

HISTORY OF THE G. WEBER BREWING COMPANY  
THERESA, WISCONSIN

Theresa, Wisconsin, was founded by Solomon Juneau late in the fourth decade of the 19th Century, probably in 1848 or 1849, and named by him after his Mother. His Wife was part Indian but Milwaukee which was founded by her husband, who had also been its first Mayor, had become too metropolitan and different to suit her taste for open country that her wishes to make a change were complied with. This, of course, is according to rumors and other matters such as attractive fur trading, water-power potentialities etc., may have been either contributory or major factors.

Juneau had acquired a tract of land including that inside the ox-bow formed by the Rock River which also offered a water-power site that would provide extensive pondage, a very desirable factor for power regulation for a mill that operates during only a part of a 24-hour day and is adversely affected by drought conditions. He built a dam, a gristmill and a timber rock and earth dam to operate the water-power driven mills under a hydraulic head of substantially 7 feet. Some logs projecting out of the water along the East bank mark the location of the first dam which later on was removed to be replaced by a second dam further South. The second dam was destroyed by a flood. It was replaced by a third dam still further South. Remnants of the third dam which was removed in 1895 are still visible, especially on the East bank. The last of the three dams provided a hydraulic head of about 6 feet.

The mill-pond was rather large. To the Southeast of the railroad station of the Soo-Line - non existent prior to 1875 - the pond at its widest part was about 2 miles in extent and its over-all length above the mill was about 6 miles. Mr. Rietbrock of Milwaukee had acquired much of the mill-pond land after 1895 and then sold acreage to farmers.

The dams and mill are mentioned herein for the reason that the brewery depended on the gristmill for malt grinding service and water because it, the brewery, had no motive power of its own.

The mill, without water-power after 1895, was operated by steam power which, before that time, was auxiliary power during periods of low water.

Juneau had the foresight not to have Theresa grow helter skelter but carefully planned the excellent layout as it existed before recent additions.

Juneau built a fine residence, by the standards of earlier days, near to the crest of the hill directly South of the residence of Mrs. Clara Bandlow. The residence commanded a fine view of the Rock River and the ox-bow it formed.

When Benedict Weber at age 43 arrived in Theresa in May 1853 with his Wife, Josefa, a Son, Gebhard and three Daughters, he still had left between 600 and 1,000 dollars which, while chicken feed by modern standards, was enough to make a worth-while down payment on



farm land. He and his family stayed with a farmer who lived on the West side of the road to Milwaukee and about a mile South of where Grandpa Fred Bandlow built his home.

Benedict contemplated buying a farm and had in mind the acquisition of the acreage West of Fred H. Bandlow's farm on the Mayville Road and only a fraction of a mile on the knoll West of Maxams. The owner of the land lived in New York State and negotiations by mail were so time consuming and difficult that he decided to accept the offer of Ulrich Oberle to acquire a one-half partnership interest in Oberle's brewery which was one of only four in Theresa at that time. I don't know the price paid but I am sure it was much less than \$100 per acre.

It has been reported that Benedict Weber was very energetic and the fact that he bought out Oberle's other half interest within a year indicates that he had made progress. In those days before the Civil War, when railroads were scarce and automobile trucks nonexistent, beer often enjoyed a seller's market and country town saloons were more or less dependent upon local breweries and had to stand in the good graces of brewers in order to obtain beer. Production and not selling was the major problem in those days before railroads in many small towns and before automobiles.

The brewery, as breweries generally were planned before the advent of mechanical refrigeration, was built into a hill-side in order to provide cool underground cellars. Beer before the Civil War was brewed much stronger than that now produced. Its alcoholic content was much higher than present day beer and this permitted of higher cellar temperatures.

Having been built, prior to the time when Solomon Juneau came and plotted the Village, the old still existing underground cellar with arched or vaulted brick construction, projects, for a short distance at its West end, into the later laid out street.

A few years after Benedict Weber's acquisition, the brewery was destroyed by fire. It was not insured. Benedict set about immediately to rebuild and when the walls were partly erected, a violent storm tore them down before the mortar had set. Undaunted Benedict set about reconstructing. In those far off days, timber was a nuisance. As a matter of fact, Theresa, at that time, had a caustic potash manufacturing facility. The raw material was cut-down stately oaks, pines and other fine timber which was burned to provide ashes for leaching. My Father told me that anyone building a house or barn had only to ask a local farmer who wanted cleared farm land for the privilege of cutting some trees. The farmers were glad to grant the request. Benedict needed a heavy timber or two and had picked a very large tree he had selected in what much later on became Bandlow's Woods. His request was denied and when he asked what the owner expected to do with it he was told, "To have the pleasure to see it burn." Benedict apparently got a big timber elsewhere. Incidentally, some years after the refusal, the owner of the tree lost a team of horses and, according to custom, a collection to reimburse the loss was solicited. It was then that, when Benedict's Son, my Father, Gebhard Weber, was asked to



contribute he replied, "I would not give even 5 cents if the best team of horses in Wisconsin was to be presented to the man who was so mean to my Father."

At any rate, my Grandfather succeeded in rebuilding and included a malt production facility with its barley sprouting floor, cord-wood fired furnace, hot air duct and cast-iron small I beams to support numerous slotted cast-iron roasting floor plates over the hot air ducts to roast the sprouted barley to convert it into malt.

This facility was still in use up to late in 1919. Prohibition went into effect in January 1920.

Benedict met with an accident in the Winter of 1862 - 1863 on a trip to Ashford. When his horses shying at suddenly seeing a big bright bare spot on a tree that had been struck by lightning, made a sudden jump sideways, he was thrown off his seat of his sleigh and his back landed on a stump in the woods through which he was riding. He managed to get home but an infection developed. He had to be taken 2 times to Milwaukee to have cauterization with hot irons but by June, the doctors gave up hope and he soon died in the Summer of 1863.

He had been in business for a little less than ten years and, during the interim, had become sole owner of the following:

A farm in Theresa

A farm near Ashford in Fond du Lac County

The house he built in 1854, the one in which the Knutzens and Alice Fickert now reside in,

and

The brewery which, except for the underground cellars that did not burn and, therefore, required no rebuilding, but was rebuilt without the aid of insurance money.

He did well under the circumstances.

My Father, Gebhard Weber, born Sept. 5, 1846 was nearing 17 years of age at the time his Father, Benedict died. He took on the management of the brewery and continued to live in the home with his Mother and Sisters until the time he married Maria M. Husting April 14, 1874.

Shortly prior to his marriage he negotiated with his Mother for the sole ownership of the brewery, the two farms and the residence and arranged for the periodic payments. Two of the Sisters had married before 1874. The Sister, Theresa, had married a man by the name of Carl Weber and lived in Fond du Lac. The Sister Matilda had married Carl Jussen, a Cousin of Karl Schurz who was a well-to-do business man in Ripon, Wis. The Mother and the remaining Sister Ursula, who never married, then moved to Ripon to be with the Jussens.

