

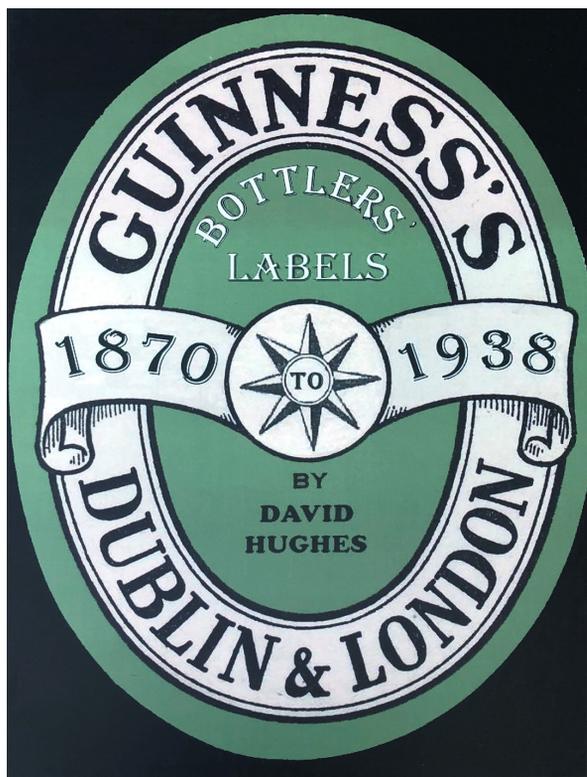
**BOOK REVIEWS****Guinness's Bottlers' Labels 1870-1938****Hughes, D.****Wokingham, Berkshire: Phimboy****2020, Pp237, £40****ISBN: not available**

If there were ever a degree in Guinnessology (and why not?), then David Hughes would be the professor in charge, and much of the curriculum would be written by him. His *A Bottle of Guinness Please* (Phimboy, 2006) is almost as essential to understanding the history of the Dublin brewing giant as the two books on the company's corporate history by Lynch and Vaizey (covering 1759 to 1876) and Dennison and MacDonagh (covering 1886 to 1939). He edited the memoirs of Edward Guinness (*A Brewer's Tale*, 2014), the scion of the 'banking' Guinnesses who joined the brewery in 1945 and rose to be a member of the board by 1982, and who was thus able to provide a fascinating insider's view of the Ernest Saunders years. He wrote two important books on John Gilroy, the artist almost synonymous with Guinness. He wrote two illustration-filled books on Guinness memorabilia. Now he has produced a book crammed with more than 2,000 examples of Guinness labels issued by bottlers of the company's products in Ireland and Great Britain over almost 70 years.

Of the 30 or more books written about Guinness, this is, certainly, one of the obscurest, even more so than those dedicated to Guinness's railway system at the St James's Gate brewery. But you do not have to be too much of a Guinness nerd to find its pages fascinating. There cannot ever have been another brand sold under so many different labels, of every form – oval, circular, square, rectangular (portrait and landscape), five-sided, hexagonal, octagonal, shield-shaped, diamond-shaped, round-topped and others – and colour, including red, blue, green, yellow, brown, maroon, black, white and pink, as well as the standard buff or beige.

It is also instructive to see the variety of bottlers of Guinness during the years when the company declined to bottle its own product: they include at least two well-known Dublin

pubs (Mulligan's of Poolbeg Street, p.35, and the Bleeding Horse, p.38), and several of Guinness's rival stout brewers, such as Watkins Jameson Pym of the Ardee Street brewery in Dublin (p.83), Barclay Perkins (p.107), Hoare (p.140), Meux (p.153) Watney Combe Reid (p.185) and Whitbread (p.186) of London, and Mackeson of Hythe (p.150). Other oddities include Guinness labels from 'Her Majesty's Naval and Military Hospitals' (p.140) and two railway companies, the LMS and the LNER (p.149). Some labels raise intriguing questions: I really want to know more about Mungha Singh of the Crystal Bells, Londonderry, bottling Guinness Extra Stout some time before 1936. Hundreds of British breweries bottled Guinness, of course: I was intrigued to find nine different breweries from Hertfordshire represented.



The sort of surprising information that can be found in the book is exemplified in a five-sided black and white label for Guinness Extra Stout on page 113 which was used by T. Briden & Son of Stevenage, in Hertfordshire. That was the town I grew up in - and a Stevenage local historian tells me that Thomas Briden ran a grocers' and drapers' shop in Stevenage High Street which clearly once sold Guinness bottled on the premises, those premises today, more than a century later, and after a long period as a hardware store, being used as a bar called the Draper's Arms.

The book is arranged by product and then (largely) alphabetically by company, starting with Guinness porter and moving through labels for extra (or XX) stout; the 'blended' porter and ES mix that was clearly a popular (and cheaper) bottled drink across Ireland, with more than 80 examples depicted; nourishing/invalid stout; and Foreign Extra Stout, or XXX, the 'overseas' version, with its multiplicity of bottlers' brand, from the cat of E. & J. Burke and the bulldog of Robert Porter & Co to hippos, pelicans, storks, peacocks, badgers, beavers, monkeys, imps, knights in armour, waterfalls and the rest.

A scattering of non-Guinness labels have found their way in, including D'Arcy's of the Anchor brewery in Dublin (p.59), Caffrey's of the Mountain brewery in Belfast, (p.46), the Oakhill brewery in Somerset (p.103) and the Great Northern Brewery in Dundalk (p.166). There are also a fair few typos ('Ennestymon', 'Colonmel', 'Ferneau Pelham', 'O'Reilly' - as the old joke goes, 'Oh, really? No, O'Reilly!'), which suggests it might have been wise to have had another eye go over the copy before the book went to print. There are also a few labels where the reproduction is at a much lower resolution than one would expect in a book of this general quality.

