SBAA

The Annual Journal of the Scottish Brewing Archive Association

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Coopers' tools and their uses

John Martin talks to Tam Jack

Also: Scottish & Newcastle / Summer job at Maclay's / Drumdryan Brewery / Courage / Shipwrecked beer on the Clyde and in California

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Figure 1: Coopers at work

Coopers' tools and their uses

Tam Jack, John Martin

Tools have shaped our history over the years from early beginnings with the simple flint, which the skill of the knappers helped to shape into an effective cutting implement. Copper and bronze eventually superseded the flint, with tool designs continuing with the axe in varying shapes and sizes. This was followed by the adze, which can be dated back to the copper age. The adze was always a popular tool, since a skilled hand using it could attain a great degree of accuracy. It was the symbol used to designate the ancient Egyptian Royal Architect and a favourite tool of the pyramid age. It was such tools that the early coopers used in their work.

Traditionally, a cooper is a maker or repairer of casks made from wood. Wooden casks, or what most people today call barrels, are containers of exceptional strength, durability, versatility and mobility. However, let us not underestimate the skill required to become a cooper. You could say a wooden barrel is a piece of wooden engineering and that coopering is not a trade, but a craft.

For hundreds of years, the barrel was the most convenient way to transport goods. As a result of increasing trade in the 19th century, the number of coopers rose and in the early 1900s there were over a thousand coopers in the Edinburgh area alone.

Figure 2: Trussing the cooper.

Coopers existed either independently or were attached to breweries, distilleries and bonds. The cooper was indispensable, preparing staves and constructing or repairing casks. However, following World War II, many coopers lost their jobs as a result of the following factors:

- Gradual introduction of machinery
- Amalgamation and closures of breweries
- Adoption of aluminium kegs by breweries
- Cheap importation of American casks

To protect the knowledge and skills of the craft, membership of the National Union of Coopers was essential. Starting wages in the 1920s would be around 14s. 6d. per week, but would rise every year throughout a five-year apprenticeship. A typical week would be 47 hours, from 6.30am–6pm Monday to Friday with an hour's break for breakfast and lunch and 7.30am–12 noon on a Saturday.

When a cooper finished his apprenticeship, it was customary for him to go through a form of initiation, which was performed as a matter of celebration after they had passed the examination. This ceremony was known as 'trussing the cooper'.

The newly-qualified cooper was placed in a barrel, which he had made himself. The barrel was then filled with a mixture of soot, feathers, sawdust, wood shavings, beer and treacle. The barrel was then rolled around the workshop before the cooper was taken out and tossed in the air three times. He was then presented with his indentures.

Back in 2011, the SBAA Journal included an article entitled 'The Life and Times of a Cooper', written by Bill Brown, which told the story of John Perry, who was a cooper for 40 years. This time, however, with the help of Tam Jack, another cooper I met, I wish to highlight the tools used in the craft and to explain their purposes. Through our conversation, I found out that Tam Jack knew John Perry when they both worked at Bell's. It is a small world.

To begin with, a little about Tam and his career as a cooper, before going on to explain the tools used and their purpose.

John How did you start as a cooper?

Tam After leaving school, I started work at Henry Robb's shipyard in Leith. Each morning on my way to the shipyard, I walked past a coopers' shop, John Gillespie – Cooper and Cask Merchant. As I did not enjoy working at the shipyard, I asked at the coopers' shop if there were any job vacancies. My timing was good, as there was a vacancy for an apprentice cooper. After discussions, I accepted the apprentice position. Thus started my career as a cooper. The working day was 7:30am to 5:30pm with an hour for lunch.

John Can you tell us about your working career as a cooper and where you worked?

Tam After completing my five-year apprenticeship and becoming a fully fledged cooper, I decided to emigrate to Australia. My best friend, Douglas Gorman, a footballer with Hearts FC on a 'S' form (the equivalent of today's youth development), was given the opportunity to play for an Australian football team, so I decided to emigrate as well. Following the Second World War, Australia had launched their immigration program to encourage people to settle there and to bring with them their job skills. I was 21 years old then and the first to fly there for only £10. Immigrants under this scheme became known as the 'Ten Pound Poms'.

The job I had was with the Union Cooperage in Sydney and I worked there for two and a half years and enjoyed it very much.

I then had the opportunity to emigrate again, this time to Hawaii. On arrival, I was made very welcome. However, I soon developed into a globetrotter and toured America and Canada and visited Los Angeles, Santa Monica, Las Vegas, Seattle,

		
Adze A very sharp tool used for cutting the slope on the chime of the cask. It was also known as an etch.	**Bilge plane** To make the outside of the cask smooth, by trimming off any rough pieces of wood.	**Bow saw** Saw used for sawing round heads before cutting them to fit the cask.
		
Compass In various sizes for marking and determining the size of the cask head.	**Croze** The tool, which cuts the groove for the head; one size used for barrels and kilderkin and another one for pins and firkins.	**Crum knife** Scottish name for a jigger. Used for smoothing cross shave, the inside of the chime, in preparation for the groove to be cut, held with handle in left hand and swung with the right.

Table 1: Coopers' tools

Vancouver, Toronto and finally New York. To make ends meet I worked in a variety of jobs. I then returned to the UK, landing at Southampton.

Back in Edinburgh, I returned to work for John Gillespie, the coopers' shop, where I had worked as an apprentice. After that, I worked as a bench cooper inspecting casks at William Muir's no. 9 bond.

However, I had the opportunity to work for Bell's at the Broxburn cooperage, which turned out to be my best job and I was very happy there. During my time there, Bell's was taken over by Guinness, who later merged with Grand Met to form Diageo in 1997. As a result, Diageo became a multinational alcoholic beverage company. The Broxburn cooperage was later sold to Speyside Cooperage, where I retired aged 69.

		
Driver The tool, which is held onto a hoop and struck with a hammer in order to force the hoop into position.	**Hammer** The hammer is tapered on one end and used to hit the driver to force the hoop into position.	**Hand shave** The hand shave is used inside the cask to shave and level the joints and make them smooth.
		
Heading knife Used for cutting the basle on the head.	**Topping plane** A curved plane, used for leveling the chime at the end.	**Shell scillop** Used in either a clock-wise or an anti-clockwise manner until the bung hole is of the correct size.

Table 2: Coopers' tools

John Did you have any accidents as a cooper?

Tam Two accidents come to mind. When checking casks for leaks, the procedure was to insert a rubber bung and air pressure was applied. When rolling the barrel into position, the rubber bung was dislodged under pressure and shot out at great force and hit my face. The force of the impact knocked me back and my face was a mess. Afterwards, at the Royal Infirmary I was told that my nose was broken and had surgery to repair the damage and to straighten my nose.

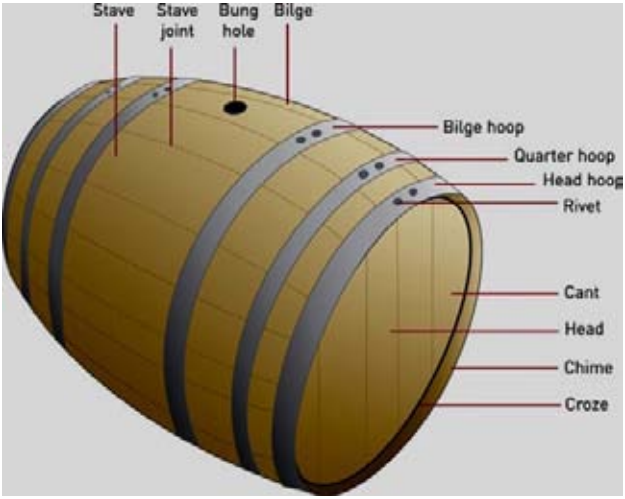

Figure 3: The constituent parts of a barrel

On another occasion, when using the driver and hammer, a misplaced blow took off the tip of my finger and later I required a skin graft in order for the finger to heal. As a result I was off work for three months.

John Were there any changes in working practice during your career?

Tam The job of the cooper remained basically the same. The only part that was automated in my time was when you were required to tighten or apply a new hoop to the cask, which was originally done by hand. However, the riveting was eventually replaced by a machine.

John How would you summarise your career as a cooper?

Tam My career as a cooper was interesting and varied and my best time was working at Bell's. Towards the end of my career, the work was not as enjoyable, as more time pressure was applied to complete your work.

However, looking back, I enjoyed my time as a cooper working with the wood and the tools.

John Thanks for your time, Tam, and for telling us more about your career.

Barrels came in different sizes, depending on what people required. Beer measures were as follows:

Size	Gallons	Pints
Hogshead	54	432
Barrel	36	288
Kilderkin	18	144
Firkin	9	72
Pin	4.5	36

One barrel holds 288 pints (36 gallons).

Today, the cooper is still in demand within the whisky industry, but not so much in the brewing industry, although some breweries do use wooden barrels to mature and to influence the flavour of their beer.

The cooper has many tools at his disposal. Tables 1 and 2 show the main ones and their uses. Others are:

Vice a device to pull the end into place in the croze of a cask.

Flail (maul) solid steel, curved, double handed hammer.

Plucker (downshave) used to smooth the outside of the staves by removing any over wood.

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Figure 1: An example of a leather-bound handwritten ledger

How times have changed: across the years with Scottish & Newcastle

Bill Brown

The idea of writing this article came about after I was asked to proofread a book, based on the exploits of working for Scottish & Newcastle. Following discussions about the many changes we had encountered during our careers, it was agreed that this would make an interesting article for the Journal.

Firstly, a few random thoughts

In my 45 years with Scottish & Newcastle (1958–2003) directly and indirectly, I became involved with so many changes that just seemed part of the natural order of things, but on looking back, the diversity and scale of these were considerable.

These included changes arising from the labour-intensive brewery workforce, the large, Dickensian leather-bound ledgers, hand-cranked adding machines, comptometers, pocket calculators through to the IBM 3rd generation computers, VDUs and, during my last few years, PC laptops interfacing to and fro with SAP, a state-of-the-art mainframe computer system built in Germany.

Figure 2: Deuchar's Brewery, Craigmillar, with railway siding

Even since my retirement, things have continued to move on at an exponential rate with the augmented reality, digital assistants such as Alexa and Siri, artificial intelligence, robotics, telecommunication technologies, blockchains, cloud computing, big data and many more.

I think it would be true to say that people working in the final third of the 20th century probably experienced and had to embrace more changes in their lives than any previous generation, a kind of horse carts to jumbo jets scenario!

But let's pause for a moment and take a look back across the years.

Deuchar's Duddingston Brewery, Craigmillar, Edinburgh

On my first day in Deuchar's as Apprentice Clerk, (with an annual salary of £156), I recall the retiring Head Clerk, Mr Robert Reid, telling me that things were about to change and that we were about to enter the dawn of a new era.

In 1903, Mr Reid was the apprentice clerk. From that time right up to his retirement (and indeed the brewery closure in 1962), just about everything in the office (and brewery too) had been captured in a time warp with large handwritten ledgers, high sloping desks, high stools, Remington typewriters, telephone and, to keep the clerks warm in winter, an open coal fire. Part of the apprentice clerk's job was to refuel the fire, including the boss's upstairs office (Mr Robert Allan, affectionately known as

Big Bob) and all hell would break loose if these fires were allowed to go too low! On an amusing note, there was one noticeable change over the years and that was the introduction of biro pens, thus relieving the apprentice clerk from having to fill up the ink wells!

The "customer service" function, as we know it today, was unknown. Middle-aged country-styled gentlemen, known as travelers, visited their customers on a weekly basis. Customer beer orders, along with requests for drip mats, dart boards, trays, ashtrays and so on, were either phoned in or completed on the official company form and posted.

About 60% of beer deliveries (all wooden casks, hogsheads, barrels, kilderkins and firkins) were by rail and, in local areas, by lorry and horse-drawn drays.

Duddingston railway station housed an extensive office function, mainly dealing with the freight traffic to and from the seven Craigmillar breweries. Each cask had a unique number burnt onto its 'head', with all movements manually recorded in four huge leather-bound ledgers. This was Archie Bell's full time job (he wasn't a boss, so we were allowed to call him Archie).

Deuchar's employed twelve journeyman coopers, headed up by Geordie McLaren, who ensured that all the casks were maintained to a very high standard, resulting in good quality beer delivered to the customer. Even the commitment by apprentices was scrutinised and I recall John Perry, one of the apprentice coopers, telling me that Big Bob told him that apprentice coopers from Deuchar's should be winning prizes at night school, because failing to do so was bad for the company's image. True to form, the following year John was awarded a second prize and no doubt that kept Big Bob happy.

The sample cellar was very popular with the clerks, and for a very good reason, because in addition to mid-morning and afternoon cups of tea, a selection of beers was available for consumption mid-morning and afternoon. For the brewery workers, a beer known as pundy was available at all times of the day – 'Health and Safety', forget it!

