



## PLOUGH INN, DORMANSLAND

The main part of the pub appears to be 18<sup>th</sup> century with a later addition at the rear. At some time the building was joined on to a 16<sup>th</sup> century cottage on the left hand side.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the pub stood on the edge of a large area of common land called Dormans Land extending northwards and westwards. Dormansland was a part of the parish of Lingfield until 1886.

In 1809 Parliament enacted *An Act for enclosing lands in the Parish of Lingfield in the County of Surrey*. The enclosure and subsequent sale of plots took until 1816 to complete and the map produced to illustrate the various plots is the first documentary evidence of The Plough inn. Many large plots were sold to various individuals to establish cultivated fields but various left over small plots were allocated to local people to compensate them to loss of certain common rights.

One small plot between the Plough and the public road was allocated to John Dives who was presumably owner of the inn.

From 1820 to at least 1826 James Martin was licensee of the inn. Earlier licensees may have included James Batchelor 1812-18 and William Rivers, 1811.

The next rural upheaval was the Tithe Assessment of 1846, where the Plough is recorded as being owned by John Dives and occupied by Thomas Brackpool, who, according to the census of 1841, was the innkeeper at the time. Thomas was also a carpenter and his wife Mary probably did most of the work in the inn. Women rarely received any credit in the archives for their labours in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In any case, Thomas and Mary had moved to Lingfield village by 1851 where Thomas is recorded as a master carpenter. Although Thomas was a local man, being born in Lingfield in 1801, his occupation had apparently caused him to move around as he married his wife Mary Williams in Seal, Kent on 23 February 1823, where his daughter Sarah was born in 1826. His next two children, Mary and Thomas were born in Croydon in 1832 and 1836 respectively.

In April 1851 the innkeeper was a 29 year old widow, Rosina Skinner. She had been born in Fletching as Rosina Vine and had married, or lived with Joseph Skinner, farmer. They had a son Joseph, born at Fletching on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1848 who was living

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with his mother at the Plough in 1851. Joseph Skinner senior, age 32 died of English cholera at Maresfield on 21 October 1848. Rosina apparently moved from Sussex into Dormansland soon after Joseph's death, where she had a daughter, Sarah born soon after. It is not clear why the widowed Rosina should have moved from Fletching to become an innkeeper in Dormansland. She may have had a local contact. The infant Sarah died on 23 November 1853 after an accident whereby her nightdress caught fire because she was playing with matches.

Rosina married Ambrose Glover, poulterer, after banns, at St Saviour, Southwark on 19<sup>th</sup> November 1851. Ambrose had been living with his widowed sister Eliza Paget who was innkeeper of the Blue Anchor, Godstone.

Having married, Ambrose and Rosina appeared to have lived a settled life at the Plough, where their children Alfred, Ann, Alma, Amm (Ambrose), and Alice were born between 1853 and 1859.

Ambrose Glover was a local man being born in Lingfield around 1826, the third child of Ambrose, poulterer, and his second wife Sarah née Lampon. The family lived for many years in Holly Cottage, Plaistow Street, Lingfield. Ambrose (senior) died of jaundice in 1843 and his son carried on the trade of poulterer while living with his widowed sister who was innkeeper of the Blue Anchor, Godstone until 1851.

There are many cases in 19<sup>th</sup> century records of an innkeeper having one or more secondary occupations. Ambrose is often described as a higgler. The dictionary describes this occupation as one who buys up poultry and dairy produce and supplies in exchange commodities from the shops in town. It is interesting that Ambrose's elder brother Richard in 1861 was a poulterer and innkeeper at the Greyhound, Lingfield. In 1876 his younger brother John became the Greyhound's licensee. Meanwhile Ambrose's sister Eliza had remarried and was now wife of the innkeeper William Jones of the Station Hotel, East Grinstead. They probably obtained some of their supplies from Richard or Ambrose.

Some of Ambrose's children retained their interest in the licensed trade.

**Alma** married the publican Colin Mackenzie of the George Inn, George Green, Langley, Buckinghamshire.

**Ann** married Cadwallader Stanford, licensee of the Star, Lingfield. He died young and Ann then married Arthur J Wood, remaining at the Star. On his death in 1897 the widowed Ann continued as innkeeper for a further 4 years.

**Ambrose** (sometimes called Amm) after a period of farming became landlord of the White Horse, Edenbridge. His daughter Alice married Fred Nichols. After being widowed in 1935 and following the death of her aunt Alice she became innkeeper of The Plough.

**Alice** remained a spinster and became licensee of the Plough on the death of her parents.

Ambrose died at the Plough on 28 March 1890 of pulmonary apoplexy leaving his widow Rosina as licensee until her death on 4<sup>th</sup> January 1901 of chronic myelitis and diabetes for 4 months. Her daughter Alice had no doubt effectively been the innkeeper for some time and became licensee in 1901.

