

The Rutland Arms (Dirty Duck) and the Waight/ Pearson Families

I am descended from Benjamin Waight (1799-1888) who became landlord of the Rutland Arms. He had five children. His youngest daughter Jane married George Pearson and they took over the running of the pub between 1871 and 1881. Their son Wallace Pearson took over in 1927. They also worked as coal merchants and supplied coal to Belvoir Castle. When I started my research I found three local newspaper articles about the Rutland Arms, two of which were as the result of interviews with Elizabeth Waight.

One of Benjamin's daughters, Elizabeth Waight, was born in 1840 in the pub and went on to live for 104 years, dying in 1945. She was interviewed on her 90th and 100th birthday by a local newspaper. She apparently was renowned for her excellent memory and recounted aspects of her family history. She recalled that her grandfather, Joseph Waight came from Andover, having served with the Marquis of Granby. The Marquis had built the pub for Joseph, sometime after 1790. She says that it was at the time that the Grantham Canal was being opened to traffic (I believe it was constructed 1793-7). Elizabeth stated that Joseph was only a landlord for a short time as he died of smallpox leaving his young wife (Triphena Musson) and his young son Benjamin (born 1799). His wife continued to run the pub until Benjamin was old enough to take over in his own right.

In October 2014 there was a local newspaper article about Bob Taylor on his retirement from being the landlord of The Dirty Duck (previously the Rutland Arms). He said that he had taken over as landlord from the Waight/ Pearson family in 1971. Bob stated that the pub was originally built in 1749 by the Marquis of Granby for his batman Waight who had served with him on his military campaigns. If this was the case then Joseph Waight could not have been the first landlord.

From the information I've been given by Tony, the Rutland Arms predates the canal and the date of 1749 seemed more likely. Also the dates I found for the Marquis of Granby fit more with this date as John Manners born, 2.2.1721, was the Marquis of Granby renowned for rewarding his soldiers by setting them up in pubs. He died 18.10.1770, too early for Joseph Waight but within the timescale if the pub was built in 1749. However, subsequent information that I have obtained leads me to believe that although the building itself may have been there in some form from 1749, it did not become a pub until the 1790's. Also it belonged to the estate of Belvoir and not the family, who were tenants.

The following is information I have found regarding the Waight and Pearson Families:

I have been unable to find a baptism or birth for Joseph Waight in Woolsthorpe or the surrounding areas. I have found a birth for a Joseph Waight (parents Joseph and Mary Waight) in 1755 in Andover. If the information given by Elizabeth Waight is correct this could possibly be Joseph.

Joseph Waight married Triphena (Fanny) Musson on 17th November 1793 in Barkstone. Triphena (Tryphena) had been born c. 1766 in Barkestone to Benjamin Musson and Mary Parkham.

Joseph and Triphena appear to have had two children. Sarah was born in 1797 in Redmile, although I can find no further information about her. Their second child was Benjamin born in 1799 in Redmile.

According to Elizabeth's recollections Joseph was not landlord of the Rutland Arms for long, dying of smallpox when his son was a baby. I have found a burial at Woolsthorpe on 5th February 1800 for a 'Josephine Waight'. Could this actually be Joseph? It would certainly fit with other evidence.

On 6th August 1801 Triphena married Christopher Pick in Woolsthorpe. She was described as a widow of the parish. They continued to live at the Rutland Arms with Benjamin and have two further children: Ann (1803) and William Christopher (1805). Sadly both died as young babies. Triphena died in 1839 and Christopher in 1841. They were both buried in Woolsthorpe.

Benjamin took over the running of the pub although his mother and step father continued to live there. Interestingly, the pub was broken into in 1835 and a horse pistol, 15 table cloths, two coats and various articles belonging to Christopher Pick were stolen. Edward Pyzer, 22 was charged with the crime and was sentenced to death, commuted to life, and deported to Tasmania.

The pub appears to have become a home to the extended family. On 23rd May 1834 Benjamin married Ann Beecham in Woolsthorpe. They had five children:

William (1835). He was married three times and had three sons, one from each marriage. His first two wives died in childbirth and William himself died in 1916 in West Ham. His eldest son Joseph William (1866) had two sons William Danks and Herbert William. Although they were both born in Rotherhithe they appear to have gone to live in Woolsthorpe following the deaths of their parents. They were enrolled at the local school in 1909 and 1910. Their guardian is recorded as being George Pearson.

Mary Ann (1836). There are too many possible leads to know which relate to Mary Ann.

