

The Coopers' Arms and the Great Northern Hotel, 97 and 99 Westgate



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Wakefield Historical Society welcomes all those interested and curious about the remarkable history of Wakefield and beyond. We encourage research, provide talks, publish books, and are happy to respond to historical enquiries.

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The Upper Westgate Heritage Action Zone (HAZ)

Wakefield Council and Historic England are investing nearly £4 million pounds in 2020-2024 to regenerate historic buildings in the Upper Westgate Conservation Area to bring new life and make it flourish again. As their contribution to the project, members of Wakefield Historical Society are researching the buildings and yards and publishing their stories.

The Coopers' Arms

On the west side of the car park on the corner of Smyth Street and Westgate is the extant building which was the Great Northern Hotel. This was rebuilt in 1875 on the site of the Coopers' Arms which can be seen on the right in the Thomas Kilby drawing of the 1850s.



Excerpt from Thomas Kilby's sketch of Westgate, showing the Coopers' Arms on the right with the barrels outside, and the sheep emerging from Ings Lane, later named Garden Street. The line of the street can still be seen on the present-day car park.

The Coopers' Arms dates to before 1814 when it was mentioned in a memorial in the Registry of Deeds between William Scott of Upton Ward Mill in Nottinghamshire and Elizabeth his wife, Robert Pashley

of Worksop liquor merchant, and George Justice of Worksop, druggist.¹

The following year it was sold by lease and release (a method used before modern conveyance) from William and James Scott, to James Sheppard maltster and John Bell, innkeeper, (trustee nominated by James Sheppard).² The property was described as a '*messuage used as an inn*' known as the Coopers Arms. A messuage is a dwelling house with outbuildings and land assigned to its use. These were listed as: '*malt kiln, barn, stables, foldstead and two cottages now converted to stables adjoining, late in the occupations of James Sheppard, John Bell & Benjamin Sheppard, James Hesling & William Wigglesworth, now in the occupation of James Sheppard, John Bell and Benjamin Sheppard*'.



Excerpt from the Enclosure Map of 1790s
By kind permission of West Yorkshire Archives,
ref: QD5/3/Vol 4/28
Photograph ©Lesley Taylor

There was also the right to two pews in the parish church.

The enclosure map of the 1790s shows plot 152 on the west of Ings Lane belonging to Ann Scott. This consisted of a house, yard and garden covering 1 rood and 14 perches, which is approximately just over a quarter of an acre. Presumably Ann Scott was an ancestor of William

¹ Registry of Deeds, 25 Nov 1814, Volume GD, page 34.

² Registry of Deeds, 2515 and 16 Nov 1815, Volume GH, page 333.

and James Scott from whom they had inherited the property.

Further records in the Registry of Deeds show that James Sheppard remained as landlord for some time; he was also recorded in Baines' Directory of 1822.

The Registry of Deeds also records mortgage agreements, and an indenture was recorded in 1819 between James Sheppard and John Clegg which was likely to be a mortgage, as in 1830 a Surrender of Mortgage was memorialised between William Ottley of Wakefield who was the executor of the will of John Clegg, and James Sheppard. The occupiers are shown at that date as John Milnes and George H. Knowles. James Sheppard was, however, recorded in the 1832 Poll Book as an elector by right of owning a freehold corn warehouse in the Coopers' Arms Yard, with Thomas Deplidge being the tenant.

William Brear became landlord in 1839. He had previously been living on Garden Street; the baptism of William Brear's son on 9th August 1839 showing that he was a grocer. Brear was recorded in the 1841 census as the landlord of the Coopers' Arms, age 30, with his wife Sarah age 25, and a one-year-old son. In a separate household at the same address were John Whitaker age 25, Sarah Broadhead age 15, Hannah Rothery age 15, all servants, and Joseph Tuke age 20 an attorney's clerk. This must have been a young, lively household.

In 1842 John Clapham was indicted for stealing nine ivory bagatelle balls from William Brear.³ Bagatelle was one of the popular entertainments provided in inns and taverns at the time.⁴ It was played on a table similar to a snooker table, but unlike snooker there were 'cups' on the table itself with different scores. The Chairman of the Chester Bagatelle League writes: *'Bagatelle was probably at the height of its popularity in this period. In the early 19th Century, as gambling was seen as a serious problem, bagatelle was deemed morally*

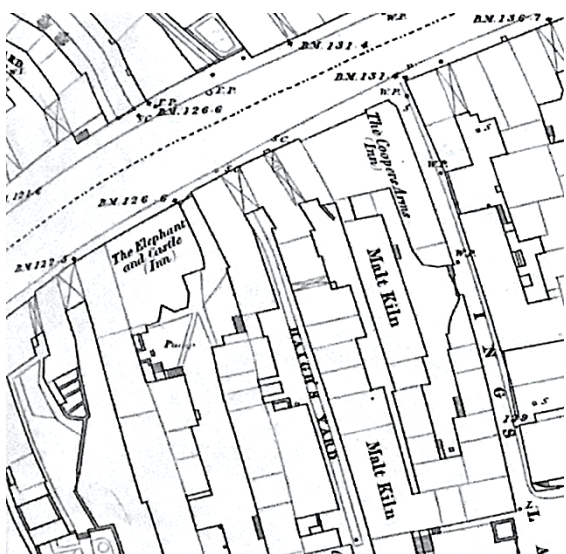
³ 3 March 1842, Bradford Observer.

