

**TALES OF TAVERNS  
IN THE VICTORIA COLONY**

**By Maurice Walsh**

## Tales of Taverns

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TAVERN ENTERTAINMENTS

For many years after their arrival in the new colony, the pioneers were too busy settling in and expanding their businesses to bother about entertainment, other than using billiards tables, rare at the time, or attending an occasional concert, provided between drinks. But after the discovery of gold when Melbourne grew enormously, the tavern keepers built many houses on the outskirts and in the near country where their bent for providing entertainment could be given full play. And weird and wonderful it proved to be with race meetings, balls, concerts and sports days provided to hold the customer's interest and his custom.

In 1854 Thomas Sibling, licensee of the Brighton Tavern announced he would give a saddle and bridle and two sovereigns for a horse race for all ages, after which he would provide prizes for a duck hunt, catching a greasy pig event and a boat race. Those still on their feet after that variety of sports, he promised a masquerade at his house with refreshments. In the same year James Dunbar was granted a licence for the Flemington Tavern at Main Bridge and, to celebrate the occasion he invited the neighbourhood to witness a hurdle race for a saddle and bridle, and a hack race for a whip and spurs. Spectators were then invited to climb a greasy pole and catch a greasy pig. Apparently in those days everyone had a penchant for catching unfortunate porkers.

"Garryowen" reported a memorable Christmas Day in the following year at the Traveller's Rest on Eastern Hill, which was a fine hotel, having a ballroom to accommodate five hundred people and grounds laid out in walks and gardens - most adaptable as a place of amusement.

"It was a pleasant afternoon", he wrote, "and visitors were offered entertainment, in the form of a 'sports day', which made horse races, soirees and grand balls as such appear very small potatoes, indeed.

"Patrons were invited, among other things to walk backwards, catch a greasy pig (of course), climb a greasy pole, after which there were two races for billy goats, one a hurdle, before the 'piece de resistance' was announced - a rat hunt! The rules of this most unusual spectacle were few - three hundred rats were released simultaneously among the district's dogs, the one catching the most to be declared the winner".

One can imagine how much rest the traveller had among a pot-pourri like that!

Behind the Bull and Mouth hotel there was a small hall called the "gymnasium" where the active young men of the town exercised regularly. Concerts were often part of the entertainment offered by Mine Host on the stage there, and it was his custom to invite friends to use a small balcony overlooking the stage to view the performances. Those invited to do so were certainly not the hoi-polloi of the public bar or the tap-room, but that did not deter them when a popular artist was advertised to appear. As he began a solo they invaded the balcony-privacy of the host and his friends in such numbers that the lightly-built balcony gave way and a score of friends, invaders and the host fell down upon the singer and his chorus. It is safe to assume that the balcony was not re-built.

The Lord Mayor's show in London is famous for the entertainment offered the citizens there and so it was, in a very different manner, when Henry Condell, Melbourne's first mayor set off from the Royal Tavern, which had become the Town Hall for the occasion, to be sworn in at the Courthouse. But let "Garryowen" take up the story of an extraordinary happening:

"Owner of two breweries, Henry Condell 'turned it on' for all and sundry after his election and there were some unsteady steps taken that afternoon, which was enlivened by the appearance of an itinerant bull as the mayoral procession proceeded down William Street. Headed by a town constable, carrying a red flag, and the town band playing stirring music, dressed in their official robes the mayor, his councillors and the constabulary, escorted by sundry men, women and children, and apparently every dog in the town, they were proceeding to the Courthouse where his Worship would be sworn-in.

"Suddenly they were confronted by a bull which, after belligerently viewing the assemblage, decided to have a go at the standard bearer and his red flag. But the constable was no slouch. Showing great speed he raced the bull down Flinders Lane, where he sought safety in a putrid slough of reeking mire. The bull, satisfied with his good deed for the day, quietly wandered off to greener pastures. After he had been rescued with the aid of a long pole - understandably no one would go near him - the standard bearer was congratulated at a distance by the mayor on his gallant performance which saved the worshipful company. He later was promoted to the important post of Street Keeper for his fleetness of foot".

Michael Hennessy held the licence for a large tavern, designated "Hennessy's Hotel" in Fitzroy in the 'eighties and, to celebrate Queen Victoria's Jubilee, he decided to promote a sports afternoon in the spacious grounds of the tavern. He provided the prizemoney for the usual type of programme - pony races, events for pedestrians and goat races. He announced that after the field events had concluded he would provide a prize for the best dog in the district, the result of which was that fifty or more dogs of all descriptions were brought along by proud owners to be shown.

