



SCOTCH WHISKY REVIEW

EDITION 10

AUTUMN 1998

SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL

As part of a brand reduction exercise, United Distillers & Vintners, the cumbersome named subsidiary of The Company Formerly Known As Grand Metropolitan, pronounced that, among other lines, Bell's Red Devil is delete (as a Scots solicitor would have it).

Red Devil was the first truly radical whisky product, created in response to a market shrinking in the face of favour for white spirits. Whisky had had its day and so UD created a host of new whisky based products and proceeded with Bell's pre-mixes (with Coke or Irn Bru—for goodness sake!), Red Devil and Loch Dhu. At the moment only Loch Dhu survives and it is understood that it is on the sick list (nothing trivial I hope).

This column believes that Red Devil has not been properly assessed. Test marketing took place in night clubs and similar trendy spots in a less favoured region of England. In some tests, participants were encouraged to drink lots and finish off with a game of "Slambongo" which involved downing a Red Devil in one and slamming the glass down onto a percussive cap—BANG!

Here's what we wrote on the back of our Autumn 1996 order form;

"SOME LIKE IT HOT

UD continue to challenge our taste buds with the production of a 'red hot spirit' called Red Devil made from Bell's 8yo, red chilli peppers and assorted other spices. Hot from the food labs and begging howls of outrage, here's something for those who enjoy spicy and well-flavoured food. For those who don't, it's still worth a try, judging by our local feedback (and the rate of consumption!): the nose is 'pleasantly spicy', the rest is 'smooth', 'warming' and 'heartening'.

Those with more catholic tastes will enjoy trying it while our early research indicates an appeal beyond pure novelty factor. So far we've seen it appreciated by non-whisky fans who like hot food, by non-curry fans who like whisky and by outdoor types with hip flasks to fill—it warms twice! Be a Devil—try it!"

Red Devil needs a proper test. As a truly radical whisky derivative it should not be binned so quickly. Proper trialing will show its potential and encourage further development of other new products, helping to preserve the variety and employment in the trade.

Be a Devil, TCFKAGM—try it!



BENROMACH LOOKING (AND NOSING) GOOD!

In October, HRH Prince Charles opened the rebuilt Benromach Distillery which had lain silent for fifteen years. The distillery is now owned by Gordon & MacPhail.

BACARDI BUYS DEWAR'S AND FOUR DISTILLERIES

As part of a £1,150 million deal, Bacardi of America has bought the Dewar's brand of Scotch whisky and Aberfeldy, Aultmore, Brackla and Craigellachie distilleries. They also get stocks of whisky and the Bombay brands of gin. According to industry analyst Alan Gray of Edinburgh stockbrokers Sutherlands, the transfer of distilleries will have been to ensure that the sale of Dewars included adequate stocks and production back-up. Prior to the sale Bacardi owned the William Lawson brand and MacDuff distillery (Glendeveron).

"This is good for the Scotch whisky industry," commented Alan Gray. "A big player like Bacardi adds a new and necessary dynamism to the industry. Watch them for more developments."

During a reception celebrating the event the Prince said: "It is enormously encouraging to see a distillery coming back into use again. I was hugely heartened to see, a year or two ago, that a distillery on Islay (Ardbeg) was brought back into production. I happen to have a particular fondness for Islay whiskies and to see such a distillery producing again and now Benromach, gives one enormous hope and encouragement. I think such a distillery as this forms a very important part of each local community. They provide a great source of pride for people who live in the particular areas where the distilleries are situated. In addition the whisky is of enormous importance to Scotland in every conceivable way.

"I want to congratulate Gordon & MacPhail and the Urquhart family for bringing new life and hopefully employment to this area."

THE COMPANY



The directors of Inver House Distillers are a taciturn lot, noted for not courting publicity, so we are delighted that the Chairman accepted our invitation to be featured in the Scotch Whisky Review interview.

LFW: What is your job?

We are the directors of Inver House Distillers, a wholly private company, owned by ourselves and our employees. We are (as pictured above) Bill Robison—Chairman, Bob Boyle—Operations, Graeme Thomson—Blending, Sales & Marketing and new member Graham Stevenson—Finance. Absent from our discussion is the Managing Director, Angus Graham. Our job descriptions are by no means definite, we all undertake a variety of responsibilities for the entire company.

LFW: Tell us about the company.

Inver House was established in 1964 as an American subsidiary of Publicker Industries. In 1988 we succeeded in a management buy-out. Now we are a Scotch Whisky company active as distillers, warehousemen, blenders and brand owners. Our principal blend brands are Hankey Bannister and Inver House. Our prize single malts are Speyburn and just recently, Old Pulteney.

We own five Highland distilleries, all in full production and a very large warehouse complex at our base here at Airdrie, fifteen miles east of Glasgow. The company is not listed on the stock exchange and is owned by the original MBO team and our employees who partake in a share ownership scheme.

LFW: Established by whom?

Publicker Industries Inc. of Philadelphia which was also the parent of the Continental Distilling Corporation of America, a significant producer of both alcohol beverages and industrial alcohol. Way back in the mists of time Publicker were heavily involved in Cuba until the changes that happened there in the 1950s. At that time the Chairman was Sy Neuman, the son-in-law of the founder, who had launched a brand of blended Scotch Whisky in the US market place named after his home, Inver House. Neuman was a remarkable leader of men, a human dynamo.

The Inver House brand of Scotch Whisky, which was bottled in the States, was so successful that by the early sixties the producers in Scotland had to put them on allocation and allocations are complete anathema to all Americans! So

to overcome shortages of supply, in 1964 Neuman set up a subsidiary in Scotland with the intention of becoming self sufficient in the US. Like everything he built, he built big, and fast.

He bought this site, Moffat Mills, Airdrie which was a paper mill (and nowhere near Moffat in the borders, mind!) and started construction.

Within two years a medium-sized grain distillery (Garnheath) a malt distillery (Glenflagler and Killyloch) and a warehouse complex were completed and in production, as well as a cooperage, blending and bottling plant. The purpose was to have a fully integrated plant. Raw materials would be brought in, processed, and a case of Scotch would roll out the door. They got to that position extremely quickly.

It was at this time that Bill Robison started here, having worked with the then DCL and was joined a year later by Bob Boyle.

Once in production in 1965 they were put on raw material allocation by the maltsters! So in line with character, Neuman said they should build a maltings, which they did, building the smallest plant necessary to satisfy their needs. Yet they did produce a surplus which they sold and found to be very profitable. So they expanded the maltings into what became one of the biggest in Europe, selling the malt produced world-wide.

*like everything
he built, he built
big, and fast*

LFW: Did Neuman run the complex?

He was hardly ever seen. He came to Scotland about twice a year; he had a big empire to run and Inver House was just one subsidiary, but he was very interested in production methods. A lot of his ideas were, at the time, revolutionary to many but thirty years on are now industry practice. For example, his concept of maturation was to take an empty warehouse, fill the floor with casks, put dunnage wood on top and then go ten high to the ceiling. That was frowned upon then, but now everybody has in-situ filling, cask palletisation and high-rise as a method of storing. For Grain it has no effect on the maturation quality of the warehouse.

From 1964 to 1970 the management was a strong American presence with an American resident Director, but very much a subsidiary of Publicker. All the while we were rattling up warehouses—right through to 1976.

LFW: Production at any cost.

Yes, but not at the expense of quality. Neuman was always seeking the holy grail of the perfect malt and the quality of his final blends was paramount. Very much a production man, he was a big bourbon producer also.

LFW: So what happened?

He died, it's that simple. Neuman left a huge vacuum. With his death in 1976 the business went with him. There were surviving family difficulties and with us being 3,500 miles away they had really lost interest in us.