Overall, however, this will be, if not as invaluable as some of Hughes's other volumes on Guinness, certainly an important reference book, an excellent record of just how incredibly diverse the labelling of one of the biggest-selling bottled beers in the British Isles was before Guinness centralised bottling, and a worthy tribute to the many hundreds of small bottlers who ensured for decades that people got what was good for them.

All the same, the appeal of the book is going to be limited, and only a small number have been printed, which accounts for the high price.

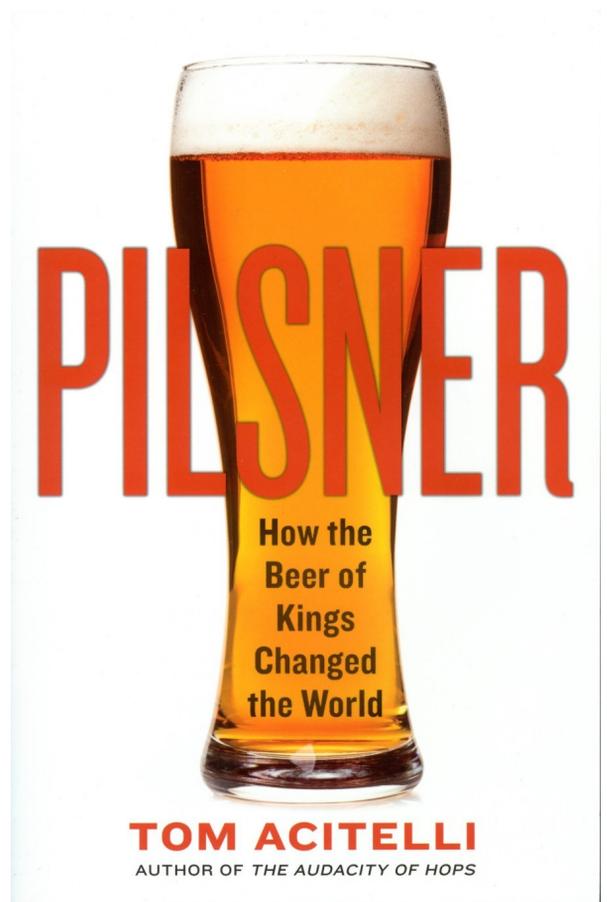
MARTYN CORNELL

**Pilsner: How the Beer of Kings Changed the World**  
**Acitelli, T.**

**Chicago: Chicago Review Press**  
**2020, Pp. xvii + 285, \$19.99**  
**ISBN: 978-1-64160-182-5**

Following in the wake of impressive works on the history of American craft beer, whiskey, and wine, Tom Acitelli's recent look into the history of pilsner offers a vibrant and entertaining journey from the beer style's 1840 birth to the late twenty-first century convergence of the world's leading multinational, pilsner-soaked brewing corporations. While it might not equal his previous works, *Pilsner* nevertheless offers a streamlined historical introduction to the style's modern ubiquity.

This book frames pilsner as an unstoppable juggernaut that took the brewing industry by storm, but also as a 'product of its time and place' (p.xv) that benefitted from fortuitous technological, political, and other global developments of



the last 180 years or so. Acitelli emphasizes the various Bavarian inspirations, as well as actual Bavarians, that contributed to the invention of pilsner, seeking to correct the ‘myth of Pilsner as a Czech rather than a Bavarian glory’ (p.xvii). This framing is critical to the book’s overall narrative - Acitelli can therefore link pilsner to the more general spread of lagers during the mid-nineteenth century (particularly in the United States), even before explicitly named pilsners proliferated in the 1870s and 1880s, using Bavarian lagers as a common ancestor. While he does not specifically trace the production of pilsners or golden, pilsner-like lagers back to mid-1800s Bavaria (instead implying the opposite by frequently contrasting pilsners with Vienna’s amber lagers and Munich’s märzen and dunkel styles), Acitelli argues that pilsner-inspired lager brewing piggy-backed southern German immigration and other knowledge networks to spread both to the United States and other sections of Europe, notably Denmark. By 1859, the year that the Burgher’s Brewery trademarked the term ‘pilsner bier,’ Acitelli remarks that it was ‘too late’ (p.63)—political and technological advances had already inspired future pilsner brewers around the globe.

From there, Acitelli traces the growth of brewing giants such as Heineken and Anheuser-Busch, as well as the 1873 World Exposition in Vienna where pilsner received special notice. Alongside technical and operational advances that propelled the industry forward, by the 1890s pilsner was the top-selling beer style in much of Europe and the United States. Acitelli further describes how it spread, via imperial networks, to Africa and China. But *Pilsner’s* primary focus remains the United States as Acitelli traces the political ascendance and eventual defeat of the Prohibition movement. Because pilsner became, as Acitelli argues, essentially synonymous with beer, pilsner’s history in turn became that of the largest brewers in the post-Prohibition period. The book covers the rise of packaged beer, competition for ‘share of throat’ (p.164), industry consolidation, and how the Second World War, unlike the first, actually stimulated the pilsner-brewing business. From there the book covers how these gargantuan brewers combined ‘that modernity won in the late nineteenth century and that convenience achieved in the early twentieth with the blander [postwar] diet many Americans were adopting’ (p.197). This rounds out another of *Pilsner’s* main arguments, that the style not only appealed to consumer tastes but was also ‘the exact sort of beer that rewarded streamlining’ (p.198). The book culminates not only in the final major iteration of this process, “lite” beer, but also the seeds of a craft beer community bent not only on reacting to pilsner, but also reinventing it.

