

The History of The Poacher Pub, Portishead

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The Poacher was known to be an ale house prior to the 1680's but with the granting of the first official licence in 1683 *The Blew Anchor* (as *The Poacher* was then known) can rightly lay claim to being the oldest public house in Portishead and the surrounding area. The Licence was granted by the 'Courts Baron of the Rectory Manor' to a Husbandman: William Beakes and his daughter Mary.

In the 1720's after various changes of licensee, Mary Whitwood was the owner. She allowed the Justice Court to hold sessions in *The Blew Anchor* from where the local magistrates dispensed penalties in the pond outside with the ducking stool and on the village green in the form of stocks and a whipping post.

At the time of the 1851 census *The Blew Anchor* was found to be re-named *The Gordon Arms* in deference to its patron, Squire Gordon of Naish, Portbury and Portishead.

In 1861 the licence was held by Charles Hodges and was again known as *The Blew Anchor*. His great great grandson still lives in Portishead and occasionally uses *The Poacher*.

In 1878 the pub was leased to the Kensit family and their patron the Reverend C F Norman who apparently did occasionally use one of the rooms as a preaching room. They again changed the name, this time to *The Anchor*.

In 1914 the pub was bought by the local Bristol Brewery Georges Ltd. This company was in time absorbed by the national brewer Courage.

In 1970 the name of the pub was again changed to its present title *The Poacher*.