Up to around the mid to late 1960s, the Head Brewer called the tune, but owing to changes in technology and management, his decision making became more of sharing responsibilities and working together with other managers, accountants, system analysts and marketing. This change in management culture did apply throughout the brewing industry and was certainly underway in Deuchar's and beyond, when working for S&N.

For further information on Deuchar's see [1, 2, 3] in the bibliography on page 20.

Figure 3: Fountain Brewery

Fountain Brewery, Fountainbridge, Edinburgh

Following the closure of Deuchar's Brewery in 1962, I was transferred to the McEwan's Forwarding Department at Fountainbridge and the diversity from the medium sized brewery at Duddingston to the large brewing complex at Fountain was immense.

First and foremost, there was the comparative scale of operations with Fountain's annual output many times greater than that of Deuchar's, with its processes and systems bang up-to-date, along with a fully modernised bottling hall. At Fountain, wooden barrels were a thing of the past, being replaced by aluminium casks and kegs. From brewery to customer, this was a win-win situation, as it was more economical to manage and control the keg population and, from the customer's point of view, much easier to dispense. The days of the fully trained pub cellarman were now in decline, more's the pity. S&N still continued with cask-conditioned beer, although the volume was much lower than before. However, McEwan's 80/– remained a favourite with many.

In the mid-1950s, under the leadership of Peter Balfour (the brother-in-law of the then Chairman and Chief Executive, Sir William McEwan Younger), the Fountain office procedures had been mechanised, with large handwritten ledgers a distant memory. This was Mr Balfour's first job in Scottish Brewers and he went on to become Chairman and Chief Executive until his retirement in 1983. All of this, and much more, enabled Scottish Brewers to gain the edge over their competitors, resulting in the 1960 merger with The Newcastle Breweries, who were well on their way to becoming one of the UK's 'Big 5' brewing companies.

In the 1960s, the Forwarding Department had seven Bradma machines, which were replaced by 'Sadi Suzie' pieces of kit that produced customer delivery notes and invoices. The Forwarding Department was the equivalent of what later became customer service call centres. This department, headed by Bill Dallas, employed about 20 clerks and, with the new style salesman replacing the old style travelers, the order procedures were upgraded and streamlined to accommodate very high demand. It is also worth mentioning that many of the Scottish heavy industries were still in operation (and these guys liked their pint), but sadly these have all but disappeared, as highlighted in the Proclaimers song "Letter from America".

Around this time, business was booming and, to capture the tied trade, the brewery started investing and increasing its estate of tied public houses, managed and tenanted. The West of Scotland's managed houses were headed up by Jimmy Pratt, the East of Scotland by Jack Alexander, with Bill Thomson in charge of Scottish tenancies. In order to raise its profile and image in the early 1970s, the Managed Houses Division was renamed Welcome Inns. To give you an idea of the scale of this at that time, there were around 250 managed houses and 180 tenancies in Scotland. To accommodate and streamline controls, a new computerised system was designed specifically for managed houses and driven by the Abbey mainframe.

In tandem, the free trade business was booming too and, in the 1970s, Scottish Brewers had branches, each with a separate management function, located at Inverness, Aberdeen, Dundee, Kirkcaldy, Bellshill, Hillington, Milton Street (Glasgow), Galashiels, Dumfries and Ayr, all reporting to Scottish Brewers' central function at

Figure 4: Bill Brown outside the South Gyle offices in 2000

190 Fountainbridge in Edinburgh. The vast majority of S&N pub sales were with the free trade which encouraged greater emphasis on customer service.

In the late 1970s, Scottish Brewers was still operating from Fountainbridge, with 70 lorries delivering to the free and managed trade. However, this was causing serious traffic congestion in and around the city. To circumvent this, in 1979, Scottish Brewers, the first company to do so, moved to a 17-acre greenfield site located at South Gyle, Edinburgh. This later became South Gyle Industrial Estate. In 1992, the Cashier's function at South Gyle became the first S&N branch to become cashless. This does not seem much of an event today, but back then it was quite an achievement.

S&N Abbey Head Office, Holyrood Road, Edinburgh

In 1964, I was transferred to the Tax Department at Abbey Brewery, (now the site of the Scottish Parliament and Dynamic Earth), where the company's Corporation and Capital Gains Tax computations were prepared on a manual basis, aided by adding machines and comptometer operators. I recall one of the programmers claiming that, in time, the many complex tax calculations would be computerised. I could not envisage this. However, over the years, the transition took place and finally became an integral part of the process.

Figure 5: Abbey Brewery converted to S&N Head Office

In the early 1960s, a second-generation IBM 703 mainframe computer was installed at Abbey and staff who had been working with mechanised methods had to retrain and report to the newly hired IT specialists. The IBM 703 was huge and took up the whole of the basement and, to mitigate the volcanic heat produced, it was encased in a strict temperature air-conditioned environment, without which the computer would have melted down. Programmers assigned to wages and salaries had to wait in line to run their programs, as the computer could only handle one program at a time and there were no keyboards or screens.

Programs were written on paper and handed to a typist, who would key in each command onto punch cards, then an operator would file the stack of cards into a reader. The computer would then execute the program and hours later the results were sent back via a printed message on a tele-printer (In passing, it may interest you to note that, during World War II, the first experimental computational machines were used for code breaking at Bletchley Park).

All was going well, with further progress made in May 1969, when a third-generation IBM system was installed. This was primarily to include customer invoicing and billing, but due to repeated inadequate programming, the system could not cope and, by the autumn, customer billing fell into weeks of arrears, creating

a serious cash flow problem. A replacement IT manager, Leslie Wise, was duly headhunted and engaged to get the system back on track, which he did, and much more.

Visual Display Units (VDU)

It's hard to imagine in today's world, but back in the 1980s in each of the office centres around the company, there was located only one VDU, for which staff had to book a time to use. These VDUs were stand-alone and for the ever-increasing departmental reports, information from the mainframe computer was received in vast quantities of print form and then interpreted. This information from the mainframe was dissected and keyed into the VDUs for local reporting and these procedures continued right up to the mid-1990s.

Accounting systems

During the 1960s, the company's accounting and purchase ledger function was centralised at Abbey and driven by a machine card system under the control of David Smeaton, Financial Accountant. In 1972, to accommodate the demands driven by the expansion of the business, these functions were converted to a mainframe computerised system, known as 'Accounting 1' and, during the following decade, various upgrades were made culminating in the system called 'Accounting 4' (ACIV).

The new decentralised ACIV system went live in 1979, creating local autonomy and decision-making, enabling the company to become more responsive to what the customer wanted. ACIV was held in place, right up to the takeover of Courage in 1995 and with it the introduction of the SAP computer system. ACIV required using vast amounts of printout paper and one that the SAP system all but eliminated. The ACIV system was now nearing its end. The conversion from Accounting IV to SAP was completed in 1998, well in advance of the anticipated millennium 2000 issues and, as part of the process, Scottish Brewers, Newcastle Brewers, John Smith, Courage Scotland and Courage North and South were merged into a centralised function under the umbrella of Scottish Courage Ltd.

Following extensive training on SAP, accountants and managers throughout the organisation were able to divest themselves of various administration tasks, increasing their ability, at least in theory, to spend more time on strategic higher level issues. The SAP system, with subsequent upgrades, remained in place, right up to the combined Heineken and Carlsberg takeover in 2008 and even after the takeover.

So, from the old leather-bound ledgers through to SAP, I do hope that these extracts will give you a flavour of the changes that have taken place during my time with S&N. For future editions of the Journal, it would be interesting to read about the changes that others have experienced in their line of activity with S&N or any other brewery.

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Figure 1: Dray lorry in front of office building with main gate in the background.

Recollections of an Alloa brewery hand

Michael Clark

With a four month gap in 1969 between leaving school and student life, the need for a summer job became a pressing priority and prompted me to approach Maclays of Alloa for temporary employment.

I have the vaguest memory of a brief interview with head brewer Charlie Ritchie and his parting advice to acquire a sturdy pair of boots. A visit to our local army surplus store resulted in a pair of Czech fell boots costing £2 which managed to last the duration.

Looking back now I can't recall if I started on a Monday, or midweek. The latter sounds more likely, it must have been a slow day in the Thistle Brewery because my first task was to wash Charlie's black saloon car!

That morning was indicative of how jobs would be assigned, on a day to day basis for temporary hands, rather than one specific allocated role.

Monday mornings were generally hectic since all dray lorries needed to be cleared of casks and crates etc. from the previous Friday, when returning draymen were focused on collecting pay packets and slipping away for the weekend.

Figure 2: The opposite side of the brewery from the main front entrance. A sliding metal gate for loading casks is just visible on the lower left. Barrels are visible on the raised unloading bay platform, notice the access steps.

Then came the inevitable haste to load up for start of the week's supply runs to Maclays' 'shops' (they were never referred to as pubs) across central Scotland.

I would often help slide crated beer and sundries, loaded down an inclined chute from the first floor storage area to the parked dray wagons below. This simple device was lowered from vertical to approximately 45 degrees below horizontal and raised back when finished, similar to a medieval drawbridge arrangement.

I already knew the foreman in charge of that store. He had owned a small corner shop near our house so I had a "friend at court" for guidance when required, which was often!

If memory serves I approached him to enquire what was meant by "horn" time or "get your horn". If you don't understand the phrase it may be due to it being peculiar to the Alloa area. It referred to the beer allowance or "pundy". It was a very casual procedure at Maclays, a few pints at end of the brewery day or some bottles to take home weekly. The term was also used at Alloa's Ind Coope brewery where the 'horn' was more formal, usually taking the form of 24 bottles of un-labelled Skol or Long Life Lager. Some initial investigations suggest the term "horn" may have its origins in drinking horns used to dish out beverages since antiquity.

Casks and kegs were put on at ground level in the narrow lane that ran beside the brewery with crates and boxes of spirits etc. slid down from the first floor store via the aforementioned chute.

On occasions, when a dray wagon had a large number of drops (deliveries) I was detailed as "third man" to help the regular pair. Vehicle cabins were designed for two

so I would perch on the engine cowling between the driver and second drayman. These trips were an educational experience – more on that later!

If not on deliveries, or helping load lorries, Mondays were often spent sorting returned bottles for re-use. Bar staff put any style of beer/lager bottle into any empty crate and these would lie outdoors in yards in all kinds of weather before being returned.

Maclays used industry standard half-pint "dump" bottles and these were washed, sterilised and recycled on the bottling line when the next run was due. They had to be separated from the lager ones which were incompatible with the Thistle Brewery line.

This was a tedious and unpleasant task – the bottles were partially full of foul smelling liquid and often some "interesting" biological cultures growing on the beer residue.

Maclays didn't produce pilsner beer so it was generally Skol, from the nearby Ind Coope lager brewery, that was sold in their 'shops'.

The distinctive Skol bottle profile prevented them being used on Maclays bottling line. In a mutually convenient arrangement a lorry, every so often, would drive down to Whins Road and exchange these for 'dumps' that Ind Coope had acquired.

The extra man journeys on deliveries were always a learning experience – at that time Maclays still did a relatively significant trade of their bulk beer using wooden casks. The standard barrel (36 gallons) was more common, although a few shops took huggits (in local brewery staff parlance), correctly known as hogsheads (54 gallons).

After on the job instruction in handling techniques I could usually manage a barrel without assistance, especially the aluminium ones. However a wooden huggit was a cask too far – a beast of a container!

The experienced draymen were able to manipulate one on their own, and it was amazing to witness. The acquired skill, as they demonstrated, was to rock the beast back and forth robustly and then to judge the precise point on its uprise to apply full manpower and push it upright.

The brewery had an elderly cooper who was nearing retirement age and it was rumoured that Maclays were finding it difficult to recruit a successor. Years later the last head brewer, Duncan Kellock, told me that wooden casks had been phased out by the time he joined Maclays in the 1980s.

Each shop serviced would give both draymen a whisky, a pint and (more often than not), a pack of cigarettes. I was denied any spirits or ciggies being considered too young. However, the offer of Maclays excellent "heavy" was too good to avoid, although my mother was not impressed when I rolled home for dinner.

The dray lorries were never stopped by the police in my experience – mind you the volume of traffic on the roads in those days was a fraction of today's.

Figure 3: The narrow lane (East Vennel) close to the front entrance with unloading bay.

Figure 4: The cask cellar – wooden "huggits" on the left.

Depending on day to day logistical requirements I would be occasionally teamed up with an older drayman who drove the van on runs around local bowling clubs and the like, delivering kegs, crated products and sundries. Sadly, he wasn't in the best of health and I suspect he might have been with Maclays since leaving school and was put on lighter duties as a kindness.

One interesting distraction was the visit of H.M. Customs & Excise officer, in uniform, to witness the disposal of beer destined for destruction.

The brewery had a small well for this purpose. Barrels were rolled along parallel rails onto a raised section where the bung was removed and the contents drained off, closely scrutinised by Charlie Ritchie and the attending exciseman.

