

The Old Inns of St. Albans.

BY F. G. KITTON.

I think many will agree with the assertion that there is something fascinating about old country Inns, and particularly so in the case of those which were favourite "houses of call" in the coaching days. Their usually picturesque appearance and their interesting associations compel the attention of all who are attracted by the history of social life in England, for, prior to the introduction of railways, the Inn or Hostel played a very important part in every-day affairs. The dictionary definition of an Inn is "a house of lodging and entertainment for travellers"; a Hostel or Hostelry (from which we have Hospital and its French form, Hotel) is also an Inn, in the proper sense of the term. An Inn, therefore, must not be confounded with a Public-house, although the two terms are often considered synonymous—for a Public-house is licensed only for the retail of intoxicating liquors, while the Ale-house merely supplies malt liquor.

Although I purpose to deal with the Inns (especially the Coaching Inns) of St. Albans, past and present, I may find it necessary now and then to make passing allusion to a veritable Public-house or two, either for the reason that certain of these minor establishments possess unusual interest, archaeologically or pictorially, or were more or less associated with their big brethren, the Coaching Inns, in constituting themselves what I may call (for want of a more expressive term) "chapels of ease" in their relation to the Inns, which, when overflowing with guests, gladly availed themselves of the inferior accommodation afforded by the smaller houses in their neighbourhood.

Travelling by coach is well within living memory, and the older citizens of St. Albans can vividly recall the scene of bustle and activity which the principal thoroughfares of the town continually presented. About seventy coaches passed daily through St. Albans, which was the first important stopping-place out of London on the road to Holyhead, and of course the starting-point of the last stage on the return journey. These facts explain the abundance of Inns which existed here when travelling by coach was in its prime: but there is also another

reason why these Inns flourished exceedingly, viz., the fact that the Shrine of St. Alban attracted crowds of pious worshippers, chiefly equestrians and pilgrims, who naturally needed hospitality during their stay.

A great transformation in the social life of St. Albans was inaugurated when, on the 5th of May, 1858, the first railway was opened here, viz., the branch line of the London and North-Western from Watford—an event that occasioned much public rejoicing; in 1865 the St. Albans and Hatfield line was completed; and three years later the extension of the Midland Railway main line from Bedford to London placed this old-world town within easy reach of the Metropolis. However, as regards the Old Inns, the ante-railway period is the more attractive and romantic, those “good old times” (as we usually speak of them) when the quaint streets of St. Albans resounded with the lively notes of the horn, as coach after coach was skilfully “tooled” through the town. At the Hostleries all was life and activity, while the numerous farriers and harness-makers found constant employment in shoeing horses and repairing broken traces.

It is interesting to know that amongst the mail-coaches which passed through St. Albans, the first was that despatched from Liverpool on July 25th, 1785—the very first, in fact, of Palmer’s mails to run over the Great North-West Road. Of course, long before this, other conveyances, and especially post-coaches, had passed through the town. The turnpike from London entered St. Albans at a point near the Great Northern Railway Station, the road here being called the “Old” London-road, in contradistinction to the new road, constructed in 1794, which runs in a nearly direct line to High-street and the heart of the town. From a coaching point of view the new road was a considerable improvement, as the cumbrous vehicles would thus avoid the necessity of mounting the steep ascent of Holywell-hill; in some instances, however, this difficulty of hill-climbing was partly overcome by means of access to the Inn-yards at the rear, a drive being made right through, this remark applying chiefly to the Inns on Holywell-hill and in Chequer Street.* The old road continued (at any rate,

*See Plan of St. Albans by Andrews and Wren, 1766, the earliest map indicating this arrangement.

during part of the coaching period) through the narrow Sopwell-lane, thence up Holywell-hill, along High-street, George-street, Fishpool-street, over St. Michael's Bridge and, branching off to the right by Blacksmith's-lane, so continued across the present fields between Gorhambury drive and the Pré, joining the Redbourn-road just beyond Bow Bridge. Mr. John Harris, C.E., writing in 1896,* gives a somewhat different line of route, but he evidently refers to a period much earlier than that to which my description applies.

In these notes upon the Old Inns of St. Albans, I have decided to take the Inns (as far as possible) in the order in which they stood on the line of route followed by the coaches. As we have seen, outward-bound travellers entered the town *via* Sopwell-lane, and therefore emerged upon Holywell-hill by the "Old Crown" Inn, which stood at the corner of the lane and the hill. The number of Inns which flourished on Holywell-hill (all of them on the eastern side) was astounding for so small a town. Nearly every other house was a hostelry—indeed, they stood side by side, in an almost unbroken line—The "Crown," the "Angel,"† the "Bull," the "White Hart," the "Saracen's Head," the "Horsehead,"‡ the "Dolphin," the "Mermaid," the "Seven Stars," the "Woolpack," the "Peahen," and the "Key" (or "Peter Keys.") Of these, only two survive, viz, the "White Hart" and the "Peahen"; nearly opposite the former are two quaint houses, the "Postboy" and the "Trumpet," whose signs are reminiscent of the coaching days—houses which may be classed among the "chapels-of-ease" to which I have just alluded. With the exception of the "Horsehead," the "Angel," and the "Mermaid,"

* *Herts Advertiser*, 1896.

† *Court held December 7th, 1612*: . . . "The Viewers of Holywell Ward presented Symon Cowper, inn-holder, for setting forward the lower part of the forefront of his house on Holywell Hill, in the occupation of John Kinder, and between the Bull Inn and the Angel Inn."—*The Corporation Records of St. Albans*, by A. E. Gibbs, F.L.S., 1890.

‡ Wills, Archdeaconry of St. Albans, Wallingford, fol. 167: Will of Thomas Cooke of St. Albans, 1518, mentions a house called "Horsehede," "and my tenantry next it lying on Halywell Streete." Mention is also made in the Marian Survey of St. Albans, 1556, of a tenement called "The Horsehead," in St. Peter's Street.

I have succeeded (I hope) in locating the exact positions of these Inns. The sign of the "Horsehead" is a most unusual one, and Larwood makes no mention of it: he gives, however, that of the "Horse's Head," of which he speaks as a variation of the more familiar "Nag's Head," although it seems that only one example of the sign of the "Horse's Head" is known, this being at Brampton, in Cumberland.* That an Inn bearing the sign of the "Horse's Head" actually existed here is evidenced by the fact that it is mentioned in documents dated 1518 and 1583 respectively, as standing in Halliwell-street, † the old name for Holywell-hill; the "Mermaide" is referred to in the will of Richard Purs, 1497, as a tenement in the same street.‡ (I venture, at this point, to observe, parenthetically, that in 1586 Holywell-hill is referred to as "Halloway Streate," and it is thus curious to find history repeating itself, inasmuch as to-day we often hear this thoroughfare called, by the uneducated class, "Holloway-hill"—a designation which therefore cannot be considered as a modern "cockneyism," it being actually a reversion to the old name.)

THE "CROWN" INN was the first which greeted travellers by coach as they turned the corner of Sopwell-lane and Holywell-hill. In Mr. C. H. Ashdown's History of St. Albans we read that this was a house of much repute in its day, the commodious stables being continually in demand; we are also informed that it was "a favourite resort of the huntsmen of the neighbourhood, a well-known sporting character named Ward being the landlord for many years." § This Inn (within recent times) stood between Sopwell-lane and the modern thoroughfare called Albert-street, upon the site of the present High School for Girls. When at the height of its fame, it must often have presented a brilliant spectacle, as "the scarlet-coated huntsmen and town-gallants, all booted and spurred for the chase," foregathered there before going

