

# Brewing in Pyrmont and Eora country

Prepared for The Pyrmont  
History Group, February 2020

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[pyrmontbrewery.com](http://pyrmontbrewery.com)



## Brief history of Pyrmont beer swilling (why we brew!)

Beer drinking in the pub has been central to working class Pyrmont in the truest sense of the word '**Public House**' since its earliest days - our national identity/culture - dinky di

Pyrmont pubs were **shared spaces** on literally every street corner amongst small terraces

(there used to be 26 of them!)

# Small Pyrmont private houses sharing a public house

Harlequin and Half Way House and  
Dunkirk/Quarrymans/Terminus/Point + Bridge, New York are all  
very close to brewery!



Half Way House  
Hotel

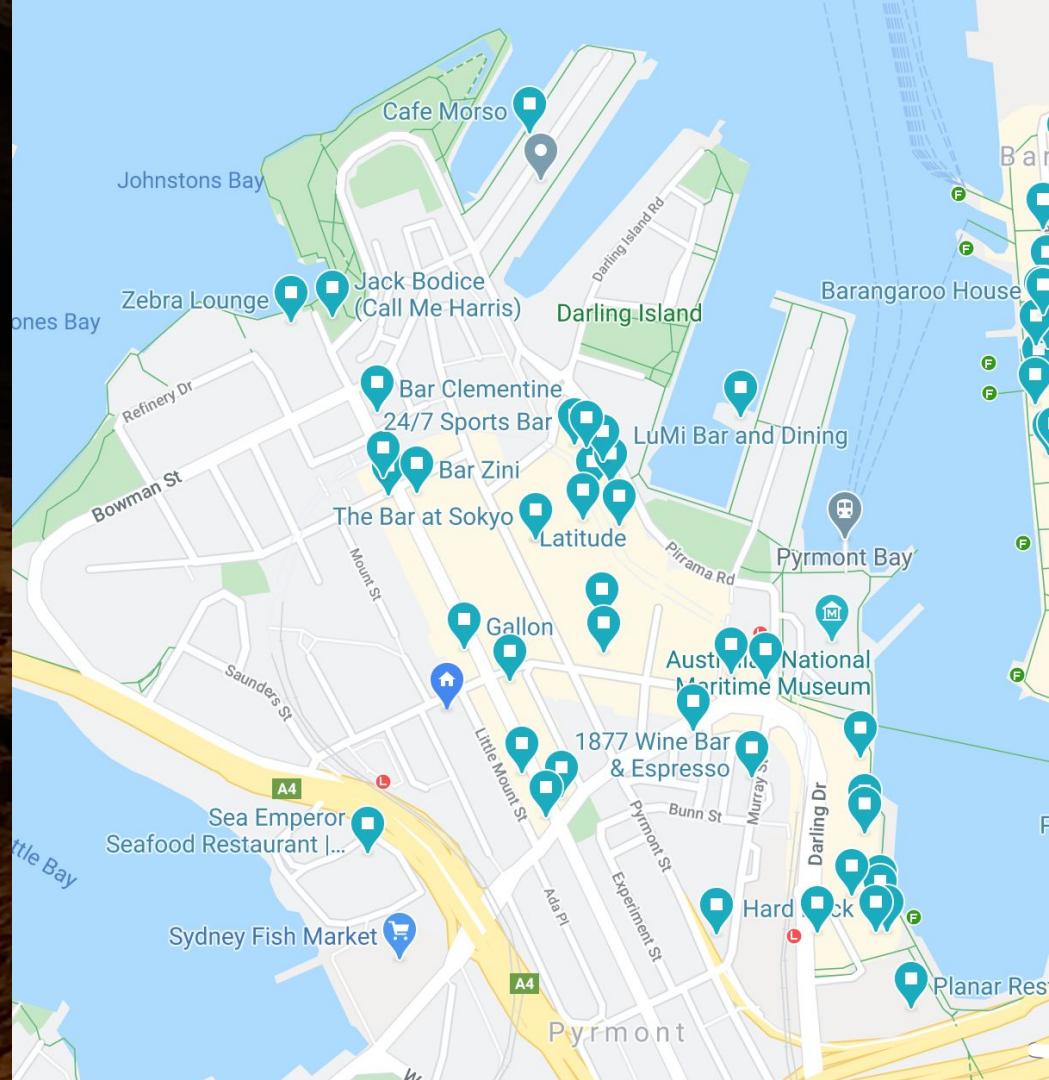


Harlequin  
(Duke of  
Edinburgh)

