

# Hit or Miss (Crew's Hole Pubs)



A name that is often mentioned in old newspaper stories about Crew's Hole is the Hit or Miss. Sometimes it is the Hit and Miss, sometimes a Public House, an Inn, a Tavern, a Beerhouse or a Beershop.

On Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March 1886, the Bristol Mercury reported on the Anniversary Dinner of the 'Loyal Trunk Lodge' celebrated 'at the Lodge house, Hit or Miss, Crew's Hole, Mr R.G. White in the chair'. 'a most enjoyable evening was spent, songs being sung by Bros, White, Windsor, Weight, Drake, Iles, and others'

On Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 1886 the Western Daily Press reported that the Nelson (Barton Hill) 2<sup>nd</sup> XI had played the Hit or Miss Rovers at 'the Mead, Crew's Hole, on Saturday, resulting in a victory for the former' the scores were reported as 'Nelson, 52; Hit or Miss Rovers 37.'

The Bristol Mercury had a report on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October 1887 that 'George Churchill, a young man, was charged with stealing an umbrella, value 10s.' The report states that a John Bird went into the Hit or Miss Beerhouse, Crews Hole and left his umbrella in the tap-room. On returning later the umbrella was gone. George Churchill was later apprehended and said 'that he bought the umbrella off the prosecutor for 2s.' This was denied but Mr Bird agreed to withdraw the charge on payment of costs'.

An inquest was reported as held at the 'Hit and Miss Tavern, Crews Hole' in October 1892, this was for 'John Pow, aged 85 years, a labourer, who lived at No 1 Beehive Terrace, Crew's Hole, who was found dead in his chair in the kitchen'. The jury returned a verdict of "Death from natural causes".

The 'Hit or Miss Inn' was reported in August 1898 as the venue for another inquest. This was a sad story of Alfred Bevan, aged 11 years who was drowned after bathing in the River Avon near Netham Weir.

We have also seen a will from the 1890s that appoints 'Robert Inkerman Weight of the "Hit and Miss" Crews Hole, Saint George also in the said County of Gloucester, Innkeeper' as a trustee.

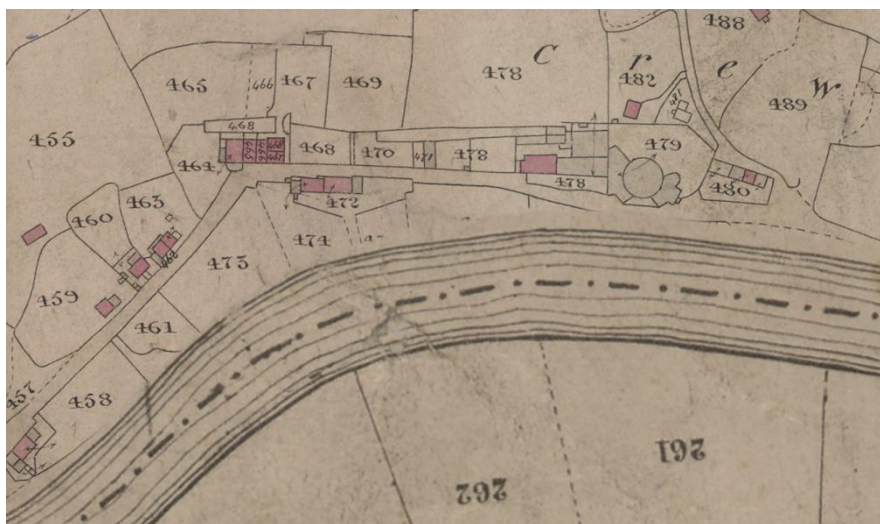
***So where was the Hit or Miss?***

## 1840 Tithe Map

There are at least three Inns or Beerhouses shown in Crews Hole on the 1840 Tithe map and its associated [apportionments](#) .

Plot 472 is shown as 'The Bee Hive Beer Shop & Premises' it was jointly leased by John Pountney & Joseph Cookson and occupied by John Thatcher.

Others were the Lamb Inn & Premises as plot 522 and the Bull Public House & Premises at plot 784. There is no record of the Hit or Miss.



The Bull Inn remains, and is now the only pub now in Crews Hole (it was rebuilt in around 1904, the original building being where its carpark now is). The [Lamb Inn](#) survived as a pub until the 1950s, was used as offices and then demolished and rebuilt as two houses in 2015.

The site of the Beehive is now occupied by industrial estates.

## Bristol's Lost Pubs

The 'Bristol's Lost Pubs' website is no longer live but has been [archived](#).