The field programme proved so long that it was dusk when the last race was run, so it was decided that the dog show would be conducted under lights in the tavern. The afternoon's entertainment had not aroused any enthusiasm, but to those fortunate to be on the fringe at the dog show, they had all the entertainment they could wish for.

When Pat Muldoon had an argument with Hennessy about the amount shown on his "slate" and had been asked to pay cash in future, he had decided to get even with Hennessy and his opportunity came when the dogs were paraded in the bar, crowded with thirsty customers. Pushing his way through the crowd, he dropped a sack he was carrying on his shoulder to the floor and upended it, whereupon a score of lively rats raced out and scampered among the feet of the customers, pursued by dogs promiscuous.

The dogs darted everywhere, behind the bar and up the stairs. Cursing customers were knocked down in the mad charge of rodents and canines. The rats were chased up stairs, down stairs and even in the lady's chamber, and it was many hours before Hennessy had cleared the house of customers, dogs and rats, although many of the latter were able to join the old inhabitants of their ilk.

While all the rumpus had been going on Muldoon had withdrawn by a side door, honour satisfied, and it may be assumed that his homely face was not seen at Hennessy's tavern again.

John Baverstock, licensee of the Barwon Tavern, near the river at Geelong, was an unlucky sponsor of open-air entertainment, for his first essay ended in near tragedy, and the second in wrathful protest by hundreds of spectators.

To add variety to the usual events at sports meetings of the 'eighties, Baverstock decided to offer a prize for the winner of a swim across the Barwon, a distance of about fifty yards and one of the entrants was his handyman, who had imbibed unwisely during the afternoon. He staggered to the start and fell in among the reeds, where he struck his head on a submerged log. Suffering concussion, he spent many weeks in hospital before gracing the tavern again.

The most extraordinary entertainment offered to patrons was that by Baverstock when he cashed in on a act of devotion by a religious sect who had camped by the river, near his premises. The sect had widely advertised that at the end of their stay their Leader, "like our Blessed Lord", would walk on the water, and immediately Baverstock went into action. He built a platform for the Leader to address the spectators, and a temporary grandstand for the customers at the large tent, which he erected on the river bank to serve as a bar.

All Geelong and his wife came along to see the water-walking feat and business was brisk at the bar before the Leader appeared to briefly address the crowd before removing his boots and dipping a tentative toe in the river. A talk with his followers followed before one of them announced that the Leader would not walk that day as the water conditions were not conducive to the success of his act.

The announcement was not kindly received by the huge crowd and a number of Mine Hosts's customers, who had liquored not wisely but too well, seized the Leader and some of his followers and threw them into the river, with the advice: "Now try walking out". Only the enterprising Baverstock showed a profit for the day's outing, for his customers got full without being entertained, the large crowd got no performance, and the Leader and his followers got wet.

Chapter 12  
THE BELLES OF BOURKE STREET

In the early days of the taverns in Victoria, the only women to be seen behind the bars were the few female licensees in a day when man was supreme. But towards the end of the century there came a change and, in a gracious Victorian and Edwardian Melbourne, an older generation would remember the bright public houses in Bourke Street, and the majestic belles who ruled behind their welcoming bars.

When great-grandfather and his happy friends sang:

"Can anyone point to a better old joint  
"Than Bourke Street on Saturday night",

that popular thoroughfare, particularly between Elizabeth and Russell Streets was thronged by Sentimental Blokes and their Doreens dodging scores of hansom cabs, four-wheel "growlers" and cable trams. Dion Boucicault was staging "spectaculars" at the Theatre Royal, Harry Rickards was doing great business at his Opera House, later the Tivoli, and vaudeville reigned at the Bijou, with its tavern beneath.

And great business was being done also in the multitude of public-houses, over which ruled majestic women - the barmaids in the brightly-lit and crowded bars. In that golden age of the barmaid, she was a professional. She went behind the bar as a young woman after learning all the arts of dressing and delicate make-up, and she made her job a studied, full-time one.

And she was something to see. An hour-glass figure, shaped by whale-bone, was usually sheathed in white or black satin, with the ubiquitous cameo brooch displayed on a noble bosom. Her hair was done up in a queue and rings sparkled on her fingers. In those days "dressed like a barmaid" suggested brassy vulgarity, but envy of a smart figure and tasteful clothes to match it had much to do with the loose use of the epithet by other women.

