

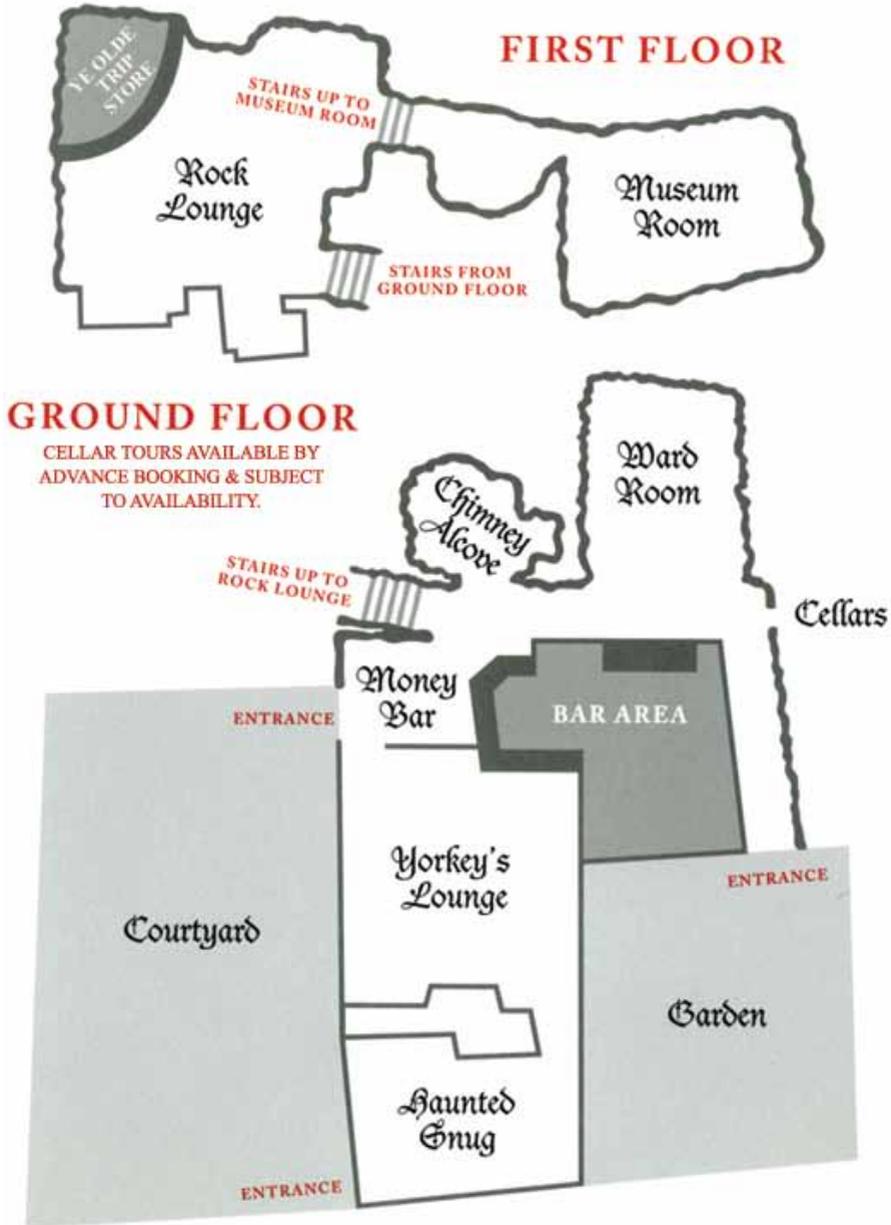
De  
Olde Trip  
To  
Jerusalem

THE LEGENDS AND HISTORY OF ENGLAND'S OLDEST INN





# A Guide to the Inn





# The Legends of Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem

**T**ravellers to the city of Nottingham invariably find their way to this quaint old Inn, which is carved into the rock connected with the labyrinth of sandstone caves at the foot of Nottingham Castle. As its sign says, it truly is “well known throughout the world”, but the very first question every visitor asks inevitably relates to how it came to have such an unusual name?

The answer to this lies in the date printed on the exterior walls of the Inn, that of 1189AD. This was the year of ascension to the throne of England of King Richard I, famously known as Richard the Lionheart. One of his first acts as King was crusade against the Saracens who at the time occupied the Holy Land of Christian Religion. Nottingham Castle was a stronghold favoured by Richard and legend has it that the brave Knights and men at arms who rallied to his call to fight in this Third Crusade, gathered at the Castle to rest before journeying to Jerusalem.

