

BOOK REVIEWS

Brewing Local: American-Grown Beer

By Hieronymus, S.

Boulder, CO: Brewers Publicatons

2016, Pp.xxi + 340, \$19.95

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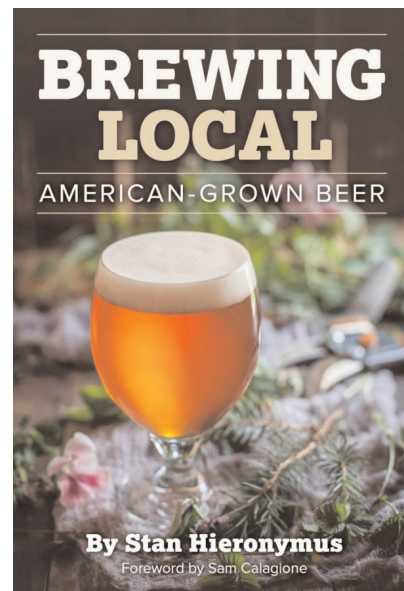
Stan Hieronymus' *Brewing Local: American-Grown Beer* is not a typical book on beer, beer history, or brewing. It discusses all of these topics but is not focused entirely on any one of them. Rather, it is a work that sets out to highlight the non-industrial (or craft) nature of beer in America, both historically and through the current craft beer movement. The author is well known for his beer journalism and his three earlier books on beer and brewing (*For the Love of Hops*, *Brew Like a Monk*, and *Brewing with Wheat*). This latest work addresses a number of themes he has written about for years, but it is focused more narrowly on the rise, fall, and rebirth of beers and brewing techniques that reflect their immediate geography.

The Table of Contents divides the book into four sections (Part I: Local, Now and Then; Part II: Where Beer is Grown; Part III: From Farms, Gardens, Fields and Woods; and Part IV: Brewing Local), yet to this reader it seems to be more broadly divided between a first half (Parts I and II) that discusses the historical and philosophical dimensions of local beer and brewing and a second half (Parts III and IV) that provides more detailed discussion of the ingredients local beers can utilize along with a handful of recipes. Yet, despite including over 40 pages of recipes, the author emphasizes that this 'is not a how to book', (p. 164), recommending that readers look elsewhere for detailed help with brewing techniques. So then, what kind of book is this?

Well, at a broad level, it is an ambitious volume designed to reframe conversations about how and what

we think of beer in the US: 'This is a book about brewing beer with American-grown ingredients, only a few of which were used in making beer during much of the twentieth century' (p. xvi). As this statement intriguingly suggests, the focus here is on the surprisingly wide array of materials that brewers used for several centuries in the US before the arrival of more standardized beers that characterized production between the late 19th -late 20th century. He is interested in connecting some of the dots between recent craft brewers and those earlier, pre-mass producers whose brewing was not determined by (or limited by) the strong traditional preferences of German immigrant brewers (and drinkers).

He goes on to summarize his objective: 'The book begins where science and art meet, and considers why



some beers taste of a specific place ... The goal here is not to offer a complete history of American brewing, but to examine specific beers, ingredients, and processes that influenced where beer is today' (xviii). Clearly, the language here is different from that typically used by brewing historians who more commonly look to explain industry level trends or brewery-specific challenges and accomplishments.

While the whole book is worthwhile, readers of this journal will be particularly interested in the chapters which comprise Part 1: Local, Now and Then. Here, the author documents how beer has changed over three different time periods: pre-industrial (pre-1870), industrial (1870-present) and craft (1980-present). Whereas most brewing industry historians are strong on history and relatively weaker on the technical issues related to brewing, Hieronymus is an acknowledged expert in brewing and he draws adroitly on this understanding in his various analyses of how beers were made in different eras.

For this reviewer, the most thought-provoking sections in the book were those involving the concept of terroir and the question of what localness means to brewing. As someone who has written about the history of the US brewing industry (disclosure - Hieronymus references some of my work here), I was particularly intrigued by his extensive discussion of terroir, a concept I (and I'm sure many readers) more commonly associate with wine. In fact, I'm not sure I have ever encountered the use of this word in any academic discussions of beer and brewing history. Yet, Hieronymus argues quite persuasively that ingredients, styles, and environment can shape beer flavor and taste as much as they do wine. It is this discussion on taste and localness that at times seems more philosophical than historical. He persuasively shows that for much of its four hundred-year history, beer in colonial America (and then in the early United States) often reflected its nearby environment. From this perspective, the recent movement by a growing number of craft brewers to emphasize local ingredients and local yeasts-their terroir-harkens back to its pre-industrial past.

