

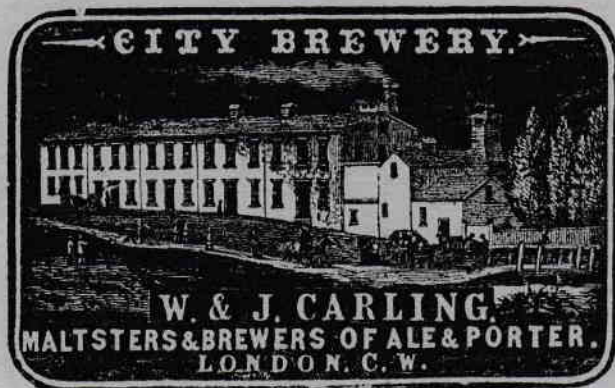
THE CARLING'S STORY PART 1 1840 - 1882

With our convention being held in London next summer, it seemed an appropriate time to tackle the story of one of Canada's longest living brand names—Carling's. I've referred to many sources - my own accumulation of data and pictures, a 1935 university essay in which the young author interviewed J. Innes Carling, the last Carling involved in the brewery, the J.J. Talman collection and the University of Western Ontario's archives. The illustrations come from Marg Walker, Larry Sherk, Phil Greenwood, Jim Maitland, Norm Playter and Paul Koenig.

The whole thing started with a "pioneer Stumping Bee". Twenty one year old Tom Carling had emigrated to Canada from Yorkshire, England. Landing in Quebec City in 1818 he moved on to the area around the forks of the Thames River, which would later become London. He started a farm and in 1820 married Ann Routledge a neighbor's daughter. Southern Ontario had a primeval forest of hardwoods - oaks, maples, elm, walnut - and clearing the land for farming was a most difficult task. Often when the trees were cut the pioneers simply plowed around the stumps. When enough folks were settled in the area and draft animals - horses and oxen were available stumping bees were held to pull out the stumps. Each person brought something to share for the meals at these bees, and Tom's share was his homemade ale. His brew became so famous that it was always in demand whenever bees or other pioneer gatherings were held. As more and more folks moved in to the area his friends and the local soldiers convinced him to start a local brewery.

Carling's original brewery as expected was a primitive log built structure equipped with materials readily on hand - his brewing vessels were two gigantic iron ex potash kettles, a horse to turn the stone grinding wheels, wooden mash tuns, and surprisingly eight workers. Including Tom and his two sons. Brewing could only be done in the cold months of late fall and winter which allowed his farmer neighbors to be available to help. Stories abound about Tom wheelbarrowing bottles of his brew about town for sale, but glass and bottles were in short supply and expensive at that time, so more likely he sold his brew by or from a barrel and purchasers brought their containers to him. Sales were great Tom and his brews' reputation spread.

Tom died in 1845, but his two sons were well versed in the brewery's operations. The brothers William and John wisely split the tasks of operating the brewery according to their skills, with William managing the plant and warehousing, while John concentrated his efforts on selling and administration. Together they were a great team and Carling's business constantly grew and strengthened. In 1849 the company was renamed W. & J. Carling Co. and as can be seen in the 1863 bill head tremendous improvements and expansion had taken place in the brewery since the brothers set that goal in 1845. "*Bottling both ale and porter, by 1860 the brewery was using 18-20,000 bushels of grain a year, 12-18,000 pounds of hops and malting 22,000 bushels of barley a season. "The proprietors give steady employment to between 15 and 20 men"*" runs a de-



LONDON, C. W., *1st July* 1863

Mr. Thomas F. Rance
of Arhells Hotel
To W. & J. CARLING, Dr.

Maltsters, and Brewers of Ale and Porter.

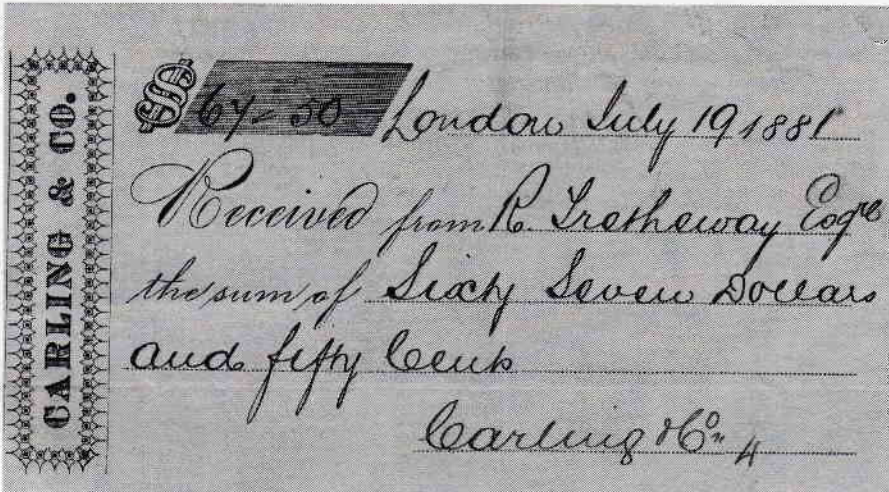
scription written about 1860, and "*six horses are constantly employed in connection with the establishment. The works are propelled by a steam engine. Agencies have been opened in*

