

BOHEMIAN BREWERIES LIMITED (1889-1907): AN ENGLISH BREWERY IN PRAGUE. PART II

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Operation of the breweries

The general manager in Prague of the English company and its three breweries was Alexander William Wentworth Forbes; on 23 December 1889 the directors gave him authority to represent the company and act on its behalf in Bohemia.¹ He came of a military family - his father was Lieutenant-General George Wentworth Forbes of the Royal Marines - and had later himself the rank of captain. He lived in Liben with his wife Loveday Elizabeth and their young daughter Dorothea; another daughter Majorie Catherine died in 1893, probably in infancy.² In 1898 he was appointed vice-consul and in 1899 British consul in Prague; the consular offices were located at U Štajgrů.³ Thus when in 1898, as part of his vice-consular duties, he issued a notice addressed to all British subjects that Her Majesty the Queen had issued a proclamation enjoining her subjects to observe strict neutrality during the present state of war between Spain and the United States of America, the notice was dated from 'The British Vice-Consulate, Prague, Wassergasse Nr. 34', in other words U Štajgrů. Later in 1899 the consular offices were moved to Stephansgasse 69 (Palais Baron Aehrenthal), next door to U Štajgrů.⁴

Wentworth Forbes was a leading figure among English residents in Prague; thus in 1901, for instance, a certain G. Hampton put an announcement in the newspapers addressed to Charles Brejška in the following terms

Dear Sir! The dinner which followed my Nieces wedding on the 12th instant, at which the English Consul, captain A. Wentworth Forbes was present with many other guests of the English Colony in Prague, was carried out entirely to my

satisfaction and the arrangements were admirable. I schal always have much pleausure in recommending You to my friends.⁵

As regards the individual breweries, at Liben, the head brewers (also described as technical managers) were Eduard Krüzner to 1891 and František Ronz (Ronc) from 1891 (or earlier: he was described as 'brewer' in a nameday greetings notice in October 1889)⁶ until his death in 1894. Krüzner was also technical manager at the other two breweries until 1891.

At U Štajgrů, Krüzner was registered in the Prague register of trades in November 1889 as a pub or restaurant operator, at house 699-2. Registered as brewer (at No. 699-2) and distiller (at No. 630-2) was Robert Gräver



Figure 1. Nameday greetings on St. Francis's day for František Ronz from the staff of the Libeň brewery, *Národní listy*, 4 October 1889.

Johnson, of London, residing at No. 699-2. Krüzner was later also registered as selling beer at house 630-2 and operating a restaurant at house 126-2 (Zlatý soudek, Ostrovní 24); his address remained house 699-2. He was also recorded in the police records as a brewery manager (Brauerei-Direktor) at house 630-II in 1889 and at house 1601-II (Václavské náměstí 55a and Mariánská 1) in 1891.⁷

In April 1890, following the granting of permission referred to above, the company itself was registered as

Bierbrauergewerbe in Nr. 699-2 und *Spiritusbrennerei* in Nr. 630-2: The Bohemian Breweries Limited, Repräsentant Herr Alexander Wentworth, Geschäfts-Stellvertreter Herr Eduard Krüzner [brewery at No. 699-2 and distillery at No 630-2: The Bohemian Breweries Limited, representative Mr Alexander Wentworth, deputy Mr Eduard Krüzner].⁸

The Prače and Liben breweries were not registered in the Prague register, as they were outside the then city boundary. Shortly after this *Národní listy* reported that The Bohemian Breweries, Limited, had been registered with the Prague Commercial Court as the representation of the English company, its objects being to carry on brewing and distilling, operate restaurants, and deal in beer, spirits, mineral waters, malt and hops.⁹

<p>Eisen. + Glasgow, 10. April. (Schlußber.) Hoheisen Wired Numbers Warrants 47 Sh. 5¹/₂, Pence.</p>	
<p>Eintragungen in das Prager Gewerberegister.</p>	
<p>Weinausschank und Selcher-Gewerbe: Herr Antonie Hamouz, Stellvertreter Herr Joseph Urban</p>	269—3
<p>Bierbrauergewerbe in Nr. 699 2 und Spiritusbrennerei in Nr. 630—2: The Bohemian Breweries Limited, Repräsen- tant Herr Alexander Wentworth, Geschäfts-Stellvertreter Herr Eduard Krüzner.</p>	
<p>Schneidergewerbe: Herr Alfred Wayer Herr Anton Kolub</p>	549—1 909—1
<p>Damen-Schneidergewerbe: Frau Anna Kavalir</p>	92—2

Figure 2. From the *Prager Tagblatt*, 12 April 1890

The English company took over the management of the pub and restaurant side of U Štajgrů from 30 September 1889. An advertisement in *Národní listy*, in the name of the ‘management of Národní pivovar “U Štajgrů” of the company “The Bohemian Breweries Limited” in Prague’, specified that J. Paul was in charge of the catering, which included morning soup and evening meals, on subscription or paid for separately. There would be a concert three times a week by the Kubínek and Fišer band.¹⁰

In the following year the restaurant side of U Štajgrů was leased to W. Noel, who advertised his *obyčejné* (ordinary), *ležák* (lager) and *bavorské* (Bavarian) beers, while the food was now provided by Jan Mašek.¹¹ Other advertisements mentioned ‘Baierisch Bier’ (Bavarian beer) as a speciality. The premises also included a small garden.

It may be noted, if only as a curiosity, that a mildly humorous article in the *Prager Tagblatt* on the struggle for hegemony which was said to have broken out between the partisans of beer glasses and beer mugs reported that two Prague breweries had declared in favour of the mugs. One was U Štajgru (the other was U Rozvarilu), which had introduced stoneware mugs in place of glasses.¹²

Little is otherwise recorded of the day-to-day operation of the brewery and restaurant. Occasional references include an advertisement for a cellarmaster, advertisements for spent grains and secondhand brewing equipment for sale, reports that a brewery worker by the name of Josef Choutka had fallen down unconscious and been taken to hospital, and that a 17-year-old trainee named Matoušek had suffered serious chest injuries when a barrel fell on him - not to mention a report that two thieves who stole a packet of shirtings from a wagon in Wenceslas Square ran off and were caught in the courtyard of U Štajgrů.¹³

One house which is known to have sold beer from U Štajgrů is Voctářova restaurace in Liben, opened by V. Voctář in 1890. He advertised ‘excellent table beer and Bavarian beer from The Bohemian Breweries, Limited “U Štajgrů”, Prague’ (‘Výtečným pivem stolním a bavorským z pivovaru The Bohemian Breweries, Limited “U Štajgrů” v Praze’).¹⁴ It is perhaps slightly surprising that Voctár did not get his beer from the com-

pany's nearby Liben brewery. It is not clear to what extent the three breweries competed rather than cooperating with each other.

As regards the Práche brewery, the previous owner Josef Kašpar had continued to manage it a year after the sale to the English company, in accordance with the company's expressed intention to retain the local management. On 1 October 1890, however, he publicly announced in the press - both Czech and German - that he had resigned from the company's local committee and would have no further involvement with the brewery. At the same time, Wentworth Forbes announced, also in the daily press, that he was now in charge of all three breweries and the distillery; all correspondence concerning the business as a whole should be directed to him, as should offers from suppliers. One wonders what caused Kašpar's sudden and public departure.¹⁵

Early the following year, 1891, Nolc took over the separate management of U Štajgrů, but as head brewer rather than manager.¹⁶ Wentworth Forbes was registered as holder of a concession to operate the restaurant side of U Štajgrů in his capacity of representative of the English company.¹⁷

All three breweries were mentioned in a bilingual (Czech and German) advertisement in a Prague directory of 1891 (Figure 3). It was asserted that Bohemian Breweries Ltd. had 'so far' acquired three breweries, all of which were flourishing. The steam brewery u Štajgrů (beim Štajger) was claimed to be well known throughout Bohemia, dating from the 16th century, and with a capacity of 48,000 hl. It exported its Bavarian bottled beer - several Prague breweries brewed what they called 'Bavorské' or Bavarian beer; the term may originally have designated beer that was bottom-fermented rather than top-fermented - to South America, England and Africa. The associated distillery had a capacity of 18,000 hl, and produced spirits from molasses and potatoes. The steam brewery in Libeň had a newly equipped brewhouse with cellars on the Rosenberg system, and could produce 120,000 hl a year of *výčepní pivo* (Schankbier) and *ležák* (Lagerbier). The steam brewery in Práche, which was described as being an hour's distance from Prague, also had new steam-driven equipment, and brewed over 50,000 hl of *výčepní pivo* and *granátové pivo* (Granatbier). The three breweries had a central management in Prague, the general man-

ager and representative being A. Wentworth Forbes.¹⁸ The production figures asserted (if they were not merely optimistic exaggerations for advertising purposes) must have related to theoretical capacity, not actual production.

As to the export trade, it may be noted that the press reports of the purchase of the breweries in 1889 had also mentioned the intention to expand the breweries and to export to England, India and South America. There is no information on the volume of beer exported.

A minor embarrassment in early 1891 was the forced sale of the English-owned Grand Hotel. The company was sufficiently concerned to place an announcement in the press under the manager Wentworth Forbes's name in which it pointed out, to avoid confusion, that its property extended only to the three breweries and it had no connection at all with the company which owned the Grand Hotel.¹⁹

In September 1892, when Prague was threatened with an outbreak of cholera, the city's brewers announced that they would supply boiled water free of charge to the public. It was initially reported that all the breweries except the English company's U Štajgrů had agreed to this; the company corrected this, saying that they would provide boiled water and also ice.²⁰

Progress of the company

After the complicated and turbulent start, the company fared better in the next few years. Thus the A.G.M. of 6 February 1893 was told that there had been a decrease in sales of beer but an increase of £3,248 in the gross profits on sales and rents, and a small profit on the distillery. There was a threat of a new tax on the capital of foreign companies carrying on business in Austria, which might be a problem; however, this seems not to have materialised.²¹

It appears that an arrangement was made in October 1892 that all available profits, after paying mortgage and debenture interest, were to be applied to paying off mortgage and debenture debt, until £50,000 was repaid.²² Possibly in connection with this arrangement, the company was involved in a dispute with the Ministry of Finance on duties chargeable on certain con-

„The Bohemian Breweries Limited“

V PRAZE.

