

Chapter 4

FOOD AND DRINK

Corn milling and brewing were formerly widespread and their characteristic buildings have remained familiar, through mill restoration projects and adaptive re-use. Corn milling in particular has left several well-known landmarks in the form of wind and watermills. Most brewery buildings have been lost to redevelopment but some have been reused, for example at Staines, Horley and Esher, and Farnham Maltings houses a major community centre, while parts of three out of seven Victorian breweries in Godalming can still be recognised as such by the initiated. Among other interesting structures relating to food production, two examples — ice houses and watercress beds — are discussed in this chapter.

Corn Mills

In prehistoric times cereals were ground by hand, using quern stones which are often found on archaeological sites. The first water-powered mills for grinding cereals were probably introduced into Britain by the Romans and several Romano-British and Saxon mill sites have been excavated. By the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086 there were over 5,000 watermills in England, including about 100 in Surrey, but it is not clear whether these were sites, waterwheels or pairs of millstones. A drawing survives of a medieval Surrey watermill in the late 14th century cartulary of Chertsey Abbey.

At the end of the nineteenth century Surrey still had about a hundred active water corn mills but there was then a rapid decline and the last commercial mill in the county, Botting's Albury Mill, closed in 1990. Wheat is now ground only for demonstration purposes at Cobham, where one of a former pair of watermills survives and has been refurbished by a local trust. The earliest windmills in Britain were recorded in the late twelfth century. At least one of these was in Surrey as, between 1189 and 1199, Odo de Dammartin granted his land in Warlingham with the windmill to the Priory of Tandridge. Some forty windmill sites are known in modern Surrey but only five are still standing as recognisable mills and of these only Outwood post mill is able to grind.

[Page 28]

In the past, most parishes had a mill which ground local corn for local consumption. When it arrived at the mill the corn was lifted in sacks to a loft where it was stored in bins. This was usually done using a hoist powered by the waterwheel or windmill sails. Before

it was used, the grain was fed down spouts to be cleaned using shaking or rotating machines known as dressers. It was then returned to the loft, again using a hoist, and fed down different spouts to the millstones. For flour for human consumption the best millstones were imported from the Paris basin in France or from Cologne in Germany and were known as burrs and cullens respectively. For animal feed, millstone grit 'peak' stones from Derbyshire were mostly used. The grain was ground between the furrowed working surfaces of the rotating upper stone and the fixed lower stone and emerged at the perimeter as meal. This descended down spouts to be collected in sacks on a lower floor. It was then transferred to a bolting machine for at least some of the bran to be removed.

The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 allowed grain to be imported from overseas and this gradually led to vast quantities being shipped into Britain from North America. Also, in the 1870s, roller mills in which flour is made by passing grain between a series of pairs of iron rolls, rather than between a single pair of stones, were introduced from the continent. This method also involves more elaborate equipment for refining and sifting the partially-made flour at each stage. It was particularly suited to milling North American grain and consequently large steam-powered roller mills were built near the ports. This meant that inland watermills and windmills lost much of their flour trade and were often forced to rely on producing animal feed. Most of them closed in the early years of the twentieth century.

At many mills several generations of the same family are known to have been active. Of particular interest is the Budgen family, an agricultural trading family and founders of the modern grocery chain. They milled at Outwood from 1665 to 1807 when the mill passed to their relatives, the Jupps, who continued until 1934.¹

[Page 29]

WATERMILLS

Waterwheels are classified as being undershot, breastshot, overshot or pitchback, depending upon where the water meets the wheel. Undershot wheels require no head of water and are turned simply by having paddles which dip into a flowing stream. The other types of waterwheel do require a head of water. This may be created by placing a weir across a river upstream from the mill and taking water from



Haxted water mill.

the top of this along a leat to the waterwheel. However on small streams it may be necessary to build a dam to create a millpond or reservoir immediately upstream from the mill. The buckets of the waterwheel are often shaped so that they retain as much water as possible as the wheel rotates, in order to maximise the power. For simple undershot wheels only about one-tenth of the available power may be used but for overshot and pitchback wheels the fraction can be over one-half. Early waterwheels were of wood but during the nineteenth century most of these were replaced by wheels made partially or entirely of iron. Also in the late nineteenth century water turbines were introduced. These are usually much smaller than waterwheels, easier to maintain, far more efficient and more suited to roller mills as they rotate much faster. Many different types of turbine were manufactured. They all have a rotating wheel or rotor which can be mounted either vertically or horizontally. Usually, water is directed continuously through all of the vanes of this wheel, radially outwards, radially inwards or axially. The whole is often enclosed in an iron casing, sometimes out of sight beneath water level. Finally some mills added steam engines or gas engines or turned to electric power.

