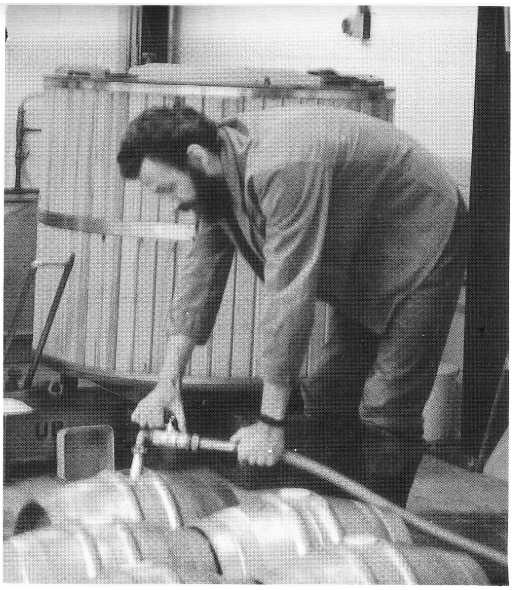
THE RH7 HISTORY GROUP

HOP GROWING AND BREWING



The Medieval Brewer past and present, Philip Goacher of Maidstone shows that little has changed in the manufacture of Real Ale today.

Picture curosities of Ale and Beer

THE HOP

Its botanical name is 'Humulus Lupulus' and it belongs to the nettle family. It is a bine which can climb as high as 20 ft. in a season. The hop 'should be planted no later than April' (Reynolde Scot), appears in July and matures through to September. Hops are 'dioecious', i.e. they bear the male and female flowers on different plants. The male flowers are small and green but the female flowers, likened to 'scaled pine apples' are large and unmistakable and the source of the hop's essential oils. Each lobe of the cone-like structure is studded near its base with yellow glands which exude a mixture of aromatic oils and resins known as lupulin. Their scent is quite distinctive with hints of garlic, ripening apples and yeast and, long before they were employed in making beer, they were used in herbal medicines; they were recommended as an appetite stimulant, a mild pain killer and a sedative. Pillows stuffed with hops were and are, even now, used to cure insomnia.

Introducing the Hop:
It is not clear whether the hop is a true native plant. It has always grown in Europe and Western Asia and, as mentioned above, was well known as a medicinal herb before being used in brewing.

Until the 13th century the common daily drink of Northern Europe was spiced ale. It was brewed with malt infused with water with the addition of some basic spices. It was a heavy drink which, after brewing, had to be consumed quickly before it deteriorated.

Originally, ale was brewed in monasteries, manor houses, also private houses. In our area the Tandridge Priory (ca. 12th century in what is now Barrow Green Road, near Oxted) "had a brew and bake house".

Peter Gray, in his book *Crowhurst* writes: 'John IV called 'senior' obit. 1450 who built Crowhurst Place: … bake and brewhouse.'

Drinking water supplies were very often inadequate. People had in the past used spring or river water but such sources were becoming polluted in towns and areas affected by rural industries. As beer had been boiled it guarded against infection and this, together with the nutritional value, encouraged its use and was therefore the daily drink of most people.

Women traditionally did the brewing – they were 'the ale wives'. It was an easy process and could be managed in the household. All that was needed was a vessel made of copper for heating water over an open fire and some wooden casks (vats or tuns). The ale wife mixed dried malt with quantities of unmalted grain. She turned this into the mash vat to form the grist. She poured on some of the heated water and mixed it into the grist by hand, leaving the remaining water to reach a higher temperature. She added that in stages until the starch in the mixture turned to sugar. She then separated the mash from the spent grains and turned it into cooling vessels. When the liquid (wort) was cooled it was poured into vats, yeast was added and left to ferment. After several days, when secondary fermentation had taken place, spices were added to what had become alcohol.

Because of its simplicity, poor people could turn to brewing and selling ale as a means of support. Ale deteriorated quickly without preservatives and so only small quantities could be made at any one time.

Once the hop was introduced into brewing, it was more economic to produce beer. A bushel of malt produced only 8 gallons of ale but yielded 18 gallons of beer with addition of hops. The old spiced ale only came in two types: strong and small. Beer came in three varieties: strong, middle and small. The small beer was the daily domestic drink of the lower classes and was made by pouring a fresh volume of water over the wort in the vat after the strong beer had been drawn off.

