



## WASHBOURN BROTHERS,

Wine Merchants,

—= GLOUCESTER. =—

NO reference to Gloucestershire's varied interests would be complete without a description of Messrs. Washbourn Brothers' wine cellars and bonded warehouses in Bell Lane and Fox Entry. Through the courtesy of Mr. T. A. Washbourn (the present head of the Firm) we were recently shown through the cellars, and were given the following information concerning them. It is to be regretted that no written description could give anything like an adequate idea of their extraordinary extent or of the value and variety of their contents.

are stored along the walls and in numerous separate bins. There are in all not fewer than 145 separate bins, many of the largest holding each from 100 to 200 dozen bottles.

The wines include importations from the best vineyards where the vine is cultivated, and much of it has been maturing for a number of years. The separate bins are so numbered and recorded that any desired kind of wine or any particular vintage may be quickly reached. The accurate system of keeping account of receipts and sales is remarkable, and at any given time the exact number of dozens in the cellars, the country vintage and character, are definitely known.

The temperature and atmospheric condition of the cellars are exactly suited to the proper keeping and maturing of wines, as the ex-

cordials, champagne, etc., on which duty has been paid, kept for any sudden demand.

Besides the cellars and warehouses are a number of other departments, including large yards and sheds for the storage of casks and bottles, and a separate bottle cleaning department. The latter is quite interesting, as showing the care taken by the Firm to ensure the absolute cleanliness of their goods. Every bottle, after being thoroughly soaked, is cleaned inside and out by electrically driven machinery; after being taken to the cellars to be filled each bottle is again separately examined, those containing the slightest flaw or soilure being rejected.

It is interesting to know that the business has been in the hands of the Washbourn family for nearly a century, Mr. William Washbourn (the father of the present senior partner), having become a member of the Firm in 1821. The present Mr. T. A. Washbourn has himself been identified with the business since 1854; he was, indeed, born on the premises he now controls, though his birth-place in Southgate Street—one of Gloucester's fine old mansions—is now used by another firm.



Section in Bell Lane Cellars, Washbourn Bros. Gloucester

The exact date of the construction of the cellars and the establishment of the business cannot now be ascertained, although the business has been referred to in a document dated 1767, and it had no doubt been in existence for a considerable period prior to that date. The cellars as they exist to-day are therefore upwards of a century and a-half old. The massive walls and arches, however, are in perfect condition, affording a striking illustration of the care and thoroughness with which they were constructed. Gloucester affords no more interesting contrast than that between the unbroken quiet of the cellars and the busy streets almost over-head—The Cross, the heart of the city's traffic, being but a stone's throw away—and when one enters the enormous underground passage he feels that he has stepped from the twentieth into the eighteenth century. It may be of interest to add that one of the wine bins in the cellars is paved with old Roman tiling.

Upon visiting the cellars the first impression one receives is that of immensity. From the point at which he enters them he looks down a vaulted passage 240 feet long. This passage is illuminated with a row of gas jets, revealing along the sides an enormous quantity of wines in cask and bottle.

We present herewith an engraving made from a flashlight photograph showing a view in the cellars. While this photograph shows a peculiarly interesting scene, and gives a fair idea of the manner in which the wine is stored in casks and bottles, it must be understood that the camera could of necessity take an impression of but a very small portion of the passage.

But if one is surprised at the extent of the cellars, he is even more surprised at the great quantity and variety of their contents. Scores of large casks and many thousands of bottles

perience of over a century has proven. The roof is several feet below the surface of the ground, thus insuring the same degree of temperature at all seasons of the year.

To attempt even a partial description of the various wines stored in the cellars, or even to give their names and vintage, would be wholly out of keeping with this brief article. The Messrs. Washbourn Brothers publish descriptive price-lists, giving full particulars as to quality and vintage of the various wines and spirits they offer. It is enough to say here that the stock is most complete, and that the most fastidious connoisseur, no matter what his particular taste may be, may find a wine exactly suited to his fancy. Some of the liquors—notably Scotch whiskies, and brandies—bear the Firm's exclusive label, and have gained a wide demand by reason of their exceptional quality.

The completeness of the stock and its high character are attested by the demands made upon it by men of wealth and standing, as well as by the general public. The Firm have not only enjoyed a wide connection in this district for generations, but they have become favourably known in London and other large centres throughout the country. They have even exported wines and spirits to the United States, India, Australia, South Africa, and Malta.

In connection with their wine cellars they also have large warehouses for the storing of wines and spirits in bond. One of these warehouses is in Fox entry, the others being in Crypt Alley adjoining the Bell Lane premises. Although the warehouses contain an enormous quantity of spirits, every arrangement has been made to facilitate handling, and consignments may be received or sent out at the minimum of labour. There are still other rooms used for the storage of liquors, including whiskies, gins,



## FRANCIS WINTLE, MITCHELDEAN.

Maltster, Brewer, and Miller.

