

THE ALLIED BREWERY TRADERS' ASSOCIATION'S VISIT TO GERMANY, 1945

A.B.T.A. team visits Germany

In June last year, the Association was approached by the Allied Control Commission for Germany who asked whether members had suffered in any way from German competition in the days prior to the outbreak of war in 1939. If so who were the German firms concerned - where were they situated - what were the actual products and, finally, the names of the proprietors.

Your Committee circularised some 500 members with a questionnaire and the replies received were collated and passed to the Central Control Commission. The A.B.T.A. were then asked to nominate a team to visit these targets in Germany and three were chosen the Chairman, Mr. S. George Thompson, Mr. A.J.C. Cosbie and the Secretary, Mr. H.C. Vickery.

After lengthy preparations such as medical inspection, inoculations and much briefing, the party were eventually sent by air to Germany on 19th November, being joined by a delegation from the Chemical Manufacturers' Association, Mr. John C. Carlson and Mr. G. Osgood, who now formed part of the team under the leadership of Mr. H.C. Vickery. The whole team was equipped with uniform and each given the rank of Colonel.

The air trip took some three hours, landing at Buckeburg, south of Hanover. The team was then transported some 20 miles to Lohne where billets were given near the Officers' Mess. It was here the party had its first pleasant surprise. A large whisky, gin or brandy only cost 9d. whilst the popular brands of cigarettes were 20 for 1s. The messing consisting of breakfast, lunch, tea and dinner was one mark a day, or in English money, 6d. Some three days went by before transport was avail-

able which consisted of a Humber 6-seater car - all the baggage being piled on the top. During the period of waiting, we found there was a brewery near at hand so it was decided to pay it a visit. It was quite a modern one capable of some 3,000 barrels a week under the control of N.A.A.F.I. The beer brewed for the troops (lager, of course) - was of good quality and gravity, but the beer allowed the civilians was of very poor quality indeed and very low in gravity. The civilians in this hamlet were a miserable looking lot and took their funerals very seriously. The usual sight was a couple pulling a truck of some description with the deceased encased in some container which was completely covered up, followed by apparently everyone in the neighbourhood who had a top hat. The top hats were weird and wonderful - there was even one worn with no brim at all.

Going south by road we were soon in the Ruhr and the scenes of desolation were really indescribable but there was much worse to follow as we learned later. One peculiar thing was the number of factory chimneys still standing but not one wisp of smoke coming out of any. The whole of the factories surrounding the chimneys were completely flat which made the sight so unusual. One of our billets near Dusseldorf in a place called Ratingen was rather difficult to find but we knew it was somewhere near a Gestapo prison and the locals knew all about that so we were soon directed. It turned out to be a very large building with all the appropriate niceties of the Gestapo regime and now being used to house the personnel of the local Central Control Commission staff.

Cologne was our next target and here again the devastation has to be seen to be believed. The two famous bridges crossing the Rhine have been blown sky high.



The Party at the Officers' Mess at Lohne. Left to Right - J.C. Carlson, Major C. Paterson (Briefing Officer), S.G. Thompson, M.C., G. Osgood, L. Benet (Transport Officer), A.J.C. Cosbie, H.C. Vickery.

Twisted metal and huge chunks of masonry are all that remains of what was once the pride and joy of the German Race. The Royal Engineers completed here a wonderful job of work building a steel and wooden bridge across the swiftly flowing Rhine in 30 days. This bridge carries two lines of traffic which appeared to be going day and night and two lanes for pedestrians who seemed to be moving backwards and forwards all the time carrying what was left of their personal belongings on their backs or pulling them behind on little wooden trucks. The scene was as though someone had given an ant heap a kick - the ants running around aimlessly in all directions. The beautiful spires of Cologne Cathedral were still standing - a truly imposing sight above the scene of ruination and desolation all around.

We now made for Frankfurt leaving the British Zone behind us travelling along one of the famous German Autobahns. We soon stopped counting the number of blown bridges and had to make many detours around them where temporary roads had been bulldozed out of the surrounding country.

The Frankfurt billets were excellent; we were housed in the Excelsior Hotel opposite the railway station - the Mess being in the Carlton Hotel opposite. The Americans certainly know how to live and they have unlimited rations. Our breakfast which cost 1s. consisted of orange juice, corn flakes with any quantity of milk, egg and bacon with fried toast, the whitest of bread with marmalade and excellent coffee. Lunch was

on the same scale of lavishness ; for 1s. 3d. we had turtle soup, roast chicken, peas and potatoes, pineapple flan with cream in abundance and coffee. The only drink obtainable was lager beer or cacao-cola.

