THE PETWORTH SOCIETY *magazine*

Issue No. 66. December 1991
Price to non-members £1.50

CONTENTS

* * * *

Cover illustration "The Stable Yard" by Gwenda Morgan.
Cover design by Jonathan Newdick.

* * * *

This Magazine was printed by:-
MIDHURST AND PETWORTH PRINTERS

11 Rothermead,
PETWORTH. Tel. 42456

Duck Lane,
MIDHURST. Tel. 816321

* * * *

The Petworth Society

Winter/Spring Programme. Please keep for reference.

Monday December 16th Leconfield Hall 7.30 p.m.

The Petworth Society Christmas Evening

TALKS for early 1992. Leconfield Hall 7.30 p.m. Refreshments. Raffle.

Tuesday January 14th. Jeremy McNiven: "Mexico".
This is Jeremy's third talk for us. His previous shows on Peru and Egypt have been superb.

Tuesday February 18th. Ann Tyrrell: "From Russia to Ebernoe - and back".
Ann is vice-principal of Brinsbury College and was actually in Russia at the time of the failed coup. Brinsbury is helping to instruct Russian farmers in aspects of western agriculture.

Wednesday March 11th. Pat Hill: "Otters and other animals".
Pat's cine films of animals were very popular last year and we're pleased she can come again.

Thursday April 9th. Brian Blunkett: "Downland Flowers".
Brian will bring plants of the chalk raised from his own stock plants to include flowers like oxlip, cowslip, small and field scabious, dropwort, cheddar pink and fritillary. Members will be able to purchase if they wish.

Wednesday April 29th. Tony Moss: "The Silver Screens of West Sussex"
West Sussex cinemas (including Petworth) with slides.
Tony is Vice-President of the Cinema Organ Society and President of the Cinema Theatre Association.

WALKS Leave Petworth Car Park at 2.15 p.m.

Sunday February 16th. John and Gloria's late winter walk. Stopham Fittleworth area.

Sunday March 22nd. David and Linda's walk in New England.

Sunday April 26th. David and Linda's Stag Park Walk.

The Petworth Society recommends:

"Fittleworth through the years"

An Exhibition of Pictures, photographs old and new,
and other memorabilia, showing something of
Fittleworth's past and what is happening in the village today

at Fittleworth Village Hall

Saturday December 14th 10-6
Sunday December 15th 10-4

Admission free. For Friday evening opening check publicity.
Much additional material including winter scenes of Fittleworth.

* The Fairground Association of Great Britain have produced a very attractive 1992 calendar and we are very pleased that November features Petworth. We have a very limited number of calendars for sale at £5.

Editor's Postbag continued from main magazine:

Douglas and Mary Price
Box Cottage
Balls Cross
Petworth, W Sussex

19th November

Dear Peter

Footpath clearance

The correspondence printed in the September issue rightly praises the County Footpath Team for their work.

We should also add that our busy local farmers have also played an important part in ensuring that careful footpath users are welcome to use rights of way.

Perhaps this note may serve to remind those few farmers who have been so preoccupied with their day-to-day work that they may have overlooked the need to reinstate paths which have been ploughed?

Yours sincerely

Douglas Price

PETWORTH APPLE DAY: POSTSCRIPT

Dr Joan Morgan stresses that one or two identifications are tentative - Cockle Pippin and Norfolk Beefing for instance. Identifications of apples taken to Brogdale are also uncertain. Two possibilites are King of Tompkins County and Pott's Seedling. More on apples next year!

Merry Christmas!

Peter.

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 £5.00. Single or Double one Bulletin delivered. Postal £6.50. Overseas £7.50. 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. Treasurer - Mr. P. Hounsham, 50 Sheepdown Drive, Petworth.

*Hon. Membership Sec. - Mrs. R. Staker, 71 Wyndham Road, Petworth.

Hon. Bulletin Sec. - Mrs. B. Hodson, The Cottage, Whitelocks, Sutton.

Hon. Social Sec. - Mrs. Audrey Grimwood, 12 Grove Lane, Petworth.

Committee - Mrs. Julia Edwards, Mr. Ian Godsmark, Lord Egremont, Mr. John Patten, Mrs. Anne Simmons, Mr. D.S. Sneller, Mr. J. Taylor, Mr. E. Vincent, Mrs Linda Wort.

Membership enquiries to Mrs. Staker please, Bulletin circulation enquiries to Betty Hodson or Bill (Vincent).

Bulletin Distributors - Mr. D. Sneller, Mrs. Williams (Graffham), Mrs. Edwards, Mrs. Mason, Mr. Thompson, Mrs. Simmons, Mrs. Watson, Mr. Patten, Mrs. Adams (Byworth), Mrs. Hodson (Sutton and Duncton), Mr. Vincent (Tillington and River), Mrs. Goodyer, Mrs Williams (Fittleworth).

* Note change of address.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

I hope members will excuse what is as much a foreword as it is an orthodox "Chairman's notes". Space is at an absolute premium and separate accounts of events over the last quarter appear in the body of this Magazine. Members may like to know that a collection at Dr Joan Morgan's talk on September 25th enabled the Society to replace the tub on the Town Hall steps destroyed by vandals the evening before. Our thanks to Les for getting everything back with a minimum of fuss. It was all done so quickly that few realized that the vandals had struck!

Congratulations to Les for his recent award from the Midhurst and Petworth Rotary Club for his services to Petworth. I cannot do better than quote the words of a Rotary Club spokesman.

> *"We decided Les's sterling work in keeping Petworth squeaky clean should be recognised in some tangible fashion.*
>
> *"Come rain, snow or autumn leaves, Les is out there every day with his wheelbarrow, shovel, and plastic sack, to clear up the mess."*

(Midhurst and Petworth Observer 24th October).

I don't think anyone will quarrel with that!

Peter *1st November 1991.*

EDITOR'S POSTBAG

1. Isolation in the 1920s

Re Mrs. Vigar's note on Isolation in the 1920s (Magazine No.65) Mrs. M. Thimbleby writes:

No, there were no tragic huts as such for Tuberculosis at Heath End, but Kath Vigar has got an image of what was around at the time.

A family by the name of Davis lived in a tin bungalow near the sandpit, and next to Florence Rapley's cottage at Heath End. Mr. Davis had T.B. and lived outside permanently in a

small tin hut on wheels, just big enough to take his bed and little else. This hut was open half way down on one side for the necessary fresh air, and it swivelled round against the prevailing winds. The hut was always somewhere around in the garden. When Mr. Davis died, the family left: Arthur Stevens and his wife Netty lived there after the Davis family left. Arthur Stevens was the boot repairer mentioned on page 142 in 'Tread Lightly Here' and had his business in High Street. Netty was an excellent dressmaker, making many of my clothes before I married and moved up to Lincoln.

Further down the road, on the edge of one of the Kilsham Farm meadows, hard by the railway embankment lived May Challen, who also had T.B. Her home was a converted railway carriage: she kept a few chickens to earn a little money. Her parents lived in one of the cottages at Petworth Station. She later recovered and worked at the Heath End Garage.

2. The Old House at Home, Petworth (?)

Mr. M. Johnson, 190 Rose Hill, Willenhall, West Midlands WV13 2AR sends this sketch made by his father in the mid-1930s. It is entitled "The Old House at Home". Can anyone identify the picture for him?

See drawing.

3. A long case clock by John Easton

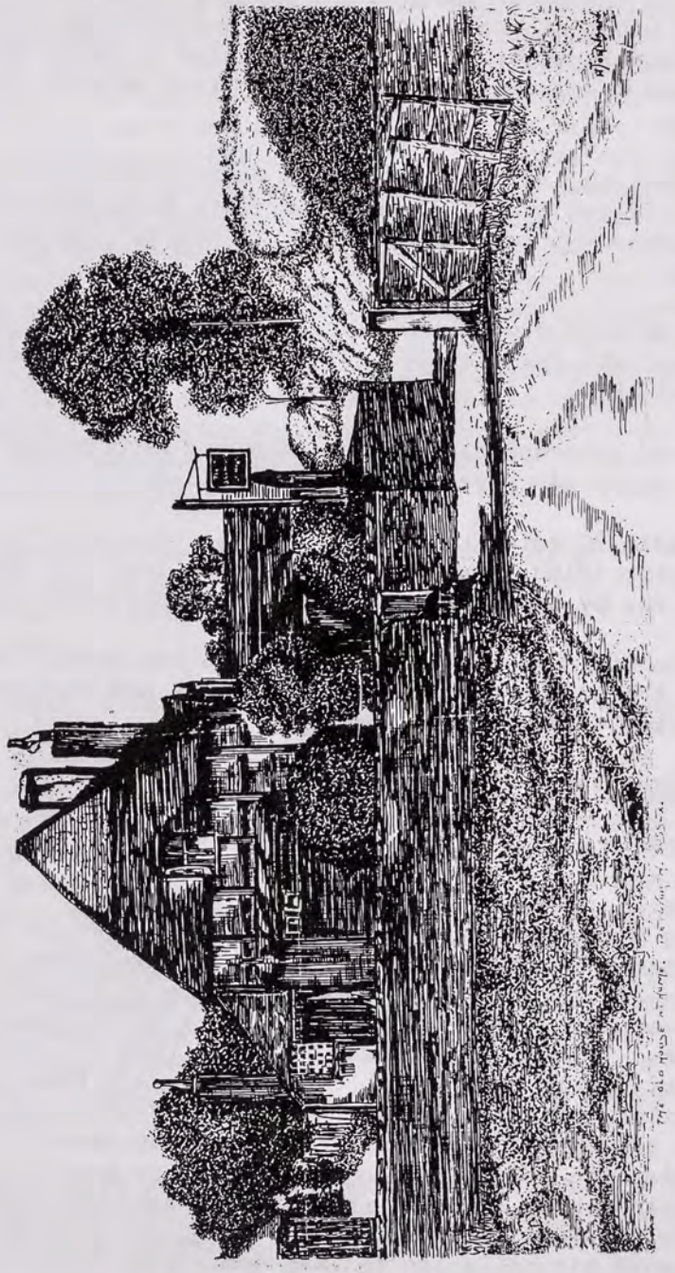
Mr. D.G. Martin of 4 Nightingale Close, Storrington writes:

"I have a long case clock with the inscription on the dial

John Easton
Petworth

Inside, on the plates are scratched the following inscriptions:-

1. Jan 6 m 764 J.W. STEDMAN
2. Cleaned and repaired
   May 2 1827 by J. Stedman
3. Cleaned Dec 21/56 WALTER STEDMAN
4. July 2 1868 W. WICKENDEN
5. 11/4/92 ES'
6. 1/07 ES'



The Old House at Home, Petworth, Sussex. See Editor's postbag.

