

## FLEMING'S GOLDEN ALE

GARY GILLMAN

*There's a nice alliteration to Albany ale. And well there should be, for Albany and ale have long had a meaningful relationship.*<sup>1</sup>

### **Introduction - a living testimonial**

In a triangular green enclave in Albany, New York known as Bleecker Park there stands a small fountain apparently of cast iron. The design is not imposing but offers a pleasing, well-proportioned simplicity. The fountain has stood in place since 1863. *The Bi-centennial History of Albany* records that in July 1863 William Fleming made a gift of the fountain to the city.<sup>2</sup> No further details are given concerning this person, but he was undoubtedly the merchant of the same name who, since 1857 at least, conducted a liquor and wine business on South Pearl Street, Albany.<sup>3</sup>

In late 1857 William Fleming placed a 'Card to the Public' in the Albany press. It stated Fleming had leased the first floor of the Clinton Hotel 'at the corner [of] South Pearl and Hudson Streets' to conduct 'a wholesale and retail wine and liquors business' and would move there on 1 November 1857 from current premises at 27 South Pearl Street.<sup>4</sup> These sites appear today to be covered by modern buildings.<sup>5</sup>

William Fleming sold among his wares a beer of high repute, Fleming's Golden Ale.<sup>6</sup> That William Fleming the liquor man and William Fleming the city benefactor were the same person is underscored by an important clue. The gift is a fountain, not a statute, gazebo, or garden. The bubbling font of water served evidently as a stylish allusion to Fleming's marquee Golden Ale, the profits of which enabled a native son to 'give something back'. More proof were it needed is that in 1861

Fleming advertised his shop and saloon as 'Fleming's Public Fountain'.<sup>7</sup> The term encompassed an emerging form of bar, later viewed as stereotypically American, that offered non-alcoholic drinks - carbonated water and syrup, especially.<sup>8</sup> The advert read:

FLEMING's Public Fountain plays every afternoon and evening Golden Ale, clean, pure, cold, and delicious, 4 cts per glass. His Soda and Syrups equal to the best in Albany. His Segers from 2 cts to the celebrated Figaro at 15 cts.

Two years later, he thanked the city for its patronage by donating a public fountain understood in the more usual sense. The visual double entendre must have pleased him and his customers.

### **Fleming's Golden Ale**

Fleming's Golden Ale was well appreciated as a type of Albany ale in particular from 1858 through the mid-1860s, but apparently enduring in the market until about 1886 - a run of some 30 years. The beer offers good interest from a historical standpoint. It was an early contract brand, featured a notable production method, enjoyed high repute and may have been the first branded golden ale in the United States.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, Fleming was a small time player going up against large, well-capitalised brewers, domestic and foreign. The analogy to modern-day craft brewing is irresistible.

In its heyday the ale was sold in Albany,<sup>10</sup> Troy,<sup>11</sup> Schenectady,<sup>12</sup> Ogdensburg,<sup>13</sup> Manhattan,<sup>14</sup> and probably Syracuse<sup>15</sup> in the Empire State. J. Whiting's *The New York Shippers and Consignees' Guide* lists numerous Atlantic and coastal steamship lines that carried the

beer.<sup>16</sup> It was available in the important Boston market,<sup>17</sup> in Lowell, Massachusetts,<sup>18</sup> in other parts of New England,<sup>19</sup> and probably in Michigan.<sup>20</sup> Washington, D.C.'s high-toned Willard Hotel, among other reputed American hotels, carried the beer.<sup>21</sup>

Fleming's Golden Ale was an offbeat member of the top-fermentation tribe, different from American musty ale,<sup>22</sup> but not dissimilar in social status, regional impact, and idiosyncrasy.<sup>23</sup> This article will trace its arc from first known appearance to apparent demise.

### **British ales point to another story**

The following advert appeared in *Harper's Weekly* of October 1857:

ALLSOPPS' EAST INDIA PALE ALE.

MESSRS. ALLSOPP & SONS can not refrain from reminding the Public that it is entirely owing to the exertions of their House that "Burton" possesses its present important trade in "Pale Ale." Messrs. Allsopp & Sons first introduced this Article to the Indian Market 30 years ago, since which period its great popularity has remained unshaken; and, until they commenced shipping their Ale to the United States - 3 years since-English Draught Ale was unknown in America. These circumstances induce Messrs. Allsopp & Sons to feel confident the American Public will support them in their endeavors to make their Bitter Ale a general drink in this country; and its anti-bilious and tonic properties, its refreshing and agreeable flavor, make it a beverage especially adapted for the States during the Hot Season ...<sup>24</sup>

The claim of 1854 for first importation of draught (English) pale ale seems incorrect, as on 14 May 1840 the *Morning Courier and New-York Enquirer* advertised 'Hodson's [i.e., Hodgson's] East India Pale Ale, on draught'.<sup>25</sup> A second advert, published in Albany in 1858, states:

Some two months ago, the undersigned was urged by his customers to bottle his Golden Ale for family use, and having received a patronage too large for the facilities he then had at hand to supply them, he was obliged in many cases to send it out before it was in condition for use, hence it did not give that satisfaction which it would have done when in proper order.

Now being convinced that the public require and appreciate a good "home made bottled Ale," he was induced to employ a man from Edinburgh, who has had large experience in the business, and who prepares and bottles the Golden Ale precisely as they do their "best sparkling Scotch".

The subscriber now begs to ask the attention of the public to call and examine the article he has now ready for delivery - he will be happy to open a bottle of Campbell's Scotch Ale, and Allsopp's Burton Ale, to compare them with the Golden. He wants to show that the Golden Ale is a more superior article, and at less than half the cost. We can and do make as good Ale as they do in Europe, and if so why pay double the price? It is time for our people to begin to protect home manufacture and not pay such extravagant prices for everything that bears a foreign name or mark.

Wm. Fleming, corner South Pearl and Beaver st.<sup>26</sup>

What was Fleming's Golden Ale that even before the Civil War cheekily claimed superiority over British brands circulating in world commerce? What accounted for the beer's evident appeal in the busy East Coast marketplace, appearing as it did in hundreds of adverts? As Fleming seemed not to be the brewer, who was?

### **The Hudson ales**

The Albany Institute of History and Art provides a brief survey<sup>27</sup> of a regional brewing tradition, stating in part as follows:

Albany Ale and the Upper Hudson Valley's ale brewing tradition began nearly 400 years ago with the earliest Dutch settlers ...

With the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, and the rise of New York's hops industry in the 1840s and 1850s, ale production in the Upper Hudson Valley exploded. By the 1860s, Albany and Troy alone boasted twenty to thirty breweries... Most of the breweries of the Upper Hudson Valley produced Albany Ale—a strong, pale, mild ale—and most of the Albany Ale brewed was made for the export market, being sold in cities like New York, Boston, Charleston, New Orleans, and San Francisco ...<sup>28</sup>

In the mid-1800s the North River,<sup>29</sup> Hudson River, and Erie Canal provided a continuous waterway from New

York City to Buffalo at Lake Erie. As stated above, this was a key factor in the growth of 19<sup>th</sup> century brewing at Albany and Troy. A graphic illustration is a debate in the U.S. Senate on 31 August 1862 concerning the new tax on malt liquors. The practice was cited of Albany and Troy brewers shipping 'stock ale' in autumn to New York City on the river before it froze. A railway existed by then between Albany and New York but brewers preferred the waterway, which was less costly. The beer was stored and sold in New York or trans-shipped to markets further south.<sup>30</sup>

In 1884 the *Albany Hand-Book* focused on the rise of lager as a decisive factor in the loss of a national, or so-called export, market for Albany ale:

Albany's brewing industries has [sic] for many years had an international reputation, and Albany ale was on tap in all the large cities of the country until lager beer displaced it in popularity ...<sup>31</sup>

In Albany itself though, even as production of lager had risen, ale still outsold lager by approximately 2:1.<sup>32</sup> Yet by World War I things had shifted: *The Guidebook to Albany* had lager at about two-thirds of total production in 1916; the rest was ale.<sup>33</sup> National Prohibition, beginning in 1920, put an end to such rivalry. In January 1929, with legalization still uncertain, De Witt Schuyler of the *Albany-Times Union* remembered the glory years of Albany beer, making sure not to forget the erstwhile upstart, lager:

Albany was famous throughout the world for its ale and lager breweries. Albany was to the east in this industry what Milwaukee was to the west and its products found their way throughout the world. Just about this time of the year the breweries were busy brewing 'bock' for the after-Easter sale and old ale and pale ale were being sold over the bars.<sup>34</sup>

Old ale and pale ale indeed, on the top-fermentation side of the equation. But there was yet more, as New York's river of ale in the 1800s had many branches including Fleming's Golden Ale.<sup>35</sup>

### The empire of ale

The *Preliminary Report on the Eighth Census. 1860* outlines key features of American brewing when



## FLEMING'S Premium Golden Ale

This celebrated Ale is made expressly to compete with imported Ales, and is, beyond doubt, one of our country's greatest successes. Two Silver Medals and a Diploma were awarded by the N. Y. State Fairs of 1858 and 1859. For Shipping it is vastly superior to any in the market. This fact is well vouched for by the Steamship lines which use this Ale exclusively, viz., the New York, Southampton and Havre Steamships, [D. TOMLASEK, 5 Bowling Green;] the Havana and New Orleans line, [LEVINSON, SPOONER & Co., 80 Murray Street;] the Charleston and Savannah Steamships; the N. Y., Washington and North Carolina; and several others coming to this port. Our Ships of War and the entire Transport Fleet, furnish themselves with large quantities of "Golden Ale." The Fifth Avenue, Albemarle, Lafarge, Astor House, Astor Place, Bisby House, Tammany, Stevens' House and many other Hotels in New York City, as also Willard's Hotel, in Washington, and many others throughout the country, keep this Ale for sale. Sold also in all first-class Saloons and Liquor Stores, on Draught. It is put up in Stone Bottles, in packages of 8 dozen, and shipped to all parts of the world. Orders filled immediately for this Ale, by the barrel or hoghead. The public are requested to call and sample.

**DEPOT, 158 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.**

PIERCE SKEHAN, SOLE AGENT.

Figure 1. From J. Whiting's (1861) *The New York Shippers and Consignees' Guide*.