For ten years after his death the company continued with a struggle. There were various managers in the States and they were continually trying to sell the group but there were no takers for such a complex company.

Labour relations had changed since the early days. Initially if they decided to increase production, or whatever, they would bring in 20 men overnight, recruiting on the hoof so to speak, but with new industrial relations during the seventies a lot of people became bedded in and hiring and firing was a lot more awkward.

Also remember that this was a production unit only, the sales were run in the US and the UK was considered another overseas market. We had no autonomy here as to what we would like to do in the way of marketing the principal products which were Inver House and Coldstream gin (Neuman had also built a gin plant).

During the time between Neuman's death and our decision to buy the business, the Americans had no long term vision for the business, there was no continuity with decisions changing almost daily. The maltings were sold, Bladnoch Distillery bought and then sold, Loch Lomond Distillery and warehouses bought and sold and the grain and malt distilleries dismantled.

The maltings have since been closed and removed by the new owners as a result of that industry's decline and technical developments in malting, although we have bought back the flat barley stores and converted them into maturation warehouses.

It was during this difficult time that Angus Graham and Graeme Thomson joined the company.

LFW: What attracted you to buy the business?

The potential. It was pretty run down but we saw a future in production and in marketing. It is easier for a small private company with long term interests in the trade to bring it back rather than a public company answerable to dividend driven shareholders. We can consider opportunities as and when they come round, making quick decisions.

LFW: A courageous decision though.

For our four families, yes. The industry in general was at a fairly low ebb but we reckoned that we were in time to see it turn round. With the assistance of our banks we raised £8.2m. For that we got the warehousing complex and stocks of maturing whisky. There was no primary production save for the cream and gin plants and our business initially was the provision of warehousing facilities for the trade and the creation of our blends. Our intention was to become a quality producer seeking opportunities on the marketing side. The brands we acquired

at the time of the buy-out and subsequently have done well, in particular Hankey Bannister, Heather Cream, Speyburn and recently Pulteney. However we knew that unless we were a primary producer there was no way that the industry would take us seriously. We had to be Distillers and before the end of our first year we bought Knockdhu Distillery from United Distillers.

Our distillery, tied in with the quality of our blends and the fact that we were independent, opened more doors for us. Whisky people were prepared to talk to and deal with us. There was more continuity about the company rather than the transient approach of Publicker.

LFW: Now you have five distilleries. Knockdhu was the first in 1988 and since 1992 we have bought Speyburn from UD, Pulteney and Balblair from Allied Distillers and last year, our new flagship, Balmenach from UD. All Highland distilleries producing highly respected spirit. Balmenach is our biggest, but we can still only achieve with all our distilleries what some others can do with just one.

Our main asset is the five different characters produced by those distilleries and we will soon benefit from the five single malt products, because these are quality distilleries with quality products.

One attraction of a distillery is the ability to trade its product with other distillers in order to produce the variety of blends in the market place. 90% of the industry's trade is blended whiskies and as both malt distillers and blenders we can bring in a substantial number of other distillers' products to complement our own blend recipes. This is a reciprocal trade rather than one involving cash and is common within the Scotch whisky industry.

We have not bought our distilleries in a speculative manner, for production and subsequent open market sale. The distilleries enable us to make savings in what we would otherwise have to buy to make our blends. That is the value of distillery ownership; the savings rather than the revenue. We could have bought several other distilleries that were available, but we wanted to be sure that we were producing products that not only were we able to use ourselves but are sought after by others in the trade, including the previous owners, for use in their blends. According to some of the older classifications, all our distilleries are firsts or seconds, with Balmenach being the most highly regarded.

LFW: And good single malts.

All our distilleries are 'medium weight', recognised as quality singles which will survive in a single malt market.

Last year we launched Pulteney and are delighted with the results. A wholly unique whisky, and a valid single malt that had a good following before as a Gordon & MacPhail bottling. However, ours has a substantial difference in the mouth feel, a remarkable softness.

Pulteney is described as the ugly duckling, but this does not detract from the quality of the spirit. We have marketed

the product on the back of fishing heritage of Wick and the fact that it is the most northerly distillery on the Scottish mainland. As a single there is a natural momentum with the product and we have great hopes for its future. Pulteney is also popular with blenders and we gained one or two healthy trade arrangements on the back of its acquisition.

Our first distillery, Knockdhu, which we sell as An Cnoc (the true gaelic name) has the classic whisky heritage based on farming in summer and distilling in the winter. It has been quiet in the malt market because we did not acquire sufficient stocks with the distillery to implement a co-ordinated promotion as a malt. That changes soon; before our acquisition there was a chequered pattern of intermittent production but we have been distilling since 1988. Our new bottling, taken from a pre Inver House distillation is nectar, and the best way of appreciating the quality of the distillery. We have decided to name that bottling Knockdhu—21 years old.

Because of the shortage of single malt from Knockdhu we have led on Speyburn which is now the fifth or sixth best seller in the US.

Some of our success has been our discretion

Our fourth distillery, Balblair, is an excellent distillery which we bought from Allied who wanted to close it but realised the effect it would have on the local community and so let us have it. The second oldest in Scotland, but in a very nice condition. We are just releasing the single now with the marketing angle on the purity of the spirit, as the area has the purest air in Scotland.

Balmenach is the largest in our group, most respected in terms of historical blenders' classification. A still from Balmenach was taken to London to take part in the Queens Jubilee in 1977! We started distilling in the Spring of this year and will be bottling the single in due course.

LFW: How about a grain distillery?

We've done grain production before! We have availability of grain for blending through our malt production. We have five quality malt whiskies much in demand and that is our guarantee of grain supply. At present grain distillers are looking to retain their customers, and looking ahead we do not envisage a future when grain will be short.

LFW: Were you responsible for Heather Cream?

That was developed about 1980 as a Scottish answer to Bailey's which was introduced in the early seventies. Inver House, with the assistance of the West of Scotland Agricultural College developed a stable cream liqueur. At that time Bailey's advertised that it had to be consumed within six weeks of opening but

Heather Cream had no such limitations and now it is regarded as a high quality product technically as well as by its consumers. Because of the use of malt whisky we regard it as a superior product, but with Bailey's being the world's greatest selling liqueur of any kind, Heather Cream has yet to achieve its full potential! It does very well in the home market and has niches elsewhere.

LFW: Would you say your venture has been a success?

Our company is doing remarkably well, certainly a lot better than in 1988! We have a good platform on which to build, if the industry will allow it. We will continue to do well because of the size that we are and now, with five distilleries we are much more flexible. We have grown distillation into our requirements; before we were acquiring stock, either new fill or mature, but now we are distilling for ourselves.

Last year we had our best turnover, £50m and yes, we make profits but that is not a number we dwell on—even amongst ourselves. Some of our success has been our discretion, the industry understands this and unless you are a publicly quoted company reported profit figures are of less relevance anyway. We take the view that we are here for the long term rather than the short and to have a less than regular profit stream reflects that we are taking opportunities.

LFW: Any more advice?

Re-invest everything, put everything back. You will not be taken seriously in this industry unless you have quality distillation. Without that we would never have achieved what we have achieved so far.

We are a slim company of just 130 people with over half in production and warehousing, the rest in administration and international sales. Graham Stevenson joined the board as Finance Director in 1995 perhaps reflecting recognition that four production men alone is not necessarily all good.

We are fortunate in that we are not big in any world market. Our principal market is continental Europe with Hankey Bannister, but we have a presence in many markets which works in our favour in this particular situation when prosperity differs around the world. The Scotch Whisky Industry is having a tough time, there is a recession about the world. Export results are not that good for the industry in general.

LFW: Any more distilleries?

