

WHITE SWAN BREWERY

FORMATION OF HAWKES BAY BREWERY COMPANY.(Limited)

On July 13th. 1868 it was reported that Mr Gary who had previously been commissioned by the Provincial Council to drill an artesian well in the borough of Napier had struck water, and that a good flow was produced. The well was situated in Edwards Street opposite the Napier Hotel about 20 meters West in from Hastings Street.

On July 27th.1868 the following notice appeared in the Hawkes Bay Herald.

NOTICE

Proposed New Company to be called =

THE HAWKES BAY BREWERY COMPANY (Limited)
Capital 1,000 Pounds in 100 shares of 10 pounds each. The first call not to exceed 5 pounds per share. Persons desirous of taking shares

in this company, or requiring information will please apply to the =

Provisional Secretary;
A D. Corfield, at
SWANS Hotel,
Napier.

N.B. Early application is necessary as only a limited number of shares are now open for allotment.

On September 21st. 1868 another notice was published in the Herald.

NOTICE
HAWKES BAY BREWERY COMPANY

Notice to shareholders

A call of 5 pounds per share having been decided on by the Managing Committee it is requested that the above amount be paid at once into the Company's account at the Bank of New Zealand, Napier, or to the Secretary:

A.D. Corfield,
SWANS Hotel,
Napier.

The Brewery was established on the South West corner of Edwards and Hastings Street beside the Artesian well recently sunk by Mr Garry.

The Hawkes Bay Times May 24th 1869.

NOTICE

THE HAWKES BAY BREWERY COMPANY

A meeting of directors will be held this day, Monday at half past 2 o'clock at the companys office: Business very important.

G. H. Swan.

The Hawkes Bay Times May 31st. 1869.

NOTICE

THE HAWKES BAY BREWERY COMPANY.

Mr. G.A. Lamont has ceased to be secretary to the company, and Mr. H.E. Webb has been appointed secretary and accountant Pro-Term.

By Orders of Directors

After Mr Webb had taken over as Accountant - Secretary for the brewery a thorough examination of the books was made and a number of fraudulent discreptencies discovered in the order books. It appears that Lamont could not account for all goods ordered by him and charged to the company. It was proved by some directors that he had been ordering goods, charging them to the company, then having them delivered to his own residence.

The Hawkes Bay Herald June 10th. 1869.

NOTICE

In compliance with a requisition to the effect an EXTROADINARY GENERAL MEETING of Shareholders of the company will be held at Mr Hastie's Albion Hotel, Napier, of Thursday evening on the 17th, instance at 7 o'clock for the following purposes:

- (1) To elect directors in place of those who have resigned, and of those who have sold their shares in the company.
- (2) To ascertain from directors the present position of the affairs of the company and the manner in which they have been conducted thereto.

H. E. WEBB
Company Secretary,
June 10th. 1869.

For the purpose of the above advertisement it is requested
that all claims against the company incurred to date be sent to
the undersigned by Saturday next the 12th. instant.

H. E. WEBB.
Company Secretary.

The Hawkes Bay Times September 27th, 1869.

NOTICE

THE HAWKES BAY BREWERY COMPANY (Limited)

THE first Annual General Meeting will be held in Mr Hastie's
Albion Hotel at 7 pm on Thursday 30th September 1869.

H.E. WEBB,
Secretary.

The brewery was in production for just over 12 months when
disaster struck. At Midnight on the 3rd of November 1869 the
brewery was destroyed by fire under very suspicious circumstances.
A full enquiry was reported on November 11th. 1869. =

ENQUIRY INTO THE CAUSE OF THE LATE FIRE AT
THE HAWKES BAY BREWERY COMPANY'S ESTABLISHMENT

An inquest was held at 2pm on Tuesday 9th instant, at the Napier Hotel in the White Road to examine into the cause of the fire, which at midnight on the 3rd of November, destroyed the premises of the = HAWKES BAY BREWERY COMPANY.

Joseph HAMON deposed: " I am a Maltster, employed by the Hawkes Bay Brewery Copmpany. On Wednesday the 3rd. I left the Brewery at 5-30 pm., and returned with my father at 9 pm. I turned the malt which was drying, and then made up the fire with the usual fuel, coke with ashes".