Toto družstvo koupilo dosud tři pivovary, a sice: Národní pivovar „u Štajgrů“ v Praze; pivovary v Libni a v Prači jakož i všechny tři podniky jsou v nejživější činnosti.

Parostrojní pivovar „u Štajgrů“ v Praze trvá v Čechách od 16. století a jest v celých Čechách dobře znám a vyrábí ročně 48.000 hektolitrů piva.

Pivovar provozuje také obchod pivem láhvovým, kterýž denně roste a se šíří. Bavorské pivo láhvové tohoto pivovaru exportuje se velmi silně do Jižní Ameriky, Anglie a Afriky.

Při pivovaru jest též lihovar s výrobou 18.000 hektolitrů ročně, na melasu i spracování zemčat zařízen.

Parostrojní pivovar v Libni, v nejbližší blízkosti u Prahy položen, jest velmi dobře zařízený podnik s roční výrobou 120.000 hektolitrů piva výčepného a ležáku; opatřen jest nejnovějším zařízením, jakož i novými sklepy dle soustavy Rosenberka.

Pivovar v Prači. Hodinu od Prahy vzdálen, jest rovněž dle nejnovější soustavy parostrojní zařízen, vyrábí ročně více než 50.000 hektolitrů piva výčepného a granátového a těší se právě tak zasloužené pověsti jako ostatní jmenované pivovary.

Ústřední správa všech 3 podniků nalézá se v Praze.

Representant pan generální ředitel A. Wentworth Forbes.

„The Bohemian Breweries Limited“

in PRAG.

Diese Gesellschaft hat bis jetzt drei Brauereien, und zwar: Die National-Brauerei „beim Štajger“ in Prag, die Brauereien in Lieben und Prač käuflich übernommen und befinden sich alle drei Brauereien im besten Betriebe.

Die Dampf-Brauerei „beim Štajger“ in Prag ist in ganz Böhmen wohlbekannt, besteht seit dem 16. Jahrhundert, liegt in Centrum von Prag und hat eine Leistungsfähigkeit von 48.000 Hektoliter pro Jahr.

Die Brauerei betreibt auch in eigener Regie ein Flaschenbiergeschäft, welches täglich an Ausdehnung gewinnt.

Das bairische Flaschenbier dieser Brauerei wird vielfach nach Südamerika, England und Afrika exportirt.

In Verbindung mit dieser Brauerei ist auch eine **Spiritus-Fabrik** mit einer Capacität von 18.000 Hektoliter jährlich, sowohl für Melasse- als auch Kartoffel-Verarbeitung, eingerichtet.

Die Dampf-Brauerei in Lieben, in nächster Nähe von Prag gelegen, ist mit den neuesten Einrichtungen, neuen Sudhaus, neuen Kellereien, System Rosenberg versehen, die jährliche Erzeugung bei vollen Betrieb von 120.000 Hektoliter Schank- und Lagerbier; auch diese Brauerei erfreut sich des besten Rufes und sind die Erzeugnisse vielgefragt. 182

Die Dampf-Brauerei in Prač, eine Stunde von Prag entfernt, ist ebenfalls nach neuestem System mit Dampfbetrieb eingerichtet, erzeugt 50.000 Hektoliter Schank- und Granatbier per Jahr und erfreut sich eines ebenfalls so wohlverdienten Rufes wie obgenannte Brauereien.

Centrale sämtlicher 3 Etablissements in Prag.

Representant Hr. Generaldirektor A. Wentworth Forbes.

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Figure 3. A bilingual (Czech and German) advertisement, 1891.

tracts. The case went to the Administrative Court in Vienna, but the final outcome is not known.²³

In May 1893 the company won another award for its products, the gold medal diploma at the Prague international economic exhibition.²⁴ Later in 1893 a complaint against an order to close the cellar opening in front of the Štěpánská street frontage of U Štajgrů was rejected by the municipal authorities.²⁵

In the following year, the A.G.M. of 3 January 1894 heard that there had been an increase in gross profits, as well as an increase in beer sold. The chairman and secretary had each visited the breweries and found them to be in a satisfactory state of equipment and in good order.²⁶

The fifth A.G.M., held on 21 January 1895, was chaired as usual by Lt-Col. D. Stewart, chairman of the company. He said that

considering all the drawbacks they had experienced during the season under review, he thought the shareholders should be satisfied that the initial and inevitable heavy loss caused by the largely-increased prices of materials had been so largely reduced by increased economy at the breweries, the reduction of management expenses both in London and in Prague, and last, and most important of all, by the increased sales of beer even under unfavourable conditions of weather and competition.

Stewart noted that the bank loan of £1,800 had been paid off. Only £2,000 out of the reserve mortgage had

been taken up, despite the higher prices of materials. Stocks of beer were higher. Customers' balances had not increased. Expenditure on repairs and maintenance had increased, but London expenses were down by £300 and Prague administration down by £150, and revenue from rents up by £50. The whole of the hops and three quarters of the barley and malt needed for the current year's consumption had been purchased on favourable terms. The directors had good reason for anticipating that the next year's report and accounts would be of a more satisfactory character.²⁷

The position of the company, then, if not particularly good, was at least improving. Despite the adverse factors of weather and competition - of which the latter was surely the more important - sales of beer were higher, the basic raw materials had been bought on favourable terms, and management expenditure had been reduced.

By 1895 the total number of shares actually in existence was 9,712 ordinary (an increase over 1889) and 10,153 preference (a decrease). There was clearly a considerable amount of buying and selling of shares (all fully paid-up shares were freely transmissible) in the company's earlier years, in contrast to the later lack of movement. There were now nearly 200 shareholders. Of those who held shares in 1889, approximately 33 had dropped out by 1895, 96 were still involved, and they had been joined by 101 newcomers.²⁸

The holdings were still very much scattered, with no dominant shareholder. The principal shareholders - those with 400 or more shares - were now:

	Ord	Pref	Total
Hon. Kenelm Pleydell Bouverie and another, 3 Threadneedle Street, London EC	1874	37	1911
Mary L. Horne, married woman, 8 Medina Terrace, West, Brighton, Sussex	1309	221	1530
John B. Hankey, gentleman, and others, Fetcham Park, Leatherhead, Surrey	300	650	950
Col. the Hon. W.H. Peregrine Carington, Royal Court, House of Lords	367	560	927
Schloss Brothers, Ethelburga House, Bishopsgate, London EC	367	460	827
Arthur C.L. Fuller, 3 Evelyn Mansions, Carlisle Place, London SW	382	422	804
William de Neufville, 11 Copthall Court, London EC	0	500	500
Robert J. Price, barrister, 104 Sloane Street, London SW	183	230	413
Henry J.L. Graham, 22 Lennox Gardens, London SW	200	200	400
H.R. Grenfell, gentleman, and another, 8 Great Winchester Street, London EC	200	200	400
Henry W. Horne and others, 6 Stone Buildings, Lincolns Inn	400	0	400

Horne seems to have disposed of most of his shares by transferring them to other members of the family.

There were a few shareholders living abroad, mostly in Germany: besides John and Căcilie Simon, these included Leopold Adler, Vienna, banker; Bertha Fromme, Altona, Germany; Max Goldmann, Charlottenburg, Germany; Karl Seltmann, Hotel Blauer Stein, Prague;²⁹ and Charles Weikert, Hamburg, clerk. Emile Rothschild of Paris briefly held 25 ordinary shares, but sold them before 1895. The manager Alexander Wentworth Forbes now had a nominal holding of 5 preference shares.

The company's sixth A.G.M. took place on 5 February 1896, at the offices at Blomfield House, London Wall, London EC. Lt-Col. Stewart, chairing the meeting, informed shareholders that the year 1894/95 had indeed been more satisfactory than the preceding year. He described the increase in sales at Liben by 3,974 hl as satisfactory, while the small decrease in sales of 944 hl 'at the National', as he called U Štajgrů, was 'better than could have been expected from the working of the first half-year under the old brewing management'. At Práče, however, the improvement achieved in 1893/94 had been almost entirely lost because of competition from the new brewery in Vinohrady (Weinberge), in which many local residents and publicans had become involved as shareholders.

It was also reported *inter alia*, as regards the accounts, that the debit side of the balance sheet showed that the preferential mortgage debt had been reduced by £732 12s 5d. On the credit side, only £705 16s 8d for maintenance and repairs had been charged to capital account, while £3,587 15s 7d had been charged to revenue. The balance of debit of profit and loss had been reduced by £228 9s 1d. It was noted that the breweries had been visited during the financial year by the chairman, secretary and auditors.

It was hoped that in 1895/96 the result of the cheaper hops would make itself felt throughout the year, not for only half of it as in the previous year. The important ice crop had already been secured.³⁰ Artificial refrigeration was now possible, but many breweries still used ice, traditionally harvested from the river Vltava, or in the case of the Libeň brewery from the artificial ponds next to the brewery. An unusually mild winter could lead to a

shortage of ice and seriously increased costs for many breweries.

It thus appears that the management of U Štajgrů had not been satisfactory, and changes had been made. However, the establishment of the new share-company brewery in the Prague suburb of Vinohrady posed a greater threat.

The company further modernised and extended the Liben brewery, with a steam brewhouse and boilerhouse from J. Rosenberg and other brewing equipment from Br. Noback & Fritze. Cellars to hold 2,000 hl were built by Rosenberg in 1891, as the above advertisement boasted; another report referred to a large brewhouse, icehouse, cellar for 3,000 hl and a beer dispatch area.³¹ The newer buildings erected by the English company were generally known as *anglický pivovar* or the English brewery and they stood on Kotlaska street (formerly U Gotlasky or U Kotlasky).³²

In 1892 František Ronz, the head brewer, had a large pub built near the brewery, in Ronkova ulice (čp. 369), U Sokola. Two years later he died and was succeeded by František Camplík, previously second brewer, who held the office until his own death in December 1906.

