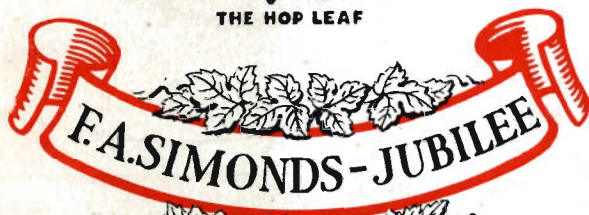


JUBILEE SUPPLEMENT.

THE
HOP LEAF
GAZETTE



THE HOP LEAF



1902 1952

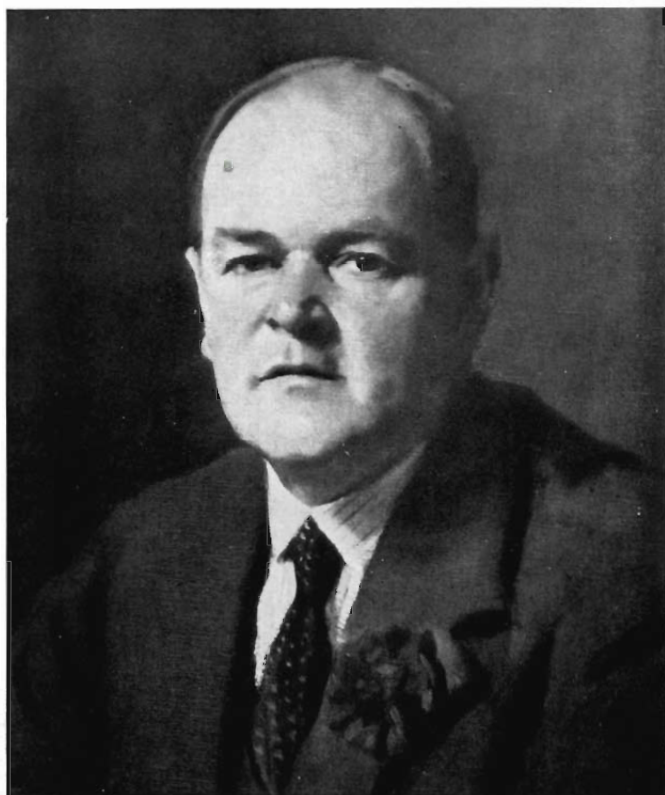
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The Hop Leaf Gazette

MARCH JUBILEE SUPPLEMENT.

1952



F. A. SIMONDS, Esq.

EDITORIAL

MR. F. A. SIMONDS.

ONE OF NATURE'S GENTLEMEN.

HIS REMARKABLE RECORD.

Few men have a finer record of private and public life than Mr. F. A. Simonds, our highly respected Chairman and Managing Director. He has just completed fifty years with the Firm and under his able guidance it has grown from strength to strength. A gentleman of very charming personality, he possesses many statesmanlike qualities, and his rare business acumen is known far and wide. He has indeed served his fellow men well, his transparent honesty and large-heartedness singling him out as a great force in public life.

All feel privileged to serve under him and learn to look up to him with an affectionate respect. This was more than evident when he was entertained by a numerous company who feel it an honour to work under him. It was a very happy and thoughtful gesture on their part to present their honoured chief with a fine painting of Audleys Wood, Basingstoke, his old home, which he has just left. That picture will ever bring back nothing but the most happy memories.

In making the presentation, Captain A. S. Drewe made a noteworthy little speech admirably suited to the occasion.

Mr. Simonds was deeply touched by the warmth of the welcome accorded him, and in acknowledging the fine tributes paid to his sterling character, his great work and worth, he did not forget to mention the gracious lady who has always been an inspiration to him and helped him immensely on his way. And that lady, of course, is his wife, Mrs. Simonds.

It was indeed a momentous occasion when the great company filled their glasses and drank with the most sincere and heartfelt good wishes to the health, happiness and long life of one of Nature's Gentlemen.

God bless you, Sir!

The occasion was widely and very fully reported in the Press, and the following particularly well-written and well deserved tribute appeared in the *Berkshire Chronicle* :—

A MUCH-LOVED HEAD.

" Tributes have been paid from many quarters this week to the work which Mr. F. A. Simonds, Chairman and Managing Director of H. and G. Simonds, Ltd., has accomplished during his fifty years' association with the Company. He joined the firm in 1902, became a Director in 1905, and Managing Director in 1916, whilst since 1938 he has held the dual posts of Chairman and Managing Director. When he first became associated with the Brewery beer was sold at twopence a pint instead of about rs. 3d. as it is to-day, and whisky was so plentiful that the price of one bottle to-day would purchase a week's supplies for ' mine host.' The growth of the business during these fifty years has been really phenomenal. In 1902 the Brewery had attached to it some 350 houses in Reading and district. To-day there are over 1,400 houses, stretching in a chain from London to Cornwall. Since he took over the Managing Directorship in 1916, Mr. ' Eric', as he is familiarly known to all his friends, has been largely instrumental in the taking over of no fewer than sixteen other breweries in Reading, Newbury, Staines, High Wycombe, Basingstoke, Bristol, Swindon, Devon and South Wales. All of this concentration has made for efficiency and economy, and has redounded to the benefit of Reading as a whole. For it has meant greater employment in the town, greater spending power, and more prosperity all round. In all of this development Mr. Simonds has taken his full share, and at the age of 71 is still active in looking for likely further developments. Apart from his business acumen, which has taken the firm from one success to another, Mr. Simonds has always had a kindly interest in the welfare of all with whom he has been associated—tenants, staff and employees—and can truly be described as a ' father,' much loved by a very large family."

DETAILS OF MR. SIMONDS GREAT RECORD.

Mr. Frederick Adolphus Simonds was born in Reading on the 2nd January, 1881, and was educated at Eton, and later Magdalen College, Oxford.

With the advent of the South African War, 1900-01, he joined the Service Company of the 1st Volunteer Battalion, The Royal Berkshire Regt., and was attached to the 2nd. Batt., and saw service in South Africa, attaining the rank of Captain.

On his return from South Africa, in 1902, he joined the Firm of H. & G. Simonds, Ltd., and was appointed a Director of the Company on April 15th, 1905, Managing Director in 1916, and later, in 1938, on the retirement of Major S. V. Shea Simonds, was appointed Chairman of the Company.

He joined the Council of the Brewers' Society in 1916, and was appointed their Chairman in 1933-34. He was High Sheriff of Berkshire in 1928-29, and President of the Wine and Spirit Trade Benevolent Society in 1933. In 1937 and 1945 he was honoured to be the President of the Royal Warrant Holders Association. As President of the Licensed Victuallers' School in 1946, it was gratifying for him to know that the then record sum of £41,144 1s. 8d. was collected for the School at Slough.

He was a keen supporter of the Reading Conservative and Unionist Association for many years, and from the office of Chairman of West Ward some 45 years ago, later became Chairman and President of the Reading Association. During his association with Basingstoke he also took an interest in the local Conservative Association, and was their Chairman for many years.

During the period of the two World Wars he acted as Chairman of the "Beer for Troops" Committee.

He was married in 1909, and his charming wife has been a tower of strength to him during the many years of his very busy career.

During the years of his Managing Directorship with the Company he has seen the following amalgamations:—

- 1919 Tamar Brewery, Devonport.
- 1920 South Berks Brewery Co. Ltd., Newbury.
- 1928-29 Saw the amalgamation with Messrs. Farrugia Bros., of Malta, to be known subsequently as Simonds Farsons Cisk Ltd.
- 1930 Ashby's Staines Brewery, Ltd., and Wheeler's Wycombe Breweries Ltd.
- 1935 W. J. Rogers, Ltd., Bristol.
- 1937 Cirencester Brewery, Ltd., Cirencester.
- 1938 Lakeman's Brewery, Brixham, and R. H. Stiles, Bridgend.
- 1945 Saccone & Speed Ltd., Gibraltar and London, became an Associated Company.
- 1945 R. B. Bowly & Co., Ltd., Swindon.
- 1947 John May & Co., Ltd., Basingstoke.

- 1948 Substantial interest was acquired in the East African Brewery, Ltd.
- 1949 Phillips & Sons, Ltd., Newport, Mon.
- 1951 South Devon Brewery, Ltd., Kingsbridge, South Devon.

MR. F. A. SIMONDS THANKS.

THE BREWERY,
READING.
25th January, 1952.

The Editor,
THE HOP LEAF GAZETTE.

Dear Sir,

Among the scores of telegrams and letters I have received on the occasion of my Jubilee I find that there are many unanswered—from Members of the Staff and Heads of Departments and Branches. May I through your columns thank all the senders for their many expressions of goodwill which I value very highly.

It has only been by reason of the loyal co-operation of the various departments of the business that I have been able to achieve so many successes and carry on so efficiently all these years, and may I tell them how grateful I am to one and all of them.

Yours sincerely,
F. A. SIMONDS.

THE BREWERY,
READING.
25th January, 1952.

The Editor,
THE HOP LEAF GAZETTE.