Fleming's Golden Ale commenced its ascendancy: New York had 175 breweries, the largest number in the Union; it produced the largest amount of beer, 990,767 barrels; and Pennsylvania was second largest in number and output, with 172 breweries producing 585,206 barrels. The total U.S. output was 3,239,545 barrels, over two-thirds ale, the rest lager.<sup>36</sup>

Hence, around 1860 ale was still dominant nationally and New York and Pennsylvania accounted for half the beer in the entire country. As chronicled by Craig Gravina and Alan McLeod in their *Upper Hudson Valley Beer*, in the 1850s Albany in particular had large, well-established ale breweries including John Taylor & Sons, Amsdell Brothers, Boyd Brothers & Co., A.A. Dunlop, U. Burt, and John McKnight but also a clutch of small-

er ones, and ‘Albany Ale’ enjoyed a national and international reputation.<sup>37</sup>

In 1869, when Albany breweries started on a long period of decline, most beer produced there consisted of ale and other top-fermented beer (as against lager), while the situation was quite the opposite in, say, Buffalo and New York with their significant German population.<sup>38</sup> Boston and New England in general, as for Albany, remained ale strongholds through the 1800s with ale accorded a higher social status than lager due to being introduced earlier in America.<sup>39</sup>

### The golden age of Fleming’s Golden Ale

William Fleming’s liquor shop and bar on South Pearl Street in the Clinton Hotel was a one-stop shop for booze. A prominent box advert of 29 December 1858 in the *Albany Morning Express* makes that clear.<sup>40</sup> The notice advertised brandy, gin, Irish and Scotch whiskey, Monongahela whiskey, Bourbon whiskey, porter, Campbell’s and Jeffrey’s Scotch Ale - and the Golden Ale. Not less than 10,000 cases of Golden Ale were said to be on hand. That is a lot from one merchant in a city of only 50,000 in 1860,<sup>41</sup> as even by 1853 Albany’s breweries produced an impressive 233,000 bbl. of beer.<sup>42</sup> The answer was that a good part of these productions was sent out of the city.<sup>43</sup>

Countless adverts for Fleming’s Golden Ale appear in the late 1850s and 1860s in Albany-Troy and beyond, apparently beginning in early February 1858, for example this advert in the *Albany Morning Express*: ‘... an article of ale that beats anything of the kind we have ever seen. Its golden colour is charming, its flavour is delightful ... Drop in and see it’.<sup>44</sup> A typical advert of mid-1858 touted the beer as ‘bottled for family use’ and ‘now ready for delivery’.<sup>45</sup> Territorial growth extended to Schenectady, NY in April 1859. An advertorial-style squib in its *Reflector* noted that the local agent for the beer ‘favoured’ the newspaper with samples. The scribes brightly noted:

The Golden Ale is well-known in New York City and Boston, as well as throughout the East, where it is justly popular. Fleming’s ale never renders one stupid and heavy after imbibing. It is of beautiful golden color, and delicious flavour.<sup>46</sup>

Even allowing for the typical advertising exaggeration of the time, by summer of 1858 the beer enjoyed local and regional repute and earned a following in Manhattan and Boston. Some adverts were just a few lines, while others were more elaborate stratagems to draw the public’s attention.<sup>47</sup> An example of the latter is one of 29 April 1858 in the *Albany Morning Express* inviting the public to view an intricate wood sign for Golden Ale.<sup>48</sup> It was carved from one piece with little barrels festooned from a linked chain. Such gambits sound folksy or naïve today but they appealed to townspeople with few opportunities for diversion, and of course brought people to the bar and retail shop.

An amusing anecdote that ends as an advert appeared in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* of 29 January 1859, one of many newspapers that carried the story.<sup>49</sup> The Clerk in the State house began reading a citizen’s petition that asked Senators to call at Fleming’s premises to try his Golden Ale. He showed evident discomfiture in doing so due to being ‘a pillar of the Temperance organisations’, but mercifully the Speaker stopped the reading. The petitioner? ‘Wm. Fleming’, of course. Seemingly chastened in his home legislature the irrepressible Fleming had the final say, as not long after a newspaper in Sag Harbour, Long Island offered the following jape:

During the presentation of petitions in the State Senate on the 28th ult., a Senator took occasion to rise in his place and petition the Senate to notice his ‘Golden Ale’. This is superfluous. We should as soon think of calling the attention of Senators to the fact that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west by virtue of the earth’s diurnal motion, or that twice two makes four. Superfluous, sir, superfluous.<sup>50</sup>

The brand continued to spread. An advert in *Vermont’s Middlebury Register* of 10 August 1859 showed it could be had via order from Fleming’s Boston depot.<sup>51</sup>

With business burgeoning Fleming improves his ability to sell more beer, first by bottling it from mid-1858 as noted above, then by associating with James S. Laughton who was based in Boston. The association was obviously a major step for Fleming’s business. It was advertised numerous times in the local press including on 18 June 1860 in the *Atlas & Argus* of Albany, as follows:

**Co-Partnership Bow** - The undersigned having formed a co-partnership under the firm name of Fleming & Laughton,

for the purpose of being better able to keep up and supply the increasing demand for our popular and national beverage, known as FLEMING's GOLDEN ALE.

From our large and well-arranged facilities in our Albany, Boston, and New York depots, we are prepared to take orders and put up in packages in one to six dozen, and ship to any part of the United States, South America, and Cuba ...

With many thanks to our customers and friends, we promise and pledge ourselves to keep the standard of our Golden Ale.<sup>52</sup>

The depot was important in the mid-1800s Central New York brewing business, but both Albany's aspiring and established brewers demonstrated different approaches and didn't necessarily play a 'numbers game'. In the box adverts of seven brewers in an 1862 business directory (out of 19 listed with street address only) most advertised four depots or less while Amsdell Brothers, for their part, listed 16. The pre-eminent Albany brewer, John Taylor & Sons, placed an impressive full-page advert but listed depots only in New York and Boston - the same number and locations as Fleming if we include the John Taylor brewery.<sup>53</sup> Fleming & Laughton are listed in a couple of lines in the alphabetical (not trade) section for Fleming's Golden Ale with an address at South Pearl and Beaver streets.<sup>54</sup>

Adverts for Fleming's Golden Ale proliferated in pace and variety. In July 1860 *The Phoenix* in New York City carried this florid paean:

In Basement floor of gorgeous state,  
Broadway, One Hundred and Fifty-Eight,  
Our friend Pierce Skehan, fresh and hale,  
Dispenses Fleming's Golden Ale,  
As crystal clear, and foaming high,  
As though 'would bubble to the sky,  
And trust us Fleming's Ale the thing  
Meet drink, for poet, soldier, King,  
It fires the spirit, sharpens wit  
And gives men all the nail to hit  
    In every knobby question....

Pierce sends the liquid life around  
Packed in casks both safe and sound,  
For Winter nights lay in a store....  
    Fleming's Golden Ale,

158 Broadway, N.Y.

19 S. Pearl street, Albany

12 Loudan Street, Boston.<sup>55</sup>

Pierce Skehan was Fleming and Laughton's man in Manhattan. His name often appears in adverts for that market, e.g., in *The New-York Shippers and Consignees Guide* mentioned above. That advert named steamship lines, prestige hotels, and the U.S. and merchant Navies as customers and gives a definite impression of cachet.<sup>56</sup>

The early Civil War seems not to have affected Fleming's business. In June 1863 Fleming is still advertising in Albany's *Atlas & Argus*.<sup>57</sup> Between 1863 and 1865 Fleming's Golden Ale is advertised in numerous issues of the *Daily Courier* in Lowell, Massachusetts.<sup>58</sup> In 1869 Fleming continues to advertise in Albany as shown in an advert, one of many that year, in the *Morning Express* on 22 September 1869.<sup>59</sup> Starting at the end of October 1869 and in November and December of that year, Fleming, still at South Pearl St. and Beaver, advertises the opening of Fleming's San Francisco Saloon. This series of adverts touts various meal offerings and imported ales and beers. The Golden Ale is not mentioned, instead we read of a 'fresh tap of Bass Ale', 'McEwan's Sparkling Ale', and 'Barclay and Perkins Stout Porter'.<sup>60</sup> Did Fleming give up the Golden Ale at the end of 1869 to focus on imported brands? It is difficult to say as the updated saloon may still have carried Golden Ale.

A Boston trade directory of 1874 states Fleming's Golden Ale is still represented by J.C. Laughton, Fleming's old partner, so evidently this part of Fleming's dealings continued into the mid-1870s.<sup>61</sup>

### **Mr. Fleming's fortunes change**

Commencing in 1863 Pierce Skehan starts advertising Golden Ale in New York without reference to Fleming, e.g., in the *New York Herald* of June 1863.<sup>62</sup> The adverts state that 'Golden Ale' may be had from Skehan's Golden Ale Depot on Broadway Street - Fleming is out of the picture. Golden Ale could similarly be had from Skehan in Georgia in 1870, as seen in numerous adverts in the *Charleston Daily News*.<sup>63</sup> It seems likely that from 1863 Skehan's agency for the beer ended, amicably or otherwise, and henceforth Skehan sourced his



Figure 2. C.1920 image of Front Street, Bath, Maine. Believed in the public domain, sourced from Wikipedia at [https://commons.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Front\\_Street,\\_Bath,\\_ME.jpg](https://commons.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Front_Street,_Bath,_ME.jpg). Fleming's Golden Ale was sold in Bath in the mid-1860s on this street.

'Golden Ale' elsewhere. Possibly though Fleming continued to supply him on the basis that Skehan's name could appear without Fleming's in certain markets.

Albeit there seem gaps in the chronological record, Fleming's Golden Ale is still an item in Albany, its original home, in 1877, as discussed below. The *Albany Directory* for 1877 has Fleming at 11 South Pearl Street, one of a shifting number of addresses Fleming used on that street.<sup>64</sup> In the *Albany Directory* for 1879 he has left South Pearl Street finally, for 643 Broadway Street, but is still in trading for 'liquors'.<sup>65</sup> The *Albany Directory* for 1886 has a listing for a William Fleming as a 'Bottler' for 'ale', but there seems no trace of him afterwards.<sup>66</sup> He is now at 65 Quay Street; perhaps by then he was simply bottling the Golden Ale for others.

It appears that after the Civil War - perhaps even from 1863 - the fashion for Fleming's Golden Ale had died down and the brand became, in the cant of modern advertising, 'mature'. This makes sense in terms of the changed picture for Hudson ales given their long decline from the late 1860s. This resulted from an alteration in

the public opinion of Albany beer and structural changes in the beer industry related to rail transport, in particular. The analysis of Gravina and McLeod in *Upper Hudson Valley Beer* is pertinent on these points.<sup>67</sup>

### Prizes won by Fleming's Golden Ale

The salad days of Fleming's Golden Ale is emphasised by at least three prizes granted. A box notice on October 1858 in the *Albany Morning Express* takes the form of a breathless dispatch by 'Victor.' (it probably means, victorious) from the New York State Fair at Syracuse that a Diploma and Premium (or silver medal) were awarded Fleming for his 'splendid Golden Ale'.<sup>68</sup> No other beers are referenced in a publication of the fair that confirms a similar award for 1859.<sup>69</sup> On 19 October 1859 Pierce Skehan advertises in the *New York Herald* that the beer won the first premium at both the 1858 and 1859 New York State Fairs:

This well-known ale can be found at No. 158 Broadway, between Maiden lane and Liberty street. This ale has taken

the first premium at the New York State Fairs, both in 1848 and 1849. Sold by cask, bottles, and on draught. It is pronounced by the best judges to be equal to, if not superior, to Allsopp's.<sup>70</sup>

The years 1848 and 1849 must be typographical errors unless Skehan indulged in misrepresentation. The former explanation seems more likely, however, as a recent product award seems more useful for publicity than an older one. In the vernacular of today, 'Tell me what you did lately'. It was not just a case of the Empire State honouring its own. The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Massachusetts Charitable Mechanics Association Trade Exhibition of 1860 awarded a bronze medal to the beer. The taste note, the core of it, would do credit to the beer writers reading this essay. It reads:

Fleming & Laughton, Boston. Fleming's Golden Ale. We have tried this ale, at various ages, of ordinary and stock varieties. It is transparent, has a clear hop-taste, is sufficiently lively, very carefully put up, and carefully kept. No adventitious ingredients present themselves. We do not hesitate to rank this as one of the best ales in this or any other country; and we consider it as agreeable and healthful an ale for use in the family or in sickness, as can be found.<sup>71</sup>

'One of the best ales in this or any other country': no mean tribute. Even allowing for 19<sup>th</sup> century liberties with promotion that likely favoured a native son the prizes underpin the evident good reputation of Fleming's Golden Ale. It seems no other beer won an award at the three exhibitions, if any was entered.

