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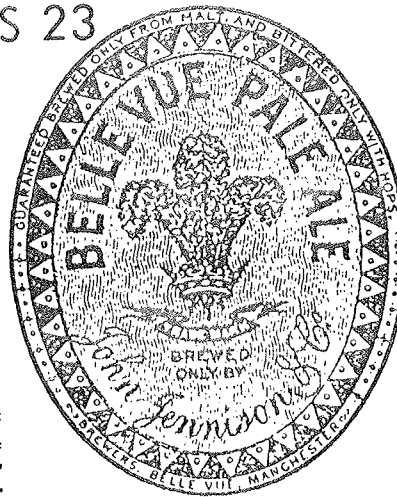
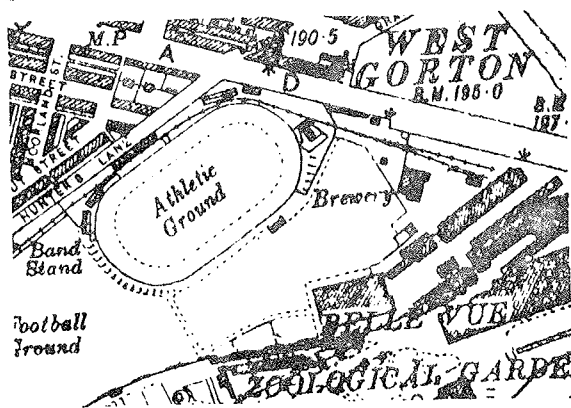
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MANCHESTER BREWERIES 23

John Jennison & Co



The Victorians were responsible for a great variety of interesting, if not always practical, commercial schemes. At Brighton, Magnus Volk constructed a railway which actually ran along the sea bed at high tide (the train was on stilts!), Blackpool acquired a tower and John Jennison founded Belle Vue Zoological Gardens. The first was a resounding flop but Belle Vue, like Blackpool Tower, became a famous attraction. Apart from the sheer magnitude of recreational facilities on offer, the gardens were remarkable for other reasons. In an attempt to make Belle Vue self-contained, Jennison introduced a number of innovations, including building an electricity generating plant at a time when Manchester Corporation had yet to develop a system. Jennison also kept herds of cattle, which could be turned into meat pies in his own bakery; he built a gas works, a printing works, developed a large ice storage business and, naturally, brewed his own beer.

Jennison's first venture was a tea garden at Stockport, opened in 1828. Here he kept a small collection of monkeys and parrots for the amusement of customers. Meanwhile, a Mr John Walker occupied a house and about 36 acres of land on Hyde Road. The only public attraction was a bowling green, known even at that time as Belle Vue Gardens. Walker sold the land to William Crisp in 1833, who added a further plot that had been used for grazing. In 1836 John Jennison bought the land and the Belle Vue House Tavern, and moved in with his monkeys. A couple of years after the first opening of the gardens, the Broughton Zoological Gardens closed down. (Largely for lack of patronage as they were not allowed to open on Sundays) Jennison seized the opportunity to increase the number and variety of animals at Belle Vue, and so created the first successful privately owned zoo in Britain.

Many more people were able to take advantage of the Gardens with the advent of the railways. The western entrance was close to the Longsight station of the L&NWR and about half a mile away stood the Gorton station. Belle Vue Station itself was built on the Central & Midland Railway line.

Exactly when Jennisons first began brewing is uncertain. They never advertised as commercial brewers, possibly because of limited capacity, with only enough to supply the refreshment rooms at the gardens and the few hotels. The Belle Vue House Hotel was supplemented in the mid 1870s by the building of the Midland Hotel and then the Lake Hotel, all within the grounds. They also had an interest in the Waggon & Horses on Hyde Road. Hannah Jennison is listed as licensee in the 1880s and William Jennison was the owner. The brewery, estimated to have been of about 10 quarter size, occupied some 600 square yards in the north eastern corner of the gardens. Apart from the grounds, and the hotels previously mentioned, the brewery did have at least one other outlet. This was a beerhouse called the Garibaldi Inn, which stood on Lees Street in Gorton.

John Jennison & Co was obviously a family concern. In 1910 at least ten members of the family were actively employed, as licensees of the various hotels and in administering the grounds. Angelo Jennison, grandson of the founder, also had another brewing connection. In 1904 he joined the board of directors at John Henry Lees Ltd, based at the Moss Side Brewery. By 1910 he had become managing director of Lees, a post he held until the appointment of a receiver in 1913. Angelo died in 1936 after many years of failing health.

Just before the First World War, Belle Vue Pale Ale cost 3d for a half pint bottle. The same price applied to Allsopp's lager and Murphy's stout, which were also on

sale in the grounds. Bitter beer on draught sold for 2d a glass. The pale ale label shown here dates from 1902, one of the few remaining relics. Brewing is thought to have ceased before 1916 and John Jennison & Co Ltd sold out to Belle Vue (Manchester) Ltd in 1925. John Jennison Junior, a grandson of "Old John", continued to work at the gardens, first as general manager, then as resident works manager. The last surviving member of the Jennison family, Mrs Emily Studholme, died in Sale, aged 86, in May 1958.

Alan Gall

Reproduced from the Camra Newsletter (Manchester branch)

Jennison was the source of numerous exotic creatures donated in the flesh to the museums in the area. They then had the problem of getting the larger ones mounted which was usually done by H. Brazenor of 34 Lloyd Street, Greenheys, Manchester. I do not think he was related to the Brazenor's of Brighton although it is an uncommon name. The best examples of his work were the exhibits at Salford (Buile Hill) Museum. The mounted mammals there were known as the "Brazenor Environmental Collection". These have now been dismantled and dispersed as the result of devoting the Buile Hill building to a museum of mining technology. Brazenor's work can also be seen at Bolton and Manchester, with specimens from Belle Vue Zoo in a large number of cases.

E. G. Hancock.

Dimethyl hydantoin formaldehyde (D.M.H.F.); an alternative mountant for insect genitalia

Although by no means new (see Angus, R. B., 1969, *Entomologist's Mon. Mag.*, 105(1); 2 and Sinclair, M., 1978, *Balfour-Browne Club Newsletter*, No. 10; p.6). D.M.H.F. is not widely known even amongst entomologists. It is a colourless, transparent, water-soluble resin, especially suitable for mounting smaller, more delicate structures, which may be introduced to a bead of the mountant on a card. The bead will set hard in a matter of days, without distortion of the specimen which may be dissolved out with water at any time in the future. One advantage of this substance is that the genitalia can be transferred to it directly from water and this saves considerable time.

D.M.H.F. may be obtained from W. S. Simpson & Co. Ltd., 1-23 Linden Way, Southgate, London N14 4LT and costs about £7.50 for 500 gms. Though to date this mountant has been used mainly by coleopterists it deserves far wider attention.

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British and Irish Herbaria - new edition

The BCG are meeting Douglas Kent and his collaborator David Allen in order to identify and solve any problems of overlap which are concerning some curators. From the curator's point of view (and he or she is quite likely not to be a botanist) an entry for the Collections Research Unit's registers is as much as can be found. Often these can be very detailed;