No, not at the moment. Acquisitions in the past have not been part of a master plan, but the consideration of opportunities and the increase in demand we were experiencing. We're not looking at the moment, but if a top class distillery became available we wouldn't say no immediately.

LFW: Your desert island drams?

Chairman—Knockdhu 12yo; Production—Knockdhu 21yo; Blending—Pulteney 12yo; Finance—Pulteney 15yo.

LFW: Company men, eh? Gentlemen, thank you and good luck for the future.



BENROMACH RENEWED

In 1993 Gordon & MacPhail bought Benromach Distillery, located on the outskirts of Forres, from United Distillers. Now, in the distillery's centenary year, a full refurbishment is complete and new spirit is being filled into casks for the first time since 1983.

Three years ago G&M celebrated their own centenary as warehousemen and bottlers. Now clearly they are very proud to have become distillers.

The distillery has been completely renewed. Starting with a major building refurbishment, necessary after ten years of neglect, G&M have created an elegant complex including one process room of washback, mashtun and single pair of stills. The mashtun is new, built in Elgin, as are the stills which were made in Rothes. The washback was one of the very few pieces of equipment remaining in the distillery and this has been re-made using the old wood.

The spirit safe comes from Millburn Distillery, a gift from United Distillers. It is an industry tradition to make donations to new distilleries and a variety of companies have bestowed the project with support, advice or equipment.

The stills are of a new design, created to the new owner's specification. The size and shape was devised with the help of consulting engineers who also calculated the capacities of other equipment according to the output of the stills. "We could have referred to plans of the original stills but we wanted to apply our own influence to the product. We want to produce a medium-weight Speyside style of spirit," Managing Director Ian Urquhart told us. "Now Benromach is producing whisky again, and we are delighted with the quality of the spirit which is best described as clean."

"Benromach is one of the smaller distilleries but perfect for our requirements. The majority of the spirit is destined for single malt sales but some will be used to complement our blends. To achieve this we are filling a variety of cask types but most will be filled into sherry casks. "We are proud that we were able to source the majority of the equipment and skills in the Highland area."

ORKNEY'S PEAT

Iain Stothard

Brands Ambassador — Highland Distillers

On the green Island of Orkney, whisky has been produced at Highland Park for over 200 years. Highland Park has a very distinctive taste and style to my mind; a lot of this is the result of us producing one fifth of our malted barley requirement in the old traditional way using our open floor maltings at the distillery. The balance is brought onto Orkney as totally unpeated malt. It is for this reason that I maintain that ALL of the Orkney character within this whisky comes from our use of Orkney peat.

We at Highland Distillers are extremely fortunate to own and manage our own peat banks at Hobbister, overlooking Scapa flow. This windswept moor produces peat of great character.

Many people often ask why we still use peat in the malting of the barley. Well it is very simple, as it is the peat that gives that lovely smokey flavour to many single malts.

At Highland Park we tend to cut our peat during the month of June. This enables us to make use of the long hours of sunlight to assist in the drying of the peat.

When cutting our peat, we firstly remove a thin top layer taking the heather with it. We then cut from the exposed bank, blocks of peat, about ten inches long by four wide, which are stacked for drying. This is in no way unique and you will see peat banks being cut all over Scotland in a similar manner. But at Highland Park we cut our peat at three different levels as we believe these give different characteristics when used for drying the malted barley.

There are names for the different levels. The top one is known as *Foggy*—most probably named after the weather. This layer gives a heather-honey sweetness to the whisky. You may often read that at Highland Park we throw heather onto the peat fire during kilning—this is not true. This flavour and aroma comes from the foggy peat, a peat of about 5-6,000 years old.

The second layer has the wonderful name of *Yaphie*. The exact meaning of yaphie is unknown, but it is a wonderful name that is full of mystery. This level would be a peat of 8-9,000 years old. It tends to be less rooty than the foggy and slightly darker in colour.

PEAT CUTTING

When burning it will give off less sweet notes and most probably gives more of the phenolic notes to the whisky than the foggy.

The final level, *peat/moss*, is basically a crude form of coal at about 10,000+ years old. When dried this turns very black and becomes very hard. This level most likely gives the heat to the peat fire as well as elements of both the foggy and yaphie.

The three levels with their different characteristics are used in different quantities to impart that very special Orkney character to Highland Park.

After cutting, the top layer of heather is replaced in order to encourage regeneration of the peat.

All in all, Highland Park would not be the product we know and love, were it not for the peat cut on the cliff tops overlooking Scapa Flow.



ALSO ON ORKNEY...

Allied Distillers has reached agreement with Highland Distillers, owners and operators of Highland Park, that Highland manage nearby Scapa Distillery, mothballed in 1995.

The three workers from Scapa will join with Highland Park's workforce and all will in turn operate Scapa on an occasional basis.

It is understood that this is the first inter-company agreement of this kind. It represents an option for keeping stocks available for single malt sales.

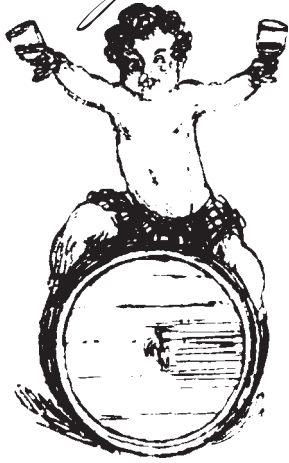
YET AT IMPERIAL...

In September, Allied announced that Imperial Distillery is to be mothballed at the end of the year and the work force to be redeployed.

As Imperial has historical links with nearby Dailuaine, perhaps a crew could nip across the river occasionally and make some more of what is a wonderful single malt?

ONLY FROM LOCH FYNE WHISKIES

The Living Cask™



A unique recreation of the storage and serving of malt whisky

After moving into our new shop in mid July we were finally able to realise a plan we had been nursing for some time. The Living Cask™ is the latest wheeze to come out of Loch Fyne Whiskies, and at this time we are not aware of anyone else offering such a unique product.

Not a single malt, but a living vatting of suitable malts, The Living Cask takes its inspiration from Notes on a Cellar Book by renowned connoisseur Professor George Saintsbury, published 1920. In the chapter titled Hollands & Whisky Saintsbury writes, "...The more excellent way—formerly practised by all persons of some sense and some means north of the Tweed—is to establish a cask,...fill it up with good and drinkable whisky,...stand it up on end, tap it half way down or even a little higher, and, when you get to or near the tap, fill it up again with whisky fit to drink, but not too old. You thus establish what is called in the case of sherry a 'solera,' in which the constantly changing character of the old constituents doctors the new accessions, and in which these in turn freshen and strengthen the old."

And that is what we have done. For the present, and for a while, we can retain the character of the initial filling by re-

filling with the original whiskies (it's so good we don't want to change it anyway!) Soon we will introduce a new malt, changing it forever and creating a new generation. Each fill will be described as a Volume and this is marked on the 'spine' of our book-style label.

Each 'Volume' is bottled as a 20cl sample, dated at the time of drawing from the cask with the prevailing strength noted. Volume I consists of two Speyside whiskies and we anticipate that Volume II will see the introduction of a well-flavoured Highlander—but who knows!

Volume I is a rich, full bodied dram with a most enchanting aroma; in fact there is no need to drink, nosing alone will entertain all evening. There is a fruity character and a burnt match—sherry/sulphur character that Charlie Maclean reckons must come from the old style of cask fumigation, (our cask is remade in Spain from an old, exclusively sherry cask). Neat (it is 61%alc.) there is little nose prickle and an apricot hint—though this changes day to day without any adulteration to the cask. The flavour is of a true, full bodied Speysider, vastly complex and enchanting in its variety. The finish is long and slightly oily. We're very pleased with it.

