

The Robin Hood Public House Elsenham



Elsenham Village History Society



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our Thanks Go To

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Without your help we could not have compiled this history

Chris Bush EVHS May 2016

The Robin Hood Public House is a Grade II listed property in Robin Hood Road Elsenham. First listed 22-Feb-1980 It is described in the listing as:

“C18-C19 timber framed and plastered building, two storeys, three one window range, modern, casements, two doorways, with flat hoods on brackets. Roof tiled, half hipped at the South end, section to rear, not of special interest.”

Abstract of Title 21ST May 1766

Lands held 1 acre more or less of land known by the name of the House – croft or close of pasture called Bratts Croft in Elsenham also cont. by estimation half an acre more or less then in the occupation of Souvience Warner To the use and behouf of Thomas Wolfe of Walden To the use of Augustine Rolfe the younger of Wimbish

1840 Tithe Papers

From the 1840 Tithe Commutation papers, the Robin Hood was occupied by Daniel Wilkinson. The public house, yard and garden was 35 poles, i.e. just under a quarter of an acre. The land was owned by George Starkins esq. Wilkinson also occupied another pasture adjoining the pub, which was also owned by Starkins, and this was 2 roods 30 poles or just under three quarters of an acre. Finally, Wilkinson also occupied another pasture, amounting to 1 acre and 30 poles, or just under an acre and a quarter, also adjoining the pub, and this was owned by the trustees for the Poor House, which was one of the Well's Cottages.

Mr George Starkins was the proprietor of a beer shop on site in the early 1840s. He owned the property for about six years, he died on the twenty third day of January 1843. On 17th March 1846 the property was sold:

“Sale of Beer Shop with Outbuildings, Yard and garden comprising: A Freehold messuage, situated at the south west entrance to the village of Elsenham, used as a beer shop, containing taproom, two parlours, washhouse, dairy and cellar, four bedrooms and garrets, a brew-house with an oven, two barns, stables for four horses and piggery, horse yard with pump of water, stable yard, garden and pasture close. A paddock of pasture land, in front of the beer shop; a ditto called “Kings Mead” near the Old Water Mill at Elsenham.”

It should be remembered that in those days, before the coming of the railway in 1845, the Robin Hood was strategically sited on the main road which followed beside the Stansted Brook between Elsenham and Stansted, before the new road as we know it in 2016 was built. Once the rail connection had been built, Elsenham station for a short while was sited at Fullers End crossing before moving to the junction of Station Road and New Road. The Robin Hood was thus, at this time, well placed.

The sale took place on Tuesday 17th March 1846 at 3 o'clock in 7 lots under the auspices of Cockett and Nash, architects, auctioneers, surveyors and estate agents, on the premises held by Mr James Wilkerson at Elsenham.

The lots were described as:

A Freehold Beershop with outbuildings and Garden

Three Cottages with Gardens

And

Five Inclosures

Pastures and Arable Land

In and near the village of Elsenham and Stansted Mountfitchet

A Freehold Messuage situate at the South West entrance of the village of Elsenham used as a Beer Shop containing Taproom, two Parlours, Washhouse, Dairy and Cellar, four bedrooms and Garrets a Brewhouse with an Oven, two barns, Stable for four horses, Shed and Piggery Horse-yard with pump of water Stable-yard, Garden and Pasture Close 0A 3R 25P

Lot 2 A Paddock of Pasture Land in front of the Beer Shop separated from Lot 1 by road 0A 2R 21P

Lot 3 A ditto called "Kings Mead" near the Old Water Mill at Elsenham Note Kings Mead belted with numerous fine growing spires and timber trees the road from Stortford being on the West and the Railroad, East 2A 1R 15P

Lot 4 A highly productive Inclosure of arable land called "Witch Croft" in the Parish of Stansted Mountfitchet. Witch Croft separated from Lot 3 by the road. 2A 0R 14P

Lot 5 A Freehold Cottage with Oven and Garden in the occupation of James Dixon situate in the Parish of Elsenham old road being on the North East and Railroad West. This Lot is almost surrounded by the Estate of George Rush Esq.

Lot 6 And Two ditto with Ovens and Large Garden situate at Fullers End, Elsenham in the occupation of Josh Robinson and Henry Chapman

Lot 7 And the Inclosure of rich, arable land adjoining.

