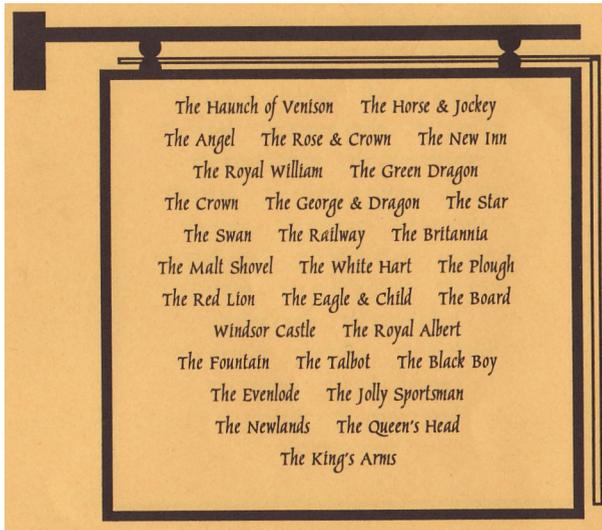


Do You Remember an Inn?

An historical survey of Eynsham Public Houses



A *Good History* Special Issue No 1,
1997

FOREWORD

The Junior History Group were invited to give a talk to the Eynsham History Group as part of their 1996-1997 Programme. Eynsham has long been known for its pubs. Like many others I had grown up thinking of pubs as important for many reasons besides the obvious one of a place of refreshment. In Bristol where I grew up, as in many places, bus stops are designated by appropriate pubs. You might go for a ride from The Cross Hands to the Hen & Chicken. You might find out something of the industry of the place from names such as The Miners' Arms or The Shears. Friends meet to play cards, dominoes or darts, sports teams affiliate themselves to particular hostelryes and groups such as gardening clubs hold meetings in them. The pub is an essential part of English life and has been for hundreds of years. Therefore it seemed a good idea to make Eynsham's Public Houses a serious subject for research. Editor

Group members: Flora Cranmer-Perrier, Hayley Blackwell, Katy Bullard, Helen Greenwood, Louise Henney, David Holland, Tara Hooper, Rebecca Leighton, David Luna, Louise Mahoney, Elizabeth Mittell, Kelly Prlina, Alison Retz, Jack Rossiter, Jenny Rossiter, Jessica Scott, Sam Scott, Matthew Walker, *Associate Member:* Helen Dearing, *Chairman:* Mr E. F. Whelan, *Senior Member:* P. E. Richards

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Junior History Group wishes to thank The Oxfordshire Archives, The Oxfordshire & Swindon Co-operative Society, Mr T. Woodman, Mrs P. Clifton, Mrs M. Gascoigne, Mr M. Harris, The Chairman and members of Eynsham History Group, Mr P. Keates and the staff of Eynsham Primary School, and many other friends and relations for their help and encouragement.

© Text: Eynsham Junior History Group, 1997
Illustrations are from various sources

ABBREVIATIONS

OA = Oxfordshire Archives

REFERENCES

Angel/Red Lion - OA.4 /1/51: OA.71/1/29: OA.Blake/XV/i/5

Rose & Crown/Haunch of Venison/White Hart: OA.B5/16 /F2 /1-7;
OA.B5/16/D/1-20

Swan: OA.B/15/D/1-16; OA.B5/15/F1

Queen's Head: OA.B5/14/D/1-14

Malt Shovel: OA.E305/D/1-17

Britannia/Railway: OA.Misc.Pimm VI/1b-2

Jolly Sportsman: OA.B15/2/L1/31 Talbot: OA.B15/6 /20D/1

Documents relating to Halls Brewery: OA.B15/2/50D/1; OA.B15/2/L1/ 26.

Other material was gathered from *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, *The Witney Express & Gazette*, Oxfordshire Directories, Parish Records, *The Victoria County History*, and Chamber's *Eynsham Under the Monks* and *The World We Have Lost* by Peter Laslett (Methuen, 1965).

Good History is the Journal of the Eynsham Primary School Junior History Group.

All proceeds from the sale of this booklet are for the purchase of history books for the use of the children at Eynsham Primary School.

Do You Remember An Inn?

The fact that there was at least one inn in Eynsham in the 16th century tells us that it was a town not a village. Generally, in villages, most drinking was done in the cottages of people who had permission from the magistrates to keep an alehouse, on the strict understanding that there was to be no tipling and that no liquor was to change hands during time of divine service.

The alewife, for it was often a widow brewing for sale what most women had to brew for their own households, did not even have to have a painted sign. For one thing not many people could read. All she had to do was to hang a bush outside her door.

Inns were important for travellers; a place where they could stop on their long slow journeys to rest, take refreshment or stay the night while horses were rested or changed.

Eynsham was on the important route westward from London. Travellers were probably glad of a rest, particularly if they had just experienced the ordeal of crossing the Thames.