LIVING CASK™—20cl @ cask % £14.90



Living Cask™ SUBSCRIPTIONS

We suspect that some may enjoy a credit card based subscription service and so we offer two options:

Living Cask™ – Quarterly subscription, a 20cl sample sent every three months, or

Living Cask™ – Volume subscription, a 20cl sample sent every time the cask is refilled.

Postage is £3 per sample. Register for either subscription to receive your sample automatically until you cancel.

Check the centre pages for details of a how you can get a free 10cl sample when you spend £125 or more.



A NEW HOME FOR LFW



A WELCOME FROM DONALD



THE LIVING CASK



NEW MAN ANDY



SHINY GOODS & TUMMY DEPT.



CHEERS!



TROLLEY-DASHING!

For those of you who like to stay 'on their trolley', here is our wall of whisky to draw your attention to the variety of *DEALS* and assorted new lines—all desirable products, carefully crafted for you to take home and enjoy. Our shelves are in a jumble so you'll have to read carefully, taking notes. Remember to be specific if leaving notes lying about as hints for loved ones to find!

PLEASE NOTE

All our *DEALS* are for Christmas 1998: to qualify you must place an order before mid-day Monday 14th December. Many deals are limited in number so order early to secure your goodies. If you are expecting a deal with your order it would be helpful if you would identify the extras you expect when ordering. Deals marked¹ are one per order. Now, lets open the doors...

TOP SHELF

✓ Every, yes EVERY box going out with a bottle of malt whisky will have a complimentary miniature of the wonderful Old Pulteney 12yo, courtesy of Inver House Distillers. What nice chaps!

✓ With thanks from LFW, every order of £125 or more will receive a 10cl sample from our *Living Cask*¹.

✓ Inverarity, our House Malts; the standard 8yo has gained two years (and a quid) but buy two 10yos and deduct £2. Buy a 'brace' of a 10yo and an *Ancestral* 14yo to deduct £4; order two *Ancestrals*—deduct £5.

✓ Next on the shelf, the new 23yo 1975 vintage Ardbeg, limited and the peatiest whisky ever, £40.90. Stocks of the previous vintage, 1978, finish soon.

✓ A pairing of Laphroaig 10yo (£22.90) and Glendronach 15yo (£24.30); buy both to receive a 5cl Laphroaig + dram glass pack plus we'll redeem the £3 off voucher in the pack so you pay only £44.20 for the pair¹.

✓ Order any two bottles from Signatory and deduct £2.50 per pair (in addition to any £2.00 cask* vouchers you may have).

✓ New Highland Park *Bicentenary* limited edition 21yo—£65.60. Not pictured here but worth remembering, the HP 18yo is our bottling of the year and so has a special price of £35.90, over £4 less than the big boys' price.

✓ Beautiful, unique pewter & glass flask bottle of Clan Campbell *Legendary* 18yo, with certificate signed by the Duke of Argyll, £55.00.

✓ Price deals from Glenmorangie:

10yo—£19.99, any of the Port, Sherry or Madeira finishes—£25.90. Also Glen Moray 12yo—£15.50 (not pictured).

✓ Brass spirit safe presentation of Glengoyne's *Farewell Dram* for retired manager Ian Taylor. Hen's Teeth category, only 204 bottles produced—£469.

✓ The Heritage Collection; Longmorn 15yo (£27.90), Benriach 10yo (£22.80), Glen Keith '83 (£21.60) and Strathisla 12yo (£24.90); buy any four bottles and nominate a fifth of your choice free (but no dearer than any you've ordered).

✓ Clynelish fans; the new CC bottling is an ace (—Δ in the list). Buy any bottle of the following, get a free miniature of the CC Clynelish...

CC Caol Ila '81 (£28.20), G&M Balblair 10 (£21.40), G&M Strathisla '82 (£26.90), G&M Glentauchers '79 (£29.50), CC Teaninich '85 (£26.90), G&M Inverleven '85 (£23.50).

Buy a 70cl CC Clynelish (£24.30) plus any one of the above, get a 20cl Ardmore, a much under-appreciated dram.

MIDDLE SHELF

New arrivals

✓ Left flanker—Glenlivet, a very limited, superb cask strength collection of 5 x 20cl from 1967, '68, '69, '70 and 71—£169.00.



✓ Aberlour 1976, with unique embossed plaque, nice whisky too—£79.90.
 ✓ Springbank have a good wheeze; limited bottlings of a collection in instalments. We have the 25yo (£75.00) now. Next Spring comes the 30yo (£100), then Autumn 35yo (£150), Spring 2000 sees the 40yo (£250), Autumn '00 45yo (£350) and finally the 50yo (£500); total cost £1,425. Once you have all 6 you will also get an exclusive set of miniatures and numbered certificate. There's plenty of the younger whiskies (the 25yo is ace drinking) but the limit is the 40 and 50yo. LFW is liaising closely with Springbank to ensure that those who register for the whole set with us now are assured final stock, (one registration per person; we may ask you for a deposit and to agree to terms).
 ✓ *The Family Silver* from Highland Distillers is a new presentation of limited old whiskies, initially a 1968 Bunny (£74.90), and Glenglassaugh 1973 (£93.60).
 ✓ Three new Mo's, *Special Reserve* (£24.90), *Fino Finish* (£39.90) and, contender for best presentation, the 21yo *Elegance* (nice name)—£116.
 ✓ Auchy *Three Wood*, Bourbon & Sherry matured then finished in heavy-

weight sherry Pedro Ximenez to give a dark sweet malt—£31.30.
 ✓ Knockdhu, truly the *nectar* described by Inver House's blender and great value for a 21yo at cask strength—£46.90.
 ✓ Classic Six—*Distillers' Editions*; more 'finishes', worth trying the miniature pack before a set of 70cls—£22.90. We'll deduct £10 from a complete set of six 70cl bottles.
 ✓ G&M's best presentation to date, (limited to 3,500) Benromach 17yo racked (finished) in sherry casks that are over 100 years old—£48.70.
 ✓ Right flanker—Glenlivet, two limited vintages, 1969 & 1972—£85 & £79.

LOWER SHELF

✓ Price busters!!! all £19.99—Highland Park 12yo, Macallan 10yo and Bunnahabhain 12yo.
 ✓ *The Distillery Archives*, Glen Garioch 1978 & 1968 and Auchentoshan 1978, 1975 & 1965. Buy two (one must be older than 1978) get a free Bowmore Darkest worth £33.90.
 ✓ Three new Glenfiddichs, 15yo *Solera* (£28.90), 18yo (£39.90) & Glenfiddich Liqueur (50cl—£14.90). Buy all three and get a nice water jug¹.
 ✓ Murray McDavid's *Regional Selection* from Rosebank (£23.90), Macallan

(£27.90), Springbank (£22.70) and an excellent Caol Ila (£22.70). Buy all four for £80, saving a monster £17.20!
 ✓ Order Aberlour (£18.90) or Edradour (£26.90) for a free miniature of the very fussable Clan Campbell *Highlander* 12yo blend.
 ✓ Vintage Cask Balvenie distilled 21st May, 1966—£165.
 ✓ Balvenie Nosing Glass free with 12yo *Double Wood* (£24.90), 15yo *Single Cask* (£35.90) or 21yo *Port Wood* (£39.90). Buy a 10yo + any other Balvenie to deduct £5—and get a free Balvenie tumbler too!
 ✓ Snuck in the picture, a very popular Ardbeg Tasting Glass—£3.50. Buy the 17 with the new '75, get one free.
 ✓ Glenfarclas — Δ 30yo, straight for the wallet, deduct £6. Deal price £63.
 ✓ The best Bowmore, 17yo—Δ another with £6 off. Deal price £29.90.
 ✓ Stock awaited so no picture, but two new official bottlings of Balblair are imminent; *Elements* (no age statement) at £14.90 and the 16yo is £23.50. We've had a quick taste of the 16yo—it's very good. Nice bottle too!
 ✓ Last but not least, include four bottles of The Loch Fyne in your order to get free delivery (UK mainland, others deduct £5.90)¹.