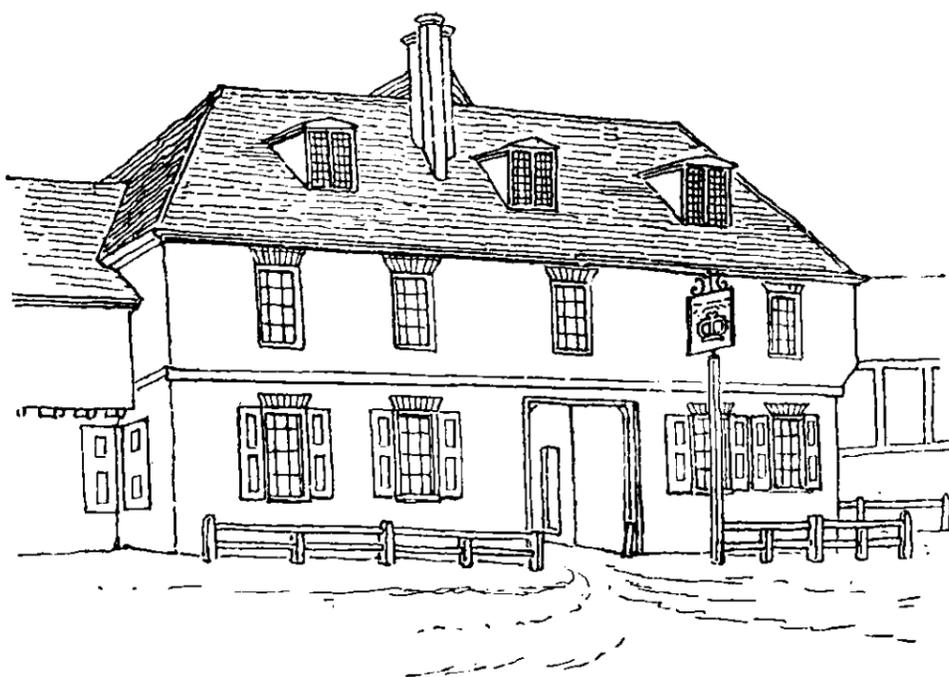
* Larwood and Hotten's "History of Signboards."

† *Herts Genealogist and Antiquary*, Vol. II., 207-8.

‡ Wills, Archdeaconry of St. Albans, Wallingford, fol. 90:—Will of Richd. Purs, 1497, mentions his tenement in Holywell Street, in St. Albans, between the tenement called "le Mermaide" and a tenement of Abb. and Conv. of St. Albans.

§ "St. Albans, Historical and Picturesque," by Charles H. Ashdown, F.R.G.S., 1893.

to the covert. The Right Hon. the Baron Dimsdale has very kindly accorded me the privilege of examining the collection of drawings of Hertfordshire topography (bound in nine quarto volumes) executed about the year 1797 by a schoolmaster of Tewin, named Pridmore, in which I found some valuable information relative to my subject. Among the St. Albans views is a drawing in



THE "CROWN" INN, *circa* 1797.
From a Drawing by Pridmore.

colour of the "Crown" Inn as it then appeared, just over a century ago, and of this I am enabled to show an outline tracing which I made, together with a few others, during a brief visit to Essendon Place. In this drawing we see that the "Crown" had an important exterior; a manuscript Note in the volume states that "some ancient remains of building are to be seen at the 'Crown' Inn, which are said to be brought from the ground adjoining the Abbey,"* and careful drawings of these are given, which include mouldings of a Saxon arch, sculptured heads, and a carving of the martyrdom of St. Amphibalus. The room containing the latter was called the "Amphibalus," and we are further informed that there is "a tradition that Queen Elizabeth once slept in the room

* The Notes in the volumes are apparently not entirely in Pridmore's handwriting.

above"! The tavern at the corner of Sopwell-lane, called the "Crown" (demolished a few years since), was a portion of the original Inn. It would be interesting to know what has become of the carvings which it formerly contained.

THE "BULL" INN, which still exists as a private residence, although altered and adapted to new requirements, stood a few yards north of the "Crown." The exterior of this comfortable-looking house, called "The Priory," has been re-fronted since the early days of its career as a coaching-inn, probably at the time of George I.; in the rear we may still find evidence of its former character, as, for example, in the remains of what was once extensive stabling, while the ample cellarage in the basement is sure proof of antiquity. The "Bull," one of the most noted hostelries in St. Albans, is mentioned in a deed dated 1548,* and in the Parish Records of St. Peter's we read that the sum of nine shillings was paid to the ringers, in celebration of Queen Elizabeth's visit to the town in 1577, when we are further told, "the Queen's Majesty came to the 'Bull.'"† The Mayor's accounts for 1625 include the following entry: "Paid the 19th of July for a gallon of wine, which was sent unto Mr. [afterwards Sir] Thomas Meautys [a cousin of, and secretary to, Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam], and his company unto the 'Bull' at that time when he lay there, 4s. 2d." Thomas Baskerville, when describing his travels in Herts and Essex more than two centuries ago, observed: "St. Albans is a great town with many inns in it, but the 'Bull Inn' is the greatest that I have seen in England."‡ On June 10th, 1717, there seems to have been much festivity at the "Bull," for on that day the sum of £3 was expended by the City Fathers in drinking the health of the King (George I.), "upon his return from Hanover."§ This famous hostelry is frequently mentioned in the Corporation minutes at subsequent dates, and late in the eighteenth century was still a flourishing house.

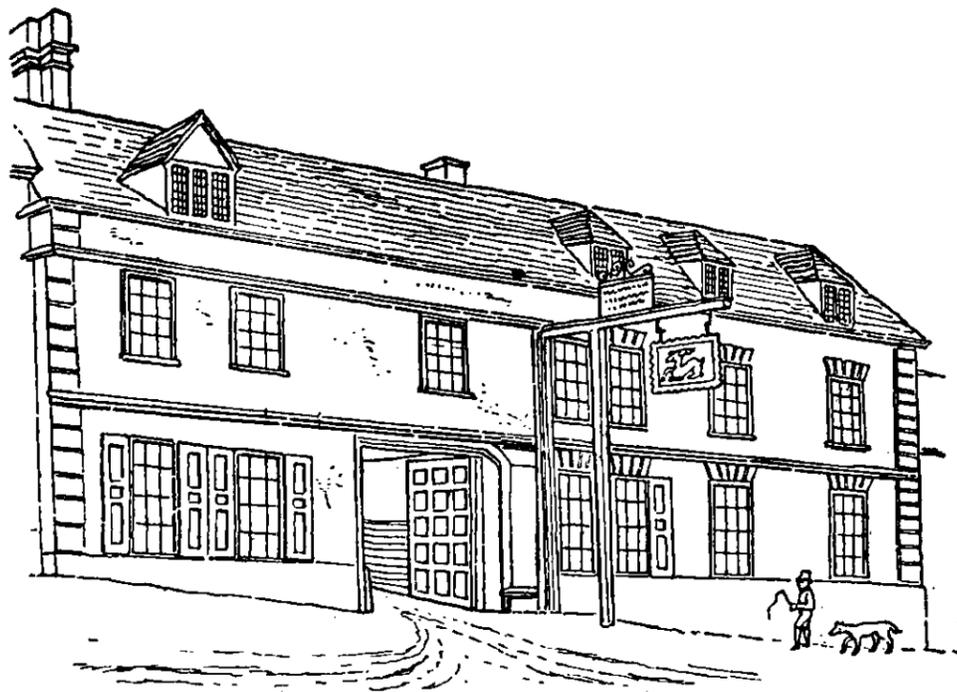
* See *Herts Genealogist and Antiquary*, Vol. II., 260.

† St. Peter's Parish Books and Records—1575, vii. Eliz.

‡ MSS. of the Duke of Portland, Vol. II. (Historical Manuscripts Commission).

§ Mayor's Accounts.

THE "WHITE HART," adjoining the "Bull," (now "The Priory"), yet retains externally much of its original aspect. A portion of this hostel continues as a tavern, the remainder being used as grocery stores. With its plaster front and over-hanging upper storey, and its red-tiled roof with dormer windows, the old "White Hart" constitutes the most picturesque feature of Holywell-hill. Passing through the gateway into what was formerly the yard of the Inn, and looking towards the Hill, we may behold a typical remnant of old St. Albans. A writer in the *Hertfordshire Illustrated Review*, Vol. I. (1893), in a note upon the



THE "WHITE HART" INN, circa 1797.
From a Drawing by Pridmore.

