THE PETWORTH SOCIETY
magazine

NO 78. DECEMBER 1994 PRICE TO NON-MEMBERS £1.75

Contents

The wood-engraving on the front cover is by Gwenda Morgan.
That on the back is of Egdean church.

Printed by Midhurst and Petworth Printers, 11 Rothermead,
Petworth (tel. 342456) and Duck Lane, Midhurst (tel. 816321)

Published by the Petworth Society which is a registered Charity

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY SUPPORTS THE
LECONFIELD HALL!

Constitution and Officers

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 of residence who is interested in furthering the object of the society.

The annual subscription is £6.00. Single or double one Magazine delivered. Postal £7.50 overseas £8.50. Further information may be obtained from any of the following:

Chairman
Mr P.A. Jerrome, Trowels, Pound Street, Petworth (Tel. 342562)
Vice Chairman
Mr K.C. Thompson, 18 Rothermead, Petworth (Tel. 342585)
Hon. Treasurer
Mr P. Hounsham, 50 Sheepdown Drive, Petworth (Tel. 343461)
Hon. Magazine Secretary
Mrs B. Hodson, The Cottage, Whitelocks, Sutton
Hon. Membership Secretary
Mrs R. Staker, 71 Wyndham Road, Petworth
Hon. Social Secretary
Mrs Audrey Grimwood, 12 Grove Lane, Petworth
Committee
Mr Stephen Boakes, Mrs Julia Edwards, Lord Egremont, Mr Ian Godsmark, Mrs Anne Simmons, Mr D.S. Sneller, Mr J. Taylor, Mr E. Vincent, Mrs Linda Wort
Magazine distributors
Mr D. Sneller, Mrs Williams (Graffham), Mrs Edwards, Mrs Mason, Mr Thompson, Mrs Simmons, Mrs Hounsham, Mr Patten, Mrs Patten, Mrs Adams (Byworth), Mrs Hodson (Sutton and Duncton), Mr Vincent (Tillington and River), Mrs Goodyer, Mrs Williams (Fittleworth)

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

Chairman's Notes

Really just some comments on two projects very near to this Society's heart.

The Cottage Museum, 346 High Street, is proceeding. A great deal of thought is going into it and work should soon begin. The museum now has planning permission. You can see that we already have some background information. The Leconfield Hall renovation proceeds although it may be March before the scaffolding is finally removed. The new stonework will be impressive but take time to blend in with the old. Be prepared for a slightly piebald look in the early stages. The workmanship looks to be superb. We're hoping not only to reinstate the old fire bells but also to put back a clock on the east side. It's a good century and a quarter since there was one. Arnold noted in 1864 that it was long stopped and a peril to any unwary rustic who took his time from it!

Not much to say about Society events that isn't covered in the body of the Magazine. Don't miss the chance to see the silent film Tansy on January 27th. And, yes, there is at least one shot of Byworth. Patricia Warren will give a short introduction on Cecil Hepworth the Director. Altogether a strong array of speakers for the quarter, we'll have Keith's "House Full" notices poised and ready!

I am very anxious to find ***any*** *turn of the century photographs or postcards of Lurgashall. Can anyone help? I would borrow and return but do any exist? I only know of two at present.*

And a happy Christmas!

Peter *2/11/94.*

Oh, and don't forget the Christmas evening Monday 12th December. I'm sure we've something to interest you!

Miss G.M.A. Beck, 1917-1994

Older residents of Petworth may remember Jill Beck, Archivist at Petworth House from 1953-1961, who died last August. Her time at Petworth was comparatively short, but her work on the Archives was tremendous, and forms the basis of the work done by all her successors.

Jill Beck was born in Ilford, Essex, of Irish parents. She attended the Ursuline Convent School there, and went on to St. Hilda's College, Oxford, where she graduated with an honours degree in modern history. She then did her professional training in archives administration on the newly established course at London University. Her first job as an archivist was in 1950 when she was given a temporary appointment at Guildford Muniment Room, to catalogue the Loseley Manuscripts. When the temporary job ended, she moved to Petworth, to work on the Archives at Petworth House.

Jill was the first professional archivist to work on the archives, which had simply been left in the old Estate Office when the staff moved to the present premises in the 1930s. The

amount of material was enormous, but her work rate was prodigious. She listed, and indexed, all the Sussex estate title deeds; listed the Yorkshire estate deeds and documents; collected together and listed all the manorial court-rolls and accounts; listed all the maps; and annotated the old estate registers to show which documents were no longer there. She also found time to answer letters and enquiries, deal with students and act as Hugh, Lord Leconfield's research assistant for his books on local manors. In addition to all this, she went to Cockermouth Castle, to undertake a similar exercise on the Archives there.

Jill's work was of the highest possible standard, and all her successors know that any note about the documents in her own unmistakeable hand, or typed on her very elderly typewriter, is completely reliable. One makes all sorts of exciting discoveries in the documents, only to find that Jill discovered them thirty years ago. Her work still provides the solid platform on which all her successors build.

She was very lonely when she first arrived at Petworth. She remarked to one of her successors that there were times when only the Estate Office cat saved her from despair. Gradually, she got to know people, and made some good friends, including Miss Harris, the Secretary at the House, and George Garland's wife Sally. She lodged initially at 319 Park Road, and then at Rectory Gate Cottage and finally in Somerset Hospital! She retained very happy and very vivid memories of Petworth.

In 1961 Jill left Petworth, and moved back to Guildford Muniment Room, where she eventually became Borough Archivist. Even after her retirement she continued to catalogue the Loseley Manuscripts one day a week. Her spare time was divided between Cat Rescue, gardening, folk dancing, theatre going, voracious reading, and her many charitable activities. Notable among these were the Cyrenians, Pax Christi, Amnesty International and Books on Wheels for the disabled.

Her life was centred round St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Guildford, which was full for her Requiem Mass. The congregation included friends and colleagues from all the many facets of her life, including old school and college friends. They will all miss her gentle, but very firm personality, her fine example of service to others, and her intellectual abilities, but above all her tremendous sense of fun.

Alison McCann

Saturday Opening at the County Record Office

As from the 1 October 1994 people will be able to pursue their interest in local and family history in West Sussex at the weekend. West Sussex County Record Office is extending its opening hours, and will be open on Saturdays. This is in response to public demand which has long existed and was expressed strongly in the User Survey held in Spring last year. "We were very conscious that the Record Office and all its resources were not easily accessible to all those

people who work on Monday to Friday "said County Archivist Richard Childs. "Now, with Saturday opening in addition to Monday to Friday, we hope to reach a whole new section of the public. This has only been made possible by WSCC's allocation of additional funding for three new part-time members of staff. These were necessary to ensure that the same high standard of service to the public was provided on Saturdays, and maintained during the rest of the week. We have over 11000 visitors a year already, and we are proud of our reputation for efficient and friendly service. It is important that this reputation is maintained with our extended opening hours."

As from 1 October, the Record Office will be open from 9.15 - 4.45 on Monday to Friday, and from 9.15 - 12.30, and 1.30 - 4.30 on Saturday.

Anyone is welcome to visit the Record Office, and no appointment is necessary. First-time visitors should bring identification with them, so that they can be issued with a reader's ticket. Record Office staff will then be pleased to advise them on how to obtain the information they want.

À Propos of Magazine 77

Fittleworth Picture:

Gordon Goodyer identifies the men as follows:

From left.

Messrs. Saunders, Goff, Dugan, Dacre Ducane, Taylor, Bridger(?), Sebage, Goodyer, Foster, Budd and Attrill.

The occasion seems to have followed Fittleworth Flower Show and the date is the early 1930s.

From Mr R. Hazelman:

Blackman's Orchestra

Dear Peter,

Further to Bert Hollingdale and Ken Kenward's article in the September Magazine about the Blackman's Concert party I thought it worth mentioning that in the mid 1920s all the small boys and girls used to congregate at Petworth Rectory fete which was held in July. What always fascinated me was Blackman's Orchestra!! Not a great many musicians but they were always engaged for the rectory fete. We used to look around the stalls in the morning and perhaps *if I was in funds* I would buy a small present for my mother, then in the afternoon several of us would sit on the grass and listen to the Orchestra and watch the conductor and I was completely captivated.

From Miss G. Steggles:

Re Mrs Cummings

Dear Peter,

With regard to your enquiry in the Magazine concerning Mrs Cummings I visited her, more than once, at No. 346, with my mother, in the 1920s, as she used to do needlework (making

chair covers etc) for my mother.

I well remember the meat safe outside the door though at that time it was, of course, painted the stone colour then used by Leconfield Estate.

So far as the room referred to in the article as a "scullery" is concerned I would have said that this was the living room. My recollection of it was that it was dark and had a lot in it, though of what, I cannot say. Had I known that it would be of interest seventy years hence, I might have taken more notice! The only thing that I can remember was a thick curtain hanging over the doorway into the front room, presumably to keep out draughts. Whether Mrs Cummings did the needlework that she undertook at home in the front room I do not know. I do not think that my mother and I ever went in it.

Mrs Cummings must have retired from her work at the house about the end of the 20's her job being taken over by Mrs Keys who then came, with her husband and Edith, to live in Angel Street. Mrs Cummings moved to rooms in Somerset Hospital - part of where the Warehams now live, and my mother and I visited her there from time to time but I cannot remember whether she died there or when her death occurred.

Re Mrs Cummings:

Ethel Goatcher recalls:

Mrs Cummings was a wonderful seamstress, I would think she could turn her hand to any kind of sewing. In fact she showed my mother how to do upholstery - if my mother wanted to cover a chair she'd ask Mrs Cummings for advice. She was really, I think, a friend of Dad's mother and came to Duncton four times a year, always walking and always bringing her umbrella with her, whatever the weather. She had three family graves in the Catholic churchyard and John Rowe looked after them for her. She never met him and he never met her, she handed the money over to my mother at the Post Office and then my mother passed it on to John. There were no headstones but I expect I could still find the graves, I certainly knew where they were. I know one of them was of a son.

We lived opposite the church so if Mrs Cummings came to Duncton she'd take the opportunity of paying John Rave and paying us a call. We only had the one sitting-room so we children had to be good. Mrs Cummings wasn't a tall lady and quite plump and she would always set off back to Petworth in time for evening service at the Roman Catholic Church at Petworth. She was a nice old lady and I have the impression she was Irish. I always think of her as living at Somerset Hospital rather than in High Street. I can remember her funeral and she would no doubt have been buried at Duncton but I didn't go. Her son came into see us on the day of the funeral but I can't recollect that we ever saw him again after that. I suppose it would be a good sixty years ago now.

346 High Street - a note.

Mrs Cummings was at 346 from 1901 - 1930 PHA 10,057-10,059, 2771-2773, PHA 10,061). The property was clearly connected with the adjoining 345 and was a copyhold of the Manor of Petworth. It was bought by the Leconfield Estate in 1854. It can be traced back to Crow's survey of 1779 when it was in the ownership of Robert one of the ubiquitous Trew family. It is possible that the house was built between 1673 and 1691.

Alison McCann has given us an outline of tenants since 1779.

Lombard Street - a bird's eye-view.
Photograph by Barry Norman.

"Light in the day-time."
Photograph by Barry Norman.

