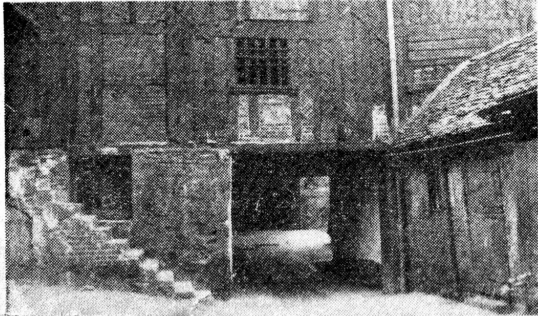


Fore Street and Neptune Inn, Ipswich

A loaded farm waggon proceeds past the Neptune, in Fore Street. Behind the creeper-enshrined wall stood an old house with a cobble-stone forecourt. The tram lines and absence of overhead wires suggest the date of the picture was in the horse-tram era (1880-1903).

A wealth of oak beams on buildings at Tudor House. For many years the walls were covered with plaster.



Age Lives In This Street

WITH commendable zeal and civic pride, the shopkeepers of Fore Street, Ipswich, were the first in the borough to inaugurate a facelift to their business premises. But properties, which with careful preservation could have made this highway a showpiece of Eastern England, have been demolished to make way for road improvements and new shops.

In fairness it must be said that its situation in the heart of Ipswich's dockland with its necessity for making easier access to one of the trade arteries of the town, meant that it was essential that some of the old buildings had to go.

Fore Street has always been of the age when the merchant princes of the First Elizabeth traded with the Netherlands. It is easy to conjure up a picture of men clad in doublets and linen ruffs. The Tudor architecture of their houses had strong links with that to be found in the cities of the Netherlands, while their situation on the right-hand side of the street from the town centre was a distinct commercial asset. The yards and warehouses went down to the water's edge.

Picturesque

"Ye Olde Neptune Inne" which is cared for with laudable pride, is today under private ownership, but its date on the front—1639—is thought by many historians to be incorrect, the building being considered of greater antiquity. After its licence as an inn was surrendered, it became

**YET IT HAS HAD
A FACE-LIFT
SAYS DONALD
G. ROPER**

the showrooms of a firm of builders and decorators and their associate company of boiler descalers.

Opposite was an old creeper-covered house with a cobble-stone forecourt. Many Ipswichians were sorry to see the end of this picturesque habitation with a water pump in the yard. I remember on one occasion seeing bales of fleeces on the stones.

But age does live in Fore Street, for there are firms with their roots firmly implanted in the past, one concern being able to boast of having traded since 1689. There may even be others older. One of the earliest garages in the town—the Wingrove Motor Company—was situated next to the Social Settlement. This was but an adaptation of an old house with a passageway at the side for access to the workshop.

Cherished heritage

One of the "treasures" of Fore Street is undoubtedly Tudor House where Miss A. A. Lord shares her father's (the late Mr. Isaac Lord) interest and enthusiasm in keeping the property as a worthy heritage of a storied past.

Miss Lord carries on the family business of corn, coal and coke merchants and brewers' grains contractors, at the address.

Many years ago Mr. Lord took steps to preserve a half-timbered wall of a warehouse on his premises. But it was in 1936 that he undertook "restoration" in earnest. Plaster was stripped from walls, opening to the light of day oak beams. Wooden mullions in the building were opened out. Colour-wash was applied to give the whole a pleasing effect.

The coal trade is not one of the cleanest, but the property reflects nothing of the dust and grime associated with it, and is now on the "Preservation List." During the last war the premises suffered bomb damage on three occasions.

A fine institution

Memories of Fore Street bring to mind the Social Settlement which had been identified with the highest order of philanthropy. The movement of many folk from the district and the general betterment of living standards and social conditions closed its doors.

It was in 1896 that the "Settlement" was opened by, among others, the late Sir Daniel Ford Goddard and until his death he worked assiduously in its service. It dispensed a simple faith—nonsectarian and non-political—which had as its guiding principle the fostering of a spirit of brotherhood among all classes.

Its functions were threefold—educational, religious and social. At various times there were classes and activities connected with the institution, including Bible, ambulance, gymnastic, debating, benefit society, and "poor man's lawyer". Two nursing sisters gave succour to the sick. The men's own lantern services on Sunday evenings were a pleasing blend of travelogue and religious appeal.

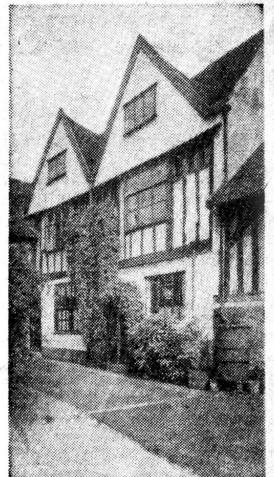
In 1951, the building was taken over by Ipswich Town Council, and ten years later the demolition contractors moved in.

Penny loaves

Perhaps a fleeting glance at some of the shops of other days will not be out of place. I have vivid memories of an establishment on Salthouse Street corner which catered for the floating—forgive the description—maritime population.

Outside hung seamen's high boots, oilskins, and all items under the heading "Shipping supplied". I believe this was kept by a Mr. Jary, and was next door to the pork butchery of Mr. Wells.

The small baker's shop at the end



Unusual scene in an industrial setting. This picture of Tudor House might well have been taken in the heart of the country. Careful preservation has made it a unique showplace.

of the street, opposite the "Settlement," was of interest to me as a lad, for the manufactory had "stable doors," and I was able to watch the bread being made. How different from the plant bakeries of today. Here, too, could be bought a small loaf for a penny or twopence.

There were numerous inns in the locality which have long since fallen victims of the demolisher. One was the Ship Inn, the landlord also carrying on the trade of cartage contractor.

Speaking of the inns in this important St. Clement's thoroughfare is a reminder that the Sorrel Horse is reputed to be the only public-house in the town with no frontage to the street. Connoisseurs will doubtless tell me if this is incorrect!

Enterprise

A narrow, dingy street, ill-lit, and with a dangerous bottle-neck where the old Red Hostels jatted in to the highway, but a street where the affluence of commerce was manifest.

The new, bright Fore Street, which was first with a face-lift, and put on one of the finest shows of flowers, shrubs and garlands ever seen in the town when Queen Elizabeth II opened the Civic College in the summer of 1961, shows the same enterprise as did the traders there in those far-off days.

This happy co-operation of tradesmen and inhabitants is a direct result of the Fore Street Association.

The Proof...



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fabrics**

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12 January 1965

Branches:
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CHELTENHAM
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P.O. Box. 33
Carr Street
Ipswich.

Dear Mr. Connelly,

360 Applications for 20 Vacancies.

I am pleased to inform you of the tremendous response we have received to our recent advertisement in the EVENING STAR for staff for our new branch, opening in Ipswich shortly.

The time required for our staff manager to interview each applicant at 10 minute intervals would total 60 hours or 1½ working weeks.

Whilst it would not be possible to devote this amount of time to the interviewing, it is true to say our personnel staff are carefully reading all the letters and a considerable number will in fact be given an opportunity of an interview.

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Yours sincerely,

Gordon Thoday
Gordon Thoday.

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