The brewery had no mechanical power. The gristmill then owned by a man named Schrauth who lived kitty-corner from the Bandlow home across the street from the Village Hall and Fire Department, ground the brewery's malt which on brewing days was transported in bags on



the shoulders of men who did not receive \$8.00 or more per hour. This continued until about 1893 when it became more or less certain that the mill would lose its water-power through the taking down of the dam, a development which followed in 1895.

During the 30-year period 1863 to 1893 a new brew kettle and a new mash tub were installed. The copper kettle, 6 feet in diameter, had a plain sheet copper bottom convex inside, a sheet copper shell and an open top. The oak wooden mash tub had no mash machine but 3 men with heavy paddles of a special form of construction, stirred the mash in the tub while moving about on a circular platform surrounding the tub.

The uncooked "Wort" as the strained and drained liquid from the tub is called, was then pumped into the kettle by an overhead brass pump of the same general design as an ordinary kitchen sink, iron pump such as households usually had mounted on the sink in the 19th century. The brass wort pump was mounted at the level of the top of the kettle and a long wooden rod hanging down to within a few feet above the floor below was worked up and down by hand for a period of about 2 hours.

The kettle was fired with 4-foot lengths of cord-wood. The fire being more or less difficult to control repeatedly might have the boiling wort spill over the top of the kettle. This necessitated quick action by a man immediately opening the firing door to cause cooling off.

The two to two and one-half hours of cooking was and is for the purpose of bringing about coagulation of dissolved starchy matter for later straining out the clear wort after the addition of hops to the boiling brew during the last half hour of the boiling period. The hot finished wort was then pumped by hand to what was called a "Cool-Ship" on the second floor. This was a large flat tank in which the depth was only about 1 foot. After cooling, the wort flowed by gravity to the fermenting cellar.

The above broadly describes matters as they were prior to 1886, the year I was born.

With the removal of the water-power in the mill, my Father proceeded in 1893 - as I recall the date - to install temporarily a second-hand portable steam engine such as threshers used and, shortly thereafter the following:

- A 30 BHP Horizontal Fire-tube Boiler in a brick setting
- A 15 HP Horizontal Steam Engine
- A Long Overhead Line Shaft
- A Malt Mill which was moved from the Grist and Flour Mill.
- A New Deep Well
- A power-driven rotary pump and, later on, a steam pump for pumping wort were installed.

He had previously installed a water cooled copper tubing wort cooler to replace the Cool-Ship.



The brewery and cellar floors were all wooden which, after 1900, were replaced with concrete.

In 1908, a steam bottom then costing only 400 dollars was installed to replace the light sheet metal bottom. The price included everything from manufacture in Milwaukee, shipping by rail to Theresa Station, loading, hauling by wagon and unloading, the Coppersmith's 3-day job and hotel bill, his railroad fare and 3 days assistance by Riney Wagner of Theresa. The kettle at that time was in the extreme Southeast corner of the brewery but continued to have no copper dome on top.

Early in the last decade of the 19th Century, my Father built a new Ice House for cooling the cellars below by means of air ducts in the walls. This Ice House was built of cream colored brick and occupied the Northwest corner of the brewery in the space which is now the still existing flat roof as may be recalled. The brick structure was not removed until after Prohibition went into effect.

Gustav Luhn, the Great Grandfather of the three Bandlow Boys, Fred, Russell and Clyde, was the contractor for the carpentry work and, I well recall him standing on an elevation and commanding "Hee Haw Heep" to his men when lifting heavy timbers in order to make them work in unison. Gustav Luhn for the job may not have been an un-mixed blessing for G. Weber.

Of the several Theresa breweries only the Weber Brewery and Quast's Brewery, then in the area of Fred Bandlow's Mother's property, had survived. Quast, who also had a tavern, was about the only customer of his own brewery, which no one was inclined to buy. In spite of my Mother's repeated urging for my Father to buy it, he just would not comply.

Gustav Luhn may have noticed things that looked interesting to him. His Brother-in-law then living in Chicago, was induced by Gustav to join him to buy the Quast Brewery and to form "Luhn and Bandlow Union Brewery."

My Father had made a mistake in not having bought the Quast property. Luhn and Bandlow and, later on, as I recall, Bandlow alone gave the Weber Brewery some stiff competition.

While the two competitors did not love one another too much, they, nevertheless, cooperated in jointly harvesting or cutting ice on the river beginning at the location now used as a bathing or swimming place and extending East and then, for a short distance, South at the first bend in the river. They each also delivered free ice to the saloons in Theresa. One delivered on Mondays and the other on Thursdays.

Quast had Horse power in his brewery but Luhn and Bandlow replaced it with a steam engine of the kind used for threshing grain.

The Theresa beer business was shared about 50-50 but our competitor did more business in Lomira which previously had been a good market for G. Weber.



A big drawback under which the two Theresa breweries suffered was that neither one could supply bottle beer, the demand for which was increasing steadily.

The G. Weber Brewing Co., which had changed from a sole ownership to a corporation in 1906 or 1907 with Gebhard Weber and his two Sons, Bertram C. Weber, who was the brewmaster, and Victor R. Weber who beside doing general brewery work also worked on sales promotion at which he was quite successful.

A Bottling House and facilities were added and began operations in 1910. While most breweries supplied only one size - 12 fluid ounce bottles - the G. Weber Brewery supplied only the 16 ounce size in brown bottles and, to a very limited extent, 12 ounce in white bottles. A 15 ounce size largely replaced the 16 ounce later on.

For various reasons, maybe even for lack of room on the limited premises, the Bandlow Brewery did not undertake bottling but decided to quit producing beer and took on a Beer Agency in Theresa to supply Gutsch Brewing Co. beer delivered by trucks from the brewery in Sheboygan.

"World War One" and up to the time when "The U.S. joined in One" started, in 1914, Internal Revenue was One Dollar a barrel. There was no State of Wisconsin tax. Beer stamps were pasted on the tops of the beer kegs. The Blue colored Beer Stamps - all about 3 inches square had been in denominations as follows:

1/8	Barrel	12½¢
1/4	"	25¢
1/2	"	50¢

They were doubled when we joined in the war.

Since only larger city breweries furnished some full barrels with One Dollar Stamps, country town breweries had nothing larger than 50¢ stamps before the tax was doubled. Delivered beer price to local and nearby villages were as follows:

Keg Beer		Bottle Beer to Saloons	
1/8 Barrel	\$ 0.75	24 - 16 oz. Bottles	\$ 0.80
1/4 "	1.50	and \$1.00 to individuals	
1/2 "	3.00	who called at the brewery.	

Prices to Customers who called at the brewery were:

Keg Beer the same as above excepting 1/8 barrel which cost 90¢	24 - 16 oz. Bottles	\$ 1.00
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I do not recall what Weber charged for the very limited sales of 12 oz. bottles. The 16 oz. size at the price in comparison with the price that other breweries charged for 12 oz. - whatever it happened to be - helped the G. Weber Brewery to regain Lomira, Ashford and other customers and apparently this adversely affected 12 oz. bottle beer competition in the local territory.



