

The Farmers Arms – Pheasant Inn at Allithwaite

The following article was compiled mainly from a search of the digitised newspapers from the 19th century, and reading microfiche copies of the Westmorland Gazette for the period of the First World War. The published census records and the Grange Red books were also used.

Today, in 2016, the Pheasant Inn, formerly known as the Farmers Arms, is the only remaining public house in the village of Allithwaite (Fig 1), since the other one ceased trading in 2015. It is located towards the west end of the village on the Flookburgh Road in the neighbourhood of Low Square.



Figure 1: The Pheasant Inn, Allithwaite (Pat Rowland 1991).

The Brewhouse Act of 1830 allowed anyone to brew or sell beer providing they had obtained a licence costing two guineas. This resulted in the opening of hundreds of new beer-houses, public houses and breweries in the nineteenth century [1], and in its early life it was a farm that brewed and sold beer.

The history of public houses / inns in Allithwaite probably dates back to the beginning of the 19th century when Allithwaite was a small hamlet of farms with a corn mill located close to Allithwaite Lodge (Fig. 2), and the building for the Farmers Arms is clearly shown on the map.



Figure 2: Low Square Allithwaite around 1850

The Farmers Arms is on the road connecting the cross-sands routes, across Morecambe Bay and the Leven estuary, from Lancaster to Ulverston. Early maps show the route from Kents Bank to Ulverston proceeding down Jack Hill and past the hostelry. However there is little evidence to suggest it was often used by travellers before the coming of the railway. However, the main inns at that time were the Kents Bank Inn and those in Flookburgh e.g. The Crown. Up to the middle of the 19th century when the Institute was built, the public houses in Allithwaite will have been the only place for locals to meet and socialise, with maybe the occasional passing traveller stopping at them.

The earliest mention of an inn in Allithwaite in the newspapers was in November 1799 and probably related to the property now known as The Pheasant Inn. The advert was for the public sale of a house and mill in several lots. The property was described as an excellent new-built dwelling house now used as an inn or public house and known by the sign of the Cart and Horses, and to be sold with a brew-house and land, and currently owned by Mrs Raine [2]. This most probably is the Farmers Arms / Pheasant, as it is thought that the Guide / Royal Oak was built around 1750 [3].

In 1826, the announcement of the death of an innkeeper in Allithwaite (supposedly located in Westmorland) made the national newspapers [4]. It read "...[Mrs Sarah Birkett] Innkeeper and formerly of Troutbeck, famous for brewing fine ale. On her sign are written these words:

*O mortal man, that liv'st by bread
How come thy nose to be so red
Thou silly ass, that look'st so pale
Tis red with Sarah Birkett's ale*

William Field notes in his logbook that she died at the beginning of November [5]. She was not at that time listed as a tenant / licensee at the Guide Over Sands [3], and therefore she may well have resided at the Farmers Arms.

It appears not to be in use as a public house in 1871 when John Moore a farmer employing 4 labourers resided at The Farmers Arms [6]. Since the residence was named the Farmers Arms, it is clear that it had been in use as a beer-house earlier. However, the premises owned by Mrs Jane Speight of Silverdale, was licenced as a beer-house on 12 Sept 1872, and the licence was transferred to his wife Margaret Moor in 1879 and to Richard Parrington in 1880 [7]. In 1881 he was recorded as the Innkeeper with his wife Ann shown as a Dairymaid [8], Ann took over the licence in May 1885. In 1891, Ann Dickinson resided here, and she described herself as a fish dealer and beer house [9]

The tenancy of the Farmer's Arms Brewhouse was again vacant in 1903 [10].

