

SANDOWN'S ROADS AND EARLY PUBLIC HOUSES

By David Bambrough 2007 (part four)

With a growing trade the spacious area at the rear of the house was the next to attract attention for furthering the business. On Whit Saturday, May 19th 1956 a Chateau bar (country house) and an illuminated beer garden was opened, drawing even more custom to the expanding premises.

One year later Ted Barber retired from the business and Ted Barber junior took over the license.

Being the son of his father, Ted junior was a progressive landlord adding further improvements in June 1960 by way of an extended "L shaped" Lounge Bar. The work on the improvement scheme was undertaken by a local firm, Messrs A.W. Rose & Company who took three weeks to complete alterations, with customers suffering only a minimum of inconvenience.

Now attracting many local businessmen he soon branched out in the catering field, selling high class quality sandwiches from cuts of joints displayed behind the counter. In 1962 the house successfully applied to the council for registration under the Betting and Gaming act 1960, for which to install a fruit machine. This was not an automatic decision as other public houses in the area who applied at the same time were refused.



With sandwiches doing a roaring trade, knife and fork snacks soon followed, demand for these soon exceeded the limited facilities within the bars. To overcome this, the eating area was moved upstairs in May 1963 to a small and intimate restaurant called "The Turret Grillroom", which attracted people from all over the Island. On his retirement in 1966 the house was then managed by a Mr G.H. Pattison who had moved from Yelf's Hotel at Ryde. The Castle Inn was originally owned by Messrs Crowley & Co., brewers of Alton, eventually being taken over,

along with The Fountain Inn, by Watneys Brewery. In keeping with modern times many old public houses have forsaken the concept of segregation and the inner walls have been removed to create one large bar, the Castle is no exception.

Footnote. The word "Inn" appears to have been dropped by at least 1971 according to this advert, and I have a feeling that an ad. of this nature these days may well be a contentious issue.

The second ever hostelry to open its doors in Sandown was The Royal Standard, on the corner of Beachfield Road and the Broadway (then Broad Lane), listed in the directories by 1852. The soldiers stationed at the nearby Sandown Barracks would have sustained the trade for many years and consequently there are many reports of drunkenness and thieving, involving patrons of the Inn. One particular court case concerned a certain Fred Saunders of Shanklin who was charged with stealing a scarf from the porch of the Bible Christian Chapel (Formerly G. Deans & Co., wholesale stationers in The Broadway).

The accused was tracked to the Standard where the scarf was found under his arm. Saunders had been seen coming out of the church porch by a witness and pleaded guilty at the hearing, having previous convictions, a sentence of 14 days imprisonment was passed.

In answer to a request for a public urinal at this end of town in 1920, the council suggested that the Royal Standards urinal (which opened out to the Broadway) be kept open to the public throughout the day. Not suprisingly the request was rejected by the brewery. The Standard was owned and sold Ale brewed by Mew Langtons of Newport in its latter years and closed in the late 1980's. An original application to convert the public House into 8 flats was finally agreed in September 1989, the premises is now known as Broadbeach Court .



The picture shows The Royal Standard surrounded by trees with a horse drinking fountain in front of the largest tree. The area had been a very welcome watering hole not only for the patrons of the Inn, but also for the local horses after their long haul up Lake Hill. Boys will be boys and a further use was as the ceremonial ducking place for the probationer choir boys from Christ Church. The horse trough was initially proposed

for removal in 1902 along with the trees, which would then pave the way for widening of the Broadway. Nothing it seems moves very quickly in council circles and thirty six years later in April 1938 the removal took place. Footnote. This was not the only licensed drinking house in Upper Sandown. There is known to have been a beershop called The Rainbow Inn, circa 1864 at the top of Beachfield Road (then the High Street) next to the Parish Rooms. The last but not least of our look at Sandown's early public houses finds us just outside the soon to be built Station yard, just in time for a pint, as it is opening time at the Nottingham Castle Hotel. It is difficult to imagine why it was built at the time and if the end conclusion is, that foresight with the impending arrival of the railway was the reason, one must then wonder why it was called Nottingham Castle Hotel.



