

Cambridge & County Folk Museum

FORMERLY THE WHITE HORSE INN

2, CASTLE STREET,
CAMBRIDGE



A BRIEF GUIDE

by

ENID M. PORTER, B.A.

Resident Curator



HOURS OF OPENING:

Weekdays (except Mondays)	11.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.
	2.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.
Sundays	2.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.

ADMISSION:

Adults 6d.	Children 3d.	Thursdays Free
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Price 6d.

May, 1951

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THE CAMBRIDGE & COUNTY FOLK MUSEUM formerly the White Horse Inn

THE Museum was opened in 1936 and contains exhibits gathered only from the City and County of Cambridge and from the Isle of Ely. These exhibits illustrate the life, work and history of the people of Cambridge and Cambridgeshire from mediaeval times to the beginning of this century.

This brief guide does not claim to be a catalogue of all the exhibits in the Museum since some of these are changed from time to time to allow as many as possible to be shown in turn in the somewhat limited display space available. It is, however, hoped that from this booklet the visitor will gain some idea of the nature of the Museum and of the building which it occupies.

The building itself, used as *The White Horse Inn* until 1934, was begun in the 16th century and was added to at the back in the early 18th century. Visitors will notice the oak beam running through the centre of the front rooms and making the limit of the 16th century house. The windows are modern, the overhanging frontage with its small windows having been removed in 1922. A memento of a former landlord of the Inn, one William Loveday who lived here in the 1890's, is seen in his signature which he scratched on the glass of the Bar door, next to that of his daughter Lil and a certain Signor Fosco, the latter probably a customer at the Inn.

Immediately inside the entrance door, on the left, is the old

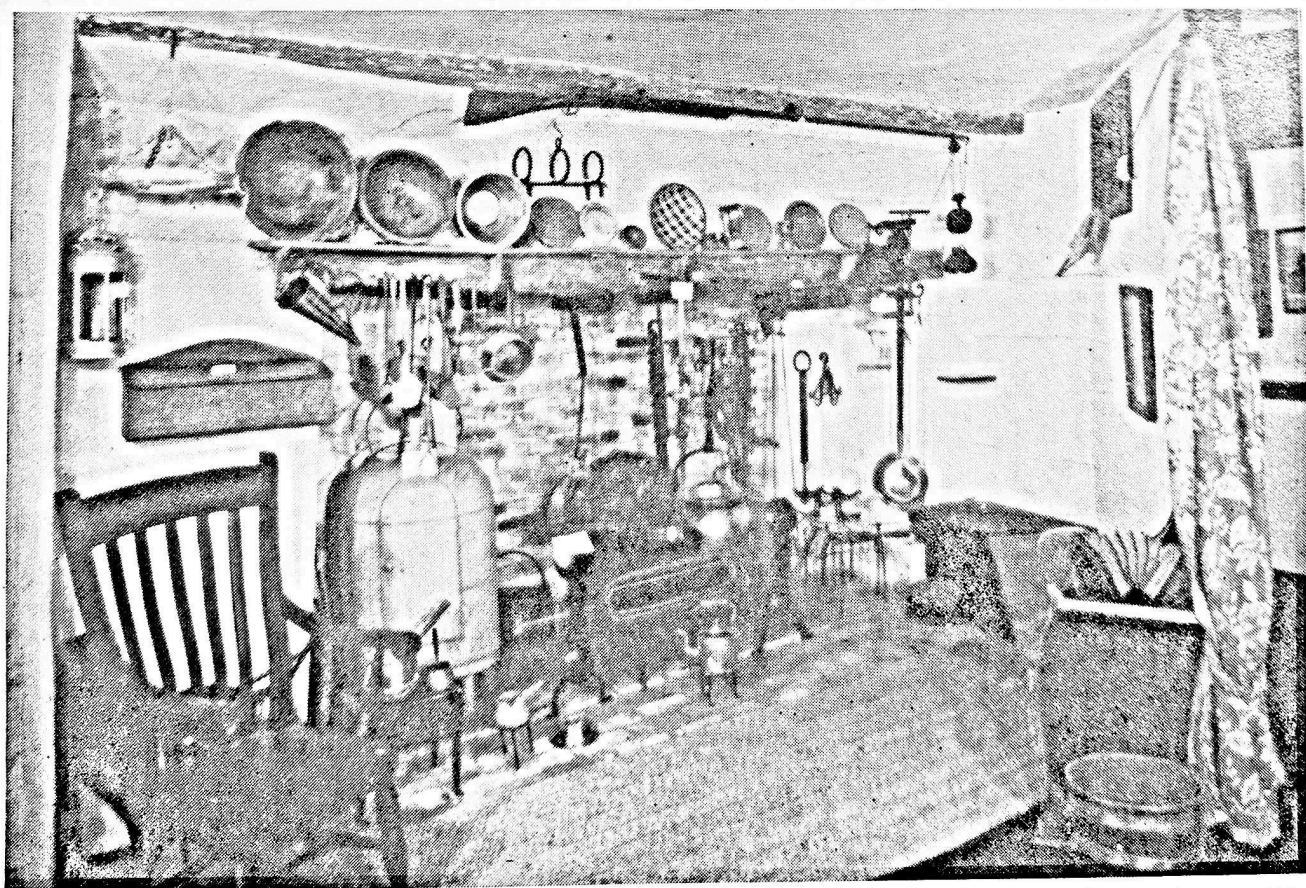
BAR

of the former inn. This still contains pewter pots and measures, earthenware spirit and wine casks, toddy stirrers and hand-made wine bottles of the 18th and 19th centuries

The door by the Bar leads to the one-time

BAR PARLOUR

now containing domestic and household exhibits. The fireplace on the right of this room is the only open one remaining in the Museum. In it are the cooking appliances of the past—spits, jacks, bottle jacks, gridirons, etc., hanging from iron hooks in the wide chimney. Above the fireplace is a display



Fireplace (Bar Parlour)

[Photograph by Edward Leigh, Cambridge]

of wooden bowls and trenchers together with the salt box, ladles, strainers and other objects needed in the preparation and cooking of food.

