

St. Andrew's Street Cambridge

remembered by

Enid Porter

The hand of change fell heavily, in the mid 1950's, on part of Emmanuel Street and of the east side of St. Andrew's Street. Familiar shops, houses and even a thoroughfare disappeared, and so quickly did we become used to the new order of things that today, only twelve years or so later, we sometimes find it difficult to recall the old.

Emmanuel Street, at its Drummer Street end, had already suffered change in 1912, by the erection of the new buildings of Emmanuel College. These replaced a row of 16th and 17th century houses, the end one of which, at the corner of Drummer Street, had been, early in the last century, the Heartsease Inn.

Then, in the 1950's, the remaining old shops and houses in the street were pulled down to make way for the present row of shops built on their site, but with a far wider pavement in front of them.

The building at the corner of Emmanuel Street and St. Andrew's Street had already been demolished some time before the 1950's. It had fallen victim to the ever-increasing volume of traffic in central Cambridge, for it provided a hazard for motorists at this right-angled turn. So the shop, for many years run as an art needlework business and, in its later years, as a tobacconist's and, last of all, as an outfitter's, was pulled down, and the space it had occupied served as a parking place for bicycles and motor cycles.

This corner site had, in early times, been the property of the Hospital of St. John the Evangelist (later re-founded as St. John's College), but in the 16th century it had been acquired by Emmanuel College. On it, and along Emmanuel Street, had been erected, round about the year 1568, a row of tenements for the College,

most of them occupied by college servants. A hundred years later the corner house was rebuilt as Roxton Hall, a hostel for Emmanuel students.

The rebuilding of St. Andrew's Street in the mid 1950's involved the demolition of all the buildings between Emmanuel Street and Christ's College. Nearly all this property had had an interesting and a long history.

The site No. 58, adjoining the building at the corner of Emmanuel Street and St. Andrew's Street, and for some time in the 1930's, the home of Dr. S. H. Pritchard, had for centuries belonged to St. John's College. Here, from 1532, had stood three cottages which, in 1743, were leased by the then Professor of Chemistry



Bradwell's Yard off St. Andrew's Street which has now been replaced by Bradwell's Court.

(who was also Vicar of St. Andrew's the Great and of Landbeach); he demolished the cottages and replaced them by a fine town house which was, in its turn, pulled down in the 1950's. In the late 18th century and in the early 19th, the house was the home of several well-known Cambridge doctors, among them Thomas Thackeray, uncle to the famous author, William Makepeace Thackeray.

Inside No. 58 was some fine panelling, the best of which, ornamented with mouldings in the classical style, is now preserved in Fisher House, the headquarters of the chaplaincy to Roman Catholic students in Guildhall Place. Demolition also revealed earlier woodwork which, probably, had formed part of the cottages which had stood on the site.

Nos. 59 and 60 St. Andrew's Street, in their last days occupied by a wool shop and by Board of Trade and other offices had, in early times, been the site of two or three small houses, No. 59 being, until about 1870, the Three Archers public house. In the early years of this century it was occupied by a dairy and fruit shop while No. 60, which had been largely rebuilt in the last century, was, in the present one, the home of local doctors.

One of the most conspicuous landmarks to disappear in the rebuilding of the 1950's was the towering red brick building, Nos. 61 and 62, then occupied by University offices. No. 62 had, way back in the 17th century, been the Chequers Inn, but on the site, in the 1850's, a Cambridge lawyer, Henry Rance, had built the fine house which later housed the University offices and which, in 1957, looked almost too massive ever to be demolished.

Henry Rance was twice Mayor of Cambridge, in 1875 and in 1882, but although he used his house as his office, he did not go to live in it until he was elected Mayor for the first time. He called it Ruberdome, because of the bright red brick of which it was constructed, but local people soon came to nickname it Rance's Folly, a name which stuck to it for many years.

Rance was a wealthy man and not only was Ruberdome built of the finest materials, but it had many amenities which were rare in those days: several lifts, four bathrooms and central heating. It had a magnificent ballroom, too, the floor of which was laid by German craftsmen brought over especially to carry out the work.

The house had a fine, well-stocked library to which many undergraduates

came, for Henry Rance, in addition to being a lawyer, was a University tutor. But as well as teaching his pupils he also invited them to tennis parties and, on Tuesdays, to what were probably the first tea dances to be held in Cambridge. He was an hospitable man and entertained on a lavish scale. In his two terms of office as Mayor he often wined and dined all the aldermen and councillors, indeed he occasionally held council meetings in his dining room, which had an unusual plastered ceiling with a design of mathematically constructed circles.

Between the present Kenya Cafe and Christ's College — Nos. 70 to 65 St. Andrew's Street — lay, in medieval times, the Vine Estate which belonged to the nunnery of St. Radegund, later re-founded as Jesus College. Numbers 64 and 63 formed, once, St. Nicholas Hostel for students of Christ's College who were described as being 'eminent for hard studying, infamous in their brawlings'.

Running between Nos. 68 and 69 today is Bradwell's Court, newly constructed in the redevelopment of the 1950's but retaining the name of David Bradwell, builder, who owned the property in the last century. Bradwell's Yard, which disappeared in



Christ's Lane which formerly ran beside Christ's College to Drummer Street.