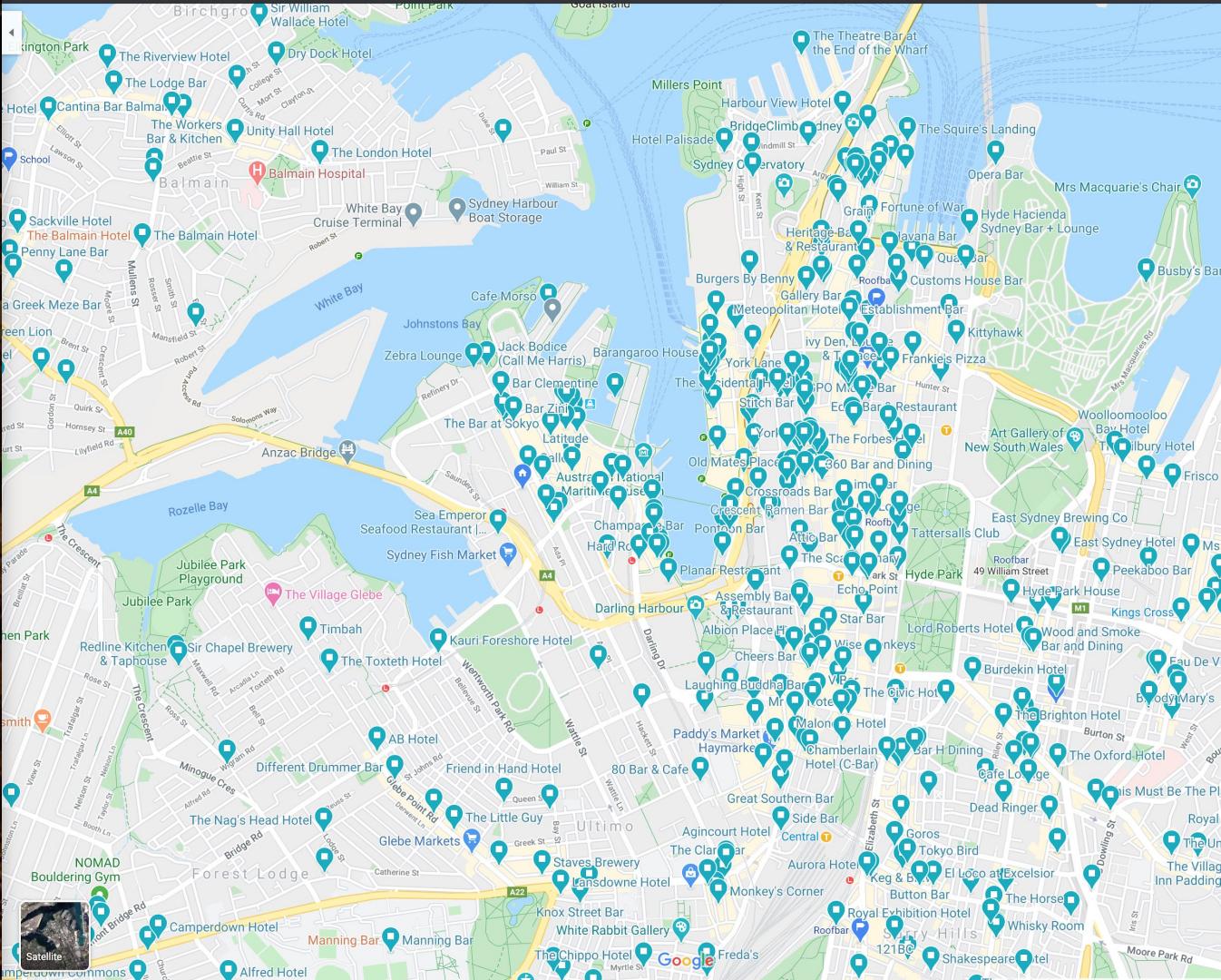


My little Nano Brewery on  
Miller Street