The Belle was versatile, too. She was often called upon to play the piano in the parlour, and to sing on occasions. She could joke with customer friends and could fascinate without being familiar, as many a "masher" found to his cost. In those far-off days she had a harder task than those who followed after, for ways were rougher, although she was no mere ornament. Often a heated argument fizzled out before her scornful word, and many a participant was banished from her bar.

Great-grandfather and his cronies had their favourites among the ladies behind the bars and, to retain their favour, comported themselves as gentlemen. There was Ruby at the Royal Mail, Lily at the Orient across the street, who displayed their charms. Julie held sway at the Bijou, which was beneath the old theatre, and Marie was at the famous Bull and Mouth. And the lads knew a score of others in the many public-houses up the hill to Queen Street and further west to Spencer Street.

The Belle reached her finest bloom in those gracious years when people had time for quiet, intelligent conversation, and a few of them lingered on to gladden the older drinkers and entrance the younger ones, in what may be termed the silver age - the era between wars. But they were less impressive than their older sisters. They still had their good appearance, however, and many were amusing and retained large followings. But the introduction of early closing laws sounded their knell.

With the second war we approached the utility age when barmaids lost much of their allure, as did so many other things. However, slowly their personality and glamour are returning and, no doubt, time will bring new blondes for old.

The public-houses which sheltered these stately and attractive women in their seemingly endless bars have long since been reduced to rubble, but Great-grandfather would remember with affection the old-fashioned barmaid as part of a day of eleven-thirty closing of bars; a day when "Bourke Street on Saturday night" meant love and laughter, bright lights and the pleasant company of the Belles in numberless gay taverns.

Chapter 12  
SPORT WAS SPONSORED IN THE TAVERNS

All major sports as the world knows them today had their origin in England and their cradles were the taverns, for they have been the home of sports for centuries, and many were named for a sport or a pastime. When one walked into the Dog and Duck or the Bird in Hand, he was entering the portals of sports history.

Until recent years most top fighters made the tavern or hotel their headquarters, and the cricket on the village green was played in the shadows of the Bat in Hand or the Cricketers. At the Star and Garter in Pall Mall, London, wealthy noblemen and sportsmen in the 18th century met to revise the laws of cricket and directed Thomas Lord to build a cricket ground for the Marylebone club at St. John's Wood, which was later named for the erstwhile Yorkshireman - Lord's.

The English Jockey Club, the oldest in the world, was also born at the Star and Garter in 1772, and other inns which were its meeting places in its earliest days were the Thatched House and Clarendon in London and the Old Red Lion at Newmarket, where the Rutland Arms claims to have been the hub of racing for the last hundred years. Its visitor's book is a "Who's Who" of turf personalities from Squire Osbaldstone down to Gordon Richards, England's greatest jockey.

Originally the popular horse race, the steeplechase, started from an inn, the course being across country over a score of fences to a distant village. The contestants had to round the church, the steeple of which could be seen from afar, and return to the inn, where victory would be celebrated in flowing cups, much to the pleasure and profit of Mine Host.

The Bull and Dog commemorated bull-baiting, a disgusting pastime which was once as popular in England as bull-fighting is in Spain, wherein a bull was tethered to a post and dogs sent in to bait him. Falconry, perhaps the oldest of pastimes is remembered by the Falcon, the Bird in Hand and the Hawk and Buckle.

Although Victoria's pioneers were too busy in opening up a new land to bother about sports events, eventually they carried on the habits of their English forbears, and the history of sport in Australia intermingles with the early history of the taverns.

In 1838, a meeting of Melbourne's "flannelled fools" met at the Lamb Inn in Collins Street, and decided to form the Melbourne Cricket Club. Many subsequent meetings of the committee were held there in the club's formative years.

Another of Victoria's major sports bodies, the Victoria Racing Club, was established in a tavern, when, in 1864, the Port Phillip Turf Club and the Port Phillip Jockey Club decided to merge. The committees of the two bodies met at the Batman's Hill tavern in Spencer Street where they agreed to amalgamate as the Victoria Racing Club and, like the committee of the Melbourne Cricket Club did at the Lamb Inn, they met there for many years.

