

Miles Costello
Petworth
Collection



The
Petworth
Society

BULLETIN No. 34
DECEMBER 1983

Price for non-Members 50p

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Constitution and Officers	2
Chairman's Notes	3
Petworth Town Fields	6
"A Great Deale of Frogspawne"	10
Prize Rabbits and Marionettes	12
Bulletin: Back Numbers	15
A Long Walk from Lambeth	16
Brickmaking at Colhook 2. Firing	21
Pimp-making at Petworth August 1983	24
Petworth Cinema (7) Some tribulations at the Pound	26
Defamation at Fittleworth 1594	
1. John Parker of Petworth	30
Edwin Saunders Recollects	33
Excerpts from PHA 649	35
New Members	36

* * * *

Cover design by Jonathan Newdick drawn from a photograph by Walter Kevis. It shows Somerset Hospital about 1900.

* * * *

This Bulletin was printed by:-
MIDHURST AND PETWORTH PRINTERS

11 Rothermead,
PETWORTH. Tel. 42456

Duck Lane.
MIDHURST. Tel. 6321

* * * *

Published by:- The Petworth Society

The Petworth Society was founded in 1974 "to preserve the character and amenities of the town and parish of Petworth, including Byworth; to encourage interest in the history of the district, and to foster a community spirit". It is non-political, non-sectarian, and non-profit-making.

Membership is open to anyone, irrespective of place or residence, who is interested in furthering the objects of the society.

The annual subscription is £2. Double membership £2.50. Postal £3.00. Overseas £3.50. Further information may be obtained from any of the following:-

Chairman - Mr. P.A. Jerrome, Trowels, Pound Street,
Petworth. (Tel. 42562)

Vice-Chairman - Mr. K.C. Thompson, 18 Rothermead, Petworth.

Hon. Bulletin Sec. - Mrs. Margaret Hill, Whitelocks, Sheepdown
Close, Petworth.

Hon. Treasurer - Mr. R.A. Sneller, 16 Littlecote,
Petworth. (Tel. 42507)

Hon. Membership Sec. - Mrs. R. Staker, 2 Grove Lane, Petworth,
assisted by
Mrs. J. Boss, North Street, Petworth.

Committee - Lord Egremont, Mrs. Audrey Grimwood,
Mr. R. Pottington, Mrs. Sonia Rix,
Mrs. Anne Simmons, Mr. D.S. Sneller,
Mr. H.W. Speed, Mr. J. Taylor,
Miss Julia Thompson, Mr. E. Vincent.

Hon. Press Officer - Miss D.S. Gundry, Woodmans, St. Mary's
Drive, Fittleworth.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

The Festival Walk around the town was surprisingly well-attended given the erratic weather and the similar walk with the Arundel Society in mid-October also attracted a good number. It concluded with tea and biscuits in the Leconfield Hall and a few slides of Petworth as it was. We may pay a reciprocal visit to Arundel next year as guests of the Arundel Society. No great number made the trip to Chingford Pond on a mellow September afternoon but those that did had a good opportunity to appreciate the difficulties involved and to understand different viewpoints. J's Ambersham Common walk was extremely popular and owed some of its success perhaps to the area being relatively new territory for many of the walkers. J is having a well-earned rest in this present Bulletin but will be back with another excursion in the March issue. Early in October a band of stalwarts from the Society helped the Parish Council to clean up the Jubilee Garden round the hills. Their hard work was much appreciated both by the Parish Council and by myself.

Mr. Jeans from Stedham began the autumn programme at the Leconfield Hall with a lively talk on the theatre. The return visit of Donald Jackson the calligrapher will take place shortly before you read these notes. I hope you will be able to come to the Society's Christmas evening on Tuesday December 20th. As last year the Town band will play carols but this year we will have our old friend Bob Lomas back, not this time to talk about heavy horses - but in his more usual role, playing the clarinet. I know when he came last year some of the audience had come to hear him play but settled for heavy horses instead. This time he's playing! As if this weren't enough, perhaps for the first time in Petworth since before the war, the traditional Sussex mummers' Christmas play will be performed. I am very pleased to have a visit from the Tipteers so near to Christmas. Here we shall be welcoming another Society friend, John Copper with his troupe of mummers. They will perform the Rottingdean version of the play. Talking of old friends, you'll be pleased that Doris Ashby will be back in January. I've had so many requests for Doris to make a return visit that this really is by public demand! While we have some new speakers for the remaining meetings it's very pleasing to see speakers return to the Leconfield Hall; they seem to enjoy coming back and we like to see them again.

The Christmas cards are again selling well but no doubt there will still be a few left by the time this Bulletin is published. Our

thanks once again to Rendle Diplock for his attractive drawing of Lombard Street. The last Bulletin has again sold out but I would think that most who wanted a copy managed to acquire one. Space permitting I will include a list of back numbers that are available at cover price in this present issue.

This quarter has seen the public meeting at the Herbert Shiner School to discuss the Parish Council's bypass initiative. Much as any fresh initiative on this perennial problem is to be applauded I am sorry that the net result of this particular one was to leave the Society somewhat at cross-purposes with the Parish Council. However our relations with the latter body have always hitherto been good and I hope that fences can soon be mended.

A committee meeting held early in September was largely given over to a far-reaching discussion of the Parish Council proposals. While, as you would expect with any cross-section of Petworth people, opinions varied on the larger issue of specific routes, the discussion remained friendly and constructive. We did feel on the basis of this that there were certain recommendations we could make on which we felt a common agreement. These were:

- (1) That any route through the Shimmings Valley and/or the Virgin Mary Spring was unacceptable.
- (2) That the Society should strive for weight and length restrictions to be imposed on lorry traffic coming through Petworth.
- (3) That the Society was not in principle hostile to a Fox Hill/Kingspit Lane route but did not necessarily endorse this or any other particular route at this time.
- (4) That as many people in the town had consistently argued for a western route, the reasons for its rejection should be made clear. It should be noted that this recommendation does not of itself indicate that the Society would favour such a route. The Parish Council's reasons for rejecting a western route may well be compelling but they do need to be clearly understood and seen as compelling.

As I explained at the public meeting we believed that these views were reasonably representative of a consensus of the membership and writing some several weeks later I have no reason to doubt this. I did offer to ballot the members but this suggestion was not taken up.

There are many reasons why this Society would consistently oppose any route over the Shimmings but at the meeting I based our objections on the ground that the proposed route would traverse the old medieval town field system of Petworth, easily seen on the lower Gog slopes as one looks from the Jubilee Garden walk. These ridged fields date from at least as early as 1100 and the proposed route would cut along their bottom edge, at best separating them from the town but more probably destroying them altogether. Few ancient settlements in England preserve their town fields in close proximity and historically these fields are as much a part of Petworth as any building. Few, if any, Petworth buildings are as old as they are and the peasants had ridged and cultivated them long centuries before the Park had taken its present form. The unbroken link between the town and its historic fields spans almost a thousand years and is one of the things that makes Petworth what it is and unique among the towns of the Sussex Weald. It is hardly surprising that as a conservation Society we should react strongly against any attempt to destroy the fields or sever them from the town. No doubt a considerable body of scholarly opinion could be marshalled to fight with us. An article on the fields by Dr. Peter Brandon appears in this issue and they are discussed in his book *The Sussex Landscape* (1974) page 123.

What of the Society's role on the wider issue? For the present I do not think we should act as a pressure group to advance the claims of any particular route. Certainly we are hostile to the Shimmings route but this seems such a lost cause that to say we are hostile is hardly now to be controversial at all. What we as a Society can perhaps best do is to act as a forum for discussion so that if the people of Petworth do have any say in future developments, they will at least be in possession of some of the facts. Might discussion of routes for the late 1990's be preempted by a concerted attack on the routing of heavy lorries through Petworth? The great advantage of such an approach would be that it would unite rather than divide. There can be few individuals and probably no vested interest, who would feel themselves threatened by this line of argument, even if some might, understandably, be sceptical of its possible success. The Parish Council are adamant that there is no way forward here in the absence of an alternative route. They may well be right: but once again they need to be clearly seen to be right. We would certainly work with any group who wished to explore the possibilities here and seek the advice of outside experts who would address themselves single-mindedly to this particular initial problem. Indeed as a Society I would hope we could take an initiative here. We may find that there is no way forward but at least we should then know

for certain. There is no great ground for optimism: the path to making some inroad on the heavy lorry problem will be at best strewn with difficulties and even the most gradual advance would be a long and tedious business. Nevertheless I do think that a solution along these lines, while at present remote, is not entirely ludicrous. In theory at least there are possibilities. Car traffic may be a cross that Petworth has to bear for the foreseeable future, particularly at certain times like Goodwood: the town stands at important road intersections and cannot set itself entirely at variance with the internal combustion engine. It is the heavy lorry that shakes buildings (the new more than the old), cracks concrete, fractures gas pipes, snarls up car traffic and emits noise and fumes. If there are those in Petworth who are looking for progress along the lines suggested here, we as a Society would be most anxious to make common cause with them and try in everyone's interest to make clear the situation regarding heavy lorry traffic.