Inside a watermill, on the same shaft as the waterwheel, there is a vertical bevelled cog-wheel known as the pit-wheel. This links with a horizontal cogwheel known as the wallower on a massive upright shaft. Above the wallower is a larger horizontal cog-wheel

known as the great spur wheel. Engaging with this are located numbers, often two or three, of small horizontal cog-wheels known as stone-nuts. These have short vertical axles which pass upwards to the floor above and drive the upper mill-stones. The upright shaft also goes upwards through the mill to power the dressing and bolting machines and the hoist. Occasionally other arrangements are used including rows of millstones driven by a horizontal lay-shaft beneath the floor.

Most of the water-powered corn mills of Surrey have been destroyed, sometimes accidentally by fire, but usually by conversion into residences, offices, workshops or restaurants, usually with the loss of all of their equipment. Others have been demolished for their sites to be redeveloped. The outstanding, timber-clad Newark Mill on the River Wey, with three waterwheels and eight pairs of stones, burnt to the ground in 1966; the seven-storey, turbine-powered Lock roller mill on the Wey navigation at Addlestone, which worked until 198, was converted into apartments in 1990; the larger of the pair of attractive mills at Cobham was demolished for road widening in 1953; the Upper Mill at Ewell, after a public enquiry, was gutted in 1984, converted into offices and its timber weather-boarding replaced by plastic — which resulted in it becoming one of the listed buildings in Britain to lose its listed status; Stanwell Upper Mill on the River Colne; which had a magnificent waterwheel about 20 feet in diameter by 6 feet wide and also steam power

has become a warehouse and offices; Coltsford Mill, near Oxted, has become a restaurant and, although it produced flour for private use until recently, this has now stopped; and finally Botting's roller corn mill at Postford Mill, Albury, together with its turbine, was demolished for re-development in 1996. Fortunately the Surrey Industrial History Group was allowed to video this last mill working before it closed in 1990. Also in 1996, permission was granted for Paddington Mill near Abinger Hammer, which had not worked for nearly a century, to be recorded in detail before it was converted for residential use. Although all the equipment had been removed many years ago, it was possible, from the traces which survived, to deduce where the machinery had been and how the mill had operated.

[Page30]

Despite all these losses, Surrey is fortunate that the 18th century Shalford Mill on the River Wey, one of its best watermills, has survived and is protected by the National Trust. The remarkable story of how it was saved is well-known but worth re-telling. It stopped work in 1914 and by 1932 it had become very dilapidated and was in danger of being demolished. However, it was given by the owner to a mysterious but dedicated group of preservationists known as Ferguson's Gang. They collected money to restore the mill, held their secret meetings there and then gave the mill to the National Trust. It has four storeys, is timber-framed, with brick, tile-hung and weather-boarded walls, and has an unusual and large overhanging wing over the door. There is an internal low breast-shot waterwheel and all the gearing is in place. There are two pairs of peak stones, one pair of French burrs and several cleaning and dressing machines.

Surrey has also been fortunate in having had a water-mill museum housed in Haxted Mill, on the River Eden between Lingfield and Edenbridge, near the county boundary with Kent. Built partly in 1680 and partly in 1794, it worked until after the Second World War. Then in 1949 it was purchased by Mr Woodrow who created the museum which opened in April 1966. The mill has three storeys with twin Mansard roofs and is brick and weatherboarded. It has an external hoist protected by a characteristic covered platform, known as a lucomb, projecting at loft level. There is an external overshot waterwheel, all of the gearing is in place and it has three pairs of French burrs around the great spur wheel. In 1992 the mill received SIHG's annual Conservation Award but regrettably it has since been closed to the public.