According to a directory of Liben published in 1896, house No. 63 was a brewery and maltings in the street U Gotlasky and houses Nos. 30 and 31 were small mills in Palackého trida, owned by 'The Bohemian Breweries Limited v Londýně'. The alphabetical part of the directory listed the firm as

The Bohemian Breweries Limited, akc. společnost, hl. sídlo v Londýně. Pivovar a sladovna v Libni. I. 63 (telef. 1192). - Pivovar, lihovar a vinopalna, obchod se sladem a chmelem v Praze II. Vodičkova ul. 34 (telef. 1191), (u Štajgrů) a pivovar v Prači (telef. 1193). Gener. reditel Alexander Wentworth Forbes v Libni. I.-63. [The Bohemian Breweries Limited, share company, head office in London. Brewery and maltings in Libeň, I 63 (tel. 1192). - Brewery and distillery, dealers in malt and hops, in Prague II, Vodičkova ul. 34 (tel. 1191) (U Štajgrů) and brewery in Práče (tel. 1193). General manager Alexander Wentworth Forbes in Libeň, I. 63.]

with cross-references under *Anglický pivovar* and *Breweries Bohemian*.³³ Note the consecutive telephone numbers for the firm's three establishments.

The directory also listed Alex. Wertworth Forbes (sic) as general manager, Jan Borecký as accountant, František Camplik as head brewer (*sládek*) and Josef Burka as representative, all at No. 63; Jan Voráč as maltster (*nadsladovní*), Josef Šil as second brewer (*podstarší*) and Josef Šmejkal as copperman (*vaříč*), all at Nos. 30/31; Antonín Bouček as cellarmaster (*sklepmistr*) (living nearby at Ronkova ul. 353) and Bedřich Bohuslav as cashier (*pokladník*) (at Ronkova ul. 369); and Josef Bauer (living in Smíchov) and Bohumil

Chalupa (living in Žižkov) as office workers. The brewery employed 56 workmen.³⁴

Two local alehouses advertised in the directory as selling the company's beers: the above mentioned U Sokola, kept by Karel Kraus, and U Deutschů at Palackého třída 110, kept by Adolf Graf (formerly by František Deutsche). Graf sold draught beers from the English brewery (and from Měšt'anský pivovar, Pilsen) and had a depot for their bottled beer. In his advertise-

The Bohemian Breweries Limited

První

parostrojní pivovar a sladovna

v Libni u Prahy

doporučuje

své výtečné pivo obyčejné,

jakož i

svůj chvalně známý granát.

Pro P. T. pány sládky

osvědčené, vždy čerstvé a ze zdravého kvašení

pocházející

v á r e č n é.

Figure 4. Advertisement in the 1896 Libeň directory.

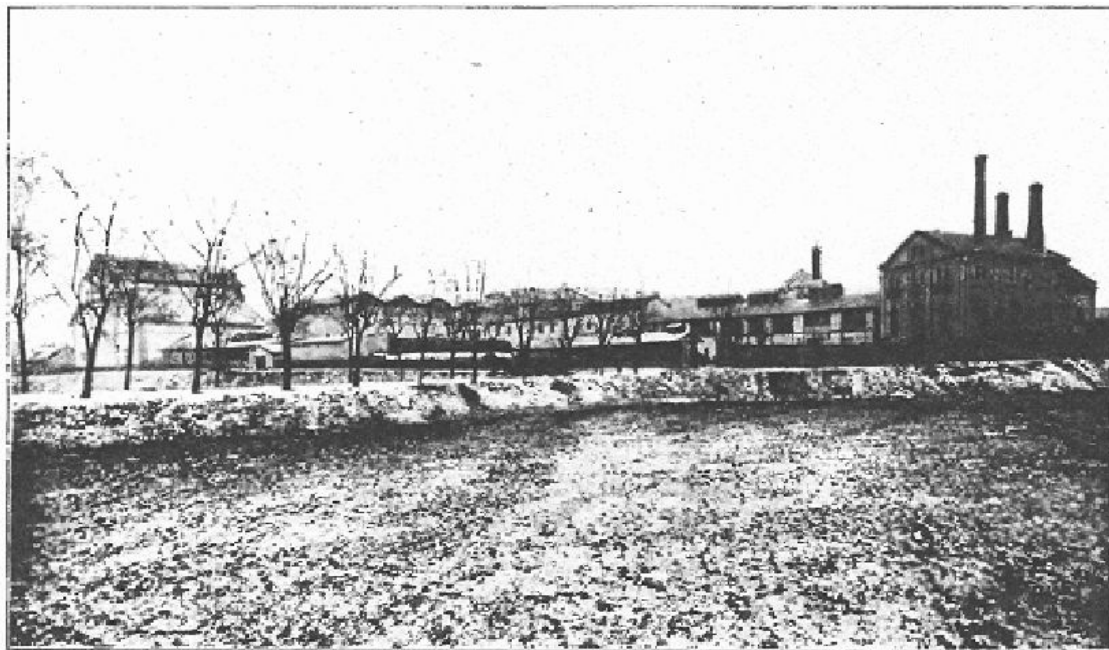


Figure 5. The brewery in Libeň: illustration from the 1896 local directory.

ment he called the brewery 'I. parostrojní pivovar v Libni' - First Steam Brewery, Libeň.

The brewery's own advertisement used the formulation 'First steam brewery and maltings in Libeň by Prague' and recommended its 'ordinary' (*obyčejné*) and its famous dark or amber (*granát*) beer.

Shortly before Christmas 1896 it turned out that the cashier Bedřich Bohuslav had been embezzling money from the company. He was a devotee of the Saxon class lottery, and bought a great many tickets for each draw in the hope that fortune would smile on him, but he never had more than a few small wins. He also played, even more enthusiastically, on the Bohemian 'little' lottery, known as the *lotynka*. Sometimes he bet as much as 350 gulden on *extráto*, a single number. As his salary was not enough to cover what he spent on gambling, he started helping himself to the firm's money, to the amount of over 24,000 gulden. The defalcations came to light when the auditors arrived in Prague to examine the books, and Bohuslav was arrested and brought before the criminal court. The company's losses were however said to be covered by what the *Prager Tagblatt* called an English-style insurance policy.³⁴

Under the English company's ownership production at the Libeň brewery continued to increase, from about 50,000 hl to 70,213 hl in 1893/94 and 71,280 hl in 1894/95. This put it in the second rank of Czech breweries. In Prague and district, of the industrial breweries mentioned above, the Smíchov brewery produced about 310,000 hl, the Nusle brewery 120,000 hl and the Vinohrady brewery 60,500 hl in 1894/95, Velké Popovice perhaps 49,000 hl, while U Primasů brewed about 60,000 hl, but many of Prague's breweries were still small-scale ones. However, by 1900 production at Libeň had fallen to 45,000 hl, however - still a respectable figure, but a clear decline.

At U Štajgrů the head brewers, under English management, were the above mentioned Antonín Nolč from 1889 to 1891, Josef Brabec from 1892 to 1894, when - as noted above - there was a change of management; then Konrád Kovář from 1894 to 1896, and Alois Spěváček in 1896.³⁶ J. Rosenberg submitted plans for rebuilding the cellars in 1891. Output in these years was generally of the order of 28,000 hl, but fell to 18,030 hl in 1896.

At Práče, the brewers were František Kraus until 1893, when he left to become head brewer at the new rival

brewery in Vinohrady, and then František Hervert.³⁷ This brewery too was modernised; a new fermenting room designed for 32 brews (96 vessels) was built by J. Rosenberg in 1891.³⁸ An adjoining house in Práče, No. 1, was acquired in April 1890 for 3,000 fl. Production in the first years of English ownership varied from 39,400 to 44,400 hl, but fell to 32,200 hl in 1897/98 and only 22,607 hl in 1898/99.

Closure and sale of U Štajgrů

Rumours were circulating about Bohemian Breweries Ltd. in January 1897. The newspapers then published a report, said to be from a reliable source, to the effect that brewing at U Štajgrů would cease as from 1 March. The reason stated was that the brewing operation in the city centre was comparatively expensive to run and made only a small profit, and the other two breweries had sufficient capacity to supply U Štajgrů. Malting at Libeň and Práče would cease, on the other hand, and all the company's malt would be produced at U Štajgrů. The distillery there would also continue, as would the restaurant, which would serve beer from the other two breweries; the brewing staff had already been given notice.³⁹

A few days later, however, *Národní listy* quoted an unnamed source from the brewing trade as saying that the English company had bought their three breweries a few years previously with a lot of noise and fuss, with the blame for selling out to foreigners being laid on Czech indolence; the Englishmen had counted on exporting successfully, but had miscalculated badly. They had run out of money. U Štajgrů was overmanned, with too many managerial and clerical staff; there had been six (now five) of them, almost as many as at the giant Smíchov brewery, while the big brewery in Nusle only had two. Operations at U Štajgrů were now being gradually wound down. The company's excuse was that the embezzlement at Libeň had dealt it a mortal blow.

Now in the new year, the best time of year for a maltings, U Štajgrů had stopped malting, and seven workers had been dismissed, together with three cellarmen, a copperman and two coopers. Only the head brewer, second brewer, one cellarman and a cooper were left. The Práče and Libeň breweries were faring no better, and the sword of Damocles was suspended over them too.

According to *Národní listy*'s source, the report that the company was going to establish a large new malthouse at U Štajgrů was false. It was clear that there were no funds available for such an investment. Now the last brew was being made in U Štajgrů, and even that was only being done to avoid breaching a contract for a delivery of wort. Orders had come from London to sell the brewery for whatever it would fetch.