The date of the first entry which appears to be 1764 is almost certainly wrong as the clock is not believed to be as old as that - probably after 1780 and could refer to James Walter Stedman who was in business in North Street between about 1870-1878.

My own research indicates that John Easton had the business between 1784 and 1828 and would therefore have predated the first Stedman who was almost certainly George - in business 1828-1855.

He seems to have died in 1855 and the business was run by Mrs. Stedman and son until at least 1866 and was then taken over by the son in 1870.

There is an apparent gap between 1866 and 1870 during which time the clock was repaired by W. Wickenden.

The initials ES refer to Ernest Streeter, father of the late Mr. Streeter (died about 1951) whose jewellery and clockmaking business was by then in Church Street, opposite the church."

Mr. Martin would be interested if anyone can throw further light on the probable history of the clock and particularly on the repairer W. Wickenden.

4. Reading gravestone inscriptions

Jeremy Godwin writes:

Dear Peter,

Having some spare time in July, I copied down the epitaphs in the church and churchyard of Tillington and Upwaltham respectively, and was going to do the same at Petworth when I found these last (fronting Church Street) to be almost all illegible. Those at Tillington and Upwaltham are faint in places but mostly fair, as to legibility. All three places used similar stone and lettering in the 18th century. Petworth also has a good large graveyard and derelict chapel (1863) near the foot of North Street, on the eastbound road, the earlier stones of which should be transcribed soon, if not yet done, not only for their contribution to local history, but also because air-pollution is fast destroying their surfaces.

Consequently, those with time to spare could do worse than transcribe such stones while yet they may. There is also the small, half-forgotten graveyard in Bartons Lane.

Do not rub, chip, or otherwise try to "revive" the inscriptions, for sometimes the whole surface comes off, for ever. Sunlight is best; if bushes cover the stone, await winter's leaflessness for a second visit. Some epitaphs are on east face, some on west, according as people came from one or other side towards church! You may need more than one visit, to catch the sun at appropriate time of day for shining on them. This is so at Upwaltham, for instance. Take with you a looseleaf shorthand-notebook and a sharp HB or B pencil. Make a plan of the churchyard, if you can, too. Number each stone in list. In churches, remember to lift carpets (discreetly!) to see if old tombstones are now floor-slats beneath; even if half-legible, they're worth noting. Always show what's legible, and where you were uncertain/unable: do not "force" the readings, but follow what you see. Best of luck!

5. Mr. E. Brouwer of Howick Farm, Balls Cross would be very pleased to hear from anyone who can give him any information on the farm and its buildings either in this century or in previous ones.

6. Mrs. K. Vigar, 1 Ribbetts House, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint writes:

Dear Peter

Seeing the article on Southdown sheep, do you know if there was ever a flock kept at Stag Park? Lady Leconfield kept a spinning wheel in one of the attics in the house and my mother used to pick the sheeps' wool from the many and various fences and took it to Lady Leconfield, this would be about 1923. The ladies used to have weaving sessions perhaps it was something to do with the Women's Institute. Lady Leconfield used to weave Southdown sheep wool into lengths and then have it made into suits that's why I wondered if there was ever a flock on the estate. I wonder if anyone else remembers collecting sheeps' wool?

7. Mr. H. Ward of 25 Weaverhead Close, Thaxted, Essex, sends us this postcard of his father Tom Ward still working with horse and cart in Lombard Street in 1947.

ANNE'S TOWN GARDENS WALK, AUGUST 4TH

Everyone was impressed by the flowers - and if that appears to be stating the obvious, it must be remembered that the gardens in recent Augusts have presented scenes of scorched lawns and parched borders, well past their best apart from the seed heads and dried foliage coveted by the flower arrangers. But every garden this year was ablaze with colour and luxuriant with lush growth, products of a late spring and for once, adequate rainfall.

About 50 members turned out on a warm, sunny afternoon; a lot of new faces, while several familiar ones were absent, perhaps on holiday, otherwise committed, or "just giving it a miss this year". But 50 is enough to shepherd around Petworth, let alone through private gardens. Anne had as usual, come up with a perfect programme - some new gardens, some "regulars", some reappearing after a lapse of a year or more - and one or two surprises.

Connoisseurs of the previous two years were looking forward to seeing what had been happening at Somerset Lodge. The Harrises have achieved so much in 2½ years and again, we were not

disappointed. The plot which was last year down to green manure was embarrassingly rampant with vegetables: artichokes (Jerusalem and globe), Brussels sprouts, scorzonera, potatoes and many more, bordered with all the herbs you could think of. We could hardly see across to the wall. There was the wild garden; not so many species this year due to the invasive couch, but chicory had appeared unexpectedly. The conservatory had been almost taken over by the datura, a natural survivor left to its own devices for a year before suitable accommodation became available and now there were cuttings from it flourishing in large pots in the courtyard. Cape gooseberries were bursting out of a mini-greenhouse. A mulberry and an Indian bean tree had been planted - one grows to 65 feet and the other to 50 feet - was this going to be a big mistake? Rosemary Harris wondered. The surprise was the gazebo at a focal point overlooking the Shimmings Valley towards the Gog as well as back over the garden to the house; not yet finished, but awaiting the carving of "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills" around the top.

Then next door to Somerset Hospital. Again the herbaceous borders were a riot of colour - they get better every year - and another nice vegetable patch. It was good to see Mr. and Mrs. Stan. Wheeler and the Wareham sisters looking so well and obviously happy in such lovely surroundings. On to Mr. and Mrs. Craddock's at Rectory Gate, the late Mr. Perce Howard's cottage garden looking surprisingly mature in its newly designed landscaping. Then another new garden, 2 years old, at High Town, Mrs. Baker's house off Barton's Lane, followed by Mrs. Wardrop's New Cottage, where Peg. Streeter created a tiny suntrap full of plants. Out and down East Street to Stringers, where Mrs. Rabone's walled garden is well separated from the house by a courtyard and outhouses, an unfamiliar spot with a large, unusual tree, later identified as a false acacia, at its entrance. At this point Linda set off to look for Keith, who was supposed to be "bringing up the rear" and by now was lost, she thought. But he was only directing a young lady driver from Worthing, who was trying to find Frensham Ponds. Stringers drive leads on to Mr. and Mrs. Neve's beautiful garden at Keston Cottage. The collection of fuchsia species caught the eye immediately, then a sub-tropical echium not yet in flower but with spectacular foliage, and another surprise - a kiwi fruit, male and female plants side by side for fertilisation on the south-facing wall and a good crop ripening. Over to the High Street; Mr. and Mrs. Eric Wakeford's garden at Rosemary Cottage with its "pergola" of runner beans, but plenty of flowers as well. Finally, through

and down to the new development of small houses and bungalows next door, the courtyard tubs, urns, baskets and borders testifying to Ann Bradley's passion for a great variety of floral form, colour and texture - and the final surprise: not only had the builder, Norman Horton, opened up the four vacant properties for us to inspect, but there was Anne in the kitchen of the show house, dispensing orange squash and lime juice. A perfect end to a well-planned, nicely-time tour. In thanking her, we also record our appreciation to the hard-working owners and gardeners, both those on hand with explanations and advice and those who, though on holiday, trusted us to troop over their plots unsupervised.

KCT

"FITTLEWORTH THROUGH THE YEARS." SEPTEMBER 21ST and 22ND

A really mellow sunlit September afternoon. It was only about half-past two on the Saturday but the Village Hall Car Park was already packed with cars with a long line stretching away up the road opposite. The Hall is a large venue to fill but in fact the Exhibition took in not only the Hall itself but the stage and the smaller room just off the entrance. People signing the visitors' book, so many people coming from away also had once had links with Fittleworth and looked now to renew and remember them. There was even a brochure to guide the visitor through the twenty-six headings. What a lot of work, so much pinned up on board and screen, the screens themselves, said Judy and Norman, borrowed from a variety of different sources. They'd been working all morning with their dedicated band of helpers, sometimes despairing, but finally everything was in place - only the flowers to be put out now. There was even a refreshment tent outside. The organisers were surprised there were so many there - I wasn't - and I was sure they'd be even busier on the Sunday when people had been home to tell others about the Exhibition and came back themselves for another look.

In the small room were photographs by John Smith, the backbone of any Fittleworth Exhibition: there were a lot more of his pictures scattered through the main hall under the various headings. On the table was a plan of the tombstones in the churchyard and a typed reading of the burial inscriptions on them. Produced by the Fittleworth and District Association this was an object lesson to every village in Sussex. The main Exhibition covered every aspect of Fittleworth life this century with a broad prospect of the

preceding ones. I liked the thoughtful use made of articles in this Magazine, some even like Gordon Goodyer's classic account of the wheelwright's made up also into little booklets. All kinds of Fittleworth material from the Magazine was carefully utilised and it was nice to see Rendle Diplock's drawing of caravans outside the Swan. There was almost too much to take in, the mind travelling from one topic to another, then back again. The shops, the local trades and crafts, the school with its register from way back. So many children had "moved away" before completing their schooling. Farm-labourers' children one supposed. There was a host of pictures of the Swan, that favoured haunt of artists over the years and a painstaking account of artists who had lived and worked at Fittleworth. The Wednesday Club, the W.I., the Football Club, the Rother Navigation and the Station, old and new mingled together as they should to give a sense of village tradition. There were people filling in names as they peered over group photographs, or found themselves or a relative in a picture they had never known existed. The better an Exhibition is, the more it uncovers and all sorts of things were appearing. Brilliant and they'd used hardly any Garland prints. Cue for another Exhibition? I'm sure Judy and Norman will need to get their breath back first!

P.

APPLE IDENTIFICATION DAY SEPTEMBER 25TH

Preliminary list of apples brought in for identification on September 25th. This does not include apples taken to Brogdale for further enquiry. Names of these varieties are not yet to hand. Groupings 1-8 are made according to those in the index of the apple collection at the National Fruit Trials (April 1985).

P.

GROUP

1. Smooth skinned, green sour. (Lord Derby type.) CULINARY
   Edward VII, Lord Derby, Lord Grosvenor, Alfriston, Grenadier, Early Victoria, Warners King, Catshead.

2. Smooth skinned, predominantly green, sweet. (Granny Smith type.) DESSERT
   None.

3. Smooth skinned, flushed or striped, sour. (Lane's Prince Albert type.) CULINARY

Newton Wonder, Wellington (synonym Dumelow's Seedling), Lane's Prince Albert, Monarch, Bramley seedling, Bismarck, Howgate Wonder, Annie Elizabeth.

4. Smooth skinned, flushed or striped, sweet. (James Grieve type.) MIXED CULINARY and DESSERT
Cox's Pomona*, Belle de Boskoop*, James Grieve, Rival, Beauty of Bath, American Mother, Lady Sudeley.