Dear Sir,

May I crave the indulgence of your columns to extend to all those hundreds of members of my Company's staff and employees my warmest thanks for those wonderful gifts which were presented to me at that great gathering at Olympia on January 18th, 1952, to mark the Jubilee of my service with our Company. It was indeed a heart-warming and soul-stirring

welcome which was accorded me and made me proud of my many years of endeavour in the Firm's interests for the glorious development of our Hop Leaf enterprises at home and abroad.

The Oil Painting, by Mr. Hesketh Hubbard, of my old home, Audleys Wood, Basingstoke, whose amenities have at times been enjoyed by five generations of the Simonds Family, will always be treasured. It will serve to remind many members of a beautiful house and grounds and so many happy days and years spent there. I hope, also, to be spared to enjoy in comfort for many years the very modern television set which has been so thoughtfully provided for me.

I pray that the Old Firm may go on from strength to strength, and may the influence of the Simonds Family and its descendants continue to guide and guard its destinies.

The book containing the names of subscribers will be carefully preserved together with that given me on the occasion of my marriage in 1909.

In conclusion, may I congratulate Captain A. S. Drewe on his delightful speech in making the presentation, and Mr. J. D. Richardson and Mr. Walter Bradford and all concerned with the organisation of a memorable party.

Mrs. Simonds wishes to join with me in my expressions of gratitude to you all and to tell you how greatly she enjoyed the gathering and how deeply touched she was by the reception accorded her, and the beautiful bouquet of flowers which was presented to her.

Yours sincerely,

F. A. SIMONDS.

H. & G. SIMONDS, LTD. ANNUAL STAFF BALL.

On Friday, January 18th, 1952, H. & G. Simonds, Ltd., held their Annual Staff Ball in the Olympia Ballroom, Reading, the party of 760 consisting of large numbers from the Firm's Branches.

Amongst those present were the Mayor and Mayoress, Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Simonds, Major G. S. M. and Mrs. Ashby, Mr. R. St. J. Quarry, Mr. and Mrs. E. D. Simonds, Mr. and Mrs. F. H. V. Keighley, Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Downes, General Sir Miles and Lady Dempsey, Mr. K. F. Simonds, Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Cripps, General Sir Charles and Lady Allfrey, Mr. and Mrs. A. N. Phillips, Chief Constable and Mrs. Lawrence.

Music was provided by the Blue Star Players from Oxford, under the direction of Mr. Stan Rogers. Mr. F. Bowsher officiated as M.C. The hall was artistically decorated by the Firm's Canvas Department, and the floral decorations were by Messrs. Heelas Ltd.

Just before midnight dancing was suspended for a while in order that the main function of the evening could be performed, this being the presentation to our Chairman and Managing Director, Mr. F. A. Simonds, on completion of his fifty years' service with the Company.

Mr. T. W. Bradford, the genial organiser of the Ball, presided, and in his opening remarks, said :—

" We now come to the most important part of this evening's programme. We are here to-night to celebrate the fifty years which our Chairman and Managing Director has spent with us, and whom we should always revere and look up to. . . . I am sure you will all join with me when twelve o'clock chimes in about another two minutes in congratulating Mr. F. A. Simonds on having completed fifty years, and I must admit he is still looking extremely fit. I will, then, call upon Captain Drewe to make the presentation on behalf of all of us, and after that Mr. F. A. Simonds will reply ; then Mr. J. D. Richardson, who has worked tremendously hard to make this presentation possible, will add a few words."

As midnight struck there were spontaneous cheers of " For he's a jolly good fellow," which were drowned by the hymn, " Now thank we all our God "; this was again followed by prolonged cheering.

Captain A. S. Drewe, in making the presentation, said :—

" I much appreciate the honour at being asked to make this Jubilee presentation to our Chairman and Managing Director, Mr. F. A. Simonds, but, before doing so, I would like to pay some tribute to his great abilities and personality, and also to his achievement over the past fifty years. H. & G. Simonds was founded in Reading about the year 1760, and in a history of Reading, it states : ' The Great Brewery of H. & G. Simonds was transferred to Bridge Street, Reading, in 1790,' which means we have now been on the present site for over 160 years. Mr. F. A. Simonds joined the Firm on the 19th February, 1902, and after going through all the Departments and learning the ramifications of the Company, as it was then, he was made a Director in 1905, Managing Director in 1916, and our Chairman in 1938. In 1916, the Company controlled about 300 to 350 licensed properties and one Brewery, all situated in the Home Counties, but it was not

long after the 1914-18 war before an increase in the properties commenced, rising year by year, and now our Chairman controls through H. & G. Simonds, Limited, no less than 1,400 licensed properties and four Breweries in this country. In 1925, our Managing Director secured that great contract for all beers in the 2nd Wembley Exhibition, and thousands of 'dozens' poured into that Exhibition from Reading and London. The name of 'Simonds' became known, not only in the Home Counties and London, but over the length and breadth of the British Isles, and in the Colonies as well. Twelve years after being made Managing Director, Mr. F. A. Simonds turned his eyes to the Mediterranean, and Simonds Farsons sprang into being on the island of Malta, now the George Cross Island of to-day. Throughout the 1939-45 war he was personally responsible for the organisation of the bottling of beers for the troops, and over 640,000 dozen of bottled beer were sent overseas; a plaque to commemorate this can be seen at our London Stores to-day. In 1945, Saccone & Speed, the great firm of Wine and Spirit Merchants, of London and Gibraltar, became an Associated Company. It is not necessary to remind our Chairman of Kipling's lines, 'Ship me somewhere East of Suez where a man can raise a thirst,' for in 1948 a substantial interest was acquired in the East African Brewery, Nairobi, Kenya. This does not in any way finish the picture; the ramifications of the Firm are now so great that it would take me a great deal longer than I have at my disposal to recount half of them. The Army, Navy, Home, Foreign and Export trades have increased and prospered under his astute guidance, and I might go on to say that the small country Brewery he controlled in 1916 is now one of the big Breweries of this country, and of national importance. Owing to his outstanding personality he has filled very many important posts in this country, amongst some of them, I would mention the post of High Sheriff of his own County, 1928-29. In 1933, he became Chairman of the Brewers' Society, President of the Royal Warrant Holders Association in 1937, and again in 1945; President of the Licensed Victuallers' School at Slough, in which year the then record sum of over £41,000 was collected for the School. Ladies and Gentlemen, and brother employees, we are extremely fortunate to have had the honour to serve under such a wonderful character, and we all pray that he will, for many years, rule and guide this great Brewery of H. & G. Simonds, Limited."

Mr. F. A. Simonds then mounted the platform, and was received with musical honours, and, again, prolonged cheering.

Captain Drewe continued: "The gifts I now present, on behalf of all the Staff, are only some outward expression of our admiration, loyalty and great affection for you, Sir, and I would ask you to accept this oil painting of Audleys Wood, your old home, which we hope will remind you of many happy years, and I would also ask you to accept this television set, which I trust both Mrs. Simonds and yourself will appreciate and enjoy."

Mr. F. A. Simonds, in his reply, said:—

"Mr. Mayor, Fellow Directors, all good friends, and co-workers with myself for many years (some of you for long periods, and some for shorter periods), and to you, Captain Drewe, I do tender my very warm thanks for this wonderful reception. I have had many momentous days in my life—there was one very memorable day seventy-one years ago, when I was born, but I have not a very clear recollection of that day! The next notable day I can remember is when I was at the back of the platform in the Town Hall, at a meeting for Lord Randolph Churchill, the father of our great Statesman, Mr. Winston Churchill. The next great day of my life was fifty years ago when I came into the Offices, and I was introduced to the old staff. Fifty years has been a long time, and I have never had the sack yet—maybe, like so many of you, I was never found out! The next notable occasion in my life was when I married my dear wife, who has provided the inspiration and encouragement for my work. If I had wanted to slack I should not have been allowed to; and now I come to this great day, 'the most memorable day of a very crowded life'—I would like to quote those words used by Mr. Winston Churchill two days ago in Washington: 'My mind flies back to all the great men with whom I have worked in the past.' I think of Stocker and Suddaby, the Lindars and Goodall, and good old Batchelor and Dormor, also the Joseys (a great family); Wakeford, our Surveyor, before your day; Captain Drewe, who didn't spend so much money as you! and many friends, and, in later days, dear friend Knapp (I see him here), also Gough, Bennett, Bowyer, Timms, McIntyre, and so many that I cannot remember them all, but I have been brought up with them, and we have gone on from strength to strength. When I came to the Brewery we had just taken over Hewetts Brewery at Reading, and the next acquisition was Dowsett's in Broad Street—now occupied by the 'Oatsheaf'; then we had a little period of quietness, and after the first war we took over the Tamar Brewery, Devonport, the forerunner of many successes in the West Country. I am so pleased to see amongst us members

of the Bridgend Brewery, and also Phillips, of Newport, John Mays, of Basingstoke, etc. I do appreciate, Captain Drewe, and all of you, the wonderful opportunity you have given me to say what a happy time I have had with you all. This wonderful picture of my old home, where five generations of my family have been allowed to enjoy themselves, will serve to remind us of a very happy home, where circumstances, over which we had no control, compelled us to leave, but this painting will always help my wife and I, and all of us in the family, to enjoy many happy memories. The television set—well, I never understand them. I am told by my friends in the licensed trade that they are a terrific curse to the Licensed Victuallers because they keep people away from the public houses, and I hope there is no motive behind this, and I am not quite sure whether my wife was in the conspiracy!