"At 10 pm. my father went away leaving me alone in the bilding. I went to bed and put the candle out. I always slept in the building. I was awakened about 11 pm by the barking of dogs, and heard a voice outside call "Smith". I opened the door and found Vining, the night watchman. He told me he smelt an unusual smell about the place, as if something was burning. I smelt nothing but the malt, but I examined the whole of the inside of the premises. I examined the fire, and looked into the kiln but could not find anything wrong, nor smell anything unusual so I returned to bed and went to sleep. We were making porter malt for the first time, I had been told that it required more heat than ordinary malt, but I had no more fire than usual".

"I was again awakened in about half an hour, as near as I can judge, by the dogs barking. I saw fire rushing between the weatherboarding and the sides of the kiln. The flames were as high as the kiln. I took the iron used for stirring the fire, and went with it to the top of the kiln to try to extinguish the flames, but I saw it was perfectly useless. The kiln was separated from any woodwork by at least fourteen inches at its nearest part. I got down and went and called Mr Smith telling him the place was on fire".

"From the appearance of the fire I think it originated at the bottom, outside. I made the fires up about 10 o'clock. There was no possibility of fire communicating to the building from the kiln, even if the malt had taken fire. The malt was not burning when I got on the kiln - the fire was confined to the weatherboards".

"The premises caught fire about two weeks before, nearly in the same place. On that occasion I was in bed. It was about midnight, and Smith and I found the fire and put it out. It had every appearance of being done wilfully. A portion of the stone-work had on that occasion been knocked away, to allow access to the under part of the building. I never heard anyone threaten to burn the building down. It had been raining for some days before the building was burned down".

GEORGE SMITH deposed; "I am a Brewer employed by the brewery.

On Wednesday night I was awakened by Hamon between 11 and 12 o'clock. I ran to the brewery forgetting to take my keys. I saw the place was on fire. The fire was then at the South-West corner of the Malthouse, about 5 feet from the kiln. The weather-boarding was on fire and the flames were above the roof. I ran back and got my keys. I opened the front door and got the books from the room where they were kept. The fire had by that time extended from the malthouse to the brewery, and spread too quickly for anything else to be saved. In about a quarter of an hour the whole building was destroyed."

"We had been making porter malt for the first time in the brewery. It was being made under my superintendance; I had often made porter malt before. It requires a little more heat than ordinary malt. I had watched the kiln during the day, and before I left the brewery, at about 10 o'clock I looked at the kiln above and below, checked the fire a little, and saw that everything was safe. During the day I had smelt the malt parching, but nothing unusual".

"The kiln was of the best construction, the walls were from 16 inches to 5 feet thick, and the top of the kiln was about 15 inches from the woodwork. It was not possible for the building to catch fire from the kiln, and it is my firm conviction that it was set on fire from the outside".

"I HAVE HEARD THREATS used by Mr McFARLANE the proprietor of the Napier Hotel, that he would burn the place down. He has also threatened that he would smash the company and that he would beggar me and have me on the hill. We were not very good friends. He threatened twice to burn the place down, but he has threatened to ruin the company a dozen times. He used to, when I was going to the brewery sometimes to follow me as far as the artesion well, or the brewery gate threatening me. I have known him to come out at 3 o'clock in the morning to threaten me".

"About 3 weeks ago an attempt was made to burn the building by setting it on fire from the outside; but I discovered the fire in time to put it out. I saw Inspector Scully next day find some rope yarn similar to that produced thrust in between the wall plate and the weather boards. Some of it had been burnt".

"I did not see Mr McFarlane on the night of the fire. I believe that if I had been 10 minutes later on that occasion I could not have saved the building, for the flames were then four feet in height. I have no doubt that the fire was the act of an incendiary. I do not know if Mr McFarlane was sober or not when he made the threats, but I am pretty sure he was on one Sunday morning when he followed me to the brewery threatening me".