The site listed many of the old pubs of Bristol along with the licensees / publicans. For Crews Hole the following were listed:

BEE HIVE Crew's Hole  
1860 - 61. George Fry

BULL Crew's Hole Road  
1795. Deborah Davis (widow) / 1795. John Davis / 1818. Joseph Davis / 1821 to 1848. Sarah Davis 1848 to 1850. David Davis / 1850 to 1851. Sarah Davis / 1851 to 1871. Sarah Hicks / 1871 to 1897. Job Jones 1897 to 1905. Walter Giles Britton / 1909. Joseph Olds / 1914 - 30. Thomas Stacey / 1930. Minnie Rowna Stacey 1935 - 38. Minnie Joyce / 1944. Albert Horton / 1950. Louisa Hopton / 1953. Jack Browning / 1956. Walter Hooper / 1960. Gilbert Parker  
*Minnie Stacey's tenancy commenced on the 25th March 1930, the rent was £40 per annum, the*

*landlord was The Bristol Brewery Georges & Co. Limited. Much of the information for the Bull was kindly provided by Brian Gosney*

HIT OR MISS Crew's Hole Road

1871 & 1881 (census) James Limb / 1886. Robert Weight / 1893. J. Walker / 1899 - 1906. Joseph Jones

*1871 & 1881 census information was kindly provided by Cyril Limb, the great grandson of James and Maryanne Limb (nee Thatcher)*

LAMB INN Crew's Hole

1827. William Knight / 1830. George Woods / 1859. James Phillips / 1860. John Phillips / 1870 - 73. George Trimm / 1878. John Neale / 1881 - 91. Joseph Wilkes / 1892. J. Hobbs / 1896. William Phillips / 1898. Mrs. L. Phillips / 1900 - 01. George Wright / 1903. Joseph Pow / 1905. George Gilmore Gullick / 1908. Mary Elizabeth Jones / 1911. Joseph Jones / 1913 - 16. Mary Elizabeth Hall / 1920 - 24. Arthur Tucker / 1927 - 30. Ellen Tucker / 1934 - 36. Guido Drake / 1937. Victor Drake / 1943 - 52. William Morse / 1956. Frank White

RED COW Bull Lane - 1861. Robert Iles

STAR Crew's Hole - 1853. Elizabeth Avery

The license for the Hit or Miss was transferred from Robert Inkerman Weight to George Lewis in 1887 (Bristol Mercury 20<sup>th</sup> May 1887) and from William Taylor to James Walker in 1888 (Bristol Mercury 25<sup>th</sup> September 1888).

We have not found any other references to the Red Cow or the Star; these may have been short lived establishments. The Red Cow must be linked to the Bull Inn in some way.

### **Land Adjacent to the Hit or Miss**

In 15<sup>th</sup> July 1893 edition of the Western Daily Press, Bristol United Breweries offered for sale a 'Freehold Building Site at Crews Hole, adjoining the Hit or Miss, frontage 75 feet by 100 feet depth, with river frontage'.

This tells us that the Hit or Miss was between Crews Hole Road and the River.

### **The Beehive Inn**

It is notable that the Beehive does not feature on the list Bristol's Lost Pubs list beyond 1861; equally the Hit or Miss only appears from 1871 onwards. There is also a potential link given that James Limb, the first listed occupant of the Hit or Miss, married Maryanne Thatcher. Thatcher being the family name of the occupants of the Bee Hive in the 1840s Tithe apportionments. James Limb was the son of James Limb of the [White House](#).

Also while there are a number of reports of inquests held at the Hit or Miss in the 1880s & 90s, an inquest in April 1854 was reported to have been held at the 'Beehive public-house, Crew's Hole'.

Both were located between Crews Hole Road and the River.

### ***Are the Beehive and the Hit or Miss the same premises?***

## Hit or Miss - Licence Extinguished

In 1906 many public house licenses were being “extinguished” unless good reasons were presented for the premises to continue to be licensed. This was in accordance with a national scheme under the Licensing Act of 1904 which arose from the view that there were too many public houses compared with the needs of the public. Licensing Magistrates could now refuse to renew a pub’s licence if it was considered that the pub was unnecessary to provide for the needs of the public. Compensation would be paid both to the owner of the premises and the licensee although, typically, only about 10% of the compensation went to the licensee. This compensation was paid for by a levy on the licences granted to other premises (see [www.pubhistorysociety.co.uk/1904-10acts.html](http://www.pubhistorysociety.co.uk/1904-10acts.html)).

On the 7<sup>th</sup> July 1906 the Western Daily Press published a Public Notice listing premises where the Compensation Authority for the County Borough of Bristol; The City and County of Bristol had refused renewals of licenses.

In a long list was the Hit or Miss, Crew’s Hole, The ‘Nature of License’ was said to be ‘Beerhouse 1869’, the licensee Joseph Jones and the registered owners were Bristol United Brewers Ltd. The Hit or Miss therefore ceased to be a public house at this time.

## Premises for Sale



On 17<sup>th</sup> December 1907 the Western Daily Press carried an advert for the sale by auction of the Hit or Miss Crew’s Hole in the occupation of Joseph Jones. It was obviously a large property with a ‘Bar, Tap Room, Two Parlours, Two Kitchens, Four Bedrooms, Cellar & usual Offices’. There was also an adjoining cottage with four bedrooms and a large ‘pull-up or forecourt’. The frontage was said to be about 75 feet.