5. Skin predominantly yellow. (Golden Noble type.)
MIXED CULINARY and DESSERT
Golden Noble, Rev. W. Wilks, Lord Suffield.

6. Skin predominantly red. (Worcester Pearmain type.)
MIXED CULINARY and DESSERT
Norfolk Beefing, Crimson Bramley, Gascoyne's Scarlet, Tydeman's Early Worcester, John Standish (?), Devonshire Quarrenden, Gladstone, Herring's Pippin, Ben's Red.

7. Reinettes, skin coloured with some russet. (Cox's Orange Pippin type.) MAINLY DESSERT
Belle de Boskoop*, Blenheim Orange*, Golden Reinette, Lord Lambourne, Allington Pippin, Ellison's Orange, (Laxton) Fortune, Beauty of Hants, (Sussex) Nanny, Adams Pearmain, Ribston Pippin, King of the Pippins, Rosemary Russet, Saint Everard, Laxton Superb, Claygate Pearmain, Margil, Orleans Reinette.

8. Skin predominantly russet. (Brownless Russet type.) DESSERT
Ashmead's Kernel, Allen's Everlasting, Pitmaston Pine Apple, Darcy Spice, Egremont Russet, Brownless Russet, Cockle Pippin.

* Dual purpose: culinary and dessert.

APPLE DAY - THE VICTORIAN DESSERT LECTURE

Dr. Morgan described The Dessert as the finale to the dinner of at least 8 courses in Victorian country houses, through which the host made a statement of his wealth and position with a display of floral decorations and fruits both in and out of season, as part of the social calendar. Improved technology, the removal of the tax on glass, plentiful coal and labour, all combined to make possible the production of high quality fruit, flowers and vegetables in

Apple Identification Day September 25th.
Photograph by Tony Whitcomb.

Apple Identification Day September 25th.
Photograph by Tony Whitcomb.

wide variety and the development of the railways meant that they could be taken to the town houses during the London season without deterioration. She made frequent reference to the 14 acre Petworth gardens with their 2½ miles of "nailing", particularly under the influence of Mr. Jones, the head gardener, who was later to move to Frogmore. There was a staff of 20, with additional help as necessary, considered generous even in those times.

On the table, the pineapple - King of Fruits - was grown in variety throughout the year in special glasshouses, to be eaten rather than as decoration, the primary consideration therefore being quality rather than size. On one occasion 40 fruits were cut at Petworth solely for preserving. Grapes, black and green, were served displayed on their own leaves. Strawberries were ready by February - 5,000 pots were forced at Sandringham for the royal hunting parties. After initial work in France was halted by the French Revolution, the modern strawberry was developed in England. Peaches appeared by Easter and were available from glasshouses and outdoors right through to the shooting season. 5,000 figs were gathered at Petworth in 1863. Passion fruits were eaten like boiled eggs, with a spoonful of port between each mouthfull. Oranges, tangerines - again served with leaves to exphasise that they were home-grown and not imported from Portugal, melons - 200 were cut in one year at Petworth - served in a circlet of passion fruit flowers, apples, cherries, plums, greengages, nuts and, the most esteemed of all, pears, of which 100 varieties might be grown in one garden. The apple of the time was the Ribston Pippin, described as "all that was desirable in size, flavour and colour" and from which the Cox's Orange Pippin was developed in 1825. Another variety, the Lady Sudeley, was raised at Petworth by William Jacob and propagated at Allington, near Maidstone, by Bunyard, who named it after his patron.

By the end of the century, improved communications led to fruit growing and jam production on a commercial scale, making fruit available to a wider market, so the country house table featured less exotic, more hardy fruits, apple trees being decoratively trained.

After questions from the audience, the experts and the Revd. Donald Johnson of Funtington, who had the inspiration for the event, were thanked by our Chairman for giving a marvellous day.

KCT

AN INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH SILVER

A special monthly meeting was addressed by Ian Pickford, well-known through his appearance on the BBCtv Antiques Roadshow. He is an enthusiastic and entertaining expert with a wealth of background knowledge and anecdotes about the historic and cultural aspects of his profession.

The working of precious metals in Britain dates from 2,000 BC but Mr. Pickford began with the Saxons and St. Dunstan, the patron saint of goldsmiths and one of the most important Archbishops of Canterbury who, incidentally, put together the order of the Coronation Service used today. His education, as was the custom for the well-bred of the day, was in goldsmithing. All members of the Goldsmiths' livery company are known as goldsmiths whether they work in that metal or silver. Goldsmiths' Hall, in three successive buildings on the same site since 1320, has been assaying and "hall-marking" silver since 1478. Marking started in 1300 in the silversmiths' own workshops, but corruption brought about its centralisation at the hall. By 1500 there were 52 goldsmiths' shops in Cheapside, the main thoroughfare in London - "cheap" meant "market" then - and it was said that there was more gold and silver there than in Rome, Athens, Vienna and Milan put together.

Excellent colour slides depicted important items from Saxon to modern times: the Pewsey Horn, and not a document, gave right of title to the Vale of Pewsey; in the 12th century, spoons given at baptism were carried and used by the recipients throughout their lives, from wooden ones for the low-born to silver for the higher ranks (born with a silver spoon in their mouths). There followed the Bermondsey Dish, the only known example of English royal silver from medieval times; a standing cup (hanap) from 1380 and a rare drinking vessel from about 1500, silver-gilt with a polished coconut bowl. Such cups (mazers) usually had woooden bowls but examples made from "dragons'" or "griffins'" eggs were actually made from the eggs of ostriches. From the Norfolk family came the Howard Grace Cup (passed round after saying Grace at meals) of 1525, then ewers and basins of the late 16th century and the Bowes Cup, using rock crystal from reliquaries destroyed at the Reformation and probably used at the Coronation of Elizabeth I. At this time, salts were used as proclamations of wealth at banquets: primary salts up to two feet high at the "top table", some with ceramic and gilt, with secondary salts and salt cellars for the lower orders. In the reign of James I, obelisks and beacons

appeared on salts and cups. In the 17th century, silver cooking utensils became more common, due to the metal's excellent conducting and anti-bacterial properties. Even furniture was made with a silver overlay, including Nell Gwynne's 4-poster bed, sadly, not surviving. Gilding ceased at the Civil War and workmanship declined. With the development of modern eating habits in the 18th century (no forks hitherto), came tea and coffee pots, sugar, pepper and mustard casters (the mustard was mixed on the plate) as well as candlesticks. The arrival of Huguenot craftsmen at the end of the 17th century had also forced a rise in standards of English goldsmiths. In the mid-18th century came creamers (milk jugs) in the shape of cows and Rococo influences on design, together with the first mass production in factories. Many women designers achieved distinction but one of the best-known, Hester Bateman, succeeded more by brilliant business methods than as a silversmith. Through the Victorian era, Art Nouveau, Art Deco, to the present day, typified by surface texturing, Mr. Pickford broadened his audience's perception of the evolution in purpose and design of English silverware and ended by answering questions on assaying, military silver and the introduction of eating forks at the end of the 17th century with the Restoration of the Monarchy. Also available were a number of books written, edited or revised by the speaker, including the standard work on hall-marks.

KCT

IAN AND PEARL'S BALLS CROSS WALK OCTOBER 27TH

There didn't seem a lot of people in the Square but when we arrived at Langhurst Hill the number was well over thirty and that didn't include the children Matthew, James, Glenn, Christopher, Hayley and Stephanie, or the dogs Kia, Holly, Splash and 2 and 6. 2 and 6? Douglas Price explained that it was the date of his daughter's wedding, the 2nd of June.

It was a perfect walking day and beautiful in the woods, the only problem was that the hour was going back and it would be dark early. We went through Langhurst Common and out by Sparkes Farm, now renovated but for so long unattended and overgrown. There were so many fungi on Ebernoe Common: Douglas said he was making a study of fungi and pointed out some that were jet black - ink was probably once made from the black that oozed from them. When they died they curled up and dried. Why did the red mushroom with spots round the edge have a smooth top? It appeared this was where the gnomes had been sitting!

It was noticeable that where the dead trees still lay after the hurricane the fungi had grown along the trunk in intricate patterns. We moved on to the brick-kiln, unfamiliar to some, and Eileen told us about the kiln and Mrs Batchelor whose eight-roomed house on the right of the path always had a dove in a cage on the wall. On the way to Furnace Pond we climbed a set of steps called Stokers Steps, nothing to do with iron-smelting it turned out. There had been a cottage there which the Stoker family had owned. We were soon by the church and working our way back to Langhurst Hill. Bill Harding said that we'd walked 3.16 miles, taken 7,175 steps and used up 358 calories.

The calorie count would become largely academic when we saw the regal spread Ruby had prepared for us. What you would hesitate to call a Petworth Society "tradition" for that would be to assume Ruby would always do it - but a tradition of a kind it is. Then at this meeting Ian always shows his slides - it's amazing how varied a Society year is - Shimmings in the spring, Petworth Fair, Gardens visits, Coates Manor, Apple Day, Coultershaw Beam Pump. Ian ended with John's "extra special fungus slides" and extra special they really were. John Patten thanked Ruby and John, Pearl and Ian on the Society's behalf. It was a real afternoon to remember all through the dark days of winter.

Audrey Grimwood

COMING TO ORCHARD HOUSE

My father James Marr Brydone had been brought up in Petworth and never forgot the town. It was always his home even though he had a busy medical practice in London. As a doctor between the wars, holidays and weekends were at a strict premium for him but on those rare occasions when he could he would joyfully set off for Petworth. His cousin Lizzie, Miss New, was still living at Petworth, at Orchard House, but was by this time quite on her own. Her father John New, formerly Rector of Duncton, had been dead for many years, while her mother and sister were now dead too. Her unmarried brother James, Canon of Chester died too about 1930. Except for her two servants Miss New lived in solitary state. In the early thirties visits to Petworth to see her were rare and, for us children, a considerable event. The fifty mile car journey seemed endless and we would be lucky if not delayed by a puncture or other form of breakdown. Car travellers at this time were frequently greeted on arrival with "Did you break down?" or even "How many times did you break down?" Even the most meticulously

maintained car would suffer random mechanical failure or something like a broken fan belt. My father would begin reminscing at Northchapel, "This is as far as you would get playing cricket," he would say, looking back to the days before motor-cars when you had to play within a certain radius to enable you to return home the same day. As the car drew into Petworth itself he'd point out the spot where he had fallen off the family pony and his mother had driven past in her trap, taking the view that he was big enough to look after himself without being nursed along by her. We knew these interjections were coming and looked upon them as a kind of ritual, an integral part of the adventure that was "coming to Petworth".

