

# HENRY WEINHARD – The BEGINNING

## COLUMBIA REDIVIVA



American sea Captain Robert Gray was the first Euro-American to enter the Columbia River in May 1792. He named it the Columbia after his ship, Columbia Rediviva. The Chinook Indian's name for the river was "Wimahi", meaning "the big river".

In October 1792, British Royal Navy Captain George Vancouver sent Lieutenant William Broughton to explore the Columbia River. Broughton sailed 100 miles upriver to "Point Vancouver" which he named in honor of his Captain.

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*Journals of Captain Vancouver describe the making of **spruce beer** which was a combination of water, molasses and spruce needles brewed during his exploration of the Pacific Northwest coast.*

In 1810, Fort Astoria was established by American John Jacob Astor. The War of 1812 saw the British take control of Astoria and rename the fort to Fort George (today's Fort George Brewing Company name-sake). Dr. McLoughlin of the Hudson Bay Company became the Chief Factor of the fort. In 1825 Dr. McLoughlin moved his headquarters to the newly constructed Fort Vancouver.



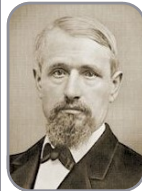
Hudson Bay Company - Ft. Vancouver

Joint occupation with Britain ended in 1849 with the Treaty of Oregon, thus ending Britain's claim to Oregon and Washington. The United States Army immediately took over Fort Vancouver that same year.

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In 1857, the City of Vancouver became incorporated, Factor John McLoughlin died and Henry Weinhard was brewing his famous Columbia Beer lager in his Vancouver brewery.

When the Corps of Discovery camped in present day Vancouver, Washington in 1806, little did they realize how their *journal entry* "the only desired situation for settlement west of the Rocky Mountains" would affect the future of the Pacific Northwest. For it was here in Vancouver, Washington that Lewis Meriwether wrote in the Corps journal of a desired settlement site that would eventually be the destination of German emigrant Henry Weinhard and the beginning of his brewing empire.



Henry Weinhard

Henry Weinhard was born in Lindenbronn, Wurttemberg, Germany February 18, 1830. He became an apprenticed brewer in Stuttgart, Germany where he learned the trade and emigrated to the United States in 1851. After honing his brewing skills in Philadelphia, Cincinnati and St. Louis, Henry headed to the west coast and the gold fields of California. He arrived in Sacramento, having traveled via the Central America isthmus. After a short time in Sacramento, Henry ventured north into the Washington Territory in 1856. Henry settled in Fort Vancouver and it is here, at the Vancouver Brewery, that Henry became employed and later purchased. He excelled; so much so, that within 6 months he headed over to Portland, Oregon and formed a partnership with George Bottler in a new brewery, called City Brewery. The business did not grow as Weinhard planned, thus he sold his interest to Bottler and headed back to Vancouver.



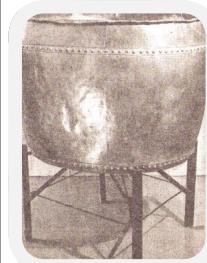
Vancouver Brewery - Columbian Newspaper 1974

On April 7, 1857, John Maney sold his Vancouver Brewery, building and land to Henry Weinhard as reported in the *Columbian April 2, 1974 by Ted Van Arsdol...* and all things pertaining to the Brewery, with all beer, hops, malt, beer barrels" in the amount of \$4,000.00. Within two weeks Henry purchased an additional 2 lots that adjoined his brewery from landowner Esther Short.

Henry married Louisa Wagenblast in 1859 in Oregon City, Oregon. Louisa was 2 years younger than Henry and she also was from Germany, a native of Wurttemberg. The Weinhard's lost their first child and only son, Christian Henry, when he was 2 1/2 years old in 1863. They then lost their second child, Emma Augusta, in 1864 when she was 6 months old. Anna "Annie" Catherine was born in November 1864. Bertha Carolina was born in 1869 and later died in 1882. Louise Henrietta was born in November 1872.

Henry's brewery was located between Columbia and Washington Streets, bordered between 3rd and 4th streets, just a short distance from the public square to the north and the ferry terminal and wharfs on the Columbia River two blocks to the south.

Business was booming from the thirsty soldiers at Fort Vancouver, dockworkers, trappers and local populace. His beer was selling up and down the Columbia River, from Walla Walla down to Astoria. Adventurers traveling to the gold rush in Canada in 1858 kept Henry busy, as well as settlers from the Oregon Trail heading for its northern terminus in Tumwater, Washington. His German style lager was a refreshing, mild, light-colored hoppy tasting beer which he kegged in batches of 5, 6, 8 and 10 gallons receiving 50 cents for each gallon sold. His malt and hop supplies came from San Francisco via steamboat which was unloaded on the wharf down the street from his brewery.