*Pilsner* offers an enjoyably introduction to lager brewing history, mostly in the West and increasingly just the U.S. Its

elevation of Evan Rail’s excellent research on the origins of pilsner, as well as advocacy for more nuanced perspectives which connect beer history to broader trends in politics, imperialism, and technology, are all incredibly welcome. But the book’s execution of these points leaves some things to be desired.

The sources behind Pilsner are many, but rely heavily on tertiary web articles and similar resources, generalist and seminal works, as well as a heavy use of entries in the *Oxford Companion to Beer*. A dearth of significant primary source research or deeper scholarship in the bibliography means that this work repeats many common misconceptions about brewing history and related trends, particularly in the United States. A notable example of this is Chapter 22, which characterizes the rise of the Prohibition movement citing seminal beer history works and digital library resources, but not a single dedicated study of the temperance or Prohibition movements. The chapter suffers as a result.

Acitelli’s analysis of pilsner’s historical journey also appears muddled at times. The book’s introduction explains how pilsner was in many ways intersected with and benefitted from larger developments of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, from revolutions to steamships to pasteurization. This is an insightful and beneficial perspective. But with the latter group, Acitelli vacillates at times between portrayals of pilsner as the driver of these larger trends and as a mere beneficiary of them. It would certainly be fair to argue that each was true at different points in time, but Acitelli’s rush to assign pilsner sweeping credit foregoes such precision.

Similarly, Acitelli’s periodic equivocation of any light-colored lager history as essentially pilsner history leads to a slightly confusing narrative. Chapter 13, for example, insists that most of St. Louis’ pre-Civil War lager breweries (along with the rest of the country) were ‘producing lighter-colored, lighter-tasting lager based on the pilsner style’ (p.71), though Acitelli never demonstrates an explicit commitment by American brewers to Bohemian pilsner brewing during this period. Later in the chapter, however, he explains that these light-colored lagers were ‘not necessarily of any particular lager style’ (p.75) and it was only *after* 1880 that Bohemian-style pilsners became Americans’ preferred beer. Early German-American brewers certainly did brew light-colored lagers and emphasized their beer’s Bavarian roots both technically and culturally. But if pilsner ultimately became ‘synonymous with lager’ (p.xvi), Acitelli backdates that assumption farther than his sources allow. This leads some generalized lager history to be framed as pilsner history despite the book’s repeated assertion of pilsner’s distinct historical trajectory versus other lagers.

Ultimately, this book serves as a steppingstone. For an enthusiast starting out their journey into the history of beer, it will offer a fun overview to the topic. But for more robust insights, readers will need to delve deeper.

BRIAN ALBERTS

**Beer and Racism: How Beer Became White, Why It Matters, and the Movements to Change It**

**Chapman, N.G. and Brunσμα, D.L.**

**Bristol: Bristol University Press**

**2020, Pp.xvi + 212, £22.99**

**ISBN: 978-1-5292-0179-6**

A would-be reader likely won't find *Beer and Racism: How Beer Became White, Why It Matters, and the Movements to Change It* shelved with 'beer books' at her local library or favourite book shop. Whatever qualifies as a traditional beer book, this is not that.

It is the second in a Sociology of Diversity series from Bristol University Press and based on sociological and interdisciplinary research. In the preface, series editor David Embrick writes, 'Books in this series equip and challenge the reader to think critically about racism, sexism, ableism or other persistent inequalities.'

Authors Nathaniel Chapman and David Brunσμα happen to be enthusiastic drinkers of beer, but first of all they are sociologists. Chapman is an assistant professor at Arkansas Tech University and Brunσμα a professor at Virginia Tech. Their book is steeped in academia, sociological theories, expected references to other work, and focuses on beer within the context of racism and white supremacy in the United States.

Nonetheless, *Beer and Racism* is a book for those interested in beer and the brewing industry, the history of both, and perhaps the future of both.

Central to the book is the assertion that 'the white, mythological creation story of beer, brewing, and the social and cultural relations surrounding beer' has made the complete story of beer - one that includes indigenous populations and enslaved Africans - invisible. Unfortunately, because the history is invisible many readers will not accept their thesis.

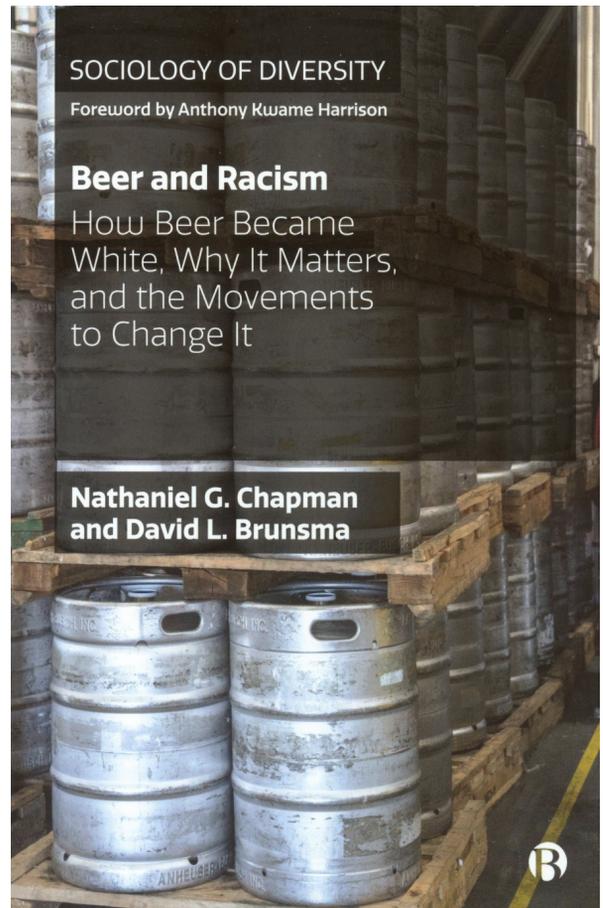
The authors recognize white people often react defensively when presented with similar theses. They write, 'Far from "name calling" and/or calling out all "white people" as immediately to blame, sociologists of race and ethnicity are "system calling" and ask us to understand the system of

whiteness under white supremacy, as well as the myriad ways in which "whiteness" has opened its doors to some and closed them to others.'