THE RED LION

The first date found for an innkeeper in Eynsham is 1587. This was Robert Browne who died in 1604 and from his will it can be seen that he intended to leave the inn called 'the signe of the Angel' first to his wife Margaret and then to his son, Edward or if he died to his daughters Joan and Alice. However, a document dated 1637 shows that a man called Hugh Wise had then become owner of this inn and he left it with 'all cupboards, furnace, brewing vessels, planche (which seems to be a slab of metal or stone) racks, mangers and all other household stuff as is now belonging to the said inn' to his son, when he should reach to the age of 24.

In the 18th century the inn was used for cockfights, auction sales, and important meetings such as the one in January 1781 to discuss the Enclosure of Eynsham Heath. *Jackson's Oxford Journal* reports several cockfights in the 1780's. One in 1789 was between the gentlemen of Eynsham and Oxford when the 'feeders' were Messrs Inott and Johnson. Presumably they were the men who set up the cocks to face one another. In 1800 the inn seems to have come into the hands of the Morrell family. A document dated April 1801 speaks of an 'inn formerly called or known by the name of the Angel

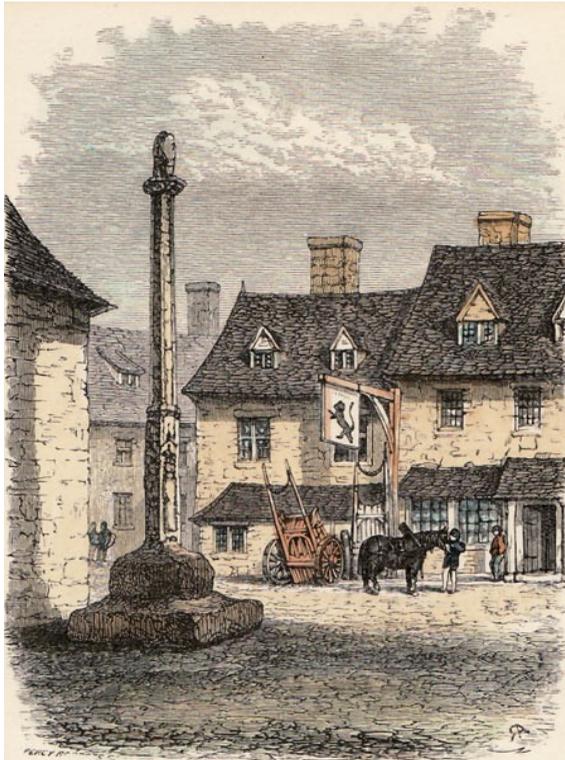


Fig. 1. Eynsham Cross and
The Red Lion in 1878
(© Oxford Mail).

and since and now called or known by the name of The Red Lion' which it has continued to be called, although in one Directory dated 1850 it was called The Old Red Lion. The name change seems to have taken place in about the middle of the 18th century. From the Directories it is possible to discover something about the landlords from 1842, the first being one John Williams. From 1846 to 1850 it was held by Charles Rouse and was described as a commercial hotel. For the next four years Mr George Blake was there. During the 1860's the Directories do not quite agree on who was landlord or when, as the names of William Ellis and William Kearsy overlap. Then in 1869 came Joseph Kearsy, whom we assume was William Kearsy's son.

More information came from old copies of the *Witney Gazette*. The Red Lion seemed to be quite a rough pub with men getting drunk and fighting, and the landlord himself getting into trouble. In 1875 he was charged with keeping licensed premises open out of hours and in 1881 he was charged with having unjust measures in his possession.

Public Houses were also used for the holding of inquests and in the *Witney Gazette* of 16 June 1881 there is a report of an inquest held at The Red Lion



Fig. 2. Eynsham Cross and the Red Lion, c. 1880. (Photograph by Henry Taunt, sourced through Oxford Central Libraries.)

on the body of one Richard Brooks who met his death through being knocked down by a runaway horse on the race course at the Whit week fair. From evidence it appeared that the deceased was a farmer and dealer from Uxbridge Moor Farm. He had an invitation to visit his brother-in-law, Joseph Kearsy, at Eynsham. On the Monday he went to the Sports and about 3 o'clock in the afternoon a pony driven by two Oxford Collegians was startled by the Witney Band. The trap was thrown over and the pony got loose. The deceased and a lady were knocked down by it. The lady was not hurt much but the deceased had five rib fractures which penetrated the lung and the breast bone was also broken, and from which injuries he died about 10 o'clock the same night. A verdict of being accidentally killed was given.

Joseph Kearsy was followed by William Preston and in his time the inn was noted for having good stabling and a lockup coachhouse. It was also in his time that the inn became the Headquarters of the Cyclists' Touring Club. His granddaughter, Mrs Gascoigne Snr, still lives in the village.

In 1957, as reported in *The Oxford Mail* The Red Lion was still noted for its sporting connections, with the landlord, Mr Harris, claiming it to be the only place in the area where they still played the ancient game of 'Tipit', a sort of variant of hunt the slipper, played with a threepenny bit. It was also said to be the great domino and cribbage centre of Eynsham.

