BREWERS, PUBLICANS, AND STAFF IN LATE VICTORIAN AND EDWARDIAN LICENSED TRADE SOCIETIES: PART I

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The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography finds room for a few brewers, but the entries tell little about their subjects' role in licensed trade defence. Other brewers, publicans, and licensed trade society staff are even more neglected, remembered as little more than names. This article casts light on representative brewers, publicans, and drink societies staff, while sketching the political context of the licensed trade societies in which they worked.

In England and Wales drinkers usually drank beer. Consequently, the people who mattered the most in the licensed trade were the brewers. As well as brewing the beer, they controlled as tied-houses most pubs and beerhouses that sold beer for on- or off-premises consumption. Licensed trade societies, those of the brewers and those of the retailers, differed from other business organizations. Pubs and their customers were everywhere.

The English brewing trade developed a powerful pressure group for only one reason: rightly or wrongly, it felt beleaguered.⁴ To assure a market for their beer, brewers had made huge investments in public house property. By custom, annual public house licenses were almost always renewed, but there was no statutory security for renewal.

This ambiguous legal status made the trade politically vulnerable when combined with a growing concern over excessive drinking by urban workingmen.⁵ Drinking (by other people) worried responsible society. In late Victorian England, the drunkard was 'reimagined as the undesirable and often detestable product of a morally questionable profit-driven industry'.⁶ The justices of the

peace, who administered the licensing laws, often imposed unwelcome restrictions on the sale of drink. The courts repeatedly upheld the widest powers of magisterial discretion.

Conservatives, Liberal Unionists and Gladstonian Liberals all called for a reduction in the number of licensed houses. Reduction raised the controversial question of compensation. The Conservatives and Liberal Unionists were more willing than the Liberals to provide what the trade considered adequate compensation provided that the money come from the drink trade. In addition to worrying about reduction in numbers, the trade was frightened by local veto, the radical reform championed by the prohibitionist wing of the temperance movement. When the Liberal Party decided to support local veto, the licensed trade saw no choice other than to align themselves with the Conservatives and Liberal Unionists.

In this troubled environment, the English drink trade acquired a reputation for political effectiveness that other pressure groups could only envy. The brewers had money and at least a few MPs, while the publicans supposedly could sway the votes of working-class drinkers. In contrast with other business lobbies, the licensed trade had a political network in every constituency.

The trade organizations shaped the arguments that retailers used by providing vast quantities of printed propaganda. Propaganda directed at the working class was confined to leaflets and handbills, little more than slogans, and posters and small cartoons. They defended an Englishman's right to personal liberty against

meddling by narrow-minded, faddist reformers and protested the middle-class bias of the attacks on the poor man's club, the public house. In the general election of 1895 the central office of the National Trade Defence Fund produced about 900,000 leaflets, 90,000 posters, and 77,000 cartoons. Workingmen liked the cartoons, known as 'pictures,' the best.⁷

Middle class voters, worried about property rights, could be persuaded to support the public house politically, although they did not patronize it. Substantial pamphlets courted them. When major breweries became limited companies, their shareholders could be organized to protect their investments. Allied trades that did business with brewers also could be persuaded to join the fight. In 1901, a boycott by publicans forced a sausage maker to resign from the board of a public house trust. (A public house trust divorced the sale of drink from the profit motive, supposedly opening the way to other reforms.)

Trade organizations supplemented behind the scenes lobbying by leading brewers. In the 1880s and 1890s leading licensed trade organizations became centralized, politicized, and staffed with paid officials. The paid officials rarely had prior experience in the licensed trade. Brewers' associations demanded that societies of licensed victuallers accept their subordination. The trade pressured parliamentary candidates to promise support. Unfortunately for the trade, party discipline and government control of House of Commons time diminished the value of such pledges. Trade societies employed propaganda and protest both to rally immediate adherents and to appeal to a larger public. The endless succession of trade dinners, large and small, combined conviviality with efforts to heighten the sense of group identify and loyalty.

Caution was the watchword of the rich London brewers, the commercial and political leaders of the licensed trade. They agreed with what Joseph Chamberlain told a Birmingham brewer in 1891.

If the Trade keep strictly on the defence, confine themselves to principles in which they are sure of support from reasonable men, and do and not exert their influence too openly and aggressively, I am certain that they can defeat their enemies and make themselves absolutely safe against the attacks of fanatics But tact and prudence are almost

more necessary than money, organization or any kind of electoral pressure. 9

Licensed trade political influence was real but not unlimited. It reached its peak in the fight against the Liberal government of 1892-95 that had sponsored local veto bills. Liberal politicians and temperance reformers often depicted the trade as more formidable than it was to excuse their own defeats and to provoke a reaction against what they alleged to be corruption by privileged monopolists. The Liberal journalist A.G. Gardiner claimed: 'every public house is worth five votes to the Tory party.' Estimates of the money spent by the trade in general elections were much inflated and sometimes confused guarantee funds with actual expenditures. 10 Conservatives and Liberal Unionists often proved to be half-hearted allies. In 1894 the newspaper of the London publicans despaired about its political friends. 'We have learned by bitter experience that we cannot trust any party absolutely; that they all regard the Trade as a cow to be milked or an ass to be burdened'. 11 In 1897, the traditional toast, Our Parliamentary Representatives, 'was received with significant silence' at the Birmingham & District Licensed Victuallers annual dinner. None of Birmingham's MPs had bothered to attend.12

The licensed trade had difficulty in obtaining a friendly statute. It enjoyed more success in blocking hostile legislation, although it had to accept minor anti-trade bills that offended retailers such as the Child Messenger bill in 1901 and the Licensing Act of 1902. Retailers did not like the prohibition of selling beer to children under age 14 except in sealed containers. In the somewhat miscellaneous 1902 legislation, penalizing publicans for selling to drunkards predictably did not appeal to the retail trade. In 1904, to win crucial legislation protecting license renewal, the licensed trade had to make much more painful compromises.

Typically trade leaders were reluctant fighters willing to yield major concessions to gain an enduring settlement. They risked a campaign of no compromise only in 1908 when confronted with an omnibus licensing bill that seemed to jeopardize their financial survival.

Friction between the brewers and the retailers weakened the license trade politically. Outside London the tied house system often obligated the public house tenant to buy more than beer from his brewer. In a bitter saying of the 1890s he might be 'tied for everything but sawdust.' Provincial publicans resented the 'long pull,' by which some brewers expected them to encourage business with a extra measure of beer, essentially a price reduction. ¹⁴ A trade newspaper regretfully acknowledged: 'It is impossible to get the maximum of Trade electoral effort out of men nursing a grievance'. ¹⁵ Relations between brewers and publicans were better in London, where brewers 'tied' license holders by extending large mortgage loans, leases that were 'seldom for less than fifty years'. ¹⁶

Despite the contractual restrictions constraining tied houses, most publicans were independent business entrepreneurs. Some pubs were unprofitable. In the mid-1890s 10% of Newcastle pubs did not make money.¹⁷ At the other extreme, there were wealthy publicans. For instance, the brewer Courage loaned £100,000 to George Wyatt, who controlled 15 pubs.¹⁸

Some breweries hired salaried managers to run pubs instead of tenants who worked for a profit and not wages. 'At least half of the houses in Manchester and Liverpool and about one-fifth of those in Birmingham were employing managers in the 1890s'. 19 In 1891, Peter Walker & Son, the Liverpool brewer, had managers in 89% of its pubs. 20

Apathy, fueled by internal quarrels, frustrated trade activists. Many brewers failed to join brewers' organizations. It did not help when stagnant beer sales and imprudent investments in overpriced licensed property challenged the profitability of brewery firms. ²¹ Publicans were even less likely than brewers to join trade societies. At the turn of the century, trade union-backed Labour candidates undercut the influence of pub landlords. 'Where a Labour candidate stands the Trade's customers, pledged to support their man loyally, blindly follow the Union, and the Trade is comparatively powerless'. ²²

A political study of the English licensed trade cannot ignore the Scots and the Irish. The Imperial Parliament included Scottish and Irish MPs whose elections mattered to the English drink trade. In 1896, when the Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws was created, the eight members representing the licensed trade included a Scottish brewer and an Irish distiller and brewer.

The English licensed trade could be confident that the Scots would take care of themselves. By 1898 the Scottish Licensed Trade Defence Association had accumulated a defense fund of almost £7,000.²³

In contrast, the Irish situation was frustrating for the English licensed trade. The Nationalist alliance with the Liberal Party often made Irish MPs vote against drink trade interests. Moreover, in Ireland no more than 5% of the 20,000 license holders belonged to any trade association.²⁴ The major Irish trade organization, the Licensed Grocers and Vintners' Protection Association (founded in 1810), consisted in fact of Dublin publicans. The Central Committee of the Liquor Trade in Ireland was not much more than the Dublin society with a bigger name.²⁵

Occasionally the English trade provided the Irish trade with subsidies. T.M. Healey, an anti-Parnellite Nationalist MP, claimed in July 1895 that the English brewers had provided the rival Parnellite faction £3,000 to fight the 1892 general election.²⁶ Whether this is true or not, it is definite that the National Trade Defence Association gave the Irish party £500 for the general election of 1906.²⁷ In 1901, the London licensed victuallers paid an Irish MP named Nolan £100 for services during the past session.²⁸

Brewers' societies

The broad outline of this story is familiar, but the men of the late Victorian and Edwardian licensed trade who waged the battle are mostly just names.²⁹ As an exception, there are records for brewers as businessmen or occasionally as MPs.³⁰ Consequently, other than major officers, brewers seldom will appear in this article. It is the officers in retail societies and the paid staff everywhere who need attention as they are almost unknown other than through hard to access obituary notices.

