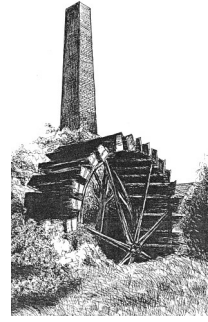


WANDLE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM



BULLETIN



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WANDLE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM

PRESIDENT

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Chair: Fr David Pennells,
Nicholas Hart and John
Hawks.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Alison Cousins, Eric Shaw,
Roger Steele, and Michael
Taylor.

Editorial

In this uncertain time we are happy to be able to bring you our quarterly bulletin or at least to those of you who are online. To those of you who receive the hard copy we hope that you have not waited too long before getting it.

Whenever you have received it I hope you will find something of interest. John Sheridan's piece on the Young's archive should set us up nicely for when the museum on the old Ram site opens towards the end of the year. To all of you keep safe and well.

Best wishes,

Mick Taylor (Guest Editor)

Cover Picture:

This is a picture of The Bull public house in Church Road, Mitcham just a short distance from the museum. Since closed it is now a private dwelling as shown below.

The photograph is one of a collection of photos of Young's pubs taken by Ian Dornn and Derek King that were donated to the museum.



Operations Team Report

Well --- the diary was full, the whiteboard full up, we had 2 new talks ready to deliver and then the inevitable. We held a special meeting on March 18th at which we decided to shut up shop and postpone planned events for the next few months. However – we need to pop in on a regular basis to check all is well, to satisfy our insurers. We have been “encouraged” to think about new topics for our talks and to develop additional items for the website. So no rest for the wicked !

Since February John had given a talk at Shirley Library, I had done a presentation at Tolworth Library (possibly the smallest location ever) and Eric had trudged in the pouring rain on public transport to Leatherhead to give his classic talk on the Surrey Iron Railway to the Surrey Industrial History Group.

We have two new volunteers – John Branford who has not had the chance to do a Sunday duty yet, and Usha Rajagopalan who will initially be developing the website.

We have 2 books to add to the William Morris collection thanks to Meg, and a copy of the new book on May Morris from me. We also received two articles by Dave Saxby which had appeared in the Friends of the William Morris Gallery Newsletter. One is "William Morris and his Workers at Merton Abbey" and the other is "A Tapestry Boy" on Walter Taylor, a weaver, artist and teacher. This article contains some lovely watercolours.

We are delighted with our newly-upholstered stools in the shop area. Thanks to Fiona McKelvie for transforming them with a traditional Morris fabric - Golden Lily. We also have Mary Hart to thank for "rediscovering" a leaflet compiled by Liberty & Co Ltd and entitled - " Explaining something of what is entailed in the production of LIBERTY`S HAND-LOCK PRINTED



FABRICS ". (The capitalisation is theirs) Sadly not dated but the use of the present tense in the title suggests the 1970s at latest.

Alison Cousins

Was Surrey Iron Railway the First?



The article “The Industries of the River Wandle” in No105 issue of the bulletin raises the questions, was the Surrey Iron Railway (S.I.R.) the first public railway in the world, further was it even the first public railway in this country?

Evidence suggests that it was neither. As a reference I quote Paul Sowen, well known in Surrey Local History circles. He mentions two public railways that preceded the S.I.R., the Loughborough to Nanpantan Railway in 1789 and the Lake Lock Railway, near Wakefield in 1798.

On that evidence the S.I.R. would have been the third and the Croydon, Merstham and Godstone Iron Railway, the fourth.

Further evidence suggests that the S.I.R. wasn't the first to be sanctioned under the Parliamentary Bill procedure as the Middleton Railway, near Leeds, was sanctioned in 1758. The last tramway under a similar act was Croydon Tramlink. The bill was dated 1994. Any subsequent projects now come under the Transport and Works Act.

We may have to alter some of the titles and headings in the museum!

Footnote: November 2003 Issue 44 also refers to the subject of which was first.

Eric Shaw

The Young's Brewery Archive Project

Wandsworth Heritage Service has taken delivery of the Young & Co archive and is in the process of cataloguing it. The archive provides evidence of corporate decisions and also gives an insight into the ordinary men and women who worked at the brewery and the contributions they made to the business. The collection is diverse and includes photographs, financial records, plans, letters, minutes of board meetings, and audio visual material. It occupies 50 metres of shelving so cataloguing will take some time. Once the work is complete, the collection will have its own unique collections reference in the Wandsworth archives. The project has been funded by the William Allen Young Charitable Trust.