After calculations were agreed and paperwork signed both parties retired to the tap room for a light refreshment… or several.

One day, by chance, I noticed a small elderly gentleman inspecting the racked barrels in the lower cellar. It turned out to be George Reid (Snr.) who joined the firm as a clerk and worked his way up to the boardroom.

His son, also George, came to prominence a few years later by taking the local parliamentary seat for the SNP at the February 1974 General Election and also had a distinguished political career later.

A couple of times I was drafted into the bottling hall to help crate Maclays Export "dumps" as they came off the conveyor belt. It was the domain of a matronly lady assisted by other female operatives.

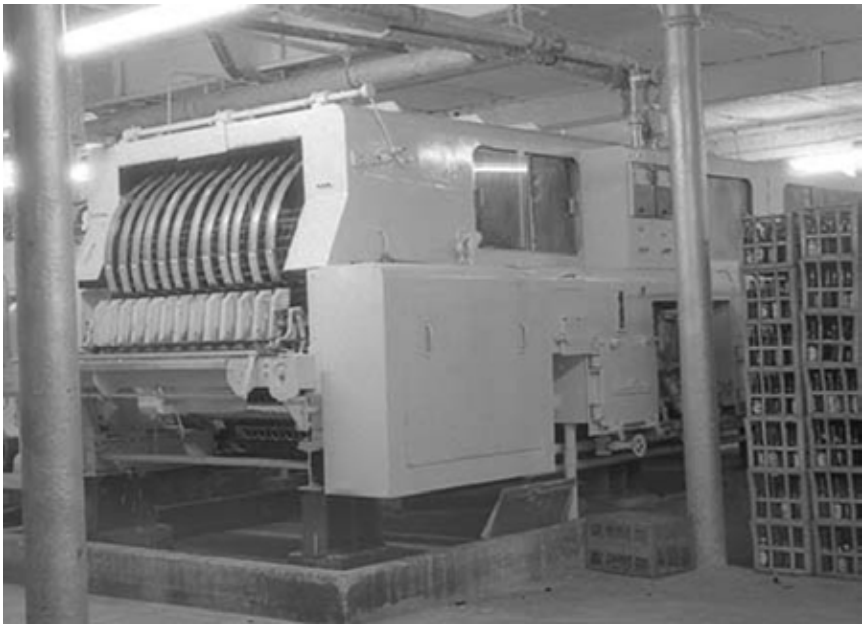


Figure 5: The washing and sterilisation machine in the bottling hall.

Figure 6: Inspecting passing bottles from behind the Perspex safety screen.

The bottles were hot after sterilisation and a few would crack (or occasionally explode) when filled, so one of the ladies would stand behind a perspex safety screen and examine the bottles as they passed.

The labelling process was fascinating due to its relative simplicity – it reminded me of a rotating toolpost on a turret lathe which automatically moved 90 degrees after a passing bottle made contact – having picked up a smear of glue from a dispenser. An attached magazine device would be refilled with fresh labels to maintain an uninterrupted run.

When it came time to leave Maclays, the boots were on their last legs and literally came apart on the final day so that I appeared home like a hobo tramp!

Fifty years on and I still remember the names of most of the characters who worked there at that time – some still did (I believe) when Maclays closed its doors in 1999, a sad day for Scottish brewing in general, and Alloa in particular.

The following year I managed to secure a summer job at "that factory down the road" as I once heard Charlie Ritchie refer to Ind Coope's in Whins Road.

That was a vastly different experience from the traditional old-fashioned establishment that was the Thistle Brewery. Maybe a story for another time?

Acknowledgements

Photos courtesy of John Hume, Scottish Brewing Heritage, except figure 6.

Drumdryan Brewery: the Georgian years

Andrea Morrison

Introduction

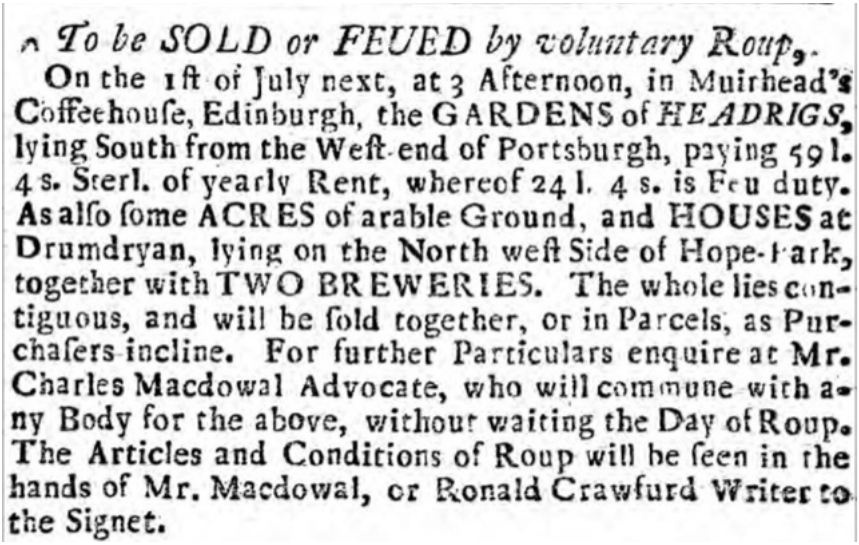
It amuses me to think that if someone had suggested a decade ago that I would discover an interest in 19th century brewing, I'd have gasped in disbelief. All that was set to change when a cousin encouraged me to research our family history. Working backwards through the branches and twigs of our growing family tree, I discovered John Kirk, brewer at Drumdryan "near Edinburgh". Whilst many ancestors remain shadowy characters, John Kirk left a fascinating paper trail of records to sift through, allowing me to read his words and piece together his story, and ultimately to discover the reasons why his descendants weren't destined to be heirs to one of the capital's great breweries.

This is the story of John Kirk, the Drumdryan brewery he ran for twenty-three years and the brewers who preceded him.

The Lands of Drumdryan, the Brewery and the South Loch

The lands of Drumdryan were situated to the south of Edinburgh's old town in the present Tollcross district. Early maps show an area of estates, farmland, orchards and pasture. The Drumdryan estate lay at the western end of the South Loch.

In 1598, access to the South Loch's water had been given to the Society of Brewers and several breweries were established at the east end of the loch. By the time the Society of Brewers was dissolved in 1619, the loch had shrunk significantly and as brewers were no longer granted the privilege of using its water, they had to find a new supply. By a stroke of good fortune, a plentiful source was at hand, an underground aquifer running along the fault line from Calton Hill past the Palace of Holyrood House and the Canongate south of the Old Town to Fountainbridge. By boring wells, brewers could tap into this bountiful supply, a "charmed circle" of pure clean water. One of the breweries that sprang up along this fault line was Drumdryan towards the western end of the "charmed circle".



To be SOLD or FEUED by voluntary Roup,

On the 1ft of July next, at 3 Afternoon, in Muirhead's Coffeehouſe, Edinburgh, the GARDENS of *HEADRIGS*, lying South from the Weſt-end of Portsburgh, paying 59 l. 4 s. Sterl. of yearly Rent, whereof 24 l. 4 s. is Feu duty. As alſo ſome ACRES of arable Ground, and HOUSES at Drumdryan, lying on the North weſt Side of Hope-Park, together with TWO BREWERIES. The whole lies contiguous, and will be ſold together, or in Parcels, as Purchaſers incline. For further Particulars enquire at Mr. Charles Macdowal Advocate, who will commune with any Body for the above, without waiting the Day of Roup. The Articles and Conditions of Roup will be ſeen in the hands of Mr. Macdowal, or Ronald Crawfurd Writer to the Signet.

Figure 1: Advert for sale of houses and breweries at Drumdryan, *Caledonian Mercury* 1743

The McDowalls of Drumdryan

The McDowall family had been associated with the lands of Drumdryan since 1709 when Patrick McDowall of Creichen (Crichan, Crichton) acquired the lands of Drumdryan by charter of the Magistrates of Edinburgh as superiors of the lands. At this time Drumdryan was undeveloped and McDowall spent considerable sums of money forming roads through it in conjunction with Thomas Hope of Rankeillor who was tasked with draining the South Loch in 1722. The former loch site was renamed Hope Park or the Meadows as we know it today.

In 1730 McDowall erected Drumdryan House as his own residence on the ground now occupied by the King's Theatre. When Patrick McDowall died in 1734 the property passed to his son, Charles.

Evidence for the first brewery at Drumdryan is possibly lurking in a dusty document in an archive somewhere, but a notice in the *Caledonian Mercury* shows that there was brewing on the site in June 1743. To be sold or feued were "some ACRES of arable Ground, and HOUSES at Drumdryan, lying on the North west side of Hope-Park, together with TWO BREWERIES… For further Particulars enquire at Mr. Charles Macdowal Advocate, who will commune with any Body for the above."

Advertisements in the *Caledonian Mercury* chart the development of Drumdryan brewery. By 1750 it had a large malting barn and good well. The well was an important

asset, being specifically mentioned in the brewery sasines (legal documents that record the transfer of ownership of land or buildings) to ensure that the residents of Drumdryan House would have access to the water. Drumdryan House was renamed Leven Lodge in 1750 when ownership passed to the Earl of Leven.

Drumdryan Brewery itself would pass out of Macdowall hands for just over a decade, only to be acquired again in 1764 by Mrs Jean MacDowall, the widow of John Biggar of Woolmet, who built a new dwelling house adjoining Leven Lodge.

In 1776 an advertisement detailed the location and extent of the brewery: "There is a large HOUSE and large BREWERY at Drumdryan, adjoining Leven Lodge, to set or sell… There is a malting barn, 45 feet long, and near 18 feet wide, with two lofts over it of the same dimensions. There is another malting barn, 24 feet long, and near 18 feet wide. There is also a brew house, store house, and kiln, with a well which affords a plentiful supply of good water… The gardener at Dr Spens's house in the neighbourhood, has the keys, and will show the premises."

Dr Nathaniel Spens was an Edinburgh physican and prominent member of the Royal Company of Archers. Mrs Jean McDowall (Mrs Biggar) named him as the executor of her will and he became the owner of the house built by her adjacent to Leven Lodge.

The Brewers of Drumdryan

Whilst wills, sasines and advertisements record the names of those who owned property, the names of Drumdryan's earliest brewers are lost in the mists of time. However, in 1752 we learn the name of one, William Meikle.

William Julius Meikle (or Mickle), brewer of Drumdryan 1752-1763

Such is William Meikle's fame, he features in *A Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen*. However, he's remembered as one of Scotland's great poets, not as a great brewer.

William was the son of the Rev. Alexander Meikle, minister of Langholm who had retired to Edinburgh on the death of a brother-in-law, "Mr Myrtle, an eminent brewer". Mr Myrtle's widow wished to continue the business, so in January 1752 the Rev. Meikle and his eldest son, Thomas, purchased "certain subjects at Drumdryan" from Mr Charles McDowall.

So far no evidence has come to light for a "Mr Myrtle" brewing at Drumdryan prior to 1752. However, in 1734 there was a Thomas Mirtle who was the brewer at Summerhall, one of the breweries that had sprung up at the east end of Hope Park. It's quite possible that Thomas Mirtle had become the brewer at Drumdryan as he was no longer at Summerhall in 1739 when fire reduced the brewer's house to ashes.

On coming to Edinburgh the young William Meikle attended the High School, becoming competent in Latin and Greek. However, at the age of sixteen he was taken out of school to keep the brewery accounts of his widowed aunt. The Rev. Alexander Meikle died at Drumdryan in 1757, leaving William in sole charge of the brewery. In the Rev. Meikle's will, he described his son as "William Meikle brewer at Drumdryan".

Although running a brewery, William Meikle's love of literature and poetry had come to the fore and by 1761 he had contributed compositions to a collection of poetry published by an Edinburgh bookseller. The business of the brewery was neglected and entrusted to servants; debts mounted and creditors were demanding payment. Despite help from friends, William was deeply in debt. In April 1763 fearing that one of his creditors intended to have him arrested for a considerable debt, he hastily left Edinburgh and headed for London.

In September 1763 the *Caledonian Mercury* carried an advertisement for the sale of "that large new-built DWELLING HOUSE, with a blue slate roof, lying on the west end of the meadow or Hope-park, near the city of Edinburgh, consisting of three stories… and also, a commodious brewery, malt-barn, kiln, coble, and a well with their pertinents, having leaden pipes for conveying the water to any part of the brewery. The said brewery and new distilling house, being presently possessed by William Meikle, Brewer at Drumdryan, the proprietor."

These subjects were still for sale in May 1764 with the addition of "a little DWELLING HOUSE belonging to the said brewery". And there is a single mention of a new brewer – James Whyte.

It was at this time that Mrs Jean McDowall acquired the brewery and fifteen years later sold it to Charles Cock Senior.

