



A BRIEF HISTORY OF BRITAIN'S OLDEST BREWER

Shepherd Neame's commitment to excellence and innovative brewing are the result of more than 300 years of experience. Expertise gleaned from centuries of tradition and the continual embracing of state-of-the-art technology has seen Shepherd Neame, a mainstay of the market town of Faversham, prosper.

Something's brewing...

Records show that Faversham was first associated with brewing as early as 1147 when monks at the abbey, one-third of a mile from today's brewery at 17 Court Street, produced beer.

In 1525 William Castlock, the brother of the last abbot of Faversham, was exporting and importing beer. The brewing operation remained within the Castlock family before being passed to Thomas Hilton in 1653.

Growth and expansion

In 1678, Richard Marsh, one-time Faversham mayor, leased the brewery from the Hilton family, before buying it from the family's executors in 1698.

Marsh died in 1726 but the brewery continued under his daughter-in-law Mary and her new husband, a Mr Hilles Hobday. By the time Hilles Hobday died in 1731, the brewery owned two Faversham pubs, The Castle and The Three Tuns. The latter is still part of the brewery's pub estate.

In 1732, Mary married Samuel Shepherd who took over the running of the brewery, introducing a new era of growth, which included the acquisition of 21 pubs, five of which remain with Shepherd Neame.

The brewery passed to Shepherd's sons, John and Julius, in 1755. John would eventually withdraw, while Julius continued to develop



his father's entrepreneurial flair. In 1789, he bought the brewery's first Sun and Planet steam engine, the work of Birmingham engineers and steam engine pioneers Boulton & Watt.

Julius was succeeded by his son Henry in 1819 who ran the brewery for the next 25 years. Upon his retirement, it passed to Henry Jr and his son-in-law, Charles Jones Hilton, but Hilton withdrew four years later and Henry Jr took on John Henry Mares as his partner.

Shepherd Neame

In October 1864 Percy Beale Neame, a 28-year-old hop farmer and brother-in-law of John Mares, joined the firm as a partner, only two months before Mares' death. Shepherd Neame & Company was born.

Henry Jr died in 1876, leaving Percy Neame the sole proprietor. He was joined by his sons, Harry, Arthur and Alick about 20 years later. Percy Beale Neame died in 1913. A year later Shepherd Neame became a limited company, with all of Percy's children as

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the shareholders. Tragedy struck the family when, in 1916, Arthur died of pneumonia, to be followed by Alick only three months later. Harry became the sole managing director.

The Second World War saw the brewery depleted of staff due to military service.

Seventy-five were away by 1940, though production continued as beer was not rationed as it was regarded as a morale-boosting essential.

Shepherd Neame was now largely managed by Harry's sons, Jasper and Laurie. Harry died in 1947 and nine years later, Jasper's eldest son Robert, known as Bobby, joined the company.

In 1958 Shepherd Neame produced one of its most distinctive beers, Bishops Finger. The strong, typically Kentish ale was named, according to folklore, after a signpost that pointed the way to Thomas Becket's tomb in Canterbury.

Upon Jasper's death in 1961, at the age of 56, Laurie became the sole MD.

More strength to strength

In 1968 Shepherd Neame demonstrated the innovation for which it has become renowned when it became the first regional brewer of

lager in the UK when it started brewing Hurlimann, eventually coming to own the popular brand.

Laurie died in 1970 and Bobby became chairman, a position he held for 35 years. By the end of the decade the brewery had acquired 65 pubs in total and Bobby reported an eight-fold increase in profits.

In 1990 Shepherd Neame produced Spitfire to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. Spitfire took off thanks, in part, to its cheeky Dads Army-style humour.

In 1991 Bobby's son, Jonathan Neame, joined the company. He was appointed managing director in 1999, before becoming chief executive in 2003.

Bobby Neame stepped down as chairman in 2005 – he was succeeded by Miles Templeman - and retired from the board a year later. He is now Shepherd Neame's first company president.

In 2004 the company undertook a major upgrade with the installation of a new keg plant and the opening of a new distribution centre.

It followed that with a new cask packaging operation in 2007 and bottling line in 2009 respectively.



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