Chapman and Brunσμα ask many questions, but this one is key: 'Craft brewers and craft beer often symbolize progressive ideals, creativity, independence and forward-thinking. If this is true, why is the craft industry and culture exclusively white?'

There is no denying how white the industry remains. When the Brewers Association, the trade association which most U.S. craft breweries belong to, surveyed its members in 2019, it found only 1% of owners were Black, fewer than 1% were brewers, and only about 5% of production staff was Black. The numbers are similar for amateur brewers. Of the 2,769 homebrewers who completed a 2020 survey on the Brūlosophy website only 1% were Black.

For the authors, the answer why is that the history of craft beer begins with the history of beer, and beer is a cultural



product. They examine the same factors as other sociologists do to explain the production of cultural products: law, technology, industry structure, organizational structure, occupational careers, and markets. This widens the lens when considering both the past and the present, providing a perspective different than in most books about beer.

They do this by methodically looking at the history of beer in the United States beginning in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the more recent history of craft beer, the paths to becoming a member of the brewing industry, the role of representation and marketing, and how craft beer has reshaped the places where beer is consumed into ‘white spaces.’ They conclude by reviewing recent movements to change the whiteness of craft beer and its culture.

Even those familiar with how beer became the most popular alcoholic beverage in the United States in the 19<sup>th</sup> century - when production grew from 185,000 barrels to 39.4 million barrels between 1810 and 1900 - will find something new to them. For instance, Chapman and Brunsma cite a doctoral dissertation completed at the University of Toledo in 2004 about the history of saloons in Toledo, Ohio, during the 40 years before Prohibition began in 1919. It includes information about Black ownership of taverns, the role of those taverns in the community, and the challenges they faced.

This is precisely the sort of previously invisible history the authors challenge historians to uncover. The book would be stronger were there more. Instead they write, ‘Some stories are buried deep, and even after our research, we realize that there are many stories that remain buried. ... We hope that others will keep searching with us as there has been very little research linking beer with race and racism.’

The authors also conducted 15 semi-structured interviews with brewers, beer sales representatives, industry folks, marketing specialists, bottle shop owners, museum curators and breweriana specialists, and festival organizers. They use the responses throughout the book, providing a narrative not always found in academic publications. Appearing a paragraph at a time, the voices of those interviewed amplify the arguments that Chapman and Brunsma make.

In the chapter examining gentrification and the creation of (exclusively) white spaces, Ida - a Black, female, brewer/owner - says, ‘Having been to no less than 150 breweries, I am always, to use your language, ‘shocked, not shocked,’ at the blanket of whiteness that’s immediately dropped on me approaching the brewery. There’s whiteness in the parking lot, whiteness behind the bar, whiteness in the cellar, whiteness being brewed, whiteness on the TV, white music, white culture. I’m overstimulated by the hegemony.’

Many, perhaps most, members of the beer industry are oblivious to what Ida describes. In fact, they may view themselves as agents of positive change. Beer and Racism rolled off the presses at a time when many craft breweries were uncertain about their future because of Covid-19. Nonetheless, more than 1,000 breweries made a beer and donated the proceeds from sales to support the Black is Beautiful initiative, a ‘collaborative effort to raise awareness for the injustices people of color face daily and raise funds for police brutality reform and legal defenses for those who have been wronged.’

Chapman and Brunsma expect still more of modern brewers, writing on the final page that ‘we are hopeful that white people will take their part in initiating an acknowledgment of their past and contemporary wrongs, take it upon themselves to learn the real history of beer, apologize to the communities that they have erased in that history, and begin a discussion akin to reparations for the brewing industry, for much was erased, stolen, and profited from in the making of the whiteness of beer.’

Not all readers will agree with this conclusion, but they may still find value in considering the questions within *Beer and Racism*.

STAN HIERONYMUS

### **Brussels Beer City: Stories from Brussels’ Brewing Past** **Walsch, E.**

**Independently published**

**2020, Pp.95, £9.23**

**ISBN: 979-8666062746**

When you ask a beer expert about the greatest places for beer, Belgium, and in particular Brussels, will undoubtedly get mentioned. Beer is embedded in the history of Brussels, at least since the middle ages, and the brewing trade and its industrialization have left marks in various parts of the city.

Eoghan Walsh’s debut book, *Brussels Beer City*, is not a comprehensive history of the relationship of Brussels, beer and its brewers, as the author clarifies very early on. Rather, it is a collection of essays that discuss very specific elements of the city’s rich brewing history, about the emergence of a modern brewing industry as well as its decline, embedded in its context of social history, architecture, city planning and even football.

The roots of this project lie in Eoghan publishing a series of articles about Brussels’ beer and brewing history for the

*Belgian Beer and Food Magazine* with the idea to later publish a dedicated collection of them for the magazine's subscribers. Sadly, the magazine was discontinued in spring 2020, but Eoghan got permission from the publisher to realize this project himself, and so he did: the four articles originally published in the magazine are accompanied by four more previously unpublished ones.