Re The Horseguards

Kath Vigar writes:

Dear Peter,

I was born at Tillington Lodge and lived there for twelve years with my parents and brother.

Whilst my father was serving in the first world war my mother was very friendly with the landlord (his wife had died) and I believe there were two grown up sons and a daughter Annie who used to come over to the Lodge to keep my mother company in between whiles when she was helping her father, I remember one son Herbie, but cannot remember the name of the other son, oh by the way the family name was Adams. At that time the pub had a large hall attached to the side of it. The hall was built over the top of another building as I remember we used to go up rickety stairs to it. A concert party used to use the hall at times. I remember a man with a monocle and dressed in evening clothes wearing a top hat who used to tap dance, he also sang. The only words I remember were something like

"I'm Gilbert the filbert
The nut with a curl
The pride of Piccadilly
The blase roue."

These words may be all wrong but I was only about seven at the time (1917).

Recently friends of mine took me to the pub for a meal, I noticed the hall had gone and the car park is now what was the garden. I believe the old kitchen door is still there.

Incidentally does anyone remember the eel traps in the lake overflowing? (I believe these were conger eels). In the 1920s I remember my father came home with one, he said the eels had been washed across the path and they had slithered over the incline where the cork tree stood, or has that gone? We all enjoyed the eel I know.

Costrong at apple time

The threatened rain hadn't materialised but there were two events on the one day so the weather was going to be all-important. First a fund-raiser for the new Cottage Museum with Phil Sadler talking about Petworth as it was. A very pleasant gathering and well over £300 towards much-needed funds. Not a Petworth Society event as such but very much of Petworth Society interest. More or less straight into the car park from there and down North Street and out on the Balls Cross road for Costrong. The previous visit had been at apple blossom time but here was another crucial point of the year, apples ripening on the trees but not yet gathered. We could see the big wooden crates already placed ready.

There were a lot of people in the yard at Costrong, certainly sixty, probably significantly more, with the tractors ready to pull the long trailers with their straw seats. All meticulously planned as usual. It had been a little doubtful whether the tractors would get round the laden trees but John Nash had decided it was possible. And off we went, the Cox still greenish but

looking promising. Worcesters to come off Wednesday if the rain held off. Small rosy fruits of Michaelmas Red - not so often grown today. The Blenheims were having an "off" year, John said. This variety is very biennial in its cropping. The Blenheims were old trees growing the traditional way with plenty of space, trees are now planted ever closer together. Pickers were a regular force but could come from some distance. Pears and plums too - fruit where on our previous trip we had seen only blossom. John explained "Stringfellowing", planting by cutting off the roots of the young tree and just stabbing it into the ground. A recipe for disaster on the face of it but in fact it works as well as, in fact rather better than orthodox planting and is much quicker. It was an old idea from the 1920s that had only recently come into its own.

Over the road we saw the rare varieties. It's a relatively new departure and not all have cropped yet. John stressed that they have to be worthwhile commercially. They're then sold in the farm shop. Numbers aren't sufficient to interest supermarkets, although I suspect that public taste will eventually cry out for the extra variety of taste and texture that they provide. They're all grown on modern rootstock, it's not a museum concept John stressed. Court Pendu Plat, Bess Pool, named after an innkeeper's daughter, Petworth's own Lady Sudeley or the local D'Arcy Spice. Time to look round the farm shop then back to Costrong farmhouse where Sally had laid on tea. The wind blew the scudding clouds, but, yes, the weather had been kind after all.

P.

Some of the walkers at Barlavington. Others were in church. Photograph by Pearl Godsmark.

Audrey's September Walk

To Sutton, parking in the field behind the churchyard. Stubble and a view to the Downs, the merest hint of autumn in the trees, that green when you sense the sap has flowed its last but there's no change in colour. Two new graves in the immemorial churchyard and a cascade of wreaths in the autumn sunshine. At the end of the churchyard a single gravestone pointing toward Mecca. Some remembered him from a few years ago, a gentle quiet man now lying in a faraway green land. Down into Sutton Street, how many Garland photographs (and earlier) there are of the folk dancers threading their way through here. Just phantoms now. A large bed of begonias defied the advancing season and gleamed in the brittle sunlight, they could almost have been of plastic. Sharp right through a curious footpath that led eventually between two parts of a single garden and back to the stubble field where we were parked. Petworth, lit by the sun, lay away at the end of the landscape. Looking toward the Downs three deer were bounding across a distant stubble. We walked beside a stream, admiring a massive oak with the spidery excrescences that seem to indicate long-standing, almost like the whiskers of one of George Garland's old rustics. Over the stream and up a steep meadow, it wasn't long before we were approaching Barlavington from the rear. A church in a farmyard, we seemed almost to be echoing Eliot's magi. A running stream we had certainly seen but there was no water-mill here! Into the church, a memorial to a Victorian pioneer in the "backblocks" of New Zealand. The Bragg family had left a mark here, how well many of us remembered Jimmy and Ailsa from early Society days. Out in the churchyard a huge tree trunk had been carved into a seat. We got some of the group to sit in it for a photograph. Down a narrow path and out on to Folly Lane, one eye on the traffic, the wind sissing in the high trees and vermilion apples in the road or lying on the steep bank. Attractive they seemed but were so bitter to the taste they must have been cider apples. Left up a path with the sticky marly clay of the Downs and along again by the stubble fields. Time for a look round Sutton Church. It's beautifully decorated. Someone clearly cares. Not too long a walk - just right.

P.

Not-so-shaggy dog stories

The first meeting of the Autumn was informed and entertained by John Rosser, the Chichester District Council's Senior Dog Control Officer, more familiarly known as "the Dog Warden" and his assistant, Sarah Eglen. They also mounted an excellent photographic display of their activities. John, who contributed an article 'Dog Days' in September's magazine, is well-known as an ex-policeman in Petworth, having been selected as a dog-handler 25 years ago, and Sarah has 7 years' experience as a veterinary nurse. Their duties with the Council's Environmental Health Dept. arise from legislation laid down in the Environmental Protection Act, 1990. Details of dog law are given in the rotection of Animals Act and further guidelines in the Dangerous Dogs Act of 1992. Control of strays and investigation into various forms of dog

nuisance, including fouling, feature in most of the work but people experiencing problems with other animals also ask for help and advice.

Mr Rosser feels that dog owners should be more aware of the implications of the Protection of Animals Act and gave useful explanations of why dogs become "problems" and questions prospective owners should consider before taking on the responsibility. Strays cause accidents and fouling is not only unpleasant but dangerous and even allowing a dog to lick a person's face can result in passing on disease, especially to young children. He gave an amusing as well as useful, demonstration of devices available for the safe disposal of dog faeces. He considers the Dangerous Dogs Act an excellent measure and despite initial difficulties of interpretation and definition, believes that its implementation has settled down to fulfil a need arising from recent increases in dog-fighting, badger-baiting and a desire to breed in and train for aggression in dogs by a minority of owners.

John came to appreciate the true worth of dogs in his work as a handler; their outstanding senses of smell and hearing (eyesight less so, perhaps) and Sarah's experience with sick and injured animals make them an ideal team to serve the public and the best interests of dogs. By and large, people are caring owners, but it seems that many view their pets as fellow humans rather than as simple animals, simple to train and look after, but with their own special needs.

KCT

The 4th Garland Memorial Lecture

The 4th Garland Memorial Lecture was given by Mr Kim Leslie of the West Sussex County Records Office. His subject was the life and work of Hilaire Belloc, whose spirit and sensitivity in detecting and recording the passing of a way of life was shared and complemented by George Garland in his photography.

Born of a French father and English mother just outside Paris in 1870, Hilaire Belloc was brought to England at an early age, his father having died. He attended school in Hampstead and then in Edgbaston, Birmingham, returning to France for holidays. After serving in the French Artillery and travelling to the United States, he became a brilliant scholar at Balliol College, Oxford, where he was President of the Oxford Union. Had he achieved his ambition of being elected a Fellow at Oxford, his career would been restricted to the academic world, but he failed at interview and embarked on wide-ranging projects to earn a living. He was never wealthy. He wrote 50 books, thousands of articles and gave thousands of lectures. He became a Liberal M.P. He recorded Sussex, wrote poetry, novels, books on history, travel, economics, religion (he was a prominent Roman Catholic), songs and music, but no plays. A man of great energy, not only as a writer but as a walker, his greatest walk being from France to Rome, during which his bravado and lack of equipment led him into several life-threatening situations. When writing about military history, he would visit battle sites to gain a personal insight into the scene, taking measurements and sightings with a theodolite. He saw history in the context of

landscape. His work led him to realise that a way of life in his adopted county of Sussex, and indeed in the country as a whole, was threatened by three growing influences: the internal combustion engine - he proposed motorways in 1910 to save villages and landscapes from the motor car; schools, by teaching a uniformity of thought and language; wireless and principally the BBC for the same reasons. In the 1936 edition of his book "The County of Sussex", he explains "the way to see what is left of the County" and Garland's photography reflected these developments as they took place in the 1920s and 30s.

Belloc's childhood Sussex homes were in Slindon in the heart of the Downs, but after marrying he bought Shipley Mill and 5 acres in 1906 - in the Weald, but still with views of the distant Downs. Here he lived without a telephone or electric light, but handy for Southwater and Horsham stations for frequent trips to London. He loved sailing and kept a boat at Littlehampton. G.K. Chesterton was a friend and illustrated some of his books. His wife died in 1914, after which he always wore black. He suffered a stroke in 1942 and through the long years until his death in 1953 he would "sit with an air of bewilderment". A sad end to a remarkable life.

KCT.

The Petworth Edwardians at the Leconfield Hall

Today's grandparents tend to have more vitality than their forebears. The Petworth Edwardians XI (10 on stage, one at the piano) included five grandmothers and three grandfathers in their team of entertainers at the Leconfield Hall on Friday and Saturday. Reinforced by "Young Edwardians" - grandchildren among them - and the Kirdford Players drama group, the Edwardians raised almost £500 towards the cost of the Leconfield Hall restorations that currently dominate the heart of Petworth. "We're very happy with that, and very grateful to everyone who took part" says Peter Jerrome, chairman of the Leconfield Hall committee.

Perhaps slightly stronger in the first half than the second, the programme was admirable in its variety, balance, and level of performance. Essentially the show was a brightly-costumed reminder of the old music hall days, when popular ballads had tunes and comprehensible, well-remembered lyrics. But the Edwardians also ventured, with imagination and verve, into another Edwardian era, that of Edward VIII, which coincided with the musical reign of Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, and the "swing era" in general. This sortie into the "pop" music of the late 1930s and the 1940s included piano and clarinet solos in tune with the period.

The show's simmering sense of fun came openly to the boil in the presence of the Kirdford Players - whose neatly scripted, orchestrated chaos was based on a choral rehearsal that never actually happened - and that of one of the two postmen in the cast, who gave us an engaging blend of Irish jokes and local anecdotes. Two postmen in a cast of 11 Edwardians? That has to tell us something about postmen.

But in the absence of Thespian dogs it was probably inevitable that to some extent the attractively costumed "Young Edwardians" should steal the show with their group of songs. Two in particular seemed born to tread the stage. The future of The Edwardians looks promising.

