

Whitwell Street pub well known for selling vinegar



In her publication *Fifteen Locals*, Joyce Cox writes: “The Star [pictured in the Reepham Life 2019 Calendar for June], once known as The Cock, was very old-fashioned with sand on the floor.

“There was no bar counter; all drinks had to be brought up from the cellar. It was also well known for selling vinegar. The last landlord, William Morris, had been a ‘clicker’ (he hand-cut shoes) in a Norwich shoe factory.

“Henry Hawes writes of its Whitsuntide Tuesday sports. Whitwell Street was used for races and a small field belonging to the pub for a ploughing match.

“The Star closed in 1935 and is now a private house known as the Old Star – but no longer permitted by its deeds to sell vinegar!”

Census records tell us that it was a beerhouse or pub in 1841 with John Rayner as the victualler. In two censuses it is called the Cock Inn, but reverts to The Star by 1878.

Frederick Watson was the licensee from 1896 till 1905. He was also a house painter but must have enjoyed life as a publican as in the 1911 census he is recorded as the landlord of the Sun Inn with his wife Ellen and sons Stanley and Clifford.

Frederick carried on working as a painter and decorator as well as running The Sun. His son Stanley was apprenticed to Edward Gibbs, ironmonger, continuing to work for Gibbs for a number of years. His second son Clifford took over the licence in 1922 and is well-remembered in Reepham, as is his wife Violet, who continued running The Sun after Clifford’s death in 1962.

*Janet Archer*