



# 19 HIGH STREET



## INTRODUCTION

The research to create a timeline of the historic buildings of Stockton has drawn on resources such as trade directories, newspapers and census information. Whilst we have been able to construct some quite detailed pictures, there are gaps which we would like to fill. If you have any further information that could assist us, please contact [Eleanor.blyth@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:Eleanor.blyth@stockton.gov.uk).

We would like to thank volunteers who have worked on the timelines.

The Royal Oak has been on the high street since the early 1800s



## HUNTER

In the 1851 Census Robert's father James is recorded as a Hotel Keeper at 61 High Street Stockton. Robert is a Bailiff with the County Court. On 11<sup>th</sup> January 1855 the marriage of Robert Hunter to Ann Peachy is recorded at Holy Trinity, Stockton. James Hunter is associated with the Vane Arms, Stockton.

By the 1861 Census Robert Hunter is resident at the Royal Oak with his wife and children. His continued occupation of the Royal Oak is evident in the 1871 Census where he appears with his wife, children, his mother in law Elizabeth Peachy and servants.

Robert moves from the Royal Oak to the Vane Arms. This may be linked to the death of his father James who died on 13<sup>th</sup> January 1869. The National Probate Calendar records Robert Hunter, Licensed Victualler as executor. James's effects are recorded in the category of under £3,000. This ties in with William Kirkup being recorded as in residence at the Royal Oak by this time.

In 1874 Robert's daughter Martha Dorothea's death aged 9 is recorded and the obituary states the death occurred at the Vane Arms.

In 1878 an advertisement in the York Herald of 5<sup>th</sup> December 1878 for a post at the Vane Arms with applicants to address themselves to Robert Hunter indicates that Robert is active at the Vane Arms.

Robert Hunter died on 14<sup>th</sup> November 1880, his address being recorded in the press as the Vane Arms.

Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail - Tuesday 23 November 1880

The National Probate Calendar records the estate of Robert Hunter, Inn Keeper and Farmer as under £800, equivalent to approximately £12,000 today.

Robert's interest in racehorses is evident in several notices where he is advertising horses for sale and an

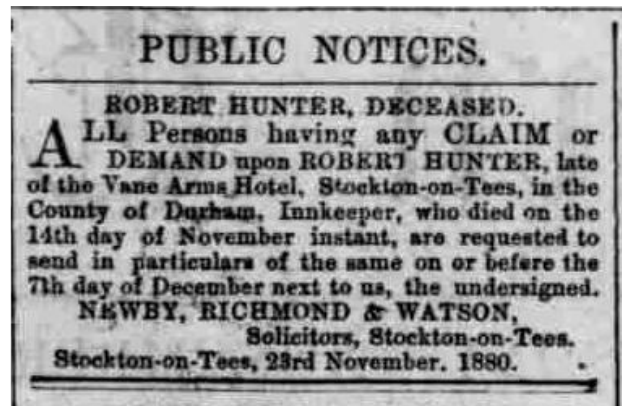


Figure 1

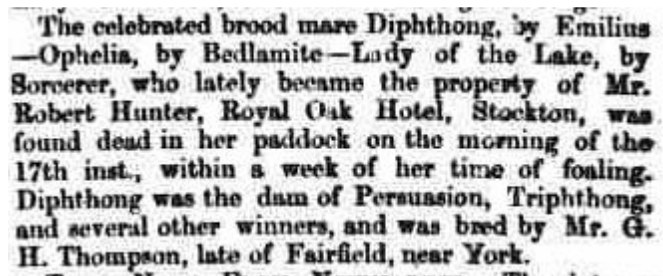


Figure 2



article about the loss of his newly acquired racehorse in 1868.

**Leicester Mail 27<sup>th</sup> June 1868.**

**KIRKUP**

In the 1871 Census William Hepple Kirkup is recorded at 20 High Street, Stockton. His occupation is recorded as a grocer and provisions merchant, employing 2 men and a boy. He is resident there with his wife, children and a servant. William Hepple Kirkup is later to take on the role of manager of the Royal Oak. At this point the manager is Robert Hunter who is resident with his wife, children and servant.