### **The source of Fleming's Golden Ale**

As stated earlier, William Fleming did not brew the beer and there is no evidence he was a brewer. Most of Fleming's adverts do not mention his source but three from early in the beer's history do. The first is on 2 February 1858, in Albany's *Evening Journal*, when the brand is just getting on its feet. Under 'Special Notices' we read:

GOLDEN ALE - Fleming, of the "old Clinton Hotel," has an article of ale at his bar that rivals anything we have ever seen. It is as clear as Golden Sherry, and the flavour is beyond all praise. We think that it has no superior on this continent, and we question much if it does not rival the celebrated Burton

Ale. It is well worthy of a mile's walk to see it. It was made by Boyd Brothers & Co. of this city, and well may they be proud of this Golden Ale.<sup>72</sup>

The second advert referencing Boyd Brothers is on 30 June 1858 in Troy's *Daily Times*. It reads, under the heading 'Fleming's Golden Stock Ale':

**THE WELL KNOWN BREWERS, BOYD BROTHERS, & CO.** have made for the undersigned an article of Ale that surpasses anything ever before brewed in this country. It is made of the choicest Malt Hops and Cuba Honey, regardless of trouble or expense; and for beauty of color, fine flavour, and purity of body, it has no equal. It has been examined by the best judges in the business, and they have pronounced it equal if not superior to the far-famed Burton Ale of England. Physicians, too, have recommended it to their patients, and use it in their families. It is put up in pint bottles, and sold at the low price of ONE DOLLAR AND TWENTY-FIVE CENTS PER DOZEN, and delivered free in any part of the city. Orders left at J.H. Nichols. No. 3 First street, Troy, will be promptly attended to.

Wm. Fleming, Old Clinton, cor. South Pearl and Beaver sts, Albany.<sup>73</sup>

The question of honey is referred to further below. The third advert mentioning Boyd's appears again in Troy's *Daily Times*, on 15 July 1858:

Fleming's Golden Ale - The above article has been made regardless of trouble and expense, by those celebrated Albany brewers, Messrs. Boyd, Brothers & Co. of the best and choicest malt and hops, expressly for bottling for family use. It is equal, if not superior to any foreign ale, and at less than half the price. Orders may be left with Mr. J.H. Nichols, No. 3 First street.<sup>74</sup>

Hence, Fleming's Golden Ale was in modern parlance a contract brand - such arrangements are hardly new. In the first half of 1858 Fleming was not chary to advertise his source for the beer, similar to some non-brewing producers today.<sup>75</sup> However, after July 1858 Fleming's adverts make no reference to Boyd Brothers. Perhaps initially he wanted to assure local citizens that the beer came from a reputed source, this in a time of public worry about product tampering and 'adventitious' ingredients.<sup>76</sup> But once a base of customer goodwill was established, we infer he dispensed with mention of

Boyd Brothers to intensify the association of Golden Ale with his name.

Two 19<sup>th</sup> century sources paint a picture of Boyd's and its Arch Street Brewery as a venerable and respected business. One, the above-mentioned *Bi-Centennial History of Albany*, brings matters to 1886.<sup>77</sup> The other is an earlier treatment, *A History of American Manufactures From 1608 to 1860* by J. Leander Bishop, published in 1868.<sup>78</sup> Gravina and McLeod's *Upper Hudson Valley Beer* continues the history to the close of the brewery before Prohibition.<sup>79</sup> Bishop in *American Manufactures* states that Boyd's was founded in 1796 when two 'Scotchmen', were employed by the father of Robert Boyd to instruct the son how to malt and brew.<sup>80</sup>

Clearly this 'establishment' brewer in Albany, for whatever reason, chose to enter into an arrangement with the entrepreneur, William Fleming. Whatever the origins and ambit of the plan, in 1863 Boyd Brothers start to advertise their own golden ale in Oswego, NY on Lake Ontario, rather a distance from Albany. An advert, one of many that year in the *Oswego Times*, touted 'an excellent glass of Boyd's golden ale - none better' at the 'Monitor Saloon'.<sup>81</sup> In the late 1860s Boyd's Golden Ale pops up in Schenectady, advertised by liquor merchant William Clarke.<sup>82</sup>

Despite these seeming competitive moves, as earlier noted Fleming is still selling the beer in 1863 in Albany, in 1863-1865 in Lowell, MA, in Boston into the 1870s, and for much of 1869 in Albany. Perhaps the market was divided with Boyd's in some way from 1863, which would tie into Pierce Skehan's merchandising the beer under his own name in New York from the same year and later in parts of the south. It seems, therefore, that Fleming's writ lessened after the mid-Civil War, with presumably lower returns from the venture.

Whether or not Fleming was offering the Golden Ale at his saloon from late 1869 until 1872, the brand is still available in Albany in 1877, as an advert that year states Quinn & Nolan, another large Albany brewery, are now the brewers: 'QUINN & NOLAN make the celebrated Golden Ale for Fleming, No.11 South Pearl street'.<sup>83</sup> Quinn & Nolan began in ale brewing but later on the same street in Albany established the separate Beverwyck brewery to brew lager.<sup>84</sup> Hence, Fleming either switched from Boyd Brothers to Quinn & Nolan

in 1877, or from another brewer who had replaced Boyd's at some point. After all the years - post-July 1858 - of not mentioning his sources, Fleming, surely a lion in winter in 1877, tips the public that Quinn & Nolan are supplying him. Possibly the change was meant to give a faltering brand a fresh start.

It appears, therefore, apart from Boyd's commencing to do so from (apparently) 1863, no Albany-area brewer sold 'golden ale' so-branded before Prohibition at any rate. Why this was so is hard to say. Perhaps golden ale was regarded as 'belonging' to Boyd's or Fleming. Perhaps the established brewers did not want to be perceived as emulating an upstart entrepreneur, to preserve their dignity. One thinks in this regard of modern mass-market brewers who for decades ignored the beers sold by the emerging micro- and craft brewers.

### **Characteristics of Fleming's Golden Ale**

As shown by the 1859 Massachusetts fair jury's description Fleming's Golden Ale was available in two forms: 'ordinary', also called present-use at the time, and 'stock'. The former was relatively new beer; the latter was longer aged. A November 1859 advert for Fleming's Golden Ale in the *Albany Morning Express* described the beer on that occasion as 'present use'.<sup>85</sup> These two types would have exhibited differences in relative sweetness and probably acidity and hop character but generally the adverts vaunt the beer's qualities without reference to present use or stock.

It seems likely Fleming's beer was not a Victorian-style pale ale but more akin to an English mild ale of the period, less attenuated in a word and not excessively hopped, due to repeated comparisons in Fleming's adverts to Scotch and Burton ales. Burton ale probably here meant the older style of rich, strong Trent Valley ale, not the later Burton pale ale.

In 1874 a test of beer strengths was reported in various media that placed 'golden ale', brand not specified, at 5.1% 'alcohol', which may have been by volume or weight.<sup>86</sup> This (withal) moderate level for the era, i.e., in the top-fermented class, is consistent with Fleming's early adverts stating his beer did not render the drinker 'stupid' or 'heavy'. It may be assumed, therefore, that the beer was about this strength, at least the present use



type. As one well-known assay of ‘Albany ale’ rated it at 7.38% (probably ABV) for a draught specimen and 10.67% for a two-year-old bottled specimen,<sup>87</sup> the lower strength was attractive from the standpoint of marketing the beer as medicinal or for family use, typical 19<sup>th</sup> century stratagems to promote beer consumption.<sup>88</sup>

The adverts taken together highlight the beer’s attractive golden colour, clarity, hop character, foam, liveliness, stability, and ‘delicious’ flavour. They also compare the beer to fine imported ales including from Scots brewers such as Campbell and Jeffrey. Scotch ale in particular enjoyed a good reputation in America in much of the 1800s. The press in Albany and much of the Northeast regularly advertised Scotch ale both branded and unbranded, e.g., the latter in the *Albany Journal* of 1 December 1856 (‘London Porter and Scotch Ale’) among a list of fine wines and liquors.<sup>89</sup> In the 1850s and 1860s many brands of Scotch ale were featured in high-class saloons and restaurant menus.<sup>90</sup> Fleming’s adverts compared his golden ale to these beers, claiming either parity or superiority.

### **The honey factor**

As seen above, an 1858 advert that identified Boyd Brothers as brewers of Fleming’s Golden Ale stated use of ‘Cuba honey’. A second Fleming Golden Ale advert, this time in Troy in the *Daily Whig* on 1 July 1858, refers to honey as well:

This splendid ale is now for the first time brought before the public in this city. It is made solely of the best malt hops and Cuba honey, and no cost or trouble [is] spared to make it superior to any foreign ale ...<sup>91</sup>

These appear to be the only adverts for Fleming’s Golden Ale that mention honey. Possibly reference was later dropped to avoid a charge of using a malt substitute. Indeed a full-page advert in 1863 by the established McKnight brewery in Albany stated pointedly that no sugars or honey are used in its beers and brewers who use them are attempting to ‘mask’ the ‘peculiar flavour of the hop’ thus lessening the ‘medicinal value’ of their beer.<sup>92</sup> This was likely an attempt to depreciate Fleming’s Golden Ale and other ales that used honey or other sugars in their formulation. However, as will

appear below, Fleming’s use of honey was an astute application of contemporary brewing doctrine. Before proceeding, this modern summary of honey’s characteristics in brewing may be helpful, from the National Honey Board (the full document is most instructive):

Honey plays a significant role in brewing when added to a recipe. At just 10%, honey will have an impact on fermentability, color and pH in the finished beers. When it comes to taste, the impact is even greater, and depends on what stage of the brewing process the honey is added.

Added in the boil, and 95% of the honey will ferment out. However, the remaining 5% provides a depth of flavor to the beer. Added after the boil, and brewers can expect to maintain the exceptional aromatics and flavor honey imparts.

