

NORTH CURRY HISTORY NOTES

RISING SUN INN, KNAPP

There is evidence to suggest that the origins of this building are pre 1500. Originally possibly a longhouse with animal byre or possibly built as an Open Hall house rebuilt in the 16C when a fireplace was inserted.

This building stands at the foot of a steep hill and stands high above the road at the N end. It has a typical plan of three bays and a cross passage with various later additions at the back and south end. The present two storey tiled roof building has coursed rubble walls which have been raised in brick when it was re-roofed with substantial trusses with tusk-tenoned purlins possibly in M18C. The windows and doors are late replacements. The N gable end, the front wall as far as the entrance of the cross passage, and the back of the Hall stack are set unusually on a plinth.

Between the outer room N and the cross passage is a stud and panel screen which has plain chamfered mason mitred studs with a sill beam on a stone base. This room was possibly rebuilt in the 17C as a kitchen before which it could possibly have been the byre of a longhouse. The hearth in this outer room has a blocked hearth tunnel indicating a former curing chamber, now a plain recess. Stairs are of a later date.

The Hall fireplace backing onto the cross passage and the twelve panel framed ceiling have moulded chamfers of high quality that suggest a date of E16C. The date of the fireplace is uncertain due to the loss of the original roof, but the Hall was evidently open, its ceiling inserted.

There is evidence of two doors in the stud and plank screen in the inner room south of the Hall. One of which would once have given access to stairs to an overhead solar, the other through to the Hall. Although this room has been much altered the walls in this section are 30 inches thick, and together with the plain chamfered studs and 45° flat stops of the screen and the remains of a sill beam indicate a very early building not later than c.1500.

In contrast to the high quality of the ceiling and fireplace in the Hall, the very narrow small steep spiral stairs that rise to the left of the fireplace in the Hall, and not as is more usual beside the cross passage door, are a puzzle. These stairs are now blocked. The door between the cross passage and the Hall is plain chamfered and mason mitred to a shallow peaked head and indicates a later date.

Research using old maps and schedules, census returns, trade directories and other documents and information from local residents has revealed the following information about some of the past occupiers of the building.

There is a building marked in the position of the Rising Sun Inn in the 1840 Tithe Map of North Curry and in the Tithe Schedule it is given the No. 136 and is described as follows:

House, Garden, Buildings with 3 rood and 37 perch of land.

Landowner and Occupier - John Smith - Lessee under the Dean and Chapter of Wells.

In the 1863 Rate Schedule of North Curry we find Hugh Foster listed as the Landowner and Occupier (Lessee of DCW).

In the 1851 Census Return there is a family listed as residing in *Lower Knapp Street* as follows:

Thomas Green	head	age 21	unmarried Inn Keeper
Sarah Green	mother	age 54	Inn Keeper
Emma Green	sister	age 15	at home
Edwin Green	brother	age 8	Scholar

In the 1881 Census Return there is a family listed as residing in the Rising Sun Inn as follows:

John Woodman	head	age 44	Inn Keeper & Farmer of 28 acres emp. 2 men & 2 boys
Elizabeth Woodman	wife	age 37	
James Woodman	son	age 11	Scholar
Charles Woodman	son	age 9	Scholar
John Woodman	son	age 6	Scholar
Hannah Pike	m.i.l	age 58	widow

In the Kelly's Trade Directories of 1861, 1866 and 1872 Hugh Foster is listed as a Farmer and Beer Retailer.

In 1875 until 1910 John Woodman is listed as a Withy Merchant and Beer Retailer. From 1914 until 1923 he is listed just as a Beer Retailer.

From 1927 to 1931 William "Bill" Mercer, from 1931 to 1935 Mr. Bucknell, and from 1935 until 1939 George Albert Pipe are listed as Beer Retailers.

In 1965 Edward "Ted" Dyer became the owner of the building and sold about 11 acres of land, but enlarged and altered the premises into a larger fully licensed Public House.

A number of occupiers have owned the Rising Sun Inn since that time improving, adding and altering the premises. They included Ken and Peggy Anderson, Ernest Jarvis, Fred and Mary Withers, Jackie Coles, Simon Rayner, Derek and Gina Geneen, Peter Morgan and James and Peggy Ord Watt. Tony Atkinson became the owner in 1989. The present owner and landlord is Duncan Cossey who re-opened the Rising Sun in 2010 after it had been shut for 10 years.