

Old Cowbridge - the pubs and alehouses (from the parish magazine of June 1977)

I was very interested to read Mr Selwyn Davies's and Mr Ralph Bird's early memories of Cowbridge, and I hope my recollections will prove equally interesting and may jog a few memories.

The Railway Inn (*later Basil's Brasserie, top of Eastgate*)

The licensees were Mr and Mrs Billie Davies. Mrs Davies had a lovely face, but unfortunately was handicapped in that her head, by some muscular aberration, was twisted towards her shoulder.

The Edmondes Arms (*cornerwise, across the road*)

The licensee was Mr Mike Fitzgerald, who had a wife, three sons and a daughter. The entrance, as I remember, was via a porch in Aberthin Road.

The Commercial (*opposite the entrance to Druids Green*)

The licensee was Mr Morgan Morgan, who had a reddish beard, and was known affectionately as 'Mr Commercial'. It was at the time when the navigators were building the railway between Cowbridge and Aberthaw. Mrs Morgan later lived in West House, Cowbridge.

The Druids (*on the corner of Druids Green*)

The licensee was Mrs Thomas, with her sons (mother and brothers of Mrs Forster). One son, Charles, was a member of the Cowbridge rugby team when Mr Thomas Thomas of Stallcourt, Llanblethian was captain. Mr Thomas Thomas was the father of Mr Harry Thomas, who, I am glad to say, is still with us and still going strong (he was living in Beechcourt, Broadway, Llanblethian). The playing field was behind the old Post Office (Eastgate). I was born not far from there (the cottages have since been demolished). That was where I was introduced to the rugby ground when I was not more than four years old, as my father used to carry me on his shoulders to watch the matches. The players made a great fuss of me.

On the way to the Bridge Inn, we pass Theresa's, the hairdressers, where there used to be a fruiterer's owned by a Greek gentleman. One day he was seen polishing the apples in the good old Army fashion, so he did not stay long after that!

The Bridge Inn (*corner of the Limes*)

This was where Mr Harold Phillips now lives, and the licensee was Mr Sol warren, who with his sons carried out a painters and decorators business. By the way, the instruments of the local Town Band were kept in part of the building.

The Blue Bell (*now Filco*)

The licensee was either Mrs Humphries and her daughter, or Mrs Humphries and her mother, one of the two. I cannot remember which.

The Butcher's Arms (*beautician's, corner of Birds Lane*)

The licensees were Mr and Mrs Lewis Jenkins, no relation of Lewis Jenkins of the Vale of Glamorgan Brewery and Graig House. (Lewis Jenkins, an alderman of the town, built Graig House).

The Royal Oak

The licensee was Mr Roberts, who had a son, Albert.

The Horse and Groom

Where the present Horse and Groom stands is not the original site. I think it was a few doors away, near the river.

Three Boars Head

Now Peter Alan's estate agency. The licensee was Mrs Howell with her daughter Celia and two sons. I remember Celia had lovely red hair.

The White Lion

Adjoining Three Boars Head

The Cowbridge Arms

Adjoined The Duke. The licensee was Mrs Thomas, who still has connections in the area (perhaps Aberthin). On the east side, it adjoined Davies the curriers, where the Co-op now stands.

The Duke

This was run by Mrs Spencer, before her son.

The Bear

Amongst my earliest recollections are the Thomases of the well-known Vale family, whose only son Harry died at a fairly early age.

The Masons Arms

This was a popular meeting place of the farmers in pre-war days.

The Bush

This was situated on the corner of the Butts. The licensee was Mrs Hayter, who was a tall woman and had a back like a ramrod, and often wore a canvas apron. She was the mother of Sam Hayter, late of the Horse and Groom.

The Pelican

The licensees were Mr and Mrs Jenkins, who had a son, Monty.

The Westgate

The licensee was known as Illtyd the Westgate. He was the father of Mrs Addie Russell.

(recollections of Miss Evelyn Hopkins, Broadway House, Llanblethian)

(b. 1889)