



OCTOBER
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Morgan's Corner

by Morgan Conner

Well, here I am, my final newsletter as Guildmaster. It feels a little weird, knowing I won't have to write this column anymore. I really don't have much to say this time anyway. The Guild ranking system is in place (see Runwynn's article). Ducal Prize is over, and I've already written the next installment of my grains article. I'll let Ceolgar talk about everything else.

I'm wrong. I do need to set up the October Crown field trip to St. Stan's Brewery. Tentatively, it will be on Friday evening, but I'll have to verify this. If you would like to attend, please drop me a postcard soon.

Donations from the Brewers' Guild to Ducal Prize helped raise over \$300 at auction for the Land Fund, but only half of the donations were sold at auction.

Finally, I would like to thank a number of people as I step down as Guildmaster. Thanks to Juana Isabella (Grun) for sound advice when we were just starting the Guild, to Eirik Ulfsson for starting the newsletter, to Laura Rydal of Grassmere for autocratting our war with the Bud Dogs of the Westermarck, to Eoin for hosting Guild meetings, to Runwynn of Amberglen for the exceptional job she is doing with the newsletter, to Iamov and Ciombady for giving us the proper perspective on things, to all you brewers out there who have participated and have made this a great Guild, and to Ceolgar who has been my right, no make that my left (I drink with my right) arm for the past two years. Ceolgar has the tough job of making things work, so please, let's all support him as he settles into his new job as Guildmaster.

For all of the Guild, HIP HIP HURRAH, HIP HIP HURRAH, HIP HIP HURRAH!

A Plea From the Far West

by Baroness Chryse Raptres

I am very interested in any information you would have not only on cordials but also on non-alcoholic brews.

My Lord husband, Simon d'Este of Mantua, has directed me to find late-period beverages that we can serve at the ball we will be hosting in November. I'm certain that cider, mulled cider and mulled wine would be acceptable, but it is usually quite warm here even in late November. Can you suggest some cool beverages we might be able to throw together for our fete?

Editor's note: Fermenting is legally proscribed in the Far West.

The Medieval Brewer

by Master Titus of Wormwood

The following are excerpts concerning brewing from *Life in a Medieval Village* by Frances and Joseph Gies.

This is an informative book about life in a 13th-century English Village named Elton. It tells about the Medieval villager (villein and freeman alike), how they lived, how they loved, how they worked, and how they played. It tells of their quality of life, their service to their lord (and church), and the conditions they lived under.

"The thirteenth-century villager was a cultivator rather than a herdsman because his basic need was subsistence, which meant food and drink produced from grain. His aim was not exactly self-sufficiency, but self-supply of the main necessities of life. These were bread, pottage or porridge, and ale. Because his wheat went almost exclusively to the market, his food and drink crops were barley and oats. Most peasant bread was made from 'maslin,' a mixture of wheat and rye or barley and rye, baked into a coarse dark loaf weighing four pounds or more, and consumed in great quantities by men, women, and children.

"For the poorer peasant families . . . pottage was favored over bread as more economical, since it required no milling and therefore escaped both the miller's extraction and the natural loss of quantity in the process. Barley grains destined for pottage were allowed to sprout in a damp, warm place, then were boiled in the pot. Water could be drawn off, sweetened with honey, and drunk as barley water, or allowed to ferment into beer. Peas and bean supplied scarce protein and amino acids to both pottage and bread."

The book goes on to describe what they did for fun when not working in the field (for their lord and for themselves) and during their few and far between holidays.

"Yet the favorite adult recreation of the villagers was undoubtedly drinking. Both men and women gathered in the 'tavern,' usually meaning the house of a neighbor who had recently brewed a batch of ale, cheap at the established price of three gallons for a penny. There they passed the evening like modern villagers visiting the local pub. Accidents, quarrels, and acts of violence sometimes followed a session of drinking, in the thirteenth century as in subsequent ones."

"Every village not only had its brewers, but had them all up and down the street. Many if not most of them were craftswomen (virtually all in Elton). Ale was as necessary to life in an English medieval village as bread, but where flour-grinding and bread baking were strictly guarded seigneurial monopolies, brewing was everywhere freely permitted and freely practiced. How the lords came to overlook this active branch of industry is a mystery (although they found a way to profit from it by fining the brewers for weak ale or faulty measure). Not only barley (etymologically related to beer) but oats and wheat were used, along with malt, as principal ingredients. The procedure was to make a batch of ale,

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The Medieval Brewer, Cont.

display a sign, and turn one's house into a temporary tavern. Some equipment was needed; principally a large cauldron, but this did not prevent poor women from brewing. All twenty-three persons indicted by the Elton ale tasters in 1279 were women. Seven were pardoned because they were poor."

