



## Object of the Newsletter

*To promote the appreciation of fine Scotch Whisky, the area from which it comes, the people that inhabit the land and it's history. By the way, I do not profess to be an expert, I am merely expressing an opinion on the whiskies I am tasting.*

I now look at the Tobermory 15-year-old, which I tasted in a bar called "Whiski" on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh, Scotland.

The Tobermory distillery is situated on the Isle of Mull and is the only distillery on the island.

You may not have tasted anything from the Tobermory distillery, or then again maybe you have, they also make a peated whisky that they sell under the name "Ledaig".

Anyway, back to the Tobermory 15-year-old, this particular offering has been matured in Gonzalez Byass Oloroso sherry Casks. As you would expect, with any whisky being finished in a sherry cask you get a sherry bomb'ish type of whisky. To me it has similar characteristics to the Dalmore 15-year-old.

Is it a nice whisky, yes, it is, would I buy a bottle, no I would not, look at the price below, you can buy a Dalmore 15-year-old, or a Glenfiddich 15-year-old for \$50 to \$60 dollars, why would you pay 3 times as much for a whisky that may be comparable in taste (or in my opinion, not quite comparable).

[You can buy the Tobermory 15-year-old for around \\$150.00 a bottle.](#)

### Tasting Notes

**Nose** - Sherried fruits and moist Christmas cake

**Palate** - Citrus peels, nutmeg, cinnamon & chocolate

**Finish** - Butter, nuts & spices

*"Slainte Mhath"*

*Paul Bissett*





## The Military and Whiskey's 250-Year Old Relationship

by Kevin R. Kosar

Whiskey, as any enlistee will tell you, is popular among America's fighting forces. Military installations' drinks shops ("Class 6" stores) are stocked with a galaxy of intoxicating drinks — beer, spirits, wines — but whiskey is especially popular. And it isn't just any whiskey — it's the American-made bourbons, ryes and Tennessee whiskeys that really move off the shelves.

Certainly, the popularity of whiskey among soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines can be explained partly as a reflection of American taste in general. Americans purchased more than 30 million cases of American whiskey last year, according to the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States. But for military men and women, whiskey holds an additional appeal beyond its glorious amber color, robust flavor and mood-alleviating powers — it may even be more American than apple pie (which seems to have been invented in England). Whiskey has been with the America's armed forces since the earliest days of the republic.