Other Surrey watermills which retain a substantial amount of their machinery but are not normally open to the public include High Mill, on the River Wey at Farnham, which worked until 1950 and has interesting gearing and a low breast-shot waterwheel; Snowdenham Mill, with a very large mill pond on a tributary of the Wey at Bramley, which SIHG hoped at one time to restore but was denied permission; the small timber Flanchford Mill on the Wallace Brook near Reigate, which is decaying rapidly and has an uncertain future; and Cosford mill on a tributary of the Wey at Thursley, which was lovingly preserved after the Second World War by the late Mr and Mrs Loarridge, who were presented with the first SIHG Conservation plaque in 1983. The mill is now in new ownership.

One apocryphal story about a Surrey watermill needs to be corrected. In 1830, during a period of rural social unrest, the timber mill near the centre of the modern village of Albury was set on fire and an attempt was made to shoot the miller, James Franks, who was also an unpopular overseer of the poor. Subsequently James Warner was arrested, found guilty and executed, but the charge was attempted murder and he was not, as has often been repeated, the last man in England to be hanged for arson.² The mill was soon rebuilt in brick and continued working but in 1910 a later miller, Charles Botting, moved his business to a new roller mill at nearby Postford. The old mill has been used as a laboratory in the twentieth century.

WINDMILLS

Windmills are far more elaborate as engineering structures than watermills because the sails, which in south-east England are often known as sweeps, have to be turned to face the wind. In the earliest type, the post mill, the whole timber body or buck of the mill turns on a pivot at the top of a massive upright post. This is supported by a framework of other timbers around which a building, called a roundhouse, is often constructed to protect it from the weather and to provide storage space. In the smock mill and the tower mill only the cap rotates. The former is weather-boarded but the tower of the latter is of brick or stone. Traditionally windmills were turned into the wind manually by pushing a tail pole protruding from the back of the mill. However in the late eighteenth century the fantail was invented. This consists of a set of small vanes mounted at the rear of the mill at right-angles to the sails and linked to gearing which rotates the buck or the cap automatically. For post mills the fantail is usually located on the tail pole or on the external steps at the back of the mill. For smock and tower mills it is behind the cap.



Outwood post mill.

[Page32]

In early windmills the sails are covered with cloth, which has to be adjusted for each sail in turn, either working from the ground or, for tall mills, from a balcony around the mill. In the late eighteenth century spring sails with wooden shutters were introduced. These are set according to the average strength of the wind so that strong gusts open them against springs to prevent the sails from turning too quickly. Then patent sails were developed which enable the miller to re-set all the shutters from inside the mill, simultaneously and while it is working. The windshaft to which the stocks of the sails are fixed, enters the mill and acts as the axle for a large cog wheel immediately inside. This drives millstones and other equipment in

the mill and also acts as a brake drum; being almost surrounded by a band of wood or iron which can be tightened against it. In a storm the friction arising from the brake can cause a disastrous fire. Another problem is rapid changes in the direction of the wind. For example, if the eye of a storm passes overhead, it may not be possible to turn the sails into the wind quickly enough and then they and the cap, or even the whole mill, can be blown down. Post mills, because of their light construction, were particularly vulnerable to being 'tail-winded' in this way. However they also had an advantage, in that they could be moved to new sites without being dismantled. They could, for example, be pulled across country on rollers by large teams of oxen or traction engines.

[Page33]

The outstanding surviving windmill in Surrey is Outwood post mill. This was built in 1665, retains many of its original timbers and is the oldest working windmill in Britain. It has a tarred weatherboarded buck, a roundhouse, four spring sails, no fantail, a pair of peak stones in the head and a pair of French burrs in the tail. The post mill ceased working regularly in the 1930s but some

commercial milling was carried on until about 1949. It has been repaired on many occasions and was in working order in 1962 when purchased by the brothers Raymond and Gerald Thomas. In 1984 they were presented with SIHG's Conservation Award for their dedicated work in maintaining the mill in working order. Sadly Raymond died in 1992 and Gerald in 1996 and a trust is being formed to try to ensure that the mill continues to work.

