
THE STORY OF GLOUCESTER PUBS- LONGER VERSION

Gloucester had as many pubs and taverns as it did churches. There used to be a saying 'as sure as God is in Gloucester' reflecting the presence of so many places of worship. In addition to the many parish churches, we also had friaries and monasteries. Blackfriars, Whitefriars, Greyfriars, Black canons of St Augustin, Benedictine monks etc. etc. By 1738 there were 115 licensed inns and alehouses in the city and given a population of about 5000, that is one pub for every 44 citizens. These establishments have nearly all vanished, but Gloucester's ale houses still survive and are mostly flourishing. All these religious houses had large breweries as part of their normal business so were a good source of ale. We will be visiting the most notable or historical today and we start with:

THE OLD BELL. As you can see only the upper floors of a once grand and important house remain. Built 1665 – so Jacobean in style. Originally built for Thomas Yate, apothecary, and onetime Mayor. Supposedly made from the timbers of the Mayflower- the ship that carried the Pilgrim Fathers to America. The small, panelled sitting room (now a bar room) has a magnificent fireplace installed for Yates's first marriage in 1650. Allegedly the house was haunted. It once formed part of the much larger Bell Hotel which was the centre of Gloucester's cultural scene in the Georgian and Victorian eras, it was a coaching inn and was the haunt of Robert Raikes in his younger days- he used to drink here with his pal Gerry Tugwell- both were apparently quite disreputable and were once shown the door by the landlady, Elizabeth Whitefield until she realised who Raikes was- he was known in his youth as Bobby Wildgoose! The Bell Inn also features in Henry Fielding's novel Tom Jones, and it was the birthplace and early dwelling place for George Whitefield the notable Methodist and Evangelist. In the 1840s Susannah Marsh took over the running of the Bell Hotel in Southgate Street after the death of her husband Thomas, and then her son Henry (aged 23). The daughter, Martha, who was born and baptised here in 1813, never married but ran the pub and hotel, leaving £28,000 in her will when she died in 1885-approx £1.6 million today. She is buried in the family grave in St Mary de Crypt churchyard which we will visit shortly.

CAFÉ RENE. Originally part of the old Golden Hart or Heart, it is a mediaeval building and records show it was an inn in the 18th century. The so-called Roman well, which is a feature of the pub today, stood in the courtyard of the Golden Hart and was in all probability used by the Franciscan Friars who inhabited Greyfriars. Records show that wells were a common garden feature in old Gloucester so this may just be a survivor of the mediaeval period. There are extensive cellars underneath the area that are supposedly haunted. The Café lies in the old Saxon

Street called Marylone. The courtyard was covered over after the 1970s and Café Rene opened in 1987 as the Greyfriars but took the current name in 1998.

THE CROWD TAVERN. **(If the guide does not wish to visit the crypt this section can be covered from Marylone looking through the fence)** The location of this tavern in the crypt of St Mary's church is most unusual; It was active from 1576 for about 100 years. Records show that gunpowder was stored here during the 1643 siege of Gloucester. The crypt covers most of the ground underneath the church. Half of it is still a charnel house but the side nearest to Marylone was cleared of bones and put to commercial use. The tavern, like the Golden Hart, probably got its beer from the old Greyfriars brewery. In Victorian times the crypt was re-furbished with brickwork to 'modernise' the interior.

Look briefly at the Marsh grave and then the following

DANIEL MOUSELL ONE TIME PROPRIETER OF THE RAM HOTEL in Southgate Street. His grave is in St Mary de Crypt churchyard. Daniel Mousell was proprietor of the Ram Hotel who died December 24th, 1851, aged 57 years.

HENRY DANCER LANDLORD OF THE BERKELEY INN

The Berkeley Inn was just south of St Mary de Crypt church, so it was appropriate for Henry and his family to be buried here as parishioners.

'Henry Dancer, landlord of the Berkely Inn on Southgate Street and his wife Sophia 1837'.

Leave the churchyard and enter Southgate St.

THE BERKELEY INN.

The Berkely was just south of St Mary de Crypt as you can see in this old photo.

BLACK SWAN HOTEL.

This building was an hotel built between 1849-1850 Designed by the architects Hamilton and Medland. Built of three storeys, attic, and cellar. Fine symmetrical Italianate Street façade, faced in Ashlar of three bays flanked by wider, slightly projecting end bays. Closed in 2004 and was re-purposed as apartments.