Other exhibits to be noted in this room are the lighting appliances, the sugar loaf with its cutters, the moulds for making gingerbread and sugar ornaments, the spice boxes and the collection of pottery and earthenware. On the table devoted to tea making equipment is an interesting Parlour Sink used for washing the best china in the drawing room.

From the Bar Parlour the visitor passes into the tiled kitchen containing exhibits of the

DAIRY AND LAUNDRY.

Here the first object which attracts the eye is the BOX MANGLE of the 19th century used for pressing linen after it had been washed and dried. The corner cupboard contains box irons and gaffer's implements while nearby are two linen presses, one for table napkins and the larger for table cloths, sheets, etc. On the dressers are a number of dairy exhibits, including the basket in which the famous Yard Butler of Cambridge was carried. Note also the wooden door lintel bearing the words "Cheeses Room." This came from Lordship Manor, Cottenham, now demolished but once the home of Mistress Catherine Pepys, a kinswoman of the famous Samuel Pepys. Cottenham was once famous for its cheeses. Rooms thus marked with the name of the trade or craft carried on in them were exempt from the Window Tax.

Ascending the stairs at the far end of this room the visitor arrives in the one devoted to a display of

DOMESTIC CRAFTS.

An interesting feature of this room is the deep closet to the right of the fireplace and used for powdering wigs. The small window through which the wigs were shaken to dispose of the excess powder is now blocked up.

On the walls are samplers and embroidery pictures while the cases contain examples of various 18th and 19th century handicrafts—bead and shell work, lace making, wool and rolled paper work, together with some of the implements needed for these crafts. On the table is a Cambridgeshire cowman's Sunday smock with the traditional hearts embroidered on the cape to show the wearer's occupation.

Leading from here is the large room devoted to the exhibits of the



[Photograph by Edward Leigh, Cambridge]

A corner of the City and University Room

CITY AND UNIVERSITY.

On the long table in the centre are various weights and measures, an Elizabethan Winchester Bushel of 1601, and another Winchester Bushel inscribed "Ely 1709." Many of the other measures bear the name of the University of Cambridge since the University, from 1382 to the passing of the Award Act of 1856, had the privilege of inspecting the weights and measures of the city, Richard III having deprived the latter of its right to do so on account of its participation in the Peasants' Revolt.

Above the fireplace hangs the last Steelyard or Weighing Beam to be used at the famous Stourbridge Fair which was held each September from the 12th century until 1933.

The iron-banded oak chest was the property of Robert Byngham, founder in 1436 of a Grammar School called God's House, which was refounded in 1509 as Christ's College. The Seal of Christ's College is to be seen on the centre table.

Along one wall hang the staffs presented in the past to the special and parish constables and each bearing the city arms, the mayor's name and the date of his mayoralty. One staff bears the University arms and another is inscribed "University Police 1825." These were carried by the University Constables established under the Act of George IV in 1825 for the "better Preservation of Peace and Good Order in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge."

The Inn Sign which hangs above the staffs is that of the Brazen George, an inn, originally a students' hostel, which stood on the site now occupied by the Post Office in St. Andrew's Street.

Other items of special interest in this room are the College Stamps, on the long table, with an account of their history, and, on the walls, the Assize Lists and the Letter Box of the "Gowmsman," an Undergraduate Journal to which Thackeray was a contributor.

Notice also the small case of Folk Lore exhibits containing Witch Bottles, cures and charms for cramp and toothache, and the small loaf baked on Good Friday, 1919. According to tradition bread baked on this day never goes mouldy and can be eaten during the year as a cure for digestive complaints.

Along the passage leading from this room is a small door marked "Chimney Hole." Through this the visitor can look down on to the wide hearth of the Bar Parlour and can also obtain some idea of the size of the chimneys in the house.



Group of Dolls in the Children's Room

[Photograph by Edward Leigh, Cambridge]

Of the two front rooms on this floor the one to the left is used for special temporary Exhibitions. The one to the right is the

CHILDREN'S ROOM.

Here is gathered a collection of games, toys, dolls and dolls' houses. In front of the window stand a Kaleidoscope and a Zoetrope, the latter the first form of moving pictures in the home and a favourite 19th century toy.

In the centre of the room stand two "Walks" for teaching young children their first steps.

Notice also the Backboards used by teachers, parents and governesses in the 18th and 19th centuries for preventing and curing round shoulders in girls.

The last room to be visited is at the foot of the stairs and is set apart for

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS.

Here are agricultural implements, eel traps and pitches, peat digging implements and many other exhibits illustrating the work of the people of Cambridgeshire. Notice the Corn Dolls made annually from the last sheaf of corn at harvest time and hung in the local church, while the one of the previous year was burned—a relic probably of pagan times.

PICTURES AND PRINTS

On the walls of each room and of the passages are shown engravings, prints and paintings of Cambridge in the past together with old maps, theatre bills and public notices.

THE INN YARD

The cobbled entrance yard of the Museum has a fine 18th century shop front removed from Bridge Street when the new buildings of St. John's College were erected in 1936. Other exhibits to be noted in the yard are the old pump and the objects displayed in the arcade at the end of the house wall.

On the wall near the shop front will be seen the iron rings to which horses belonging to visitors to the Inn were tethered.