Charles Cock Senior, brewer at Drumdryan 1779–1797 and Charles Cock Junior, brewer at Drumdryan 1797–1804

The earliest reference to Charles Cock Senior as a brewer is in the *Caledonian Mercury* in 1771. "A Convenient House, Brewerie and Garden at the Abbayhill, near Edinburgh, presently possessed by Charles Cock" was advertised for sale.

By 1773 he was a wine merchant in Middleton's Entry, a close which linked Potterrow and Bristo Street. Two years later he was advertising that he had "a large stock of FINE LONDON PORTER, warranted genuine", to be sold at a reduced price.

He purchased property at Drumdryan from Mrs Jean McDowall in 1779 which was disponed in a Deed of Settlement in 1785 to Charles Cock Junior and recorded in the Books of Council & Session in 1797, the year of Charles Cock Senior's death.

The will of Charles Cock brewer at Drumdryan was signed on 13 November 1785. At that time his wife, May Monro, was still alive. May Monro and Charles' second son, Charles Junior, were appointed as his only lawful executors and universal legatees. He had also worked out the line of succession should his wife and son predecease

Figure 2: Location of Leven Lodge and the Meadows on the Thomas Brown & James Watson map of 1793.

him: "whom failing to the heirs of his [ie. Charles junior's] body whom failing to James Cock my eldest lawful son and the heirs of his body whom failing to the heirs of William Archibald slater in Edinburgh." William Archibald, a slater and builder, was the brother-in-law of Charles Cock Senior.

Charles Cock Junior had presumably been running the brewery alongside his father, but on the death of his father in 1797, he became the brewer at Drumdryan with the property being transferred to him in a sasine dated February 1802. He was seised (ie. having ownership) of the "Brewery Malt Barn Kiln Coble & Well with a Cellar below the Little House Together with a Large Close thereto belonging and also a Little Dwelling House belonging to the said Brewery with the Area to the North of

the Malt Barn & Kiln all lying… upon the East Side of the Turnpike Road leading from Wrights Houses to Edinburgh".

Restrictions were placed on any further building in the Wester fore close of the brewery or any additional buildings to the west of the east side of the malt steep which would in any way be prejudicial to the lights of the house at one time belonging to Mrs Jean McDowall. The tenants of the house had access to the well for their domestic purposes but were obliged to pay a proportion of the expense of its upkeep.

On his death in September 1804, title to the brewery passed to his elder brother, James Cock, described as James Coke of Neath, Glamorgan, Wales as heir to his brother Charles Coke, Brewer, Edinburgh. The apparent change of name from Cock to Coke was most likely to do with pronunciation.

John Kirk Senior (brewer at Drumdryan 1805–1828)

With the death of Charles Cock junior, Drumdryan Brewery required a new brewer. It's time for my ancestor, John Kirk, to take his place centre stage.

John was born in the parish of Torryburn in Fife in 1770 and had he followed in his father's footsteps, he would have become a shipmaster. However, it was his younger brother, Robert, who eventually became a shipmaster in Leith whilst John Kirk began his working life as a baker, not a brewer.

In 1790 John was working as a journeyman baker for Mr Adam Keir, whose premises were opposite the Mercat Cross in Edinburgh's High Street. By his own admission, John had ambitions to run his own business, and by 1794 he was baking for himself. In 1796 he married Grizel Smith, the daughter of John Smith, a burgess of Edinburgh. Five months later John Kirk, now described as a victual dealer, became a burgess in the right of his wife.

The Cowgate years

In 1800 Grizel Smith was seised of a dwelling house in the Cowgate in the third storey "of that Great Building commonly called the Foreland of the Meal Market".

The following year John Kirk, a dealer in grain and malt, purchased a shop, house and bakehouse in Leith Walk, now Greenside Place. It's likely that he rented out these premises as there's evidence that he had already turned to brewing by that date.

Directly opposite the Kirk family's home in the Meal Market Stairs was West Campbell's Close which had long been associated with brewing since Archibald Campbell first set up a brewery there in 1710. In Oct 1797 the brewery, distillery and malting house in West Campbell's Close, Cowgate was available for lease.

According to Post Office Directories for Edinburgh from 1799 to 1800, this was the location of Robert Kirk and Co., barm brewers; in 1804 the address of Robert Kirk, barm brewer was given as East Meal Market Stairs. John and his brother Robert

seemed to be operating a family enterprise. Robert was now the master of the *Brig John* at Leith regularly sailing to Hamburg and Danzig, returning with cargoes of wheat. In 1801 an advertisement in the *Caledonian Mercury* states: "AT LEITH – FOR HAMBURGH, THE BRIG JOHN, Robert Kirk Master, Is now taking in Goods, and sails first convoy; has good accommodation for passengers. For freight or passage apply to the master on board or to John Kirk, East Mealmarket Stairs, Cowgate, Edinburgh."

We learn more about the brewery in Court of Session documents, Kirk v Roxburgh, dated 1801 to 1804. John Kirk, barm brewer, was in possession of a brewery at the top of Campbell's Close and having suffered heavy losses from theft on various occasions took measures to protect his property. Gates were erected across the close at the entrance to Brown's Square and between the brewery and the adjoining stable. As his property was still vulnerable, he was advised to get a terrier dog to warn of intruders and catch rats which abound wherever there is malt.

Despite these precautions he visited the brewery every night to check that all was well. On the night of Sunday 11 October 1801, he was alerted by loud rapping at the stable door and the terrier's barking. On investigation he saw Robert Roxburgh, a bookbinder journeyman, and a companion, both the worse for liquor. Roxburgh, came from the direction of the brewery and struck Kirk, who then opened the stable door and released the dog. As the men took to their heels, the terrier pursued them and caught Roxburgh by the leg.

The Magistrates granted a warrant for enquiring into the matter. However, the bites that the dog had inflicted on Roxburgh became inflamed, requiring him to receive attention at the Infirmary for about ten days prompting Roxburgh to raise an action for damages against Kirk.

Having heard the evidence, the bailies were divided but allowed Roxburgh to claim expenses of £15 for the treatment received in the infirmary. However, John Kirk wasn't prepared to accept this ruling and presented a Bill for Advocation. The bill was refused and stated: "It is truly surprising that Mr Kirk after the lenient sentence pronounced by the Magistrates of Edinburgh… only subjecting him in payment of £15 in full of damages and expences [sic] should have presumed to trouble your Lordships with a Bill for an alteration of the sentence… But the truth is that Mr Kirk who is a wealthy man has here to contend with a poor tradesman of no ability to maintain law suits", and that Mr Kirk was "overpowering his adversary by strength of purse". The attack by the terrier grew into "hounding by a mastiff dog" and another £1 11s. 6d. of expenses was added.

Yet again, John Kirk didn't accept the ruling. Eventually, an interlocutor was pronounced by Lord Bannatyne stating that neither party was entitled to either damages or expenses.

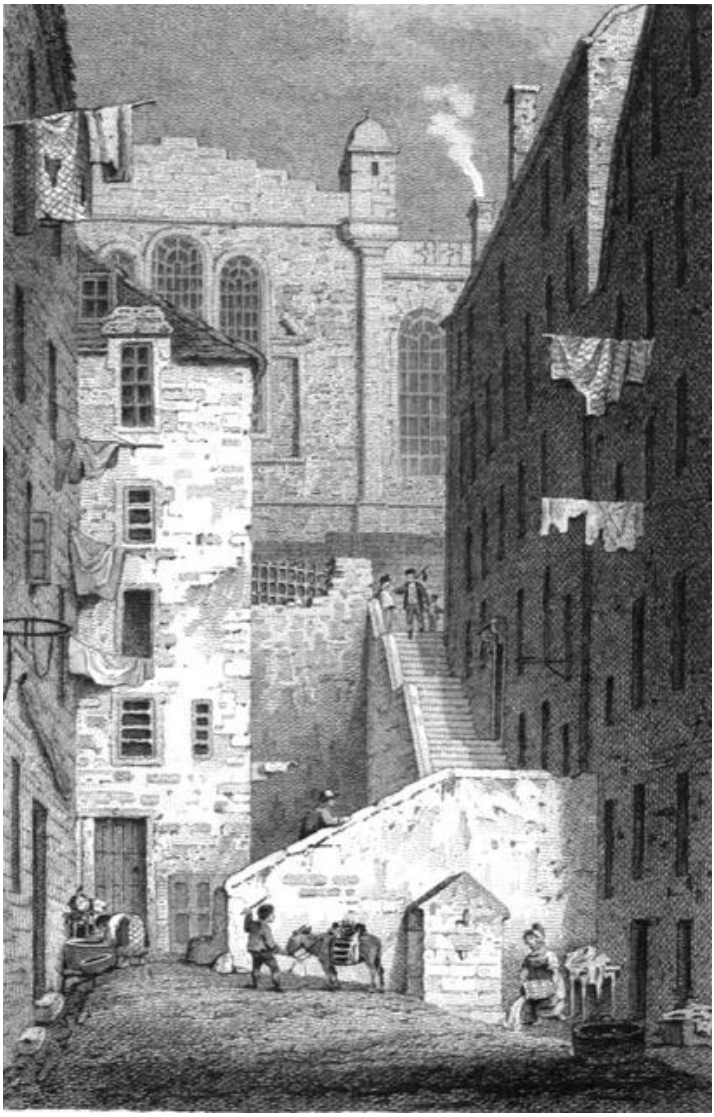


Figure 3: The Mealmarket Stairs, also known as the Parliament or Back Stairs

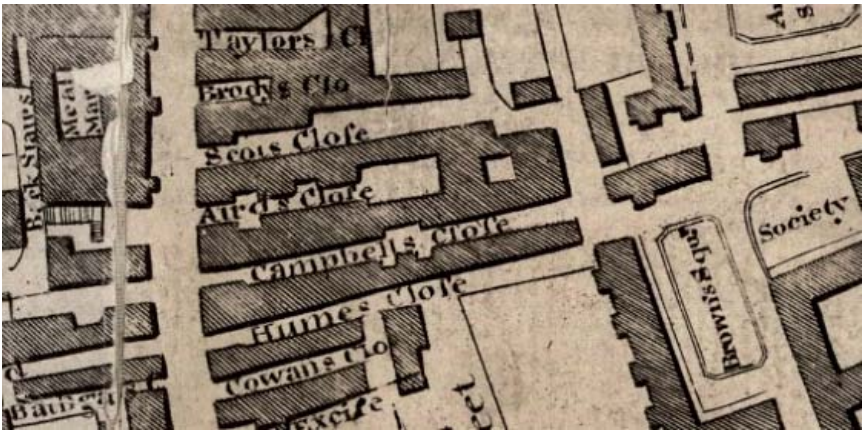


Figure 4: Map showing the Back Stairs and Campbell's Close, Alexander Kincaid 1784.

The Partnership of Whitelaw and Kirk

By 1802 John Kirk was in partnership with another brewer, David Whitelaw of Portsburgh. In that year John received two bonds of £300 in security against his properties in the Mealmarket Stairs and Leith Walk. However, Grizel Smith, Kirk's wife, was still able to hold the house "in free blench", a nominal or peppercorn rent.

The Post Office Annual Directory for 1805–1806 lists Whitelaw and Kirk as brewers at the Head of West Port; the partnership continued to be listed in the directories until 1808 when their business started to flounder. A series of Court of Session documents show that Whitelaw and Kirk were attempting to recover debts for goods supplied years earlier.

The most distant debtor was Mr Thomas Marsh, merchant, in the Island of Demerara, part of present-day Guyana. Dating back to 1805, a bill of £37 for four puncheons of ale sent to London by Marsh's order was unpaid. A proclamation at the Market Cross in Edinburgh charged Thomas Marsh to appear before the Judge of the High Court of Admiralty in Edinburgh, an unlikely event as he was described as a foreigner not residing in Scotland. Authority was given to arrest all ships, goods, gear etc. belonging to Thomas Marsh to pay the debt.

The Forth and Clyde Canal, which provided a route for the seagoing vessels of the day, had opened up markets in the west of Scotland. Whitelaw and Kirk had debtors in Glasgow, Port Glasgow, Greenock and Paisley. Unfortunately, a pattern of events for the years 1803–1807 seemed to emerge when there were complaints about the quality of the ale, hogsheads only partially filled, ale that was not fit for bottling and shortfalls in the weight of barley supplied to a grocer in Greenock.

Figure 5: View across the Meadows towards Edinburgh Castle, c. 1810.

Whitelaw and Kirk responded that their ale was sent away in good order and they weren't responsible for any damage or deficiency sustained by the carrier or by being sent by water to Glasgow. The ale was "the same quality we were furnishing our Customers in Town with and which has given general satisfaction". On one occasion they pointed out that "the ale was ordered at a very critical season of the year being the months of June and July when it is well known ale may be rendered unfit for use in the course of a few days and is the more apt to go wrong when driven so far" and on another occasion they blamed warm weather which "will have brought a new fermentation on it and made it throw up". Another time the partnership did agree to a reduction in the bill as they had tried some of the same brewing themselves which had "turned out as thick as brose".