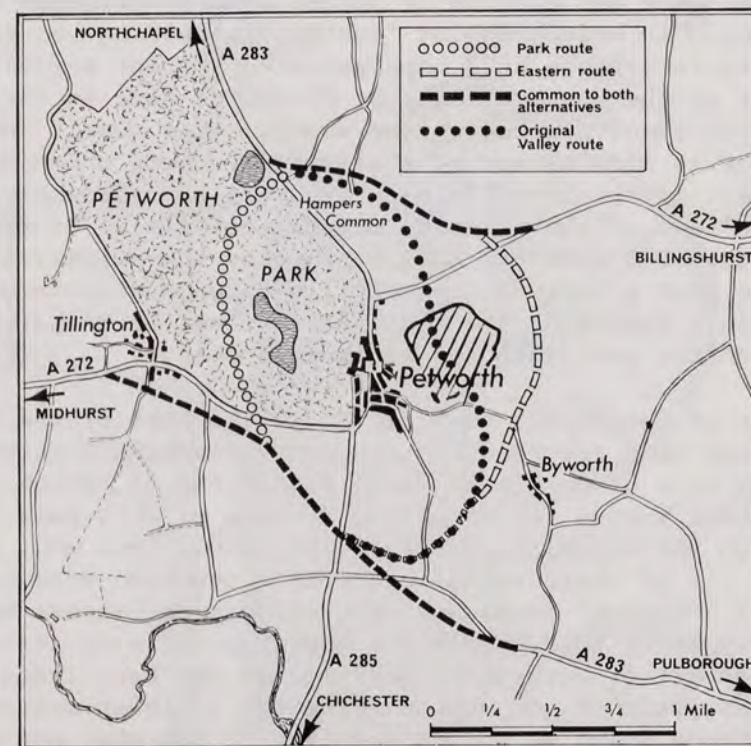
Peter. 7th November, 1983.

PETWORTH TOWN FIELDS

In 1973, at the height of the previous furore over proposed routes of a by-pass for the town of Petworth, Marcus Binney declared that it should be inconceivable for anyone to seek to dismember Petworth Park. He also reported that the townspeople regarded the delightful Shimmings Brook valley to the east of the town as an unacceptable alternative route for the by-pass. He gave the reasons for this as historical: "While Petworth estate was in private hands they (the townspeople) had to find their common land and access to the country to the east. As a result there are strong visual links between the town and the valley, as well as a number of well-trodden country paths, which could lose much of their appeal if the by-pass cut across them so near to the town". (Country Life, September 6, 1973, pp.620-1).

The purpose of this note is to draw attention to Binney's objective of saving both the Park and the Shimming Brook valley from mutilation and to develop further his line of historical reasoning about the latter. Binney omits to mention that the strongest visual and physical link between the town of Petworth and the Shimmings Brook valley and Shimmings Hill is largely due to the location there of the town fields in medieval times. The town fields, or tounmannes-fields, as they were called, were common arable fields called furlongs each divided into long, narrow, strips held by individual

townspeople. Such a system of town fields was commonplace throughout England in the middle ages but the Petworth example is exceptional in South-east England for sites of common fields are rare in the Wealds of Sussex, Surrey and Kent, presumably because the forested area of South-east England was colonised relatively late, mainly in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, by individual woodland clearers inhabiting isolated farms or small hamlets. The survival of the Petworth town fields is thus a matter of considerable historical importance.



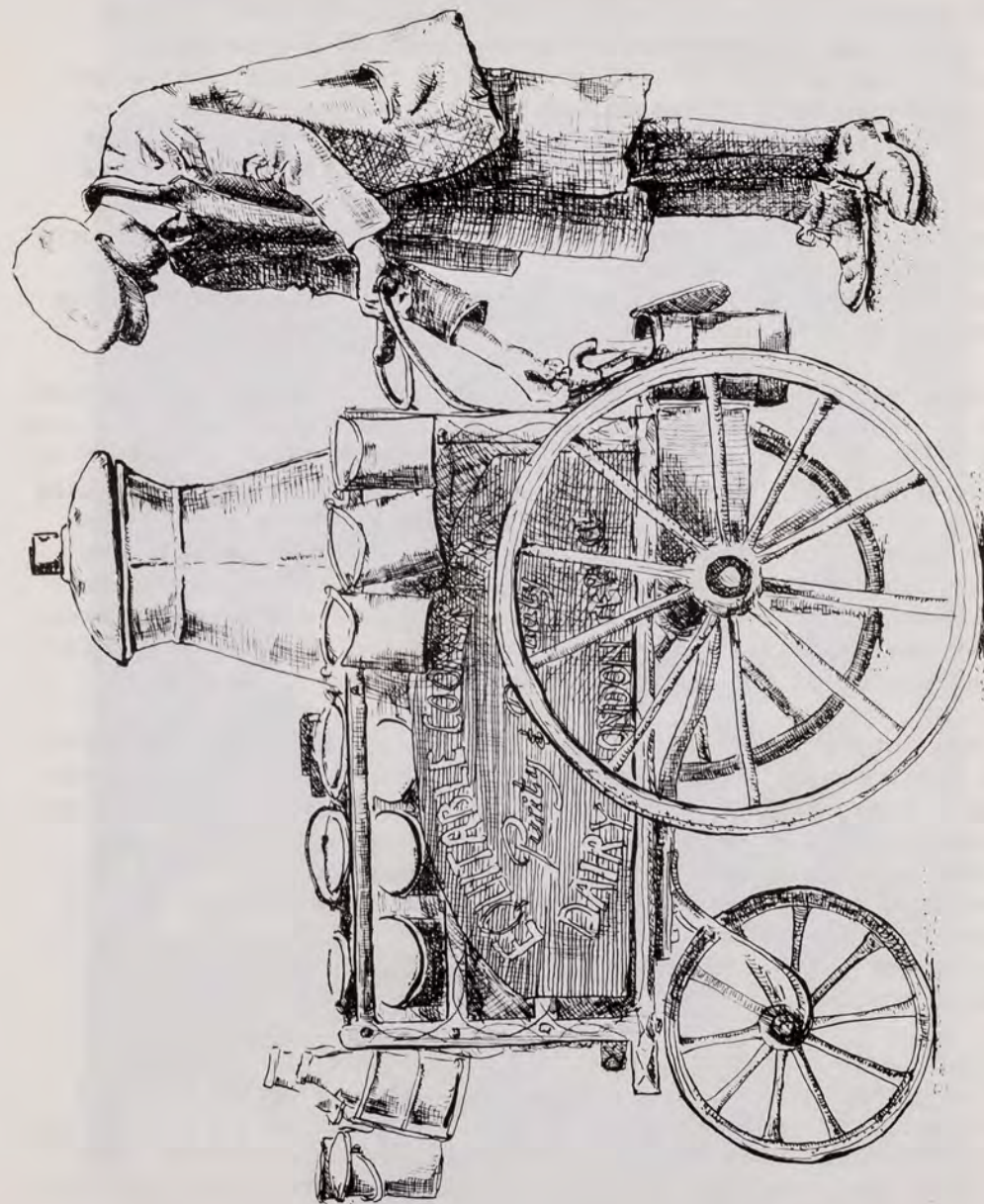
Superimposed on the Shimmings Valley by-pass route (rejected in 1973) is the site of the Town Fields (shaded). (After Country Life)

Our knowledge of the Town Fields is confined to fragmentary references to them in fifteenth and sixteenth century documents preserved in the Petworth House archives. By this period they appear to have been partially enclosed within the oak-bounded hedges that are such an attractive feature of the view across the Shimmings valley. Earlier we can plausibly suppose that the plough travelled

along the contours of the strip fields on the flanks of Shimmings Hill. The imprint on the ground itself corroborates this assumption. In the view from the edge of the town due east of the parish church and beyond the first two fields below the observer a fine 'staircase' is visible of sharp breaks of slope ('risers') alternating with wider and more level areas which might be called 'treads'. The cultivation of strip fields on the relatively steeply sloping hillside gradually caused the breaks of slope to occur at the junction of strips, the plough action causing soil to be washed downwards from the upper edge of a strip to the bottom. In this process a steep bank was eventually formed called a lynchet which continued to gain in height whilst 'contour' ploughing was practised. This pattern is visible as a deeply-scored imprint across the higher part of the western flank of Shimmings Hill as far as the clumps of fir trees planted on the summit. The summit and the eastern face is also marked by shallower lynchets which are also probably part of the town fields. Lynchets are also observable on the western face of the hillside beyond, especially on the field bordering the A283 near the public house on the outskirts of Petworth. The best preserved lynchets lie in unusually large fields which probably represent the medieval furlongs which have come down through the past with the minimum of change.

The remains of the relict town fields to the east of the town of Petworth have been recorded by the County Planning Department as an historic site of more than usual significance. Their presence is yet another reason for rejecting a route of a by-pass or relief road through the Shimmings valley. They would lose most of their beauty and all of their significance if a new road were cut across them. As a 'working' landscape of great attractiveness which is now much used by local townspeople for exercise it is in its own way as priceless a part of Petworth's heritage as the Park itself. As part of the countryside of our remote forbears, it is an original or proto-landscape which we should continue to remember and cherish even though for each new generation of us its image becomes fainter and harder to recall. It is the imprint on the ground that mostly keeps that memory alive and for this reason it is in Petworth's interest to see that the Shimmings valley route for a by-pass is rejected.

