

Book Reviews

Gone for a Burton. Memoirs from a Great British Heritage

by Bob Ricketts

Pp. viii + 240. London: Pan Press

Publishers Ltd, 2005. £7.99.

ISBN 1-905203-69-1

Bob Ricketts is the most senior brewery executive to write his memoirs since Sir Sydney Nevile published his Seventy Rolling Years in 1958. Both men reached managing director level in large companies, Ricketts at Bass and Nevile at Whitbread, and both took office as President of the Institute of Brewing during their careers. But there the similarity ends; the two books reflect very different careers and times. Nevile was a reforming all-rounder who attained immense stature in the brewing trade in the 1920s and 30s, and his book celebrates his industry wide achievements during a very long career. Ricketts is a scientist turned production chief, and his book, while also recounting with approval many of the changes he witnessed from the mid 1950s on, has at its heart a lamentation on what happened to the industry as he approached retirement in 1992 and after.

When one gets past the rather irritating didactic layout of the book, with short sections broken up by what the author calls 'notes to file' printed in bold to rein-

force the lesson to be learnt from the preceding passage, there is much to enjoy in Ricketts' book. Pithy and perceptive comments on management behaviour and people in the industry abound. Individuals are rather coyly seldom named but enough clues are given for insiders, and not so insiders, to deduce their identities. In its time span, the book covers a similar period to that of the late Tony Avis's reminiscences in The Brewing Industry 1950-1990. But Ricketts is more circumspect, sceptical rather than cynical, in comparison with his one time contemporary at Bass, mixing affectionate joshing with only the occasional barb. Ricketts' wry observations touch on many groups of people. Accountants, trade unionists, marketers, foreigners, consultants, city financiers, civil servants and snooty directors warrant particular attention and CAMRA receives undisguised contempt (don't expect to see this book reviewed in What's Brewing). His observations on Bass's experiences of franchise brewing a foreign beer have a particular resonance. The beer in question is not specifically identified, but is clearly Tuborg which Bass brewed in Burton for a few years in the late 1970s. The uncomprehending responses which met Bob's attempts to explain to the Danes that just because something was written down in the huge manuals of procedures

they had brought with them across the North Sea, it did not necessarily mean that the procedure worked on the ground, vividly brings to life what happens when two incompatible cultures collide. Ricketts also has a long memory for injustice. Having his name missed off an important patent 50 years ago when a young scientist at the Brewing Industry Research Foundation in Surrey, despite having contributed significantly to the work, obviously still rankles.

The only person in the book to receive unqualified approval is Margaret Thatcher, whose election in 1979 heralded 'new and better times'. Ricketts admiration for the iron lady even leads him to air-brush from history some of the consequences her regime had for the British brewing industry. Thus on page 183 he has this to say regarding Bass's financial performance: 'During the 1980s this was helped by a steady small increase in beer consumption in the UK'. In fact in the first three years of Thatcher's government beer consumption in the UK fell by over 10 percent and never returned to its 1979 level. It may therefore seem surprising that Ricketts reserves his fiercest criticism for the Beer Orders which were introduced in 1989 when she was still Prime Minister. But Ricketts lays responsibility for the Beer Orders, which sought to dilute the tie between production and retailing of beer, firmly at the door of the Monopolies Commission aided and abetted by Lord Young and his civil servants. To the Beer Orders he attributes all the evils that he sees to have since befallen

the British brewing industry; specifically the transfer of the majority of beer production into foreign hands, the rise of a new layer of middle men in the form of the giant pub companies and the disproportionate rise in the price of beer. This view is the accepted orthodoxy articulated by brewing insiders when they bemoan the changes that have occurred in the brewing trade in Britain in the last couple of decades. Peter Ogie, a former Whitbread brewer, reviewing Ricketts book in the trade press sums up these feelings thus: 'In particular, he cannot forgive the abomination that was the Beer Orders 1989, being foisted on an unwilling industry by an ill-intentioned commission. I know that many of my readers will agree that this totally unnecessary act of vandalism tolled the knell of the British brewing industry that we all knew and loved'. But this is an emotional view which lacks historical perspective and really won't wash. In reality the city-fixated leaders of the British brewing industry sowed the seeds of the industry's metamorphosis; the Beer Orders only provided the conditions under which these seeds could germinate.

