

I'LL DRINK TO THAT

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I am often asked what is the difference between a 'pub' and an 'inn', and to be honest the distinction now appears to be quite blurred (and that is before we have a drink)!

Strictly speaking an 'inn' was supposed to provide some sort of overnight accommodation - often stabling for your horse and some sort of food as well as drink - whereas a public house was only required to sell the drink. In many places, before the 16th century, monasteries provided such hostelry, and the location of inns close to places of worship is sometimes because the church took over that role after the dissolution.

At Ash the house known as Hartshorn, next to the cemetery (below), was once an inn providing food and drink for parishioners from the outlying parts of the parish on a Sunday. Church House at West Horsley, next to St Mary's Church, was likewise once a church-run inn, whilst in many places (even into recent times) the Parish Council or Vestry used to regularly meet at the local village pub.



Nowadays there are public houses with 'inn' in their name that no longer have rooms, and most public houses seem to serve more food than drink, so the distinction between the various classes of establishment probably no longer applies. But they certainly did in the past. At a tavern (usually in a large town or city) wine could be sold as well as ale, but in the countryside a number of places were simply beer houses, tipling houses or ale houses. Each had their own role to play and their own regulations.

In the early 13th century Magna Carta confirmed the standard measure of ale and wine. In 1226 the Assize of Bread and Ale, regulated local prices and in the late 15th century Licencing Statutes gave Justices of the Peace the right to supervise local ale sellers, although 'tippling houses', selling a small amount of ale from just one barrel, and inns serving 'victualing travellers', were apparently not covered.

At an ale house you sold ale that was brewed on the premises, whereas the tipling house and later beer house bought in its drink to sell on.

This brings me to the issue of what is 'ale' and what is 'beer'. Until the 15th century it was only ale that was brewed in this country. Ale is made of water, malted cereal and fermented yeast. It is the fermentation process that made ale safer to drink than water in medieval times. In the 15th century hops were introduced from the continent as a method of preserving the brew, and it is the introduction of this drink known as 'bier' that meant that brewing could be carried out on a more commercial scale and no longer

Horsell Village, Woking

There appears to have been a public house on the site of the Red Lion since at least the 16th century, although the present building dates only from the 18th century.

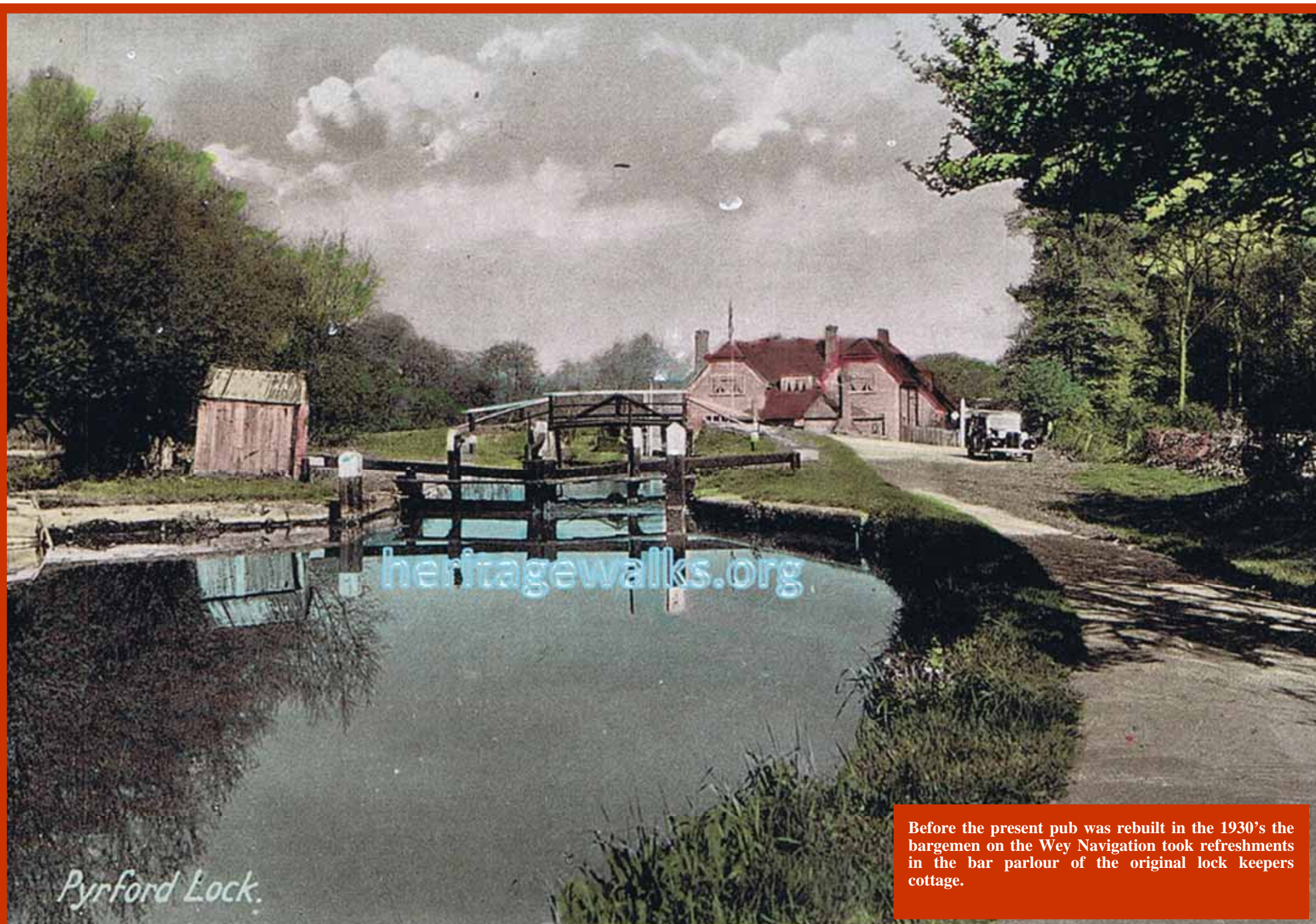
had to be made in an 'ale house' or small brewhouse.