“Ladies and Gentlemen, I must tell you how pleased I am to see so many of my old Directors here. I am also supported by the younger generation of Directors, some older than others, and I have my two sons here, bless them! to whom I hope to pass on the baton in due course, and I am sure you will be the same loyal friends to them as you have been to me for so many, many years now. I cannot conclude without saying ‘thank you’ to Mr. Bradford for all he has done, and to Miss Prosser—she is always Miss Prosser to me—and also to Mr. Denys Richardson—I know the great amount of work involved, and also to all who have helped to make this such a success to-night. I hope you have all enjoyed yourselves, and I hope that to-morrow you will not sing the refrain :—

‘Oh, mother dear, I’m better now,
But, oh, I am so dry;
So take me to a Brewery,
And leave me there to die.’

“Mr. Mayor, my colleagues, my sons, ladies and gentlemen, I do thank you from the very bottom of my heart for the wonderful opportunity you have given me, and for the wonderful gifts! Thank you very, very much! ”

Mr. J. D. Richardson, in making his presentation, said :—

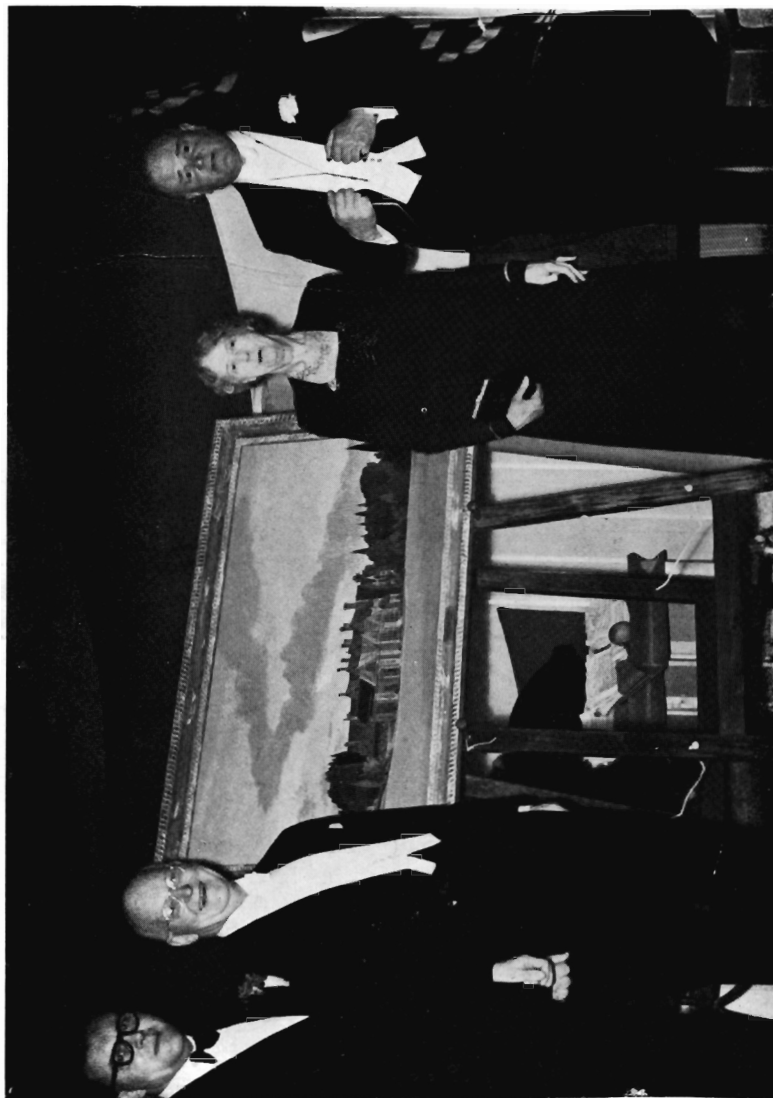
“I am sure you will all appreciate very much the gratitude that our Chairman has expressed for the gifts that have just been presented to him. . . . More than a thousand employees of H. & G. Simonds and Phillips & Sons, Limited, Newport, together with a number of pensioners, have subscribed to these gifts. They have asked to be associated with this presentation, and this album, Sir, which I would like to present to you, records the names of all those who have subscribed towards these presents, and I am sure you will treasure it in the future.

“In conclusion, Sir, may I say that I have received a great number of letters from friends who are unable to be here to-night, and they all ask me to convey their very sincere congratulations and very best wishes for your future.”

Replying to Mr. J. D. Richardson's remarks, Mr. F. A. Simonds continued :—

“Mr. Dennis Richardson, really I am quite overwhelmed by this delightful book recording so many names, and it will lie alongside the album I have always treasured which was given me on the occasion of my marriage in 1909, and contains the names of those employees who at that time subscribed towards the very handsome piano which occupies an important place in my home, and has always been an honoured possession ever since. It is still there, and I am consequently reminded that it is there by the peculiar noises that persist during the many hours of the day and night when my grandchildren are at home and I am trying to rest. Only last evening I was looking at the album presented to me in 1909, and I took out the names of the people who are still in the service of the Company, and I would like to give you their names now :—

Mr. T. W. Bradford heads the list, Mr. N. J. Crocker, Mr. E. Carpenter, Mr. W. H. Davis, Mr. E. A. Kealey, Mr. A. E. Smith, Mr. T. E. Stevens, Mr. A. P. Tee, Mr. Waterman, Mr. J. Wadhams, Mr. G. Weait; Mr. J. H. Law, Bristol; Mr. Bryson, Portsmouth; Mr. H. Aust, Staines; whom I am very pleased to see here, and many others.



Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Simonds, with the painting of their former home, Audleys Wood, which, with a television set, was presented on behalf of Simonds staff at the firm's ball.



Photo by : Photographic Services (Berkshire) Ltd., 25, London Street, Reading.

The Painting of 'Audleys Wood' and Television Set with Album of Subscribers.

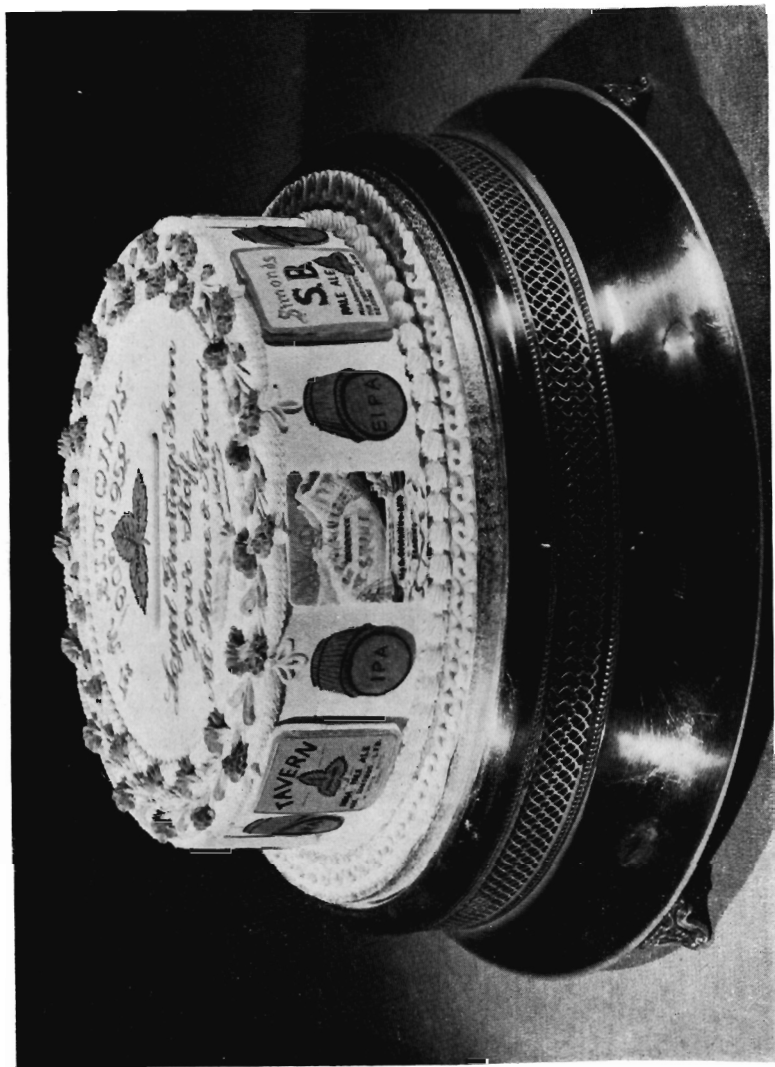


Photo by : Photographic Services (Berkshire) Ltd., 25, London Street, Reading.

The Cake presented to Mr. F. A. Simonds.



Photo by : Photographic Services (Berkshire) Ltd., 25, London Street, Reading.

The Directors' Party.

H. & G. SIMONDS TENANTS' BANQUET AND BALL.

In order to celebrate the Jubilee of Mr. F. A. Simonds with the Company, a Banquet and Ball of some of the tenants of H. & G. Simonds, Ltd., was held at the Olympia Ballroom, Reading, on Tuesday, January 22nd.

