

## The Guide Over Sands – Royal Oak in Allithwaite

The following article was compiled from a search of the digitised newspapers from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and reading microfiche copies of the Westmorland Gazette for the period of the First World War. The published census records were also used. Our research uncovered a Short History of the Royal Oak in the Barrow-in-Furness Archive Office [1]. This article, written by J L Hobbs in 1954, provided a substantial amount of information which he obtained from the deeds and records of the public house. Some of North Lonsdale licence records held in Barrow were also examined [2].

Early records show the name of this establishment to be the Guide Over Sands (the Guide). (fig 1). The name was changed to the Royal Oak around 1850, as indicated in the Mannex directory [3] and a coroner's court held there [4]. During the 1980's the name was changed back to the Guide Over Sands (Fig. 1), Latterly the public house was renamed Yakkers before it ceased trading in 2015. Hobbs [1] records the name change from the Guide to the Royal Oak in 1865. However there are two independent sources indicating the name changed around 15 years earlier.



Figure 1: Guide Over Sands (Pat Rowland 1993)

The "Guide" name itself suggests that the establishment was used by the cross-sands travellers and visitors. The Royal Oak 'sign' commemorates the story of how

King Charles 2 escaped from Cromwell's troops in 1651 by hiding in an oak tree in Boscobel after the Battle of Worcester (reference).

The history of public houses / inns in Allithwaite probably dates back to the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Allithwaite was a small hamlet of farms with a corn mill located close to Allithwaite Lodge (Fig. 2).



Figure 2: Allithwaite around 1850

This public house was on the road connecting the cross-sands routes, across Morecambe Bay from Lancaster to Cartmel, and during the first sixty years of the nineteenth century, the Guide Over Sands was the main public house in the village. Hobbs [1] suggests that the place was established as an inn to accommodate the visitors who wished to partake of the waters with medicinal properties of the Holy Well.

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 [5]. The early references refer to the publican as an innkeeper. Up to the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Institute was built [6], the

public houses in Allithwaite will have been the only place for locals to meet and socialise. Later, in the licence records of 1872, the Royal Oak is described as an Alehouse perhaps reflecting that the cross-bay travellers and visitors to the Holy Well had disappeared and it was now a drinking house. Originally alehouses were ordinary dwellings where ale was sold and served. These alehouses quickly evolved into meeting houses for the folk to socially congregate. Beer-houses seem to be the term used where ordinary dwellings sold and served their home-brewed beer.

The earliest deeds of the property date back to 1806, when Joseph Davies, a master mariner was the owner (Tab. 1). On his death in 1811, it was inherited by his wife Ann. When Ann died in 1831, the Guide was purchased by the Blacksmith Joseph Brown [1]. In his log book, William Field records that the Allithwaite Public House was sold to Jno Brown in 1843 [7].

Miles Crewdson is the first known licensee (Tab.2) followed by James Bell [1] and Nicholas Carter in 1829 [8]. William Woodburn was a maltster in 1830 and an innkeeper in 1830-1 [1] [9] and in 1837 his death was announced [10]. The tenancy was transferred to Agnes Orr [1] in 1832. In 1840 the Guide Over Sands was advertised for sale at auction together with the barn, stable, shippon and brew-house and the tenant was David Orr [11]. The property was described as a dwelling house now used as a public house. David lived there with his wife Agnes. Amongst the inhabitants then were two children, Thomas Woodburn (aged 11) and William Woodburn (aged 9) [12] were the children of the previous innkeeper William who died 4 years earlier [12]. The two boys were most probably David and Agnes Orr's grandchildren, as William Woodburn had married an Elizabeth Orr in 1827 [9]. Whether the Guide was sold in 1840 is not known.

In 1847 the licence of the "Guide" was transferred to Isabella Kellet [13], and then it was transferred to John Hutton [14] later that year when they married. John Hutton died in 1858 and the Isabella again became the innkeeper.