On and off stage, everyone had fun - and that, plus the fund-raising aspect, was the object of the exercise.

Rex Bellamy

Ian and Pearl's Ebernoe Walk. 30th October

The weather forecast was gloomy, the only thing you could say that the weather couldn't actually be worse than the forecast. In the event it was exactly as forecast - atrocious! Despite this an intrepid band of some couple of dozen prospective walkers were ready to go, not disheartened by the driving rain sweeping across the car park. Ian thought it fair, in view of the weather to go to Ebernoe Church and then enquire if anyone simply wanted to go back to the farm at Langhurst Hill for the afternoon. It was as bad as that. Tradition however had to be taken into consideration, no Society walk has ever been called off. Nor was this one - opinion was unanimous at Ebernoe Church. Yellow puddles in the clay of the lane, yellow leaves everywhere. Across the road and into the woods, a footpath in the middle of a field. Bittlesham pulled down in the 1950s, we had been here before with Riley Shotter some four years and more ago. So often new walks take in parts of old ones. Blackening bracken, first Freehold Farm then Pheasant Court and a track leading away to the Northchapel Road. We veered off to the left, single file along a path that Ian said was quite dry last week. Now the water came down in rivulets over the clay. The leaves were falling quickly. A bush with scarlet haws had lost all its leaves. The "Street" at Colhook away to the left and the rain stopped. It was very warm and the wind had stilled. "We've had worse weather for walks than this", we decided. Across Colhook Street and back through lush grass. The rain began again with renewed fury. Back on to the Ebernoe Road just the other side of the cricket ground. Looking at the sodden grass summer already seemed an age away. To the cars now and the shelter of Langhurst Hill, Ruby and John as welcoming as they always are. The table loaded for tea - then time for Ian and Pearl's slides, a year of the Society beginning in that same room at Langhurst Hill last year. So many things, walks and events and the usual feeling of a natural stop - until we walk again in February.

P.

In the land of the wild service

Nick thought Medhone would be a good place for plants; he had seen wild service trees there in the winter. Left on the incline at Fox Hill, down a rather better track than we might have expected and to the edge of Pondtail Copse. A circular walk via Crawfold. Nick was soon looking at the edge of a stubble field, plenty of mayweed, predictably enough, but also more unassuming plants like field madder, swine cress (coronopus squamatus) ground-hugging and spreading, and parsley piert, a humble relation of the Alchemila mollis so often seen in flower arrangers' gardens. Here too was heartsease, the wild pansy, with its tiny yellow pansy flowers.

To our left as we walked along the track the sweet chestnut coppice seemed to have grown very tall. Perhaps it wasn't cut any longer. The roadside hedge itself offered a good mixture of varieties, quite a few spindle boles, field maple, holly, ash, goat willow and many more besides. The blackberries were turning colour quickly now. By an open field entrance there were masses of common fleabane, yellow daisy heads and hairy leaves. At some time, we supposed, the plant had been used to deter fleas. Gerard in his Herbal, identified it with a plant Dioscurides claimed drove away fleas and midge!

The public footpath offered a right turn and we entered woodland with a view through to meadows on the right. There was every indication that the woodland was ancient. Nick said there were some hundred plants that indicate this type of woodland and some thirty in one specific area create a strong probability that the wood is old. The dainty bents of wood millett were a start. Nick soon found his wild service trees again, not yet mature but relatively numerous. Sorbus torminalis is a unusual plant found only on clay or limestone and only in the south. Florence Rapley mentions the wild service twice in her diary - in May and August 1912. On May 27th she and her son Walt go to Hoes farm for batchelor's buttons (probably Silene alba the white campion) and to the river and the copse for wild service flowers. Perhaps they wanted a white bouquet. On August 31st she goes down to the river to pick the "annual amount of wild service berries". The acid fruits were known to the Victorians as "chequers" but were so tart that they were, like medlars, only edible when they had half rotted. Probably those we saw were too young to flower. They were certainly present in respectable numbers and we wondered if they had been planted (it didn't look like it) or had colonised since the 1987 hurricane. They seemed a little too large for this.

Signs of the hurricane were still clear enough in the woods. A huge clump of herb robert grew where the soil had gathered in a hollow on a fallen trunk. There was no shortage of ancient woodland indicators: Nick thought that thirty would be quite easy to find if we had time to set about it. The clay paths were at times very deeply rutted, even after the dry spell, and we wondered if these paths had dried out in the summer of 1976. Under the canopy of trees there was a profusion of plants and predictably a predominance of green. Many of these plants were certainly ancient woodland indicators. A rather dilapidated wood melic, could a plant be described as "dilapidated" we wondered. Water pepper with its bitter ruddy leaves hugging the centre of the path. Varied ferns too, male, female and broad buckler for a start. Bugle had been plentiful here, another ancient woodland indicator if taken in conjunction with other species.

We came out of the woods into a kind of clearing, where the pylons had cut a great swathe cut of the woodland. Here with the tree canopy removed, all kinds of plants had a chance to grow. In a similar context, in Stag Park, the grass was roughly cut to protect the less invasive species. It was decidedly damp at one edge of the path and here Devil's bit scabious grew in some profusion. The truncated root had been bitten off by no less a personage than the Devil himself said the legend. We wondered why he had chosen a scabious. The purple heads blew in the slight breeze, the colour being intensified by the ruddy violet of the anthers. Corn mint was another plant flourishing in this impromptu sanctuary. Where it was less damp eyebright grew and the inconspicuous pink flowers of the red bartsia - this latter a sign of the declining season Nick said.

Back into the woods; clearly there had been bluebells here in great profusion. This would be a good walk for late spring. Honeysuckle, wood spurge, enchanter's nightshade and tutsan, a variety of hypericum, most if not all, good indicators of ancient woodland. The clay ruts still held water after a dry August.

The woods gave way eventually to a path between fields. Here was a sluggish culvert with whirligig beetles dancing on the surface, congregating where the sun shone on the water. Some late campion and the beautiful heads of tufted hair grass. The footpath veered round the rear of Crawfold. "Cravel" the old Sussex dialect had called it. Would that be an affectation now where "Crawfold" would have seemed an affectation then? We didn't know.

Turning before Crawfold a hedge bounded a wide path with a maize field on the right. The hedge was fall of wild roses and we noted a huge example of Robin's pincushion - a gall that attacks wild roses much as the oak apple the oak. The gall was indeed like a pincushion. In the wide space at the field's edge were wild madder, field madder again, and plantain growing "free-range", a foot or more high rather than squashed down into a lawn where they're usually seen. There was a derelict cottage in the fields, brambles climbing the walls, the garden high in grass, forlorn apple trees and the glimpse of a copper through a non-existent outhouse window. We walked back up the track, past the turning to Blackbrook, then past the turning to Bennyfold, Jack Purser's old stronghold. Blackberries were ripening quickly now, fragrant agrimony already going over - crush the leaf to smell the fragrance - and the pure white trumpets of convulvulus glaring in the hedgerow. The pale pink heads of hemp agrimony almost suggested the downland chalk. But here we were on this day of sun and wind-blown cloud, back at Pondtail Copse.

P.

Nick Sturt will be talking to the Society in February.

With the Toronto Scottish in Pheasant Copse

We were the first troops into the Pheasant Copse and we found it laid out for us in advance, Nissen huts under a woodland cover. There were basically only Toronto Scottish in the Pheasant Copse, some 700 troops to begin with, four companies with an H.Q. Co. We were

a support regiment armed with Vickers machine guns and with a full title of Toronto Scottish MG Regiment. During our time at Petworth our strength was increased to 1200 men and the machine gun companies reduced from four to three, B, C, and D companies remaining but A becoming a 4.2 mortar company. There was some talk of us also having an anti-aircraft company but this never materialised. Some of us went to Dieppe as support but not all of us and I didn't go myself.

I had some training at Tangmere, going out on flights sitting in the observation cockpit but I was soon sent to Bordon to take a six-week mortar course. I did well enough to be seconded from the regiment to instruct at Bordon with the proviso that when we went to France I could rejoin the regiment. At weekends I'd motor-bike over to Petworth to be with my friends. I remember wanting to fail two of our officers who came on the mortar course and being told I couldn't fail officers. If I didn't have to give them Q1 (distinction) I'd have to give them Q2 (pass). I reluctantly gave them a pass but they knew my feelings and made life a little difficult for me when we moved later to Hove.

You always had an awareness of possible bombs in the Pheasant Copse as in fact you had anywhere at that time. I remember a Dornier being shot down when we were at Coulsdon earlier. You always thought bombing was precise and pinpoint but in fact it was often quite haphazard, just a retreating bomber unloading before making for home. At the time you always saw a personal element in it.

Every day the N.A.A.F.I. wagon would drive into the Pheasant Copse and the guys would line up for a cup of tea and a cookie. Lord Leconfield would often be about and the first time he went straight to the head of the line. He was soon told to join the queue, which he promptly did. After that he was always invited to the front. I know this is right because I was supervising the queue at the time. The boys saw him quite a lot.

We did have a few platoons from other regiments attached to us for support: one was the 8th Recce. They had very fast cross-terrain vehicles and would go out to have a look at enemy positions prior to an attack. They'd look out for enemy command posts and be at some risk from mines. It was very dangerous work.

As a mortar unit we couldn't practise at Petworth as there was no range big enough. A 2.4 mortar had a shrapnel range of 275 yards from the initial impact. We used to go down to Firle Beacon for practice and were highly trained by the time we got to France.

Perhaps my most vivid Petworth memory is of a church parade at a time when all officers and warrant officers had been called away for a briefing session so that when the parade marched into Petworth from the Pheasant Copse I, being senior sergeant, had to act as R.S.M. to march them up North Street, line abreast and preceded by a full pipe band.

We didn't just go into Petworth for parades, we'd go in of an evening. I hardly drank at all in those days so I had to pick the boys up and bring them home. In fact on this visit I've re-established contact with the girl I used to walk home from the Angel of an evening. Everything seemed so very innocent in those days! She married and moved from Petworth many years ago and I never though I'd ever contact her gain. And, yes, she *was* pleased to hear from me!

Ron Searle was talking to the Editor

[As Ron and Molly Searle left Petworth before this could be checked, there may be the occasional inaccuracy. This is down to the Editor!]

Walk for a Winter Day

A Winter's walk day. Well into December The Christmas Holiday looming: a looking forward-to time of the year. Must be thinking of keep fit to enjoy the festivities and good will just ahead. A country walk .. I have long promised myself a return to Graffham. 'Tis too late for the Autumn colours in the Downland woodlands but we may be accompanied by the odd skittering Crow riding the up winds, going homeward .. A wan sun came through as I parked in the White Horse pub' car park. Slow to be away, the journey here had taken a little longer than I had planned for and I had left myself with little more than an hour winter light to walk in. Down the hill, up the lane through the village, passing the old Post Office, restraining the temptation to help myself to one of the excellent carrots, local grown, on sale by the step .. On around and up the hill between the deep grassy banks in their winter green, too deep for shadows from the lowering Sunset.

The Ancient Pre Norman Church stood splendid, the cedar shingles of the spire stark to the skyline above the dark of the Downs background. I stopped to catch my breath and gazed across the country over the parklands, the woodlands, the heatherlands, away to the distant black hills, in the last of the day.

