed down or at best restricted.

A strike by miners, from whom many of Alexander's customers came, did not help and all of this was taking place when he was suffering badly from a duodenal ulcer. The final straw seems to have come when, after a long illness, a dearly loved daughter Mary died at the age of fourteen - the eighth of his thirteen children to die - and this, together with all his other worries so overwhelmed him that early one morning he tried to commit suicide by cutting his throat. He survived the attempt but as he recovered he was committed to Gartnavel, the Mental Hospital in Glasgow, and a *curator bonis*, an administrator appointed by the Courts, was sent in to oversee the business during his illness.

It seems sadly ironic that, because Australia survived its financial crisis, there was no need for the Scottish banks to call in loans, the licensing authority remained with the county, the miners strike was soon over, and when the *curator bonis* came to look into the state of the business he reported that Alexander's property was valued at £1,760 and the value of his moveable property, including cash in bank, was £3,379. Alexander had

in fact no financial problems.

The final years

The *curator bonis*, after some disagreements with the Court, eventually had it agreed that:

Patrick should be allowed to buy the goodwill of the spirit shop and business at the Cross, the fittings and utensils of the spirit shop and the working plant of the brewery and the tenancy of these properties.

Charles should be allowed to buy the goodwill of the pub and the spirit shop on Newton Street.

This in effect meant that Alexander's wife Alice would have money and rent coming in which could be used to the benefit of herself and her other surviving children. Alexander came home from Gartnavel in 1912 and, after his wife died in 1913, he lived on with his youngest daughter Annie, being remembered by his grand daughter, as a gentle grey haired fine figure of a man, with a strong and tuneful singing voice. He died in 1926.

In the meantime Charles and Patrick continued to manage their businesses in Kilsyth, opened an aerated water business, and expanded, and in some respects protected, the business by opening up a spirit shop in Airdrie and public houses in Coatdykes, Hollandbush and Bellshill which were supplied from their plants in Kilsyth using horses and carts. By 1913 the annual turnover at each of the McMullan public houses, which were in effect by this time owned by Charles, was:

Newton Vaults Kilsyth	£2,340
Horse Shoe Bar Coatdykes	£1,872
Hollandbush Inn Hollandbush	£1,404
Mac's Bar Bellshill	£1,248

At the Horse Shoe Bar in Coatdykes the £1,872 turnover came from the sales of:

802 proof gallons of spirits
116 barrels and 56 and a half hogsheads T.B.
24 half barrels Bass

Charles died in 1914 and Patrick, as the Trustee of the estate, thereafter ran

the businesses on behalf of the two children, Sandy and Anne, that Charles had left. Patrick himself died in 1920, the year that Kilsyth voted to turn the town 'Dry' and the Kilsyth licensed premises, including the brewery, had to be closed down leaving the Trustees of his estate to run the properties and licensed premises which had been established outside Kilsyth on behalf of his third wife and his four children. Over time, the estate came to be run so badly and unfairly that in 1940 after the court had been petitioned, a Judicial Factor was appointed to take over its management. All the properties were gradually sold off, the last in 1970, and it was thus that the McMullan involvement in the licensing trade came to an end, an involvement which had started one hundred years earlier in 1870 in Alexander and Alice's little beer parlour in Newton Street in Kilsyth.

Epilogue - temperance

The first Temperance Society in Kilsyth was established in 1830 by William Burns in reaction to the high level of drunkenness and low morals he identified amongst his parishioners. Over the next decades the Society was complemented by branches of the Independent Order of Good Templars, the Rechabites, the Band of Hope, and the St Andrews Catholic Total Abstinence and Benefit Society [Hutchison, 1986]. In short, there was a considerable local protest movement ready to challenge the proprietors of the 22 licensed public houses in Kilsyth and the government, under pressure from the Permissive Bill Association, provided them with the means to do it. The Temperance (Scotland) Act was passed in 1913 and Section 2 of the Act made provision for the taking of a poll by local authorities in which the questions to be submitted to the electors would be, a no change resolution, a limiting resolution or a no licence resolution. Several districts agreed to hold a poll but the First World War began before these could be organised and so the polling had to be delayed until after the war. It was not until December 1920 therefore that polling took place in 580 of the 1,221 districts of Scotland. The result of the polling was that 503 districts voted for no change, 36 for limitation and 41 for no licence.

Kilsyth was one of the districts that held a poll and following very vigorous campaigns run by both the pro- and anti- camps in a very high turnout (89% of the electorate voted) 1396 voted for no licence, none voted for a limitation and 904 voted for retention [Brewers' Society, 1920].

Because of this result, the 17 licences that were held in Kilsyth at that time were 'extinguished'. Of the 17, three were part of the Alexander McMullan and Sons' business - a brewery, a spirit shop and a public house. The family, however, also owned licensed shops and public houses in Airdrie, Coatbridge, Hollandbush and Bellshill and as these were unaffected they were able to continue the family business in these towns for many years after.

Three years later the result of a second poll maintained the status quo: 1564 votes for 'dry' and 1076 for 'wet'. Whilst the Temperance groups in Kilsyth rejoiced in their victory and filled the press with their enthusiastic views about how better Kilsyth now was without the licensed trade, a perhaps more reflective view, was given by the Reverend Mackay Lennox in his article:

"Being 'Dry' does not mean that it [Kilsyth] is teetotal. There are licensed premises in Banton, Queenzieburn and Banknock just over the parish boundary and the later buses from Glasgow bring home those who have gone there for their drinks. When the shops close at 6-00 PM the town looks like a city of the dead".

It was not, in fact, until 1967 that the 'wets' reversed the decision of 1920, winning by 2,842 votes to 2,106.

References

Brewers' Society (1920) The brewers' almanack and wine and spirit trade annual for 1926. London: Review Press.

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