Chapter 3, titled King Corn, reviews the rise of the large-scale lager breweries that came to dominate the US industry in the late 19th and 20th centuries. In this view, the rise of scientific, mass production brewing

suppressed the variety, the localness, the individuality that had characterized so much brewing that came before it. It is an important chapter as he shows how industrial breweries changed the nature of what constituted beer in the US and this complements existing studies that analyze how the broader brewing industry changed during this period.

The real contribution of this volume, though, lies less in its discussion of any specific time period than in its connection of the wide variety of pre-industrial beers and styles to some of the new offerings from innovative craft breweries who have begun reintroducing the sense of terroir to beer. His interviews with brewers from Jester King (near Austin, Texas), Prairie Ales (Tulsa, Oklahoma), Crane (Kansas City, Missouri) and Scratch (Ava, Illinois) are particularly interesting, as they detail some of the ways current breweries are looking to interact with and reflect their immediate environment.

So, having discussed what the book does well, let's review a few of its gaps. Overall, the book does a better job of discussing what happened rather than why. Two key questions emerging from this volume are: a) why did localness fall out of fashion as craft gave way to industrial beer in the late 19th century and b) why did some craft brewers rediscover an interest in local? Stated more broadly, why do beer producers and consumers in different eras value (or not value) localness? Along this vein, does the recent craft brewery interest in terroir relate to broader socio-cultural developments such as the Slow Food movement and the Farm to Table trend?

Despite these questions, this book is a much-needed addition to the literature on beer and brewing. Historians of the brewing industry will want to explore in more detail the reasons for the decline in and resurrection of terroir in American brewing. And, while this book is focused on the US, the issues raised here certainly apply to many other beer markets whose production has become industrialized and whose current consumers and craft producers may wonder about what role their immediate geography can play in their own beers.

MARTIN STACK

Brewing Revolution: Pioneering the Craft Beer Movement

By Appleton, F.

Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing

2016, Pp.210, \$Can 24.95

ISBN 978 1 55017 782 4

The Canadian brewing industry has passed through many of the same phases in its evolution as the more comprehensively studied industry in the United States: Like its counterpart south of the border, Canadian brewing emerged as a significant industry between 1865 and 1915; went through the dark years of prohibition from about 1915 to 1930; experienced a renaissance between 1930 and 1945; witnessed the emergence of a national brewing oligopoly after the Second World War; saw the onset of a craft beer revolution in the early 1980s; and underwent significant restructuring since 1990 due to globalization.

While our understanding of the Canadian brewing industry has increased recently, particularly since 2011 when historians were granted access to the Labatt Collection at the University of Western Ontario, we still know relatively little about the microbrewery revolution in Canada. Frank Appleton's book *Brewing Revolution: Pioneering the Craft Beer Movement* helps to fill this gap in our knowledge. *Brewing Revolution* is a memoir about the triumphs and tribulations of a craft brewer, builder and consultant. At one level, the book can be read as a how-to guide - full of colourful anecdotes and advice - for would-be craft brewers. At another level, it is an eye-witness account of the rise of the craft brewing movement in Canada.

Appleton was the co-founder of Canada's first craft brewery, the Horseshoe Bay Brewery, which in 1982 was constructed in an empty 770 square-foot boat shop at Sewell's Marina in Vancouver, on Canada's west coast. Other microbreweries soon followed, especially in those areas where there were a large number of expats from Britain 'thirsting for a good old pint' (p.81). Today there are more than 530 microbreweries in Canada, producing approximately 10% of all the beer made in the country. Appleton traces the roots of this revolution in craft brewing back to the 1950s, '60s and '70s when three big brewers - Labatt, Molson and Canadian Breweries Ltd. (CBL) - dominated the national beer market, producing over 95% of all the beers sold.