By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was widespread concern about the effects of intoxicating liquor, and it wasn't too long after the opening of the Allithwaite Chapel – School in 1854 [6] that the Temperance movement established itself in the village [25] with 17 adults and 6 youths signing the pledge in 1856. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Church of England Temperance Society (Secretary – Rev John Hammersley) had a membership of 24, and the Band of Hope was thriving with 60 members [15]. The decline of the Holy Well, the establishment of the local Temperance Society, the alternative meeting place at the Institute, and the coming of the railway in 1857 with the resulting loss of passing trade must have impacted on the trade of the Royal Oak. John Paisley, the tenant from 1860-4, was eventually refused a licence for attempting to continue his trade by "less reputable methods" and the Inn was closed in Sept. 1864 [1].

It was common practise to convene inquests in public houses, and in 1850 at the Royal Oak Inn the coroner and 'respectable jury' found that 3-year old William Brocklebank died of accidental burns [4]. In 1863, another inquest was held at the Royal Oak Inn on an unidentified body of a man who drowned close to Humphrey Head [16]. The verdict was accidental death.

In 1865 James Paisley, a resident and former innkeeper of the Royal Oak, took his silver lever watch for repair to Isaac Vickers (of Ulverston). Margaret Baskerville was charged with obtaining this watch from the repairers under false pretences, and then selling it to the pawnbroker in Market

Street. At that time she was remanded in custody [17].

The Royal Oak was re-licenced in Sept 1865 with John Dickenson as the licensee. The 1871 census shows John Dickinson as the Head Publican, residing at the Royal Oak with his wife Ann and 7 children. Also still living there was James Paisley and his family [18]. John Dickenson died in 1875 and his wife Ann continued serving the locals until 1879. Customers did not always receive their drink un-diluted, as Ann was found guilty at the Cartmel Petty Sessions in September 1877 of adulterating the gin; she was fined 5/-and ordered to pay the costs of 16/6 [2]!

On 18 March 1879, the Royal Oak Inn was sold by auction to Benjamin Sweeting for £855 also an orchard sold to Paisley for £350 when last bought £400 was given for both of them [19]. He immediately transferred the ownership to his son, Benjamin Jnr, and remained the publican for one year [1]. The ownership was later passed to Benjamin Jnr's wife, and later to their son, also named Benjamin.

In 1881, the innkeeper at the Royal Oak was John Atkinson, who ran the pub with his wife Ann [20]. Several licensees came and went until 1887 (Tab. 2), until Albert Crewdson took charge of the Royal Oak (Fig. 3) from 1887 until 1913. He was also a butcher [21] and he probably converted the barn into a slaughter-house [1]. Albert was "reputed have been a man of determination and certainly had a convinced opinion as to where his duties should end, for it is recorded that on 29 Oct 1901 the Inn at Allithwaite refused to be roused to supply candles to belated travellers after closing hours" [1]. The property was leased to RF Case & Co in 1906 for 7 years, and on expiry of the lease, the Royal Oak was sold to Matthew Brown & Co., brewers of Preston. The Gross Valuation of the Farmers Arms in 1910 was £705.

George Pattinson became the next tenant. He was reputed to be "the last of a long line of Allithwaite Carriers, who used to distribute parcels and goods between the village, Kendal and Ulverston. Together with this he appears to have combined inn-keeping with butchery [1].



Figure 3: The Royal Oak around 1900

There is clear evidence of brewing on the premises in both the public houses in Allithwaite, with the sale or let advertisements indicating brew-houses [22] [11]. There will have been a ready supply of malt for brewing the ale from the corn mill / malt kiln in Allithwaite at the west side of the village (fig.3) from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century [22]. It was reported that there was a fire which burnt down the Corn Mill in 1824 and destroyed a large quantity of the malt [23]. Subsequently the rebuilt corn mill became a brewery sometime in the second half of the century [24], and able to supply the local ale-houses.

In his essay [1], Hobbs provides a description of the building. He states that "the building may be ascribed to about 1750". The original double-fronted residence with rooms either side of the entrance, have now been thrown into one large apartment, forming with its old beams a pleasant appearance. A "true village inn bar of tradition was created, with a comfortable snug to the rear. The first floor contained a divided larger room, with a staircase leading to a large apartment under the roof. Hobbs writes that the extensive barn or coach house & stabling attached is puzzling as the place was never

used as a barn. As the blacksmith lived next door and owned the property for a while, the barn / stabling will probably have been used for his business and to service the cross-bay travellers or early visitors. The building is built from “locally dressed limestone” [1], no-doubt obtained from Allithwaite Quarry. Hobbs writes that “the quarry is the property of the Parish and from which inhabitants living within 3 miles of the Church had the right to take stone”. We wonder about the validity of this statement, as it is thought that the quarry was established at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to provide stone for the “enclosures”, and the Church in Allithwaite was built in 1865, nearly a century after Hobbs suggests the property was built.