1898—BOOM & BUST

Gavin Smith

Speyside is unquestionably the greatest whisky-producing region in the world. This year marks the centenary of the founding of a number of the area's working distilleries, including Dallas Dhu near Forres which was constructed in 1898/99 and is now a 'whisky museum' in the care of Historic Scotland.

Ardmore at Kennethmont, Benriach at Longmorn, Knockando, and Benromach were all built one hundred years ago, while Glen Elgin was begun in 1898 and completed two years later. Work began on the Mulben distillery of Glentauchers in 1897 and it officially opened in June of 1898. Glendullan in the 'whisky capital' of Dufftown and Caperdonich at Rothes had both been founded the previous year, along with Glen Moray, Imperial and Speyburn.

So why were the late 1890s such a boom time for distillery construction, for the whisky industry in general and Speyside in particular and why was the prosperity not to last?

The whisky business is, by its very nature, speculative, as the spirit being produced today in Speyside's distilleries and all the others around Scotland will not be bottled in any form for a legal minimum of three years, and in many cases will not see the light of day for at least another five. The whisky producer has, therefore, to anticipate future trends, recessions and periods of economic growth, as well as taking into account the amount of whisky of varying ages already maturing in bond, when deciding how much whisky to make. It is, necessarily, a very inexact science and, as history shows, one which has always made the industry prone to periods of 'boom' and 'bust'.

As recently as the early 1980s, the then Distillers Company Ltd. closed twenty-one distilleries, as supplies of maturing whisky threatened to exceed demand for the foreseeable future. There was talk of a 'whisky loch' to rival the EEC's 'wine lake'. Happily for the whisky and distillery connoisseur, many of the plants closed by DCL have reopened, in several cases under the ownership of rival companies such as Allied Distillers and Inver House, while Benromach, at Forres, celebrated its centenary by coming back into production this year under the auspices of the famous Elgin whisky merchants Gordon & MacPhail.

The second half of the nineteenth century was essentially a time of growth and increasing prosperity for the Scotch Whisky industry, interrupted by comparatively brief periods of set back. From the 1860s onwards, the rise in popularity of blended whiskies accounted for a major increase in sales, not only in British markets, but all around the world.



PATTISON'S OPULENT OFFICES IN COMMERCIAL STREET, LEITH

The success of blended whisky led to an inevitable increase in the demand for malts with which to produce them and programmes of distillery expansion, modernisation and new construction were carried out during the 1870s, '80s and especially the 1890s in order to meet the requirements of the blenders.

Two of the distilleries currently celebrating their centenaries are Ardmore and Glentauchers. The former was constructed by William Teacher, while the latter was founded by James Buchanan of 'Black & White Whisky' fame. Along with the Dewars of Perthshire, Teacher and Buchanan made up the trinity of leading Scotch whisky blenders.

The increasing availability of reputable blended whiskies and their energetic promotion around the world by salesmen such as flamboyant 'Whisky Tom' Dewar coincided fortuitously with the devastation of the French vineyards by the vine louse *phylloxera vastatrix*. This meant that from the late 1860s until well into the 1890s French brandy was virtually unobtainable and men such as Whisky Tom were quick to seize the opportunity for whisky to fill the vacuum left by the lack of brandy.

During the 1890s Speyside whiskies became more popular than ever before, with malts from the Campbeltown and Islay regions losing flavour. Smoothness at all costs was the blenders' aim, and the delicate Speyside whiskies gave blends a pleasing degree of mellowness and sophistication. Today more than half of Scotland's operational distilleries are located in the Speyside area and the dozen malts categorised by blenders as 'Top Class' are all Speysides.

Moray and Banffshire were prime barley-producing counties, where pure water—an essential for distilling—was abundant. The expanding rail network also meant that the 'raw materials' of distilling such as coal could easily be brought into distilleries to fire stills and provided a convenient way for casks of

spirit subsequently to leave the premises. The most cursory glance at an Ordnance Survey map of Speyside shows the striking number of distilleries sited alongside now disused railway lines and many distilleries had their own branches and 'puggie' engines which carried supplies to and from the main lines. The puggie once employed at Dailuaine, near Aberlour, is now preserved at Aberfeldy distillery in Perthshire, itself built in 1898 and reliant on railway transport until the Beeching rail cuts of the mid 1960s.

Then as now, the Speyside area also had an existing 'pool' of distilling talent, in terms of a skilled labour force and providers of ancillary services, such as cooper-smiths, coopers and distillery engineers. Of the thirty-three distilleries which opened in Scotland during the 1890s, no fewer than twenty-one were located in Speyside.

The Speyside whisky name with the most cachet was Glenlivet. Indeed, the place was almost synonymous with fine whisky and was a noted haunt for illicit distillers and smugglers. The figure of two hundred illegal stills in existence in the glen at the end of the nineteenth century is regularly trotted out by writers, but were this true, it would have meant that every household was engaged in the trade—and some must have operated more than one still! This seems to be one of those spurious statistics that has gained the status of fact merely by reputation.

Many distillers incorporated the Glenlivet place name into their titles in order to suggest quality by association. At one time, no fewer than twenty eight whiskies carried the Glenlivet suffix, giving rise to the famous observation that Glenlivet must be the longest glen in Scotland.

In fact, only one legal distillery operated in Glenlivet during the second half of the nineteenth century and that was the distillery at Minmore owned by the

Smiths, who had been the first family to take out a licence under the 1824 Excise Act. In 1880 John Smith went to court to try to prevent other distillers in various parts of Strathspey from using the word 'Glenlivet'. The result was that only Smith could label his product *The Glenlivet*, but anyone could add the hyphenated suffix '-Glenlivet' to their name. Gradually the practice dwindled, as distillers such as Macallan grew to have sufficient confidence in their own product that they were happy to let it live by its own name alone.

Interestingly, the Seagram company was keen enough to call the state-of-the-art plant it built in the early 1970s 'Braes of Glenlivet', but it changed its name to Braeval after gaining ownership of *The Glenlivet* distillery in 1978 as it did not wish to distract attention from its new flagship malt whisky. Similarly, the decorators went to work on the white-lettered roof of their Longmorn distillery, south of Elgin, to remove the offending hyphen and word Glenlivet in the wake of the take-over.

As the whisky boom of the 1890s continued, investment in whisky became respectable and even fashionable and banks were more than ready to lend money for the purchase of distillery shares and whisky stocks. Mature whisky had a considerably greater value than new spirit, so as an investment whisky seemed attractive during a period of steady growth and stability. The problem was that too many people realised this and stock levels began to rise out of proportion to sales or potential sales, with the amount of warehoused whisky in Scotland rising from two million gallons in 1891/92 to 13.5 million in 1898/99.

There was always going to come a time when boom turned to bust. Many people saw the Pattison brothers as the central villains of the piece and certainly their well documented activities helped to destabilise the Scotch whisky industry and precipitate a crisis of confidence. Outwardly, the rise of Pattison, Elder & Co. appeared little different from that of other dynamic, buccaneering firms of the time, such as Teachers, Dewars and Buchanans and their publicity was sophisticated and effective, but behind the scenes they employed business practices that no reputable firm would countenance.