Local Assize Records frequently note those selling ale who were not licenced to do so, and 'common brewers' selling to people who they shouldn't.



In many cases people had other jobs than just running a pub. In 1881, when the Kingfield Arms (above) was first recorded, William Bragg was a baker as well as a publican and by 1897 Owen Ernest Moore at the Cricketers in Pirbright was also operating a butcher's shop from a cart shed in the yard, whilst his wife ran the pub next door.

At Horsell the Red Lion apparently sold rose bushes grown on the local nurseries. Its first landlord is claimed to be Edward Roake in 1566, although the present building only dates from the early 18th century (with many later additions).



Before the present pub was rebuilt in the 1930's the bargemen on the Wey Navigation took refreshments in the bar parlour of the original lock keepers cottage.

At the other end of Horsell High Street, the Cricketers was once a village store, so although it is in part the oldest building of all Horsell's public houses, it is not necessarily Horsell's oldest pub (if you see what I mean).

In fact most of the area's current public houses are not 'original' with many being rebuilt in the 1920's and 30's such as the Blue Anchor at Byfleet and the Anchor at Pyrford.

All have a history to tell however, which is why some of us can normally be found doing 'research' in the bar after my Sunday Heritage Walks.



The original Blue Anchor at Byfleet (left) dated back to the 17th century and in the 1780's was a beerhouse known as Hollydays. It was replaced by the present building (below) in the 1920's.



THE 'TABUT' AT RIPLEY - FINED FOR TAKING 'EXCESSIVE PROFITS'!



The history of the Talbot at Ripley is long and interesting. In 1566 Robert Saunder, the manor's ale taster, presented that 'Agnes and George Stanton are common innkeepers in Ripley and they sell their victuals too expensively'. Their inn was the 'Tabut' and in the 1570's the manorial court books regularly fined them for taking excessive profits.

One of their successors at the pub, Richard Staunton, in 1636 likewise found himself in

front of the Manor Court when 'on several occasions since the last court, has held and permitted illicit games at his inn in Ripley against the laws and statutes of this English realm'. He was fined 2s 6d, but what the 'illicit' games were we do not know, although a later landlord in 1752 is known to have arranged cock fights on the premises for Admiral Boscowen of Hatchlands at East Clandon.

By this time the Talbot Hotel had gone up-market with the opening of the turnpike road in

1749, becoming a staging post where in 1763 a fresh pair of horses to take the traveller onto Kingston and back could be hired at a cost of 13s 6d.

Twenty years later it was to become the post office for the area, from where post to Woking was distributed for almost a hundred years until the railway took the trade away from the village to a new sorting office by Woking Station.

THE ANCHOR AT RIPLEY - FAMED FOR ITS CUSTOMER CARE BY CYCLIST'S



Whilst the Talbot lost out when the turnpike road ceased to be used by stage coaches, the Anchor at Ripley was on the brink of finding its fortune and fame.

The old inn may have originally been almshouses founded upon the dissolution of Newark Priory in 1539, but part if not all was a 'message called and bearing the sign of the

Anchor' by 1677 when it was recorded along with another property between it and the churchyard.

The name presumably had been chosen to attract the sailors using the route via Guildford to Portsmouth, but in the late Victorian times it was cyclists using the route that made a beeline for the comforts

of the old inn and the welcome of its landlady, Mrs Dibble, and her two daughters, Annie and Harriet. When Annie died in 1895, closely followed by her sister the following year, the cyclists got together to pay for a window to be placed in the nearby church to honour them (and their mother who passed away in 1887).