The evidence is that a number of British brewing companies had already decided that their role was primarily as retailers rather than producers of beer a decade and more before the issue of the Beer Orders. The disparity in profitability between production and retailing, with the balance clearly towards the latter, led inevitably to the break up of the industry. The Beer Orders acted as the catalyst for

the demise of the vertically integrated national brewers but they were not the root cause of their disappearance. Even Bass, slower than some to see which way the wind was blowing, set up separate retailing and brewing divisions within a couple of months of the MMC report and before the Beer Orders were actually issued. But one can understand why a Bass production chief in particular would resent the changes which swept over the industry in the 1990s. When the music stopped on major brewery mergers in the late 1960s, Bass Charrington, as it then was, landed on top as the biggest of the 'Big Six'. The company then consolidated its position over the years. Through stable, centralised, authoritarian direction it used its massive tied estate to dominate the industry and build its brands, such that by 1989 Bass had 'only' (as Ricketts puts it) 22 percent of the UK beer market; its nearest rival had 14 percent. By then the UK industry had reached a position where everyone knew their place: Bass on top, as a second tier five smaller similarly sized national companies who had just about given up on their aspirations to increase market share, and the remainder a picturesque irrelevance in the big financial picture. The Beer Orders upset this cosy situation and facilitated restructuring of the industry in ways which were detrimental to Bass. Little wonder then that Ricketts rants against the Beer Orders. If you are going to have a rant, it is best to get your facts right. Unfortunately Ricketts does not. On page 207 of his book he writes of the provisions of the Beer Orders and states that

they required that 'No beer producer can own more than 2400 pubs. This means that Bass, with 8000 pubs as one example, had to dispose of two thirds of them'. This is wrong. The prime requirement of the Beer Orders, which implemented the recommendations of the MMC in diluted form following representations from the brewers, was that companies owning more than 2000 pubs had to dispose of half of their on-licenses in excess of this number or dispose of their breweries. Thus in Bass's case, on Ricketts figures, the company needed to dispose of 3000 pubs, but could still retain 5000 not 2400. (Bass actually had 7,476 full on-licences in 1989 and 4,595 at the end of 1992, the deadline for the disposals being 1st November of that year).

While the Beer Orders clearly failed in their goal to liberalise the beer market - beer production and retailing is as concentrated now as it has ever been, it is just arranged differently - Ricketts' emphasis on them is doubly unfortunate, for earlier in his book he identifies the real root cause of the changes of the last couple of decades which he so laments. On page 98 he notes '... the short term demands of the financial world on company performance seemed to outweigh all other considerations'. This comment is made in connection with the tendency of companies to bend too readily to union demands in the 1970s for fear of upsetting the city and damaging the all important share price, but is equally applicable to the events of the 1980s and beyond. With the constant pressure from

the city to generate unrealistic profits (which Ricketts fully recognizes and deplors in latter passages of the book) all that came next - the creation of autonomous retailing units within companies, the flight from manufacturing, the growth of independent pubcos, even the eventual withdrawal from retailing as 'brewers' looked for yet more profitable ways of using their capital - became inevitable. Hence the view that the Beer Orders didn't start anything; what they did was to accelerate a process that was already underway. The real cause of the current state of the British brewing industry is short-termism within companies and a narrow definition of 'shareholder value'.

If Bob Ricketts memoirs are sometimes unreliable and his analysis of events is in some places flawed, it does not detract from the overall enjoyment of his book which is an entertaining and revealing read.

Ray Anderson

Licensed to Sell: The History and Heritage of the Public House

by Geoff Brandwood, Andrew Davison and Michael Slaughter

Pp. xi + 192. London: English Heritage, 2004. £14.99.

ISBN 1 85074 906 X

and

Pubs and Progressives: Reinventing the Public House in England 1896-1960

by David W Gutzke

Pp. xiii + 360. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2006. £32.50.