It was the headquarters of the Foresters & Ancient Order of the Buffaloes as well as the Eynsham Football Club. It had also been the headquarters of the Cricket Club and at that time the walls of the bar were decorated with photographs of Eynsham cricket and football teams going back for a considerable number of years. Above the bar were a number of silver cups for darts, dominoes and bar billiards, rather gentler sport than the cockfighting of the 18th century.

THE WHITE HART

Another very old and still extant inn is The White Hart, which has also had a variety of names. In the 13th century (1215) Adam, Abbot of Eynsham, opened up a large portion of land to the north-east of the village so that it could be divided up and let to tenants. It came to be called 'New Land'. It had its own headman and court. The holdings were subject to ground rent, and fees were payable when holdings changed hands. The court collected rents and fees and judged wrongdoings. The building or hall in which the court conducted its business has now become the premises which we know as 'The White Hart'.

There is reference in 1366, to a building or hall, occupied by Thomas Scherman, which appears over the centuries to have been extensively altered. From Mr David Conquest, who retired as landlord in 1997 it was learnt that the premises had evidently been one large hall open right to the roof. A survey a few years ago showed that some of the original roof timbers were encrusted with soot, showing that there had been a central open fire from which the smoke found its way out through vent holes in the roof. A first floor had been inserted probably in the 17th century.

In the 1750's the eastern part belonged to the Day family who let it to a tenant, Francis Ladsen. He licensed it as the Rose & Crown. Then in 1785 John May bought it and licensed it as the Haunch of Venison. It was not until 1835 that it finally became the White Hart. It was the meeting place of the Newland Courts until the 20th century.

For a time in the 19th century the eastern end was used as a grocer's shop. In the 1851 Census, William Davis, who was then landlord of the White Hart, is described as being a grocer, aged 37. By 1854 he was dead, though there is no account of the cause of death.

With the improvements in roads, an increasing number of coaches passed through Eynsham so in 1828 a stable block was built at the rear and it became

a coaching inn. In 1849 it was sold for £510 and was described as having: four bedrooms, a parlour, a tap room, a pantry, cellar, brewhouse, skittle alley, grocer's shop, piggery and stables.

THE SWAN

Another coaching inn was The Swan. It was noted that often inns were owned by people as property holdings and that the landlords were just tenants, rather as pubs, which are owned by breweries, operate today.

In 1720 The Swan was owned by the Cracklow family but the victualler, the man actually running the inn, was a William Handshall. In her will of 1752 Ann Ayres, who is described in another document as William Cracklow's widow, leaves the property to her brother Robert Jeeves but it also says that the landlord is now one Robert Andrews. Until the end of the 18th century the inn seemed to be owned by descendants of the Jeeves family until it was sold in 1806. By then a Robert Davies was landlord. At the beginning of the 19th century it belonged to the Druce family but in 1862 it passed into the hands of Clinch's Brewery of Witney for the sum of £1,000.

In 1850 William Lord, a publican from Devon, came to The Swan. The 1851 census shows that he was born in Exeter, was 63 years old, had a 40-year-old son, also called William, and a 36-year-old daughter called Sarah who had the same name as her mother. Previously William Lord had been landlord of The Herd of Swine at Curbridge. As nowadays publicans moved around from one inn to another.

Next came Thomas Dolley. He and his wife were there for a long time as we learn from a piece from the *Witney Express & Gazette* of 27 April 1871. It reported the decease of Mr Thomas Augustine Dolley, for some 20 years proprietor of The Swan Inn and also for a long period the esteemed Band Master of the Queen's Own Regiment of Oxfordshire, Yeoman Cavalry. It appears that on the Friday afternoon before, Mr Dolley (who had been suffering from a disease of the heart and pressure on the brain) went to Oxford, accompanied by his wife, and while transacting business at the County Hall he was seized with a fit, from which, however, he soon recovered. He shortly afterwards left and was proceeding along the New Road, apparently in his accustomed health, when he had a second attack and fell down in the street in an unconscious state. He was immediately taken up and removed to the Radcliffe Infirmary but never rallied and died before reaching the Institution. His wife Mrs Sarah Emma Dolley carried

on running the 'commercial inn and posting house' for at least another seven years.

By 1891 it was in the hands of William Brice Howe and he kept 'very good accommodation for cyclists, boating and fishing parties'.

Other inns came into being during the 19th century. Those that still exist are The Queen's Head, The Newlands, The Star and The Jolly Sportsman.

THE QUEEN'S HEAD

The first directory reference to The Queen's Head is in 1850 when Richard Bridges is described as a beer retailer. In Jackson's Oxford Journal we read that during the 'calamitous fire' of 1854 the fire spread to 'a skittle alley, brewhouse and outhouse occupied by Mr Bridges, landlord of the Queen's Head, and belonging to Mr Akerman of Wytham'. The property remained

Fig. 3. The Queen's Head in 1957 (© *Oxford Mail*).

in the Akerman family until about the time of the First World War with a number of different landlords.

