

BREWERIES, DISTILLERIES & TAVERNS

THE SIFTON-COOK'S EXHIBITION HALL

OUR ALCOHOLIC HISTORY

While the early history of this stone building is shrouded in mystery, it has **clear and documented links to the local brewing and distilling industries.**

In 1832 James Calcutt, newly arrived from Ireland, bought this property which was bounded by the streets immediately to the north, west, and east of the

building and Lake Ontario to the south. Here Calcutt erected his home, a distillery, brewery, malt houses, kilns, workshops, storehouses and a steam powered mill. The buildings can be seen in this **1839 map by Sandford Fleming.**

This long, narrow stone building, (upper left corner with Calcutt's house just below) appears to have been awkwardly modified by Calcutt with the addition of brick chimneys and 'owl windows' for its new role in the brewing industry.

Due to the fame of their "Calcutt's Malt" and "Calcutt's Ale" the Calcutt family expanded to Port Hope and Peterborough (this bottle is from their Peterborough operation). Thomas Molson also established a complex of a brewery, distillery, flour and saw mills at "Molson Mills" at Port Hope in 1851. It was rented to local

businessmen until it was sold in 1868.

James Calcutt was a forward looking entrepreneur, being the first locally to establish the system of paying cash for the coarse grain and paying his men in cash every Saturday.

However, by 1862 financial problems forced Calcutt to sell the business to Henry MacKechnie who renamed it the Victoria Brewery. That brewery operated until 1899 when it was destroyed by fire. The house and this building survived, but were damaged. During restoration work, charred boards were found in part of this building's roof - another interesting chapter in the long story which brings you here today.



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