

Remember the days when makers of home brew were hauled into court by Inspectors Bill Thornbury, Dave Porter and Billy Warren, when making brew on the farm or elsewhere was a knack tried by many and when most of the stuff was so potent that a glass or two knocked imbibers out cold?

Illicit stills were profitable but police sleuths in order to hold their jobs had to be on the alert and "go" day and night, mostly at night when those in quest of the stuff would travel miles, park their vehicles some distance from the bootlegger's shed, rap at the back door and be admitted after being identified as a friend or foe.

Many a vendor was summoned to court and on these occasions in order to get a conviction the "evidence" was prominently displayed on the magistrate's desk.

Invariably the bootleggers were found guilty but it was equally determined that the Bible oath was forgotten many a time. Invariably the law breakers had to pay large fines or go to jail. This nefarious bootlegging business was "dished" with the adopting of sensible laws and the establishment of the Liquor Control Board.

Incidentally the first Chairman of the Ontario Liquor Control Board was the late J. D. Flavelle of Lindsay and the Vice - Chairman was L. H. Dingman, of Stratford, also a strict temperance man, Editor of the Stratford Daily Herald and Organist in the Methodist Church. The late Mr. Flavelle was one of the first temperance advocates to appear on a local platform advocating the passing of the Act regarding the establishment of the control board. He believed in lawful control and the establishment of liquor stores.

The Fred Cornell brewery

in Lindsay was followed later on by the erection of a large distillery by Thos. Hodgson on St. Paul street north, and the operation of a plant on Pottinger street, in Ops Township.

A progressive step took place in Lindsay when a brewery warehouse was set up in the large brick building at the corner of Lindsay and King streets in charge of John O'Reilly, and this outlet was enlarged when it moved to a new building on Kent Street east, the present outlet.

The first store in Lindsay to handle the sale of hard liquor was located on the south side of Kent street, near Lindsay street and the vendor was J. R. Shannon, with the former Mayor John O'Reilly in charge. In later years the Ontario Liquor Control Board opened a store in the premises east of the Dominion Bank. Today the modern store at the corner of William and Russell streets, attends to the tastes of the imbibing public, and unlike days of old, women customers are about as many as the males. Guy Gassien is the courteous and obliging manager of the store.

It is recalled that Sir Henry Pellett of Toronto was the establisher of the Lindsay distillery in the old stone grist mill on Kent Street east, running the distillery for a few years and also built an addition to the elevator across the Scugog River which was also served by a large bottling plant. This building has been occupied for several years by the Northern Casket.

A son of the master brewer Cornell also became a master distiller.

The Lindsay distillery and the Lindsay brewery are two industries long ago buried, that provided employment for a number of men and a thirst quencher for thousands of people.