In 1874 Edward Viner was the landlord and he came to a sad end. In the *Witney Gazette* of 3 July 1884 it was reported that 'Friday last a man named Edward Viner of the Queen's Head fell from a haystack and sustained a serious injury. He was immediately conveyed to the infirmary but apparently died before he got there.' As with the case of the Dolleys at The Swan, Mrs Viner took her husband's place and was there for a number of years.

In 1914 the premises were described as being let to Messrs Morrells Trustees, Lion Brewery, Oxford but the land was all part of the 'New Land' and controlled by the Courts Baron of Newland well into this century.

The Queen's Head was another inn selected for attention by the *Oxford Mail* in 1957. Here they commented on the skill and enthusiasm of the landlord, Mr John Thornton, as an amateur flower grower. He had The Queen's Head for over 10 years. At that time much of the custom came from Oxfordshire business men and some Americans from Brize Norton. It was the headquarters of the Eynsham Cricket Club. It also had a completely separate room for darts and claimed to be the only Eynsham pub where they played shove-ha'penny.

THE STAR

Jason Bowerman, plasterer, is the first landlord of The Star referred to in the Directories in 1863. He was succeeded by Josiah Wall, jun., 1869, and George Green, 1876. But in 1880 a more colourful character, Thomas Messenger, appears. He was born in 1842 and was noted in the 1881 census as being a general gardener as well as a publican. In 1880 he was accused of receiving stolen oats worth 8/- but the case was dismissed. However, like Joseph Kearsley of The Red Lion he was found to have unjust measures in September 1881 and was fined.

The Star Inn appeared in the papers again in 1884 when one Edwin Pullin was charged with stealing money and tobacco from Thomas Messenger. Mrs Sarah Messenger was a witness to the crime. Edwin Pullin pleaded guilty but said he had done it as a joke. However, he probably didn't think his fine of £1 was a joke.

In 1907 Albert Breakspear was landlord and he was remembered by Jim Evans in some of his reminiscences. Now The Star is important for its football team and as the place from where the Carnival starts.

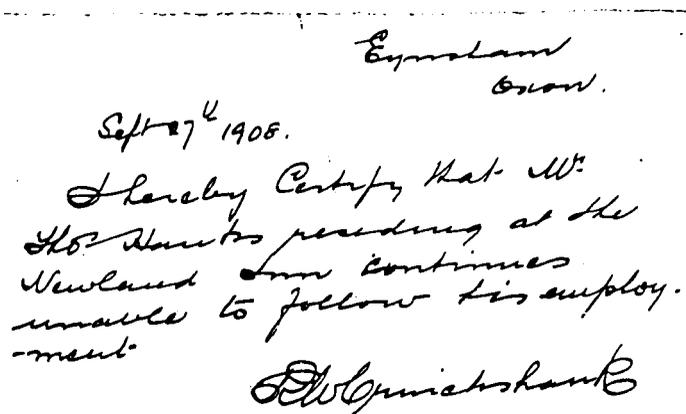
THE NEWLANDS

At The Newlands Inn, (at one time the Newland) the present landlord, Mr Nicholas Godden, suggested that the original building dates from about 1580, but it did not become a pub until sometime in the 1860s.

In the 19th century it had been two cottages, one large corner building and a much smaller one on the west side that is now used as the dining room area of the inn. There is a large cellar and the ground floor is stone flagged. The walls of the public bar are panelled in pine wood. Some of the inner dividing walls are of wattle and daub construction. The roof had originally been thatched but was later tiled and then in 1935 it was slated. Inside many traces of the old parts of the building can be seen. A window at the rear has been bricked up, presumably after the introduction of a window tax in 1696 and a bread oven can still be seen in the west wall of what was the small cottage.

In the public bar is a rather special clock with this interesting notice:

TAVERN CLOCK: In the 18th century improving coaching facilities required inns to have reliable time pieces. In 1797 a tax was imposed on all clocks or time keepers 5/- a year on every clock, 10/ each on gold watches and 2/6d on silver watches. Villagers thought it cheaper to use the inn's clock. The Tavern or Coaching Clock thus increased in popularity and became known as the Act of Parliament Clock. The Act was repealed in 1798.



Eynsham
Grove.

Sept 27th 1908.

I hereby Certify that Mr
Thos Hanks residing at the
Newland Inn continues
unable to follow his employ-
-ment

Dr Cruikshank

Fig. 4. Certificate signed by Dr Cruikshank excusing Thomas Hanks from work.

Mrs Temperance Hawtin, now aged 93, remembers being taken as a child to see her grandparents, Mr & Mrs Hanks, when they ran the Newlands Inn. When her grandparents retired one of her aunts, Mrs Capel, took over. Thomas Hanks first appears in the Directories in 1874 and Arthur Edward Capel appears in 1915. It appears from certificates signed by Dr Cruickshank that Thomas Hanks was off work in September 1908 and February 1909.

THE JOLLY SPORTSMAN

According to Mr Frank Driver who was landlord of The Jolly Sportsman in 1957, this pub dates from the 1600's; however, the earliest reference traced is the granting of a licence to Frederick Durbridge in 1875. Undoubtedly the building is old but whether it has been an inn all its life is open to question.