A visit to Aunt Lizzie was of course de rigueur for my father but we children were not asked into Orchard House except for a brief "How do you do?" in the hall. We would then be whisked away for a walk, either up to the Gog and Magog or, somewhat more popular with us, to the Virgin Mary Spring. Accustomed as we were to the plainest nursery fare of bread and butter and always cherry cake, it was a huge treat to go to the Four and Twenty Blackbirds where we were regaled with scones and jam followed up with cakes and finally chocolate biscuits! This feast made up for all the "not fidgetting in the car" on the journey down. We loved the Four and Twenty Blackbirds and especially being asked if we wanted more! The Blackbirds was at that time the quintessential country tea-house, dark and light at the same time and radiating cheerfulness. It was a place where everyone met. I vividly remember people coming in from the country villages and asking if a table was vacant. Sometimes they were lucky, sometimes not.

If we returned to Orchard House we would stay in the garden, taking care not to walk in front of the sitting-room window, or indeed to be seen at the other windows. To paraphrase the old adage one might say that at Orchard House children were not only not heard but as far as possible not seen either! Orchard House in the early 1930s was run exactly as it had been when Mrs. New had first gone to live there well over a generation before. My eldest sister and her brother had been allowed to stay at Orchard House for a few days about 1920 and always remembered with great embarrassment missing prayers. "If only Daddy had told us, we wouldn't have minded and would have gone". Cousin Lizzie always appeared very austere to us children and was an intensely conservative lady. After she had had a stroke in 1936 I can remember my mother saying to her quite firmly, "Lizzie, you won't keep a nurse without a

bathroom." It was only with much reluctance that Aunt Lizzie agreed to this modernisation.

While we might look on a visit to Petworth with excited anticipation, the journey back was more something to be endured. Car heaters had not been invented so the only way to keep warm was by close proximity and confinement in the back seat covered by a rug, or, if you were lucky sitting up front where the engine gave off some heat - but also a rather oily smell. The car we had up until 1936 had a partition between front and back just like a London taxi.

At least once in the 1920s my father had rented Petworth Rectory for his summer holiday - the Rectory being available in the month of August while Mr. Powell the Rector was away. It was fitting for the Brydone family to go there for it was almost a hundred years since the Brydones had first come to Petworth Rectory. My great grandfather James Marr Brydone, "Old Trafalgar" as he would be known in later years, was brother-in-law to Thomas Sockett the Rector, their respective wives being half-sisters. J. M. Brydone was, in the 1820s, on half-pay from the Royal Navy and his family were invited to use the southern half of the rambling old Rectory while "Trafalgar" supervised Thomas Sockett's several successive parties of emigrants to Canada. Supervision involved going out to Canada and fostering the welfare of the emigrants in their adopted homeland. My great grandfather would later help Colonel Wyndham with the administration of his Irish Estates.

As I was only a baby I have no recollection of this visit but I do know that the family entertained the Bishop of Tennessee at the Rectory, my mother having been born in the United States, he was a friend of her family. Thus it was that I was baptised at St. Mary's by no less a personage than the Lord Bishop himself! This visit in 1924 was the first time that our housekeeper Ivy (later Mrs. Jack Slee) would come to Petworth. It would certainly not be her last!

My father was 65 in 1939 and, with the war coming on, bought Orchard House when Lizzie died. He did a lot of work with the Home Guard, an anonymous donor making sure he lacked for nothing for his field ambulance. It was Ivy who set about making Orchard House into a home for our family and in so doing became effectively a member of the family herself.

Barbara Calder was talking to the Editor.

A PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY

I first came to Petworth in 1935 with my parents for our summer holiday. For this purpose my father had hired a car to get from Petworth to the coast towns of Sussex. We were to stay with my father's uncle and aunt who kept a tobacconist's shop in Lombard Street. The shop was not far up the street from the market place and was on the left hand side. Above the shop and house was a large wooden building; this was the studio although it had not been used as a studio for many years. The shop was in the house on the right handside as you entered, in some parts of the country it would have been called a "parlour shop" because the business was conducted from the downstairs front room. The shop seemed dark because of the brown paint and because of the small amount of light that came in from the window. The counter ran across the back of the shop at right angles to the road. Besides cigarettes and tobacco, my great uncle sold tea and post cards and, I think, walking sticks. It seemed to me that there was never a great amount of stock on display, but there were posters on the walls and a "hand" of tobacco leaves hanging up.

Behind the shop was the living room which had the usual furniture a large table, wooden chairs, sideboard and a range which was the standard fitment in all such rooms of the period. The room had a window that ran across the back and which looked out onto a small yard. The other rooms that were downstairs, were a parlour and a kitchen, perhaps more of a scullery than a cooking area as it contained just a sink and an oil stove.

Upstairs there were three bedrooms, the small one, in which I frequently slept, contained mysterious piles of boxes covered with blankets (the stock that Uncle Bert kept?)

Yet going further upstairs by a small flight of steps one came to the studio that was on top of the house. Thinking about it now this was quite a considerable structure as it was at least as large as two bedrooms underneath it. Part of one wall, which looked towards the church was made of glass, on two other walls were backdrops for portraits or family groups. The studio was frozen in time, as nothing had been done to it since my great uncle took over the shop; it was a complete Victorian photographer's workshop, as it also had in one corner, a dark room. I never really discovered what was in there, small boys were not allowed to roam indiscriminately. It was not until my great aunt died that I went

in there only to find an absence of equipment and plate negatives. My great aunt used the studio as a sitting room. It was light and could be warm on summer days and so also serve as an enormous airing cupboard. I discovered that you could look up and down Lombard Street by peering through little windows that were at the side of the studio (I note that these no longer exist).

Mrs Rose Earle in Tudor Costume for the Petworth Tudor Revels in 1938.

I have no recollection of the question of the use of the studio ever being discussed in my presence nor did my father ever enlighten me. Perhaps it was thought to be very obvious. My uncle took over the premises from his aunt and uncle, prior to that he had been a valet and it was while he was in service that he met my great aunt, she being a lady's maid. To my mind they were typical of their positions. Uncle Bert could have been the ideal Jeeves. He had a deferential manner without ever being subservient. Aunt Rose I remember as a bright chatty person capable with her needle, and generally friendly and deomesticated. One or other of them I think had travelled as I discovered albums of postcards of foreign towns and places. Neither of them had any interest in photography, the shop provided a home and an income for them to settle in. On this first visit my uncle's portrait

had been taken by Mr Garland. There were two to choose from, the one that was chosen appears here and is more typical of him than the one that appears elsewhere. The picture of Aunt Rose was taken for an occasion that was held in Petworth Park when those taking part had to dress in period costume.
The Tudor Revels held in Petworth Park in 1938 to celebrate the visit of King Edward VI to Petworth in 1550 (Ed.)

Petworth had particularly strong associations for my father. It was here that my grandfather died, perhaps while he was on holiday, visiting his brother? My uncle became for him, almost, a substitute father. I think that it might have been through him that he was found a job with a firm of wholesale grocers near Seend as I found that my uncle had a small number of shares in the company. Seend is a small village in Wiltshire which had been the home of the Earles for many generations. While it has been explained how my great aunt and uncle met, how did uncle Bert's aunt and uncle meet? And where did they go to live after they gave/sold the shop to my great uncle and aunt? It is easy to pose these questions now with hindsight, but who can tell what one generation should ask of another? History might be a lot easier if we knew.

I mentioned that we came with a car, this was not only to go to the seaside, but also to visit churches in Sussex. Many of them Uncle Bert and Aunt Rose had walked to on Bank holidays and Sundays, others Aunt Rose had heard of and wanted to go and see. Places too far to walk and where buses did not go. Thus begun for me the first steps in my aesthetic education which were continued through art school and into my work as a teacher. I in turn took my children into churches and museums at home and abroad, perhaps some of those places I saw briefly in my aunt's album.

But what of the names of these people, I am sure older residents of Petworth will know them now, but the answer can be found below from my name and the name of my great, great uncle Walter Kevis.

Donald Earle

THE ADSETT FAMILY

In the early 1960's, I began to enquire into the history of my Adsett ancestors. Little did I anticipate what a time-consuming affair it would become, especially after I decided to concentrate

on getting as much detail as possible about the twelve children and their descendants of John Adsett (1765-1836) and his wife Ann of Miles House, Northchapel. She was an Ayling and died at Mill House, Northchapel in July, 1864 aged 96.

Still, it has been fun and rewarding. I've corresponded with, met and tape-recorded many interesting people from Sussex, many parts of England and from Canada, Australia and New Zealand and been given or loaned many photos and other mementoes. A lot of information, mostly anecdotal has emerged. This constrained me, when putting it together in the form of a typed booklet with genealogical tables, to entitle the booklet "People of little consequence - a history of the Adsett Family". History is reflected in the lives of the family members, not made by them.

We know from copies of wills kept at the County Record office and from parish records, that the family has been established in West Sussex since at least the 16th century. Then, they seem to have been small farmers. When Thomas Adshead made his will just before his death at Wigginholt in 1613, he left 4d to the church, his best bullock to his son John Adshead, his second best bullock to his daughter Joan Adshead and the rest of his small estate to his wife Elizabeth. Although the name isn't particularly common, early parish registers in the area particularly those of Stopham, contain a good number of references to it.

At Fittleworth, an entry for September 11th/12th 1697 begins - "A son of Richard Greene and Eliz. his wife of the parish of Pulborrow, was born at old widd. Adsheads, a little soon. She falling in travaill as she came from Petworth markett and like to have parted with hir babe on Egden Comom..."

I have traced a definite line back to the marriage of Thomas Adsead and Sarah Manfield at Kirdford on October 16th, 1733. They immediately settled in Northchapel. It was the descendants of their grandson John (1765-1836) a sawyer, on whom I decided to concentrate. Some of his children were as follows.