An English-born, college-trained microbiologist, Appleton began his career in the brewing industry in 1964 when he was hired as a quality control supervisor at one of CBL's subsidiaries, the O'Keefe brewery in Vancouver. While he was fascinated by the art and science of brewing, he was dismayed by the way O'Keefe and the other big Canadian brewers made their beer. Since the mid 1950s, the 'big three' had been producing milder, lighter beers in an effort to appeal to as many beer drinkers as possible. To make these lighter tasting beers, the big three often diluted the mash with non-malt cereal. At O'Keefe this was done by adding corn grits. The amount of corn grits added to the brew represented about forty percent of the mash recipe. In addition to making the beer appear clearer and taste lighter, corn grits were about a third of the price of barley malt. Thus, Appleton came to the disturbing conclusion that: 'We [at the big three] were dealing with the bottom line' (p.9). To make matter worse, the big three breweries 'were cranking out the same kind of beer, practically indistinguishable on the palates of our carefully conducted taste panels' (p.10). The money that they saved by producing similar tasting brands went into massive marketing campaigns designed 'to persuade us that this new lighter beer was the beer of the post-war generation the young, active, with-it crowd of both men and women' (p.184).

Appleton's account lends anecdotal evidence to the fact that the big three were primarily interested in promoting a few national flagship brands - e.g. Labatt Blue, Molson Canadian, and Carling Black Label - rather than making innovative products for the local marketplace. When Appleton suggested making a Kaffir brew to one senior O'Keefe executive, he was told it was a good idea and to write his suggestion down so that it could be brought to the attention of the board of directors. It was not Appleton's first suggestion. But Appleton's calls for more exciting, better quality brews went unanswered.

For reasons described in chapter 5, CBL went into decline in the late 1960s. Canadian Breweries had been the first of the big three to 'go national'. The company's outspoken president, Edward Plunkett Taylor - known as 'Excess Profits Taylor' to his critics - was among the first in Canada to recognize the advantages of marketing and distributing brands on a national basis. Taylor understood that advertising expenditures per barrel and marginal benefits of advertising were greater for nation-

al rather than regional or local brewers. In theory, Taylor could have produced his 'national brands' in his plants in Ontario and Quebec and then shipped them to the east and the west. Such was the approach taken by the 'shipping brewers' (e.g. Anheuser Busch, Schlitz, Miller and Coors) in the United States. But due to the immense distance in Canada, it was not practical for breweries in Central Canada - where CBL, Labatt and Molson were based - to ship their beer to the east and west and compete with regional breweries. In addition, provincial governments had set up the equivalent of tariff barriers against imports from other provinces. As a result, Taylor concluded that the proper course was to purchase a number of prosperous regional concerns. By the mid 1950s, CBL operated a string of breweries across the nation and was promoting Dow, O'Keefe, and Carling as its flagship brands. Soon thereafter Labatt and Molson followed suit.

Having gone national, CBL looked abroad for opportunities for growth, expanding into the Bahamas and the American Southwest. But as Appleton makes note, these ventures were unsuccessful for a variety of reasons. In the U.S. Southwest, CBL failed to test-market its products. 'Test-marketing is essential when you are thinking of moving into unknown territory', Appleton

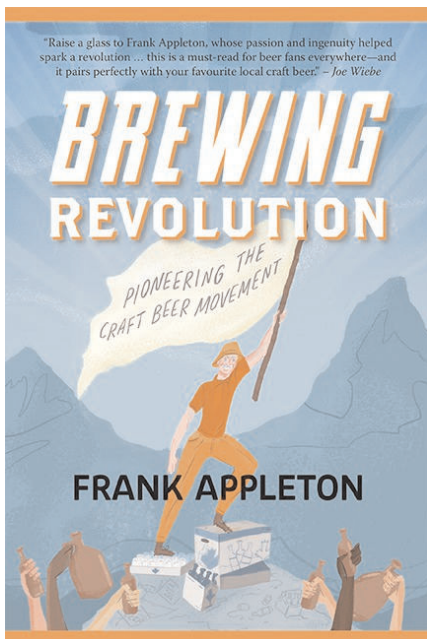
writes, 'but so sure of success were the CBL executives that they seem to have ignored test-marketing entirely' (p.38). Thus the unknown Carling brands were met with indifference by Americans and the \$8 million brewery was sold off within a year for \$5.5 million. Furthering CBL decline was the fact that its flagship beer, Dow Ale, was implicated in the premature deaths of sixteen Canadians who had died of cardiomyopathy - a weakening of the heart to the point where it was unable to pump the necessary blood through the body. Apparently, Dow had been adding cobalt sulphate to its beer in order to improve the stability of the foam 'head'. When Appleton heard the news on his radio in 1966, he could not believe his ears. 'Cobalt! A heavy metal! What were these people thinking?' (p.39). These strategic blunders caused a precipitous decline in CBL's financial performance.