The first meeting of people interested in forming the Oaklands Hunt Club was held at the Inverness Hotel at Bulla in the early 'eighties. Presided over by Alex McCracken, a prominent brewer, the meeting formed a committee which included Miss Katherine Ross, daughter of the owner-licensee, so the house had a close kinship with the club.

In a small hall attached to the Bull and Mouth in Bourke Street and in one behind the Globe in Swanston Street, prizefights took place regularly. And, of course, the greatest fighters' inn anywhere in the world was the White Horse Inn, in Sydney, where the owner-licensee, Larry Foley, produced five champions of the world in Bob Fitzsimmons, "Young Griffo", Peter Jackson, Jem Hall and Dan Creedon.

Even today, in the smaller country towns in Victoria, members of the racing club and other sports bodies meet regularly at the local hotel, while the local hotelkeeper is usually the patron of the town's sports activities. Today one will find within easy reach of Melbourne country hotels which provide football and cricket grounds and facilities for their patrons and visitors close at hand, where social games are played on lines similar to those on the English village green.

Until the first war, most town and country hotels had billiards rooms and skittles alleys, the latter being a game similar to pin-bowling, and much beer was swilled and much money changed hands on the games. But they, with darts and hookey, have disappeared, their places being taken by pool, an emasculated form of snooker, which often causes much inconvenience to drinkers at the bar.

Chapter 13  
INN SIGNS WERE MEANINGFUL AND VARIED

The origins of the inn signs is an interesting study, for each has a story to tell. It may be a lion pawing the air, or something more subtle such as a man staggering under the weight of a woman in his arms with the words "A load of Mischieff" superimposed. Whatever the subject, inns bearing signs such as these were common in England hundreds of years ago, but few tavern keepers in the infant colony displayed such thoughtful signs, with the exception, perhaps, of two enterprising licensees in Fitzroy in the 'eighties.

On a swinging house-sign a tavern keeper showed a young woman scrubbing, with soap and water, an aboriginal child seated in a tub. And the name on the sign was Labour in Vain, a subtle title for unrewarding work. Soon after a new tavern was built on the opposite side of the street, and the owner, not to be outdone, displayed a somewhat similar sign, although in this case the aborigine appeared half-white after vigorous scrubbing. And the name of this masterpiece? Perseverance!

The first English inns were probably Roman and the first sign the Bush, a clump of ivy leaves symbolic of Bacchus. The Chequers points also to Rome, for those tabernae, where chess could be played, announced the fact by displaying a chequers board, real or painted on their walls. One of the oldest methods of advertising, its utilitarian function was to announce the name of the ale house by means of a picture in the days when few people could read.

Most of the homely country taverns were named for the village people who patronised them, houses such as the Sawyer's, the Brickmakers and the Waggon and Horses, while innumerable Lions, Feathers, Unicorns and Bulls took their titles from the crests of the ground landlords. Some, like the Fighting Cocks, took their titles from a sport associated with them, in this case the illegal sport of cock-fighting which was, for hundreds of years, the main attraction at an inn of this name, claimed to be one thousand years old, at St. Albans, Hertfordshire.

Although the English inn has been famous for the infinite variety of the sign, those of Victoria, particularly Melbourne, have been much more commonplace for since Fawkner built the first public-house here, which he was content to call Fawkner's Hotel, house names have shown little originality, being mostly named for Royalty, the "higher-ups" and nostalgic overseas places.

For instance look at some of those in Melbourne before hotel licences were decimated in the last thirty years. There were the Queen's, King's, Prince of Wales, Royal George, The Princes Alfred, Charles and Patrick; Lord Clyde hob-nobbed with Lords Raglan, Newry and Windsor, while Albany, Kent, Yorkshire, Sussex and Edinburgh evoked thoughts of home. The Rose was a favourite among the flowers and the fruits were not forgotten, for we had the Cherry Tree and the Lemon Tree and, for the lovelorn, there was the affectionate Darling.

It is said that the Arms evolved from those of the nobleman's shield, but they were not all noblemen in Melbourne. There were the Baker's, Carriers, Cornish, Carter's, Builders, Cricketer's, Limerick, Forester's and a host of others bearing Arms.

Nevertheless, in the long history of the inn, it is extraordinary that the name above all others which suggests the warm welcome of a hostelry as exemplified by the outstretched arms of the white-aproned Mine Host, has never adorned a house sign - The Open Arms.