IT will no doubt surprise most people to learn that although Gloucestershire is not particularly noted as a brewing centre, it has one of the largest, if not the largest, individual brewers in the kingdom. Mr. Francis Wintle, who owns and controls the Forest Brewery, at Mitcheldean, is entitled to this distinction. Apart from its large capacity, the Forest Brewery is noteworthy by reason of its exceptionally up-to-date and complete equipment, and a brief description of it will therefore be of interest.

The business was established in 1868 by Mr. Thomas Wintle (the father of the present proprietor) on the premises still used. The site of the brewery, by the way, is exceptionally favourable, as it is several miles from any factory of any kind—an important point, as it is well-known that fermentation can be brought to perfection only in an absolutely pure atmosphere. Another advantage is the supply of excellent water, which is obtained from springs rising in the hills but a short distance away. The high quality of the brew is in large measure due to the purity of this water.

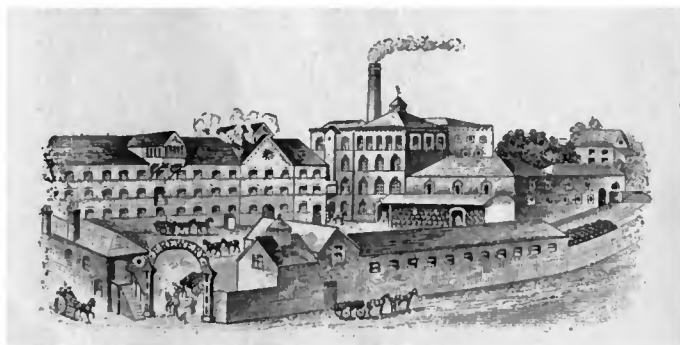
In 1870 (two years after the establishment of the brewery) a very important addition was made to it, a new malt house being erected. This malt house, which is still used for the purpose for which it was designed, was constructed of red sandstone obtained in the "Wilderness Quarries" but a mile away; in fact, the quarrying of the stone for this building was the origin of what has since become one of the largest and best quarries in this section. Besides the malt house a number of other additions have been made, the capacity of the brewery having several times been doubled. Among the more important recent additions may be mentioned a new boiler and copper house, cask washing sheds, dray sheds, and motor house, and still further enlargements are in contemplation. The accompanying engraving will give some idea of the general arrangement and size of the premises, which cover approximately two acres, exclusive of the meadow land adjoining.

In passing through the brewery one is impressed with two features which are in evidence in every department—the very unusual cleanliness everywhere in and about the buildings and yards, and the care which has



been given to perfect the smallest details which could in any manner affect the product. In the boiler and copper house, and in some other departments as well, the walls are of white glazed brick, and are, therefore, absolutely germ proof; the woodwork everywhere is painted and is frequently washed; the floors are of concrete; and the copper vessels and piping, and the pumps, engines and machinery generally, are spotlessly clean. As a further illustration of the care taken to prevent contamination from dust or from any other cause, it may be interesting to add that the dust arising from the screening of the malt is collected and is converted into mud by a special apparatus and then discharged into a drain. This method effectually prevents the dust from flying about. The mechanical equipment throughout is all that a large expenditure and a thorough knowledge could make it.

The brewery plant also contains a cooperage and carpentering shop, a fitting and repair shop, extensive stables, and houses for the vans and for the large motor which is used for delivering. The premises are lighted throughout by gas, though the erection of an electric lighting plant is in contemplation.



Forest Brewery, Mitcheldean. (F. Wintle, Proprietor.)

Practically all of the barley used in the brewing is obtained from Herefordshire, which is one of the best barley growing districts in the kingdom. Before malting, the barley is put through a cleaning apparatus, and all the small, broken and imperfect grains are rejected. The hops are obtained from Worcestershire. It need scarcely be said that absolutely no adulterant is used in any process, though frequent laboratory tests are made to insure uniformity of product. Mr. Wintle has made himself thoroughly familiar with the art of brewing, in which he takes great interest apart from any question of profit, devoting almost his whole time to the brewery.

He brews mild and bitter ales and stout, all of which are sent out in casks. He has throughout the district between sixty and seventy public-houses, at which his ales are sold exclusively, and also agents in all the neighbouring towns. Many private families also obtain their supply direct from this brewery, and to such we can say, after careful inspection of the plant, that they are served with a beverage which for purity and wholesomeness is not excelled anywhere.

In addition to his brewing interests, Mr. Wintle owns and operates a flour mill at Cinderford. This mill is equipped with the new "Elite" system, a recent invention which was installed by Messrs. William Gardner and Sons, milling engineers, Gloucester. The advantages of the "Elite" system, which marks a radical departure in milling, are described in an article in this publication referring to Messrs. Gardner and Sons' works.

In concluding this inadequate notice, it is but just to acknowledge Mr. Wintle's courtesy in permitting an inspection of his admirably appointed brewery. It is perfectly accurate to say, without disparaging other firms, that as regards both the equipment and the management of the brewery it is a very creditable type of Gloucestershire's best industries.

## E. HARDING & CO.,

GLoucester.