Each village had its own officials, chosen from the local populace. The headman was the Reeve, who was responsible for making sure everyone did his "week-work" (labor obligation of a villein to his lord). Other officials were the Beadle or Hayward (the Reeves assistant) and the Woodward.

"One set of officials no village was ever without was the ale tasters, who assessed the quality and monitored the price of ale brewed for sale to the public. This . . . was the only village office ever filled by women, who did most of the brewing."

"A village woman, however, ran a much greater risk of being fined for her brewing than for her dallying. '[Allota] is a common brewer at a penny and sometimes at a halfpenny, and sold before the tasting [by the village ale tasters] and sometimes made [the ale] weak. Therefore [she is] in mercy two shillings.' 'Alice wife of Blythe [sold] three times at a halfpenny and a penny, sometimes weak ale, and sold before the tasting, did not bring her measures [to be checked]. Twelve pence.' 'Matilda Abovebrook at a halfpenny and a penny, sometimes weak ale, she sells before the tasting, did not bring her measures. Six-pence.' Sometimes the lengthy list of women (only six men ever appear among Elton brewers) is simply put down in the court record with the fine noted. The unfailing frequency of the ale fines has led to a conjecture that the assize of ale was a sort of back-door license fee collected by the lord in lieu of the monopoly he had failed to obtain in this important branch of village business. At the same time, the very number of home brewers makes credible a need for government regulation, while the fines varied and the charges differed: the ale is 'weak,' 'not of full value,' 'not worth the money,' and measures are not sealed, the price is too high. Enforcement of standards for price and quality was of value to consumers, and the insistence on checking brewers' measures indicates serious purpose."

I hope this give you a new perspective on medieval brewing and its place in the villager's life. If you wish to learn more about medieval life I highly recommend this book and others by Frances and Joseph Gies:

Marriage and the Family in the Middle Ages

Women in the Middle Ages

Life in a Medieval Castle

Merchants and Moneymen

Life in a Medieval City

by Frances Gies:

The Knight in History

Joan of Arc

Grains Part Two

by Morgan Conner

In this installment, I'll discuss the specialty malts used in making beer. This article will also include the use of grain adjuncts such as corn or wheat, and how they affect the final product.

Specialty malts are employed by the brewer to add a special flavor or character to the beer. When we sit around at Guild meetings tasting and talking about our brews, we talk quite a bit about the effects (color, aroma, and body) derived from these malts. Many beer styles owe their existence to specialty malts, in particular, dark beers such as stouts and bocks. (That's right Ceolgar, there would be no "Asskick").

There are two ways the homebrewer can treat these malts during the brewing process, if he/she is brewing from extracts. First of all, though, the malted grain must be crushed to allow for the extraction of the grain's character. It is very important that the grain is not ground too fine, since this can create problems with filtering and haziness. Once the grain has been crushed, the brewer can 1) boil the grains in the wort, or 2) prepare a preliminary extract. If the brewer is mashing his/her own grain, the specialty malts can be added to the mash. In boiling the grain, the result will be satisfactory, but there may be some astringency present and a chill haze may result. These possible problems are not always noticeable, and will mellow with age. To eliminate these potential problems, a preliminary extract should be prepared by placing the crushed grains in cold water and bringing them to a boil. The grains can then be strained out of the liquid. The time required to boil the cold water is long enough to extract the character of the specialty grains. By mashing the grains in the regular mash, the extraction is complete (but more on that later). The best method to use depends on several factors, namely, the type of grain being used, how the brewer makes his/her beer (mash vs. extract), and how much time the brewer wants to spend.

Now I'll talk a little bit about the different kinds of specialty malts. There are approximately six types: Black Patent, Chocolate, Crystal (also known as Caramel), Roasted, Dextrine, and Munich. Black Patent is prepared by roasting malted barley at high temperature to drive off all the malt flavor (aromatics). This malt will give the beer a dark color, and when used in excess, will impart a dry burnt flavor that sometimes seems bitter in taste. This malt also has no enzymes.

Chocolate malt is produced by roasting the malted barley, but not as long as Black Patent. It will impart a lighter color, and some sweetness and aromatics. Chocolate malt is also noted for a characteristic nutty, toasted flavor. Like Black Patent, this malt has no enzymes.

Crystal malt is made from "green malt"—malt that has not been kiln dried (see part one of this article on malting). The malt is made by drying wet germi-

Grains, Cont.

nated barley at a controlled temperature for a short time, then it is mashed in its own grain by raising the temperature to 212 degrees F. Thus the starch is converted to sugar, and at these high temperatures, is in a liquid state. As the malt cools, the sugar crystallizes. Not all of the soluble starches in the grain will ferment, so use of this specialty malt will sweeten the beer. It will also increase the body, add color, and will aid in head retention. This malt also has no enzymes present, since like Black Patent and Chocolate malts it has been roasted at high temperatures.