In the *Witney Express* of 5 February 1880 Jabez Wall of Burford, a rope manufacturer, was summoned by complaint of the Rural Sanitary Authority that water in the well at The Jolly Sportsman, Eynsham, of which he was the owner, was polluted, and there was an Order made to close the well permanently. In 1887 the inn still seemed to have been owned by the Wall family and John Wall, described as a rick cloth manufacturer was landlord.



Fig. 5. The Jolly Sportsman in 2005 (image added later)

By 1910 Halls Brewery of Oxford owned the property and used it as one of its licensed houses to secure a £32,000 loan. They had bought it from the Wall family in 1901. In the details of a document it mentions the pump in the yard behind the inn which was also for the use of neighbouring property.

In an article on Eynsham inns written in the Oxford Mail in July 1957 a 200-year-old Spanish gun is described as hanging on a wall as part of the decor but today the landlord knows nothing about it. It has been learnt, however, that the gun was still there in the early 1960's. It was then described as a musket, but one day a customer noted that the gun had disappeared. It was explained by the barman that it had been sold. Apparently, a customer had come into the pub and admired the gun and offered to buy it for £120. As it had only been valued on the inventory of the pub at £5, there was too great a temptation to make some money and it was never seen again.

Another customer's story is the one about the large wardrobe that had to be left downstairs in the bar until the roof was taken off for repairs and it was finally put into a bedroom through the roof!

It was a pub with a reputation for 'live music' which meant, in the 1950's, piano playing!

LOST PUBS

Over the hundreds of years, a number of pubs have changed their names and survived but there are a number of pubs which are truly lost, some only remaining as a single reference. Such is The Black Boy that appears to have been an alehouse at least in 1674 and is mentioned in John Paty's will of that date. The Eagle and Child is referred to in the Victoria County History as being last noted in the 17th century. The Eagle and Child were part of the Stanley arms. The Green Dragon, noted in the 1650 survey (see Dr Atkins' article in Eynsham Record No. 6) which later became The George & Dragon, was another early faller. Chambers suggests the old inn building, which is now the Co-op, may at one time have been a Court House.

It became The George & Dragon in the 18th century when it was held by the Meads family, but it was closed by 1780, with the last reference in the Quarter Sessions Victuallers Recognizances being in 1777 when William Meads was granted a licence. The interesting thing about Mr Meads is that he appears in the list of school masters of the Bartholomew school during the period 1786-1797, receiving a salary of £10. 17/- per annum. He was

also paid one guinea for keeping the vestry book from 1787 to 1788. He died in 1797 at the age of 52.

Another name that came up in the list of schoolmasters was that of James Batten who had a licence for The Red Lion between 1753 and 1759 when he died. He was paid £10. 18 / - per annum from 1752, when he took over from Stephen Day, until 1756.

To obtain recognition as a licensee in the 18th and 19th centuries one was obliged to appear at the Quarter Sessions and to have one's name recorded. An entry would appear in a list of names, sometimes with the name of the inn and sometimes without, by town or village and hundred (a division of a county). Eynsham was in the Wootton Hundred and the following is an example of the statement which would appear before the list of names.

THE WOOTTON HUNDRED OF OXFORDSHIRE, Be it remembered that on 20th day of September in the year of our Lord 1774 the several persons hereunder written whose names are against the several sums respectively set came before us the Honourable John Mason Esq., Theophilus Leigh, D.D. & James Lamb Esq., J.P. in and for the said County and acting in and against their respective names severally set to be made and levied of their Goods & Chattels, Lands & Tenements respectively to the use of our said Sovereign Lord the King, his heirs & successors if they or any or either of them shall well default in the condition underwritten:-

Conditions of the Recognizances are such that if several persons licensed to keep Common Inns & Alehouses for one year from the 29th day of this instant September in the Hundred of Wootton aforesaid in the County of Oxford in the several houses where he or she or they now dwell & shall keep & maintain in good order and rule and shall suffer no disorders or unlawful games to be used in her or their House or Houses in any outhouses gardens or Backsides hereunto belonging during the said term.

A mystery from the Victuallers Recognizances is that in 1762 a pub called the Windsor Castle appears. The victualler was a John Soden. Its last appearance in the Quarter Sessions books is in 1788. This was an Eynsham pub: but where it was it?

The Plough appears in *Pigot's Directory* in 1842 with a landlord Thomas Swadling. He is the only named landlord found and, in 1854, was also referred to as an ironmonger. In the Parish Registers of Baptisms he appears as Thomas Swadling, victualler from 1829 to 1839. From documents relating to The Maltster & Shovel it seems that he and his wife Mary had moved to Great Haseley by 1861 and there is no further reference to The Plough.

The Maltster & Shovel, or Malt Shovel as it is variously called, had a complicated history of ownership. There is a series of documents in the Oxfordshire Archives relating to this inn dating from 1750 to 1967. The



Fig. 6. The Malt Shovel (now a private house) in 2006 (image added later).

most fascinating of these refers to the Ford family who emigrated to Canada in the 1830's.