It was said that the English company had destroyed the brewery, which would have been capable of continuing to exist and flourish alongside the big Prague breweries for years to come.⁴⁰

It was the second report that proved to be nearer the truth. Brewing and malting at U Štajgrů ceased altogether. The main part of the premises was sold to J. Novák (Nowak) and M. Mayer in May 1898 for 420,000 gulden, and the part on Štěpánská was sold a few months later to Mr and Mrs Jan Vančura for a further 200,000 gulden, a total of less than half the price paid for the original purchase.⁴¹ In March 1899 a small classified advertisement announced the cheap sale of equipment 'from the closed brewery U Štajgrů': coolships, a malt crusher, a degerminating machine, a maize mill, an 'Excelsior' mill, and various discs and pumps.⁴² Later in the year an eight-horsepower steam engine was also for sale.⁴³ The restaurant (which had had a new publican from May 1897, Jan Benda, in place of Josef Petrák; in 1899 the landlord appears to have been J. Matějček)⁴⁴ continued to trade for a few years, probably until 1902.⁴⁵ Novák demolished the buildings in about 1900-04 and built his well-known department store on the site. Vančura continued to operate the distillery on his part of the site, trading as Pražský lihovar u Štajgrů. The premises were later altered and extended in 1928, and now consist of an arcade linking Vodičkova and Štěpánská streets, with a theatre and restaurants, shops and offices.⁴⁶

The money received for U Štajgrů appears to have been used to pay off the larger part of a 500,000 zl mortgage debt to Česká spořitelna. To get rid of the remainder of the debt, new loans of 100,000 zl each were taken out from two other banks, Zemská banka and Živnostenská banka, and secured by mortgages on the Libeň and Práče premises.⁴⁷

In the meantime the gambling cashier Bohuslav had come up for trial before the Zemský trestný soud

(Provincial Criminal Court) in April 1897. He admitted his guilt. His story was that he had worked in the brewery from 1883 (before the English company bought it). In 1892 he had noticed that the till was short some 400 zl. He claimed to have been mystified by this. As he could not make good the deficit from his salary of 1,150 zl, he decided to gamble on the Bohemian lottery, but only lost more and more. He then tried the Saxon lottery, as well as speculating on *promesy*, other people's lottery tickets which he bought up. The total amount embezzled was 27,298 gulden.

On pleading guilty, he was convicted and sentenced to ten months' imprisonment with hard labour. *Národní listy* commented that, while the crime could not be excused, the defalcations would not have reached such a great amount if proper checks had been carried out; but where the bosses do not know the local language, they spend more time on translations than on audits.⁴⁸

Reduction of the share capital

The years 1896 and 1897 were clearly a period of crisis for Bohemian Breweries Ltd. Money was short; U Štajgrů closed and was sold; and the share capital was reduced. No specific causes of the company's problems are known; rather, the general difficulties of trading and the increased competition from other breweries were probably to blame.

The seventh A.G.M. of the company was held in London on 15 March 1897. Lt-Col. Stewart yet again complained of the bad weather in Prague. He reported that sales for the six months to the end of March 1896 showed an improvement over the same period in 1895, and 'but for the exceptionally wet summer experienced in Prague, and the general depression in trade' the directors' estimates for the trading year would have proved correct. The company had continued the policy of keeping its breweries, plant and machinery in 'a thorough state of efficiency'. A total of £2,474 19s 0d had been charged to revenue for that purpose. The falling off of sales in the half-year and the consequent loss of profit

had more than counterbalanced the benefit from the use of cheaper materials.

Stewart presumably mentioned the end of brewing and malting at U Štajgrů. He also noted, however, that at 'the National Distillery' (U Štajgrů) advantage had been taken of the higher prices prevailing for spirits to recommence manufacture, but in such a way that distilling could be stopped at short notice.⁴⁹ In fact, distilling cannot have lasted long, in view of the sale of the premises later in the year.

It was decided to consolidate and reduce the share capital. It was cut from £280,000 to £55,621, consisting of 9,712 ordinary shares of 10s each and 10,153 preference shares of £5 each; the unissued and forfeited shares were cancelled. The reduced £5 preference shares were then converted into 5 shares of £1 each, and every two 10s ordinary shares were consolidated to make one £1 share; the result was that the company now had 55,621 ordinary shares, all ranking equally and carrying one vote each. Of the 55,621 shares, 50,765 thus derived from the old preference shares and only 4,856 from the ordinary shares. The reorganisation scheme was adopted by special resolutions passed and confirmed at E.G.M.s held following the A.G.M. and approved by an order of the Chancery Division of the High Court of 26 June 1897 'In the Matter of the Bohemian Breweries Limited and Reduced and in the Matter of the Companies Acts 1867 and 1877'.⁵⁰

The court order, which was made by Mr Justice North, recorded that the petition for reduction had been duly published, not only in the *London Gazette*, the *Times* and the *Standard*, but also in 'the Prager Zeitung circulating in Bohemia ... containing Notices in the German Language of the presentation of the Petition'. A minute of the order was also to be published in those newspapers, and for one month the words 'and reduced' were to be added to the company's name.

After the 1897 reorganisation the largest shareholders were:⁵¹

John Barnard Hankey, Henry W. Kerrick Walker and Mortimer Drewe Malleeson, c/o Messrs Wadeson & Malleeson, solicitors, 4 Devonshire Square, Bishopsgate, London EC	3400
Col. the Hon. William Henry P. Carington, Royal Court, House of Lords	2983
William de Neufville, 11 Copthall Court, London EC	2500
Schloss Brothers, Ethelburga House, Bishopsgate, London EC	2483
Ernest Edye and Walter Hale Millett, Bank of England	2116
Mrs Mary Louisa Horne, 8 Medina Terrace West, Brighton, Sussex	1759
Edgar Hanbury, Eastrop Grange, Highworth, Wiltshire	1500
Francis George Horne, 14 Royal Exchange, London EC, Henry Walter Horne, 13 Old Square, Lincolns Inn, London WC, and Arthur Pollock, 6 Lincolns Inn Fields, London WC	1500
Robert John Price, 104 Sloane Street, London SW	1241
Hon. Kenelm Pleydell Bouverie and Charles Keed, 3 Threadneedle Street, London EC	1122
Henry John L. Graham, Clerk of the Parliament, 22 Lennox Gardens, London SW	1100
Henry Riversdale Grenfell, 8 Great Winchester Street, London EC	1100
Edith Laura Arkwright, 2 Brompton Square, London SW	1000
Lt-Col. Henry E.S. Horne Drummond, Blair Drummond, Perthshire, Wm. Augustus Horne D. Moray, Abercainey, Crieff, Perthshire, and Walter Francis Forbes, The Cottage, Goodwood, Chichester, Sussex	1000
Mrs Cécilie Simon, Kleinbeerenstraße 4, Berlin	1000

There may have been a few other large holdings if one aggregates shares owned by different members of one family; the two Misses Arkwright, for example, had 1,250 shares between them. Most of these appear to have been private investors, but some may have been trustees or nominees.

So the five largest shareholders together controlled only about a quarter of the shares. As to the directors, Horne had 529 in his own name, but may effectively have controlled more, if the shares owned jointly or by other Hornes (a total of 3,988) and the jointly owned shares are taken into account; Stewart and Butler had only a few shares.

There was only one change in the major shareholders in the period from 1900 to 1905 (apart from M.D. Malleeson no longer being one of the holders of the 3,400 shares): the package of 2,116 shares in the names of Edge and Millett was now held by H.G. Bowen, J.G. Nairne and T. Askwith, whose address was stated to be the Bank of England. Indeed, there were hardly any sales of shares at all, large or small, and none at all in the year preceding the 1905 return; the few changes of ownership were usually the result of the death of a shareholder and a transfer to his executors. It may be that the shares were effectively unsaleable as a result of the company's financial position.

The directors from 1897 on were Lieut-Col. Duncan Stewart, of 89 Eaton Place, London SW, Lt-Col. retired; Francis George Horne, of 14 Royal Exchange, London EC (120 Bishopsgate St. Within, London EC in 1905), gentleman; and Francis Carus Geneste Butler, of Motley Bank, Camberley, Surrey, gentleman. Stewart and Horne were thus directors throughout the life of the company. John Paterson was the company secretary from about 1900, in succession to Rodwell. From October 1900 the registered office was 27 Cornhill (3rd floor), London EC.

The reorganisation did not resolve the company's financial problems. Duncan's Brewery Manual commented unenthusiastically in 1898 that the 'results achieved by the Company have not been encouraging'.⁵² In view of what ensued in 1899, this may have been an understatement.

Assassination in Guatemala

Meanwhile, a former employee of Bohemian Breweries Ltd. achieved fame in 1898, although not in a way directly connected to brewing. He was an Englishman by the name of Edgar Zollinger, who went abroad to learn French and German and arrived in Prague in 1895, aged 17, joining the Regatta rowing club on the strength of a recommendation from a German football club. He

worked for the brewery company for about a year and a half, and then went to Guatemala, where he had a job in a sugar factory. He was described as a big, strong young man, a well-known sportsman, whose gentle disposition won him many friends in Prague.

Zollinger often told his Prague friends that he would have to go to Guatemala to help a friend of his become President. This was naturally treated as a joke; but on the evening of 8 February 1898 he accosted the President of Guatemala, José Maria Reina Barrios, while he was walking near his palace, and assassinated him with two shots from a revolver. Zollinger was then himself shot dead by the President's bodyguards.

Zollinger's motive was revenge for the death of his employer Juan Aparicio Mérida, a popular businessman who had been shot, supposedly on Reina Barrios's orders, during the revolution of 1897.⁵³

Bankruptcy in Prague

In April 1899 Bohemian Breweries Ltd. filed for bankruptcy in Prague. The company had been in difficulties for some time, and in April 1899 it reached an agreement with its creditors to make them a payment on account of 25%. The two breweries would continue in operation under the supervision of the creditors. But the unexpected and unwelcome news then arrived from London that the company had not raised the funds for the 25% payment, and the directors in London proposed instead that a declaration of insolvency or petition for bankruptcy should be made.