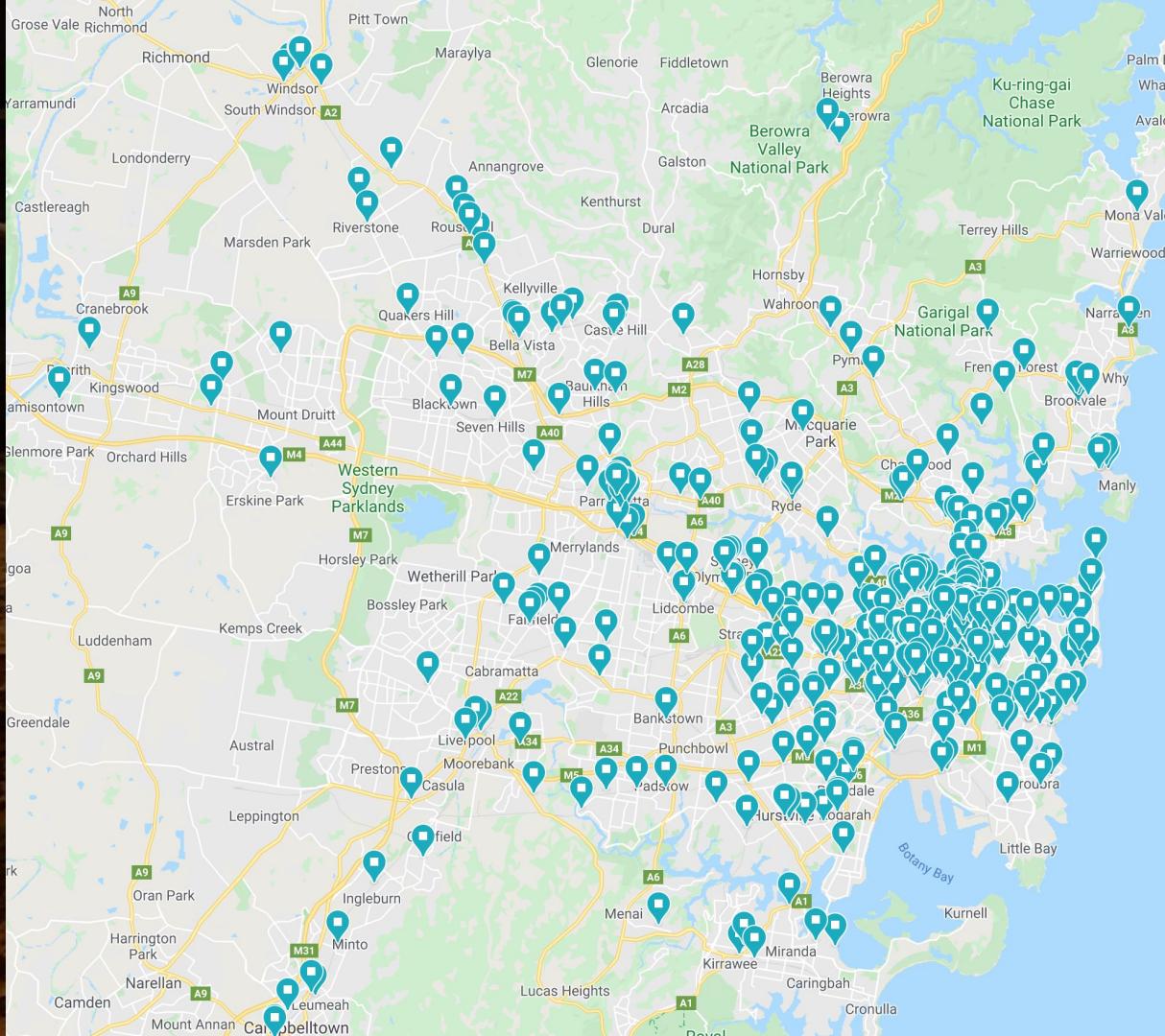
Today still  
heaps  
of  
**local**  
Pubs  
And  
bars!