ISBN 0 87580 335 0

Exactly a quarter of a century ago Brian Harrison wrote that just three books were 'really worthwhile studies of the public-house'; Gorham and Dunnett's Inside the Pub, the Mass Observation's The Pub and the People and Girouard's Victorian Pubs. During the intervening 25 years it could be argued that only two other works merit adding to this list, Clark's the English Alehouse: a social history 1200 - 1830 and Jennings' The Public house in Bradford, 1770 - 1970. It is difficult not to be depressed by this state of affairs: how can an institution that has played such a central role in the lives of millions over the centuries have been so poorly researched? Fortunately, in the last 12 months two new books have appeared which have every right to join the above five.

The first, Licensed to Sell: The History and Heritage of the Public House by

Geoff Brandwood, Andrew Davison and Michael Slaughter, is a copiously illustrated volume. It contains a vast amount of photographs, often three per page, and typically in colour. Yet this is no mere picture book for what distinguishes Licensed to Sell from just about every other general study of the subject is that it rests upon a great deal of primary research; a real joy to come across after innumerable publications containing rehashed old stories and half-truths.

The authors begin by providing a brief history of the emergence of the pub, from its very beginnings to 1830. Due to the relative lack of reliable data from this early period it is often the case that, to quote Harrison again, 'mindless antiquarianism literature' is used as source material. Fortunately, the present authors do not fall into this trap and the pubs' 'shad-ow-y' origins are described well, if somewhat briefly. There then follows a more detailed analysis of the development of the pub from 1830 to the present day. It is here that the book really gets into its stride, though here too one feels that elements have been left out, perhaps due to restrictions of space. Using a combination of contemporary illustrations, advertisements, plans, and modern photographs, the rapid evolution of the pub over the last two centuries is examined. The 1830 Beer Act was a catalyst, transforming the retailing of beer, and it is at this point that the pub as a distinctive establishment first emerges. The Act also played a part in bringing about the temperance movement, which produced its

own, much overlooked, buildings. The 20th century provided several distinctive forms and styles of the pub. These were often huge structures, aimed at either attracting a new, more mobile, kind of customer or built with the purpose of 'improving' those that drank in them.

After analysing the pubs' historical development, the authors then move on to deal with its physical layout and how this has evolved, a task aided by the inclusion of numerous plans. Before the start of the 19th century, the public house was literally that - a family house open to the public. It was partly as a reaction to the gin palaces of the 1820s that pubs began to take on a specific character. Progressively more rooms were added, catering for both an increasingly diverse clientele and a growing variety of functions, from the playing of billiards to providing off-sales. The compartmentalisation of the interior reached its height around 1900, coinciding with a peak in the value of pubs and the amount spent on their decoration. The Edwardian period saw the construction of less ornate and more open-plan establishments. The rise of the 'trust house', those following the Gothenburg scheme, the 'improved public house' and the 'destination pub' all brought with them new architectural designs. However, so lacklustre has been the last 60 years of pub design that this era takes up a mere three pages of Licensed to Sell.

The book goes on to examine a wide-range of subjects, from the different

methods of dispensing drinks (from serving straight from the barrel to the introduction of electric pumps) to the many forms of entertainment offered. The latter has been a popular subject for a great many publications and the authors wisely keep this section brief. Next the various decorative elements found in the public houses are described. Here Michael Slaughter's photographs are indispensable, showing the range and detail of the tiling, glasswork, signage and woodwork which were so characteristic of many Victorian pubs. The beauty of some of these features is still awe-inspiring and one can only imagine the thoughts of the many pub-goers who had the most dower of homes to return to. A fuller description of light fittings, as well as the introduction of the many varieties of wall and ceiling coverings, would have made this section even better.

The short, penultimate chapter deals with the distinctive qualities of pubs in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Though the sheer volume of elaborate drinking places found in England cannot be matched, a few pubs elsewhere can certainly hold their own when it comes to stunning interiors, the Crown, Belfast, being an obvious example. The book ends with a chapter which demolishes several myths surrounding the public house, including the many establishments which claim to be the 'oldest inn', the countless number of tunnels which always seem to lead to the local church, and the myriad pubs which entertained highwaymen.

Ultimately, Licensed to Sell is by far and away the best introduction to the history and design of the public house to come out in the last 30 years.