This versatility makes honey an excellent ingredient for multiple reasons, not just creating sweet beers.<sup>93</sup>

### **Honey in nineteenth century British brewing**

Early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century non-malt-derived sugars still were prohibited in U.K. brewing apparently to preserve the integrity of the excise tax on malt, subject nonetheless to periodic exemptions.<sup>94</sup> In 1847 sugar, but not molasses or honey, became permitted permanently but this sugar was made dutiable on a basis equivalent to malt.<sup>95</sup> After the Free Mash Tun law on 1 October 1880 any type of fermentable material was allowed in brewing with taxation thenceforth applied to the beer, or more correctly a deemed quantity and strength of wort.<sup>96</sup> Despite these changes, until quite recently honey, as against various types of sugars and raw cereals, was rarely used.<sup>97</sup>

Nonetheless, a 1906 recipe from Drybrough brewery in Scotland used a little honey according to a brewing log elucidated by brewing historian Edd Mather.<sup>98</sup> This appears a vestigial survival of an older Scots practise, and at least three texts attest to it: Sherwood Muspratt’s in 1860,<sup>99</sup> Thomas Hitchcock’s in 1842,<sup>100</sup> and William Roberts in his 1847 edition of *The Scottish Ale-Brewer and Maltster*.<sup>101</sup> Muspratt recorded use of Russian honey in Scotch ale.<sup>102</sup> Hitchcock counselled to add honey (type not discussed) towards the end of the boil.<sup>103</sup> This practice would tend to accentuate its flavour contribution.<sup>104</sup> Roberts tested a variety of honeys together with many kinds of sugar to determine their gravity, and addressed

whether to add sugar at the boil stage, in the fermenting vat, or both.<sup>105</sup> One of the honeys Roberts analyzed was - Cuba honey. Others included Greek honey, American honey, Irish honey, and Jersey honey.<sup>106</sup>

### The role of Cuba honey

Cuba honey was a known commodity in 19<sup>th</sup> century international commerce, with Genoa an important trading centre where according to an American trade text, Cuban honey was ‘preferred to any other honey’ and fetched c.1850 \$1.20 /gal.<sup>107</sup> In the American context at least, there were two types, a light bellflower kind not so different from American white clover honey, and a darker, heavier, strong-tasting kind.<sup>108</sup> Supplies were regularly sent to America from hives continually made more efficient in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>109</sup> Baking was a frequent application particularly for dark honeys of any origin.<sup>110</sup> Brewing was also an application, as seen above, but not solely in America. A notice in Scotland’s *Glasgow Herald* in 1855 stated as follows:

TO BREWERS, RECTIFIERS, &c., &c.

To be Disposed of, about Three Tons of the FINEST RICH CUBA HONEY. The method of using Honey as an Auxiliary in Brewing Export Beers with the greatest advantage. - See Supplement to the Third Edition of “Roberts’ Scottish Ale-Brewer and Practical Maltster.”

Apply to

MR. ROBERTS,  
BRITISH WINE WORKS, EDINBURGH<sup>111</sup>

Hence, only three years before Fleming’s Golden Ale appears William Roberts is promoting Cuba honey commercially to British brewers for exported brews. The question is, why did Roberts advise use of honey for exports only, and why honey at all versus another form of saccharine? The domestic side of the equation likely is explained by the fact that honey was not permitted for beer sold in the U.K.<sup>112</sup> Production for export sales was not affected, it seems. Why advise it for exports, though?

The reason emerges from the 1847 Supplement referred to in Roberts’ 1855 advert. On pages 246-247 he advised brewers to prepare a strong decoction of hops



Figure 3. Brand of Cuban honey marketed by Cuba’s export organisation, purchased at St. Lawrence Market, Toronto. The author found it rich, mellow, with complex notes of coffee, amber rum and some faint wood.

and water as well as a sugar syrup, blend the two, and add the ‘extract’ in the proportion of ‘a gallon ... to a hogshead of [racked] beer’. He stated this would lend a ‘fulness’ to over-attenuated beers that were too harsh from the hop content, and stressed this advice was ‘the most valuable part of my information [on sugar in brewing]’, whether for ‘India beers’ or ‘keeping’ beers.<sup>113</sup> Since honey is a natural syrup, in 1855 Roberts informed his customers that his 1847 directions on improving export and keeping beers applied equally to an extract based on honey. The Thomas Thomson-originated chapter in *Britannica* on brewing (1854 edition) summarised the advice, which clearly originated with Roberts albeit he is not named for this aspect (he is a few pages earlier on other questions):

The addition of a small amount of strong syrup, highly hopped, is said to improve ... [export beers] not only restoring to it that fullness of body which it had lost, but enabling it to stand exportation much better than it would otherwise do.<sup>114</sup>

As Roberts had noted, the saccharine addition would offset the displeasing dryness or harshness of over-attenuated beer by restoring the beer’s body. Evidently

he considered the sugar would not ferment out completely on the foreign voyages, perhaps due to the strong hop decoction, or the fact that up to the mid-1850s at least it was thought Scotch ale did not re-ferment after its prolonged primary fermentation.<sup>115</sup> In the discussion by these experts of such export beer treatment, cost, e.g., as between different forms of sugar, is not referred to. One might infer that the cheapest would do, but this is not how Roberts viewed it in 1855.

McKnight's stated in 1863 that sugar or honey added to beer 'masked' hop character and reduced its 'medicinal' value. It seems clear McKnight's was referring to the same practice recommended by Roberts and referenced in *Britannica* but from an opposite perspective: it's two sides of the same coin in other words. Certainly, Scotch ale was often remarked for its rich, luscious character at home and abroad. Charles Dickens in New York called Scotch ale he encountered there - which might have included some U.S. imitations - 'disagreeably sweet and smoky'; this is just one of many citations through the century of the richness of quality Scotch ale.<sup>116</sup>

It is reasonable to suppose Boyd's and Fleming used Cuba honey in the way Roberts counselled and *Britannica* gave credence to, to produce a beer similar to the Scotch ales with which Fleming intended to compete. Hence it was probably added at racking and/or at bottling in the depots. To the extent Boyd's added honey in the kettle or fermenter, procedures also discussed by Roberts and Thomson but generally not endorsed by them due to lack of cost advantage, this too might flavour the beer. It would depend how the honey was used and the type, but it seems more likely honey was added to Fleming Golden Ale in the way Roberts advised for export beers, that is, to the finished beer.

But why, for Roberts, Cuban honey? Why not some other kind, or some form of sugar syrup? Was Cuba honey the cheapest form of sugar available at Genoa in 1855? That is highly unlikely. The Table of analysis for the gravity and price of different honeys and sugars in the 1847 Supplement makes it clear Cuban honey was not cheap in relation to gravity. Irish honey, say, was half the cost per hundredweight yet just 2.5 points of gravity lower than Cuba honey. The sugars in the Table were better value, too. Even Very Fine Bengal sugar, at the same 60s per cwt. was almost eight points higher in gravity than Cuban honey. (Honey contains water and

the basis of the comparison was dissolving one pound by weight of sugar, honey, etc. in one gallon of water at a specified temperature). 'American' honey, at the same gravity as Cuban, cost in Scotland 40s, versus 60s per cwt. for Cuban. Yet the 1855 notice specifies 'rich' Cuban honey, not American, perhaps meaning rich in flavour. This suggests too Cuban honey probably cost more Stateside than American, which the duty would suggest alone - 30% in 1847.<sup>117</sup>

Of course, there are unknown factors, e.g., for honeys in the Table cheaper than Cuban honey, were they available in the quantities needed by Roberts for his Wine Works business? The Scotch honey was extremely cheap yet the harvesting season for heather honey is very short, just a few weeks,<sup>118</sup> so commercial quantities were likely not obtainable. Still, taking all with all, Cuban honey may well have had a particular quality - flavour, or resistance to complete fermentation - that made it an ideal choice to treat beer exports.<sup>119</sup>

#### **From Scotland to America**

It is reasonable to suppose Boyd Brothers had both Roberts' and Hitchcock's volumes in their library, and knew of Roberts' recommendation in 1855 to use Cuba honey for export beers. As well though, brewing knowledge was surprisingly widespread in the 1800s due to global circulation of books, newspapers, magazines, and not least people. One has only to think of James Muir's attempts to make lager in Scotland in 1832.<sup>120</sup> All it took was for a Scots workman lately arrived in Albany and now working in a local brewery to tell his new employer that his former brewery used honey, but likely Boyd Brothers knew it anyway.

Robert Boyd may have learned it, possibly, from the two 'Scotchmen' his father hired in 1796 to teach the son how to malt and brew. Certainly in the early 1800s some Albany and Troy brewers used honey, as found by the New York Senate committee on brewing practises in 1835.<sup>121</sup> Flavour enhancement *a la* Roberts may have been one reason. Deponent Thomas Read, a brewer at Troy, NY, stated he sometimes added 'two or three pints of honey' to a 'barrel' of 'pale ale', averring that the beer was 'finer' and 'rather an improvement'.<sup>122</sup> This sounds not dissimilar to what Roberts later counseled. But, again, even an addition in late boiling or in ferment-

tation might have imparted the honey taste if the beer was not attenuated too low.

For his part, Robert Boyd testified to the Committee that he only used malt and hops to brew, plus salt.<sup>123</sup> Even taking him at his word, when designing a beer for Fleming Cuba honey made sense, as clearly Fleming wanted to equal or exceed the imported Scotch ales, and if they contained such honey, why not use it in the local product selling for half the price? It was certainly convenient to obtain it on the East Coast, more so than for the Scots.<sup>124</sup> As noted, some Fleming adverts also likened his beer to Burton ale, also famously rich in character unless perhaps very old; the honey would have performed good service here as well.<sup>125</sup>

### **Did Boyd's/Fleming change the recipe?**

Fleming's later adverts eschew mention of honey and some mention simply the use of malt and hops. Did Fleming alter the formula to exclude the honey? This seems unlikely as there appear to be no adverts stating this and the ones mentioning only malt and hops are ambiguous at best.

One advert should perhaps be mentioned in this regard, from December 1862 in the *Atlas and Argus*.<sup>126</sup> It states that although the prices of malt and hops have 'greatly advanced' and the government tax is 'so heavy', 'there is no change in the quality of Fleming's Golden Ale, in fact we think it is getting better'. Could it have improved through abandonment of the honey? This cannot be ruled out, or perhaps war conditions interfered with supply of Cuba honey for brewing. The advert is too vague though to support the abandonment of honey.

Also, why would Fleming want to toy with the taste that made his success? It is true the 1859 Massachusetts fair jury found his beer contained no 'adventitious' ingredients but this does not mean honey was not used. Anyway, the jury may not have considered sugars adventitious. This would be in line with the 1835 Senate brewing investigation, as well as the 1847 legal amendments in the U.K. that permanently allowed sugar in brewing. The Interrogatories for the 1835 investigation excluded honey, molasses, or other sugars among the suspected 'drugs' in beer.<sup>127</sup> Still, a general perception remained in some brewing circles that sugar lessened

beer quality.<sup>128</sup> This explains the haughty declaration by McKnight's in 1863 that no honey or other sugar figured in its beer.

### **Competitor and faux-competitor Golden ales**

The 1860 advert in which Fleming announced his partnership with Laughton<sup>129</sup> states in part:

Since our GOLDEN ALE has been before the public, other brands have sprung up here and there, all over the country, puffing themselves up into notice, in prose, painting, and poetry. We content ourselves in good MALT and HOPS, and let it off as a joke, when now and then one of these little fellows catches at the skirt of our big coat as we pass by on our way; it being our pride that we have got the lead which others have to follow.

The charming phraseology cannot hide that competition was nipping at Fleming's golden heels - indeed few successful products lack a competitor. The wording suggests these other brands arose after Fleming Golden Ale appeared. In fact, it seems none of them existed previous to Fleming's Golden Ale.