The application was made, and on 27 April the k.k. Handelsgericht (c.k. Obchodní soud, Imperial Royal Commercial Court) in Prague ordered the bankruptcy procedure to be opened over the estate of 'the English brewing company "*The Bohemian Breweries Limited*" with its seat in Prague and branches in Libeň and Píseň'. Karel (Carl) Šikýr, a provincial court judge (Landesgerichtsrat), was appointed commissioner in bankruptcy; JUDr. Bedrich (Friedrich) Kaufmann and JUDr. Jindrich (Heinrich) Šolc, both lawyers in Prague, were appointed as administrator and deputy administrator. The creditors' meeting was fixed for 8 May, the deadline for claims for 17 June and the liquidation meeting for 30 June.

Národní listy and the *Prager Tagblatt* reported that the two breweries were subject to mortgages totalling 230,000 fl, including 100,000 each in favour of two banks, Böhmsche Landesbank (Zemská banka) and Živnostenská banka; these were safe, as the breweries were worth much more than this. English creditors were said to be owed a million gulden or £90,000 and local suppliers in Bohemia 160,000 fl, and there was also 30,000 fl in arrears of tax. Brewing might well continue despite the bankruptcy.⁵⁴ There were also two mortgages which had been taken out to secure loans from the directors of the company, one of £75,000 in favour of Duncan Stewart and Sydney John Montagu and another of £25,000 in favour of Stewart and Essex Reade.⁵⁵

Národní listy observed that the bankruptcy of the company 'may have taken the public by surprise, but was expected in the circles which were to some extent aware of the firm's situation'. The Englishmen had abandoned their original hope that the Czech brewery shares would become as valuable as shares in an African gold mine.

Although the obvious reason for the company's failure was the rise of competing breweries such as those in Královské Vinohrady and Holešovice, which had grown up in the years since the English company came on the scene, *Národní listy* felt that the fundamental cause was probably to be found in the weakness inherent in a business that was run by people who were not sufficiently familiar with local conditions (not that foreign capital was unwelcome as such, of course) and had started by paying unreal prices not just for breweries but also for the 'rosy dreams of future dividends'.⁵⁶

The creditors' meeting (Gläubigertagfahrt, schůze věřitelů) took place in the afternoon of 8 May. It was described as 'very lively' and went on for nearly three hours. The *Prager Tagblatt* noted that the creditors present at the meeting represented debts of 390,000 fl, and the total debt of the company was thought to be over a million gulden. According to *Národní listy*, the company's assets were about a million, and the breweries in Libeň and Píseň were worth 450,000 and 200,000 gulden respectively.⁵⁷

Dr Wien (a lawyer who had acted in the original purchase of U Štajgrů), representing one of the creditors, Lazar Kaufmann the Prostějov maltster, objected to the initiation of bankruptcy proceedings on the ground that

only the representation of the company was registered in the Prague register of commerce and the main seat of the company was in London; the branches in Prague could not be made bankrupt unless the main company in London was first declared bankrupt; and the general representative Wentworth Forbes did not have authority to petition for bankruptcy. In response, the chairman of the meeting Šikýr said that the branch in Prague had been registered with the Commercial Court as an independent firm with its own representation within the meaning of the 1865 regulation, so that the company was subject to Austrian law as regards its Austrian property. If claims and executions could be brought against it, the right to declare bankruptcy and conduct bankruptcy proceedings against it must also be accepted. Wien repeated his demand that the proceedings should be halted, and said that the officials acting in the bankruptcy would be held liable for all their acts. The

administrator designate Dr Kaufmann (who had also previously acted in the sale of Libeň and Práche) countered with the argument that the Prague breweries were registered with the Commercial Court not as a branch or subsidiary (*Zweigniederlassung*) but as an independent firm which was a representation (*Repräsentanz*) of the London company, and it was possible to bring insolvency proceedings against the local assets under the relevant Austrian law. He also pointed out that it was unusual for a creditor to oppose bankruptcy proceedings; normally it was the debtor who had the right to object. Deputy administrator Dr Šolc also opposed Wien, saying that if Wien's view were correct, the English company would enjoy a great advantage, since no bankruptcy could ever be declared over its Austrian property. If that were the case the creditors would have to bring execution proceedings against the company, and only the one who acted first would have a claim,

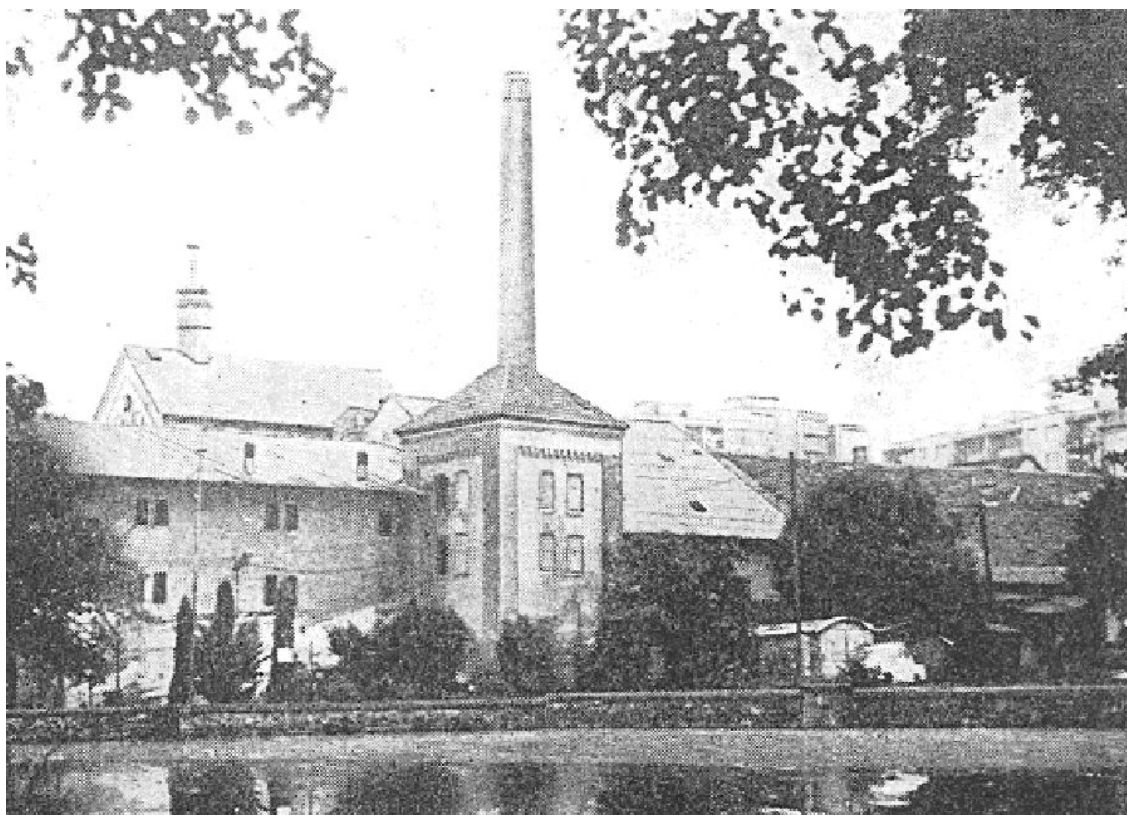


Figure 6. The former Práche brewery in 1984, photographed by Z. Likovský (from *Kvasný průmysl* 10/1986).

and the other creditors would miss out. A lengthy discussion followed, in which most of the lawyers present took part. In the end Šikýř rejected Wien's protest on formal grounds, as the bankruptcy law made no provision for such a protest, and left him to use any ordinary legal remedies that might be available; Wien thereupon said that he would appeal. The meeting then finally proceeded to business.

Kaufmann and Šolc were confirmed as administrator and deputy administrator, and a creditors' committee was formed, consisting of representatives of the main creditors: Dr Dětřich Platte (or Friedrich Plate, representing Franz Xaver Brosche Sohn), Hynek (Ignác, Ignaz) Weinmann (Weimann) (or Rudolph Weimann, representing the firm of Weinmann or Ignaz Weimann), Eduard (Edvard) Landesmann (procurist of Sonnenschein a Landesmann), Herman (Hermann) Pollak (Polák), and as alternate members Antonín Tuma (Anton Tuma) (partner in J. Hitz) and David Abeles (firm of Abeles, hop merchants in Žatec).⁵⁸

Wien appealed to the courts, as he had threatened, but without success. The Commercial Court rejected his appeal (against Šikýř's rejection of his protest) on the grounds that Wentworth Forbes had been given power by the company's directors to act in every way in the company's businesses in Austria; he was therefore entitled to apply for bankruptcy, and under § 486 of the Criminal Code might be obliged to do so even if the directors decided otherwise. Wien's written application (against the declaration of bankruptcy) was dismissed as unfounded and purposeless by the Vrchní zemský soud (Higher Provincial Court), which also confirmed the decision of the Commercial Court.⁵⁹

The liquidation procedure then continued with Kaufmann as administrator. On 31 October 1899 a meeting of creditors at the Commercial Court had to reach a decision on what was to become of the two breweries. An offer had been received for Práče from Emil Stein and Joseph (Josef) Kornfeld, the owners of a brewery in Pakoměřice north of Prague. They would take on the debts burdening the brewery, pay the resulting costs, and pay 110,000 fl in cash. That sum would be divided up by allocating 50,000 fl to the bank which had a mortgage debt of 100,000 fl, 10,000 to another banker, Moriz Zdekauer, for a debt secured on the land, and 6,000 fl to the chairman of the company, Duncan

Stewart, who had also lent money on mortgage. Of the remaining 44,000 fl, 25,000 fl would be used to pay off arrears of tax and 19,000 fl to increase the working capital of the Libeň brewery. The offer was accepted; so at least Práče's trade debts were paid and the secured creditors got some of their money back. Stewart and his former co-directors, on the other hand, received only a small payment towards their mortgage claims, although of course they still had the Libeň premises as security for their loans.

