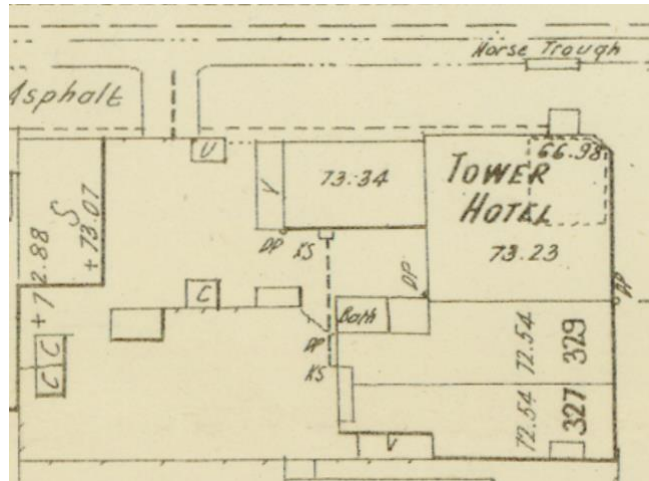


Images

There are only two images which give us a sense of what the hotel was like before the 20th century renovations. A photograph from the 1890s (Mary Forde, Licensed Victualler) can be seen below from the collection of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria. This shows a much smaller brick double storeyed building than that of the current building, with a timber cottage adjacent on the Wellington Street frontage and another timber structure adjacent on the Reilly Street frontage. A horse trough in Reilly Street provides for other drinking needs. The only other representation, on the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works map in 1900, suggests that the timber building on Reilly Street was part of the hotel and behind it there was a yard and hotel WCs. The hotel was renovated in the interwar period around 1935 and maybe that is when the footprint was extended to its current dimensions.



History

This hotel must be the only pub in Collingwood not to have engaged regularly in illegal Sunday trading or to have scandals attached to its name. So, reporting of it in the press is minimal and does not provide any particularly juicy stories. There are accounts of the occasional inquest held, particularly in the 19th century, and a couple of accounts of police charges (both in the interwar years under licensee Francis Gallagher), one for Sunday trading and one for selling spirits out of mislabelled bottles. However, investigating the publicans is fascinating as they provide a microcosm in the history of one pub of the type of people who were publicans.

The first licensee was **John Fox**, presumably eponymous, but we know little about him and he was licensee for only a year or so. However, there are a few licensees from the 1880s onwards who are interesting. **James Michael Forde** was publican from 1880-1891, interestingly as he died in 1885! James Forde was a **single man**, who was born in Galway and emigrated to Melbourne with his family at the age of 2. He took over the license in 1880 and saw the marketing opportunity of the building of the Shot Tower in 1882 to change the name of the hotel to the Tower. He died very suddenly, an awful and untimely death from hydatids, in 1885. He was 30 years old. Aside from his interest in the hotel, James owned houses and land in Rathdowne Street, Carlton, and Wellington Street, Collingwood, as well as four other parcels of land in Carlton and Clifton Hill.

His will left the effects, license, and goodwill of the hotel (valued in probate at £350) to his sister Miss **Mary Forde**, a **single woman**, who was licensee until 22 December 1897. It is not known whether she had been party to running the hotel previously, but given the will and that her address is given as Wellington Street Collingwood, it is likely that this had been a **brother and sister partnership** before James' death. There is an impression from the will and



from her role as executrix of other family wills that Mary was the family businessperson. Mary gave up the licence in December 1897 and within two years her sister, Bidelia, and her mother Susan had died, and Mary herself died of uterine cancer in 1900. She was 50 years old.

Mary was replaced as licensee by **Samuel Goodman** who held the licence from 1897-1913. Samuel Goodman was a **single man**, but, while he was licensee, he married and his two daughters were born while he was there. So, we have the example of a **young married couple with small children** running the hotel.

John Caples (licensee from February 1913 to June 1914) was a very different type of publican. In his sixties when he came to the Tower, he was a **long-term hotelier** who had moved to the Tower from the Dan O'Connell in Carlton. He had a **wife and six adult children**, four of whom were living in the pub but not working there. Occupations of his children included two teachers, a solicitor and a linesman so the family was upwardly mobile. At first sight it seems puzzling why he would have left the Dan O'Connell for the relative backwater of Collingwood, but the answer probably lies in the fact that shortly after moving to the Tower, he made a will in June 1913 and died of cancer in June 1914. Caples left the goodwill of the hotel (valued in the probate at £500) to his widow, **Honora Caples**, who was licensee from 4 November 1914 to September 1919. Honora provides an example of another type of publican, namely a **widow who took over from her husband**.

If the whole list of licensees from 1871 were to be investigated, there would no doubt be many more stories but one more suffices to give another example. **Francis Gallagher** was licensee in the interwar years and was responsible for the renovation in 1935 that extended the building and gave it its current footprint. As evidenced by the contemporary electoral rolls, **Francis and adult members of the Gallagher family** all played roles in the hotel as licensed victualler, barman, barmaid and housemaid.

So, this hotel has managed in the history of its publicans to give us examples of the hotel being run by a single man, a brother and sister, a single woman, a young married couple, a husband and wife, a widow, and a whole family. It truly provides a microcosm of the types of publicans we might expect to find in Collingwood, Melbourne or Victorian pubs in the 19th and 20th centuries. Today the place we affectionately call Foxy Forde's after its first female publican, Mary Forde, thrives as a local place to gather, to have a meal or try one of the beers they have on tap.

