

TAMPLINS, BREWERS OF BRIGHTON

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‘If Messrs Tamplin and Sons’ brewery were removed from Brighton, it would be possible to put up three streets in its place’.¹ So wrote a reporter for the *Sussex Daily News* in 1902 following a visit to the premises.

The business was founded by Richard Tamplin, the eldest son born in 1779 to a father of the same name, a mercer of Horsted Keynes who died on Christmas day 1792 aged 52. Richard’s younger brother Thomas Roff Tamplin became a brewer at the Bear Brewery in Lewes in partnership with Thomas Wood. This Thomas was named Roff-Tamplin after his great uncle Thomas Roff and fared better than a relative who was saddled with first names Frederick Augustus (and the embarrassment resulting from the initials). Their only sister Sarah married John Pollard who owned the White Hart Lewes.

Like his father, Richard became a mercer in Horsted Keynes, married Elizabeth Pagden in 1800 and probably moved to Brighton soon afterwards. Their first child was Henry Pagden born 1801. The family home was a spacious house at 1, Lennox Terrace later known as Richmond Terrace that finally became the brewery’s offices supplementing the smaller red brick counting house at the entrance to the yard.

In 1820 Richard was trading as the Sussex County Bank of Castle Square with Creasey, Gregory and Company. That year he purchased, from a Nathaniel Hall, a small brewery in Southwick on the south side of the present Southdown Road. Unfortunately, later that year, the *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* reported:

In the forenoon of Wednesday last the 6th of September, a fire broke out in the thatch of an old building called the remote storeroom of the Southwick Brewery belonging to

Mr Tamplin. This quickly communicated with the main building also covered with thatch and in a short space of a little more than an hour the whole premises including the dwelling house their contents fell a prey to the devouring element. The damage is estimated at ten thousand pounds and we regret to state that not any part of the premises or stock was insured. Mr Tamplin had recently purchased the valuable concern and it had been in possession of it only a few months.²

In spite of suffering what to most men would have been a crippling loss Richard appears to have continued brewing by taking over temporary premises in Worthing before beginning to build a new brewery in Brighton the following year. The foundation stone was laid by Henry Pagden Tamplin his eldest son. The *Brighton Herald* in February 1821 hoped:

That from the calamity which rendered the present erection necessary will come far greater advantages than the heavy loss which it inflicted. The building, we understand, was named “The Phoenix Brewery” by Mr Tamplin and the plan, by Mr Henry Wild is one of the most perfect and architectural that ingenuity has devised. Previous to the ceremony Mr Tamplin entertained his friends with an excellent dinner at the Gloucester Hotel.³

The new building was therefore rising from the ashes albeit on a different site. It is remarkable that Richard, was able to buy land and employ the best known of local architects - who with his father Amon Wild was responsible for the greater part of Regency Brighton, to build such an ‘extensive brewery’ a bare six months after suffering the loss of £10,000. By 1902 the premises had become the largest brewery in the county occupying an area of 100,000 square feet bounded by Albion Street,

Albion Hill, Newhaven Street and Southover Street and employing 150 men.

Richard prospered steadily as he had many customers for his beer. This was the golden age for Sussex brewers when more and more new breweries were being established and old ones rebuilt. Independent publicans were being bought out and tenants installed 'tied' to the brewery. The national annual beer consumption per capita almost doubled by 1830. This was further aided by the proliferation of retail outlets resulting from Duke of Wellington's Beer House Act of 1830 that abolished the duty on beer and permitted its sale by any person paying the poor rate on obtaining a two guinea Excise licence. Consumption per capita increased from 20 gallons in 1855, to 29 gallons in 1867. Richard is recorded as saying that his beer was so good and the thirst of the Brighton fishermen was so great that if all the water in the Channel was turned into Tamplin's beer there would never be a high tide at Brighton! The Wine and Beer Act of 1869 checked the growth of beer houses and brought them under the control of licensing magistrates. However, in 1874 it was estimated that over 34 gallons of beer were being drunk annually per head of the population.