Peter Brandon



An old time milkman - drawn by Mike Martin after a photograph in "Petworth : the Winds of Change".
Photographs by George Garland 1922-1931

"A GREAT DEALE OF FROGSPAWNE"

Petworth House Archives 682 is a series of letters bound into a single volume and dating mainly from the period 1675 to 1706. They mainly concern George Thornton and are not so much connected with Petworth as with events in the north. The volume also contains some unsigned news bulletins from London in the years 1686 and 1687. We have published some small excerpts from these in a previous issue of this magazine. Into this collection has been bound an earlier letter, not obviously connected with George Thornton, and dated 11th March 1655. It is written by one John Troutbeck and addressed to Captain John Phips "comptroller of ye traine at Edenburgh in Scotland".

Troutbeck's letter is not, at first sight, particularly interesting. He does not seem otherwise known and the people he mentions are also obscure although they might possibly mean something to an expert on Cromwell's England. Troutbeck, clearly an army officer, is writing from York and appears to have charge of Col. Howard's son who is going to London "to consult about his recovery". No details are offered: Captain Phips clearly knew all about this. Letters to Troutbeck should be addressed to William Molins, a surgeon in Shoe Lane near the windmill. Because of his mission Troutbeck is seeking an extension of the leave he has already been granted.

So far the letter is unremarkable and somewhat obscure. Troutbeck however continues: "My service to ye lord Broghill and desire him to cause a great deale of frogspawne to be gathered for his use and thus preserved let it be well washed in a sive from ye dirt and filth that is mixed with it and put in a cleane great earthen pot* then cover ye pot with a bord and bury it in ye garden and let it stand ther and at my comeing I will shew his lordship ye use of it. It must be got with what speed you can or else it will be gone". The letter concludes with a greeting to various officers.

Lord Broghill is not known: nor is it clear why his lordship should be gathering frogspawn. were the frogs to be hatched and kept in captivity, perhaps to be farmed and eaten as a French-style delicacy? Perhaps they were to be kept for feeding to fish, or simply to be put into a pond to purify it: no water that frogs inhabit is stagnant. Perhaps his lordship had a predilection for

* "let ye top of ye pot be sixe inches under ye ground at least"



Petworth Football Club 1920.
(see "Prize rabbits and marionettes.")



Chingford Pond in Burton Park in December 1932 (See Chairman's Notes).
This photograph by G.G. GARLAND.

Put top of pot & frogspawn at back.

five inches or so

science and would use the frogs in experiments. Possibly however the spawn was to be used to make up some medicine, or even a poultice, or was Troutbeck simply constructing an elaborate mole-trap? If the board were left slightly ajar, moles might climb in and be unable to escape. Again if the pot were unglazed, as it probably would be, the frogspawn might, as it disintegrated, seep through the porous sides, and fulfil the function of a slow-acting fertiliser. I am not sure that any of these explanations is satisfactory: the letter would seem to suggest that Troutbeck is addressing himself to some problem his lordship had and that the latter would be somewhat bemused by these preparations. What do you think the frogspawn was to be used for?

My service to
 lord Broghill and desire him to cause a
 great deal of frogspawn to be gathered
 for his use and this preserved let it be
 well washed in a few ^{times} of dirt and
 filth that is mixed wth it and put in
 a cleane great earthen pot then cover
 pot wth a board and bury ^{it} in y^e garden
 and let it stand there and at my coming I
 will shew his lordship y^e use of it it must
 be got wth what speed you can or else it will
 be gone.

John Troutbeck's directions for gathering frog-spawn.
From P.H.A. 682 and reproduced here by kind permission of Lord Egremont.

PRIZE RABBITS AND MARIONETTES

I don't remember much about the open-air theatre down at Howard's Plat but I certainly remember it being there. When we lived in High Street before the Great War we had a man and his wife lodging with us for a week or so. They were travelling marionette players and used to do a show every night for the children. This would have been on Howard's Plat. They put on Punch and Judy, that sort of thing, but I don't think I actually went to see them. It would have been under some kind of tented cover and almost certainly in the summer. It must have been a hard life travelling from one little town to another.

My father and I did quite a bit of groundsmen's work between the wars. It wasn't particularly well paid but it did help the money along. Mr. Patching had been groundsman in the Park, then Mr. Wallace for a little while after the war, then we took it on. Petworth Football Club were playing the best Sussex sides at that time and there was a lot of work to the job. There was no pavilion at that time; simply a shed at the back of the Cricket Lodge. The League were very particular about the crowd getting onto the line when the first team were playing, although they were less fussy about the reserves. For first team games this meant fifty wooden posts and a great length of rope being put up for every home game and taken down afterwards, in addition to the posts and nets. There was no fence protection from sheep, cattle or deer and Lord Leconfield always insisted that the wood posts were stacked away in the shadow of the wall immediately after the game lest the animals injured themselves on them. For reserve games we roped only half-way round. 7/6d. was our fee for roping all round and it was hard-earned.

There was a Wednesday football side in addition to Petworth Football Club itself. The former was made up of people like shopkeepers who played on their half-day (Wednesday) but couldn't take Saturday off. There was a hockey pitch further down from the present football field; both men and women had teams for a time, and there was another reserve football pitch down toward the slope. The top pitch tended to cut up badly and I remember once having to have a load of sawdust laid in the middle as it was like a ploughed field. Marking out was another of our jobs: in very bad weather we'd put a drop of oil in the whitening; so long as the referee could see the line it was alright. Cricket we weren't responsible for: The Leconfield Estate saw to that and men from Petworth House Garden kept up the

cricket pitch in the summer months. Our attention would be turned toward the Park Tennis Club. This was somewhat select and drew members from far and wide. We used to keep the courts mowed and look after the nets. They didn't have a pavilion but there was a small hut and the lodgekeeper used to take hot water round for them to wash. They had two courts over toward the wall where the door led into the Gardens of Petworth House. Sometimes too we'd help with the Grove Tennis Court in Grove Lane. In those days the footballers changed at the White Hart public house in High Street, kept by Mr. Todman. They would then go down to the Park in a charabanc. After the match the lodgekeeper would carry across hot water in buckets for them to wash in. He would boil up a copper for this. When the season finished we would hire Mr. Streeter's truck and load on the uprights and crossbar - to be stored in Mr. Eager's loft - over his garage at the back of Austen's. There was always a lot of lugging about with the groundsman's job. Once we had the bright idea of leaving the nets draped over the crossbar from match to match but the deer got themselves entangled in the netting and caused no end of trouble. The nets had to be destroyed. There was no fence then to keep the deer off the pitches.

The footballers of course had to travel to away games and this was in itself often something of an adventure. Mr. Morais from the garage where Polaris is now drove one of Henry Streeter's old type Crossley buses and would ferry them round in that. It was nothing for the team to be asked to get out and help push the bus up a hill. People were very unused to cars then and odd things would happen. I had a friend who worked for Mr. Spurgeon, the vet, one of the first people in Petworth to have a car. My friend borrowed it to go for a run and we set off. When we had gone as far as Cross Lanes, a little short man put up his hand to stop us and get a lift. He told us where he wanted to go and we set off again. Imagine our surprise when a few hundred yards on at Stony Hill he suddenly opened the door and stepped out without even getting us to slow down. He could have killed himself if the back wheel had hit him. As it was he didn't appear to be hurt. Perhaps he didn't realise that you could stop the new-fangled machines when you wanted to.

Cars could cause problems but so too could horses. There was one at Rickett's the carriers which couldn't be taken to the blacksmith because it kicked so. Mr. Spurgeon the vet had a special pen with rails and iron posts with rings attached so that the horse could be shod one foot at a time, with the other legs being held by the posts and rings. Smiths would make their own shoes then and if

anyone wanted hinges for field gates they would turn them out too. I used to watch them slowly bending the hot iron in the High Street forge opposite the White Hart. The Leconfield Estate had their own blacksmith who went round the Leconfield farms but also had a forge up in the yard.

The Estate also had their own fire brigade with their own uniforms; they were mostly used for fires at the outlying farms. When the fire bells rang on the town Hall the town fire brigade was called into action. They usually had to wait for the horse bus to come up from the station so that they could use the horses to pull the tender. I remember once the horses were all harnessed up and ready to go and still nothing moved. There was consternation until the driver discovered that in his excitement he had forgotten to take the brake off! It was said that when Coultershaw Mill was on fire one of the firemen, standing in the mill-pond, shouted "Where's the water?". "You're in it," came the reply.

Neither Mr. Leazell nor Mr. Tate, my first real employers, were great ones for transport and I had more dealings with the carriers when I worked as a boy at Eagers, the outfitters in Market Square. Mr. Dearling from West Burton or Mr. White from Bignor or the Graffham carrier would collect parcels for the villages. Quite often the stuff went out on approval and quite often it came back. One way and another we saw quite a lot of the carriers at Eagers.