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'Black Alice', as she was locally known because of her habitual wearing of a black dress remained licensee until her death on 22 March 1936 of cerebral thrombosis. Her niece Alice Nichols was present at the death and subsequently became licensee for a few years until her brother Ambrose Glover took over in 1942. His earlier life had included periods as an electrician and clerk to an electrical contractor in Hackney.

The long Glover dynasty at The Plough ended in December 1945 when Arthur Nash Boakes took over. He was succeeded in 1951 by Harry Turville Stubbs and on 12 December 1955 by Thomas Henry Farndale and in August 1964 by his widow Hilda Marion Farndale. In 1977 Clive Drury was licensee.

### **Rating Valuation Survey**

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century a major survey (sometimes called Lloyd George's Domesday) was carried out around 1911. This gives interesting information on all properties in the country but often in rather cryptic form. The Act was repealed in 1920.

The essential information relating to The Plough is:

Extent 2r 26p

Occupier Miss A Glover, owner E & H Kelsey

Tenancy yearly, 3 months notice

Estimated rent £45

Land tax £1-9s-2d, paid by owners. Rates & taxes paid by occupier. Insurance paid by owner.

Repairs: owners outside, tenant inside.

Brick & tile public house. Smoke room, bar, 4 pull engines, sitting room, large club room, tap room & kitchen combined, larder, scullery, 2 bedrooms, 2 attics, 3 stall stable. Coach house of wood & slate, wood & tile old stable, old wood & tile sheds (useless), brick & slate urinal, 1 wood & slate table is property of tenant. House in fair repair, buildings poor. Gross value £1450.

Around the same time all licensed premises in the area were surveyed by the licensing authorities. The surveys were again recorded in rather cryptic form as shown:

### **1892: The Plough, Dormansland**

Fully licensed

Owner: Edward & Henry Kelsey, Tunbridge Wells

Licensee Rosina Glover, residing on premises

Tied House Tied to Kelsey

Good accommodation

Stabling 6 horses

Nearest pubs 2 miles from Star Inn, ½ mile from Royal Oak

Frequented by: tradesmen, working classes and others

### **1904: The Plough, Dormansland**

Fully licensed

Poor rate assessment £40 gross £34 rateable

Owner Edward & Henry Kelsey, Tunbridge Wells

Licensee Alice Glover, residing on premises

Tied House Tied to Kelsey

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2 nearest licensed houses      ½ mile and 1½ mile  
Serves refreshments other than intoxicants  
Accommodation provided for the public: 3 bedrooms  
Stabling for 6 horses  
Sanitary facilities      Yes  
Frequented by working class

Entries from two guidebooks give a flavour of the pub in the 1970s:

**From: A Drinking Man's Guide to Surrey Pubs, John Booth, Midas Books, 1976**

The Plough at Dormansland is a pleasant pub which, despite the proximity of a large commuter residential area manages to retain the appearance and general style of a country pub. Indeed, the worst excesses of the kind of commuter estate of which Dormansland has its share are thankfully distant from the Plough which stands in solitary isolation on a bend on the Lingfield to Edenbridge road.

It has the look of a farmhouse and is a substantial but unpretentious building with a lovely garden. For motorists there is a large car park and for that much rarer specimen – the user of public transport – there is a bus stop directly outside.

The Plough isn't one of your vast one-bar pubs with acres of carpet and galaxies of strip lighting. It has three areas – two poky little bars which are clearly used by locals and a large area at the rear which seems to be designed for the use of visitors.

The locals' bars are ideal for drinking men. The beer flows easily and well, the talk is genial and uncomplicated – of crops and cows – rather than cars and central heating. The beer is from Messrs Whitbread and is an acceptable drop although served under pressure. Some food is available; sandwiches and rolls and ploughman's lunches, which are actually eaten by ploughmen.

The emphasis is on value for money in these offerings and all snacks offer a stern task for the less than dedicated trencherman.

The saloon bar at the back has a quite different atmosphere than the rest of the place. It has lots of tables and chairs and is remarkable for a large and hideous mural on one wall which depicts a mountain scene – a work in the style of the School of Cinema Art 1948.

*[The mural is believed to have been painted by Canadian soldiers in the 1940s]*

### **Surrey Pubs, Keeble**

Plough, Dormansland. Brewer Whitbread. Food, snacks, station Lingfield

The house is about a mile from Lingfield racecourse and is also much used by people from London and Brighton who like to drink off the main road.

As the Plough has been owned by four different brewers - through mergers - in eight years, there is a good choice of bottled beers. Twice a year - in the summer and autumn - the famous 'Taverners' perform plays and have poetry readings and these attract people from miles around.

The bar slopes towards you at the edges which makes for comfortable leaning but beware of placing your glass too near the edge.

Michael Verrall  
*Revised 15.12.15*

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