Amongst those present were The Mayor and Mayoress of Reading, Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Simonds, Major G. S. M. and Mrs. Ashby, Mr. R. St. J. Quarry, Mr. and Mrs. E. D. Simonds, Mr. and Mrs. F. H. V. Keighley, Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Cripps, General Sir Miles C. Dempsey, Mr. K. Simonds, Mr. D. J. Simonds, the Chief Constable and Mrs. Lawrence, Capt. A. S. Drewe, Mr. and Mrs. S. H. Spurling, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Davis.

Music during the Banquet, and for dancing, was provided by Don Turk and his Orchestra, Mr. F. Bowsher acting as Toastmaster.

The catering arrangements were carried out by Olympia, with the able assistance of Simonds Hotels and Catering Department. Floral decorations were by Messrs. Heelas Ltd.

Prior to the Banquet, a reception was held at which Mr. F. A. Simonds met the assembled Company.

After the loyal toasts Mr. F. A. Simonds rose to propose the health of "Our Tenants."

"First, I have to apologise for the absence of Mr. Leaver, Chairman of the Licensing Committee, who is unfortunately ill, and Captain Langham, Clerk to the Justices, who also has illness in his house. I have to apologise, myself, unfortunately, for the absence of my good wife, who came earlier this evening, but did not feel equal to the strain, and of staying, and has been taken back home. She is terribly grieved not to be with you tonight. She was inoculated about two days ago against a journey which she is going to take with me into the South, and unfortunately the inoculation has not yet worked off, but she is with us in spirit.

"I have had some 150 telegrams from various parts of the world, including England, the U.S.A., Canada, and countries in Europe, congratulating me on this great occasion.

"I have one from the Lord Mayor of Plymouth, which will please Tamarites, and from Mr. Harry Taylor, also of Plymouth, late Lord Mayor of Plymouth, and one from the Tamar Tenants. I also have one I treasure from the Reading L.V. Association, and one from the Plymouth L.V. Association. One which I

think you will all treasure from the Archduke of your Trade, Alderman Dyer :—

'Hearty congratulations on your completion of 50 years' service with the House of the Hop Leaf, and best wishes for the future.'

"I do welcome this tribute from him and will tell him of the great reception that his telegram had from all of you. Well, I told them all on Friday night, on the occasion of my Staff Dance, of the most memorable day of a great life; to-night is the photo-finish. I have attended many assemblies in this hall, some of them political, some of them social, some stormy, but I do not recall such a soul-stirring or heart-warming occasion as this evening. I do feel greatly indebted to all of you who have come to honour me, and for the wonderful co-operation of all my tenants. I look back fifty years ago on the good tenants of those days; they weren't half the trouble they are now! Beer was sold then at twopence a pint and you could buy as much whisky as you wanted for the price paid for one bottle nowadays—if you could get it. Only about two qualities of beer was sold, and the tenants took what was sent them.

I am thinking of some of the old tenants, people like Mr. Parker, of the 'Tuns'; Harry Egby; Earls, of the 'Rainbow' in Chain Street; Harry Dack, down at Swindon; the Taylors, of Caversham; Arthur A. W. Webb, who succeeded Parker at the 'Tuns,' and Mr. Tobitt, of the 'Moderation.' Also those two grand stalwarts, Talbot, of the 'Jack o' Both Sides,' and his son, Todger; and Luker, of the 'Queen's Head,' Whitley. They were grand fellows!

"Now we come to you, equally grand young ladies and gentlemen—you have much more to put up with these days, troubles of the Licensing Benches—I nearly said the Police! I think that goes for all the towns where the Hop Leaf operates. I do know that there is a wonderful spirit of co-operation and a desire to help the Authorities, whether they are the Police or Licensing Magistrates wherever the Hop Leaf firm operates. You have your problems, and in the past some of you have made your fortunes, and some of you are busy at it now. Unfortunately, some of you have fallen by the way; that is the ordinary course of business, but can't be helped, but I know that we have had great gentlemen like Mr. Lindars, the late Mr. Bennett, 'of blessed memory,' Mr. W. J. Roberts, and now you have Mr. Spurling—my adjutant, we call him—and Mr. 'Beer' Davis. These gentlemen have exercised in the past and will exercise in the future justice with mercy, generally on the tenants' side, and not on the brewers'.

"I have to couple with this toast for the Tenants the name of Mr. C. Middleton, of the 'Oatsheaf.' Mr. Middleton has got a jolly good house, a house which is, of course, of recent date, on the site of the old Dowsett's brewery. I think we must congratulate Mr. Middleton, as he is instrumental in the wonderful spirit of co-operation and fellow feeling which exists between all the tenants and the gentlemen who sit on my right, the Directors and the Executives of the Company. We have to make difficult decisions, perhaps pass judgment, but whether it is parochial, or whether they have to be made in London by a body which is working there, and is known as the Brewers' Federation, of which I am Chairman, or the Brewers' Society, we do try to exercise every possible discretion in cutting the cake.

"I have been to many L.V. Banquets, and I know how very boring speeches are on these occasions, especially from the Chairman. I will conclude by asking you to be upstanding and drink to the health of Mr. Middleton."

Replying to Mr. F. A. Simonds toast, Mr. C. Middleton said :—

"It is with very great pleasure, some pride, and a sense of extreme responsibility, that I rise to reply to our toast which you have just heard so ably proposed. Pleasure, I feel, at being afforded an opportunity to express those thoughts of thankfulness, admiration and goodwill to Mr. Eric, which I know are in the minds of you all. Pride that this task falls to my lot, and I do feel that the responsibility of speaking on behalf of such a large and widespread body as that of Mr. Eric's tenants is indeed of great weight. But, Sir, after listening to those friendly words spoken by your good self, words which I am quite certain came from your heart, I warm to my task with the feeling that I am really speaking to the kindly, wise and sufficient head of a family. A family of which I, my two sons, and all my colleagues are members. A family which you, Sir, have seen grow from some 350 licensed premises fifty years ago, when you joined our firm, to a figure of 1,400, which is to-day's total. Moreover, a family which spreads from the south-westerly tip of our land, eastwards through Southern England and Wales, to Sussex. A family to be proud of, and most of all, a family, the growth of which, Sir, is largely due to your skilful leadership and constant care. We are indeed honoured to be members of such a family.

"We might ask ourselves, my colleagues, why is it, in a world of turmoil and strife, we find ourselves in this happy relationship. Let me suggest to you that it is because this great gentleman, to whom I am sure it is the wish of us all we should pay tribute here to-night, has always endeavoured to

know, and to understand, the difficulties and the problems of his tenants. Only in that manner, ladies and gentlemen, can true success attend a leader's efforts. Perhaps some of us are inclined to think of the head of a big firm as someone who sits in an office, surrounded by telephones, issuing orders for crowds of people to carry out. Someone aloof. Someone who only observes the intricate working of his business through the medium of reports received from various quarters. I can assure you, this picture by no means portrays our Mr. Eric. . . .

"He has always identified himself very closely with retailers' trade protection activities. As long ago as 1933 he was President of the Wine and Spirit Trade Benevolent Society, and in 1946 he was President of the Licensed Victuallers' School. The respect and popularity he commanded throughout the country was such that the trade roused itself on behalf of the President's list for the School to the extent of a record sum of £41,144, a truly magnificent tribute. The following year he was Banquet President at the Licensed Victuallers' Defence League Conference at Torquay, and throughout the years he has accepted the Presidency of numerous retailers' associations. Officials of these associations which operate in the land of the Hop Leaf assure me that he is always ready to meet them, and discuss with a sympathetic ear matters arising between their members and the Brewery. Neither does he hesitate to invite representatives to meet him and discuss matters of mutual concern. It is, I think, worthy of note, that of the 1,400 licensed premises which I have already mentioned, all but a few residential hotels are entrusted to tenants. Surely this is a very pleasing feature of the methods of Mr. Eric, proving that he has faith in 'Mine Host' to maintain and uphold the English public house in its high tradition, and its important place in the life of this nation. . . .

"And now, Sir, it is my pleasurable and sincere duty, on behalf of your tenants, not only those here assembled, but also those who are unavoidably absent, to offer you our sincere compliments on the completion of fifty years' illustrious and unselfish devotion to the interests of our firm. We thank you for all you have attained in bringing into being that happy state of affairs to which I have referred, and from the bottom of our hearts we express the hope that, blessed with the comfort and companionship of your dear wife, who we are so sorry was unfortunately unable to be here to-night, you will be enabled to endow us with the benefit of your supreme leadership for many, many years to come."

“ THE LADIES.”

Mr. E. D. Simonds, in proposing the toast of “ The Ladies,” said :—

“ I intend to change the subject completely. It may be that since the war there are one or two among you who have had the misfortune of listening to me holding forth on occasions of L.V. Banquets up and down the land. On those occasions I have been a little more fortunate than now in that I have had toasts very much easier than this to propose. . . . My problem is to find words to explore the many virtues of the fair sex which have not already been written into poems, words or music, or poems of stone or sculpture throughout the ages and many lands, and that is indeed a difficult task. I have decided that the most appropriate and the most impressive comment on the subject comes from way back in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I—that is just about the time our Chairman started with the Company—and this is what was said, ‘ Man was made when nature was but an apprentice, but woman when she was a successful mistress of her art.’ I think that really sums up in one brief sentence everything about the spiritual virtues and merits of the fair sex.

