TRADE MARK

THE HOP LEAF

H & G SIMONDS LTD

READING · BERKS

"A Spile in Time"

Hints on the Management of Draught Beer by the Head Brewer

Produced by

H & G SIMONDS LTD

in the interest of better drinking

INTRODUCTION

THIS booklet is primarily prepared for newcomers to the Trade, but we welcome the opportunity of having another chat on this all-important subject with our older friends, who have had many years behind the bar. We all want to do good business ; good business means good beer ; good beer is dependent on good cellar management, which is mainly common sense. We can only touch the fringe of this subject in the following pages.

If you are about to take a " Simonds House " for the first time, it is essential that you spend a day at the Brewery where you will meet the foremen, the brewers, perhaps a Director or two, and be shown the brewing process from start to finish. You will see the measures we are taking to ensure that the beer delivered to you is second to none, and will go away knowing that you have our co-operation in finishing the job. It is a combined operation, and we want to see you or hear from you at the brewery whenever you have difficulties at your end.

We know that your skill is measured by the condition in which you serve your draught beer. We also know that this skill cannot be acquired in a day, or even in a few short lessons, but takes time and experience. We would like to emphasise that we are all in the Trade together — we appreciate your problems and we hope you do ours!—and it is to our mutual advantage to work together as a team to maintain the highest standards in our products.

WHAT IS IT?

Beer is a living thing. It is brewed with malted barley, sugar, water, hops and yeast. " Brewed from the finest malt and hops " is no empty boast ; impure ingredients will never make good beer : that is why all ingredients are being constantly analysed in our laboratory for purity.

When you receive a cask of beer in your cellar the yeast is alive and working. Like all living things, it is susceptible to sickness, and unless you keep your cellar spotlessly clean, airborne bacteria will infect the beer, producing hard and disagreeable flavours.

BEST CELLARS

This is the most important room in your House—it should be as clean and well ordered as your bars or living accommodation.

All cellars are not ideal, we know, but the *essentials* are simple—good ventilation, cleanliness, and an even temperature of 55°—60°F. *with a thermometer* to guide you. The serving of good draught beer is entirely dependent on these three things, and it is wonderful what a little ingenuity will achieve in a difficult cellar !

Strong draughts and wide variations in temperature must be avoided at all costs. High temperatures and low temperatures will both produce lifeless and insipid beer.

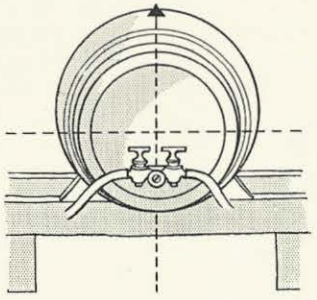
Finings work more rapidly on a rising temperature so in the winter let the temperature of your cellar be higher than that of the beer in the cask on arrival, otherwise it will take a few days before the beer is bright, and no one wants to drink cold beer on a cold day anyway ! In hot summer weather, beers will come into condition rapidly and, therefore, will *lose* condition rapidly if there is no attempt to keep the cellar cool.

No relaxation in the cleaning of your cellar must be allowed. Once you appreciate how easily beer picks up infection, you will understand the reason. Beer left lying on the cellar floor is a breeding ground for bacteria ; dust carries it in the air, to be sucked into the cask every time a pint is drawn.

Why not invite your customers to see how well ordered your cellar is ? You can be assured that they will then drink your beer with even greater pleasure.

DELIVERY OF CASK BEER

When "the Brewers" arrive, get them to put the whole of the delivery on the stillions if possible. If some casks have to go on the floor, make sure they are " bung up " and not standing on their heads. There are two reasons for this:—



(1) Casks stand pressure better if they are " bung up."

(2) They can only be vented in this position.

All stillions should be dead level. Any which tilt the cask forward should be altered, because it is impossible to spile full casks on the tilt without losing beer as the spile hole will be submerged, and secondly, because finings and hops will submerge the tap and you will have to draw off more beer before you obtain a brilliant sample. MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE CASK IS REALLY FIRM ON THE STILLAGE.

