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Tavernkeeper, Piscataway, New Jersey, 1678-1713

Benjamin Hull was baptised at Hingham, Massachusetts by Reverend Peter Hobart on 22 March 1639 and died probably at Piscataway, New Jersey in 1713, son of the Reverend Joseph and Agnes (---) Hull. He married perhaps at Durham, New Hampshire in 1668 Rachel York(e), born ca. 1649, the daughter of Richard and Elizabeth York of Dover, New Hampshire.

From 1659 to 1669 Benjamin paid taxes at Oyster River (Durham), New Hampshire. He was a member of Captain Robert Mason's Troop of Horse, and was commissioned Captain. In 1678 he removed to Piscataway, Middlesex County, New Jersey where he was a grantee. In 1678 he was granted a license to keep a tavern there which was carried on in the Hull name for over two hundred years.

" BEN HULL'S LICENCE TO KEEP AN ORDINARY
BY PHILLIP CARTEREST, ESQ., GOVERNOR & JE.

These are to permit and Lycense Benjamin Hull of New Piscataway to keepe an Ordinary or Public victualing hous within the said towne For the entertainment of strangers and passengers and to sell and retaile all manner of Drinks and Strong Liqrs to, all Psons in Genll, provided that he keeps good orders in his hous, observe the Laws and orders made or to be made concerning the selling of strong Liquers to the Indians and that he does not Exceed the prices limited by the Laws upon Victualls and Drink, and also to provide setle accomodations for strangers and passengers, hereby prohibiting all manner of persons whatever within the said towne to sell or retails any manner of Liquers to be drunk or spint in their houses without any Lycense, Upon the penalty of paying by way of fine the sum of Fifty shillings for Every such default, excepting the said Benjamin Hull, which said Lycense Is to continue for one whole yeare from ye first day of this Instant month of Stembr unless there be any just occasion Given to the Contrary and to be by him continued yearely with my Consent by ye Secretary. Given under my hand and Seale of the province the 2d of Anno, 1678".

Hull's Tavern was rectangular, having a chimney at each end of a moderately pitched roof with no overhang. A center hall connected the doors at front and back, the wide front door swinging on leather strap-hinges. To the left a tap room had a bar along the

wall, with a small wall window at eye level, enabling the innkeeper to view all who came or went from the inn. Across the hall was another room, and behind both were smaller ones. Upstairs a handsome ballroom, known as the Longroom, had fine moldings and a carved mantel; there were bedrooms for the family and for hire. The downstairs rooms and the Longroom had fireplaces, but the bedrooms were unheated.

In 1751 the large stone dwelling house and land formerly belonging to Benjamin Hull and used as a Tavern was put up for public vendue. During the Revolutionary War, there was a famous inn called "The Ben Hull Tavern" and it was a known fact that "George Washington visited the Ben Hull Tavern". The building finally burned in 1937.

Nan Alexander
#87-30

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