Richard was partnered by his son Henry Pagden Tamplin who after learning the trade inherited the business upon his father's death in 1849. He boasted that he brewed the best beer in Brighton and only sold to others what he could not drink himself. Henry in turn was partnered in 1863 by his eldest son 29 year old William Cloves Tamplin. The number of licensed properties owned was then about 50 and the business was valued at £52,000. Father Henry gave half of the business to his son agreeing to sell him the remainder for £26,000 allowing him to pay interest at 4% on the amount outstanding. Each year father and son took half of profits. Henry gradually left more and more of the running of the business to his son so that he could indulge his other interests mainly what was to become the Sussex County Cricket Club. He died in 1867 of a heart attack at the end of a hard run while out hunting with a pack of harriers between Patcham and Pyecombe on the Downs to the north of Brighton and was buried in the new Brighton Municipal Cemetery, Woodvale.

William Cloves Tamplin inherited the business on his father's death. He had married Henrietta Christiana

Schneider in 1865 and fathered ten children in just over twelve years -six girls and four boys. The brewery business had multiplied six-fold during the past 30 years and accounted for the bulk of his wealth. Clearly, he could not transfer that to his eldest son while disinheriting the other children. It would be necessary to realise a good part of the capital in order to provide for all ten children. He therefore transformed the business into a limited liability company in 1889 with a capital of £270,000 later increased by £100,000 with himself as chairman. The number of licensed properties had risen to 83.

In 1885 together with a brother-in-law A.J. Berger William bought a paint and varnish factory in St. Petersburg. So as not to appear to be in competition with the family firm this traded as King's Paint & Varnishes so as to conceal the Berger involvement and impress the Russian customers who assumed a connection with British monarchy. After a disastrous fire at the paint factory in 1890 William purchased the remains and financed the rebuilding. His eldest son Richard William became the General Manager.

William Cloves commanded the 1st Volunteer Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment and as their colonel built at his own expense a drill hall in Church Street Brighton. He died in 1893 leaving an estate worth over £200,000 and absolute control of the brewery passed out of family. A third son Henry Robertson Tamplin became the Managing Director of the maltings owned by Messrs Swonnells of Oulton Broad Norfolk and later became Deputy Chairman of Tamplin & Sons Brewery Brighton Ltd. in 1916.

The business expanded by the acquisition of several smaller concerns. In 1892 the nearby Albion Brewery belonging to M.P. Castle in Albion Street was purchased for £41,178 bringing in 35 houses. Brewing here ceased in 1894 and the premises were retained as a wine, spirit and bottled beer store. At the same time an agreement with Mr Charles William Catt, late of Vallance Catt & Co. owners of the West Street Brewery gave exclusive rights to supply beers to a large number of his licensed houses. In 1899 these houses were bought for £386,009. In 1896 the business of the South Malling Brewery at Lewes was purchased for £22,004. The year 1899 saw the purchase of the 12 houses of the Brighton Brewery Co. from R.C. Weeks for £46,144. His brewery at the



Figure 1. Tamplins Brewery, Brighton.

north end of Osborne Street, Hove was retained as a store for a short time before demolition in 1902. In the 1870s an old malthouse, built by the West Street brewery at the top of Hove Street was used to supplement the brewery maltings but this was soon disposed of to the Amber Ale brewery of Henry Longhurst who in 1880 built the Connaught pub on the site.

A further take-over was the business of the Southdown & East Grinstead Breweries at Lewes in 1924 from Thomas Sackville Manning for £274,075. Manning joined the Board and the malthouse at South Malling was retained to replace the older house adjoining the brewery in Southover Street, Brighton which became a wine and spirit store. The former brewery premises at Lewes and at East Grinstead were sold off.

In 1926 the business of the Brighton brewers Kidd & Hotblack was acquired for £55,376 and Seymour Hotblack joined the Board. The purchase brought in 53 licensed properties together with the former Canon Brewery in Russell Street which was retained as a bottling store. In 1928 two thirds of the licensed premises of the Hove brewers E. Robins & Sons were purchased followed in 1929 by two thirds of the houses of the Brighton brewers Smithers.