In contrast to Brandwood, Davison and Slaughter's general study David Gutzke's Pubs and Progressives: reinventing the public house in England 1896-1960 focuses on one its particular incarnations, the improved public house. This largely overlooked phenomenon experienced its heyday during the interwar period, but Gutzke argues that its origins can be traced back as far as the 1870s and is intrinsically linked to the emergence of a specific ideology, Progressivism.

It was during the last quarter of the 19th century that upper middle class professional bodies were formed with the explicit aim of bringing about social improvement. For these organisations 'an overriding priority was to inculcate their bourgeois values into the unsocialized, ill-educated, unsophisticated, and undisciplined lower classes'. The primary method of transmitting these values was through the alteration of the working classes' surroundings. This notion has its basis in the belief that we are all products of our environment; by changing where we work, live and take our leisure our personalities will in turn be transformed. These tenets form the central core of the Progressive philosophy which came to prominence on both sides of the Atlantic.

The first Progressivists to have an impact on the public house were proponents of

the Gothenburg system. Pioneered in Sweden and Norway this system had a profound influence on the improved public house movement post 1918. It came to be 'associated with disinterested management, a catering mission, environmentalism, a recognizable company image projected through retail outlets, and the concept of a professional staff'. The first pubs to be run along these lines were owned by Trusts, public companies financed by investors who received a decent rate of return on their holdings. Trusts usually converted existing pubs; long bars were replaced with short service counters, separate entrances for drinkers and dinners were installed and chintz became a common interior feature. Gutzke contends that the influence of Trusts on later pub movements has not received due recognition by historians. Yet he argues that not only did brewers gain their first taste of disinterested management as a consequence of business ties with trusts, he also shows that several of the leading figures who were to play a central role in the improved public house movement first came to prominence with Trust companies. Possibly the most important was Baron D'Abernon, chairman of the Central Control Board (CCB) from its founding in May 1915.

The CCB oversaw the next phase in the evolution of the English pub, the state-management scheme. With the compulsory purchase and closure of many pubs and breweries, most notably in the Carlisle area, D'Abernon was able to introduce many of his Progressive poli-

cies. The 'long pull', offering credit and the buying of rounds were forbidden and licensing hours were radically reduced. Women, particularly 'respectable' women, were encouraged to visit pubs as this would, so it was believed, have a civilising effect on male drinkers. Another important aspect of state run pubs was the primacy placed on food provision. Architectural changes also followed, most notably the gutting of the ground floor to produce pubs with a single, large bar furnished with plenty of tables and chairs. The seating was provided in an effort to persuade the clientele to abandon 'vertical' drinking. All these changes appear to have had the desired effect for, by the end of 1917, 2/3 fewer men and 1/3 fewer women had been arrested for intoxication. D'Abernon, via the CCB, thus 'demonstrated convincingly that acceptable profits could be attained if brewers rigorously reduced the number of pubs, extended the pub's clientele socially upward well into the propertied classes, and regarded insobriety as the product of the environment. Fewer pubs would make improvement of the survivors economically justifiable; attractive pubs would draw more refined customers; and an environment shaped by cultural uplift and social control would ensure order, discipline, and cleanliness. All these facets together powerfully impelled brewers to launch the movement for the improved public house soon after the war'.

Central to this launch were eight brewers whom Gutzke labels as Progressives:

Sydney Nevile, Cecil Lubbock and Frank Whitbread (Whitbread & Company); Richard Garton (Watney, Combe & Red; Frank Mason (Charrington & Company); Edwyn Barclay and Edward Giffard (Barclay Perkins); and W Waters Butler (Mitchells & Butlers). This group took up many of the innovations promoted by the CCB and began introducing them across England after the First World War. Particular significance was given to two elements, the serving of food and the encouragement of women into the pub. The provision of food not only helped dilute the intoxicating effects of alcohol it also, as a consequence, made 'drinkers more orderly, disciplined, and acceptable to the middle classes. The behaviour of moderate working-class drinkers could then be refined by the bourgeoisie using moral uplift and social control. Food thus became part of a clever broader marketing strategy in which brewers repositioned the improved pub as a venue as much for the social elite as for the masses'. The presence of women was viewed as an antidote to male insobriety and, in the words of one reformer, 'a recognised check upon bad language and roughness of manners'. These, together with other modifications to public house facilities (the provision of modern lavatories was seen as of particular importance) gradually shifted public perception - the pub became 'gentrified', an acceptable venue for the middle classes.