I do not know the reason but I surmise that the 16 oz. bottle appeal to local customers must have been, at least, a factor and probably one reason for Bandlow's decision to terminate operations.

The Bandlow Brewery, in 1901, had a disastrous fire which, through hot air bouyance of burning shingles, set fire to and completely destroyed the Catholic School, the Theresa Fire Station and the home of Joseph Miller, all West of - but in the same block - with the Rock River House.

Bert Weber and Carl Tolzman - with almost super human efforts - managed to save the Weber residence and limit the damage. The Lomira Fire Department arrived too late to save the properties immediately West of the Rock River House.

It does not appear that the fire in 1901 had an influence on the later operations of the Bandlow Brewery which continued in business for some time after 1910 or more than 10 years after the fire.

The recapture of Lomira and other business by the Weber Brewery made it necessary to purchase malt from the Sterr Brothers who, by noting the amounts of the purchases, could tell fairly well what prospects were. There had been rumors of Sterr planning to build a brewery in Lomira. Bandlow may have sensed that this was forthcoming. This may have been an influence in the decision not to continue to remain in business.

When I graduated in June 1908 with a University of Wisconsin B.S.E.E. degree, a business depression had rendered it difficult to obtain a good job so that during the balance of the year I stayed at home.

In those days of long ago many small town breweries had no mechanical refrigeration and depended on natural ice cut into 12" x 22" x 12 or more inches thick, and stored above the cellars below as already stated. The Weber Brewery harvested and stored well over 300 tons to cool cellars and more than that amount in another ice house Southeast of the brewery for ice deliveries to saloons and some local customers' household iceboxes as well as for packing around kegs on horse-drawn beer wagons for delivery to saloons in other towns during hot Summer days. The cooling of cellars with natural ice was not very satisfactory during abnormally hot Summers.

Not yet having found a job during the latter half of 1908, I installed an auxiliary brine cooling system in which Adolph Walther, a very versatile local man, helped me to cut, thread and install 1½ inch pipe and fittings in overhead space in the storage cellar.

A large basement tank which, during the hot months of Summer was filled with ice with buckets of salt thrown in to supply cold brine, was then circulated through the brine pipes by means of a new horizontal steam pump. This auxiliary cooling was very helpful but also laborious.

Theresa had no public electric service such as could supply a motor-driven ammonia compressor for mechanical refrigeration. The big slow speed steam-operated old type compressors, together with



additional Power Plant Boiler capacity - even if they had been within the financial means, could not be considered for lack of space.

In January 1909, I found a job with the Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company (T.M.E.R. & L. Co.) This was at a time when the 600 Volt Interurban Lines to Watertown, Racine, etc., were being converted to 1200 Volts D.C. and an aluminum 44,000 Volt 25 Cycle High Tension Line on steel towers together with sub-stations was being constructed to connect with the 44,000 Volt line which the Kilbourn Hydro-Electric Co. line had been built as far as Watertown.

The Assistant to the Chief Engineer of T.M.E.R. & L. Co. had resigned to accept a University teaching position and I, his Assistant, was given the job. I had charge of delivering material and equipment to the construction crews, made layout designs for switchboards for the Drafting Department's use to make working drawings, prepare line sag tables for high line construction crews using a catenary equation, the tables showing the various amounts of tensions in pounds to apply to the aluminum high line wire or cable with varying temperatures so that the finished line had the same amount of sag between towers. There was so much work that 12 hour days for me were common. One morning I left the office at 3:00 A.M.

The strain became unbearable and, even though the work was within several months of completion, my nerves could take no more and my Parents persuaded me to come home until I would feel better.

We were almost ready to start bottling and I found a good many things to do with my time. This was in the latter part of 1910.

We, of course, did not start out with modern bottling equipment which, incidentally, we could not have used for lack of Public Electric Service.

We had bought a second-hand Bottle Filler and Crowner and a new large Cypress rectangular pasteurizing tank in which the bottles were handled in perforated galvanized sheet metal open top 4 inches high trays or boxes. Steam pipes supplied the heat and an operator with a hand thermometer was in attendance.

The Bottle Washer was comprised of a rectangular tank on legs with a horizontal belt-driven rotary brush powered by a small DeLaval type steam turbine which I built myself. Some Bottling Plant - not quite the last word in efficiency.

However, we mugged along and improved our business sufficiently to permit of making some major improvements in the brewery.

We then - and even up to the time Prohibition went into effect - "Kraeusened" our beer. This is the natural process which Heileman of LaCrosse still follows. Like Bass, the producer of the world famous Bass's Ale, we did not filter Weber beer. Unfiltered beer has a better flavor but no sparkle. The brewery improvements made in 1910 comprised of moving the brewkettle from the extreme Southeast corner room to the Southeast corner of the adjacent room to the North and adding a 6 ft. diameter 1/8 inch thick copper dome



costing only \$190 installed. A 6" channel iron frame work on which the kettle rested was fabricated in North Milwaukee per my design at a cost of only \$50.

A new oak and cypress wooden mash tub, with 8 feet diameter 6-section copper strainer bottom and a mash machine and copper grant, and also a new hop jack were installed. The copper Baudelot wort cooler was moved into a separate room on the second floor from its former position on an elevated platform on the first floor. Various incidental improvements were also made. The first Brew, after completion of the rehabilitation, was made on Washington's Birthday, February 22, 1911.

The bottle beer business gave the brewery a good lift and soon the old filler was replaced by a rotary unit, a labelling machine and a multiple washer was installed and I, personally, built a mechanical bottle soaker.

We purchased a  $1\frac{1}{2}$  K.W. Northern Electric Co. D.C. generator and I wired part of the brewery and our home for electric lighting. The intention was to incidentally operate the generator from the 15 HP brewery steam engine - since it was usually in operation most of the day driving a water pump and other equipment - and have the generator charge a 120 Volt storage battery which I built with my own hands. I am embarrassed to this day to confess that the battery was a failure because it just did not attain sufficient capacity. I thereupon sold the battery lead plates and bought a 2 HP gasoline marine engine to run the generator. The line to the house was carried in series through an electro-magnet which sustained a horizontal lever which, in turn, was connected with the engine's oil cups and had a built-in contactor in series with the ignition circuit.

After the engine was started, it needed no attention and when the one who was the last to go to bed merely opened and closed the main switch in the cabinet, in the upstairs hall, the lever dropped to open the ignition circuit and close the oil cups.

In 1910 or 1911, Lomira installed its own municipal electric light plant with a producer gas-operated engine and storage battery. As soon as it was started to successfully provide electric lighting, Nathan Haesley of Theresa contacted me in Janesville where I, during the interim, had taken the job as Electrical Engineer for the Janesville Electric Company. He wanted me to design a plant such as that in Lomira for installation in Theresa.