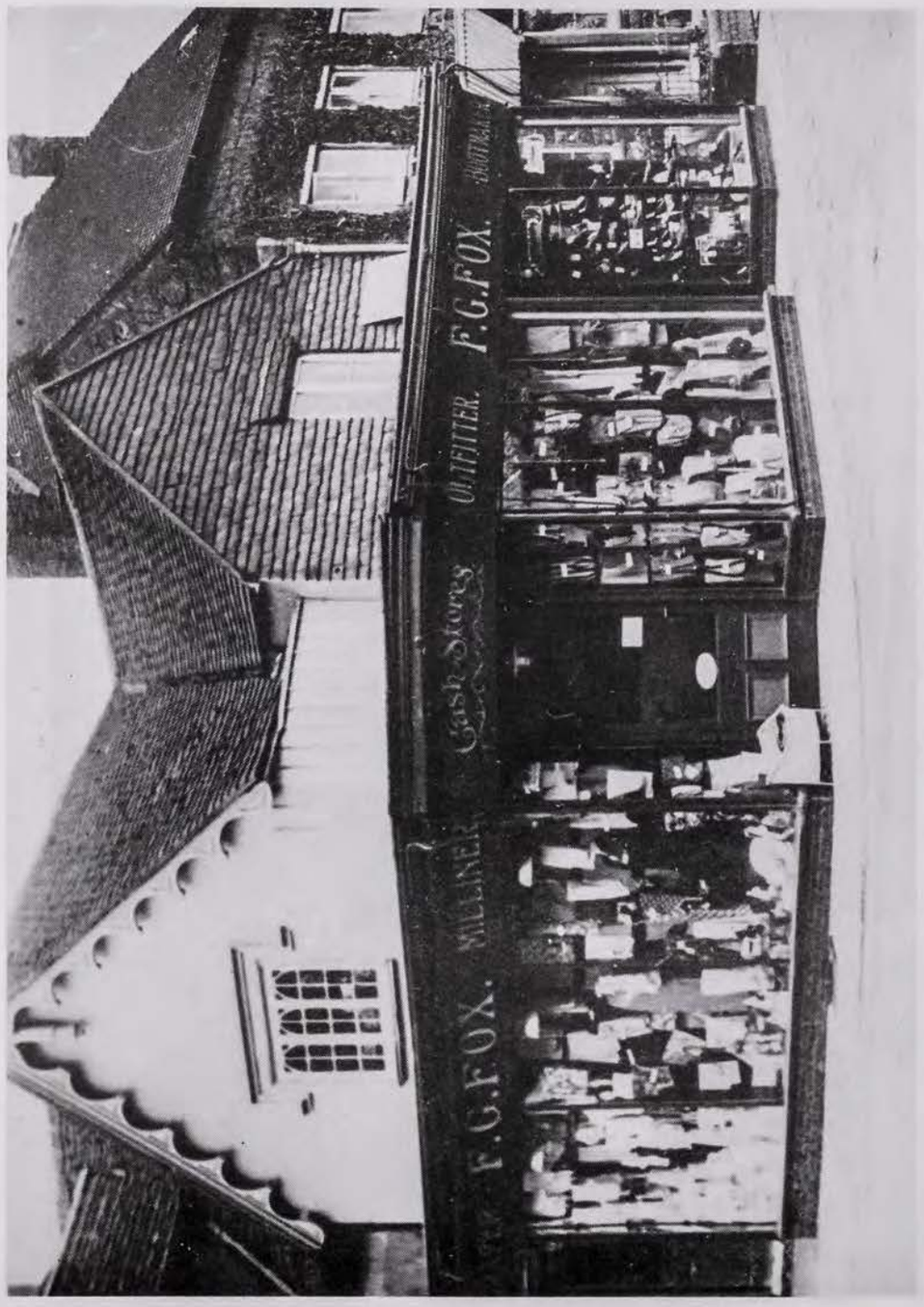
Margaret Adsett (born 1794). When she married George Greenway in 1831, the Trustees of Chichester Savings Bank presented them with a long-case clock which is still in the family. They and their descendants, the Slades, Pryers and Hoares had a small farm at Merston and a smallholding at Sidlesham Common on the Selsey peninsular.

The Orchid House at Petworth Park Gardens about 1900.
Photograph by Walter Kevis.

Herbert Earle in the mid-1930s.
Photograph by George Garland.

Top: Canon James New of Chester Cathedral
at Orchard House in 1924.

Bottom: Members of the Brydone family at Orchard House in 1931.
Miss New (left). On the right is R.M. Brydone older brother of
Dr. J.M. Brydone who took the picture. See "Coming to Orchard House".



Messrs Fox : North Street. January 1936.
Photograph by George Garland.

William Adsett (1798-1866/67) was a gamekeeper at Hatch Cottage and Wetwood, Northchapel and has many descendants. One of his grandsons George (1858-1936) kept a laundry at Stopham. George's son George (1876-1958) worked for Jennings of Park Farm, Pulborough and was a ploughing champion with his two white horses. I should like to talk to people who remember these men. There must be anecdotes about them worth recording. Joe Knight has told one which is printed on page 37 of "Petworth - the Winds of Change".

Harry Holden (born 1896) of Colhook Common whom I met in 1976 was one of William's great-grandsons. Does anyone know how Harry's family fits in with the Holdens mentioned in early 1980's issues of the Petworth Society Bulletin and with those whose photos appear on page 28 and pages 124-127 of "The Men with Laughter in their Hearts"?

Charles Adsett (about 1800-1855) was a sawyer. His son Charles (1829-1890) was tenant-farmer at Park Hurst Farm, Northchapel in the late 19th century.

John Adsett (1803-1891) was my 3xgreat-grandfather and a sawyer. He moved to Arundel with his family in about 1840. His eldest child Sarah in 1847 married Charles Bullen a policeman and theirs was the first family to live in the police-house at Littlehampton police station.

Harriet another daughter (1834-1914) married George Treagus an assistant at Herringtons in Arundel. One of their sons had a shoemaker's shop in Tarrant Street. Another was cellarman at The Norfolk Arms and a frequent correspondent about Arundel in former times to the West Sussex Gazette.

One of John's sons Alfred (1842-1921) drove the steam-engine which powered the machinery in the Duke's sawmill and was lieutenant in the Duke's fire-brigade.

Several other of John's descendants were journalists and local newspaper proprietors.

My great-grandfather Frank (1852-1945) was a well-known Three Bridges character, nick-named 'Banjo' as he liked to entertain his friends and himself with banjo and violin in the pub. He was a woodreeve for a firm of timber-merchants and liked to boast that he'd been timber-throwing in three counties. In 1915 his son my grandfather moved to Kent where my father and uncle later had businesses in Faversham and Canterbury.

Henry Adsett (1805-1878) lived at Hole House, Lurgashall where for most of his life he had a shoe-making shop. His son Alfred

(1842-1886), Edward Denyer (born about 1826), James Chalwin (born about 1832) and Jonathan Saunders (born about 1826) were all apprentices or shoemakers employed by him as was his grandson Harry Anscombe (1861-1895), a well-known local cricketer. He was the professional at Torquay cricket club in the 1880's and later at a boy's school in Buckinghamshire. Harry's father, mother and brothers kept the Nine Elms pub in Regent Street, Brighton. It was a favourite meeting-place for theatrical and musical people and frequented by performers at the Theatre Royal.

If anybody can give further information about the Lurgashall set-up I shall be delighted to hear from them. Perhaps somebody's ancestor worked as a shoe-maker there or knows about cricket in the nineteenth century there.

Susan Adsett (born Northchapel 1808) married Henry Hillier in 1828 at Northchapel where they apparently settled. Their two eldest children were William born in 1828 and Sarah born in 1830. I would like to hear from descendants.

Mary Adsett (born Northchapel 1811) apparently married Benjamin Balchin at Kirdford in 1834. A daughter Sarah married John Richard Bradford at Northchapel in 1851. Again I would like to hear from anyone acquainted with these families.

George Adsett (1814-1898) was a sawyer who in the 1840's moved from Northchapel to Rotherhithe, London where the great timber docks were then located. His son Henry (1841-1912) in 1873 emigrated to New Zealand where he made his money by felling and cutting up totara trees - he had a contract from the government to supply 100,000 sleepers for the New Zealand railway. Later he bought a farm where his grand-daughter Dell Adsett lives to this day. She writes a monthly article called Country Life for the New Zealand Listener and is a well-known novelist. Henry has scores of descendants living on North Island, New Zealand.

Thomas Adsett (1799-1870) a cousin of John Adsett (1765-1836) was one of the now well-known emigrants who sailed with his wife and children in The Lord Melville to Upper Canada in 1832. Two of his letters home were published by John Phillips in his book in 1833. Thomas's descendants still live in Ontario, the province where he settled. His son Charles (1826-1908) wrote an autobiography, mainly about his early days there. I have sent a copy to Dr. Sheila Haines in response to a request for information in a recent edition of the Petworth Magazine.

"Father" Adsett is mentioned on pages 81-83 of "Petworth - Time out of Mind". He worked in Petworth House laundry. I am unable to place him on the family tree. Can anyone provide more detail about him? Is he the man with the shovel in the bottom photo on page 83?

R. Adsett, 7 Winterstoke Crescent, Ramsgate, Kent.

THE SPIRIT OF FOX'S

I don't have very much documentation about the early years of the shop but I do have an old ledger giving the takings for the shop's various divisions. From the handwriting I can tell that my father was called up on June 16th 1917; he would have been 37 at the time. Even the older men were required for service by 1917. He didn't have the shop then but managed it for Mr. Kensett and had done so I think since 1904 when Mr. Kensett took over from Gallups. Mr. Kensett had three shops, an original one at Midhurst and two branches at North Street, Petworth and at Liss. I remember him only dimly as he died in 1930. My main memory is of him coming to lunch when we lived in Middle Street and my being instructed to be on my best behaviour. He didn't come over very often, once a month perhaps. When Mr. Kensett died my father bought the goodwill and stock but it wasn't until years later that I bought the freehold. As you know, a draper was expected to hold an extensive stock and I still have my father's cleared cheque for the goodwill and stock, well over a thousand pounds and a large sum in those days. My father just had to scrape the money together to buy, for his own employment depended on it. It was a situation that often happened in those days.

There were other drapers in the town and Gilhams of Midhurst had a man going round with a bicycle - something of an intrusion my father probably thought! Mr. Dancy in New street was near to retirement and a different generation but the Eager boys were great friends: my father and Stan Eager, being founder members of the British Legion, ran the benevolent fund between them. The friendship made for a spirited rivalry and Dad liked to think we had a reputation for the keenest prices but there was none of the savage price-cutting you sometimes see nowadays.

You will see from George Garland's photograph that the window was elaborately dressed. We would need to change the display alternate weeks so that nothing was in there for more than a fortnight: you didn't dare leave it longer than that because of fading and dust.

Friendly Rivals: Advertisements for Messrs Eager and Kensett juxtaposed in a Parish Magazine from the mid-1920s.

Price tickets were laboriously hand-done with a stencil and everything was priced. The shop had always been partitioned and in latter years I would have liked to take out the central divider to give more floor space. Ironically I could never do this until the stock had been run right down when we were going to close and then there was no point. The thing was that carrying the stock we did, we could never dispense with the shelves that ran along the divider on both sides. There was a show-room upstairs with curtains marking off a small space for fitting. It was never an easy arrangement; we would usually take people upstairs to look at what we had in stock rather than having them go up on their own. The drapery trade was one where space was always at a premium; for instance we always kept great numbers of hats which could never be stacked one on top of another, and several rails of dresses.