Mr. Tate didn't keep a horse, let alone a motorised vehicle. For a start he hadn't anywhere in Saddlers Row to keep a horse. We would think nothing if we were decorating a house, say, at Fittleworth, of stacking up the handcart with planks, steps, pasteboard, trestles; everything we would need and setting off on foot - the pair of us pushing the handcart along the road together. Mr. Tate had a lot of work in the country houses round about, also at the two Swans, at Fittleworth and Petworth. I didn't like the undertaking side of the business but I once had to carry a small coffin to Stopham on foot. Similarly with Mr. Leazell in the early days: if he had a particular job somewhere that needed a carrier, he would hire a horse and van from Ricketts. Often, however, load and transport simply didn't coincide. I might be told to go to Shopham Bridge and dig five tons of sand, but the transport might not be immediately available. I'd walk out there with a shovel, dig out the sand, put a board on it marked with the builder's name, then leave it until it was to be collected.

Walking came easily then. I can remember leaving Sullington Village just before eight in the evening and walking up Shimmings Hill as the clock struck ten. Or we might walk into Midhurst, leaving Petworth at six o'clock, have a drink or two in Midhurst, then walk back to Petworth by nine o'clock. Almost nothing would pass us on the road; in fact the roads were so quiet that we'd be quite relieved to be through Ambersham Hollow where the trees met across the road and even the rustle of a leaf would make you jump. Because people walked so much they knew the country well enough to save their feet when they wanted to. Mr. Tate and Mr. Bishop who had the shoe-shop in Lombard Street, used to love following the hounds but they knew just where to go to watch them come back and they never wasted their energy.

Mr. Tate kept prize rabbits and would usually carry off first prize in the big Agricultural Show cum Gymkhana that was held every summer in the Park. He thought a lot of his rabbits which were kept in big hutches all along a fence at the back of his premises in Saddlers Row. He would keep them fastidiously brushed and groomed. He also grew Beauty of Bath apples in the orchards that used to be down at the back of the Pound Garage and these would almost always be good enough to take the prize at local shows.

Bill Ede was talking to the Editor.

BULLETIN BACK NUMBERS

I am still being asked quite frequently about back numbers. I have the following available at present at cover price:

2,6,7,12	10p.
16,17,18	20p.
19,20,22	30p.
24,26	40p.
29,30,32	50p.

Stock of the other issues is basically exhausted but I do sometimes have odd or second-hand copies at cover price. Please call in at the shop or write.

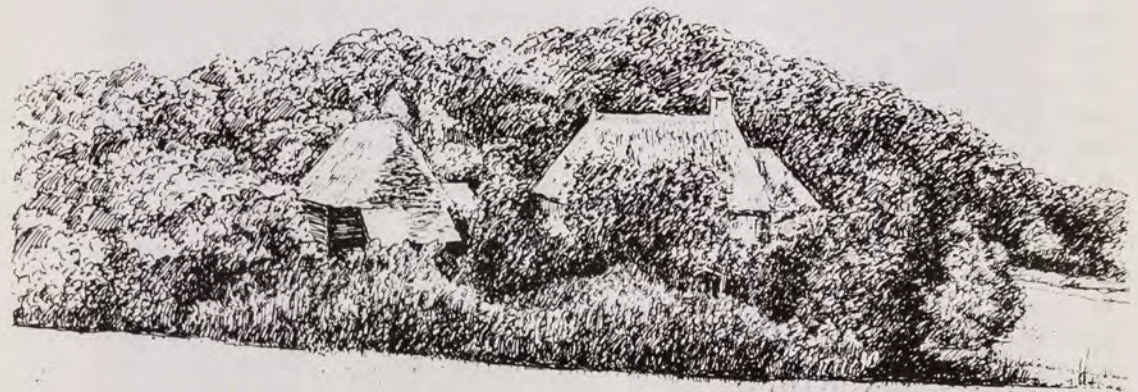
Peter.

A LONG WALK FROM LAMBETH

Our family's connection with Ebernoe came in a way by chance. Miss Heath of Ebernoe House was an active member of the Lambeth Housing Movement whose aim was to resettle people from London's poorer housing in modern flats. At the age of eight when I first came to Ebernoe we had a nice modern Lambeth Housing flat where I lived with my parents, brother and sister. I think that Miss Heath, who had become by this time something of a family friend, had come to collect the rent and got talking with my mother about holidays. Holidays were hardly a priority for a family like ours in south London in the 1930's. We didn't expect to have a holiday and if we did it would have to be something we were paid for because with money as short as it was, you needed all you could muster to survive a week either without pay or on flat rate. My mother in any case was no traveller; Luton was the furthest she had been at this time, while we had never been further than Wimbledon Common. Hopping in Kent would have been our only chance but mother didn't like the idea: it was very rough and there would be a lot of fleas she said. The nearest we'd get to a holiday was to earn a few coppers carrying people's bags as they went on holiday from the coach station just across from us in Brixton. Holidays weren't something that concerned us much.

Miss Heath however had other ideas. She would be going back to Sussex on the Friday and she would take us down with her sitting in the "dickie" of her 1926 Talbot car. In other words we'd sit in the special lift-up seats in the boot watching the countryside disappear in our wake as the Talbot raced through South London and beyond. The journey ended at Ebernoe post-box where Miss Wakeford met us and took us home with her to Birchwells on the Common (now demolished). By the time we came the next year we didn't need to be met; we knew our way even though there were then no roads on the common at all.

To us children who had never been out of London we had been transported to a different world. We'd never seen a cow or a pig, a jay or a magpie. It grew dark on the common in a way that we had never known in London where the night was lit up by the streetlamps, while in the morning I would lie in bed at Birchwells looking out of the window at the tops of the trees.



Birchwells in the early 1930's.
(Drawn by Rendle Diplock)

The common then was full of light and laughter and a community of its own. There was always something happening: there would be Bill Holden with his cattle or Ephraim Holden cutting the fern down (the common was kept free of bracken in those days), or Mr. Batchelor, the estate keeper, might be on his rounds. You could walk where you liked, and we would wander over the common picking up firing for Miss Wakeford.

We came to Miss Wakeford for several years, three I think, and sometimes my mother would come, stay for a day or two and leave us there. Eventually we came on our own by train to Haslemere, Waterloo being our nearest station. I remember there was a two-hour wait at Haslemere for the bus. We would collect our boots at Mr. Lunn's at the old Greyhound on the London Road (even at this time no longer a pub) and walk down through Palfrey.

Miss Wakeford used to do needlework and dressmaking at Ebernoe House and I remember her working away winding the handle on her sewing machine. Birchwells, not a farm, but a cottage on the common, going I think with Sparkes Farm, was lit by oil-lamps and candles. There was no coal and all firing was with wood. Miss Wakeford would make

lemonade for us with the old-fashioned Eiffel Tower crystals. She wasn't young then and eventually she moved to Lurgashall. It seemed that our Ebernoe days had come to an end.

We had however been used to going across to the Holdens at Sparkes Farm, often helping Mr. Holden to pick the damsons that grew in the lane at the back of the farm, or helping to shock up the hay or being given a stick to hit the rabbits as they ran out of the corn - our sympathies tended to be with the rabbits and we usually let them escape. So it seemed natural for us to come and stay with the Holdens. I don't think there was any formal arrangement: they had no children of their own and it was something that came about quite spontaneously.

At the first we had some difficulty in understanding the Holden brothers of whom there were five. Fred, the youngest, who lived at Warren Cottage, was in some ways the leader of them, and the most "modern" of them, if that is the right word. He was certainly, to a limited extent, receptive to new ideas. Bill lived at Sparkes with his wife Annie who had been in service at Ebernoe House and came originally from Godalming. Walter lived at Little Birchwells and Ephraim and Bob with sister Annie at Willand. Words like "varn" or "anywhen" we soon picked up but their accent was very broad. The livestock they invariably referred to as "the things". "I've got to go and get the things," they would say. "Hunk", too was a word of which they were very fond - it was always a "hunk" of cheese. They found our London accents of course equally difficult.

The Holden brothers achieved a certain fame in the 1930's by their refusal to go along with summer-time. They all adhered to the unaltered time and were much photographed by the press. They weren't, as the press perhaps suggested, simply sticking their heads in the sand. They argued that you couldn't alter light and dark as you couldn't alter the heavy dews of late summer. For cutting you had to wait until the dew had gone regardless of what "time" it was supposed to be. Their time was popularly known in the district as "Ebernoe watch-time". Somewhat similarly Bill and Annie Holden were very suspicious of the two valve accumulator radio we had brought with us. But they soon became very keen on it - they weren't against new things just because they were new.