⁴ Information from email from Chester Bagatelle League Chairman:
<https://www.chesterbagatelle.co.uk>

dangerous enough by the government for it to be included in its Gaming Act legislation of 1845.

Brear moved on in 1843, and became the landlord of the York Hotel near the top of Westgate, where he kept a casino but was declared bankrupt in 1850.⁵ Brear then returned to his previous trade, being the proprietor of a grocer's shop on Bread Street in the 1851 census.

An older man was the next landlord; Edward Furbisher being recorded in the 1851 census as age 57, with his wife Elizabeth age 44, John Roylance age 44 who was an ostler, two female servants, and a lodger. One of a number of inquests was held at the inn in 1847 on Charles Stevens a prisoner who had died at the House of Correction.



1850s map showing the Coopers' Arms and the entrance to the yard in Ings Lane.

The inn was advertised to be let in September 1854: *'that old established and well accustomed public house, called the Coopers' Arms' with "a very excellent brewhouse, good stabling for between 20 and 30 horses, with granary above, and other premises and conveniences. The present occupier leaving on account of ill health'*¹⁶ The number of horses that could be stabled

⁵ 28 December 1850, Yorkshire Gazette.

⁶ 15 September 1854, Wakefield and West Riding Herald,

is notable. The entrance to the yard was from Ings lane, as can be seen on the 1850s map. Furbisher died in 1854, and left a will bequeathing his gold watch to his son Richard, and ensuring that his wife would be maintained in her widowhood, and his son supported until he was twenty-one.

Following this several landlords appear to have stayed for brief periods only, Henry Welsman and John Totty being the first two. John Totty was taken to court for not paying the full amount of a debt for spirits supplied by a wine and spirit merchant in Manchester.⁷ He was followed by James Hepworth and George Coggin. By January 1858, the Coopers' Arms was for sale with Joseph Coggin in occupation as landlord: *'to be sold on Friday 26th day of February at the house of John Coggin, the Coopers' Arms Inn..... all that old-established and well-accustomed Inn called the Coopers' Arms, with good stabling for twenty horses, coach-house, corn chambers, brewhouse, and other suitable out-offices, with a spacious yard, good malt-kiln, capable of steeping twenty-two quarters of Barley every eight days, situate in Westgate, in Wakefield aforesaid, now in the respective occupations of Mr John Coggin and Mr Thomas Depledge. The above property forms a very compact estate and being closely situated to the newly-erected railway station in Westgate is well worthy of the attention of any party wishing to obtain a profitable investment'*.⁸ The advantage of being close to the station was clear, particularly on market days when livestock brought by rail would be driven down the adjacent Ings Lane (later called Garden Street) to the market.

An Indenture registered in the Registry of Deeds in 1858,⁹ records the first mention of John Crosland of Thornes. It was made on 16th April 1858 between the Reverend Henry Dawson of Wakefield, John Stead of Wakefield bookkeeper, and William Otty of Wakefield, grocer of the first part; John Crosland of Thornes of the second part; and William Wordsworth of Blackgates, West Ardsley, land agent, of the third part,

⁷ 1 August 1856, Wakefield and West Riding Herald.

⁸ 12 February 1858, Wakefield and West Riding Herald.

⁹ Registry of Deeds: 1858, Volume UG page 109

and described John Coggin and Thomas Depledge as being the occupiers. As this was only a memorial to the original indenture, the purpose of it is not clear, it may be that it relates to a mortgage that John Crosland was raising.

The Leeds Times of 1st May 1858 describes a '*Curious Case*' at the County Court, when Sarah Ann Coggin (sic) daughter of Mr Coggin, the landlord of the Coopers' Arms Inn brought a case against William Boulton of Pincheon Street, tailor, to recover the sum of 14s 6d. It emerged that the money had been lent at various times, and spent in drink and playing bagatelle at the inn, and Sarah Ann had been joining in. Although the defendant had previously been acquitted of the debt at Quarter Sessions in January, he was nevertheless ordered to pay it forthwith.

In the same month, the Coopers' Arms was the scene of a drunken fight that ended with a death.¹⁰ William Henry Norbury, age 24, was charged at York Assizes with the manslaughter of Thomas Kilner on the 5th May. It was the day of the fortnightly fair, and a number of drovers and butchers were assembled in the inn. Norbury had been involved in a fight with a man called Field, friends had separated them, and Norbury was alone for a time. He then went into the back kitchen with a coal-rake in his hand and struck Kilner on the left side of his head, fracturing his skull. Kilner nevertheless then drank some brandy, danced to some music, and travelled in a cart six miles to Flockton. The jury found Norbury guilty, and the Judge said he must make an example of him and sentenced him to three years penal servitude.

John Coggin was not long at the Coopers' Arms, by the time of the 1861 census he was the landlord of the Dog Inn further down Westgate, and by June 1863 had died.¹¹

¹⁰ Leicester Guardian, 24 July 1858.

¹¹ Probate of 27 June 1863, John Coggin of Wakefield, innkeeper, died 16 June 1863, leaving effects under £450.

