

Memories of Wednesfield with Ray Fellows (published in the Wednesfield Magazine, 2015)

Wednesfield pubs

The New Inn, 10 Rookery Street



The New Inn stood on the left-hand side at the top of Rookery Street, it was the 2nd last building, and it pre-dates the Pyle Cock. To the rear of the New Inn were the 'Monkey Muck Works', so called because of the bad smell it gave off, and Sidebotham's the trap makers. The pub was similar in appearance to the Dog & Partridge. It had the wooden rails outside, most likely to tether horses to. The ale at one time was Atkinsons. Atkinsons brewery was

taken over by Mitchell & Butlers in 1959. We can date the New Inn back to at least 1834 when John Tomkys kept it until the mid- 1850s. Other tenants were, Harry Wearing 1880s, Joseph Jackson 1896, Samuel Foster 1920s, Fredrick Peplow 1936, and Alfred Whittingham 1940s. Another Tomkys – Joseph – kept the old Tiger in 1834.

The Royal Oak, 78 Rookery Street



Sybil Ansell recalls how she lived at the Royal Oak. 'My Grandfather, William Weston, kept the Royal Oak. After him it was kept by his eldest daughter Lois Thompson, then my mother and father Olga and Arthur Tonks. I lived there from a young child till 1940. Polly Mason who was employed as my mother's nursemaid remained a family friend, she stayed on when Mr and Mrs Morgan took over from us in 1940. My Grandfather brewed his own beer in his day. He had stables at the rear where he kept a pony and trap; he used to take

my mother Olga out in this when she was a small girl. My other Grandfather, Joseph Tonks, was a trap maker. His sons worked with him at a place opposite New Cross Hospital and work house. That's where the tramps used to wait at the gates to be let in at about 5pm for a bed and meal. I was born in Bolton Road and baptised and married at St Thomas' Church. We lived in Beechwood Avenue until 1954 when we left Wednesfield and now (2015) live in Dorset'.

Previous keepers of the Royal Oak were George Roberts in 1888, and Hollins in 1896.