Henry's 10 barrel kettle

With the Oregon Trail having been established and in full swing since 1843 connecting the Oregon and Washington territories to the interior of the United States, rapid growth was being experienced in the Portland area. With this growth came new opportunities presenting itself to Henry Weinhard. In 1862, Henry purchased the Henry Saxer Liberty Brewery, which was Portland's oldest brewery, located on Northwest First & Davis St. With his re-established Vancouver Brewery, his advertisement proclaimed he "was now prepared to supply...A No. 1 Lager beer" to the people of Portland.

# WEINHARD'S – CITY BREWERY

Henry had seen the “writing on the wall” as tensions between the South and North were getting heated-up. More and more Union troops at Fort Vancouver were being re-garrisoned in the troubled spots of the Eastern United States...less soldiers equaled less beer sold. Henry would also be closer to the German Society in Portland, offering more social activities, speaking the same language and shared values.

Having successfully transitioned into Portland, Henry Weinhard purchased ownership into City Brewery in 1864. He then sold his Vancouver Brewery to Anton Young on January 27, 1864 for \$5,000.00 and moved his headquarters into City Brewery's location at West Burnside on 12th and Couch. He bought out George Bottler's interest in City Brewery and that of partner William Dellinger. He was now in full control of City Brewery and ready to build on his dream.

In 1866 Henry Weinhard began the task of building a beer empire...he improved City Brewery, enlarged the plant, purchased refrigerating machines, built a malt house and built a new brew house and storage cellars to keep his lagers at a cool temperature. By 1870, City Brewery was producing nearly 2,000 barrels of beer per year. By 1889 the production of beer was over 40,000 barrels and still growing.

One of the most famous stories of Henry Weinhard goes like this...the City of Portland was planning on erecting a water fountain honoring Stephen Skidmore who had left \$5,000.00; *his bequeath read*, “for erection of a drinking fountain, to be placed in the business part of the city, for men, horses and dogs”. Upon reading the proposed fountain, Henry offered to bring a hose from his breweries lager beer tank and connect it to the fountain so everyone could enjoy free beer. The city of Portland thanked Mr. Weinhard, but declined.

As the City of Portland grew, so did Henry. He was involved in other business pursuits, constructing numerous buildings, hotels and warehouses and storage facilities throughout Oregon and Washington. Henry was a Mason, Chamber of Commerce member and belonged to the Manufacturers Association. Henry and Louisa had a summer home in Astoria. He lived a block away from his brewery and would be seen walking with his pet dog to and from the brewery.

In 1884, Henry and his daughter Anna (Annie) left Portland for Stuttgart, Germany. The two traveled back to his homeland where he had not been since he left for America years earlier. Henry returned back to the United States and Anna stayed behind with relatives. It is here in Stuttgart that Anna met her future husband, Paul Wessinger.

On December 10, 1885 Annie Weinhard married Paul Wessinger in Portland Oregon at the church of the German Reformed Congregation. Sister Louise would follow suit by marrying Henry Wagner on June 21, 1893.

In 1899 City Brewery had expanded, covering two city blocks and producing over 100,000 barrels of beer, shipping to all parts of the globe.

Henry Weinhard died on September 20, 1904 from kidney failure caused by uremic coma.



Reverse-on-glass painting of the H. Weinhard Brewery in Portland, Oregon courtesy of Bryan Anderson.



Weinhard family grave at Riverview Cemetery

## BOSTON OR PORTLAND

Portland was home to indigenous American Indians of the Multnomah and Cascade tribes of the Chinook nation living along both sides of the Willamette River in Oregon.

Early traders, settlers and trappers traveling between Oregon City and Fort Vancouver would rest at a place called “*The Clearing*” which is present day Portland.

The city of Portland, Oregon was named by the “flip of a coin”. Asa Lovejoy, native of Boston, Massachusetts and his business partner Francis Pettygrove from Portland, Maine could not settle on a name for the new city. The matter was settled when they flipped a penny (best 2 out of 3) and Mr. Pettygrove won...Portland, Oregon became the official name in 1845. The original penny used in the “flip” is on display at the Oregon Historical Society and appropriately named, the **Portland Penny**.



## GEORGE MICHAEL BOTTLER



George Michael Bottler was the founder of Portland's City Brewery in 1856. He was a partner and friend to Henry Weinhard and later sold his interest in City Brewery to Weinhard.