“ My particular task is to focus not on women as a whole, but the ladies of our trade. You have heard at various trade dinners different speakers get up and extol the virtues of the female members of the trade : everything they have said is true. Every man here knows that if it was not for the assistance he received from his lady the house could hardly be run. . . .

“ Before closing I am very happy to couple with this most worthy toast the name of Mrs. Brazier, very nearly tenant of the ‘ Duke of York,’ at Aldershot, who is, in fact, the immediate Past Chairman of the Ladies’ Committee of the Beer and Wine Benevolent Trade Society. Mrs. Brazier is a lady outstanding in her devotion to the trade, and all she has done on behalf of the trade charities I cannot begin to recount, but she is one among you who is worthy of your acclamation, and to respond on behalf of the other ladies of our trade. It is, therefore, with great pleasure, gentlemen, that I wish you to all be upstanding for the toast to ‘ The Ladies.’ ”

In reply, Mrs. Brazier said :—

“ I indeed feel honoured for the privilege of replying to this very important toast.

“ Before doing so I feel that I should be expressing the wishes of all the ladies if I asked you, Mr. Chairman, to accept our very sincere congratulations upon reaching this memorable occasion.

“ The House of H. and G. Simonds is honoured and respected throughout the world—a no mean accomplishment in the face of heavy competition. It is our wish that the day will be far distant when you will cease to be an instrument of wisdom through that House. May you go from strength to strength, adding further lustre to this great House, and may God bless you !

“ Mr. Duncan, thank you for your very kindly words, and I am sure that every lady here will say, ‘ What have you that my husband hasn’t ? ’

“ Now, Mr. Duncan, I feel sure that you have put ideas into our husband’s heads, and may God bless you ! ”

HERALDED WITH A FANFARE.

Mr. J. E. R. Tilley rose to propose the “ Health of the Chairman ” :—

“ Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

“ I have been given the very great honour of proposing the principal toast of the evening, that of our highly esteemed and respected Chairman, Mr. F. A. Simonds, or may I, on this auspicious occasion, say ‘ Mr. Eric.’ . . .

“ Undoubtedly you are aware of many of his past achievements ; however, I think it is right that they should be related to you in some detail this evening, and I know you will concur with that sentiment.

“ Unlike the ladies, his age is not a jealously guarded secret : he was born in Reading on the 2nd of January, 1881 ; he therefore celebrated his 71st anniversary recently, and he was heard to say a short time ago that hard work keeps him young. . . .

"I now come to possibly the most memorable occasion in his life ; it certainly was as far as we are concerned : he joined our Firm in 1902, and was appointed a Director on the 15th April, 1905. In 1916, he was appointed Managing Director, and twenty-two years later he took over the added responsibility of the Chairmanship of the Company, both the appointments are, as you know, still held by him so you will see that for the past thirty-six years he has played the highest part possible in the destiny of the Company, of which he is rightly so proud. As my colleague, Charles Middleton, intimated during his speech, Mr. Simonds has not confined his activities to the wholesale side of the trade ; he has been President of many Licensed Victuallers' Associations, and his name is legion throughout the retail side of the trade for his fairness, regard for us tenants, and all licensees. On the wholesale side he has attained much eminence ; he joined the Council of the Brewers' Society in 1916, and was Chairman of that Society in 1933-34, when something happened which we all hope will soon occur once again—the beer duty was reduced. As you can well appreciate, his activities have not been limited to the trade alone ; he had the high honour of being appointed High Sheriff of Berkshire in 1928-29, and was President of the Royal Warrant Holders Association in 1937, and again in 1945, an honour of which he is justifiably extremely proud. I cannot leave the subject of Mr. Simonds achievements without mentioning the fact that he was Chairman of the 'Beer for Troops' Committee in both World Wars, and I feel sure all ex-service men present to-night will join me in saying how much this contribution to our welfare was appreciated. . . .

"To conclude, I have in my humble way endeavoured to portray briefly the business and civic life of this great man, and great he is in every way. But he, in his greatness, will, I know, readily agree that he has been blessed with what is man's greatest asset, and that is a devoted wife, and I know I am expressing the sentiment of you all when I say how glad we are to see Mrs. Simonds here to-night. We know she has played her part nobly in the service which Mr. Simonds has given to our Company. It is our wish, Sir, that you will both have continued health and much happiness for very many years to come.

"Ladies and gentlemen, it is an honour and privilege for me to ask you to rise and drink a toast to our Chairman, Mr. F. A. Simonds."

Mr. F. A. Simonds, replying, said :—

"I am really overwhelmed at all the loyal toasts which have been made to me.

" . . . I cannot let this evening pass without saying thank you to Mr. Palmer for sending me a most magnificent iced cake, a memento such as only Huntley and Palmers are capable of producing. It was a very friendly gesture.

"I was born in Reading ; you were quite right, Mr. Tilley, in calculating that I was seventy-one, and I am proud of it, and I am happy to say I have had some wonderful days, but I do not remember a greater triumph than this one to-night. If only those great architects of the fortunes of my family could see me here to-night, and those two sons of mine—I am thinking of my uncle, Mr. Henry Adolphus Simonds, a very great man, and my father—bless his memory—a great working man, and wiser than his son and grandsons, they would have been very proud of us all. . . .

"May I take this opportunity of thanking you, Mr. Toastmaster, for the very efficient part of your duties. May I thank Mr. Spurling and Mr. Davis for the arrangements they have made for the happiness of all of us, and may I thank you gentlemen of the orchestra, and may I thank the staff of the Olympia, who have done a very magnificent piece of work ; also may I thank 'Chef' Davis for lending a hand, and may I thank, last of all, my colleagues, my co-Directors, my senior Executives for being responsible for this wonderful evening, which would have been impossible without their help and wisdom.

"Ladies and gentlemen, on with the dance !"



Photo by : Photographic Services (Berkshire) Ltd., 25, London Street, Reading.

The Cake presented to Mr. F. A. Simonds from the Directors of Huntley & Palmers Ltd.



Photo by : Photographic Services (Berkshire) Ltd., 25, London Street, Reading.
The Chairman with a Party from South Wales.

Later in the evening two presentations were made to Mr. F. A. Simonds. Nearly 700 tenants had subscribed towards a chair made from cherry wood taken from his old home at Audleys Wood, Basingstoke. The chair will match a desk made from similar wood which was presented to Mr. Simonds on his 70th birthday by the Directors of Saccone & Speed, Ltd.

A silver plaque on the chair reads as follows :—

“ Presented to Mr. Eric Simonds by the tenants of his Company as a mark of their affection and high esteem, and in appreciation of his untiring and kindly efforts on their behalf during the last fifty years.”

Licensees in the Basingstoke area presented him with a silver Georgian mug.

To present the chair, Mr. Spurling introduced Mr. G. Rose, of the “ Oxford Arms,” Silver Street, Reading, who recalled that he took over his first tenancy in 1909, and that 53 years ago he started work at Simonds Brewery as a bottle-washer.

The Basingstoke presentation was made by Mr. C. E. Maslin of the “ Station Hotel,” Basingstoke, who stated that on several occasions Mr. Simonds had been President of the Basingstoke L.V. Society.

Mr. F. A. Simonds, in reply to the presentations, said he remembered the “ Oxford Arms ” when another Rose had it. (Mr. Rose replied, “ My father and grandfather.”) Mr. Eric stated he used to call it the “ Poacher’s Arms.” The chair, Mr. Eric stated, would go very well with another he had presented to him by the old volunteers of the 4th Royal Berkshire Regiment when he got married.