The remaining brewery in Libeň would continue to be operated on behalf of the estate. The estimated values of Práče and Libeň were now said to be 587,806 fl and 1,100,000 fl respectively.⁶⁰

Kornfeld sold his share of Práče in 1905 and bought the Libeň brewery the following year. The Práče brewery continued in Stein's ownership until 1922. It appears never to have recovered from the effects of the First World War, and also suffered a fire in 1923; it ceased brewing in December 1936, becoming a depot for the Velké Popovice brewery.^{61,62}

As previously indicated, Prague still had a comparatively large number of small breweries attached to pubs. In the closing years of the century, several of them joined together to replace their often cramped and antiquated brewhouses with a new jointly owned modern brewery on an industrial scale, capable of competing with the other industrial breweries. The Společenský pivovar pražských sládků, as it was named, was built a few kilometres outside the city, at Braník. Brewing started in September 1900, and production in its first year of operation was already 77,952 hl. By 1901/02 production already exceeded 100,000 hl. Not all the old brewhouses closed at once, however; some continued brewing for several years yet.

The English company had been a member of the Prague brewers' cooperative, but only in respect of the city centre brewery U Štajgrů via its representative Nolc. It played no part in the foundation of the new Braník brewery, which it probably regarded as a further unwelcome competitor.

The rules on taxation of beer were amended in 1899, with reduced rates of duty being introduced for small breweries producing up to 15,000 hl a year,⁶³ but the

practical effect of the change on the smaller Prague breweries may have been limited. In any event, the English company will not have benefited.

The table below shows the aggregate production or sales figures (in hl) for the company's three breweries in various years.⁶⁴

Year	Libeň	U Štajgrů	Práče	Total
1890/91	56,400	28,754	40,800	125,954
1891/92	52,445	25,991	41,404	119,840
1892/93	64,090	28,005	44,400	136,495
1896/97	[71,280]	4,026	42,203	117,509
1897/98	52,200		32,200	84,400
1900	45,000			45,000
1901/02	34,000			34,000
1902/03	36,360			36,360
1903/04	41,160			41,160
1904/05	38,000			38,000
1905/06	32,600			32,600

Conclusion

Little is known about the Libeň brewery in the closing years of Bohemian Breweries Ltd. Presumably Kaufmann, as the administrator of the company's bankrupt estate, continued to operate it with the approval of the creditors. The production figures quoted above indicate an annual production fluctuating within the region of 30,000 to 40,000 hl.

The company itself continued to exist in England, the bankruptcy and administration extending only to its assets in Bohemia. The profits, if any, will have gone to its creditors; it is improbable that any dividends were ever paid.

The arrangement made in 1892 - that profits would be applied to paying off mortgage and debenture debt until £50,000 had been repaid - was evidently still unfulfilled in 1903, when, as the *Brewery Manual* noted, debenture interest had been in arrear since June 1898. The accounts for 1899, probably the most recent then available, showed that, after including interest on mortgages and loans, there was a loss of £12,278, making the total debit to profit and loss £14,485. The *Manual* also confirmed that the nominal share capital of the company in 1903 comprised, in addition to the 55,621 £1 ordinary shares, £16,666 in 4½% preferential mortgage, £70,000 in 6% first debentures and £20,200 in 6% second debentures, and that a receiver had been appointed for the company's remaining property in Bohemia, in other words the Libeň brewery.⁶⁴

As of 31 December 1905, the total amount due from the company on mortgages and charges liable to registration under the Companies Act was £95,700, and £14,145



Figure 7. Announcement by the company of the death of head brewer Camplik, *Národní politika*, 12 December 1906.

was due on foreign mortgages. The same figures applied as of 31 December 1906.⁶⁶ The former sum probably represents the monies owed to Stewart, Montagu and Reade and charged on the Libeň brewery, and the latter sum the monies owed to the Prague banks.

The Libeň brewery was finally sold in 1907. The price paid is unknown as is the precise circumstances of the sale. The directors who had lent money to the company may even have got some of their money back. The new owner Josef Kornfeld, who had previously been a co-owner of the company's former Prače brewery, announced the change of ownership in May 1907. He adopted the name *První parostrojní pivovar v Praze VIII* (First Steam Brewery in Prague VIII):⁶⁷

I have the honour to announce that I have taken over the First Steam Brewery in Prague VIII (Libeň), formerly belonging to the English company. I shall endeavour to maintain fully in future the good reputation of Libeň beer by its quality, and remain respectfully Jos. Kornfeld. Prague VIII (Libeň), May 1907.

After Kornfeld's death in 1919 it was run by his widow Olga Kornfeldová (née Feiglová; they were married in 1889). She was apparently more interested in other matters and paid less attention to the brewery. It ran into financial problems and ceased brewing in 1927, and the premises were closed and sold in 1928. They were subsequently occupied by various firms, including a furniture business and a manufacturer of cosmetics and chemicals. Most of the original buildings have subsequently been demolished, but some, together with the high brewery chimney, are still standing in Kotlaska, as part of the premises of an Albert supermarket.⁶⁸

No shareholders' meeting was held in 1905 or 1906; indeed, it is possible that there were no meetings after 1897.⁶⁹ The final winding-up meeting was called for 30 July 1907. It was inquorate, and was adjourned for a week. The adjourned meeting duly took place and Bohemian Breweries Ltd. ceased to exist in August 1907.

The manager Wentworth Forbes was still living in Prague in May 1907, when he was registered at an address in the district of Královské Vinohrady, still as British consul.⁷⁰ Indeed, he continued as consul until the outbreak of the Great War in 1914 and returned to Prague after hostilities ended, dying there in 1925. He

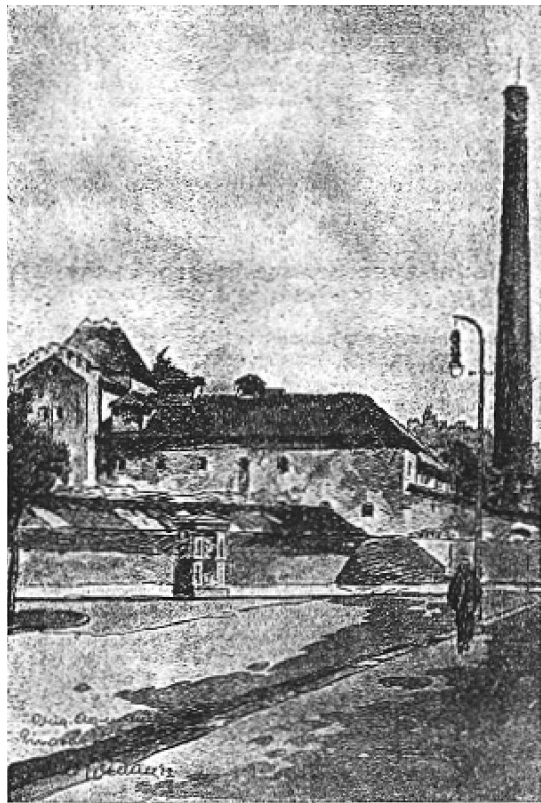


Figure 8. Drawing by Karel Toman of the former English and Kornfeld brewery in Libeň, Gambrinus, 1943.

was described in the press as very popular in Prague and a great friend of the Czech people. His widow, Loveday, died in London in 1934 at the age of 80.⁷¹

Had the Bohemian Breweries company survived until 1914 it would doubtless have been expropriated as enemy property. But it did not; and its roughly 18 years of life scarcely represent a triumph of British imperial capitalism. On the other hand, it may have contributed to the modernisation and industrialisation of the Czech brewing industry, and perhaps even to the development of the Czech style of beer.

Corrigenda to Part 1

More information has come to light since Part I of this article was completed. The following corrections should therefore be made to Part I.

On p.51, the first two paragraphs under the heading 'The sea serpent' should be replaced by the following text:

In late 1888 or early 1889 Herbert Edwards and Harry Saunders, two financial agents based in London, were introduced to the Berlin-based Dr John Simon to discuss the purchase of the U Štajgrů brewery in Prague. In a letter of April 1889 Simon said that the brewery in Prague showed a profit of £40,000 a year and was for sale for about £200,000. Edwards and Saunders brought in Chadwick & Co., another firm of London financial agents, and their Mr Orriss agreed to promote the company immediately if the brewery returned its predicted profit of £40,000. Edwards and Saunders wrote to Simon to say that their 'friends' would offer to purchase for £175,000, on the strength of the profits being £24,000 (not £40,000 as first claimed), and would make the capital of the new company £250,000. Further discussions were held when a commission agent by the name of John Bell Allen travelled to Cologne to meet Simon on behalf of Chadwick & Co., and in May 1889 Simon's brother-in-law visited England for more talks.²

The upshot of all these meetings was that on 1 June 1889 an agreement to acquire the brewery was finally concluded between George Harold Sutcliffe (an accountant who shared a London address with Allen & Co.) - acting on behalf of the new company - and John Simon and Messrs Allen & Co., as John Bell Allen described himself. The precise nature of the roles of the various parties in the deal is unclear. It seems that Simon held himself out as owner of the brewery, but was in fact only an agent with power to arrange the sale. The English legal documents none the less refer to him and Allen & Co. as vendors, but the Czech press reports refer only to František Zverina as the owner of the brewery, and one English document distinguishes between the vendors and the (unnamed) owners.

Allen, whatever his legal position, took control of the negotiations, so much so that he was later described as the 'promoter' of the Bohemian Breweries company. Presumably he took great care not to tell the other parties that his real name was in fact John Baines, that he was an undischarged bankrupt, and that in 1883, when he was a clerk at the Barrow-in-Furness branch of the Lancaster Bank, he had been convicted of forgery and

falsification of accounts and sentenced to five years' imprisonment.³

On p.65, the final sentence of the paragraph starting 'An investment company' should read:

Allen & Co. were unable to pay for the shares allotted to them and they were forfeited.