T.O. Wethered (1832-1921), the chairman of the Country Brewers Society, was one of the leaders in its reorganization in the early 1880s.³¹ He had studied at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, and had been an unambitious backbench MP, speaking only three times in twelve years. Although quiet in Parliament, Wethered was outspoken elsewhere as an anti-Ritualist. Despite controversy about his social status as a brewer, he

became a justice of the peace.³² With his younger brother, he was a partner in the family brewery at Marlow in Buckinghamshire. It was of middling size, growing slowly from about 20,000 barrels to 25,644 barrels in 1882 and then declining for several years before growing again.³³ He did not take an active part in the business after 1891, the year that his eldest daughter married J. Danvers Power. Power had served as secretary of the reorganized CBS and as manager of the new National Trade Defence Fund. Dying at age 88, Wethered left an estate of more than £75,000.

By the end of 1883 the Country Brewers' Society had acquired a salaried secretary and permanent offices in London.³⁴ It furnished speakers, polemical literature, statistics, and in test cases legal assistance. In the year 1883-84 the society circulated between 30,000 and 40,000 pamphlets to members of Parliament and other influential people such as clergymen.³⁵ In 1885 it purchased 50,000 copies of Lord Branwell's pamphlet entitled *Drink*.³⁶ Subscriptions rose to pay for the new agenda. The CBS provided the county brewers' societies that sprang up in the mid-1880s, with places on its governing committee.³⁷ The reorganization produced an increase in membership from 316 in 1883 to 637 eight years later, in affiliated societies from twelve to 40, and in subscriptions from less than £400 to more than £2,100.38 In 1886 a newspaper was launched that in practice belonged to the society without making it liable for its debts. A committee of shareholders who were required to be members of the CBS owned the Brewing Trade Review.³⁹ Critics sniffed that no major London, Burton, or Dublin firms had joined the CBS.40

The CBS got most of its members from the southern counties and the midlands. The northern brewers founded the Manchester Brewers' Central Association (1860), the Yorkshire Brewers' Association (1870), and the Liverpool and District Brewers' Association (1871).⁴¹

These northern organizations were kept alive by a handful of activists. For instance, Thomas Clowes, the founding chairman of the contentious Manchester society, continued in office until his death in 1889. Although Nonconformity was identified with the temperance movement, Clowes left £500 to the New Congregational Chapel at Withington. In the last ten years of his life, he had not been active in brewing. The Manchester society had an income in the year 1890-91 of somewhat

over £900 that nearly doubled in the following year, presumably because of the general election.⁴³ Henry Bentley served the Yorkshire organization first as treasurer from its founding and then from 1876 as chairman until 1885, the year before his death from diabetes at the age of 53. He left an estate of almost £56,000.⁴⁴

H.H. Riley-Smith (1863-1911) was one of the few Yorkshire brewers active in trade defence at a national level. ⁴⁵ As he is little known today, he deserves a lengthy sketch. His brewery - John Smith's Tadcaster made the Riley-Smith family wealthy. On his death, he left £500,000. A year later brother Frank, his only partner, also died, leaving £540,000.

In 1886 Henry Herbert and Frank Riley had inherited the John Smith's Tadcaster brewery from their uncle at which time they assumed the additional name of Smith.⁴⁶ In 1889 John Smith's Tadcaster produced 150,000 barrels. In 1892, it became a limited company with H.H. Riley-Smith as chairman. At that time, it had 223 licensed properties, and by 1894 the number has risen to 512.⁴⁷ According to R.G. Wilson, 'the brewery was one of the best-run in Britain.' In 1899-1902 profits averaged £81,728. The third volume (1890) of Alfred Barnard, *Noted Brewers of Great Britain and Ireland*, begins with several chapters on John Smith's Tadcaster. At that time, the brewery employed 200 workers whose wages were supplement by three pints of beer daily.

In the 1880s Riley-Smith became known for his good relations with retail organizations. At the age of eighteen, he gave his first important speech. It was at a licensed victuallers' banquet held in Leeds. In 1887, he presided over the banquet of the Sheffield, Rotherham and District Licensed Victuallers' Association. 49 Many testimonials to his service to the licensed trade, often retailers, appeared on the walls of his mansion. Barnard reported one that recognized his chairing a banquet of the Manchester, Salford and District Licensed Victuallers' Association on 7 December 1896. At this occasion, Riley-Smith donated over £172 to the society. Barnard reproduced a photograph of another testimonial, thanking Riley-Smith for presiding over the banquet of the National Defence League of Licensed Victuallers, held at Hull, on 10 April 1889. On 20 December of the same year he presided over the annual banquet of the Licensed Victuallers' Protection Society of London.⁵⁰ In January 1890 the Brewing Trade Review said that Riley-Smith supported retail organizations so strongly that in the 1880s his firm declined to subscribe to the Country Brewers' Society.⁵¹

Riley-Smith continued to preside at the banquets of retailers, in 1902 at the South London Licensed Victuallers' Association and in 1903 at the North-West London Licensed Victuallers' and Beersellers' Protection Association. 52 At the time, Riley-Smith was being considered as the Conservative candidate for West Newington in south London, a staunchly Liberal constituency. He was reluctant to stand because of a slight deafness.

In the mid-1890s Riley-Smith took a prominent place in the wholesale trade. In 1895, when only in his early thirties, he was elected as chairman of both the Yorkshire brewers' society and the County Brewers Society. In the following year, he was re-elected chairman of both organizations and was appointed to the Royal Commission on the Liquor Licensing Laws. After accepting a compromise Royal Commission report, Riley-Smith explained that a report signed only by trade members would lack influence.⁵³ In 1910, he was chairman of the Institute of Brewing.

In politics Riley-Smith usually was a moderate, although he could be assertive when he thought that the future of the licensed trade was in danger. Riley-Smith was blunt about his fellow brewers. 'As with any other body of men, their pecuniary interests governed their political ideas' .54 This did not mean that the brewers should become captives of the Conservative Party. In 1891, he asked the Country Brewers Society to follow the Yorkshire organization in urging brewers to demonstrate their political impartiality by leaving all political organizations.55

After the trade had triumphed in the general election of 1895, H.H. Riley-Smith warned a meeting of brewers against making 'absurd and extravagant demands upon the generosity of the present Government'.⁵⁶

The Child Messenger Act of 1901 was controversial with the retail trade, but Riley-Smith defended it. In his presidential address to the York and District Association of Licensed Victuallers, he said:

It was with that feeling (not to tempt the rising generation ... and with the knowledge that this Trade must keep abreast of

the times, and must act in unison with popular sentiment that he, as a member of the Royal Commission on the Licensing Laws, signed the report that contained it as one of its chief and most important recommendations, and had he been a member of Parliament when the measure was passed through the House of Commons, he could have put his finger on NOT a single clause that would have met with his absolute sanction and approval.⁵⁷

The year before his death he stood for election at York in the parliamentary election of January 1910 but was defeated by a few hundred votes.

Outside his life as a brewer, Riley-Smith was called to the bar (Lincoln's Inn) in 1897 but did not practice. As a child, he had been a student at the Leeds Grammar School. He was a justice of the peace for the West Riding of Yorkshire, a county councilor, a member of the court of the University of Leeds, prominent in a local Freemasons lodge, and a warden of his church. As a sportsman, he was a golfer, rode to the hounds, and was an excellent shot. 'Genial and a good speaker, as early as 1896 he was reputed to have presided at more dinners and spoken at more meetings of the trade than anyone else in Yorkshire'. More important than the rich Yorkshire brewers such as Reilly-Smith were the even richer London brewers and, to a lesser extent, those in Burton.

The London and Burton brewers were slow to organize for political defense. During the nineteenth century the London brewers, or at least the largest ones, had a venerable organization, the Brewers' Company. The Brewers' Company was exclusive and secretive. In 1896 only nine London breweries were members.⁵⁹ They met once a month to administer charitable and educational trusts. Speaking in 1888, a brewer said that in the 15 years that he had been a member trade affairs typically were discussed only once a year.⁶⁰ A London brewers' association was organized in 1893 with a broader membership, but its chairman was the Master of the Brewers' Company. As there were only a few large Burton firms, personal relationships substituted for a formal organization for many years. Blurring the difference between the licensed trade in London and Burton, many London brewers established branches at Burton to make use of its gypsum water for brewing pale ale.

Years of mistrust divided the Country Brewers' Society from the Brewers' Company. In 1885, for instance, the

Society's chairman told an audience of publicans 'during the last thirty-five years, in the working of political matters from first to last, the interests of the licensed victuallers have been absolutely betrayed by the London brewers'. 61 In 1895 the Society's newspaper explained that

ten years ago the Court of the Brewers' Company ... thought, to put it mildly, that the Country Brewers were generally indiscreet, and the Country Brewers thought, also to put it mildly, that the Brewers' Hall were [sic] generally indifferent to the interests of the trade outside London.