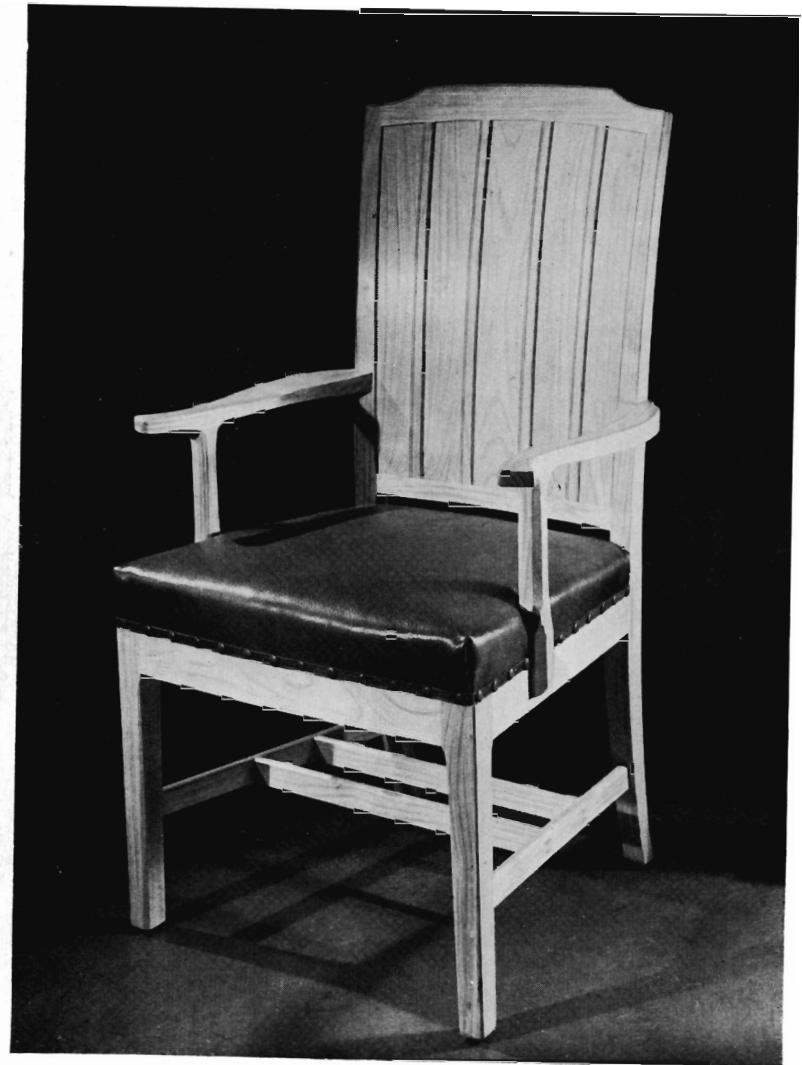


Photo by: Photographic Service (Berkshire) Ltd., 25, London Street, Reading.

The Chair.



Photo by : Photographic Services (Berksire) Ltd., 25 London Street, Reading.

The Assembled Company.



Photo by: Photographic Services (Berksire) Ltd., 25, London Street, Reading.

Mr. Maslin making the presentation on behalf of the Basingstoke Tenants.

25th January, 1952.

C. E. MASLIN, Esq.,
Basingstoke and District Licensed Victuallers' Assn.,
The Station Hotel,
BASINGSTOKE.

Dear Mr. Maslin,

Would you kindly convey my warmest thanks to all your members who subscribed to purchase that beautiful Cup which you presented to me at the Banquet held on January 22nd, 1952, in celebration of my Jubilee of service.

I very much value the happy terms in which you made the presentation and your felicitous reference to my business career and my relations with my Company's tenants. I have naturally held your Association in highest regard owing to its activities being in an area so close to my own home. I am particularly pleased to know that tenants of other brewery firms joined in the gift.

The Cup will surely be handed down from generation to generation of my family and serve to remind them of many years of exemplary co-operation between both wholesale and retail trade in North Hampshire.

In extending to Mrs. Maslin and yourself my warmest regards, may I ask you also to thank Mr. Len Smith and Mr. Dowling, and all those immediately concerned with you in this happy gesture.

Yours sincerely,

F. A. SIMONDS.



Photo by : Photographic Services (Berkshire) Ltd., 25 London Street, Reading.

Mr. G. Rose making his presentation.

25th January, 1952.

Mr. GEORGE ROSE,
The Oxford Arms,
Silver Street,
READING.

Dear Mr. Rose,

I must extend to you personally my very warmest thanks for the very happy terms of your speech on January 22nd, 1952, when you made the presentation to me of that handsome chair fashioned from cherry wood grown and felled in the woods of my old home at Basingstoke.

I was deeply moved by the wholehearted welcome which was accorded me on that occasion, perhaps the grandest gathering of my crowded life. I will endeavour to tell, through the columns of the HOP LEAF GAZETTE, all subscribers to that present how greatly I value a gift which will always be treasured by my family and will serve to remind them of the cordial relations which have so long existed between my Company's tenants and the Brewery Directors, and I pray these relations will always be fostered and maintained.

It was particularly fitting that you, with your long and honourable record in our trade, should have been selected to make this presentation.

I am only sorry that the capacity of Olympia did not permit the attendance of all our tenants at the Banquet held in my honour; very many were inevitably disappointed.

I am sure you, and all of you, would join in tendering to Mr. S. H. Spurling and all those in his Department concerned with the organisation of the greatest gathering ever held by the Hop Leaf Clan their warmest congratulations on a wonderful achievement.

Yours sincerely,

F. A. SIMONDS.

To mark the memorable occasion the following are extracts from letters received from our Associate Companies :—

- (1) From the Chairman and Managing Director of Saccone & Speed Ltd., Gibraltar.
- (2) From the Chairman of East African Breweries, Ltd., Nairobi, Kenya Colony.
- (3) The Most Noble the Marquis of Scicluna, Chairman of Simonds-Farsons Cisk, Ltd., Malta, G.C.
- (4) The Managing Director of Simonds-Farsons Cisk, Ltd., Malta, G.C.

11th January, 1952.

Dear Sir,

I understand that the HOP LEAF GAZETTE is printing a Commemorative Number on the occasion of Mr. F. A. Simonds, your Chairman and Managing Director, attaining his Golden Jubilee with the great Firm of H. & G. Simonds, Ltd. To mark this, I would like to convey to Mr. Simonds and to the Company the heartiest congratulations and good wishes of the members of the Board and the Staff of Saccone & Speed, Ltd., and its Subsidiary Companies, and to wish him many more years of health and happiness at the helm of affairs at Reading.

... I myself have been associated with him for nearly 30 years, and I cannot but look back with pleasure to the help, encouragement and good advice he has always given me. I value his personal friendship as one of the pleasantest factors of my life.

The closer association of the business interests of our two firms during the last 7 years has only increased my admiration for him, both personally and from the business angle, and I know I am voicing the opinion of all my brother Directors when I state how we all welcome working with him and receiving his experienced and considered advice, and all members of this Company in Gibraltar, London and other Branches in Great Britain and Overseas are proud of our association with your Company under the able leadership of Mr. Simonds.

In congratulating him on attaining his Golden Jubilee, we also congratulate Messrs. H. & G. Simonds, Ltd., on having been fortunate enough to have had him directing their affairs for all these years.

I would not like to finish this letter without making reference to, and including in the congratulations, his charming wife, who has been such a dear friend to so many of us and, I am sure, a tower of strength to Mr. Simonds in his many business worries over all these years.

Yours sincerely,

E. B. COTTRELL,
Chairman and Managing Director.

14th January, 1952.

Dear Sir,

As Chairman of East African Breweries, Limited, having a close and friendly association with Messrs. H. & G. Simonds, Limited, I welcome this opportunity of joining in the many congratulations to your Chairman and Managing Director on having completed his excellent innings of "Fifty not Out."

On an occasion such as this it would seem inevitable that one should look back through the cavalcade of years that has passed since the early days of 1902. It is questionable, I suppose, whether there has ever been a period of fifty years that has seen so many changes and transformations in every sphere of social, commercial and industrial life as those that have occurred since that date. Indeed, from the industrial standpoint the difficulty—or one of the difficulties—has been to keep pace with the speed of evolution in practice.

I have little doubt that on January 18th, Mr. Simonds will cast his mind back over the years and possibly think of the "Good Old Days." Were they so good? May I be forgiven if I list a few advances which modern science has wrought over the "Good Old Days"?

... Whilst advances in the process of brewing have been less spectacular than in many other fields, nevertheless, improvements in metals, improvements in refrigeration, improvements in containers, advances in the study of yeast, and so forth, have resulted in a much improved beverage for human consumption. In the van of this movement has been the Firm of H. & G. Simonds, Ltd., which Company has undoubtedly received much inspiration and encouragement from its much respected Chairman and Managing Director, Mr. F. A. Simonds.

In this connection the East African Breweries, Ltd., is in the happy position of being able, through its association with

Messrs. H. & G. Simonds, Ltd., to avail itself of their capable and up-to-date organisation for such things as the selection and purchase of plant and machinery, and what is perhaps of the greatest assistance of all, the selection of competent European staff for our breweries in East Africa. These services have been of great help to us in Kenya, and I am delighted to have this opportunity of recording our appreciation.

A feature I have always admired, and to which publicity is given in the HOP LEAF GAZETTE, is the prominent part played by the Simonds organisation in the social life of the Clubs and villages with which it is associated, and of the many members of its staff scattered throughout its many Branches. It is well known that Mr. Simonds is greatly interested in this movement, and I feel sure he will be inundated with expressions of affection and esteem from many quarters on January 18th. My own contact with him to date has been confined to air mail correspondence, but even that has afforded an opportunity for the formation of a friendship which I hope to cement by personal contact when I visit England this year.

All good luck to the Hop Leaf for 1952!

Yours sincerely,

W. C. MITCHELL,
Chairman,
East African Breweries, Limited.

14th January, 1952.

My dear Mr. Simonds,

Both I and my co-Directors read your Directors' Report and Accounts for the year ended 30th September, 1951, with the usual interest that we follow the fortunes of your great Company, but we find that this year is a special one as there is history in your Report which is created by the personal note in your address to the Stockholders—in this little note one visualises the hard and painstaking work of "a learner," who, during the many years completing fifty years' service, rose to be a great Captain of Industry, and whose Company became a combine that flourished and prospered under his brilliant and wise guidance until it became one of the foremost Companies in the United Kingdom to-day. It is with pleasure that I declare that your leadership has always served as an inspiration to me and my co-Directors, and we attribute our

success partly to your great interest and wise counsel. One can easily see that it is not only your Company that benefited from your good and arduous work, but also that great fabric, the British Commonwealth of Nations, because it is men of your temper and steel that the United Kingdom depends on to set an example to others.