There is a reference to a Mr Thompson being the next landlord, but at the time of the 1861 census Joseph Newsome (sometimes spelt Newsom), age 56, was recorded as '*victualler*' at the Coopers' Arms with his wife, son, daughter and a female servant. Newsome became embroiled in controversy over the licence.¹² His daughter Sarah had married Michael Edwin Moran in Sandal parish church in 1860.¹³ Newsome had installed him as landlord of the inn following Moran giving him a bill of sale for £300. Newsome afterwards recovered on his bill of sale and ejected Moran, and then applied for a transfer of licence back to himself. But to do so, he needed Moran's consent which he would not give. Mr Gill the lawyer for Moran claimed that Moran had goods in the house worth more than £400, and having been ejected he was now unable to pay his creditors. Mr Barratt, the lawyer for Newsome, said that Moran wanted to cheat Newsome and had been lent a further £100 by Newsome the previous May, so that Newsome was now owed more than £400 by Moran and had to recover the debt. Newsome had given Moran a further £10 on leaving, and Moran had signed the back of all the licence papers and therefore given up possession. Moran claimed he had only signed the papers for the purpose of identification. However, the Bench were of the opinion that Moran had given up possession, whether by fraud or otherwise and the licence was granted to Newsome.

Mary O'Donnell attempted a sneaky robbery in 1864, by asking for a glass of ale, and while it was being drawn she went upstairs, and Joseph Newsome met her coming down with a pair of his father's boots. She was committed for trial.¹⁴

As might be expected, there was plenty of drunkenness leading to violence. In April 1865 Stephen Spencer of Newmillerdam was taken before the Mayor and ex-mayor for assaulting Joseph Newsome on the 21st May.¹⁵ He entered the inn when he was already quite drunk and

¹² Wakefield Free Press, 3 July 1863.

¹³ Sandal Magna parish records

¹⁴ Wakefield Free press, 27 February 1864.

¹⁵ Wakefield Free Press, 1 April 1865.

when Newsome refused to sell him a drink, took hold of him by the collar and threatened to strike. Newsome then sent for a constable and Mr Ward a police clerk, and Police Constable Johnson attended. Ward asked Spencer to leave which he did. PC Johnson said that he had known Spencer for ten or twelve years. Ward found Spencer later in Westgate, committing a nuisance and exposing himself. Spencer swore he knew nothing about the matter, but he was ordered to pay 13s 6d for the assault, and 10s 6d for being drunk, or ten days for each offence.

Anyone facing up to Joseph Newsome must have been a brave man, as in another case of assault on him, he is described as a burly fellow weighing at least 20 stones.¹⁶ Frank Bowers and four other men from the Alhambra Music Hall (a previous name for the Theatre Royal) had gone into the inn to play a game of bagatelle for 'glasses round'.¹⁷ Newsome told them that they were prohibited from playing a game of '101 up'¹⁸ and must only play to '61 up'. Newsome got hold of Bowers to try to throw him out, but Bowers kicked him in the stomach. The Bench believed Newsome, who was backed up by his daughter as a witness, but refused to pay him 5s (which Newsome said he would give to Clayton Hospital). Instead Bowers was ordered to pay 10s 6d which was paid by another person in the court. Bowers turned to the magistrates as he left and said, *'I have seen many donkeys in my time, but I have never seen such a lot of intellectual donkeys in my life!'*

Joseph Newsome came to a sad end just a year later, age 63, dying from poisoning, with a tailor being charged with his manslaughter.¹⁹ The coroner, Thomas Taylor, held the inquest on 9th and 10th April 1866, at the Coopers' Arms. It was noted that Newsome was in poor health and very corpulent. Newsome's wife Elizabeth (whom he had

¹⁶ Wakefield and West Riding Herald, 2 June 1865

¹⁷ Probably the loser had to buy the others a round of drinks, gambling on the outcome being illegal by this time. Information from email from Chester Bagatelle League Chairman: <https://www.chesterbagatelle.co.uk>

¹⁸ A score of 101 remains the winning score for singles games; like darts, the exact score has to be achieved.

¹⁹ Coroner's notebook, Ref: C493/K/2/1/100.

married in 1864) said that Newsome had a bad cold, and had been prescribed some medication by Benjamin Kemp (MD) which he had been taking, but he had been unable to sleep because of a bad cough. Mr Rigg who had been in the bar parlour had told Newsome he could get something for the cough that would help, and fetched a bottle of something that looked like water. He told Newsome to take half at night and the rest in the morning and Newsome took a dose. Mr Rigg appeared quite sober, and had been in the inn before and was on good terms with Newsome. Newsome told his wife that he felt like a drunken man, and he rambled in his speech when he went to bed at midnight. The following morning Mr Kemp was sent for again. Newsome's daughter, Sarah Moran, said that she had been living in the inn for the previous two years, and that Christopher Rigg, a tailor, Arthur Emmett, and a man called Baines had been in the bar parlour the previous night when her father had complained of his cough. She said that Rigg said that he had got the medicine from Mr Denniston, the druggist, and had paid 6d for it, having previously said that he could get some quinine and opium.