Finally in 1955 the business of Henty and Constable of Chichester was bought jointly with the Guildford brewers Friary Holroyd Healy Breweries Ltd (later Friary Meux). Over lunch at the 'Unicorn' the pubs were divided between them. Each pub had been listed according to barrelage and the first choice was decided by cutting cards. Friary having first pick chose the 'Red Lion' at Cosham, Tamplins took the next highest the 'Old House at Home', Wittering. Eventually Tamplins owned two thirds of all the licensed premises in the Brighton area amounting to over 200 and a further 400 elsewhere. Although many of the acquired pubs were upgraded, Tamplins, unlike the Kemptown Brewery or the United Brewery of Portsmouth do not appear to have altered them to any common design. Most retained the features established by their previous owners. The brewery was rebuilt in 1921.

Tamplins themselves were taken over by the London brewers Watney Coombe & Reid in 1953 who merged with Mann Crossman & Paulin of Whitechapel in 1958 to become Watney Mann. The business continued unchanged for some time until the company was acquired by Grand Metropolitan in 1972. The last brew was in November 1973. The brewery building was eventually demolished although the site continued in use as a distribution depot trading as the Phoenix

Brewery Co. Ltd. until the end of the 1980s. In 1996 the premises were cleared and houses erected on the site by the Chichester Diocesan Housing Association who have happily named some of the roads after the former brewing company. The former counting house that was situated at the south west entrance to the yard and the brewers house in Richmond Terrace remain intact.

The brewery is of special interest to the writer as it was here over 60 years ago as a pupil he learnt his job as an Excise Officer. Fond memories survive of Sussex Bitter, Watney's Special Bitter and even the much maligned Red Barrel. In bottle there was Watney's Brown Ale, Best Pale Ale, Pale Ale, Brown Ale and Cream Label Stout. His notes record:

Premises entered from the main gate in Phoenix Place. Two mash tuns with two sugar dissolving vessels and two cases for holding grist above. Close by was a milling room and malt and sugar stores. A copper house contained three coppers with associated hop backs for boiling and straining worts. There were two coolers and seven refrigerators to cool worts, twenty seven vessels for the fermentation of worts and four for the collection of sugar solutions. On the north side of the yard was bottling hall with storage for bottled beers. Finally there were several stores for cask beers, and cold storage of beers in tanks.

A visit by the reporter from the *Sussex Daily News* provides an interesting insight to the operation of the brewery in 1902.⁴ He enthused at the spacious courtyards, lofty buildings, and towering shafts finding the place not unlike a small town, the interior being a veritable home of industry and that it would be difficult to find, among the commercial enterprises of Sussex, a more successful example than that of Tamplin and Sons' Brewery Company. A tour of the brewery which the representative made under the guidance of the head brewer (Mr Lade) proved quite an instructive and interesting event and he reports the following:

SOME OPERATIONS IN BREWING

Even to look inside the building containing the cask washing plant reveals something notable in its way. As a matter of fact this part of the premises conveys a very good idea of the development of the business since its conversion into a Company some thirteen years ago. During that time

this part has been enlarged to ten times its original size, and as practically the entire output of the brewery eventually finds its way into the casks which are treated in this department, the acute mind may be able to deduce an interesting fact regarding the Company's increase of business. A first glance at the cask-washing apparatus suggests the presence of a miniature battery of guns in action, for one sees a line of barrels belching forth clouds of vapour, and masses of steam ascending to the roof. This, however, is really nothing more terrible than the drying of the casks with hot air. But although this is the first process to strike the eye, it is not, as a matter of fact, the first in actual order. The cask washing is a very important process, far more so than the ordinary observer might think, for it is most essential that the wood should be properly sterilised; in other words, that none of those microbes against which it is the brewer's chief business to fight shall survive in the wood, and thus find their way into the beer: if they did the beer would not keep nearly as long as it should. First of all the casks are treated with boiling "liquor", after which hot air is driven from the boiler by means of a fan into underground pipes, which are connected with the casks. All the casks are ready to be filled half an hour after they have been emptied of "liquor". When the old methods were in use the time which had to lapse was twenty four hours. The many store rooms constitute another important department. There are four rooms, and in two of them elaborate special machinery is in use, brushing the malt no fewer than five times, so that it is thoroughly cleaned from all impurities passing to the grinding mill, and for grading it so as to separate the heavier and lighter malts and ensure perfect grist. The lighter grades are sold for feeding purposes, not being considered suitable for the production of the high-class beers. Another feature of the machinery here is a dust destroyer, which absorbs and destroys all the dust arising from the process.