Born in Bavaria (Bayern) Germany, George Michael and brother George Fredrick “Fred” immigrated to the Oregon/Washington Territories. Fred resided in The Dalles, Oregon where he was one of the first brewers in that city. George Michael, meanwhile, started City Brewery in Portland, Oregon with Henry Weinhard. Henry would leave, but eventually come back and purchase Bottler's interest in City Brewery in 1864.

Bottler died in Germany in 1868.



# HENRY WEINHARD BREWERY

## PAUL WESSINGER



Paul Wessinger was born in Esslingen, Wurttemberg Germany on February 9, 1859.

Upon completion of public school in Stuttgart, Paul was admitted to a Commercial House where he learned economics, bookkeeping, correspondence and the learning of products.

He became employed at a large linen manufacturing house in Germany and remained with them for two and one-half years.

He met Anna Weinhard while she was visiting relatives with her father Henry while in Stuttgart. Anna left for the United States, and in the fall of 1885, Paul left Germany for the States as well.

Paul Wessinger married Anna Weinhard on December 10, 1885. They eventually had two children: Milla and Henry Wilhelm.

Paul became employed at the City Brewery where his bookkeeping skills and Commercial House education served him well. Paul started at the bottom of the brewing business and as time passed gained knowledge in the malt house brewing department. In 1891 he returned to Germany and studied their malting practices. Upon returning to America, Paul used his learning experience to improve the malt house.

When Henry Weinhard died in 1904, Paul Wessinger became the President of City Brewery until his death in 1926.

THE MOST MODERN BREWERY IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST



Morning Oregonian January 1, 1908

## HENRY WEINHARD BREWERY

PAUL WESSINGER

HENRY WAGNER

The two names on the 1908 newspaper picture above, Paul Wessinger and Henry Wagner, were the two sons-in-law of Henry Weinhard. The following profile (below) on Paul Wessinger is taken from *History of the Columbia River Valley from The Dalles to the Sea, Vol. III, Published 1928, Pages 782-785; S.J. Clarke Publishing Co.*

"Upon the death of Mr. Weinhard, on Sept. 20, 1904, he was made President of the company, which position he filled until his death, December 3, 1926. He was one of the executors of the Weinhard estate, and when it was incorporated in 1917 he became it's president. Mr. Wessinger was one of the original fifteen directors of the (1905) Lewis and Clark Exposition and served as chairman of the grounds and buildings Committee, in which capacity he contributed immeasurably to the success of the fair"

Officially known as the Lewis and Clark Centennial American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair, it was a worldwide exposition in Portland, Oregon to celebrate the centennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Opening on June 1, 1905, it ran four and a half months, closing on October 15, 1905.

The Expo was to have a major restaurant, and the Weinhard Brewery made a business arrangement with a St. Louis company, Fritz Muller & Sons, to build a German restaurant called the Bismarck Café. This business association with the Mullers would last over a decade.

LEWIS AND CLARK EXPOSITION  
GOLD MEDAL

**KAISER BEER**  
—FOR—  
PURITY AND AGE



Bismarck Café tip tray

The tip tray shown here (left) was produced for the Bismarck Café and has the image of the first Chancellor of the German Empire, Otto Von Bismarck. The Café also had etched beer glasses sporting the image of Bismarck.

Due to the favorable response to their Kaiser Beer, a bottled version was introduced on the 4th of July, 1906 and was named Kaiserblume. This was a dark lager, or dunkle, in a slightly sweet and malty Munich style. Their bottled Columbia was a light Pilsen style lager, and the bottled Export was a pale Dortmunder style lager that would have been fuller, with more malt and less hops than the Pilsener.



# HENRY WEINHARD BREWERY

They also produced a Vienna style draught beer called Standard which they claimed: "...has added much to the fame of our establishment, and represents the tradition of the Vienna school, both in brewing and malting process." This style of lager was a reddish-brown or copper-colored beer with medium body and slight malt sweetness. At some point prior to 1905, the Brewery had a Pale Beer



Weinhard beer stein

as seen in the embossed display card (right), but it didn't appear in their list of brands in an ad published in '06. The beer stein (left) is another item that is generally believed to have been produced for the 1905 Expo with "H. Weinhard - Portland Ore" and the brewery logo consisting of a W. H. monogram on an eagle with the slogan "Purity is Health".