THE WHITESMITH'S ARMS 81 SOUTHGATE ST. (Omit because of time constraints)

The Whitesmiths Arms was a beer house by 1871. It was extended into the adjacent building in 1996 which was found to be a rare survivor from the 15th century as most of the buildings in the area were demolished during the Siege of Gloucester in 1643. A Whitesmith was a metal worker who does finishing work on iron and steel such as

filling, lathing, burnishing, or polishing. The term also refers to people who worked on light coloured metals and is sometimes used as a synonym for 'tinsmith'.

THE NEW COUNTY HOTEL.

The hotel as it is at present dates to 1879 when it became a commercial and posting hotel. It was the first commercial premises to have telephone. It closed in 1936 and after extensive refurbishment opened as the New County. However, the history of the building goes back much further, originally known as The Ram, as we have seen just now Daniel Mousell was one of the earlier landlords. The New County started its life as 'The Old Ram'. The Old Ram was remodelled in 1879 and became a commercial and posting hotel. The Ram was the first commercial premises in the city to have a telephone. The first documented landlady was Mrs Elizabeth Drewitt until 1885. The Ram closed in 1936 and after extensive refurbishment re-opened as The New County.

ROBERT RAIKES HOUSE. A merchant's house dating from 1560 and used by Raikes, from 1772 onwards, as a dwelling house and business premises for the Gloucester Journal which he owned and edited. Raikes was the promoter of the Schools on Sunday movement, and he used the garden at the rear as an outdoors classroom in which Raikes's Ragged Army as his scholars were known were given educational instruction. Samuel Smith bought it and restored it in 2008 at a cost of £4.5 million and opened it as the Robert Raikes House pub. Before this though, in the back-garden area there was a pub/drinking den called The Mucky Duck that was accessed through the garden gate.

THE CROSS KEYS INN. Situated down Scruddelone- or Shroud Lane, where the shroud makers plied their trade, shrouds were what you were buried in if you were poor. The building is early to mid 16th Century- originally three cottages but it appears in licensing records from 1720 onwards. The sign of the cross keys signified that the inn was supplied by one of the nearby monastic houses. Cross keys are also the symbol of St Peter's Abbey, now the Cathedral so that is probably the most likely affiliation.

From the Cross Keys look at the rear of the Fleece – just out of interest-some recent activity to establish a pop-up bar is evident. Take the party down Mercers Entry noting the Masonic Hall as you go past. Explain that the Entry was also known as Fox's Passage, Love Lane and Pinchbelly Lane and briefly explain these with the aid of the mosaic outside the entry in Westgate Street.

THE FLEECE HOTEL. The Fleece was built in about 1500. It became known as the Golden Fleece in 1665 which reflected the importance of the wool trade to Gloucester but that was dropped as wool declined in value. The suppression of the

monasteries -1534-1539 meant that ownership passed to The Dean and chapter of Gloucester Cathedral. They were the principal owners but by 1770 the Inn was in a sorry state and the Dean offered it to the mayor and burgesses for £150. The Inn passed into private hands in 1799 and remained so until its recent demise. Underneath the building is a 12th century undercroft which is tunnel-vaulted and supported on Norman pillars – a suitable fireproof storage area for a merchant but used latterly as a bar the Monks Retreat. The building's future use is unclear at present, it was in the ownership of the city council and some internal work to bring it back to its original condition was in progress until an arson attack some years ago brought the work to a halt. Since then, a property development company has been involved in its reconstruction and this continues as a work in progress.

THE SWORD INN. This is as far as we know the original name dating from 1680. It was in the ownership of the City Sword Bearer at the time a Mr Messenger. It has been known as the Union and the House of the Tailor of Gloucester. The former to celebrate the unification of Ireland with England in 1847 and the latter celebrating the fact that the right-hand building with the false front was the workshop of the real Tailor of Gloucester John Prichard. Elaborate on the Beatrix Potter connection and briefly tell the real story and what Beatrix made of it,

THE FOUNTAIN INN. One of the oldest known sites associated with the brewer's trade. The inn has had various names, Savages Inn, the Catherine Wheel as well as the Fountain. The newly crowned nine-year-old King Henry III gifted the Inn to one Peter Poictevin in 1216. He was Peter de Roches the Bishop of Winchester and originally from Poitou (Charente) who 'crowned' the new boy king. Henry remains the only monarch not to be crowned in Westminster Abbey since the conquest and it was not unusual for mediaeval kings to give grants of land in provincial cities to those that had done them an especial service. The appropriately named John Taverner held the premises in the early 1300s and then Sybilla Savage held the place in the mid-1450s. It was known as the Catherine Wheel in Tudor times and was in the tenure of Thomas Bell the eldest son of Sir Thomas Bell of Black Friars fame in 1538. The premises became known as the Fountain Inn in the 17th century, and it is believed that it procured its water from the Trinity well just outside in Westgate Street. The plaster relief of William III is said to commemorate a brief visit of the monarch to Gloucester early in the reign of William and Mary. There were pockets of Jacobite dissenters in the area-supporters of King James II and the Stuart cause, and these met in an upper room just here-point it out. William is said to have ridden his horse up the stairs to frighten the living daylights out of the dissenters.