The whole by measurement 9A 2R 16P Total Land Tax 8s per annum

Messuage: (Law) property law – a dwelling house together with its outbuildings, curtilage and the adjacent land appropriated to its use.

Copyhold: (Formerly) a type of ownership of land in England, evidenced by a copy of the manor roll establishing the title

As recorded in Lease documents held at the Essex Records Office

“..the highest bidders were William Robert Hawkes, John Nash, William Bird, Thomas Bird, William Johnstone and Jones Gifford Nash and were declared as purchasers for the price or sum of Three Hundred Pounds..”

“which said lot comprised inter alia the copyhold hereditaments thereafter described all that croft close of pasture then and thereafter called Bratts Croft situate and being in Elsenham and containing by estimation half an acre more or less as the same then formed part of the said close of pasture thereinfore described then or late in the occupation of James Wilkinson and bounded on the south by the said freehold messuage or tenement and also then or late in his occupation and used as a Beershop and on the west by the Turnpike Road leading from Elsenham aforesaid to Newport to which said croft or close of pasture the said George Starkins the testator by his description of George Starkins the younger was with other hereditaments admitted tenant for his life at a Court held for the Manor of Elsenham Hall on the first day of May 1778 and the reversion or remainder in fee in which descended to him on the death of his father the said George Starkins the elder as his eldest son and heir at law together with all trees hedges ditches mounds fenceways waters watercourses liberties easements profits commodities emoluments and appurtenances whatsoever to the said copyhold croft or close of pasture hereditaments and premises belonging or in anywise appertaining **Now Be It Remembered** that on the day and year first above written the said Jones Gifford Nash in person came before me the said William Rowcliffe Steward of this Manor at my office No.1 Bedford Row in the County of Middlesex and humbly prayed to be admitted tenant to all that croft or close of pasture land called Bratts Croft in Elsenham in the County of Essex by the hereinbefore recited indenture expressed to be bargained and sold unto the said William Robert Hawkes Frederick John Nash William Bird Thomas Bird William Johnstone and Jones Clifford Nash their heirs and assignees and that the said Steward under and by virtue of the provisions of an Act of Parliament made and passed in the fourth and fifth years of the reign of the present Majesty Queen Victoria entitled “An Act for the commutation of certain Manorial Rights in respect of lands copyhold and customary tenure and in respect of other lands subject to such rights and for facilitating the enfranchisement of such lands and for the improvement of such tenure” And by virtue of all or any other powers or power enabling me in that behalf Do out of court by the Rod admit the said Jones Clifford Nash tenant to the said Customary hereditaments and premises for all the estate and interest of the said George Starkins therein To Hold the same with the appurtenance To the use of the said Jones Clifford Nash his heirs and assigns for ever of the Lady of the Manor by copy of Court Roll at the will of the Lady and according to the custom of this Manor And by Fealty Suit of Court and other the rents duties and services thereof due and of right accustomed”

Abstract of Title 1846 September

Tenement now used as a beer shop situate standing and being in Elsenham aforesaid with the yard garden barns stables and other appurtenances thereto belonging and so much of a close of pasture adjoining thereto as is freehold as the same were formerly in the occupation of Daniel Pegram

In 1846 Daniel Wilkinson is recorded in the Post Office Directory of that year at The Robin Hood with a tenant being Jones Gifford Nash

From 1848 Ann Wright is shown as publican by the various trade directories and national census documents up to the 1861 census.

In 1862 Kelley's Directory and the Post Office Directory show James Savill in situ whilst White's Directory in 1863 records Arthur Savill.

