



CHIEF ♦ EXECUTIVE ♦ BOARDS
I N T E R N A T I O N A L

Chief Executive Book Review # 33

A History of the World in Six Glasses

By: Tom Standage © 2005 Walker & Company ISBN 0-8027-1447-1

(See other Chief Executive Book Reviews for the history of other drinks)

The History of Beer

1. About 12,000 years ago man started transitioning from a hunter-gatherer lifestyle to a farming lifestyle. Man took up farming and began settling down in villages
2. As a farmer, man began to domesticate animals and plants and came to rely on new beverages derived from barley and wheat
3. Exactly when the first beer was brewed is not known, but beer is definitely associated with the domestication of cereal grains around 3400 BCE
4. Beer was not invented -- it was discovered. Cereal grains can be stored over time and man probably discovered that certain grains would ferment and turn into alcohol
5. The first pictures of man consuming beer involved two people drinking through straws out of the same urn. Sharing a drink is the universal symbol of hospitality and friendship
6. When drinking alcohol in a social setting, the clinking of glasses symbolically reunites the glasses into a single vessel of shared liquid
7. Beer was thought to be a gift from the gods, and as a result it was used in religious ceremonies and thought to invoke supernatural powers
8. Since beer was made using boiled water, it was safer to drink than water
9. In ancient Egypt, beer was used as a currency; the workers who built the pyramids were paid in beer. The pyramids were built by state employees, not slaves