Chapter 14  
CRIME AT THE TAVERN

It is natural that an institution like the tavern, which welcomed a multitude of travellers to its yard, and beneath its roof lodged every rank of society from king to beggar should bear its taint of crime over many centuries. From its very beginnings the suitability of the tavern for this kind of business was perceived and vigorously exploited, there being scarcely any offence from murder to smuggling and robbery, the performance of which its walls have not seen.

A regular frequenter of taverns in the Regency days warned travellers what to expect when visiting roadside inns: "When the guest cometh into the yard the ostler is very busy to take down his budget or capcase from the saddle bow, which he passeth very slyly in hand to feel the weight thereof, and when the guest hath taken up his chamber, the chamberlain will be sure to heft it from one place to set it more conveniently somewhere else. If the budget seem substantial, it could ill-betide the lodger".

However, in the long history of the inn this direful warning must have been ignored, for many visitors to the taverns courted death. Macabre murders reported within their welcoming portals have not had their equal anywhere in the world, but at Ballarat, in 1858, a strange set of circumstances surrounding an ordinary murder, if murder can be ordinary, produced an extraordinary sequel.

Superstition entered into the story connected with the Travellers Tavern at Golden Point, which proves that not only are murderers sometimes haunted by their crimes, but that witnesses of the crimes can be haunted also.

John Copley, a labourer around the many mines in the vicinity, was accepted by fellow tipplers as a good fellow, although on occasions a bit light in the head, but he had a sniggering little vice which cost Peeping Tom dearly at Coventry hundreds of years ago, and it cost John Copley dearly, too.

After some time with his cronies at the Travellers bar, one evening Copley set off for his humpy, about a mile distant down Main Road. As he approached a lane which branched off the road towards Yarrowie Creek, he saw a man and a woman enter it and, deciding to indulge his dirty hobby, he entered the lane behind them and soon heard the man say "Sit down. You can rest here". He recognised the voice as that of Bill Matthews, an itinerant fossicker, who that morning had married a girl who worked at the Travellers.

Crawling closer, he recognised the woman as the new bride and suddenly, while he waited for the comedy to begin, tragedy began, for Matthews who had clambered into a thicket nearby, climbed down the bank with a stake in his hand and struck her over the head with it, again and again.

"I think I went into a faint", Copley said later, "and when I woke up the stake with blood on it was lying near me. I got out of there pretty quick for I thought they would blame me fot it".

Always garrulous in his cups, Copley, whose mind was obviously affected by what he had seen in the lane, hinted to his drinking mates what he could tell about the murder and they told a constable about his babblings. As a result, Copley told the police of what he had seen in the lane, and two months later Matthews was hanged. "I'll come for you", he screamed at Copley in the court. "Just see if I don't".

However, the centre of the story is the hedge stake which the landlord of the Travellers, thinking to attract custom, hung on the bar wall, but the tavern knew no peace until he parted with it. Each morning of the tenth of December, the anniversary of the crime, it was missing from the wall and each time it was found near the murder spot in the lane. Someone having a joke, thought the tavern keeper, but he began to think there was something queer about it and, with an air of altruism, he passed it to a friend at the Black Bull in the town.

Here, the landlord, who set a value on it and suspected that one of his customers might covet it, had it clamped to the wall of one of his parlours with an iron hasp. But again on the fateful December day they found the hasp broken and the hedge-stake gone. It was again recovered from the lane and this owner, feeling it was no ordinary stake, decided to do something about it.

The latest story of the broken hasp soon spread and created unrest and fear in the superstitious mining community, so the landlord invited all his neighbours to a bonfire before the inn and when it was well alight the stake was tossed into it. And thereafter there was peace of a sort for John Copley, for the stake's secret lay with him and had he died suddenly it would have stayed with him. But during a long illness following a fall down a mine shaft, he told his doctor the story in these words:

"It was the very night of the murder a twelvemonth after that I went to bed at dusk-hour but I couldn't sleep. Of a sudden Bill Matthews stood before me with the hanging rope around his neck and he said 'It's time, Come o' long with me". And I knew that I would have to go, so I went.

"Go and fetch the stake", he says, so I broke into the Travellers and fetched the stake and when I got outside the door she was with him and the three of us walked down Main Road to the lane. We turned down it and when we came to the very same spot as before, he said the same words as he did a twelvemonth ago: "Sit down. You can rest here". Then he turns to me wild-like and says: "Now then, quick", and somehow I threw up the stake and gave her a hard clout like he did a twelvemonth before.