So, in the 13th century there was a great advance in large scale specialised brewing throughout Northern Europe due to the introduction of hops in the brewing of beer.

One of the properties of the hop is its resinous constituents which have preservative effects helping to produce a more durable, stable and palatable drink. Hops were cultivated in the Low Countries (modern Belgium and Holland) on a growing scale from the 13th century long before they were cultivated in England. However, by 1400 hopped ale was being imported into England. It is thought that Flemish weavers may have introduced the crop on a small scale to Kent, probably around Cranbrook, where they settled during the years after 1331 when Edward III had invited John Kemp of Ghent and his workers to settle in England to teach the English the art of weaving. It seems likely that people, who had become used to hopped beer at home, would have taken steps to obtain a drink felt to be so vital to their well being.

From the time of the arrival of religious refugees from Flanders (in the North of modern Belgium) in 1525, there is evidence of hop growing. However, the skills belonged to the Flemish and payments were made by King Edward VI's Privy Council in 1549 for charges in bringing over hop setters.

So the English were leaning on Flemish expertise which enraged Reynolde Scot who set out to reform the English hop industry and succeeded. He published a book which was reprinted twice and was read mainly by yeoman farmers as, at the time, books were in the main only within reach of the gentry and in this book he set out: 'A Perfite Platforme of a Hoppe Garden and necessary instructions for the making and maintenance thereof, with notes and rules for reformation of all abuses commonly practiced therein, very necessary and expedient for all men to have which in any wise have to do with hops.'

Where does the Hop grow?

At first farmers in many counties tried to grow hops and there are even records of hop growing in Scotland and Wales but difficulties became apparent and eventually, even though small acreages were grown in some fourteen counties, Hereford, Worcester and Kent became the main hop growing areas with the latter soon establishing itself as the dominant producer.

Hops succeeded in Kent because the field system was suitable and convenient for experimenting with a new crop. Some regions of the country were farmed on the mediaeval open field system but Kent's agricultural system was historically different and the open field system was never operated there. It was a county of small enclosed fields suitable for a small acreage of hops and they were well hedged for protection from the wind. The climate proved to be suitable and the county was well wooded and thus able to supply the thousands of poles required. The farmers also had the benefit of the fact that Flemish refugees with knowledge of hop culture had settled in Kent but the most important ingredient for success was that in some areas of the county a variety of soils proved to be suitable.

In William Cobbet's *Rural Rides*, he says: 'Very near to Westerham there are hops: and I have seen now and then a little bit of hop garden, even in the Weald. Hops will grow well where Lucerne will grow well; and Lucerne will grow well where there is a rich top and dry bottom. When, therefore, you see hops in the Weald, it is on the side of some hill, where there is sand or stone at the bottom, and not where there is

real clay beneath. There appear to be hops, here and there, all along from nearly at Dover to Alton, in Hampshire. You find them all along Kent; you find them at Westerham; across at Worth in Sussex; at Godstone, in Surrey…'

In *A History of Surrey* (W E Brayley, Vol. I.II): 'Hops were then as now grown in Surrey, more especially in Farnham and to a smaller extent in Chobham, Bagshott, Effingham, Oxted, Tandridge, Godstone, Lingfield, Horne and Horley.'

Hop Growing in and around Lingfield:
In *The Oxted & East Grinstead Railway* by David Gould, he quotes a sentence from *Black's Guide to the County of Surrey* (4th ed. 1892) 'Much of the countryside between Hurst Green Junction and East Grinstead was given over to hop growing.' Also: 'The finest building visible from Lingfield Station was the 17th century New Place, a sandstone house.'

From the *History and Guide to East Grinstead and its environs* by W R Pepper (of 1885) he quotes: '…Once more, resuming our travels by rail (from Lingfield), we pass more hops, glide through more cuttings and, after a short ride, reach Dormans…'

Map of Puttenden Manor of c. 1700: (Lingfield Library):
Great Beerfield, Little Beerfield, The Beer Grove, The Middle Beerfield and Further Beerfield.

Map of Magnus Deo of c. 1720: (Lingfield Library):
On land on the right hand side of the present East Grinstead Road (opposite Lingfield Surgery), probably where Drivers Mead is now.
It mentions: a: 2, r: 1 p: 08
A = acre, r = rood, p = perch
1 acre = 4840 square yards or 160 square rods.
1 rod = 16½ feet
1 pole or perch = 16½ feet
1 Hop Acre = the area occupied by 1,000 hop plants = about half an acre (*The Local Historian's Encyclopedia* by John Richardson).

