

The George bygone – February 2018

We do, however, have another one of Robert Adam's typically terse advertisements (see *The George bygone – January*) from the Suffolk Chronicle in February 1857, soon after he took over the pub; this time for a 'sporting' challenge.

PIGEON SHOOTING.

THERE will be a SHOOTING MATCH at the George Inn, Wickham Market, on Friday, the 27th Instant, at 1 o'clock, for a FAT SHEEP.
A good supply of Pigeons and Rabbits.
R. ADAMS.

Livestock prizes were quite common at all sorts of village events and were, perhaps, a forerunner of pub 'meat raffles'. This also suggests that the 3-ish acres of arable land, traditionally let with The George, was still attached at this date for the match to take place over.

Given our aims, it was amazing to find the following article recently (from the *Suffolk Chronicle* of December 13th, 1845).

WICKHAM-MARKET, Dec. 12.

WICKHAM-MARKET PUBLIC ROOM. — Verily, verily, this is a most enterprising village! Its inhabitants are ever projecting something new and useful for the benefit of society, and they are usually successful in carrying out their schemes. How do they achieve these things? Why, by the unanimity and good feeling existing amongst them; they are all united in one band; their minds fully comprehend the duties of a neighbour, and they carry out those duties with each other to their fullest extent. They have now resolved to build a PUBLIC ROOM, 46 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 15 feet high, together with an ante-room 12 feet square, to provide accommodation for the meetings of the numerous friendly and other societies in the place and neighbourhood, and to be used as a lecture-room, auction-room, &c., &c. The building is already commenced, under the auspices of 30 individuals, among whom is the esteemed High Constable of the Hundred, P. Dykes, Esq., and that veteran in science, Thos. Har-sant, Esq. Mr. John Whitmore, the eminent engineer, is the builder; George Thompson, Esq., of Woodbridge, the architect.

The Public Room cost £200 to build, this might be as much as c £685,000 in today's money (there are various ways of calculating price equivalents). Once built, as stated, it was used by both public bodies and social and recreational groups. It later became the Foresters Hall and now carries on as the British Legion Club. We think our "unanimity and good feeling" has survived the long Feasibility Study process, as we will demonstrate on the 10th, particularly at the 'Pop-up George' after the meeting.

If you have any historical facts, memories, photographs of The George, or characters associated with the pub or groups that used it you wish to share, contact us by e-mail at heritage.wmgeorge@btconnect.com.