Chatham, Sarnia, Newbury, Bothwell, St. Thomas, Ingersoll, Seaforth, Goderich, Exeter and Windsor. Beer and ale has been sent frequently to Hamilton and Toronto." According to J. Innes Carling these agencies were just bottling operations. That is realistic because at that time bottles were more expensive than the brew they contained. Here is his description of the Montreal agency run by Jack Carling "Raw brew was shipped up from London and the beer bottled in Montreal. After washing the bottles the beer was bottled and stored on shelves where it was left for two or three months. As soon as enough beer had been aged to supply the probable volume of sales Mr. Carling called in all his friends and had them sample a bottle or two. Then in company with these friends a tour of several beer taverns in the town was made and Carling's beer requested at each." The instructions on this Carling bottle's label veri-



fy this agency technique.

So successful were the brothers that they began planning to replace their brewery with a new gigantic state of the art brewery to be built at another site in London. In order to help raise the money for the new brewery, spread the risk, and take on some of John's responsibilities as he was now heavily involved in both Federal and Provincial politics - at one time simultaneously having a seat in both parliaments. The newcomers Thomas H. Carling one of John's sons and Joseph and D. Dalton, John's brother in law and his son joined the company in



1875 and the name became Carling and Company.

Several factors were driving the need for a new brewery and the one most quoted was that John Labatt the Carlings' main opponent in the local brewing scene, had recently opened a brand new brewery after his old one burned down on March 5, 1874, but the real key motivating the Carling brothers was lager beer. In the post the U.S. Civil War lager beer was emerging as a product with growing popularity. The Carlings had added a three story lager brewing section to their City Brewery in 1875, but demand had outrun production. Looking at the picture on our front cover you can see the huge section of Lager Vaults at the left end of the new brewery.

With the new financing in place, work began on the new Carling brewery. The building you see on the front cover cost \$ 250,000 opened to great fanfare in 1878. The London Free Press described the new Carling Brewery. "Opened after two years of construction, the brewery is without a doubt the largest building of it's kind in the province as well as the most completely fitted of any brewery or malt house in use either in Canada or the United States. Carling's malt house stands at the centre of a complex that spans 3 acres and includes a warehouse and garage as well as a blacksmith shop. What made the plant unique was the 300 foot long Norman style brewery made of 2.5 million bricks. At one end of the five story building was a seven story malting tower. The plant becomes a prototype of efficiency in the North American brewing industry because of what was housed in its basement. Thirteen feet below ground is a production centre that includes an underground conveyor belt connecting the brew house to the warehouse.

The sprawling basement is dominated by seven massive brick vaults with 60 gallon vats or puncheons full of fermenting or ripened ale. The vats are naturally cooled by spring water piped into the building via an outdoor pumphouse. With a constant temperature of 11 degrees is the right temperature to cool the vats as well as providing the vital ingredient in the brew itself. After being transferred to one of 10,000 wooden casks, also water cooled, is stored for six to eight weeks. The finished product is bottled then whisked to the nearby warehouse on the 150 foot conveyor belt.

What really set the new Carling brewery apart was the huge section devoted entirely to lager beer production.

The lager vaults were built using an accumulation of the very peak of brewing technology of the day. "The building is 65 feet long by 42 broad - the walls are of stone and brick - inside the walls is a space of six inches with a double casing of wood filled in with shavings. The doors are double and the windows have three sashes. The floors are of pitch pine. In the upper story the sides, top and bottom have been lined with galvanized iron, channeled and corrugated to prevent heat penetration. - in it is always kept stored 600 tons of ice extending over the entire floor in a layer twelve feet thick."

Now here is some outstanding technology and thought for the time. "Along the floor are a series of zinc troughs carrying the ice water off as it is melted to cistern in the fermenting room where it is used in keeping the vessels cool and the building scrupulously clean. To keep the temperature of the beer cool there are on each side of the lager vaults four shafts conveying the cold air from the ice house to the cellar, with valves at the foot which can be opened or shut as the temperature of the beer may demand. Foul air shafts and ventilators are provided to ensure a pure atmosphere."

As for the art and magic of brewing this new fangled lager, "Provisions for brewing a superior lager - the establishment is under the care of an experienced brewer, who has had the advantages of a German training and has conducted extensive manufactories in the United States."

Combining the latest technology and technique, "Messrs. Carling & Company are capable of producing lager equal to any manufactured on this continent. The lager made by them is brilliant and sparkling in the glass, like champagne with a thick cream like foam; its taste is pure, full in the mouth and pleasantly bitter of hops. The establishment is capable of turning out from 50,000 to 60,000 kegs of lager annually."



CARLING'S



CARLING & CO
* LONDON, CANADA. *

STOCK

LAGER.

WE respectfully beg to inform the public that we are now in a position to supply our Stock Lager in kegs and bottles.

