

In November 1795, the following article appeared in the Ipswich Journal:

**GEORGE INN,
WICKHAM-MARKET.**
BENJAMIN POOLEY, having taken the above
INN, begs leave to inform Gentlemen Travellers
and others, that he has fitted up neat Post Chaises,
with able Horses and careful Drivers, at One Shilling
a mile; and has also laid in a stock of choice Liquors,
and provided good beds, &c. and flatters himself, his
mode of doing business will meet the approbation of
the public. *November 5, 1795.*

It makes no mention of the fact that Benjamin (1753 – 1827), a farmer from Sudbourne, had taken over The George from his brother, Robert, who in March had had to sell, “Under a distress for Rent”, his household effects at an auction at The George. It is clear that they were related to the pub itself as they included, “7 feather beds and bedding, mahogany and wainscot tables, pier and dressing glasses, chests of drawers, 2 handsome buffets, walnut-tree and painted chairs, coal range, 30 gallon copper, with brewing utensils, and sundry other articles.” It is not known if, in the end, his brother bought them in order to carry on with the business. Benjamin did not run The George for long as, in the following March, from the Crown Inn in Woodbridge, he was ‘acquainting’ “Gentlemen Travellers and others, that they may be accommodated with Post-chaises, able horses, on the shortest notice, as usual, at the above inn.” and in June of the same year (1796) was advertising The George, an “Old-accustomed Inn”, for let and immediate possession as he wished “to decline the public line of business.”

The following news story appeared in the *Suffolk Chronicle*, on the 6th November 1869:

WICKHAM MARKET.
ACCIDENT.—On Friday evening last, as Mr. Hill, baker, Wickham-Market, and Mr. Chas. Bird, of the George Inn, were driving from Framlingham, when near the Willoughby Arms, Parham, owing to the darkness of the night, the vehicle in which they were riding came in contact with a raised part of the road and was overturned. Mr. Bird was thrown on to his head, and was taken up insensible. Assistance having been procured he was conveyed home to Wickham-Market in a cab, and received prompt medical attention, when it was found he had sustained somewhat serious injuries. Mr. Hill fortunately escap'd with a few bruises.

Charles Bird had been the landlord of the George from, at least, the mid-1860s when it was sold as part of the Stonham Brewery's pub estate in 1866. He was then paying £10 a year for the tenancy of the tied house, which was bought by Hansard J. Bridges for £350 along with two of the other pubs sold. Bridges had bought the Violet Hill Brewery in Stowmarket the year before. Having previously been the brewery manager at Stonham, he was obviously now building up his own pub chain. Fortunately, Charles Bird recovered from his injuries, in 1870 giving a bottle of rum as a prize for the 5th Suffolk (Wickham Market) Rifle Volunteers' shooting competition (won by a Private Manthorpe), before transferring the licence of The George to William Foster in March 1871. Foster ran the George for the next nine or ten years, though changing its name to The Golden Lion. It became The George again under the next landlord, Robert Norford. The Mr [George] Hill mentioned very soon after the accident added to his bakery business and opened The Volunteer pub at the corner of High Street and Spring Lane.

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