On p.66, the paragraph starting 'At the same time' should end as follows:

(...) the plaintiffs' claim succeeded. However, the decision was reversed on appeal.⁸² It may be noted that Herbert Edwards and Harry Saunders went bankrupt later in 1892.

Notes 2 and 3 should be replaced by the following:

2. *Brewers' Journal*, 15 May 1892, pp.217-8; *Birmingham Daily Post*, 6 July 1892.

3. Allen was released from prison in 1887 and set himself up in London as a commission agent although he had no money of his own (he later said that 'his friends assisted him'). He went bankrupt again in 1891, when he had liabilities of over £13,000 and no assets; any money gained from Bohemian Breweries Ltd. - there is an unclear reference to £15,000 which came into his hands in August 1889 - must have disappeared quickly. The facts about his earlier misdeeds and change of name came out in the bankruptcy proceedings despite his attempt to deny that his real name was Baines or that he had ever been to Barrow-in-Furness. His suggestion that his first bankruptcy did not count because he was then Baines and he was now Allen, so that he had a sort of dual personality, did not find favour with the court: *London Gazette*, 12 December 1890 and other dates; *The Standard*, 19 March 1891; *Liverpool Mercury*, 19 March 1891; *Lancaster Gazette*, 21 March 1891.

Note 82 should read as follows:

82. *Brewers' Journal*, 15 May 1892, pp.217-8, *Birmingham Daily Post*, 6 July 1892. Chadwick & Co.'s appeal succeeded on the ground that there was no evidence that Allen was their agent or that they had received any profit from the transaction. *The Brewers' Journal* report - which is not entirely clear - refers to

Simon as 'Dr Simonds, the owner of a brewery called the National Brewery at Prague'.

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to the staff of Birmingham Central Library, for their help with the B.H.S. Archive; to The National Archives, for supplying copies of company documents; and in particular to Marie Cernohorská of VÚPS, Prague, for her help with the Czech sources in the VÚPS library.

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Zbynek Likovský, 'Pivovary', in: Pavel Augusta (ed), *Kniha o Praze 10*, Prague 1997, pp.79-81.

Milan Polák, *Pražské pivovarky a pivovary*, Prague 2003, pp.49-51, 95-7, 197-8.

Zbynek Likovský, *Majitelé, nájemci a vedoucí pracovníci pivovaru Českých zemí 1869-1950*, supplement to *Kvasný průmysl*, Prague 1997.

Zbynek Likovský, *České pivovary 1869-1900*, Prague 2005, pp.122, 185, 193.

Zbynek Likovský, *Pivovary československého území 1900-1948*, Prague 2006, pp.202, 208.

Gabriela Basarová and Ivo Hlaváček, *České pivo*, Prague 1999.

František Chodounský (ed), *Príspevek k dejinám českého pivovarnictví*, Prague 1891.

References

1. His name may be spelt with or without a hyphen, and is also recorded incorrectly as A. Forbes, W. Forbes, Forbes A.W. Wentworth, Alexander Wendforth Forbes, Wentworth Forbes and the like.

2. Národní archiv, 'konskripce' (police registrations of residents in Prague), consulted at www.nacr.cz. In 1890 Forbes was also reported at house cp 699-II, in other words U Štajgrů. The records state that he was born in Plymouth in 1853.

3. *Prager Tagblatt*, 18 February 1898: 'Mr A. Wentworth-Forbes, general manager (*General-Director*) of Bohemian Breweries Limited, has been granted the exequatur as English vice-consul in Prague'; *Národní listy*, same date; *Prager Tagblatt*, 2 January 1899; *The London Gazette*, No. 27077, 5 May 1899, p.2891: 'Foreign Office, February 22, 1899. The Queen has been graciously pleased to appoint Alexander William Wentworth Forbes, Esq., to be Her Majesty's Consul to reside at Prague.'

4. *Prager Tagblatt*, 12 September 1899.

5. *Národní listy*, 27 January 1901. The announcement was in English, with spelling mistakes presumably added by the printer, and Hampton gave his address as Old-Lieben, 507.

6. According to Likovský, Ronz was head brewer at the other Libeň brewery, Zámecký pivovar, from 1886 to 1893 and head brewer and technical manager at the English brewery from 1891 to 1894 (*České pivovary 1869-1900*, p.122; *Majitelé*, p.200), but the nameday greetings cast doubt on this. As to the positions of Krüzner and Ronz, probably Krüzner was based at U Štajgrů and Ronz at Libeň; however, namedays greetings to Ronz in 1891 from the workforce at Libeň called him technical manager ('technický reditel') while those from second brewer Jan Mauer and the brewing staff at U Štajgrů called him manager and head brewer of U Štajgrů and Libeň (both *Národní listy*, 4 October 1891), and the notice of Ronz's death in the *Prager Tagblatt* (9 October 1894) described him as Franz Ronz, manager ('Director') of the Libeň brewery.

7. *Prager Tagblatt*, 12 November, 15 December 1899, 7 February 1890. Krüzner's name is also misspelt as Kürzner and Krügner; Gräver must be a German attempt at spelling an English name.

8. *ibid.* 12 April 1890.

9. *Národní listy*, 10 May 1890.

10. *ibid.* 6 October 1889.

11. *ibid.* 14, 25 February, 16 April 1890. Josef Navrátil may have been the restaurateur in 1891.

12. *Prager Tagblatt*, 3 September 1890, quoting Brauerzeitung.

13. *Národní listy*, 16 November 1889, 5 February, 15 August, 16 September 1890, 12 May, 27 June 1891; *Prager Tagblatt*, 30 September 1890.

14. *Národní listy*, 25 May 1890.

15. *ibid.* 28, 30 September, 1, 2 October 1890, *Prager Tagblatt* and *Bohemia*, same dates, *Politik*, 1 October 1890 (the latter a Czech announcement by Kašpar in a German-language newspaper). Kašpar, who described himself as a landowner rather than a brewer, had evidently sold only the brewery and retained the rest of the Práce estate. That it was 'landtäflich' means that the title was recorded in the Land Tables of the Kingdom of Bohemia.

16. *Národní listy*, 8 January 1891.

17. *Národní politika* 14 March 1891.

18. *Adressár královského hlavního mesta Prahy a sousedních obcí*, Prague 1891, p. XCIX (consulted on <http://kramerius.nkp.cz>).

19. *Prager Tagblatt*, *Národní listy*, both 14 February 1891. The Grand Hotel company seems to have defaulted on its payments to the Böhmisches Sparcassa bank.

20. *Národní listy*, 21, 23 September 1892.

21. *Brewers' Journal*, 15 February 1893, p.72.

22. *Duncan's Manual of British & Foreign Brewery Companies*, 1898, London 1898, p.263.

23. *Národní politika*, 14 October 1892; *Národní listy*, 29 October 1892.

24. *Národní listy*, 23 May 1893. Other breweries honoured with the diploma of honour were Meštanský pivovar, Pilsen, and the German breweries St. Anna from Munich and Sandler from Kulmbach, and with the gold medal diploma the Smíchov, Nusle and Treboň breweries.

25. *ibid.* 12 December 1893.

26. *Brewers' Journal*, 15 January 1894, p.19.

27. *ibid.* 15 February 1895, pp.76-7.

28. T.N.A. (cited above), Summary of Capital and Shares made up to 4 February 1895. The numbers are approximate because some shares were jointly owned by more than one person. Note that some changes were due to death and inheritance rather than sale and purchase.

29. This should read Blauer Stern. Selmann was the owner or manager of the hotel, which was one of the leading hotels in 19th century Prague. He was also a director of one of the Pilsen breweries, Erste Pilsener Actienbrauerei.

30. *Brewers' Journal*, 15 February 1896, pp.79-80. A shareholder, Sir Richard Nicholson, asked various questions as to details in the accounts, and the A.G.M. was adjourned to 24 February for the directors to provide further details, which they presumably did.

31. Chodounský, *Příspevek*, pp.159, 175, 177. An

advertisement for Rosenberg in 1899 included, in a list of some 65 breweries built or rebuilt by the firm, 'Libeň, The Breweries Limited, parostr. pivovar' and 'Přace u Prahy, The Bohemian Breweries Limited, parostrojní pivovar': *Kvas*, 15 April 1899, p.235. The Rosenberg cellar system involved moving and stacking the barrels by means of a railway or trackway slung from the ceiling. Polák mentions lagering cellars for 3,000 hl constructed by František Schläffer in 1891: *Polák*, p.51; *Národní listy*, 7 March 1891, in an article on the 'building boom' in Libeň which also mentioned other factories and developments.

32. Marek Laštovka, Václav Ledvinka and collective, *Pražský uličník*, Prague 1997-8, vol. 1, pp.64, 363-4, vol. 2, pp.65, 300. The name derives from Antonín Gotlas, who owned a factory here. The side street to the west of the brewery was named Borivojova in 1900 and renamed U libeňského pivovaru ('By the Libeň Brewery') in 1925. Other nearby streets received brewing-related names after the brewery had closed: Pivovarnická ('Brewer Street') in 1940 and Bednářská ('Cooper Street') in 1979.

33. L.H. [Ladislav Hubený], *Adresár obce libenské*, Libeň 1896, pp.5, 6, 8, 77, 79, 80 (consulted on <http://kramerius.nkp.cz>).

34. *ibid.*, pp.78, 79, 81, 86; *Polák*, p.51. The numbers are house numbers, not street numbers.

35. *Národní listy*, 2, 3, 5 January 1897 ('The lottery has claimed another victim'); *Prager Tagblatt*, 2, 5 January 1897. Bohuslav is referred to in the German reports as Friedrich Bohuslav or Bohuslaw.