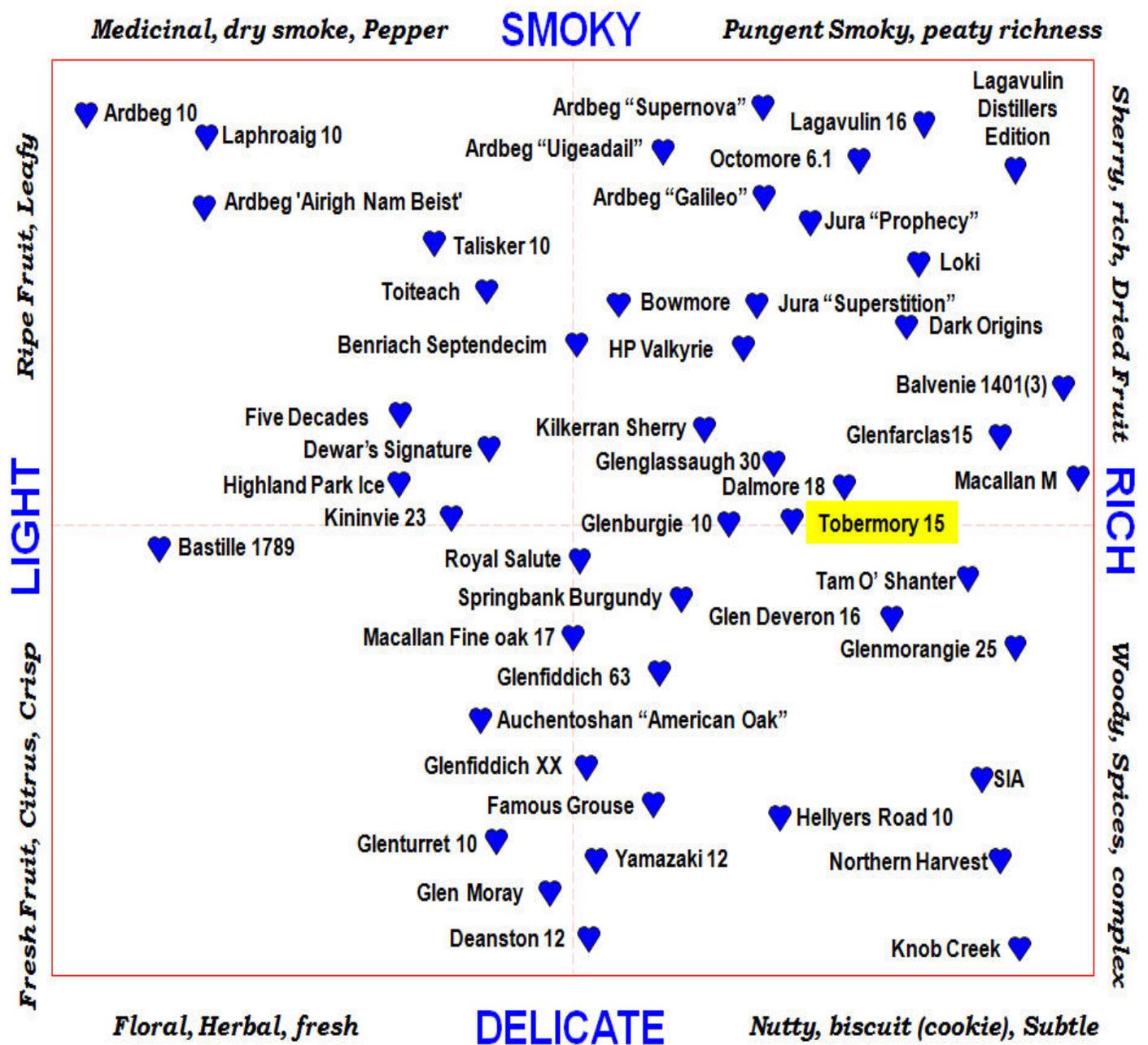
"[T]he liquor ration," wrote historian Robert Hunt, "was an absolute necessity. No military commander of the 18th century would have thought of leading his troops on any mission without planning for this need." This was an age-old practice in Europe. Drink lifted morale and suppressed fear, and alcohol was widely viewed as medicinal.

Indeed, medical experts had been recommending alcoholic beverages as a cure for mental and physical afflictions since the 15th century. Irish alchemist Richard Stanhurst (1547-1618) extolled whiskey's curative properties: "Beying moderatelie taken, it sloweth age; it strengtheneth youthe; it cutteth flueme; it abadoneth melancholie; it relisheth the harte; it lighteneth the mind; it quickeneth the spirites" He recommended it for curing dropsy, resolving kidney stones, intestinal gas cramps, and declared whiskey good for the circulatory system and bones. Alcoholic beverages were thought, often rightly, to be safer than the water available.





Below is a simple guide to help you choose your single malt Whisky, and the flavor notes you should expect from it. Being Scottish I recommend you find a likely candidate and try it in a bar before buying the whole bottle. This Issue; [Tobermory-15-Year-Old](#). For more information go to <http://tobermorydistillery.com>





## **The Military and Whiskey** cont.

These beliefs about drink came with those Europeans who settled America. Whiskey initially was not the most popular drink of the day. Beer, hard apple cider and brandy were more commonly consumed. Rum, meanwhile, was king. There were 140 distilleries belching potent spirits made from molasses harvested in the Caribbean islands.