IN THE MASH TUBS

After being ground the malt goes to the malt hopper for the mash-tub. The mash-tub room suggests to a visitor the presence of some naval machinery. The tubs (for there are two) are covered by huge copper domes, which can be raised by chains and pulleys; and the copper domes are bright with an astonishing brightness. There are three glass windows in each metal lid, through which the process which goes on inside can be observed. These tubs are furnished with Steele's masher and rakes and other ingenious appliances, all of copper, and capable of mashing 100 quarters of malt. Two

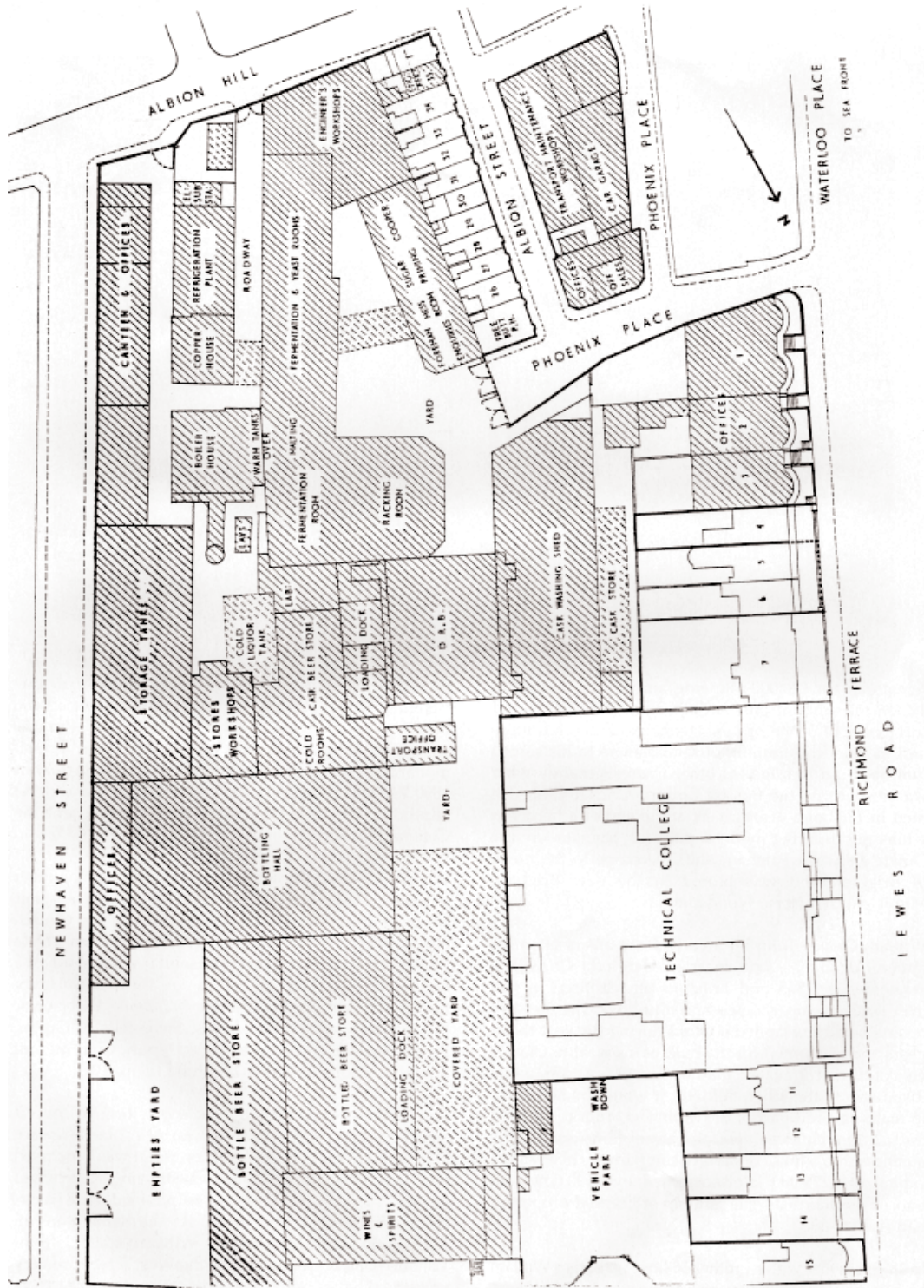


Figure 2. Plan of Tamplins Brewery, Brighton.