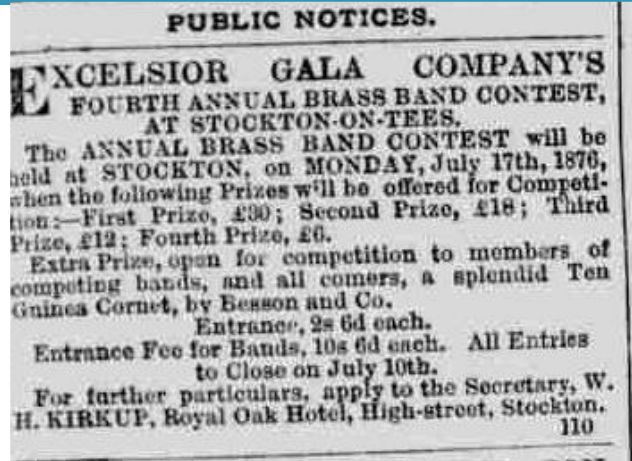


Figure 3 Ecelsior Gala Company's: Northern Echo (1st July 1876)

During the period 1876 to 1881 there are several accounts in the press that reference Kirkup's role, from the Royal Oak, in local events and give us an indication of the variety of amusements on offer. The Carlisle Examiner 15<sup>th</sup> June 1878, for example describes a wrestling event with participants from across the North. In 1879 there was a Cherry Fair.

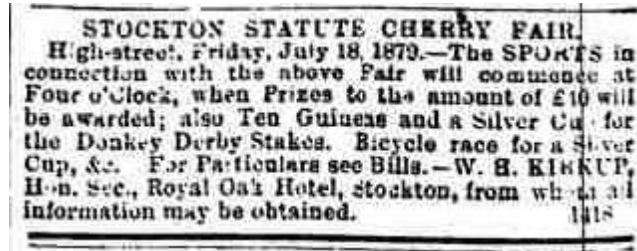


Figure 4 Stockton Statue Cherry Fair: Northern Echo (16th July 1879)

There is also reference to providing refreshments at the Cleveland Agricultural Show in the Northern Echo 25<sup>th</sup> July 1879.



The 1881 Commercial Directory for Stockton-on-Tees records William Hepple Kirkup at number 19 High Street as a painter with a separate entry for him for the Royal Oak as Licensed Victualler.

In 1881 the Royal Oak, occupied by W.H Kirkup is advertised for sale in the Northern

200, v. DICKINSON PP.

**NORTON FLOWER SHOW.**

The twelfth annual show of flowers, fruit, and vegetables of the Norton Horticultural Society was held yesterday under decidedly adverse circumstances. A large marquee had been engaged from Messenger, of Grimsbrough, and it was duly erected in a field belonging to Mr Noddings; but, unfortunately, the morning was squally and it was blown down. Repeated attempts were unsuccessfully made to get it up again; and, ultimately, the committee had to make shifts to do without it. As there was rain as well as wind shelter had to be sought; and it was found behind haystacks, in outbuildings, and the like. The beauty of the exhibits was thus seen to great disadvantage; but, nevertheless, the attendance of spectators was pretty numerous, especially towards evening, when the showers ceased. The show of flowers was highly creditable; but the fruit was much behind the average, the bad season, of course, accounting for this. Mr Dodds, M.P., presided at the luncheon, served by Mr Kirkup, of the Royal Oak, Stockton, in a tent on the show ground; Mr M. B. Dodds officiating in the vice-chair. Various auxiliary attractions were provided, winding up with a display of fireworks. We append a list of the awards, Messrs Dale (Brancepeth), Todl (Middle-strough), Cremont (Nunthorpe), Mansby (Ganncersgate), and Wilson, Nicholson, and Fawster (Norton), being the judges.

OPEN CLASS.

Figure 6 Norton Flower Show: The Northern Echo (23 August 1879)

GOOD HEALTH.