Sparkes was an arable farm run at this time with horses but without a tractor. Mrs. Holden never liked tractors and thought they were evil. When the brothers did eventually get a second-hand one and the horses had to pull it out when it got stuck that just confirmed



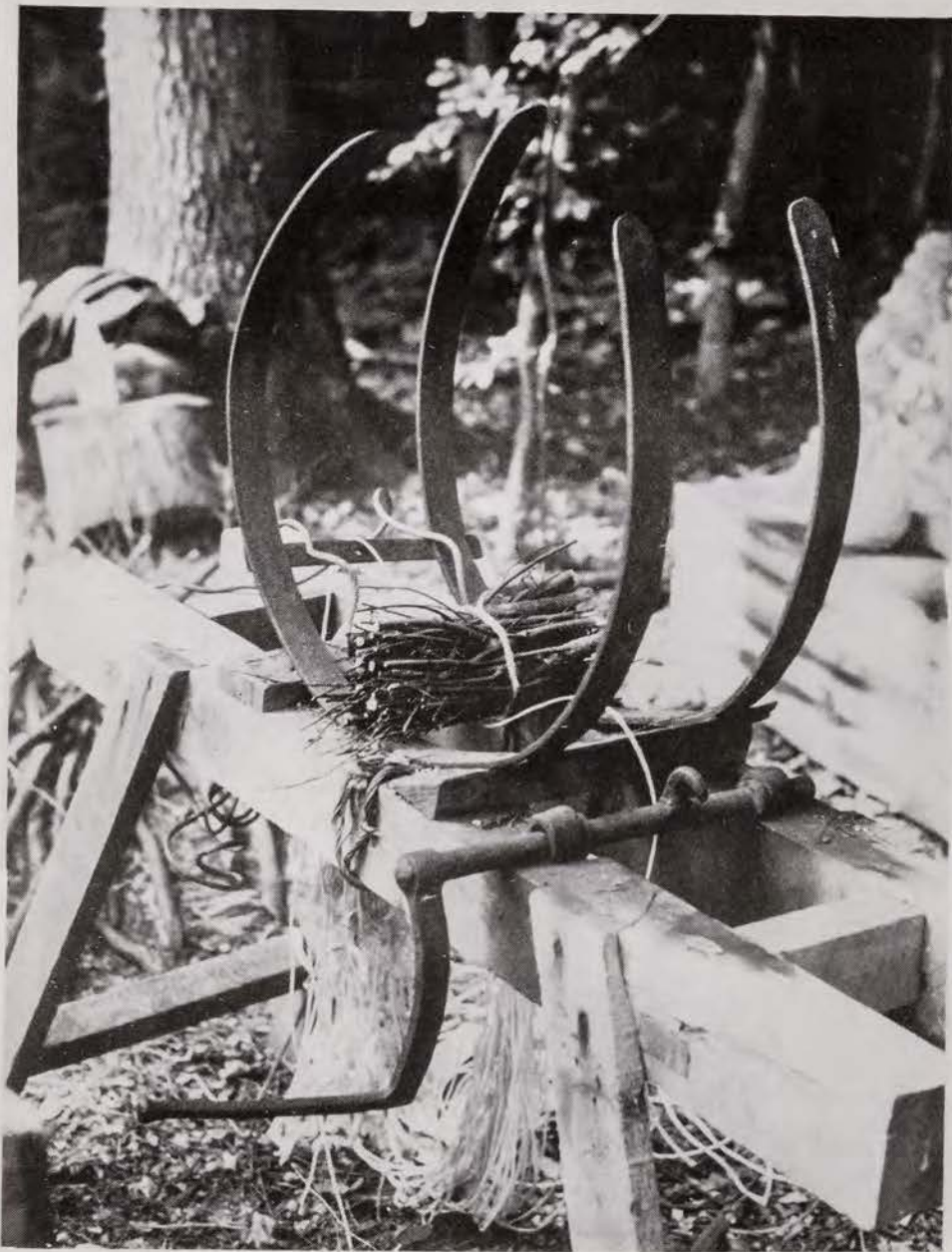
Pimp-making. (1) Cutting the string that will bind the pimps.



Pimp-making (2) Using a cleaver to chop the birch-faggots to the required length.



Pimp-making (3) The press. Note the thicker pieces of wood already in place.



Pimp-making (4) The second press for making the roundel.
Pimp-making photographs by Graham Stemp.

her misgivings. The farm was some 100 acres and had originally formed part of the old Peachey Estate and had been bought by Lord Leconfield with the other Peachey farms just before the Great War. It wasn't compact around the farm-house, but rather scattered. There were even two odd fields out towards Palfrey. These were used primarily for grazing so this rather curious arrangement didn't cause too much difficulty. The Holden farms worked the common too and the Holden brothers, while keeping their separate farms, would help each other out. Willand was mostly a cattle-farm: it had three working-horses while Sparkes usually had two. Cereal crops brought in the income; the hay and roots were kept for winter feed while there was a small milking herd at Willand.

Bill Holden kept a stubbly beard but he would shave on Thursdays and Sunday. The commoners were very strict about doing certain things on certain days. Bill would go into Petworth perhaps once a year and would spruce himself up before he left. He would walk in via Palfrey. The Holden brothers were not great ones for travel and Ephraim was reputed never to have travelled in a bus or coach. Their most important tool was their lambsfoot knife, a single bladed knife with a black bone handle. Its uses were innumerable. It might be used to cut bread or to paunch a rabbit. To clean it, it would simply be stuck into the ground.

The Holdens had what seemed to us a curious insensitiveness to animal life. Bill would patrol the farm with a gun and shoot anything that moved, mice, rabbits, anything. The Holdens had an indiscriminate fear of snakes and would kill grass snakes, slow worms or whatever might pass for a snake. In the winter I remember "four-up", a curious local game where they would scrape a hole in the snow, put down some corn, wait for a number of birds to peck at it, then blast away with a gun. The common was used by Lord Leconfield's Hunt and on the rare occasions when the hounds were about the Holden brothers would down tools and follow them. Lord Leconfield had a pun about the common to the effect that under every holly-tree there lurked a "Hold-'un" - old-'un was a popular nickname for a fox.

The common was almost another dimension to their senses. The Holdens knew everything that was going on and everyone who passed and even if they hadn't actually seen them they would know them by their footmarks. They would never buy anything they could make themselves and constantly eyed the common for what might at some time be of use to them. They'd size up a piece of ash to use as a shaft for a cart, let it grow, then eventually trim it up with

a draw-knife. Or they might see a piece of straight hazel, tie a knot in it while it was growing then come back another year to cut it for a walking-stick. They would plant apple-trees in the hedge-rows and hazel for windbreaks. Acorns would be collected for the pigs. We would be shown how to take out the tip of honeysuckle and suck the honey.

Each day had its own particular feeling about it. Monday was always washday whatever the weather and washing could not be done any other day. The main meal was at mid-day and would be the same each day following a weekly pattern. Saturday was always pigeon and rabbit pie and a rabbit had to be shot on Thursday for this. The commoners of course grew all their own vegetables but didn't much like salad and didn't grow tomatoes or cucumber at all as I remember. Sunday was a day apart when there was beef from the butcher with suet pudding dipped in the beef fat and potatoes. They never had roast potatoes nor chips nor mashed, and they never fried anything except chitterlings. Eggs were always boiled. Bacon was a staple of their diet and they would eat "hunks" of fat bacon for breakfast.

No gardening was done on Sunday and there was no shooting: the wild life of the common was quite safe on the Sabbath if on no other day. Mr. Holden didn't go to church but there was a definite distinction about Sunday. He would only do the essential jobs like attending to the horses and pigs. I remember planting some seeds on a Sunday and being told, "You can be sure they won't grow". But they did. After lunch on Sundays there would be a long walk.

As we grew closer to the Holdens we would sometimes come down to Ebernoe in the winter. On Christmas Day Mrs. Holden would go into the best room where the range would be lit, and after a dinner of roast chicken they would eat the russett apples they had kept for Christmas, and nuts they had picked themselves. Oranges we would usually bring with us. they didn't have a daily paper but did have one of the local Sussex papers weekly and a relative of Mrs. Holden's in New Zealand used to send a magazine for them and this was always eagerly read.

The newspapers of the time liked to think of the commoners as quaint survivals: survivals they perhaps were of a way of life that was already archaic in the 1930's and had remained little changed for centuries. Their common had not been enclosed and they lived from it as their forefathers had done - they had not been made rootless as so many others had been by enclosure. They were their

own masters; never buying what they could make themselves, whether it was a cart-shaft or their own cloudy home-brewed beer. Above all they had a quiet dignity that they would never lose.

Bob Whatrup was talking to Mrs. Walters and the Editor.

BRICKMAKING AT COLHOOK.

2. FIRING

The bricks would be burnt in a big square furnace building with thick brick walls. This building housed three separate kilns, one for 12,000 bricks, a centre one for 22,000 and another for 16,000. The separate kilns were not operated simultaneously. Each kiln had a floor made of a series of separate narrow brick platforms or hives, some eighteen or more running across from wall to wall and separated by sufficient space to allow the flames to come through. These hives were some four feet below ground level. Beneath the hives were the fire-holes, eight in all at Colhook, four for the big centre furnace and two each for the side ones. The fire-holes were effectively long tunnels running the length of the kiln.

The bricks would be laid in the kiln in a distinctive way with the first layer being placed on the brick hives so that they ran across the vents. The next layer would go the other way, i.e. along the same line as the hives. The idea was that the first layer would baffle the flames making them "work harder" instead of simply going up in straight lines. This second layer would be built up in a kind of wall for about 4 feet and then the stacking would revert to the way the first layer had gone - perhaps for another five feet or so, every so often leaving a gap for the flames to pass through. The bricks would be packed finger-tight but not forced together and the job of stacking in the kiln was known as "crowding". My father would usually do this important job himself as would Mr. Shotter who succeeded him as foreman. The crowder would work backwards towards the opening of the kiln, not so much a doorway as a simple gap in the wall: it had no lintel or anything like that. The opening would finally be built up with bricks and plastered over with "pug", a rough clay and water mixture. If, when the furnace was alight, you could hear the pug hissing you'd know that air was escaping and you'd pug the gap again.