*Phil & Pat Rowland v1 April 2016*

**Table 1: Owners of the Guide / Royal Oak [1]**

Joseph Davies	1806
Ann Davies	1811
Joseph Brown	1831
Benjamin Jnr Sweetman	1879
Elizabeth Sweetman ?	1879
Benjamin Jnr-Jnr Sweetman	1906
Matthew Brown & Co – Brewers of Preston	1913
John Thompson & Co	1919
Whitbread Brewery	After 1954

**Table 2: Tenants of the Guide / Royal Oak**

Miles Crayston	1823
James Bell	1824
Nicholas Carter	1828
Richard Postlethwaite	1830
William Woodburn	1830
Agnes Orr	1831
David Orr	1840
Isabella Kellet	1847
John Hutton	1849
Isabella Hutton	1858
John Paisley	1860
John Dickinson	1865
Ann Dickinson	1875
Benjamin Sweetman	1879
John Atkinson	1880
Thomas Sadler	1883
Thomas Dixon	1884
James Kellet	1885
William Burrow	1886
Albert Crewdson	1887
George Pattinson	1913
William Killiner	1916
G Fisher	1931
J Fisher	1932
JJ Fisher	1934
R Rowlandson	1948
R Shury	1954
Mrs E Heiner	1964
R Gorst	1966
J D Waller (or Warner?)	1972

Compiled from Grange Red Books and [1].

## References

- [1] J. Hobbs, "Short History of Royal Oak Allithwaite," BAMH/1/52, Melville & Hobbs Box 1, Barrow Archive.
- [2] N. Lonsdale Licence Registers, Held in the Barrow Archive.
- [3] P. Mannex, A Directory of Westmorland, including Furness & Cartmel, 1849.
- [4] *Westmorland Gazette*, 2 Nov 1850.
- [5] "Beerhouses Act 1839," en.m.wikipedia.org.
- [6] P. Rowland, "Allithwaite Institute," www.cartmel-peninsula-lhs.org.
- [7] William Field log book, 12 Oct 1843.
- [8] *Lancaster Gazette*, 12 Sept 1820.
- [9] "Lancashire Online Parish Clerk".
- [10] *Westmorland Gazette*, 12 Aug 1837.
- [11] *Westmorland Gazette*, 29 Aug 1840.
- [12] "1841 Census".
- [13] *Kendal Mercury*, 15 May 1847.
- [14] *Kendal Mercury*, 13 Nov 1847.
- [15] Cartmel Almanac 1888-1903, 1898.
- [16] *Westmorland Gazette*, 5 Sept 1863.
- [17] *Lancaster Gazette*, 17 Jun 1865.
- [18] "1871 Census".
- [19] William Field Log Book.
- [20] "1881 Census".
- [21] T. Bulmer, History, Topography and Directory of Furness & Cartmel, 1910.
- [22] *Manchester Mercury*, 5 Nov 1799.
- [23] *Lancaster Gazette*, 8 May 1824.
- [24] B. Copeland, "Allithwaite Mill," www.cartmel-peminsula-lhs.org.
- [25] *Lancaster Gazette*, 17 Sept 1803.
- [26] *Chester Chronicle*, 24 Nov 1826.
- [27] *The Yorkshire Post*, 16 Dec 1903.
- [28] *Westmoreland Gazette*, 5 Jun 1915.
- [29] Cope's Directory, After 1926.
- [30] P. Mannex, History & Directory of Furness and Cartmel, 1882.
- [31] *Lancaster Gazette*, 2 Aug 1879.
- [32] *Kendal Mercury*, 17 Apr 1858.
- [33] *Kendal Mercury*, 10 Jul 1858.