

THE
* PLOUGH & HARROW *

This inn known by the name and sign of the Plough and Harrow was built in the 4th year of William and Mary in 1692, though the original structure of the building has been altered and added to down through the years.

When first built the property was made up of two dwelling houses owned at this early date by one Charles Pittock, who appears not to have resided in either, but held leases on them. In 1703, one of the dwellings was occupied by Isaac Whale, a shoemaker of Bridge, whilst the other by Thomas Kettle, a carpenter of the parish. By 1720, both dwellings along with two others in Bridge and a third at Patricxbourne, was in the possession of Elizabeth Maudistely Pittock. Isaac Whale still occupied one dwelling and did so until his death in 1742, whilst the other, was occupied by the widow Kettle, who at this date lived here on what appears to be a peppercorn lease.

By 1750, the Pittock estate was in the hands of Dorothy Pittock, who had inherited it upon the death of her mother. At this date both dwellings were occupied, one by Henry Marshall and the other by Jacob Sherrod, however in 1761 both properties were sold, Henry Marshall, still occupied one, whilst the other appears to have remained empty. They were sold to Richard Hardiman, who in 1768 made them over in his will to Susannah Sherrad, daughter of Jacob Sherrod; and there followed some arguments at law between Sherrod and members of the Hardiman family as to the rightful owner, during the whole of which both dwellings remained unoccupied.

1785

In 1785, Susannah Sherrard (now spelt thus) spinster of Bridge parish disposed of the two dwellings by sale to Thomas Williams a maltster of Bridge, who between the years of 1785 and 1789, carried out works to the dwellings to form them into a malthouse, though in doing so, he probably retained a small living area for himself and his family. His wife bore him eleven children, but as was usual of the times, not all these, survived the perils of infancy and by 1811, only six were recorded alive and living here with their parents.

Thomas Williams lived out the rest of his life here, producing malt for the purpose of brewing. He died in 1830, whereafter the house and business passed to his son William, who by 1831 was brewing ale here for he is recorded so throughout that year and early 1832. In that year he obtained a beer house licence under the terms of the 1830 beer act, which enabled any house holder of good character to obtain a licence to sell beer from a dwelling or tenement of rateable value, by merely paying the small sum of two guineas to the department of excise, thereby avoiding the necessity of applying or being presented to Magistrates, who had no control over these beer houses and frowned upon the act.

And so in April 1832, ale was sold here for the first time. The house bore no title at this date other than that of a beer house at Bridge and that the said Williams a brewer and now beer seller was of that house. He kept it and sold his home brewed beverages from it until 1858, when in that year he sold it to Joseph Burch, an ale and porter brewer. By 1863, the house had come to be commonly called the Plough and Harrow. It is quite possible that it was given this title because there was a blacksmiths nearby run by Thomas Fagg, who forged farming implements and probably displayed them outside his shop.

In 1877, Joseph Burch sold the house to Samuel Shepherd of the Shepherd Neame Brewery. It was sold as the Plough and Harrow beer-house with brewhouse, and outbuildings, the price of the purchase was 410 pounds. The Brewery set about altering the property and upon completion of the works, they leased the house to Edward Russell in 1878. In the same year he was granted a wine and spirit licence for the house, and it became a registered tavern. Edward Russell gave up the house in 1881 to George Whiddett. He, in 1887 was succeeded here by Frederick Miles and he in 1894 by Charles Hopper Bean.

Bean gave up the house in 1898, to Robert Silsey and he in 1901 to William Brice. He was here until the outbreak of World War I when he was conscripted. He never returned. His wife Harriet took over the Plough and Harrow and stayed until 1928, when she was succeeded by George Ford and he in 1937 by Philip Ralph Mullinger, who was here for many years to follow.

To-day the Plough and Harrow is kept by James Henry Crowhurst.