A couple of cases may be false leads in that the beers sold may well have been Fleming's but the advertiser, for whatever reason, omitted his name. This may be the case for an advert by saloonkeeper Alexander Behan in Syracuse, which is west of Albany directly on the canal route. The advert, in the *Syracuse Daily Courier* on 2 March 1858 states:

GOLDEN ALE - If our readers who like a glass of ale that is acknowledged by all to be par excellence, let them call at Alexander Behan's, corner of Market Square and Railroad street. He deals it out by the glass, half barrel, barrel, or cask.<sup>130</sup>

The beer is quite possibly Fleming's as there appears no evidence of another golden ale associated with Syracuse or environs. As noted too, the city was of easy access to Albany by 1858. A similar case may be Millard's Golden Ale in Hillsdale, Michigan. It was advertised on 27 December 1859 (and other occasions) in the *Hillsdale Daily Standard*, part of a larger advertisement by Woolcott & Crippin, evidently grocers and provisioners in town. They offered 'Millard & Co.'s celebrat-

ed golden ale and porter' among a select list of foods, tea, and tobacco items.<sup>131</sup>

Searches suggest Millard & Co. were not brewers, but probably the Detroit-based liquors dealer Frank Millard, who probably supplied regional businesses in a similar line outside Detroit.<sup>132</sup> Detroit is, again, directly westerly of Albany, reachable by canal link to Buffalo and thence by boat across Lake Erie. Fleming sometimes advertised porter and often used the term 'celebrated'. For these reasons a case can be made that 'Millard & Co.'s golden ale and porter' were quite likely supplied by Fleming.

For manifestly genuine competition, there was Newlin & Thomas Golden Ale from Philadelphia. The Philadelphia-based brewers<sup>133</sup> advertised in Troy, NY, a heartland market for Fleming, although there seems no trace of their beer elsewhere. A June 1860 advert<sup>134</sup> in the *Troy Daily Times* mentions local agent Chester Davis as source for the beer and states it is available in town on draft at the Fulton House.

Two further Fleming Golden Ale competitors were Gaul's Philadelphia Golden Ale, and Howard & Fuller's Spring Water Golden Ale from Brooklyn, NY. Both were included in a stellar list of draught ales and other beers advertised in 1861 by a noted ale hostelry of the period in Manhattan, Mendum's.<sup>135</sup> Gaul's Golden Ale was from a venerable Philadelphia brewery with roots in the late 1700s. Frederick Gaul owned it from 1824, sometimes with others, until 1861 when it was taken over by his son William. Brewing continued finally under the aegis of John Betz to and after Prohibition, ending in 1939.<sup>136</sup> Howard & Fuller were another old-school brewery closer to home for Mendum's, in business from 1835 until 1914.<sup>137</sup>

Mendum's was a venture of two English brothers. It was the mid-1800s American equivalent of today's craft beer bar. They finally sold it and returned home with a 'small fortune'. A picture of its workings and those of other ale haunts in mid-1800s New York is offered by W.H. Wallace in his memoir-piece 'The "Shades" of old New York' in *The Evening Post* of 9 December 1905. A sample quote, pertaining likely to the 1850s or early '60s:

In the time of the Mendums ... [the alehouse] was called 'Mulum in Parvo'. It had peculiar attractions and interest

for the writer, as the house had been for nearly ten years the home of his boyhood and youth. But little change had been made in the arrangements on the rooms. A snug had been placed in the hall just beyond the front door and between the two parlor doors. The place being small and compact, the Latin motto was very apt. In the sanded parlors were a number of well rubbed mahogany tables and a few choice engravings of English hunting scenes. The house became famous for the quiet, respectable character, excellent viands, and old ale, the latter imported in huge tuns from England.<sup>138</sup>

Fleming's Old Clinton Hotel and saloon - sans the soda fountain - probably resembled the atmosphere of Mendum's or another 'Shades' in the article. Wallace noted that the appeal to a large degree depended on the personality of the owner - no less true today.

Searches also revealed a Fisher's Golden Ale, mentioned in the *Portland Daily Press* (Maine) of 8 August 1865. A bit of an outlier, there seems no further trace of this beer. The editor mentioned it when criticising another newspaper whose editor professed Temperance sympathies yet advertised the brand.<sup>139</sup>

A New York brewery owned by Henry Ferris & Sons advertised its 'celebrated' Canada Malt Golden 'B' Ale on 17 September 1878 in the *New York Evening Express*.<sup>140</sup> It was one of many New York ale breweries that withered under the gale winds lager unleashed in Manhattan and boroughs (quite literally, some would observe). Using Fleming's adjective 'celebrated', the brand seems to have followed in its steps but also that of the eponymous Frank Jones Brewery of Portsmouth, NH. Frank Jones, a wildly successful entrepreneur, engaged in many fields but is remembered especially for his brewery. Already in 1874 he is advertising in the important Boston market his 'Frank Jones Portsmouth Golden Ale', as seen from an advert of 18 July that year in Boston's *The Pilot*.<sup>141</sup> The golden ale branding continued into the 1880s at least.<sup>142</sup>

The competitors, despite the dismissive tone of Fleming's 1858 advert quoted above, surely did not assist Fleming's fortunes. Such are the facts for any business yet after all was said and done Fleming's Golden Ale had a run of some 30 years - an achievement unto itself especially for a contract brand.

## Golden ale coda?

Norfolk Golden Ale, made by Habich & Co. in Boston,<sup>143</sup> appeared in splashy adverts in the late 1890s including in *Harvard Graduates Magazine* together with the firm's India Pale Ale and Extra Stock Porter.<sup>144</sup> It is possibly a remote descendant of the style Fleming's Golden Ale represented.

About the year 1897, when Fleming's Golden Ale was long a memory, Albany Brewing Company, formerly the Boyd Brothers brewery, introduced a product called Arctic Ale ('Drink Albany Brewing Co.'s Arctic ale. Delicious, cool and pure').<sup>145</sup> In 1907 the product is still sold ('The Best Beer That Ever Was ... Famous Arctic Ale ... Consumers Albany Brewing Company')<sup>146</sup> but by 1910 it has been re-named as Golden Arctic Ale.<sup>147</sup> Was the latter a distant revival of Fleming's or Boyd Brothers' Golden Ale of 1860s heyday? The term 'arctic' is ambiguous, especially as the change of name occurs only after ten years. To beer historians 'arctic' suggests a possible allusion to the Victorian Allsopp's Arctic Ale, a super strong Burton Ale carried on arctic expeditions as a tonic and fortifier.<sup>148</sup> In contrast adverts for Golden Arctic Ale are pitched to a family and 'domestic' audience. A 1910 example:

Because of its wholesomeness and high nutritive value. Golden Arctic Ale is a most healthful drink. It is an aid to digestion and a great health builder.

Golden Arctic Ale is properly brewed, aged and sterilized. For the weak, the languid, the fatigued, the exhausted a glass of Golden Arctic Ale will aid as a wonderfully invigorating tonic. When your Physician tells you to drink Ale, drink **ALBANY BREWING CO'S - GOLDEN ARCTIC ALE.**

It has a satisfying and refreshing flavour. All this goodness is produced in brewing and preserved by our extraordinary facilities in bottling and sterilization.<sup>149</sup>

The 1890s adverts for the Arctic Ale describe it as 'clear, cool and sparkling like lager',<sup>150</sup> whence presumably the term arctic. Amsdell Brewing & Malting Co. in Albany in 1900 (and after) touted its Polar Ale,<sup>151</sup> which likely as well meant a drink best served cold, so these two brands likely were direct competitors. Golden Arctic Ale seemed to have a certain substance though, via the 'high nutritive value'. Fleming's Golden Ale,

while billing itself as sparkling and cold, and a presumed, moderate 5.1% alcohol (or 'family' strength), compared itself to the Burton and Scotch ales of its time - relatively rich beers - including Allsopp's Burton Ale.<sup>152</sup>

Given the same physical brewery is involved and the partial similarity of name, there might be some connection between Golden Arctic Ale and Fleming's or Boyd's 1860s Golden Ale but this seems unlikely: a gap of some 40 years separates the beers, and Golden Arctic Ale was to all appearances a renaming of a beer (Arctic Ale) not called golden to begin with.

## Post-Prohibition Golden ales

The scope of this essay excludes post-Prohibition golden ales of which there were, and are, many in the United States, both pre- and post-craft brewing. Britain offers many current examples due to a decades-old fashion for golden ale sparked by the brands Exmoor Gold and Hop Back Summer Lightning.<sup>153</sup> Nonetheless, one mid-1900s example is worth mentioning, Old Shay Golden Ale. Adverts of 1949-1950 show an evocative illustration of a couple in post-Civil War costume riding a two-seat carriage.<sup>154</sup> Was this an allusion to the late-1800s golden ale phenomenon of which Fleming's Golden Ale was seemingly avatar? Quite possibly, although the illustration may have been intended simply to underscore an emphatic ale character versus the 'standard' American lager palate then dominant.

## Conclusion

There appears to be no record of any biographical details of William Fleming apart his professional life and eponymous golden ale. In the records of St. Agnes Cemetery in Menands, NY, located on the outskirts of Albany, the burials of two William Flemings are recorded in the late 1800s and it seems likely that our Fleming was one of these, possibly the earlier.<sup>155</sup>

Fleming's Golden Ale was one facet of the Hudson Valley's rich ale tradition. It was notable for a distinctive name, pleasing appearance and taste, and use of Cuba honey to emulate an apprehended technique of exported Scotch ale. It may have been the first branded

golden ale in America. Fleming's beer probably influenced later golden ales, up to WW I at least, in point of name but perhaps too for colour and clarity. Also, unlike the other Albany brewers, Fleming was a non-brewing entrepreneur striving to compete against established brands. There is an analogy to modern craft pioneers, a breed exemplified today by James Watt of Britain's Brewdog or Greg Koch of California-based Stone Brewing.

As well, the exotic Cuban honey of Fleming's ale, promoted in his early adverts, presaged our time when beer vaunts a dizzying range of ingredients. Knowing as they had to that sugar in brewing was deprecated by some influential brewers, Boyd Brothers and Fleming nonetheless made the kind of beer they wanted, seeking to turn a negative into a positive. A process not dissimilar continues today. One only has to think of sour beers, or 'milkshake' I.P.A.s.

The public favour lasted a good many years, enough for Fleming to make a modest benefaction to his native city. To those who walk through Albany's Bleecker Park the public fountain is a quaint evocation of a distant past. It is that but much more, a memorial to a town burgher who carved his place in beer history.

### Acknowledgement

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2. Howell, G.R., (1886) *Bi-centennial History of Albany. History of the County of Albany*, p.518. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 11 April 2019).
3. Fleming is listed as a wholesale liquors dealer in *The Albany Directory for the Year 1857*, p.161. (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 8 April 2019). The 1856 edition has no listing for Fleming. We infer he started in the liquor business in 1856 or 1857, unless engaged earlier without placing a notice in this source.
4. See e.g., Fleming, W. (1857) 'Card to the Public', *Albany*

*Morning Press*, 29 October 1857. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 8 April 2019). Hence it appears in November 1857 Fleming entered two new fields, saloon keeping and retail wine and liquor vending.