H. STEVENS deposed: I built the kiln for the Hawkes bay Brewery Company. I had built several others before; this one was quite perfect in its construction, and it would be quite impossible

for fire to communicate from it to the brewery. I know McFarlane. About the 5th or 6th of September I was passing his hotel and he called me over, and showed me some of Hartleys beer (Another Brewery) that he was pouring out of a cask. He said it was a pity that the Hawkes Bay Brewery Company could no make something of that quality. He then pointed to the brewery and said that he would put a F'n clew on it. He said he would also put a clew on Smith in less than a month. This was about dinner time, and he seemed quite sober".

A Mr S.F. Morley was then examined but could give no information on the subject.

GEORGE CLIFTON deposed: "I know nothing about this fire. About a fortnight ago one Saturday night I saw a row on the white road between Smith and McFarlane. I was passing the brewery about 11pm with a young man, when we saw a bright light through the window. I remarked to me companion that Smith is in the brewery. He said No! I have just left him at home. He went for Smith but before they came back the light went out and I saw McFarlane come out of the brewery by the second door at the side. He passed by the artesian well. I spoke to him and he answered. I saw no candle in his hand. "Smith came up and there was a row. He asked McFarlane what business he had being there, and McFarlane said he would go where he liked. He said he would give Smith a belting. He also said that the brewery should not be having water from the artesian well. There were more words and they came to blows. This was all sorted out in the court afterwards".

JOSEPH HAMON deposed: "I am secretary to the Hawkes Bay Brewery Company. I accompanied my son through the brewery on Wednesday night, about 9'clock, but did not see anything unusual. I stayed about an hour, and all appeared safe when I left".

JAMES VINING deposed: "I am a private watchman. On the night of the 3rd. inst. I was in Hasting Street and smelt fire. The wind was south - westerly so I went up the White Road. I smelt it stronger as I went up the White Road. I went on until I passed the brewery, when I lost it. I went to call Smith but did not succeed in getting him up. I then knocked at the Brewery and Joseph Hamon came to the door in his night shirt. I told him I smelt something burning and advised him to look around. I did not investigate myself when I found that someone was in charge of the premises. I went away. I have never heard anyone use any threats about the brewery".

EDWARD HOWEL was duly sworn but could only state that he was aroused at midnight by the cry of "fire" and saw the brewery in flames.

THE JURY, after a lengthy deliberation, brought in a verdict that the fire originated from causes unknown.

After the enquiry most shareholders were not prepared to retain their shares in the company. Soon after the insurance had been settled the shares of a large proportion of shareholders were purchased by George SWAN a director of the Company; also the late proprietor of Macs Hotel. (Empire Hotel) By the time the brewery had been rebuilt Swan owned a majority of the shares of the Co. When it reopened later that year it was named SWAN BREWERY and later The WHITE SWAN BREWERY.

In 1874 a large addition was made to the brewery facing the white road to accommodate covered fresh water baths that had been built by the brewery utilising water from borough well in Edwards Street.

An Advertisement Saturday February 14th. 1880.
LUCRATIVE BUSINESS FOR SALE

ONLY SMALL CAPITAL REQUIRED. TERMS EASY

THE business of the Napier Bottling Cellars is to be disposed of on easy terms. Immediate possession will be given.

For particulars apply to:-

G. H. SWAN. at -
White Swan Brewery.

P.S. All debts due to the above business are to be paid to G. H. SWAN, or to his agent.

The premises known as the Napier Bottling Cellars, situated in Shakespeare Road just down from the Coote Road intersection, was owned and leased out by George Henry Swan. When the occupier Robert George GIBBONS, Brewer & Bottler, was declared bankrupt in March 1880 the business was purchased by a former traveller for the company, Messrs Mr T. H. Gifford.

On February 2nd. 1884 Edward Newbiggin inserted the following notice in the Hawkes Bay Herald.

TENDERS

Tenders will be received by the undersigned up to 4pm on Thursday 5th. instant, for the erection of a building 16 X 24, labour only. Plans and specifications on application.

E. Newbiggin.

White Swan Brewery.

On February 26th.1884, Messrs Newbigin & Co advertised that they had commenced business as Bottlers adjoining the White Swan Brewery. Mr Edward Newbigin was no stranger to Napier having been employed at Mr Swans brewery since 1874; the last five years as brewer to the company. He was said to have had a reputation for courtesy and attention to business which would stand him in good stead in his new venture.