36. Kovář also brewed inter alia at Kralupy and Černá Hora, and Spěváček inter alia at Klatovy, Zhoř and Poděbrady: Likovský, *Majitelé*, pp.121, 227.

37. Hervert had previously brewed at the Hervert family brewery in Popovice and at two Prague breweries, Na Libušince and U Primasů. He died in 1899: Likovský, *Majitelé*, p.78, *Držitelé*, p.116.

38. Chodounský, *Příspevek*, p.177.

39. *Národní listy* and *Prager Tagblatt*, both 5 January 1897.

40. *Národní listy*, 9 January 1897.

41. *ibid.*, noting that 'beer has not been brewed for some time now', and *Prager Tagblatt*, both 11 May 1898 (the reports refer to the company as 'Breweries Ltd.' and 'English Breweries Ltd.' respectively); *Národní listy*, 8 December 1898.

42. *Národní listy*, 8 March 1899 and other dates.

43. *ibid.* 1 November 1899.

44. Benda previously kept a pub by the name of U Hopfenštoků: *ibid.* 10 May 1897.

45. The date of closure is uncertain. According to

advertisements by J. Matějček for the garden room and garden restaurant in the *Prager Tagblatt* in August 1899, ordinary draught beer was on sale at 6 crowns, Bavarian dark lager beer at 8 crowns, and Pilsner at 12 crowns. The restaurant still had several large rooms which were used for theatre and cabaret performances (Šmíd-Sodoma and others) and meetings. As late as November 1902 the restaurant was the scene of the founding meeting of the Prague Esperanto club (Esperanto-klubo de Prago). At the same time, Novák started advertising coats, scarves, ribbons and lace from his shop, whose address was given as 'Wassergasse "Beim Stajger"' or the like. By Christmas 1899 Novák was advertising it as the largest and cheapest source of fashionable goods in the city, with a special display lit by electricity on Sunday afternoons.

46. Polák, p.198; *Pražský uličník*, vol 2, p.363, 'V jámě'.

47. *Národní listy*, 19 May 1899.

48. *ibid.* 27 April 1897. Bohuslav was born in Ďáblice near Libeň, and was aged 35 in 1897.

49. *Brewers' Journal*, 15 April 1897, pp.318-9. The ceasing of brewing and malting at U Štajgrů is not mentioned in the report. This was the last meeting of the company to be reported in the *Brewers' Journal*.

50. T.N.A. (cited above), special resolutions of 15 and 31 March 1897, office copy of order of the High Court, and certificate of registration of the order and a minute of reduction of capital of 8 July 1897; *London Gazette*, 26872, 13 July 1897, p.3913.

51. T.N.A. (cited above), Summary of Capital and Shares made up to 10 April 1900.

52. *Duncan's Manual* 1898, p.263. The same comment appeared in later editions of the *Manual*, e.g. in 1903.

53. *Prager Tagblatt* and *Národní listy*, both 4 March 1898.

54. *Národní listy* and *Prager Tagblatt*, both 28 April 1899; *Kvas*, 1 May 1899, p. 249.

55. *Národní listy*, 19 May 1899.

56. *ibid.* 30 April 1899.

57. According to *Národní listy* and the brewing trade journal *Kvas*, the creditors who had put in claims were Zemská banka král. českého (Böhmische Landesbank), represented by the secretary Jirí Tilšer, 99,000 zl. (originally 100,000 zl.), Živnostenská banka 100,000 zl., banker Moric (Moric, Moriz) Zdekauer 65,000 zl., Lazar Kaufmann, owner of the maltings in Prostějov, 44,622 zl. 98 kr., Sonnenschein a Landesmann, hop merchants in Prague, 31,946 zl. 64 kr., the hop firm J.G. Weinmann of Prague and Žatec 21,854 zl. 24 kr., Herman (Herrmann) Pollak, grain dealer in Smíchov, 8,216 zl. 40 kr., the share company Fr. X. Brosche syn (Franz Xaver Brosche Sohn), distillers in Prague, 19,211 (or 16 211) zl. 78 kr., Jakub Abeles a synové, Prague, 6,394 zl. 88 kr., the Prague

ice factory Pražské ledárny 3,052 zl. 25 kr., J. Hitz, coopers in Prague, 1,750 zl., Josef Tekl, cork makers in Prague, 730 zl. 10 kr., J. Petschek, a coal-mining company in Ústí nad Labem, 2,500 zl., and S. Bloch, coal merchant in Prague, 102 zl.

58. *Prager Tagblatt*, 8, 9 May 1899; *Národní listy*, 9 May 1899; *Kvas*, 15 May 1899, pp.280-1. The legal arguments are summarised differently in *Prager Tagblatt* and *Národní listy*, and there are inconsistencies as well as language differences with some of the names.

59. *Národní listy*, 19 May 1899.

60. *Prager Tagblatt*, 1 November 1899 (Stewart's name is misspelt as Dunkan Steward). - Stein, a brewer in Prague, and Kornfeld, a brewer in Pakoměřice, registered the partnership of Parostrojní pivovar v Pakoměřicích, Emil Stein a Josef Kornfeld in 1889 to carry on the business they had started in July 1888: *Národní listy*, 13 February 1889, *Národní politika*, 14 February 1889. After acquiring Práče, they carried on business under the Pakoměřice partnership name until 1901, when the business in Pakoměřice was given up, Práče became the seat of the firm, and the name was changed to Parostrojní pivovar na Práčích, Emil Stein a Josef Kornfeld: *Národní listy* and *Prager Tagblatt*, both 10 April 1901.

61. Konečný, p.236; Polák, p.97; *Kniha o Praze 10*, p.80. The date of the sale by Kornfeld is uncertain: the deletion from the register of the Práče partnership of Stein and Kornfeld was reported in the *Prager Tagblatt* of 31 December 1906. For an undated photograph of a drayman from the Práče brewery see Radko Pytlík, *Ve stínu pípy*, Prague 1996, p.VII. For modern pictures of the surviving buildings see *Kniha o Praze 10*, p.80; Polák, p.96; and the website <http://www.pivovary.info>.

62. With respect to the beer market in Prague, it may be noted that, besides the local breweries mentioned above, some Prague hotels and pubs were supplied by the two Pilsen breweries - especially Měšťanský pivovar, whose beers were available in the larger hotels and restaurants - and a few out-of-town breweries such as Prince Lobkowicz's brewery in Roudnice, Count Nostic-Rieneck's brewery in Pakoměřice and Count Thun's brewery in Klášterec. Beers from Austria and Bavaria could also be found: Dreher's Schwechat brewery had its own house in the city, Dreher's Bierhalle in Na poříčí, and Spaten of Munich had a depot; in 1899 J. Schalek bottled and sold Pschorr beer from Munich, claimed to be absolutely free from yeast as a result of using Prof. Pasteur's system. Even British beers were sold, although not necessarily in large quantities: a certain J.F. Krásy advertised the best 'Pale Ale a portské pivo' in 1889 (*Národní listy*, 10 October 1889. 'Portské pivo' - literally 'port beer' -

presumably meant porter.). Annual beer consumption per capita (figures for 1890) was 268 litres in Prague, and in the suburbs of Smíchov 188 l, Karlín 187 l, Vinohrady 172 l and Žižkov 129 l. This compared with figures for other European cities of 213 l in Vienna, 327 l in London, 345 l in Berlin and as much as 7,12 l in Munich (*Prager Tagblatt*, 29 March 1891).

63. Antonín Kratochvíle, *Pivovarství českých zemí v proměnách 20. století*, Prague 2005, p.10.

64. Likovský, *České pivovary 1869-1900* and *Pivovary československého území 1900-1948*. Note that complete figures are not available for all years; the figure for Libeň for 1896/97 is taken from F.V. Konečný, 'Z galerie a historie českomoravských pivovarů a sladoven: Libenské pivovary', *Gambrinus*, 1943, pp.425-6 (*Kvas* was renamed *Gambrinus* during the German occupation). There are some mistakes in this article, which refers to the company as 'The bohemian Brewery Lim': thus the English company did not found the brewery, but purchased it subsequently, and Camplík was not the first head brewer.

65. *The Manual of British & Foreign Brewery Companies for 1903*, p.321.

66. T.N.A. (cited above), Returns of Capital and Shares made up to 31 December 1905 and 31 December 1906.

67. *Národní listy*, 14 May 1907. The date of sale of 1 December 1906 stated by Konečný would appear not to be correct.

68. Polák, p.51; Konečný, p.425.

69. It is known that no meeting was held in 1899: T.N.A. (cited above), letter of 29 March 1890.

70. Národní archiv, 'konskripce'; the address was house cp 1228.

71. It should perhaps be noted, for the sake of completeness, that there is no connection between Bohemian Breweries Ltd. and other breweries of similar name, such as the later American firm Bohemian Breweries Inc. Bohemia - like Bavaria and Munich, and of course Pilsen - was a name commonly used by brewers to suggest that their beer was of a certain style or quality, in the days before stricter laws on the use of designations of origin. In this case, however, the name was purely geographical: the company was called Bohemian Breweries Ltd. because it owned breweries in Bohemia, Bohemian rather than Czech being the usual English word at the time for the country and its language.

Other British companies owned breweries in the colonies and the United States - not to mention Buenos Aires and Lima - but ownership of breweries in continental Europe was less common. One such company was the Kaiser Lager Beer Brewery Company Ltd., which operated a brewery in Niedermendig in the Rhineland, but was wound up in the early 1890s. The Belgian Lager Beer Company Ltd, formed in 1891, was set up to import beer from Messrs Schultze & Co's Brasserie du Lion, Antwerp, but not to own the brewery. Three companies established in 1888 were St. Pauli Breweries Co Ltd. (connected with the Bohemian Breweries in the persons of McHardy and Stewart), Antwerp Tivoli Brewery Ltd. and Dortmund Breweries Co Ltd. The Antwerp and Dortmund ventures were not very successful either, but the St. Pauli brewery in Bremen continued until the outbreak of war in 1914, when it was expropriated as enemy property.