I immediately told Haesley that I would give the Lomira Plant about 5 years of life because the storage battery would not last longer than five or six years and that there would not be sufficient profit during the interim to earn enough money to buy a new battery. I also told him that when I had tried to obtain the Lomira job for my former employer who had left T.M.E.R. & L. Co. to go into consulting practice, I did not spill the beans in handing out free information to Lomira when I had in mind a 6600 Volt or more 3-phase high line from the new plant in the Mayville blast furnace to serve both Lomira and Theresa. I strongly opposed what they had in mind.



However, a high line from Mayville to Theresa even without Lomira was my answer and Haesley was convinced.

I have forgotten the cost but the estimate for a 3-phase No. 6 B&S ga. copper wire line, three 5 KVA single phase transformers and a distribution system with an additional 3-phase transformer to operate the gristmill, was far below the Lomira cost. I think the entire cost including distribution was about \$6,000.

The Theresa Company - I have forgotten its name - could afford and did sell energy, as I advised, to the mill below the KWH purchase price because the lowering of the rate due to the increased total consumption more than offset the amount by which the energy bills for the mill were reduced.

To make an already long story shorter, Lomira could make no money and was lucky, when the time came, to salvage its plant as junk for between 5 and 10 percent of its cost when service from a high line had become available and, presumably, the wiring in the village distribution system remained available for continued use.

By contrast, the \$100 per share original cost of the Theresa Electric Co. - or whatever the name was - was sold at \$200 a share to the company that now served our village.

The Theresa Electric utility went into operation some time after I quit my job in Janesville to take a new one with the Great Falls Power Company in Montana.

The Webers, of course, abandoned the gasoline engine for driving its D.C. generator and installed a small upright steam engine in its place to generate energy to operate a D.C. motor that served the mechanical bottle soaker.

With the end of local competition, the Weber Brewery for a while enjoyed improved business. The two breweries in Mayville never tried to sell beer in Theresa nor did the G. Weber Brewing Co. attempt to compete in Mayville. The hardest competition was the brewery in West Bend. While relief from the difficult Bandlow competition greatly benefited Weber business, it was to be more harmful than beneficial and, presumably, was an important factor in reviving the interest of Sterr in Lomira to build a brewery next to the Malt house which, incidentally, could also supply steam, power and water.

The new brewery in Lomira severely reduced the Weber sales and profits which, for a time, revived somewhat after the U.S. was drawn into the World War but, soon after peace returned, the picking was tough and continued to be reaching a climax with Prohibition which became effective in January 1920. This was indeed a crushing blow. No compensation of any kind from the Government which felt it to be entirely justifiable to destroy the alcoholic beverage industry and people's capital and savings without batting an eye.

To cap the climax, a severe Farm Depression set in in 1921 when local farmers, for a time, sold milk delivered to Mike Asenbauer's Cheese Factory - now Widmers - for One Dollar per Hundred Pounds



which means one cent a Pint. In 1921, I bought cheese at the cheese factory, which sold cheese to its milk suppliers at the wholesale price in Plymouth, at 11 cents a pound. Cheddar cheese at Widmer's now costs \$1.50 a pound and somewhat more than \$2.00 a pound in Milwaukee supermarkets for small packages.

Incidentally, before the World War, the Journal and Sentinel each cost One Cent for the Daily except Sunday, which was 5 Cents. The Daily now is 15 Cents and Sunday 50 Cents. The Real Estate Tax on the brewery property was reduced somewhat but was paid every year as a heavy burden.

During Prohibition there was much moonshining of whiskey and somebody conceived the idea of the production of Wort - the unfermented completely brewed beer as it leaves the brew kettle - and sell this product in 5 gallon cans. I am sorry that with my 91½ year lapse of memory, I cannot recall what the ostensible product the purchasers of Wort supposedly would make at home, but it was something entirely unrelated to beer. I believe it spoken as of something to mix with live-stock feed. Small town breweries began manufacturing Wort and selling it at One Dollar per 5 gallon thin plywood covered corked metal tinplated cans with conical tops. The Wort, at almost boiling point temperature was filled into the can from a faucet and tube at the kettle bottom. The sterile Wort then was available for the purpose for which it was bought.

I have always suspected that on rare occasions one or more of the numerous purchasers had discovered or had been told that if yeast were added in a suitable container in a cool cellar, the result would be beer of from 3½ to 4% alcoholic content in about 11 days and if put in bottles with a little sugar water or - better still - some fresh Wort with a good start in fermentation then mixed in on the bottle then crowned or corked, beer with a good head and flavor would result. Of course, there was no doubt about the intended use of Wort by the purchasers. Those who went into the Wort business made good profits especially before the time competition brought the price down to One Dollar per 5 gallon can.

Several friends had urged Bert Weber to go into this line of business but he just would not risk to provide something that he thought was illegal.

It finally came to a point where the Government was considering to tax the product and, I believe, it may have done so eventually. At any rate, no attempts were made by Federal or State legislative bodies to promote a Revenue Tax.

Some considerable time after the manufacture of Wort for sale was first begun, Hank Hartmann, a native of Theresa employed in Hartford, came to urge Bert to manufacture Wort and succeeded in having his Brother Pete join Bert in the venture.

For a matter of only a few hundred dollars, Bert and Pete Hartmann, Hank's Brother, went into the Wort business. It made a quick start and a good profit.



I do not know the reason why Pete, after receiving an offer to sell his interest back to Bert did so at a profit of only a few hundred dollars, but he did and Bert was in sole possession.

Even though Bert got into Wort manufacture after the cream of the business had been skimmed, he still did well and continued to do so until in early 1933, Prohibition was repealed.

After Repeal of Prohibition, I did not give much thought to our brewery, which I considered to be a dead asset with a rather low liquidation value, because it was so awkwardly adapted for anything other than for use as a brewery.

However, to my surprise, we were receiving some inquiries which soon prompted me to prepare a rehabilitation plan and estimated cost to rebuild, as well as prospective profits under various assumptions of business volume and beer prices.

Two Brothers in the construction business in Milwaukee were interested in earnest while the several others who had looked over the premises did not seem like good prospects.

I conferred repeatedly with the Brothers but, when I could not see my way clear to sell not more than a 50% interest, they, understandably lost interest.

Matters drifted and prospects, other than controlling interest by the Purchaser, began to look hopeless when I received a telephone call from Mark C. Hanna, a Cousin or a second Cousin - I don't know which - of the long deceased, nationally known former Ohio Senator, Mark C. Hanna - the said telephone call asking for an appointment relating to his interest in our brewery.

With all my prepared papers in readiness, I made an immediate appointment to come over to his office only about a block and a half West of my office at The American Appraisal Company.