grist cases, holding 50 quarters each are also a feature of the equipment, and it may be observed that here, as well as all over the brewery, the appliances are duplicated so that if necessary two or more different kinds of beer can be brewed at the same time. When the liquid has left the mash tubs it is what is technically known as 'wort.' The wort runs from the mashing tubs for the next process through 24 taps and in conjunction with taps are 24 sample jars for testing purposes. The room in which this testing is performed is called the "underback" room, and is fitted with underbacks, copper steam coils and two wort pumps, which last convey the wort through copper pipes to coppers, where it is boiled with hops. The liquid now runs into coppers which are fitted with slotted plates; and these slotted plates act as strainers, allowing the liquid to run through, but arresting the hops. Everything in the room is made of copper. When the process is actually in progress it is not easy to obtain a view of it for the apartment is an abode of steam, and one peers through a dense and odorous atmosphere, a quality of which is that it is a guarantee to create an excellent appetite.

AN APPROPRIATE MOTTO

Next comes the cooling process; and the great object aimed at in the apartment used for this purpose is thorough ventilation, air finding admittance in every direction, the idea being to cool the wort rapidly. In a great many breweries no special room is kept for this purpose, but Tamplins have fully recognised its importance. The exposure of the wort to air causes the steam to evaporate. In the coolers are more strainers to prevent the smallest particle of hops from passing to the refrigerators. The refrigerators are interesting and important apparatus. They consist of a vertical screen composed of 109 tubes running horizontally. Water drawn straight from the well passes through these pipes and the wort pours over them in a miniature cataract. Here rapidity is most necessary, as the faster the wort runs the more stability is ensured. Thorough ventilation and cleanliness are essential through out the brewery, and most particularly in this room. The walls and other parts are of glazed brick, and the windows work on pivots, which makes it possible to direct the air into the apartment at any angle. There are also a double set of windows above to allow the steam to escape, and to prevent it from falling back on the wort. Altogether, the room is a magnificent one, fitted with the latest appliances, and considered by experts to be equal to anything of the kind in the country. The four large refrigerators are capable of cooling 1,800 gallons per hour. Now the wort

passes on to the fermenting rooms where the yeast is added. The fermenting rooms are also appointed in the best possible manner: the ten fermenting vessels in the round room can ferment 32,400 gallons a week, and a similar number in a square room have a capacity of twice that number. A word here upon the yeast store room may be appropriate. The walls are enamelled, and there are 5 large tanks standing on glazed bricks. These have false bottoms, to enable the water to run through, and they are also fitted with electric fans. The air finds entrance through a canvas sheet, over which water is constantly running, to arrest the ingress of any microbes which may wish to incorporate themselves in the yeast. These minute enemies necessitate double doors to this apartment; in fact the place is practically air tight. The fermenting process, for which the yeast is prepared, is the end of brewing, and the next thing is the barrelling of the beer, which takes place seven days after the addition of the yeast. The underground store cellars are built in arches in the form of a crypt. Despite the rows of barrels, there is something vault-like in the arched roof, its supporting pillars, and in the semi-darkness, relieved only by a few solitary gas jets. On either side are arranged long rows of vats, each capable of holding 10,800 gallons. The temperature here never varies. Near this part of the premises there is a cellar in which is machinery for elevating the barrels on to a platform, from which they are transferred to the vans. A motto which might apply to the whole of the processes throughout the brewery is "Cleanliness and Despatch".