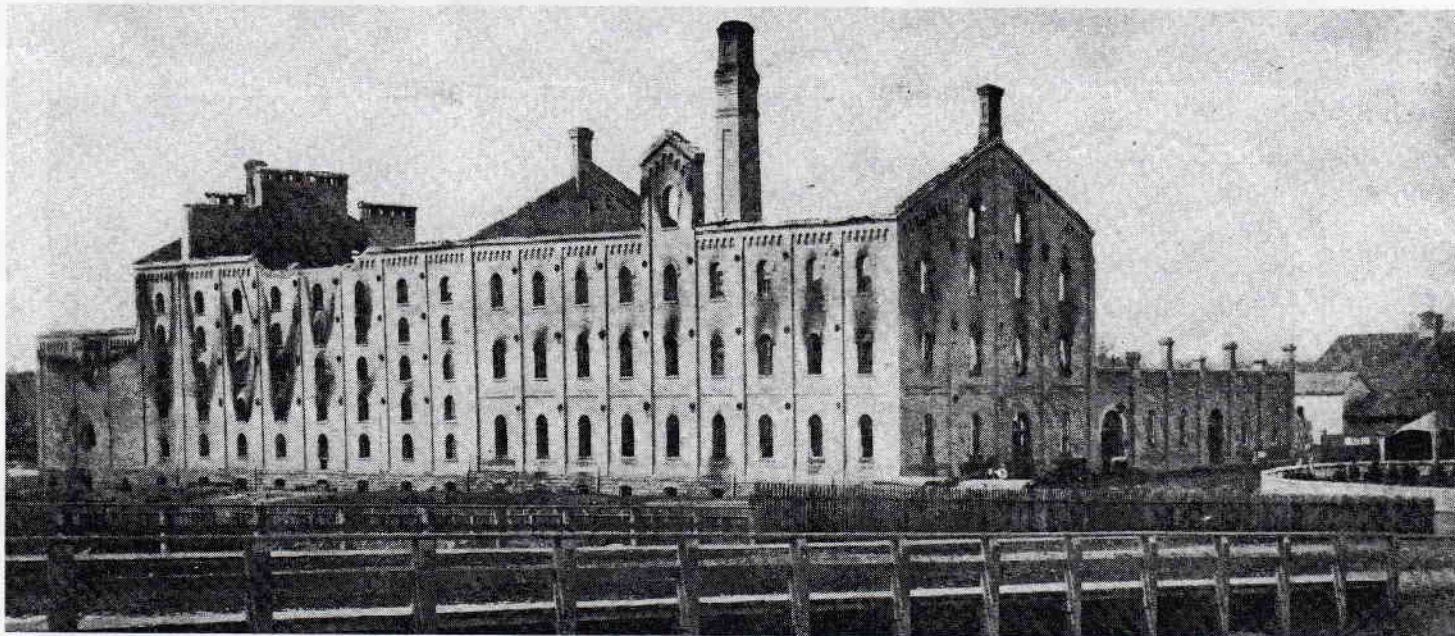
Fresh supply in bottles kept by all Grocers and the trade generally.

CARLING & CO.

ORDERS SOLICITED.

The joy of opening their new plant on April 10, 1878 was short lived. On February 13, 1879, "a severe fire occurred. The fire raged throughout the night and the next day. At one point the fire seemed to have been beaten down, but then a gigantic explosion probably in the malting tower tore the entire centre out of the building and reignited the inferno. William Carling worked desperately with hundreds of volunteers to save the building, but with little success. From exhaustion and exposure, he (William) contracted pneumonia and died within the next two weeks."

This picture of the smoke streaked shell that some how remained standing two days after the maelstrom swept through it, grimly indicates the Carlings' loss. That loss was even deeper as estimates of the cost of rebuilding were set at \$ 100,000 but just \$60,000 was covered by insurance. How could the company even contemplate any positive future?



The recovery started with reopening the City Brewery and producing Carling products there while fundraising and rebuilding took place at the new site. John supervised the rebuilding of the brewery, managing to restart operations in April 1879. In the first month of operation, the new plant was able to produce 150,000 gallons of ale, lager, and porter.

Probably desperate to find new sources of income due to the rebuilding costs, Carling and Company bought the Rogers & Hughes Forrest Brewery in Cleveland, Ohio. To further attach the reputation and mystique of Carlings to this venture they renamed it The London Brewery and brewed Carling's ale, porter and brown stout there. These would not be the same as the brews created in London, Ontario as the technology and science did not exist to allow it.

The 1883 brewery trade card with the Phoenix symbolizing for "rising from the ashes" celebrates the occasion of the Carling's brewery rebuilding. This card also indicates a major change in the management structure of Carlings, which became the Carling Brewing and Malting Company in order to deal with the financial stresses brought on by the costs of rebuilding.

The Carling Brewing & Malting Co. was incorporated on December 1, 1882. It was a major change from a family owned brewery to a private stock company. It came about with the death of Joseph Dalton and John's heavy involvement in federal politics on top of William's death earlier creating a leadership gap. The deal saw a number of prominent locals selected for what they could add to the business as well as their money for stock added to the board, but with John and his son holding 80% of the stock. Carling personal debts from rebuilding were wiped out.