Map of Chellows of 1739: (Lingfield Library):
Field No. 6 = Hopgarden Mead - A: 5, R: 2, P: 20.

Map of 'Chellowes in the Parishes of Crowhurst and Lingfield in Surry' of ca. 1815 – 1831: (Lingfield Library):
The Hopgarden Mead that was No. 6 in 1739 on this map is field no. 7 with A:5, R:3, P: 26.
Field No. 6 = Hop-Garden Field A:7, R:1, P: 5.
Field no. 9 =Hop Garden Chellowes A:2, R:1, P:24.

The Tithe Apportionment Schedule of 1846 shows : (Lingfield Library)

Frith Farm, Baldwins Hill	Hop Garden Field	No. 960
Trustees of A M Atkins		
Occupier: Joseph Simmons		

Ray Lane	Malthouse Field	No. 52
Owner: E R Comyns, Esq		
Occupier: James Powell		
Lodge Farm	Hopgarden Meadow	No. 1501
Owner: Copeland, Esq	Hopgarden Field	No. 1536
Occupier: Woodham Obediah		
Chellows Farm	Hop Garden	No. 186
Owner: Hooker		
Hoopers:	Hop Garden	No. 1570
Owner: J F Elphinstone, Esq	Hop Garden Field	No. 1751
Occupier: himself		
Milkhouse, Ford Manor Road	Hop Garden Shaw	No. 1606
Owner & Occupier: Elphinstone		
Hole & Lady Cross Farm	Hop Garden	No. 1235
Owner: Gwillian, Jane		
Occupier: Chandler		
Jacks Bridge & Doggets (East Grinstead Road)		
Owner: Thomas Hale	Hop Garden	No. 823
Occupier: Himself	Two Acre Hop Garden	No. 824
Old House	Old Hop Ground	No. 244
Owner: Hansell, Mary	Old Hop Garden	No. 842
Occupier: Alexander	Hop Garden Field	Nos. 960, 1751
	Hop Garden Shaw	No. 1606
Stonehurst & Smithers (Hollow Lane, Dormansland)		
Owner: C N Hastle, Esq	Hop Platt	No. 104
Occupier: James Neale		
Lime House Farm (Godstone Road)	Hop Garden	No. 322
Owner: Jewell, John		
Occupier: Himself		
Batnors Drivers (Racecourse Road)	Hop Garden	No. 430
Owner: Kelsey, J T	Hop Garden	No. 703
Occupier: Himself	Hop Garden	No. 2062
New Barns (Moor Lane)	Hop Garden	No. 1544
Owner & Occupier: Marchant, John, Esq	Old Hop Garden	No. 1556
Reeds Farm (Blackberry Lane)	Hop Garden	No. 1044
Owner: Phillips, Caroline		
Occupier: M J Johnson		

New Place Ware Farm (Station Road)			
Owner: Phillips, Caroline	Town Field & Hop Garden		448
Occupier: (Bowrah?)	Brewhouse Mead	No.	548
	Lower Hop Garden	No.	773
	Hop Garden	No.	776
College Farm & Lands, Jacks Bridge & Cripps			
Owner: Ladbroke, John	Hop Garden	No.	543
Occupier: Dives, John	Hop Garden	No.	550
Ford Farm	The Ruddy Hops	No.	618
Owner & Occupier: J F K Elphinstone			

In 1843, a Report to Parliament mentioned 16 hop fields in this area.

Re: Reeds Farm, Blackberry Lane (see above):
'When the Mansel or Weir Courtney Estate (600 acres 'more or less') was sold in the 1880s, 220 acres went to the Bellagio Estate for the Dormans Park development. Ware Farm, i.e. most of everything to the east of Blackberry Lane to the Railway, went to the Race Course developers. The land between Felcourt Road and Blackberry Lane (225 acres) was sold to Samuel Newcombe in 1888. This included a hop garden of 4 acres and 14 perches in a field known as 'Crooked Field'. The Deeds for this property give it a number (field 56). There is a field No. 55 just to the south of Blackberry Lane and No. 56 could have been next to this, i.e. just below the present day Kingsley Farm House. (Information supplied by Michael Poffley.)