By 1969, CBL had fallen to a distant third in the business of brewing in Canada. As a result, E.P. Taylor decided to sell the firm to the British tobacco giant Rothmans, which renamed the brewery after its two flagship brands, Carling O'Keefe. The new owners did not see the value of the show-piece plant where Appleton worked in BC, and in 1972 it was announced that the plant would be closed for good. Appleton was offered a job elsewhere in the organization, but felt it was a 'squeeze play' and turned it down. Still in his early thirties, he moved to the wilds of the Kootenays and started a new life as a homesteader and freelance writer.

In 1978, *Harrowsmith Magazine* published Appleton's article, 'The Underground Brewmaster', in which he railed against big beer:

Like tasteless white bread and the universal cardboard hamburger, the new beer [of the big three] is produced for the tasteless common dominator. It must not offend anyone, anywhere. Corporate beer is not too heavy, not too bitter, not too alcoholic, not too malty, not too gassy or yeasty (p.51).

Appleton's article was a call-to-arms for would-be craft brewers. He advised people to start brewing their own beer, since not only was it much cheaper than the beer that Canadians were purchasing at government-regulated outlets, but 'if you did it right, you could make a better more satisfying drink than what the big guys produced' (p.50). The article caught the eye of John Mitchel, another ex-pat from England who was running the Troller Pub in Horseshoe Bay. Mitchel was inspired



by the 'Real Ale' movement in Britain, which had seen British drinkers mobilize, beginning in 1971, against the bland, standardized products of mass production and in support of beer conditioned in casks with no additives or preservatives. Mitchel decided he wanted to build a brewery to supply his pub with real ale like he had tasted in England. Having read 'The Underground Brewmaster', he knew he needed to conscript Frank Appleton to help him out. Together the two built Canada's first craft brewery.

There were challenges, of course. It was very difficult at the start of the revolution to get the ingredients necessary to brew real ale in Canada. As a result, Appleton and Mitchel had to import their yeast and malt from England, while Fuggles and Kent Goldings hops were brought in from Yakima, Washington and the Willamette Valley in Oregon. Appleton's decision to import malt from England angered those at the Canada Malting Company, which was Western Canada's only malting firm. Canada Malt wrote Appleton a letter hinting that it might be 'against trade laws to make and sell beer in Canada made from imported malt'. There was also the problem of getting a license from the Liquor Control and Licensing Branch of the Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs in BC. As Appleton makes note, 'the parsimonious provincial liquor boards in Canada treated licenses to make and sell beer as if they were licenses to make explosives, the applicants potential miscreants' (p.109). Eventually these obstacles were overcome and on 17 June 1982 the Troller Pub started serving real ale from the Horseshoe Bay Brewery.

After the Horseshoe Bay Brewery opened, Appleton began a new career as one of the world's leading microbrewery consultants, responsible for building the breweries at Swans Brewpub in Victoria, Yaletown Brewing in Vancouver, Friday's Bar in Winnipeg and at Tin Whistle Brewing in Penticton. He also designed and oversaw the construction of the Humbolt Brewery in Arcata, California and Deschutes Brewpub in Bend, Oregon. According to Appleton, it was far easier to build and operate a microbrewery in the United States than in Canada. This was due to the liberal licensing laws and the free-enterprise attitude south of the border. In British Columbia, if you were granted a brewpub license, you could only sell your beer in your pub, not to other licensees - a situation that inhibited the growth of brewpub beers until the law was changed in 2001. In the

western states, on the other hand, the attitude was, as Appleton puts it: 'You want to sell your beer to other outlets. Go ahead!' (pp.114-15).

If there is any shortcoming of this book it is that the reader is often forced to accept Appleton's statements and supposition at face value. This is because there are no references or citations. (The book also does not have an index.) For example, there is no cited evidence to support Appleton's claim that the big three were giving cash kickbacks to the retail outlet operators to the tune of \$6 a keg (p.83). In addition, there is little evidence to support his claim that the big three were "smug" when it came to their position in the industry and the threat posed by the microbrewery revolution. Appleton quotes one big brewery executive as saying 'If it [i.e. craft brewing] was a good idea, we would have done it by now' (p.183). In reality the response of the big three was more nuanced. At Canada's biggest brewery, John Labatt Ltd., executives took the public stance that they 'welcomed' the brewpubs. 'We usually cannot win a public debate against the small guy', stated Labatt's Vice President of Corporate Development and Public Affairs, R.A. Binnendyk, on 9 July 1984, 'in most cases we end up with egg on our face'. Binnendyk therefore suggested that Labatt 'should appear to be welcoming people who might enhance the intrigue of the industry'.¹ But behind the scenes the company was vigorously lobbying various provincial governments to force the new brewpubs to carry their packaged beer. Admittedly a book can only do so much, and an author is often bound by time and financial constraints. That being said, if Appleton had examined the Labatt Collection or the Molson Fonds (in Ottawa), he would have found some riveting empirical evidence to support some of his claims.