John Denniston of Westgate, chemist and druggist was the next to give evidence. He said that Rigg asked him for 5 or 8 grams of quinine (he forgot which) and was told that the dose was 1 gram every 3 hours. Rigg then asked him to add 6 to 8 drachms of opium or laudanum, and he again told him that a full dose was half a drachm. 2 and a half drachms were added to the bottle, which was then filled up with 6 oz of water. He wrote him a label showing '*3 tablespoons to be taken every 3 hours*', and Rigg left. At this point the inquest was adjourned, and resumed the following day with John Denniston continuing to give evidence. He said that he had dissolved the quinine in about 12 drops of diluted sulphuric acid, which was normal practice for dispensing chemists.

Benjamin Kemp, surgeon followed. He said that he had attended Newsome about 5 to 6 weeks ago as his legs were starting to swell, then again about 8 or 10 days before the time he died. When he arrived on the day of his death, Mrs Newsome had shown him the

bottle of medicine which was half full, and he could smell that it was opium or laudanum. He found Newsome almost unconscious, but when he shook him he seemed to rouse a little and recognised him, but then went to sleep immediately again. His face was livid, and the pupils of his eyes contracted, his pulse was feeble, and he was in a cold clammy sweat. Dr Kemp gave directions for hot coffee and brandy and water, and that he should have hot flannels soaked in mustard and water applied, but he considered there was little chance of him getting better. At the post mortem that afternoon he had found the stomach large with air and contained fluid, other areas were a little swollen and congested... Strangely the notes end in the middle of the results of the details of the post mortem.

The coroner concluded that Newsom had died from the opium being taken when he was already in a weakened state, and that Rigg should not have given it to him as he had no medical expertise. The jury gave the following verdict *'Joseph Newsome came by his death through laudanum being administered to him by Christopher Rigg without sufficient caution being exercised in the use of such a dangerous drug'*. The Coroner told the jury that this amounted to manslaughter and issued a warrant for Rigg to be taken into custody, but he allowed bail in two sureties of £50 each, and the prisoner was set at liberty.²⁰

Probate was granted to Joseph Newsome's son, Walter Newsom, a private in her Majesty's 75th Regiment of Foot. He left effects under £1000.

Charles Crosland was the next landlord,²¹ and drunken behaviour continued - the Leeds Times dated 24th November 1868 reported that Arthur Cunningham from Leeds stabbed Crosland below the knee because he would not serve him. The following year, the stable roof

²⁰ Wakefield and West Riding Herald, 13 April 1866.

²¹ Charles Crosland was the son of John Crosland senior who owned the Coopers' Arms and brother to John Crosland junior who became landlord in 1875. John Crosland junior was landlord of the Mark Lane Tavern in Thornes 1872-1875, and Charles Crosland was landlord there in 1886.

was badly damaged when a squib was thrown in on Bonfire night, igniting the straw.²² Charles Crosland, like Newsome, was clearly a man not to be crossed, being described as *'a very violent character, and has been frequently in trouble'* when he was taken to Court in 1870 for assaulting a Police Constable called Field. Crosland, who was very drunk, had been seen quarrelling with two females, and when Field told him to go home, he attacked him with a blow in the face, threw him down and kicked him insensible. He was fined £10, told to pay £3 compensation to Field, or face 6 months imprisonment.²³ Other articles that appear in the newspapers make it clear that he had a history of violence, and he may have been a supporter of prize-fighting as information about the whereabouts of such a fight in 1867 could be ascertained at the Coopers' Arms.²⁴

In Autumn 1870, the licence was transferred to William Marsland, who had kept the Vine Tree Inn at Newton.²⁵ But his tenure was short as he died on 3rd August the following year, leaving effects under £200, and the licence was transferred to his widow Jane.²⁶ Jane Marsland is recorded in the 1871 census with a daughter and a female domestic servant to support her, but apparently no other men in the household. It is interesting to conjecture the place of women in the inns of this period, and how they coped with what could be a drunken and rowdy clientele. Sarah Ann Coggin, daughter of John Coggin, and Sarah Moran, the daughter of Joseph Newsome (both previously mentioned) were involved in the business. Would the 'regulars' step in to help these women if there was trouble, or did they have to rely on the police?

Quarter Sessions Licence records dated 28th August 1872 valued the Coopers' Arms at £46; it records John Crosland of Thornes Lane as the owner, and Jane Marsland as landlord. The licence was transferred to

²² Wakefield Free Press, 6 November 1869.

²³ Bradford Daily Telegraph, 28 April 1870, Wakefield Express.

²⁴ Sporting Life, 28 September 1867.

²⁵ Wakefield Free press 3 September 1870.

²⁶ National Probate Calendar, proved 16 February 1872. (Marrsland, otherwise Marsland)

John Crosland Jr. on 25th August 1875, but just 9 days before, plans had been submitted to the Surveyor's department of the Council to rebuild. Great changes were afoot!