Everything went smoothly until I indicated that we would not sell more than 50 percent of the stock, but I told him that if he had the other 50 percent and if we came to a dead-lock, I was prepared that on my word of honor I would give in and, for all practical purposes, let him dictate. To my great surprise and comfort he said that he was ready to talk and that with a partner, Sam Chemer, he wanted to go with me to Theresa to look things over. Hanna, who had some kind of connection with some magazine publishers, of course, had no brewery experience.

The G. Weber Brewing Company originally was capitalized at \$25,000 with all share issued and outstanding. Hanna proposed to have a capitalization of \$40,000 with \$30,000 issued and \$10,000 in the treasury.

The estimated cost of rehabilitation, sufficient to get started, was \$15,000. Hanna was to acquire a \$10,000 and Sam Chemer a \$5,000 interest. The Webers, collectively, were to have a \$15,000 interest for contributing the brewery property.



On July 1, 1933, Mr. Hanna informed me that he and Sam Chemer would accept the terms, and shortly thereafter the deal was closed. Hanna was elected Secretary and Treasurer.

Because Hanna was not an experienced brewery Manager or possessed of similar experience, I surmised that he was acting in behalf of someone else who would take over at the opportune time.

The rehabilitation, which began in the late Summer of 1933, progressed smoothly and the cost was kept in line with what had been provided to get started with various additional needs held in abeyance. There was some trouble, however, with obtaining Federal approval of including Sam. This belatedly was obtained by Hanna holding the \$15,000 during the interim and then disposing of \$5,000 later on to Sam.

I was rather amazed that just a few weeks before we were to start operations, Hanna informed me that he was preparing to move to Theresa to assume the management. I had gambled it being someone in whose interest I suspected he had been acting.

The rehabilitation involved drilling of a new 10" well 104 feet deep and equipped with an automatically controlled motor driven centrifugal pump, 1,000 gallon capacity pressure tank and with accessories, removing the Malt House production facilities to make room for new fermenting and storage cellars, the installation of automatic mechanical refrigeration, some new first floor and reinforced concrete second floors, 12 new 35 barrel fermenters, 10 - steel composition - lined 70 barrel pressure storage and aging tanks, a very expensive beer meter, a beer filter, filter cake press and filter mass washer which I designed and Sam built, a beer racker or keg filler - largely second-hand equipment - as well as a second-hand delivery truck and miscellaneous small items. Money bought more in 1933 than in 1977.

I designed and Sam built a special form of beer keg elevator for hoisting filled kegs to the truck loading platform. We abandoned "Kraeusening" and adopted the generally used method of carbonization by the injection of Carbonic Acid Gas (CO<sub>2</sub>) into the finished beer. The gas was fed through so-called porous stones hung inside the pressure tanks at the lower end of flexible tubing. The porous stones were in fact a special kind of a porous hollow round tile, which permitted of feeding the required amount of gas into the beer. This was done over a period of several hours. The gas seeped through the pores in the stone.

We earned a small pre-depreciation profit in the first year and in all of the subsequent years prior to selling out after our profits drifted downward materially in the mid 1950's. In 1946, we operated at 100% capacity and brewed every weekday with only a few Saturdays and legal holidays excepted. The capacity was 10,000 barrels per annum. A barrel of beer is only 30 gallons instead of 31½.

The original rehabilitation was, of course, not expected to cover more than the immediate needs to get going. For a time, we even bottled out of filled half barrels.



The remodeling or reconstruction which began late in the Summer of 1933 then proceeded without delay or major difficulties. One accident, which luckily caused no serious damage and which the contractor immediately repaired at his own expense, was in connection with the water supply pressure tank. The convex top of this vertical tank in the basement had not been welded securely enough to withstand 65 PSI pressure and violently blew off against the arched limestone ceiling. Luckily an electrician, who the day before had been on top of the tank had finished his job. The Contractor took the tank back to Milwaukee for repair and then reinstalled it.

Brewing operations began early in 1934.

Mr. Hanna, in spite of his inexperience with breweries, proved to be just the man for the job. He made a very good move to get an ex-locomotive Engineer in Fond du Lac to take on a territorial agency. The agent had a strong influence with local union men who became boosters of Pioneer Beer, the name which Bert Weber had applied to the product before World War One. The brewery workers at Hanna's instigation formed a local union without which it would have been impossible, almost, to sell beer in cities. In my estimation, we made a good beer. As a matter of fact, the Evergreens Resort at Fox Lake, Illinois, Northwest of Chicago, sent a truck every week or ten days during the Summertime for a load of Pioneer Beer. This Illinois customer told us that our product came the closest to Heineken's Beer - a famous European product - than any they had ever found.

As already stated, we no longer Kraeusened our beer but carbonated it with high pressure, 1,600 PSI CO<sub>2</sub> released from a heavy steel drum containing the gas in liquified form and fed through a controllable valve to saturate the beer at a pressure of 15 PSI. The liquified gas put into the drum at 1,600 pounds pressure reaches temperatures in the gas compressor sufficiently high to impair the flavorable hops aroma which gas from a beer fermenting tank is the source of supply, whereas the "Kraeusening" or natural process involves no high pressure. In the Kraeusening process fully fermented but aged flat beer, that has no head, is stored in a closed pressure tank to about 85% of the capacity of the tank. Next, some fresh beer from a fermenting tank, at the time of vigorous fermentation, is added to the flat beer in the partially or 85% full pressure tank to supply the remaining 15% to fill it completely. The tank is then bunged up so no gas can escape when the added fresh fermenting 15% of the beer produces the necessary CO<sub>2</sub> to put on a head of foam. The hop flavor and aroma is retained instead of being destroyed or impaired by heat of compression.

Realizing this condition, I changed our carbonating process by installing a very small twin cylinder oil-less compressor with a 1/6 H.P. motor to pump CO<sub>2</sub> gas from a closed fermenting tank at 15 PSI directly in the pressure tanks. Having found through experimentation the number of hours and minutes required to carbonate, I used an automatic stop and start switch in the CO<sub>2</sub> suction line so that the compressor would run only when sufficient gas was being generated in the supplying fermenting tank. I also installed a self-starting electric clock in the motor circuit so that the clock recorded the cumulative number of hours and minutes the compressor was in operation. A reading of the clock was recorded and the time required



for carbonating was added. I have forgotten the required time. Assuming 5 hours, for example, the brewer would take an occasional look at the clock and be alert to stop the compressor at the predetermined expired time, shown by the clock. My process incidentally, also saved the cost of purchased gas.

When a brewing consultant from Milwaukee happened to visit our brewery and I jokingly said, "Some carbonating system" he gave me a serious look and said, "Don't joke about it. It is one of the finest things I have ever seen for carbonating beer."

Mr. Hanna, of course, was the boss and deserved to be because he had the knack of making sales. We soon were on our feet. Camilla Weber assisted him with the office work and kept the books. At first she worked part time while still teaching school in Theresa but the two jobs were too much and she did not renew her school teaching after the term expired. We engaged Mr. Fred Stadelbauer of Milwaukee as our Accountant to issue monthly reports before the end of 1934 and year-end Annual Reports as well as Income Tax Reports for several years until he died. We then retained Haskins & Sells until the time when we sold all of our stock on April 2, 1958.