WHY TO SPILE

Spiling is necessary because:

(*a*) The fining process will not generally be effective if there is too much pressure in the cask ;

(*b*) If there is too much pressure you will damage the cask and lose beer.

. . . . AND WHEN TO SPILE

We would give two rules :

(1) For the summer allow the casks 6–8 hours to settle down after the journey, then spile them and insert a porous spile if the beer is lively, a hard spile if it is not. Examine all casks regularly to ensure that you have the correct spile in them, for as soon as the excessive condition has worked out, you should insert a hard spile. Remember—porous spiles become clogged and require changing. *Never make a porous spile a permanent spile.*

(2) For the winter you need not spile so soon, and you may not need your porous spiles. But all casks must be spiled within 24 hours. A hard spile will not let condition out so long as it is really driven home.

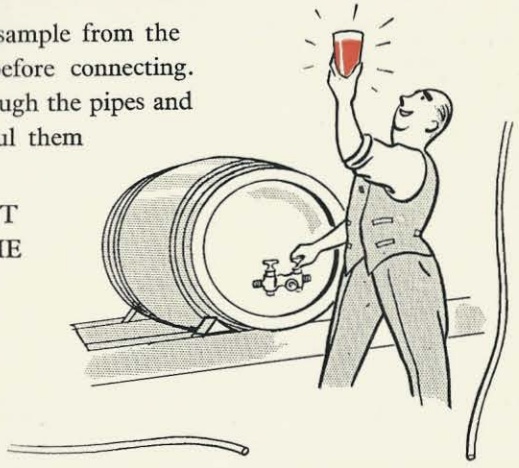
TAPPING

This should be done 24 hours before the cask is required. Never tap an unspiled cask. You will only do it once as it will probably cost you the price of a pair of trousers !

PUTTING A CASK ON THE ENGINE

Always draw off a sample from the cask until bright before connecting. If you draw off through the pipes and engine you will foul them with thick beer.

DO NOT FORGET TO LOOSEN THE SPILE BEFORE DRAWING.



TILTING

CAREFUL NOW !
Beware of mechanical tilters ; they are usually too jerky. If the cask is properly chocked and balanced when put on the stillion, it is not difficult to tilt by hand. Don't forget that the finings will not clear the beer again if it is disturbed at this stage. And do not leave it too late—tilt when the cask is half empty.

"If there is too much pressure . . . ."

PIPES AND ENGINES

Time spent in cleaning these and all utensils is never wasted. They are the most important link in the chain, and the weakest. They *must* be kept clean and sterile. Beer leaves a sediment in the pipes and engines, and it is a matter of the greatest importance that the engine should be taken down and cleaned as regularly as the pipes—the engine is a natural trap for this sediment which will never be completely washed out during the pipe cleaning routine. It is a simple matter for even the least mechanically minded to disconnect the engine sufficiently to clean the top and bottom plates, where the sediment lies.

We recommend the following procedure for cleaning pipes. (All figures given are for the use of Soda. If a detergent is used, the instructions on the tin *must* be followed minutely.)

(1) Drain out beer from pipes.

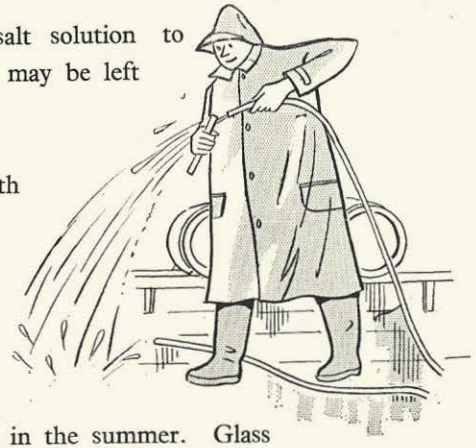
(2) Fill with *warm* soda solution or one of the many detergent solutions (Soda : 1 lb. to 2 gallons).