Manufacturers of all kinds of High-Class Mineral Waters.

THE business carried on by Messrs. E. Harding and Company, Barton Street, was established by the late Messrs. Wilesmith and Moreton in 1839. It has, therefore, been in continuous operation for the greater part of a century, and has become widely known throughout this and the adjoining counties.

The continuous extension of the business necessitated frequent enlargements and alterations, and in 1885 new buildings were erected. These buildings were specially designed for the purpose to which they are put, and at the date of their erection it was supposed they would be amply large for any future development of the business. In recent years, however, it has been found necessary to make several extensions, new wings being added and other important improvements being made. Messrs. E. Harding and Company's premises to-day cover a total area of approximately one acre, by far the greater part of which is under roof. They have the advantage of a particularly favourable location, facing three streets—Barton Street, Victoria Street, and Blenheim Road—with as many entrances and exits. In point of lighting, ventilation and general sanitary arrangements the buildings are in every respect thoroughly modern. A special feature, and one which at once commends itself to every observer, is the scrupulous cleanliness noticeable in all departments.

In the manufacture of mineral and aerated waters modern invention has played an important part, and the machinery and apparatus now in use have facilitated economical production. In this respect Messrs. E. Harding and Company have been more than ordinarily progressive, and they have from time to time changed and added to their mechanical equipment, which is now fully equal to that found in any plant in this section of the country. The motive power is furnished by a steam engine.

One of the most interesting departments in the Company's factory, and one which forcibly illustrates the marked improvements made in the mechanical processes of the industry in recent years, is the "filling" room, where the machinery is the very latest and most approved pattern. One of the latest additions to the mechanical equipment is a steam filling machine, capable of turning out 120 dozen bottles an hour, as against the 40 dozen an hour filled by hand. The laboratory, where the ingredients are blended for the various beverages, is also excellently equipped.

The extensive use of machinery has another advantage besides increasing production and lessening cost—it ensures a thorough cleanliness in every stage which would not be possible were only hand labour employed. No water, syrups, flavouring, or other liquids entering into the composition of the beverages are touched by the hands of the employees. This, and the care given to frequently cleanse the machinery, makes contamination almost impossible. The spotless cleanliness of all of departments has already been referred to, though it is a feature which could scarcely be emphasised too strongly.

In the manufacture of the beverages city water is used, though not direct from the mains. All of the water is carefully filtrated by passing through Dr. Bond's Charcoal Filters, which remove any undesirable matter that may have remained. The same care is used in the selection and treatment of the various ingredients, which are selected for

their strength and efficacy rather than for their cheapness.

It would be impossible here even to enumerate all the beverages manufactured by Messrs. E. Harding and Company. Among those, however, which have gained particular favour may be mentioned the ginger ale, lemonade, quinine water, summer and winter beverage, and hop bitters. The Company's stone ginger beer has gained for itself a reputation second to none, a separate department being devoted to its manufacture.

All of the beverages manufactured by the Company are prepared after exclusive formulae, and it would be an ill-acknowledgment of the courtesy shown the writer during a recent inspection of the plant to make any extended reference to their character or composition.

The trade has shown that solid and substantial growth which is followed by permanent success. The Company have not attempted to push forward too rapidly, their chief consideration being to supply the best beverages that skill and care could produce, confident that the public would appreciate their efforts—a judgment which has been amply justified by the event.

The business is under the personal supervision of Mr. Thomas M. Harding. He is thoroughly acquainted with every detail of the business, having been interested in its management with his father, with whom he was associated for a number of years. Although the business has already grown to very creditable proportions, Mr. Harding is not content to remain stationary, but brings to it a progressiveness which is evident to anyone who is privileged to inspect his plant, and it is safe to predict a still further growth.



## JOHNS & SONS,

21, COMMERCIAL RD., GLOUCESTER.

Ship Chandlers, Sail Makers, and General Merchants.

MESSRS. JOHNS AND SONS, Ship Chandlers, Sail Makers, and General Merchants, are one of the oldest firms in Gloucester. Their extensive stock, both at Gloucester and Sharpness, makes them well able to cope with the supply of storers to the largest vessels which come to the port.

They are probably most widely known as tent proprietors, agricultural and general show contractors. Under the present new proprietorship special attention is being given to the builders' and engineers' sundries stores branch of the business. Messrs. Johns and Son have recently started to cater for the requirements of farmers, and are represented on the principal markets in the West of England. To their many clients they give the satisfaction which necessarily follows from a modern system of business capably managed.



EVERYONE who has followed the trend of events in recent years is familiar with the marked tendency toward decentralisation—the restoration of the people from the crowded centres to the land. The tide of emigration that has so long flowed from the country to the town, and which has been an equal loss to both, has, we hope, been arrested. "Garden cities," "industrial commonwealths," "co-operation farming," and other plans have been put into effect for providing toilers with employment under more natural and more wholesome conditions than are possible in large crowded cities. "Back to the land," is a sentiment with which all men can agree and is a consummation devoutly to be wished.