Another post mill survives on Reigate Heath. It dates from the mid-eighteenth century and worked until about 1868. It is remarkable because the roundhouse was converted into a chapel in 1880 and services are still held there during the summer months. It has been restored with decorative sails and has most of its machinery intact. Also unusual is Lowfield Heath post mill which dates from about 1762 and was last used in about 1880. It was then left to decay until fitted with dummy sails in the 1930s, after which it deteriorated again. It stood just within the county boundary near Gatwick Airport but, when the boundary was moved as a part of local government reorganisation in 1974, it found itself in Sussex. However in 1987 the pillaged wreck which survived was dismantled and carried across the new county boundary back into modern Surrey and rebuilt at Charlwood. The building was officially opened in 1990 and work continued to restore the machinery to working order. The trust carrying out the reconstruction was presented with the SIHG Conservation Award in 1995.

Regrettably, Surrey has no surviving smock mills. The largest smock mill in England, measuring 62 feet to the top of the cap, was built by the Budgen family close to the old post mill at Outwood, some time after 1796.³ It had four patent spring sails with a span of 80 feet, a 5-vaned fantail, a balcony, four pairs of stones and an auxiliary steam engine. It worked until 1914 and then gradually decayed until it finally crashed to the ground in November 1960. Shiremark smock mill, very near the county boundary south of Capel, was very different from Outwood. It was squat with a large octagonal base and had no fantail. Like Outwood, it ceased work in 1914, gradually rotted away and eventually burnt to the ground in 1972.

[Buckland wind-driven sawmill has been restored to working order and received the SIHG Conservation Award in 2004. It is the only wind-driven sawmill still in existence in the country.]

Two Surrey tower mills survive with their structures largely intact. Wray Common mill at Reigate was built in 1824 and worked until 1895. The tower is about 45 feet high and it had spring patent sails and a 6-vaned fantail. It was fitted with dummy sails in the 1930s but no equipment survives below the cap. Ewhurst tower mill with four storeys plus a cap was built in about 1840, replacing a post mill which was tail-winded in a gale and blew down. It ceased work in about 1895 and was converted into a residence in 1901. It originally had patent sails, with shutters on both sides of the stocks and a fantail. It now has dummy sails but the ogee cap still contains a cast iron windshaft and a wooden brakewheel. The rest of the equipment has gone and large windows have been inserted into the tower.

[Page34]

Ice Houses

Before refrigeration became available, owners of large estates built ice houses in their grounds to store ice. The ice would have been used either as a bed for cold

dishes or for making cold sweets and was also useful for cooling wine and keeping food fresh, either in the kitchen or while it was stored in the ice house.

General use of ice houses began in Britain in the sixteenth century, one of the earliest recorded being at Greenwich in 1619. An early ice house close to Surrey was built at Hampton Court in 1625 but there appear to be no remains of this or even any indication of where it may have been sited. The twelve-sided brick structure in Home Park, near Kingston Gate, was built in 1693 and repairs, including encircling it with iron bands, were carried out in 1700.

The design of the houses varied in detail but, in general, they consisted of an entrance, a passage, a storage chamber and a vault; there are often two or three doors between the chamber and the outside. The chamber for storing the ice is usually underground although ice houses were often built into the side of a hill or buried into a mound which would cover the structure. If not covered with earth, the vault and passage were usually thatched. A few ice houses had no passage, the ice being loaded and removed through the top of the vault. These are sometimes referred to as ice wells. The base of the house was sometimes paved and sometimes of bare earth. A drain, usually covered with a grating (sometimes a wagon wheel) was needed to remove any water which formed as the ice melted.



The ice house at Ockley Court.

The houses were usually sited close to a pond or other source of ice and in some cases artificial ponds were specially dug for the purpose. When ice was formed on the pond it was put into the chamber by the gardeners and layered with straw so that it was easier to remove.

As soon as there was a rail network to transport ice from the docks, an increasing amount was imported into Britain. This came from Norway and the United States, particularly from Wenham Lake in Massachusetts, although after 1873, when a fire destroyed the Massachusetts works, 'Wenham Lake ice' came from Norway. Owners of large houses began to fill their ice houses with this cleaner ice for domestic purposes, rather than dirtier material from estate ponds and lakes.

During the First World War the import of ice stopped and never recovered as mechanical refrigerators had become available. Ice houses in the grounds of stately homes fell into disuse but many survive in varying states of disrepair.

