The Sedgemoor Inn - a Brief History

Built at the end of the 15th century, the house is of timber framed construction, sitting on a blue lias stone bed, there are no foundations. The walls are made of cob between the frames, internal walls were made of wattle and daub, and remains of this can be seen just inside the front door. Originally built as a single storey house with no chimneys, the fires were lit on stone slabs, the smoke being allowed to drift up into the roof void and out through the eves. A second storey and chimneys were added in the 17th century with the rooms built between the existing frames of the house.

The first reference to it being an Ale house occurs in 1674 when Ben Page was issued with a license to sell alcoholic drink. The name Ben Page also appears in the Churchwardens accounts of 1685 where it states he was paid for repairing the clock and a seat, also making a key for the North door, repairs after the battle?

The house at the time was called Wilkins tenement and possibly owned by one Thomas Wilkins who was at the Battle of Sedgemoor according to W M Wigfield's book The Monmouth Rebels, he took part in the rebellion, was taken prisoner, tried at Wells and bound over. Later he became licensee until 1725 when Sam Lockyer took over.

In 1822 the Pub was given the name Three Greyhounds, the word Hotel was added sometime in the thirties.

Much has been said and written about the old pub in which Lord Feversham is alleged to have slept, see the letters the Rev Evans wrote, asking for the room to be preserved and for a tablet to be installed to commemorate the fact! It has taken sixty years to be done but there is now a notice which reads: In this room the night before the battle slept Lord Feversham. At 1oclock in the morning he was roused by the Inn keeper Ben Page to be told that the rebels were on the moor and at their head was James Duke of Monmouth, the date the Sixth of July 1685, that day started the last battle to be fought on English soil.

If you look on the left hand side of the inglenook there is a sharpening stone where the Troops sharpened their swords.

Over the years the premises changed ownership several times (see list of Landlords), in 1883 it was sold to a Mr Knight of Bridgwater a brewer who later joined forces with other Brewers to become Starkey Knight & Ford , in 1970 it got lost in the Whitbread Empire.

Looking at the sale advert of 1883 the Cottage Lot 1 was gutted and became a garage for Heard Brothers Threshing machine. Lot 2 is now the Post Office (since closed), and Lot 3, advertised as an excellent site for building, was not built on until the 1960s, incidentally Lot 3 was the site of an old malt house, probably with connections to the Pub.

In 1925 major alterations took place, the garage turned into the Public bar, a new window and bar door were fitted with leaded lights incorporating the words

Public Bar, this was supplied by a company called Christmas of Bristol for the princely sum of £4.10s at the same time the cider house was changed into a domestic kitchen. Overnight accommodation was now available for the public.

1969 saw further changes, the floor plan will give some idea of how much the Pub was enlarged, and the cellar was reopened, and was last used as an air raid shelter during the Second World War, and the name was changed for the third time to The Sedgemoor Inn.

Many stories circulate about the old Pub about it being haunted. Several customers say they feel a presence when they are in the Pub. Roy and Sarah Ferguson held the fort on weekends but would not stay again as they could hear the sound of footsteps walking along the passage outside their bedroom (they were the only two in the building that night)

On another occasion a gentleman staying the night said he was aroused by a great weight on his legs, he looked toward the foot of the bed and saw a figure of a man sitting there dressed in what he described as old fashioned uniform and when he called out the figure stood up and walked away straight through the wall. He left the following morning vowing never to stay the night again. He returned several times afterwards but never for Bed & Breakfast.

There is an experience I shall always remember. Sitting in the bar one night with a friend, George Lester from Derby, the Pub was completely deserted apart from ourselves. Suddenly he said "There is someone in the lounge". I turned to see a figure moving across the front of the fireplace and disappearing through the far wall. "It must have been your Ghost, said George, "at least we have both seen it". A few minutes later he was sitting facing the lounge bar when he said "She has gone back the other way". "Did you say she?" I asked. "Yes it looked like a young girl that time" said George.

There was another strange happening. It was a bright summer's day in July 1972. I was serving at the bar when a lady came in and said "Excuse me Landlord, do you know you have a Ghost?" "Yes Madam" I said. "That's alright then, I have just seen a young girl who was by the fireplace, but she has passed on now".

The census of opinion is that the Ghost is probably Mary Bridge who killed a Royalist soldier with his own sword when he tried to rape her mother (the sword is now on display in the Bridgwater Museum).

