

What's in a Name? ----- By Claire King

Of Beer, Baronets and Brits!

It isn't too likely that we will ever have a brewery on Denman Island, or even a pub, but if we did, it could be aptly named *The Lacon Arms*, or *The Lacon Falcon*. Probably most residents of Lacon road have realized that the road they live on was named after a well-to-do settler who, in 1911, bought land on the south end of what is now Lacon Road. It may be less well known that Henry Reginald Lacon, a Canadian born member of an upper crust family originally from Norfolk, England, was the grandson of Sir Edmund Lacon, the owner of an historic and thriving British brewery: Sir Edmund, was an M.P and a Baron, but his wealth came from the brewery founded by his family in 1760.

The Lacon pubs were numerous in the south of England, and very popular for the quality of their ales and bitters. In the 1800's the brewery produced around 100,000 barrels of beer a year. The signs that hung outside the Lacon pubs depicted the family crest of a falcon which came to be known as the Lacon Falcon, and was a familiar sight in South East England for over two hundred and fifty years.

It was sad news for many when the historic Lacon pubs and brewery were closed, and taken over by the large corporation of Whitbread in the early 1950's. Even sadder that Whitbread then shut them down in 1968

But good news came again in 2013 when, after the Brewery had been sold again to a foreign corporation, two local men negotiated a deal to return the brewery to its historical Lacon name, along with its heritage beers; the recipes had been carefully preserved over the years, and samplings of their original brewer's yeast had been preserved in deep freeze by the Lacons.

Local newspapers celebrated the return of the historic brand under headlines such as "The Falcon flies again," or "The Lacon Falcon has landed" William Lacon of Norfolk, the son of the last member of the family to have been employed in the business, cut the ribbon to re-open the brewery to much fanfare in May 2013 at a festival in Great Yarmouth.

Nowadays, the Lacon beers have indeed soared again, along with their emblematic falcon. They have gained national and international recognition, winning many awards in Europe and beyond. There is now even a Lacon Brewery Museum that has become a tourist attraction in Great Yarmouth

It is not known for sure if Denman's resident, Henry Reginald Lacon, ever actually *worked* at the Lacon Brewery, but he lived at his grandfather's estate in England while he attended Eton in 1900, and while he was a young man. The student records at Eton note that he left Eton prematurely to work in "family business", so it is quite likely that he was involved in the Brewery business before his arrival on Denman in 1911. No doubt family money, received as a remittance man on Denman, would have allowed him to subsist as a "gentleman farmer" on

the 400 acres that he eventually acquired at the south end of the island. Although Henry was reputed to enjoy his booze, it seems Scotch was actually his preferred beverage; maybe, by the time he settled on Denman, he'd already had his fill of Lacon beer.