At one time the property was in the tenure of the Church Wardens and Overseers of the Poor of the Parish having been the property of the Jordan family. In 1771 it came into the hands of Miss Suky Batt, the daughter of Augustine Batt, a Surgeon of Witney. It then passed in trust to Jonathan Ford who was described as a Maltster. In the Victuallers Recognizances he is found receiving a licence from 1774 to 1822. Unfortunately, it is at this date that the Quarter Sessions lists end and apart from wading through all the Petty Sessions and all the Quarter Sessions records there seems no way of tracing who was granted licences.

At about this time came the deregulation of drinking places. In 1830 the duty on beer was abolished. Any ratepayer, on payment of an annual duty of 2 guineas could obtain, direct from the Excise, a licence to sell beer for consumption on or off the premises. Inevitably drunkenness increased with the peak of national convictions occurring in 1876. It is claimed in that year 344 gallons of beer per head was drunk. Alcohol consumption was also

made easier in the 1890's by the introduction of bottled beer. Eynsham in the 1870's had its share of drunkenness. In 1873 there were ten cases and in 1876, nine. It was at this time that The British Temperance League (1835), the Band of Hope (1847) and The Salvation Army came into being. Stricter licensing hours were introduced at the time of World War I and things got 'tidied up'.

Among the Malt Shovel documents are statements made as to the authenticity of the signature of one John Ford. First is the declaration made in 1862 by Jeremiah Clarke, described as slater and plasterer living in Acre End Street, who says he knows the signature of John Ford who had worked for him, though it was 27 years ago. The second declaration is made by William James, Schoolmaster of Ensham and 77 years of age in 1862. He states that he had taught John Ford to write as a pupil and recognized the signature!

Part of the Ford family settled in the region of Vancouver and part in the area west of the Niagara in Haldimand County, which is just next to Oxford County and is a very flat area of farming and tobacco growing.

The last of the documents in the collection refers to the part of the property that is now Peaks. If you stepped across Mill Street from The Malt Shovel and walked a few paces you would have been outside The New Inn. In a deed of 1879 the whole property is described as 'The dwellinghouse with shops cellars yards stable coachhouse and other outbuildings situate on the North side of and fronting Mill Street which premises were late in the occupation of Richard Castell Toner deceased and are bounded on the West by the Turnpike Road from Oxford to Witney and on the North by a dwelling house at the same premises and now known as the New Inn.'

Mr Charles Yateman had the licence of this inn from 1872 until 1883 when it was transferred to Mr E. Harris. At the end of the last century and the beginning of this one Bob Buckingham was landlord and was remembered by Jim Evans. In 1917 a report in the *Oxford Times* dated 9 June tells us that a school dinner kitchen was opened in Eynsham at The New Inn by the War Savings Committee, and that on the first day 20 children were given mashed potatoes, stewed peas and gravy, price 2d. This apparently made an estimated saving of 1 loaf of bread per child per week! It was not reported if they got anything to drink.

Just around the corner and along a bit you came to The Fountain. It first occurs in the Directories in 1864 with Frederick Wilkins as landlord but in 1869 Charles Buckingham took over. In 1873 he was charged with allowing

a John Buckingham to be drunk and quarrelsome on his licensed premises and was fined £2. 1 /6. In 1883 Edwin White took over the licence. Mr W H Goodwin had applied to take it on but his application was refused on the grounds that he was not a fit person to hold a licence.

After Mr White came a Mr Griffin, and then Albert Wall who was described as a shopkeeper. Mr Tom Harris, talking about his memories in 1995, said 'the Fountain is the house in Crown Crescent with the big 'ol window. That used to be my Uncle's. He used to be a fishmonger, a fruiterer and a landlord. They used to drink the beer themselves. Out the back was toilets and all that old fashioned tackle. My Dad's sister married Sam Buck.'

As shown in the article 'The Railway Comes to Eynsham', in Eynsham Record No 5, The Britannia was probably built by the brewer James Gibbons about 1845 and the first landlord found in the Directories for 1847 was described as beer retailer and baker. John Harwood was followed at The Britannia by his wife Sophia and then a Mr John Wright took over until sometime in the late 1860's.

The first reference in the Directories to The Railway Inn has Mr Charles Yateman as landlord, who in 1871 moved into The New Inn.

The turnover of landlords seemed to be quite rapid and we have noted a number of 'disturbances' at the inn including the gatecrashing of a dance in 1883 by two men who used 'disgusting language and were violent'. However, a Mr Oliver Browne did give a series of talks there in 1879 on the Second Coming of Christ. In Mollie Harris's book From Acre End Dorothy Aldridge tells about the time when her family took over the inn in 1887.

The Oddfellows Lodge removed to the Swan for their meetings in 1890 but in 1903 the Eynsham Young Men's Social Club met there. Mr Frank Sawyer was their Secretary.