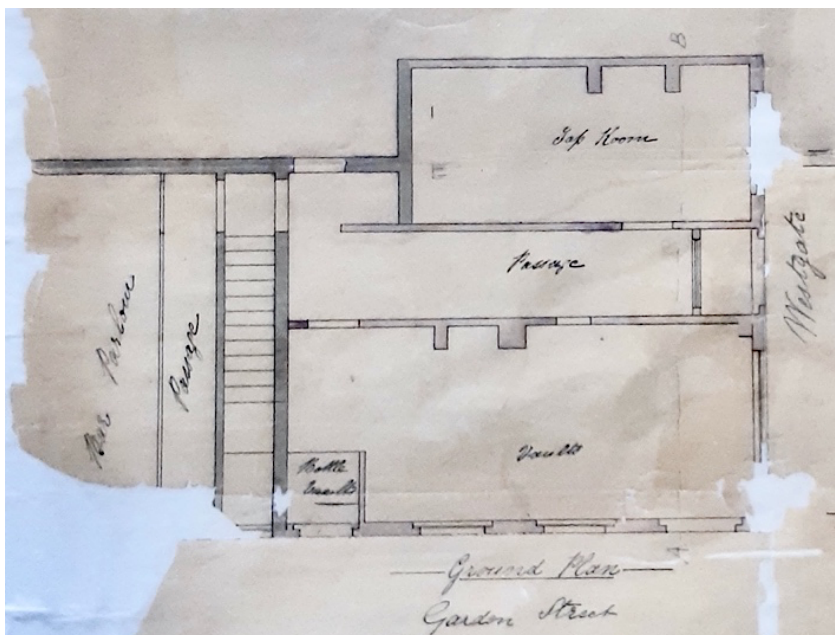
The Great Northern Hotel.



The building that was the Great Northern Hotel, 2021
© Shirley Levon

On 13th August 1875 John Crosland submitted plans to the General Works Committee for rebuilding, and also to the Local Board of Health since they included drains, water closets, ash pits, and cesspools.

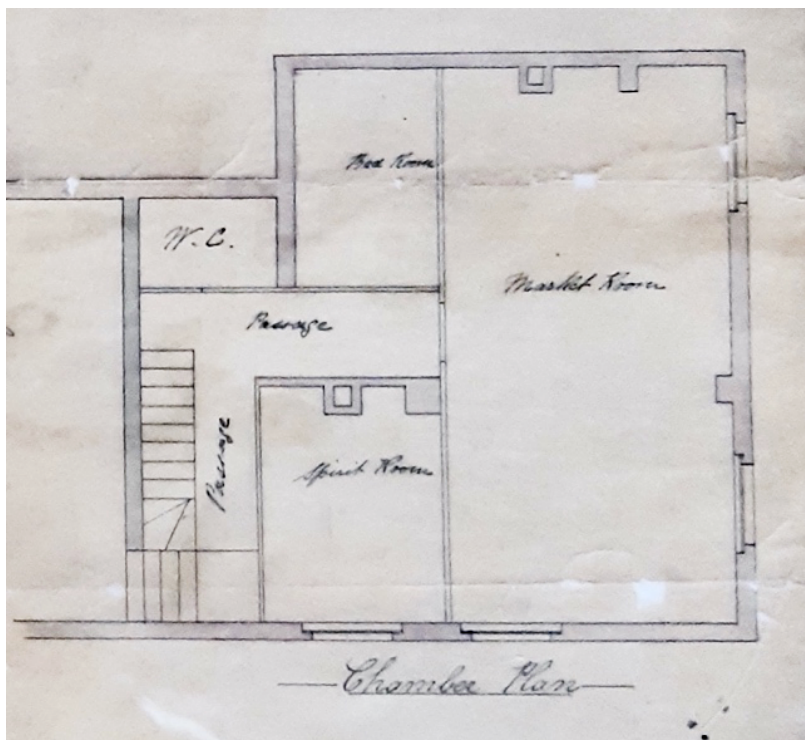
The rebuilding plans were in a very fragile state and were conserved by West Yorkshire Archives for Wakefield Historical Society. It was a major rebuilding, and how much, if any, of the Coopers' Arms was kept is unclear.



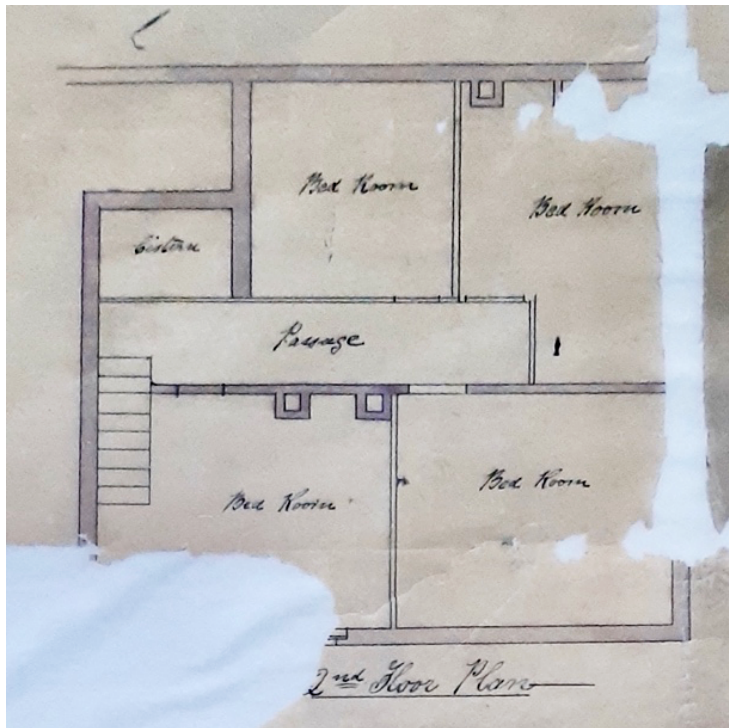
Plan to rebuild the Coopers' Arms, with Westgate to the right of the plan
and Garden Street at the bottom.