5. Some Fleming adverts situate his business at the corner of South Pearl and Hudson Streets, others at South Pearl and Beaver Streets. Some mention different civic numbers on South Pearl: 11, 19, and 21, and even nos. 50 and 52 on Beaver Street.

6. The notice of Fleming's move to the Clinton Hotel did not mention the Golden Ale, which suggests its wide appeal was still in prospect.

7. *Atlas Argus*, 19 June 1861. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 8 April 2019).

8. For a compact history of the American soda fountain, see Bellis, M., 'The History of the Soda Fountain', ThoughtCo.com, 20 February 2019, <https://thoughtco.com/history-of-the-soda-fountain-1992432> (Accessed 27 April 2019).

9. The ambit of this essay is the United States but it may be noted that branded golden ale has been documented as early as 1838, as a provision in a British passenger ship, the Emerald Isle, sailing between India and Australia. See Hamilton, A., (2015) *Brewed Britain: The Quest for the Perfect Pint*. London: Bantam Press, p.246. ('24 dozens of Golden Ale').

10. *Morning Express*, 24 June 1858. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 7 April 2019).

11. *Daily Whig*, 21 July 1860. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 7 April 2019).

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15. See Note 130 and the related discussion in the text for the unattributed Golden Ale sold by saloonkeeper Alexander Behan in Syracuse.

16. Whiting, J. (1861) *The New York Shippers and Consignees' Guide*, p.170. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 7 April 2019). See also the advert for Fleming's Golden Ale in Ross, C.J. (1861) *Chronicles of the Rebellion of 1861* (unpaginated). (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 7 April 2019). In this notice the New York agent, Pierce Skehan, states that Fleming's Golden Ale has 'excellent quality for keeping at sea'.

17. See (1860) *The Boston Directory*, p.164. (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 8 April 2019). William

Fleming and J.C. Laughton are listed at 12 Lindall St. as supplying Fleming's Golden Ale.

18. The beer is advertised by Samuel Billings, probably a saloonkeeper, at 100 Central Street in Lowell. See *Daily Courier*, April 1863. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 9 April 2019).

19. See *The Middlebury Register*, 10 August 1859. (Retrieved from <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.org>, accessed 7 April 2019). As well, in Bath, Maine a saloon advertised the beer together with a specialty of oysters in (1862) *A Business Directory of the Subscribers to the New Map of Maine*, p.130. (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 7 April 2019).

20. See Note 132 and the related discussion in the text viz. 'Millard's Golden Ale' in Michigan.

21. Whiting, J. (1861) op. cit. p.170. The Willard Hotel was *bon ton*. In the same year as Whiting's book Abraham Lincoln resided there before his inauguration, and the hotel hosted the ill-fated Peace Convention meant to head off the Civil War. The same notice lists numerous first-class hotels in New York as outlets. It may be noted of some 80 menus from the 1850s-1860s included in the University of Texas' Digital Library menu archive, none mention Fleming's Golden Ale although Taylor's ale and McKnight's 'malt wine', both of Albany, have one mention each. However, an 1862 menu of the Astor House, a hotel listed in the Whiting book advert, mentions simply 'American ale' and 'draught ale'. Fleming Golden Ale might have been among these. See <https://digital.lib.uh.edu/collection/p15195coll34/item/9/show/8> (Accessed 11 April 2019). The menus generally list ales or porters sent to America by Bass, Muir, Barclay Perkins, Allsopp, Jeffrey, and Guinness, but 'London Porter', 'Scotch Ale', and 'India Pale Ale' are sometimes listed without indication of source. An 1861 Willard's Hotel menu is included but sadly without the wine list.

22. See Gillman, G. (Winter, 2016) 'The arc of American Musty ale', *Brewery History*, Number 169, pp.36-59. Golden ale and musty ale shared a relatively elevated social status among the brewery productions of America. A profile of Chicago eateries in a January 1890 issue of the National Police Gazette: New York stated that Charles Rector, a noted restaurateur who had started in Boston (a heartland of musty ale), served at his fashionable chophouse 'the most golden' ale, brand not stated, with devilled or broiled oysters. Musty ale was positioned similarly, as I documented in my article. (Retrieved at <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 22 April 2019).

23. *ibid*.

24. *Harper's Weekly*, 31 October 1857. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 8 April 2019).

25. *Morning Courier and New-York Enquirer*, 14 May 1840.

(Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 8 April 2019). ('London Pale Ale, on draught - 4 hhd's Hodson's East India Pale Ale on draught, a very pleasant beverage for warm weather, for sale by Robert Maitland & Son, 110 Front st.').

26. *Albany Morning Express*, 26 July 1858. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 9 April 2019).

27. For a full-length treatment of Albany ale history see Gravina, C. and McLeod, A. (2014) *Upper Hudson Valley Beer*. Charleston: American Palate, division of The History Press (the page references *infra* pertain to the Kindle edition). See also the authors' website The Albany Ale Project at <http://albanyaleproject.com> and the Albany Ale Public Group at <https://facebook.com/groups/137746912938180/>.

28. 'Albany Ale', <https://albanyinstitute.org/albany-ale.html> (Accessed 10 April 2019).

29. The term North River has carried varying meanings over the centuries, or for different users. Especially in the 19th century it meant, and still does for many, the most southern part of the Hudson River between New Jersey and the Manhattan banks, lined with wharves especially in former times.

30. See *The Congressional Record*. The Official Proceedings of Congress. (1862), No. 122, p.2459. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca/>, accessed 11 April 2019).

31. Phelps, H.R., (1884) *The Albany Hand-Book*. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca/>, accessed 11 April 2019).

32. Howell, G.R. (1886) op. cit. p.557. In 1884 Howell had ale production in Albany at 263,459 barrels and 94,475 for lager.

33. Whish, J.D., (1917) *Albany Guide Book*, p.39.

(Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 11 April 2019). Whish cited for 1916 a total Albany production of 333,822 barrels, of which 213,544 were lager and 120,277 were ale. See also the author's blog post at Beeretseq.com, 'In Memorium: American ale, 1600s-1904', 27 May 2017, <https://www.beeretseq.com/in-memorium-american-ale-1600s-1904/>. We describe from the standpoint of c.1900 Manhattan the declining market for ale. The situation further up the Hudson River was similar; the process just took longer. One imaginative effort to reverse the general trend, not long before Prohibition, is described in our two-part post, 'I.P.A.: a Pretty Romance', 5 September 2018, <http://www.beeretseq.com/ipa-a-pretty-romance-part-i/>. A pioneering advertising campaign played on Western conceptions of romance and Eastern exoticism. The theme was later reprised with great success in the early years of American craft brewing.

34. *Times-Union*, 26 January 1929. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 9 April, 2019).

35. In *The Albany Directory for the Year 1867*, p.325, A.R. Dunlop Brewery advertised in a full-page spread East India



Pale Ale, Export XX and XXX, Pale Ale, Amber Ale, and Porter. (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 11 April 2019). At different times in the 1800s one could also find among New York brewers cream ale, imperial cream ale, amber cream ale, California pale ale, musty ale, stock ale, winter stock ale, English still ale, and brown ale.

36. Kennedy, J.C.G., (1862) Preliminary Report on the Eighth Census. 1860, p.65. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 9 April 2019).

37. Gravina, C. & McLeod, A. (2014) op. cit. pp.61-80.

38. (1896) *Documentary History of the United States Brewers' Association*, p.235. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 10 April 2019).

39. *ibid.* While not stated therein, understandably given the source and overwhelming German influence in American brewing by the 1890s, German-Americans and their lager were at best a curiosity to old stock Americans earlier in the century. The higher social status of Anglo-Americans was long mirrored in their drink of ale until lager washed away (mostly) the older tradition.

40. *Albany Morning Express*, 29 December 1858. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 9 April 2019). A series of these adverts appeared in the Albany press in December 1858.

41. See Stowell, D.O., (1999) *Streets, Railroads, and the Great Strike of 1877*, p.15. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 9 April 2019).

42. *Troy Daily Times*, 17 December 1853 which in turn cites the 'Albany Knick' (or *The Knickerbocker News*). (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 12 April 2019).

43. See e.g., the Congressional discussion on the shipping trade in beer referenced in Note 30. See also e.g., Gravina, C. & McLeod, A. (2014) op. cit. p.9, in relation to a finding by co-author McLeod of export of Albany ale to Newfoundland in 1847, and Gravina, C. & McLeod, A. (2014) op. cit. p.67 viz. John Taylor's exploitation of 'New York's new water highway' to increase beer sales.

44. *Albany Morning Express*, 5 February 1858. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 12 April 2019).

45. *Albany Morning Express*, 24 June, 1858. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 12 April 2019).

46. *The Schenectady Reflector*, 1 April 1859. (Retrieved from <http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org>, accessed 11 April 2019). The modern understanding that advertising, news reporting, and opinion are separate functions of a newspaper did not exist in the same way in the 19th century press.

47. *Albany Morning Express*, 24 June 1858. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 12 April 2019). The advert states: 'Fleming's Golden Ale, bottled expressly for family

use, is now ready for delivery. Please send in your orders. Wm. Fleming, corner South Pearl and Beaver streets.'

48. *Albany Morning Express*, 29 April 1858. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 12 April 2019).

49. *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 29 January 1859. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 12 April 2019).

50. *The Corrector*, 12 February 1859. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 12 April 2019).

51. See Note 19 viz. Vermont.

52. *Atlas & Argus*, 23 May 1860. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 13 April 2019).

53. See *The Albany Business Directory for the Year 1862*, pp.227 et seq. (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 12 April 2019).

54. *ibid.*, p.52.

55. *The Phoenix*, 14 July 1860. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 27 April 2019).

56. Whiting, J. (1861), op. cit., p.170.

57. *Atlas & Argus*, 21 July 1863. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 29 April 2019). This advert also lists numerous luxury wines and spirits as well as relative luxuries such as coffee and sugar. Fleming may have expanded into running a grocery unless possibly he conducted the activity earlier at or near the Clinton hotel along with the liquor shop and saloon.

58. See e.g., *The Lowell Daily Courier*, 31 January 1865. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 23 April 2019). Samuel Billings was a regular customer of Fleming's Golden Ale judging by many adverts he placed in the Lowell press between 1863 and 1865.

59. *Albany Morning Express*, 20 October 1869. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 12 April 2019).

60. See the group of 29 adverts, all in the *Albany Morning Express*, for the period mentioned. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 13 May 2019).

In the heyday of Fleming's Golden Ale, c.1860, Fleming sold imported brands alongside his Golden Ale, so advertising one did not necessarily exclude the other.

61. *The Boston Almanac and Business Directory 1874*, p.13. (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 13 April 2019). Laughton is now based at 9 Court avenue.

62. *New York Herald*, 18 June 1863. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 13 April 2019). ('... large stock [of miscellaneous ales and porter] on hand. Golden Ale Depot, 62 and 63 Liberty Street, Pierce Skehan').