"And every December for years, no matter where I might be, the same tired feeling would come over me and Bill Matthews with his hanging rope would come to me and say; "It's time. Come with me", and I would fetch the stake from wherever it might be and do the murdering all over again. Once when the stake was fastened up to the wall with a hasp, he come and helped me pull it down.

"For years this went on and the stake was always found in the lane next morning where I threw it like he did on that murder night, and when I found meself walking back home I'd be wet with sweat. And I had no peace 'til the stake was burned in front of the Black Bull. After that was done he never come to fetch me to go with him to murder her no more".

And that is the tale of a superstitious, simple-minded mine-worker, a ghost and two taverns in the days when Ballarat was very young.

## Tales of Taverns

### THE FORMATION OF CARLTON AND UNITED BREWERIES

In the first twenty-five years of the young colony, apparently each seller of liquor to the eager settlers made his own concoction which passed as "grog", and there must have been some dreadful mixtures handed out in the various "shanties".

However with the arrival in Melbourne of a number of brewers from England in the 'sixties, small brewing companies were formed, and the "rotgut" trade was soon on the wane.

In 1858 Rosenberg and Co. opened a small brewery in Bouverie Street on a portion of the site now occupied by the Carlton Brewery. Called the North Melbourne Brewery, it lasted only a few years before it was taken over by John Bellman and re-named the Carlton Brewery. But he was soon in financial trouble and he was forced to sell by the Sheriff who advertised "On the premises of the Carlton Brewery, all rights in 90 casks of ale, 150 empty casks, four horses and plant".

Edward Latham, born in England in 1839, came to Victoria in 1864, but crossed to Tasmania a year later. After his marriage there in 1865, he returned to Melbourne and with G. M. Milne purchased the Carlton Brewery. Mr. Latham engaged Alfred Terry, an experienced and practical brewer and they started brewing 50 hogsheads a week and soon lifted the output to 1200 hogsheads weekly.

After seventeen years of successful brewing at Carlton, Latham then sold out to the Melbourne Brewing and Malting Company, but retained a large interest in the business.

Following a world tour in 1884, Latham retired from the Carlton firm eight years later and took over the Southern Brewery in Richmond. This business was taken over eventually by Carlton in 1901. Other breweries to be taken over by Carlton at this time were Terry's West End, in Flinders Street, and the Burton in 1899.

It is interesting to note that Latham built "Raheen" in Studley Park Road, Kew, which was later bought by John Wren as a residence for Dr. Mannix, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, between wars.

Colonel John Ballenger, who had been with the Company since its beginning and who was head brewer after Mr. Terry's death, had remarkable figures for those times.

In October, 1902, the output of the Carlton Brewery was 2500 hogsheads a week; on December 24th, 1902, they delivered 1100 hogsheads and were then doing 3000 hogsheads per week. Ten years before, to anticipate new beer duties, the Colonel brewed eight times in twenty-four hours - 700 hogsheads!

With figures such as these Carlton led the local breweries in production, the nearest to them being McCracken's, the leader of which, Alex McCracken was one time chairman of the V.R.C. and the Oaklands Hunt Club.

However the acquisition by Carlton of Fosters Brewery in the 1907 amalgamation was the best business deal in Victoria's brewery history.

## Tales of Taverns

### FOSTER'S WAS FIRST LAGER BREWERY

Australia's first Lager beer brewery was opened in Fitzroy in 1886 by two American brothers, William M. and R. R. Foster, and at the Centennial Exhibition in Melbourne two years later Foster's beer was awarded the First Order of Merit in the Lager beer section.

New buildings were erected in Rokeby Street, Collingwood in 1889, and two years later Mr. Joseph Peska arrived in Melbourne from Copenhagen to become chief brewer in the Company which was then styled "Foster Lager Brewing Company" and soon Melbourne hotelkeepers were notified that ice would be provided free of cost during the summer months. Foster's product must have been popular as in the same year with only two "tied" houses, the Company was turning out 300 hogsheads a week.

In February, 1901, the Foster Brewing Company shipped to South Africa thirty cases of Lager beer and endeavoured to establish a trade there but, so soon after the Boer War, it seems that they could have been too optimistic. However they were at that time the only Victorian brewery making any attempt to build an export trade.

Before the amalgamation in 1907, Sidney Joske had joined Foster's Board of Directors, and became a director of the C. & U. B. from 1916 until 1942, being Chairman for a long period.