We all realized that a lot more was needed after we got going and, therefore, during the period 1935 through 1941, we made the following changes and additions:

Old Racker replaced by an up-to-date pneumatically operated Racking Machine. An inadequate small Beer Filter was replaced by a larger unit.

A larger Filtermass Washer replaced the one we built ourselves.

A larger Power Plant Boiler replaced the one we had. Automatic water pressure booster was added to obtain more pressure on Filter Cake Press.

Storage cellar space with Refrigeration Cooling Pipe work and 200 barrel capacity in Beer Storage Tanks was provided.

A second Beer Truck was added.

Extension to the Bottling House at its North end.

A new Rotary Bottle Filler.

A Labelling Machine for both body and neck labels, replacing the one that was suitable for body labels only, since we had added neck labels in the meantime.

An efficient automatic Bottle Soaker and Washer with automatic bottle discharge.

A motor-driven Bottle Crowner to replace a foot-power machine.



A Three-Compartment Basket-type Motor Driven Pasteurizer with automatic temperature control designed by Cornelius G. Weber and, excepting the 3 steel tanks made to order in Milwaukee and purchased gearing link chains, sprockets, Motor, etc., completely built in the brewery shop by Sam Chemer.

A 3/4 inch copper Beer Pipeline extending from the beer storage cellar into the basement and thence underground to the Bottle House, together with my own design automatic flow control. The parts made in a shop in Milwaukee from sketches supplied were put together in the brewery.

An additional Bowser Beer Meter for metering the beer supplied to the Bottling Department. The cumbersome bottling from half-barrel kegs one of two filling operations as well as labor and hauling keg beer from the brewery to the Bottling Department, of course, was abandoned.

The brewery was now in much better shape and was earning good profits which had increased every year.

On December 6, 1941, while I was in New York, I received a telegram from my Sister Camilla that my Brother, Bert, had died in the night and so I took the next available N.Y. Central train for home, traveling the major part of Sunday, December 7, without learning about the attack on Pearl Harbor until I got to Chicago.

After the funeral, I stayed another day to see my Nephew, Gebby, who, with the assistance of Oswald Reimer, took over the work of brewing which then proceeded without much interruption.

When the Theresa Mill was closed, torn down and the machinery sold - much of it at junk prices - the vacant land was also offered for sale. Mr. Hanna managed to buy, for the brewery, the land between Mill Street and the river, beginning from a point some considerable distance from the North of the Mill foundation to a point located 80 feet South of the South wall of the engine house attached to the gristmill. When the owner to the North of the North boundary of the land that the brewery had purchased, sold the Southern portion of his holding, he had already added 15 feet to his original 30-foot lot No. 2 so that it was increased to 45 feet. When he sold the said Southern portion, the surveyors started from the "Point of Beginning" stated to be the Southwest corner of Lot No. 2 instead of having noted what was defined as Lot 2, Block 10 of the "Original Plat of said Village." Apparently what the neighbor to the North of the brewery land purchase, which preceded the neighbor's purchase, believes to be his property overlaps by 15 feet the land the brewery bought. The described North Lot Line of the brewery purchase is almost up to the South wall of the neighbor's house.

Thus far, this historical outline is brought up through December 7, 1941, the day my Nephew, Gebby, took over the Brewmaster's duties. He, however, barely got started when he was called for military duty but Oswald Reimer, nick-named "Ossie," had worked so long with Bert that he could carry on with the brewing without difficulty.



Ossie, however, was a schemer and aware of the fact that he was the only one in the brewery who had learned the routine of the brewing process, the timing, the temperatures, weights of ingredients, etc., periodic chemical tests and other details, he felt himself to be in such a strong position that he became very independent and even had attempted to fire my Brother, Victor - nick-named "Kerl." Hanna had to intercede to keep Kerl in his job.

On August 19, 1944, I received in Milwaukee a long distance call from Hanna who, in great dismay and hopeless mood, said "We have lost our brewer. He left his keys and a note that he was quitting today. What can we do?" I told Hanna that I would immediately make arrangements to be in Theresa for a few days and that he should not be unduly worried because I had not overlooked planning for an emergency of losing a brewmaster which I would discuss as soon as I would see him.

Having arranged to absent myself for several days, I arrived at the brewery several hours after I received Hanna's telephone call. I discussed nothing with Hanna upon my arrival but merely told him that I knew the technique of brewing beer and would talk to him later after seeing and talking to Gilbert Radke who had been doing the cellar work but whom Ossie had carefully avoided teaching how to brew.

Gilbert assured me that he needed no instructions about the cellar work which meant that, aside from what he had observed of the physical efforts in brewing, the technique was what he had to learn.

Ossie, in order to reduce his own labor was working on a shoestring basis keeping an inadequate supply of properly aged and finished beer in the cellars. I, therefore, decided to carbonate beer the very first night I was in Theresa and had Gilbert come early the next morning to brew beer under my directions as I read them out of my notebook and a copy of which I had made for him later on.

The first night I stayed up until the early morning hours carbonating beer and, after a few hours of sleep, I was in the brewery to meet Gilbert. We got busy and brewed without any trouble. I let him do everything first-hand and merely directed. We made the second brew the next day.

I had tried to arrange for a Mr. Suhm, a brewery Consultant, to be at the brewery just in case we might get into trouble, but he was out of town. However, he came on the third day and we had him examine what we produced. He pronounced everything to be a perfect job. I was back in Milwaukee after an absence of only four days and never had any brewing trouble anytime thereafter except that, through accident, the large spent grains valve on the bottom of the mash tub, several years after Ossie quit, opened up spilling an entire brew of 35 barrels on the floor. It was a big mess.

About a week after he quit, Ossie came to see Hanna to ask to have his job given back to him only to be told that if he worked for nothing he would be refused.

Ossie, of course, found no job in Theresa and later on moved to Milwaukee to work for a plumber.



Operations went on smoothly until Sunday, October 14, 1945 when Mark Hanna was fatally injured in an automobile accident and was dead before I arrived in Theresa. This was a great blow to everybody and a vital set-back to the G. Weber Brewing Co., which had and continued to have no one to take his place. None of the Webers could concede to have Sam Chemer manage affairs, carry on business correspondence and conduct other office work. I also realized that I was not the man for the job even if it had been sufficiently attractive for me to sever my connections with The American Appraisal Company. While I always took great interest in brewery engineering and, in fact did in 1915 reconstruct a part of The Cream City Brewing Co. in Milwaukee, I never took an interest in visiting saloons, or taverns as they are now called, nor did I hob nob with saloon keepers. I well realized that I lacked the vital characteristics of a beer salesman and especially that I never liked a salesman's job of any kind. In other words, the major required qualifications for successful management of a small brewery were not a part of my makeup. However, there was no alternative but to take on the job largely in absenteeism.

