

Stories of alcohol and abstinence

From barley fields to breweries, and from the pubs of working people to the dining tables of dukes, for centuries the production and consumption of alcohol has shaped our region.



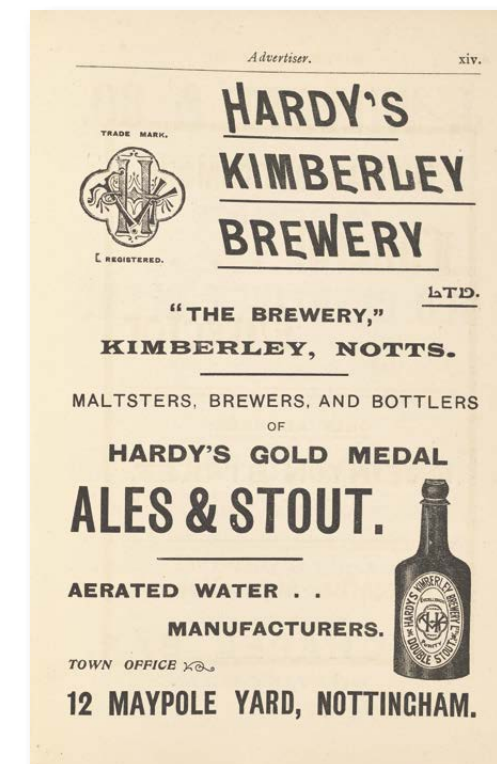
Historically, the freedom to drink was seen as a marker of British liberty and different types of licensed premises were therefore celebrated as part of local identity and culture. Romanticised as people's parliaments, it is no surprise that they have also been the subject of much storytelling and even mythmaking.

Offering stabling for horses and overnight rest for travellers, coaching inns were vital economic hubs. Some larger venues often hosted events ranging from auctions to inquests. Alehouses, broadly speaking, were often more workaday and domestic in origin. Ubiquitous, they had a clear place in the regular rhythms of working life. A 1779 survey counted 140 in Nottingham, '43 kept by widows'. Their home-brewed ale was made with local barley, and beer with local hops. Caves provided an ideal environment for brewing and a stable temperature for storing the finished products. Into the 19th century, local beer continued to serve as a source of pride.

Against those positive stories, concerns about the economic and social consequences of alcohol shaped the emergence of the temperance movement in the 19th century.

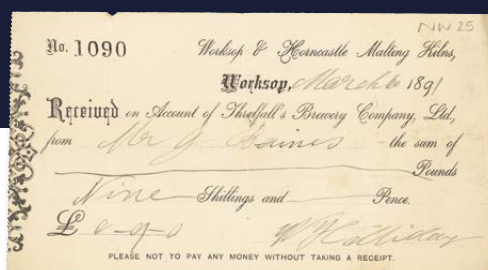
Campaigners championed their right to be free from the effects of drink, defining alcohol as both a political and a moral question. To persuade people to join the crusade, they created alternative spaces to the public house for the everyday economic and social life of members.

The exhibition has been jointly curated by Manuscripts and Special Collections and Dr David Beckingham of the School of Geography, University of Nottingham.



↑ Engraving from GM Woodward, *Eccentric Excursions* (1817). Special Collection, Oversize PR109.W6

↓ Receipt from Worksop and Horncastle Malting Kilns on account of Threlfall's Brewery Company Ltd, 1891. Papers relating to the Worksop Manor Estate, NW 25



Record of ale and beer consumed at Clumber, 1865-1869. Newcastle Collection, Ne 5 I 3



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