Come 1800, however, whiskey had ascended as the spirit of choice among troops and much of America. The rise of whiskey was due in great part to the fall of rum as the distilled spirit of choice. The Revolutionary War severely disrupted the importation of the molasses and the production of rum. Prices skyrocketed. Americans also began to disdain rum for being an English and “Olde World” spirit.

Whiskey production, meanwhile, was growing rapidly, and it was a native invention. Settlers had been drinking it since at least 1620, when Virginia farmer George Sloan wrote in a letter, “Wee have found a waie to make soe good drink of Indian corne I have divers times refused to drink good stronge English beare and chose to drinke that.” Old World whiskeys mostly were made from barley and wheat. American whiskeys were distilled from rye and corn, the latter of which was particularly abundant. Due to the glut of corn being harvested, whiskey often was fantastically cheap. A farm laborer could buy a gallon of it for a day’s pay.

American commanders began supplying strong drink in 1775 — right after the Continental Army was formed. Congress voted to supply it with beer. Gen. George Washington, who was fond of beer and all sorts of drink, nonetheless felt something heartier was required. “The benefits arising from the moderate use of strong Liquor have been experienced in all armies, and are not to be disputed,” wrote Washington to John Hancock, then president of the Congress. Washington directed that each soldier be issued a gill — 4 ounces — of whiskey each day, and later directed field commanders to reward valor with additional rations. To keep fighting men in their cups, Washington asked Congress to fund the erection of whiskey distilleries. (His request was not satisfied. Washington opened his own whiskey distillery near his Mount Vernon estate a couple decades later.)

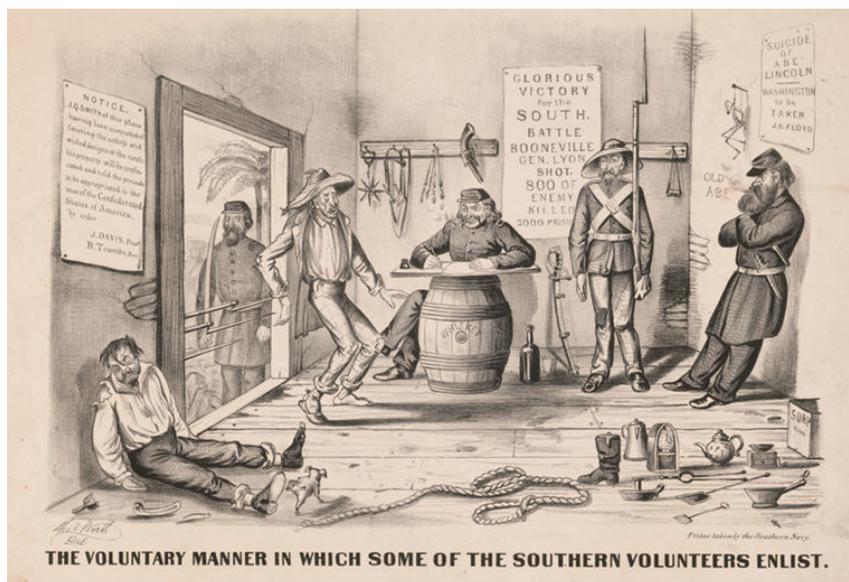
The whiskey ration went from being an occasional order to a standing policy for the army. For fifty years (1782-1832), each soldier was entitled to a daily gill. Additional gills, notes historian Mark Vargas, were issued to men on especially hard duty. The nascent whiskey distilling industry in Kentucky, Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania was more than happy to supply the army. A gill a day amounts to nearly a bottle of whiskey per soldier per week, which made for tens of thousands of bottles annually.

Soldiers of the day had an enormous appetite for whiskey. Secretary of War, John Eaton, told Congress in 1829, “The practice of indulging in the use of spirituous liquors is so general in this country that there is not, it is to be believed, one man in four among the laboring classes who does not drink, daily, more than one gill; and it is from these classes that our army is recruited.” The next year the army bought 72,537 gallons of whiskey, or 13.6 gallons for each recruit.