One debtor had heard that "the pursuers were on the eve of bankruptcy"; this was refuted by Whitelaw and Kirk who claimed that they were "carrying on a very extensive and prosperous business untill [sic] the Month of July 1808… when a number of failures happening in one day, or within a few days of one another the pursuers were so involved with them that they were obliged to make a temporary stop also and a Sequestration was no doubt awarded against them". In 1812 their creditors accepted a composition of two shillings in the pound.

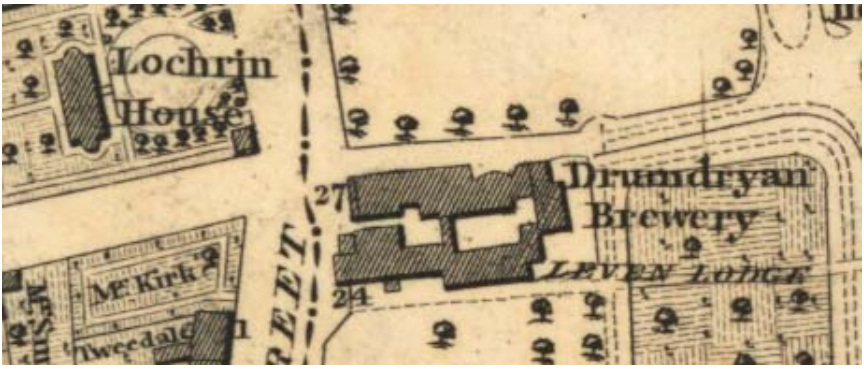


Figure 6: Map showing John Kirk's land on the corner of Leven Street and Gilmour Street, Kirkwood & Son, 1817.

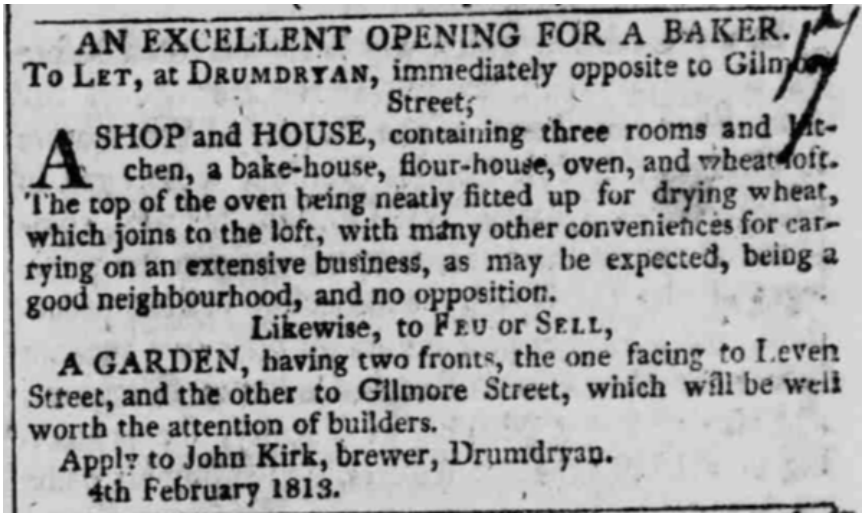
The Drumdryan years 1805–1828

The death of Charles Cock Junior, brewer at Drumdryan, in September 1804 provided the opportunity for the Kirk family to escape the cramped tenements and closes of Edinburgh to the open spaces of Bruntsfield Links and the nearby Meadows. John Kirk leased Drumdryan Brewery from James Coke of Neath, Wales and in January 1805 he bought the dwelling house formerly owned by Mrs Jean Macdowall from Dr Nathaniel Spens.

However, this new venture didn't have the most auspicious start: two young sons died just before the Kirk family moved to Drumdryan and the first three years had the shadow of the impending bankruptcy of the partnership with David Whitelaw looming over them.

In June 1808, despite difficulties paying his creditors, John Kirk acquired a corner site of the sequestrated Gilmour Estate directly opposite Drumdryan Brewery. Whether to pay for the Gilmour property or to pay the composition to creditors of the partnership, Kirk's house at Drumdryan was sold. He was unable to repay the bonds on the property in the Mealmarket Stairs or the shop, house and bakehouse in Greenside Place, so they all became the property of William Scott, the brother-in-law of David Whitelaw who had acted as cautioner for the partnership.

Despite these difficulties, John Kirk embarked on a series of building projects at Drumdryan, extending the properties and shops adjacent to the brewery. Letting these premises probably provided a modest income, but they were also regularly used as security to raise money. Kirk still had links to his home village in Fife: in January 1812 he had the rights to a "pro indiviso fourth part" of property in Torrie, comprising a malt barn, kiln and yard.



AN EXCELLENT OPENING FOR A BAKER.

To Let, at Drumdryan, immediately opposite to Gilmore Street;

A SHOP and HOUSE, containing three rooms and kitchen, a bake-house, flour-house, oven, and wheat-loft. The top of the oven being neatly fitted up for drying wheat, which joins to the loft, with many other conveniences for carrying on an extensive business, as may be expected, being a good neighbourhood, and no opposition.

Likewise, to Feu or Sell,

A GARDEN, having two fronts, the one facing to Leven Street, and the other to Gilmore Street, which will be well worth the attention of builders.

Apply to John Kirk, brewer, Drumdryan.

4th February 1813.

Figure 7: Advert to let property at Drumdryan, *Caledonian Mercury*, 4 February 1813.

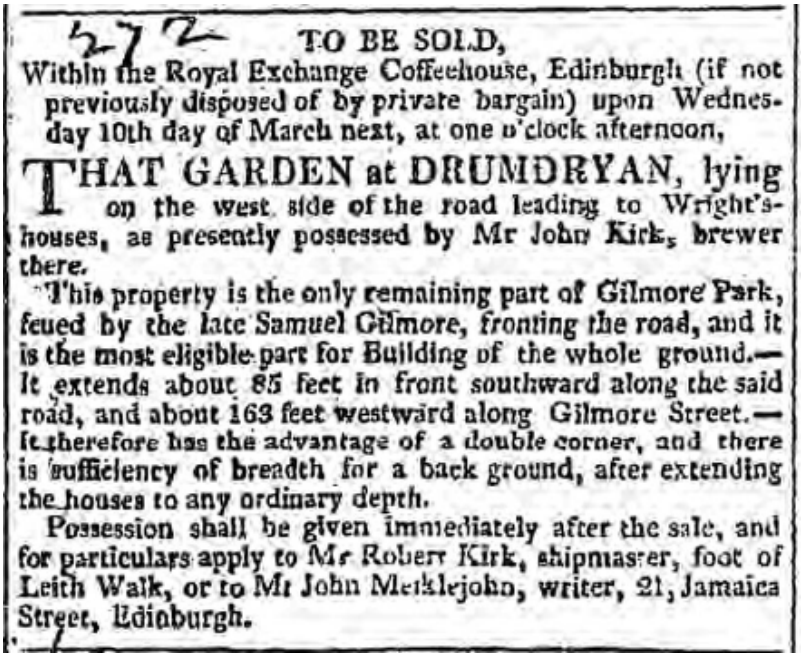
By February 1813 he was trying to let some of his property at Drumdryan. As advertised in newspapers, this was "An excellent opening for a baker" with a shop, house, bake-house, flour-house, oven and wheat-loft. The garden which had been part of the Gilmour estate also was on offer, either to feu or sell.

For the Kirk family moving out of the Old Town was no guarantee of a healthy life: in 1810 two children died within a month of each other and a year later John's wife, Grizel died "of a decline". Six months later, in October 1811, he married again, but the following year his second wife died after the birth of a son. Against the odds, the child survived.

In 1817 John Kirk married for a third time. A notice in the *Scotsman* records the event: "On the 28th April, at Lady Malcolm's Balbeadie House, by the Rev. James Grieg, Ballingry, Mr. John Kirk, Brewer, Edinburgh, to Isabella, second daughter of the late Sir John Malcolm of Balbeadie and Grange, Bart."

Isabella Malcolm was seventeen years John's junior and his young wife would bear him another seven children, all with the middle name of 'Malcolm', a reminder of their ancestry as grandchildren of a baronet; all the children, that is, apart from John Meiklejohn Kirk who was named after the family solicitor and with good reason. John Meiklejohn, Writer to the Signet, was kept busy with John Kirk's legal affairs and those of his brother, Robert Kirk, the shipmaster.

Events in 1819 and 1820 indicate that all wasn't well. There were renewed attempts to sell the garden which had been part of the Gilmour estate: "For particulars apply



372 TO BE SOLD,

Within the Royal Exchange Coffeehouse, Edinburgh (if not previously disposed of by private bargain) upon Wednesday 10th day of March next, at one o'clock afternoon,

THAT GARDEN at DRUMDRYAN, lying on the west side of the road leading to Wright's-houses, as presently possessed by Mr John Kirk, brewer there.

This property is the only remaining part of Gilmore Park, feued by the late Samuel Gilmore, fronting the road, and it is the most eligible part for Building of the whole ground.—It extends about 85 feet in front southward along the said road, and about 163 feet westward along Gilmore Street.—It therefore has the advantage of a double corner, and there is sufficiency of breadth for a back ground, after extending the houses to any ordinary depth.

Possession shall be given immediately after the sale, and for particulars apply to Mr Robert Kirk, shipmaster, foot of Leith Walk, or to Mr John Meiklejohn, writer, 21, Jamaica Street, Edinburgh.

Figure 8: Advert for sale of the "Garden at Drumdryan", *Caledonian Mercury* March 1819.

to Mr Robert Kirk, shipmaster, foot of Leith Walk, or to Mr John Meiklejohn, writer, 21 Jamaica Street, Edinburgh." In November 1819 the property in Torrie was seised by John Meiklejohn and the dwelling house at Drumdryan was used to secure a bond from James Paton of Castlebeg, whose family had links to Torryburn.

If John Kirk had reckoned that his third marriage to the daughter of a baronet would ease his financial difficulties, he was very much mistaken. Isabella's father, Sir John Malcolm of Balbedie had died the year before her marriage and the next baronet, Isabella's brother Michael, was selling off parts of his estate to pay land tax. Court of Session records between 1819 and 1821 show that Isabella and her siblings were trying to claim "the provisions to which the said younger children are entitled out of the estate of Balbedie". John's future was now bound with that of the Malcolm family.

In January 1819 James Duncan, a farmer at Parkhill in Fife had offered barley for sale with three months credit, but when Kirk sent his carts to Leith to collect it, he discovered that it was not of the quality or quantity he had been promised: "to his great mortification the barley of which he had got a sample turned out to be mixed

with grain so much damaged as to have an offensive smell and totally unfit for malting and by this mixture the value of the grain was reduced at least one third." A witness to the event was James Malcolm, John Kirk's brother-in-law. But James Malcolm was also the brother-in-law of the farmer, James Duncan, as he was married to Duncan's sister. The document records that James Malcolm "expressed his surprise how the complainer [Kirk] should buy such rotten stuff". John Kirk refused to pay in full a bill of over £133, but this was one court case that he would not win.

In 1820 John's son, John Kirk Junior, had commenced business as a brewer in Aberdeen, but after two years his business had failed. In August 1822, he gave his father a promissory note for £500, a sum with the equivalent purchasing power of £40,000 today. This was due for repayment a month later, but was never repaid. More trouble was to come when Kirk Junior was imprisoned for debt in the spring of the following year.

The final trials and tribulations followed in 1825 and 1826. The financial crisis of 1825 saw the collapse of many private banks, debt spiralled leading to widespread bankruptcies and unemployment, and the property market and house-building industry entered a period of inactivity.

In January 1825 all of John Kirk's property at Drumdryan was seised by his mother-in-law, the Dowager Lady Malcolm, Andrew Inglis, merchant in Edinburgh and John Meiklejohn W.S. as security for a bond of £600 owed to the Banking Company.