Probably the best example in Surrey which may be easily examined is at Hatchlands, the National Trust property at East Clandon. This ice house is believed to have been built at the same time as the house, in 1757. It is situated on the edge of a chalk pit, making drainage easy to arrange. The chamber is about 10 feet (3 metres) deep and 12-15 feet in diameter, is brick-built and rendered above ground level. It has a

domed roof, with a hole in the centre of the roof for loading the ice, and an arched entrance. A false floor was put in after it ceased to serve its original purpose, so that it could be used as a summer house, but this has been removed.

Ice houses are listed in the SIHG district Guides. Many of the surviving structures are within private grounds but those for Wotton House and Bury Hill are adjacent to public footpaths and that for Ockley Court, which has a tiled roof over the entrance and vault, is in the farmyard behind Ockley Church.

[Page35]

Watercress Beds

Watercress, *Nasturtium officinale*, grows naturally in many rivers such as the Wandle, Hogsmill and Tillingbourne in Surrey. It was cultivated on a commercial scale by the late eighteenth century in the German Rhineland and on the River Ebbsfleet in Kent by 1805.⁴ The first large-scale cultivation in Surrey was at Abinger Hammer, on the Tillingbourne between Paddington Mill and the site of the forge mill. It was started on this site in about 1850, soon after the opening of the Reading, Guildford and Reigate Railway with its station at Gomshall, which enabled the cress to be delivered to London within a few hours of being cut.

The first beds were made by William Smith, who found the sandy soil and spring water ideal for the



Watercress beds, Abinger Hammer.

crop. The operation was soon taken over by Richard and John Coe, of the local tanning firm, and it has since remained in the same family. By 1888 they had 25 acres of beds which extended from the original site down the valley to Chillworth, and built eight workers' cottages, later known as Fern Cottages, which had extensions at the rear for packing the watercress in flat baskets.

[Page36]

As a legal requirement, for reasons of public health, the cress is grown in spring water which is kept separate from that of the river. This is taken from several artesian wells which go down to a depth of 150 feet (46 m). The modern beds are in concrete tanks and the water is carried to the most westerly beds by pipes under the road and village green.

Watercress was also grown at Fetcham, near Leatherhead, where Mizen Brothers' market garden included 8 acres of watercress beds in 1921. These were situated near the mill pond of Fetcham Mill, which is fed by springs used for public water supply. Mizens' operation closed in 1957 when their land was taken over by transport and water supply companies.

Brewing and Hop Growing

Ale or beer has always been an important beverage in Britain, particularly in the past when both the sterilising effect of boiling water for brewing and the food value of malt helped to overcome public health problems.

The classic example of early brewing by the ale-house keeper belongs to Surrey,⁵ where the efforts of Elinour Rummige of Leatherhead are recorded by the laureate John Skelton in his poem of 1529, *The Tunning of Elinour Rummige*:

The hens run in the mash vat
 For they go to roost
 Straight over the ale-joust
 And dung, when it comes,
 In the ale-tuns.
 Then Elinour our takes
 The mash-bowl and shakes
 The hens' dung away,
 And skims it into a tray
 Whereas the yeast is
 With her mangy fists.

One would have thought that the water would be in need of boiling anyway, without the help of Elinour's additions to the recipe. In the light of this, perhaps one should be less concerned about the use of modern additives in brewing!

[Page37]

Originally the product brewed was ale, which was an unhopped drink made from fermenting malted liquor. Following the introduction of hops by Flemish brewers in London in the fifteenth century, the product became known as beer, although the terms ale and beer have often been used to mean the same thing. A degree of caution therefore has to be used when interpreting records. However it is interesting to note that one of the earliest references to a common brewer of 'byere' outside London was John George in Godalming in 1483.

The use of hops had a preservative effect on the product. This meant that beer could be kept for much longer than unhopped ale without spoiling and could also stand up to travel, so that it could be marketed over a wider area. Another preservative was brimstone or sulphur which was burnt to produce Sulphur dioxide. The use of preservatives was initially very unpopular with the authorities; indeed Henry VIII forbade his brewer at Eltham to use hops or brimstone in his ale.

