

Errors on Pub Checks

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We expect orthographic variations on 17th century tokens, issued at a time when spelling was not standardised, but by the second half of the 19th century, especially after the Forster Education Act 1870, there is much less excuse. Predictably however, they not infrequently occur.

Some orders were probably verbal, leading to mis-hearings and the effects of local dialect. For example, the check for S. UNDRELL, SPON LANE TAVERN, SMETHWICK (Fig. 1) issued by Samuel Underhill (1851-61), T. MORRIS, CLOUMBER HOUSE, CLOUMBER ST, GLOUCESTER for Columbia or W. DIPPLE, WHEAT SHEAF INN, G^T LEICESTER S^T for Great Lister Street.



Fig. 1

More frequently, orders would have been submitted in writing, often accompanied by a sketch, although we know from those retained in the Bowler archive in Bath, the latter could be very rough. A rounded 'v' could have been taken as an unclosed 'o' on the check for the GEORGE INN, ST. BRIAOELS (Fig. 2) or a looped 'l' for an 's' on G. LEAR, WHITE LION INN, SONG ST, WOTTON UNDER EDGE (Fig.3) or a lower case 'b' for an 'l' on ROBERTS, TOWN HALL HOTEL, YNYSYLWL or even a lower case 'd' for an 'l' on W. AINSWORTH, ODD HOUSE, OLDHAM (Old House).



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

Some mistakes are understandable as on F. PARKINSON, DUKE OF EDINBOROUGH, MILL LANE, BRIGHOUSE or easily done as with WILLIAM HENRY HALL, FLYBOAT HOTEL, APSLEY (for Aspley Fig. 4) but others have to be put down to poor workmanship, for example the octagonal issue for the ROYAL HOTEL, FARNWORTH where both 'Ns' in BOWLING GREEN (Fig. 5) are

reversed whilst there is little justification for the RHUBARD, BARTON HILL (Bristol), the GREewood ARMS, HORWICH or W. BUSH, BLEW BOWL, TEMPLE BACK (Bristol). There should equally be no real excuse for misspelling a county name as for the (CROWN), LONGWELLS (sic) GREEN, GLOCESTERSHIRE (Fig. 6).



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

Other anomalies may have been clumsiness or ignorance in merely adhering to the phonetic sound as on W. ALLARD, ABBY IN THE WEST, LINCOLN, T. CHAMBERS, CEMETRY INN, MIDDLETON RD, OLDHAM (Fig. 7), or the splendidly named EWEBANK SALMON, HYINA INN, KENDAL (Fig. 8). Elsewhere, could there perhaps have been mental confusion with another familiar word: R. STANLEY, RIFLEMANS ARMS, DROITWITCH (witch Fig. 9), J. SUTTON, BRITANNIA INN, PONTYMINSTER (or its mirror reversal: G. SALVIDGE, GENERAL ELLIOTT, BEDMISTER) or even T. PEARCE, GLOBE INN, QUAY ST, GLOUCESTER (Fig. 10), a mixture of 'pierce' and 'pearce'?



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10

It has to be supposed that, at least in some instances, dies were cut without design proofs being sent to the purchaser and the results were accepted, perhaps at a discount. Some were certainly corrected, notably for J. M. CORKETT, FORESTERS ARMS, WELLING (Fig. 11) where the 'R' has been countermarked very precisely over the original 'C' of Cockett (I was tempted to title this piece 'Cock-ett Ups on Pub Checks'). More often the correction was achieved by a second issue. The Rhubarb, Greenwood Arms and Ynysybwl were dealt with in this way but both versions clearly circulated. Similarly the M^cKENZIES ARMS, BAMBS BRIDGE was amended to Bamber, the WINDSOR CASTLE, EDGLEY to Edgeley and RICHARD ROGERS, CROWN & CEPTRE, BROMYARD to sceptre.-



Fig. 11

Are all apparent errors actually mistakes? For example, E. LANSDOWN, WHITE HORSE, CRICKLAID (sic), GLOUCESTERSHIRE (Fig. 12). Cricklade has always been in Wiltshire but maybe it was the 19th century version of a post code? Similarly, W. DAVIS, NELSON INN, MARSHFIELD. CHIPPENHAM; Chippenham is in Wiltshire but may well have been the post town for the village of Marshfield, Gloucs. Pursuing the theme of 'non-errors'. I will end with the enigmatic and whimsical Birmingham check reading HOLLO / THE / EDWARD GREY/ HOOD FINE (on diagonal) HOUND / WAY ALE & HEAD / PORTER that 'translates' as Edward Hood, The Greyhound, Holloway Head, Fine Ale & Porter! (Fig. 13).



Fig. 12



Fig. 13