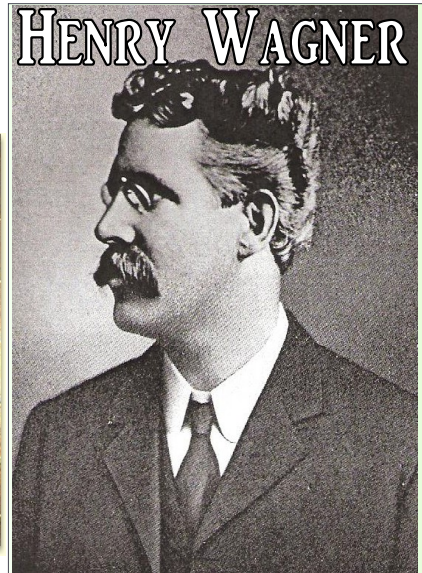
Pale Beer

The San Francisco earthquake and fire on April 18, 1906, had a serious effect on the city's breweries and bottlers, with many plants severely damaged or lost entirely. Consequently, the city faced a severe shortage of beer. The result of the shortage was that numerous Northwest breweries received huge orders for beer. The Olympia Brewing Co. of Tumwater, Washington took this opportunity to convert their San Francisco bottling works into a new brewery, establishing the Acme Brewing Co. While Weinhard didn't go that far, they did consider a larger presence in the city.

Prior to the fire and earthquake, Weinhard had been shipping kegs of Columbia Beer to their San Francisco agent and bottler, the California Bottling Co. However, the disaster leveled the bottling works and had to be rebuilt. A larger bottling works was completed, and the California Bottling Co. continued bottling and distributing Weinhard's products, including a brand called Portland Beer. But within a year's time, the Weinhard Brewery had purchased the new California Bottling Co. plant and distribution depot. The 1907 issue of the *American Bottler*, reported:

"The Weinhard Brewery of Portland, Oregon is the most modern since completed, having just finished building their new brew house last year. Materials used are only the finest Chevalier (white) barley grown on the Pacific coast and malted in our own malt house at Portland, Ore., together with the best domestic and foreign hops available, and our beer contains no more than 3 percent alcohol. For San Francisco bottling purposes, special beer brewed is named Gold Seal. The Rheingold Beer, equal to any imported draught beer in the market, is handled by most important cafes and saloons in San Francisco and vicinity, as well as throughout Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and Nevada. Branch office of the Henry Weinhard Brewery is located at 1255 Harrison street, San Francisco, Cal."

Following the 1906 fire & earthquake, San Francisco's downtown area experienced a massive rebirth. One of the most impressive structures built was the ten story tall Pacific building at 4th and Market Sts. As stated on a 1908 postcard, it was the largest concrete building in the world. It was also home to an 1800 seat restaurant called the Bismarck Café, Fritz Muller and Son's, proprietors. It opened on May 1, 1908.



Henry Wagner was born September 5, 1864 in Portland, Oregon. He attended the Independent German School. He attended Portland Business College and supplemented his income working in the employ of the German newspaper published in Portland. He worked for a time with a dry-goods house and started studying the practice of Law.

In 1886 Henry Wagner was admitted to the bar of Oregon State. He practiced general law in Portland and was very active in the music circles of the community. For four years he was the "concert meister" and leading violinist in Portland.

On June 21, 1893 Henry Wagner married Louise Henrietta Weinhard. A son was born to them whom they named Henry Weinhard Wagner.

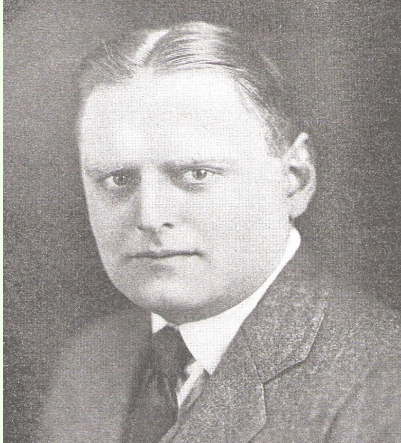
In 1896 Henry Wagner ran for and was elected to the Oregon State legislative. The next year in 1897, he became involved with the Weinhard Brewery interests and devoted most of his time to this endeavor.

Upon Henry Weinhard's death, Henry Wagner became the executor and manager of the Weinhard Estate. His wife Louise died in 1905, a year after her father Henry Weinhard. Henry Wagner lived to be 84 and died April 16, 1948 in Seal Rock, Oregon.



# HENRY WEINHARD BREWERY

HENRY W. WESSINGER



Henry Wilhelm Wessinger was born March 30, 1888 in Portland, Oregon. The son of Paul and Annie Wessinger, young Henry grew up attending Portland Academy. After graduation from Portland Academy, Henry went to Ithaca, New York where he attended Cornell University. Upon graduation with a Mechanical Engineering degree, Henry found employment back in Portland with Portland Electric Power Company.