(This story is probably not true) The inn has the distinction of being the last of its kind to brew its own beer on the premises before being tied into a major brewery.

THE OLD CROWN INN. Originally known as simply the Crown, it dates to the 13th century, it was large and incorporated a blacksmith, a saddler, and a bakery. Little wonder that it was coaching inn as well. It was the centre of operations of Lt Col Massey during the civil war siege of 1643. In the early 1600s it was briefly known as the Tabard but reverted to the Crown under the tenure of Thomas Hale a Sergeant at Arms to King James I. During the civil war it was the subject of attention by the royalist artillery and was hit by 'a bullet of some 20lbs in weight that crashed through an upper chamber and fell into someone's bed and slept there undisturbed' By 1680 it was renamed Old Crown because of another inn of the same name somewhere in the city. It was upgraded in 1730 and became the staging place for traffic between Gloucester, Ross, Hereford, and Monmouth. The coach timetable was leisurely for the operator arrived in the city on a Monday and the return journey would be made sometime in the same week! In 1744 the inn was used as a recruitment centre for His Majesty's Own Regiment, but it ceased trading in October 1760 and was bought by Alderman Benjamin Saunders, Mayor in 1745 who was a wine and spirit merchant and an entrepreneur. In October 1990, the pub was re-established by Samuel Smith's Brewery.

THE WHITE LAMP INN.

At one time the building was incorporated into the Old Crown but as you can see it became a stand-alone ale house/inn in 1900.

THE DICK WHITTINGTON. Originally St Nicholas House the town house of the Whittington family who owned the manor and estates at Pauntley, near Newent. This was between 1311 and 1546. Dick Whittington was born in the 1350s the third son of William Lord of Pauntley. The rags to riches story about him walking to London to seek his fortune is just that, a piece of folklore. He was apprenticed at the age of 13 to John Fitzwaryen a merchant banker and close family friend. Dick proved to be an astute businessman, became court mercer, and bankrolled several foreign wars for Henry IV. He was Mayor of London 4 times 1397 to 1420 and married princess Alice. Elizabeth I allegedly stayed here in 1574, It became a pub in 1980.

THE LOWER GEORGE INN. Notable since the early 16th century as a coaching inn and one that accommodated travelling salesmen. It was upgraded with a new fascia in 1820 or so and became a fashionable venue. Used to be known at one time as The Pig Inn. Lower George because there was an Upper George further up Westgate Street.

THREE COCKS LANE AND THE KINGS HEAD

We start to retrace our steps noting in passing Three Cocks Lane (named after an old inn) and the site of another 18th century inn known as The Kings Head: This was operated by Benjamin Saunders who also ran a popular coffee shop and meeting/eating room in the Cathedral precinct known as the Great Room. It is mentioned also in the Diary of a Cotswold Parson the work of the Rev Francis Witts. The diary covers the years 1820 to 1852 and records the fact that as a magistrate, he would travel by horse or carriage from Lower Slaughter where he lived via Cheltenham (that was the regular route then) to Gloucester on a Monday to attend the Sessions and return on the Friday. He records that the magistrates used to convene in the Kings Head before crossing to the Booth Hall where the sessions were held. We also pass the site of the Lamprey Inn at Number 56 Westgate Street once known as the Westgate but earlier as the Gresham Hotel in 1927 when it was on the opposite side of the road. Also mention the Comfy Pew, possibly an inn at some stage and the nearest establishment to the Cathedral.

At this point in the tour the guide can simply continue up Westgate St and go past the Theatre Vaults or take the party past The Comfy Pew and follow the route describe below:

THE GREAT ROOM. (to the rear of the Gloucester Hussars memorial - No 9 on plan of the Abbey)

This establishment was operated by Benjamin Saunders- one time Mayor and an astute businessman with a variety of business ventures mostly in entertainment and drinking establishments. The Great Room was built 1735-1736 on the site of the bishop's coach house and stables. Comprising 2 storeys and dormers as well as a ballroom with (later) a mezzanine floor. The place was designed for the holding of dances and assemblies for the well-to-do and fashionable citizens of the area, it also served as a coffee house and avenue for music recitals and public breakfasts where guests could play battledore and shuttlecock to the accompaniment of a band playing appropriate music. When dances were held, they took place on the mezzanine floor and all the onlooker from outside could see were the tantalizing glimpse of ladies' ankles as they glided by during a waltz!!