Robert and Walter Pattison were the principals behind the Leith firm of Pattison, Elder & Co. having started with a wholesale grocery business before developing the idea in the early 1880s of moving into whisky blending with the single aim of making a fast fortune. The brothers were noted for their excessive flamboyance and personal extravagance, and one publicity ploy was to release hundreds of grey parrots which had been trained to say "Drink Pattisons' whisky!"

The public were eager to invest in Pattisons, although as early as 1894, concern was being expressed within the whisky industry as to the credit worthiness of the company.

In 1896 Pattison, Elder & Co. became a public company — trading as Pattisons' Ltd. — and the partners were each paid around £100,000 in share conversion, though it subsequently transpired that the valuation of the company was based on a fraudulent balance sheet. Robert Pattison was also involved in the flotation of the Oban and Aultmore-Glenlivet Distillery Co. as a public company. It made a profit of £40,000 much of which was spent on Robert's mansion near Peebles!

The Pattisons borrowed heavily from a number of banks in order to finance the purchase of whisky stocks, along with palatial offices and a large warehouse in Leith, with much of the money being borrowed against greatly over-valued assets. It was beyond the ingenuity of the Pattisons to keep all their plates spinning in the air at the same time, however, and in late 1898 those plates began to hit the floor, with the firm effectively collapsing in December. Liquidation proceedings began early the following year, when the company's liabilities amounted to a sum in excess of £500,000 and assets were found to be worth less than half that figure. The Pattison brothers were subsequently found guilty of fraud, with Robert being sentenced to eighteen months in prison, while Walter spent eight months behind bars.

Half a million pounds of liabilities represents a vast bankruptcy in the late nineteenth century, and Pattisons' collapse sent shock waves through the Scotch whisky industry. Considerable numbers of individual investors were ruined and many companies were financially affected by the bankruptcy due to the complex network of credit arrangements within the industry. Several distilleries were forced to close down.

Although the Pattisons' failure could not be held responsible for the subsequent and dramatic recession in the world of Scotch whisky, the company had certainly helped to fuel the speculative boom of the 1890s. Symbolically, its downfall brought to an end a period of growth in the whisky industry which was not to resume for more than half a century, with two World Wars, the United States' alcohol Prohibition and the inter war 'Depression' all conspiring to keep the whisky business in the doldrums.

Of the Speyside distilleries which opened in 1898, Benriach, near Elgin, closed in 1900 and was not re-opened until 1965, while Caperdonich in Rothes closed in 1902 and was silent in the mid nineteen sixties. Imperial at Carron fell silent for twenty years after just two years in production.

The boom was already turning to bust by the time Glen Elgin was constructed, and when it opened in 1900 many of the workers who had laboured on its construction could not be paid in full. The story goes that only the steeplejacks received their full entitlement, and then only because they threatened to dismantle the chimney if payment was not forthcoming!

Glen Elgin was the last distillery to be built in the Highlands for some sixty years and its architect Charles Doig, predicted as much at the time. Doig was responsible for building and extending many of Speyside's distilleries and was the inventor of what we now think of as that archetypal distillery feature, the pagoda style kiln roof.

The next distillery to be constructed from new was the striking plant of Tormore, commissioned by Long John at Advie, near Granton-on-Spey. It was created in the grand style and the copper-clad roofing alone was said to have cost £40,000. Work on Tormore began in 1958, with the first spirit flowing two years later. Another whisky boom was beginning.



KINDRED SPIRITS

THE STORY OF SCOTLAND'S
'OTHER' MALT WHISKIES

Glenn McGill

Most of Scotland's malt whisky distilleries produce a single product, usually bottled under the name of the distillery from which the whisky is derived. Even distilleries which have replaced old stills or built new stillhouses to expand production have continued to call their malt by its normal name, even if the new product has varied or been combined with that run off the original stills. There are and have been exceptions however.

Without doubt, the greatest catalyst for change, which led to the production of additional malt whiskies, was the development of the Lomond still by the Canadian drinks giant Hiram Walker (now Allied Distillers). The company required more single malts to input into its popular Ballantines blends than were available in the early post-war years and, since 'necessity is the mother of invention', the Lomond still was born.

The design of the new still was rather different from that of the traditional long tapering copper pot still. Although it had a bulbous base, its neck was thick and straight and it had a flattish or domed top giving it a squat or 'dumpy' appearance. In the neck were housed three rec-

tifying plates which, when flooded with distillate, helped to purify the spirit by increasing the inherently low level of reflux action, in order to remove some of the heavier elements. The plates could be manipulated into a variety of positions to alter the filtering effect of the distillate and could even be swivelled vertically within the neck to completely negate the filtering effect. This gave flexibility in the production process in that the end product could be varied to meet the requirements of the blenders. The first Lomond still was installed alongside the more traditional pre existing *Inverleven* plant within the *Dumbarton* grain distillery in 1959.

At *Dumbarton*, there was only space for a spirit still and so part of the low wines produced from *Inverleven's* wash stills was diverted to the Lomond still to produce the new product known as '*Lomond*'. It turned out to be so different from *Inverleven* that the rectifying plates were later removed to bring the two whiskies closer together in style.

Lomond style wash and spirit stills were subsequently installed at *Glenburgie* to produce '*Glenraig*', named after Willie Craig, who became the General Manager of Allied Distillers Malt Distilleries. *Glenraig* was oily, fragrant and sweet, with a characteristic taste of pear drops, somewhat different from the distillery's main malt. After *Glenraig* be-

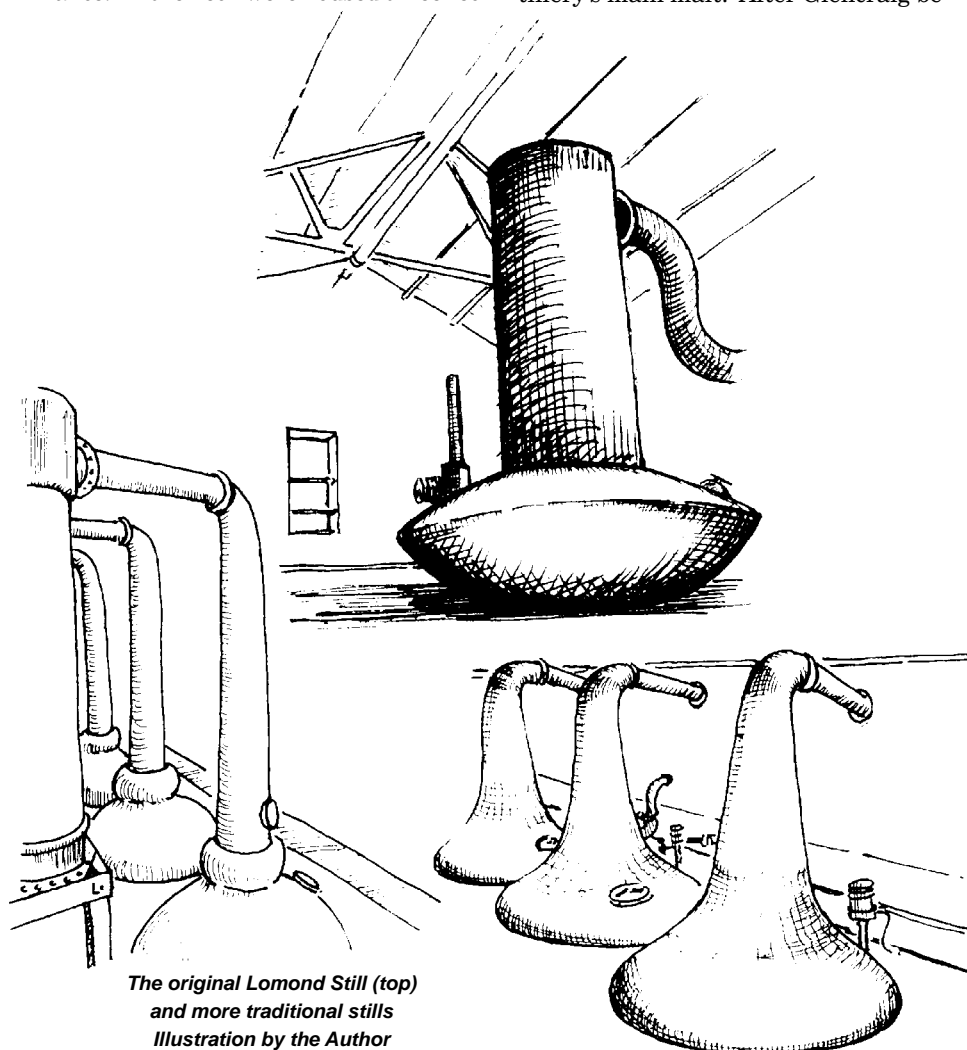
came operational, new Lomond wash and spirit stills were installed at *Milnongie* to produce '*Mosstowie*'. One writer has described the taste of the whisky as "oily, sweet and malty burnt toast dryness after a fanfare of apples and peat".