Although I only half suspected it at the time, my father was already unwell in 1938 when he persuaded me to go into the business with him, and I would continue until I was called up in 1941. My father died early in 1942. I learned a certain amount about the menswear part of the business during the years from 1938 but I didn't really take on the drapery side proper until I came back in 1946. It was something that would take years to get into. For the years of the war my sister Grace, as a rate-collector, was in a reserved occupation and able to do the bookwork in her spare time. Wyn Whitcomb, Miss Whitington and others kept the shop going.

In the years between the wars and, to a lesser extent, afterward we had a staff of seven or eight, far more than we would ever have later. One of the younger staff would be permanently at the boot shop just down the road in North Street. We didn't actually do repairs ourselves but put them out to Arthur Stevens. My father would pop down the road occasionally to see if everything was as it should be and I'm sure that many a pair of boot-laces have been suddenly bought when he appeared unexpectedly on the scene. With a predominantly young staff Dad had to give the appearance of being very prim and proper but I think he was really quite soft-hearted underneath.

In the 1930s the shop opened from 8.30 to 6.30, extended to 7 o'clock Friday and 8 o'clock Saturday. After a while we had complaints from people who were coming in to the first house at the pictures on Saturdays, coming out just after eight and finding the shop closed. We then opened until 8.30 on Saturdays and didn't start until 9 o'clock in the morning. In those days there was a

maximum working week of 48 hours which could not be legally exceeded. Fox's was an unusual shop in that there was a staff of seven or eight, some quite young, and long periods when nothing very much happened. It was important to find something to do in the slack periods. The point was that when the shop was busy it really was busy and that's when the large staff were needed. On Saturdays in particular the shop was absolutely humming with people and on summer evenings we would be packed out. People would walk into Petworth from the surrounding farms; there was a very large agricultural population then. In those days if you went down to the Square on a Saturday afternoon or evening you might have a job pushing your way up past Austens for people talking. I remember sometimes as a boy being called up from home to help in the shop because it was so busy and all the staff were going full tilt.

Material was sold "on the roll", there were great "bolts" as they were called, of drill, serge and other fabrics, huge rolls two feet in diameter and weighing half a hundredweight - there was also calico or flannelette. This was a time when people still made up their own shirts. Everything in the 1930s, and for that matter in the 1940s, was delivered in from wholesalers, my father making just the occasional trip to the London warehouses. He never drove a car and used public transport for these rare trips to London. We delivered of course but always by bicycle; father never owned a car. Most of our deliveries came by train to Petworth Station although as time went on more came by road, Carter Patterson or their predecessors, they had a green van but I can't remember the name.

You will see from the photograph that father had "Cash Stores" written prominently over the door. He didn't like credit and avoided giving it if at all possible. Quite apart from anything else it made for cash flow difficulties: sometimes in the accounts the stock would be shown at well over £1,000, cash in hand at something like £1.2.6d and liabilities £100. There was however great unemployment in the 1930s and he often gave very extended terms to those he felt sorry for but his kindness was not always repaid. Wilful defaulters he would take to court, as much I think from a feeling that it wasn't moral for people not to pay as anything else. I never took people to court - it invariably meant a lost customer. My father liked everything to be "just so", his ideal, often stated, was that he could come into the shop in the dark and find everything "just as it should be". I always remember the words that Wyn Whitcombe wrote with the wreath she sent to his

funeral, "To a respected and much loved employer". Dad would have approved of that.

In the 1930s the shop still retained much of the air of the 1920s. The gas lamps were gone but the till was very old and would only take about five notes. As a boy I always felt that the lack of one of those rails for sending money to the till was a great disappointment but in fact the shop was hardly big enough for such sophistications. I remember a tremendous commotion in the 1920s when a customer dropped a half-sovereign on the floor. It disappeared and the staff spent what seemed the best part of a week searching for it - a commentary on the relaxed labour situation in those days if nothing else. In 1960 I was breaking up one of the old mahogany counters in the shop and found the sovereign wedged down in it - as bright and shiny as the day it had been dropped.

Nothing was on show in those days: the idea of having goods on display is a relatively modern one. Everything was kept in boxes. Dust and moth were the great enemies and items like vests and pants came in packets of half a dozen with the packet having to be opened and done up again every time. A customer might look at half a dozen vests before deciding, hence the assistant had to open half a dozen boxes. On a busy Saturday night the floor would be strewn with individual packets, each having eventually to be put back in the box, retied and put back into the drawers. The floor would be knee-deep in open packets by the time we finished on Saturday evening but they wouldn't be cleared up till Sunday morning or Monday; Dad was flexible about that - it was only fair to the staff. It could be so busy Saturday evening that when it was over it felt like the quiet after a storm. Sometimes a customer might take the first vest you offered him, a single man perhaps, but usually you'd have to go through a number and open several boxes. At an opposite extreme to the customer who was satisfied with the first vest you showed him, others would turn out the entire stock, take up to an hour's time and not buy anything at all.

Clothes would be hung outside the shop on special hooks, boots too would be suspended outside. It would be working-type stuff - you wouldn't put expensive things out there. There were low wooden tables too for showing things but you couldn't put them on the North Street side as it was the public road - come to that, Mr. Provis the Rector didn't much like the clothes being put out in Rectory Gate but that was just too bad. The photograph was taken to be used eventually on our billheads, so all the usual

encumbrances outside were taken away for the occasion and it doesn't give a real impression of how the shop exterior usually looked. I can remember George Garland taking it. The basket outside is a mistake: it should have been brought in with the other things. It held hot water bottles, like soap an ancillary to the drapery trade, or so my father thought! He never could resist a bargain.

Dad's liking for a bargain led him once to buy a lot of toffees at a bargain price but when they arrived he remembered with horror that Mrs. Thayre's sweet shop was next door and that he couldn't trespass on her trade. Traders kept strictly to their own areas then. There was nothing for it but to keep the toffees under the counter and bring them out only to selected customers if the coast was clear. We had a lot of trouble clearing the toffees which weren't particularly good anyway. We had to eat a lot of it ourselves. I didn't distinguish myself, producing the toffees from under the counter for Mr. Shoubridge from Byworth who also sold sweets. I don't think he was too put out actually but it was considered something of a faux-pas.

Jim Baxter worked at the shop with me in the years just before the war but when he was called up when war was declared I was promoted to take his place. I was paid ten shillings a week, a big advance on my previous five shillings, effectively three shillings and ninepence when deductions were made. When I was called up in 1941 and my father died early in 1942 it was left to Wyn Whitcomb and our other ladies to get us through the war.

People even in 1939 had begun to realize that there would be shortages and my father, astute as he was, had accordingly begun to lay up stock. He could recall the austerities of the war years 1914-1918. He couldn't really afford a big outlay but in those days a three month credit period was standard and he reasoned that he could sell a good proportion of the goods before he was charged for them. Business was good in 1940 and rationing yet to come in. As it turned out rationing came in before we had exhuasted the massive stock Dad had bought in, so we started to collect coupons for what we had in before coupons were in force. This was a great help as it was impossible to buy new stock without the requisite coupons. Coupons were paid into a special coupon account at the bank and operated in some ways rather like money. What did give us difficulty as the war progressed was a lack of trade contacts. My father could ring up individual firms and ask for people he knew by

name. When he died that sense of immediacy was lost and it was difficult to get the material in.

A shop like ours, a traditional country outfitters, no doubt saw far greater changes in the sixty years since 1930 then it would have over a comparable period before. My father wanted Fox's to be above all a working men's shop, catering particularly, but not exclusively, for farm workers and workers on the Leconfield Estate. Father had some very decided political views but he knew well enough that being in business he had to be careful what he said. Had he not been in business he would, I think, have been more forthright. His experiences at the end of the Great War had led him to be a pacifist but Hitler's ruthless rise to power changed his outlook on that in the late 1930s as it did for so many others of a like mind.

What most strikes me looking back is that Fox's was above all a happy shop and that it was the staff that made it so. We prided ourselves on keeping our staff and they would stay with us for years and years, becoming personal friends quite as much as simple employees. For me they are the very spirit of Fox's and they will always be.

Colin Fox was talking to the Editor.

TEA ON ARMISTICE DAY

My main childhood memories are of Netherlands Farm just before you get to Halfway Bridge on the Midhurst Road, my father being manager there for Mr. Perry over several years during the Great War and after. Like so many agricultural workers of the time my parents had travelled about a bit before coming to Netherlands. They were at Bignor Park when they first married, and Dad was for a time at Tongdean Farm, Dyke Road, Brighton where he was one of the very first to milk cows by machine. After that he worked for Lord Zouche at Parham. I can certainly remember going to the tiny school at Rackham and how, if someone were ill, the doctor would come out from Pulborough on horseback. We came to Netherlands about 1911, Dad having a house, milk, firewood and £1.00 a week. Netherlands was one of a number of farms run by the Perry family and comprised also Hurlands, Fitzlea and what is now Manor of Dean. There may have been others. My father was responsible for Netherlands and helped with the others as required. My mother had been born at Capel and always looked to return to that area. In

later years my parents did move back - to a little home farm at Holmwood near Dorking.

From Netherlands I would walk into Lodsworth School. It wasn't considered a long way then. I remember that children came from as far afield at Barnetts at Graffham and that they were often away because they couldn't cross the floods at Lodsbridge. Miss Parker took the Infants at Lodsworth, Mrs. Smith the Juniors, while Mr. Godber took standards 3 to 7 and Ex 7. Mornings began with a hymn followed by a scripture lesson, then some time doing "sums". A medley of other lessons followed like reading, writing, spelling, dictation, composition, poetry, nature study, geography and drawing. There was sewing Monday and sometimes Friday, although we were more likely to do knitting on Fridays. We used to write in the old-fashioned answer books and I well remember being roundly rebuked by Mr. Godber for getting a sum wrong: I kept doing it and kept getting the same answer. In the end he caned me but it turned out that he had made a mistake and that I had been right all along. He never apologised however: I suppose that was how teachers were in those days. In the end he was called up for the war and Mrs. Godber took over. Strict as he may have been, Mr. Godber certainly gave us a good grounding. There were never more than a hundred children at Lodsworth School but it was of course much bigger than Rackham had been. Sundays I'd go into Sunday school at Lodsworth, Mr. Edgell being the Rector then, a very kind man I always thought. We didn't go up by "Horsham Square", the stretch of road the Midhurst side of Halfway Bridge (I have always wondered why it was called "Horsham Square"). Instead we'd keep to the east, walking through Liza Rice's fields to church. How many people know where Beggars' Kitchen is? A spring of clear water where tramps, walking from one workhouse to another, would stop beg for tea and milk, light a fire and have a hot drink before moving on.