The project archivist, Adam Duncan, hopes that the project will be complete by the end of 2020, and that the collection will then be made accessible at Battersea Library to researchers and members of the public.

Helen Osborn's book, *Britain's Oldest Brewery: The Story Behind the Success of Young's of Wandsworth*, (ISBN 0-9518167-2-1) gives a summary of the history of the Ram brewery site and its occupants since the time of Elizabeth I. Helen Osborn was the Young & Co archivist and records manager when she wrote the book in 1999. The book is out of print but may be obtained through the internet.

The following **brief summary** of some milestones during the Young dynasty's involvement with the brewery draws on Helen Osborn's book, on *The Times* online archive, and on a Young & Co minute book for the period 1890-1909 which Adam Duncan kindly made available for the purposes of this article.

1831: On 23 November Charles Allen Young and Anthony Fothergill Bainbridge took over the Ram brewery and 82 public houses from the widow and son of George Tritton. Young was 44 and Bainbridge 21. Both came from well-to-do commercial families. Young put up capital of £49,000 and Bainbridge £35,000. The site was bounded by Ram St (then known as Red Lion St) and Wandsworth High Street and was a quarter of its eventual size.

1832: Fire destroyed the brewery on 13 March but it was quickly rebuilt,

and brewing probably restarted the same year. A pipe from the river Wandle provided water for cooling. Water for brewing came from a well on the site. Deliveries of coal and malt were made to the rear of the site by barge from the Thames via “The Cut,” an extension of the short canal that formed the terminus of the Surrey Iron Railway. In the 1830s the brewery produced 40,000 gallons of beer per annum.

1835: A beam engine made by Wentworth & Sons of Bell Lane, Wandsworth, replaced an earlier Boulton & Watt steam engine. It generated 12 horsepower, later increased to 16 hp. It originally drove four pumps and a vertical shaft from which power was taken to various floors for milling and mashing. A second beam engine was installed in 1867. These engines were in use for most of the brewery’s existence and remain there today.

1837: the brewery site expanded when land was acquired from Daniel Watney. The expansion included the site of a former scarlet dyeworks which had been operated until around 1830 by members of the Spence and Barchard families. The 1841 tithe map still showed substantial land holdings by Watney, but the tithe map was produced in response to legislation in 1836 and it is possible that its surveyors had not caught up with events.

1846: The Surrey Iron Railway was closed. The horse-drawn railway, which had opened in 1803, conveyed raw materials and manufactured goods between the Thames and the Wandle mills as far as Croydon. Charles Allen Young’s father, Florance Young, was a shareholder in the SIR. The brewery used the SIR to distribute beer to its public



Tithe map 1841. Plots marked 1 were owned by Daniel Watney. Those marked 4 were owned by Young and Bainbridge. Those marked 3, while clearly brewery buildings, were mysteriously recorded as being occupied by John Bell, a local landowner, and owned by All Saints parish.

houses. The SIR wharf was just downstream of the brewery.

1855: Charles Allen Young died. His son Charles Florance Young, who had been a partner since 1843, became Bainbridge's sole partner.

1864: Youngs launched a pale ale, the forerunner of modern bitter, in response to the declining popularity of porters and stouts. Pale ales originated in Burton upon Trent and had penetrated the London market.



Stanford's map 1862. The brewery buildings are not labelled, but the nearby boys' home and middle mill ("Flour Mills") are clearly identified. The colouring highlights the Cut connecting the back of the brewery to the canal and the Thames.



Ordnance Survey 1865. Interesting to contrast with Stanford's map.

1866: Young and Bainbridge bought Bridge House, to the north of the brewery, from Daniel Watney. Successive proprietors of the scarlet dyeworks, and then Watney himself, had lived there previously, and it was now a boys' home. Eventually it was used as a storage area for the brewery and was pulled down in 1896.

1872: Anthony Fothergill Bainbridge retired (and later the same year died). His son Herbert became a partner.

1882: A major fire caused extensive damage on 13 May. A new Brewhouse was started almost at once. The foundation stone of the new brewery was laid by Herbert Bainbridge in September 1882. A new tun room was built. Most of the equipment had to be replaced but the beam engines were undamaged. The Ram Inn was rebuilt in 1883.