And  
plenty  
more  
nearby



# Seriously Heaps!



What may have been the first beer sold *in* Pyrmont  
James Squire was the first to brew ales\* near  
Meadowbank 1796 (8½ miles Pyrmont by boat)

Squire started with (bitter tasting) horehound but  
later was first to grow hops at Kissing Point Farm

\* John Boston may have beaten James to first commercial  
'beer' sale, but that was corn based 'beer' bittered with a  
gruit of apple stalks and gooseberry leaves, quite different  
to using barley and hops beer! But applause for making do

Beer takes off! - Hobart's more Beer less Rum! 1802

*“The introduction of beer into general use among the inhabitants would certainly lessen the consumption of spirituous liquors [rum]. I have therefore in conformity with your suggestion taken measures for furnishing the colony with a supply of ten tons of Porter, six bags of hops, and two complete sets of brewing materials.”,*

The HMS Porpoise brought those hops to Squire

## Pyrmont Brewery in 1880 (Felmingham)

The Pyrmont History Group have on their website this fabulous photo of the earlier 1857-1902 Pyrmont Bridge clearly showing a 'Pyrmont Brewery' building >

This was where the PBH is today  
(Murray and Union Streets)

"the beer sent out being light, sound, and refreshingly bitter".



## Pyrmont Brewery in 1880 (Felmingham)

Sydney Morning Herald write up was “the beer sent out being light, sound, and refreshingly bitter. Every effort is made to assimilate this beer to the pale ale produced by Allsopp and Bass”

Samuel Allsopp and Bass is English beer

So same as today, the Pyrmont Brewery also brewed English ales back then too



But, eh oh... *Beer Excise Tariff act 1901*

Whilst introducing beer helped quash the rum rebellion, this act of parliament made Pyrmont Brewery unsustainable - well, and kind of illegal

**17 local Sydney breweries - including two local Ultimo breweries were lost forever!** 

[Transformations: Ecology of Pyrmont peninsula 1788 - 2008 cites Tooth and Co Brewery Sydney for this insight]

Other alcohol production *in* Pyrmont since 1900

The Colonial Sugar Refining Company  
(Jackson's Landing) distilled ind. spirit  
methylated alcohol, also small batch  
'Inner Circle' rum made from molasses  
coming from Fiji and Queensland

CSR rum became Bundaberg, 'Inner  
Circle' was still blended in Fiji ~ 2003

Not entirely sure how/why it was bottled in NZ though



What about the traditional custodians of Pirrama?

There is evidence that Aboriginal people were well aware of fermentation processes to make beverages

But the Eucalyptus described in the process only grows cooler places. e.g. Tasmanian ‘Cider trees’ - it seems then less likely that alcohol was actually made in the local Pirrama / Gadigal territory before European settlement



# Modern beer brewing today in Gadigal territory

Obviously the **Lord Nelson** (Rocks) needs a honorary mention, on-site brewing since 1986

+ fair number of newer breweries in order of distance from Pyrmont...