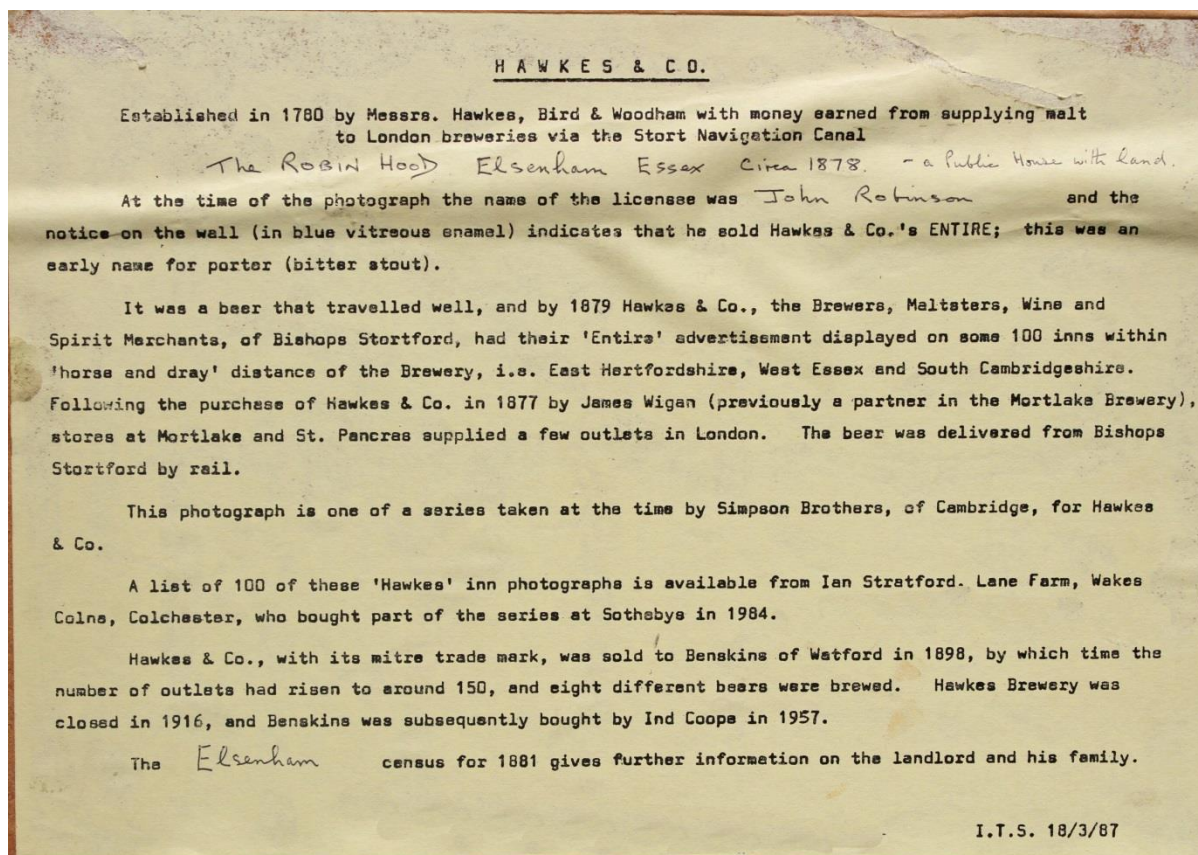
From 1867 the various trade directories and census documents record Nathaniel Simons as publican. Interestingly documents record the name of the inn as "*Robin Hood & Little John*" during his occupation.

From 1874 to 1882 the various directories and census documents show John Robinson in occupation, the name of the Inn once again recorded as "*The Robin Hood*".



The earliest photograph we have of the Robin Hood taken circa 1878 when John Robinson was Landlord. The Pub was then owned by Hawkes & Co Brewers.

The 1878 photograph has the following information upon its reverse:



The 1891 Census showed Arthur Robinson, John's son, then aged 34, as publican with his wife Alice M aged 32. At that time, they had sons, Charles aged 5 and Ernest H aged 3 and their daughter Florence M born in 1891. Also living at the address was Annie Reynolds, General and Domestic servant.

Arthur died in 1892 by which time his children were Ernest, Charles, Florence and a younger daughter Dora. After his death, his widow Alice continued to manage the pub working long hours, but they lived well with ham up the chimney of the taproom (being smoked). Keepers from the Hall brought rabbits, hares and pheasant. They kept their maid at 2/6d a month all found. Alice was still at the Robin Hood as Alice Robinson in 1903 and as Mrs Alice Simmons until 1905. One of the keepers from the Hall, a Mr Simmons, had married Alice but he got mixed up with some shady horse dealers, their money was spent and they had to leave the Robin Hood. Alice died aged 45 in 1905 and is buried in the High Street cemetery.

Alice and Arthur's son, Charles, enlisted in the Essex Regiment in 1914 and died in October 1918, he is commemorated on the village War Memorial and his story can be found in the Elsenham Village History Society's book "For The Duration".

In 1906 records show a Michael Rowman in position.

In 1907 George Lodge became the publican and he continued in position until 1914. In 1911 George Lodge was then 33 years of age with his wife Kate Lodge then aged 34. He had three sons, William then aged 9, Harry aged 7 and Alfred aged 4.