To compound these changes and to make these new establishments easily recognisable to their new, upmarket cus-

tomers, the brewers introduced a novel marketing strategy, 'place-product-packaging'. As Gutzke explains, 'trademarks and brand names became significant as early components of interrelated advertising. Once companies controlled retail outlets, advertising encompassed other significant facets - decorative colour motifs, building designs, signs, and logos. A complete design gradually emerged in which chains of appealing, homogeneous outlets showcased a product with uniformed staff and similar displays'. The most obvious of these markers was, of course, the building itself and four architectural styles were promoted by the brewer Progressives. The first to emerge, Brewers Tudor with its mock half-timbering, was soon ridiculed by the upper echelons of the architectural profession due to its very popularity. Neo-Georgian designs were looked upon more favourably, admired for its symmetry, reserve and simplicity. The third style, found mainly inside refurbished pubs, was 'Publicans rustic', a descendent of the Arts and Crafts movement. Only one type did not follow along these retrospective lines, the unloved Modern style, which was characterised by 'flat roofs, barren walls, unadorned surfaces, pronounced lines, metal-framed horizontal windows, curved shapes, streamlined countertops and chrome'. The most popular by far among brewers was the Neo-Georgian pub. For them it 'represented not so much a style as an aspiration: it symbolized their desire for self-controlled, courteous, and tranquil customers'. The rebuilding and improving of

pubs was undertaken on a massive scale, one newspaper reporting that nearly half of London's 5,000 taverns had been affected. Gutzke estimates that country-wide around 5,900 were built in the interwar years. Of course not all these can be termed 'improved public houses', but the figure does give some indication as to the level of construction during this time.

So what became of these pubs and the movement that inspired them? Gutzke explains that all but 50 remain, the rest being victims of a backlash which began as early as the 1930s. The conservative Brewers' Journal was particularly hostile; it 'denigrated public house reform as "a matter primarily of bricks and mortar" motivated by misguided middle-class reformers whose policies of social uplift patronized labourers. Nothing could be more condescending, it argued, than seeking advice from bourgeois social workers who treated the customer "as if he were a child or a mental defective". Environmentalism, one of the central precepts of Progressives, enraged the paper. It ridiculed the Royal Commission's conclusion that "the conditions in the best types of improved public-house today are a direct discouragement to insobriety" as "simply arrant nonsense". The actual design of the improved public house was also attacked; it was portrayed as a 'bastard child of genuine pub architecture'. Influential writers began to yearn for the traditional Victorian pub, a romanticised establishment a million miles away from

the cramped, airless, unhygienic and misogynistic reality. It is due to the voracity and influence of these critics that the improved public house and its attendant philosophy have been overlooked for over half a century. Thanks to professor Gutzke we can now appreciate the central role they have played in the evolution of the English pub. He also provides an excellent example of how any study of the public house cannot be divorced from its broader socio-political context.

Tim Holt

Bedfordshire Barrels - a directory of commercial breweries in the county

by Keith Osborne

Pp. 116. 2005. £9.00

ISBN 0-9528750-2-0

As its title tells us, this book is the story of commercial brewing in the County of Bedfordshire over the last 250 years. It is a welcome addition to the author's increasing series of books on the brewers of specific counties.

The format is familiar with each town and village appearing in alphabetical order. Within these categories, each brewery or brewer appears with details of what is known about them. For the more substantial firms, the tied estates at a certain date is often detailed. A useful guide for those looking to expand upon local research.

The author has included several useful appendices - The Biggleswade Brewery licensed properties in 1899; the Wells & Winch family tree; a list of Bedfordshire pubs owned by brewers resident outside the county and some notes on J.W. Green's take overs outside Bedfordshire. It utilises many illustrations from the author's extensive collection as well as trade adverts, letterheads and photographs.