The London brewer Cosmo Bonsor (1848-1929) played a crucial role in developing 'cordial relations' between the country brewers and those of London and Burton. 62 Bonsor epitomized the influential London brewer in the variety of his business, public service, Conservative Party, and philanthropic involvements. He was an influential backbench MP.63 A year before Bonsor's death, he was created a baronet for his services to Guy's Hospital. 64 His *Times* obituary (6 December 1929) praised Bonsor as 'a man of commanding physique and charming personality' and 'extremely well liked.' With equal warmth, the *Oxford DNB* described him as 'frank, open, likeable, and a good talker' who had 'the gift of choosing competent subordinates.'

His *Oxford DNB* entry depict him as a businessman, notably, his role in the merger of Watney's, Combe's, and Reid's in 1898. He chaired the resulting company for 30 years. In 1899 he helped arrange the amalgamation (not a complete merger) of two railroad companies. The *Oxford DNB* entry does not discuss Bonsor's work in licensed trade defence, other than saying that he was Master of the Brewers' Company in 1881. It does not mention that Bonsor became the head of the National Trade Defence Fund when it was organized in 1888. The failure of a government bill that moderate brewers favored helped bring about the creation of the Fund.

Divisions in the licensed trade contributed to the with-drawal of government bills in 1888 and later in 1890, that would have strengthened the trade's claim to license renewal or compensation. The Manchester brewers did not like a method of compensation that in effect had the trade paying for it. In contrast, Bonsor, as a leader of the moderate London brewers, argued: 'they would never get such another chance of obtaining a vested Interest in



Figure 1. Caricature of Henry Cosmo Bonsor (1848 - 1928). Published in Vanity Fair, 30 June 1898.

the Licenses.' He did not want a large compensation fund that might encourage a policy of reduction in the number of public houses and hoped for changes in the details of the compensation clauses to discourage the closing of licensed premises.⁶⁵

A series of legal cases further undermined the trade claim to compensation when licenses were refused renewal.

The case of *Sharp v. Wakefield* (1887-91) jolted the trade even more than the failure to obtain from

Parliament a quasi-statutory right to compensation. (Sharpe apparently is the correct spelling for the owners' name, but the usual citation is Sharp v. Wakefield.) This case followed a series of earlier cases that asserted the power of the magistrates to refuse license renewals at their discretion. For instance, the case of Over-Darwen (1882) dealt specifically with the renewal of an off-beer license. In 1887, the licensing bench in the Kendal division of Westmoreland refused to renew the license of the Low Bridge Inn. Its remote location made police supervision difficult. The Westmoreland Quarter Sessions, whose chairman was named Wakefield, sustained the refusal. The Quarter Sessions included only one teetotaler and one Liberal, not the same person, which made it difficult to say that Quarter Sessions was prejudiced. When successive appellate courts ruled against the owners, sisters Susannah and Jane Sharpe, the case threatened the tradition that any licensed house that did not violate the law had a right to renewal.66

When counsel advised that the case did not provide favorable grounds for a test of the law, most brewers refused to pay the expenses for an appeal. Cosmo Bonsor explained that the Low Bridge Inn did not have enough customers for its landlord to make a living out of legitimate business, and neighbors had petitioned for the removal of its license.⁶⁷ Consequently, it 'was not a good case to fight'.⁶⁸

After the Court of Queen's Bench ruled against Susannah Sharpe in 1888, the Country Brewers' Society and the Brewers' Company offered to purchase her property to avoid further embarrassment. When she demanded too high a price, the brewers at first agreed to conduct her next appeal, but after the Government abandoned its licensing clauses, the two brewers' societies withdrew. Sharpe had no money, but the Kendall licensed victuallers, the National Licensed Victuallers' Defense Society, the London publicans, and the Manchester brewers' organization paid her legal expenses. Sharpe stubbornly carried her case to the Court of Appeal, which ruled against her late in 1888, and then to the House of Lords. In 1891, the Lords definitively affirmed the discretionary authority of the licensing justices to deny applications for renewal.⁶⁹

After the final ruling in the *Sharp vs. Wakefield* case, there was bitterness between those who had supported the unsuccessful appeal and those who had opposed it as

a bad case. The leader of the provincial publicans, Samuel Hyslop, complained about the 'gentlemen who were engaged in the trade as large brewers and distillers, and who had ridiculed and held somewhat disrespectful opinions upon public platforms with regards to the retail trade.' He 'felt ... a contempt for those who had held [the case] up as the doom of the trade of the licensed victuallers' 70

The parliamentary setbacks in 1888 and 1890 and the ruling in Sharp v. Wakefield helped bring about first the creation in 1888 of the National Trade Defence Fund, with Bonsor at its head, and then its later restructuring as a more aggressive organization.

Although Bonsor often receives credit for the idea of the Fund, J. Danvers Power, the secretary of the Country Brewers' Society, also played a role. Ronsor had suggested that the Country Brewers' Society start an agitation in favor of Ritchie's compensation proposals. Power had countered with the proposal that a new propaganda organization be created that would supplement older defense societies by enlisting the financial support of all brewers.

The National Trade Defence Fund was set up in the autumn of 1888 with a membership of major brewers and distillers. The Fund was an elite organization that charged twenty pounds as a membership subscription. As its name suggested, the Fund was intended to pay for political agitation. Its brewer head was called the treasurer, and its principal paid staff member was called the manager. On 20 November 1888, Bonsor was elected treasurer. He served until 1895. Power was appointed manager, while continuing as CBS secretary. He retired from both appointments in 1891. The governing committee included no northern brewers.⁷³ For the first three years, it was authorized to act without reporting to the subscribers.⁷⁴ Dissident brewers and independent trade newspapers criticized the new organization as oligarchic in structure and narrow in its objectives.⁷⁵ Power argued that to be effective the Fund had to restrict its membership to a few large brewers and distillers and confine its program to matters on which the subscribers could agree. 76 In its annual report for 1888 the Country Brewers' Society modestly defined the purpose of the new organization as 'enabling speakers to be sent to all meetings hostile to the interests of the Trade, in order that the other side of the case may be fairly represented; and also ... providing writers who will be able to state our case in the Press'.77

Like other big London brewers, Bonsor was willing to make great concessions in return for the security of license renewal. In an interview published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, 19 January 1893, he said that he had told the Conservative ministry that a bill that put a burden on the ratepayers would fail. Bonsor accepted reduction in number in principle. 'No public money would be required. The trade would pay a considerable sum on condition that it should then be let alone'.78

To appease its critics within the trade the Fund launched a General Election Scheme in October 1890. The Fund offered a subsidy of £250 to help support an electoral agent in each of the ten districts into which it had divided England and Wales, exclusive of London (which was assigned to the local licensed victuallers). In December, a trade meeting convened by the Country Brewers' Society and the militant Manchester Brewers' Central Association, endorsed the proposal. Electoral agents paid by the brewers in the provinces recognized the decline of the organization of provincial publicans. Conflict among London publicans later prompted the brewers to intervene also in the metropolis.

New trade electoral associations were organized in the ten districts. Pominated by local brewers, they admitted publicans, beerhouse keepers, wine merchants, and others. The local trade matched the Fund's subsidy and appointed the agent. There seems to have been broad willingness to support trade defence. For example, in May 1891 Lord Burton and an associate pledged £3,000 to the Midland brewers' organization.

On 24 April 1891, the Fund voted £1,500 for the general election scheme to supplement a previous grant of the same amount. It also voted £500 for the metropolitan constituencies that would include no more than £300 as a salary for an agent.⁸² The Fund and its district affiliates never were rich. The total expenditures of the central Fund, 1888-95, was £37,745, while that of the districts was estimated as between £15,200 and £18,200.⁸³

The general election scheme took on a life of its own. Charles Showell (1858-1915) of Birmingham asked the districts to join in creating a new organization.⁸⁴

Delegates from these district agencies, as they were called, met in London in June 1891 to form a central committee to manage the general election scheme.85 The General Association of the License Trade was often seen as a possible rival to the National Trade Defence Fund. 86 The General Association was more representative and more aggressive than the Fund. Its central committee included four representatives of the central Fund, outnumbered by four from each of the provincial districts.87 Showell became treasurer of the new organization as a consequence of his being chairman of the Midland brewers' federation that had taken the lead in organizing the General Association. The chief agent of the Midland society, solicitor Archibald S. Bennett, briefly served as the new organization's general secretary.88 Later a Liberal activist George Henry Croxden Powell became secretary.89

The General Association was organized to fight the next general election and promised to dissolve after it. Despite this promise, the General Association was seen to threaten the leadership of the big London brewers and their Burton and Country Brewers' Society allies. ⁹⁰ The latter's newspaper, the *Brewing Trade Review*, hinted about friction. ⁹¹ The General Association was starved of funds.

In November 1891, the General Association had been folded into the NTDA in return for making the latter organization more representative. 92 The district agencies elected a majority in the new general committee, with retailers eligible for district seats. According to the *Brewers' Guardian*, the 'personal ambitions' of 'selfish wreckers' bought about 'intrigues against the secretary' (Powell) and then against the General Association itself. 93 The *Brewers Journal* commented: 'There seems to have been something mysterious about the history of General Association', 94

The Midland brewers remained independent-minded. A Birmingham trade newspaper, the *Licensed Trade Review*, was begun in April 1894, under the editorship of E. Lawrence Levy, an agent for the Midland brewers' organization.⁹⁵

The story of the General Association had an awkward epilogue. When the General Association was amalgamated with the Fund, Powell briefly worked as the latter's sub-manager for electoral purposes and then was

dismissed. He had been secretary of the North Staffordshire and South-West Lancashire Liberal Association and assistant secretary of the Birmingham Liberal Association, as well as honorary secretary of the Liberal Secretaries and Agents Association. After being ousted from his post in the Fund, he became secretary of the Tied House Tenants League. ⁹⁶ The drink trade regarded it as a Liberal front organization, hostile to the brewers.