In 1912 the Gibbons family sold the inn to Hall's Brewery. The main beneficiary of the sale seems to have been Miss Ann Ruth Gibbons. She was described as an invalid and died in 1915 aged 55. Now the property has been turned into flats.

Not long before the conversion of the property the building was damaged by fire. On a very hot day in the summer of 1976 a large load of hay was passing along Acre End Street. Just as it was about to turn into Station Road the hay burst into flames - a form of spontaneous combustion. Besides the Railway Inn, the cottage nearby, Janty's and the chemist's shop were all damaged. Fortunately no-one was seriously hurt.

Fig. 7. Fire in Acre End Street, August 1976. (Photograph taken by Mr T. Woodman.)

Miss Ann Gibbons' address on documents relating to The Railway was given as 'Lynwood', High Street, Eynsham which brings us to another lost pub. The Royal William was probably established in the 1830's. In the Post Office Directory of 1847 Charles Cantell was described as bacon curer and beer retailer. In fact during the 1850's a whole tribe of Cantell's lived at the inn and in Columbia Terrace, one being a tailor & woollen draper and another being the Relieving Officer for Eynsham and District.

In the 1870's the inn was taken over by the King family and its name changed to The King's Arms. It has been said that it was once an inn used by highwaymen who used to leave their horses with the saddler and blacksmith across the road while they had a drink. The house is also said to be haunted. We tend to think of highwaymen as being in the 18th century, so could this have been the Windsor Castle before it was The Royal William?

We also found another 'Royal' pub that appeared and disappeared quite quickly in the Directories. In the 1864 Post Office Directory a public house called The Royal Albert is mentioned. The landlord was Charles Augustus Goodwin who is also described as Brewer of the Crown Brewery. There is one further mention of this pub in an 1868 directory.

Another mystery is The Crown. This appears in issues of Jackson's Oxford Journal of 1785 and 1786 where a freehold house known as the Sign of the Crown and let to Elizabeth Smith with some of her furniture, is being offered for sale. Nothing further is heard of The Crown until 1850 when the landlord is described as John Cox beer retailer in Abbey street. In the 1851 census a John Cox aged 44 appears as cordwainer and in the 1861 the same John Cox now apparently aged 59 is described as gamekeeper. In the Parish Register he was baptized in 1805 and at the birth of his third son in 1861 he is described as publican. A man of many parts! As at that time what is now known as Lombard Street was called Abbey Street, and given the position in which the Cox establishment appears in the census, we wondered whether this was an earlier name for The Jolly Sportsman. The last date we have for The Crown is 1868.

The Board Hotel had belonged to the Gibbons family who had their own Brewery on the site of 33 High Street. The Co-operative Society's old deed Register reveals that in January 1842 the property belonged to Mr James Gibbons. In November 1879 it passed to Mrs C. Gibbons. It passed to Mr E J Gibbons in 1929. Mrs Clifton went to work for Mr Gibbons when she left school, 66 years ago, when she was 14. In those days, she tells us,

Board Hotel, Birmingham. (Freehold) NL 74/3

Abstract of release	Mr E J Gibbons & AN. Co.	
	Mr James Gibbons	7. 1. 1842
Copy of will	Mr James Gibbons	19. 8. 1869
Certificate as to payment of stamp duty		18. 9. 1879
Statutory Declaration	Mr James Gibbons	11. 11. 1879
Conveyance	Mr E Gibbons to	
	Mr E J Gibbons & AN.	25. 9. 29
Official Certificate of Search	H.M. Land Registry	14. 5. 45
	Registry of Local Land	19. 5. 45
	Charges (2)	22. 5. 45
Statutory Declaration	Mr E Gibbons	14. 5. 45
Conveyance	Mr E J Gibbons & AN.	
	to Helios (O.C.S./L.A.)	25. 5. 45

Fig. 8. Extract from the Co-operative Society's old Deed Register.

you went in the front into the grocery shop and the door on the right opened into the Bar. The Gibbons family eventually sold The Board to the Co-operative Society in 1945.

The Society operated the Board Hotel as a public house but despite the inclusion of the word 'hotel' in the name never offered any accommodation. The property was sold to Mr Kenneth Cope, the well-known actor, in December 1979. It has been a restaurant since under the names of 'The Epicure', 'Lombard's' and now 'Baker's', the chef being Mr Philip Baker.

THE TALBOT

So far attention has been concentrated on the inns within the centre of Eynsham but we should not forget two that were particularly created for the convenience of travellers.

In Good History No. 1, Michelle Winter, daughter of the then landlord, recounted some of the history of The Talbot, which from about 1774 until the beginning of the 1830's was believed to have been known as The Horse & Jockey. The Victoria County History claims that the name of The Talbot was adopted after the closure of another now untraceable inn. Looking into



Fig. 9. The Talbot Inn © Arkells (image added later)

this further it was found that the Horse & Jockey and the Talbot appear in directories at the same time. In 1842 according to *Pigot's Directory of Oxfordshire* Edwin Willis was landlord of The Talbot and Philip Scholey landlord of the Horse & Jockey. It is now believed that the present inn changed its name about 1844 while Philip Scholey was landlord.