Legend also has it that these Crusaders stopped off at the Inn at the foot of the Castle for welcome refreshments – or indeed perhaps more accurately ‘one for the road’!

Given that in the Middle Ages, a ‘Trip’ was not a journey as such, but rather a resting place where such a journey could be broken, it is entirely understandable how this Inn came to be called ‘Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem’.

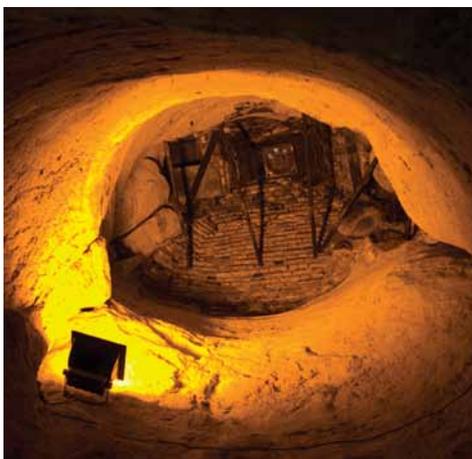


# The History of Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem

**I**n truth, the precise date of 1189 AD is difficult to verify, since reliable historical documentation was virtually non-existent in England in the Middle Ages. Undoubtedly, it can be established that the caves connected to the Inn were used as the Brewhouse for Nottingham Castle, subsequently leading to the emergence of the Inn as it is today.

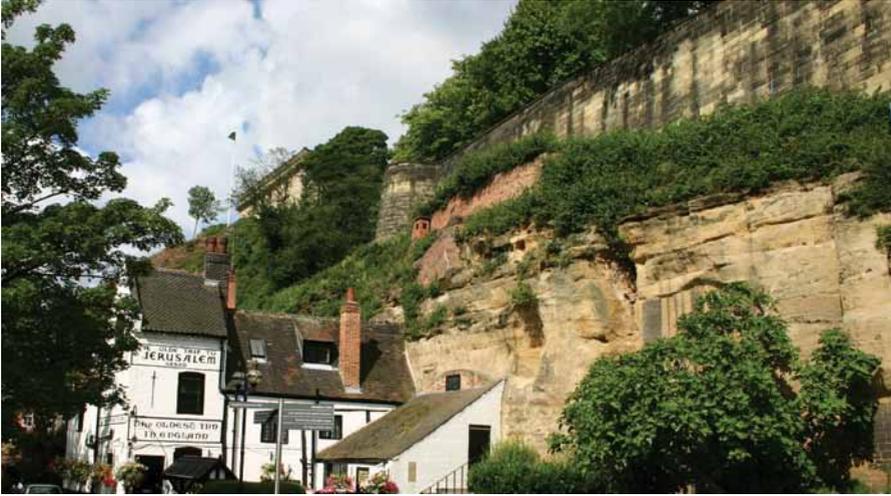
The original Castle of Nottingham was established on the rock in the year 1068 by William Perverill for William the Conqueror. Perverill caused the course of the River Leen to be altered to pass by the foot of the rock, partly as a moated defence and partly as a water supply for the Castle.

After the building of the Castle, one of the first additions would have probably been the Brewhouse. Since water for drinking was notoriously bad in the Middle Ages, ale was brewed and drunk, because as well as providing alcohol, the brewing process served to sterilise the drink. The brewing of ale requires a steady temperature and the caves at the foot of the Castle rock would have been ideal for this process.



Above: One of the vertical passages in the upstairs of the inn that leads directly into the open air outside the castle walls.





Whilst there are no maps of the era, detailed examination of the caves suggests that the original location of the Castle Brewhouse was in the immediate area of Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem. Two vertical passages through the rock emerge into the open air outside the Castle walls – one of which leads from the present upstairs lounge of the Inn. It seems highly likely these two passages were used in the malting process. This would have required a large fire and also a wide chimney and, although these chimneys may have been partly natural, the similarities between the two suggest that they were most probably altered to suit the needs and were thus the malthouses of the day.

Much of the history of the Inn is very poorly recorded, but an archaeological dig in 1974 proved conclusively that the location of the original Brewhouse could only be that of the caves of Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem. This firmly established that the Castle Brewhouse existed prior to 1189, but the first dated reference is to be found in the records of the City Council for the year 1618. The parochial rights to the area that are known as Brewhouse Yard did not in fact belong to the Castle but passed backward and forward over time between the Priory of Lenton, The Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem and the Knights Templar.