**BELLE VUE RECREATION**  
GROUND, NORTON ROAD,  
STOCKTON ON-TEES.

**ANNUAL WHITSUNTIDE SPORTS.**

The public of Stockton-on-Tees and surrounding district are respectfully informed that the Annual Gathering for **WRESTLING**, and other British Sports, will be held in the above Grounds on **WHITMONDAY** and **TUESDAY**, June 2nd and 3rd, when the sum of £120 will be given for competition in Wrestling, Pole Leaping, Foot Races, Hurdle Races, Bell Races, &c., &c.

For Programme and all particulars apply to Mr W. H. Kirkup, Royal Oak Hotel, Stockton, with whom all entries must be made.

An **Open-air BALL** will be held each evening on the platform, under the management of an efficient M.C.; and the **WALTZING COMPETITION**, which was postponed at Easter, will take place, for which prizes will be given. A first-class Brass Band, under the leadership of Mr Cass, will be in attendance. Refreshments of every description on the ground.

Admission each day, 6d; Children half-price. Gates open at half-past Twelve o'clock. No pass-out checks.

Evening Mail 11<sup>th</sup> June of that year.

Figure 5 Belle Vue Recreation: Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail (26th May 1879)



**TO BREWERS, SPIRIT MERCHANTS, CAPITALISTS, AND OTHERS.**

**TO BE SOLD** by public Auction at the house of Mr W. H. Kirkup, the "Royal Oak Hotel" in High-street, in Stockton-on-Tees, in the County of Durham, on Friday the twenty-fourth day of June, 1881, at two for three in the afternoon, subject to conditions.

**MR. T. W. HORNBY, AUCTIONEER.**

**A**LL THAT substantially built, commodious, and well accustomed HOTEL called the "ROYAL OAK," situate on the east side of High-street, in Stockton, aforesaid, as at present occupied by the said Mr W. H. Kirkup, as tenant.

Also, all that **LOCK-UP SHOP** adjoining thereto, now in the occupation of Mr William Best, as tenant.

The frontage of the Hotel into High-street, is 39 feet or thereabouts.

The Hotel contains on the ground floor large Front Bar, Snug, Smokeroom, Kitchen, Scullery, and spacious Taproom. On the First Floor, 2 Dining-rooms, 2 Sitting-rooms, and 2 bedrooms. On the Second Floor, 7 bedrooms and attic. There are excellent Ale, Wine, and Spirit Cellars beneath the Hotel.

Behind the Hotel is a convenient Yard, four-stalled Stable, Warehouse, and all usual and requisite out-offices.

The respective tenants will, on application, show the premises, and further particulars may be obtained on application to Mr FRANCIS HUNTER, No. 10, Bright-street, Stockton; the Auctioneer, and at the offices of

**NEWBY, RICHMOND, & WATSON,**  
Solicitors,  
Stockton-on-Tees.

Stockton-on-Tees, 10th June, 1881.

The death of William Hepple Kirkup is recorded in the registers in January 1900. The Northern Echo January 19<sup>th</sup> 1900 contains the announcement of William's death.

**DEATH OF A STOCKTON CATERER.**—Mr W. H. Kirkup, of the Half Moon Hotel, Stockton, a few years back one of the most popular caterers in the town, is buried to-day at the Oxbridge-lane Cemetery. He had been in ill-health for some time, and complications, induced by an attack of pneumonia, carried him off on Tuesday. He was one of the founders of the local Licensed Victuallers' Association, a member of the Philanthropy Lodge of Freemasons, and a Conservative in politics. He leaves a widow and three married daughters.