Ken Smith

The Lost Pubs of Bath

by Andrew Swift and Kirsten Elliott
Pp. 400. Bath: Akeman Press, 2005.
£15.00
ISBN 0-9546183-4-8

BHS members Andrew Swift and his partner have added a third book to the series on Bath's licensed trade, which include Bath Ale in 2003 and Awash With Ale in 2004.

This book, whilst weighty in your hand, reads as a light hearted and loving history of some of the pubs lost from Bath and the surrounding district over the years. The layout of the book follows the style of a Victorian novel and includes those header paragraphs enjoyed by Dickens that say 'In which the Author ...'.

The text flows in narrative form and can be used as a walking guide to the sites described. But throughout the authors never get too serious, even suggesting

that one use of their work is to help 'support a table with one extremely short leg'. What is clear is that they take seriously their passion for the Bath pub scene, both past and present. Their objective for the book is to record all of Bath's pubs since 1776 - or before if records allow. They seem to have achieved it.

The coverage of each pub varies considerably as records allow. Some have several pages of detail where other are just the date of opening and closing. Even these latter are speculative in some cases. When lots of detail is given it is woven into a much broader local picture and can encompass some of the social history of the area as well as some of the events in the lives of that particular pub's clientele.

The photographs, maps, diagrams, deeds and occasional advertising images help illustrate the story. These are clear and with brief captions. However, some images could do with being a little large to help us better appreciate what it records.

Breweries do not feature too strongly in the book. A passing mention of Northgate Brewery and the Claverton Brewery and an appendix offers us a list of breweries in the area, but this has been extracted from Norman's Century - with acknowledgements.

I enjoyed reading this book and appreciate the authors attempts not to get too

serious about the whole thing. One day I would like to follow some of the routes so temptingly offered to us - if only there were more days in the week!

Ken Smith

Gloucestershire Pubs and Breweries

by Tim Edgell and Geoff Sandles.

Pp. 128. Stroud: Tempus Publishing,

2005. £12.99

ISBN 0-7524-3524-8

BHS members Tim and Geoff have created an excellent memorial to the brewers of Gloucestershire, illustrated in over 200 well reproduced photographs.

The format of this edition from Tempus differs from the book on Cardiff Pubs and Breweries in the same series. This one is essentially a picture book where the captions tell the story, rather than illustrate the text. Nevertheless, the history of the companies that traded in Gloucestershire is very clear. As with the Cardiff book, despite its title there are more brewery related photos than pubs ones.

The regions of the county are divided up and allocated a chapter. The authors then give us the story of the brewers of that area and their tied estates. For example the chapter on Cheltenham breweries is dominated by the Cheltenham Original Brewery Company which is tracked though the various changes in name, whereas the Cotswold chapter gives prominence to the Cirencester Brewery.

The Stroud Brewery Company dominates the chapter on Stroud but this does give the authors the opportunity to present some excellent internal views of the brewery. The Stroud area is covered in a separate chapter allowing us to be introduced to a number of the firms trading in that part of the county, including of course, Godsells.

Again, as with the Cardiff book, it is good to see that the authors include the micros in the overall story of brewing in the county.

An excellent, all round addition to anyone's library especially if you are interested in the area and how life, and brewing, was back then.

Ken Smith

A Bibliophile's Inn-Signia

by John Thorne

Pp. xii + 32. Dagenham: Barrel to Bottle Press, 1997. £7.00.

BHS member and well known book dealer, John Thorne, has produced an impressive bibliography of books and articles relating to inn signs.

Following an introduction in which the author discusses the difficulties of preparing a bibliography there is a set of notes explaining the entries and a list of sources. After this the main body of the text consists of over 250 entries listed alphabetically, by author. These entries cover a remarkable range of documents

and generally consist of a few descriptive sentences, although many entries are treated to a significant paragraph. The book is completed by a five page index of short titles.

An essential book for anyone with an interest in inn signs. Our thanks to John for donating a copy to the Society Archive.

Available from John Thorne (see advertisements) or the BHS Bookshop.

Jeff Sechiari

Peterborough Pub History Journal 1997.