Above: Afternoon sunshine across Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem and the castle above.





The historian, Robert Thornton noted in his history of the Town of Nottingham that: “The rock yard into which the last and lowest gate of Mortimer’s Hole opens is called in old writings the Brehouse of the Castle, and indeed it had no other houses in it but such as served for the convenience of brewing for the garrison”.

Robert Thornton referred to John Speede’s map of 1610 as showing one solitary building positioned on the corner of Brehouse Yard and his own map of 1677

shows the two chimneys emerging from the rock above the Inn – although it did not show the buildings of the yard with accuracy. The black and white half-timbered section of the outer buildings of the Inn most certainly dates to around 1650 to 1660 and is shown accurately and in the correct location on Badder and Peat’s map of 1744. This was used as the basis for Charles Deering’s map in his 1751 book, “History of the Antiquities of Nottingham”.

Shortly later, the Inn was bought by William Standford who was famously responsible for many of the period buildings of Nottingham. This resulted in the structure of the Inn as it can be seen today – and those with a keen eye for detail and old architecture will be able to spot the join between the old and new structures.

Above: A detail from one of the few remaining paintings of Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem.



The first documented evidence of the Inn with a name attached to it came in Deering's book, where he referred to it as "The Pilgrim". Bearing in mind the connection with the Court of St John of Jerusalem, it seems but a short step to the name "Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem". This first appeared in 1799 in Willoughby's Directory of Nottingham and interestingly, in deeds of sale recorded in 1834, the Inn was noted as "Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem, formerly known as The Pilgrim".

The next point of particular note in the history of the Inn, was its acquisition by George Henry Ward. A very colourful character known to everyone as "Yorkey", he had his nickname boldly painted on the outside of the Inn where today the inscription "well known throughout the world" is to be seen.

Wright's Directories of Nottingham record that "Yorkey" was the licensee of the Meadow Inn on Arkwright Street in 1891 and the Fox and Owl on Parliament Street in 1893. By 1894 the Directories recorded that "Yorkey" had taken over the licence of Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem and remained there until his death in 1914. As you will read later however, it may be the "Yorkey" still visits his beloved Inn on a fairly regular basis!



Above: A late nineteenth century photograph of "Yorkey" which can be seen on display in Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem.



# Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem as it is today

**O**n stepping inside, visitors to England's Oldest Inn will without doubt immediately sense that they truly are taking a step back in time for an experience that will long remain with them.

## The Ward Room

Going through the main entrance you will find yourself in The Ward Room. This takes its name from the Ward family, various members of whom were owners of the Inn between 1894 and 1989. It is little more than a cave with walls of natural sandstone, notably unadorned with the brass ornaments and similar trappings found in many old Inns throughout the country today. The most obvious feature of the Ward Room is to be found on the back wall – a curiously mounted Bull's Horn which forms the basis of one of the oldest Inn games in England. Known as “ringing” or “baiting” the Bull, the object of the



game is to swing a bull's nose ring suspended on a cord and hook it onto the horn. This is more difficult than it might first seem, especially after sampling a pint or two of ale from the Money bar.

Above: “Ringing” or “Baiting” the Bull and right, the unique cave-like Ward Room.







### **The Money Bar**

Opposite the Chimney Alcove is the Money Bar where a wonderful wealth of banknotes of various currencies is displayed on the ceiling. These have been left by overseas visitors and provide a rich testimony to the fact that the Inn truly is “well known throughout the world”.

### **Yorkey’s Lounge**

Passing round the bar visitors will find themselves entering Yorkey’s Lounge, where an old photograph of “Yorkey” is proudly displayed. Situated in the section of the Inn built around 1660 and little altered since that time, this lounge is pure 17th Century, with a massive oak beam bisecting the ceiling north to south. Visitors will also observe a number of old photographs of famous music-hall stars from the mid-1900’s, mostly belonging to Mrs Ada Geraldine Etherington-Ward, better known as “Auntie Ada” and owner of the Inn between 1950 and 1966.

### **The Haunted Snug**

Located at the far end of Yorkey’s Lounge, it would appear the ideal place to enjoy a quiet drink. However, this cosy little room, which sits above an unused basement area known as the ‘Secret Cellar’, has succeeded in sending a shiver through many folk over the years. So, just when you think you are on your own, you might feel a tap on the shoulder – other people have!