George Lodge outside the Robin Hood probably circa 1912



Kate Lodge, George's wife in the doorway

It can be seen from these two photographs firstly, that the brewery has changed to Benskin's . Secondly, a second entrance door has been added at the North end.

In 1917 records show Robert C Hall at the Robin Hood.

By 1920 William Henry Thomas (or Harry Thomas as he was also known) was publican and can positively be traced as publican through to 1937 although he is believed to have been there until 1942.



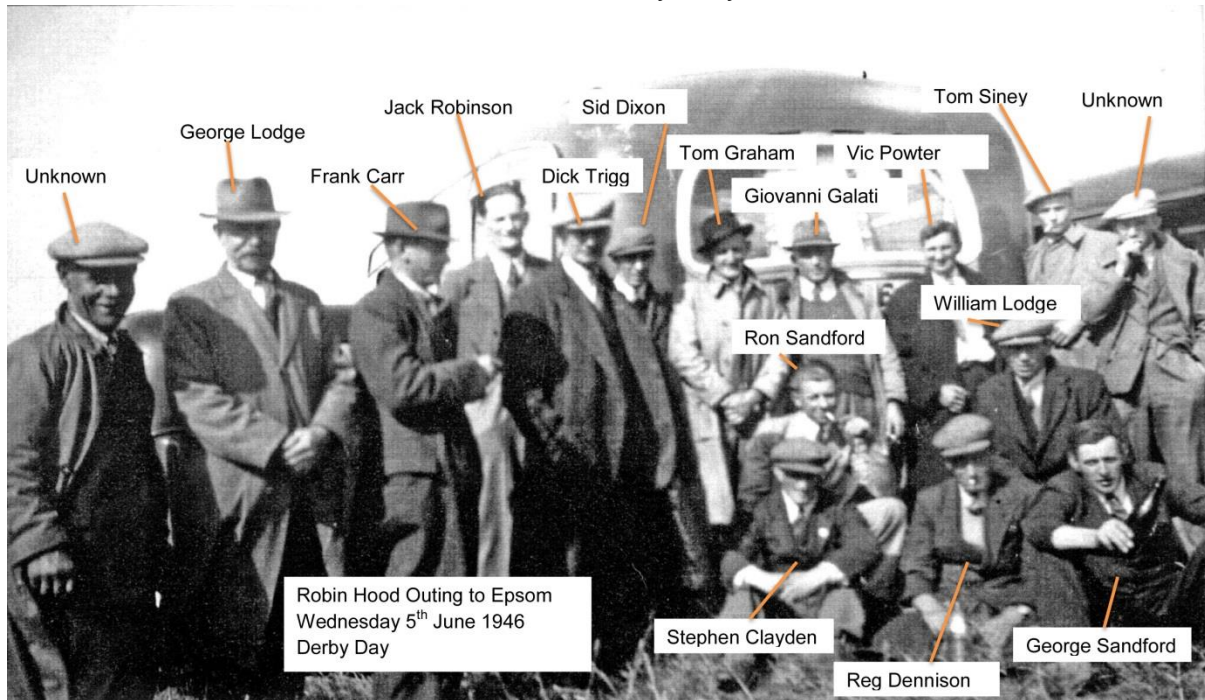
A group photograph, most names are unknown but George Lodge is left in the doorway, to his right is William Henry Thomas

At present details of the pub's tenure during the years of the Second World War have not been substantiated. Electoral Registers were not published during the latter years of World War 1 (1916–1917) or during World War 2 (1940–1944).



Delivery Day

However with the resumption of Electoral Records in 1945 the couple in charge of the Hood can be established as Rosina and Sydney Hill.