Showell never became an enemy of the drink trade. Remaining the leader of the Midland brewers, he headed the organization of Birmingham brewers that negotiated the Birmingham Surrender Scheme with the local licensing justices to reduce the number of licensed houses. He became chairman of the family brewery in 1896. Two years later his salary was increased to £3,000.

Late in 1903, Showells career ended at the age of 45. He resigned in disgrace as chairman and director of the brewery that bore the family name. Showell explained to his shareholders the decline in company profits. Supposedly it was the result of an unsuccessful arrangement with other brewers to stop the practice of the 'long pull' of over-measure. Showell's public houses had enforced the new policy, while the other brewers did not and consequently attracted customers.⁹⁷

More important, Showell was arrested in January 1904 for adding £25,000 fictitiously to the apparent stock of his brewery. In April 1904, he was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment. At a company meeting Showell's resignation as chairman and as a director was announced.⁹⁸

In the 1890s the licensed trade was increasingly under attack.⁹⁹ The local veto bills proposed by a Liberal Government never proceeded beyond a second reading, and after the crushing Liberal defeat in the general election of 1895, local prohibition was not a serious threat. It had been easy to present the fight against local veto as a defense of personal liberty and the sanctity of property.

More worrisome was the growing call for a reduction in the number of licensed houses but not with what the trade regarded as market value compensation. Looking for an issue that might return him to office, the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Randolph Churchill, futilely negotiated with brewer friends to support the reduction bill that he authored. Outside Parliament several bills were drafted by *ad hoc* committees, often dominated by Liberal Unionists and Conservatives and supported by Anglican bishops.

The Archbishop of Canterbury had influence with Lord Salisbury. 100 The licensed trade did not object to the archbishop's proposal for an official inquiry with the proper terms of reference but favored a joint parliamentary committee. 101

The Conservative Government responded to calls for reform by creating a Royal Commission on the Liquor Licensing Laws in 1896. 102 It was composed of an equal number from three groups, supporters of temperance reform, supporters of the licensed trade, and persons not identified with either of the two other groups. Lord Peel served as Royal Commission chairman. His appointment was popular with all parties. The *Morning Advertiser* (1 April 1896) waxed enthusiastic. 'No better chairman could possibly have been found.' A son of the famous prime minister, he had served for many years as Speaker of the House of Commons prior to receiving his peerage.

The weight of the testimony heard by the Royal Commission in 1896, 1897, and 1898 favored extensive and drastic licensing reform. It was obvious that the Commission would recommend a substantial reduction in the number of licensed premises and unlikely that it would propose permanent, market value compensation. Late in 1898, when it appeared that the rest of the Commission soon would adopt an unacceptable majority report, the trade secretly drafted its own. Offering little in the way of compromise, the proposed trade minority report added compensation to the three reforms which the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, had urged in a speech at a dinner of the Country Brewers' Society, early in November of that year: graduated license fees, reduction in numbers in overcrowded areas by the exchange of old licenses for new ones elsewhere, and the regulation of clubs. Cosmo Bonsor sent the Prime Minister a summary of the projected trade minority report on 6 November. 103 It had been expected that Lord Peel would circulate his chairman's draft report on 9 November. In fact, because of illness he did not do so until early in 1899. A full year elapsed between the completion of hearing of evidence (20 July 1898) and publication of the final reports (18 July 1899).

A minority report signed only by trade members of the Royal Commission and a majority report signed by everybody else might have led to hostile legislation. Fortunately for the licensed trade, the long delay caused by Lord Peel's illness, allowed the trade to escape its dangerous isolation.

In the beginning Alfred Money Wigram (1856-1899) had led the liquor contingent. He was a Conservative MP, chairman of the London firm of Reid's (which merged with Watney's and Combe's), a past Master of the Brewers' Company (1892), and since 1895 treasurer of the National Trade Defence Fund. In 1898 he became chairman of a new gin distillery company. He took a three-month leave of absence from the Fund in January 1897 to travel for his health. Bonsor deputized for him as Fund treasurer, while E.N. Buxton (1840-1924), from another major London brewery, Truman's, became chairman of the committee. 104 Wigram temporarily regained his health but soon fell ill again, dving on 13 October 1899. The leadership of the trade contingent on the Royal Commission already had passed to Buxton. He had been appointed to the Royal Commission in April 1898, replacing an ailing distiller. 105

The unexpected helped the trade. When he recovered his health, Lord Peel presented a report containing radical reforms that only the temperance members embraced. The rest of Royal Commission believed Peel had gone too far. Buxton was a Liberal who found an ally against Peel in the person of the Royal Commission's vice-chairman. Sir Algernon West (1832-1921), a retired chairman of the Inland Revenue (1881-1892) and a former private secretary to William Gladstone, who had once been interested in Lord Randolph Churchill's licensing bill. 106

Some Liberals outside the commission wanted a consensus report to force the Unionist Government to sponsor a licensing bill that might remove the contentious drink question from politics. Henry Gladstone, one of the former Prime Minister's sons, arranged a meeting between West, an old family friend, and Robert Younger, the brother of a brewer commissioner, in hopes of heading off an intransigent trade minority report.¹⁰⁷

The politic Buxton and the impolitic Lord Peel brought about a majority report which the trade members signed with reservations, and a minority report (Lord Peel's Report) supported only by the temperance members and Lord Peel. ¹⁰⁸ The majority report embraced compensated reduction. The Conservative Government ignored both reports, but the Royal Commission consensus in favored of reduction encouraged the licensing justices to refuse many license renewals. ¹⁰⁹

At the beginning of the twentieth century the principal licensed trade organization changed its name. In 1900, the National Trade Defence Fund was renamed the National Trade Defence Association. Perhaps the word Fund drew too much attention to the money of the licensed trade.

With one exception, the leaders of the organization came from the great London firms: Cosmo Bonsor (1888-95), Alfred Money Wigram (1856-99) (served 1895-99), George Crafter Croft (1845-1908) (served 1900-02), and E.N. Buxton (1902), and after a few years under Sir John Brickwood, Bt. (1903-07) of Plymouth (1852-1931), the popular Frank [Francis Pelham] Whitbread (1867-1941), 'the perfect liaison officer,' who served from 1907 to his death. He was a notable philanthropist. For instance, he was president of the Central Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society. He was a staunch Unionist, unlike his father and a brother who served in Parliament as Liberals.¹¹⁰

Early in the twentieth century, tired of the parliamentary deadlock over a reduction scheme, some justices used their discretionary powers to refuse license renewals without compensation. The majority and minority reports of the Royal Commission on Licensing Laws, published in 1899, encouraged the reduction movement. Probably the Birmingham Surrender Scheme did too. In Birmingham, a voluntary scheme negotiated between the justices and leading breweries had closed 150 licenses over five years.

The magisterial reduction campaign began in 1902 when licensing justices in Farnham denied the renewal of nine licenses out of 45 public houses for no reason other than to reduce their number. 111 The trade protested this policy, but in 1903, in the case of Rex v. Howard, the Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the justices. Over 600 licenses were denied renewal in 1903. 112 Fearing

for the future, the licensed trade pressed a reluctant and tottering Government for legislation to protect it. The trade preferred that the Government take away the power of the licensing justices to deny licensed renewals, but the Government was unwilling to abolish their traditional power. The licensing justices had done nothing illegal. As Prime Minister Balfour told the King: 'The action, though novel, at least in degree, seems to be legal, and it is not easy to see what remedy can be applied'.113

It was a difficult time for the licensed trade to make demands on the Government. The Unionist Party was torn by the emotional issue of tariff reform and identified with policies unpopular with large sections of the electorate such as 'Chinese slavery' in the Rand that disturbed humanitarians, the Taff Vale decision that undermined the rights of trade unions, and the Education Act of 1902 that offended Nonconformists. Few people were surprised when the next general election proved to be a disaster for the Unionists.

Did the support of the trade make controversial legislation worthwhile? In April 1903, Joseph Chamberlain told a Birmingham associate: 'the support of publicans is not worth much in itself - i.e. when it is merely passive support. It becomes important when they are really excited and alarmed, as they were in 1895,' after the Liberal Government had introduced a bill for prohibition by local veto. 114 The drink trade needed to hurry before it faced a new Liberal Government.