1883: Herbert Bainbridge had a brief affair with Charles Florance Young's wife and the business partnership was dissolved.

1890: Charles Florance Young died. In accordance with a letter from him which was opened posthumously, a limited liability company, Young & Co, was incorporated with capital of £380,000. The only shareholders were Charles Florance Young's wife and sons. Limited liability status facilitated the raising of capital with which to buy new public houses, refurbish old ones, and invest in the brewery. At that time increasing competition and property prices, and falling beer sales, provided the incentive to invest and expand the business. Young & Co raised capital of £13,000 in 1892, £18,000 in 1893, and £80,000 in 1899 by means of bank loans. In addition £150,000 of debenture stock was raised in 1898 at 3.5% pa – this was the first invitation to the general public to share profits, while the family retained control.



Ordnance Survey 1894-96. A complex of brewery buildings.

1893: The Ram trademark was registered: an image of a Dorset Horn ram.

1899: in an example of a major investment in public houses, the board agreed to pay £55,000 for "Tritton's Leases", which included freeholds for *The Dog and Fox* and *The Leather Bottle* and copyholds for *The Half Moon* and *The Pied Bull*. Fifty three pub freeholds were bought between 1881 and 1899.

1895-1905: Some investments in the brewery:

1896 – old stables were pulled down and new stables built on empty land on the north of the site.

1897 - electric lighting installed for £1,602 with an additional dynamo, the brewery having been lit by gas from a neighbouring gas works since 1835.

1897 – new cooperage, beer room, sample room, allowance room, carpenter's shop, w.c.s built for £2,386.

1897-99 - Wandle embankment walls built in two phases for £707 and £165.

1898 - new well dug; tender of £1,112 for pump and mains accepted.

1899 – steam heater for No. 2 copper for £205; two hot liquor tanks, copper coils, steel joists for £757.10s.

1903 - new boiler house for £1,872, new boilers for £1,980, and boiler setting for £1,435.

1903 – tender of £1,830 for new chimney accepted; according to Osborn the 140 feet high chimney was completed in 1908, and heavy iron bands had to be put around it because of cracking.

1904 – pipe, drain and steam maintenance for £796.

1903: Henry, the youngest son of Charles Florance Young, joined the board at the age of 21. He was to be chairman from 1923 to 1957.

1905: bottling plant and machinery was installed following receipt of a tender of £874.12s.6d, as directors sought new markets in the face of falling profits. Profits were £47,000 for 1903, £31,000 for 1904 and £21,000 for 1905. The first foreign lager, St Pauli from Germany, went on sale in Young's houses from 1907. Profits recovered to £26,000 in 1906, went down again to £14,000 in 1907 and back up to £21,000 in 1908. In 1905 the annual staff bonus was reduced from 12% to 6%, and then to 5% in 1906. Dividends were maintained at their historical levels of 2.5% for preference shares and 3% for ordinary shares. Signs of harder times had been visible since the turn of the century, when directors had voiced concern about additional duty on beer, and the price of coal increased from 15s per ton in 1899 to 22s in 1900.

1914-18: the war brought restricted licensing hours, which were consolidated in 1921 – a setback which the company survived.

1917: The first director not to be a member of the Young family was appointed – Leonard Hitch, head brewer.



Ordnance Survey 1913. Some changes to the brewery buildings. The middle mill has gone and tram tracks have appeared on Red Lion Street. The PH between Red Lion Street and The Cut was the Red Lion.

1919-20: A photographic survey of the pubs was made.

1924: Youngs acquired William Wells & Co and its Britannia brewery in Kensington - the brewery was sold for redevelopment.

1932: The Cut was filled in, along with the short canal to the Thames to which it was connected. Young & Co had wanted to retain the Cut for deliveries by barge from the Thames, but Wandsworth Gas Co owned the canal and insisted on filling it in. At least the site of the Cut provided more land for the Brewery site.

1937: Armoury Way was built on the northern side of the brewery site. To make way for it the Middle Mill (which had closed in 1898) and the Bell public house were demolished. The Crane public house, which was next door to The Bell, remains on Armoury Way, at the entrance to the causeway leading to the mouth of the Wandle.

1939: Young & Co's first female employee started work in the brewery office. Having started as a temp, Kathy Jackman worked for the company for nearly 40 years.