At the time it was built there were few roads or people living in the immediate vicinity. A look at a map of 1862 shows virtually no development at all on the west side of Broadway (nee Broad Lane). Nunwell Street, Grove Road, Station Avenue (nee Station Road) and Winchester Park Road etc. were yet to be developed. The building of railways on the Island had been rumoured since 1845 with the first opening between Cowes and Newport in 1862. The Isle of Wight (Eastern Section) Railway, Ryde St. Johns –

Shanklin later renamed the Isle of Wight Railway became law on July 23rd 1860, which also included a Pier, (not built by the Railway) with commencement in late December 1862. The Isle of Wight Railway opened for passenger traffic on the August 23rd 1864, no doubt increasing the patronage of The Nottingham Castle Hotel. Sensibly three years later in 1867 the name was changed to the more appropriate “Railway Hotel”. There was local competition for the consumption of alcohol by way of the Railway refreshment rooms, which advertised the sale of best quality wines and spirits at moderate prices. Disaster however was not far away, in the early part of 1879 the hotel caught fire and was completely gutted. Rebuilding commenced during August of that year and the present building opened to the public in early 1880. One drawback, until it was completely refurbished in 1967, was access to the gentlemen's toilet. On leaving the bar where the group are standing, the journey went past the weighing machine, immediately turning right a further 10/15 yards found the toilet in the far left hand corner of the original stabling yard. Not so bad during the daylight, but everything had to be accomplished by moonlight, when the sun had gone down!!

A very popular drinking house with the locals during the 1930's and 1940's the Railway had a reputation for winning the pastimes of the day. In 1931 they retained the local Shove Ha'penny League by winning the first division championship whilst their reserve team won the second division title. This proved to be the last ever Shove Ha'penny competition in Sandown, as the league was abandoned the following year at a meeting of the AGM, darts was proving a more exciting evening pastime with many of the top Shove Ha'penny players. The Railway continued in the same vein turning out strong dart teams over the years.

The name most associated with running the Railway Hotel was Capel. John Milton Capel took over the license in 1906 and died of a heart attack aged 51 in 1914. He was succeeded by his widow but when she died in 1922 one of his sons, Harry, left the Metropolitan police to manage the house. Harry also died of a heart attack on the premises on May 8th 1942. His widow in turn succeeded him until she died when their daughter and son-in-law took over the license in 1965. Joe Ross, a Geordie by birth and a very keen dart player, helped revive the Sandown Dart League in 1971 continuing in the same competitive way that his predecessors had done until his retirement in 1984 which ended the long standing reign of the Capel family.

The house, then under various ownerships, never regained the popularity it had always been accustomed to. It remained as a conventional public house for a few years, finally changing hands for the last time with a new name “The Open Arms”, closing permanently in the 1990's. Following the same fate as many other closed public houses, planning permission was granted in March 2001 to convert this long standing social amenity into four flats and a pair of semi-detached houses within the grounds. This ends our look at the Victorian public houses of Sandown.

Footnote. The renaming of Fort Street to Avenue Road, Fort Lane to Fort Street and Broad Lane to The Broadway, was proposed and implemented in July 1889. At the same meeting it was also proposed to re-number Fitzroy Street, Bridger Street, (now St. Johns Road) York Road, Wilkes Road, George Street and Station Road (now Station Avenue). The entire council run streets/roads were to be fitted with new nameplates, 69 in total, at a probable cost of £8 10 shillings. The names of Leed Street, Fitzroy Street and Grafton Street were connected to the Oglander family, the owners of much of the land that the town was built on. Lady Oglander was the daughter of George W. Leeds, omitting the final letter when naming the street, possibly for convenience. Sir Henry Oglander's mother (wife of the 6th baronet) was Lady Maria Fitzroy, daughter of the 4th Duke of Grafton and this appears to be the reason for the naming of the aforementioned streets. The Commercial Inn was named after a strip of land opposite the Old Town Hall known as the Commercial Green. The Prince of Wales originally had its own Well but this was filled in on the grounds of health and safety by The Local Board pre 1900.



From the left. Peter Hayden, Larry Brown, Adge Rodgers Roger Gustar, Peter Broome Tich Pardey and Charlie Smith. At The Prince of Wales Sandown August 1964



Back row. Dave Bambrough, Joe Ross (landlord), Charlie Betts, Joe Brabon, John Church. Front row. Jock Simpson Stan Rose, Bill Cook, Peter Ross and Doreen Ross.