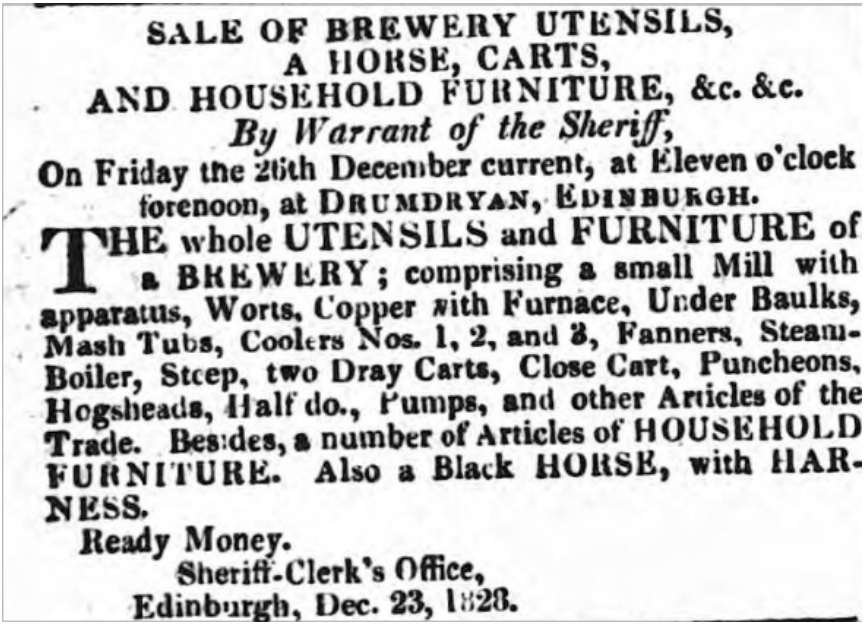
Efforts to keep the business solvent were proving difficult as debtors weren't paying their bills. The goodwill of the Malcolm family to act as cautioners with the Drumdryan properties as security had kept the brewery afloat, but in August 1826 the business finally failed and John was declared bankrupt. The final tragedy was the death of his mother-in-law in November of the same year.

Sequestration documents provide information about Kirk's business, his house and furnishings. He had debtors in Scotland and England, and further afield in Hamburg and Gibraltar. Of the £4560 Kirk was owed, there was only the possibility of recovering £1355 of "good debts", the rest being deemed "doubtful" or "bad debts".

The largest debt was that of James Brown, an agent in London, who owed £2054, a doubtful debt as Brown was bankrupt. Kirk admitted that he hadn't kept an account of his cash transactions with Brown other than those appearing in his ale account in the ledger, bill book and bank cheque book, but believed that Brown owed at least £400 more.

John Kirk died on 17 November 1828 at the age of 58 years. *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* notified readers of his death: "Died, on the 17th curt., after a short illness, Mr JOHN KIRK, brewer, Drumdryan, much and justly regretted."

A month after John Kirk's death, the citizens of Edinburgh were thirsting for information about one of the most gruesome and chilling murder trials in Scottish



SALE OF BREWERY UTENSILS,
A HORSE, CARTS,
AND HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, &c. &c.
By Warrant of the Sheriff,
On Friday the 26th December current, at Eleven o'clock forenoon, at DRUMDRYAN, EDINBURGH.

THE whole UTENSILS and FURNITURE of a BREWERY; comprising a small Mill with apparatus, Worts, Copper with Furnace, Under Baulks, Mash Tubs, Coolers Nos. 1, 2, and 3, Fanners, Steam-Boiler, Steep, two Dray Carts, Close Cart, Puncheons, Hogsheads, Half do., Pumps, and other Articles of the Trade. Besides, a number of Articles of HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE. Also a Black HORSE, with HARNESS.

Ready Money.

Sheriff-Clerk's Office,
Edinburgh, Dec. 23, 1828.

Figure 9: Advert for sale of Kirk's brewery utensils, *Edinburgh Courant* December 1828.

history, that of the "body-snatchers" Burke and Hare. On Thursday 25 December 1828 the *Edinburgh Courant* dedicated almost three of its four pages to an account of their trial. But how many people read the small notification tucked away in the left-hand column of the classified section, advertising the sale of Kirk's brewing utensils, horse, carts and household furniture?

Mrs John Kirk, brewer at Drumdryan 1829–1831

John's widow, Isabella, carried on the business for at least another two years. The Post Office Annual Directories between 1829 and 1831 list "Mrs John Kirk, brewer, Drumdryan". But this was a period of difficulties for Isabella. Her brother, Michael, who had succeeded to the baronetcy of Balbedie and Grange, had died a month before her husband and two months after his death, in February 1829, Isabella gave birth to a son, Pultney Malcolm Kirk. Her mother, the Dowager Lady Malcolm had left provision in her will for Isabella, in the event of her being widowed, and also for the education of Isabella's children. Pultney eventually became a pupil at George Heriot's Hospital, qualifying as a "puir, faitherless bairn" of a deceased Edinburgh burgess.

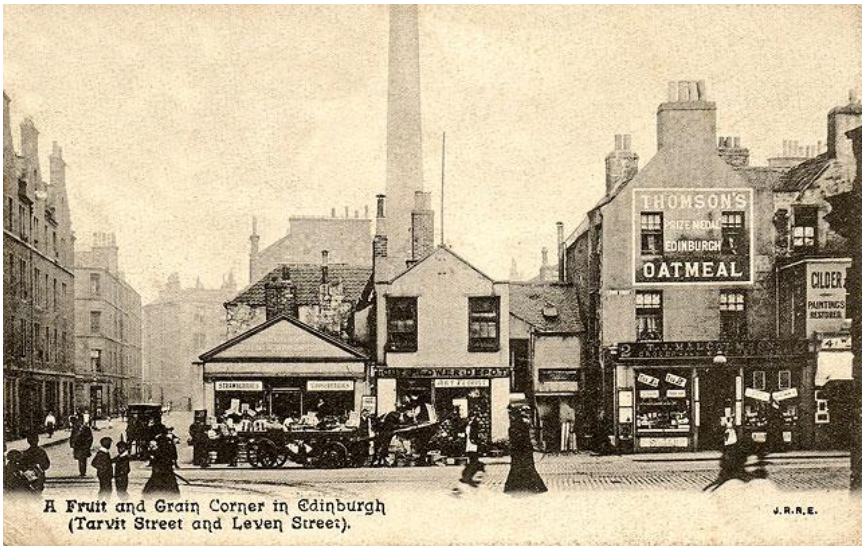


Figure 10: Postcard of Tarvit Street and Leven Street showing the shops and houses in front of Drumdryan Brewery c. 1900. The King's Theatre now stands on the site.

In 1832 Isabella and her stepson, John Kirk Junior, were named in a petition and appeal taken to the House of Lords. They were appealing against a decision in the Court of Session which found John Kirk Senior liable in expenses. Kirk Senior's property eventually passed to his heir, John Kirk Junior, and Isabella Malcolm moved to Leslie in Fife where her late mother, the Dowager Lady Malcolm had bought property.

Then followed the lengthy process of sequestration and determining a dividend for creditors. This rumbled on until 1853 when Kirk Senior's grandson, also named John Kirk, was cited to appear in court "to shew cause why sequestration of the estates of the deceased John Kirk should not be awarded". The estate was eventually sequestrated on 29 March 1853.

The saga of Kirk's brewery had finally come to an end. And now you know why no one walks into a pub today and says: "A pint of Kirk's if you please, barman!"

Acknowledgements

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Thanks to The National Records of Scotland (nrscotland.gov.uk) and to the staff in the Historical Search Room for their patience, help and advice.

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RS27/1282/55 Sasine, land on corner of Leven Street and Gilmore Place, 1808
RS3/1145/74 Sasine, a malt barn, kiln and yard lying within the Town and Barony of Torrie, 1812
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CS271/72269 John Kirk V James Duncan, 1820
CS271/73221 John Kirk Brewer at Drumdryan V Messrs Alexr Allan & Coy., Bankers in Edinburgh, 1821
CS34/26/86 Alexander Grieg V James Malcolm, Catherine Malcolm, Isabella Malcolm and John Kirk, 1821
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Figure 1: RFA Wave Emperor

From the Royal Fleet Auxiliary to Courage & Co.

John T. Gatenby

I must begin with a short introduction of my career in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA), before explaining my role when working for Courage & Co. The RFA is the civilian support branch of the Royal Navy (RN), providing vital logistical and operational support to military operations. The RFA supports a wide spectrum of operations ranging from war to counter piracy, disaster relief, counter narcotics, law enforcement and assisting with evacuations.

I started work with the RFA in 1948 as an Indentured Apprentice Deck Officer on board the RFA Wave Emperor, a wave-class oiler. My training lasted four years before becoming a qualified officer. Although I was registered in the Merchant Navy, I was working for the Ministry of Defence. The RFA included tankers, stores ships, ammunition ships and others. I saw active service during the Korean War and I was later presented with the Korean Medal.

My last ship was the RFA Wave Chief, a fleet support tanker, and one of its duties was to accompany HMRY Britannia in the West Indies with Princess Margaret and Anthony Armstrong-Jones on board. Later we were deployed, supporting RN ships in operations during the Cod Wars against Iceland.

After I left the RFA, I learned that the Wave Chief escorted Sir Alex Rose around Cape Horn in 1968, when he circumnavigated the world single-handedly and, as a result of this achievement, was knighted.

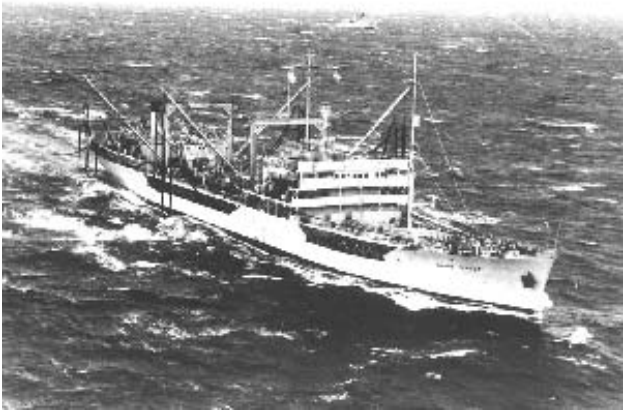

Figure 2: RFA Wave Chief

During my 12 years with the RFA, I was aware of a company named Saccone & Speed Ltd (S&S), a wine and spirits company, who supplied our ships with duty free provisions throughout these years. When I was serving as a Senior Second Officer on RFA Wave Knight, I 'swallowed the anchor', a naval term used when leaving. When I left on the 30th June 1960 at Portsmouth, I had previously applied for a position with S&S and I joined the company the following day, this time based in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

My job with S&S as a Sales Representative was to provide duty free products to RFA, RN and Merchant ships and duty free shops in northern England airports. I was to learn my trade when visiting the ships in the Tyne shipyards, and being an ex-RFA officer, I knew the Masters.

In 1964, I was transferred from Newcastle to Edinburgh to become the Sales Rep in charge of Scotland and the North East and the North West of England. Northern Ireland and Dublin were included later. The job involved visiting and supplying all navy-related shipping and duty free outlets with a range of beers, wines, spirits and tobacco products. One of the best sellers at that time was McEwan's in yellow 12oz cans with the globe trademark with 24 cans to a case. It was thought that the yellow colour was for the export trade whereas red continued for the home trade.

S&S was taken over by H & G Simonds, brewers in Reading. However, nothing changed, apart from the introduction of Tavern Ale in 12oz cans. After that, Courage, Barclay & Co. merged with Simonds and S&S, then became known as Courage Export, and so began my association with Courage.

Figure 3: Courage's cockerel emblem.

Perhaps best to pause here so I can tell you a bit about Courage, its origins and how it evolved as a company. John Courage, a Scottish shipping agent from Aberdeen, moved to London and bought the Anchor Brewhouse in 1787. As a result of takeovers of smaller breweries, the business grew over a number of years.

In 1955, the company merged with Barclay, Perkins & Co. and five years later merged with Simonds, with the company name changing to Courage, Barclay, Simonds & Co. At this time, many breweries throughout the UK were subject to mergers, takeovers and closures. By 1970, the company name was simplified to Courage Ltd, but two years later it was taken over by the Imperial Tobacco Group Ltd. Thereafter, a new large brewery was built – Berkshire Brewery in Reading, which became the largest brewery by volume in the UK.

In 1986, Imperial Tobacco was acquired by the Hanson Trust who sold off Courage to Elders, an Australian company, later to be renamed the Fosters Brewing Group. In 1991, the Courage section of Foster's merged with the breweries of Grand Metropolitan and four years later Scottish & Newcastle purchased Courage from Fosters, creating Scottish Courage as its brewing arm.

After 31 years, I attained the title of Area Manager, which included responsibility for a bonded warehouse to maintain stocks and to supply ships and duty free airport shops within my area of control. We were asked to supply and install Courage dispensing equipment for draught beers and lagers in most ships' bars. The beers I remember best were Courage Sparkling Beer, which become known simply as CSB. It was a beer specifically brewed for naval shipping and came in five- and nine-gallon kegs. When the Foster's Brewing Group took over, during the latter part of my career, John Smith's Bitter and Foster's Lager were introduced.

During these years, I gained more experience when I was taken by helicopter to aircraft carriers at anchorage and aboard submarines. On one occasion, whilst on board a submarine at Faslane, the HM Naval Base on the Clyde, there was suddenly a tannoy announcement – "pressure test underway". The submarine submerged until the testing was completed. I must admit it was a great experience.

The greatest challenge of my career happened in 1982, when I became responsible for the logistics to arrange and supply beers, wines and spirits to some of the RFA and RN ships in the Task Force during the Falklands Campaign. I had to keep the lads happy during this ordeal and was pleased to do so.

I decided to retire in 1991, after 31 years' service and my tour of duty of stores of H M Forces, commercial shipping and airport shops ended. Scottish & Newcastle were themselves taken over in 2008, with a combined bid by both Heineken and Carlsberg.