Re: Batnors/Drivers: By 1890, most of the land opposite the house 'Batnors' had been used for the race course. Also, a map of 1870 shows 'Malthouse Farm'opposite the Tan Yard. On a revised map of 1895, Malthouse Farm no longer exists as the land by then had become the race course.

There were hop fields belonging to **New Place Farm** between the Star Inn and Station Road until well into the 1900s as described in *The Lingfield I new* by Gordon Jenner: He remembers walking through the hop garden to the Station and '…the Deacons (who owned Bricklands Farm in Newchapel Road) are responsible for the hops which grow in the Star fields on the way to the Station'.

Again, in Chapter 5: (walking from the Star Inn to the Station) 'I'm through the gate now and into the second field. Mr. Deacon of Bricklands Farm in Newchapel Road hires this field and the next one along and has planted them both with hops. There are several different sorts of hops and the ones planted here are "Fuggles".
In his book there is a photograph taken in 1912 of hop pickers.

In a book *Edwardian Lingfield* by Sydney Matravers he writes: (walking from the Star Inn to the Station)…'We now go back to the footpath we call 'Hop Gardens' leading to the Station. At the bottom of the fair field there is an iron kissing gate. We go through, some elm trees on the left and a small pond and on to the last field reaching

down to Station Road and a very old house opposite New Place. In this field hops are growing and owned by that 'do-it-yourself' (meaning self-sufficient?) family Deacons. I went hop picking one year with my mother and enjoyed myself. (The time he describes would have been between 1904 and 1914).

There were hop gardens and fields in the Felcourt and Felbridge area as described in the Fact Sheet by the Felbridge & District History Group.

In and around Godstone hops were grown as mentioned on the 1896 Map of Godstone Green and Tilburstow Hill: 'Hop Garden Wood' on the south slope of Tilburstow Hill.

Uvedale Lambert writes in his book *Godstone – A Short History*: 'White Hart Barn: probably the 'great new Brewhouse near the (Bay) pond belonging to Godstone Place'. On page 20, it shows, near Harts Lane, a field No. 6 indicated as "Brewers Field". Page 31: "Boorers or Brewers Field; probably connected with the Fox and Hounds Inn. There was a hop field adjacent within living memory.'

The book *Godstone in 1900* says: '...To the east of Leigh Place and the Millpond, the fields were mostly down to hops at the turn of the century. Here, at the end of Leigh Place Lane was 'Hop Garden Cottages' …. Between the cottage and Tandridge village were the oast houses. These worked full stretch in 1900 but have completely disappeared over the years.'

In Godstone, in what is now 'Pondtail', the doctor's surgery, there used to be a brewery, owned by a Mr. Peters. The cottage behind it was also a brewery at one time, Mannington's Brewery, and later a malt house.

Opposite what is now Fairalls there was mention of 'the Old Malthouse' and, also, '…the present garage and petrol station was known as 'the Old Malthouse' in 1900 although it had long ceased to be used for roasting barley'.

The Brew house in Lingfield was the 18th century building referred to as 'maltings on the waste' in the Billshurst Court rolls in 19th century (Lingfield Heritage, Peter Gray).

An 1870 Map of Lingfield shows, in 'New Place Lane' (now Station Road): Lingfield Brewery. *A History of Lingfield* (Arthur Hayward/Stanley Hazell) mentions: '…Malthouse Cottages in Station Road are on the site of the old Malthouse of Billeshurst Manor.'

Sydney Matravers in *Edwardian Lingfield* writes:..'we decide to walk back along Station Road…two cottages near the Malthouse changed into one house'.

There had been a brew house in the Workhouse in Lingfield. Also, in Cowden Church it is mentioned that the Vicar had his own brewhouse. Spratts Farm, Haxted Mead had a brew house.

New Place, New Place Oast and Old Cottage are situated on the land of Billshurst Manor. New Place, the only stone built house in the Parish dates from 1617, the Old Cottage, the first brick built house in the Parish, from 1743 and the Oast is estimated to have been built between 1870 and 1895.