By May 1921 the property was again for sale, now described as 'The Old Hit or Miss, now three dwelling-houses'. One dwelling of five rooms was let to Mr Watkins, the second (two rooms) to Mr Cook and the main portion of the property (seven rooms) was vacant. Large well-cultivated gardens adjoining had pigstyes and fowlhouses. It appears it didn't sell as sale notices for 'three houses known as the Hit or Miss' also appeared in April 1922 and in September 1923 'The Old Hit and Miss' was again advertised using the same format as the 1921 advert, though all three houses were now occupied with Mr Kitson joining Messrs Watkins and Cook.

In August and September 1933 there are adverts for the sale of Nos 7, 8 & 9 Crew's Hole Road, described as a dwelling-house with two cottages adjoining. They are described as having a 'large piece of garden ground adjoining, having a long frontage to the Towing Path. 'The dwelling-house, No 7, contains six rooms; and the two cottages, nos 8 and 9, four rooms and two rooms respectively'.

This sale is part of the estate of William Pope and is described as 'formerly the Beehive Inn'.

The similarity between the descriptions of these properties sold some 10 years apart seems to suggest that they must be one and the same.

### **Britain from the Air 1936**

If the Beehive and the Hit or Miss were indeed the same property and were located on the site shown as the Beehive on the 1840 tithe map, then the photograph below shows the property in 1936. The full photograph can be seen on the [Britain from Above website](#), it is [reference number EPW050569](#).

The tall building is on the site of the 1840 Beehive, the path down to the river remained as it was in 1840.



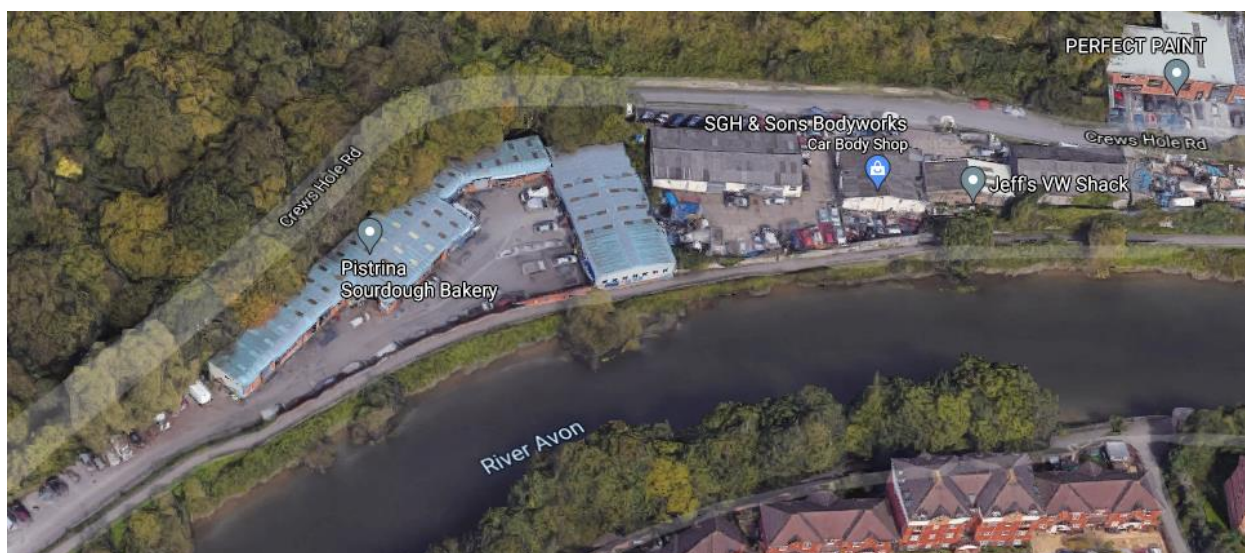
The properties to the right (east) are believed to be 'Beehive Terrace'.

Various residents of Beehive Terrace feature in some of the incidents and inquests recorded in local papers, with the first reference we have found being the inquest of John Pow of No 1 Beehive Terrace in 1892, mentioned above.

Other residents of Beehive Terrace mentioned in reports:

- George Billingham of No 6 – his bicycle was stolen in 1906
- George Billing & Isacc Fry (number not given) – rescued Albert White aged 11 from the river in 1908.
- Wesley Churchill of No 5 – recovered the body of James Sainsbury, aged 6, from the river in 1920.
- Walter James Ashmead of No 5 – died on 27<sup>th</sup> October 1923. Described as a ‘bargeman’ he left a gross estate of £6,628 9s 9d
- George Ashmead of No 5 – recovered the body of Violet Peacock of Hanham from the river in 1925.
- Gilbert Ashmead (ferryman) of No 5 - recovered the body of a baby from the river in 1928
- Joseph Higgins (number not given) – fined 5s for stealing two apples when unloading a ship at Avonmouth in 1932
- Mabel Edith Baker (58) of No 8 – her body was found in the river at Netham Lock in 1946

The whole site is now covered by two industrial estates, one of which is called ‘Beehive Industrial Estate’. Thus the Beehive name persists, but that of the Hit or Miss appears to have been lost from the area.



Newspaper reports reviewed via the British Newspaper Archive  
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