It took some time and much patience to get our clearance tickets for the American Zone. It should be explained here that naturally in each Zone we entered, the country occupying it had to give permission for us to make the journey through it and authorise our investigations of the various targets.

The journey down south to Munich was made via Nuremberg where the famous trials were taking place at the time and took us over mountainous country where the roads were frozen and we drove some part of the time in complete fog-not so funny with a sheer drop of hundreds of feet in many instances on either side of the road. The billeting at Munich was on the same lavish style as at Frankfurt - if anything more so. We had some important targets to investigate here as it was one of the homes of the German brewing industry in pre-war days and although the town is in ruins much valuable information was obtained.

We were now all set for our visit to the French Zone and we had to report for our clearance at the small town of Offenbuhg going through Stuttgart on the way. After we crossed the Danube we came upon pretty little Bavarian villages covered in snow, surrounded by pine trees looking exactly like the pictures on the children's Christmas



cards. We reached the edge of the Black Forest at a height of some 3,000 feet just as the sun was setting and the picture it presented was the sight of a lifetime. The pines draping the hill sides were covered in snow but they shed a purple haze reaching to the setting sun as far as the eye could see. After reporting at Offenbuhg we retraced our steps north again to visit targets in the German wine-growing districts and here the food was indescribably bad although the wines were excellent. Horse flesh served up as beef steak appeared at almost every meal and the coffee accompanying it was equally foul. A lot of street fighting as well as bombing had brought ruination to the townships but the surrounding countryside seemed to be untouched.

We returned to Frankfurt, gave in our short reports and back again to our starting point via Cassel which appeared to us to be the most bombed area yet. Before leaving Frankfurt the Hall in the Hotel presented a truly imposing sight. A party of Russians had arrived in gorgeous uniforms all bearded, wearing fur hats and bristling with revolvers. Around them was a good sprin-

gling of officers in the Polish, French and American armies with dozens of U.N.N.R.A. personnel of both sexes. This complete with the sprinkling of British officers and the German Hotel staff made up a scene of glittering cosmopolitan theatrical standard and the babel of tongues was deafening.

We travelled by road to Berlin through the Russian Zone skirting Hanover and Brunswick. There were practically no formalities when entering just a casual inspection at the barrier and we were admitted. Previously, however, we had been warned not to travel through the Zone by night and on no account to deviate from the authorised route. The sentries posted at intervals were smart and extremely punctilious saluting very correctly every time a car passed containing officers.

The outskirts of Berlin presented a woeful picture, there did not seem to be anything left and this applied to the centre of the town as well. Overturned tanks - guns - cars and military equipment of all kinds littered the streets which had been cleared to allow some tram cars and motor traffic to pass. There appeared to be no shops open but the black market crowd outside the Chancellery was as busy as Petticoat Lane on a Sunday morning. The Berliners were as cowed as the populace in the other towns, walking about in a sort of daze, white faced and pinched with the cold. There were one or two German cafes open such as the Femina and the Adlon Hotel which although practically in ruins was carrying on in one room we were told, access being made through a side entrance. Here as everywhere else in Germany cigarettes were at a premium and it was nothing to see two or three quite well-dressed men make a dive for the discarded stump end of a cigarette in the street gutter. One very noticeable thing was the apparent absence of street air raid shelters throughout Germany and we were given to understand that practically every house had its own cellar which was used when the raids were on. One could not help feeling that the dwellers in the towns had become sort of troglodytes owing to this for apparently they were still living below ground.

One other striking fact was that on no occasion did we see a German woman whatever her standard of living without stockings and as far as the men folk were concerned, throughout our whole tour covering some 3,500 miles we never met one repentant for the misery their nation had brought upon the whole world.

The home flight from the well-apportioned aerodrome at Gatow just outside Berlin took five hours, stopping once at Hamburg.

The Team recently met and a complete report of the whole trip has been sent to the British Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee, at 32 Bryanston Square, London, W.1. It is hoped that printed copies will soon be available to those members interested in the targets visited.

German visit: brewing and malting machinery and Seitz filter media report No. B.I.O.S. 733

As we go to press we learn that the report of the Association's visit to Germany is now on sale at H.M. Stationery Office Sales Offices. Price 3s. 6d., post free 3s. 8d.

The Board of Trade state that unavoidable delays have occurred particularly in the printing industry and that this is the reason the report has been so long delayed.



London House - Officers' Mess at Lohne.



A Target in Berlin.



In the French Zone - Outside a Vineyard at Bad Durkheim.



A Street in Munich.

It is hoped that the information obtained will be of interest to members concerned and it should be noted that if members wish to inspect the original drawings and documents, they can be seen at B.I.O.S. Secretariat, 32, Bryanston Square, London, W.1.

