

This building is believed to have been an inn since at least c 16, and under its present name for most of that time. The name was changed to the "Exhibition Inn", presumably in 1851 in connection with the Great Exhibition, and older people in the village still remember it under this name. The original name was restored probably in the late 1940s, when the major reconstruction was done. It has not had a Licence for many years, although it is one of the three smaller pubs listed in Colvin.

Although occupied, the house appears to have been neglected, and to have deteriorated progressively until the final collapse of the thatched roof in 1946 (as shown in the NMR photographs). Extensive rebuilding followed (? in 1948); the whole front (S) wall must have been rebuilt, for the present windows are of different size and location; this work was done under the supervision of the architect, Mr Forsyth Lawson, but unfortunately he has kept no records. Subsequent owners have carried out quite major alterations, and all that is probably left of the original structure now is probably:-

- The "Study", at the W end, which retains the original beams, mantel and fireplace.
- The mediaeval front door, and stone arch at the rear.
- The E wall (bounding Wirral House), and probably some of the walls at the rear.
- The cellar (although this has been puddled).

Mr Asser owned the house for some years, and did much work on it. Mrs Asser has told us that they believed that the rear extension (to N) was at one time of two storeys, with a large room for meetings on the first floor. The present "Hall" may have been a through passage to the rear, wide enough to take horses and the inn could have been a resting-place for packhorses, perhaps related to the salt trade; there is a cupboard

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in the study in a nook that could have been for the storage of salt.

The front door is usually dated c16, and has been thought to have been brought from another site. This is, I think, because the building as a whole has been dated c17. When Mr Marshall recently visited in connection with the Listed Buildings Survey, he thought that the construction of the ceiling beams in the study (flat section, and set into a wooden wall-plate) was more typical of c16 work; the fireplace (not the modern insert, which is Forsyth Lawson) may have been later, replacing an open fire in a hall-house. The beam in front of the fireplace shows mortices for a boarding partition- again perhaps an early feature; the fine four-centred arch and front door may therefore be in keeping. Mr Marshall suggested that this could have been William Billing's house; the site of this is uncertain.