The Oast:
In the early days of English hop growing, hops were dried either in the roofs of houses, in the sunshine or in existing malt kilns. These methods were not always ideal as the first two were subject to the varying degrees of heat according to the weather and the third was a makeshift use of equipment designed for something else. Reynolde Scot advised that oasts such as he had seen on the continent should be built. At first, the design was a simple timber framed barn structure 18 to 20 ft long and 8 ft wide divided into three sections all under one roof. The partitioning walls were either brick or timber studs covered with lath and plaster. The fire was placed in a brick furnace in the middle section (plenum chamber) under wooden laths on which the hops were placed for drying (drying floor). The green hops came through the first section (the receiving chamber) and when dried passed into the third chamber for cooling (the cooling floor). An opening in the roof provided an outlet for the reek. This basic design did not change for over two hundred years and, although an existing barn could be adapted for use as an oast, the internal arrangements were always the same.

Towards the end of the 18th century, the increased acreage of that period put a strain on this system and existing oasts were adapted to a new design. It was found that by removing the internal square kiln to the outside of the oast, the whole barn could be used for receiving and cooling and it became a separate stowage. This meant that the kilns now needed their own separate roofs and, by shaping the roof pyramid style, it could act as a flue to encourage the draught, helped by a cowl.

But it was not until the turn of the 19th century that the familiar roundel appeared in the landscape, designed in the belief that hops in the corners of kilns did not receive adequate heat. Gradually, the countryside became dotted with the new roundels which internally concealed new experimental designs.

Later in the century, there was a change of opinion and, when farmers realised that they had been misled about the effectiveness of heating in square kilns, they preferred to build new oasts, as need arose, in square kiln style. The advantage was that they were cheaper to build than the roundels.

The New Place Oast was still built as a round oast at a time when the fashion had returned to square oasts.

Hop Picking:
The hop was – and is – usually ready for picking in September. In the Lingfield and Godstone area local people picked the hop. It was only to Kent that pickers from London would travel.

Gordon Jenner writes: 'Local women have been tying the hop bines to the tall poles during the summer but this job must have been completed; it won't be long now before the hops are ready to pick.'

In *Godstone in 1900* it says (about the local school): 'The terms were accommodated to the seasons. Mr Bassett, the headmaster in the early 1900s, was tally man at the hop picking. Most of the village went picking – outsiders were not brought in as they were in the Kentish hop fields – so it suited everyone to arrange the summer holidays for when the hops ripened.'

The tally man (from the French word 'tailler' – to cut) measured the quantity of hops picked by each picker. He had two sticks, a long one from which a shorter stick was cut. The tally man kept the longer piece of the tally stick and the worker the shorter, i.e. the counter tally. The two pieces of stick were put together by the tally man and a notch was scored across both pieces for every five bushels that had been picked. The tally man would check the quantity of hops harvested by each worker and entered this into a book against the worker's name. At the end of picking there would be no dispute over the quantity picked as, when the two sticks were placed together, the notches would tally and payment could be made.

Also, in *A History of Hops and Brewing* Margaret Lawrence writes '…in the last century many a head teacher gazed at an empty school in despair and wrote in the school log book: 'The school is empty. If the children are not hop picking, they are looking after the baby while mother picks.' In hop picking areas, after school attendance had become compulsory, summer holidays were arranged so that children could be absent from school legally to work in the hop gardens to help earn money for the family's winter clothing. Every pair of hands however small was vital.'

Drying the hop usually took around 9 hours. The kilns would be unloaded at about 8 o'clock and reloaded with hops picked during the afternoon. Loading and unloading would take around 2½ hours. The first drying would remain on the floor for cooling until about four or five the following morning, i.e. around 7 to 8 hours. They would then be packed into "pockets" taking around 2½ hours, leaving the drying floor clear for the next load.

The Head Dryer had complete control of the whole operation based on years of experience. Each dryer had his own method of cooling and the success of the drying depended more on the ability of the dryer than on any particular type of oast or system of heating. He stayed with each load throughout the drying process. His judgment during the cooling period was important as weather conditions affected the condition of the hop. If it was too hot, the hops would dry further on the floor whereas if it was at all wet or damp, moisture would be absorbed causing them to soften but if there was not enough moisture in the atmosphere, the hops would not reach the desired softness. The whole skill lay in the touch of the dryer's hand.

Inns, Taverns, Ale houses: (from a government survey of 1577).
Inns – originally provided only food and lodgings but developed into elite establishments in the towns where their premises, often rebuilt or enlarged, dominated the main streets. They were fashionable centres offering wine, ale and beer with

elaborate food and lodgings for the rich. They had also become commercial centres for merchants and traders. Local people from the upper classes used the inn to drink socially and talk politics.