However, with the termination of the War, the brewing industry was generally prosperous and ours continued on its own inertia. We did so well that Sam with some others had asked a certain former Public Accountant, who had served Blatz, to offer the Weber interests \$200 per share for the 100 par value shares of stock. I told my people that this was an opportunity we probably would never have again and that, while I would be ready to sell, I did not think it advisable because Brother Victor and Sister Camilla would be out of employment. We did not accept the offer.

After the death of Mark Hanna we installed a mechanical stoker, replaced the wooden Mash Tub with a steel unit for which I designed the parts to be cut and bent into shape by Wisconsin Bridge and Iron Company in North Milwaukee, for shipment to Theresa, where Arnold Hartman welded the parts together and set the unit in place on the second floor of the brew house on a new foundation. Sam Chemer fabricated a structural steel frame work and aluminum segments for the conical cover of the Mash Tub. Later on, I came from Milwaukee to place the insulation around the periphery of the unit and also the aluminum sheeting to hold it in place.

We previously had moved the Wort Cooler to a new room with a new concrete floor and glazed tiles on the walls. We also provided a special sanitary window in the West wall and a motor-driven ventilator on the roof directly above the cooler. A new steel Hop Jack replaced one that had wooden staves and iron hoops.

The brewery had been improved about as much as a modest-sized plant of its kind warranted and would not be justified in attempting the ultra automatic refinements to be found in the giant-sized breweries.

The business was very profitable as measured by pre-inflation standards up to the end of the fourth decade of the 20th Century. Whether or not Hanna, had he lived, could have continued to obtain the good results which his unique adaptation to a business in which he had not had previous experience is not known, but I had always realized that the most important factor, beer salesmanship was not



part of my makeup. It is doubtful whether or not Sam Chemer could have been successful in sales but, even if he had the qualification in that field, he, in my estimation, could not have qualified to conduct management in office work, such as correspondence, record keeping and executive duties generally. He left no doubts about his desire for the job and his failure to obtain the consent of the Weber interests, induced him to absent himself permanently, much to my regret because he just loved the brewery. To the end of his life, he never again came near the premises. None of the Webers ever thought of such a thing as reducing his salary which continued to be paid regularly as long as he lived.

As I feared, I as the absentee head of our brewing company but working in Milwaukee with appraisal assignments throughout the United States and even in Canada, could hardly expect that sales would automatically maintain themselves and that the only alternative would be for the Weber interests to sell.

Sales, of course, started to decline. Sam immediately after Hanna's death exercised his option to buy Hanna's shares which, I believe - although I am not certain - were acquired at the par value of \$100 per share for 600 shares so that he owned exactly 50% or the same number that the Weber Interests owned collectively.

I did not only acquire the headache of finding myself or all of my kin compelled to sell but, in the meantime, the State of Wisconsin had issued orders to have our sewerage effluent treated for a specified very low B.O.D. (Biological Oxygen Demand).

Since the Brewery Property included the old mill land and masonry foundations, I designed a Trickling Filter within the walls which would have made use of the mills masonry but the plan was not accepted primarily because the unit was too close to local residences. This delayed matters and we received an injunction. Fortunately there was available to the brewery a sizeable area of fairly level land on the East bank of the river where my parents were buried directly across from the mill foundations. I designed a "Ridge and Furrow Purifying Facility" including a collection Basin and automatically controlled pump, together with underground and submerged piping in the river between the brewery and the Ridge and Furrow Unit on the East bank.

This installation was about ready to go into service when the Webers and the Widow, Christine Chemer sold their shares on April 5, 1958.

Attorney Hoebreckx, who then lived in the same block in which I built my home in 1940 and with whom I was well acquainted, called me by telephone one evening in February 1958, to make a date to meet him and one of two individuals who together appeared to be seriously interested in acquiring 100 percent of the stock of the G. Weber Brewing Co. I accepted his invitation to a meeting at his home on the next evening. To my great surprise, the instigator was our former Agent in Milwaukee who had lately quit his Beer Depot and Food Store. His name is David M. Kincaide.



The other interested individual was Nathaniel A. Lemke, an Attorney who also was and, I believe still is, the Manager of the Wells Building in Milwaukee.

Neither Lemke nor Kincaide appeared to have been much concerned about the sales decline during the last several years. Lemke was sure that, with such a super salesman as Kincaide, it would not take long to restore the business to its former profitable status.

In spite of our lowered sales, we had carefully watched our cash position which was still strong when we sold our stock and the new owners had to provide a considerably lesser amount of additional cash to complete the acquisition although they would not start out in as strong financial condition in which we left the business, unless they would not use any of the available cash on hand to complete the transaction.

The sale of the stock was completed on April 15, 1962 in the amount of \$16,963.58 as a Down Payment plus a promissory note in the amount of \$14,048.52 resulting in a total of \$30,012.00. The agreed upon price was \$30,000. I cannot account for the extra \$12.

The Promissory note included some special conditions. The Officers of the Corporation resigned on April 5, 1962. The new owners went to work at once with Kincaide coming to Theresa to manage local operations.

He lost little time in joining the Golf Club in Mayville and playing golf rather often. The membership was hardly a big asset for promoting sales from a small country town brewery.

The brewery workers had recently finished varnishing the inside surfaces of all of the fermenting tanks with shellac, the lining material which for years had been in use by most breweries, large and small, as the best coating for beer vats. It stuck with tenacity and had no harmful influence on the product.

Kincaide had heard from some source that there was a new superior coating for wooden stave beer vats.

When the new owners took over the Company, it was debt free except for the ordinary current bills and accruals of wages and property taxes. The purchasers acquired so much cash in the deal that they required relatively little more than the aforementioned promissory note to obtain 100% of the issued stock. Instead of retaining a comfortable amount of the available cash, they took an injudicious portion toward payment for the stock.

Kincaide, instead of conserving the little cash left for the conduct of the business, set about immediately to have all of the newly applied but firmly hardened shellac linings of the fermenting tanks scraped off by hired labor, as the tanks became available, and new linings substituted by the new material he had heard about.

The next thing that entered his head was to change the beer formula. I did not know this at the time but am under the impression that



the change was made and shortly thereafter abandoned and the old formula restored. To make a long story shorter, money was in-judiciously spent to promote sales which, of course, did not in-crease. It was not long before the new ownership burdened itself with a \$5,000 mortgage.

The man who was rated so highly as a salesman by his associate in the business achieved no worthwhile results so that the handwriting on the wall was plainly visible. By the end of 1960, with deplet-ed cash, no borrowing power and no prospects of reversing the down-ward slide, brewing of beer was abandoned and, on March 17, 1961, G. Weber Brewing Co., sold its last keg of beer.

Gebby Weber and Gilbert Radke, the Brewer, arranged to rent enough of the premises so that they could operate a beer agency of the Milwaukee Independent Brewing Co., beginning on March 21, 1961. The Brand Name of the beer was "Braumeister."