"White Hart," says: "At the present time there are the remains of timbers which carried a gallery over the gateway at the back, and, I think, also a plastered-up doorway on the second floor of the tavern, leading into the room over the gateway, which room, some ten years ago, was partly stripped of its paper and canvas, and exhibited on the plastered wall some vestiges of old wall-decoration, considered by the late Mr. John Chapple (who acted as Clerk of the Works at the Abbey) as particularly interesting examples. The room adjoining is large and low, and panelled with oak, the other rooms

of the grocery stores have been much modernised, but the attics are rude, and were, until lately, almost ruinous." In the Pridmore Collection, there is a drawing of the "White Hart" as it then appeared, and we find that the external aspect of the principal front has changed but little during the last hundred years. On the right-hand side of the gateway hung the signboard (a white hart on a green ground) suspended from a heavy wooden bracket. The "White Hart" was formerly called the "Hartshorn," and is referred to in the Corporation Records of 1571, but probably dates back to a much earlier period. It is doubtless the veritable hostelry at which the Scotch rebel lord, Simon Lovat, rested in 1746, during a sudden illness, while on his way to London for committal to the Tower, where he was executed shortly afterwards. It was at the "White Hart," too, that Hogarth painted the famous portrait of his lordship, at the express invitation of Dr. Webster, a notable St. Albans man, and a friend of Samuel Ireland, the biographer of Hogarth. This portrait, which is now in the National Portrait Gallery, was painted in great haste—probably at one sitting—for Dr. Webster, who attended Lord Lovat as medical adviser; it is said to have been discovered eighty years afterwards in the house of a poor person residing in the neighbourhood of St. Albans, a singular fact regarding it being that until then this valuable picture was not known to exist. The engraved reproduction by Hogarth was, of course, familiar, and concerning it it is said that at the time of publication it became so popular that the artist refused an offer made for the copper-plate by a printseller which amounted to its weight in gold; here he showed much discrimination, for the sale of the prints alone realised as much as £12 a day for many weeks.* The "White Hart" was a posting-house (of which there were only two or three in the town), that is, a house where post-horses were kept for the convenience of couriers and others who desired to travel quickly by relays of horses, and in the foreground of Pridmore's drawing of this Inn is represented a diminutive post-boy with a large dog at his heels. A much-respected citizen of St. Albans. Mr. Thomas Weedon Kent, who has

* *Hertfordshire Illustrated Review*, Vol. I., 1893.

attained his 95th year, and is therefore probably the "oldest inhabitant," clearly remembers the days when coaching was in full swing and post-boys in active employment.* He says that when they were posting up to Parliament it was an exceedingly lively time at the "White Hart." The post-boys were all at the corner of the High-street in their white smocks, on the look-out for a job, and, as soon as their services were required, they would pull off their smocks and be ready to start at once.

THE "SARACEN'S HEAD" stood next to the "White Hart," the site of which is marked by the still-existing yard bearing that name. The earliest allusion to this ancient hostelry that I have been able to discover is that in the Marian Survey of 1556. Mr. W. Page, F.S.A., has directed my attention to a still earlier reference to an Inn in St. Albans, "commonly called the Ston Ha'l, or the signe of the Sarsyns Hede"; it is to be found in the will of Robert Depyng, dated 19th January, 1496-7;† but it does not appear quite certain whether this Inn is identical with that on Holywell-hill. Stone Hall was also the name of the house in the Market Place where Mr. W. Marks now lives. The building over and contiguous to the archway leading to Saracen's Head Yard is probably a remnant of the Inn, for, like its neighbour the "White Hart," it has a plaster front and a high-pitched roof covered with red tiles. Of the "Saracen's Head" practically nothing is recorded, and it was doubtless demolished before the beginning of the 19th century.

THE "DOLPHIN" was one of the many Inns which stood between the "Saracen's Head" and the top of Holywell Hill, only a single example of which remains to us. This Inn is believed (with good reason) to have occupied the site of the two houses now in the occupation of Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Payne respectively—the yard immediately south of Mr. Payne's is still known as the "Dolphin Yard," whence can be seen a picturesque

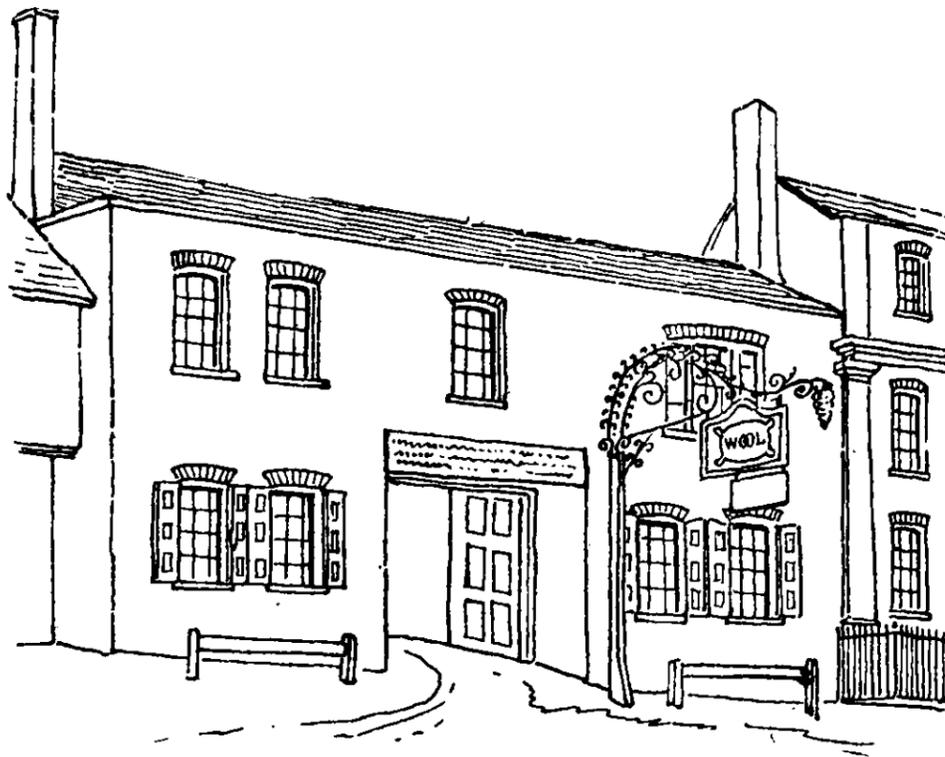
* I regret to state that, since this paper was written, Mr Kent and the Rev. H. Fowler, M.A. (both quoted in my Notes) have passed away.

† Wills, Archdeaconry of St. Albans, Wallingford, fol. 87d.

gable or two, which evidently formed part of the vanished Inn.

THE "SEVEN STARS" was on the site of Dr. Lipscomb's house, as is proved by the old deeds. The residence of Mr. T. W. Kent also stands upon the site of an ancient hostelry, but, strange to relate, its identity cannot be established, as no mention is made of it in the deeds. I venture, therefore, to suggest that it was perhaps the Inn to which I have already referred as being situated on Holywell-hill, viz., the "Horshead," which must have been swept away in the 18th century, or even earlier. In Mr. Kent's house may be found considerable evidence of its former importance, in the form of large panelled rooms, one of them containing a carved overmantel of an early date, and I may mention that on the right-hand side of the archway leading to the yard of what is now the Holywell Brewery, there are still extant the remains of a carved pilaster, hidden from view by modern woodwork.

