

# THE GRASSHOPPER INN

EST 1271

The Grasshopper Inn dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century and according to old newspaper cuttings, it was the centre of the villages' social life. Originally there were two cottages huddled together behind a dusty cart track. One of the small cottages was used as a beer house called 'The Plough'. There were two rooms and a kitchen on the ground floor. The front room was furnished with a deal table in the middle and deal forms along two sides. The other side accommodated two wooden barrels or trestles. One of which contained Westerham Strong Farmers Ale and the other Westerham Mild Ale. When customers visited, they banged on the table and the land lady would emerge from the back room. She filled their pint or quart tankards from the wooden barrels, then retired to the back.

It is not known exactly when 'The Plough' changed to 'The Grasshopper Inn' but apparently there was a small establishment called The Grasshopper Inn at Titsey on the Titsey Estate. This belonged to the Squire who at the time was of the Leveson-Gower family. This Inn was for some reason demolished and the Squire ordered 'The Plough Inn' to be changed to 'The Grasshopper Inn'. The Grasshopper is the crest above Sir John Gresham's family coat of arms, which can be found at Titsey Place, his country house and can also be seen as a gold weathervane atop the Royal Exchange Building in the City of London.

In the early 1950's the Grasshopper Inn was restored and extended using old material including Oak panelling, and wrought iron from the houses of parliament and the vestry doors from the Coventry Cathedral, which can be found among the leadlight windows and beamed ceilings of the Tudor Ballroom.