

Starkey, Knight and Ford—a correction!

In the last edition of SCN it was stated that the pub at Merridge was called The Rising Sun, since when the author has been reminded on several occasions that it was called The Bell. Sorry.

The Bell was mentioned because, along with a surprising number of pubs and ex-pubs, it still displays the Starkey Knight and Ford black horse trademark. In the summer edition of CAMRA'S local magazine "Pints of View" Roger Tibbles who lives in Spaxton and who is a much greater authority on the subject wrote a summary of the company's history. This is adapted from that summary and if you are interested I advise you to get hold of the original before the Autumn edition replaces it.

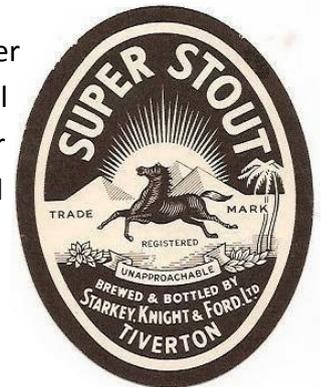
The origin of the company has been traced to North Petherton in the late 18th century although Anthony Starkey was brewing in Spaxton at the same time and in 1845 the Petherton malthouse was sold to Thomas Starkey of Spaxton. Thomas died in 1876 and his son took over the business. He operated it from new premises in Bridgwater for a time then George Knight, another brewer, joined Thomas in 1888. Together they built the Northgate brewery in Bridgwater on the site still known as "Brewery Field". Thomas Ford of Tiverton joined the group in 1895.

Over the next 60 years the company prospered. It acquired other breweries such as Uffculme (1918), Hanbury and Cotching in Taunton (1923) and Holt Brothers of Burnham (1958). With these came their tied inns and by 1962 SK & F had over 400. As well as breweries in Bridgwater and Tiverton the company owned mineral water factories and a wine and spirit business.

As was usual in those years Starkey Knight and Ford beers were generally weaker than modern ales, mostly less than 4%. Those who remember them recall flavoursome beers that one could enjoy throughout an evening. Certainly better than what followed for in 1962 SK & F became wholly owned by Whitbread Flowers.

The Bridgwater brewery was demolished in 1967 for a car park. It has been mostly an open space ever since.

Keep an eye out for the wild horse.



Spaxton Women's Institute

We are now changing to the summer months and holding our meetings at 7.30pm. We held our coffee morning with various craft tables on Saturday 6th June - we had hoped for those who had items for sale that there would be more support but Members of Spaxton W.I would like to thank those who generously gave donations to the raffle – the funds going to St Margaret's Hospice

August will see us having our usual skittle match and Carol has arranged this for Wednesday 5th August at 7.30pm to be held at the Enmore Inn. She is requesting that non-members, friends and family come along and enjoy the evening but please let someone on the Committee know if you would like to come so that we can brief Carol on numbers.

In September we are to enjoy a visit by Lou Lloyd who will give a stained glass demonstration. October 7th will feature a talk by Gail on 'International Donkey Week'. In November, meeting at 2.30pm, the subject will feature the Somerset and Dorset Air Ambulance.

The SCFWI Annual Meeting will be held at Junction 24 Sedgemoor Auction Centre on Sunday 1st November (new date) with special guest speaker being Mark Stacey of 'Flog It' and 'Bargain Hunt' fame.

The Group Carol Service will be at Nether Stowey on 4th December.

We welcome anyone who would like to come along to any of our meetings.