The company's final Lomond still was later installed at *Scapa* in *Orkney*, but it was only a wash still to vary the existing product, rather than to produce a new single malt. The results at *Scapa* produced a malt with more characteristic flavours of *Orkney*, of caramel sweetness, heather and iodine, which were considered inappropriate for the *Ballantines* blends.

Experimentation continued, especially at *Glenraig* and *Mosstowie* even after these Lomond stills were installed, particularly with the design and length of the neck, the position and design of the rectifying plates and the angle of the lyne arm connecting at the top of the still to the condenser, which affected the lightness (or heaviness) of the distillate. The 'Achilles heel' of the Lomond still turned out to be its rectifying plates, which collected yeasts and other solids in the distillates causing heat transfer problems, leading to longer distillation times and creating maintenance difficulties. Such problems, together with demand for stocks of the main malts at *Glenburgie* and *Milnongie* and then the arrival of the 1980s recession, eventually led to the Lomond stills being dismantled. The Lomond still at *Dumbarton* and the wash still at *Scapa* have not been removed despite these distilleries being mothballed. Although there is cause for optimism about the future of *Scapa*, '*Lomond*' and indeed its sister plant *Inverleven* are unlikely to produce again. It is perhaps ironic that the Lomond stills were created to produce additional malts for the *Ballantines* blends, yet it is because of their relative rarity value and interest from connoisseurs of single malts that they are much sought after today.

Loch Lomond distillery, a converted calico dyeing factory which opened in 1966 at *Alexandria*, took advantage of the technology developed by *Hiram Walker*, without directly copying it. The perforated plates in the rectifiers of its stills are cleverly designed to allow greater variations in reflux than was possible in the original Lomond still. This means it can produce a variety of different malts. The distillery is actually capable of producing two whiskies at the same time and rectifiers in the still heads can be modified to produce different whiskies at different times in the same stills.

Only two of *Loch Lomond's* malts are currently marketed as commercial singles. *Inchmurrin* is a clean, light malt distilled at an amazingly strong 85.6% abv, whilst *Old Rhosdhu* is not so in-



The original Lomond Still (top)
and more traditional stills
Illustration by the Author



**LOMOND STILL
AT SCAPA, ORKNEY**

*Photo: Allied
Distillers*

tensely distilled, thereby retaining some heavier oils. Other malts produced, but not yet marketed, are *Croftengea*, derived from heavily peated malt and distilled in the Old Rhodhu fashion to retain heavier oils and *Inchmoan* which is heavily peated but distilled like Inchmurrin. *Craiglodge* is somewhere inbetween the two, being distilled like Old Rhodhu but from half peated malt. The other malt is *Glen Douglas*, an everyday filler for blending and distilled at 68% abv, a much lower gravity than Inchmurrin, and a more normal distillation strength. A limited edition bottled malt has even been released entitled *Loch Lomond*, reputedly a vatting from the various single malts produced by the company. The Loch Lomond distillery has considerable flexibility in that it is the only operation in Scotland currently producing both malt and grain whisky.

The Loch Lomond Distillery Company also owns Glen Scotia and Littlemill malt distilleries, both of which are currently mothballed. Under a previous owner, Littlemill produced two other malts in the 1970s for a short time, by virtue of the fact that its stills were attached to a rectifier or 'reflux condenser'. *Dumbuck* was heavily peated, highly unusual for a lowland malt while *Dunglass* was oilier and unpeated, reputedly with a big, full texture. Both were produced for blending purposes and were essentially trial products.

Another whisky which was produced on an experimental basis for a limited period in the 1970s was *Glenisla*, which originated from Seagrams' Glen Keith distillery. This was around the time when triple distillation was changed to the more usual double method. *Glenisla* was produced in the Islay style, being highly peated and oily. The malt is very rare and is unlikely ever to be bottled. One wonders whether any other similar products are being produced at present, for example, at UDV's Pittyvaich plant, which is now only distilling on an experimental basis?

A number of other whiskies have been produced by varying the amounts and strength of peated malt used in the distillation process. Ledaig distillery on the

Island of Mull operated from 1972-1975 and 1979-1981 after being silent since the 1930s. It produced the peated whisky known as *Ledaig* but under its present owners, Burn Stewart, it now produces an unpeated version entitled *Tobermory*. However, a few mashes are still made every year to produce limited quantities of Ledaig.

At the famous Springbank Distillery in Campbeltown, where all distilling processes from malting to bottling are carried out on the premises, three malts are now produced. *Springbank* is a classic whisky made from medium peated barley malt by means of an unusual configuration of the plant's three stills, i.e. it has two low wines stills and a spirit still, (rather than the more usual low wines and spirit still), using a process in which the malt is effectively distilled two and a half times. Springbank's mellow flavour is usually accredited to the fact that an intermediate or doubling still is employed in its production.

The characterful *Longrow* is occasionally produced using double distillation from heavily peated barley and this version is often mistaken for an Islay. The company has developed a third unpeated, lowland style whisky which goes by the name of *Hazelburn*, which is not yet available.

Another strongly peated malt was produced at the 'Old Clynelish', 'Clynelish No 2' or 'Brora' distillery, built in east Sutherland in 1819. It closed shortly after the larger new 'Clynelish' distillery was built on an adjacent site in 1968/9. It should be pointed out that a number of other distilleries stand virtually 'cheek by jowl' e.g. Glenlossie and Mannochemore, Longmorn and Benriach, Glen Grant and Caperdonich, Balvenie and Kininvie; but Clynelish was essentially built as a replacement distillery to meet the increased demand for its product during the 1970s. Despite this, the older plant was recommissioned in 1975 and for some time fillings from both distilleries were sold as 'Clynelish'. This caused HM Customs and Excise considerable confusion and led to the old distillery being renamed 'Brora'. Although casks were stencilled accordingly, both new fillings and mature singles were still sold as 'Clynelish' until final closure of the 'Brora' distillery in 1983. To all intents and purposes however, 'Brora' is the whisky originating from the older of the two plants.

In the decade before the new distillery was built at Clynelish, several other malt whiskies were produced for the first time, mainly from new stills installed within existing grain whisky plants. This was a direct response to the strong market demand prevailing at the time which had also led to the development of the 'Lomond' still. For example, *Kinclaithe* was distilled at Strathclyde from 1957; *Ben Wyvis* was produced at

Invergordon from 1965 and *Ladyburn* at Girvan from 1966. In addition, *Strathmore* malt whisky was made for a period of only two years in a patent still in the converted Knox's brewery at Cambus before the plant was changed into a grain distillery and new malt and grain plants were set up at *Lochside*, Montrose in 1957 and at Moffat in 1965. Sadly, none of these whiskies is produced today.