## The Military and Whiskey cont.

Commanders were not the only ones to deliver whiskey to soldiers. Sutlers, retailers licensed by the military, also set up shop near military installations and followed troops in the field. Sutlers sold various non-essential goods: magazines, tobacco, candy, personal care items and whiskey. Sutlers were permitted to allow soldiers to purchase on credit and then be reimbursed through the military, who would then dock the purchaser's payment. Unsurprisingly, some men blew their pay on liquor. Many soldiers developed severe drinking problems, and corrupt merchants and vendors supplied addicts with cheap rotgut drink. Some army recruiters acquired enlistees by getting men drunk then cajoling them to sign enlistment papers. Family members of these enlistees sometimes contacted their congressmen, who in turn would send requests to discharge the sot from military service.



The army's leadership grew tired of the booze-fueled mayhem and hangovers, and cracked down. Drunk soldiers were flogged and thrown into solitary confinement for weeks, fed only bread and water while they detoxed. Recruitment policies were tightened up, and temperance was promoted on bases. The whiskey ration was abolished in 1832. Thereafter, whiskey drinking, though curbed, remained a part of military life. The sutler system continued to supply troops with drink, and commanders on their own authority also could reward their troops with whiskey, who often plead for it. For example, during the Civil War the Army of the Potomac telegraphed Thomas Eckert, an aide to President Abraham Lincoln: "I do not [know] of anything that you could send here to benefit the men unless it is one [barrel?] of good whiskey so that they can have one ration of it daily. I can get it here but it is a very bad article." For fighters suffering from hunger, injuries and disease in the field, whiskey was a prized good, an elixir that offered a respite from the misery and trauma.



## **The Military and Whiskey** cont.

Additionally, the notion of whiskey-fueled valor lived on. One of the more famous, and possibly apocryphal, expressions of wit by Abraham Lincoln concerned whiskey and the military. It was summer in 1863, and the President had just learned of Gen. Ulysses Grant's gory triumph at Vicksburg.

*Several gentlemen were near the President at the time he received the news of Grant's success some of whom had been complaining of the rumors of his habit of using intoxicating drinks to excess.*

*"So I understand Grant drinks whiskey to excess?" interrogatively remarked the President.*

*"Yes," was the reply.*

*"What whiskey does he drink?" inquired Mr. Lincoln.*

*"What whiskey?" doubtfully queried his hearers.*

*'Yes. Is it Bourbon or Monongahela [rye]?'*

*"Why do you ask, Mr. President?"*

*"Because, if it makes him win victories like this at Vicksburg, I will send a demijohn of the same kind to every general in the army."*

*His visitors saw the point, although at their own cost.*

In the 1980s, the military followed the rest of the nation and lifted the drinking age to 21. Each branch of the armed services also has taken steps aimed at curbing binge drinking, such as reducing the hours when alcoholic beverages can be consumed.

Nevertheless, the military's considerable appetite for stiff drink endures. Long hours, boredom, hardship, and the possibility of injury or death continue to make drinking a popular past-time. Which is why U.S. military installations continue to sell drinks. Today's military installation drinks stores are a long way from the humble shops run by sutlers. The development of the U.S. military as a permanent, immense fighting force after the World War II necessitated erecting a system of large, secure bases that could house hundreds if not thousands of soldiers, and their families. Which meant erecting large-scale retail operations that stock a variety of consumer goods, including myriad brands of whiskey.

In fact, the U.S. military is the largest purchaser of Jack Daniels' By the Barrel program. A service member can purchase an entire barrel of some of Jack Daniel's best whiskey. Various laws and regulations forbid a buyer from taking the 560-pound barrel back to the barracks. Instead, the spirit is drained off into 250 bottles. So when U.S. fighters get together to trade war stories, it is often over a glass or two of this historic amber liquid.