Frances (1838). She is my great (x2) grandmother. She married Edward Clements, an ostler, on 18th May 1859 in Spitlegate Church Grantham. They moved to Southwark and had two children: Mary Ann (1859) and John. Frances died in 1881 in Southwark but appears to have been buried at St James Woolsthorpe on 1st November 1881.

Elizabeth (1840-1945) Elizabeth never married and lived in the pub for all but the last few years of her life.

Tryphena (1846). She married William Catton in 1874. She had three children: Walter Lowe Waight (1870) William and Mary Catton. Tryphena died in 1925 and is buried in Woolsthorpe.

Jane (1853). She married George Pearson in 1872. They had ten children: Clara, Frances, Frederick, Florence, Mabel, Wallace, Clarissa, Alberta, Ronald and Elsie.

On 12th March 1927 the ownership of the pub passed to Wallace. In 1939 Wallace was the Landlord of the Rutland Arms as well as being a coal merchant. His son Fredrick and brother Roland were assisting him although Rolland appears to have a mental deficiency and needs the support of his brother Wallace in order to help. I can only assume that Frederick took over the running on the pub. Wallace died in 1958, Roland in 1979 and Frederick in 2003.

Still on the trail of when the pub first opened and who was its first landlord, I decided to try the archives at Belvoir Castle. I wrote to the archivist, Peter Foden, telling him what information I had and asking him if he could help me. I received a reply from the Duke of Rutland telling what he and Peter had found in the estate archives. The Rutland Arms is not drawn on their earliest map of Woolsthorpe (1799). They did however, have an account of a conversation Benjamin Waight had with Charles Neale, the Surveyor, in 1831:

The value so much depends upon whether it is a good accustomed house - it is I apprehend liable to the business fluctuating very materially. The tenant states that he built the House and Premises mostly at his own expense 40 years ago and enlarged them 20 years ago. Premises worth £18 per annum. Say £8 on account of outlay by Tenant.

This would mean that house and premises were built in 1791- before Benjamin was born. Is the 'tenant' referred to actually his father Joseph? However, 20 years later in 1811, Joseph was dead and Benjamin only 12 years old. His mother had married Christopher Pick and he lived at the Rutland Arms. Could they have been responsible for the building work?

The Duke suggested that I contact the Lincolnshire Archives to check information on the Lincolnshire or Kesteven Quarter Sessions Roll. This I did and I was supplied with the following information.

The earliest alehouse records for Woolsthorpe were for 1732. These early records list parishes, victuallers and whoever stood surety (usually for £10) for the alehouse. Unfortunately names of pubs/alehouses are not listed until 1825. There is nothing interesting in these early years until 1784 when it lists one Thomas Welbourn but there appear to have been two alehouses. There is no mention of Joseph Waight until 1799.

In 1799 three people are listed as victuallers in Woolsthorpe: Mary Welbourn, Joseph Waight and William Jackson. Thomas Welbourn stood surety for all 3 and Joseph also stood surety for William Jackson (perhaps they helped each other out?).

In 1800 the three victuallers are listed as Mary Welbourn, William Jackson and Tryphena Waight, which fits in with your information. Christopher Pick was then listed as victualler (not Tryphena/Triphena) in 1801 and 1802, 1805-1808 and later (although there are gaps).

In 1825 the system changed and pub/alehouse names are added. For Woolsthorpe: The Rutland Arms, Benjamin Waight (surety of £30), The Red Lion - William Jackson and The Chequers, George Welbourn, Benjamin stood surety for all three.

This stays the same till 1843 when John Machin takes over The Red Lion and Thomas Wright The Chequers. Benjamin Waight or Waite continues to be listed as victualler until 1865 when the records are discontinued (apart from minute books).

There are no further details about Joseph Waight's time as landlord, though this would fit in with him dying when Benjamin was a baby. These records do not state when the pub was built (and in any case it was as likely to be a building in use for something else that was changed to a pub) though it seems he became a landlord in 1799, not earlier.

The only other piece of information found was an application for the transfer of alehouse licence: The Rutland Arms, Benjamin Waite to George Pearson in 1882.

Based on what I have found I can only assume that Joseph Waight was the first Landlord of the Rutland Arms, or Wharf Inn as it appears to be called on early census. It's possible that he lived there prior to 1799 but only became licensed in 1799. Joseph and his family may have originated in Andover and may have had links to the Marquis of Granby. This might explain how he came to be a tenant although I have found no evidence to support this. He could equally have been a local lad and I just haven't been able to find evidence. On balance I think that the accounts given by Elizabeth Waight are more likely to be an indicator of the date for the Rutland Arms.

Lynn Plumer

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