The top of the kiln would be about a man's height above the ground and when the crowding was done you would cover the unbaked bricks with a layer of bats - old half-bricks and general brick refuse, keeping the top fairly level. At this stage you would set up the sighting bricks which would later be used to check the success of the burn. Three were laid lengthwise, one on top of the other on opposite parapets of the kiln itself, with a further two bricks laid on the bats above the firing itself. The kiln had at one time been used with a tiled roof, later with galvanised, and it had been the custom to leave the roof on during burning. However, as, despite constant spraying, the rafters still tended to burn out, we had by this time a roof which we could take off when the burning began. As a further preparation for burning, a load of turves would be cut on the common and brought up to the brickworks by horse and cart. These would be piled outside the kiln to wait until they were required.

All now was ready for burning - in its beginning quite a leisurely process. My father would begin by burning cord wood, slowly raising the temperature, adding the logs at intervals and drying the bricks out. This would go on all the first day. It was early the next morning when the four of us working the shift (if it was the big furnace) would begin to burn the faggots that would raise the temperature. The big aperture at the mouth of the tunnel would be closed up with bats, leaving only sufficient room for a faggot to be forced up into the tunnel, the faggots being introduced into the tunnel quite gradually in the early stages. As the faggots burned out the ash accumulating in the passage would gradually raise the level of the faggots that were burning. Although we would begin gradually, once the temperature began to rise the fire had to be kept going, and kept also hard against the far wall of the fire-hole; it was no use burning the faggots near the mouth of the tunnel: they had to be forced right up into the tunnel using a long pole with a horseshoe attached to the end. As we worked the heat intensified and the passage itself could be seen to glow red hot; then as the heat built up at the back it would glow literally white hot. Each man had two fire-holes to service and worked one hour on and one hour off, with each hole taking some eighty faggots and hour, one hundred and sixty an hour for the two, all taken from the huge stack that lay in front of the kiln pit.

As the burning continued and the ash built up you would try to pack the fire as tight as you could, either using the horseshoe pole or, if this was difficult, another long pole with a big iron square at

the front which forced the faggots up the tunnel. What you couldn't do of course was to take the ash back out of the mouth of the tunnel. A kiln needed to be kept going like this for some thirty hours and if you once slackened off and let the temperature drop you might need another ten hours work and a lot more faggots and still find the bricks did not burn properly. Sometimes the tunnel could get badly sooted up, you could tell this if the smoke began to blow back into your face. The remedy for this was to get the 12-bore shot-gun and fire a barrel up the tunnel. This would clear it alright and I've done it many times.

As the day wore on and the heat reached its zenith, every so often we would go upstairs to inspect the sighting bricks. They should have risen some 2½ to 3 bats, (no more than that) with the heat and the centre bricks would be out of alignment with the two sets on the kiln parapet. If they were still in alignment then the heat was not right. The burning of the bricks was in fact something rather like the baking of a cake. It would now be time to lay the prepared turves on the kiln top, then burn hard again. The turves would of course have the effect of holding in the kiln's heat. As the night advanced you would go up to see that the sighting bricks were beginning to level up again. It was always an eerie feeling in the darkness to shine your torch across the roof of the kiln to check the alignment. The turves would by this time have been reduced to dry dust and if there were any breaks in the cover you'd have to put more turf on. In some cases you'd have to step onto the kiln top itself to reset the turf covering. You could do this but you certainly wouldn't hang about. The kiln itself would give off its own light and this could be seen for miles. It wasn't unusual for motorists to pull up and rush in to tell us our barn was alight. "We very much hope it is," we'd reply much to their consternation. During the war work had to stop because of the blackout problem. You couldn't black out a burning.

If the alignment was right, or if it was slightly under the level of the sighting bricks, the burning was on course and we could expect to go the normal thirty hours, finishing between 2 and 3 o'clock in the afternoon. If they didn't fall it might mean there was air in the kiln and a longer burn or (if we were lucky) simply that two or three bricks had fused onto the wall of the kiln and were holding the pile up. This wasn't too serious a matter. The final stage was to pug up the remaining fire-hole aperture much as we had done at the beginning with the kiln opening: the kiln needed to be kept tight closed after we had finished. Turves would again be laid on the top and the kiln left for anything

from a week to a fortnight. After a week or so we would pull the odd brick out of the pugged kiln opening and gradually begin a process of cooling. Then we'd unblock the mouth of the fire-hole and take the rubble off the top. Finally the bricks themselves would be removed and stacked in piles according to their quality and colour. Cherry reds were the best, those that had been right in the kiln middle. Too many yellow bricks was the sign of a poor burn and some of these might go in again the next time round. We'd get 30/- for a whole burn; then be back the next day making bricks again, piece-work rate at 13/- a thousand. I'd reckon to do 800 to 1000 in a day.

(Concluded)

Frank Wadey was talking to Mrs. Walters and the Editor.

(The previous article on brickmaking at Colhook appeared in the March Bulletin. For both articles we have relied on conversations with Riley Shotter and Frank Wadey, but have tended to use Riley Shotter's recollection for the first article and Frank Wadey's for the second.)

PIMP-MAKING AT PETWORTH

The brushwood birch that will later become pimps is cut as faggots when the leaf is off in the winter season and stacked ready for use. A handbill is used for cutting. Birch is best for faggots and pimps and the faggots are often a by-product of clearing ground to plant tree seedlings: the birch comes up self-sown in rough woodland and grows in some ways like a weed. This year is the first I've made pimps outside the wall; I've always previously worked the Pheasant Copse and Stag Park, but this year I've worked in Palfrey Copse behind Blackwool Farm just off the London Road. The faggots themselves had been in this case simply cut for later use as pimps but were at one time much in demand for bakers' bread ovens, while farmers would use them in place of rick steddles - putting them on the ground and laying the ricks on top of them to keep the hay off the ground. Faggots would also be used for coppers or to lay tracks over marshy soil with earth or stones being laid on top of them. I've heard it said that Petworth Station was built on faggots as the ground was somewhat wet.

Pimp-making has gone on on the Leconfield Estate for generations. It's not something that stopped and has been consciously revived. Its continuance, however, is threatened by modern economics.

Labour is expensive and pimp-making is a labour-intensive job. Of late years we have tended to work alternate years and make a supply to cover the two years, sometimes even three. The equipment is basically traditional: the cleaver, used only for pimps is something of an antique in itself, being made by Mr. Williams the former Billingshurst blacksmith. He had the yard where S.C.A.T.S. is now and it was his two sons that started up the engineering business in International tractors and other farm machines.

To begin I cut the bond on a faggot and take out the thicker pieces of wood. These I then cut with a cleaver to a length of roughly ten inches. These pieces are then cleft again, this time through the middle. I put them on one side to be used later. The next task is to cut the strings which will later bind the finished pimps. For this I use a kind of improvised gauge, not really a tool at all, simply an oblong piece of 4" by 2" wood some 22 inches in length with three long nails hammered into it. I wind the string round the two end nails using the middle one as a guide and make twenty-five complete rounds. When I cut the string at both ends with a sharp knife, this leaves me with fifty pieces of string all of the length I want. I then put a little bond round the pieces simply to hold them together.

Chopping the birch to the right length for the faggots is done with the cleaver, using a hopper and a chopping-block. The hopper would traditionally be stood on legs but as legs tend to wobble I have my hopper solidly mounted on two oil-drums. The hopper itself is simply a low table with a tapered shute on it that fans out the way the frith sprays out at an angle from the bottom. The frith comes over the edge of the shute on to the chopping block and is then cut with the cleaver; two separate cuts for each pimp, cutting first one way and then the other so that when the two parts are put together the pimp doesn't go all to one side.

The two parts of the pimp are then placed in the press in which I have already placed a couple of the larger split pieces. The press mechanism is simple enough - a chain bolted onto a table with iron brackets, kept taut by a string on a hanging weight suspended beneath the table. The chain has attached to it a cylindrical piece of wood, which, pressed down with the leg, acts as a lever and, tautening the chain, presses the pimp. Once pressed and tied the pimp is then transferred to another press with a distinctive circular iron framework which holds twenty-five bundles. This press

has a chain mechanism which will press the twenty-five bundles together at the turn of a handle. The "roundel" as it may be called is then tied with string.

The roundel is packed in the framework so that two of the large split pieces are left facing out on each pimp to give the roundel a neater look, while a piece of wood shaped like a squat cricket bat is used to tidy the roundel, gently tapping the packed faggots on the side and top of the roundel. The pimps are then ready for storage. I would reckon to make 250 pimps in a day, 10 roundels, using 8 brushwood faggots.

Peter Wakeford was talking to Mrs. Walters and the Editor.