**All Hands** (Darling Harbour), **Staves** (Broadway),

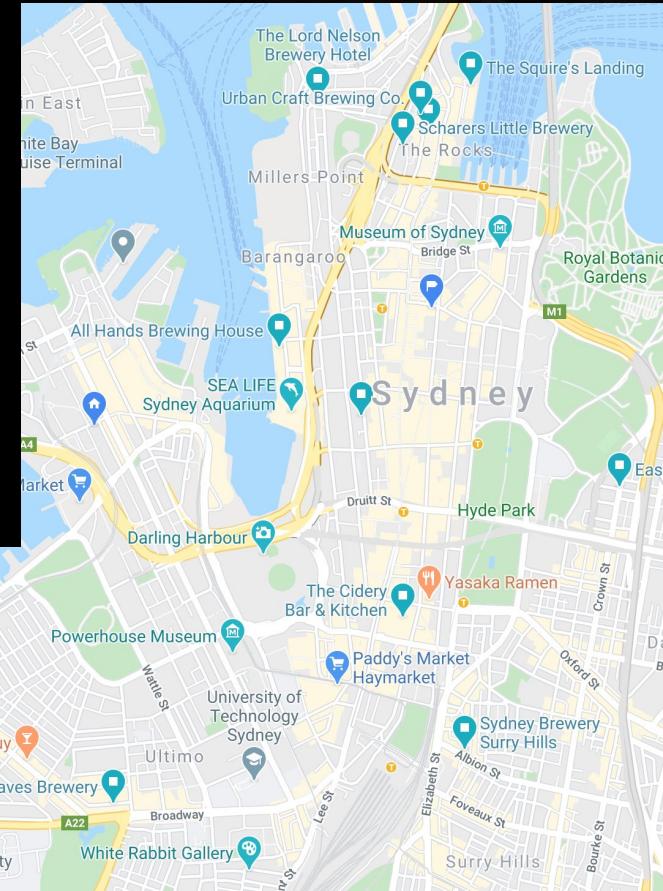
**Redline** (Tramsheds),

**Wayward** and

**Malt Shovel** (Camperdown),

**The Surry Hills** and

**Redoak**



# **Challenges** of brewing in 1790s vs how it is today

- #1 Finding fresh Grain (grow and malt some barley)
- #2 Mill and Mash it (convert starches to sugar)
- #3 Lauter (remove grain/sparge to get wort)
- #4 Boil wort with hops (kill enzymes, hops add flavour)
- #5 Ferment with yeast (= ethanol alcohol + CO<sub>2</sub>)
- #6 Store for a bit without drinking it

Modern beer just the same but a little more tech!

# Challenge #1 - Finding some fresh Grain

Easy today but you do still need quite a lot!

A typical 50L  
Commercial keg ~ 12kg  
Consider that amount in  
colonial days farming effort!



#1 - Grain providers in 1800s Australia

Many barley growers, including Squire (45 acres)

**William Farrer** was  
first to cross-breed  
barley in Australia

Making it hardier to  
disease ('rust')



## #1 - Colonial grain - Varieties

Not a great deal of choice in colonial barley growing, most likely seeds would have come from England, Pioneer (the brewery in Orange actually grows their own today)

Mittagong, NSW was the first barley Maltings

Today we talk about base and speciality malts.  
Malts are roasted germinated grains

# #1- 'Base Malts' produced in Australia today

Spartacus/LaTrobe/Bass/etc **barley** grown and malted/kilned within Australia - 900kt of malt from one million tonnes of barley prod per year!

