

BOOK REVIEW

All Change. An autobiography. Roland Gordon Booth. St. Albans: R. G. Publishing, 1997. £6.99. ISBN 0 9527238 0 8.

When friends or colleagues reminisce of people and events touching one's own past, the thought comes that this should be put down for others to enjoy. Dr Booth has done exactly what many of us feel we might or ought to do.

The events of a long, varied and above all energetic life are described with the many anecdotes from a varied career in nutritional research, and the food industry, complemented by interesting accounts of all the other factors that have added joy and stimulation to the writer's life — family and friends, and many outside activities especially music, hobbies and holidays.

Apart from its demonstration of versatility and *joie de vivre*, nutritionists, agriculturists and food scientists will find this account fascinating. Dr Booth grew up in the small Wiltshire town of Highworth, and was at school there and in Swindon. His many agricultural contacts led to winning a scholarship to read agriculture at Reading University and to become S. K. Kon's first PhD student at the National Institute for Research in Dairying. Kon guided him in the early 1930s into the growing fields of biochemistry and nutrition. He attended Biochemical Society meetings when 30–35 was a normal attendance, and was a founder member of the Nutrition Society. The department at Shinfield provided opportunities to meet and visit the great pioneers of nutrition. His work in vitamin discovery and assay provides a springboard to a wider-ranging career in the scientific aspects of commercial food science: Midland Counties Dairy (baby foods), British Cod Liver Oil Producers, The Cereals Research Station, St Albans, Bovril, Mars and eventually to tackle a bewildering range of problems as an independent consultant.

As one who shared several parallel, but slightly later, threads and contacts — Wiltshire, Reading, NIRD, Nutrition Society — this reviewer must express the feeling of good fortune that in those early days of our subject as much could be done by graduates with first degrees that nowadays would not be deemed ideal. But there were few others, and the field, as Dr Booth shows, was wide open to those with imagination, energy and determination.

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