As foreman at Netherlands my father had quite a responsibility and we had a rather larger cottage as befitted his status. There was no bathroom of course, only a galvanised bath in the kitchen, water being carried in from a copper in the scullery. Lighting was by paraffin and candle. Even as a small child I had to help in any way I could; I always made my own bed and by the time I was seven I was writing the labels for the churns that went off every morning from Selham station bound for London. Mr. Perry had a brother with a shop in Clapham and I had the impression that much of our produce went to him. Dad had to see that the men were up and about, oversee the milk being put into the churns, see it through the

Plaistow Place : March 1953.
Photograph by George Garland.

Plaistow : 8th March 1947.
Photograph by George Garland.

cooler and out in time to catch the 7.30 out of Selham. Eggs went up with the milk. Mother had to take up milking during the war and was absolutely petrified at first. I can vividly remember the week the Armistice was signed in 1918; I was away from school because schools had been closed for three weeks to try and check the spread of influenza.

A storm blew up and a neighbour said to my Grandfather, "It's windy Father". He replied "Yes, and it's going to blow me away". He had a pain, and was going to bed early: he was sick and died of a stroke in the early hours of Tuesday 5 November 1918. Mother laid him out in a clean nightshirt in his bed and I went to see him and give him a last kiss as was usual in those days. He was measured and a coffin was brought; they put him in it and he lay there with the lid against the wall until Saturday when a horsedrawn hearse took him to Selborne Station to go to the Holmwood. The railway charged 1/- a mile for the coffin.

The service was in South Holmwood Church and he was buried with his wife. There were lots of relatives and friends there and the locals went home afterwards, but a few of us went to our relatives for tea, despite rationing. We went home on the last train and had a half-hour walk over the fields in the dark to get home at 10.30 at night.

We went into Lodsworth to pay for the flowers for my grandfather's funeral and then into Tillington to pay Bryders for the funeral itself. It had cost £17. "Lala" I always called my grandfather: he lived with us at Netherlands when my grandmother died and "Lala" was what I had called him before I could speak properly. As often happens, the name "stuck". He was not very well in later years but he helped where he could, like doing the vegetables when Mother was out on the farm. My sister was born after the war, some thirteen years younger than I was and Nurse Francis the midwife came out from Petworth on her bike every day for a fortnight. I was told that when I was born at Dyke Road my father was very concerned about my mother's health and paid himself for a nurse to live in for a month, a privilege reserved usually for the gentry.

I was ill at the time I left school and staying with my uncle and aunt at Epping but I knew I wanted to be a children's nanny. I'd always been quite good at sewing and the first step was to work somewhere as an apprentice. It was September 1920 and I was fourteen. Mrs. Wickens the shopkeeper at Storrington, a friend of

my parents from Parham days, recommended that I do two years apprenticeship at Eagers in the Market Square. There was no interview: it had all been fixed while I was at Epping and I just went to Eagers without further ado. There were three apprentices in the sewing room and for the great part of my two years the others were Lily Sadler from Shimmings and Mary West, whose parents had the greengrocers in Pound Street. I was paid three shillings and sixpence a week. Out of this came our daily cup of tea and a bun at Knights in Lombard Street. No. Eagers didn't provide tea, that's perhaps a modern idea. There was however one exception to this rule: a few minutes before eleven o'clock on Armistice Day we'd all troop into the Eagers' sitting-room, sit there for the two minutes' silence and then be given tea.

In the sewing-room upstairs we were taught to cut out dresses and to use the treddlemaster sewing-machine. Ironing was done with flat-irons and a gas-ring was kept on the mantelshelf with a kind of wooden protector over it like a miniature shed. There were always two irons on the floor and one on the ring. Our job was basically dressmaking and hand-sewing, we learned faggot-stitching and herringbone. We did quite a lot of work for Mrs. Kerr at Culvercroft using the best material, evening and day wear, blouses and skirts. Miss New at Orchard House was another customer I remember but I don't think that Eagers were actually her regular dressmakers. I well remember Miss Whitington bringing in a clergyman's coat, he was obviously not well-off and the coat, while of a beautiful tweed, had the lining quite gone. I remember too the "hobble" skirts coming in; they were so tight that you could hardly walk because your knees were so pressed together. In the winter, when dressmaking was slack just after Christmas, we'd make up sheets for Eagers' Sale from plain fabric. Once we were working in the sewing room during a storm and Miss Whitington suddenly ducked and shouted, "Look!" The glass in the window had been struck, not broken but gone all wavy.

We didn't have a great deal to do with Petworth House but we did see quite a lot of Mrs. Cownley the housekeeper. I always liked her. Some of our work for her was private: some for the House itself. I'd often go up the stone passage to her sitting-room beyond the kitchen with a packet carefully wrapped in tissue paper. We did make uniform dresses for a big house between Selham and Graffham but I can't now remember the name of the people. The dresses had wide collars and a narrow frill.

Dressmaking was something only the gentry could afford or perhaps the more prosperous farmers' or doctors' wives. If a dress was to be made, Miss Whitington as head of the sewing-room would take the details, conducting the client into one of the upper rooms at the front of the house, taking measurements and choosing the material. The client would select from fashion books with various patterns and come back for the first fitting when the seams were done and the outline roughly tacked together. For the second fitting the dress would be much more up together, the bottom hem would be done and the buttons put on. All the handwork would be done by the apprentices, the hems, seams and cuffs. Miss Whitington, or Miss Best who worked under her, would stitch up and finish off.

When you went into the shop the drapery counter was on the left, there was a man in charge of that but I can't remember his name. To the right the Misses Steer from Egdean looked after the materials, the sheets, haberdashery and that sort of thing. Eagers also sold carpets and lino. Miss Philpott the milliner had a room of her own up the stairs and looking out over the back. Mr. Leslie and Mr. Stanley Eager worked with their sister Mary and Mrs. Eager. I don't seem to recall Mr. Eager.

As apprentices we weren't supposed to be in the shop at all. We came in by the back way from East Street and down Trump Alley. I left Netherlands at eight o'clock to be at work by nine finishing at six when it was light but at four o'clock in the winter. At lunchtime we were expected to go out and take a walk rather than stay in the sewing-room, I'd usually walk down to Shimmings with Lily Sadler. Wednesday was half-day but by the time I'd walked home and had my dinner there wasn't a lot of time left.

Rhoda Stonestreet was talking to David Sneller and the Editor.

A MILLER'S DAUGHTER

Chapter 3

Fittleworth 1918

At the end of summer term my two sisters and I came back to yet another new home. Very different from the Midhurst Mill house where I was born. From boarding school at Brighton we now alighted at tiny Fittleworth Station. Here we were met by our mother (on foot) with one of the mill-hands with a trolley for our trunks. We

walked over the three bridges to see the old, ivy-covered Mill,

Fittleworth Mill House in 1923.

and just north of it there was a stone archway leading to the house, with a lovely garden. "It is rather large" said mother, "but it was sold suddenly along with the Mill which your father wanted, so here we are." Actually it was a sad story. A wealthy gentleman had bought the property and was spending a lot of money enlarging the old mill house and turning the mill into 'Bachelor's Quarters' for his son who would soon be returning from France. This was not to be however, for the son was killed before he could return. The property had been immediately put back on the market again by the distraught father.

As an inquisitive nine-year old I was soon exploring everything. The old pony was out in a paddock beyond the Mill. There was stabling and a large garage. The pony trap had gone, but my father's Buick and Model T Ford were there. Behind the Mill was a small island reached by a wooden bridge beside the paddle wheel. I later learnt how to try and fish with a home-made rod, but never caught anything. Father did not make flour in this mill but used it for grinding animal feed. He had put a dynamo in the mill to

produce electricity to light the mill and the house, also to pump water from the well up to the roof tank of the house. This was fine until there were floods, then we were back to candles, lamps and hand pumping the water. A small drawback too was that the electricity was D.C. (Direct Current) which causes voltage to vary rather alarmingly sometimes and a light bulb would 'go pop'.

We were quite close to the Swan Hotel, where their lovely painted sign used to hang right across the road. The hotel was kept by Mr. Oliver and his sister. In the Christmas holidays they had Country Dancing in the long front room which is now the restaurant. Old Mrs. Rolt used to play the piano for the dancing, and it was the greatest fun.

In the summer I used to roam on the old pony all over Flexham Park and Bedham, never meeting a soul apart from the woodman. Occasionally Mr. Elgar came striding past the mill on his walks, he then was living at Brinkwells. He always looked very serious.

That first summer holiday I noticed an artist with his easel, painting the Mill. He was there most mornings and I used to watch him painting. After a day or so he said "Hallo", and that started me off and we chatted. One morning my father said in passing "Don't let her worry you". But the artist replied that he liked a chat. The following Christmas a parcel arrived for me. It was from Mr. H.E. Waite the artist, and was a photograph of his painting of the mill, which had been hung in the Royal Academy. Mother was very impressed and of course I had to sit down and write to thank him. The little picture was put in my room and I kept it until about five years ago, then I took it down to Fittleworth Primary School to give them, and the head mistress asked me to tell the children how I had watched it being painted.

Just before the end of the war my parents heard that our brother had been wounded in France and was back in England. They were not told where he was or how badly wounded. After many enquiries they learnt that he was in a Liverpool hospital and wounded in a leg. Poor mother, off she made for Liverpool on her own, for father was far too busy to go with her. She found my brother quite cheerful and not too severely wounded in one leg. The hospital would send him home as soon as he was mobile. He was at home for quite a while after this, and then went off to train for the milling business.

So with the two eldest away my second sister stayed at home to help mother and learn exactly how things should be done. She also became Brown Owl for Fittleworth Brownies. She was good at this because she liked children and was patient with them; she had become quite used to hearing with only one ear.

There were two shops in Fittleworth at that time. Hardings near The Swan and Picknalls up nearer the church, they both sold our flour. Hardings had a Bakery too. Ted Binstead had worked for them for years in the bakehouse. The ovens were heated by faggots from Hesworth. Late at night he put the dough to rise, then came back early next morning to knead and shape the loaves and later start the baking. All the flour was from father's mill at Petworth. Twice a week Ted delivered the bread in his hand-cart, and Mr. Gilbert Harding drove his horse and van further afield to deliver bread and grocery orders. The shop sold almost everything, groceries, cakes and sweets on one side and draperies, boots and shoes, even some hard-ware on the other.