1939-45: The brewery was lucky to escape with only minor bomb damage

compared to other buildings in Wandsworth. A number of public houses were destroyed and were rebuilt after the war.

1945: The well was capped. The water level in the well had dropped since Wandsworth Baths, built across the High Street in 1939, had started pumping water from the same artesian source. The brewery had to turn to the public water supply.

1955: The company was listed on the stock exchange, with a complicated three-tier share structure to protect itself from takeover. There were 122 licensed premises, all within 30 miles of the brewery, of which 112 were held freehold.

1957: Allen Young was elected chairman following the death of his uncle Henry Young. Allen was followed in 1962 by his son John who held the position until 2006. Henry and John Young were both champions of the shire horse for local beer deliveries and both were presidents of the Shire Horse Society.



Ordnance Survey 1949. The Cut has gone and Armory Way has appeared. The Red Lion public House has gone.

1958: New bottling stores were built, with a distinctive barrel-shaped roof.

1962: Youngs acquired Foster-Probyn for £375,000 to increase the company's access to the free and off trades. Following the construction of a new office block, Foster-Probyn's business was assimilated into the Ram site in 1972. Young's had 128 pubs by now.

1964: The Ram Brewery Trust was launched. It allocated 'B' shares annually to employees with 5 or more years' service, to be held on trust until retirement, and to provide a profit-sharing mechanism.

1964: John Young made a statement alongside the company's annual report and accounts, committing the company to traditional draught rather than modern keg beers for its tied houses. This was regarded by some as a backward step, but the "real ale revolution" was just around the corner. Demand for real ale rose, CAMRA was formed in 1971, and production and profits increased. Young also committed to modernisation of the brewery and independence - as a relatively small regional company in a competitive business, Young's was constantly looking over its shoulder for takeover threats.

1960s-70s: A succession of record-breaking years for profits and turnover from the mid 1960s to 1979.

1973: Youngs acquired Cockburn & Campbell Ltd, wine and spirits merchants.

1974-82: Major rebuilding and refurbishment included the construction of a new brew house and installation of new equipment. The old coppers were left in place. Distinctive metal vessels for storing lager were erected. The company reported in November 1979 that margins were down but the company was beginning to benefit from plant improvements. A year later the Times reported that profits were down from £935,000 to £730,000 for the 6 months to 30 September 1980, due to interest charges on the development programme and increasing pub maintenance costs. The new Brewhouse reportedly cost £5m.

1975: John Young was awarded a CBE. He was also made a freeman of the City of London in 1986 and of the Borough of Wandsworth in 1992.

1980: The company had 138 pubs, of which 30 were managed. From the 1970s the company had introduced managed houses alongside its tenanted houses, and had also expanded its sales to other pubs, to supermarkets and its exports.

1981: The Queen visited the brewery, towards the end of the construction work, to mark the 150th anniversary of the Young family's involvement with the brewery.

1985: The Times reported that beer prices, already 70p on average following the budget, were set to rise by another 4p in September that year. Beer prices have consistently increased faster than inflation. Roughly speaking, the average price of a pint of bitter in London was 1s (5p) in

1960, 2s (10p) in 1970, 35p in 1980, £1 in 1990, £2 in 2000, £3 in 2010 and £5 in 2020. The Young & Co archive may include a record of Youngs beer prices.

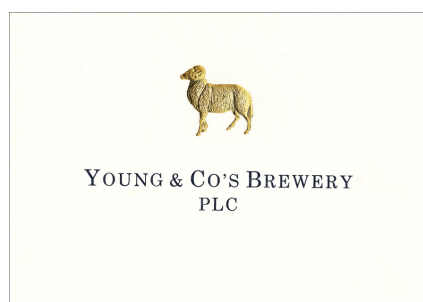
1991: Youngs acquired H H Finch Ltd, a pub company with 22 pubs.

2006: In May the company announced the forthcoming closure of the Ram brewery, with a transfer of brewing to Bedford following a merger with Charles Wells Ltd in which Youngs took a 40% stake. On 17 September John Young died aged 85, and the Ram site closed on 25 September. John Young's obituary in *The Times* on 19 September said that although the company had protected itself from takeover by means of its complicated share structure, it had finally surrendered to pressure from leading non-family shareholders, including Guinness Peat which had built up a stake, and had sold its valuable site. The five and a half acre Ram site was sold to Minerva, a property developer, for £69m. Ram Quarter flats are currently being marketed by the Greenland Group. Youngs sold its stake in Charles Wells in 2011 and is now a pubco with more than 200 establishments, mainly freehold. The company is still based in Wandsworth.