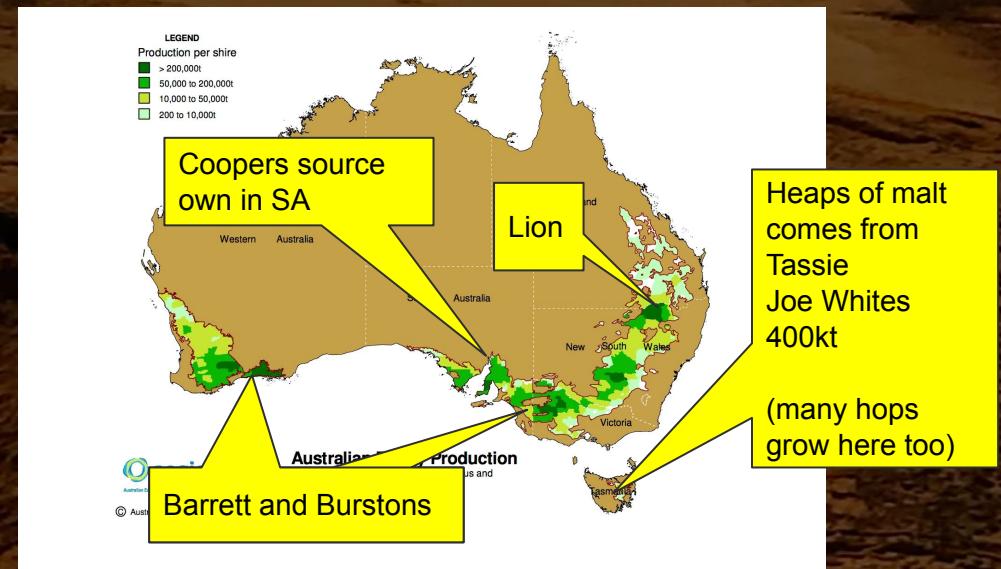
Pale (2 row) malt

Pilsner malt

Ale malt

Vienna malt

Munich malt



# #1 - 'Specialty malt' grown or imported in Oz

Same barley, but longer/hotter roasts for flavour

Low diastatic

Chocolate

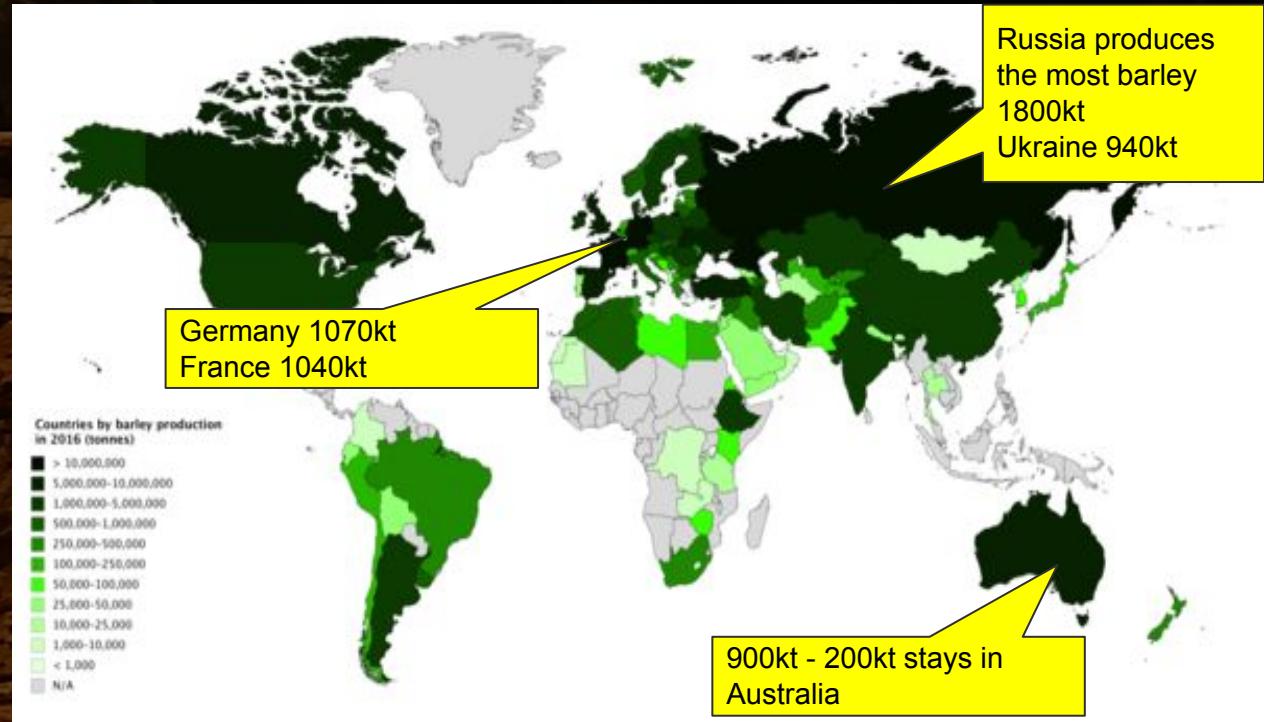
Carahel/pils/\*

Aciduated

Crystal

Patent Black

*... many more ...*



#2 - Mill/Crush the grain bill into hot water (liquor)

Mashing is wetting then holding crushed grain at various temperatures for enzymes to convert starches into sugars - different grains and beer styles vary in their mash steps

Ale malts typically **67°C** for 1 hour

Many variations = flavours...