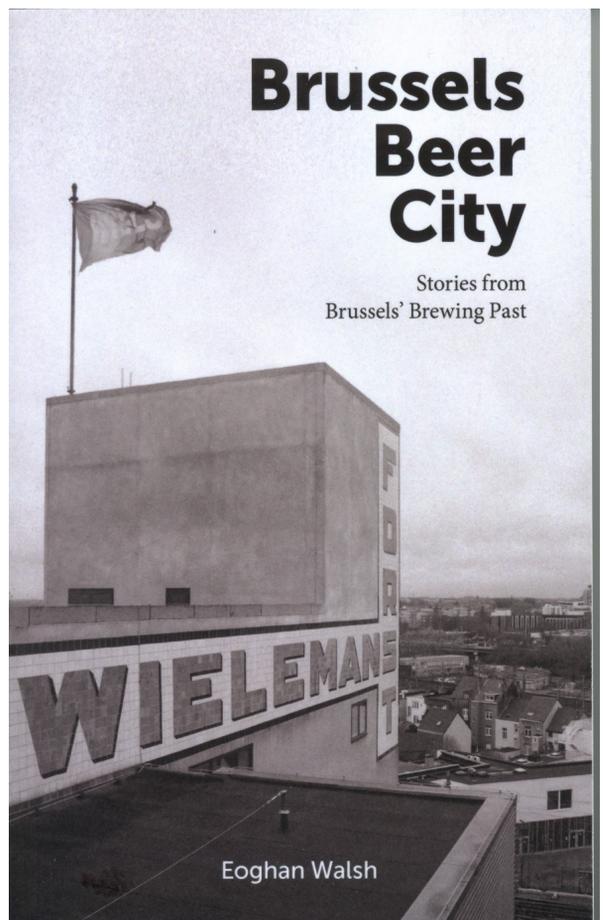
In the book's first chapter, the author gives a rough overview over the city's brewing history by making the point that it can be best traced by the breweries that vanished. Since the middle ages, the brewing trade was centred around the river Senne which provided brewers both with water to clean their breweries and the waterways to transport their product outside of Brussels. With an increasing pollution problem, breweries migrated away from the Senne into other parts of Brussels, coinciding with the dissolution of the guilds and the industrialization of brewing: new companies formed and quickly grew that brewed not just the classic beer types such as lambic and gueuze but also established themselves as large-scale brewers of bottom-fermented lager beers, eventually becoming national brands. War was what wore down the industry, though: during World War I, more than half of all breweries had to close down. After World War II, this consolidation continued, culminating in international breweries from outside Brussels, or even outside Belgium, to buy up and eventually close down the few remaining local breweries. With lambic brewery Cantillon left as the only brewery in Brussels, it took until 2010 for a new brewery to open, starting a re-emergence of local breweries in parts driven by the wider craft beer movement.

The following chapters all take a look at different aspects of Brussels brewing history from their very own angle, like the history of two rivaling, influential breweries of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, Brasserie de Boeck and Grand Brasserie de Koekelberg. While the former started out with traditional beer styles like lambic, faro, table beer and bruin beer, Grand Brasserie de Koekelberg was a new venture solely focusing on brewing German-style lager beers, using German brewing equipment, German hops, and operated by a German brewery director. Post-World-War-II changes in consumer preferences and continuing consolidations forced both businesses to buy up competitors just to keep bigger competitors at bay, a game that collapsed in the 1960s when Boeck had to close down while Grand Brasserie de Koekelberg was bought up by their biggest rival Vandenheuevel.

Eoghan Walsh discusses brewery architecture with the example of Grand Brasseries Atlas. Located in Anderlecht, this local brewery shut down brewing in the 1950s while its owner shifted the Atlas brands to other production breweries

and used the buildings as warehouse and distribution hub until the 1980s. Unlike most other brewery buildings, it survived waves of demolition and renovation. Its art deco brewing tower still overlooks the low-rise neighbourhood, but inside it, very little old brewing equipment is left. The author guides us through the building in a very visually descriptive way that gives a good impression of what is still left, and which remnants of the brewing system can at least still be imagined.

One of Brussels' famous sights, the retro-futuristic Atomium building, also comes into play: built for Expo 58, it featured a restaurant that served Vandenheuevel's Ekla Pils, a beer that the brewery heavily promoted during the event. Other breweries were not far behind: 32 brewers got together to build La Belgique Joyeuse, a folksy Belgian village consisting of replicas of Belgian architecture. In return, the divided up the village's 40 cafes between them to each serve their own beers. Within the next 10 years though, most of these breweries disappeared, and even Vandenheuevel was eventu-



ally bought by British Watneys in the late 1960s and shut down in 1974.

Brasserie Wielemans, acquired by Artois, was going to face the same fate as most other breweries. The brewery was established to brew German-style bottom-fermented beers, and became famous for brewing the first blonde Belgian lager beer. Surviving two World Wars and establishing themselves as a strong local brand with Wiel's Pils, they were eventually acquired by Artois in 1978 despite more than half a million hectolitre in annual production just two year prior. Production was gradually shifted to Leuven and the brewery was eventually shut down in 1988 and almost demolished until Guido Vanderhulst, a museum owner-turned-activist, intervened and started campaigning against the destruction of the historic Wielemans art deco brewery building. Local authorities halted destruction of the brewing vessels in 1988, and while subsequent development projects failed, the building has found a second life as a local arts centre.

The author then picks Brasserie Leopold and its former location as the place where 'brewing Brussels died'. Founded in the mid-19th century and named after Belgian King Leopold, this brewery started producing German styles from the 1880s onwards. As many other breweries, the brewery's fate was sealed when it was sold to Artois which subsequently shut down the operation and laid off 150 remaining staff in 1981. The brewery was torn down, and with it a whole neighbourhood disappeared, making space for a complex of parliament buildings that nowadays houses the European Parliament.

