

**... AND NOW FOR SOMETHING ENTIRELY DIFFERENT ...** (Oct. 1986)

It is possible that beer may have been the staple of mankind before bread! The history of brewing is as old as recorded history, over seven thousand years, and who knows how far it goes back from there. Hieroglyphics have been found by archaeologists that brewing (give me a Lite . . . no . . . a Tut Light). Evidence of beer has been recorded in all languages, and next to water, it is possibly the universal drink of mankind (and womankind). From darkest Africa, the native races made and still make a form of beer from Millet (a type of grass), and every civilization regardless of how primitive or advances, has or had a form of beer. (I know personally a “civilized” person who once made a beer out of chicken bones!)

Julius Caesar described beer as “a high and mighty liquor” (Rome did not have a Miller distributor). King Wenceslas of Bohemia instituted the death penalty for anyone caught exporting the cuttings of the world famous Bohemian hops. William IV of Bavaria, in 1516, thought beer so important that he issued a purity order to the Bavarian brewers that the ingredients used in beer could only be hops, malted barley, yeast, and water. This law is known as the Reinheitsgebot and is still in effect in Germany today. The Belgians revised this law to include fruits and various grains; the Americans modified it to include corn and rice; Peter Cadoo destroyed it and included chicken bones; and the Miller Brewing Company ignored it and excluded hops! (almost)

Our illustrious Pilgrim fathers landed at Plymouth Rock instead of Virginia because, as recorded in their journal: “We could not take time for further search or considerations, our victuals being spent, especially our beer.”

William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, operated a brewery in Bucks County, George Washington, Samuel Adams, James Ogelthorpe, Israel Putnam and Thomas Chittenden, all were involved in breweries. Brewers even have a patron saint – Saint Arnoldus the Strong of Oudenaarde, Belgium, who performed a miracle in the 11<sup>th</sup> century by successfully invoking God to create more beer when a brewery in Flanders collapsed. The Patron Saint of beer is Gambrinus whose statue can be seen on the remains of the Falstaff brewery in New Orleans. Do you suppose that we could pray to both saints to invoke a miracle and rid the world of Lite beer? Beer is brewed by Trappist Monks (Chimay) and Franciscan Nuns. In 1975, Sister Doris, a 27 year old Franciscan Nun of Mellersdorf, Germany, passed her brewmasters exams with the highest scores against 30 male students from around the world – how about that you women libbers!

What is a good beer, everyone asks? In the words of Fred Eckhart, the guru of homebrew . . . “It’s the beer in my glass at this time!” Each beer has a flavor and characteristic of its own. Like wine, women, and song, they are a matter of personal opinion and taste – how else can you explain the success of the Lite Beers?