Getting it wrong affects efficiency = cost



## #2 - Mashing (enzymes convert starches sugars)

Pilsner malt **51°C** for 30min *then* **67°C** for 30min!

Most grains also need a ‘mash out’ at 75C to avoid diacetyl (= bad esters) being released

In 1790's Sydney, how did they? brews were likely pretty inefficient

(this by the way is how it's done today - this is computer controlled heating with a sensitive thermocouple feedback to electrical element - very precise step mash = best efficient)



## #3 - Lauter / Sparging the grain out of the wort

Removing the grain to leave only wort (*said wert*)

Large tanks used in larger breweries actually sift the grain husks away, on small scale you just make a tea bag

Then gently (very very gently) wash the grain through, at 75°C to about 115% liquor



## #4 - Boiling - easy enough in colonial days too

Literally hard boil at 100°C (no less) for an hour to 1½ hours (any volume - hence that extra 15% liquor)

Hops added in various stages

Bittering hops in at the start

+ often in the middle boil

Aromatic hops go in at the end



## #4 - Hop choices (then)



Beer without hops is sickly sweet - bittering hops from Kent oast houses came via HMS Daedalus

Hops were a bit of a cash crop back then - James Squire grew on **4 acres** at Kissing Point

(East Kent) Goldings hop > 200 years cultivation

Unlikely to have (any) aromatic varieties around

# #4 - Hop choices (today)



Varieties of hop, many are **Aussie** and **NZ** ones!

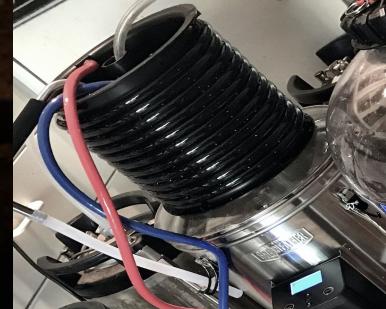
## Bittering Hops

Admiral, Agnus, Apollom, Banner, Bitter Gold, Bravo, Brewer's Gold, Bullion, California, **Cluster**, Chelan, Comet, **Dr Rudi**, Eastern Gold, Eroica, Feux-Coeur, Galena, **Galaxy**, **Green Bullet**, Kitamidori, Magnum, Millennium, Newport, Outeniqua, **Pacific Gem**, **Pacific Sunrise**, Pilot, **Pride of Ringwood**, **Rakau**, **Riwaka**, Satus, **Sticklebract**, Sorachi Ace, **Southern Brewer**, **Southern Star**, Sovereign, Summit, **Super Alpha**, **Super Pride**, **Sty Golding**, Symphony, Tillicum, Toyomidori, **Vic Secret**, Warrior, Yakima Cluster, Zenith, Zeus

## Aromatic Hops

Ahil, Ahtanum, Amarillo, Amethyst, Aquila, Aramis, **Astra**, Atlas, Backa, Bianca, Blato, Blisk, Boadicea, BOR, Bramling, Canadian Redvine, Canterbury Whitebine, **Cascade** Cekin, Celeia, Cobb, Columbia, Crystal, Dana, Defender, Density, Dunav, Early Bird, Early Green, Early Prolific, Early Promise, East Kent Golding, Eastern Green, Eastwell Golding, **Enigma**, El Dorado, **Ella**, Elsaesser, Equinox, **Feux-Coeur Francais**, First Choice, Fuggle, Furano Ace, Gargoyle, Golden Star, Golding, Groene Bel, **Hallertau**, **Hallertau**, Helga, Hersbrucker, Red-Stem, Hüll Melon, **Hort4337**, **Hort9909**, Hybrid-2, Ivanhoe, Janus, Jester, Keyworth's Early + Midseason, **Kohatu**, Landhopfen, Liberty, Lubelska, Lubelska-Pulawy, Lucan, **Melba**, Mandarina Bavaria, Mathon, **Motueka**, Mount Hood, Mount Rainier, Nadwislanska, **Nelson Sauvignon** Nordgaard, Olympic, Omega, **Pacific Jade**, **Pacifica**, Palisade, Petham Golding, Pocket Talisman, Precoce de Bourgogne, Premiant, Progress, Record, Red Earth, Riwaka, Saaz, Santiam, Saphir, Saxon, Serebrianka, Shinshuwase, Sladek, Sonnet, Spalt, Spalter, **Summer**, **Sylva**, **Topaz**, **Wai-iti**, **Waimea**, **Willametta** ... (lots and lots of hop varieties basically)