By Don Mattravers

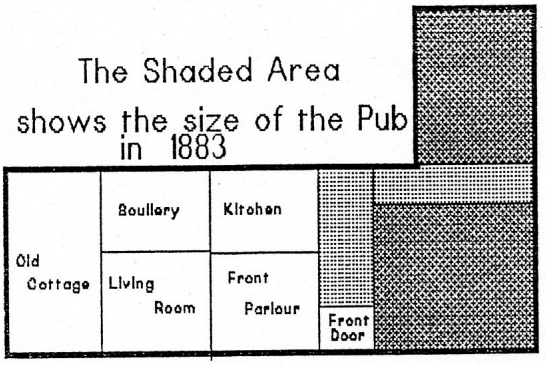
[illegible] - List of Landlords since 1674

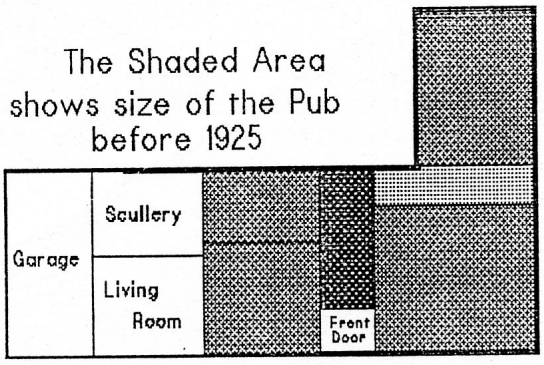
Mark & Charissa Jackson	2015
Mark James	2014
Noel & Natalie Hurman	2013
Andy & Lisa Clements	2007
Colin & Babs Loader	2007
Shaun Pike & Steve Doherty	2006
Sue & Jamie Dorsett	2004
Caroline & Ricky Rose	2003
Nigel Ainsthorpe & Lue Oszynski	2001
Penny & Graham Francis	1999
Penny Waite	1995
Colin Small	1993
Peter Smith	1988
Don Mattravers	1969
William Hobbs	1965
George Bryant	1953
William Symes	1939
Harry Addis	1937
William Boyd	1935
Herbert Keye	1931
George Seaman	1923
Tom Summerhays	1920
William Winter	1913
Walter John Heard	1882
Richard Chinn	1876
John Chinn	1865
Charles Coles	1864
William Pugh	1861
William Trie	1839
Charles Trice	1822
Richard Brooks	1805
William Poundsford	1795
Betty Poundsford	1782
Robert Poundsford	1773
John Nation	1770
William Martin	1768
Matthew Lockyer	1757
Joanna Lockyer	1744
Ambrose Lockyer	1732
Thomas Wilkins	1687*
Ben Page	1674

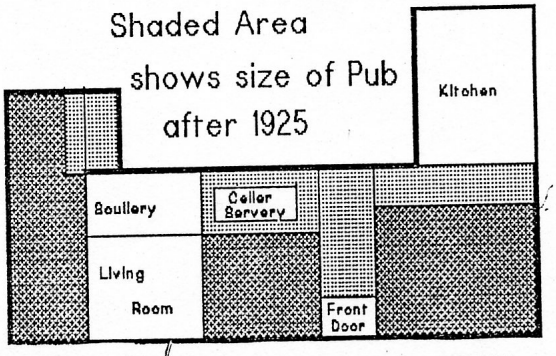
*Thomas was at the Battle of Sedgemoor in 1685

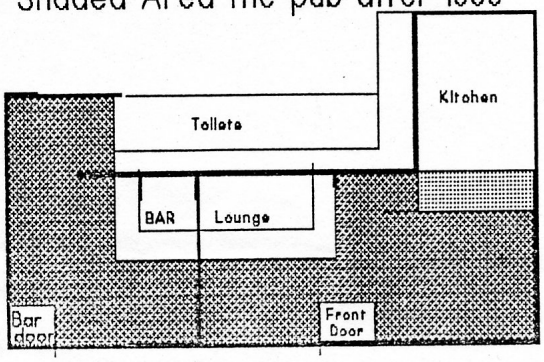
The Inn was known as Wilkins Tenements until 1822 when it was given the name, Three Greyhounds. It was renamed the Sedgemoor Inn in 1970.

Compiled by ***Don Mattravers*** from Electoral rolls, Alehouse records and local will's.









The above diagram shows how much the pub has been enlarged over the years it probably did not hold more than a dozen people originally. A head count taken one Saturday night in 1973 added up to 210