

Gambrinus Gets Fatigued— Drops 74-Year-Old Drink

The shock of being in the public gaze was apparently too much for Gambrinus.

His outstretched arm, holding high an ale tankard, fell off — or was knocked off — only two days after the public's attention was pointed to the huge statue at the old Stoeckle Brewery in a Morning News feature story on Friday.

Did someone twist the old boy's arm in trying to get him to drink from the tankard he has held aloft all these years on his high perch on the side of the brewery building?

Or perhaps did some villain drop a weighty object into the tankard and strain the sturdy arm to the breaking point?

Or was it sheer fatigue after 74 years of maintaining a bent elbow?

No one seems to know.

The unexplained fact is that

the arm was found broken off, on the pavement about 35 feet below the statue's feet, yesterday morning.

And while close friends of the former owners of the brewery all had maintained the statue was carved of wood, the arm proved to be cast of a white metal. It is hollow, but heavy. It was estimated yesterday that the part that fell weighs about 60 pounds.

It is still possible that the major part of the statue is wooden, and now that part of it is broken, the owners may find out. For they intend to find out how it can be fixed, and this will probably involve taking it down from its familiar perch.

Joseph Cohen, one of the new owners of the brewery building with its statue of Gambrinus,

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Morning News Photo

GAMBRINUS has lost his mug—along with most of his right arm—but he still has that keg firmly at his left hand. Why the statue dropped an arm is a mystery, but rust is suspected.

Statue—

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said yesterday that the owners will see whether a new arm can be made and attached to the figure. He said that while the statue could be reached by dropping a scaffold, such as painters use, from the roof, the whole statue will probably have to be taken down if it is to be repaired. And that sounds like a job for riggers.

Mr. Cohen said it was a rather amazing coincidence that the arm came down only two days after the story on the Gambrinus statue appeared, but he knew of no external cause.

Most of the broken part of the arm is in one piece, but is cracked from the fall. The remainder is in small pieces. Mr. Cohen gathered up all the pieces he could find.

The heavy arm, with its mug, fell at 10:25 a. m. yesterday. The time was noted by Larry M. Pollitt, 900 West Fifth Street, which is directly across the street from the statue.

Mr. Pollitt heard a crash, looked out the window, and there was the broken limb and battered tankard on the sidewalk. He examined the arm and reached the conclusion that rust was the culprit that caused the downfall of Gambrinus. The metal of which the arm was cast appears to be a rustproof alloy. It served as the skin of the statue's arm. But the bone inside the hollow arm was an iron bar. This bar seems to have rusted through near the elbow joint.

Moral: Beware of leaning on your elbows too long.