It was a hard fight for the licensed trade to get a bill even from a Unionist Government. Some members of the trade supported opponents of Government candidates at bye-elections to demonstrate their discontent at foot dragging. On 23 February 1904, the usually moderate Riley-Smith threatened the Government which was slow to introduce a compensation bill to protect the trade against hostile licensing justices: 'we mean to have a Compensation Bill, and unless the Government do justice to this trade they will find opposed to them a huge and solid phalanx of common sense and public opinion'. 115

In the end, the licensed trade had to accept a bill that the Government could sell to its own moderate reformers as temperance legislation. The bill created a reduction scheme in which the trade paid for its own compensation. New licenses had to pay the monopoly value of

licensing. Liberal temperance reformers were furious with the bill, but the licensed trade saw it as a painful compromise. Lord Burton glumly complained: 'The dog was fed with a bit of its own tail'. 116 Despite this complaint, it was a necessary compromise because the trade rightly feared what a Liberal Government might do without a compensation statute in its way. 117

The struggle over the compensation bill helped bring about a new and more comprehensive organization for England's brewers. The Brewers' Company, founded late in 1904, changed the role of the NTDA in licensed trade defense. 118 The NTDA had become a liaison body representing all sections of the licensed trade. The brewers needed an organization of their own to formulate policy. 119 Although the Brewers' Society membership largely consisted of those who had belonged to the old Country Brewers' Society, the newcomers were big London and Burton firms. The Brewers' Society began with 631 members, 598 of them previously members of the Country Brewers' Society. 120 The new society's income in its first year exceeded that of its predecessor by nearly half. 121 Regional organizations continued to exist. For instance, the London Brewers' Association had taken over the metropolitan defense functions of the venerable Brewers' Company. 122 It was not until late in 1906 that the contrary-minded Manchester Brewers Central Association joined the Brewers' Society. The Brewers' Society acquired as members most but not all commercial brewers. In 1910, it had a little less than sixty per cent of commercial brewers as members. In 1914, membership fell to just under 50%.

The last chairman of the CBS was the first chairman of the new Brewers' Society. J. Grimble Groves (1854-1914) was managing director of Groves and Whitnall in Salford. In 1899, his firm had a tied-house empire of almost 600 pubs. He was elected to Parliament as a Conservative for Salford South in 1900 but was defeated in the Liberal landslide of 1906 by the writer, Hilaire Belloc.

Groves was not a Londoner. Nor was the chairman of the Brewers' Society in the crisis year 1908. W. Waters Butler (1866-1939) chaired the important Birmingham brewery, Mitchells and Butlers. 123 Born in one of his father's public houses, he was created a baronet in 1926. A natural politician who made friends easily, he was a champion of public house improvement.

Balfour's Licensing Act of 1904 proved to be durable. In 1908 when a Liberal Government attempted to undo this settlement, it failed despite an enormous majority in the House of Commons. 124 After the Liberal electoral victory in 1906, brewer Riley-Smith said 'I am not a political pessimist'. 125 He was confident that the House of Lords would block a damaging Liberal bill. 126 Yet the licensed trade could not take the Liberal failure for granted. The time limit that Liberal bill added to the right of compensation threatened a return to the insecurity of 1903. Worst of all, the provision for the exacting monopoly value from existing licenses-and not just new ones as in the 1904 Licensing Act-seemed to endanger the financial survival of the trade. 127 Believing that it faced ruin if the Liberal licensing bill passed in any conceivable form, the licensed trade gambled at alienating moderate public opinion by demanding the total rejection of the bill. A trade official told Balfour's secretary: 'We are absolutely pledged to no compromise, and amendments moved by the opposition to extend the Time Limit [when the right to compensation would end] or to modify this or that will be taken as a sign of weakening'. 128 The trade wanted only one thing, to persuade the Unionist leadership to wield its veto power in the House of Lords to thwart the large Liberal majority in the House of Commons.

The licensed trade brought its reserves into battle. Lord Rothschild helped rally the debenture and shareholders. ¹²⁹ An Allied Brewery Traders' Association, organized in 1907, had about 1,700 firms as members in the following year such as maltsters, hops growers, and sugar brewers. In April 1908, the new organization flew a propaganda kite over the football cup tie final at the Crystal Palace. ¹³⁰

The Midland district of the National Trade Defence Association urged brewers to advertise in local newspapers. The Midland district also decided to spend up to £400 on political advertising. In addition, it donated £50 to the newspaper press fund. The donation would be reported as from the Association or from individual brewers as the editor of the *Birmingham Daily Mail* (H.F. Harvey) thought best. ¹³¹ Correspondence between the Midland district and the newspaper show that a three-column cartoon would cost £14, a report of a trade meeting (news and not advertising) would cost four guineas if the meeting was in Birmingham, £5 if the meeting was held elsewhere. ¹³²

It was not only provincial newspapers that were willing to take money to support the licensed trade. 'The series of articles appearing in the [London] Times in defence of the Trade had been authorised by the [Central] Board, who would pay for them.' This startling statement appeared casually in the minutes of the Central Board of London's licensed victuallers on 22 October 1908.

The licensed trade helped the Unionist Party win an impressive succession of bye-elections. The too conspicuous role of the drink trade at Peckham in South London, where supposedly even the dogs were dressed in party colors, embarrassed many Unionists, including the editors of the *Morning Post*. Balfour's secretary advised the National Trade Defence Association to exercise more discretion at the Northwest Manchester bye-election. When Balfour addressed a mass meeting on the licensing bill at Albert Hall in June, the trade remained in the background, although it had asked him to speak and had paid a full-time organizer to provide the audience. ¹³⁴

The trade abandoned circumspection at the climax of its campaign, a massive demonstration at Hyde Park on the last Sunday in September. ¹³⁵ A huge crowd, variously estimated as a quarter million or a half million people, accompanied by about a hundred brass bands, reportedly attended this monster meeting in an open display of trade power. The provinces had sent 172 special trains full of demonstrators. The huge throng, wearing buttons of blue enamel that bore the motto, 'Honesty and Liberty,' surrounded 20 carts that served as platforms for the prominent speakers who denounced the bill. Riley-Smith was one of the speakers.

The trade had to contend with both the temperance reformers and the Church of England for influence with the Unionist Party. The Church of England Temperance Society central committee endorsed the bill by a vote of 77 to 25.136 Yet the CETS did little to help the temperance agitation on behalf of the bill.137 The upper house of Convocation unanimously supported the idea of a time limit to compensation. In contrast, the Representative House of Laymen condemned the 1908 bill.

Although the Church was by no means united on temperance legislation, indignant publicans and brewers retaliated by withdrawing subscriptions to ecclesiastical charities and by threatening to work for disestablishment. ¹³⁸ Such blatant pressures probably hurt the trade more than it did the Church. The trade also organized boycotts of tradesmen known to support the Liberal bill. For instance, in Northampton a license holder 'declined to let a Good Templar tune his pianoforte'. ¹³⁹

The King was anxious that the House of Lords pass the licensing bill. Edward VII feared that the defeat of the bill might endanger the survival of the powers of the hereditary chamber. He King warned he Unionist leader Lord Lansdowne: 'if the attitude of the Peers was such as to suggest the idea that they were obstructing an attempt to deal with the evils of intemperance, the House of Lords would suffer seriously in popularity.' Lansdowne agreed: 'for the sake of the House of Lords, it was not desirable that the peers and the brewers should be represented as in too close alliance'. 141

The decision taken by the Unionist peers did not take place in the House of Lords. It came at a private caucus held at Lansdowne House on fashionable Berkeley Square, the town house of the Unionist leader, at midday on 24 November.

Widespread distaste for the 1908 bill does not seem to have been deep or intense outside the drink trade. Reduction in numbers and the transfer of monopoly value would have hurt the trade financially without serious inconvenience for its customers. What advantage the Unionists gained in fighting a vaguely unpopular bill was lost by the provocative way that the Unionist peers had thrown it out at a private meeting.

The Unionists expected retaliation: higher taxes on the drink trade. It was the amount of the taxes, however, that surprised and infuriated the Unionists and the drink trade. Irish Nationalists, allies of the Liberal Government, protested the increase in the duties on whiskey.

A rash House of Lords threw out the budget that included the new taxes on drink. The drink trade fought fiercely in the Unionist cause in the first general election that followed, in January 1910. According to Neal Blewett in his standard history of the 1910 elections, the drink trade spent more money on newspaper advertising than all the other pressure groups combined. 142 Historian David Gutzke argues to the contrary that the

trade was less active in the 1910 elections than during the fight against the Liberal bill in 1908. Failure of Unionist candidates to emphasize trade complaints undercut support by a demoralized licensed trade. Blewett agrees at least about the December 1910 general election when trade had been disillusioned by the willingness of the Unionists to accept the new taxes on drink imposed by Lloyd George's budget. 143

In the last years before the war, battered licensed trade leaders talked about neutrality in the struggle between the major political parties. Even Frank Whitbread, the head of the National Trade Defence Association, talked in this fashion. As time showed, it was only talk. Lack of alternatives bound the licensed trade to the Unionists.