The inn's importance to the wharf and the men who used it seems clear. In fact, it was sometimes known just as The Wharf Inn. At the end of the 19th century it was owned by The Oxford Canal Co. who were obviously very rigorous about the conditions under which they leased the property. In 1898 it was leased for a yearly rent of £35 to be paid quarterly and the lessees were to spend at least £200 in alterations and repairs and specific details were given as to how this should be done.

'Every fifth year the lessee to paint all inside wood, ironwork and all other work usually painted and belonging to said premises and additions and improvements which shall be made or added thereto with proper oil colours in a workmanlike manner and also whenever necessary will repaper such parts of the said premises as require to be papered and wash whiten and colour such parts thereof as require to be whitened or coloured and all the said premises so repaired cleaned painted & kept as aforesaid together with all additions & improvements as shall be made thereto will at expiration of said term be delivered up to Lessors. Also lessors Agents to be allowed access to inspect & that Lessees will not assign present lease (except to Halls, Oxford Brewery Ltd) without consent in writing of Lessors.'

Any tenant was only to deal in and sell coal and other articles that had been conveyed by Canal & River on the wharf and they were to be responsible for the fair use of the wharf and weighbridge. They were also responsible for attending to the weir and the locking and unlocking of the wharf gate. There was to be no change of use of the premises. If there should be any breach of the licence the owners took no responsibility and would demand financial compensation.

THE EVENLODE

The motor car brought a new hostelry to the village, the roadhouse, The Evenlode. In 1957 it was another of the Eynsham inns featured in an article in the Oxford Mail. The proprietor at that time was Mr Arthur H. Lowe, who prided himself on his excellent food and wine. The decor aimed to give a feeling of luxury, comfort and solidity. Mr Lowe provided 'all meals from breakfast till after theatre supper'. He listed among the guests the Wasps Rigger team; the Australian cricketers; the Gloucestershire bowling team; the Heythrop Hunt, who held two invitation meets there; the Christ Church Beagles and parents of boys and girls at school in Oxford and Cheltenham.



Fig. 10. The Evenlode (drawing by D. S. Richards).

In the 19th century the land on which The Evenlode is now built was owned by Charles Cantell Junior, son of the landlord of The King William inn. The Cantell family then sold the land to the Hedges family who eventually sold the land to Mr John Knox Biggers. The size of the land sold was roughly 25 acres. Mr Biggers got an application for an official search to make sure there were no reasons for not building on the land. Nothing was found to stop them building so the land was sold to the Hill Brothers who were builders and contractors with an office in Witney Road, Eynsham. Once built, the roadhouse was sold on to H. & G. Simmonds Ltd, Brewers of Reading on 28th March 1935. It is now owned by the Beefeater Group.

There is, for the time being, one other mystery. In a collection of wills and inventories relating to Eynsham are the inventories of two innkeepers, William Greenaway and his son Charles, who lived at the end of the 17th century. Unfortunately, there is no name given to their inn. However, from one particular reference in the inventory made of William Greenaway's

lumber ----- 1-0-0

It in the shoulder room one shoulder and two
one bed of bedstead with furniture one table two
benches chairs & other lumber ----- 4-10-0

It in the parlor chamber one feather bed one bedstead with
furniture & chairs ----- 3-15-0

In the same chamber one table ten chairs three
long stools one bench pulled largely furnished with other
lumber ----- 2-3-0

It in the chamber over the stable one Egg bed one truss bed
with furniture ----- 2-0-0

In the same room 19 pairs of sheets ----- 9-2-0

ten tables & chairs ----- 1-0-0

one chest ----- 0-10-0

five stools ----- 0-3-0

one holland glass ----- 0-10-0

two other one table with two legs other lumber ----- 7-0-0

It in the chequer chamber one table ----- 0-1-0

It in the chamber over the butchery one salt stack bed of bedstead
with other lumber ----- 0-10-0

It a table in another room ----- 0-1-6

It in the brewhouse one furnace eight tubs & chimneys one
manilla mill with other lumber ----- 2-0-0

It in the brewhouse one table one sleepers & two
two forms ----- 5-0-0

It in the cellar two hatching of gill one hatching of beans two barrels
of board nine empty kegs & other lumber ----- 4-0-0

Fig. 11. Extract from inventory of property of William Greenaway, dated 1687.

house and possessions and from some evidence in the Court Rolls it seems possible that the inn referred to is The White Hart. In the document of 1687 it refers to 'the chequer chamber where there is one little table'. Research suggests that a chequer chamber was a treasure house or counting-house, sometimes a court room. Part of the White Hart property was used for the Courts Baron in the Manor of Newland. Although it is known that other inns were used as Courts, and in particular the Court held where the Green Dragon was sited (now the Co-op) William Greenaway's name is associated with property in Newland. At the moment there is no conclusive proof.

No doubt over the years to come there will be further changes to the public houses of Eynsham, landlords have come and gone within the period of this research, but it seems unlikely that Eynsham will ever be a town without a pub!