

Bishopwearmouth Pubs Profile (Demolished) – The White Swan

Project Pub REF: 013

NGR: NZ 39248 56889

Name of Pub: The White Swan

Are there any explanation of the pub's name or changes of name?: The pub sign read 'The Swan doth love the water clear, So do men good ale and beer' (Ron Lawson, 2019).

What did it look like in the past?: Unfortunately, this research was not able to uncover any historic photographs of the White Swan.

Current Photographs:



© Sam Neal, August 2022. Photograph showing the approximate location of the White Swan, now a restaurant and Travelodge.

Building Description: Unfortunately, as there are no photographs of this building, it was not possible to do a building description.

Map regression:



Map 1 - 1887 Ordnance Survey Map (25") [Accessed via National Library of Scotland].

Map 2 – 1919 Ordnance Survey Map (25") [Accessed via National Library of Scotland].

Map 3 - 1946 Ordnance Survey Map (25") [Accessed via National Library of Scotland].

Map 4 - Modern Ordnance Survey Map (25") [Accessed via Historic England, Search the List].

Historic Ordnance Survey mapping from 1887 shows the White Swan as an unnamed Public House as part of a row of terraced buildings on Low Row. At this point, the building had a simple, regular plan form with a 'U' shaped associated building to the rear of the plot of land. There is very little change to the plan form of the pub between 1897 and the 1919 and between 1919 and 1946 the only changes that had occurred were to the surrounding buildings, with the pub being located between the Cabinet Works and Mayfair Confectionery Works. Between 1946 and modern OS mapping, the pub had been demolished to make way for a large hotel complex.

How long had it been a pub?: The first known records of the White Swan is in a 1770 trade directory.

Who worked here?

The following information has been extracted from Ron Lawsons Pubs of Bishopwearmouth (2019).

Trade Directory:

1770 – Joseph Garthwaite (Parish Clerk and Church Warden)

1820-48 – James Hodgson

1850-51 – Ephraim Last

1853-57 – Thomas Oxberry

1858-59 – Nicolas Thompson

1861-69 – Robert Brown (Also a blacksmith).

Who drank here?: There is no available evidence to suggest a brewery link for the White Swan.

Brewery link: There is no available evidence to suggest a brewery link for the White Swan.

Story timeline

Images accessed via British Newspaper Archives.

Also, that well-known and much-frequented INN, "THE WHITE SWAN," in the Low Row, Bishopwearmouth, in the occupation of Mr. Robert Brown, as Tenant. This valuable Property has, on the Basement Floor, Two capital Cellars, Warehouse, Stable, and inner and outer Offices; on the Street Floor, a Front Tap Room, convenient Spirit Bar, Club Room, 24 Feet by 12, and Inner Parlour; and on the Upper Floors, Two good Bedrooms and an Attic.

10th October 1864 – Newcastle Daily Chronicle: Sales particulars noted. Provides an interesting description of the pub as it was in the mid 19th century. At this time, it included two cellars, warehouse, stable and offices as well as a tap room, spirit bar, club room and parlour.

Unfortunately, there are no other references to the White Swan.

Sources consulted:

Bishopwearmouth Village Atlas (2021). Available at: <https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/article/16351/History-of-Bishopwearmouth>

British Newspaper Archives. Available at: <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

Historic England, Search the List. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

National Library of Scotland Ordnance Survey Maps. Available at: <https://www.nls.uk/maps>

Trade Directories. Available at: <https://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4>

Ron Lawson (2019) Historic Pubs of Bishopwearmouth.

Completed by: Caitlin Osborne (TDR Heritage).

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