THE ABBEY WATERMILL AND BREWERY (Number 14 and 16 on Abbey plan).

Take the party through the archway into Millers Green. Point out the Parliament Room and explain that this was where the Domesday Book was initiated by William I during the Christmas Parliament of 1085. The brewery was where No 6 Millers Green now stands- it was right at the end of the Parliament Room adjacent to the Cathedral. The watermill was where the tall tree next to the Deanery now stands.

Carry on following the path of the river Twyver (The Fullbrook) marked by brick inlay underfoot walk between the bishops Palace (The Kings School) and the Abbey kitchen and cellars and reach the Infirmary arches. Walk round the back of the cathedral and out to St Johns Northgate.

THE RAM ETC.

The original Ram was in Northgate St and was taken down in 1865. First mentioned in the mid-14th C it was associated with St Peter's abbey and the landlords were also 'aqueductors' responsible for the water supply to the abbey. The carved lintel of the archway into the inn may be seen at the Folk.

Also mention The Abbey and the Northend Vaults (I don't know anything about them but still looking) and the new range of bars down St Aldgate St opened to take advantage of the opening of the University complex in the former Debenhams building.

THE IMPERIAL. (Northgate St)

Originally called The Plough, this inn appeared in licensing records in 1772, but was probably much older. It was purchased by Mitchell and Butler in 1898 who rebuilt it in their typical elaborately moulded glazed exterior tile exterior and was renamed The Imperial.

THE NEW INN.

This fine galleried inn is called The New Inn. Built between 1430 and 1450 by the Town Monk John Twyning- built from oak and chestnut framing it was the largest inn at the time in the county capable of accommodating 200 persons. The proclamation of Mary Tudor's succession to the throne was made at Gloucester Cross in 1553 and the Inn was full to the brim with the vast array of noblemen and their adherents that seemed to be needed for this solemn occasion. By the 18th century it was an important stage point for the Gloucester to London coaches and all manner of exhibitions and shows were held here over the centuries. A Real Tennis court was installed in the rear courtyard in 1649 and the Lion and Serpent have been locked in mortal combat for, probably, as long as that; they symbolise the triumph of good over evil. The Coats of Arms of the city can be seen on the galleried area. The simpler one above dates from the De Clare family who were Earls of Gloucester up until the battle of Bosworth Field- the Tudor coat was granted in 1538- the roses are those of York and Lancaster and the boars head is taken from the badge of Richard III Duke of Gloucester. The sword of state granted to the city can be seen in the mayor's parlour as can a replica of the cap of maintenance. The horseshoes and nails represent mediaeval ironworking in the city. The upper coat the chevronels and red rondels are in use today (adopted in 1647) the chevronels from the De Clare family

and the rondels or torteaux are from the arms of the Bishop of Worcester which see incorporated Gloucester until 1541. Go outside through the small passage to the left of the carvery (the original stables) and see how big the Inn is, tell visitors of the origin of eavesdropping. End the tour here or walk up to the Cross and go right to cover the Theatre Vaults or left for Lemon and Parker.

THE THEATRE VAULTS. The Theatre Royal has long since been rebuilt and its most recent incarnation was as the Poundstretcher shop. The Theatre Vaults located at Number 30 (now number 152) Westgate Street was a popular inn especially with the actors and their admirers during and after theatrical performances. It is possible that Charles Dickens may have used the Vaults as he often read his plays here. The outline of the theatre and entrance to the Pit can still be seen from the upper floors of 26 Westgate looking west. Take your party down Northgate St after looking at the site of the Lemon and Parker

THE LEMON AND PARKER. The location is now Waterstones bookshop but until it's closure in the 1970s, it was a very popular place to visit from about the 1900s. Named after the founders at its height it boasted a conservatory to the rear and had 3 bars and 50 staff.

These tour notes are based on the original work by Darrel Kirby, 'The Story of Gloucester's Pubs' The History Press 2010. Additional material taken from Historic Pubs of Gloucester at www.cityofgloucester.co.uk. Westgate, Gloucester from Wikipedia, various sources from within St Mary de Crypt church, Southgate Street Townscape Heritage Educational Resources (Lesson 2), John Rhodes BGAS and, of course, from Gloucester Civic Trust's Phil Moss.