

The Prince of Wales

It is not easy to say exactly when the story begins but we will start in 1841. At that time Westcott was still a very rural community with farmlands and orchards extending into the heart of the village. The census shows that there were about 130 households (leaving aside the Bury Hill and Rookery Estates, the Logmore community and other outlying areas). Thirty or so of these were farmhouses and the substantial houses of people of independent means. The remainder were much smaller dwellings, some very primitive indeed, housing the village craftsmen – there were 3 blacksmiths, 7 carpenters, 6 shoemakers, 2 broom makers and 2 charcoal burners for example, together with less skilled – the 50 or so gardeners and agricultural labourers. Most lived quite close to the Green but Westcott was changing. St John's Chapel had been built the year before and in the next few years it would be followed by Holy Trinity Church and the Vicarage (1852), and the Village School (1854) and several more houses in what would one day become Furlong Road, St John's Road and Bailey Road.

The 1841 census included just one baker, Mrs Elizabeth Coldman and she was approximately 70 years old, and it may be that was the reason why Griffin Beall, an ambitious young baker from Headley stacked all his worldly wealth on a pony & trap and made his way to Westcott.



Westcott Village in 1859

Landlords:

We know that Griffin Beall was born in Headley in 1822, and that he was the youngest son of the village baker, but we don't know exactly when he moved to Westcott, but it was sometime in the 1840's when he set up as a baker in a cottage on the main road. The land was owned by John Worsfold who will always be remembered as the founder of St John's Chapel, and of course he had a vested interest in developing this end of the village as he owned much of the land, known as The Furlongs, between the main Road and the Pippbrook.. As well as baking, Griffin brewed his own ale from locally grown barley. The brew proved popular with the villagers and in 1849 he was able to build a small Inn beside his cottage.



It is also relevant that Prince Edward the eldest son of Queen Victoria was born on **9th November 1841** and a month later was appointed Prince of Wales. He became King Edward VII in January 1901.

This advertisement appeared in a Dorking Guide in 1850:

GRIFFIN BEALL
BREWER WESTCOTT
Beall's Beer your hearts will cheer
And put you in condition.
If you've a will to have your fill
You'll ne'er need a Physician
Agents for Meux's Stout and Porter
Families supplied on moderate terms
Orders punctually attended to.

The 1861 Census shows Griffin Beall resident at the Prince of Wales, with his wife Mary who had been born in Braunton, a village in North Devon overlooking Barnstaple Bay. Griffin was described as Innkeeper and Baker and in the latter role he was now assisted by Richard Gamon, his 20 year old stepson. He was also born in Braunton; Mary having been a widow with young child when she married Griffin Beall.

Twenty years later, in 1882 on reaching his 60th birthday and 33 years after becoming the first landlord of the Prince of Wales, Griffin Beall retired. He and his wife settled in Devon at his wife's former home at Braunton but at the end of December 1899 they returned to Westcott to welcome in the 20th century with their family. By this time Griffin was 77 and Mary was 80. Shortly afterwards Griffin was taken ill. Mary returned to Devon but she came back as soon when she heard that her husband was not getting any better. She caught a bad cold and both died within days of each other. They were both buried in the churchyard at Holy Trinity on 18th January 1900.

Meanwhile, back in 1882 Griffin Beall was succeeded as landlord of the Prince of Wales by his son in law, John William Tucker. John Tucker was a North Devon man; from Morthoe not far from Braunton. Before he married Griffin Beall's daughter Lucy, in Holy Trinity Church on 10th May 1876, he had been first a Groom and then a Coachman but the 1881 census shows him as an Innkeeper's Assistant. Having been trained by his father-in-law John Tucker took over when he retired and remained in charge until his death in 1907. The running of the pub then passed to his son, William Griffin Tucker although he was not officially the licensee until after his mother retired in 1922. He then remained in charge until June 1954

The pub had remained in the family for over 100 years and during that time it played a major part in the social life of the village.

Foresters:

When it was established in 1868, Court Rescue, the Westcott Lodge of the Ancient Order of Foresters, met at The Crown but at a special meeting for the Alteration of Rules on 16 February 1874 it was 'proposed by Brother F Molyneux and seconded by Brother H B Potterton that in Rule 2, line 3, the words 'Crown' should be struck out and the words 'Prince of Wales' inserted.' That the move took place is confirmed by the minutes of a subsequent meeting which noted that on the proposition of Br C Wilkins, seconded by Br

W Ladd, it was resolved that the sum of three pounds ten shillings per annum be paid to Mr Beale for the use of the new court room on condition that it be ready by the fourth Monday in July.