Peterborough CAMRA

Pp. 32. Peterborough CAMRA. £1.50.

This book, which was produced by a team led by BHS member Steve Williams, consists of a series of short articles covering both post War and far earlier historical topics. It is attractively illustrated with black and white photographs, historical drawings and further drawings by archaeological illustrator Anne Stewardson, and is very readable. A good balance of the old and new, I was particularly pleased to read a history of the Ancient Order of Froth Blowers, an organisation which has featured in the Society's pages in the past.

As this is the second year of publication I assume that this will now become an annual series on Peterborough pub histo-

ry. Not only of interest to local people, I look forward to next year's volume.

(This and the 1996 edition are available from the BHS Bookshop, the latter priced £1.00)

Jeff Sechiari

Ryde Pubs - An illustrated history.

by Kevin Mitchell

Pp. xii + 133. Island Books. £9.95.

ISBN 1-898198-14-4

Kevin Mitchell spent his holidays in the 1970s working as a drayman's mate, a job which included helping to clear out closed pubs on occasions. Because of this he started to record the pubs of Ryde, resulting in this book.

A very readable introduction covering the development of Ryde as a town in general, and its breweries and licensed houses in particular, is followed by a series of chapters on the pubs themselves. Each chapter covers a different area of the town and includes a page for each house with a brief written history and one or more illustrations.

These histories identify a wide range of earlier names for many houses and the mainly historic photographs remind the reader of the lost brewers of the Island. Although there is a wonderful selection of photographs within the book, the quality of reproduction is the one area of disappointment.

Two appendices give the Chief Constable's report to the 1905 General Annual Licensing Meeting and a table comparing drunkenness rates for Ryde's 95 licensed premises with those of other towns of a similar size, and seaside resorts. The report provides interesting details on a number of less desirable houses recommended for closure. An alphabetical index of pubs mentioned (almost 110) completes the book, which will be full of interest with memories of visits to 'The Garden Isle'.

(Available from the BHS bookshop)

Jeff Sechiari

Cardiff Pubs and Breweries

by Brian Glover.

Pp. 128. Stroud: Tempus Publishing,

2005. £12.99

ISBN 0-7524-3110-2

This is another in the Tempus series by well known beer writer Brian Glover. The author opens his story of brewing in the city of Cardiff with a detailed description of the clash between Temperance and the industrial city. He looks at the ramifications on the licensed trade as well as covering the industrial growth of the town. He describes it as a 'battlefield' between drink and work.

The early common brewers are introduced then each of the more familiar and famous names are given detailed histories, all of which are well illustrated. I was particularly pleased to see the author

giving space to more recent events rather than spending all the space covering their older history. This shows that brewery history did not stop in the 1960s.

Brains, Hancocks, Elys and Crosswells as the major players, are given ample coverage and the author shows the struggles each had to maintain independence and carry on brewing. The board room battles are given space as are the characters who fought those skirmishes. Some new arrivals on the brewing scene in the shape of the micros are given a similar treatment.

In a chapter on beer as a product, the author gives a clear explanation on what makes Welsh ale different from say, English or Scottish ale. He ties it back to the firms but nevertheless this chapter looks at the history of Welsh beer rather than the history of the firms that made it. Despite the description in the title, the chapter on Cardiff pubs is brief in comparison to the detail in the rest of the book.

The author frequently returns to the underlying theme of Temperance and gives space to some of the producers of non-alcoholic beverages.

Despite the lack of an index, it is a valuable narrative that reflects the shift of the city from a creation of the Industrial Revolution to a modern commercial city. As I would expect from a renowned expert like the author, the narrative is unambiguous, the research sound, the quotes well presented and the illustra-

tions clear and relevant. The latter featuring adverts, labels and photographs.

Ken Smith

Coopers and Coopering

by Ken Kilby

Pp. 64. Princes Risborough: Shire Books, 2004. £5.99

ISBN 0-7478-0584-9

The author is Vice President and founder member of the Tools and Trades History Society and from a family of coopers. He worked under his father at Green's of Luton and his uncle was the owner the cooperage of Samuel Kilby & Sons of Banbury.