I heard music. There was a light in the Church that might have been a last ray of the sun creeping down over the roof of the Rectory. The Organist practising on the run up to Christmas? Normally I might have hesitated to go into a darkening Church. A Claustrophobia .. The Spirits live in these hideaway places. The Church was full of music, a Christmas Voluntary.. Something of the Messiah? A familiar Carol came through a background laughter of young ladies, I do not really know .. but a happy vision of The Dickens Spirit of Christmas reassured me.

Propping my stick against the wall by the entrance door, I slipped quietly into a pew, and relaxed to enjoy the music. There was little light. Just the single candle burning by the altar. How long I do not know but I began to feel very alone in a dark Church. The music faded away and I was suddenly alerted .. to silence .. Looking around .. no lighted organ loft .. No sign of where the music might have come from .. There was no One there! With some apprehension .. Do I go? Do I stay?

The candle flickered, on a draught, and seemed to fade, such shadow that it had cast, lengthened .. I was surrounded by a deep silence .. in near darkness. I felt an icy cold breeze upon the back of my neck and with some alarm thought that I must be on my way .. I was suddenly conscious that I was cold .. it was mid Winter, the Church was reckonably, not heated ... but the temperature had dropped. Probably imagination. I heard the ringing of a bell and a loud summoning voice. Away in the depth of the darkness the music started again, quietly, quite different, rising in a gentle crescendo. A long Horn note, a melody, a roll of drum .. Familiar .. Yes .. Horns .. Arrival?

The Dvorak The 5th The New World .. I shivered and felt warm again as though a warm wind in from sun baked plains swept away the icy blast of minutes previous .. I stood rooted to the spot, listening, swept along with it .. I was being carried out, away into the Plantations of the Deep South ... "Going Home, Goin' Home .. Ahm just goin' Home .. the Negro Slave

Folk song .. the melodious music but all the pathos, the deprivation, the poverty, the wretchedness, the long hard backbreaking toil under the Overseer's whip and gun, in hovel living, on inadequate food. The Slave Market where they were bought and sold on the ring of a bell ...

The music swept on to a trilling of pipes and deep throb of drums, bringing the melody in, on a lighter, stronger plane, a promise of "I have a Dream ..." and what the Generations to follow will bring to the World, to the Seats of Power, Command, Opera, Sport ...

The trumpets sound into the final movement .. I reached for the torch in my pack, "Notes on the Church of Saint Giles ... 10." I hastily put a coin in the box, tucked the notes into my pocket and not forgetting my stick alean against the Church wall, gripping it firmly, something bemused, I hurried into the dark lane, back to my car. Thinking about this experience, going home. ..

The next day I retrieved the Notes from my poachers pocket ..

"The Architect who was responsible for the "new look" was blessed with an unenviable reputation for most of his work but St. Giles is one of his happier inspirations. The Church here retains that atmosphere of antiquity so often lost in a drastic restoration ..."

"As a Memorial to Bishop Samuel Wilberforce (of Oxford and then Winchester) who was Lord of the Manor, Resident in Lavington Park House, and Son of William Wilberforce, famous for His anti-slavery campaign ....."

John Francis

The Gilbert White of Sussex

Major Arthur Edward Knox (1816-1886), known as the 'Gilbert White of Sussex', made his name (as did the parson-naturalist of Selborne) with a book: *Ornithological Rambles in Sussex,* published in 1849.

A member of an old Anglo-Irish family, Knox owned considerable estates in Co Mayo but for nearly forty years spent most of his time in Sussex: briefly at George House, Petworth, and then at the lovely Trotton Place, four miles west of Midhurst.

No greater contrast can be imagined: Castle Rea, Knox's ancestral seat, was a large, partly battlemented house in bleak countryside near Killala Bay, where a French invasion force had landed in 1798. Trotton, on the other hand, is a typically English village, peaceful still despite the baleful A272 road.

Knox never owned a house in England. At Petworth he was a Wyndham tenant and at Trotton he had three successive landlords, one of them the redoubtable diarist and horticulturist, lady Dorothy Nevill who, inexplicably, refers to Knox in her diaries as 'a curious old *clergyman*'. His heart was certainly in Sussex, rather than at Castle Rea, which he inherited when his father died, at an advanced age, in 1862.

During a brief career in the Life Guards, Knox married Lady Jane Parsons, sister of the third Earl of Rosse, an astronomical pioneer who constructed on his Irish estate what was, until

1917, the largest reflecting telescope in the world. Retiring from the army, Knox devoted himself to country life. An enthusiastic field sportsman, he was also (like many sportsmen) a keen conservationist, although somewhat before his time in his desire to protect wild birds, as two entries from the *Rambles* will show.

> Referring to the owls that roosted in the roof of Trotton Place, he wrote:
> I cannot help indulging the hope that this bird will eventually meet with that general encouragement and protection to which its eminent services so richly entitle it.

On another occasion, he stopped the extinction of the Petworth ravens, which had nested for generations in a clump of trees in the park. The keepers and local boys had all but destroyed the colony and Knox, who would come every day to observe them through his field-glasses, was in despair. At length, he sought out the boy who had removed the squabs from the last nest and, persuading him to give up one young bird whose wings had not yet been clipped, returned it to the ruined nest. The following morning the parent birds were to be seen, feeding the prodigal. There was no further molestation.

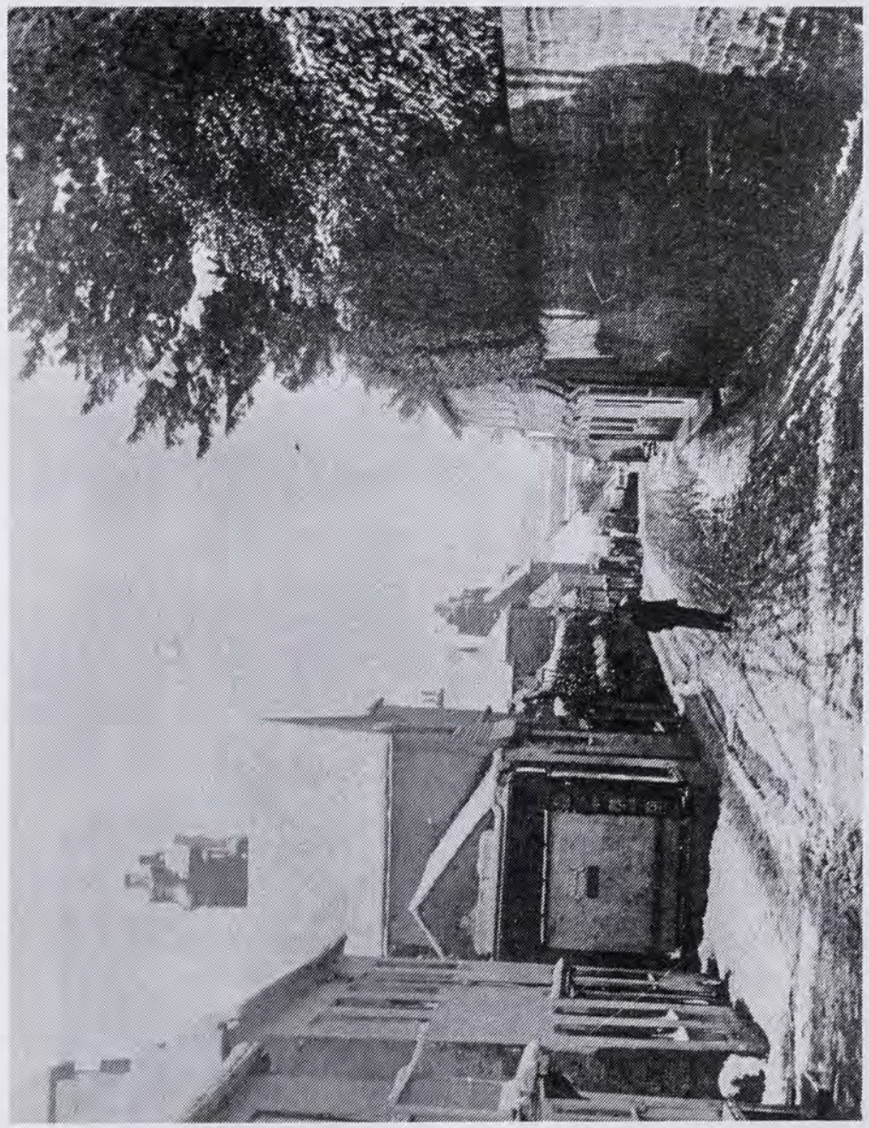
In common with Gilbert White, Knox possesses the countryman's ear and eye for the minutiae of rural life. The *Rambles* evokes a Sussex scene both changed and unchanging: for instance, Knox regrets the gradual cultivation of land in the Arun Valley, destroying the haunt of the bittern and '... many a rare species whose occurrence, like the visits of an angel, can now be recorded as 'few and far between' ...' Then, almost in the same breath, he offers what must be one of the most evocative passages ever written on the South Downs:

> The very air that you breathe, fresh from the altitude of the spot, and mingled, as it is, with the sea-breeze, is far more exhilarating than any artificial compound which your flask can furnish. Down after Down swells around you, their smooth sides dotted with the evergreen holly and juniper, or varied with larger patches of golden gorse; while the steep slopes which bound the intermediate valleys are clothed with hanging beech woods, whose irregular forms relieve the undulating outlines of the Downs, and the rich and varied tints of the autumnal foliage are blended into that beautiful harmony of colours which Nature alone can combine ...

The *Rambles* was not Knox's only work: others included *Autumns on the Spey*, recalling fishing holidays in Scotland; but the *Rambles* captured the Victorian and Edwardian imagination. Knox wrote with perception and E.V. Lucas was correct when he said that the *Rambles* was 'one of the few books worthy to stand beside the *Natural History of Selborne* ... guns were active enough in Knox's time, but to read his book today [1904] is to be translated to a new land ...'

Knox's literary abilities were obviously inherited by his son, Laurence (1837-1873) who, at the age of twenty-two, founded the *Irish Times*. It appeared at a boom time for Irish newspaper publishing and, against all odds, survived to become a respected institution.