PETWORTH CINEMA (7):

Some tribulations at the Pound

Other helpers at this time, beside Bill Wareham, were Tommy Tucker, Charles White and Len Page. Their reward would be complimentary tickets but they did a lot of hard work. Jack Kirk my new brother-in-law was another stalwart: he would clear the hall, burn rubbish and even put up bills - all this during his school lunch-hour. I had the idea of building a false front to eliminate the front apex of the cinema's pitched roof, so with the help of a friendly carpenter, working evenings and Sunday mornings, I bought a few hundred foot lengths of 4 x 2" timber cut into different sizes and nailed them in framework fashion to take pebble dash asbestos sheeting with the joints covered with 2" wooden battens. I made a large wooden sign about 25ft by 2' long with the words PICTUREDROME painted in red and also fitted the two large electric glass bowl fittings over the top which we had previously used at the Swan Hotel. We also built a small glass canopy over the entrance doors which we replaced with large glass panels to give extra light to our small foyer and fixed a crash barrier in front of the box office made from iron water pipes and cemented this into the floor. This unique contraption painted in aluminium saved the front of the flimsy box office from caving in when everybody rushed forward to be first in. All this improvement was accomplished during the Summer months, but no planning was ever thought of still less permission from the Council to do these alterations and additions to the property. With the coming of Talkies we decided to run extra performances but only with the bigger films that we were able to book. These extra shows, did put a severe strain on our small generating plant, so scouting around the countryside again, calling



Ebernoe. 11th February 1933.
A photograph by G.G. GARLAND. (See "A long walk from Lambeth".)



"Ebernoe time". An agency photograph of the 1930's.
(See "A long walk from Lambeth".)

in at different garages I managed to buy an old Hillman 10hp. car engine complete with starter and Radiator for £10. I made up another concrete bed approx. 6ft x 3ft leaving just about room to move around. I was lucky that the centre of the flywheel was of the same height as our existing Douglas engine; this saved any packing if it became necessary for a quick change-over during a show. On further consideration however I decided it would be much easier and quicker to change the Dynamo over, instead of having the engine with water and exhaust pipes to contend with. I fitted up a pulley block made from old bed angle irons fixed to the roof of the shed timbers, all we had to do then was to release the holding down bolts of the dynamo and pull like mad, it was about three cwt.. We timed ourselves doing the change-over to about 12 minutes. The floating driving flanges were of the same height and size which simplified the operation. One day I wanted to give this Hillman engine a trial run for an evening show to see how she stood up for the three hours running. It was real fun to be able to press a self starter button as opposed to swinging a handle to crank it over. The engine started immediately and we carried on with the performance. After running about an hour, for some reason or other I wanted to go into the engine shed for a broom, there were bits of hard cement laying about on the pathway and dangerous for anyone walking at night. I opened the door and to my horror the dynamo which we had fitted to the new concrete bed was jumping up and down tearing at the metal and canvas driving pulley flange and the holding down bolts. Why this should have happened I really don't know as the driving flange was of the floating type with no strain on the engine mountings or the dynamo, I didn't want to stop the performance which would leave our patrons in semi darkness with only gas light in the exits and one in the centre of the hall for illumination. The only thing to do to stop the concrete breaking up was to hold the dynamo down. Somehow I managed to procure a short length of 4" x 2" timber long enough to reach the underside of the roof bearings, and with wedges I managed to stop any further up and down movement, and to make sure that no side movement occurred, I sat on the dynamo to ease the strain. As you can imagine, sitting on a cast iron machine for nearly two hours was a bit of a challenge. I shall never forget my poor old rump, which felt so sore for several days after. The next day we changed over again to the Douglas engine. Unfortunately we had several complaints from neighbours saying the exhaust from our plant was getting more pronounced at night than usual, and asking what we could do to eliminate this nuisance. So on the following Sunday with our usual helpers we dug a large hole in the ground to take two empty ten gallon oil drums we obtained from the Garage adjoining, one drum for each exhaust pipe

to do away with the silencer, and filled in these drums, after fixing in the pipes, with old brick bats, large stones etc., or what ever we could find laying about the place. We then concreted the lot in, leaving the rest of Sunday and Monday for the cement to dry out. Monday was our usual poster round for the country district covering some 30 miles. So I left young Charles White to spool up the films in readiness for the rehearsal mid-day. From experience it was not always necessary to run through to the end of each reel. If it started in synchronisation and the copy of the film seemed to be good it invariably continued to be O.K. I arrived back from my posting of bills about 12 o'clock to put away what posters and the paste bucket and brush etc. I had left. But Charles came to meet me, and when I saw his blackened face and ruffled hair I thought he had just come up from a coal mine. Poor old Charles he was in a dirty state, I asked him what the trouble was, after a couple of minutes he calmed down and said that he wanted to start the Douglas engine to see if the exhaust was any quieter. It was the usual practice before starting this engine to inject a small quantity of petrol into the compression taps, one for each cylinder, a tea spoonful being about the right amount. He must have injected about an egg-cupful and when he tried to start it, the engine back fired, and there was a loud explosion in each oil drum, sending up all the recent filled debris sky high. It was extremely lucky no one was hurt, and that it was daytime instead of night but even so we had to improvise something very quickly in time for our evening performance. We secured two more empty drums after clearing up the mess and instead of filling in with brick bats etc. we filled the drums again with just plain dirt and placed several railway sleepers on top of the drums for security. This was quite successful for a temporary makeshift until we were able at the week end to make a proper job of it. We eventually cut the exhaust noise down by half.

T. S. COLLINS.



Ploughing for autumn seeding at Soanes Petworth in 1943. A contemporary drawing by R.G.P.

DEFAMATION AT FITTLEWORTH IN 1594.

1. John Parker of Petworth.

The nucleus of the village of Fittleworth in 1594 would have been a cluster of buildings concentrated round the church and straddling the "street" where the road from Stopham turns either toward Petworth or away to Bedham. Fittleworth "Street" was so called even at this time. The White Horse Inn stood on the corner but the Swan Inn would be a little out in the country. While Fittleworth already had an identity of its own, administratively it lay somewhat awkwardly on the edge of three separate manors, Amberley, Bury and Coldwaltham, each of whom held sway in some part of the village. The two main houses were Fitzleroi, continuously associated with the Dawtrey family, and Lee Manor House just rebuilt at this time by its new owner Thomas Stanley, formerly steward to the ninth Earl of Northumberland. Its long association with the Lee family had ended a year or two previously when William Lee sold the house and moved away in 1589. It may be, as Lady Maxse suggests in *The Story of Fittleworth*, that the White Horse owed at least some of its trade to the people who came to the weekly market at Egdean. In earlier years too, pilgrims coming to the shrine of St. Richard at Chichester or even perhaps to try the healing waters of the Virgin Mary Spring at Petworth would have passed that way.

Fittleworth itself, a parish perhaps of some 150 souls and scattered over a fairly wide area, would be a tightly-knit, inward-looking community which might unite to face a common enemy from outside but where at the same time internal division would quickly become embittered and acrimony and scandal spread quickly. Certainly when John Stone, a local yeoman, openly accused Thomas Cooke of immoral behaviour in the hearing of anyone in the Street who happened to be in ear-shot, news of the incident would spread like wildfire in the tiny community, and, whether the accusation were justified or not, Cooke's reputation would be tarnished. This was a rough age and Stone did not mince his words. The taunt flung at Cooke was coarse and damaging in the extreme, and Stone made no attempt to relieve the stark crudity of it. Thomas Cooke had occupied Joan Sowch in one Gunter's beans, her clothes were above her knees and his breeches down. Whatever the villagers understood by the old word "occupied" the rest of the sentence left no doubt as to Stone's meaning. There was no attempt at finesse: as a contemporary witness observed, "The sayd Cooke and Stone were so nigh together in within i or ii yardes and the said Cooke did and cold not choose

but heare the wordes playnely and distynctly". As we know nothing of the background of the case and virtually nothing of the participants, it is not clear why Stone should be so belligerent. Other witnesses were agreed that he had said, "He wold spend £XX but he wold prove his wordes true".

Cooke reacted smartly. On the 8th June he brought before the consistory court at Chichester a suit against Stone alleging defamation. Whether Stone had expected Cooke to have recourse to the diocesan authorities, it is now impossible to say, but at all events, faced with an appearance before the church court he had no choice but to defend himself. What he obviously could not do was to deny that he had uttered the offending words: half Fittleworth it seems had been in the Street when he made the accusation. Probably he had no intention of withdrawing them anyway. On the face of it, Stone had an excellent case if he simply stood his ground and sought to validate his accusation. He had, and could present to the court, the evidence of an independent witness, who could not only destroy the prosecution case by corroborating Stone's statement but could probably turn Cooke's very recourse to the church court against himself. The consistory court might not look very kindly on someone as flagrantly contemptuous of accepted public morality as Cooke could be shown to be.

It had been Stone's immense good fortune that on the day in question, the 27th May 1594, John Parker, a gardener, aged about 43, originally from London, now of East Hoathly, and latterly of Petworth, had been out to Mr. Stanley's at Lee Manor in connection with his work. It was afternoon and Parker was on his way back to Petworth when he stopped for a drink at the White Horse. There he got into conversation with John Stone and his brother Richard. As Parker was about to leave the three men walked to the door of the inn with the lady of the house. "Look, look," she suddenly cried, "what will Mr. Cooke?" pointing to Thomas Cooke who was hurrying Joan Sowch along with him toward the back of Richard Gunter's house. The pair soon disappeared from sight to the left of a patch of beans and over a midden. For some unexplained reason John Stone and Parker set off in pursuit only to find the pair behind the beans much as Stone had originally claimed. Parker spoke briefly to Cooke and later saw him climbing over a high pale into the Street, while the girl went her separate way into the kitchen where she worked as a servant to Richard Gunter.