In 1898 the 30th anniversary of Court Rescue was celebrated. Again headed by the band, and in their regalia, the members paraded the village calling at the residences of several of the gentry where music was rendered. On their return the members sat down to the customary dinner at the Court House, the Prince of Wales. At the conclusion of an excellent repast, which did credit to Mr and Mrs Tucker, the loyal toasts were honoured.

Two years later the Boer War was remembered when six soldiers who returned from South Africa were guests at the Anniversary Dinner of Court Rescue at the Prince of Wales (Sgt Walton, Dvr Sawyers, Trooper West and Privates Wilkins, Martingale and Rowlands)

Other Forester events we know about include

- Fifty 'Juvenile Foresters' attended a tea party at the Prince of Wales in April 1908
- In February 1909 the Foresters own band played at the Prince of Wales led by Br. G E Mansfield (cornet).
- In 1910 there was a Smoking Concert in the Prince of Wales Club Room for Court Rescue

The Foresters provided help to their members in times of hardship but in 1930 it was the provider that needed support because "*The Foresters Lodge lost another long-serving member when Mr William Warren of Furlong Road died, aged 65. He collapsed in the Court House at the Prince of Wales where he had gone to obtain Bro. William Griffin Tucker's signature on the weekly sick pay cheques.*"

Slate Club:

Another means of ensuring relief in the event of sickness or to provide for future expenditure was the Slate Club. In the first half of the 20th century the members of all the village pubs, including the Village Club and sometimes the Reading Room, paid a weekly sum – usually 7pence - with a payout just before Christmas. The amounts paid were often published in the local paper and provide an indication of the relative popularity of each hostelry. In 1907, for example, the share out (after sick pay and funeral fees had been met) was as follows:

Prince of Wales	£1- 5-5
The Cabin	£1- 3-6½
St John's	£1- 3-4
Cricketers	£1- 2-10½
Bricklayers Arms	£1- 2-8½
Reading Room (men)	19-5
Reading Room (women)	12-6
Crown	18-10½

In 1924 the figures were as follows:

Red Triangle Club	214 members	£1.6. 1 dividend
Cabin	133	£1.5.10
Bricklayers Arms	42	£1.7.4
Cricketers	57	£1.6.4
Crown	118	£1.5.8
Prince of Wales	41	£1.4.8

Social Events

Before the Reading Room was built in 1876 there was no 'village hall' and any village

indoor event that was unsuitable for the Village School would be held at the Crown or the Price of Wales because they both had 'function rooms'. No record survives for all of the many social events that took place but we know, for example, that:

- In October 1904 a 'Long Night Dance' was held at the Prince of Wales with Miss Spratley (piano) and Mr G Sawyer (piccolo) providing musical items. Messrs F W Bowring and W Tucker were the MC's.
- In 1924 local entertainment in the run up to Christmas included a Conservative 'Smoker' at The Prince of Wales.
- In 1930 the British Legion, with a paid-up membership of 115, held their Annual Supper and Concert Party at The Prince of Wales.
- In the General Election of 1931 over 75% of those in the Reigate Division eligible to vote did so and Mr Touche was elected with a substantial majority. At the conclusion of his acceptance speech in Dorking Mr Touche intended to go home quietly to Broomfield but the Westcott residents, led by Mr C S Gordon-Clark, had other ideas. In great secrecy they had erected a platform outside the Prince of Wales bedecked with flags and illustrated with arc lights and a banner was strung across the road bearing the word 'Welcome'. After the local celebration of his victory ropes were tied to Mr Touche's car and he was towed to his home in triumph.
- In 1935 the Westcott British Legion took over the Red Triangle Club, now The Hut, in Furlong Road but before that, in 1930, with a paid-up membership of 115, the Legion held their Annual Supper and Concert Party in the Prince of Wales.