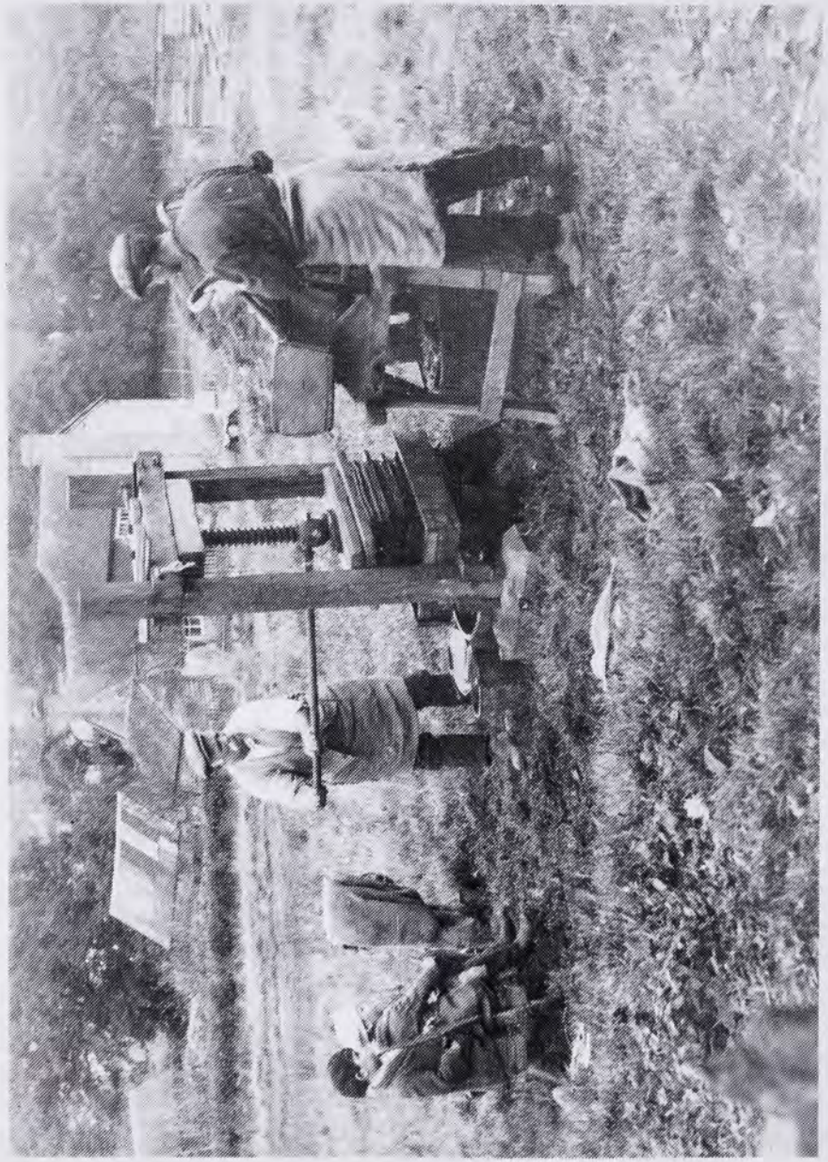
Lady Jane Knox died in 1883, and was buried at Trotton. Arthur Knox followed her in 1886, dying at Dale Park, near Madehurst, the home of his son-in-law, Charles Fletcher. Fletcher's father, né John Jack, was a Scottish Merchant who made a fortune in Peru and bought Dale Park from the Smith family.



Early century Pound Street.

These George Garland pictures were taken during the 1914-1918 war.
Does anyone recognise the places or the people?
George Garland himself is the figure on the left of the right hand picture.

George Garland (centre) on the old cathedral steps at Wells.
Easter 1922.
The two other men are unidentified.
WSRO 1029.



The "Broom-Squires" cidermaking at Hillgrove in the mid-1930s
Photograph by G.G. Garland.

Another Knox daughter, Alice, is buried beside her parents at Trotton, together with her husband, General Horace Newton, and daughter, Alice, who was brought to the family plot from Brighton in 1906. Castle Rea has long been demolished, but George House and Trotton Place stand to delight the eye and to recall their amiable tenant who, like so many settlers in Sussex, before and after him, fell in love with the South Downs country.

Roger Chatterton-Newman

The 'Broom-Squire' of Hillgrove
I A Garland 'Character' 1958

Many old country crafts are dying; many have already died; but fortunately the making of birch brooms - besoms, as they are called in West Sussex - is far from dying, for the birch broom is still widely used throughout the country. No farmhouse or country cottage is complete without a birch broom standing about the place, and the production of them is still in the hands of the few remaining individual country craftsmen.

Broom makers are few and far between these days, but out in the secluded hamlet of Hillgrove, lying beneath the shadow of Blackdown hill, where Tennyson once lived, and walked, and wrote his poetry to charm the Victorians, lives 61 year old Jim Bicknell, one of the few remaining craftsmen of this kind, who follows in his father's footsteps as a woodland craftsman, and who is well qualified for the old title of "Broom Squire".

If you ask Jim what he does for a living he will tell you, with a twinkle in his eye, "Anything to earn an honest shilling", and this includes various other forms of woodland work - and the seasonal making of Sussex cider, for which he is famous over a wide area.

Tucked away in a hollow, with the slopes rising around it, is the Sussex cottage where Jim lives, and where his father lived before him. It was Jim's inheritance when his father died.

Our Sussex broom maker buys all the copse wood he can from cutters, but he also buys pieces of standing copse wood, and cuts it himself.

There is more to broom making than just bundling together a bunch of twigs. The broom must be made from young twiggy birch, and must have a pliancy which will sweep well. The broom must be neither too hard nor too brittle and so, according to the vagaries of the season, the broom maker has to determine just where and when to cut his birch.

Jim Bicknell's home produced wares are sought after by shops and private customers from over a wide area, and many of his besoms will be found in many a Surrey garden, because shops in Guildford and Godalming are amongst his regular customers.

From: Garland, Petworth, Sussex.

The Broom-Squire of Hill Grove
II Reflections 1994

My grandfather Dick Bicknell was a member of the Northchapel Dependants, "Cokelers" if you like, but my father Jim was never one of the brethren. As a boy I'd sometimes go to the chapel with my grandfather. He didn't usually go to the morning service but we would walk down from Hillgrove for afternoon worship. We'd find Dependants who had walked in from some distance already sitting there with their little lunch boxes waiting for the service to begin. My grandmother didn't go at this time because she wasn't well enough. I was quite happy going to chapel with my grandfather but as the Dependants had no printed hymn-books or form of service I found it difficult to join in. The adult Dependants simply knew what to do through years of worship. At Northchapel Parish Church you could follow the service even if you were very young.

Having said that, the Dependants were very good people, many a family, and not just Dependant members themselves, would be given a food-parcel when times were hard and this would often be repeated. Mr "Dickie" Hammond was a nice old man; if on our way home from school we saw one of his sheep lying on their back in the field, we'd turn them over again. "You are some good boys", the old man would say. My grandfather had a good voice and you could hear him singing the old Dependant hymns to himself of an evening, or see him reading his Bible. The family always made cider but I was never sure how this activity fitted in with his being one of the brethren. I think the people at Northchapel just turned a blind eye.

While my father wasn't a member of the Dependants, he bought things like saws and files at the Northchapel Stores. They had their own bakery with four delivery vans in their heyday, a furniture shop, ironmongers, shoeshop and grocery. I remember the butter, lard and margarine being on three separate huge white plates, as big as the top of a small table and needing two men to lift them. Cutting would be with a wooden spatula and quite skilful that was I can tell you.

My grandfather had worked in his early days as a tree-feller and my father went round with him. In later days things were very much based at Hillgrove. We were known as birch-broom makers and both men would spend days making them. Fogwills of Guildford would take a gross or Jones the Godalming ironmongers. The Leconfield Estate too would take them in quantity and a firm, at Littlehampton. They were bundled in twelves. The Leconfield Estate would pick them up with the lorry and I remember my grandfather putting twelve out by the roadside for the lorry to pick up and going back to get another dozen. When he returned the first lot had gone. We never did that again!

Dad would cut the brush in a copse then get Talbots at Northchapel to bring the wood back to Hillgrove to be cut into lengths and dried. To keep it straight we'd lay long heavy pieces of timber on top of it. Both my father and grandfather were referred to as "Broom-Squires" but I was never clear as to the origin of the expression. Dad did all sorts of things, he'd do two days a week gardening in Haslemere, he'd sharpen saws for a shilling - quite a skilled job. You had to keep the blade regular. If a saw was so sharpened that it ended up with "cows and calves", ie differing tooth depths, it was useless. Sharpening was a skilled job. He also cut hair for a shilling at times. My father supplied pea-sticks, bean-sticks and flower stakes and these went out in quantity to ironmongers at some distance. He also made fencing although less so in later years. In the war he made wooden tracks for tanks to run on when the terrain was very uneven. He also had a licence to slaughter pigs and went on with this until the late 1950s. Our own pig would be hung up in the cherry tree at Hillgrove. George Garland's article appears to come from 1958. My father died just a year or two later.

Harry Bicknell was talking to the Editor.

Early days in Pound Street

I was born and christened at Tillington. The vicar's wife was my godmother and she gave me a tiny black prayer book with a golden cross on the front. I've now given it to my eldest daughter but I kept it for well over eighty years. I was myself the eldest of what would eventually be a family of ten and my father was by trade a carpenter. However when I was five my father took the shop in Pound Street (now Davenport Restoration) but before that Caines and then Jerromes. He had it as a greengrocers and confectioners but it had formerly been a boot shop. It was empty when my father began to rent it.

Miss Hiley was at Petworth Infants School when I went there, it was before the 1914-1918 war and I remember getting a good slapping for something and my father coming up to remonstrate with Miss Hiley. I don't know with what success. When I left school I went to work at Eagers in Market Square as an apprentice dressmaker. I had to start at the very beginning and initially I wasn't allowed even to touch the treadle machines on which the work was done. At this time there were about a dozen of us in the workroom and I learned how to do fittings from Miss Whitington. Over the four years I went through all aspects of dressmaking and qualified as a dressmaker. At the same time however, as an eldest daughter I had to help a lot at home.

During the 1914-1918 war we'd go out blackberrying; a black dye was made from them. It wasn't a quality dye and would often fade almost to mauve. The shop sold greengrocery, sweets and tobacco but for a time had a large golden boot over the door, a legacy of its period as a shoe-shop. Eventually the boot was removed. In the little shop next door (now Posh Pets) was a gentleman's tailor, Mr Nevatt. He was a short plump man, very approachable, and he and my father were good friends. Mr Nevatt did a lot of work for Petworth House and for the Hunt. Looking up the road, the present fish shop was Paynes the Butchers and I believe there was a kind of slaughter-house in the yard at the back. Up the road was Miss Fanny Knight's sweetshop, I would often go in there for a penny stick of liquorice or something like that.

My grandfather, who lived to be a hundred all but a fortnight, had a big orchard at River and grew a lot of flowers, polyanthus, African violets, all sorts of things. When my sister Babs and I came home from school we'd often be dispatched to River with trug-baskets to fetch produce to sell in the shop. We had a long pole and we'd put the baskets on the pole and hold one end each. His house was Yew Tree Cottage.

Mum saved up all socks and stockings during the week so that once a week we'd sit down and darn them all. During the war I went to knitting classes: there was a group of ladies who knitted scarves and balaclavas for the troops. We went up to Mrs Rigby's over the road from the shop and up the stairs. Washing we scrubbed on a board using just soap and a bit of soda. You scrubbed till your knuckles were sore. Then you'd put the washing through the mangle, that is if you had one, not too many did. A wringer was a smaller thing altogether.

My father was perhaps an unusual greengrocer in that he didn't like gardening. He had an old "bone-shaker" van and also a "Royal Ruby" motor-cycle with a side-car. He used the van to go to market but would also have produce sent down to Petworth Station for him to collect. We usually ate in the kitchen at the back but at Christmas we always had turkey and cooked it on a spit in the sitting room over an open log fire. My little sister would come to the window that looks into the shop and mouth "Dada" or "Nana" through the glass. If the first it meant she wanted a date, if the second a banana. Bananas we used to ripen off in the cellar.