At a meeting of the Borough Council on Thursday February 7th. 1884 the following letter was read and tabled by the chairman of the Public Works

Committee. It was from George Swan in response to the number of complaints received from the public who protested about the free use of water by the White Swan Brewery and the swimming baths operated by the brewery.

LETTER

Napier 6th. February 1884.

His Worship the Mayor and Borough Councillors;

Gentlemen, - I see by the newspaper report of the last Public Works Committee meeting that it is to be recommended that the artesian well in Edwards Street be taken possession of by the Corporation and that I am to be required to pay for water by meter. I beg to call your attention to the following facts with regard to the matter: -

In 1869 a resolution was passed by the directors of the Hawkes Bay Brewery Company that: In consideration of the Provincial Government guaranteeing the company the perpetual right to the

use of the well, they would pay for that privilege the sum of forty pounds. This was done and an agreement was drawn up by Mr Cuff on behalf of the company and signed by the Superintendent on behalf of the Provincial Government.

On February 28th. 1884 an item in the Hawkes Bay herald mentioned that:-

Messrs Newbiggin & Co have commenced business as bottlers adjoining the White Swan Brewery. They have forwarded us a sample of their Pale Ale brewed by Mr Swan. It is a well brewed, pleasant light dinner ale, and should meet with a large sale. Mr Newbiggin is no stranger in Napier, having been employed at Mr Swans brewery for many years past, and he has a reputation for courtesy and attention which will stand him in good stead in his new venture.

The Hawkes Bay Herald January 28th.

1887.

There was a very pleasant gathering at the White Swan brewery last evening, when his worship the Mayor (Mr George Swan) gave an invitation ball and supper to celebrate the coming of age of his eldest son, Mr George John Swan. There was a large attendance of friends of the host and hostess, fully 150 ladies and gentlemen being present.

The festivities were conducted in the large malthouse, which was beautifully decorated for the occasion with evergreens, flowers flags, Ect, and illuminated by rows of coloured lanterns suspended from the roof. Music was provided by Mrs Morrison (piano) and Mr Sorrell (violin), who succeeded in thoroughly pleasing the many dancers. For non-dancers card rooms were fitted up, and were utilised by many prominent citizens who love a quite rubber

occasionally.

The supper provided was on the most lavish scale, all the delicacies of the season being on the tables in great profusion, and the desert including all the varieties of fruit procurable in the district. In addition to the dancing there were songs at intervals by some of the guests, and nothing was wanting calculated to make the gathering what it proved to be, a most enjoyable one throughout.

The toast of the evening was felicitously proposed by Mr H. Williams, who, on behalf of the company expressed his good wishes for Mr G. H. Swans welfare in well chosen words. The toast was enthusiastically honoured, and was responded to in suitable terms.

The toast of the host and hostess was also cordially honoured, and served to show the respect in which his worship the Mayor is held.

During the evening Mr Newbiggin, on behalf of the brewery employees (all of whom were present) presented Mr G. J. Swan with a handsome gold Albert & chain as a token of their respect and esteem, the presentation being made in very feeling terms, and similarly responded to.

At midnight the party sat down to supper, after which dancing was recommenced, and lasted till an early hour this morning.

In December 1893 shortly after returning to Napier from a visit to England, Edward Newbiggin purchased the St. Aubyn Brewery at Hastings from George Ellis. On January 31st. 1893 he took possession of the Brewery.

In January 1899 the white Swan swimming baths closed.

THE HAWK BREWERY COMPANY.
CONSOLIDATED BREWERY COMPANY.

The HAWK BREWERY COMPANY was established on the 29th April 1926 on the site of the old Swan Brewery on the South-Western corner of Edward and Hastings Street.

On the 10th. of August 1927, the name was changed to the Consolidated Brewery Company.

The main part of the Brewery premises were severely damaged in the 1931 Hawkes Bay earthquake.

On the 25th. January 1933 transferred back to the Hawk Brewery Company and the company liquidated by the Public Trustee's Office.