References

- 1. In this article when I say England, I refer to England and Wales. Scotland and Ireland had separate drink histories. For England, my focus is on beer, although distillers sometimes joined English trade organizations. The wine trade mostly stood apart, especially the licensed grocers. Working-class clubs did not see themselves as part of the licensed trade. Like most generalizations, that about the licensed grocers overlooks nuance. When the Royal Commission on the Liquor Licensing Laws was created in 1896, the licensed trade received eight of the members, one of them (Henry Grinling, 1834-1913) representing the licensed grocers. For the sake of unity, other retailers swallowed their sense of grievance toward licensed grocers.
- 2. Although the brewers were manufacturers, they often were called wholesalers (or common brewers) to distinguish them from private brewers who brewed for an institution or estate and from publicans who brewed for their own public house. Publicans (also known as licensed victuallers) were called landlords, although outside London most of them were tenants who did not own or rent a freehold or leasehold and others were salaried managers..
- 3. For the licensed trade in politics, the standard work is David W. Gutzke (1989) *Protecting the Pub: Brewers and Publicans against Temperance.* Woodbridge: Boydell, for Royal Historical Society. For drink in high politics, see John R. Greenaway (2003) *Drink and British Politics since 1830: A Study in Policy-Making.* London: Basingstoke: Palgrave. For drink as a trade, see Paul Jennings (2016) *A History of Drink and the English, 1500-2000.* London: Routledge. For the cultural history of drink, see James Nicholls (2011) *The*

Politics of Alcohol: A History of the Drink Question in England. Manchester: Manchester University Press; and Thora Hands (2018) Drinking in Victorian and Edwardian England: Beyond the Spectre of the Drunkard. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. T.R. Gourvish and R.G. Wilson (1994) The British Brewing Industry, 1830-1980. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press is the standard history of brewing as a business. Especially useful is chapter seven, 'The Scramble for Property and Its Aftermath, 1885-1914.' See also R.G. Wilson (1998) 'The Changing Taste for Beer in Victorian England,' in T.R. Gourvish and R.G. Wilson (eds.) The Dynamics of the International Brewing Industry. London: Routledge.

- 4. David W. Gutzke persuasively critiques the notion of the political power of the licensed trade in his article, (1990) 'Rhetoric and Reality: The Political Influence of British Brewers, 1832-1914,' *Parliamentary History*. 9, May, pp.78-115; and in his monograph, *Protecting the Pub*, especially ch. 9, 'Myths and Realities of Trade Power.'
- 5. Fahey, D.M. (2016) 'Worrying about Drink,' *Brewery History*. 166, Summer, pp.2-19, and his earlier article, (1974) 'Drink and the Meaning of Reform in Late Victorian and Edwardian England,' *Cithara*. 13/2, May, pp.46-56.
- 6. Hands, T. (2018) op. cit., section 'The Legislative Jigsaw,' unpaginated.
- 7. NTDF [National Trade Defence Fund], Report, General Election 1895 ... Executive Committee to the Subscribers for the Year 1895, pp.19, 20, 27, 32.
- 8. Lord Grey to W. T. Stead, 23 May 1901. University of Durham, Department of Palaeography and Diplomatic, Earl Grey Papers, Fourth Earl.
- 9. Joseph Chamberlain to Charles Showell, 26 December 1891. University of Birmingham, Joseph Chamberlain papers, JC 6/5/3/9.
- 10. Quoted in Clarke, P.F. (1971) *Lancashire and the New Liberalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.269. The newspaper of a teetotal fraternal society reported that in Staffordshire brewers had supposedly subscribed £20,000 for the general election. *Good Templars' Watchword*, 25 January 1892, p.43.
- 11. Licensing World, 25 May 1894, p.337.
- 12. Licensed Trade News, 13 March 1897 pp.12-13
- 13. Quoted in Sigsworth, E.M. (1967) *The Brewing Trade in the Industrial Revolution*. York: St. Anthony's, p.30. In fact, sometimes the publican was tied for sawdust too. Gutzke, D.W. (1989) op. cit. p.182.
- 14. The brewer Peter Walker installed the long pull in his Liverpool pubs. Mutch, A. (2008) 'The Design of Liverpool Pubs in the Nineteenth Century,' *Brewery History*. 127, p.20.

There were other business quarrels, for instance, over direct sales by brewers to consumers.

- 15. Licensed Trade News, 8 December 1906, p.2.
- 16. Charles Walker in Brewers' Guardian, 11 April 1893, p.105.
- 17. Jennings, P. (2016) op. cit. p.53.
- 18. Pudney, J. (1971) A Draught of Contentment: The Story of the Courage Group. London: New England Library, pp.31-32.
- 19. Gutzke, D.W. (1989) op. cit. p.24.
- 20. Beckingham, D. (2017) *The Licensed City: Regulating Drink in Liverpool*, 1830-1920. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, p.127.
- 21. As late as 1907, the Liverpool brewer Cain's paid £49,000 for a single licensed house. Routledge, C. (2008) *Cain's: The Story of Liverpool in a Pint.* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, p.109. For an extreme example of the collapse of public house prices, one pub in central London sold for £28,000 in 1898 but for only £1,150 in 1910. Gutzke, D.W. (1989) op. cit. p.225. Belated purchase of unrealistically high-priced licensed property led the great Burton brewery Allsopp's to bankruptcy in 1911.
- 22. Licensed Trade News, 3 August 1907, p.2.
- 23. Scottish Licensed Trade Defence Association, *Annual Report for 1898* (Edinburgh, 1898), p.44. For beer in Scotland, see Anthony Cooke (2015) *A History of Drinking: The Scottish Pub since 1700*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- 24. (Dublin) *Licensed Trader*, weekly ed., 10 January 1894, p.9. See also Bradley Clark Kadel (2015) *Drink and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Ireland: The Alcohol Trade and the Politics of the Irish Public House.* London: I.B. Tauris.

 25. In 1889, P.J. [Peter Joseph] Lennox, Litt.D. (1862-1943), professor of classics and modern languages at University
- College, Dublin, was appointed secretary of the Dublin association. He appears to have been instrumental in establishing the Central Committee. *Licensed Trader*, 10 January 1894, p.9. After a few years, Lennox left Ireland to teach English at the Catholic University of America.
- 26. Temperance Witness, September 1895, p.50.
- 27. NTDA finance committee minutes, 11 January 1906, f. 172.
- 28. London Central Board, 29 August 1901. Probably Joseph Nolan.
- 29. No women were prominent in brewing or retail trade organizations as officers or paid staff, although a few women had pub licenses in late Victorian and Edwardian England. After women received the parliamentary suffrage, some trade societies sponsored women's auxiliaries. Little is known about them other than that they existed in the 1920s. The records of an organization created by London licensed victuallers, the Women's Auxiliary League (Licensed Trade),

- survive for 1921-30 at the London Metropolitan Archives.
- 30. Barber, N. (and edited by Brown, M., Farleigh, R. and Smith, K.) (2012) *A Century of British Brewers 1890 to 2012*. New Ash Green: Brewery History Society is the third edition of the standard directory. *Who Was Who* provides basic facts for many brewers, especially those who served in Parliament. Very useful is Anderson, R. (2005) 'The Brewing Connection in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,' *Brewery History*. 119, Summer, pp.10-23. In (2005) *Brewery History*, 120, Autumn, pp.20-34, Anderson looks at maltsters, scientists and technologists, and others.
- 31. For a sketch of the early years of the CBS, see Newton, H.A. (1898) 'The History of the Country Brewers' Society,' *Brewers Almanack*, pp.215-22.
- 32. The persistent, although declining, attitude that brewers were not gentlemen slowed Wethered's appointment. Gutzke, D.W. (1984) 'The Social Status of Landed Brewers in Britain since 1840,' *Histoire sociale*. 17, pp.99-101.
- 33. Wethered, A. (2004) *The Power and the Brewery: The Story of a House and Its People*. Chichester: Phillimore, p.134. The title reflects what local people admiringly said. Impressed with the brewery, they reworded the Lord's Prayer to conclude as 'the power and the brewery' instead of the power and the glory.
- 34. Before the reorganization, the CBS had a part-time secretary named R.W. Tootell who was a partner in a firm of brewery valuers and chartered accountants.
- 35. Country Brewers' Gazette, 22 October 1884, p.374.
- 36. Country Brewers' Gazette, 30 April 1885, p.3.
- 37. Country Brewers' Gazette, 24 October 1883, p.385. This issue included reports of the meetings of the Kent, Surrey, and Hampshire brewers' unions. CBS minutes, 30 April 1882, f. 247; 15 October 1883, f. 254; 29 October 1883, f. 257; 10 December 1883, ff. 261, 266-67, 11 January 1884, ff. 269-72; Country Brewers' Gazette, 24 Oct. 24 October 1883, p.384; 7 November 1883, pp.391-94, 406; 19 December 1883, p.444; 13 Febuary 1884, p.58; 22 October 1884, pp.374-76; Brewing Trade Review, November 1888, p.407.
- 38. Country Brewers' Society [hereafter CBS], annual report, in *Brewing Trade Review*, November 1891, p.335.
- 39. Brewing Trade Review, November 1886. The Brewers' Guardian had been the society's organ, 1871-77, and the Country Brewers' Gazette, 1877-86. Both were privately owned. The Country Brewers' Gazette refused the demand of the Country Brewers' Society for absolute control of the literary department. Country Brewers Gazette, 21 October 1886, p.341.
- 40. Brewers and Distillers, 12 April 1890, p.581; 10 May 1890, pp.788-789.