I met my husband in Petworth Park at one of the Club days that used to be held for the Leconfield Estate Friendly Society. I was there with a group of girls and he came up to me and said, "Miss West, can I take you home tonight?" We were never really apart after that. Club Day was a great place for meeting people as was Petworth Fair. My recollection is that after the Fair finished some of the showmen used to go down to Hampers Common for an extra day or two.

Eventually my father found that the greengrocery simply didn't pay and the family left Petworth. I didn't want to go as my future husband was still here - he worked for a firm of landscape gardeners, going out to jobs on his push-bike. I went to work as a cook for Mr Colvin at Tillington Cottage, an artist. Meanwhile I stayed at Hill Top, Tillington with my aunt. After I'd cooked the last meal of the day I'd be allowed out for an hour to meet my future husband.

Mrs Rapson was talking to the Editor.

On the Fringes of the Garland Collection ... some Reflections on Garland Negatives 1-1068

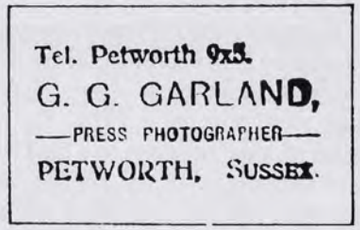
George Garland's earliest negatives, numbering up to about 2000 and dating from early 1922 to, perhaps, the summer of 1929 have always formed to an extent a race apart. Unlike the great mass of negatives that run through to the late 1960s, they are seriously incomplete particularly in the first thousand or so. The negatives are individually numbered but many numbers are missing. As they survive at present they seem to be either the result of a single drastic revision and rejection of negatives, or, more probably, the end product of a longer process of such revision and rejection.

The negatives to 1929 need however to be further subdivided and it is Nos. 1-1068 which form a separate independent group that are the subject of the article. 1-1068 have themselves been subjected to a drastic re-ordering in January 1928. This collection was then severely culled at a later stage, possibly in 1929. The culling seems to have had two distinct facets: the relegation of some negatives to a kind of reserve status outside the main collection and the complete discarding of others. The first category have to an uncertain extent survived, although not at present officially catalogued, while those actually discarded can be known only from random surviving prints at Petworth House or unique copies in private hands. The number involved in these two categories is some 350, about a third of the total. What distinguishes 1-1068 from all other Garland negatives is the mode of ordering them: where all negatives after 1068 are enumerated according to a system that, given the very occasional vagary, is relentlessly chronological, the arrangement of 1-1068 is not chronological at all but alphabetical under subjects. Negative 1 (in fact a reserve) is Lady Ursula *Abb*ey and comes from 1927 while *Amb*erley Castle (1925) and *Brac*ken Cutting (1922) are numbers 18 and 123 respectively. It may be conjectured that the impetus for this re-ordering, clearly undertaken in January 1928, comes either from the building of the Station Road Studio which gave Garland an effective base for the first time, or the considerable organising ability of Miss Knight who would become Mrs Garland in June 1928. There may well be a combination of both factors.

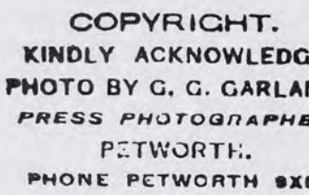
Sources for 1-1068 are as follows:

1. The provisional West Sussex Record Office catalogue of all Garland negatives. This monumental effort is based on the negatives in the present collection. Given its terms of reference it does not enquire into negatives that are no longer extant nor does it at present deal with "reserve" negatives. [WSRO]
2. A handwritten lever-arch file, probably begun by Mrs Garland in 1928 and continuing to the mid-1930s when it was probably superseded by a card catalogue. This is important because it is possible to some extent to reconstruct from this file the original negatives that formed 1-1068 and check against existing prints and newspaper cuttings. [File]
3. George Garland's newspaper cutting books. Three are relevant here: one running from January 17th 1922 to December 19th 1924, a second running from December 26th 1924 to April 20th 1927 and part of a third book (newly rediscovered) which runs from 9th May 1927 to 6th September 1929. The cutting books record pictures sold to the press and usually give a cutting (occasionally an original print) showing the relevant picture and the amount received. [Press Books]
4. Prints either at Petworth House or in private hands. Like most photographers Garland kept a library of spare prints which he could draw upon at short notice to service a newspaper story. These are in boxes under general headings but are not sorted except very broadly by subject matter. Sometimes a print carries a negative number but more often it does not, and it is difficult to decide whether or not a particular print matches a negative in the file. A pointer to an early print is the stamp on the back but this is not an infallible indicator; old stamps do not seem to have been taken out of use immediately a fresh one came into the Studio. Early examples of Garland stamps are

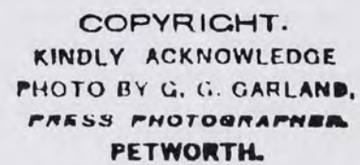
1) Earliest of all: 1922



2) Early: 1923 - (uncommon)



3) Early, mid 1920s



4) Late 1920s, early 1930s

Looking at the handwritten file it is possible to suggest why some negatives were retained and others discarded, but this will always be a somewhat subjective exercise. Allington Rogation Service (13,15), Army Manoeuvres (20-3) and Balls Cross football Team (38,39) are three early casualties. Allington may be remote, the manoeuvres ephemeral in their interest and the football picture unlikely to be re-ordered. More predictable perhaps is the jettisoning of a significant number of portraits. Some series of pictures have been drastically cut so that just a single representative picture remains in WSRO. So Reuben Baker's wedding [WSRO 33] originally comprised five numbered negatives. The position is the same with the Beech-Upton wedding of 1922 [WSRO 143] where a single negative survives from an original four. As a matter of interest, the Allington pictures seem completely lost, one faded cutting of the manoeuvres (in Lavington Park) appears in the Press Books, while the Balls Cross F.C. picture may survive in a copy of a print loaned some years ago to the present writer.

It is one thing to check random prints with the file and attempt to reconstruct the original outline of 1-1068, but quite another to suppose that the 1928 rearrangement represents anything other than a comparatively late stage in the ordering of Garland's early material. Even the most casual glance at the Press Books shows this clearly.

The first picture in the Press Books is, predictably enough, a print of the accident at Coultershaw Bridge in January 1922 when a paint lorry went over the parapet. George Garland always spoke of this with some affection as his first success in placing a picture with the national press, and neatly enough, these pictures figure as WSRO 236 and 237. What neither WSRO, File or Press Books lead us to expect is another quite different print of the aftermath of the accident, held in private hands, stamped by Garland and known only by the awkward but indisputable fact of its existence! Clearly this had been discarded *before* the revision of 1928 because there is no room for it in the WSRO sequence of numbers. The next photograph in the

book is of a fire (February 1922) at the Olympia Picture Theatre at Chichester. Again no other negative is known and no other print. A flood picture showing Lombardy poplars at Pulborough may be taken from an identical vantage point to later shots but this is irrelevant for present purposes. We have again a "unique" copy. The meeting of the Sussex County Coursing Club (March 1922) and the Horsham Shopping Carnival (April 1922) have three browning newspaper cuttings for each event but no counterpart either in WSRO or the file. There is however no consistent pattern: while the famous study of John Ashley, the Lancashire clogmaker working alder in Burton Park (April 1922) survives as WSRO 223, Mr. Perry's Southdown Tegs from Netherlands Farm, prize-winners at Barnham Easter Market in 1922, are known only as a print (and a cutting) pasted into the Press Book. A study of a Saunderson Model G tractor arriving at Old Coultershaw Mill is extant as a print but not as a negative. A young girl with a Victorian-type shawl climbing the wooden stairs to Bignor shop is one of the pair WSRO 152,153 but a cutting showing Petworth Ploughing Match in 1922 is no doubt just one of a number now lost. The first extant Garland photographs of this event come from 1923. A late autumn cutting shows ferreting on a Sussex farm but no negative survives. In fact is it not, as far as I know, something Garland ever photographed again. Jack Moase and Roland Carver cutting bracken however occurs as WSRO 123.

F.R. Growcott with Shakespeare Caravan 1924 (WSRO 399)
Can anyone explain this picture?

The pattern is similar for 1923. A portrait of Charles Spring, long-serving clerk at Midhurst Magistrates' Court, survives in print form but not as a negative as does a similar portrait of Thomas Payne, long-serving, and by this time, nonagenarian post-master at Balls Cross. The Press Book offers however quite different cuttings showing Payne at work in the Post Office and delivering letters, while the present writer has yet another completely different print copied from a postcard in private hands. All these were no doubt originally part of the same cluster of pictures. There is no trace of any of this material amongst the spare prints at Petworth House. This journey through the Press Books could be continued until 1928 but the foregoing is sufficient to show that as a guide to Garland's early work the present outline of 1-1068, even when reconstructed from the file, cannot be taken as a reliable guide to Garland's earliest work.

A feature of this period and one that virtually dies out by the early 1930s are immaculately printed photographs of local gentry, or sometimes house-party guests at Petworth House, seen at certain prestigious local events, pre-eminently the meet, but to a lesser extent at coursing meetings, ploughing matches and agricultural shows. These pictures hold a curious fascination now; for the world they portray, like the elegant figures that inhabited it, is irrevocably dead. Here was a narrow world, tightly closed to the outsider, and rejoicing in its self-declared differentia. Here was a world that, though it did not realise it, was as dependent on Garland for the regulation appearance in Eve, The Bystander, The Tatler or The Queen as Garland himself was for the income such pictures generated. The impression is of a group of people incarcerated in a social prison whose door they had locked fast behind them.

Garland's work in the 1920s in fact reflects the social division of the age and occupies no middle ground. It flits uneasily between different extremes, from an ever more rarefied social round, doomed to perish of its own lack of haleine, to the harsh world of pre-machine agriculture. WSRO 235 comes form 1923 and features Edward Cooper "who has worked on the same farm for 57 years" - the first in a long line of Garland "characters" - a trickle in the early 1920s that becomes a flood in the 1930s and dies with the outbreak of war in 1939.

The series 1-1068 is notable for some very large lacunae. Very few of the numerous "bathing" negatives now remain. Taken at Bognor or Littlehampton these shots with their slightly risque ambience foreshadow the equally "daring" hiking shots of the late 1920s and early 1930s. "Bury Hill" (101-107) may be represented by the occasional unique print but there are no negatives and the same is largely true of 350-369, floods at Pulborough and Stopham. It is not clear why virtually all, rather than some, of these negatives should have been discarded.