January 20, 1900 -  
Northern Echo -

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**FUNERAL OF MR W. H. KIRKUP,  
STOCKTON.**

The funeral of Mr W. H. Kirkup, landlord of the Half Moon Hotel, Stockton, took place at the Oxbridge-lane Cemetery on Friday morning, and was very largely attended. The chief mourners were Mr Watt, Mr Gardner, and Mr Horner (sons-in-law), and Mr Dufour, of the Prince of Wales, Tenant-street, (brother-in-law); and the pallbearers, Mr J. Clapham, Turk's Head; Mr T. Thompson, White Swan, Norton; Mr W. Stephenson, treasurer of the Stockton Licensed Victuallers' Association; Mr T. Warwick, Prince of Wales' Inn, Portrack; Mr J. Bishop, White Hart Hotel; and Mr J. J. Cowley, Turf Hotel. The coffin was of polished oak, with heavy brass mountings, and bore the following inscription:—"William Hepple Kirkup, died 16th January, 1900, aged 59." It was covered with beautiful wreaths, including one from the Stockton, Thornaby, and District Licensed Victuallers' Association, of which the deceased was one of the founders and second president. Amongst those present were the Mayor (Councillor J. H. Nightscales), Colonel Kopner, Mr William Kirk, J.P., Mr T. Kirk, Mr A. Gelder, Councillor T. Brignal, Thornaby; Mr T. Clapham, Raby Castle; Mr Wardle, Stillington; Mr J. R. Wilson, Red Lion, Norton; Mr Bulmer, Ship Inn; Mr A. Atkinson; Mr Hanson, Three Tuns; and Mr Robinson, wine and spirit merchant. The Rev. Canon Martin conducted the service.

The Probate Calendar records the death as occurring on 16<sup>th</sup> January. His estate was valued at £768 10s and 6d, over £65, 000 in today's money. The Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough 30<sup>th</sup> April 1900 contains details of the probate process.



**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that all Creditors and other persons having any Claims or Demands against the Estate of **WILLIAM HEPPLE KIRKUP**, of the Half Moon Hotel, Stockton-on-Tees, in the County of Durham, Innkeeper, Deceased (who died on the 10th day of January, 1900, intestate, and to whose estate Letters of Administration were on the 19th day of February, 1900, granted to Mary Annie Kirkup, the lawful widow and relict of the deceased by the Durham District Registry of the Probate Division of the High Court of Justice) are hereby required to send the particulars in writing of their claims and demands to us, the undersigned, Watson, Newby, and Robson, on or before the 4th day of June, 1900, after which date the said administratrix will proceed to distribute the assets of the said deceased amongst the persons entitled thereto, having regard only to the claims and demands of which she shall then have had notice, and she will not be liable for the assets of the said deceased or any part thereof so distributed to any person or persons of whose claims and demands she shall not then have had notice.

Dated this 20th day of April, 1900.  
**WATSON, NEWBY, AND ROBSON.**  
 10, Finkle-street, Stockton-on-Tees.  
 Solicitors for the said Administratrix.

] J I B

The England and Wales Probate Calendar 1900 records William Hepple Kirkup as being at the Half Moon Hotel.

William is registered as a Freemason subscribing to the Lodge of Philanthropy from 1888.

**Founder of licensed victuallers association \*\*\***

Thomas

The assumption of a role in the management of the Royal Oak by Mr D Thomas is recorded in the Jarrow Express - Friday 14 October 1892.