Through the history of Brasserie Belle-Vue, an unlikely connection is made with football: its owner Constant Vanden Stock had revolutionized the gueuze market through a much more streamlined product that was filtered, back-sweetened and pasteurized, and got to dominate the otherwise collapsing gueuze and lambic market. Vanden Stock had been an avid football player in his youth and even won promotion with Anderlecht in 1935, but his career was cut short because of a broken leg. In the late 1960s, he returned to his football club as a board member, eventually becoming the club's president in 1971. Anderlecht football club became internationally successful, and won three European trophies in the 1970s and 1980s. On the beer business side, Brasserie Belle-Vue faced a similar fate as so many others, bought up by Artois and the brewery closed and the Belle-Vue brands transferred to other locations.

The final story of the book, about Brasserie Caulier, again ties together brewing and architecture. A brewery that flourished in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in

particular with its 'Perle Caulier 28' brand, it had its downfall when the brewery owners decided to move from the kasseienwijk district to the industrial town of Ghlin, eventually culminating in the Belgian government having to rescue the brewery in 1978, which was then taken over Artois and Piedboeuf which would eventually be turned into Interbrew. The area where Caulier had been located in Brussels was to be redeveloped as part of a grand plan, the Manhattanplan, which turned into a grand failure. With more recent development plans, brewers have been making their way into the area, and one particular builder, Eric Coppieters, has revived the Caulier 28 brand and is working to reopen a new brewery in 2021, in the same neighbourhood where the original Brassiere Caulier had been located.

While all of the stories in this book are independent and self-contained, attentive readers will still recognize a particular connection between many of them. Changes in fashion, two world wars and economic struggles have been transformative to Brussels as a city but also to its industries, its social fabric and its architecture. The book's particular focus on beer and the brewing industry ties all of this together and contextualizes many of these changes over the decades. You also get a glimpse at how the Brussels beer history could be told in a comprehensive way, and reading the book back-to-back leaves you with a desire to learn more of these stories. And exactly this approach that widely diverges from the conventional way of analysing beer in its purely technical aspects or retelling mythological narratives is what makes this book not only unique in how it tells the brewing history of Brussels, but also sets a good example in how brewing history can be narrated in a more comprehensive, prudent and diverse manner.

ANDREAS KRENNMAIR

**Vienna Lager**  
**Krennmair, A.**  
**Berlin: Andreas Krennmair**  
**2020, Pp.vii + 210, £10.99**  
**ISBN: 979-8650933434**

How much can there be to say about a single relatively obscure substyle of lager? Andreas Krennmair shakes just about every drop from the topic in a book that will delight serious students of European beer history.

Vienna Lager, or Vienna Beer, has a claim to being the first mainstream international lager, developed by brewer Anton Dreher at Klein-Schwechat in the 1830s. This amber beer took Austria by storm and spread across Europe, along

with the new golden lager of Pilsen and the dark lagers of Bavaria. When lager first came to Britain in a serious way in the 1860s, it was Dreher's Vienna Beer that people were drinking in the fashionable beer halls of London's West End.

Slowly, though, Vienna Beer fell out of fashion, usurped by ever-paler lagers, until it became a footnote in beer style guides. And, unlike other obscure styles such as salty, sour Gose or smoky Rauchbier, it lacked the glamour or novelty value that might inspire a revival. The surviving examples were hardly inspiring, either: the Mexican Negra Modelo, perhaps the most widely available in the UK, is nobody's favourite beer.

Of course the more endangered a beer style feels, the more fascinating it becomes to historians. While various writers prodded at the edges of the subject, notably Ron Pattinson in his writing on 19<sup>th</sup> century lager, Krennmair's is the first really thorough study, not only in English but in any language.

Krennmair has multiple advantages when it comes to writing about Vienna Lager. First, he is Austrian and so has a stake in the subject beyond mere curiosity – his grandfather even worked in the forests owned by the Dreher family, he discovered during his research. Secondly, because he is a German-speaker, he has access to sources either overlooked or inaccessible to Anglophone beer historians. The dense black letter of 1840s editions of the Wiener Zeitung, for example, defies dabbling, even in conveniently digitised form.

As a self-published digital and print-on-demand book, it is saved from the indignity of conforming to the prescribed formulas of modern popular history, or of contriving a 'fun' narrative where none exists. Instead, it concerns itself with establishing the facts, one after the other, in a rather dogged, scholarly style.

What exactly happened on Dreher's trip to Britain with Gabriel Sedlmayr in 1833? Krennmair provides the most detailed account currently available in English:

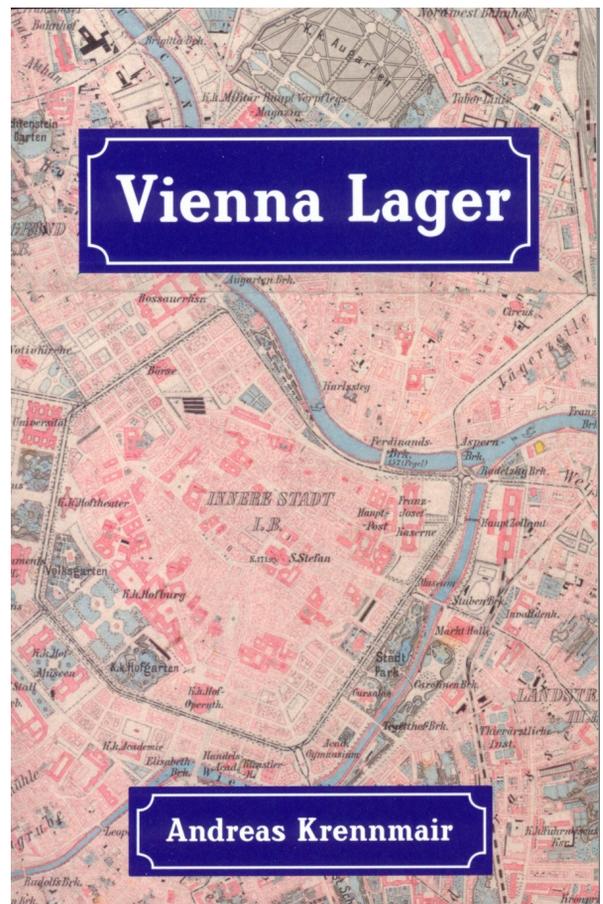
On September 9, they took a stage coach to Maidstone, Kent, where they visited the hop gardens there and in the surrounding villages of Boxley, Thurnham and Bearsted, including the hop kilns so typical for Kent. Sedlmayr apparently wasn't too impressed with the local Kentish hops ...