This criticism should not detract from what is, overall, a very good book. *Brewing Revolution* is an engaging read for anyone with a thirst for the history of Canadian brewing and aspiring craft brewers around the globe seeking to learn the tricks of the trade from a pioneer of the craft brewery movement.

MATTHEW J. BELLAMY

1. R.A. Binnendyk to J.R. McLeod (9 July 1984), Labatt Collection, Box A08-053-337.

Empire of Booze: British history through the bottom of a glass

By Jeffreys, H.

London: Unbound

2016, Pp.304, £12.99

ISBN 978 1 783522248

Henry Jeffreys is a Leeds-born and educated, London-based consumer wine writer who also writes on other drinks. At 40, he is in the top echelon of younger writers and probably of wine writing in general. After leaving university he worked in wine retailing, and then in publishing for many years while doing freelance writing on drinks, but now writes full-time.

His name regularly appears in the quality press and high-end magazines such as *The Spectator* and *The Economist*. He reaches a broader audience via BBC Good Food, Radio 4, and his website, World of Booze (<https://worldofbooze.wordpress.com/>), amongst other media.

Empire of Booze is Jeffreys' first book and likely considerably to enhance his reputation. Jeffreys' journalism is topical yet informed often by a scholarly bent and a dry, off-the-wall sense of humour. He is a very 'English' writer and reading him one is sometimes reminded of old-school drinks writers, e.g., George Saintsbury who wrote *Notes on a Cellar-Book*, or Cyril Ray. His tone is variously 'clubbable', straight narrative, and even edgy: it is a unique blend, just as some of the drinks described in *Empire of Booze*.

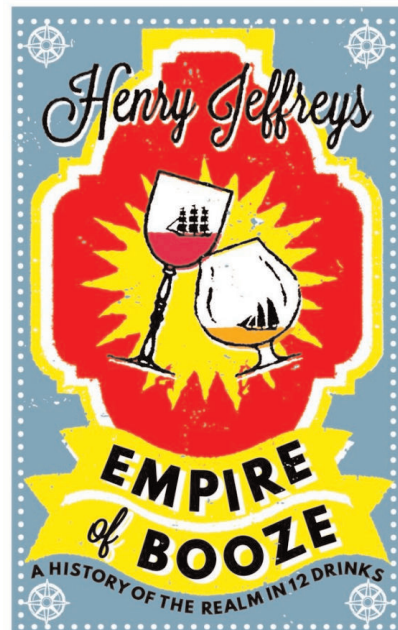
Empire of Booze is notable for being primarily a work of cultural and social history while also being, although to a much lesser extent, a buyer's guide. Think Saintsbury sans the ornate prose and Latin with an addendum of personal favourites and tips on good values. Like Saintsbury too, he has essayed a wide compass in the book, covering a baker's dozen of drinks. Jeffreys has never limited himself to wine and in this sense is an outlier in drinks writing today as much of it tends to focus on one drink, beer, say, or Cognac, or gin. Jeffreys takes on all these and more including and cider, red Bordeaux, rum ('the devil's drink'), madeira, whisky and Champagne.

The book's stated object is to consider what Jeffreys terms - bear in mind his brand of humour - 'perhaps our greatest legacy', the 'alcoholic [domain]'. Using sec-

ondary sources but also letters and other private papers provided by some producers, he weaves an entirely convincing tale that many of the world's great drinks were created since the 1600s by Britons either at home or often abroad, as part of commercial endeavour which is part of Britain's imperial past.

In the chapters, he reviews the history (primarily since the Restoration) of all the drinks mentioned and shows how British enterprise shaped by military, economic, and political factors helped produce these drinks in their modern form, in places as diverse as Gascony, Sicily, and India. British merchants in Lisbon and Oporto were exploiting the Portuguese desire for salt cod and the Newfoundland market for woollens, resulting in a triangular trade which sent garments to the new world, brought cod to Iberia, and sent wine home to thirsty England. Jeffreys explains that many wine merchants resident in colonies or foreign centres of influence started as dealers in fish or cloth.