Even from this short account it is clear that beneath the apparent simplicity of the present ordering of 1-1068 there lurks a far more fluid complex of lost negatives and unique copies. A further thought: we know that George Garland had, even if sporadically, been taking photographs from 1915 onwards: a mutilated album with a few Brownie snapshots confirms this. We know too that Garland's continuing friendship with the Franciscans at Duncton was probably the catalyst for this interest. But is January 1922 the true starting-point for his work? A picture of Rotherbridge water-wheel (Magazine 70 pp 36) could well be earlier as also another picture of haying at Rotherbridge. Dating will always be difficult as also, if there is no stamp on the back, will be authenticity. A picture of old Coultershaw Mill is extant with a stamp of the late 1920s, early 1930s on the back. This is clearly nonsensical: the old mill was burned

down in 1923. Is this a very early Garland picture? If it is it cannot be later than 1923. Or is it a copy of an earlier picture not by Garland at all? Or there is a mounted print showing a Petworth Mothers' Union Group at Westways. The stamp is early and there is no indication of such a negative in the file. This again is a copy in private hands. Another clog-making picture, again in private hands, is clearly linked to WSRO 223 but shows two quite different clogmakers and a different location. A postcard from 1923 of Sutton Revels may be Garland's while the cutting book has a photograph from 1924 and there will have been others. Again there is no mention of these in either WSRO or file. Given the vast ocean of Garland material that has come down to us, it is a curious irony that progress here is as likely to come from random material in private hands as it is from the collection itself.

Pictures: references are to pages.

Lorry crash at Coultershaw: NSE 90 ONTT 5,6.
John Ashley: clogmaker: NSE 57.
Bracken cutting: J. Moase and R. Carver: NSE 48.
Bignor shop: PWC 12.
Tom Payne postmaster: MLH 69.
Bury Hill: NSE 90.
Tractor at Coultershaw: NSE 49.
Society Pictures eg NSE 70-3, ONTT 95, PPB 15.
Floods at Pulborough eg PWC 156, 158, NSE 66-68.

NSE Not submitted elsewhere 1980
PPB Proud Petworth and Beyond 1981
PWC Petworth: The winds of Change 1983
MLH The men with Laughter in their Hearts 1986
ONTT Old and New, Teasing and True 1988

P.

'We therefore shall praise him in sweet melody ...' Dependants and their hymns

You'll see the names written inside this large handwritten hymn book; they belong to the father and son who wrote out the hymns. Eventually the book passed to my sister Bessie and then to me. Charlie Circus, a member of the Norwood congregation, started the book in 1887: he worked as a carpenter and died in 1914. His son Ephraim continued the book after him. He died in 1938. I knew Ephraim very well but I also remember going with my mother to see Charlie in Stretton Road, Addiscombe. I was very young then of course. Approximately the first hymn that Charlie copied out was the one sung over our founder John Sirgood at his funeral in 1885 and printed as a broadsheet. It has two parts of 24 and 22 verses respectively. Written by Charles

Taylor from Norwood, it pays tribute to our founder and emphasises that no one could ever take his place:

In our dear Brother's place to stand
His office to fulfil
We none of us have a command
Nor is it God's will.

Charles Taylor wrote many of our best-known hymns and had some talent in that direction. He wrote some verses to (I think) the Empress Eugénie when her husband died and we had the acknowledgement for years. This was while he was still "in the world" before he joined us in 1875.

Charlie Circus would have been 21 when John Sirgood died. He (and later) Ephraim, didn't actually write hymns himself but collected Dependant hymns and wrote them down as he came across them. The Dependants had no printed hymn book until 1958 and anyone had the opportunity to write a hymn that might be used by the congregation and hence pass into the wider corpus of Dependant hymns. The Circus collection is a large one; some 408 hymns written on over three hundred double pages. It is much larger than the collection in the Hymn Book attributed to John Sirgood himself and given to the Spy Lane chapel in 1989. This has some 160 of the very oldest Dependant hymns. The Circus book wasn't used as a hymn book for worship. It was much too bulky and kept rather as a record. Dependants had their own hand-written books, each one with a different selection of hymns. They didn't really need the hymn books anyway. They knew the hymns by heart and in any case the verse was read from the platform before it was sung.

How many Dependant hymns are there? There must be well over a thousand, 461 in the 1958 Hymn Book, 220 in the Circus book which are not in the printed Hymn Book, and several dozen in the Loxwood Hymn Book which are early and not found in either later collection. There will be many more scattered in individual Dependant hymn books. Anyone could compose a hymn and bring it to the service. Hymn-writing was a part of the texture of our life as a community and hymn-singing a great part of our tradition. I remember Harriet Burrows at Norwood was a great singer, so was Willie Booker at Warnham. Harriet lived until she was over a hundred and had once been a straw-bonnet maker in Bond Street. I didn't write hymns myself but I liked to write meditations in verse. I can still remember them. Thomas Rugman at Loxwood would often use a little meditation he had written but it wasn't in any sense a hymn:

Oh Lord I will bless thee
In the midst of the Church
I'll sing praises to thee ...

Some of our verse could look like a hymn but wasn't meant to be sung - or at least it wasn't sung in my time. John Sirgood wrote several long poems celebrating the deliverance from persecution of the early 1860s when some local magnates sought to silence him by the threat of legal action but I don't think they were ever sung. There were also two long poems about the failure of Shamley Green to live up to Dependant ideals as John Sirgood saw them. I've always understood them to be written by Sirgood himself. The first begins:

There is a place called Shamley Green
Which I with my own eyes have seen.
The living go among the dead
On purpose for a loaf of bread.

When someone had composed a hymn, they'd come to the service and we'd fit a tune to it. Remember that hymns were unaccompanied and that what was important was what the hymn was telling us, not the tune. The tune wasn't important and we could sing the same hymn to different tunes. The tune was incidental. It didn't happen frequently but it could happen that someone would strike up a tune for a hymn and the words wouldn't fit. Those who realised wouldn't sing and we would have to come back to start with another tune. Hymn tunes weren't really a difficulty for us; after all we might go to other churches for funerals, or hear the children singing at school, or even have been brought up in other religious persuasions. Sometimes we'd sing hymns to secular tunes, contemporary songs. Had not General Booth sought to deny the devil the best tunes?

"Abide with me" was a popular tune with us (HB 453)

Who is this that comes from Edom
With his garments dyed and stained
In his glorious strength now travelling,
Why it's Jesus come to reign.

Or in this old Dependant hymn not included in the 1958 Hymn Book

Have you heard of my intended
He with whom I now am one
Even Jesus that ascended
To prepare for me a home.
And will come and will receive me
When my work on earth is done.

Or this hymn by Charles Taylor which we sang very frequently:

How very high, how holy and how great
O Lord, thou art in thy eternal state,
Yet to the poor in love doth condescend
And proves to him to be a faithful friend. (HB 172)

Another is the John Sirgood hymn (HB 52) "Behold the man who in the Lord doth trust" or (HB 185) "If we will but trace Jesus from his birth".

Another favourite tune was that of the old Wesleyan Advent hymn "Lo he comes with clouds descending..." HB 148 was sung to this:

Hast thou read of combination?
What great wonders it has done.
Hast thou had the consolation
Through the victories it has won...

Another hymn sung to this tune was HB 339 again by Charles Taylor:

Some do in horses and in chariots trust
Some in their treasures which we know will rust

But we do make the living God our stay
Who gives us peace and comfort all the day.

Or John Sirgood's hymn:

Shall iron break the northern iron
Or counteract the steel
Shall it take courage from the Lion
That's sensitive to feel? (HB 335)

The reference is to Jeremiah XV 12. Iron is the flesh and the tempered northern iron or steel the spirit. It's a hymn we all knew but not one we sang particularly often.

HB 401 is attributed to John Sirgood in the 1958 book but I always took it to be written by his wife Harriet. It was again sung to the old Advent tune:

'Twas John the man of God so great
Who heard the voice which said:
"Yea", saith the Spirit, "from henceforth
How blessed are the dead."

Harriet was very deaf in later years and lived with the sisters at Lord's Hill while Brother John went round the churches.

HB127 Come ye who righteously are tried
And keep your armour on,
For Jesus Christ for you had died
And sits upon the throne ...

was sung to the tune of "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds..." HB 149, a John Sirgood hymn which recounts the prowess of David in his battle with the giant Goliath, was sung to the secular song "On Ilkley Moor", and this one was often sung alternately by brothers and sisters before being taken up by the whole congregation. It begins:

Have you heard talk of one of old
Whose name is not concealed
Whose faith in God made him so bold
To him his foes did yield.

Sung to "New every morning is the love..." is Charles Taylor's well-known hymn (HB 307):

One universal king will reign
His sceptre sway o'er earths domain
His kingdom shall be one of peace
His majesty shall never cease.

HB 226 went to the tune of "Praise my soul the King of Heaven..."

Love divine thou art my sister
Thou art my companion here.
How I love to hear thee whisper
Saying to me: be of good cheer.

This hymn by Charles Taylor was sung over his sister Mrs Garnett who died in 1926. I can still remember it now, but it's not written down and was, as far as I know, sung but the once. The tune is "Onward Christian soldiers". It begins:

Evacuees at Billingshurst Station September 1939.
Photograph by G.G. Garland.

Evacuees in Damers Bridge September 1939.
Photograph by G.G. Garland.

Saints of God departing
One by one they go
Laying down the mortal
It no more to know.

Now they sleep in Jesus
What a sweet repose
All their work is ended
O how blessed are those.

The making of the printed Hymn Book in 1958 was a definite break with tradition. We had not had a printed hymn book before. Not everyone agreed with this departure. I could quite see that a new generation might feel the old custom of reading out each verse of a hymn before it was sung might have (or be seen as having) something old-fashioned and child-like about it. A printed book wouldn't have been much good to most of John Sirgood's earliest converts because they couldn't read! But the essential Dependant faith was a child-like one. What the Hymn Book did was to establish a set corpus of hymns, something we had never had. It had always been open to someone to add a hymn to the community's stock. I know that by 1958 this tradition was effectively dead but there was a loss of the old immediacy. Inevitably too, the selection was arguable. Some hymns were included that I had not heard sung, while others were omitted. I am thinking particularly of some by Willie Booker of Warnham. The existence of the Hymn Book didn't mean however that we didn't sing hymns that weren't included. Indeed we might even sing hymns that were not of our composing at all. "There's a land that's fairer than day..." with its chorus, "In the sweet bye and bye" was not composed by us but often used at funerals.

Singing was a part of our tradition but I can't sufficiently stress that singing wasn't an end in itself. It was the doctrine and the content that really mattered. Salvation wasn't a matter of tunes or sacraments, mitres or crooks. A man repents and his sins are remitted. It's like a wife offering her husband his dinner. It's prepared for him and he's just got to eat it. That's all. He doesn't back away from it saying, "I won't eat it unless you force it on me". It's there and he's only got to eat it. Salvation for us was just like that.

Alfred Goodwin was talking to Connie and Jim Nash and the Editor.

But don't touch the linnet's nest!

It's hardly surprising if I don't remember much of September 1939, after all I was just five at the time. We evacuees, came down from Peckham Rye in LCC (London County Council) school buses and were driven straight to the Iron Room at Petworth. We sat on the floor and were given something to eat after the long ride, then allocated to our different areas. Fred Streeter clearly recalled the scene: "The arrival of evacuees from London brought another sort of problem.

