



Archive Fact Sheet: Guinness Brewers

Arthur Guinness was the first in a long line of Guinness Master Brewers. The traditional craft of brewing at St. James's Gate Brewery was handed down from generation to generation. Arthur most probably developed his passion for brewing from his father, Richard, brewing for the Archbishop of Cashel. Arthur's son Benjamin followed in his father's footsteps becoming Master Brewer in 1803, while his brother Arthur concentrated on business development. In the mid 19th Century the craft of brewing was continued by the Brewery partners, the Purser family.

The brewers were the executives of the Company, the Master Brewer, the most senior of the brewers. In 1885 there were 12 brewers, with an average annual salary of £1,000. They entered as apprentices and were mainly of Guinness or Purser connections, though from time to time an 'outsider' was admitted. In 1886 the position of Master Brewer was held by W.P. Geoghegan, a great-nephew of John Tertius Purser, who had come into the Brewery in 1859. The Master Brewer before W.P. Geoghegan had been G.A. Waller who combined the duties of Master Brewer and Chief Engineer.

Towards the end of the 19th century the Company began developing the area of scientific brewing and began recruiting first class science graduates from Winchester, Oxford and Cambridge as apprentice brewers. Between 1893 and 1903 the Company recruited 11 apprentice brewers, the first of these scientific brewers was T.B. Case. Case held a first-class degree in Chemistry from Oxford and subsequent brewers at Guinness all held degrees from Oxford or Cambridge. Case's appointment was soon followed by Alan McMullen, an Oxford graduate. A most notable appointment was

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that of William Sealy Gosset, appointed on 1 October 1899 as apprentice brewer. Gosset's discovery in 1908 of the T Test carried his name far beyond the confines of the Brewery.

This new generation of brewers enhanced the traditional craft of brewing GUINNESS® with scientific technological developments. The apprentice brewers were supervised by the Master Brewer and usually served their apprenticeship for one - three years, before being promoted to the position of Brewer in charge of their own department, such as Brewhouse, Storehouse, Hops. The apprentice brewers worked on a shift basis and their duties included the general supervision of the Brewery and Brewhouse, recording in ledgers all aspects of the brewing process, the temperatures of the brewing process-the grist, the hop rate, the mashing temperature, the tuning gravity. Any incidents had to be reported to the Master Brewer immediately and the Master Brewer personally inspected all aspects of the brewing process. The Master Brewer was held in the same esteem as the Directors of the Company, maintaining a bird's eye view of all aspects of the operations of the Company. He was responsible for all brewing decisions, each brewing department had to report directly to the Master Brewer. The Master Brewer supervised all aspects of the brewing process; from the purchase, supply of raw materials to the experimental work in the Brewer's Laboratory and Experimental Brewery. He was also responsible for personnel issues relating to the Brewing departments, including the recruitment and welfare of employees.

The Brewers were on equal social terms with the Directors of the Company, being both feared and respected by Brewery employees. They enjoyed special privileges, they had their own private dining room in the Brewery and they lived in the Company houses, at 98 and 108 James's Street. The more senior brewers lived in 98, the more junior in 108. They had a housekeeper, two maid servants and free heating and lighting. Each brewer had their own sitting room as well as a bedroom and shared a communal dining room and sitting room. Permission had to be sought from the Master Brewer to have a female visitor for tea! Outside of the Brewery, the

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Brewers held a privileged status within Dublin's social society and many were considered very eligible bachelors. They socialised together and many were related by marriage.

From the late 1980s, early 1990s, the system of one Master Brewer ceased to exist. Rather, focus has been on a multi-disciplinary team, which continues the rich brewing tradition through the use of the most advanced technologies.

Master Brewers

1759 – 1803 Arthur Guinness

1803 – 1820 Benjamin Guinness

[1820] – [1840] John Purser Jr. (Became partner 1820).

[1840] – [1867] John Tertius Purser

[1867] – [1880] George Arthur Waller

[1880] – 1897 William Purser Geoghegan

1897 – 1911 F.E. Greene

1911 – 1923 Edward L. Phillips

1923 – 1932 Arthur Henry Cochrane Barker

1932 – 1937 Alan McMullen

[Sep 1937 – Oct 1937 William Sealy Gosset]

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1937 – 1946 Geoffrey Surtees Phillpotts

1947 – 1949 R.S Wix

1949 – 1956 Cyril Buttanshaw

1956 – 1960 D.O. (Owen) Williams

1960 – 1968 Launce McMullen

1968 – 1973 John Falcon Brown

1973 – 1978 (Dec) Robert O.V. Lloyd

1978 – 1984 J.F. Carson

1984 – [c.1989] G.M. Irons

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