## The Rock Lounge

Moving back through Yorkey's Lounge and turning left, the world famous Rock Lounge is accessed via a short stairway. Once the malting room of the old Brewhouse, a major feature of this room is the massive chimney that extends some sixty feet or so up through the Castle rock. This shaft, believed also to have been used as a hoist to and from the Castle for the ale that was brewed.

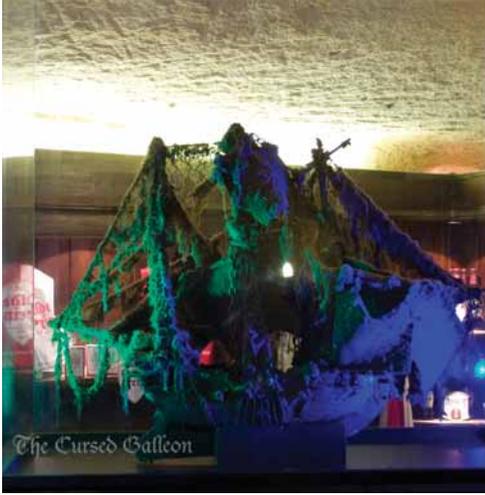
Undoubtedly, the centrepiece of the Rock Lounge is the most infamous Cursed Galleon. Legend has it that this nameless model of a galleon may have been presented to the Inn by a parting sailor but the motive for him having done so is unknown. Whatever the motivation may have been, this model galleon truly is possessed of a hideous curse. It is reputed that the last three people who dared to try and clean it, died very mysterious and unexpected deaths. No wonder, that today the Cursed Galleon is housed in a glass presentation case above Ye Olde Trip Store, safe from any would-be cleaners and shrouded in years worth of undisturbed dust and cobwebs.



Festooned with relics of bygone ages, the Rock Lounge also houses the 'Pregnancy Chair'. A decorative ancient wooden chair, legend has it that any female who sat upon it would quickly become pregnant. Given the fragile nature of this antiquity, we would ask that visitors do not test this legend out by sitting on the chair!

Above: Ye Olde Trip Store with Cursed Galleon, safely housed in its glass presentation case, sitting above it.





### **The Legend Of Mortimer's Hole**

One of the most captivating legends associated with the Inn relates to the downfall of Roger Mortimer, Earl Of March, infamous paramour of Queen Isabella and ruler of England from 1327 to 1330. In the year 1330, King Edward III entered Nottingham Castle through the network of caves to arrest Mortimer who had become his mother's lover and had treasonously deposed and murdered his father, King Edward II. Mortimer was captured in the royal apartment and subsequently hanged.

It is said that Mortimer and Isabella used to meet in secret, he from the Inn and she from the Castle, in what has become known as Mortimer's Room. This small room, cut out of the rock at the back of the Rock Lounge, was connected to the Castle by a small passage deep down through the ancient sandstone rock known as Mortimer's Hole. Today this passage can only be accessed on a tour from Nottingham Castle.

Above: The Cursed Galleon shrouded in years of dust and cobwebs and the ancient "Pregnancy Chair".





### **The Museum Room**

Linked to the Rock Lounge by a bridging passageway through the rock, you will find the Museum Room.

### **The Cellars**

Going back down through the Rock Lounge to ground level, the door to the cellars of the Inn can be found just inside the main entrance. In the cellars can be found an old cockfighting pit and an area which was once part of the Gaol of Nottingham Castle. This included the condemned cell, a small cell with a very low ceiling with small holes drilled to allow a little air to flow through. The Gaoler would have sat just outside the cell on the ‘Gaoler’s Chair’ which was etched out of the solid rock and can still be seen by visitors today.

“Yorkey”, who always said that he never wanted to leave the Inn, is said to regularly visit the cellar caves. Having been seen in the cellars on many occasions, he apparently loves to play tricks on the staff and has fun by moving things around just to confuse them!



Above: Our cellars, book a tour and see for yourself.



## Ye Olde Trip Store

Visit our store in the 1st floor Rock Lounge to take a little bit of history home with you.



### Acknowledgements:

Codebrush Ltd design and layout. 0844 445 7705  
The Knights of Nottingham [www.knightsofnottingham.com](http://www.knightsofnottingham.com)

# Ye Olde Trip To Jerusalem

Having completed a tour of the most remarkable Inn, take the opportunity over a drink & some food to relax and soak in the atmosphere. Reflect in the fact that your visit has transported you back through time when legend has it the Crusader Knights stopped off at the Inn for 'one for the road' on their journey to The Holy Land.



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