One morning I called in on the pony to get some white pepper, as mother had 'run out' completely. I demanded four pounds of pepper. Miss Harding sweetly told me it must be four ounces. But NO, I was quite certain it was pounds! She gave me all they had in the shop which was not quite four pounds, and home I went. Of course I was sent back very quickly to apologise and say I was wrong.

Just below Picknalls was the Old Post Office kept by Mrs. Hart, who always wore a hat. I used to think she was a witch, she knew all the village gossip and everyone thought she read all the postcards - but then most village post-mistresses did that!

Back in the mill they were busy grinding cattle food. The lorries came over from Petworth to take it away. One of the drivers was Ron Barnet, he was very tall, recently demobilised and still wore his long khaki overcoat if the weather was cold. He was very good looking and began 'walking out' with a pretty girl who worked for mother in the house. I was most intrigued. Sometimes I asked her to come out and help me catch the old pony who could still have a mind of her own if she did not choose to be caught. I used to ask Lily to take off her white apron as the pony did not like it. Barnet's father looked after the garden. I don't think he approved of me. Once I was roller skating on the terrace in front of the house, when I could not stop and went over the edge, landing on mother's beautiful sweet peas 3ft. below.

Fittleworth Mill:
tennis court and house 1923.

The head man in the mill at Fittleworth was Mr. Puttick and he and his family lived in one of the two mill cottages on the main road. Mrs. Puttick used to come up and help in the house sometimes; they had two boys about my age. Years later when my husband and I came back to live near Fittleworth, one of the sons was running the butcher's shop in Lower Street. We used to have a chat about old times.

There was a big eel trap at the mill, placed before the flood-gates where the river went over into the mill-pool. Mr. Puttick used to empty the trap onto the grass beside the river and put the eels into a bucket of river water until he was aready to deal with them! Once, only once, I watched him preparing one to be eaten. It was not very nice to watch but he assured me they did not feel pain. He used to hammer the eel's head through with an old carving fork onto a block of wood, cut all round the neck skin and, getting a firm hold, he pulled it completely off. Later it was washed in salt water, cut into pieces and fried. I have to confess that after a while I did enjoy eating it fried with bacon for breakfast, a favourite dish of father's in the right season.

I loved living at Fittleworth Mill and during those six years grew used to looking for mother waiting at Fittleworth Station when I came home for school holidays. There was the boy from the mill too, with the truck for my trunk. There had always been only the single line at Fittleworth, we changed at Pulborough having come up from Brighton, then got onto the little train waiting for us which first stopped at Hardham Junction where the guard had to hand over something to the Signal Box before we could go on. Fittleworth was the next stop, where Jack Tulett was in charge of the shunting

cabin. In those happy days Fittleworth Station also had a clerk to see tickets, and a porter. Jack had many other jobs to carry out between the arrival of trains, dealing with milk churns from local farms, many boxes of apples from Little Bognor when they were picked, animals for Pulborough market on Mondays, and goods to go through to Petworth, Selham and Midhurst where the single line terminated. Jack still likes to relate how, having labelled some goats for Pulborough, he tied them up to a fence until their train arrived. However when he untied them to put them aboard he found they had eaten each other's labels! I do not know how that was sorted out. Later, between the wars, a special "Hikers' train" was run at weekends on this small line. Later, when electrification came, this line was too small to be considered. It carried goods trains for a little longer but was finally closed in 1963.

While living at the mill we usually went to St. Mary's Church every Sunday. The Rector then was the Rev. Lucy, who lived at the lovely old Rectory with his daughter. She was very great friends with Miss Constable from Coates Castle who was our Guide Captain. I was not a very keen guide, the only badge I ever got was my Horse-woman's. Her father took the tests for that. I remember having some lovely parties at the Rectory, and playing Hide and Seek in all the rooms. Enid Taylor from The Grange used to come too, she later became Mrs. Dunlop and took such a big role in the W.I.

(To be continued.) P.C.

HAY AND HARVEST

"Let me introduce myself. My name is Ayling. Christian names Darcy Robert, and I am speaking from Barkfold Cottages, Plaistow. I have been a tenant of this cottage, well it will be, 60 years come the end of the year. I am a native of Plaistow."

Thus begins a most informative tape recording, which has both charm and humour, made by the late Darcy Ayling in about 1978. As he explains on the tape, the recording came about after he had had a visit from two very good friends, the then vicar the Rev. Victor Winch and Mr Den Durrant. During the conversation Darcy Ayling had told his visitors that he had made a recording about the village to send to his Australian grandchildren. The vicar then asked him if he would make another tape. Characteristically, Darcy records that

Darcy Ayling with his son. A picture taken at Shorts Cottages between the wars.

he hopes that he may be allowed to buy the tape himself to give to the vicar to add to the information on Plaistow.

Without any prompting, or repetition, and with near total recall, Darcy Ayling speaks for two hours. As he says:

"This will be a walk in time, as I want to recall it as in the year 1901. Will you come with me for a walk as times were then? I may at times wander off into the present but as much as possible it will be when I was 10 years old. It will be a much safer and comfortable walk than at the present time. There were no motor cars to drive you off the side then."

At the time of the recording, Darcy Ayling was then the oldest man living in the village who had been born there. He had been born in 1891 at Little Common, now known as Springers, in Plaistow. His father was born at Fiddlers Copse and was the eldest son of Thomas and Harriett Ayling. His mother was born at Pitchgate, the second daughter of Robert and Caroline Ford. Both the Fords and the Aylings were typical labouring families of the village. Although Darcy Ayling served for a spell in the army from 1908 and was in the First World War, he was, like his father before him, as he says, more or less, apprenticed to the woods and the farms.

The time the walk was to take place was before there were tractors when old Dobbin, our beautiful friend the horse, was on the go. The harvest was cut by the scythe and the sickle and whole families were out in the field. Men would be engaged for hay and harvest.

The farmers kept a few permanent hands. During the summer, however, men from the village would hire themselves out. The pay was three shillings for an ordinary day and three shillings and sixpence for a long day which meant that the workers carried on until dark, or even after. Some farmers paid only 3s a day, but added a lump sum one pound fifty or two pound at the end of hay and harvest. As a rule during the long day, there would be a break for afternoon lunch and the farmer would supply beer and cider.

George Baverstock, the tenant farmer of Weald Barkfold, was more generous than most. His workers went in for a slap-up tea. After it the farmer would say "Come on boys, it is not the food I begrudge, it is the time. Let's get going."

Farmer 'Grunt' from Common House, on the other hand, was a poor payer. When the farm workers wages were normally twelve shillings a week, he only paid eleven shillings. Darcy's father, George Ayling worked under him when the family lived at Little Common. Sometimes when George Ayling had to lose 'wet time', his pay only came to about nine shillings. One day he said to Farmer Grunt, "You know, Mr Wellan, I can never reckon how much a day I get. If I got twelve shillings, I should know I have two shillings a day."

Darcy's family moved to Shorts Cottages about 1902, and his mother and father lived there for more than 30 years. Unless George Ayling had some other particular job on, he had to 'engage' to Thomas Elliott, who farmed Shorts and Lyons Farms, for hay and harvest. Darcy himself started working there in the root field. In those days they grew swedes, mangolds and turnips as well as winter and spring oats, barley, wheat and a little linseed. Darcy was paid a shilling a day. One day the farmer took the other three men working in the field to another job. "What about the boy?", Darcy's father had asked. Mr Elliott said that he could stay there until five, and as Darcy comments: "Anyroad, in the sun and on my own, oh it was a back breaking job. I always said that the farmer got on my back then, eh but I never let him stay long. Oh no. I had one more summer on the farm. I never did no hoeing much, and that was at Durfold."

Durfold was a large estate owned by Miss Mary Billiter. A large part of the estate was in Dunsfold, but it was one of the six large estates around the village providing work for the people of Plaistow. The present day estate of houses which bears the name of Durfold Wood is just in Sussex, and Darcy Ayling reports that it

was once all wood. He still recalls with sadness that when Miss Mary died in about 1916, the estate was broken up, and Durfold Wood was sold as a lot. The 243 acres of woodland were sold to a timber merchant for £2000. It was rumoured, Darcy commented, although he did not know if it were true, that they cut £12000 worth of timber. They cut practically everything. Still that was a by gone day, he added.

Darcy Ayling working in the woods (about 1920?)

Woodland was most important because it provided work for a large number of people in Plaistow. The woodland was quite extensive. On the Shillinglee estate, Kingspark covered 365 acres and Ashpark about 100 acres. Darcy's father-in-law who lived at Parkgate Cottages was the woodward for Shillinglee, and his job was to look after the woods. He had to trim the rides and fill in the wheel and horse tracks after the hunting, keep the ditches clear and make the hedges. His wages were not high, only 12s a week.

The underwoods would be sold by auction at the beginning of October ready for cutting at the end of October. Sometimes when a landlord was short of money he would sell a 'broke' of timber. This was mostly oak which was never cut before the Spring, when the sap had risen, so that the tree could be rined. A man, who would be the captain, would get together a gang for this work. Darcy's father often did this, as his father had before him. The number of men needed for the gang depended on the size of the broke.

Darcy had done this work for two springs when he was young. He worked with his friend Peter Pacy, and the two of them 'quoted' as one man. They had to attend to the captain and go with him when the tree was ready. The bottom two lengths of bark had to be taken off. They would cut around the tree about three feet up and again at six foot. First the top layer known as the jacket was taken off, and then the brichens at the bottom. They would try to get the jacket off in one piece. When they did, there would be a shout of 'all round, all round, all round! Darcy worked from six in the morning until six at night, although years before, the men had worked from five in the morning until seven.

The bark was then dried. Once it was dry, it was taken to a barn hired for the purpose. There it would be stacked, then cleaned and cut up into pieces about four feet long. This process was called bark hatching because the man had one block to sit on, like a hen on eggs, while he chopped the bark on another block. Once the bark was ready, it was sent to the tanneries. The bark went into pits with the hides of leather as it helped soak off hair from the hides.

As Darcy said on the tape he wanted to impress on us the importance of the woods and also what the different places meant to him. However the tape is still primarily a description of a walk round the village.

The parish road started from Dungate which was near to Durfold Hall in Surrey. Although Darcy could not remember a gate there, he could remember gates on the roads which ran through the estates of Durfold, Shillinglee and Ifold. These roads were private and maintained by the estates. The parish roads were maintained by the parish roadman who had to look after the road from Dungate down to Streeters Farm on the road to Kirdford, and Parkgate at the beginning of the Shillinglee roads to Pitchgate, although he went as far as Little Headsfoldwood on the Loxwood Road.

The roadman had a lot to do. Unfortunately at this point in the recording, another voice is heard to call out, "Hey Darce!" For once Darcy Ayling loses his train of thought.

(To be continued.)

Janet Austin

List of new members will appear in March Magazine.