We salute you on this august occasion of your Jubilee, and you will honour me and my co-Directors if you accept the small token that we asked Lieut.-Col. F. H. V. Keighley, O.B.E., to hand you on our behalf since, to our great regret, it is not possible to go to England at this moment owing to the many pressing duties that we have here.

In conclusion, it is my sincere wish, and that of my co-Directors that you will be spared for many a long year to come so as to continue to impart your experience and knowledge to others.

17th January, 1952.

Sir,

I suppose that you, members of the Hop Leaf "Crew," have been in close touch with Mr. F. A. Simonds, in person or by correspondence, on business or on pleasure, as I have been myself during the latter half of the Jubilee which is now being celebrated.

I met Mr. Simonds twenty-five years ago when on a visit to Malta he visited our C.O.2 factory with a view to sanctioning the use of the gas we produced for the carbonation of his ales which, at that time, monopolised the whole of the Malta market. Little did he imagine that while we were eager to have his firm as one of our principal customers the idea was already strong in our minds to build a brewery to endeavour to take a fat slice of his Malta trade. And so it happened that in April, 1928, Farsons beer was successfully marketed.

The big Brewer of Reading was too big to leave the way he had so painstakingly built up so conveniently open to the small newly-born Malta Brewer. With the foresight which has been part and parcel of his business career he conceived the idea which would enable him to keep alive "Hop Leaf" popularity and, also, retain a share of the brewing trade. Simonds-Farsons, Ltd., came into being, as a result, on the 12th of March, 1929.

These new business relations brought me closer to Mr. Simonds. I paid visits to Reading a few months later. I learnt quite a lot about the Reading Brewery but, candidly, I learnt much more about the Savoy, Claridges, Cafe Royale, and other such famous places, and about the "Big Noises" patronising them. He knew each and every one of them, and I had the pleasure of acquainting myself with every one of them!

... At his desk, discussing business or the topics of the day, or listening with what great ease he dictated letters to his loyal and capable secretary, "Miss Prosser." His letter-writing is characterised by conciseness, appropriate words and, more often than not, by a touch of humour, even though it may be inserted to soften down an earlier decisive, if not dictatorial, expression. In London, whether on business or entertaining, Mr. Simonds showed the great qualifications of his business acumen, backed by the reputation of his past achievements and by his outstanding personality.

It is only at his home that I have seen Mr. Simonds relax. A short daily tour round his estate before breakfast to bid good morning to his staff, returning after having chosen a carnation. In these lovely surroundings Mr. and Mrs. Simonds hospitality to their guests is unique.

... In my business he has always been an inspiration and I have always referred to him all important matters as a result of which my Company has reaped many an important benefit. His personal intervention in England has been generally successful, and my Company owes a great deal to Mr. F. A. Simonds for the success it has achieved so far.

May God keep Mr. Simonds in good health for many years to come so that the "Hop Leaf" flag may continue to fly proudly in the future as he has kept it flying.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

LEWIS V. FARRUGIA,
Managing Director,
Simonds-Farsons Cisk, Ltd., Malta, G.C.

MORE JUBILEE GIFTS.

Mr. F. A. Simonds was also the recipient of numerous gifts to mark his Jubilee. Among them being a pair of antique Georgian silver salt-cellars from Messrs. C. G. Hibbert & Co., a silver cigarette case from Messrs. Wood Hanbury Rhodes & Jackson,

Hop Merchants, an antique jewelled handle silver paper knife from the Harding Family, Malta, G.C., and a shooting stick from the Directors of Whiteways Cyder Co., Ltd.

MR. F. A. SIMONDS HONOURED.

FIFTY YEARS' CLUB MEMBERSHIP.

(Extract from the *Berkshire Chronicle*, December 14th, 1951.)

"Members of the Wellington Club, Reading, honoured Mr. F. A. Simonds, their President, at a Dinner on Monday evening, to mark his fiftieth year of membership.

The Chairman of the Club, Mr. Tom Vincent, who presided, proposed the health of Mr. Simonds and presented him with a bouquet for Mrs. Simonds.

Occasion was also taken to honour Mr. F. M. Bennett on becoming the first Conservative Member of Parliament for Reading North. . . .

Col. Craddock proposed the health of the Chairman.

Prior to the Dinner Mr. Vincent gave a cocktail party to the members."

PRESENTATION BY MESSRS. SIMONDS-FARSONS CISK, LTD.

At a pleasant ceremony in the Board Room, Mr. F. H. V. Keighley, on behalf of the Directors of our Associated Company, Messrs. Simonds-Farsons Cisk, Ltd., of Malta, presented Mr. F. A. Simonds with a handsome standard lamp. On the lamp is mounted a silver plate, bearing the inscription :

PRESENTED TO MR. F. A. SIMONDS
BY THE
DIRECTORS OF SIMONDS-FARSONS CISK, LTD.,
1902-1952.

The lamp standard is made of oak felled at Audleys Wood, and was made by the same craftsman who was responsible for the chair, which was presented by the tenants. Mr. Eric expressed his thanks to Mr. Keighley, to be conveyed to his colleagues in Malta, and stated that he was profoundly touched by their kind thought on his behalf.

H. & G. SIMONDS, LTD., ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. (*Berkshire Chronicle*, Friday, January 25th, 1952.)

"At the Annual General Meeting of H. & G. Simonds, Ltd., at The Grosvenor House, Caversham, on Monday, it was announced that the net profits of the Company for the financial year ended September 30th, 1951, amounted to £249,440, compared with £210,698 in the previous year—an increase of £38,742.

Mr. F. A. Simonds, Chairman and Managing Director, presided.

The Secretary, Mr. J. D. Richardson, read the notice convening the meeting and the report of the auditors.

The Chairman's statement, which had been circulated to the shareholders, said :—

'Ladies and Gentlemen,—The Directors' report and accounts for the financial year, which ended on 30th September, 1951, have been in your hands for the requisite period and I would ask you to follow the precedent of previous years and take them as read.

'It will be observed from the accounts that the net profit of the Parent Company, after taxation and other outgoings, amounts to £249,440, compared with £210,698—an increase of £38,742—and the group trading profits for the year are £912,019 ; £161,464 higher than the corresponding figure in 1950. I think you will agree that this is a most satisfactory result considering all the difficulties with which we have been faced during the past twelve months. The substantial advance in trading profits is due to the Board's policy of rigid economy in liquidating subsidiary companies, the closing down of uneconomic branches, the elimination of the brewing of draught beers sold at a low profit margin, the expansion of sales of bottled beers at more remunerative prices, particularly in the export market, as also our popular "Tavern Ale" in the home market and increased sales of wines and spirits. A large portion of the resultant increase has been absorbed by the charge for taxation which has gone up by £64,483, mainly due to the punitive effects of the Profits Tax.

'Towards the end of the financial year we were able to effect a final settlement with the Inland Revenue of our outstanding taxation claim in respect of deferred repairs to properties, which resulted in a repayment of £160,736—this sum has been credited in the appropriation account. Of this we propose to transfer, as a matter of prudence, a sum of £125,000 to future taxation for the purpose of creating an equalisation account in respect of initial allowances which, you will remember, are to be discontinued

by the Government in March, 1952. It is also proposed to allocate a sum of £33,591 to a new provision for property maintenance, which, by transfer from the old deferred repairs provision of £141,409, will then aggregate the sum of £175,000. Now that the position with regard to repairs deferred of necessity during the war years has been finally cleared up with the Inland Revenue, it has been decided to dispense with the title "Deferred Repairs"—hence the new provision now created.

'On 28th June, 1951, the Company purchased for cash a group of licensed properties belonging to the South Devon Brewery Company, Ltd., and C. W. Blundell (Plymouth), Ltd., and it is anticipated these will prove valuable acquisitions. The old-established wine and spirit business, R. Grant and Sons, of Torquay, has also been bought by us.

PENSION SCHEME.

'On 1st July, 1951, a contributory pension scheme for the benefit of the staff was inaugurated, as foreshadowed in my address last year. A further scheme to embrace the senior executive officers was also established. The annual cost in respect of past service liability, viz., £17,805, has been charged against pensions provision and it is proposed to replace this sum by a similar appropriation out of the current year's profits. The cost of future service liability has been charged against current profits. This scheme has been welcomed by all whom it affects and should prove to be of lasting value.

'With regard to property improvements, we have expended a sum of £53,949, or £21,899 more than last year; this year, however, we have charged to this account a certain amount of fixtures which in former years were capitalised. You will observe that it is proposed to replace this sum by a similar amount from the appropriation account, thus restoring this reserve to £500,000.

'The purchase of the licensed properties in South Devon, to which I have previously referred, was to a large extent financed by the sale of many of our unremunerative properties, mostly in country areas. The heavy increase in cost of materials and wages, the substantial increase in the cost of replacement of plant and machinery, and the savage incidence of existing taxation, particularly Profits Tax, have all contributed to disturb our liquid resources and our experience is common to most industrial concerns to-day.