Inquests:

It was not only social events that took place. If there was an unexpected death in the village the inquest was often held in the Prince of Wales:

- In 1862 for example an inquest was held when Charles Whitburn age 2 died when he overturned a teapot and was scalded.
- In June 1890 an inquest heard that Mr Francis Child, a 72 year old carpenter of Bailey Road had been sitting on a fence on Westcott Road when he fell forward on his head. He was taken to his home by Alfred Tickner, a carter, and treated by Dr Royston but he died a few days later. James Harvey Child a gardener of Southampton identified his father's body. In both cases a verdict of accidental death was recorded.
- In 1902 an inquest into the death of Ernest Cheesman attracted a lot of interest. Several leading members of the Anti-Vaccination League were present although the medical evidence showed that the infant's death was more likely to have been due to inherited syphilis than because of vaccination

Sports Clubs:

Many of the village sports clubs also used the Prince of Wales as their headquarters.

Cricket: The Westcott Cricket Club has probably existed as long as the Prince of Wales and we know that they held their annual dinner at the Prince of Wales on 23rd April 1883 when a first class bat was presented to Henry Jeater 'in recognition by the members of that gentleman's energetic services as Secretary'.

Bowls: In March 1936 the Bowling Club had a jolly evening at the Prince of Wales

Cycling: It is not known whether Westcott had its own Cycling Club but the Prince of Wales was a popular stop for those cyclists using the Dorking Road to and from Abinger, Shere and Newlands Corner before the Great War. It displayed a sign 'Cyclists' House' alongside one advertising 'Luncheons and Teas'.

Football: A new Westcott Football Club was formed at a meeting held at the Prince of Wales Hotel in July 1935 to replace the Westcott Athletic Club which had to close at the end of the 1933/34 season. It was agreed that the club's HQ would be at the Prince of Wales and that an application would be made to join Division One of the Dorking & District League. Lt Col R W Barclay had given permission for the club to play at Milton Street. Mr H Jeater was elected Secretary and the committee included Messrs. Burgess, W Tucker, Shepherd, Wilkins, A Knight and W Collins.



And we know of course that in more recent times the Prince of Wales established local prowess at Pool and Darts.

Miscreants:

In addition to reporting social events, the local paper always had a representative at the Dorking Magistrate's Court and there were numerous examples of local misdemeanours involving the Prince of Wales.

- In 1900 William White, a sawyer, was sent to prison for a month for stealing a bottle of whisky, value 3/6 from the Prince of Wales.
- In the same year PC Wotton arrested Robert Mansfield for using obscene language and creating a disturbance at the Prince of Wales where he claimed that he had ordered a pint but somebody took it and drank it. He was fined 10/-
- In 190 Edith Brennis, an unmarried woman living at Elm Cottage was summoned for being on licensed premises, namely the Prince of Wales Inn, not being a lodger or a bona fide traveller. William J Tucker, the landlord, was also summoned for selling liquor after hours. Sgt Bailey and PC Steele stated that they observed Miss Brennis knock on the inn door at 10.22pm and ask for a shilling's worth of brandy, claiming that it was required for medicinal purposes. The landlord asked whether she had a bottle and when she said no he provided one.

[PC Steele remained in Westcott for many years and in 1951 he recalled how at the start of

the 20th century he was posted from Godalming to Westcott. And on his arrival he was offered tea at the Prince of Wales.]

- In January 1940 William Griffin Tucker of the Prince of Wales was summoned for allowing a light to show during the blackout. PS Field gave evidence that he saw a red glow from a partially open door at 9:10pm on the night of 17th December.
- In May 1940 William Tucker was fined for permitting drinking after hours
- In 1941 the Prince of Wales was in the news again when Agnes Kelly, aged 20 of no fixed abode, was charged by P C Ruffell for stealing a dress and a pair of shoes valued at £2 17s 3d when employed as a servant by Mr Tucker.
- In 1942 the police opposed the renewal of Mr Tucker's license at The Prince of Wales because he had been guilty of various offences in the previous year, but the court received a petition and letters supporting him from the Reverend Fred Salzmänn and many others and the police objections were overruled.
- In 1943 a police inspection of dog licences resulted in several Westcott residents being fined 15/- including William Tucker of the Prince of Wales

Accommodation

In 1903 there was a drive to reduce the number of licensed premises in and around Dorking. All were visited and a report prepared. This noted that the Prince of Wales was leased to Messrs Attlee & Co of Tooting Brewery. Accommodation for travellers was limited as there was only one spare bedroom but there was ample accommodation and stabling for 3 horses. It was noted that Landlord Tucker has been there for 20 years and his father for 33 years before that, but the Crown was only 50 yards away!