The Agency continued until the Autumn of 1962 when G. Heileman Brewing Company of LaCrosse, Wisconsin acquired the Milwaukee Brewery in order to expand its market and dispose of the idled brewery in Milwaukee.

The non-operating Weber Brewery was now accumulating property tax-es which were, of course, reduced somewhat but hardly commensurate with the greatly lowered market value of mortgaged Assets. Whether or not and to what extent Lemke and Kincaide made energetic ef-forts to sell the idle Brewery for whatever someone else might plan to use it, I do not know. Both, of course, tried to sell it back to the Webers and Chemers.

Matters dragged on until March 24, 1961, when we asked our Attorney, George Hartman of Juneau, Wisconsin for a meeting with the Webers, Chemers and both Lemke and Kincaide, who had asked for such a meet-ing. Hartman desired to see Lemke alone.

It was not until April 1, 1962, Hartman asked the Webers and Chemers to meet with Lemke, Kincaide, a Mr. Emmerling and Lloyd Allen, who was Chemer's Attorney, and to be in Allen's office in Mayville in the morning of Thursday, May 3, 1962, having told us about what we might expect.

At the meeting, Lemke stated that both he and Kincaide would have to declare bankruptcy if we would sue to enforce our claim includ-ing the promissory note in the amount of \$14,049.52. They offer-ed to return the 300 shares of stock to the former stockholder, who would thus again own the assets encumbered by a \$5,000 mort-gage and two back salary claims; one of \$1,200 and the other of \$250, or a combined amount of \$1,450 in salaries.

The Weber and Chemer groups would not agree to shouldering the \$5,000 mortgage. The \$1,200 back salary claim by one of the Weber group was offered to accept \$500 or \$700 less than the claim.

After some haggling, agreement was finally reached and the \$16,963.58 was reduced by \$700 leaving \$16,213.58, to be shared equally by the



Weber and Chemer groups. This left \$8,106.77 for each of the two groups. The Attorney for the 5 Weber stockholders charged \$300 for his services, leaving \$7,806.79 for distribution in accordance with each shareholder's specific number of shares owned. I do not know what the Attorney for the Chemers charged but their 50% share before payment of Attorney's Fee was \$8,106.79. The \$14,049.52 promissory note was so hedged and conditional that it was a foregone conclusion that, for all practical purposes, it was wiped out.

The repossessed property was a "White Elephant." A brewery is rather difficult to convert to some other use and has a rather low resale value. We had a renter for a very small area for a short time in the bottling house. Having found no prospects to sell the property for use as a Brewery, we began to dispose of some of the equipment including motors, and - "Believe it or not" our bottle Filler to Schlitz - a grain elevator, malt mill, labelling machine all of the wooden stave beer vats and several hundred aluminum half barrels at practically scrap metal prices.

A substantial inventory of new steel pipe and fittings, tools, electrical control equipment and unattached copper items were stolen by someone who entered the premises with a key and, while we had a lead from a scrap dealer, we did not have sufficient proof to start proceedings against the suspected thief.

A maple syrup producer in Antigo, Wisconsin, manifested interest in our copper kettle but considered the asking price of \$1,000 as more than twice what he was ready to pay. The present owner of the brewery property who sold the kettle, mash tub and hot water tank to a man from Spring Green, Wisconsin where the kettle is displayed in the owner's industrial museum, cut up the steel tank and mash tub with a torch, removed and restored part of the building stone wall to enlarge the door to permit of moving the kettle out of the building received, according to what the owner personally told me, one-half of what he paid for the whole property. His statement indicates a price of \$7,000.

I had always hoped that the Village of Theresa might find some use for the premises and especially because there was a stretch of land extending from the Northern tip of the triangular parcel to a considerable distance South of the intervening Henni Street so that if the public road to the swimming place, it eventually could have become a long park in case the Brewery was torn down.

After six years of hopeless efforts to sell the brewery, the present owner, Herman Neils, came to inspect it and, together with Mrs. Chemer, we obtained from him an offer of \$14,000 cash. I gave my consent in behalf of the Weber Group but Mrs. Chemer just would not budge from \$14,500, while Neils would not pay more than \$14,000. Fearing that she might be stupid enough to let her avarice control and spoil the sale for the sake of \$250, her half of the \$500 difference, I accepted the \$14,000 offer and told Neils the Webers would let the Chemers have \$7,000 plus \$250 or \$7,250 and that we would accept \$7,000 minus \$250 or \$6,750 and, accordingly, agreement was reached.



On April 11, 1968, Neils made a down payment of \$500 and on May 23, 1968, the necessary papers were signed.

There were delinquent Real Estate Taxes for the last four of the six-year holding period, Title Insurance Attorney's Fees, etc., in the Total Amount of \$2,786.30. The Net Proceeds were \$11,213.64.

I have forgotten the reason why, at the time of signing the papers, I did not meticulously check the several sheets of details of the deeds and tabulations of the deductions for accrued delinquent taxes, etc., and also \$373.64 set aside and held in trust, for a period as protection against any claims that might arise and then paid on a 50-50 basis to the Webers and the Chemers so that eventually, each group would receive an additional amount of \$686.32, presumably with some accumulated interest, the G. Weber Brewing Co., reached the end of its life.

I have never been so incautious in business as I was in not finding time, in some manner, to meticulously check all of the figures in the papers I signed, but duties in my professional work with The American Appraisal Company often rendered it inconvenient to spend time in other activities. This might have been the reason for my accepting the papers without detailed checking and, incidentally, also not being too concerned since I had full confidence in our Attorney, who is a close relative.

However, at this late date when I examined the papers in detail, I found that he made an error in paying the Chemers \$5,420.00 or \$1,000 more than the \$4,420.00 paid to the Webers. The understanding was that the Chemers were to receive \$500 more than the Webers or one-half of \$9,840 or \$4,920 plus \$250 which is \$5,170 and to the Webers \$4,920 minus \$250 or

	<u>4,670</u>
Total	\$9,840

We live and learn.

The investment in 1933, at the time Hanna and Chemer acquired 50 percent of the 300 shares of 100 Par Value stock for \$15,000, the Webers contributed the brewery property for \$15,000 so that the total contributed capital was \$30,000.

In the settlement in 1962, the Webers received a Net Amount of \$7,806.78 and in the sale to Herman Neils in 1968, a Net Amount of \$4,670 plus a deferred one-half of \$1,373.64 or \$686.32 so that the Net Total of the two transactions was \$13,163.11, which is slightly more than 87 percent of the investment in 1933. Except for the interim sacrifice of interest, the ultimate recovery was fairly good.

While the amounts of money involved are, of course, peanuts in comparison with present day 1977 conditions, the Weber Brewery with some interim idleness during Prohibition was in the family since 1853, in whole or in part, for a period of 108 years, and if the additional years, seven to be exact, from 1961 to 1968 when Herman Neils acquired it are added, the total is 115 years.