Henry Wessinger married Romaine Wood of Aberdeen, Washington on November 5, 1913. The couple had three children: Paul born in 1915, William Wood born in 1917 and Fredric Green born in 1923.

In 1916 Henry became employed at the Weinhard brewery right when national prohibition took effect. Together with his father Paul, Henry worked on making the Weinhard Plant into manufacturing soda beverages, fruit syrup and fountain supplies. The plant also produced fountain cabinets, counters and fountain accessories.

Upon the death of his father in 1926, Henry W. Wessinger became the president and manager of City Brewery - Henry Weinhard Plant.

In 1928 Henry Wessinger made the decision to merge with it's rival, Portland Brewing Company owned by Arnold Blitz. With the merger complete, Arnold Blitz became the Chairman and Henry Wessinger became the vice-chairman of the new company which became known as BLITZ - WEINHARD BREWERY.

**BLITZ**

**THE BEER THAT FITS**



Rheingold stein

The Muller Brothers and the Henry Weinhard Brewery again entered into a business arrangement making the Bismarck Café a Weinhard establishment, selling their beers to the exclusion of all others. Four years later, in November 1912, the Muller Brothers sold controlling interest in the Bismarck to Henry L. Hirsch. The restaurant remained the same with only the name changing to the Hof-Brau Café, and the contract with the Weinhard Brewery remained in place, as evidenced by this stein for Weinhard's Rheingold Beer.

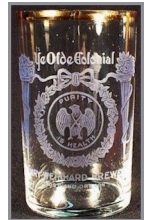
The brewery also sponsored special events, like the 1912 Grand Lodge Reunion of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (B.P.O.E). They did a bottling for the Elks called Special Brew, as shown in this Oregonian newspaper ad (right) of July 7, 1912.



Nippers flask

The brewery did something else special for the Elks convention. They issued a unique promotional item - a "nippers" flask in the form of an elk's tooth that advertised "H. Weinhard's Rheingold Beer on draught." The flask was made by the Schaefer & Vater porcelain factory of Volkstedt-Rudolstadt, Germany. By 1913, the brewery had dropped their Export

and Portland Beers, leaving only Columbia and Kaiserblume in bottles (or draught), with Standard and Rheingold as two brands that were only available on draught. Then in 1914, Ye Olde Colonial beer was introduced, along with a gold rimmed etched glass sporting a design in a periwinkle blue as a sales incentive. Interestingly, the water is identified on the label as "pure Bull Run water." Olympia's slogan, "It's the Water", must have resonated.



Etched glasses

Unfortunately, this and the rest of Henry Weinhard Brewery's output of beer was soon to be halted. On November 3, 1914, the voters of Oregon approved state-wide prohibition which would take effect on January 1, 1916. The manufacturers of alcoholic beverages had all of 1915 to deplete their inventories and close their plants. However, this still allowed Henry Weinhard Brewery to take part in the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) in San Francisco which ran 9 1/2 months, from February 20th to December 4, 1915. Just as they had done for the 1905 Lewis & Clark Exposition, the Brewery entered into an agreement with Fritz Muller & Sons to erect a German style restaurant on Expo grounds. And again, the brewery produced a beer exclusively for the event, with Weinhard's Special Exposition Beer, the only beer on draught at the "Alt Nurenberg". They also had a barrel shaped beer stein produced for the 1915 Expo that was exclusively used at the Alt Nurenberg restaurant.



Expo beer stein

The closing of the 1915 PPIE was also the end of beer production of the Henry Weinhard Brewery in Portland. They then changed the name of the company to the Henry Weinhard Plant, and in 1916 began the production of near-beer, soft drinks and fruit juices. However, there were still numerous accounts in California that sold Weinhard beer. Consequently, their Weinhard Bottling Company in San Francisco commenced doing business as the Henry Weinhard Brewery. They didn't begin producing beer but contracted with local breweries to produce Weinhard beers for their various outlets...like the Hof-Brau Café.

It's not known who they contracted to brew their beer, but Weinhard was soon to enter into a business venture with five local breweries, and one of those would have been the likely candidate. On January 17, 1917, an association of six breweries was incorporated, but the announcement wasn't made until two months later. On March 12, 1917, the *San Francisco Calif-Bulletin* reported:

"Six San Francisco breweries facing financial loss, or insolvency, through proposed legislation regulating manufacture of maltous drinks have pooled their interests into one association for the manufacture and distribution of beers and malts. The body is be known as



# HENRY WEINHARD BREWERY

the Acme National Brewing Company. J. P. Rettenmayer, President of the Acme Brewing Company and head of the State Brewer's Association is president of the consolidated companies.