In a photograph taken in the first decade of the 20th century [11] (reference Raymond Sankey book), the sign is:

**FARMERS ARMS
THOMAS FELL
LICENCED TO SELL ALE
WINES & PORTER
POST HORSES FOR HIRE**



Figure 3: The Farmers Arms in the early 20th Century [11]

In 1911, Mary Fell was the innkeeper, age 40 with 6 children and 2 boarders who were waggoners [12]

During the First World War the Ulverston Police Court heard that two Italian unregistered aliens engaged on the new convalescent home at Grange residing at the Farmers Arms, failed to register themselves as required under The Aliens Order when entering North Lonsdale. The Case was dismissed and the landlord warned it was his duty to check registration [13]. After the war, The Farmer's Arms was listed in the Directory of the time [14].

During the twentieth century, the licence was in the family of Thomas Crossfield from approximately 1916 until 1960, nearly 50 years (Tab. 1). The 1969 Grange Red Book shows the name as the Farmers Arms Motel, and indicates that the properties behind the car park were originally erected with by the owners of the pub. In 1977 when we first lived in the village, this pub was named The Farmers Arms and it probably changed its name to the Pheasant Inn in the 1980's.

The other documents on the Farmer's Arms in the Barrow Archive are:
BDHJ/86/3/40 Thomas Alfred Crossfield mortgage consideration (£500) in 1949
Z/902/1 updated plans
BTDB/Wills Box 12/1268 Thomas Crossfield 1918.

Table 1: Tenants of the Farmers Arms

| | |
|--------------------------|------|
| John Moor | 1872 |
| Margaret Moor | 1879 |
| Richard Parrington | 1880 |
| Ann Parrington | 1885 |
| | |
| Ann Dickinson | 1891 |
| | |
| Mary Elizabeth Fell | 1911 |
| | |
| Thomas Crossfield | 1916 |
| Thomas Alfred Crossfield | 1947 |
| G Swift | 1961 |
| R Young | 1969 |
| F St J Coultate | 1972 |

Compiled from Grange Red Books and other sources.

References

- [1] "Beerhouses Act 1839," en.m.wikipedia.org.
- [2] *Manchester Mercury*, 5 Nov 1799.
- [3] J. Hobbs, "Short History of Royal Oak Allithwaite," Barrow Archive BAMH/1/52 - Melville & Hobbs Box 1, 1954.
- [4] *Chester Chronicle*, 24 Nov 1826.
- [5] William Field logbook.
- [6] "1871 Census".
- [7] North Lonsdale Licence Register, Held at the Barrow Archive.
- [8] "1881 Census".
- [9] "1891 Census".
- [10] *The Yorkshire Post*, 16 Dec 1903.
- [11] R. Sankey, Furness & Cartmel. A Photographic Recollection, The Dalesman.
- [12] "1911 Census".
- [13] *Westmoreland Gazette*, 5 Jun 1915.
- [14] Cope's Directory, After 1926.
- [15] *Lancaster Gazette*, 17 Sept 1803.
- [16] *Lancaster Gazette*, 12 Sept 1820.
- [17] *Westmorland Gazette*, 12 Aug 1837.
- [18] *Westmorland Gazette*, 29 Aug 1840.
- [19] "1841 Census".
- [20] *Kendal Mercury*, 15 May 1847.
- [21] *Kendal Mercury*, 13 Nov 1847.
- [22] William Field log book, 12 Oct 1843.
- [23] *Westmorland Gazette*, 2 Nov 1850.
- [24] *Westmorland Gazette*, 5 Sept 1863.
- [25] *Lancaster Gazette*, 17 Jun 1865.
- [26] *Lancaster Gazette*, 8 May 1824.
- [27] B. Copeland, "Allithwaite Mill," www.cartmel-peminsula-lhs.org.
- [28] P. Mannex, History & Directory of Furness and Cartmel, 1882.
- [29] *Lancaster Gazette*, 2 Aug 1879.
- [30] P. Rowland, "Allithwaite Institute," www.cartmel-peminsula-lhs.org.
- [31] *Kendal Mercury*, 17 Apr 1858.
- [32] Cartmel Almanac 1888-1903, 1898.
- [33] "Lancashire Online Parish Clerk".
- [34] *Kendal Mercury*, 10 Jul 1858.