Brewing was historically a domestic activity carried out in the home, on farms and by publican brewers. Common brewers, who sell in bulk to publicans, have played an important role in the south-east since at least the end of the seventeenth century but it is only since the middle of the nineteenth century that, with better and cheaper transport and changes in legislation, they have come to dominate the industry outside London. They had certain advantages over publican brewers: a longer brewing time, which helped to give a more consistent product; keeping stock in hand, which gave the beer longer to mature; and the ability to concentrate on brewing as a primary concern rather than a sideline to the main business of running the hostelry.

THE BREWING PROCESS

The basic principles of brewing have changed very little over the centuries, apart from the modern methods of processing some beer after production

the process involves coarsely grinding malt (partially germinated barley) and mixing this with hot water, or liquor as it is known to brewers, in a mash tun. This converts the grain's starch into sugars which dissolve to give wort. The wort is drawn off the spent grains and boiled in the copper, or brew kettle, with hops, after which it is separated from the spent hops and cooled. Yeast is then added to convert the sugars into alcohol, giving beer. For British beers, top fermentation yeasts are traditionally used. These sit on top of the brew, creating a head of yeast which protects the beer from the air. For lagers, bottom fermentation yeasts, which sit at the bottom of the fermentation vessel, are used.

[Page38]

HOP GROWING

Loam above chalk provides the ideal foundation for growing hops which, although hardy, require optimum conditions to produce the quality needed for market. A good depth of rich soil and great quantities of manure are required. The plants also need an airy situation with protection from cold winds, moisture but not wetness, and a mild climate.

Hops were originally simply grown up poles but more recently these poles have been connected with wires to allow the vines to climb along. Hop production was an expensive and labour-intensive industry. Even in the 1950s a considerable number of people were employed, but since then mechanisation has taken over. Production has continued to shrink in recent times because of a number of factors including the cost of production, a reduced need as a result of modern strains being much higher in the alpha acids and lupulin required by the brewer, and competition from imports.

Hops were grown mainly in east Surrey around Crowhurst and in the west around Farnham, but are also recorded at Chilworth in the Tillingbourne valley in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁶ The crop was used both within the county and beyond. The acreage of Surrey hop gardens was always very small but Farnham hops were generally regarded as the finest in England and fetched the highest prices at Weyhill Fair near Andover in Hampshire. It should be remembered that in official excise returns 'Farnham District' actually covered the Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Salisbury and Surrey Excise Collections, although the famed 'Farnham Hops' only came from the area between the foot of the Hog's Back ridge and Wrecclesham and Bentley.

Hop growing was reputedly introduced into Farnham, which had been a woollen manufacturing town, from Suffolk in the mid-seventeenth century and eventually became the main source of the town's wealth. In the late seventeenth century John Aubrey reported that there was 'not a clothier here; Hops being the principal commodity, with about 300 acres planted'. In the mid-nineteenth century the area on which hops were grown was greatly expanded along the foot of the Hog's Back. The official returns show that during the first half of the nineteenth century the Farnham acreage was consistently in the 2,000-3,000 range but in the 10 years from 1852 to 1861 this expanded to 4,000 acres and continued to increase until it peaked at 5,930 in 1885, after which it rapidly fell back. These changes broadly reflected the national trend at the time.

Whereas Farnham had been one of the few areas in the country with specialist hop farmers, rather than general farms which included a hop garden, at the end of the twentieth century there is just one farm in the county, growing some 12 acres of Fuggles hops; however it is encouraging to see that it is hoped to expand this acreage in the near future.

[Page39]

When they are picked, the moisture content of hops is around 80 per cent. They would rapidly deteriorate and rot if stored in this condition and they are therefore dried in hop kilns — known as oasts in Kent and east Surrey — to reduce the moisture to about 6 per cent, although this rises to 10 per cent on storage. The drying process also ensures that the moisture content is evenly distributed. The dried hops are compressed and packed into large sacks, or pockets, which each hold 1.5 cwt (75 kg). Although hop growing has all but ceased in Surrey we are fortunate to be able to enjoy the sight of a number of hop kilns, often now converted into private houses. Examples can be seen near Crowhurst and South Godstone in the east of the county and at Frensham, Tongham and Puttenham in the west.