It will be interesting to see in due course what the archives have to say about the closure of the Ram site. In 1989 the Government weakened the link between the major national breweries and their tied houses. That might have presented an opportunity to Youngs to acquire some of those pubs, although the national brewers might have ensured that the pubs went instead to their newly hived-off pubcos which were an unintended consequence of the measures. In any event it may be that the Ram brewery site was too small to sustain a beer supply for an expanded pub estate, and too valuable to sustain continued use as a brewery.

John Sheridan

Ordnance Survey maps reproduced with permission of the National Library of Scotland (<https://maps.nls.uk/os/>).



KING JOHN - DID HE OR DIDN'T HE?

By John Hawks

OK, Merton Priory isn't "industrial", and isn't (quite) on the Wandle as we know it today, but it's a major part of our history, indeed we have an excellent exhibit celebrating it in the Museum. As I'm sure you know, the remains of the Priory's Chapter House were dramatically enhanced in 2018, and in the past year received 3,500 visitors. And, in writing and designing the interpretation panels, my daughter Katie got so immersed that she's now doing a PhD on it!

History is constantly reinventing itself as new facts come to light. For centuries a valuable medieval manuscript has been accepted as recording a major event in the Priory's history - a letter from King John dated 8th June 1215 to his rebel barons in London, agreeing to safe conduct if they met him a week later at Runnymede, which of course resulted in Magna Carta.

Granted, contemporary records show he was an inveterate traveller, both in England and France, but travel in those days was by horseback, and (as Dave Haunton of the Merton Historical Society reminds us) the King would invariably have been accompanied by a group of retainers with baggage - 20 miles a day would have been nearer the norm than 40 or 50. So what was the solution to the mystery?

Imagine Katie's delight to discover that the prominent medievalist Professor

Nicholas Vincent agreed with her - King John cannot have made the journey, and must all along have been at the castle near Winchester at the village of MERDON! And, though the manuscript clearly says "Merton" with a "t", variants of spelling were common in those days, not to mention the possibility of a manuscript error.

Of course, the letter still had to make its way to London from wherever it was written, perhaps by representatives of the King, or indeed the barons. But another Nicholas, our own trusty Trustee Nicholas Hart, suggests an alternative; the King wasn't at Merton Priory in person, but the King's seal could have been applied there on his behalf by a senior courtier - the "Lord Privy Seal" indeed!



King John

We shall probably never know the truth, but like scientists, historians are constantly in the business of questioning assumptions, and (as Peter Hopkins of the MHS says with a typical twinkle in his eye) they love nothing more than exploding myths!



This picture of school work by Camelsdale Primary School, Haslemere was spotted on Haslemere Station by Martin Roberts. It shows work inspired by William Morris.

Before the lockdown Year 3 of schools were looking at the Victorians. We were hoping to up our services to schools and were looking forward to speaking the history group from Merton schools.

The new signage at the rear of the museum has certainly caught the eye. A number of people who don't have a connection to the museum or even heritage have made comment. This picture shows the view as you head down Church Road towards the museum.



Dates for the Diary

Before the Coronavirus outbreak the museum had planned for walks, talks and our summer exhibition event. Now sadly postponed however there is one that we hope will take place and that is the Mitcham Heritage Day on 12th September.



Accreditation Mentor: Chris Taft, British Postal Museum and Archive.
Museum Advisor: Yvette Shepherd, Museum of London (Docklands).

A full colour version of this newsletter is available online at www.wandle.org. If any subscriber is happy to receive the newsletter by email, could you please send a request to office@wandle.org. This helps us to reduce our costs.

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Company No 01792482, Charity No 288655.



OPEN: Every Wednesday 1 ~ 4 pm;
Every Sunday 2 ~ 5 pm.
(The Museum is closed Bank Holiday weekends)

The Museum is also open to schools and groups by appointment.



Admission: Adults 50p, Children & Senior Citizens 20p

The Wandle Industrial Museum would like to point out that the views of contributors to this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the Museum. We would be happy to give the right to reply to anyone who finds the content contentious.

All contributions and news items gratefully received and appreciated - please feel free to let us know at any time - telephone or write or email to office@wandle.org

You can find us on:

