

A NAYLAND PUB CRAWL



The new licensing laws are causing quite a few headaches for people running licensed premises. Many pub landlords in towns and villages have met with a huge amount of opposition from residents concerned about the extended opening hours and the anti-social problems they fear this could lead to. Fortunately at the present time in Nayland we only have three licensed premises to worry about – the Anchor, White Hart and Village Hall - but if this law had been passed years ago when Nayland had many more pubs things could have been a bit different.

Over the centuries Nayland has had innumerable licensed premises which until the 19th century were called inns, taverns, alehouses and beerhouses depending on what type of alcohol they were licensed to sell. We know which businesses were operating during the 20th century but it is difficult finding out just how many there were functioning at any one given time in the 19th century and before.

During the second half of the 19th century some of the Nayland pubs were owned by the Cuddons Brewery which was sited at The Butts behind the Church. The brewery owned ten pubs in the Nayland area and before it closed in 1918 and was taken over by the Colchester Brewing Company.

Going backwards from today, in living memory, there was the Star & Garter in Bear Street (earlier called the Star or Rising Sun) which closed in 1984 having been kept for many years by the Osborne family. A lot of people can still remember the Butchers Arms in Bear Street, the Queens Head in High Street and the Victoria in Court Street which all closed in the 1950s. The Butcher's Arms was so called as it was adjacent to a butcher's shop in the 19th century but is thought to have had other names. The Queens Head was a 16th century coaching inn, the venue for meetings of the Commissioners for the Stour Navigation in the 18th and 19th centuries, and the Victoria was a humble beerhouse owned by Daniells Brewery.

Wiston's only known pub, The Fox, which was owned by Cuddons, closed in the 1960s. The Vine in the High Street (now Vine House) and the Compasses in Bear Street (now the Village Stores) both closed around 1909. It seems therefore that we can say in 1900 there were nine licensed premises operating at the same time and the 1901 census confirms this.

At the moment we only have scant documentary evidence of the many other pubs which existed before 1900. We know that in the High Street (for a time part of Court Street and sometimes called Town Street or Church Street) there was a pub called the Rose which seems to have been on the site of the Post Office, next to the Vine, and next door to the Guildhall another pub was called the Greyhound while across the road at Chapmans there was the Royal Oak. In this part of the High Street, of course, there was also the White Hart, known as the Crown before the 19th century, where the manorial court met. Behind the Church on part of the brewery site was the Horse & Groom and also another inn nearby called the Bull. Most of these premises existed in the 17th or 18th centuries and sometimes before.

In Court Street, as well as the Victoria and the Anchor, which had a lime kiln attached and was known as the Kings Head in the 18th century, a pub called the Shoulder of Mutton was appropriately enough housed in Kerridge's butcher's shop. In Mill Street during the 18th century Cedar Cottage was the Swan Inn. Bear Street has had its share of pubs including a White Lion and a Bird in the Hand but it is not known for certain whether Bear House was in fact a 15th century inn. Birch Street does not appear to have had many pubs but there is evidence of one in the 17th century called the Cock.

Even though not all of these pubs existed at the same time, it is clear that until the 1950s residents had plenty of choice, and, of course, all these pubs were within walking distance of their own homes.

Wendy Sparrow

[More details of Nayland's pubs can be found in Chapter 6 of *Nayland Suffolk Town & Village*]