This announcement was made today by Charles O. Swanberg, President of the Merchant's Ice & Cold Storage Company, and a heavy stockholder in two of the affected concerns.

The breweries included in the merger are: National Brewing Company, Henry Weinhard Brewery, Claus Wreden Brewing Company, Union Brewing and Malting Company, Acme Brewing Company and Broadway Brewing Company."

Only two of the breweries continued as plants of the (renamed) California Brewing Association: the Acme Brewery and the National Brewery. All of the other breweries ceased production and closed, but their parent companies continued to operate until they were all forced out of business by national prohibition on January 16, 1920. However, the Henry Weinhard Plant in Portland was steaming along with its new product line. From the previously cited 1928 publication, *History of the Columbia River From The Dalles to the Sea*, is the following:

"The plant was devoted to the making of alcoholic drinks until 1916, since which time the production has consisted of non-alcoholic beer."

"The company is also engaged in the manufacturing and jobbing of all kinds of soda fountain beverages and supplies, making fruit syrups and ginger ale, and maintains a cabinet shop, in which is made various kinds of confectionery equipment, counters, wall cases and showcases. It jobs soda fountains and all kinds of fountain accessories and has nine traveling representatives on the road, its sales territory including northern California, Idaho, Oregon and Washington."

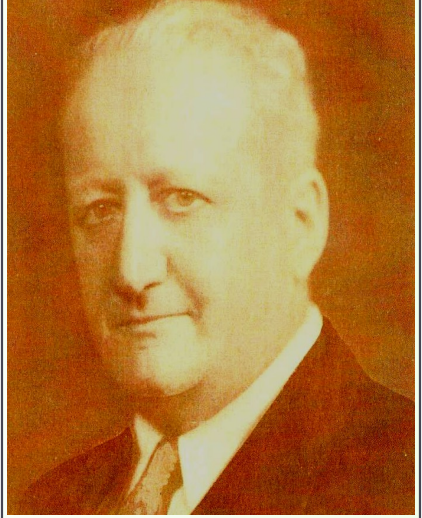
"The son (of Paul Wessinger), Henry W. Wessinger, attended Portland Academy, after which he entered Cornell University at Ithaca, New York, from which he graduated with the degree of Mechanical Engineering in 1910. He was connected with the Portland Electric Power Company until 1916, when he entered the Henry Weinhard Company, with which he has been identified to the present time, becoming President and Manager in 1926."

In December of 1918, the Henry Weinhard Plant bought out Puritan Manufacturing Company and thereby gained the rights to manufacture such popular non-alcoholic beverages as Ras-Porter, Graport, Loganport and Cherripor. About this time they also began bottling apple juice/cider in addition to Appo, their sweetened apple drink. This move was likely a response to the federal restrictions on sugar used in production of soft drinks due to the war in Europe.

The Henry Weinhard Plant prospered with their production bottling of soft drinks. However, the enforcement of prohibition was proving to be a farce, and the country was tiring of the failed experiment. Sensing this, the Weinhard Plant made a major re-alignment. Again, from the 1928 *History*:

"On January 1, 1928, the brewery activities of the Weinhard Company merged with the Portland Brewing Company, under the name of the Blitz-Weinhard Company, the Henry Weinhard Company doing all of the bottling and acting as sales agent for the other concern. Mr. Wessinger is Treasurer of the Blitz-Weinhard Company and devotes his attention closely to the interests of the business of both concerns."

## ARNOLD I. BLITZ



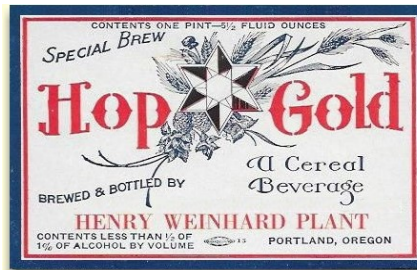
Arnold Israel Blitz was born in Detroit, Michigan on April 5, 1882 to Samuel and Martha (Kaichen) Blitz. His early years were spent in Detroit, and at the age of 11 his family moved to the "Mile High" city of Denver, Colorado. After completion of public school education, Arnold attended Technical school and eventually became employed by the Studebaker Automobile Company. He became their assistant manager until he switched jobs to enter into the merchandising brokerage enterprise.

Arnold Blitz came to Portland, Oregon in 1909 and soon thereafter, bought into the Portland Brewing Company. In 1910, he married Enid Rothchild and together, they had four children: Arnold I Jr., William, Howard and Eleanor.