THE "WOOLPACK," or "Woolsack," as it was sometimes called, adjoined Mr. Kent's house on the north side; a vestige of it may still be seen in the "Woolpack Tap,"



THE "WOOLPACK" INN, circa 1797.
From a Drawing by Pridmore.

a short distance up the London-road, and on the verge of the old borough line, thus indicating the original extent of the premises. Pridmore's drawing of this Inn shows a red-brick building having a low-pitched roof covered with red tiles; on the right is visible a portion of Mr. Kent's house, with one of the interesting brick pilasters ornamenting the front, and a portion of the iron railing (since removed); on the left is shown the end of the old "Peahen." The most striking external feature of the "Woolpack" was the elaborately-designed bracket supporting the signboard, the latter depicting a sack upon which was inscribed the word "Wool." It is, I think, much to be regretted that these splendid wrought-iron brackets and their accompanying signs, which impart a dignified appearance to the plainest *façade*, are becoming obsolete; a few striking specimens still exist in various parts of the country, as, for example, the "Sir John Falstaff," at Canterbury, and (coming nearer home), the "Bull" at Redbourn. With respect to the date of the "Woolpack," the Rev. H. Fowler, M.A., was of opinion that it was a very spacious Inn, and certainly existed in the mediæval period, and that the sign was probably as old as any in St. Albans, though he was unable to quote any document in proof. The "Woolpack" was subsequently merged into the "Peahen," notwithstanding the fact that the latter was, until then, a much inferior establishment, and the gateway on Holywell-hill, over which was placed the sign of the "Peahen" (quite lately removed), was the veritable archway leading to the "Woolpack" yard.*

THE "PEAHEN":—I have said that, with one exception, the Inns on Holywell-hill, between the "Saracen's Head" and the summit of the hill, have disappeared, leaving nothing but their names to remind us of their former presence. The notable exception is, of course, the "Peahen"; but even this hostelry has been so transformed (if rebuilding can be called transformation) as to become unrecognisable to those who can remember the comparatively unobtrusive structure over which Mr.

* In a document at the Public Record Office, Rent of St. Albans in 1446 (Rentals and Surveys, Herts, 294) mention is made of a tenement called "le Wolsak," situated in St. Peter's Street (*Vicus Sæ Petri*.)

William Marks formerly presided. The sign of the "Peahen" may claim to be unique; Larwood, in his "History of Signboards," makes no mention of it, nor does a sign of this name appear in the list of Inns and public-houses which figures in the London Directory.* With regard to the date of foundation of the original house, we have no evidence; but Mr. W. Page, F.S.A., has kindly directed my attention to the fact that it is mentioned in a document,† bearing date 1480, as "a messuage called 'le Pehenne,'" which is believed to be an earlier reference than has yet been found. It is, therefore, not improbable that the Inn was in existence at the time of the First Battle at St. Albans, 1455, when the Yorkist army broke into the town at this point. At that time, however, and until a much later period, the "Peahen" was overshadowed by its more important neighbour, the "Woolpack," which, after the making of the New London-road in 1794, gradually lost prestige; in or about 1852 it was put up for sale, when the property was purchased by the then proprietor of the "Peahen," Mr. William Marks, who thereupon converted the two houses into one establishment. Thus the "Peahen" acquired an important, if not a leading, position amongst the surviving Inns of St. Albans—a position which its situation at the junction of two main thoroughfares in the heart of the town enables it to retain. The old "Peahen," according to the earliest representation of it extant, had a decidedly unpretentious exterior, the upper portion being constructed of timber and plaster, and the lower of brick. It had a red-tiled roof of high pitch, with massive chimneys, small square windows (those on the ground floor having outside shutters), the principal entrance being through a hooded doorway from the London-road, as now. In subsequent times the ancient wooden framework was obscured by a layer of plaster (a common practice, unfortunately), and the whole exterior of the building coated with a light coloured paint, thus disguising its

* A house bearing this sign existed in Chipping Barnet, Herts, in the sixteenth century, as, according to a document (*vide* Patent Roll, 29th Elizabeth, Part 6), a grant was made to Thomas Taylor and others of a tenement in Chipping Barnet called "Le Pehen and le Swan," A.D. 1587.

† Feet of Fines, Herts, Edward IV., No. 58.

quaint characteristics. About the year 1880, Mr. Marks (finding that the annual coat of paint proved a rather heavy expense) covered the upper storey with red brick, raised the parapet about three feet, and scraped the paint off the lower storey, thus imparting to the building quite a modern appearance. In this guise, the "Peahen" had been familiar for nearly twenty years, until its demolition a year or two ago. At the time these changes were being effected, Mr. Marks intended to carry out certain internal structural alterations, which seemed to threaten the spoliation of one of the most interesting features of that portion of the building which was formerly the "Woolpack." A report to this effect came to the knowledge of Sir Gilbert Scott, R.A., the eminent architect, who, writing to Mr. Marks, said: "I was much pained to hear, when at St. Albans last week, that you contemplated the destruction of the *fine* 15th-century ceiling in the room in which we dined. All you desire can be more cheaply obtained by lowering the floor of the room. Do not, I beg you, commit an act of vandalism which would compel all of us antiquaries to cease to frequent the 'Peahen.'" In reply to this urgent appeal, Mr. Marks intimated that it was not his intention to destroy, but to restore, and he saw that the ancient moulded beams in the ceiling, with their upright supports, were protected from injury: they may still be seen in the dining-room of the new building. The "Peahen" has just entered upon a fresh phase of its existence, for about four years ago the entire freehold was purchased by the present proprietor, Mr. Walter Price, who demolished the older building and erected in its stead an imposing half-timbered edifice, which reflects great credit upon those responsible for its conception, and which imparts quite an old-world appearance to this part of St. Albans.

In recounting the early traditions of the "Peahen," I ought to mention that this hostelry is said to have been the scene of the private marriage of Henry VIII. to Anne Boleyn—at least, so it is asserted in Stanford's "Tourists' Guide to Hertfordshire," 1896, by the Rev. A. J. Foster, M.A., who informs me that the statement is quoted from Brayley's "Beauties of England and Wales." As Mr. Foster observes, the subject of this royal marriage is an interesting one, but obscure: even Froude

has not been able to clear it up. History says that the private marriage took place on January 25th, 1533, and it is recorded that the scene of the ceremony was the private chapel of Sopwell Nunnery; it seems, however, more probable that the nuptials were celebrated at Whitehall, although the evidence is by no means sufficing.

In concluding my remarks upon the "Peahen," I should like to say a word concerning the Visitors' Book. Among the many valuable autographs is a group of signatures, to which a pathetic interest attaches. In 1886, the late Madame de Falbe entertained as guests at Luton Hoo a Royal party consisting of Princess May of Teck (now the Duchess of Cornwall) and her two brothers, Francis Joseph and Alexander George of Teck. On July 30th of that year they visited the Abbey, and afterwards lunched at the "Peahen," signing their names in the Visitors' Book. It was on the occasion of this visit to Luton Hoo that the late Duke of Clarence offered his hand in marriage to Princess May, and we all remember the sad event which so speedily prevented the realisation of what would undoubtedly have proved a happy union. Among the many guests of whom Mr. Marks has pleasing recollections was the late John Ruskin, who, with his servant, stayed two days at the Hotel, and was "wonderfully chatty" and agreeable. The "Peahen" has been honoured nearly every year by a party of Royal Academicians, who there foregather, dine together, and spend a convivial evening.

THE "KEY."—Contiguous to the "Peahen," on the north side, stood an Inn called the "Key," which was also known as the "Cross Keys," and "Peter Keys," the emblem of St. Peter and his successors—this sign being frequently adopted by inn-keepers and other tenants of religious houses, even after the Reformation. The earlier building must not, however, be confounded with the present "Cross Keys," which is a comparatively modern structure. The exact position of the "Key" was where the present London-road separates the "Peahen" from the "Cross Keys." Behind the "Key" was the famous Keyfield, where, in 1455, the First Battle of St. Albans was begun, and that the Inn itself existed at this early period is proved by a document dated that same year; the reference has been kindly copied for me by Mr. Page,

and here we find the Inn described as "le 'Key' in le Hyghstrete opposite the Market where Wool is sold," while mention is also made of "a messuage called le 'Saryzynhede' in the said street."* Presumably, the Inns here alluded to as being in the High-street are identical with those which I have already referred to as existing on Holywell-hill; if so, it is difficult to explain why their situation is given as in the High-street. In 1634 (that is, nearly two centuries later), the present High-street was called Middle Row, as shown in Benjamin Hare's map of that date; in monastic times it was called "The Vintry," probably by reason of its proximity to the vineyard of the Monastery. So that High-street may be a comparatively modern appellation. Besides the "Key" contiguous to the "Peahen," there must have been another hostelry of that name in the town, as in a document, dated 1477, mention is made of "la Key," opposite "le Rome Lande."† Perhaps the earliest reference to the Inn with the sign of the "Cross Keys" is to be met with in a deed relating to a lawsuit which came before the Court of Exchequer in 1485, where it is described as a tenement called "Le Cross Keys."‡ In 1556, this hostel was associated with an incident which finds a place in the history of St. Albans and in the records of the religious conflicts of bygone days. During that year George Tankerfield suffered death at the stake on account of his Puritan principles, and the heroic man was conveyed from Newgate to the "Cross Keys" at St. Albans, there to await the dread hour when he would die a Martyr's death, the scene of which was a vacant piece of land (now a burial-ground) on the north side of the Grammar School. There is a tradition that during his brief confinement at the "Cross Keys," Tankerfield asked for a fire, and, having obtained it, pulled up his hose and brought his leg as near as possible to the flames, in order to ascertain how he could endure the painful death to which he was doomed. At the time of the Civil War, nearly a century later, the Parliamentary troopers, with Cromwell at their head, drew up in front

* Wills, Archdeaconry of St. Albans, Stoneham, fol. 80.—Administration, Simon Bernewell of St. Albans, 1455.