Exactly which varieties of malt and hops would have been used in Vienna Lager at the height of its popularity in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century? What can be found out about the precise character of the water at Klein-Schwechat? Krennmair pro-

vides notes on the wells at the brewery and the composition of the soil using contemporary reports.

One of the distinguishing features of Vienna Lager was its colour, being paler than the Munich product but darker than that of Pilsen, and directly inspired by English pale ale of the 1830s. Or, in the language of American home-brewing style guidelines, it was "Light reddish amber to copper color." Not happy with mere guesswork, however, Krennmair has found sources from the 1870s and then painstakingly translated the numeric values of something called "Stammer's colour measurement" into Lovibond, SRM and EBC. "Based on this data and its interpretation, we can safely say that Vienna lager... was most definitely a dark golden to pale amber beer rather than of a deep amber, darkish colour" he writes, calmly overturning decades'-worth of received wisdom.

A traditional publisher might have told the author to be "less generous" to his research – in other words, to cut out 60% of the precise details he has evidently worked hard to pin



down. It is this obsessive, almost pernickety focus on hard facts that gives the book its value, at the cost of easy readability. That's not to say it isn't a pleasure to read, only that it is a book by a scholar, for scholars – a priceless repository of information rather than bedtime reading.

The book also has a clear purpose beyond consolidating information strewn across a thousand sources: it is, like so many of the best recent publications in beer history, a home-brewing manual. For many readers, the recipes that conclude the book are what will give it real value and, in fact, you might think of this as a single perfect beer recipe – the 1870 Dreher clone – with 200 pages of background notes.

Throughout, a sensible balance is struck between historical accuracy and achievability. For example, after several pages of intense scrutiny of the yeast strain that might have been employed by Dreher in the 19<sup>th</sup> century – brace for mentions of *S. eubayanus*, methyl butanol, ethyl acetate, 3-methylbutyl acetate and other such unpronounceables – Krennmair gives a clear recommendation for a modern commercial strain that will get home brewers close enough.

Let's hope Vienna Lager finds its way into the hands of brewers worldwide and prompts commercial examples that peel back the layers of myth and confusion and get back to basics: Vienna pale malt, Saaz hops, lager yeast and time.

RAY NEWMAN

### Brewers and Breweries in Gosport Eley, P.

**Gosport: Philip Eley—Gosport Papers No. 5**  
**2018, Pp.50, £6.00**  
**ISBN: not available**

Philip Eley will be known to many BHS members for his contributions to the excellent series of *Portsmouth Papers on Portsmouth Breweries 1492-1847* (1988) and *Portsmouth Breweries since 1847* (1994) that were published by Portsmouth City Council. He also worked with the late Ray Riley to produce two more issues on that city's pubs: *Public Houses and Beerhouses in Nineteenth Century Portsmouth* (1983) and *The Demise of the Demon Drink 1900-1950* (1991). He has since turned his attention to the western side of Portsmouth Harbour and this softcover A4 booklet is the fifth in his series of papers on the history of Gosport and Lee-on-the-Solent.

Gosport was one of the many new towns established by local lords of the manor in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century during the

period of prosperity that followed the consolidation of the Norman power. Like many of these new towns it failed to meet the expectations of its founders and the town and adjoining parish of Alverstoke had to rely on agriculture and the local fisheries for their existence until the expansion of Portsmouth Naval Dockyard began in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. This brought about a transformation of the local economy as workers in the dockyard settled in Gosport and, together with the marines and sailors involved in the succession of naval expeditions and foreign wars of the period, provided ample opportunities for profitable brewing. Provisioning the Navy and the growth of the yard were to play a continuing role in Gosport's economy and the town had become the second largest in Hampshire by the 1830s.

The author sets out the history of brewing and its brewers within a broadly chronological framework from the first references to the craft in 1287 to the establishment of the micro-breweries of recent times. For those unfamiliar with the origins of the beverage and production, he provides a brief outline of its history at the outset and a description of the brewing process in a helpful appendix towards the end of the booklet.

As is the case with most accounts of brewing in medieval times, the earliest references occur in records generated from

## Brewers And Breweries In Gosport



Philip Eley

Gosport Papers No. 5

Henry III's Assize of Bread and Ale of 1267 which sought to regulate the price and quality of these staples. It is in the accounts of fines in the Winchester Pipe Rolls that brewing in the local manors is first mentioned. Most of this ale would have been home-brewed as confirmed by the references in wills and inventories of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Inventories were taken on the passing of the deceased prior to probate and sometimes mention vats, furnaces, stocks of barley and, occasionally, the premises used in brewing and malting such as a mill house in which to coarsely grind the malt prior to the start of the process. It is not clear whether these utensils and premises were employed for domestic use and the provision of beer for servants and farmworkers, as was customary at the time, or document the emergence of early 'common' breweries that aimed to supply a wider customer base. The introduction of hops to the brew in Tudor times required additional equipment to boil the wort with the hops and enabled brewers to increase the scale of production to take advantage of the longer-lasting new product and to cater for a wider customer base.