Taverns – had originated as upper class drinking houses with the difference that their emphasis was on wine selling although beer was also readily sold. There was limited food and accommodation and they were meeting places for business.

Ale houses – known as 'Tippling Houses', the forerunners of the public house, were well established and were far more numerous than inns or taverns. Based on the government survey of 1577 to enquire 'what number of inns, taverns and ale houses are in every shire', it has been estimated that there were 24,000 ale house keepers in England as a whole. They were much smaller premises than inns or taverns, serving ale or beer and providing only basic food and accommodation to the lower classes, which consisted of farmers, craftsmen, artisans, labourers and servants. They were an essential feature of the social life of ordinary people.

Ale houses had developed from the market stalls used in open air trading. Ale sellers increased in the 14th century when the number of new market centres reached 1,200. The ale sellers also sold ale from house to house but, at that time, the church and trade guilds provided accommodation and there had not been any incentive for the ale seller to make his house a social centre or any vision that he might do so.

Inn Licences:
Selling drink and accommodating travellers has been regulated since the time when monasteries stopped providing those services.

The Innkeeper who provided accommodation was checked to make sure he could be trusted not to 'take in and do for' the vulnerable sleeping traveller.

Any ill treatment of visitors could lose the innkeeper his licence, though bad beer and bad food were not regulated against.

From 1830 it was possible to obtain a Beer house licence, whereby beer only could be served but no food or accommodation need be provided.

Most brewing was by common brewers who sold their beer to landlords for retail. Tied houses and chains of houses were common in the late 19th century. Extra licences were imposed for selling wine, brandy and gin.

Inns, Public Houses and Beer Houses in the Lingfield Area:

Licenced Victualler Register 1822 – 7, Tandridge Area:

Lingfield:	Charles Head	Star	1822 - 3
	James Martin	Plough	1822 - 3
	John Bonwick	Greyhound	1822
	Elizabeth Bonwick	Greyhound	1823

Godstone:	Richard Walter	Rose and Crown	1822 - 3
	Robert Stedale	The Bell	1822 - 3
	Richard Peters	White Hart	1822 - 3
	William Finch	The Star	1822 - 3
	Jesse Killick	Blue Anchor	
	Richard Dodson	Hare & Hounds	
Horne:	John Wallis	Jolly Farmer	1822 - 4
	Elizabeth Wallis	Jolly Farmer	1825 - 6
Tandridge:	Thomas King	Barley Mow	

Inn Keepers often carried out other work as entries in the **1861 Census** shows:

Prince of Wales – Baldwins Hill: Eliza Lewis - Inn Keeper, Wool Dealer and Parchment Maker.

Beer House – Lingfield Common Road next to Providence House: George Ingram – Beer House Keeper and Brick Maker.

Plough Inn – Dormansland: Ambrose Glover – Inn Keeper, Publican and Higgler.

Grey Hound Inn – Lingfield: Richard Glover – Inn Keeper and Poulterer.

Star Inn – Lingfield: Charles Head – Victualler and Builder employing 27 men and 3 boys.

Three Crowns – Lingfield: Mary Bradford, Inn Keeper.

Old Black Horse – Lingfield.

A map of 1874 shows the 'Builders Arms Public House' in Godstone Road, Lingfield, in the place where a map of 1897 shows the Lingfield Hotel.

In *Edwardian Lingfield* Sydney Matravers describes (in the area that is now Lingfield Common Road – 'near Coldharbour Lane and the footpath on the other side towards Sugham's Farm'): …'In the corner of the track, I have to turn right for the farm (Paris Farm) - a very small house, more like a doll's house, an old woman lives in it, the name is 'Pig and Whistle'. An old man told us it was a small pub once upon a time'.

The present time:
Hops are no longer grown in the Lingfield and surrounding area and there are few hop gardens in Kent. Most breweries use imported hops, as they are cheaper, often in the form of hop pellets (imported from China).

Some old established breweries, however, still use hops grown in the traditional way such as the Westerham Brewery (producing 'The Little Scotney Ale'), Larkins Brewery in Chiddingstone and the Shepherd Neame Brewery in Faversham.

A new development is taking place as regards hop growing as, along with the traditional 18 foot hop poles, 8 ft. high rows of vines are being grown, i.e. in the form of hedgerows. With the hedgerow hops, only the hops and a few leaves are picked, whereas with the tall hop poles, the vine has to be cut at the base and the entire plant taken down to be stripped.

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