

COCK INN

This timber-framed building is partially clad in weather-boarding with brick infill. The back (west) part dates back to the 16th century, with the front (east) part having been added in the 18th century.

The earliest record of ownership dates from 1772 and notes the taking over of the inn by George Hammond on the death of his father, George.

It was developed as a coaching inn with the establishment of the turnpike road. Mr John Baker in his Horsham Diary describes seeing a maypole there with garlands and dancers on 12th May 1774.

(See MAYDAY)

In 1788 a fire mark was issued by the Royal Exchange Assurance Corporation. The listed details of the mark stated that the building was worth £ 250, the brew house £ 30, and the stable £ 20, the total of £ 300 requiring an annual premium of 18 shillings. George Hammond died in 1819 and his son William Hammond took over as innkeeper until 1838.

From 1839 James (John) Fairs was the owner and innkeeper until 1846, when he sold the property to William Lintot for £700 whilst still retaining the role of innkeeper. However, the sale was not completed until 1848 when the total cost, including interest, was £950. In 1860 Henry Michel in his diary cites attending the Bankruptcy Court over the matter of "James Fairs of Southwater" where the commissioner claimed such cases were "the result of ignorance of book keeping".

The census of 1861 records Henry Simmons as Innkeeper living with his daughter and son, housekeeper and servant. There must have been adequate accommodation as there were also ten lodgers listed, six of whom were railway labourers (the railway opened in September 1861).

A sale document of 1864 states that the Cock Inn, a dwelling house and harness maker's shop, sold for £ 750. It was probably bought by William Hammond as he is cited as innkeeper in a directory of 1866 and a saddler in the census of 1871. So the Cock was back in the hands of the Hammond family - this one being the son whose father was replaced in 1838/39 by James Fairs. He was also a harness maker and probably serviced the coaches and horses passing through. . A photograph of 1880 shows the family with horses, a light carriage and a cart in front of the Inn.

Bob Piper



Photo thanks to

The census of 1891 lists Henry Summersell as innkeeper, to be replaced in 1899 by James Cripps who remained until 1923.

In 1924 Arthur Barton took over and the Blue Book Directory of 1925 refers in bold print to **The Cock Hotel** which has accommodation and cars for hire - it must have gone up in the world ! This title was retained until Arthur Morgan took over in 1937 when the pub returned to its former name - The Cock Inn.

It is often difficult to distinguish between owners and tenants but, more recently, the pub has been owned by brewery companies : The Brighton Rock Ale Company, The United Brewery, The Portsmouth and United Brewery, and Whitbread plc.

In its heyday this fine old coaching inn played an important role on the route between London and Worthing.

Adapted from "A Wealden Community, Southwater in the early 19th Century" and an article by Judith Court



The Cock at South Water on the Worthing Road.

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