To say that Arnold Blitz was an entrepreneur is an understatement. He had his hands in so many things it's hard to believe he had time for anything. He became Vice President of the largest millinery company of Lowengart & Co. in Portland. Arnold helped organize the first automobile insurance company and was President of the Film Supply Co. of Portland.

Arnold Blitz was the driving force in the establishment of the Great Western Malting Company in Vancouver, Washington. After prohibition, he teamed up with Leopold Schmidt and Emil Sicks in creating Great Western Malting, becoming its president. This venture freed up space for his brewery to expand and eliminate its own malting process.

Arnold Blitz died March 20, 1940.



Henry Weinhard 's Plant beverage labels



# BLITZ-WEINHARD BREWERY

WILLIAM W. WESSINGER



William Wood Wessinger was the child of Henry and Romaine Wessinger, born on December 30, 1917.

Bill Wessinger resided just 5 blocks from the Weinhard City Brewery for a time, before his family moved up into the Capitol Hill area of Portland. Graduating from Lincoln High School, he attended Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, Iowa. He enlisted in the United States Army in 1941 and, after the war, he became employed as a freight forwarder in Pendleton, Oregon.

On May 10, 1946 Bill married Patricia Lue Lesser, and in the coming years they had five children.

In 1949 Bill became employed at the Blitz-Weinhard Brewery as assistant treasurer. Two years later, Bill earned his Certified Public Accountant credentials.

In 1953 Bill and his brother Fred went to the Brewery's board of directors and presented a reorganizational plan that they agreed upon, in which Bill became the director of the company and Fred assistant secretary.

Bill Wessinger was an avid mountain climber, skier, hiker, bike rider, tennis player and all round outdoors person. Bill was a philanthropist and sat on many boards and planning commissions in Portland.

Bill eventually became Chairman of the Board and brother Fred the president of Blitz-Weinhard and in 1979 sold the brewery to the Pabst Corporation, thus ending a dynasty in a family brewing business since 1856.

## PROHIBITION ENDS!



The National Repeal of Prohibition took effect on December 5, 1933 and Blitz-Weinhard and the country was RARING-TO-GO!!

With the merger of Portland Brewing Co. and Weinhard's City Brewery in 1928, production of beer couldn't happen fast enough for the thirsty public. One thing, however, presented a problem to the brewery; shortages of beer kegs. For many years during prohibition, the wooden kegs laid empty and forgotten; deteriorating, uncleaned and rotting away. Breweries had shut down as well as the cooperages which made the kegs. Luckily for Blitz-Weinhard, they had a bottling plant already in operation at the 12th & Burnside location to fill beer bottles while the beer was being made at the old Portland Brewing location on Upshur. American families were adapting to electric refrigerators; buying more bottled beer for home instead of frequenting saloons.

The Officers of the Brewery were Arnold Blitz, President, his father-in-Law Fred Rothchild, Vice-President, Henry Wessinger, Treasurer and General Manager and their attorney J.A. Laing, Secretary. The Blitz-Weinhard Brewery began producing beers that were light bodied and less hoppy than the pre-prohibition beers and contained 3.2% alcohol. Blitz-Weinhard produced the Columbia and Blitz signature beers at their 20th & Upshur location, while the Weinhard Brewery on 13th & Burnside was busy kegging and bottling the beers as well as continuing with the fountain syrups and supplies.

Arnold Blitz needed to consolidate his Portland Brewing Co. facilities with those of the Weinhard Brewery to save expenditures, so he devised a plan of eliminating the malting aspect from the brewery. Malting was a long arduous affair and he needed the extra room at the brewery to upgrade and expand. He came up with the idea of the Great Western Malting Company and encouraged Leopold Schmidt (Olympia Brewing) and Emil Sicks (Rainier Brewing Company) to go along with his idea. Together, they formed the Great Western Malting Company of which Arnold Blitz served as its president.

It would take 20 years for the Blitz-Weinhard Brewery to reach pre-prohibition production of beer. The United States was still in the throes of a depression in the late 30's, and the small amount of breweries that survived prohibition had not caught their breath yet. Arnold Blitz passed away in 1940 and Fred Rothchild took over the helm of the Blitz-Weinhard Brewery. Fred Rothchild and Henry Wessinger had survived prohibition and a depression, and we were now a country at war. Together they guided the beer company through these trying times of the 1940's and continually modernized the brewery until 1955. Henry Wessinger retired as Chairman of the Board and Fred Rothchild as president. Joseph M. Rothchild, son of Fred Rothchild and brother-in-law to Arnold Blitz took the reins of Blitz-Weinhard. Also, coming on-board at the brewery was another family member...William "Bill" Blitz. He was the son of Arnold Blitz and a graduate of Oregon State Agricultural College in 1935.