1956, had no access to Drummer Street, but in it were various out-buildings, originally constructed by Bradwell and used by him, and later builders, for business purposes. There

were also some pleasant houses in the yard which, with its trees, had an unexpectedly rural look about it. The

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St. Andrew's Street and Emmanuel Street before the redevelopment of the 1950's.

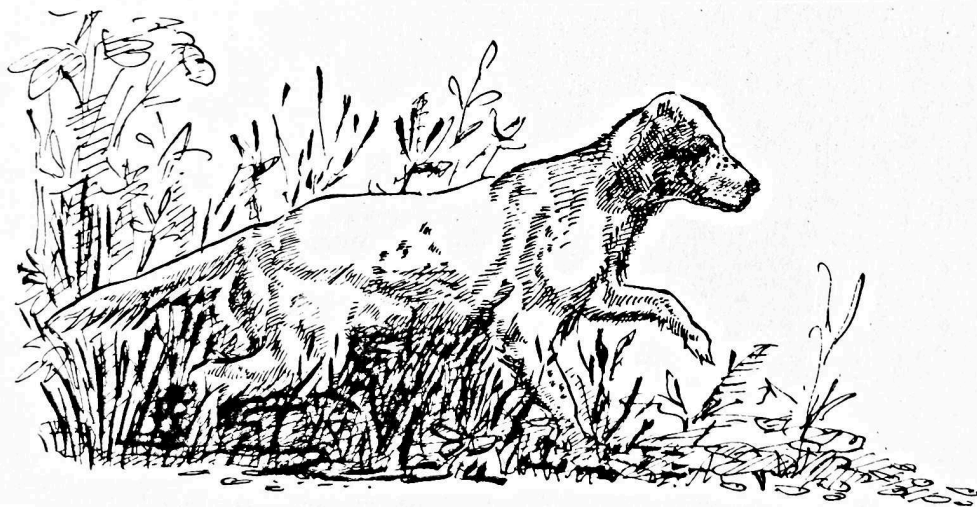
entrance was under a narrow arch to the right of which was Mr. Stanley Woolston's antique shop. The narrow pavement near the shop was always crowded with sightseers on the occasions when the late Queen Mary came over from Sandringham on one of her regular visits to Mr. Woolston.

The thoroughfare to Drummer Street which disappeared in the rebuilding of the 1950's was Christ's Lane, the entrance to which is now occupied by the Stone-Dri rainwear

store. This narrow lane was completely re-designed in the 1890's, by which time it had fallen into great disrepair. From it had led Field's Court, into which had been packed about twenty small houses. There were many such courts and yards in Cambridge in the past; even as late as 1849 it was estimated that a sixth of the town's population lived in them, in ill-ventilated houses with no sanitation and no water supply. A report on Cambridge made to the Central

Board of Health in 1849 — a time when cholera was raging in many parts of the country — contained the strong words: "The sanitary condition of numerous courts and places is so wretched as to be a disgrace to humanity and still more to civilisation; it is next to an improbability for their inhabitants to be healthy, cleanly or even moral." But it was to be a good many years before an improvement was to be made.

The St. Andrew's Street rebuilding was a large undertaking, and the neo-Georgian design of the block which replaced the old property was not, and is not, approved by everyone. Certainly many of the old buildings were in need of restoration and modernisation. Emmanuel Street needed widening for modern traffic, and the new building line in St. Andrew's Street certainly provides more space for pedestrians. But there are many people who, having known the old street, regret the passing of the varied architectural features and the substitution of those which are to be found repeated all over the country.



Shooting

by

**Adrian
Denholm**

Blessed with sunshine, this year's Game Fair, at Stanford Park, near Rugby, drew a good crowd of 39,000 over its two days. It wasn't a record turnout—a figure of 42,000 was established a couple of years ago.

The hot weather wasn't a blessing for everyone—the coarse fishing match was 'sunned' off because nobody in any of the teams caught anything at all. The match will now be fished when the weather has cooled off a bit.

Volleys of gunfire, which could be heard long before reaching the Fair, gave a good indication of what its most popular feature would be.

Clay pigeon shooting has become immensely popular over the last couple of years and is gaining more devotees every day. This year there was a record entry of 521 for the Game Fair championship.

This was won by 25-year-old Lyndon Lomax, with 23 kills out of 25. Lyndon, who started on clays at 13, and has since shot twice for England, also won the Shooting Times Challenge Bowl in the Wildfowlers' Association of Great Britain and Ireland individual competition.

A further indication of its rapidly growing popularity was the number of novice shooters at the fair. They were taking advantage of the pro-

fessional instruction at three of the traps on the layout.

A tip for aspiring clay shooters from the Olympic gold medalist, Bob Braithwaite, is included in a newspaper produced by the Eley ammunition people for the fair.

"Concentration is absolutely vital," he said. "In big events, hitting or missing one bird out of 200 can make all the difference."

Braithwaite, incidentally, is tremendously modest about his Mexico triumph. "God smiled at the right time," he explained. I can't help feeling, however, that Bob may have had a bit to do with it too.

Writing in the paper about the re-