The matter did not end there. Parker further claimed that on meet-

ing Cooke a week later in Fittleworth churchyard, the latter told him that if he didn't meddle in the affair and testify against him, he had some three or four silver spoons he, Parker, could have or he could board for half a year at Cooke's without charge, or in Petworth itself at his charge.

Obviously if Parker were telling the truth Stone had no case to answer. Inflammatory and rancorous his outburst may have been, but he had spoken the simple truth and there could be nothing defamatory in that. In reply Cooke does not seek to attack Parker's evidence so much as to elicit from witnesses information about Parker that would enable him to be challenged as a man of uncertain morals and a likely perjurer. Clearly if Parker's credibility as a witness could be destroyed Stone's defence would very largely collapse.

It soon appeared that Parker was something of a bird of passage and that his stay in Petworth had been short-lived and somewhat eventful. Anthony Mandfyld of Petworth, gardener to the Earl of Northumberland, told how Parker had come to Petworth at the beginning of March 1594 and sought gardening work. Mandfyld found him some on Thomas Kelton's land (rented from the Earl in Little Park) and some for the Earl himself - paying him an agreed sum of 6d. a day. Parker had no fixed lodging but lived "Sometymes here and sometymes there". By chance at about this time a London acquaintance of the Earl, Sir William Cornwallis came to Petworth on a visit and while he and Mandfyld were discussing gardeners, the latter casually mentioned that he had an old man of his working at Petworth, John Parker by name. Cornwallis' reaction was somewhat surprising. Turning on Mandfyld he told him roundly that if he did not turn Parker away he should have his displeasure. Parker had defrauded one of his maidservants of ten shillings and served several others the same way. Parker who had worked in the garden of a house without Bishopsgate in London called Fisher's Folly, now lent to the Earl of Northumberland for his personal use, was a man of very unsavoury life-style indeed and had terminated his employment with Sir William by taking flight. He had even taken his livery cloak with him.

William Smyth, husbandman, of Tillington also had little good to say of Parker's brief sojourn at Petworth. At Lent Parker had come to Thomas Kelton's house in the Little Park and worked for a fortnight or so, telling Smyth he had previously worked for Sir William Cornwallis and one Alderman Hyllingley. Parker had continued doing various jobs around Petworth for some three months.

Towards the end of this time, Arthur Shorter with whom Parker had lodged told Smyth to look to John Parker for "he is a stranger and hath stolen my spytter". Mistress Smyth too, wife of Captain Smyth had given Parker 2/6d. to buy some salad stuff. He had gone off with the money and not returned. Parker told William Smyth that he had a house in London worth forty pounds a year which was mortgaged for a debt he stood surety for. His mother also had land in the country. Arthur Shorter is known from the enclosure care documents in Petworth House Archives as one of the 9th Earl's retainers. He was accused by counsel for the tenants of neglecting to look after the infant Bartholomew Farnden who had been placed in his charge. Thomas Kelton too is known from the Petworth House Archives. In 1595 the Outwood (i.e. the northern part of the present park) would be let to him in addition to the Little Park. The lease for this letting still survives. Anthony Mandfyld does not seem to figure in the enclosure case but will doubtless be the "Anthony Menvell head gardener at Syon" who appears in various Syon House wage-rolls in the early years of the seventeenth century. (See G.R. Batho. The Household Papers of Henry Percy pp 158).

The information from Petworth would give Cooke more than a glimmer of hope. Whatever the truth in the case, Parker might clearly be vulnerable to a determined assault on his credibility. If Cooke went to London to take further sworn depositions from those who had known Parker in his pre-Petworth days he might well uncover further matters that might discredit him as a witness. Only by undermining Parker's character and, by implication, his testimony, might a suit for defamation succeed.

(To be continued.)

FROM THE RECOLLECTIONS OF EDWIN SAUNDERS

DEAD MAN'S WOOD

I know a wood where one never sees a bird or hears one sing. They call it Dead Man's wood. I knew a gamekeeper who used to look after that wood and he had never seen a bird in it and could not tell me the reason why and could not find anyone to tell the reason why. It is only the birds that know but it does seem very strange for this wood is very isolated, well out on its own and very few people go near it and yet one can hear the birds sing lovely outside of the wood.

THE CROSSBOW

They used to shoot with crossbows in my young days. There weren't many guns then, they couldn't afford to buy them, so men used the crossbows. They were made something like a gun only they had a bender and a piece of twine fixed to the bender and pulled down to the trigger. Then it was ready to shoot. There was a groove up to the bender where the spear used to go up. The spear was a piece of wood about six inches long and half an inch thick with a piece of lead on the top of the spear. Some could shoot very straight with a crossbow: the bow had to be yew wood no other wood would do. I had a crossbow in my younger days; my father had one made for me and I shot with it a good many times.

THE POLECAT

One does not see this animal very often for there are not very many in this part of the country. I have seen one. They are like a ferret and about as big and live on rabbits. This one was black and brown with a little white round its mouth. One has to be careful about catching it for they bite one very badly.

THE GREEN WOODPECKER

I have watched the green woodpecker how it flicks the dead branch of a tree and makes the noise with its bill. Some people used to say it made the noise from its throat but I have watched this bird many times and seen it flick the dead branch. Its beak works very fast. This bird has no song but it calls as it flies along and we country folk say it calls, "wet, wet, wet, wet". Its plumage is a nice green with red about the head.

MURRELLS

If we are in the Downs at the right time we may come across some murrells. They grow under trees and are brown in colour with a flavour like a mushroom but not the same shape. They were used most for their mushroom taste and were always very dear. Some of the older people used to know where they grew and used to go and get them. In the old days they were thought a lot of. I know of one man who used to tell me the tale that if you saw a murrell it would not grow any more.

THE KING'S DAUGHTER

From PHA 649, a file of expenses for the Princess Elizabeth daughter of the imprisoned Charles I, being cared for by Algernon 10th Earl of Northumberland: The file comes from 1648.

*To a footman of the Queens which presented
cherries to the Princess May the 7th } 00.10.00*

To a footman of the Queens which presented cherries to the Princess May the 7th) 00-10-00

*Payed Mrs. Watson for holland for three
bands & cuffs & for making those and other
Linnen for the Princess as by her bill may
appear May 12th } 03.0.0*

Payed Mrs. Watson for holland for three bands and cuffs and for making those and other linnen for the Princess as by her bill may appear May 12th) 03- 0- 0

*To Mr. Owen which he gave to my Lord
of Straffords Jeaster May 12th by the
Princess her command } 00.02.06*

To Mr. Owen which he gave to my Lord of Straffords jeaster May 12th by the Princesse her command) 00-02-06

Payed to Mr. Haymes for Ribbin & a laced Scarfe as by his bill may appere May 24 } 08.00.00
 Payed for a Knife for cornes May 26 - 00.01.06

Payed to Mr. Haymes for ribbin and a laced scarfe as)
 by his bill may appere May 24) 08-00-00
 Payed for a knife for cornes May 26) 00-01-06

Excerpts from PHA 649 reproduced again by kind permission of Lord Egremont.

NEW MEMBERS

(Up to 26.10.83.)

- Mr. C. Brooker, Chil Cottage, Vicarage Lane, Lodsworth, Sussex.
- Mrs. J. Baker, c/o 24 Willow Walk, Petworth, Sussex.
- Mr. Fogden, Kipson Bank, Halfway Bridge, Lodsworth, Sussex.
- Miss D. Howarth, Brook, Fittleworth Road, Wisborough Green,
Sussex.
- Mr. R. Heydon, Flat 4, 122 Victoria Drive, Bognor Regis, Sussex.
- Mrs. B. Huntingford, 3 The Victors, North Street, Petworth,
Sussex.
- Mr. S. Knight, The Estate Office, Petworth, Sussex.
- Mr. and Mrs. W.V. Moss, 356 Egremont Row, Petworth, Sussex.
- Mrs. P. Pope, 14 St. Edmunds Close, Wolverhampton, West Midlands.
- Mrs. D. Politzer, Little Denmans, East Street, Petworth, Sussex.
- Mrs. A. Smithells, Robin Bottom Cottage, Iping Midhurst, Sussex.
- Mrs. Speed, 1 Rosemary Close, Petworth, Sussex.
- Mr. and Mrs. P. Sinclair, The Nook, North Street, Petworth,
Sussex.
- Mr. C.D. Warner, 8 Manor Drive, Fusiev Cleveleys, Lancs. FU5 1EV.
- Mrs. R.L. Warner, 2 Tudor Court, Upper Bognor Road, Bognor Regis,
Sussex.
- Mr. and Mrs. J.M. Wilcox, 23 Wakerley, Oakham, Leics.
- Mr. and Mrs. E. Waldy, c/o Dales House, Lombard Street, Petworth,
Sussex.