The world-wide popularity of Foster's Lager today proves that its foundations were well and truly laid in Fitzroy all those years ago.

## Tales of Taverns

### BREWING'S LONG HISTORY

The dates listed here trace the development of brewing from the earliest times and its comparatively recent history in England and Australia. Although there have been many different brews in six thousand years, the basic principle has remained the same - fermentation of the malt found in grain.

- 4000 B.C. Beer was brewed in the Euphrates and Tigris valleys, and a reference in the Book of the Dead mentions "offering cakes and ale to perfect souls".
- 2000 B.C. It is certain that beer was brewed under the Pharaohs. Partly malted barley was baked into a hard loaf, crumbled, soaked and fermented. The result was an Egyptian drink called "boozah", from whence, probably, the tippler derived his derisive cognomen.
- 55 B.C. Sometime during the Roman occupation of Britain, the natives learned about brewing, but beer had to struggle for popularity against the honey brews - mead and metheglin, and Rhenish wines.
- A.D. 1086 The Domesday Book was completed and in it is a record of St. Paul's Cathedral brewing 67,814 gallons of ale.
- 1157 The monks' brewing methods must have been successful for there is a record of Thomas a'Becket sending a gift of Canterbury ale to the King of France in this year.
- 1266 In the meantime ale had become the staple drink of England and Edward I regulated the size of the gallon and laid down maximum retail prices. When barley was two shillings a quarter, a gallon of ale cost a penny.
- 1437 Henry VI gave the Brewers Company its Charter.
- 1524 Hops were first brought to Britain from Holland but serious beer drinkers did not approve their use. Ale, sweet and without hops was the drink of an Englishman. He said that beer, hopped and bitter, was fit tippie only for the despised Dutch. And talking of tippling, in the reign of Edward VI the first licensing laws were made to limit and control "Tippling Houses".
- 1580 Queen Elizabeth was worried by the effect of "Dobledoble" the strong beer of her day, on her maids of honour, so they were issued with only two gallons of weaker stuff for breakfast.
- 1660 Although Charles I had taxed beer for the first time, it was the impecunious Charles II who made the taxes effective and permanent - one shilling and three pence on strong ale per gallon and three pence per gallon for small beer.

## Tales of Taverns

- 1680 Foundation date of the oldest English brewery which still brews today - Tomson and Wootton of Highgate.
- 1697 A tax was put on malt and later on hops which enhanced the popularity of untaxed gin. In Scotland, after the Act of Union in 1707, the resistance to English taxes led to rioting and a patriotic preference for whisky.
- 1727 Porter was first heard of, brewed experimentally at Shoreditch. Fifty years earlier there had been references to "stoutt", a poor relation of porter.
- 1740 Years which saw the establishment of many of the great  
- 80 English breweries, well-known today: Worthington, Whitbread, Bass, Guinness, Barclay.
- 1785 Baverstock discovered the Saccharometer which enabled brewing to be controlled scientifically.
- 1795 Beer first brewed in Australia by James Squires at Kissing Point, between Sydney and Parramatta. Horehound, not hops, was used as flavouring.
- 1800 Hops were first grown successfully by Squires at Kissing Point in sufficient quantities to make their use practicable in Australia. Since then a colder climate such as Tasmania produces the majority of hops used today.
- 1836 Thomas Capel opened Melbourne's first brewery, soon to be followed by Henry Condell. Capel sold his grog at two shillings a gallon.
- 1854 The Victoria Brewery was founded in East Melbourne by Thomas Aitkin.
- 1858 The North Melbourne Brewery was founded in Bouverie Street and later became the Carlton when Thomas Latham took it over in 1862.
- 1901 The first Australian beer shipped overseas was consigned by Melbourne's Victoria Brewery to South Africa shortly after the end of the Boer war.
- 1907 Australia's biggest brewery combine, Carlton and United Breweries, was formed with the amalgamation of Carlton, Victoria, McCracken's, Castlemaine, Shamrock and Foster's breweries.
- 1914 The British Government, for the first time in history,  
- 18 reduced the alcoholic content of beer by law, and heavily increased the rate of tax. From a staple drink, beer became somewhat of a luxury in the war-time years.
- 1939 Again the British Government lowered the alcoholic content  
- 45 of beer, but the Australian Government did not interfere with it, being content to raise the tax rate on it, a practice which has continued ever since.