The Prince of Wales clearly survived that critical review of all the licensed premises in Dorking and District, and continued to thrive because in 1922 Griffin Beall's old cottage and the inn he built alongside it were virtually demolished and the present building erected in its place.

The license was transferred out of the Tucker family in June 1954 after 105 years. The present licensee will remain in Westcott, having moved to Corner Cottage, but he has been replaced by Donald John Ferguson, an Australian who has lived in England for four years and was previously responsible for a public house in Holborn.

Bernard Edmund was landlord of the Prince of Wales in the 1960s. He was an ex-Police Inspector.

Brewery Links

In 1913 Mellersh & Neale had succeeded Attlee's Tooting Brewery as the Prince of Wales supplier.

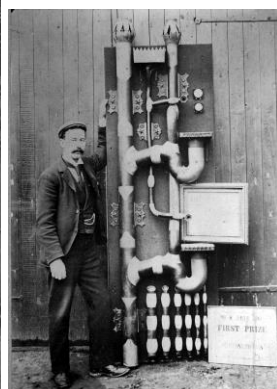
PENNY COTTAGE, Guildford Road, Westcott RH4 3QE (TQ 144486).

Penny Cottage is a small two storey symmetrical building with one room on either side of the front door. When surveyed by the Domestic Buildings Research Group in 1974 it was covered in pebbledash but this has subsequently been removed to reveal its timber frame construction.

The DBRG concluded that it was originally a 2½ bay house, with a central smoke half-bay. A previous owner (Mrs Boskins) confirmed the existence of smoke blacked wattle and daub before the house was modernized.

The 1838 Dorking Tithe Award lists the house and garden as being owned, with several other properties in the village, by John Worsfold. Soon after this the Prince of Wales Public House was built and was connected to the west side of Penny Cottage. Although the Prince of Wales has since been completely rebuilt the framing for a doorway on the west wall of the house could still be seen.

From 1860 until 1969 the house was known as Jeater's, after the family who owned and occupied it as a home and a base for their plumbing and decorating business. The front room on the west side of the house was taken up by Jeater's shop, with a Victorian shop front window.



The writing on the wall refers to 'Incandescent gas lamps, mantles and fittings' and 'Cheap paperhangings in stock'. The house had a well in the yard at the back of the house but this was filled in many years ago.

Jeaters (Glazier, Sanitary Engineer, Plumber, Hot Water Fitter, House Decorator) was established in 1862 and closed over 100 years later, in 1966, when the two Jeater boys showed no interest in continuing the business.

Henry Jeater's plumbing skills were illustrated in the shop window ...The window was smashed by lightning on 22nd March 1912 when (according to Bill Jeater's account to David Knight) a thunderbolt came down on the opposite side of the road and the electricity discharge travelled just below the road surface as far as the shop window. Bill Jeater's mother was sitting in the house knitting at the time and was unhurt. That there was a lightning strike is confirmed by a report of the damage caused to trees in the Touche Plantation on the Broomfield estate in the Dorking Advertiser for 30 March 1912.

The Cottage passed out of the Jeater family in February 1971 and acquired its present name, Penny Cottage, to commemorate Decimalisation Day when the 'old' penny ceased to be legal tender.

The Westcott census returns include Henry and Emily Jeater living in Dorking Road (1871) Guildford Road (1881), Westcott Road (1891) and High Road (1901). In 1881 the premises were described as 'Plumber, Painters and Gas Fitters'. The family had six children Henry, William, Annie, Charles, Alice and Louisa.

BRAUNTON COTTAGE

In 1871 the property next door to 'Jeaters' in the census return was described as a 'baker's shop' but was unoccupied. In 1881 Braunton Cottage is specifically mentioned with Richard Gamon, Master Baker, in residence. His family comprised wife Rebekah and four daughters aged 7, 5, 4 and 3. The cottage also accommodated William Knight, a 52 year old servant and two boarders, Mrs Elizabeth Cory, a Colonel's wife and her daughter Maud, aged 11. Richard Gamon had been born in Braunton in Devon.