The book gives a history of how barrels are made and how this construction evolved. The book introduces us to the language of the cooper defining terms such as 'duck', 'dinge Hoops' and 'knocker-up'. We are also given a review of the vast array of specialist tools used in the trade.

There is a useful section covering past usage of barrels including - I was surprised to learn - a submarine. Modern usage of the barrel is also covered. There is a valuable index and a list of where barrel makings can still be seen. Well illustrated and very informative and is a good addition to the Shire series.

Ken Smith

Hull Pubs and Breweries

by Paul Gibson.

Pp. 128. Stroud: Tempus Publishing, 2004. £12.99.

ISBN 0-7524-3284-2

In this book in the Images of England series, the author adopts the familiar historical/nostalgic picture album format that seems very popular at the moment.

The introduction sets the scene with regard to the historical research and pubs in the Hull area. The photos vary from the earliest known image to the.

The captions are detailed and informative and usefully supplement the main text, adding to the story we can already deduce from the pictures. Where possible the author lets his readers know the fate of the building he is writing about.

Of course the photos are evocative and reflect a time long gone. Some are of old inns and public houses whilst other of 1930s brewers' Tudor style. Room is even found for 1950/60 urban plain and a number of off-license photos.

Hull had the misfortune not only to be bombed in the Second World War but also in the First. Several Hull pubs suffered and they are featured.

A whole chapter on the Hull Breweries gives us a view of the HBC inside and out with a good selection of views of each of the main areas of the brewery and their methods of transport.

There is a good selection (potentially never seen before) of Moors and Robsons. These photos come from a private collection mainly featuring the people of the brewery, work colleagues of the photographer.

Primarily a photo book, there is a useful small list of extant brewery adverts for those of you wishing to walk the city looking for the past and a couple of suggestions for brewery/pub based walks.

Ken Smith

Foxearth Brew: The History of an East Anglian Brewery

by Richard Morris

Pp. 126. Foxearth: Foxearth District History Society, 2004. £7.95.
ISBN 0-9548193-0-6

Mr Morris is a professional journalist this being his first book on local history. This helps with both the literary standard and the picture of the broader world and village life. It tells the story of the Ward family brewers, based on private letters and wills.

However, I am still a little confused about the origins of the concern, since one could have a slightly different take on the auction sale mentioned on page 13. Perhaps more on the family links eg Christmas family brewing in Haverhill and also the Marshall family would be appreciated for our more specialist interests. Other links which are well worth noting are in 1890 Fuller brewer from Bedford

family. Similarly Baileys of the Panton brewery at Cambridge had been pupils and with whom there was discussion of franchising the brand around 1910.

The latter point emphasises their role as a fairly progressive little concern. For example in 1886 their installation of a bottling plant was second only to Whitbread. They were also very early in the use of chilling and filtering. Even more fascinating was that in the 1950s they experimented with developing lager from a Lambik style yeast!

The book includes a good coverage of the final years, which as most know were somewhat confusing. I was also interested to note that the FVs and copper went to Sheps and wondered if there were any remains. Overall a fascinating addition to anyone's library.

(This book is also available online at: <http://foxearth.org.uk/FoxearthBrew/FoxearthBrew/htm>)

Mike Brown

Further to Rob Woolley's review in Journal Number 120 Autumn 2005 of Birmingham Breweries by Joseph McKenna. Another excellent publication, which however raises one or two issues. For example the term 'Home Brewed Ales' is a particular problem in the Midlands, see for example the illustration on page 14. As pointed out in Century the term was often used by wholesale

brewers to describe a local product, not necessarily brewed in that pub.

The text doesn't always make clear that brewing had taken place previously at a location. It might be better to say 'by' rather than 'in', i.e. for trade directory entries. I am also not sure about the definition of 'retail brewers', since some of those in the list were wholesale concern. It also includes agencies of firms located elsewhere and botanical brewers.

Overall the book shows some very good research and sheds some well needed light on an area that has always posed difficulties for the brewery historian. I was fascinated to read that Homer's Vulcan brewery is now the site of HP Sauces. Must get the camera and have a closer look to see if there might be any remains.

Mike Brown