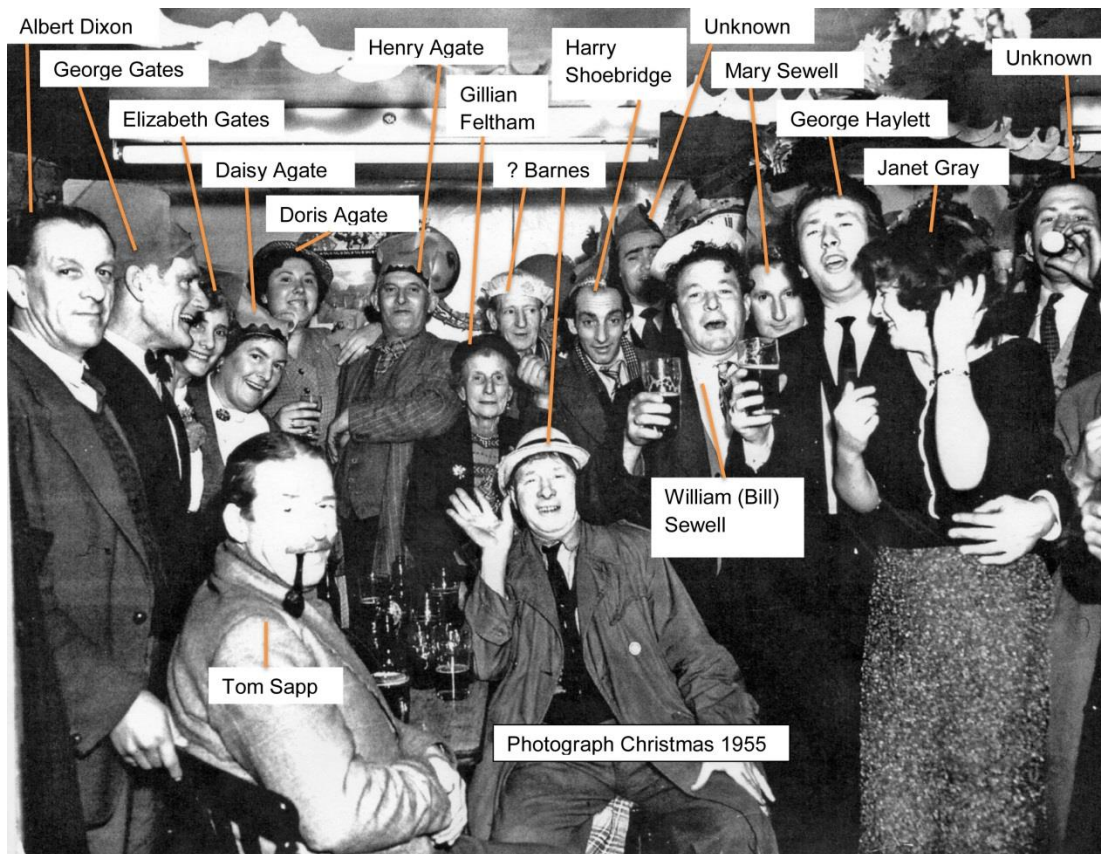


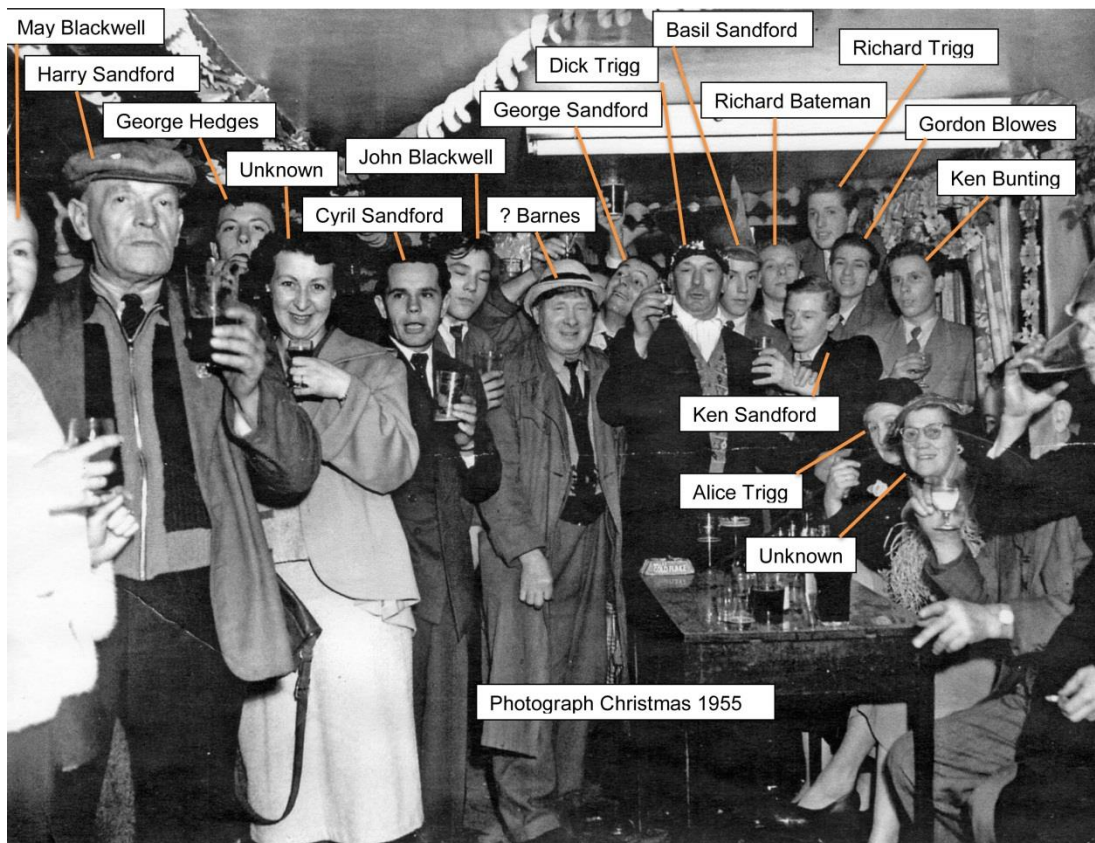
Regulars on a day out at the races. Derby Day 1946