† Feet of Fines, Herts. Edward IV., No. 58.

‡ Exchequer of Pleas, Plea Roll, 1 Henry VII. m. 27-28.

of the old "Cross Keys" Inn before advancing to the attack upon the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire and his supporters.* The Inn was demolished in 1794, when the modern London-road was made.

THE "CHEQUERS":—Holywell-hill originally comprised that portion of the ascent now familiar to us as Chequer-street. The latter name was derived from the "Chequer" Inn, which was also known as the "Chequers," or "Exchequers"; it was one of the most ancient hostels in the County, and its sign ("perhaps the most patriarchal of all signs," Larwood observes) is said to have originally indicated that draughts and backgammon were played within. Dr. Lardner has given a full description of the game, which was commonly termed "Chequers," from the fact that the board upon which it was played was called an "Exchequer," from its resemblance to a chess-board. What may be considered as the earliest reference to the "Chequers" is to be found in the Marian Survey, 1556; another early allusion to this tenement appears in a document bearing date 1583, where we read of a tenement "now called the 'Chequer,' and formerly the 'Crane.'"† In the same document it is mentioned as the "'Exchequer,' in Malt Markett"—Chequer-street, be it said, was formerly called "Malt Markett," or "Malt Cheaping." Mr. T. W. Kent, who remembers the old "Chequers" Inn, describes it as "a nice little low-house," and about 1825 the then landlord, named Coleman, of sporting proclivities, induced the brewer who owned it (Thomas Kinder) to pull down the "Chequers" and build a new house. This was called the "Turf" Hotel.

THE "TURF HOTEL" was a noted house for sporting characters, as well as the headquarters of the Conservative party in St. Albans. In a series of coloured prints illustrating incidents in the St. Albans Grand Steeplechase will be found (in Plate I.) an interesting representation of the "Turf." Here the competitors foregathered, and, as we see in the picture, attracted a large crowd of onlookers. The memorable contest took place on March 8th, 1832, and under this particular engraving appears

* "Hertfordshire during the Great Civil War and the Long Parliament," by Alfred Kingston, F.R.H.S., 1894.

† See *Herts Genealogist and Antiquary*, Vol. II., 207-8.

the following inscription: "The 'Turf Hotel,' with the Horses and their Riders going to the field, preceded by G. Osbaldeston, Esq., Umpire, and Mr. Coleman, Clerk to the Chase." The series of six plates (with key) were "dedicated to the Gentlemen of the St. Albans Steeplechase by their obliged servant, Y. Moore," who was apparently a picture-frame maker in London. In course of time, presumably when Coleman retired from the business, the greater portion of the premises was utilised as a straw factory, and the small shop on the left side of the gateway was converted into an ale-house. In (or about) 1852 the Inn business was reinstated, and the house re-christened the "Queen's Hotel," one of its earliest patrons being Charles Dickens. In all probability it was thought that the bestowal of such a dignified (though less characteristic) designation upon the house (which still exists in the "Queen's Hotel"), it would secure a superior class of custom. It is believed that in the present building may be found a few remains of its ancient predecessor. Hollinshed states that the Yorkists, at the First Battle of St. Albans, broke into the town between the sign of the "Key" and the "Exchequer"—"by the garden side"—that is, where "Battlefield House" now stands.*

THE "HALF MOON":—The Half-Moon Yard, in Chequer-street, marks the site of another extinct hostelry. In a document, dated 1586, appears the following entry: "The messuage called the Halfe Moon [in the Malt Market] is held of the King [James I.] in chief by service of the 20th part of a knight's fee, and is worth per annum, clear, 10s."† In a lawsuit of 1605, it is referred to as "a tenement or Inn called 'The Halfe Moone.'" It adjoined the "Chequers" on the north side, and Mr. Kent recalls the fact that the corner of the yard (where the "Temperance Hotel" now is) was occupied by the armoury of the Herts Militia, who assembled annually in St. Peter's-street.

THE "RED HOUSE":—During the early part of the 19th century there stood in Chequer-street a public-house called "The Red House,"‡ which almost blocked

* See the Rev. H. Fowler's Plan of St. Albans, showing Monastic sites, etc.

† See *Herts Genealogist and Antiquary*, Vol. II., 207-8.

‡ So called probably because it was built of red brick.

the roadway. Its exact position was at a point a little below the Town Hall, and its principal front faced south, looking down the hill. On the east side of "The Red House" there was just sufficient space for waggons to pass singly, while on the west there was a narrow alley for foot-passengers. "The Red House," projecting, as it did, across the road, proved a terrible obstruction, and was demolished about 1832.

THE "BELL":—Just beyond where "The Red House" stood is the "Bell Hotel," which we find mentioned in the Records of St. Peter's Parish for 1682; in another early document it is referred to as the "Blue Bell" Inn.* The present building has been much modernised, and bears but little evidence of its early origin.

THE "CASTLE":—Concerning another ancient hostel that flourished in close proximity to the "Bell," and which bore the sign of the "Castle," there is but little recorded. I think there can be no doubt that it stood either at the north or south corner of the west end of Victoria Street (then called "Shropshire Lane")—that is, either on the spot where the business premises of Mr. Odell and Mr. Kingham stand, or at the opposite corner—Mr. Hodding's offices. In Benjamin Hare's map, 1634, we find the name of the Inn written *across* the west end of what is now Victoria Street, so that this map (the only one, I believe, in which the name appears) does not solve the difficulty. Expert opinion, however, seems to favour the first-mentioned site as that of the "Castle," and Mr. Kingham tells me that many American visitors to St. Albans have patronised his shop because they believe it to be thus associated with the "Castle" which Shakespeare has immortalised in describing the incident of the death of the Duke of Somerset (during the first Battle of St. Albans), who fell early in the fight, in the doorway of the "Castle." In "The First Part of King Henry VI.," act v., scene ii., Richard thus addresses his dying foe :

"So, lie thou there ;—
For underneath an alehouse' paltry sign,
The Castle in Saint Alban's, Somerset
Hath made the wizard famous in his death."

* St. Peter's Parish Books and Records, 1699.—Thomas Heyne owned a tenement called "Le Belle" in Haliwell strete" before 1452.—Reg. I., 99, 100.

In St. Peter's Parish Books and Records, under date 1618 (that is, about two years after Shakespeare's death), is the following entry: "Ordered that . . . the churchwardens remove people from certain seats [in the Church], to make room for Roger Pemberton and Robert Wolley, and those seats were in future to belong to their two houses, viz., 'The Castell' in St. Albans and to Harpsfield Hall."

THE "CHRISTOPHER":—A century or so ago, French-row was also known as Cordwainers'-row or Cobblers'-row, and in comparatively recent times as the Women's Market, for here the countrywomen congregated with their butter, poultry, etc., for sale. In this narrow thoroughfare there were once several Inns, and the remains of one of these ancient structures, viz., the "Christopher," imparts quite a picturesque aspect to the Row, the plaster-fronted gables and overhanging upper storey enabling us to realise how the streets of St. Albans must have looked in mediæval times. The sign of the "Christopher" (or "St. Christopher," to give its full title) is derived, of course, from the saint, who, like St. Julian and St. Martin, was a powerful patron of travellers. The Inn, doubtless, originally occupied the entire space between the "Fleur-de-Lys" and the "Wheatsheaf"; what now remains of the ancient structure is divided into three tenements, the interiors of which contain but few vestiges of their former character, having been altered from time to time to suit varied requirements. The Inn, during its prime, was one of the best-known as well as one of the most notorious hostels in St. Albans. It is referred to in the Marian Survey of 1556, and in 1591 we find it mentioned as a *rendezvous* of the City Fathers, who, until the Town Hall was built in 1830, frequently met at the "Christopher" and at other leading Inns in the town for the purpose of transacting municipal business, or to convivially commemorate a great national event.* In 1765, the "Christopher" entertained two distinguished actors, David Garrick and Quin, who visited the Abbey and inspected the bones of Duke Humphrey, preserved in spirits. While enjoying their wine after dinner,

* "The Corporation Records of St. Albans," by A. E. Gibbs, F.L.S., 1890.