### A WORTHY JARROW RESIDENT.

Next month, Jarrow will lose one of its best known and most respected citizens, in Mr Davy Thomas, the genial host of the Golden Lion Hotel, Walter-street, severs his long connection with our town, to take possession of his recent purchase, the Royal Oak Hotel, Stockton, which place he enters on the 23rd of next month. Mr Thomas is of a most energetic and enterprising nature and although only a young man, has carried out many large and varied undertakings both in connection with entertainments and sport. He is well-known for his business integrity and philanthropy and perhaps a brief resume of a few of his many acts of charity would not be out of place:—Benefit to W. Foster realised £29 7s 5d; benefit to J. Whitworth realised £47; benefit to widow and orphans of E. Purvis realised £30; free night in aid of Mechanics' Institute funds realised £10 16s 7d; free use of Empire Theatre, Stockton, to present £100 bonus to Ecclesfield of the Boilermakers' Society reached £7 10s; benefit to widow and orphans of A. Thackeray, of Hebburn, and benefit of H. Durland. In addition, during the long severe depression in 1884-5-6 he opened the club room and supplied fires, newspapers, and other literature, dominoes, draughts, bagatelle, and on several occasions hot dinners were supplied to those who desired to partake of his hospitality without price. The Executive Council of the Boilermakers' Society, thinking that such noble acts should not pass unrecognised, conferred the valued order of merit and honour of this association and Mr Thomas was presented with a beautiful coloured emblem, elegantly framed and illuminated, at the Empire Theatre, Stockton, on March 13th, 1891. Mr Thomas is a rivetter to trade, and is still a member of the Boilermakers' Association; he first entered public business as manager to Mr Harry Barrasford with whom he remained with until he opened the Golden Lion, which large hostelry has been greatly improved and successfully carried on during his occupation. He has promoted numerous concerts (mostly in aid of charities) and has held the lesseeship of the Royal Albert Hall, Jarrow, and the Empire Theatre, (late Alambra), Stockton. He is also a comedian and author of no mean ability, and his talents and voice have ever been ready to succour the needy, and amuse, and elevate his fellow creatures. He is also an ardent cyclist and is officially connected with both the Jarrow Amateur and Wanderers, being a track trustee in the former, and treasurer in the latter, and his departure will be a great loss to both the above institutions. He has always by personal endeavours or by monetary assistance been ready to do his utmost to promote sport and forward their best interests. All will join in wishing our old friend Davy success in his new undertaking.



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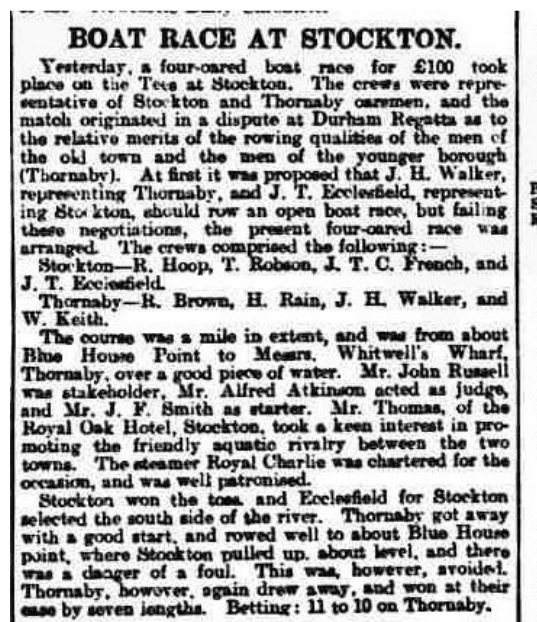
Mr D Thomas of  
the Royal Oak,

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Stockton is recorded as renting the refreshment booth at Beverly Racecourse for the annual summer meeting for a fee of £177 according to the Hull daily Mail 10<sup>th</sup> May 1907, confirming his in occupation of the address at this time.

The Newcastle daily Chronicle of 28<sup>th</sup> July 1896 provides details of the Stockton Boat Race and Mr Thomas of the Royal Oak's involvement.



The 1879 Directory records W.H Kirkup at the Royal Oak. The 1881 Directory records William Kirkup, General Printer at the address.

By the 1881 Census William Hepple Kirkup is recorded as Printer, Inn Keeper. He is living with his wife and 4 children, Elizabeth Duforer, widowed mother in law grandmother and her son who is a printer as well as a servant.

In August 1881 the Royal Oak is advertised in the Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail as being for sale by auction.

Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail 19<sup>th</sup> August 1881



**STOCKTON-ON-TEES.**  
**VALUABLE FREEHOLD AND COPYHOLD**  
**PROPERTY FOR SALE.**  
**TO BE SOLD BY PUBLIC AUCTION, at the House**  
**of Mr W. H. KIRKUP, "The Royal Oak Hotel," in**  
**High-street, Stockton-on-Tees, on TUESDAY, the 23rd**  
**day of August, 1881, at six for Seven o'clock,**  
**MR JOSEPH BRADLEY, AUCTIONEER,**  
**Lot 1.**



Figure 7 <https://picturestocktonarchive.com/2017/07/14/the-royal-oak-stockton-high-street/>



Photograph 1 <https://picturestocktonarchive.com/2014/03/21/stockton-high-street-12/>



In 1885 a scandal was reported at a High Street hotel when the bigamous marriage of the landlord, referenced only as 'Tom' was revealed by his first wife's arrival at the Inn to confront him. 'Tom' is reported as fleeing the area for fear of prosecution. The story was widely reported nationally.

The tale is continued in the North Eastern Daily Gazette 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1885 when it is reported that the bigamist husband had returned, having only fled to his mother at Middlesbrough. The two wives were reported as getting along famously!

The identity of 'Tom' is revealed by the Preston Herald of September 26<sup>th</sup> 1855 as being the landlord of the Royal Oak, Stockton High Street.

**THE ALLEGED BIGAMY AT STOCKTON.**

Last evening the landlord of the High-street hotel, Stockton, who was so alarmed the previous evening by the appearance of a lady claiming to be his lawful wife, again turned up. He had only been, it seems, to Middlesbrough to take counsel with his mother, who is herself stated to have been deserted by her husband. After a rather excited interview with the mother of his second wife at Stockton he left the place again. Both the ladies who claim to be the wives of the erring Boniface continue to reside at his hotel, and after the first "dust" between them was over, appear to have got along very well together, no doubt each consoling the other on their faithless lord's conduct. Indeed, we hear that the first, and presumably lawful, wife has suggested that they should both stay, one taking charge of one set of taps, and the other of the other. This seems to have succeeded for one evening, last night the hotel being crowded with customers, led there doubtless by curiosity to see the two wives. We hear, however, that the second wife, who is, of course, in the most unfortunate position, has since become seriously affected by the deceit practised upon her, and has been seized with fits. It appears that the first wife has been living at Pontefract, where her husband, who, in addition to carrying on his own business, travelled for a Darlington firm, has been in the habit of visiting her. Recently, while the husband was attending Doncaster races, she discovered by papers found in his pocket that he was keeping an hotel at Stockton, and thinking that all was not right, came to Stockton after him. She has two children, of seven years and fifteen months respectively. The second wife, fortunately, has no family. So far we learn no legal steps have been taken, and, of course, unless one of the aggrieved wives commence proceedings no action can be taken against the husband for bigamy.

**ANOTHER BIGAMY CASE.**—A singular case of bigamy has just come to light in Pontefract. A dramsmaker, who maintains herself almost entirely, was married in Leeds about eight years ago to a man named Etherington, who then, as now, travelled for a Darlington and Stockton wine and spirit merchant, and by him she had had three children. On Friday last, on his way to Doncaster races, he paid her one of his periodical visits, and, suspecting something, she on Tuesday went to Stockton, where she found her husband keeping the Royal Oak Hotel, having married the daughter of an innkeeper five years ago. The first Mrs. Etherington took possession on Tuesday, and on Wednesday night she had hundreds of curious customers, four policemen being engaged keeping order. The second wife will not proceed for bigamy, so the first one intends sleeping a night in the workhouse, and applying for a separation order and a weekly maintenance.

**CIRCA 1888 THOMAS**

In the 1888-1899 , 1900-1901 and 1902-1903 and 1904-1905 Ward's Directory record 19 High Street as under D Thomas, Inn Keeper.

The Royal Oak continues under the management of D Thomas in the 1906-1907 Directory. The Royal Oak is registered within the 1908-1909 Ward's Directory as under the management of J McGuckin.

**CIRCA 1910**

The 1910-1911, 1912-1913 Wards Directory records R Kay at the Royal Oak.

The 1911 Census records Angus



Scott a widow as hotel manageress with her daughter Catherine Cecilia Scott and a servant Gertrude Shipley. There are 9 rooms recorded at the address.