When I first started working for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, little did I know at that time that I would end up working for a brewing company, Courage & Co.

The *Frolic* beer story: or, the China connection

Bruce Rogerson

On a summer evening in the mid-nineteenth century, a light fog lay along the rugged coast of California. A group of Native Americans of the local Pomo people were gathered on the bluffs above the roaring surf of the Pacific Ocean. Looking out to sea, they saw a ghostly sight, as a large square-rigged ship under full sail appeared out of the mist. They watched in amazement as the ship suddenly turned to avoid the breaking surf on a reef several hundred yards away. Over the roar of the ocean they heard the sound of tearing wood and the shouts of the ship's crew. She started to take on water and list as she wallowed in the ocean swells.

Next morning the Pomo were surprised to find the ship still afloat and being manoeuvred using her sails and assisted by two ships' boats towing her into the cove below their camp site. By late in the day, the vessel was anchored close in shore, the hull resting on the bottom of the cove. They watched some of the crew board the two ships' boats and row off into the fog leaving a few crew-members from Malay and Lascar to unload food and supplies on to the nearby beach.[1] It was not long before the Pomo men swam out to the wreck to see what they might salvage for themselves.

Over the next several weeks, more and more of her cargo was collected by the Pomo as it washed ashore: baskets of pottery, fine china, flatware, rolls of silk and furniture. Amongst the jetsam and flotsam were also several iron-bound wooden cases, in which upon opening the Pomo found dozens of green, corked, long-necked bottles containing a brown liquid with a slightly bitter flavor. Soon the bottles were being shared around the camp and more than a few of the Pomo became a little tipsy. Maybe their first taste of beer!

Our story jumps forward to the summer of 1984 on a ridge in the redwood forests of Mendocino County, California, between the Village of Mendocino and the old logging town of Willits, one hundred and seventy-five miles north of San Francisco. Doctor Thomas Layton and three of his archaeology students from San Jose State University are about to start the investigation of a Native American village site on Three Chop Hill, thought to have been occupied well into the 19th century by members of the Mitom Pomo.

Spread across the hillside just below the ridge line are several circular depressions indicating where the conical redwood dwellings of the Pomo were located. Carefully, the students started to remove the covering of redwood needles and tan oak leaves from one of the sites and sift through the first layers of soil. From previous excavations

[1] Malays came from the Dutch East Indies, or as we know it today, Indonesia. Lascars were from the west coast of India and particularly, Goa. They all spoke Portuguese and were recruited as sailors on foreign owned sailing ships.

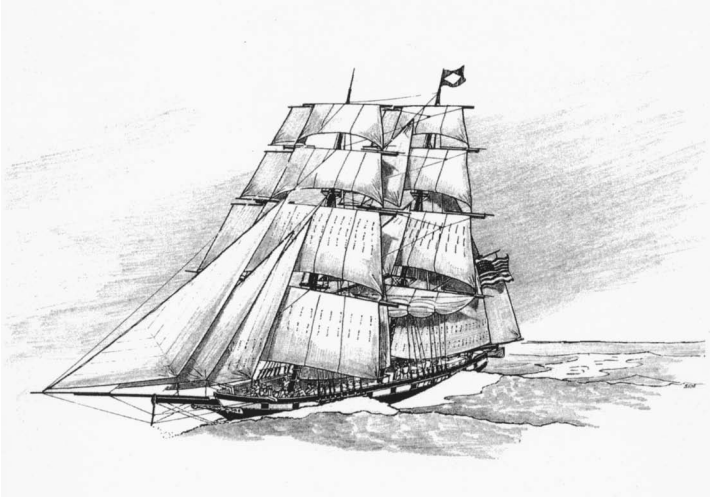

Figure 1: The clipper brig *Frolic*.

of Pomo village sites, they expected to find evidence of the occupation including stone tools made of obsidian and chert and perhaps arrowheads fashioned from chert.[2] As they sifted through the detritus (mixed soil and decayed plant materials) in the depressions, they found the expected chert arrowhead and obsidian flakes, but on the next sift of soil, several tiny fragments of what looked like pottery and several slivers of green bottle glass were discovered.

Later in the summer, the excavations of several more of the circular hut sites was undertaken by the students and these uncovered more fragments of pottery with traces of Asian designs and additional small pieces of green bottle glass. Several of the pieces showed evidence of being flaked and ground by the Pomo.

Dr Layton first thought the pottery had come from earlier contact by the local Pomo with a Spanish Manila galleon in the 16th/17th century, as those vessels made landfall from the Philippines along the Mendocino Coast on their way to ports in Mexico. However, after showing the items found in the Pomo hut sites to a local forest ranger, he was told of reports of unusual findings of pottery in a cove on the coast near the village of Mendocino, possibly from a "sampan", a Chinese wooden boat. This led Dr Layton to the Kelley House Museum and to contact with a local diver.

[2] Obsidian is a hard, dark, glasslike volcanic rock. Chert is a dark, hard rock used by indigenous peoples for tools and arrow heads.

Figure 2: Pottery fragments from the *Frolic*.

Diver David Buller had donated items from a wreck to the Kelley House Museum in 1979 and showed Dr Layton some examples including complete porcelain bowls, flatware, ship fittings and filigree gold jewellery. In addition, he had researched local papers and in the *Alta Californian*, a leading paper in the mid-nineteenth century, found a report on a recent ship wreck on the Mendocino Coast. This report identified the ship as the clipper brig *Frolic*, Edward Faucon, Captain, the date of the wreck July 25th, 1850, and the cargo from China bound for San Francisco. A library search found references to the *Frolic* in a book on the Opium clippers. [3]

The Kelley House Museum also provided a report of an attempt by Jerome Ford from Bodega Bay to locate the site of the wreck in the summer of 1851. He did not find salvage of any value but did report seeing Pomo women wearing silk shawls taken from the wreck. Salvaging anything from the *Frolic* was soon replaced by the sight of huge stands of redwood trees and Douglas fir stretching along the coast and many miles into the interior. Within a year, the first lumber mill was established a few miles from the wreck site, marking the start of the lumber industry on the coast of Mendocino supplying the needs of the growing city of San Francisco as a result of the Gold Rush.

Over the next few years Dr Layton completed extensive research of archives in libraries and universities in California and on the east coast, piecing together the history of the *Frolic* and her owners, August Heard and Company of Boston. The

Frolic was built in Baltimore in 1844 by Gardner Brothers and sailed for Bombay, India, on December 8, 1844. After sailing down the South Atlantic she rounded the Cape Of Good Hope and headed for the Indian Ocean and Bombay where she arrived on March 28, 1850.

From 1845 to 1849, under the command of Captain Edward Faucon, *Frolic* successfully traded between Bombay on the west coast of India to south China ports carrying chests and bales of dried opium, then a semi-legal trade sanctioned by the British Raj. A catastrophic dismasting in a typhoon off Hong Kong in the fall of 1849, the advent of steam-powered vessels in the trade and a decline in the available opium cargoes, forced her owner and agents to look elsewhere for a suitable cargo.

In June 1850, the *Frolic* loaded a cargo at Canton, China. News of the gold discoveries in California in 1848 was well known in China by then. Captain Faucon, and the owner's agent, decided to purchase a cargo of Chinese merchandise to be loaded on the Frolic and carried across the Pacific to San Francisco where such a cargo would attract a good price in the newly prosperous and expanding metropolis by the Bay. Included in this valuable cargo were bales of silk, fine pottery and china, furniture, a prefabricated house and 6,108 bottles of Edinburgh beer.

The *Frolic* sailed on June 10, 1850 on her ill-fated voyage to San Francisco following the ancient route of the great Manila galleons, taking advantage of the prevailing *los vendavales* as the Spanish sailors called them, the strong southwesterly winds across the north Pacific ocean.

On the evening of July 25, 1850, the *Frolic*'s lookout spotted the white loom and heard the roar of breaking surf ahead. Despite valiant efforts by the Captain and crew to turn the ship round and clear the reefs, the stern of the *Frolic* was flung against a rock by a breaking swell, flooding the cargo hold and crew spaces.

As the ship foundered, items of cargo floated free and much came ashore along the cove and surrounding shoreline. The cargo salvaged by the Pomo made its way inland to their winter camp on Three Chop Ridge including Chinese pottery and green bottle glass which the Pomo used as a resource as tools and decoration for jewelry. The Pomo were known to trade with inland tribes across Northern California and items of pottery and glass may have made their way to other Native American tribes. The Pomo also traded items from the *Frolic* with white and Latino settlers and early recollections and accounts by ranchers tell of Indian women trading bolts of Chinese silks, and of large Chinese vases being seen in early adobes inland in Mendocino county.

The beer carried on the final voyage of the *Frolic* was originally acquired by Heards in Canton, contained in 24 hogsheads (a hogshead is equivalent to 54 gallons) and subsequently decanted into 599 dozen long-necked green bottles at a cost of 30 cents per dozen. The 6,108 bottles were then packed in iron-bound cases at six dozen

Figure 3: The location of the wreck.

bottles per case for a total of 84 cases of beer. The cases of beer were loaded aboard the *Frolic* at Hong Kong where the bottling took place.

The bill of sale for the 24 hogsheads described the contents as Edinburgh Ale but there is no documentation found that could identify which brewery in Edinburgh the beer might have come from. In the mid-nineteenth century, Wm. Younger & Co. were major exporters of beer from their brewery in Edinburgh and there are records in the Scottish Brewing Archive that they brewed an Edinburgh Ale. Their India Pale Ale was specially developed to withstand the long voyage to the Far East. Unfortunately, none of the long-necked green bottles of the Edinburgh Ale survived to modern times from the wreck, which might have allowed an analysis of the beer and possible identification of its origin.

In the 1990s the whole story was coming together and a series of exhibits were being set up at museums in Mendocino County. A casual meeting, in a bar in Hopland, Mendocino County, between Richard Everett, Curator of Exhibits at the Maritime Museum San Francisco, who was assisting with the *Frolic* exhibits, and a brewer with the Mendocino Brewing Company, lead to the release of a Frolic Shipwreck Ale over two years on the anniversary of the wreck on July 25. For the 170th anniversary of the *Frolic* wreck later this year, a beer has been brewed and bottled in 750ml bottles. In keeping with its Scottish connections, the beer has been named Frolic Fraoch – Scottish Heather Ale, using the 1850s Wm. Younger Edinburgh Ale recipe and flavoured with heather and with a few local touches. It is a strong 8% ABV and brewed by Drew Jackson at the Crestwood Brewery, Mendocino.

Figure 4: Drew Jackson's Frolic Fraoch ale.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bruce Rogerson was born in Kilmarnock, Scotland. Educated in Edinburgh and trained as a marine underwriter in Glasgow, and spent over 40 years as an insurance underwriter, broker and risk manager in Scotland, British Columbia and California. Bruce retired in 2004 and lives in Fort Bragg, California and is a volunteer and board member at the Point Cabrillo Light-keepers Association, Mendocino, California and enjoys sailing, cycling and skiing.

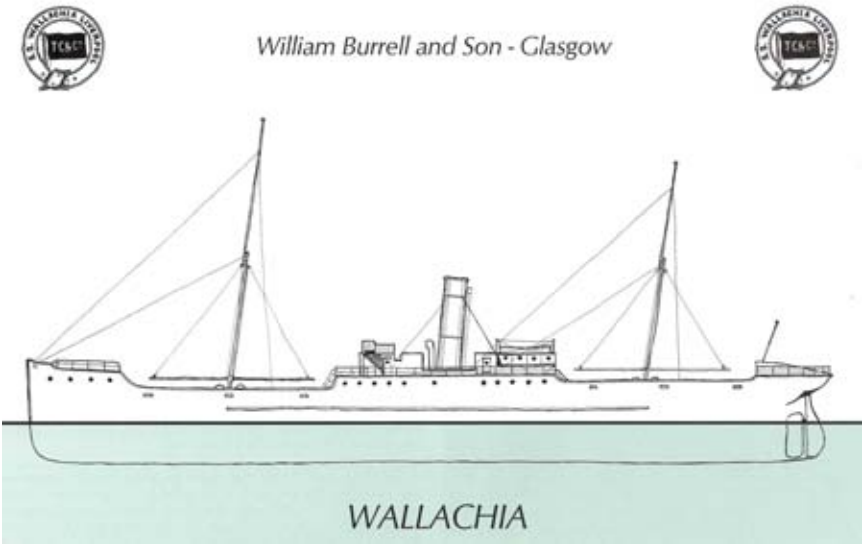

Figure 1: The *Wallachia*. Picture from P. Moir, I. Crawford: Clyde Shipwrecks, Moir-Crawford, 1997 courtesy of Peter Moir.