German Brewing and Malting Machinery and Seitz Filter Media

It will be remembered that the British Intelligence Objectives Sub-committee sent a Commission from this Association to Germany to report on matters interesting to the brewers of this country. The members of the Commission were Messrs. J. Carlson, A.J.C. Cosbie, G. Osgood, S.G. Thompson and H.C. Vickery, all well known in the Brewing Trade.

In their report (No. 733), price 3s. 6d., published by H.M. Stationery Office, the Commission deal first with the grain silos of Gebrüder Rank in Munich. The subject is one of increasing importance, not only nationally, in view of the food situation for years to come, but also to brewer and maltster now that agricultural methods are undergoing changes in respect of cropping and storage. The Rank system is especially concerned with the aeration of stored grain. In existing buildings where storage space is on floors with little head-room, they place on the floor a series of main and subsidiary air ducts in a herring-bone pattern, and the air is forced through by fan in the ordinary way. By using this method a much greater depth of grain is permissible which will keep sweet and free from heating. But it is the construction of new silos which is most interesting. Particulars are given of an installation of a block of 28 silos in four rows of seven each, made of reinforced concrete. On one side of each silo there is an air trunk reaching from the bottom to almost the top, and at suitable distances all the way up there are louvred openings for the admittance of air. On the opposite side there is a similar air trunk for exhausting the air from the silo with similar louvres, and it joins a main exhaust trunk at the top which runs along the whole row of silos. There is a contrivance for closing those air inlets and outlets which are not covered by grain when a silo is being emptied or only partially filled.

The next item in the report deals with a visit to the Loewenbrau in Munich, especially giving an account of

maltings. The Germans have used mechanical methods of all sorts in their maltings to a far greater extent than we have, and this is here well exemplified. In the first place, apart from the aeration and washing of the barley in the steeping cistern, the steeped barley is discharged into a special wagon for distribution on the floors; then the turning of the pieces on the floors is also mechanical, as well as the loading on to the kiln. The "out-steep" wagon is carried on a pair of rails, one on each side of the malting floor, and carries its own power unit, the electric current being obtained from an overhead wire as with trams. It is hopper-bottomed, and the slide being opened it moves along distributing the -rain on the floor; it carries a levelling device in the rear. On the front of the carriage, and running its whole length, are strong wooden fork tynes; this long fork is subsequently used for pushing the finished piece on to a conveyor for loading on to the kiln.

The turner consists of a carriage also complete with power unit and a variable speed drive. From this are suspended a series of steel forks which are driven by an eccentric arm which produces the lifting and throwing action of an ordinary manual worker. It runs on the same pair of rails as the out-steep wagon. It is obvious that the limiting factor in the use of such machinery is the safe width between the rails; this has been found to be 24 ft., which makes a very narrow floor. This is well seen in the illustrations included in the report. It should also be noted that both out-steep wagon and turner can be run into a lift at the end of the malting floor, and so be transferred to floors above and below.

Another malting at the Herford Brewery and Maltings was also inspected. Here all barley and malt was shifted by pneumatic conveyors; even on the working floors it was used to move the growing pieces, thickening them up or thinning them as desired, and finally loading them on to the kiln. The floors are provided with conditioned air. The kiln (circular) has a standard type turner, but the drive consists of a vertical shaft with a crown and bevel drive on each floor.

The site of the Chemische Werke Marienfelde in Berlin was visited to find out something about tank linings, but the factory had been completely destroyed. An interview with some of the personnel was obtained and a certain amount of information was freely given. The lining, which was different from Ebon, could be applied

to wood, metal or concrete, and the process of application carried out on the customer's premises.

Finally the report deals with the Seitz filter sheets. The Seitz works at Bad Kreuzach had been practically destroyed by aerial attack, but several members of the firm were interviewed and a variety of questions were freely answered. That the filter sheets were composed of asbestos and cellulose has long been known, but the actual method of incorporating these materials together could not be ascertained as all plant had been destroyed; there is, however, one hint that may be useful and that is that the asbestos is finely ground before mixing. The sheets are made on a continuous process and are dried in a continuous tunnel drier, steam heating being used. As regards proportions of asbestos and cellulose, these vary

from 5 per cent. of asbestos and 95 per cent. of cellulose for ordinary clarifying purposes, up to 33 per cent. of asbestos and 67 per cent. of cellulose for sheets with special sterilising efficiency, i.e., filtration of bacteria. The EK sheets for normal filtration of micro-organisms as met with in the brewery contain 30 per cent. of asbestos.

Blue prints, tables and illustrations are reproduced in the report, for which the members of the Commission are to be congratulated.

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