The first person to actually be identified as a 'brewer' – in the will of a mariner of 1628 – was Quinby (or Quinbonner) Marsh whose life and business affairs over the years until his death in 1671 are summarised here in some detail. His will refers to a malt house and the inventory to a brewhouse with the usual vessels and a mill house with a horse-mill, its horse, 20 quarters of malt and two chaldrons of coals. He also kept some pigs that would no doubt have fed upon the spent grains from his mash tun. The inventory of his son William Marsh, who died within a year of his father, is more detailed and includes some indication of the fixed capital required of an early brewing business - the value of the brewing kit included a copper that was worth £20 and a fermenting tun valued at £12, both large sums of money at the time.

Shortly after this, the revival of the Portsmouth Dockyard saw an increase in the number of local pubs, many with their own breweries, and also the start of contract brewing for the Navy by the Player family who entered a consortium with two Portsmouth brewers in order to produce the quantities of beer required. This proved to be a risky and demanding business and was accompanied by a move to a new brewery and cooperage at Weevil on the outskirts of Gosport in about 1704. The brewery was eventually taken on by the Navy in 1751 who then extended the brewing and storage capacity of the site. It was later incorporated in the later Royal Clarence Naval Victualling Yard where beer was last brewed in the 1850s. The history and archaeological excavation of the site is recorded here and is also described in Helen Moore's article in *Brewery History* 148 (2012).

The increase in the number of pubs mentioned above also saw the establishment of a number of new breweries by local businessmen and the development of a tied-house system. An advertisement in the local press in 1792 for the sale of the property of Henry Lys included 'an old and well-established brewhouse and distill house' plus two inns, 36 pubs, most of which were freehold, and five malthouses. Local brewers did not, however, have the field to themselves and had to compete for pub ownerships with 'outsiders' from nearby Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.

The Beer Act of 1830 established a new class of cheap licence for 'beer houses' and opportunities for new entrants to the trade, many of whom set up their own breweries. The location of the common and pub-breweries active at this time are listed and shown on the centre pages of the booklet on full-page maps of Alverstoke and Gosport Town which also include, but do not identify ownership, some of the malthouses. Many of the smaller and new breweries did not last long – UK totals for beer house brewers indicate a decline in their numbers from 16376 in 1841 to 6157 in 1880. Competition on price, quality and the cost of installing new technology favoured larger companies and their estates of tied houses. One example of such difficulties in Gosport described here was the fate of the Patent Steam Brewery in Haslar Street which was leased with three tied properties in an unpromising part of town by Henry Byles. He installed, as the name of the brewery suggests, new plant as exhibited at the Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1851 and had also taken on more tied houses in the town and neighbouring area. The investment did not pay off and he was declared bankrupt in 1856. After several changes of ownership, the Haslar Brewery was eventually sold for use as a laundry in 1898, the tied estate being supplied by a brewery in Emsworth that had been also been acquired by the purchaser.

The cover of the booklet features labels from two of the breweries that did manage to survive into the next century - Biden & Co and S & N Blake & Co. Ltd. The former business dates from 1825 when James Biden from Portsea took on the lease of the Sea Horse Brewery from James Dabbs. The brewery, described as new in 1800, had been built next to a pub of that name and the Biden family went on to develop an impressive portfolio of pubs, mostly on the Portsmouth side of the harbour, and vigorously promoted their bottled beers via a number of agencies. Biden's was registered as a limited company in 1896 with the family still firmly in control of the business. By 1918, the owners were the brothers Arthur and Vernon Biden. They were now in their 70s and the loss of licences under the compensation scheme together with wartime restrictions had diminished their sales and they decided to sell the business to the major

shareholder of Portsmouth United Breweries Ltd. The brewery closed in 1921.

The Blakes' brewery business began during the Napoleonic Wars when Thomas Blake Barrow and his nephew James Blake opened a new brewery in South Cross Street and rented a nearby malthouse that had once been an old workhouse. The brewery eventually passed to the partnership of Samuel and Thomas Blake who built up a tied estate of 17 pubs by the 1860s, mostly located in Gosport, which had grown to 42 houses in 1891. The business became a limited company in 1897 with control remaining in the hands of the then owners Thomas and Frederick Blake and was eventually to merge with Brickwood & Co. of Portsmouth in 1926. The brewery continued in use until 1935 and the company was finally wound up in 1943. The author's history of Portsmouth's breweries from 1847, mentioned at the beginning of this review, chronicles the subsequent growth of Brickwoods and their acquisition by Whitbreads.

The final pages of the booklet deal with attempts to establish new small breweries in recent times and concludes with a survey of 'mortal remains', as the author puts it, of the historic breweries in the town. Mike Tighe did not include Gosport in his pioneering gazetteer of Hampshire breweries that was published in the *Proceedings of the Hampshire*

*Field Club and Archaeological Society* in 1970 for the good reason that very little of is brewing heritage survived at the time of his survey. Philip Eley's diligent search has confirmed this as he has discovered only fragmentary traces of three of its historic breweries and come across hardly any photographic record of their premises. Only some 'ghost signs' with the names of the past brewers on a few of the pubs survive. Fortunately recent research and archaeology have recovered some images and material remains of Gosport's most noted brewery at Weevil, as mentioned above and illustrated and included in this booklet.

The author has provided a great deal of detail in his 50 pages and, as befits someone who has contributed advice on 'Some general sources for brewery historians' to the BHS *Newsletter* in the past, has carried out extensive research in newspaper files and local and national collections of archives, all of which is carefully documented in 169 end-notes. The booklet warrants close reading for, not only does it add to our knowledge of Hampshire's brewery history, it includes much significant detail on the financial arrangements and family histories that are so important to our understanding of brewery history before globalisation and 'managerial capitalism' took over much of the industry.

MIKE BONE