By kind permission of West Yorkshire Archives. Ref: WWD9/Box20/1220

On the ground floor, facing on to Westgate were rooms designated as vaults (with bottle vaults in one corner) and tap room with an entrance and porch between them. To the rear of these, stairs led up to the floors above, and behind them was the bar parlour. This part of the plan is lost, but it may be that there was a separate entrance from Garden Street.



On the first floor and across the front of the building facing Westgate was one large room designated as a 'market room'. The Coopers' Arms had been well used by the farmers, drovers and butchers at the cattle market, and it may be that Crosland wished to accommodate them better. The new room may have been used for monetary transactions between them. Behind the market room were a spirit room, a bedroom, and notably an indoor W.C.; many public houses only had outside facilities.



The second floor provided four bedrooms, and the cistern for the water supply.

The new building was named the Great Northern Hotel referencing the railway station opposite. The first station for the Great Northern Railway had been opened in 1856 on the south side of Westgate, but moved to the north side in 1867. Sheep and cattle would have been brought into Wakefield by train to take to the market, and of course, once sold, would have again been moved by train. Providing facilities for these busy traders would have been a profitable business.

It is not clear whether the present building was built to these plans, but the layout concurs with the central entrance and windows to the left and right, on the eastern side but not the entrance and doors and windows to the west where John Smith's Brewery offices were, although they appear to be of the same date. It is not known when the sculpted heads were added above each window, but John Goodchild, local historian, apparently thought that they related to the cattle market.

In 1878 the licence was transferred to George Henry Sykes, but the following year it was transferred to Alfred Ramsden, who remained as landlord for three years. He had previously been landlord of the Borough Market Hotel. Entertainment was seen to be an attraction and Ramsden advertised in 'The Era' on 28th November 1880: *'wanted for a very respectable Free-and-Easy, a young lady pianiste and vocalist. A comfortable situation, and salary good. Address at once with terms and photo (which will be returned) H. Ramsden, Great Northern Hotel, Westgate, Wakefield'*. The Era was a weekly paper established in 1838 by licensed victuallers and aimed at those in the trade. It may be that the post went unfilled as no-one answering that description appeared in the household in the census of 1881.

As might be expected, public houses were often the scene of violence, and there are many references in the newspapers to such events at the Great Northern. In October 1881, Alfred Ramsden and his wife Martha were roused at about 11.30pm by two men who demanded lodging for the night. When they were refused, one of the men, Thomas Bly, knocked Martha down, and when her husband went to her defence, he too was knocked down. Bly was fined £2 9s or prison for a month.²⁷

Like many of Wakefield public houses, inquests were often held in the Great Northern. In November 1881 inquests were held on a woman's

²⁷ Sheffield Daily Telegraph, 25th October 1881.

son born in the prison, and a daughter of a prisoner, both of whom it was found died of natural causes.²⁸

John Crosland senior died on 30th July 1881²⁹, but prior to his death the ownership was transferred from him, to George Bolton of Thornes Lane, and John Crosland's two sons John Crosland junior and Charles Crosland. The memorial in the Registry of Deeds refers to the indenture being made on 1st June 1881. All parties were described as being '*out of business*'.³⁰ It included the Great Northern Hotel with the maltkiln, barn, stables and foldstead, and also the two cottages adjoining converted to stables. Other messuages that John Crosland senior had erected on the same plot were included, in the tenures of Joseph Ramsden, William Leader, John Stell Deplege, & Mrs Robinson. Two other messuages were also listed, these were the present 101 and 103 Westgate. At least six other plots of land in Thornes were listed including the Mark Lane Tavern with four cottages on the same plot. There was also property in Union Street in Wakefield. This was a sizeable portfolio, considering that John Crosland was listed just as a 'warehouseman'.

On 5th July 1882, the licence was transferred to Joe Siswick, who had until then been the landlord of the Black Horse, on the opposite side of Westgate. He remained at the Great Northern for the next nine years. Just a month later Siswick was fined 40 shillings and 10 shillings or face three weeks in jail for keeping the pub open during prohibited hours. The Licensing Act of 1872 had restricted the closing time in towns to midnight.

Joe Siswick was also the proprietor of a cab and carriage business. He advertised in the Wakefield and West Riding Herald of 23rd March 1889 that he could now supply a '*fine new large hearse in ebonised wood*', as well as mourning coaches, a waggonette to carry twenty, landaus, cabs, Hansoms, dog carts, and that he had a fine stud of

²⁸ Wakefield Free Press, 26th November 1881.

²⁹ Probate Record

³⁰ Registry of Deeds: 1881, Volume 860, Page 704, Entry 829

**CARRIAGES FOR FUNERALS, WEDDINGS,
PLEASURE PARTIES, &c.
JOE SISWICK,
GREAT NORTHERN HOTEL, WESTGATE,
WAKEFIELD,**

BEGB to inform the Public that he has added to
his Stock of Carriages
A FINE NEW LARGE HEARSE
In ebonised wood, made expressly, on the most
approved principles and in the most elegant style, with
plate-glass panelled sides, emblematical devices, and the
latest invented appointments, including folding
shutters. Also comfortable and fashionable **MOURN-
ING COACHES.**
**FUNERALS SUPPLIED ON VERY REASON-
ABLE TERMS.**

**WAGGONETTE, TO CARRY 20, FOR EXCURSIONS, AT
1D. PER MILE EACH, CUSTOMERS CHOOSING THEIR
OWN ROUTE.**
Small Waggonette, Landaus, Cabs, Hansoms,
Dog Carts, &c.
Fine Stud of Horses, suitable for all occasions,—
Black, Grey, &c. Only skilful, careful Coachmen
employed.