- 41. Often 1869 is given as the founding date for the Manchester organization, perhaps a reorganization.
- 42. *Brewers' Journal*, 15 October 1889, p.504; 15 December 1889, p.643. Clowes left an estate of more than £20,000 and some real property.
- 43. Manchester Brewers' Central Association, *Annual Report ... for the Year Ending 31 July 1891* (Manchester, 1891), p.[14]; *Annual Report ... 1892* (Manchester, 1892), p.[10].
- 44. The head of the Liverpool brewers' organization was Sir Gilbert Greenall, Bt. (1806-94), sometime Conservative MP for Warrington.
- 45. The wealth of northern brewers did not necessarily mean full involvement in national trade politics. For instance, the enormously rich Sir Andrew Barclay Walker, Bt. (1824-1893), was active in Liverpool and Lancashire politics but not nationally. His firm did not support the National Trade Defence Fund at the scale of the London brewers.
- 46. A smaller rival brewery, Samuel Smith, was run by the uncle of that name.
- 47. Gourvish, T.R. and Wilson, R.G. (1994) op. cit., pp.259,
- 48. There is an excellent account of Riley-Smith by R.G. Wilson, hidden in an article entitled, 'John Smith,' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Biographical details come from it and from obituaries published in the *Journal of the Institute of Brewing* 12/5 (September-October 1911) and *Morning Advertiser*, 20 May 1911, p.4. His picture appears in *Licensing World*, 6 December. 1902, p.807.
- 49. Yorkshire Gazette, 19 November 1887, p.10.
- 50. Brewers' Guardian, 29 December 1889, pp.386-88.
- 51. Brewing Trade Review, January 1890, p.4.
- 52. South London Chronicle, 4 October 1902, p.2; 9 May 1903, p.7.
- 53. CBS, general committee, 1 May 1899. The Majority Report received final approval on 6 June 1899. *Licensed Victuallers' Official Annual* (1906), p.150.
- 54. Morning Advertiser, 30 May 1891, p.2.
- 55. Gutzke, D.W. (1989) op. cit., p.107. See also the entry for 13 May 1891 in Avis, A. (1995) *The Brewer's Tale: A History of Ale in Yorkshire*. Oxford: Radcliffe Press, p.189.
- 56. *Licensed Trade News*, 22 Febuary. 1896, p.9. The words are a paraphrase and not a direct quotation.
- 57. Licensed Trade News, 2 November 1901, p.7.
- 58. R.G. Wilson in art. 'John Smith,' Oxford DNB.
- 59. Knox, D.N. (1958) 'The Development of the Tied House System in London,' *Oxford Economic Papers*, new series., 10, p.78.
- 60. Cosmo Bonsor, in Wine, Beer, and Spirit, 24 October

- 1888, p.833; Brewing Trade Review, 1 December 1888, p.418. 61. H.A. Simonds, in Country Brewers' Gazette, 18 June 1895, p.240. Commenting, the London brewers pointed out the necessity of unity. William C. Higgins, clerk of the Brewers' Company, to J. Danvers Power, 13 June 1885. CBS, general committee, 29 June 1885.
- 62. Brewing Trade Review, November 1895, p.306.
- 63. A graduate of Eton, he did not attend university. Terry Gourvish wrote Bonsor's Oxford DNB entry.
- 64. Times, 6 December 1929, p.16; 10 December 1929, p.18. The Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, had asked Bonsor to serve as the hospital's treasurer, a sign of the social circles in which the big brewers moved.
- 65. Brewers' Company, MS. 5468 ff. 177-80. According to a trade newspaper, 'Lord Burton was evidently for a policy of action; Mr. Bonsor was in favour of holding a watching brief and doing nothing.' Brewers' Journal, 15 July 1888, p.337.
- 66. See Danvers Power, J. (1891) Sharpe v. Wakefield: A Full & Revised Report of the Judgments in the Queen's Bench Division, Court of Appeal, and the Arguments and Judgments in the House of Lords. London: J.S. Phillips, pp.viii, 68. The sisters did not recover 'financially or emotionally' from the loss of their license. Jane Sharpe is rarely mentioned. She died in January 1892 while her sister Susannah died early in the winter of 1895-96. See the report of her death in Kendal and County News, 4 January 1896, as cited in Jennings, P. (2009) 'Liquor Licensing and the Local Historian: the 1904 Licensing Act and Its Administration,' Local Historian. 39/1 (February 2009): 36 n. 21.
 - 67. Brewing Trade Review, 1 December 1888, p.418.
 - 68. Wine, Beer, and Spirit, 24 October 1888, p.833.
- 69. Cosmo Bonsor, and the CBS, annual report in Brewing Trade Review, November 1888, pp.415-16; May 1888, pp.197-98; June 1888, pp.231-32; August 1888, p.344; April 1891, pp.97-98; Brewers' Company minutes, 11 May, 8 June, 4 December 1888; 11 January 1889; 30 April 1891, MS. 5468, dd. 189, 193-94, 211, 294-95. For criticism of the Country Brewers' Society for not supporting Sharpe, see Wine, Spirit and Beer, 8 January 1889, pp.2-4. This newspaper said that Sharpe refused to sell at any price. The parliamentary committee of United Kingdom's licensed victuallers spent nearly £1,339 on the appeals. Sessional Report, 25 June 1891.
- 70. Northern Brewers' and Victuallers' Journal, 25 April 1891, p.12, reporting on the annual conference of the League, 22 April 1891. Reference courtesy of David W. Gutzke.
- 71. Gutzke, D.W. (1989) op. cit., p.102 n.7.
- 72. CBS, annual report; Bonsor, in Brewing Trade Review, November 1888, pp.416-18; July 1891, p.207.

- 73. Brewers' Guardian, 11 December 1888, pp.399-400.
- 74. Brewing Trade Review, 1 December 1891, pp.351-352. Report of the Joint Committee (1891) p.16. Bass contributed £3,000 out of guarantee fund of slightly more than £13,000, with the next largest contribution £500. Staffordshire RO, SD3163/2/1/10 f. 14.
- 75. Brewers' Guardian, 11 December 1888, pp.399-400.
- 76. Brewing Trade Review, December 1888, pp.457-60.
- 77. Wine, Spirit and Beer, Exhibition Number, 24 October 1888, p. 836.
- 78. Pall Mall Gazette, 17 January 1893, pp.1-2.
- 79. Brewing Trade Review, January 1891, pp.14-18;
- N.T.D.F. minutes, 31 October 1890, ff. 36-37.
- 80. In 1891, the zealous Lancashire and Yorkshire brewers decided to appoint two agents at £300 each. (Liverpool) Northern Brewers' and Victuallers' Journal, 3 January 1891, pp.4-5; Brewers and Distillers, 28 March 1891, p.687. Not everybody was enthusiastic about entrusting the trade's case to a paid agent: 'probably a man whose principal qualification for the post is a combination of crass ignorance with a bumptious and truly awful fluency.' Brewers' Guardian, 3 February 1891, p.33.
- 81. Owen, C.C. (1992) 'The Greatest Brewery in the World': A History of Bass, Ratcliff & Gretton. Chesterfield: Derbyshire Record Society, p.129.
- 82. NTDA [National Trade Defence Association], fols. 42, 52.
- 83. Gutzke, D.W. (1989) op. cit., p.114.
- 84. Brewing Trade Review, 1 July 1891, p.208.
- 85. NTDF minutes, 24 April, 21 May, 11 June 1891, ff. 42-43, 45, 50, 52.
- 86. General Association of the Licensed Trade, Objects, Constitution, and Work [Proof only, Private and Confidential] London: offices of the Association [1891?], with prefatory letter signed by secretary G.(eorge) H.(enry) Croxden Powell; The Licensed Trade and Elections. Report of Meeting of All Sections of the Trade at Newcastle on Wednesday, September 2nd, 1891 (Andrew Dickson, 1891); Brewers' Almanack (1898), pp.124-25.
- 87. General Association of the Licensed Trade, Objects, Constitution, and Work, pp.5-6.
- 88. Showell served as chairman of the joint committee of the Midland District from its formation early in 1891 until January 1904. Bennett also headed a pioneering shareholders' organization.
- 89. Brewing Trade Review, 1 July 1891, p.224; Gutzke, D.W. (1989) op. cit., p.109.
- 90. Brewing Trade Review, July 1891, pp.207-09.
- 91. Brewing Trade Review, July 1891, pp.207-08; NTDF. 15 October 1891, f. 58.

- 92. Brewers' Journal, 6 November 1891; Brewing Trade Review, 1 December 1891, pp.351-352. Gutzke, D.W. (1989) op. cit., pp.109-110.
- 93. Brewers' Guardian, 1 March 1890, p.60.
- 94. Brewers Journal, 15 February 1892, p.51.
- 95. Although less than five feet four inches tall, he became known as the Jewish 'strong man' after having won English and European amateur weight lifting championships in 1891. For details about Levy, see Fahey, D.M. (ed.) (2014 E. Lawrence Levy and Muscular Judaism, 1851-1932: Sport, Culture, and Assimilation in Nineteenth-Century Britain Together with 'The Autobiography of an Athlete,' Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press. See also Staffordshire County Record Office, for the Midland District of the National Trade Defence Association.
- 96. Brewers' Almanack (1898), pp.124-25. H.A. Newton (National Trade Defence Fund), 6 February 1897, criticized Powell's League as practically non-existent. Pall Mall Gazette, 8 February 1897, p.9. On 17 March 1897, Powell gave evidence on behalf of the League at Lord Peel's Royal Commission on the Liquor Licensing Laws. See also Gutzke, D.W. (1989) op. cit., pp.185-86.
- 97. Brewers' Journal, 15 January 1904, pp.21-22.
- 98. Birmingham Daily Post, 17 March 1904; Brewers' Guardian, 10 April 1904, p.357. Showell died at age 57 on 2 September 1915. There is an obituary in Staffordshire Sentinel, 11 September 1915.
- 99. In 1891, the Licenses Insurance Corporation and Guarantee Fund, Ltd., was organized to insure owners of licensed property. For reasons of expense, most public houses remained uninsured.
- 100. Archbishop Benson to Salisbury, 16 December 1895. Lambeth Palace Library, Benson papers, vol. 146, fols. 343-44. I am grateful to the Librarian for permission to consult the papers of the CETS and those of the archbishops. See also Greenaway, J.R. (1984) 'Bishops, Brewers and the Liquor Question in England, 1890-1914,' *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church.* 53, pp.61-75.
- 101. Bonsor to Lord Salisbury, 30 January 1896, Salisbury papers, Christ Church, Oxford. Uncatalogued when consulted. These papers have been moved to Hatfield House since I examined them.
- 102. Fahey, D.M. (1971) 'Temperance and the Liberal Party-Lord Peel's Report, 1899,' *Journal of British Studies*. 10, May, pp.132-59. For another analysis, see Wright, D.E. (1972)'The British Liquor Licensing Question, 1895-1905' (McMaster dissertation).
- 103. Bonsor to Sir S.K. ('Pom') McDonnell, 6 November 1898. Christ Church, Oxford, Salisbury papers, The speech