(3) Allow to soak for one hour and then drain out and *brush*. The soda or detergent has only softened the deposit, and it is necessary to brush all the way up to the engine. And do not forget that little pipe from the engine to the tap.

(4) Wash through with copious quantities of clean water.

(5) Pull through a weak salt solution to neutralise any soda that may be left (1 lb. to 2 gallons).

(6) Wash through again with plenty of cold clean water.



This should be done at least once a week and whenever a cask is emptied; more often in the summer. Glass pipes with rubber joints should be stripped right down regularly, as the rubber joint is a perfect trap for infection. It is infinitely better to have a pipe with no such connections.

We cannot emphasise the fact too strongly that good beer is spoiled by dirty engines and pipes.

TIME GENTLEMEN, PLEASE!

Beer should not be left in the pipes after closing time. This is a provocative statement, no doubt, but we consider it most important and will explain why. Beer standing in a glass for a length of time will leave a deposit—beer left in a pipe will do the same. This deposit will spoil the flavour of the beer drawn through these pipes and will soon turn it hazy.

The ideal procedure is to drain the beer out of the pipes after closing time while it is still fresh, and to return it straightway to the cask that it came from. Use a paper filter to do this. Then fill up the pipes with cold fresh water and leave all night. This will keep the whole equipment sweet and prevent a deposit forming. This may sound hard work after a tiring day, but half an hour at night is worth two hours next morning, and you will reap the benefit in extra sales.

N.B.—It is an offence to return beer to any cask other than that from which it was drawn.

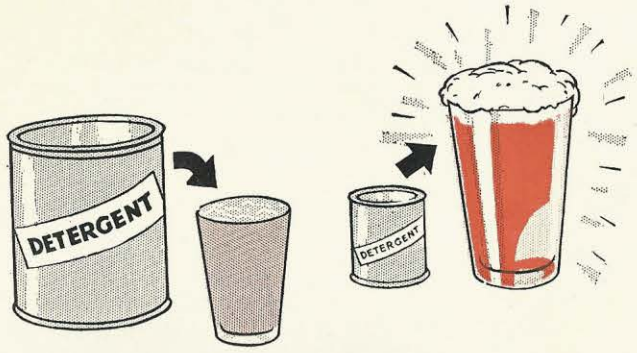
Never have beer lying about in open containers in the cellar, as it will soon pick up infection. Do not return beer to a cask in the morning, as it will not give the cask time to settle again by opening time. A paper filter should always be used when returning beer to cask.

Overdrawings : Make certain that the engines are in good order and pulling the correct quantity each time, so that overdrawings are kept to the minimum.

ALWAYS REPLACE THE SPILE TIGHTLY AT CLOSING TIME.

CLEANING AGENTS

There are now many detergents on the market for cleaning pipes, and also for glasses. When using these, it is imperative to follow the instructions exactly, as it is surprising how effective a small quantity is, and an overdose is liable to damage the equipment, or spoil the head retention of the beer.



EMPTY CASKS

Please leave all " bottoms " in the cask, and cork up as soon as the cask is empty. The hops will keep the cask sweet until its return to the Brewery.

CELLAR EQUIPMENT

We suggest that you ask our advice before you buy any new equipment. We see all the latest models and utensils and can tell you their merits or their limitations. With regard to beer piping : lead is now illegal ; rubber does not stand up to the concentrated cleaning programme demanded ; glass with rubber joints is liable to break, especially where you have it going underneath the floor, and also the rubber joints must be renewed frequently. Stainless steel is good, long-lasting and easy to brush, and with the addition of plastic " drops " is the most practical.

On the question of filters, the paper type is the only practical one, as felt pads are quite impossible to keep sterile. The metal part of the filter must be cleaned with boiling water before use.

CONCLUSION

Beer is a living thing—as such it deserves great care and attention. Keep it at an even temperature, never relax your cleaning programme, and your beer will be in good health. " Finish the job " by serving in a sparkling clean glass—presentation is most important.

The Head Brewer