Photograph taken outside the Robin Hood. Left to Right Sid Dixon, Thatcher, Rosina Hill Sydney Hill and William (Bill) Sewell owner of Sewell's Transport business in Stansted Road Elsenham

In 1954 and 1955 Ernest and Ellen Daisy Marriott were behind the bar.
 Between 1955 and 1959 Charles M Estall was Landlord.





The foregoing three photographs, date calculated to be Christmas 1955, show many of the regulars at The Hood at that time.

A few are unknown we would welcome any information that would fill the gaps in our knowledge

From 1959 Rene, (also known as Winnie), and Ernie Atkinson ran the inn for almost thirty years. During this time the pub had its busiest times although it was said that income was not sufficient to sustain its operation without Ernie Atkinson having a second job in his own light engineering business.



Rene Atkinson behind the bar circa 1967

The pub enjoyed the patronage of the Elsenham Football Club and also had a strong darts team. Custom dropped off .when the football team ceased to exist,



The Robin Hood Darts Trophy Donated in 1925

Inscribed:

*“Presented to the Elsenham & District Dart Clubs for
Annual Competition
by S.J. Cooper, Bootmaker, Elsenham.”*

The Winner's Plaques Clockwise:

Won by the Bell Henham From The Robin Hood Elsenham 1973

Won by the Bell Henham From The Coach and Horses Quendon 1950

Won by the Bell Henham From The Robin Hood 1925

Won by The King's Head Quendon From The Bell Henham 1938

Plaque Missing

Won by the Coach and Horses Quendon From The Bell Henham March 1949

The "Hood" had a large public bar and did not possess a saloon bar as such, just a small room for private parties which was hardly ever used. There was a separate building to the rear which housed a full sized snooker table.

Apart from crisps and peanuts and the onion sandwiches which were Rene's trademark, served on Dart Club home matches, no food was available, in contrast to the ever increasing menu available at The Crown.



Mrs Rene (Winnie) Atkinson 1979

The pub had no flushing toilets, merely outside facilities which were legendary. The trip to the ladies' convenience, down the garden, running the gauntlet of the geese, was described as "horrendous".



Ernie Atkinson at work behind the bar

In May 1988, some months after Rene's death, Ernie Atkinson called time for the last time and so an era ended.



Ernie Atkinson Presenting the Darts Trophy to George (Pugga) Sandford

After being empty for a while, the property was then used as offices for about ten years by Peter Charlton Financial Services

The owners in 2016 moved in during July 2005, the property then being used as a private residence. Elaine and David Bright told us that they regard themselves rather as custodians of an important feature of Elsenham's History.

Footnote:

The Robin Hood and Struggle Street

The section of Robin Hood Road from the Hood to Fullers End was colloquially known in the 1940s as "Struggle Street". It was said that the working man would stop off at the Robin Hood for a beer on his way home to Fullers End. At closing time he would have imbibed so much that it was a struggle to get back home.



Robin Hood Public House

Elsenham, nr. Bishop's Stortford.

Roger Taylor, Nov. '77.