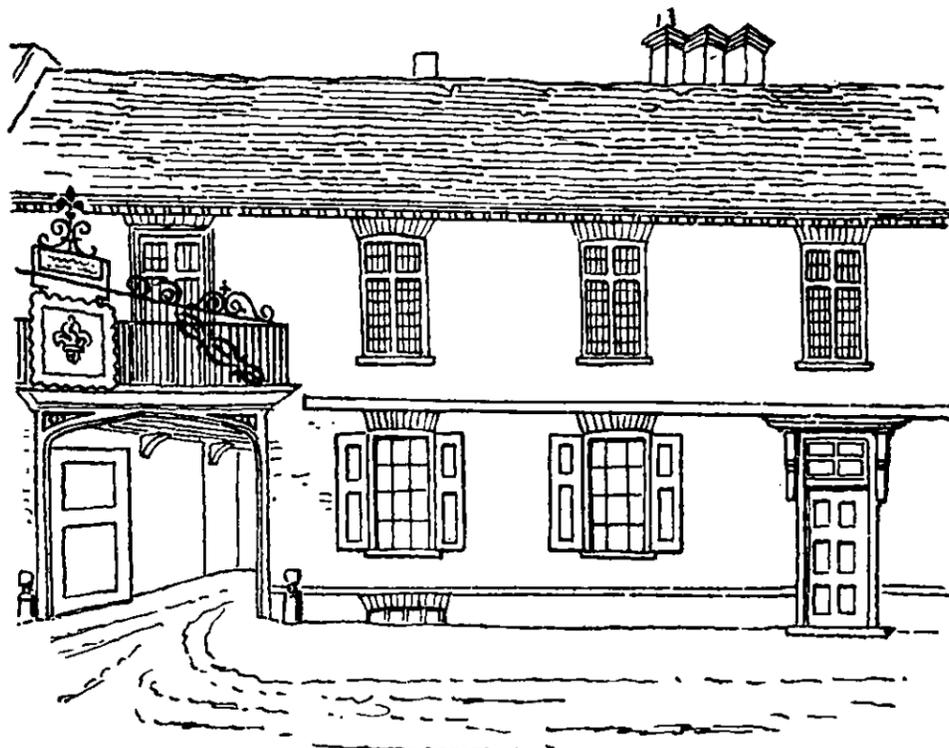
Garrick composed verses which he entitled "Quin's Soliloquy," the moral of which indicated that it is preferable to embalm oneself with "turtle fat and Bordeaux wine" while living, than to suffer such "precious pickle" to be wasted upon "senseless clay."

About a century ago the old "Christopher" began to decline in popularity as regards a superior class of clients, and this was the beginning of the end of its career as an Inn; for it opened its portals to all kinds of vagabonds and disreputable persons, and, eventually losing caste altogether, was compelled to suffer extinction. On one side of the archway facing the yard may still be seen an interesting memento of the ancient hostel in the shape of a carved bracket of grotesque design, representing a nondescript figure, half woman and half beast, of which similar examples may be seen at Messrs. Thorpe and Collings', in High-street. The lower portion of another example of a like quaint character remains on the right-hand gate post at the entrance to the yard of Holywell Brewery, together with a 16th-century fluted pilaster of wood.

THE "FLEUR-DE-LYS":—Adjacent to the "Christopher" is the "Fleur-de-Lys," now but an ordinary tavern, but formerly an Inn of considerable importance. A writer in the *Herts Advertiser* * asserts that the Sub-cellarer of the Convent, Adam Thoby, superintended its erection between 1420 and 1440, under Abbot John Wheat-hampstead, and further suggests the probability that the tenement described in the monastic documents as "facing eastwards towards the Great Cross" (that is, the Eleanor Cross, destroyed in the 17th century) is identical with this hostelry. From a fragment of carving discovered on the south side of the "Fleur-de-Lys" at the time of the demolition of the neighbouring inn, the "Great Red Lion," about four years ago, the building would seem to date back to a still earlier period, viz., the 14th century. This carving is the cusping from a window, and was presented to the Hertfordshire County Museum by the Kingsbury Brewery Company. In ancient records the Inn is usually referred to as the "Fleur-de-Luce" or "Flower-de-Luse," and is even now so called by the "oldest inhabitant." The sign of the "Flower-de-Luse"

* *Herts Advertiser*, Dec. 6th, 1896.

was common in England in old times, and in this particular instance it was acquired (according to tradition) through the fact that the captive King John of France was temporarily detained within the walls of the ancient building which formerly occupied the site of the present tavern, when first entrusted to the care of Abbot de la Mare by Edward III. after the battle of Poitiers.* At



THE "FLEUR-DE-LYS" INN, *circa* 1797.
From a Drawing by Pridmore.

the Reformation the "Fleur-de-Lys" underwent repairs, and since then has been almost rebuilt. In Schnebillie's view of the Clock Tower, 1787, we have a representation of its principal front, with a distinctive signboard projecting from the balcony over the archway, and in the Pridmore Collection there is a drawing of this Inn as seen about twenty years later, showing little, if any, alteration. In the same Collection are drawings of coats-of-arms and of two quarries of stained glass once existing in the windows of the "Fleur-de-Lys"; the latter represent triple turrets, with the following manuscript note appended, of which Mr. Wilton Hall has kindly sent me a transcript: "Castles, which leads me

* "St. Albans, Historical and Picturesque," by Charles H. Ashdown, F.R.G.S., 1893.

to imagine that the sign of this house was once the Castle." It is more probable, however, that this glass was removed from the Inn of that name which stood at the corner of Victoria-street. I have also seen in the British Museum a water-colour drawing of the old kitchen formerly existing at the "Fleur-de-Lys," which had a wide ingle-nook and double mantleshef. During the last century, and until fifty or sixty years ago, a coach ran from the "Fleur-de-Lys" and the "Woolpack" to London, daily.

THE "GREAT RED LION":—On the south side of the "Fleur-de-Lys" stood the "Old Red Lion," known in the 16th century as "The Lyon," and subsequently as "The Red Lion." In 1792 the house was refronted in a crude and inartistic manner, and it was then probably, that the sign was changed to the "Great Red Lion," to distinguish it from two other "Red Lions" in the town. During the reign of Henry VIII. there were at least three Inns in close proximity to "The Lyon," viz., the "Pecoke," "Le Horne" (also called "Le Sterre") and "Le Beare,"* all of which are mentioned in the Marian Survey. The "Great Red Lion" was once a famous posting-house, and in the Mayor's Accounts for 1585 we find the following entries:—

"Paid for the Commissioners' dinner at the Lyon when they sat for assessing the Subsidy, xvi^s."

"Paid for a pottle of wine at the same time at the Lyon, xii^d."

In 1714, the Mayor and Corporation indulged in a little conviviality at the "Red Lion," when Peace was proclaimed between Great Britain and Spain, and shortly afterwards we find entered in the Mayor's Accounts the following expensive item:—

"Spent by consent of the Company at the 'Redd Lyon' and at Mr. Alderman Ramridge's on the day of proclaiming King George, given to the ringers, musicians, and drummers then and for all the meaner sort, and for faggots to make a bonfire. £13 4s."

A writer in the *Middlesex and Hertfordshire Notes and Queries*, Jan., 1897, points out one singular feature which appertained to the "Great Red Lion," viz., an underground stable with stalls for ten or twelve horses, fitted

* Pat. 26 Hen. VIII., p. 26, m. 27.