Advertisement in the Wakefield and
West Riding Herald of 23rd March 1889,
© British Newspaper Archive

horses suitable for all occasions. The yard and stables accessed from Garden Street must have been a busy place, with cabmen, carriage and cart drivers, ostlers, and of course the customers. Siswick was justly proud of his horses, winning first prize for a cab horse, and his wife winning third prize for her pony in the Wakefield Horse Show in May 1890.³¹

The Siswick's daughter, Ellen, had married Edward Stapleton in May 1888, but just four years later her death was reported in the

Huddersfield Chronicle on 14th March 1892 as '*Strange Death of a Dewsbury Lady*'. Ellen, who was 29 years old, had taken to drink, and when her husband tried to take two bottles of stout from her, believing she had already had too much, she wrote to her parents asking them if she could come home because of the state of her health. She did not improve but became semi-conscious and died. Dr Kemp believed it was from a clot on the brain. The health of his daughter may have been part of Siswick's decision to leave the Great Northern, the license being transferred to Fred Dews the same year, although the Siswicks were still in the Great Northern at the time of the 1891 census.

³¹ York Herald, 5th May 1890.

**THE GREAT NORTHERN HOTEL,
WESTGATE, WAKEFIELD.
CHANGE OF PROPRIETORSHIP.**

JOE SISWICK,

ON Retiring from the above House, after conducting the Business for nine years, begs to thank his Customers for their liberal support, and to state that he has disposed of the concern to Mr. F. DEWS, of Ossett, who has had a large experience as a Licensed Victualler and Cab Proprietor, for whom he would ask a continuance of the public patronage granted to himself.

Frederick Dews had been the licensee of the Fleece inn in Ossett, and according to an online blog had had experience as a dyer.³² In 1893 he and a man called William Bird who was in his employ, were both charged with

aiding and abetting George Binns the landlord of the King's Arms at Horbury to be open at illegal hours between 11pm and 2am. Dews claimed that since the Kings' Arms was three miles from his home, they were 'travellers' and therefore entitled to 'refreshment' - apparently a point of law. The police went to the extent of measuring the distance and found it was 572 yards short of three miles, and all three men were fined.³³

In the Wakefield Free Press in July 1894, Dews advertised *'Waggonettes &c, for drives in the country, can be had on very reasonable terms of Frederick Dews, Cab proprietor, Great Northern Hotel'*.³⁴

Excursions into the country were popular for the many church groups and societies in Wakefield, and waggonettes

FREDERICK DEWS,
LATE OF THE
FLEECE HOTEL, OSSETT,
BEGS respectfully to announce that he has taken to the whole of the Business carried on by Mr. Siswick, and to state that the same will be conducted on the same lines as before.
He would call particular attention to the variety of Carriages and Horses kept on Hire for all purposes. Funerals undertaken.
COACHES, CABS, WAGGONETTES, &c.
The Most Modern Patent Hearse and Mourning Coach.

³² https://www.ossett.net/ossett_spa.html.

³³ Sheffield Independent, 4th February 1893.

³⁴ Wakefield Free Press, 14th July 1894.

provided a way to take large numbers, for example, in 1895 Dews conveyed a group of anglers to Cold Hiendley in waggonettes. Such hire would have provided a useful income.

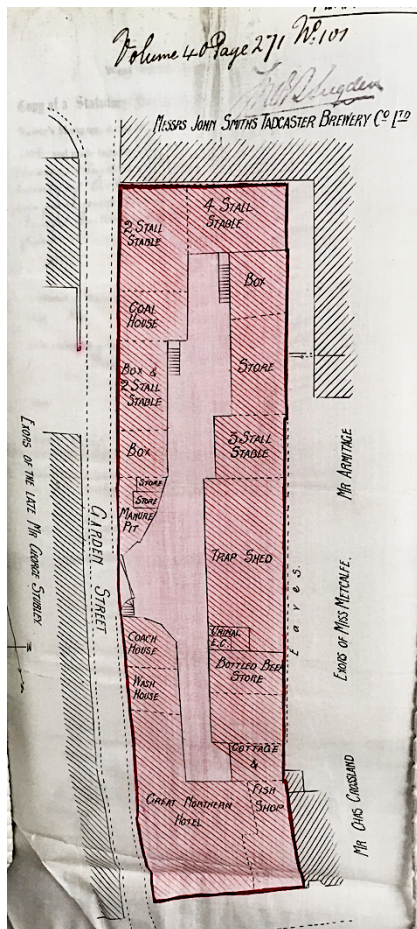
Frederick Dews was prosperous enough by 1896 to be able to purchase his brother Ezra's Spa Mill at Ossett following his death, paying the considerable sum of £2450.³⁵ Frederick died two years later in March 1898, age 44, leaving effects of £10,776: 4s. Once again a woman became the landlady, Frederick's widow Harriet, who remained as licensee until 1910. She is listed in the 1901 census as hotel keeper and cab proprietor, with her son Charles acting as barman, also a barmaid, two domestic servants, and a groom. In 1909 she followed in her husband's footsteps and was fined £2 for being open during prohibited hours. By the time of the 1911 census she had moved from the Great Northern to the adjacent Garden Street with Charles now described as an assurance agent. Her two daughters were described as '*vocalist*' and '*variety artist, Music Hall*'. Perhaps they had gained experience entertaining in their mother's pub.