METHODS OF DELIVERY

The two fine engines on the ground floor, which drive the whole of machinery in the brewery, are 20 and 15 horse power respectively, and the boilers are Galloway's, with Dewrance's fittings, while in an adjoining room are fitted up two powerful Worthington pumps for pumping water into the boilers, whose capacity is 1,000 and 600 horse power respectively. Even a cursory inspection of the brewery shows that it is equipped throughout with ingenious labour-saving appliances, and that in all the various departments the administration leaves nothing to be desired, and that cleanliness is a first consideration in all phases of the Company's operations. The scrupulous care in this respect extends to the smallest pieces of brass work; gas brackets and knobs receiving as much attention almost as the large metal surfaces. The public, indeed, are hardly aware of the great pains which are taken in this matter, or of its importance. In a corner of the immense yard opposite the engine house and boiler room are a range of seven horse boxes, which make a

comfortable hospital for horses needing rest and care; and the general stables provide accommodation for 30 horses, a splendid stud, the services of which have latterly been supplemented by an expensive motor delivery van, which has answered its expectations. Mention should be made off the loading out stage, in the centre of the main building, which is provided with a steam hoist capable of delivering into the vans at the rate of 500 casks an hour. Another busy corner on the ground floor is the racking room, fitted with immense slate tanks for dropping beer before racking.

THE WINE AND SPIRIT TRADE

Outside the brewery gates are the offices, a handsome modern brick building, with ample accommodation of the best character. On the ground floor are the manager's office, typewriting department, general counting-house, and a specially-constructed strong room with steel doors; while on the upper floor are the Board Room for the Directors' and shareholders' meetings and other private offices. A stone's throw away, in Albion Street, is the wine, spirit and bottled beer store. The premises formerly know as the Albion Brewery have been specially adapted for the purpose, and now form a branch of the Company's trade which is progressing by leaps and bounds.

AN ENORMOUS UNDERTAKING

The trade has grown so rapidly that frequent alterations and extensions of the brewery have become necessary. In 1889 the business was converted into a limited liability company, with a capital of £270,000 afterwards increased by an issue £100,000 four per cent. "A" mortgage debenture stock, for the purpose of paying off the then existing mortgages and loans entered into for the acquisition of the Albion and South Malling Breweries, and also to meet further business developments. In 1899 the capital was further increased to pay for the purchase of 76 houses, the property of Mr Catt. In 1900 the Brighton Brewery at Hove with 12 licensed houses was purchased, and a further issue of 5½ per cent preference shares was made. Mr James Tasker, who died in 1890 after fifty years connection with the firm, was the first Managing Director. The late Colonel Tamplin was also a Director until his death, in July, 1893. For many years Colonel Tamplin took a keen interest in the affairs of the town, and was an enthusiastic supporter of the Volunteer movement. His association with the 1st V.B. Royal Sussex Regiment, to the

command of which he was promoted in 1887, dating from the Regiment's formation in 1859. The supervision of the general administration is entrusted to Mr Henry Beaumont, General Manager and Secretary, whose connection with brewery extends over 36 years.

GOOD MANAGEMENT AND EXCELLENT RESULTS

The position of "Tamplins" in the share market is sufficient to show the success that has been attained from the very commencement of the present Company's operations. The progress, indeed, has been phenomenal, and the firm has a fine reputation alike in the brewery world and in the county of Sussex. The Board of Directors is at present constituted as follows:- Mr H.J. Gordon-Rebow (Chairman), Mr Charles Page Wood, Mr Charles Horsley, Mr William Sendall, Mr Alexander Miller-Hallett, Mr George Lionel King and Mr Charles William Catt. The last annual Report showed that the net profits of the business for the year ending May 17th, 1902, before charging directors', trustees' and auditors' fees amounted to over £45,000. Dividend and bonus for the year amounted to twelve per cent and the general reserve fund was increased to £53,000.

Acknowledgements

Much of the Tamplin's family history came from research made available to the writer by the late Lt. Col. Richard Tamplin, great-grandson of William Cloves Tamplin. Details of the 1902 brewing plant were taken from an article that appeared in the edition of the *Sussex Daily News* published on the 22 October 1902, a copy of which can be found in Worthing reference Library. Trading details of the business were extracted from the Company Records that can now be found in the East Sussex Record Office. The remainder has been acquired over many years of the writer's contact with the Company and that of his former tutor and later Excise colleague, Jack Manser.

References

1. *Sussex Daily News*, 22 October 1902.
2. *Sussex Weekly Advertiser*, 11 September 1820.
3. *Brighton Herald*, 8 February 1821.
4. *Sussex Daily News*, 22 October 1902.