The Moffat distillery was a large complex established by Inver House in Airdrie. A grain whisky, known as *Garnheath* or *Moffat* was also produced there. The main malt was *Glen Flagler*, made in traditional pot still from 1965-1969, before the process was changed so that the wash ran through a continuous beer still before being turned into whisky in traditional spirit stills. The process was akin to the way that Bourbon is produced today in North America.

Glen Flagler was distilled until 1974 but two other whiskies were made in the complex until 1970. *Killyloch* was first distilled in Glen Flagler's wash stills before secondary distillation in the Moffat grain stills, but malted barley was always used in the process. The malt should have, in actual fact, been named 'Lillyloch' which supplied the distillery's water, but an error was made on the cask stencil which was never rectified. *Islebrae* was phenolic and peaty but unlike the Islay malts, it was light bodied and was not, therefore, a commercial success. Although malt whisky distilling was terminated at Moffat in 1974, grain whisky was produced there until 1983/4, before the whole plant was decommissioned in 1985.

Only a few new distilleries have appeared in the last decade, e.g. Speyside, Kininvie, Lochranza, whereas too many other plants to mention have been mothballed. However, at the Mannochemore distillery, established in 1970/71, a new whisky has recently been marketed by its owners (UDV). This product is known as '*Loch Dhu*', its black colour apparently not as a result of the use of caramel, but from double-charring of the casks in which the whisky is matured. This is perhaps not so much a different whisky, but the result of a process not dissimilar to 'finishing' the same whisky in different types of wood, a project commercially piloted most successfully by Glenmorangie Plc.

It is apparent that a great many of the whiskies once produced were essentially experimental products which appeared and were withdrawn as a result of market forces or, for whatever reason, by their limited success. Nevertheless, it is reassuring that at least some of these whiskies can still be purchased today and that at least a handful of distilleries continue to produce more than one product, for their 'grist to the mill' allows us all to reap the benefits.

SUMMARY OF EARLY BIRD

CHRISTMAS DEALS

Full details in centre pages but deals are for orders placed on or before December 14th and are strictly limited so order soon to avoid disappointment. **Please advise which deals you are claiming when you place your order.**

✓ Every, yes EVERY, order of a bottle or more will receive a miniature of Old Pulteney 12yo, compliments of Inver House Distillers, while stocks last.

✓ All orders over £125 will receive a 10cl sample of The Living Cask.

✓ Include four bottles of the award winning Loch Fyne in your order for free delivery (UK mainland).

✓ Our house malt, the Inverarity—buy two 10yo and deduct £2; buy 1 x 10yo + 1 x 14yo—deduct £4; buy a brace of Ancestral 14yo—deduct £5.

✓ Price blitzzzz on LFW's **bold** stocklist recommendations:

Glen Moray — 3	12yo	£15.50
Glenmorangie	10yo	£19.99
Macallan — 3	10yo	£19.99
Highland Park — 3	12yo	£19.99
Bunnahabhain — 4	12yo	£19.99

Glenmorangie wood finishes, Port—2Δ, Madeira, or Sherry £ 25.90

Bowmore—5Δ 17yo **£29.99**

Glenfarclas—3Δ 30yo **£63.00**

✓ Murray McDavid, all at 46%:

Rosebank 8yo **£23.90**

Macallan 9yo **£27.90**

Springbank 9yo **£22.70**

Caol Ila 8yo **£22.70**

save a monster £ 17.20 when you buy a pack of all four:

MM — Regional Selection **£80.00**

✓ Glendronach 15yo + Laphroaig 10yo, buy both to receive a min+glass pack and cash in £3 voucher:

Laphroaig 10yo + Glendronach 15yo + Laphroaig 5cl + glass pack **£44.20**

✓ Order any two bottlings from Signatory and deduct £2.50 per pair.

✓ Buy any four of the Heritage Selection, request a fifth free, (up to the value of the dearest you have ordered):

OB Benriach 10 40% **£22.80**

OB Glen Keith 1983 40% **£21.60**

OB Longmorn 15 45% **£27.90**

OB Strathisla 12 40% **£24.90**

✓ Aberlour 10yo or Edradour 10yo; order one and get a Clan Campbell Highlander 12yo blend miniature free.

✓ Distillery Archives; buy two (one older than 1978) for a free Bowmore Darkest 70cl.

✓ Free miniature of CC Clynelish with G&M or CC bottlings of Caol Ila, Balblair, Strathisla, Teaninich, Glentauchers or Inverleven. Or buy a CC Clynelish bottle + any one of the above to get a free 20cl Ardmore.

✓ £10 off a complete set of 70cl Classic Six *Distillers' Editions*.

✓ Buy from LFW for great value and fast, excellent service!



IT JUST SO HAPPENED...

...that the day we were going to open the £1,575 Macallan 1946, a German television crew called into the shop for some footage for a six part documentary on Scotch Whisky (they wanted the best whisky shop). They were delighted to capture such an exciting event—and taste a truly remarkable whisky.

Anyone else wishing to try it gets a free 35ml sample when buying a Macallan '46 from Loch Fyne Whiskies.



NEW MEN

Roddy Charles who has worked with us for the last two years has moved on to run his family jewellery shop in Aberdeen. We wish him well and would direct customers to Roy Charles Jewellers for that something special in the consumer durable department.

Andy Burns (left) joins us, as does our specialist "greeter" Donald (right). Jobs were allocated by virtue of the fact that Donald doesn't seem to mind the rain.

CHRISTMAS SHOCK—

25th DECEMBER THIS YEAR!

As Christmas seems to take many by surprise, we thought a timely reminder was worthwhile. Order deadline for Christmas 1998 is, for emergencies, Monday 21st December. Our preferred date, so we can be sure of stock fulfillment, is Monday 14th, especially for personalised labels.

SCOTCH WHISKY REVIEW is free to all *bona fide* mail order customers. **If you have not bought by mail order from the last (Spring) catalogue and do not buy from the accompanying (Autumn) list then we will not be troubling you again.**

We are no longer sending out Stock Lists and SWR's to prospective customers more than once. If you or a friend would like a current stock list please ask and you will be sent one with a back-issue SWR. Your name will not be placed on our mailing list for further mailings until you have bought by mail order from us. Your name will not be passed to any other organisation.

WHISKY Magazine

A specialist magazine devoted to whisky is long overdue for the UK. At the time of writing, we hadn't seen it so can't recommend it yet but we wish 'Whisky Magazine' well and with Charlie Maclean as Editor and Michael Jackson and Jim Murray contributing, it must be worthwhile.

Published six times a year, you can order it from us for £3.95 per issue, or you can subscribe by calling 0181 563 2975 as an LFW customer. If you quote 'Loch Fyne Offer', you will get nine issues for the price of six (£23.70) and a free copy of Charlie Maclean's 'Pocket Guide to Scotch Whisky'. We do try to look after you.

Issue One will be available as you get this SWR.

COMPETITION WINNERS



A bottle of Inverarity Ancestral for the best photo caption goes to D. M. Harper of Lancs. whose suggestion reflects our announcement that we were to be moving 80 paces across Inverarity:

"Keep smiling, it's only another 80 yards."

AND a very desirable Bicentenary bottling of Highland Park 21yo goes to Mrs McBain of Dallas (Forres) for correctly clocking 104 occurrences of the letter 'H' on a presentation of our bottling of the year, Highland Park 18yo.

eMAIL — an eXPLANATION

Because our business is attending to callers to the shop and traditional mail order requests, we cannot properly accommodate eMail communication. Sorry.

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