THE "GEORGE" INN, from the Rear.
Drawn by F. G. Kitton.
(From C. H. Ashdown's "St. Albans: Historical and Picturesque.")

with mangers and hayracks; this stable existed until quite recently, and was used within living memory for horses that drew the stage-waggon and teams of the coach that ran to Watford. The east end of the stable is traditionally said to have communicated with an underground passage leading to the Abbey. The refronted "Red Lion" was pulled down in 1896, and replaced by an aggressively modern structure; it was during its demolition that the interesting window cusping of the "Fleur-de-Lys," came to light, and this would seem to suggest the probability that in very early times there existed no building at this point to obscure the handsome external decoration of the "Fleur-de-Lys."

THE "CORNER HALLE."—The exact position of this vanished hospice seems doubtful. Dr. Ridgway Lloyd, however, believed that it occupied the angle formed by George (formerly Church) street and French-row, on the site now occupied by the "Great Red Lion," or the opposite angle formed by the Market-place and High-street, where there is now a tobacconist's shop. In the Accounts of St. Albans Grammar School, under date 1606-7, there is the first mention of the third licence for retailing wine, paid by Robert Wolley "to the use of the schoole-master" in the Corner Tavern. That the house was in existence so early as 1446 is proved by a reference to it in a document of that date, now in the Public Record Office.

THE "GEORGE."—One of the most noted of St. Albans Inns was the "George," which gives its name to the street where it stands. (In the 15th century George-street was known as "Chirche-stret," and in Hare's map, 1634, it is called Cook-row.) Mr. Page has discovered an entry in a document at the Public Record Office, dated 1446, from which it appears that the rent for the Inn called "le George," in "Chirche-stret," was received from John, Duke of Exeter, then Lord High Admiral of England*. The sign of the Inn is, of course, "St. George and the Dragon," usually abbreviated to the "George." In 1448, the name of the hostelry is given

* Rental of St. Albans in 1446. (Public Record Office, Rentals and Surveys, Herts, 294). Mention is also made in the document of an Inn called "le Bere" or "le Belle," in "Chirche Stret."

as "The George upon the Hupe,"* and the curious affix, "upon the Hupe" (or "Hoop"), is thus explained by Larwood: "Anciently, instead of being a painted board, the object of the sign was carved and hung within a hoop; these hoops seem to have originated in



THE "GEORGE" INN, circa 1797.
From a Drawing by Pridmore.

the highly ornamental bush or crown, which latterly was made of hoops, covered with evergreens."† The sign of the "George on the Hoop" has been traced back as early as the reign of Edward III., *i.e.*, the 14th century. Mr. Andrew Oliver, A.R.I.B.A., states that amongst the "odd Charters" in the British Museum are six deeds relating to the "George on the Hoop," Church-street. The earliest is dated "Feast of St. James, 1401," and the latest is described in the catalogue as follows:—"Indenture of lease from Thomas the

* *St. Albans Architectural and Archaeological Society.—Transactions*, 1893 and 1894, p. 22.

† Taverns in Pompeii were almost universally placed at the street corners, many of them bearing the sign of an ivy-bush. For as the ivy was the plant sacred to Bacchus, the ivy-bush became the favourite sign of the Roman wine-shops. Hence the trite proverb of the Latins, 'Good wine needs no bush.' In Naples to-day there is scarcely a tavern which has not the orthodox bush against the doorway. In 1726, the Court at St. Albans ordered Mr. Swinston "to take down the bush which is upon his sign, that denotes his selling wine."—*Corp. Rec.*

Abbot and the Convent of St. Albans to William Potter and Alice his wife of a tenement called the George on the Hope in Chirche-street, St. Albans." The date of this is 4th February, 1509. Pertaining to the Inn was an oratory or chapel, where, in 1484, by licence from the Abbot, the proprietor was permitted to have Low Mass celebrated for the benefit of "such great men and nobles, and others, as should be lodged" at the Inn.* The earliest known representation of the "George" is that in the Pridmore Collection. With three bay windows projecting from its plaster front and an imposing sign-board jutting half across the street, this Inn certainly possessed a pictorial appearance which cannot be said to characterise it now. In the rear, however, the aspect is decidedly picturesque, the house, as thus viewed, retaining for the most part its original exterior outline. The general effect is much enhanced by the rich piece of carving in the form of a pediment, visible over the gateway; this carving (which is of stone, and not wood, as hitherto supposed) represents "Agriculture," and was placed in its present position about forty years ago by the late Mr. Henry Barrance. It has been asserted that this piece of sculpture once formed part of the exterior decoration of Holywell House (demolished in 1837), but Mr. William Dunham informs me that he remembers it as coming from Childwickbury House (now the residence of Sir J. Blundell Maple, M.P.), after considerable alterations had been made in the building. According to a drawing, by Pridmore, of Holywell House, a similar pediment existed there, but the design was a military trophy. On the right-hand side of the gateway as we enter the yard from George-street is the old Market Room, where the country women met to dispose of their straw-plait; here remained some fragments of Jacobean panelling, which the present landlord, Mr. Stanley Alcock, has transferred to the walls of a landing upstairs, utilising the material at his disposal in a most artistic manner. The cellars of the "George" are of great antiquity, and leading therefrom is a large arched passage, which is said to run across the street lower down, in the direction of the Abbey. The "George" possessed a coach of its own

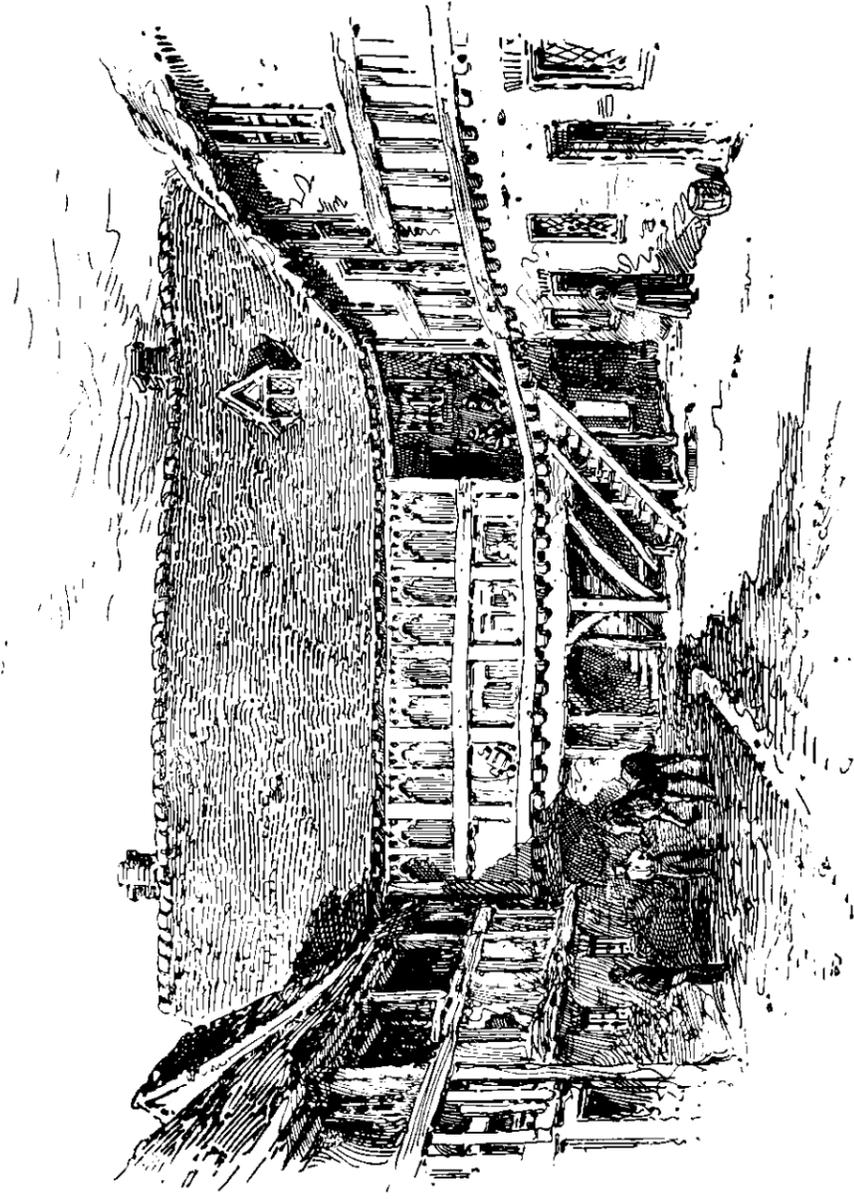
* "Thos. Hethnes, 'Innholder,' received licence to have masses celebrated in the oratory or chapel of 'le George.'"—Reg., II. 269.

in the early part of the 19th century, which daily performed the double journey between St. Albans and London.