## #5 - Cool/Oxygenate the boiled wort



Yeast is very fickle about temperature!

Fermenting in Sydney would be tricky in depths of winter and heights of summer (but easy today)

Saison/Kveik yeast happy at 28C fast (5 days) - Ale yeasts at 18-22C is ok (takes 10 days) - Lager flat out dies outside of 8-12C needs precision diacetyl resting (takes 3 months)

This is all modern yeasts - again, how did James Squire and John Boston manage in the 1790's?!

## #5 - Yeast

Sugar  $\rightarrow$  Ethanol + CO<sub>2</sub>

Colonial yeast

would have all been wild

Barmy top feeding yeast made from  
flour/water, then left outside a week

Without refrigeration would have to be made fresh



## #5 - Fermentation

Time depends on the yeast

(e.g top or bottom feeding)

amount of active cells and

amount of sugars (food)

Original Gravity shown top right is 1.050  
(light bends in a sugar solution, difference at  
end of ferment tells us the % alcohol made)



## #6 - Racking and Waiting (depends on beer style)

Beers often take weeks to condition and become  
'brite' ready to drink

Medieval ale, drank  
'fresh' still fermenting

Oktoberfest Märzens  
traditionally are  
made way back in April!



# #6 - Resist drinking it all before you've made more of it!

Pyrmont Brewery beers...



James' brews couldn't have been like modern beer

I'm intrigued as to what Squires beer *did* taste like, guessing most likely a warm flat English ale (Marris Otter like flavours from Pioneer pedigree grain)

None the less the quality was reportedly **most excellent**, and when James Squire died in 1822 he had the largest turn out at his Sydney funeral!

Enjoy!

Pyrmont  
Brewery  
.com



Program:  
Whinging  
Pom  
Best  
Bitter  
4.8%

LOAD \*\*\*\*█

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Enjoy!

Pyrmont  
Brewery  
.com



Program:  
Quarry  
Quaffier  
Aussie  
Lager  
4.9%

LOAD " "■

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Enjoy!

Pyrmont  
Brewery  
.com



Program:  
Hell Hole  
Helles  
4.7%

LOAD \*\*\*\*L

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Enjoy!

Pyrmont  
Brewery  
.com



Program:  
Paradise  
French  
Saison  
6.8%

LOAD ... L

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Enjoy!

Pyrmont  
Brewery  
.com



Program:  
Purgatory  
Pale  
Australian  
Bitter Ale  
5.2%

LOAD "■"

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Enjoy!

Pyrmont  
Brewery  
.com



Program:  
Half Way  
House  
Chocolate  
Stout  
4.5%

LOAD \*\*\*■

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Enjoy!

Pyrmont  
Brewery  
.com



Program:  
May banke  
Dark  
Mild  
3.5%

LOAD " "L

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Enjoy!

Pyrmont  
Brewery  
.com



Program:  
Arrogant  
Harriss  
Strong  
Ale  
5.3%

LOAD \*\*\*\*L

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Enjoy!

Pyrmont  
Brewery  
.com



Program:  
Woko's  
Cloudy  
Apple  
Cider  
5.1%

LOAD " "■

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Enjoy!

Pyrmont  
Brewery  
.com



Program:  
Nano  
Brewery  
in  
Pyrmont

LOAD " "L

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