But British tastes played an essential role, too. A recurring theme is how the British wanted not just more drink than their native productions supplied, but strong drink. This led, in part, to the taste for fortified and sweetened



wines which existed in drier, less potent forms on their home turf. Sometimes the equation was reversed, as when evolving British tastes changed Champagne into primarily a dry wine from the sweet dessert version favoured on the Continent.

In 'Drinking The Empire', a section which terminates most chapters, he will often give an example of a surviving, pre-Britishized drink, for example, 'verginé', a fortified but not sweetened form of marsala ('every inch the luxury product'). In the beer chapter, he advises to taste American India Pale Ale as an example of IPA in its Victorian British pomp. In this regard, perhaps he should have mentioned that the American hop signature, a result of terroir if there ever was one, was disliked in 19th century English brewing circles, but nonetheless the general point made is valid.

The trademark Jeffreys humour, frequently on parade in the journalistic work, is less evident here. The book's purpose and theme are serious and he sticks mostly to the script. But occasionally he lets go, often in a footnote, e.g., when he states that at one time, one was not allowed to write about sherry without mentioning vicars and maiden aunts. Some of the fun is more pointed as when he implies that Parisian tasters of IPA talked, flirted, and smoked too much while ingesting too little - missing the point, that is - or the British point.

One of the advantages of a survey approach is one can see connections and Jeffreys makes a number of good ones. For example, calcium sulphate (gypsum) is a mineral in the water used to brew Burton pale ale but was also added to madeira, perhaps in both cases assisting fermentation, clarity, and stability. His discussion of innovations in glass bottle production for cider, but also port and other drinks, is illuminating, and shows the bibulous world is united by more than just ethyl alcohol. Advertising techniques are discussed and compared, e.g., for Guinness stout and Scotch whisky's rapid spread through Empire and beyond.

Jeffreys notes the ubiquity of blending older and newer production in the history of porter but also in the famous sherry solera, a way to add dashes of maturity to a drink retaining withal a fruity allure and youthful vibrancy.

He shows that the rise of blended Scotch whisky is the result of a complex matrix of factors including phyllox-

era in France, the Victorian phenomenon of 'Highlandism', savvy Scots marketing, and the reach of Empire.

The beer chapter, which discusses the development of India Pale Ale and porter, benefits from recent advances in research which have shown for example that porter had a larger sale in the sub-Continent than pale ale and that pale ale likely has origins in the October brewing tradition. He misses that the story of a capsized vessel whose cargo of pale ale destined for India was sold at salvage in England is actually true and may have contributed to the popularity of IPA in Britain. Perhaps the manuscript was approved for publication before this research came to Jeffreys' attention.

Given probably the academic focus of Alan Pryor's writings in this journal recently arguing that storage of porter was a strategy to deal with changing prices for key inputs, this insight is not reflected in the beer chapter.

In the context of the book (its scope and unifying theme) the beer discussion is adequate but not among its strengths. One suspects Jeffreys' heart is in the wine and spirits area, not so much beer, and primarily cider, sherry, port, gin, and whisky.

The book concludes on an apposite note, which is that due to the Internet and post-Imperial world, the many great drinks invented by Britons or which became legion with their commercial or technical efforts (e.g., the invention of the continuous still), are now a common bibulous legacy - of the world, not just Anglo-America and Europe. This is resulting in many variations to the established categories of commerce, e.g., the plethora of beer 'styles', the 'natural wine' phenomenon, and the lively craft spirits scene. But again, as Jeffreys understood, the cornerstones of this luxury of choice - IPA and stout, London dry gin, Bordeaux wine, aged rum, aged brandy, resulted in large measure from British enterprise, the apt taste buds of the British public, or both.

There is little for this reviewer to cavil with in the book, which was published by an innovative subscription method pioneered by Unbound of London. The Cognac chapter is very short, perhaps this is due to the fact that so much of excellence has been written on the subject. There is the odd bit of repetition, e.g., that Douro vine-

yards still often feature mixed grape varieties which go into some wines. The statement is made, too, that sherried malt from The Macallan (a premier Speyside malt whisky) can be detected in the blended whisky, Famous Grouse. The reviewer understands however that The Macallan sold into the blending market, albeit a 'top-dressing', is from non-sherried casks.