In 1882 Richard died at the early age of 41 but the 1891 census shows that Rebekah, his widow, had carried on the business. Her occupation was shown as baker but her income was again supplemented by two boarders; Mrs Arnold and her daughter.

By 1901 the Gamon family had moved to Seaford in Sussex and Frederick Dewdney of Reigate was now the Master Baker, living at the cottage with his wife and 1 year old daughter.

In 1924 T R Davies was in charge of Forrest Stores but he later became the proprietor of Ye Olde Westcott Bakery at Braunton Cottage. Later Braunton Cottage became White's butcher's shop and a close examination of the front door shows that it still bears the inscription "Purveyors of High Class Meat, Families waited on daily". [According to David Knight, Cecil White had opened his Butchers Shop in 1919 and retired on 2nd January 1986]

Next door to this shop or inside it? was the village telephone exchange, where an exchange was manned by a young woman who must have known most of the village secrets!

Funeral of William John Tucker

as reported in the Dorking Advertiser 26th October 1907

We regret to record the death of Mr William John Tucker for many years the licensee of the Prince of Wales Inn, Westcott which occurred on Thursday in last week. The deceased had been ailing for some time past, but the end came somewhat unexpectedly. The funeral took place on Tuesday afternoon amid many tokens of the respect and esteem in which the deceased was held. Being for several years the Treasurer of Court 'Rescue' AOF Mr Tucker was borne to the grave on the shoulder of Bros. G Gardiner, W Gower, F Child and R Truelove. The chief mourners were the widow, Messrs W G and J R Tucker (sons), Mrs Tracy, Mrs Bowring and Miss Lucy Tucker (daughters), Mr P Tracy and Mr F Bowring (sons in law), Mr & Mrs G Mitchell and the Misses Wood. Among others present were Mrs J Johnson, Messrs F Dixon, H W Hunt, D G Dibble, W R Alloway, W Ruffell, F Chapman, W Pannell, J Pannell, A Ryde, A F Balchin, W G Balchin etc. The Foresters who preceded the cortege to the church were Bros A J Fuller DCR, W Warren, J Harrison, J Johnson, S Langsdale, H Wakeford, H Lewer, T H Ward, J Cheal, W Saxby, W Smithers, H Jeater, W Jeater, G Risbridger, T W B Stone, W Mills and others.

The vicar, the Revd A D Woolley conducted the funeral, the Foresters' service being read by Bro A J Fuller, DCR. The arrangements were very efficiently carried out by the Mr A W Sherlock of Dorking. The floral tributes were very beautiful, wreaths etc being sent as follows:

'To my dear husband, from his loving wife'; 'In loving memory of our dear dad, from Lucy, Willie and Jack'; 'In loving memory of dear dad from Marian and Phil'; 'In loving memory of dear dad from Kitty and Fred'; 'With kindest love from brother and sister E & J Holding'; 'In loving memory of dear uncle from his nieces Jessie Gammon and Isabel Borrisow'; 'From J W & E Atkinson with deepest sympathy'; 'With deepest sympathy from Mr & Mrs Jeater and family'; 'To dear John In affectionate remembrance from Mr & Mrs Creber'; 'With deepest sympathy from Mr & Mrs Fuller (Kingston)'; 'With deepest sympathy from Court Rescue No. 5258 AOF'; 'With deepest sympathy from Mellersh & Neale Ltd.'; 'In loving memory from an old friend, Miss Collins'; 'With deep sympathy from Mr & Mrs Lander, Westcott'; 'With deepest sympathy from Mr & Mrs Robinson & family'; 'With deepest sympathy H & T Nuttycombe'; 'With deepest sympathy from all at Wotton Hatch'; 'With much sympathy from one of the Brothers W W'; 'With deepest sympathy from Mr & Mrs A Balchin'; 'With deepest sympathy from May in remembrance of Uncle John'; 'In affectionate memory from G & S Mitchell'; 'With sympathy from an old friend'; 'From Mrs Mills & family, with deepest sympathy and true respect for a dear friend and neighbour J T' 'From R & L Wood with much sympathy'. There were also flowers from Mr & Mrs J Johnson and Mrs Edwards.

The coffin bore the inscription 'William John Tucker died October 17 1907 aged 64 years'

Mrs Tucker and family being unable to reply personally to all the letters of sympathy they have received desire through our column to express their grateful thanks to all their friends for the helpful expressions of condolence.