The next specialty malt is not a malt, but a grain. Roasted barley is exactly what the name implies—roasted (unmalted) barley, made by roasting barley while gradually increasing the temperature to over 392 degrees F. The grain is constantly sampled and turned to prevent burning. Surprisingly, the grain is not black, but a rich dark brown color possessing an assertive, roasted flavor. This grain is an important component in making stout, imparting a distinct roasted flavor, as well as significant color to both beer and foam. This grain also has no enzymes present.

The last two malts are Dextrine and Munich, both of which must be mashed, although they can be used in extract beers. Dextrine has no enzymes, so it should be used with malts containing enzymes, such as pale malted barley. Use of Dextrine malts will add to a fuller bodied beer and better head retention. Munich malt, on the other hand, contains its own enzymes, so it can be mashed alone. Munich malts give an amber color and malty sweetness to the beer.

As you can see, most of these malts do not contain enzymes, or much in the way of fermentable sugars, so they really are used just for modifying the beer's character. The use of the mashing process with these malts will ensure starch conversion of any fermentables present, and will avoid problems caused by boiling the grain. If you are strictly an extract brewer, don't change it if it ain't broke.

Now I'll talk a little about grain adjuncts. For the adventurous brewer, a wide range of grain additives can be used to change the characteristics of the beer, while adding fermentables. These grains include (but are not limited to) Barley, Corn, Rice, Oats, Rye, Potato, Millet, and Wheat. I'll try to keep this short (sorry, Runwynn).

Unmalted barley will aid in head retention, but should not be used in light beers, since it can cause clarity problems. The barley should be milled is not of the flaked variety, and all forms should be cooked to ensure gelatinization and a complete starch conversion during the mash.

Corn can be used to lighten the body and flavor of beer. Again, the corn must be in a gelatinized form and then added to the mash. It can usually be found in the form of corn starch, flaked corn, or corn grits.

Rice is easily gelatinized at mashing temperatures, but I could find no information as to its effect on beer. Anyone want to try it?

Raw potatoes, chopped or sliced, can be easily added to the mash and gelatinized. They really do not add anything to the beer except more fermentables. Precooking may be used to ensure starch conversion.

Millet is used in many parts of Asia where it is abundant. Unfortunately, millet contains a large amount of oils and fats, which can go rancid and ruin a beer.

Wheat. Ah, probably the most promising grain used in brewing outside of barley. Both malted and unmalted wheat can be used in brewing. Malted wheat can be ground and added to the mash like malted barley, but must be used with a high enzyme malted barley due to its low enzyme content. Unmalted wheat in flaked or flour form can be added directly to the mash, although precooking is advisable. Wheat is used to aid head retention and foam stability, and to lighten body and flavor. Like unmalted barley, unmalted wheat can increase haziness in the finished beer, as well as inhibit straining during sparging.

News From Purgatorio

by the Chronicler

At Purgatorio we held a Brewers' Guild meeting. Of course we did some tasting. Ceolgar shared three beers which had been brewed identically (actually in the same 15-gallon pot) which had then been split into three 5-gallon fermenters and pitched with different yeasts. It was an interesting example of the difference the type of yeast can make in the flavor of a beer, since each beer was distinctively different.

Runwynn passed around her amber ale, an attempt at a full-bodied but light beer. She lost points on documentation because she forgot to bring her brew record with her, so was a little hazy on exactly what she had put in this one. Morgan shared a doppelbock and a smoked malt ale. He used his barbecue and hickory chips to smoke the malt for the latter. Eoin let us sample his lager which was quite nice.

After we were sufficiently inspired, or lubricated, we discussed the Guild rankings once more. Everyone seems well in agreement with the first three levels of Apprentice, Journeyman, Craftsman as outlined in the Special Purgatorio Edition of this newsletter. For those of you who might have missed it:

Apprentice: just wants to play, donates one tax unit per year;

Journeyman: proficient in one style, has performed one public service work, and donates three tax units yearly;

Craftsman: proficient in two styles, has performed three public services, donates six tax units.

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News from Purgatorio Cont.

We tackled the more weighty question of what constitutes a master. I'll try to recreate some of the action:

Background: Early talks had worked out acceptable qualifications (after a fair amount of revision) for the initial levels. We had yet to agree on how to define a master. Morgan suggests the similarity of a Laurel for brewing. Runwynn counters with the concept of continuing the qualifications.

Eoin points out the advantage of peer review in selection to master, and suggests that it should be more than a straight point system. It was also well agreed that our rankings should be our own and not tied to Kingdom Peerages. We agreed that a Master should be more than a Craftsman (although at least that) and agreed that the Craftsmen should decide who among them deserves to be elevated to the rank of Master. Since we have no ranks at all as yet, we will necessarily have no Masters until we have sufficient Craftsmen to make a quorum. It was put forth and agreed upon that there should be at least five Craftsmen before a Master can be named. Once there are Masters they should be consulted as to admitting other Masters to their ranks, but it is truly the Craftsmen who know when one among them has surpassed their level, and it is they who should nominate someone to the level of Master. This should be a cautious decision, perhaps no more than one Master should be named each year.

