

J.B. Cross

“If there is anything a brewer has to do, it’s hold his liquor.”

After the repeal of prohibition in 1925, James B. Cross’ father, A.E. Cross, owner of the Calgary Brewing and Malting Company, sent him off to brewer’s school in England. But studying hops didn’t prepare Cross for the brewery wars.

A model for progress, the Calgary Brewing and Malting Company made beer and award-winning Calgary Dry Ginger Ale. Eastern breweries, looking for a side door to the Alberta market, tried to buy up shares in the company. To prevent a takeover, Cross bought shares from loyal shareholders. He thwarted the first takeover, but times were changing. Liquor board quotas, taxes, and advertising restrictions hobbled the brewing business. The 1957 ruling that breweries must sell their hotels was the last straw, and Cross had to entertain eastern magnate E.P. Taylor’s offer to buy the business.



James B. Cross, Calgary, Alberta
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They met in a Vancouver hotel. Taylor thought he was getting a bargain; Cross played his cards close and Taylor ended up paying a million dollars too much. Taylor should have known better than to try to best Cross – a polo player and a pugilist, one-time chuckwagon outrider and the builder of the Horseman’s Hall of Fame.

Full Name: James Braehead Cross
Born: 1903 – Died: 1990

Additional Resources

- **City of Calgary News Room**
<https://newsroom.calgary.ca/how-beer-was-born-in-calgary/>
- **Alberta on Record**
<https://albertaonrecord.ca/james-braehead-cross-collection>

Our Collections

Glenbow Museum

<https://www.glenbow.org>

Glenbow Western Research Centre | Glenbow Library and Archives

<https://libguides.ucalgary.ca/glenbowlibraryandarchives>

Glenbow Library and Archives | Digital Collection

<https://digitalcollections.ucalgary.ca/asset-management/2R340826N9XM?WS=PackagePres&Flat=1>