On 4th May 1910 the licence was transferred to John Bright Gillespie (or Gillespy), who stayed for the next twelve years. The Great Northern Inn and stables were listed in the 1910 Valuation at the considerable sum of £178 10s, John Crosland of Thornes was the owner. However he died in November that year.³⁶

The ownership changed in October 1911 when John Smith's Tadcaster Brewery purchased it from Bruno Charles Lawrence Colbeck and John Bernard Colbeck, of Alverthorpe, woollen cloth manufacturers; William Wordsworth Scarth of Stanley Hall, gentleman; and Leonard Wilson Taylor Batley, solicitor. How the ownership had passed into their hands is not clear.

³⁵ Sheffield Daily Telegraph 17th October 1896.

³⁶ Probate Record, 1911.



Plan in the Registry of Deeds, 1911,
Volume 40, page 271 and 272.
By kind permission of West Yorkshire
Archives

The property was described as the Great Northern Hotel 'with shop adjoining thereto, and the malt kiln, barn, foldstead and other outbuildings'.³⁷ It included a plan showing the yard down Garden Street, with 11 stalls to stable horses, a trap shed, a coach house, a wash house, bottled beer storage, and unsurprisingly, with so many horses, a manure pit. The western part of the building facing on to Westgate is shown as a fish shop, with a cottage behind it. John Smith's later used the western side of the building as offices.

From 1911 to 1925, there was one person who could regularly be found on the premises on Fridays between 1 and 6 pm - Mr Lodge, 'the Batley Bonesetter' who advertised regularly in the Wakefield newspapers. He claimed to be an expert in the 'treatment of fractures, dislocations, strains, contracted joints, injured spines, flat foot, infantile paralysis and all types of lameness'.

³⁷ Registry of Deeds, Volume 40, page 271 and 272, 1911.

Francis George Oldham succeeded Gillespie, acting as landlord from 1922 to 1940. He had previously worked at the Criterion Hotel on Kirkgate as a barman and his wife as a barmaid.³⁸

Harry Jackson was the next licensee remaining until 1951, but following his tenure there appears to have been a succession of short-term tenants - possibly John Smith's Brewery were putting in their own managers. The last landlord appears to have been Leonard Ellis in 1967, but the exact date of the final closure of this important public house has not yet been discovered.



The Great Northern Hotel, probably in the early 1970s.
*From 'Wakefield Now and Then' Facebook page
(copyright holder unknown)*

³⁸ 1911 census.

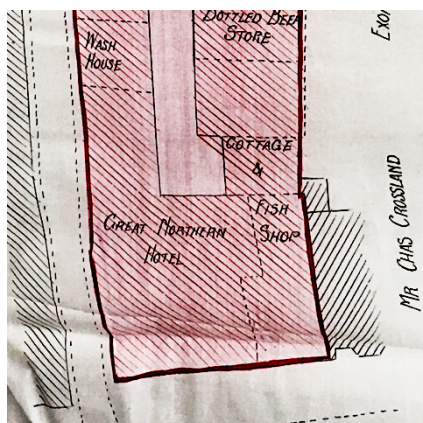


The rear of the building in 2021. On the right is part of the building that extended down Garden Street, and on the left the part that was John Smith's offices.



The side of the building, 2021. The blocked-up windows that once looked out onto Garden Street can be seen, and the street sign.

99 Westgate



Excerpt from the plan of 1911,
showing the fish shop

From the date of John Crosland's rebuild about 1875, the western part of the building was used as a separate shop and house. This is clearly shown on the 1911 plan in the Registry of Deeds (shown above). John Smith's Brewery later used this as offices, but in the 1911 census Ernest Crosland was listed as occupier, aged 45, a fish dealer, with his wife Polly aged 40. They had been married for 20 years, but had had no children. They occupied three rooms. The 1910 Valuation listed Ernest as the occupier, and John Crosland as the owner of the property and looking at earlier censuses we find that Ernest was the son of John Crosland who owned the Great Northern. The property was rated at the modest sum of 15s 5d. In the 1901 census Ernest's occupation was obscured by writing, but it appears to be '*fried fish *****coffee Ho.*' It appears he took over the shop from Walter Cooper who was listed in the 1891 census ten years earlier as a 'fishmonger' aged 24.

The occupiers may have changed hands - but the trade appeared to stay the same as in the 1881 census another fishmonger was the occupier, William Leader aged 33 and his wife Eliza, who had moved with their children from Suffolk, only the two youngest of the five children being born in Wakefield. Earlier censuses do not list 99 as a separate building.

Newspaper excerpts courtesy of British News Archive p 19 and p 20:
www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk

With many thanks to Marcello Moccia of Room 97 Creative Hairdressing for his generosity in sharing his previous research.

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