Both Morgan and Ceolgar are anxious to define these Guild structures before the office of Guildmaster changes hands this October Crown. If you have an opinion let it be known now!

A Source for Oak Barrels

*by Duncan Saxthorpe of Alnwick,
energetic Apprentice of the Brewers' Guild*

The Oak Barrel Winecraft company in Berkeley keeps a stock of new oak barrels for wine aging. Although the prices may vary by plus or minus 20% depending upon cost and shipping fees, the owner says he can usually get these sizes:

1 gallon, \$45, 2 gallon \$55, 3 gallon \$65, 5 gallon 85, 10 gallon \$100, 15 gallon \$130, 20 gallon \$150, 30 gallon \$170.

This store also sells the "soda can" 5-gallon stainless steel containers with CO2 supply and dispensing tap for \$250 per complete set. Extra new cans are \$85 and used ones (when available) are \$45. The owner spoke highly of this system, as he believes that draft homebrew is clearly superior to the bottled kind.

Oak Barrel Winecraft, 1443 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley CA 94702 (510) 849-0400.

Brewing as a Lifestyle

by Ciombady Huato Nobedar

A lot of you may think you are brewers, but the following quiz will show whether brewing is really a major part of your life.

1. Your brewery is in:
 - A. your friend's house
 - B. your kitchen
 - C. kitchen? What's a kitchen?
2. A housemate has used your brewpot for cooking food. You:
 - A. say, "Wow, thanks for the food!"
 - B. slaughter him/her instantly
 - C. (See "B" above, and) buy another brewpot and perform mystical ceremonies to rid your brewery of such sacrilege
3. Fruit trees ripen in your general vicinity. You think:
 - A. Gee, old Ms Jones will have a tough time sweeping up her patio with all those plums falling on it
 - B. Gee, I should ask Ms Jones if I can use her extra plums to make cordials
 - C. Gee, it's time to break out that plum cordial to share with Ms Jones, and time to gather up this year's crop
4. Your concoctions are allowed to age fully in:
 - A. You're supposed to age this stuff?
 - B. A cool dark place
 - C. The wine cellar of course, sniff!
5. When you go to an event:
 - A. You think about bringing something good to drink
 - B. You bring some of your own homebrew
 - C. You pack 30 gallons of brew and your lady asks if you're sure that will be enough
6. Someone mentions the Brewers' Guild Newsletter. You say:
 - A. There's a Brewers' Guild?
 - B. Yeah, that was a great issue, wasn't it?
 - C. Did you read my article/like my art?
7. A fermentation blows up its bottle. You say:
 - A. Yuck, what a mess
 - B. Oh no, that was going to be a good brew!
 - C. How interesting, I wonder which component of the fermenting process could have produced that reaction?

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Brewing as a Lifestyle, Cont.

8. The hops you last used were:
 - A. Yeah, I used some hops
 - B. Whatever's ripe in the backyard or on sale at the homebrew shop at the moment
 - C. The exact complement of beta versus alpha resins for this particular recipe
9. When you meet another brewer you say:
 - A. Greetings, gotta go, I'll get back to you
 - B. Greetings, got any homebrew?
 - C. Greetings, I've just got to tell you about this new technique I discovered, it reminds me of a situation you were telling me about last event. Have you got an hour or so? [conversation continues interminably, using a multitude of arcane but specific terminology, growing more fevered but less coherent with every homebrew, for many late hours.]
10. A potential brewer approaches you. You say:
 - A. Greetings, gotta go, I'm invited to a tasting/dinner/social-situation cause I'm a bitchen Brewer and you aren't. Bye
 - B. Oh, so you're a brewer too, have you ever tried . . . [it goes on from here]
 - C. Hey, you're a brewer too! Join me in the tasting/dinner/social-situation that the Brewers' Guild has been invited to. [it also goes on from here but with more convivial and well-lubricated results]

Obviously, the correct answer in all cases is C. If you didn't figure that out right away, you're stupid. But since you probably presumed that you were supposed to choose that response that best suited you (although I never said that—see how programmed you are) I'll give my version of the results. (Some people would assign points and do it mathematically. I haven't, ha ha.)

If you answered A to any question, you need work—a lot of work. This quiz has identified the areas where you need to improve. Don't bother coming to my camp (if you can even find it in your state) until you've resolved these problems.

If you got at least a B average on these questions that's OK, you have potential, and again you know the areas that you need to work on. Look for me; if you're properly committed you'll be able to find my camp, and I'll be happy to help teach you.

And if you answered C to every question, seek me out and teach me, because I'm still not that perfect yet.

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