63. *Chronicling America* shows a spate of ads by Skehan from 3 April to 11 June 1870 for 'Golden Ale'. (Retrieved from <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>, accessed 14 April 2019). The Civil War did significant physical damage to the

port and it failed to recover in the 19th century. Skehan seemingly went out of business in Charleston after 1870. Clearly he had also been doing business in Savannah further south, but this depot seems to have closed in 1866 according to a Google Books snippet from *Annals of Savannah, 1850-1937: A Digest and Index of the Newspaper Record of Events and Opinions, Volume 17, Part 1*. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 14 April 2019).

64. *The Albany Directory for the Year 1877*, p.91. (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 14 April 2019).

65. *The Albany Directory for the Year 1879*, p.96. (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 14 April 2019).

66. *The Albany Directory for the Year 1886*, p.320 (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 14 April 2019).

67. Gravina, C. & McLeod, A. (2014) op. cit. pp.82 and 84.

68. *Albany Moring Express*, 14 October 1858. (Retrieved from <http://14> April 2019).

69. (1860) *Transactions of the N.Y. State Agricultural Society, Volume XIX, 1859*, p. 647. (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 14 April 2019). Confirms award of a 'S.M.', or Silver Medal, for Fleming's Golden Ale.

70. *New York Herald*, 19 October 1859. (Retrieved from <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>, accessed 7 April 2019).

71. (1860) *The Ninth Exhibition of the Charitable Massachusetts Mechanics Association*, p.110. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 14 April 2019). Laughton was based in Boston so perhaps he can be viewed as a native son.

72. *Evening Journal*, 2 February 1858. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 14 April 2019).

73. *Troy Daily Times*, 30 June 2019. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 14 April 2019).

74. *Troy Daily Times*, 15 July 1858. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 14 April 2019).

75. Ace Hill Brewery in Toronto, ON furnishes an example. Its website states the beer is brewed at its 'partner facility' Brunswick Bierworks in Toronto. See <https://acehillbeer.com/beer/> (Accessed 22 April 2019).

76. For a discussion of the beer adulteration concern in New York in the early 19th century and resultant investigation see Gravina, C. & McLeod, A. (2014) op. cit. pp. 64 and 66.

77. Howell, G. R. (1886) op. cit. p.556.

78. Bishop, J.L. (1868) *A History of American Manufactures From 1608 to 1860, Volume III*, pp.246-247. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 14 April 2019). This section of the book provides a neat capsule of the prominent brewers in Albany at this period.

79. Gravina, C. & McLeod, A. (2014) op. cit. pp.53 and 55.

80. Bishop, J.L. (1868) op. cit. p.246.

81. *Commercial Times*, 9 February 1863. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 15 April 2019). Boyd's seems to have respected Fleming's rights in the important Boston market, though. An advert in Boston appears for Fleming's Golden Ale in (1865) *The Stranger's New Guide Through Boston and Vicinity*, at p.61. Right underneath appears 'Boyd and Brothers Albany Ales' but the Boyd's name is not conjoined with the words Golden Ale. (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 30 April 2019).

82. *Schenectady Democrat and Reflector*, 28 November 1867. (Retrieved from <https://nyshistoricnewspapers.org>, accessed 21 April 2019).

83. *Albany Morning Express*, 22 January 1877. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 15 April 2019).

84. Howell, G.R. (1868) op. cit. p.557.

85. *Albany Morning Express*, 3 November 1859. (Retrieved from <https://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 15 April 2019).

86. *Green Mountain Freeman* (in Montpelier, Vermont), 18 February 1874. (Retrieved from <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>, accessed 21 April 2019). ('Golden Ale has but 5 1-10 per cent of alcohol'. By contrast, the assay, by a Dr. Hayes, reported porter as 'from 4 to 7 per cent of Alcohol', and lager between '2 1-2 and 3 1-2 per cent of alcohol'). It appears Dr. Hayes was State Assayer of Massachusetts, see 'Cider in the Pledge', Rev. William M. Thayer, *Moravia Valley Register* aka *The Register*, 31 March 1876. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 22 April 2019).

87. Pereira, J. (1843), *A Treatise on Food and Diet*, p.299. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 21 April 2019). On the high strength - 9% ABV or more - of Albany and Hudson ales in the 1830s, see Gravina, C. & McLeod, A. (2014) op. cit. p.107. We think Fleming's Golden Ale, albeit not a domestic or 'table' class of ale, was likely an early departure from the high-strength norm.

88. Brewers' promotion of the alleged health benefits of pale ale is demonstrated in an 1853 issue of the (U.K.'s) *Bristol Temperance Herald* in which a physician records, but also counters vigorously, their claims. See 'The Merits and Demerits of Bitter Beer', W.B. Carpenter, M.D., February, 1853, No. 2, Vol. XVII, at p.17, in a volume collecting issues of the magazine. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 22 April 2019).

89. *Albany Journal*, 1 December 1856. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 22 April 2019).

90. See Note 21.

91. *Daily Whig*, 1 July 1858. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 15 April 2019).

92. (1863) *The Albany Directory for the Year 1863*, p.237.

(Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 15 April 2019). This also reflects the old folk understand that medicine is supposed to taste bad. Its bitterness (the ‘bitter pill’), which good beer shares, was rationalized in the mid-19th century as therapeutic.

93. From ‘Brew Better Beer With Honey’, a publication of the National Honey Board. See <https://www.honey.com/files/general/nhb-beer-research.pdf> (Accessed 2 May 2019). Much depends as well, certainly according to homebrewers online, what variety of honey is used.

94. The original prohibition appears to date from 1713 due to passage that year of the Malt Act, which imposed a duty of 6d. per bushel of malt, see Thomson, T. and Stewart, W. (1849) *Brewing and Distillation*, p.138. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 1 May 2019). Periodic exemptions were later granted. As an instance, a Mr. Jackson of the Revenue authorities testified to Parliament in 1807 whether sugar should be allowed in brewing. He observed that a lesser duty on sugar would deprive the Revenue of the full rate on the equivalent malt, but noted that in times of ‘scarcity’ of malt sugar was allowed by exemption, most recently in 1800 or 1801, he recalled. See (1836) *Selection of Reports and Papers of the House of Commons*. Vol. 16, p.16. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 15 April 2019).

95. See *AN ACT to allow the use of Sugar in the brewing of Beer* (1847) and accompanying abstract, set out in (1846) *A Compendious Abstract of the Public General Acts of the United Kingdom*, etc. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 20 April 2019).

96. For a summary of the changes see Clark, C. (1998) *The British Malting Industry Since 1830*, p.65. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 20 April 2019). Basically from 1 October 1880 the malt and sugar duties were repealed and replaced by a single duty on wort calculated on a standard barrel of 1057 gravity.

97. Hind, H.L. (1938) *Brewing Science and Practice*, p.297. (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 15 April 2019). Of course under craft brewing influence honey has been used frequently in recent decades. Honey of course has a much older lineage in U.K. brewing, e.g., the braggot of Wales, not to mention the separate field of mead, but these topics are outside our scope herein.

98. See Mathers’ post, ‘1906 Dryborough & Co. “Burns Ale”’, at his website Old Beers and Brewing, [https://oldbeer-sandbrewing.blogspot.com/2019/04/drybrough-co-ltd-burns-ale-1906\\_3.html](https://oldbeer-sandbrewing.blogspot.com/2019/04/drybrough-co-ltd-burns-ale-1906_3.html) (Accessed 15 April 2019). Beer historian Ron Pattinson provided the recipe to him. The ‘Burns’ is a clue to the revivalist intent of the recipe. Mathers states the honey was added together with invert sugars at the start of the

boil. This would likely minimize the effect on flavor, but the honey was probably symbolic by 1906, intended to honour an older tradition.

99. See Muspratt’s comments on Scotch ales, especially as made at Alloa, extracted at length in Ron Pattinson’s blogpost of 6 April 2011 at his site Shut Up About Barclay Perkins, <http://barclayperkins.blogspot.com/2011/10/scotch-guinea-ales.html> (Accessed 15 April 2019).

100. Hitchcock, T. (1842) *A Practical Treatise on Brewing*, p.44. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 15 April 2019).

101. Roberts, W.H. (1847) *The Scottish Ale Brewer and Practical Maltster*. Third Edition, pp.223 et seq. and concluding (unpaginated) Table. Only the Table specifically references honey. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 15 April 2019).

102. See Note 99 and the reference to Russian honey in the extract mentioned.

103. Hitchcock, T. (1842) op. cit. p.44. (“The boiling of Scotch ale is a little different from that of other ales ... one pound of honey per barrel of wort is added in the copper, twenty minutes before drawing off”).

104. See the pamphlet of the National Honey Board at Note 93.

105. Roberts, W. (1847) op. cit. his concluding Table.

106. *ibid.*

107. Baker, J.H. and Baker, L. (1847) *A View of the Commerce of the United States and the Mediterranean Seaports*, p.57. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 21 April 2019).

108. Poppleton, O.O. (1898) ‘Southern Honey’, *Gleanings in Bee Culture*. Volume XXVI, No. 24, 15 December 1898, p.908. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 15 April 2019). It can be seen from this account and other sources that the quality of Cuba honey could vary, or at least, there were different opinions concerning its quality, but this is true of most commodities.

109. ‘The Production of Honey In Cuba’, *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, Vol. 59, No. 3058 (30 June 1911), pp.826-827.

110. Poppleton, O.O. (1898) op. cit. p.908.

111. Glasgow Herald, Friday 14 December 1855.

112. See Note 95 and Section III in the Act cited.

113. Roberts (1847) op. cit. pp.246-247.

114. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Eighth Edition, Volume V, (1854), ‘Brewing’, p.336. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 3 May 2019). Thomson and Stewart (1849) does not reference this issue. James Sumner, in his (2013) *Brewing Science, Technology, and Print, 1700-1880*, discusses Thomson’s authorship of the *Britannica*

brewing chapter and states that after Thomson's death in 1852 Edinburgh medic James Stark edited the chapter, see p.155. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 3 May 2019).

115. *Britannica*, and not *Britannica* alone, wrote that slow Scottish ale fermentation meant the beer 'cleansed' itself, see *Britannica* ('Brewing') op. cit. p.330. This may explain a lack of concern, and on Roberts' part, that the honey or sugar would be used up, or completely used up, in re-fermentations on the voyage. It is likely some of it was converted to carbon dioxide and a little alcohol. After all some of the Scotch ale Fleming admired was billed commercially as 'sparkling', but enough sugar must have remained to lend the 'fulness' desired; at least these writers must have concluded so far. (This was before English methods started to impact Scottish brewing especially for pale ale, which became a major Scots production in the second part of the century). Thomson was not a commercial brewer; he taught brewing chemistry in Glasgow. Still, he had evident close connections with brewers. In Thomson and Stewart (1849) Stewart is described as a 'brewer'. As James Sumner noted in his book, see Note 114, Thomson and Stewart (1849) collected material from *Britannica*, supplemented by the practical perspective of Stewart. For his part Roberts was not a commercial brewer either but regularly brewed 'quarters', according to the 1847 Supplement, to test his theories. As well he sold at his British Wine Works in Edinburgh supplies for brewers and winemakers and would have been a soundboard for their experience.