Beer galore

Andy Heslop

On the afternoon of 29th September 1895, a heavy fog settled on the waters of the Firth of Clyde as the large steam ship *Wallachia* slipped her moorings and inched her way out of Glasgow on route to the West Indies. A journey she had made many times over the previous two years – however, this was to be her last.

The 1,077nt, 80m long, single screw steamer was built by Oswald Mordant & Company in Southampton and launched in March 1883. Originally owned by Taylor & Cameron of Liverpool, she was used on the Liverpool to Black Sea run. In 1893 she was bought by William Burrell & Son of Glasgow to carry goods to the West Indies.

On that fateful morning, as she made her way down the Firth, the thickening fog swirling around her bows, a large steamer materialised to starboard. Captain Walton had no time to avoid a collision, only just managing to give orders for all hands to clear the focsle before she was rammed. The oncoming bows of the 1,406nt Norwegian steamer *Flos* sliced into the starboard side of the *Wallachia*. A huge gash was ripped in her hull and tonnes of water started to flood in.

The two vessels locked together, the bows of the *Flos* supporting the *Wallachia* while her lifeboats were lowered and the crew abandoned ship, everyone escaping with no loss of life. At 4.35pm the *Flos* backed away and the *Wallachia* sank lower in the water. A loud explosion was heard when the sudden rush of cold water hit her boilers and she rapidly passed from sight, the murky surface of the Clyde frothed and boiled as the last remnants of air were forced from her hull. She settled on an even keel on a flat, muddy seabed at 34m.

Two weeks later, hard-hat divers removed her two masts which were considered a danger to shipping, but no salvage was attempted. Her final cargo destined for Trinidad and Demerara included coal, gin, whisky, beer, building materials, books, stationery, glassware, earthenware and general goods, none of which warranted the cost of salvage. She was left to lie in her watery grave and was forgotten, the last trace being a wreck symbol on an Admiralty chart of 1905.

She lay undisturbed until the late 1970s when she was re-discovered by sports divers who identified her, recovering the maker's plate and ship's bell. The wreck is now acclaimed as one of the most important of the many Clyde shipwrecks, lying about one mile to the east of Toward Point on the Cowal Peninsula not far from the busy shipping lane. The main impediment to diving this wreck and generally in the Clyde is the notoriously poor visibility. On descent, the ambient light seems to disappear at 5m to 10m, and by 20m pitch blackness envelops the diver. For this reason, venturing into the Clyde is not for the faint-hearted and should only be attempted by suitably qualified and experienced divers.

In the summer of 2018, I was invited to join a small group who intended to visit the Clyde specifically to dive the wreck of the *Wallachia*. It was a very emotional request as the intention was to lay a plaque on the deck to remember a fellow diver and friend who had died while diving this site two years earlier. While inside the wreck he had become disorientated in the very low visibility and ran out of air. A very sad loss to the UK diving community.

I have been scuba diving since 2006 and have now completed in excess of 500 dives mainly in UK waters. I am qualified to a high standard, BSAC (British Sub Aqua Club) Advanced Diver including Diver Rescue. I am also a fully qualified Open Water scuba diving instructor. With plenty of deep wreck (down to 60m) diving under my belt, I accepted the invitation and headed north.

We were blessed with good weather, a sunny day, no wind and good sea conditions. The mood on the dive boat was quiet while we reflected on the loss of a friend but maintained our strict pre-dive preparations to ensure the best safety of all who were to enter the water. "Plan the dive, dive the plan".

Our first dive, to lay the plaque, went without incident and exactly to plan. As expected, conditions on the *Wallachia* were very dark and silty, but with good torches

Figure 2: Divers directly above the wreck.

Figure 3: Andy Heslop.

and sticking strictly to the dive plan, the job was done, and we all ascended to the dive boat for a welcome hot brew.

As the sea conditions were so good, we decided on a second dive to explore the wreck in a bit more detail. Having studied previous dive reports, I understood that the beer, whisky and gin were loaded into the rear holds of the ship, so decided to head for this area with my dive buddy and see what we could find. Locating the small hatch to hold number 5, I lowered myself carefully in and looked around. I could just see the tops of bottles sticking up out of the silt.

I can confirm they are not easy to remove. Having been there for 123 years the muck has set quite firm and when you start to tease them out, the deep, fine powder like silt floats up and it is like being in a pint of just-poured Guinness. The visibility goes to zero; you cannot even see your hand in front of your face, just total blackness. Using touch only, I managed to extract several bottles and put them into a net bag and exited the hold – I had made sure I had a 100% guaranteed exit route sorted before disturbing the silt.

Back on the dive boat we took a closer look at the bottles I had retrieved. There were some larger, some smaller, all still full and with corks in place. I always wanted to find out more about the things I see or find underwater, so started my search to identify the contents.

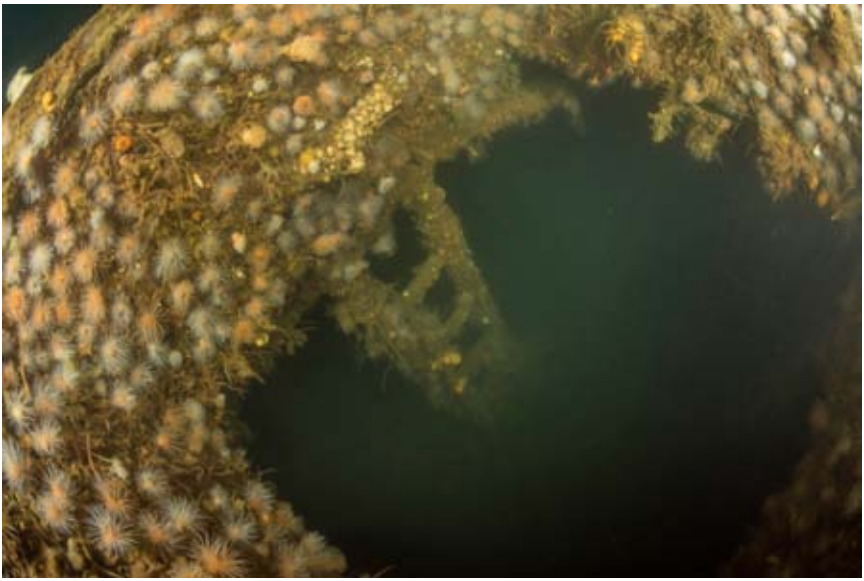

Figure 4: Entry to the hold of the *Wallachia*. Picture courtesy of Mike Clark.

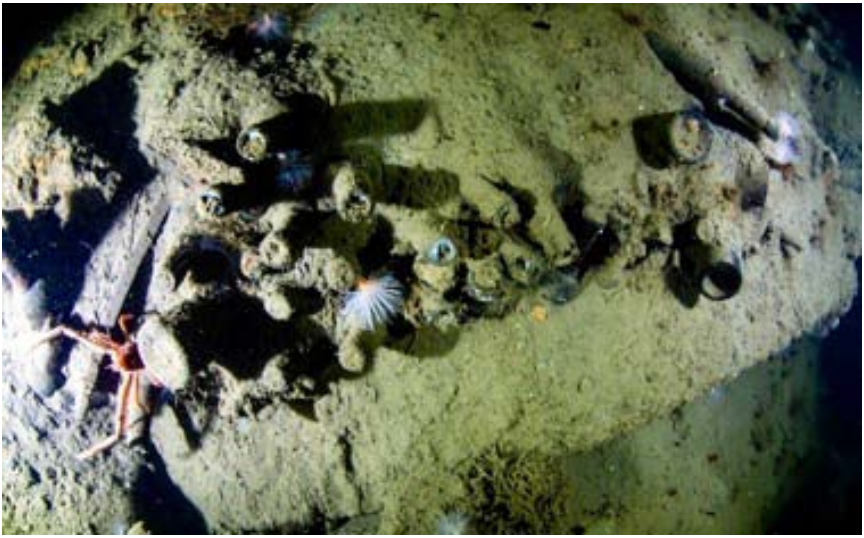

Figure 5: Bottles in the shipwreck.

Figure 6: Beer bottle with barnacles.

Figure 7: McEwan's cork.

Internet searches informed me that the beer, which had been placed on the ship, was from McEwan's. This was confirmed when I removed a cork from one of the bottles and it had McEwan's stamped on the side. I understand it is unusual for the corks to be marked in this way, the normal method being to imprint the brewer's name on the bottle.

I opened two, one containing a dark liquid similar to Stout and one containing an amber liquid similar to Pale Ale. Both poured perfectly, looked fine and smelt normal. I girded my loins and took a small taste of each. The dark liquid tasted like Stout and the amber liquid tasted like Pale Ale, both a little musty, but who knows exactly what they tasted like 123 years ago.

I contacted the McEwan's Beer Co. to see if they wanted any of the bottles for their museum and they put me in touch with the Scottish Brewing Archive Association. After swapping emails with John Martin, we agreed to meet at the Archive & Special Collection, University of Glasgow in early June 2019 to see if we could find anything in the records regarding the *Wallachia* and exactly what beer McEwan's supplied for this specific cargo.

After much searching, we could not find a specific note of the exact beer supplied, however we did find some very interesting detail of corks supplied to various agents and wholesalers and documents pertaining to the insurance claim for the loss of the *Wallachia* – the total claim for loss of cargo amounted to £1,830.00 as far as we could

tell. When you consider the total export for McEwan's for the year June 1895 to June 1896 was listed as above £600,000.00 then this claim was literally a drop in the ocean. With exports of this value it's not surprising that William McEwan was such a wealthy man.

There are thousands more bottles of beer still on the wreck along with very elusive whisky and gin bottles, so I will return and maybe I will be lucky enough to retrieve more. But that could be another story.

Appendix: analysis of the *Wallachia* beer

John Martin and Robbie Pickering note:

A bottle of stout previously retrieved from the *Wallachia* was analysed in 1982 at Heriot-Watt University. A letter from the Scottish Brewing Archive at the time, addressed to Mr Whittaker, a scuba diver, reveals the stout to have had 8.7% alcohol by volume, a final gravity of 1002.9, 35.5 units of bitterness and to be 180 EBC in colour.

The letter states:

> The RGH which we thought to imply Edinburgh could perhaps point to the beer having been brewed by either Steel, Coulson Ltd, Maclachlans or Gordon & Blair Ltd., who are brewers who had a brewery in both Glasgow and Edinburgh at that time. So perhaps the cork may have said 'Glasgow and Edinburgh.'…
>
> The impression of this beer was that it was a very strong stout which had retained some CO_2, was not particularly contaminated with either yeasts or bacteria but had a very strong 'aged' smell (sweet, fruity, cider-like, blackcurrant).

Blackcurrant is a classic note of oxidation in old beer, unsurprising given that even in 1982 the stout had been at the bottom of the Clyde for 87 years.

As can be seen from the picture on the back cover, the stout seemed to still retain its carbonation after a further 37 years underwater.

At that time the wreck had recently been discovered and the divers did not want to make it generally known.

In the letter three brewers are mentioned as possibly having brewed the beer, but this was only guesswork as there were no labels left on the bottles. It was only when Andy Heslop opened the bottles that he saw the words "McEwans" on the corks. This also ties in with what is recorded in the ship's manifesto.

Figure 8: Pale Ale.

SCOTTISH BREWING ARCHIVE

25 MAY 1982

Chairman:
Professor Anna MacLeod
Director:
Mr. Alex Anderson
Archivist:
Mr. C.H. McMaster, B.A.
Senior Records Officer:
Mr. A.D. Blyth, B.A.

The Library,
Heriot-Watt University,
Riccarton,
Edinburgh,
EH14 4AS
Telephone 031-449 5111
ext 2363
2375

20 May 1982

Our ref ADB/MR

Dear Mr Whittaker

Here are some results from analyses made by Dr Colin Slaughter, of the University Brewing Department on your bottle of beer recently found in the river Clyde. I hope this is of some use to you.

The RGH which we thought to imply Edinburgh could perhaps point to the beer having been brewed by either Steel, Coulson Ltd, Maclachlans or Gordon & Blair Ltd., who are brewers who had a brewery in both Glasgow and Edinburgh at that time. So perhaps the cork may have said 'Glasgow and Edinburgh'.

We would be interested in keeping a bottle in our archives, should you have one to spare.

The impression of this beer was that it was a very strong stout which had retained some C02, was not particularly contaminated with either yeasts or bacteria but had a very strong 'aged' smell (sweet, fruity, cider-like, blackcurrant).

The analyses made are listed below with modern Guinness as a comparison:-

	Clyde	Guinness
Colour (EBC)	180	160
Bitterness	35.5	32
Gravity as is	2.9	4.9
% Vol. Alcohol	8.7	4 (not measured)

I would guiss that the O.G. was in the 10.90 range.

Yours sincerely

Figure 9: 1982 analysis of the *Wallachia* stout.

Above: A vintage beer: McEwan's stout from 1895, retrieved from a wrecked ship in the Clyde. See the article "Beer galore" in this issue for the full story.

Front cover: Picture courtesy of Beer Nouveau, Manchester.