But considering the mass of detail marshalled in the book and the impressive thought-power applied, this is ... small beer.

GARY GILLMAN
www.beeretseq.com

Ghost Signs of Bath

By Swift, A. & Elliott, K.

Bath: Akeman Press

2016, Pp.i-xi & 292, £16.99

ISBN 978-0-993388-0-3

Ghost signs are faded advertisements for products and businesses that were painted on the walls of old buildings. Global interest and concern for their survival has grown rapidly in recent times with celebrity endorsement by the designer Wayne Hemingway, an online archive created by the History of Advertising Trust and the publication last year of a scholarly collection of essays: *Advertising and Public Memory: Social, Cultural and Historical Perspectives on Ghost Signs*, edited by Stefan Schutt, Sam Roberts & Leanne Wright. This international and interdisciplinary study examines such aspects as cultural meaning, urban change, modernity and belonging, local history and place-making and a resurgence of interest in hand-made as opposed to mass-produced media.

The World Heritage City of Bath is famous for its architecture and townscapes but can also be proud of the number, quality and antiquity of its ghost signs. Some 160 in Bath and the surrounding area are identified in this book which has been in the making for the past ten years. The first chapter provides a brief history of signs and signwriting in the city and elsewhere. Hanging signs were the customary way to draw attention to a business in early times, often making use of images that

could more easily identify different trades in an age of partial literacy, but these were banned by Bath Corporation in 1766 and were then either mounted on walls or replaced by painted signs that took well to the smooth Bath limestone. Signwriting was an artisan trade, often combined with another occupation, and reached a peak of excellence in the 1820s as householders were prepared to hire their walls for display, gable-ends being particularly sought after during the heyday of these signs. However, the hanging sign began to reappear in the later 19th century and in 1926 the corporation began to lay down conditions for the care of buildings and restricted painting on walls. The development of mass-produced copy on billboards and the introduction of A-boards and other media took over the role of the painted sign in the last century.

The bulk of the book is organised around a series of guided walks in Bath and nearby small towns and villages to introduce the reader to the surviving ghost signs - or remaining fragments of much-faded examples - with detailed commentary and the stories behind these fading images. The focus here is on business, local and social history and, in Bath, the development and expansion of the city in the period when these signs were painted. The authors make extensive use of local histories, Bath's comprehensive series of directories, census records, leases, newspaper files and historic maps to date document these stories.

As such, they shed much light on the overall development of small family businesses in Victorian and Edwardian days and redress some of the relative neglect of Bath's interesting commercial and business past, so easily overshadowed by the usual focus on its architecture and literary heritage. Only a few examples can be mentioned here. In particular, it is interesting to note the number of people who moved into the city from the surrounding countryside to seek their fortunes and the shifts in fate and circumstance that affected their lives and businesses. Some laid the foundations of businesses that survived until recent times whilst others experienced failure and tragedy. An example of the latter is the fate of George Henry Chapman whose sign is mentioned on the walk around Widcombe and Bathwick. Chapman was born in Corsham in 1871, the son of a stonemason who later became a tailor. He was living in Bath by 1901 and soon set up in business in Sussex place where vestiges of his sign remain. A bach-

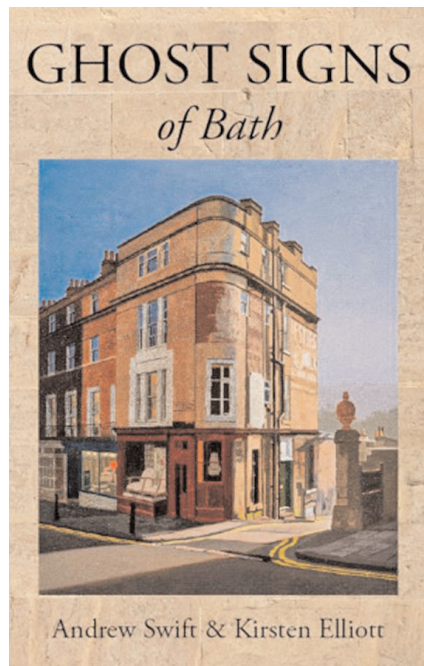
elor and master tailor, his life was to end at the age of 54 when he was found dead in his workroom, poisoned by coal gas: he had covered his face with a rug and placed it close to the heater that was used to warm the irons that he used in his trade. He had, apparently, been deeply affected by the inquiries of the Trade Board into the wages that he paid to his employees. The coroner, commenting on the premises, observed that ‘some good work was being done there’.

