



ROLL OUT THE BARREL

Distillers Find Bourbon Barrels A Big Bottleneck

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP)—Bourbon whisky distillers get more headaches from whisky barrels than drinkers do from the contents.

Bourbon may be aged only in new charred white oak barrels. They cost about \$30. After one use, the resale value is about 15 cents.

"If somebody could figure out how to salvage used whisky barrels he'd never have to work again," says one distillery executive.

But a man whose firm buys used barrels said, "I don't even like to mention the subject. Every time anyone does, we get a mil-

lion letters suggesting all sorts of crazy things to use a whisky barrel for. None of them are ever any good."

The barrel-buying firm sells them mostly to pickle makers, foreign distillers and blended whisky firms.

Some bourbon distillers don't even bother to sell the used barrels. "Mostly we knock the hoops off and burn them," says one official.

About two million barrels are used each year in the whisky industry. A barrel holds about 50 gallons of bourbon at first, but during the four or more years of aging required about 15 gallons are lost by evaporation and absorption.

Some enterprising persons from time to time have steamed the whisky from old barrels and drunk or sold it. The Internal Revenue Service frowns on the practice. Besides, the product isn't very good most of the time because of tannic acid from the wood or fusel oil and tars absorbed from the bourbon.

"The barrel represents about 50 per cent of the cost of producing whisky," said Joe Scholnick, public relations director at Brown-Forman Distillers.

"Actually it is one of the most important factors in producing good bourbon. We must use only the best white oak, and it's better than furniture oak."

Brown-Forman and several other distilleries have created their own cooperage companies to make the barrels.

Distilleries in making blended whisky can use barrels five, six or seven times to store grain alcohol used in the blend.

The weight of whisky barrels is one thing that cuts down the possibility of reuse. A new barrel with inch-thick staves weighs from 80 to 85 pounds. After one use, it weighs about 100 pounds. To ship an empty barrel from Louisville to New York costs \$7.

A suggestion that a way be found to age bourbon without using charred white oak barrels gets responses ranging from mild disgust to unconcealed outrage.

Says Julian P. Van Winkle Sr., president of Stitzel-Weller Distillery, "For years they (scientists) have been saying they could produce whisky overnight and never use a charred barrel. It's a damned lie."

Van Winkle isn't looking for a new way to age bourbon. A sign in his distillery warns: "No scientists allowed in this distillery."

Sculpture Is Rewarding, But Not In Big Money

The only excuse for the bad sculpture of our age is that some psychiatrists must advise patients to use that outlet to interpret their bad dreams, one of America's foremost sculptors, Laura Gardin Fraser of Westport, Conn., believes.

"What other reason can be given for monstrosities that pass as art, unless it is the desire of some to tear down our traditional ideas and achieve demoralization in art forms?" the 69-year-old grand dame of sculptors asks.

These art efforts sometimes do win prizes, she admits, and are promoted by certain dealers as money making propositions. "As long as an esoteric interpretation

may be put on a lump of clay it will sell, and the standards of art are lowering because of this new fashion," she says.

There is a good deal of lovely, modern sculpture with a feeling of design, Mrs. Fraser emphasizes. It's the odd-ball pieces she resents. She thinks too, that primitive Africans did the best they could in art, but "why hold it up as a standard or copy it? It's not good enough."

Her studio with 30-foot ceiling is crowded with some works done over a half century.

A 3-panel history of the United States has been a 23-year endeavor. Each panel stands 9-by-4 feet and almost got to the National Exhibition in Moscow Fair. But, says Mrs. Fraser, "I was told it seemed a good idea not to give the Russians an opportunity to criticize some of our unhappy events, and naturally we can't distort our history." She was disappointed but hopes to see the panels used in an appropriate background somewhere in America.

The dynamic sculptress with vigorous brown eyes is the highest paid medalist in America, the first woman to receive the Saitus Gold Medal of the American Numismatic Society, in 1916. Her hundreds of medals and coins include those honoring Gen. George C. Marshall, Charles Lindbergh, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington.

It all started with a cake of soap when she was 6 years old. She carved the head of a horse, and there has never been "any-

thing but sculpture on my mind since," she says. She married the noted sculptor James Earle Fraser in 1913 and they worked together until his death a few years ago.

Mrs. Fraser's "Young Woman Bathing" won the Watrous Gold Medal at the National Academy of Design in 1931. But she is partial to horses and many of her great works reflect this love. Her statue of Fairplay, the sire of Man of War, was made at the request of the owners, the Joseph Wideners. An enormous frieze, the Oklahoma Run, has 250 horses, in addition to riders and wagons, all in breathtaking action. It is 20 feet long in the model stage and is nearing completion.

Sidney Waugh, president of the

National Sculpture Society, said of her double equestrian statues of Gens. Lee and Jackson in Baltimore, the only two-horse and rider sculpture in the country: "The sheer beauty of the modeling and perfection of the composition left me speechless."

Does sculpturing pay off?

"I earned \$100,000 for that commission," Mrs. Fraser explains. "I worked 12 years on it, and the pedestal designed by John Russell Pope cost me \$50,000. So I figure I made about \$1,000 a year. Sculptors must pay the cost too, of having their statues transported—to be cast in bronze, plaster cast and to their destination."

And that, she says, is why so few potentially good artists are attracted to sculpting. They just can't afford it.

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ANOTHER BIG BLIMP—The third of the Navy's new class of ZPG-3W blimps gets ready for its maiden flight at Akron, Ohio. A sister ship is moored in the foreground. The Goodyear ZPG-3W airships are the largest nonrigids ever built. Envelopes which have internally mounted radar antennae have capacity of about 1,500,000 cubic feet, 50 per cent greater than previous airships built for Navy use. The blimps will be used for Airborne Early Warning (AEW) duty.

New Material Sets Concrete

BUFFALO, N.Y. (UPI)—National Gypsum Company has developed two new products it says "could revolutionize the yearly cycle of heavy construction."

Dean D. Crandell, vice president in charge of research for the firm, noted that in the past when concrete was poured at temperatures below 40 degrees "it usually failed to develop satisfactory setting action or performance."

National Gypsum's new products, Thermoform and Thermoconcrete, are made of special insulating materials, described as inexpensive

and re-usable, and are placed over freshly poured concrete. They are said to permit the concrete to harden properly by keeping in the heat.

The company said Thermoform is for walls and Thermoconcrete for concrete floors. Both will be on the market before the end of 1959.

Bermuda, discovered in 1515 by Juan de Bermudez, a Spaniard, was acquired by the British in 1684 and became a base for the British fleet in 1767.

Sgt. Saturday Now On Duty

FT. STEWARD, Ga. (UPI) — What's in a name? The U.S. Army and Artillery Firing Center here can easily answer that question by just looking at its roster.

Take Jessie F. Kitchens for instance. He's a specialist 5-c who has been serving here as a mess sergeant.

There's also a private first class by the name of Russell Trout, who has won numerous swimming events on the post.

Television may have Sgt. Joe Friday, but Ft. Stewart has a military policeman called Sgt. Thomas Saturday.

The Army post also has its own Stanley and Livingston in the person of Sgt. Charles W. Stanley and Sp. 4-c Charles R. Livingston.

Other famous names include: Pvt. Stanley W. Plato, Pvt. Paul A. Romeo, Sfc. Robert Taylor, Sfc. John Hopkins, SP 4-c Thomas Edson and Sp. 4-c Henry Ford.