William "Bill" Blitz

Bill Blitz became one of the top brewmeisters in the beer industry. He would become the Director and treasurer of the Blitz-Weinhard Brewery. Bill was born in Portland in 1913 and was a avid bird hunter and outdoorsman.

June 1953 marked the "changing-of-the-guard" at the Blitz Weinhard brewery. Bill and his brother Fred approached the board of directors of the Blitz-Weinhard company; they asked for and attained more responsibilities to promote and improve the growth of Blitz-Weinhard Brewery.

In 1956, the commemoration of the 100 year anniversary of the Blitz-



# BLITZ-WEINHARD BREWERY

Weinhard Company was celebrated in Vancouver, Washington. A luncheon was attended and then followed by a plaque being installed at the original site of Henry Weinhard's brewery (Vancouver Brewery). In attendance for Blitz Weinhard was Henry W. Wessinger, Chairman of the Board; his son Frederick "Fred" Wessinger, Vice President in charge of production and advertising and William "Bill" Frederick Blitz, Treasurer and Comptroller.

## Henry's Private Reserve

The beer industry was being monopolized and dominated by the larger national breweries; brothers Bill and Fred scrambled to find a niche in which to re-invent Blitz-Weinhard Brewing Co. The answer to their dilemma lay right in front of them; a voice from the past became the creation of Henry's Private Reserve. In 1976 Blitz-Weinhard introduced a new-old beer the brother's named in honor of their great grandfather Henry Weinhard, which was served in their hospitality room while being trial tested.

Henry's Private Reserve was released to the public in 1977 and became an instant success. Just as Henry's Columbia Beer and Arnold's Biltz Beer were their flagship brews, so became Henry's Private Reserve to Henry's great grandson's.

With the success of Henry's Private Reserve and sales increasing, Bill and Fred Wessinger decided the time was right to sell Blitz-Weinhard while the momentum was in their favor. So, in 1979, Blitz-Weinhard Brewing Company was sold to the Pabst Brewing Company. Blitz-Weinhard was the 15th oldest brewery in the United States and 123 years old.

The story of Henry Weinhard could stop here, but it doesn't. Henry was an immigrant and pioneer coming into this land called America. The young nation was opening up new territories and opportunities for those willing to take the risk and create their own life. What Henry and so many of the pioneers possessed was the vision and dream to work hard and create their own future and destiny...most did.

That same spirit and vision lives on today with the advent of the Craft Brewing Industry. History is being made today by people who took the same risks and shared the same dreams as Henry. These new pioneers in craft brewing such as Art Larrance, (Portland Brewing Co., Cascade Brewing Co., Raccoon Lodge & Barrel House), Kurt and Rob Widmer, (Widmer Brewing Co.) Nancy and Dick Ponzi, (Bridgeport Brewing Co.) and brothers Brian and Mike Mcmenamin, (McMenamins Pubs & Breweries) are living that dream, creating new beers and re-introducing old styles of beer from the past.

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**Bryan Anderson**, Cascade Breweriana Association member and collector extraordinaire, contributed countless pictures, breweriana information and historical stories.

## Family affair



The Rothchild family was a large presence in the Blitz-Weinhard history.

Fred H. Rothchild (left) was Arnold Blitz Father-in-Law and his son Joseph M. Rothchild (right) was Arnold's brother-in-law. Both men were Presidents of Blitz Weinhard at different times, Fred in 1940 following Arnold's death and Joseph in 1955.

## FREDERIC G. WESSINGER



Frederic Green Wessinger, brother and partner with brother Bill was born March 10, 1923.

He grew up in Portland and attended public school. Once Fred graduated from high school he joined the armed forces and served his country as a fighter pilot.

After the war, Fred came back to Portland and attended Reed College and began working for the Blitz-Weinhard brewery.

Fred married Elizabeth Couch Minott on June 13, 1950 and they eventually had four children.

Fred ascended in the Blitz-Weinhard Brewery and, with his brother Bill, took control of the brewery and all of its operations in 1953. In 1965 Fred became the President of the Blitz-Weinhard Brewery.

Fred Wessinger served on many boards in the Portland area such as the Oregon Historical Society and United Way.

Once Fred and brother Bill consolidated ownership of the brewery into their hands, they created "Henry's Private Reserve" that greatly increased their sales.

After Fred retired from the Blitz-Weinhard Brewery, he established the Wessinger Family foundation which funded grants for education, arts & culture and social services.

Fred Wessinger died in Portland on July 3, 1996. With the death of his brother Bill on February 7, 2014, the Family Foundation passed on to successor charitable Foundations.