116. (1867) 'From Bremen to New York', *All the Year Round. A Weekly Journal. Conducted by Charles Dickens. With Which is Incorporated 'Household Words'*, Volume XVIII, p.295. (Retrieved from <https://googlebooks.com>, accessed 3 May 2019). George Saintsbury took a more nuanced view of 'best' Scotch ale in his (1920) *Notes on a Cellar-Book*, p.150, giving the style a nod ('famous') but noting of a brand he had kept 16 years, 'still treacle at the end' - a leitmotif certainly of pre-I.P.A. Scotch ale throughout the 1800s. (Retrieved from <https://googlebooks.com>, accessed 15 May 2019).

117. *Farmer and Mechanic*, No. 154, Vol. III, 9 December 184. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 3 May 2019). The duty likely fell in later years but any duty had to be an issue for American buyers.

118. See Alex Testere, 'You Need to Try Scottish Heather Honey', *Saveur Premium*, 12 January 2017, <https://www.saveur.com/scotland-heather-honey> (Accessed 15 May 2019).

119. In terms of domestic U.S. pricing, a New York newspaper in 1856 had Cuba honey in-bond for 58 cents per gallon, meaning non-duty paid, stating it was 'moving very

freely' albeit in that case 'buyers required concessions'. Cuba honey was generally sold in tierces, priced by the gallon. Most listings in the 1850s business press are a line or two with no price stated, as the product was sold by auction or private negotiation. See for the price noted *Semi-Weekly Courier and New York Enquirer*, 11 March 1856. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 3 May 2019). In general the listings suggest brisk demand. The price varied where quoted but 75 cents per gallon seemed an average price in the 1850s, duty-paid. Transport to Albany would increase the cost, an 1831 account had 'Havana honey' at \$1.00/gal. at Rochester, NY, apparently a retail price. See Hawley, J., 'For the Genesee Farmer. Currant Wine', *The Genesee Farmer*, Vol. 1, No. 24, 18 June 1831, p.188. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 3 May 2019). One index of the demand is that 'Cuba Honey' was included in some books of factitious recipes, which may explain the differing opinions on quality, at least in part. A complicating factor to pin down American vs. Cuban honey prices is that 'Southern' in 'Southern honey' often meant Cuba, as seen by phrases such as 'Southern Cuba honey'. In any case, as it is probable Boyd's and Fleming followed Roberts' 1855 advice, cheapness was likely not a factor here. Otherwise why trumpet Cuba honey in the 1858 adverts?

120. *Britannica* ('Brewing') op. cit. p. 336.

121. (1835) *Documents of the Senate of the State of New-York, Fifty-Eighth Session, Volume II*, p.2 of No. 88, In Senate, May 11, 1835. A summary of responses to questions put to brewers states: '... in some cases honey, molasses, or sugar are used ... for their saccharine matter'. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 30 April 2019).

122. *ibid.*, p.40. 'Scotch ale' so termed was a specialty of many Albany and Troy brewers. Amsdell Bros. Scotch Ale was an example as noted in (1888) *The Empire State: Its Industries and Wealth*, p.94. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 3 May 2019). ('... [has] ... no superior ... in this country or Europe'). Some brands likely used honey into the late 1800s without advertising the fact.

123. Documents of the Senate (1835) op. cit., p.16. Roberts did state as well he used 'burnt sugar' where the malt was too pale, probably for porter in line with contemporary British practice.

124. See Note 119. New York regularly landed supplies and our searches indicated New Orleans and Baltimore did as well. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 3 May 2019).

125. Even some imported India Pale Ale, Scottish and perhaps English, were likely treated with honey or sugar given Roberts' recommendations viz. export 'India beers' in 1847.

Regardless of the style of British beer reaching the New York market, there is reason to think a marked sweetness characterized many and it was an aim of Boyd's and Fleming to emulate the effect.

126. *Atlas & Argus*, 8 December 1862. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 28 April 2019).

127. *Documents of the Senate* (1835) op. cit. pp.6-7. *Cocculus indicus*, *nux vomica*, laurel leaves, opium, salt of steel, and alum are included among others.

128. A good illustration is Bonington, M. (pseud. for John Lawrence) (1830) *A Practical Treatise on the Breeding, Rearing, and Fattening of all Kinds of Domestic Poultry*, etc., p.338. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 21 April 2019). Lawrence inveighs against 'sweets' and other brewing adjuncts, in any proportion, approving only salt which 'seasons all things'. His argument recurs periodically in the 19th century and underpinned the early stages of the modern craft revival. In contrast, many Victorian brewing technologists defended use of sugar and raw cereals but inevitably were influenced by brewers' cost needs, in our view. Consultants looking for clients were not going to bite the hand that feeds.

129. See Note 52.

130. *Syracuse Daily Courier*, 2 March 1858. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 21 April 2019). In a city guide entitled (1875) *The Rochester Directory*, a local agent for Greenway Brewing Co. in Syracuse, NY advertised Greenway's Golden Nectar among other beers. If the brand existed in 1858, albeit that is 17 years earlier (Greenway's did exist at the time) the product in Behan's advert may have been that beer, perhaps with name altered to Golden Ale to compete better with Fleming. (Retrieved from <https://books.google.ca>, accessed 10 May 2019). Greenway's Golden Nectar may have used honey; the name is suggestive while not being conclusive. From the available evidence, it seems this Golden Nectar emerged after Fleming's Golden Ale as a possible rival. Greenway's Golden Nectar is listed in an 1896 invoice from the brewery along with a variety of ales in the English tradition, see Worthpoint's auction listing at <https://www.worthpoint.com/worthopedia/vintage-1896-greenway-brewing-co-1829439676> (Accessed 10 May 2019). Taylor's Golden Nectar, from the sizable Taylor Brewery in Albany, is a similar case except this brand clearly was created in 1874 ('A new brand. Golden Nectar'). See *The New York Herald*, 28 February 1874. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 10 May 2019).

131. *Hillsdale Daily Standard*, 27 December 1859. (Retrieved from <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.org>, accessed 21 April 2019).

132. At least two c.1875 business directories list a Frank Millard in Detroit as dealing in liquors at retail or operating a saloon, see e.g., (1875) *Bonfort's Wine and Liquor Trade Directory for the United States*, p.242. (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 21 April 2019).

133. See the brewery timeline at the Old Breweries site: <http://www.oldbreweries.com/breweries-by-state/pennsylvania/philadelphia-pa-455-breweries/james-abbott-robert-newlin-brewery-pa-506d/> (Accessed 21 April 2019). This source names the brewery in 1860 as Newlin, Thompson & Co. but a carefully drawn advert, see Note 131, has it as Newlin, Thomas & Co. The same brewery existed under different ownership from c.1790 until 1869.

134. *Troy Daily Times*, 14 June 1860. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 21 April 2019).

135. See Gobright and Dawes (1861) *A Union Sketch-Book: A Reliable Guide*, etc., p.134, a guidebook to New York and business directory. (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 22 April 2019). Also a 'golden' among other ale types is advertised by The New York Steam and H.L. Potter & Co. breweries in (1860-1861) *Trow's New York City Directory*, p.6. (Retrieved from <https://babel.hathitrust.org>, accessed 16 June 2019). Both seemingly post-date Fleming's Golden Ale.

136. See the Gaul timeline at the Old Breweries site: <http://www.oldbreweries.com/breweries-by-state/pennsylvania/philadelphia-pa-455-breweries/frederick-gaul-sons-brewery-pa-451f/> (Accessed 22 April 2019).

137. See the Howard & Fuller timeline at the Old Breweries site: <http://www.oldbreweries.com/breweries-by-state/new-york/brooklyn-ny-106-breweries/howard-fuller-brewing-co-ny-88c/> (Accessed 22 April 2019).

138. *The Evening Post*, 9 December 1905. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 22 April 2019).

139. *The Portland Daily Press*, 8 August 1865. (Retrieved from <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.org>, accessed 22 April 2019).

140. *New York Evening Express*, 17 September 1878. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 22 April 2019).

141. *The Pilot*, 14 January 1874. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 22 April 2019).

142. See *The Utica Observer*, 3 July 1885. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 22 April 2019). This advert is for 'Portsmouth Golden Ale', clearly the same brand advertised earlier under the name Frank Jones' Portsmouth Golden Ale. Jones continued to advertise 'Frank Jones Ale' into the early 1900s.

143. See the Habich timeline (1874-1902 in Boston) at the Old Breweries site: <http://www.oldbreweries.com/breweries-by-state/massachusetts/boston-ma-48-breweries/edward->

habich-brewery-ma-15a/ (Accessed 22 April 2019).

144. (1898-1899) Vol. 7, *Harvard Graduates Magazine*, p.14. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.32044103063913;view=1up;seq=712> (Accessed 22 April 2019).

145. *The Times-Union*, 8 March 1897. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 22 April 2019).

146. *The Albany Evening Journal*, 28 September 1907. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 22 April 2019).

147. *The Hudson Evening Register*, 21 September 1910. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 22 April 2019). A Golden Arctic Ale label, and one for Amsdell's Polar Ale, appear among numerous period labels reproduced in Gravina, C. & McLeod, A. (2014) op. cit. p.96.

148. For background on Allsopp's Arctic Ale and the style it represented (Burton Ale as against Burton Pale Ale, to start with) see beer historian Martyn Cornell's blogpost of 10 January 2010, 'Arctic Ale: a 158-Year-Old Adventure Revived' at <http://zythophile.co.uk/2010/01/10/arctic-ale-a-158-year-old-adventure-revived/> (Accessed 22 April 2019).

149. *The Hudson Evening Register*, 14 September 1910. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 22 April 2019).

150. See Note 145.

151. The phrase 'Polar Ale a Specialty' appeared in a box advert of Amsdell Brewing and Malting Co. along with cream ale, India and Scotch ales, and porter in *The Times-Union*, 15

December 1900. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 22 April 2019). Adverts appear for Amsdell's Polar Ale intermittently in the Albany press until about 1917.

152. See Note 26 and related text.

153. For some background to the latter-day U.K. golden beer phenomenon see Boak, J. and Bailey, R. (2015) 'The Emergence of 'Pale 'n Hoppy' Beers in the U.K.', *All About Beer*, 19 November 2015, <http://allaboutbeer.com/the-emergence-of-pale-n-hoppy-beers-in-the-uk/> (Accessed 22 April 2019).

154. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 20 November 1950. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 27 April 2019).

155. A cemetery listing for St. Agnes Cemetary, Menands, NY from the Troy Irish Genealogy Society lists burials for a William Fleming on 23 November 1889 and 27 June 1898: [http://sites.rootsweb.com/~nytigs/StAgnesInterments-Bk3\\_Fl.htm](http://sites.rootsweb.com/~nytigs/StAgnesInterments-Bk3_Fl.htm) (Accessed 22 April 2019). This cemetery is Catholic and our impression is Fleming of the Golden Ale was of Irish background. In Albany's *Evening Journal* of 25 March 1856 a William Fleming, among others expressing Irish patriotic sentiments that day, is recorded as saying of St. Patrick's Day, 'As long as Irishmen celebrate this Anniversary, the name of Ireland will never be forgotten'. Albany was a relatively small city in the late 1850s and we believe him to be our Fleming. (Retrieved from <http://fultonhistory.com>, accessed 22 April 2019).

