

Glossary

These explanations refer to the terms as they are used in these histories.

Alehouse

Before 1830, an establishment licensed to sell beer, ale, wine and spirits at any time except during church services on Sundays. Licensing hours were modified during the rest of the 19th century and this term fell out of favour as 'public house' and 'pub' became more widely used.

Ancient Order of Foresters

Originating in Yorkshire in the 1790s, one of the first friendly societies, with an emphasis on philanthropy and virtue.

Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes

The Order was founded in 1822 and is organised on similar lines to the Freemasons. It aims to help its members in times of need and also supports other charities.

Assizes

Until abolished in 1971 and replaced by Crown Courts, the Assize courts dealt with more serious criminal offences and with appeals from the lower courts.

'Beer on'

See 'Full licence'.

Beerhouse / beershop / beer retailer

Beerhouses were created by the Beerhouse Act 1830 (qv). Some censuses, trade directories and newspaper reports use the terms 'beershop' or 'beer retailer' but do so inconsistently. We have used 'beerhouse' unless one of the other terms is in a quotation.

Beerhouse Act 1830

Abolished beer duty and created beerhouses which could sell beer and cider on the premises for up to 18 hours a day. Anyone could obtain a beerhouse licence by paying two guineas a year to the Excise. A series of later Acts gradually tightened these conditions.

Benefit Society

See 'Friendly Society'.

Coroner

An officer of the Crown (originally called a 'crownor') responsible for the investigation of sudden and/or unexplained deaths. After 1836, the coroner could call a doctor as a witness to help determine the cause of death. Today, coroners are appointed by the local authority.

County Licensing Committee

The 1904 Licensing Act allowed for the closure of public houses on the grounds of redundancy and required the Quarter Sessions to establish this Committee to carry out this function. The Act also transferred responsibility for licensing from special sessions to the Quarter Sessions.

Friendly Society

A self-help group established by members who paid into a fund from which they might receive benefits in times of need. Their development was encouraged by government and an Act of 1875 required all societies to be formally audited and registered.

Full licence

A pub with a full licence could sell beer, wine and spirits. A 'beer on' pub could sell only beer and cider for consumption in the pub.

Herts Ad. / Herts Advertiser

First published as the *Herts Advertiser & St Albans Times* in 1855 and still published every week today.

Hertford Mercury

Covering roughly the central area of the county, the *Hertford Mercury* was founded in 1872 and ceased publication in 1989.

Inn

Before 1830 an inn was defined as an establishment with a licence to provide lodging to travellers and usually but not necessarily to provide food, beer, wine and spirits.

Justice of the Peace

Historic name for 'magistrate'.

Liberty

The Liberty of St Albans was the area of land owned by the monastery in which rights that had been held by the King were devolved to the Abbot. After the dissolution of the monasteries in the late 1530s, it formed part of the free borough of St Albans with its own Quarter Sessions. In 1874 it became one of two divisions of Hertfordshire, the other being Hertford. Each had its own Quarter Sessions.

Licence

See 'Full licence'.

Licensed victualler

A victualler was a person who offered goods for sale, particularly food. If suitably licensed, such a person was permitted to sell alcohol and was therefore called a licensed victualler.

Oddfellows

A Friendly Society first registered in London in 1730, becoming the independent Oddfellows Manchester Unity in 1810.

Petty Sessions

Forerunners of today's magistrates' courts, dealing with petty crime and/or the referral of more serious crimes to a higher court.

Poor Rate Assessment

The Poor Law Amendment Act 1834 created a Board of Guardians for each parish. These had power to place a levy on local property owners that was sufficient to meet the costs of maintaining the newly-established workhouses. The Board assessed the rate at which each property would pay the levy. The 'rateable value' of each beerhouse gives a rough indication of its size relative to other beerhouses. For example, in 1841 the *Swan* was valued at £28 and the *Bull* at £24, with the *Elephant & Castle* at £6 and the *Lord Melbourne* (later the *Nelson*) at £4.

Protection Order

Following the death or resignation of the licensee of a public house, a protection order could be obtained to allow enough time for a successor to be confirmed.

Public House

This term became widely used from about the 1870s onwards to cover any business that could sell alcohol for consumption on the premises.

Quarter Sessions

Until 1971, the next level of criminal court above magistrates' courts and below Assize courts. They were abolished together with Assize courts in 1971 and replaced by Crown courts.

Vestry

For hundreds of years, the vestry was a committee responsible for the government, both secular and ecclesiastical, of a parish. They were the only civil government in rural areas. These committees met in the vestry of the parish church, hence the colloquial name 'vestry'.

Local government reforms in 1894 created parish councils to deal with secular matters and parochial church councils for ecclesiastical affairs.