- by Hicks-Beach was reprinted in the *Alliance News*, 11 November 1898, p.738. For the date that the draft report had been expected, see *Licensing Trade News*, 12 November 1898, p.6.
- 104. *The Brewers' Almanack* (1898), p.53, said that Buxton was elected acting treasurer on 29 January 1897 in Wigram's absence abroad.
- 105. For details about the role of Buxton in trade politics, see Fahey, D.M. (2019) 'E. N. Buxton (1840-1924): Liberal Brewer, Big Game Hunter and Conservationist,' *Brewery History*. 178, Spring, pp.24-44.
- 106. Churchill College, Lord Randolph Churchill papers, West to Churchill, 7, 10, 14, 15, and 17 January; 11, 14, and 18 February; 12, 24 March; 12 and 17 May 1890.
- 107. Henry Gladstone to Herbert Gladstone, 16 February 1899. British Library, Herbert Gladstone papers, Add. Ms. 46045, ff. 193-94. Reporting a speech by the temperance member T.P. Whittaker, a trade newspaper wrote: 'in the early stages of discussion on the report, Sir Algernon West told him (Mr. Whittaker) that he did not think that any report would carry weight in the country, and lead to legislation unless it had the signatures of the trade members.' *Licensed Trade News*, 24 February 1900, p.11.
- 108. Walker consulted the Londoners' Royal Commission committee on whether he should sign the majority report and whether he should add his reservations. Central Board, minutes Royal Commission committee, 4 and 11 May 1899. Edward Johnson regretted that Walker had asked the committee for its opinion. As a member of the Royal Commission, he was free to act as he thought best.
- 109. About the same time that the Royal Commission presented its reports, an influential book was published, Rowntree, J. and Sherwell, A. (1899) *The Temperance Problem and Social Reform.* London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- 110. *Times*, 31 October 1941, p.7; 5 November 1941, p.7. Frank Whitbread served as the second chairman of the Brewers' Society, organized in 1904.
- 111. Greenaway, J.R. (2003) op. cit., p.78.
- 112. NTDA, *The Licensing Question: Points to Be Considered in Connection with Any Proposed Legislation* [Publication, No. 42] (1904). Not to be confused with 1907 pamphlet.
- 113. Balfour to Edward VII, 19 February 1903. Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, RA R23/43. I am grateful for the gracious permission granted by Her Majesty the Queen to consult the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle.
- 114. Amery, J. (1969) *The Life of Joseph Chamberlain*. London: Macmillan and Co., vol 5, p.173. Chamberlain to Charles Vince, 17 April 1903. Politicians sometimes referred

to members of the licensed trade as publicans, although in fact the brewers were its leaders.

115. H.H. Riley-Smith at Yorkshire Brewers' Association, 24 February 1903. *Licensing World*, 25 February 1903, p.165. 116. *Brewers' Journal*, 15 April 1905, p.209. For the 1904 legislation, see Jennings, P. (2015) "Grasping a Nettle": The 1904 Licensing Act,' in Hailwood, M. and Toner, D. (eds.) *Biographies of Drink: A Case study Approach to our Historical Relationship with Alcohol*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, pp.30-48. For the year after the licensing act, see a multi-faceted look at the brewing trade in a single year, see Anderson, R. (2005) 'The Trade in 1905,' *Brewery History*. 118, Spring, pp.2-20.

117. H.H. Riach, joint agent of the Eastern and Southern Counties district, National Trade Defence Association, claimed that he had drafted in his office a rough version of a clause protecting retailers that the government included in the licensing act. Annual meeting of Southampton and Districct Licensed Victuallers' Associaton. *Licensed Trade News*, 20 November 1904, p.9.

118. Brewing Trade Review, January 1905, p.3.

119. T. Hamilton Fox, letter 27 June 1904, in *Brewing Trade Review*, July 1904, p.298. Fox originated the movement to create the Brewers' Society. *Brewers' Journal*, 15 April 1904, p. 226. Fox and Sons was an old Kent brewery, founded in 1836.

120. Licensed Trade News, 19 November 1904, p.5.

121. Brewers' Society, *First Annual Report* (London, 1905), pp.5-6.

122. I am grateful to David W. Gutzke for information about the shadowy London Brewers' Society. For the Brewers' Company, see Ball, M. (1977) *The Worshipful Company of Brewers: A Short History*. London: Hutchinson.

123. Gutzke, D.W. (2015) 'W. Waters Butler and the Making of a Progressive Brewer in Britain, 1890-1922,' *Histoire Sociale*. 48, May, pp.137-60.

124. Greenaway, J.R. (2003) op. cit., ch. 5, 'The High Water Mark of Party Political Controversy, 1902-14.'

125. Brewers' Journal, 15 December 1907, p.657.

126. *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 17 March 1908, p.7. Riley-Smith presided over a meeting of the York and District Licensed Victuallers and Beersellers' Association.

127. On 18 July 1908, E.N. Buxton complained that the monopoly value provision 'represented on a low valuation a hundred million of pounds.' *Morning Advertiser*, 20 July 1908, quoted in *National Union Gleanings*. 31, September 1908, p.236.

128. H.A. Newton to Sandars, 21 May 1908. Bodleian, Sandars papers, Mss English Hist. c. 756, ff. 147-148.

129. On 18 March, brewery debenture holders met at the Cannon Street hotel to protest the bill. They were addressed by Lord Rothschild and others. See also *Facts for the Consideration of Holders of Brewery Shares and Debentures* (National Trade Defence Association, 1908), a 21 page pamphlet. 130. Fairfield, V. (1965) 'The Allied Brewery Traders' Association,' in *Brewers' Journal Centenary Number*. pp.251-252

131. Staffordshire Record Office, 3163/1/1/4, ff. 323-325, Archibald S. Bennett to W. Norton, 1 May 1908.

132. Staffordshire RO, D 3163/1/1/4, ff. 335-336, S.C. Johnston (general manager, Birmingham Gazette and Express) to Archibald S. Bennett, 12 June 1908.

133. *Morning Post*, 23 March 1908, p.7; Sandars to Balfour, 1 May 1908. British Library, Balfour papers, Add. Ms. 49765 ff. 134-35.

134. Sandars to Wilfrid M. Short, 30 April 1908; Sandars to Balfour, 1, 8 May 1908. British Library, Balfour papers, Add. Ms. 49765 ff. 125-29, 134-35, 162. The brewers avoided offensive demands. After an interview with Newton, the secretary of the National Trade Defence Association, and Whitbread, its chairman, Sandars characterized them as 'most reasonable.' Sandars to Balfour, 15 May 1908. British Library, Balfour papers, Add. Ms. 49765, f. 170.

135. Holt, T. (2005) 'Demanding the Right to Drink: The Two Great Hyde Park Demonstrations,' *Brewery History*. 118, Spring, pp.26-40.

136. Lambeth Palace Library, Church of England Temperance Society, minutes, 17 March 1908. MS 2031, f. 115. There is much related correspondence in the Davidson papers, 'Temperance and Licensing, 1907-08.'

137. A.F. Harvey (secretary, Temperance Legislation League) to A. Holland-Hibbert, 2 April 1908. Lambeth Palace Library, Davidson papers, 'Temperance and Licensing, 1907-08.' The Archbishop pointed out that public demonstrations were not part of the CETS tradition. Davidson to Holland-Hibbert, 4 April 1908. Lambeth Palace Library, Davidson papers, 'Temperance and Licensing 1907-08.' See also *Temperance Chronicle*, 6 November 1908, p.551; 16 October 1908, p.510.

138. Licensing World, 6 May 1905, pp.308-09; 13 May 1905, p.321; 23 March 1907, pp.204-05; Liberal Magazine, April 1908, pp.171-73; Archbishop Davidson to the Rev. G.M. Scott, 24 March 1908, in Temperance Chronicle, 27 March 1908, p.157; Licensed Victuallers' Official Annual (1909), p.143. 139. Liberal Magazine, April 1908, p.174.

140. Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, King Edward VII's engagements diary, interviews with Asquith and Lansdowne, 11 and 12 October 2018. I am grateful to Miss Gander, then

a member of the Royal Archives staff, for bringing the engagements diary to my attention.

141. Quoted in Lord Newton (1929) *Lord Lansdowne: a Biography*. London: Macmillan, pp.368-69.

142. Blewett, N. (1972) *The Peers, the Parties, and the People: The General Elections of 1910*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, p.333. 143. ibid., p.331.