'Stockholders have received a notice of an extraordinary general meeting to be held immediately after the conclusion of this annual general meeting. The purpose of such meeting is to

consider a resolution for the adoption of new articles of association which have been framed in accordance with modern practice. One of the proposed alterations is to increase the available limit of borrowings to twice the amount of the issued share capital of the Company. On the basis of the present issued share capital, this new limit will be equivalent to £4,895,000 as against the previous limit of £3,500,000.

EFFECT OF BAD WEATHER.

'During the year under review we have continued our policy of liberal expenditure in repairing or improving our properties, but have been compelled, as last year, to surrender the licences of many of our smaller country houses where compliance, in some cases, with demands of various authorities would render the retention of them unprofitable to us. Many of these properties have now been sold.

'Unfortunately, we suffered from continuous spells of bad weather for many months in the summer season; this militated against sales in many areas, but we were able to offset this by increases in our shipments of beers to Commonwealth countries and Europe where our efforts to develop are, so far, proving successful, though the necessity of advancing our prices, owing to rising costs, may, under competition, affect us adversely.

'A repetition of the previous season's abnormally wet harvest has also had disastrous effects on the quality and availability of malting barley and, in the absence of imports of foreign barleys of a type so valuable for brewing best quality pale ale, prices have been forced up to almost unprecedented levels; the same remarks apply to hops which were badly damaged by storm and tempest, and the average controlled market price has been advanced. These factors, together with the very heavily increased cost of production, distribution and retailing, primarily due to rises in wages, and in a lesser degree to rising costs of fuel and power, must inevitably necessitate an advance in prices for some qualities to the retailer and consumer, and these advances are likely to be stepped up in the near future. One can but hope that a general reduction of prices of materials and cost of production, combined with a long overdue reduction of the Excise Duties on beers may, at no late date, allow of an all-over fall in prices to the sorely taxed consumer.

'I am happy to report that we still enjoy cordial relations with all our tenants. During the past financial year they have had the added advantage of a substantially increased profit on most of the categories of beers, the prices of which were raised to the public. Those tenants who also are licensed to sell wines and

spirits retain the advantage of the considerable concessions made to them two years ago in the terms agreed at that time.

' I regret to report that on November 23rd last, Mr. Charles Bennett, to whose services for over 55 years I made reference last year, passed away at the age of 70. It is impossible adequately to appraise the value of all he accomplished in the Company's interests during his lifetime. The Directors, staff and tenants have all lost a very real friend.

' Our hotels and catering department, under the able management of Mr. H. C. Davis, F.H.C.I., has shown consistent results, and some others of our licensed houses have now been put under his control. We continue to hear on all sides praise for the cuisine and service in "Simonds Hotels." Mr. H. C. Davis has been appointed to high office in the hotel and catering world, where his advice and experience should prove of inestimable value, particularly in dealing with the complicated added burdens of the Catering Wages Act.

' We must again offer our apologies to countless friends who are disappointed in their expectation of liberal supplies of Scotch whisky; the shortage is even more acute than last year, but we continue steadfastly to discountenance the marketing of whiskies of doubtful origin or at "grey market" prices.

THE SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES.

' Our subsidiary company, Phillips and Sons, Ltd., Newport (Mon.), has provided us with a satisfactory dividend and justified our acquisition of this old-established concern in a prosperous industrial area; there will be a better return when we are granted the necessary licences to build new bottling stores; present methods are deplorably wasteful. Meanwhile, we have greatly improved the quality of the beers and the management is efficient and enthusiastic.

' Our associated company, Saccone and Speed, Ltd., of Gibraltar, continued to expand in spite of competition. They are fulfilling important contracts with the United States Forces in many parts of Europe and North Africa, to the complete satisfaction of all concerned. To their Chairman, Mr. E. B. Cottrell, C.B.E., J.P., as also to his colleagues and staff, we offer congratulations and extend our warmest thanks for all they have achieved.

' In Malta, G.C., the brewery belonging to our associated company, Simonds-Farsons Cisk, Limited, has been operating under difficult conditions owing to the heavy reduction in Services

personnel upon whom they rely for a high proportion of customers, but they are now busily employed in supplying beers to the British Forces in the Canal Zone, and these beers, brewed in the new brewery at Imriehel, are now of excellent quality. Consumption of beer by the civil population of Malta is momentarily at a low level owing to reduced purchasing power and the competition of wines which enjoy preferential treatment as regards duty. No dividend this year has been paid to the promoting companies.

' I am pleased to report continued progress in British East Africa where our associated company, the East African Breweries, Ltd., is brewing beers of first-class quality, which command universal approval throughout the three territories of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. The new brewery at Mombasa is now operating and it is hoped that it will be in full production in the Spring.

' This annual review of our activities must, as ever, include an expression of our gratitude to those countless supporters in the "Free Trade" for continued loyalty to "The Hop Leaf," His Majesty's Forces, at sea or on land; caterers, clubs and ships' stores and export merchants, one and all testify year by year to the outstanding merits of our beers and our service.

' In conclusion, I must offer on behalf of the Directors and Shareholders to our Chief Accountant, Mr. A. G. Richardson, A.C.A., as also our Secretary, Mr. J. D. Richardson, our best thanks for carrying out their arduous duties to their complete satisfaction, and to all others of our staff and employees, wherever they may be serving us and in whatever capacity, I must extend a meed of praise for their loyalty and devotion to the service of the firm at all times.

FIFTY YEARS OF SERVICE.

' Finally, may I strike a personal note. To-day marks for myself the conclusion of 50 years' service with this grand old firm; on the corresponding day in 1902 I was privileged to join as a learner (and no doubt got in the way of all my seniors!) and I may claim to have gone through every stage of an education in the business of brewing to qualify me for the important offices which I have held so long and, I hope, for the benefit of the Company, and to the satisfaction of the stockholders.

' At the end of the first financial year, i.e., 30th September, 1902, the balance sheet of the Company disclosed the following: Assets of the Company, £778,414; stocks of malt, hops, etc., £60,685; share capital, £348,280; net profit, £40,626. At

30th September, 1951, the corresponding figures were : Assets of the Company, £10,477,848 ; stocks of malt, hops, etc., £1,063,856 ; share capital, £2,447,500 ; net profit, £249,440.

'Such amazing developments could not have been possible without the loyal co-operation and efficient application to their several tasks, of all those members of executives, staffs and employees with whom I have been happy to work for so many long years ; and may I also say "Thank you" to countless tenants, known and unknown to me, for their loyalty, sympathy and support during this period. Long may "The Hop Leaf" flourish under the wise leadership of those members of the Simonds family, and those associated with them, who may be chosen to succeed me in days to come.

RESOLUTIONS.

The Chairman, concluded : ' I now beg to move the following resolution :—

That the Directors' report and accounts for the year ended 30th September, 1951, be received and adopted, and that, having already paid a dividend on the 5 per cent. Cumulative Preference Stock for the year ended 30th September, 1951, and also an interim dividend of 4 per cent. on £1,087,500 Ordinary Stock, the Directors now recommend that the balance of £287,610 14s. 11d. be appropriated as follows :—

To pay a final dividend on £1,087,500 Ordinary Stock at the rate of 20 per cent. less Income Tax (making 24 per cent. for the year)	£114,187 10 0
To add to Property Improvement Reserve (making a total of £500,000)	53,947 13 8
To add to General Reserve Revenue (making a total of £1,025,000)	12,214 1 11
To carry forward to next year	107,261 9 4
	<hr/>
	£287,610 14 11'

Major G. S. M. Ashby seconded, and the resolution was adopted.

On the motion of Mr. R. B. St. J. Quarry, seconded by Mr. F. H. V. Keighley, O.B.E., Mr. Eric Mytton Downes, O.B.E., who retired by rotation, was re-elected a Director. Another Director retiring by rotation, Mr. Eric Duncan Simonds, was re-elected on the motion of General Sir Miles C. Dempsey, K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., seconded by Mr. W. P. Cripps.

A resolution fixing the auditors' remuneration at 2,400 guineas was passed, on the proposition of Major M. H. Simonds, seconded by Mr. M. Guthrie.

THE CHAIRMAN CONGRATULATED.

A vote of thanks was accorded the Chairman for presiding, on the proposition of Captain E. T. Cripps, who said they were indeed grateful to Mr. F. A. Simonds for what he had described in his address as a most satisfactory result of the year's working, despite the considerable difficulties they had had to face during the twelve months, difficulties of penal taxation and rising costs, and added to those, the worst summer they had had for many years. They would like to congratulate him on this very momentous occasion, when he had completed his half-century of service with the firm. Fifty years was a big slice out of anybody's life, especially when they were hard at work the whole time. The marvellous results shown in comparing 1902 with 1952 spoke for themselves. He supposed there were few businesses which could show such an amazing development in the same time. They could only hope that Mr. Simonds would be spared to carry on his good work for many years to come, and to guide the old ship with which his family had been associated for so long.

Mr. E. S. Phipps seconded the resolution, which was carried.

Acknowledging the vote of thanks, Mr. Simonds said a great deal had happened in fifty years, and people had asked how it was done. The sovereign recipe was hard work, an easy conscience, good liquor and good friends.

At the subsequent extraordinary general meeting the proposed new Articles of Association were approved."