MALTING

Malt, the second largest constituent of beer after water, is made by the partial germination of barley. The grain is steeped in water, spread out on floors to germinate and raked and turned to ensure regular growth, heated in a kiln to arrest the process of germination, finally cleaned to remove the husks and rootlets and then stored to await dispatch to the brewers.

Malting was an important industry in the past, particularly in parts of the county near the Thames. Daniel Defoe, in his tour of Britain in 1724-1726; described Chertsey as a town wholly employed either in malting or in the transport of malt by barge to London. Kingston, in the old county of Surrey, had numerous malt-houses and Alderman Frederick Gould recalled that when he moved there from his native Bath in 1839 'there were malthouses visible in all directions, and everywhere one turned there were Inland Revenue officers ...'. In general, malting in Surrey appears to have been on a small scale and it is interesting that, when so many hop kilns have survived, the process of malting has apparently left little evidence. Apart from the large industrial-scale maltings at Farnham, which has become a community centre, and a medium-sized malthouse at Egham which has been converted to offices, few malthouses can readily be recognised as such. Remains are known however in the Farnham area at Tongham, Badshot Lea and Wrecclesham.

There must have been many small malting floors and kilns to service all the brewhouse taverns which once existed and two such small malthouses distinguished by the presence of pierced tiles which formed the floor of the kiln — have been discovered during conversion of old buildings as dwelling houses in West Street and Castle Street in Farnham. One wonders how many more remain to be discovered.

[Page40]

BREWING IN SURREY

Brewing has, until recent times, always been a very important industry in Surrey, but it was generally concentrated in those areas which are now part of London, especially along the south bank of the Thames. This was no doubt a result of the pressure of space for development on the north bank of the river, combined with the fact that travellers had to use London Bridge and therefore go through Southwark. An example of a Southwark brewery was the Anchor, in its day one of the biggest breweries in the kingdom, whose owner in the mid-eighteenth century, Ralph Thrale, became Sheriff of Surrey. This brewery eventually became Barclay Perkins and then merged with Courage who, confusingly, also had a large Anchor Brewery in Southwark at Horsleydown beside London Bridge.

Nationally the number of breweries peaked in the nineteenth century when most of Surrey outside London consisted of small towns, and villages. By the time population growth had given rise to a mass market, the whole nature of the industry had changed. The Beerhouse Act of 1830 created a vast number of new outlets with neither the experience nor the desire to brew and who therefore needed suppliers. The evolution which has taken place towards brewing by large multinational companies left Surrey, until recently, with no breweries except at Mortlake. The trend is best illustrated by the example of one small village brewery and the series of takeovers that happened to it.

The Byfleet Brewery evolved from the efforts of local tanner Henry Dennett, who reputedly took a few barrels a week around the village for sale. By 1845 his son, also Henry, had set up the brewery and he later took George Barron Holroyd, of the Byfleet Mill family, into partnership. Dennett died in 1870 and Holroyd carried on the business, which was described as 'an extensive brewery' in the 1874 Post Office directory. By this time Byfleet had a population of almost 1,000 but Holroyd owned other pubs in the surrounding areas which gave him a market for his products.

FARNHAM UNITED BREWERIES, LIMITED.

**BREWERS, WINE AND SPIRIT
MERCHANTS.**

Agencies:—
WOTE STREET, BASINGSTOKE.
8, GREAT MINSTER STREET, WINCHESTER.

FARNHAM ROAD, GUILDFORD.
CHERTSEY ROAD, WOKING.

Bottled ALES and STOUT
a Speciality. From 2/- per doz.

Try our noted OATMEAL STOUT
26. per doz.

Ales and Stout in all size Casks
10d., 1/-, and 1/6 per Gallon.

TELEPHONE No 10.



**All Orders by Post promptly attended to, and our vans
being in all parts of the neighbourhood daily, we are able
to guarantee immediate delivery.**

LION BREWERY, FARNHAM.

Farnham brewery advertisement from a local guidebook.

[Page 41]

In 1889 the brewery merged with the Friary Brewery of Guildford and in 1890 Healy & Co of Chertsey were taken over to create Friary, Holroyd and Healy's Brewery Co Ltd. The Byfleet Brewery was closed in 1909 and the site was gradually sold off over a number of years. The brewmaster's house, The Beeches, still stands.