Drawing of Robin Hood by Roger Taylor of Elsenham

APPENDIX 1

A LIST OF KNOWN VICTUALERS LICENSEES OR PUBLICANS

(With Source References)

- 1840 Daniel Wilkinson (1840 Tithe Papers)
- 1841 Daniel Wilkinson (1841 Census)
- Early 1840s George Starkins (Lease Papers Essex Records Office)
- 1846 Daniel Wilkinson (Post Office Directory 1846) Tenant Jones Gifford Nash
- 1848 Ann Wright (White's Directory 1848)
- 1851 Ann Wright (1851 Census)
- 1851 Ann Wright (Post Office Directory 1851)
- 1855 Ann Wright (Post Office Directory 1855)
- 1859 Ann Wright (Post Office Directory 1859)
- 1861 Ann Wright (1861 Census)
- 1862 James Savill (Kelly's Directory 1862)
- 1862 James Savill (Post Office Directory 1862)
- 1863 Arthur Savill (White's Directory 1863)
- 1867 Nathaniel Simons (Post Office Directory 1867) "Robin Hood & Little John"
- 1870 Nathaniel Simons (Kelly's Directory 1870) "Robin Hood & Little John"
- 1871 Nathaniel Simons (1871 Census)
- 1871 Nathaniel Simons (Post Office Directory 1871) "Robin Hood & Little John"
- 1871 Nathaniel Simons (1871 Census)
- 1874 John Robinson (Kelly's Directory 1874)
- 1874 John Robinson (Post Office Directory 1874) "Robin Hood"
- 1878 John Robinson (Kelly's Directory 1878)
- 1878 John Robinson (Post Office Directory 1878)
- 1881 John Robinson (1881 Census)
- 1882 John Robinson (Kelley's Directory 1882)
- 1886 Arthur Robinson (Kelly's Directory 1886)
- 1890 Arthur Robinson (Kelly's Directory 1890)
- 1891 Arthur Robinson (1891 Census)

1894 Arthur Robinson (Mrs.) **(Kelly's Directory 1894)** **Arthur Died in 1892 (Gordon Barker History)**

1895 Arthur Robinson (Mrs.) **(Kelley's Directory 1895)**

1898 Arthur Robinson (Mrs) **(Kelly's Directory 1898)**

1899 Arthur Robinson (Mrs) **(Kelley's Directory 1899)**

1901 Alice M Robinson (Arthur Robinson's Widow) **(Census 1901)**

1902 Arthur Robinson Mrs. **(Kelly's Directory 1902)**

1903 Alice M Robinson **(Electoral Registers)**

1904 Alice M Simmons **(Electoral Register)**

1905 Alice M Simmons **(Electoral Register)**

1906 Michael Rowman **(Kelley's Directory 1906)**

1908 George Lodge (1907 to 1914) **(Kelly's Directory 1908)**

1910 George Lodge **(Kelley's Directory 1910)**

1911 George Lodge **(1911 Census)**

1912 George Lodge **(Kelley's Directory 1912)**

1914 George Lodge **(Kelly's Directory 1914)**

1917 Robert C Hall **(Kelly's Directory 1917)**

1920 Harry Thomas (William Harry Thomas) **(Gordon Barker)**

1922 William Henry Thomas **(Kelley's Directory 1922)**

1925 William Henry Thomas **(Kelley's Directory 1925/26)**

1933 Harry William Thomas **(Kelly's Directory 1933)**

1929 William Henry Thomas **(Kelley's Directory 1929)**

1937 William Henry Thomas **(Kelley's Directory 1937)**

1937 – 1942 William Henry Thomas **(Gordon Barker)**

1945-1953 Sydney and Rosina Hill **(Electoral Registers)**

1954 Ernest and Ellen Daisy Marriott **(Electoral Registers)**

1955 Ernest and Ellen Daisy Marriott **(Electoral Registers)**

1955 – 1959 Charles M Estall **(Electoral registers)**

1959 Rene (Winnie) and Ernie Atkinson **(Local Knowledge)**

1979 Winnie Atkinson **(Elsenham Feature in Herts & Essex Observer)**

1988 May Ernie Atkinson called "Last Orders" **Closed (Local Knowledge)**

APPENDIX 2
PHOTO GALLERY



Robin Hood Arrival of the Motor Car



Robin Hood Patron John Henry Nunn 1883 – 1974



William Lodge's Motorcycle & Sidecar Circa 1930



Robin Hood Exterior May 1982