The first lot to be seen in Petworth were children from Peckham Rye, poor little mites each with a label and a little bag .... they had come by road from Billingshurst and stayed to have something to eat where the road had just been tarred - and what a mess they were in!" He may be talking of a different lot of Peckham children but that was the situation exactly (see Geoffrey Eley: *And here is Mr Streeter 1950* pp 115). I'm sure that I came all the way from Peckham Rye by bus and not by train because I had put my bag and gas mask at the front of the bus so that I could sit by the driver. I'd then gone off to say goodbye to my mother. When I came back I found a seven year old lad had taken my place. An argument followed and he ended up with a blooded nose, I was swiftly hooked out and placed toward the back, right over the wheels. Hence I was jogged constantly up and down all through the journey. I was decidedly queasy by the time we arrived at the Iron Room and this would have repercussions later. My replacement "parents" were a youngish couple from North Chapel who did not have children of their own. Off I went with them to their spotlessly clean home where I was violently sick in the big inglenook fire place. Not a good start! The bedroom had two big cases of stuffed birds, one was an owl but by this time I was too tired to find them alarming. Their house was situated just up from the village shop on the right hand side, second house up from the village green. (I believe the school janitor lives there now).

Northchapel school seemed strict after Peckham and I was often in trouble, sometimes being hit on the knuckle with the edge of a ruler. My father objected to this and came down to talk to the school about it. I think this may have had something to do with my eventual transfer to Petworth.

By today's standards I imagine we school children were all poorly dressed, one girl I recall, wore a sagging, green knitted dress and boots, but money was really short and people had to make the best of it. Most families had a cobblers last to repair footwear and children's shoes or boots were heavily protected with round metal studs, not just "blakeys" but covering most of the sole to get the extra life out of them. In reality, we could easily slide on them and would drag one another skidding round the playground making sparks fly off the surface.

My mother sent me all kinds of gifts, not always very practical. Once I received a large velvet covered ball which had no obvious use that I could see. One winter's day I took it out on the village green, kicking it about in the puddles and wet grass. It quickly became muddy and water-logged so I brought it back, sopping wet, to the house. 'Auntie' (all foster parents it seemed were called aunties and uncles by the evacuees) was annoyed with me and I ended up in complete darkness in the coal-hole for half an hour.

I don't think I was exactly unhappy, just at odds with the system at school. I have a distinct recollection of writing out the number '7' over and over again, on a slate. It might have been some kind of punishment. Sometimes when looking for a bit of sympathy, I'd go to the village shop at the T junction just up the road from the school, run by a delightful couple who seemed to understand children, they belonged to the Salvation Army or so I thought. There was a harmonium there and on occasions a small number of people gathered there in the room at the back of the shop. It seems that they may not have belonged to the Salvation Army as I thought but were the Northchapel Dependants or "Cokelers" as outsiders called them.

My Northchapel "parents" had relatives in the village, who lived in one of the council houses just down from the school, and when we visited them they always told me they were going to take me shooting foxes. It was a joke but I took it completely in good faith and was bitterly disappointed when the proposed expedition failed to materialise. Children often misunderstood adult humour. For me the idea was deadly serious. Down the hill from the village shop, past the drapers shop, was another house where the couple I was with had an elderly relative; here there were boys who really did shoot rats with a .22 air rifle.

At Christmas we went to visit other relatives/friends in an isolated house surrounded by heathland with grey-black sand. Going back to Northchapel over fifty years later I can still see the village almost as it was, the house where I stayed, the village shop, even the school, but where we went at Christmas is an absolute mystery.

Grand Entrance Lodge at Petworth House.
A snapshot taken by Hubert Whitcomb
17th February 1940.

After six months I was moved to Petworth. I was to stay with Mr and Mrs Carver at the Grand Entrance lodge to Petworth House. They had two children, Vera and Victor, who lived away from home, they seemed quite grown-up to me as a boy of five. Mr Carver was the lodge-keeper, who looked very smart in his uniform with a waistcoat striped, I think, with grey and yellow. He was also the night guard patrolling the House. He had a large leather bound clock with a small dial in it and had to wind it up every five minutes. If he didn't the alarm went off. I had the impression that valuable items from London museums were brought to Petworth for safe keeping but I may be wrong here. Off duty, Mr Carver belonged to the local, smallbore rifle club, where he must have been an accomplished shot if his cabinet full of trophies was anything to go by.

One of the very first impressions I have was of being given rice and curried eggs to eat. It was quite unlike anything I'd had before but I was happy to try anything and food was so scarce you didn't argue, in fact, it was a dish I quite liked. Another meal I was introduced to was soup, the instant variety. Mrs Carver would send me down to Mr Caine's the greengrocer, just down the road from the lodge in Pound Street, to buy one of Foster Clark's soup squares. It was similar in appearance to an Oxo cube but much larger. I'm told they were still being made up to the early 1960's.

Living inside the wall, I grew up with an awareness of the main gardens and those who tended them, but there in the back garden of the lodge was the domain of Mrs Carver, it was small, yet packed with flowers. There was the smell of lilacs in the early summer, the screeching house martins that nested in the nearby buildings, the heat coming back off the wall, the summer of 1940 was hot, the stale smell of ivy-leaved toadflax which hugged the wall, as it still does. The dahlias seemed and probably were, the size of dinner plates and there was the smell of them, not a scent but the smell of the whole plant in early autumn.

As a boy I had a tendency to be inquisitive and to wander about, and the House, lawns and gardens gave me plenty of scope. Sometimes Mrs Carver would take me down to see Mrs Streeter at the end of the lane. Mrs Streeter had a green and red parrot and on one particular day I was given an enormous runner bean to give to the parrot who said, "Thank you". I was staggered, it was the first time I'd heard a bird talk. After the war, it was Mr Streeter who impressed my parents with his talks on gardening on the radio, but for me it was the parrot. The House Lawns were mowed with a sit on mower and the young man who did this used to put me up in the seat with him. I was very proud of this; it was almost as if I were doing the mowing myself. My mowing ended abruptly when the young man went off to war. The real tennis court was just by the lodge, as of course it still is, and here the man in charge would stop and talk to me and he'd show me how he made the tennis balls they used in the court. In the deer park, there was the summer lake full of blanket weed and on one occasion, beside the lake I saw a large dead fish, which may have been a roach. A pair of deer antlers I found in the park I carried around long after I left Sussex after the war. There were different types of oaks in the park and grounds: one of them I recall was the Turkey Oak with its mossy cupped acorn. In the autumn Mrs Carver and I collected bags of acorns for the deer, quite why I don't know, maybe there was a shortage of food for them over the winter period. Despite the war, at that period, the grounds between the main lodge gate and Petworth House were kept in immaculate condition, not a blade of grass

out of place. From time to time, Lord Leconfield, a red-faced man with gaiters and cane, would emerge from the House no doubt to check all was in order.

I normally went to the Church of England Sunday School, but on one occasion I noticed all this produce, fruit, vegetables, honey in the comb and a magnificent sheaf of wheat made of bread being laid out in this strange church. Well, I mused, this beats sticking religious stamps on a card every Sunday and promptly joined the Harvest Festival service. No one seemed to worry about me and as a child I happily assumed that if I sat through to the end all the produce would be shared out. I dutifully sat on, but, as so often, was disappointed. There was no sign of a share-out, so it was back to sticking in the stamps. Looking at it today it seems that I must have gone into the Congregational Chapel by the Damer's Bridge entrance.

In the early part of the war, parents of evacuees were brought, on Sundays, to Petworth by coach. We would line up on the east side of the Market Square to wait for them. We never knew if our particular parents would becoming or not and there was an arrangement that the coach driver would take the children whose parents hadn't come that weekend on a mystery trip. This petered out as the war went on because petrol became progressively shorter.

My parents would bring all sorts of things when they came. I've already mentioned the velvet ball. Rather better was a cardboard plane (today of course they're made with balsa wood or plastic) with a lead weight in the nose. The plane could be "flown" with the aid of an elastic band and a stick. It was so successful that it became stuck on the top of the Grand Entrance gate just next to Gog (or Magog) - I'm never sure which is which. My father had to get a long pole to knock it off the top of the gate. Just as well it didn't land in the ivy which was used as a ground cover under the trees as I was warned there were snakes in there. I never saw any snakes and I may simply have been told this in an attempt to keep me out of the ivy.

Later on, our house in London, together with four others were demolished by a delayed action bomb destroying almost all the family possessions. The family dog, a black Labrador, came down to Petworth. I don't know how it fitted in with the dog Mr and Mrs Carver already had, but I can't remember any difficulty. Their dog was a Kerry Blue, a quite unusual breed.

By this time I was friendly with the local boys and we'd often go down to the brook, with cold tea in a bottle and sandwiches. We went via Bartons Lane where the smell of nettles hangs still in the air just as it did in the hot summer of 1940. Just to the left by the turn stile there was a large fir tree which had massive cones - it still seems to be there - and I kept one of them for years after I left Petworth.

What child does not like a party! Well, the Swan Hotel was putting on a grand children's party up in their ballroom; it seemed it was intended for rather more refined children than myself but a party is a party and I followed the rest in. What a great time I had, and when it was over I collected a bag of sweets and a balloon and, when I arrived home, a good telling-off from Mrs Carver for going in without being invited.

On Christmas Eve, it would be the end of 1940 by now, I went off to bed as normal but had no intention of going to sleep: I was going to catch Father Christmas at work! After a long time I was astonished to see Mrs Carver and Victor steal in with presents in a pillowcase! I had a good deal of thinking to do it seemed!

Quite often during the war, there would be National Savings campaigns, the one in Petworth while I was there was held outside the Regal cinema where they displayed a Messerschmitt fighter in almost perfect order apart from a few bullet holes. This was a must, for every child in Petworth, sitting in the cockpit, twiddling with the controls, yanking on the ailerons...it must have been a nightmare for the R.A.F. personnel looking after it.

Visits to the cinema were a special treat, but this time it was extra special. There was a film being shown in red and blue and if you wore these cardboard spectacles with red and blue celluloid lenses it appeared in a kind of 3D. It was quite rare to see a film other than in black and white.

The army had a kind of canteen on the south side of the square, as I recall, where the estate agents are now. The cooks had their kitchen on the bottom floor where, through the open sash window, they used to watch out for us children, to come along. They would have waiting for us, an apple dipped in golden syrup and suspended on a string. We could have a bite of the apple, without using our hands, if we could get hold of it but we usually just covered ourselves in the syrup.

I was with Mr and Mrs Carver for just over a year, then I stayed with a working family called Smith who were woodmen, for about two months. They lived just outside Petworth in one of a row of semi-detached houses, set up from the road. (I haven't been able to locate these houses yet). I then moved next door for a month, to stay with a lady, who wore a black choker. Her grown-up daughter I recall would take me for walks. Oh yes, there was another thing, I was particularly forbidden to go near a linnet's nest in a hedge just outside the house. But that's a dare to any child. The unfortunate bird must have been visited by every child in the neighbourhood at least once to check on its progress. Well that was the summer of 1941 and my last move was to Wisborough Green where I stayed for the next three years, but that's another story.

This is how I as a small child aged from 5 to 6 saw the evacuation. It doesn't take into account the agonising decisions of my parents to send me away, the problems of foster parents who volunteered to look after young children who were bound to be noisy and tiresome, and some who were difficult to control. Even those local people and children who were not directly involved must have felt the impact of a large influx of London school children. On top of all that, there was a war on and the enemy were very close to hand. So people of Sussex who suffered the London evacuees, please accept my belated thanks.

Walter Lodge was talking to the Editor.