Following years of acquiring other local breweries, including its important local competitor Lascelles Ticker, in 1956 Friary merged with Meux of London to form Friary Meux, which itself was taken over by Allied Breweries in 1963. Brewing at Guildford ceased in 1969 and the town's Friary Brewery was demolished; Allied have since become Carlsberg Tetley.

Other breweries in the county disappeared for various reasons, such as the death or bankruptcy of the owner, but most were simply taken over by their competitors, resulting in fewer and fewer companies and the evolution of a number of national brands. Examples include Nalder & Collyer of Croydon, who were acquired by the City of London Brewery in 1919. Page & Overton, also of Croydon, took over Youell & Elkins of Horley and Bradley's of Epsom before being taken over themselves by Hoare & Co in 1929.

Hoare's — whose trademark was the familiar Toby Jug — were in turn taken over by Charrington in 1933 and later became part of the Bass empire. Mellersh & Neale of Reigate bought a number of breweries, including the Swan Brewery of Leatherhead in 1922 and Pagden's of Epsom in 1931, both of which had also taken over others, and then, like Friary Meux, became part of Ind Coope and Allied Breweries. Watney, whose brewing side merged with Courage and was then sold to Scottish & Newcastle, acquired a number of Surrey breweries. These include their present Mortlake site, which had been Phillips More & Co, the West End Brewery at Esher, the Farnham Brewery Company and Ashby's Cobham Brewery. Jason Gurney's Star Brewery at Walton-on-Thames was taken over by Brandons of Putney who went to Mann, Crossman & Paulin and then merged with Watney.

Courage bought Hodgson's Kingston Brewery in 1943. Hodgson had, over the years, taken over many other local companies including Frickers' Eagle Brewery, Kingston in 1903 and Guildford Brewery in 1929. Courage also took over the Claremont Brewery, Esher and the Farnham United Breweries formed from Edward Barrett's Red Lion Brewery and George Trimmer's Lion Brewery.



A modern micro-brewery: coppers and mash tun at the Hog's Back Brewery, Tongham.

[Page 42]

THE REVIVAL OF SMALL BREWERIES

In recent years there has been an explosion in the number of new small breweries around the country and Surrey has had its share. They are subject to change, but recent developments include the Pilgrim Brewery, founded in 1982 at Woldingham which moved to Reigate in 1985; the Hogs Back Brewery, established in farm buildings at Tongham in 1992; the Hale & Hearty at the Ball and Wicket in Upper Hale, opened in 1996; Leith Hill Brewery at the Plough Inn, Leith Hill, opened in 1996; pub breweries at the Cyder House Inn, Shackleford, the Flamingo Brewery which became the Kingston Brewery Co and closed in 1998 and the Forger & Firkin, Guildford; Bob's Brewery, Woking, opened in 1996 as part of the Planets leisure complex; Weltons' North Downs Brewery, Capel, set up in an old milking parlour at Rugge Farm in 1995 but since moved to a factory unit in Dorking; and the Halcyon Brewery at Hersham.

The history of brewing in Britain has been, to a large extent, driven by the need to acquire tied houses to guarantee a market. This system is now under review by the European Union and it could well be that in a few years' time we shall have a very different industry in Britain. In the meantime we are fortunate to be able to witness the resurgence of a local industry.

Notes

1. Davis, R, 'Budgen: a trading family', *Surrey History*, 5.1 (1994), 24-45; *The Story of Outwood Mill* (Thomas Brothers, 1989).
2. *The Surrey Countryside*, (Guildford 1975), 160.
3. Davis, note 1, 27-28.
4. Eve, D, 'Springhead Gardens and the watercress industry', *Industrial Archaeology News*, 105 (Summer 1998), 4.
5. Elinour was an actual person who was fined for selling ale at excessive prices in 1525. The poet, who was attached to the court of Henry VIII, may have visited Leatherhead when the court was at Nonsuch Palace, only six miles away. Vardey, E (ed), *History of Leatherhead* (Leatherhead & District Local History Society, 1988), 66-7, 305.
6. Public Record Office, E134. 7 Chas I, 5 Mich; Northants Record Office, Spencer Papers, SOX 488, hop accounts.