As might be expected of authors and publishers of a trilogy of books on pubs and drinking in Bath and the pubs and inns of Somerset, Wiltshire and Devon, the ghost signs in this book reveal much of interest about beer, malting, brewing and licensed premises. One might expect to come across Britain’s oldest registered trademark - the Bass red triangle - and one that has been painted over survives in Bath on the wall of premises in Margaret’s Buildings that served as a grocery store and a wine merchants for 100 years. It is a surprise, however, to find evidence of the availability of beers from much further afield such as ‘Findlater’s Stout’, as advertised on the wall of the King William IV on Combe Down. Imperial Dublin Stout from their Mountjoy Brewery was distributed in these parts in the mid-19th century by an agency in Bristol.

Bath was to lose its larger breweries before many towns of similar size suffered a similar fate but a number of its home brew pubs soldiered on into the 20th century. Evidence of many of these defunct pubs and beer houses is included in the guided walks. The last of the city’s home brew houses to operate was the George and Dragon in Batheaston which still has its gas-light advertising ‘HOME BREWED BEERS’. The commentary here includes details of the ownership of this pub from the 1840s with additional notes on its malting and brewing history - brewing was still in progress in the 1950s and is mentioned in the introduction to Peter Mathias’s classic history of the industry that was published in 1959. The last brew took place in the following year. The White Hart, a brewery and the pub on Twerton High Street to the west of the old city centre, met with an earlier fate - it was closed by the Bath Brewery and eventually sold to the Twerton Lodge of Good Templars, a body committed to total abstinence. They burnt the old vats and all other traces of its former life but its replacement, an institute and restaurant, did not last long and the building was converted to cottages.

Other ghost signs relate to the city’s malting and brewery businesses. The remnants of the sign on the former malt house on Sydney Buildings with frontage on the Kennet & Avon Canal record its acquisition by Glasgow maltsters Hugh Baird & Sons Ltd in the 1930s, evidence of their expansion into England. When advertised for sale in 1898 it had a capacity to steep 30 quarters of barley and two floors on which to work the growing crop prior to kilning into malt. Both floors were described as ‘partially underground’ thus making it capable of summer working in a trade that was often suspended in the summer months at this time. Baird worked this house until 1973 and also operated a much larger modern plant on Broad Quay in central Bath.

Some signs also commemorate past brewers and their premises. As mentioned above, Bath kept its home brew houses longer than many areas in the region and words ‘Home Brewd Beer’ on the wall of the Old Crown in Weston still draw attention to its surviving brew house building that was in use as such until 1862. The advert for the auction of the plant is included in this book - this included a 70- gallon copper which gives us some idea of its brewing capacity. Weston also had a number of common breweries over the years and their complex



history is outlined here as is the role of Henry Pointing and his family in the trade.

The final chapter focuses on lost signs and is of particular interest to brewery historians for its notes on the Camden Brewery, whose ghost signs were briefly revealed in 2011 prior to re-rendering, and to the career of Thomas Pearce whose many ventures in the trade attempted to ward off competition from the larger brewers at the end of the 19th and early years of the 20th centuries. Pearce took over a home brew house (the Oxford Tavern on Julian Road) in 1865 and joined with other retail brewers to establish the Bath Malting Co. Ltd in 1870. He also acquired an interest in a number of other pubs before selling up and leaving the city on acquiring a large business in Wales. He returned at the end of the century to put together another portfolio of pubs and, in 1904, set about forming a limited liability company (Pearce, Reynolds, Withers & Co. Ltd) with a brewery in Batheaston (this had been extended in the early 1890s by the short-lived English Lager Beer Brewery Ltd.) to supply some 30 odd pubs. The venture

failed to raise sufficient capital and was soon to enter receivership, its pubs eventually passing to the Bath Brewery Ltd., another financially-challenged operation. Pearce's last venture and some doubts about these financial dealings still lives in the memories of the relatives of one of his partners.

The book is copiously illustrated throughout, fully referenced with detailed end-notes and concludes with a bibliography and a comprehensive index. It will, of course, appeal to those with an interest in ghost signs and offers new ways to explore the heritage of Bath and surrounding areas for locals and visitors. Brewery historians have long been interested in surviving images of defunct businesses and will learn much about the trade in Bath and its environs. They will also find many examples here of how diligent use of sources can open up these intriguing windows to the past. As such, I can highly recommend this book.

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