THE "ANTELOPE":—At the corner of George-street and Spicer-street was situated the old "Antelope" Inn, the site of which, in monastic times, was occupied by the Hostry or Guest House of the Abbey. In 1545 the Inn that stood here had the sign of the "Tabard," and in 1610 the hostel was described as formerly "le Tabbard" and now called the "Antelope."* This house, which probably dated from Henry VI.'s reign, extended some distance down Spicer-street, its front facing George-street. A large gateway led into a courtyard surrounded by galleries ornamented with tracery of pointed architecture, whence the dormitories were reached. When the coaching days declined this Inn declined also, and was converted into tenements for a number of the poorest people in the town, who lived in the various rooms round the galleries. They were sometimes contemptuously spoken of as the "barrack-yard lot," a designation bestowed upon them for the reason that, prior to their occupation, the premises were used as a kind of barracks for foot soldiers. The "Antelope" was pulled down about sixty years ago; there is an engraving of it published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1845, which is from a drawing made by Buckler in 1824, during its palmy days as an Inn. On a portion of the site stands a public-house bearing the same sign.

THE "QUEEN":—On the left-hand side of Fishpool-street, near the bend, is an Inn, or rather tavern, called the "Queen," which is remarkable for containing, on the first floor, a room having a fine ribbed ceiling of the Tudor period, with the Tudor rose and fleur-de-lis moulded in alternate compartments; the room is panelled throughout (but whitewashed), and there is an arched fireplace also of the Tudor period. Another striking feature of great archæological interest is the cellar, in which are a cusped niche containing a mutilated figure of stone, and other recesses. Several years ago, during certain reparations here, a number of carved stone

* Common Pleas, Deeds Enrolled, Easter, 1 James I., rot. 17.



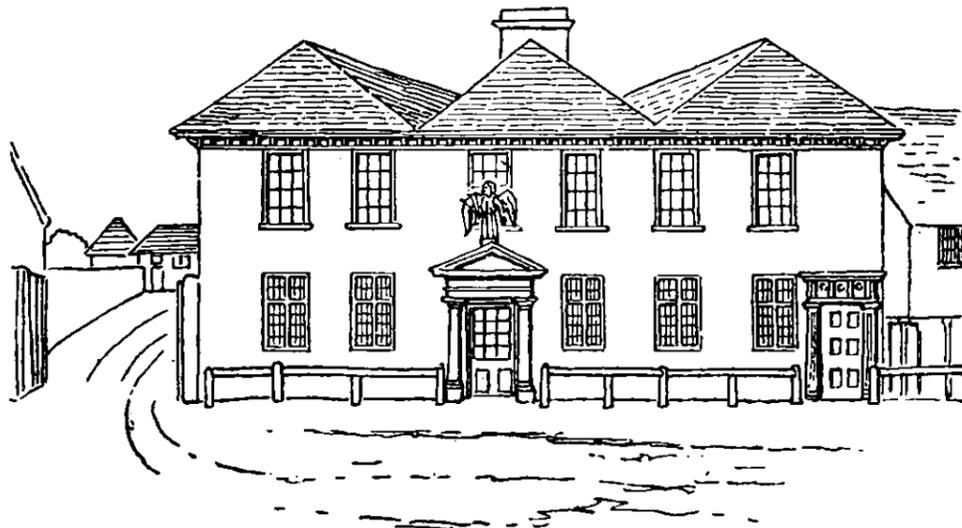
COURTYARD OF THE "ANTELOPE" INN.

From a Drawing by Buckler, 1824.

(By kind permission of the *Herts Standard Printing Company*.)

figures (more or less intact) and other fragments of sculpture were removed from the walls of the cellar and taken away by the workmen; the origin of these figures, etc., as well as their present destination, is unknown. It is conjectured that the cellar was used as a private chapel during the early days of the Reformation.

THE "ANGEL":—Towards the western extremity of Fishpool-street, just beyond St. Michael's Manor House, there stood (and still stands in part) one of the leading posting-houses in St. Albans. This was the "Angel," Pridmore's drawing of which represented a substantial looking house, with three peaks in the roof, and a plaster front, while over the porch of the principal entrance appeared a life-sized figure of an angel, which was gilt. The portion of the original Inn which has vanished is that which stood on the left hand side of the principal entrance. The pediment over the doorway has been



THE "ANGEL" INN, *circa* 1797.
From a Drawing by Pridmore.

removed, and there may still be seen in the plaster an indication of its exact dimensions—a remark which applies to the doorway formerly on the extreme right of the building. On the still-existing building is visible some decoration in moulded plaster, in the form of panel-borders—a kind of decoration peculiar to St. Albans. When Verulam-road was made in 1825, the coaching traffic was diverted from George-street and Fishpool-street, so that the Inns along that route were left

stranded. The "Angel" suffered with the rest, and the landlord removed his "belongings," stable retinue, horses, etc., to a house on the new Verulam-road, at the corner of Branch-road. This was also called the "Angel," but, owing to bad management, it did not long survive.

THE "VERULAM ARMS":—The building on the east side of Christ Church, which has been for several years a private residence, was formerly the "Verulam Arms." There is extant a small lithographic print (only two impressions of which are known to me), where is seen, on the left of the picture, an out-building—the "Verulam Tap"—on the site of which Christ Church now stands. The arms here depicted over the porch are those of the Earl of Verulam, to whom the Inn partly belonged; they were carved in stone, and presented to the late Earl when the business, as an Inn, and the property changed hands; this relic of a departed hostelry is now preserved at Gorhambury.*

THE "FIGHTING COCKS":—I ought not to conclude this paper without a brief reference to what has been described as the "oldest Inn in England." I allude, of course, to that quaint little ale-house near the river, called "The Fighting Cocks," which is also known locally as "The Round House," by reason of its octagonal form. A former landlord, thinking to call particular attention to the place, erected a signboard, with the following curious inscription: "Ye Olde Rounde House, repaired after ye Flood." In 1649 a survey was made of this curious structure, particulars of which Mr. Page has reprinted in the Society's Transactions. It reads as follows:—"The Round House: A messuage now divided into two, situate in the Abbey parish, consisting of a cellar, three rooms below stairs, and three above stairs, with a garden and backside adjoining, in the occupation of Mr. William Marston, and compassed about with the common way leading from the town of St. Albans

* It has transpired that Her late Majesty the Queen, when Princess Victoria, stopped at the "Verulam Arms" for lunch. The fact is recorded in a recent issue of the *Bucks Standard*, on the authority of a Mrs. Moore, who, in her capacity as parlour-maid at the Inn, had the privilege of waiting upon the Princess and her mother, the Duchess of Kent, on that occasion, when the Royal pair were travelling by road from Scotland to London, in 1835.

through the Abbey Court to St. Germain's, and contains one rood."*

The basement is undoubtedly very ancient, possibly of monastic origin, but the upper portion, with its timber framework, plaster exterior, and conical red-tiled roof, is probably not earlier than the 15th or 16th century. It has been conjectured that the house was built on the foundations of St. Germain's Gate of the Monastery, in which Gate it was traditionally said that the monks kept their fishing appliances. The present sign would seem to indicate that the brutal (and now happily obsolete) "sport" of cock-fighting was once carried on there. The elevated ground at the south-west corner of the Abbey Orchard, upon which this quaint tavern stands, is a portion of the embankment which, in Saxon times, bordered the King's Fishpool.

* See "St. Albans Architectural and Archaeological Society—Transactions," 1893 and 1894, p. 21.