

NO. 98. DECEMBER 1999.

PRICE TO NON-MEMBERS £2.25

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY
Magazine



Silver jubilee year 1974-99

- ① *A Letter from Petworth*
- ② *The Truth, The White Truth*



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Cover drawings by Jonathan Newdick. They are of Petworth House Stables.
Cover design by Jonathan Newdick.

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
AND PETWORTH COTTAGE MUSEUM!

PETWORTH SOCIETY SPRING PROGRAMME. Please keep for reference.

Monthly meetings: Leconfield Hall 7.30 p.m.

THURSDAY 16th MARCH

"So easy to remember"

Joann Creed
with Graham Rix
£4 wine/refreshments
SEE OVER PAGE

WEDNESDAY 19th APRIL

Peter Jerrome

"The Garland Years"

1922-1970

Slides
£1.50 refreshments/raffle

WEDNESDAY 24th MAY

7.30 Annual General Meeting

Followed by

Adge Roberts

The Arundel to Portsmouth Canal

For your diaries

Sunday June 18th Anne's Garden Walk
Saturday } June 24th } Petworth Society Open Days
Sunday } June 25th } Leconfield Hall

Walks: Leave Petworth Car Park at 2.15 p.m.

Sunday March 26th Nigel's Spring Walk
Sunday April 23rd David and Linda's Walk
Sunday May 28th Ian and Pearl's Walk

LECONFIELD HALL FILMS See main Magazine pp 43-44

Wednesday 15th March Shakespeare in Love
Wednesday 26th April Notting Hill
Wednesday 10th May The Full Month

Miles Costello: A Bibliography of the Former Petworth Rural District is now available - See main Magazine pp 6 and illustrations opposite pages 12 and 13.

Pearl and Ian's video "A Year of Events in Petworth" was shown as a large scale film on February 22nd at the Leconfield Hall. It was very well received by another capacity audience. Impressive as the film was the magnification of some twenty times gave no impression of the vividness of the original video. The closing Millennium footage is like nothing seen in Petworth before.

Order form:

"A Year of Events in Petworth"

Name

Address

Cost: £15.00 Collected

£16.00 Posted

Videos must be paid for in advance as we have them copied professionally.

Please note: for home entertainment only - a licence is needed for showing elsewhere. If you are thinking of sending abroad please consult Ian and Pearl first.

Make cheques payable to either Ian or Pearl Godsmark, 40 Martlet Road, Petworth.

For details of video contents see over. **VIDEOS ARE SOLD AT COST. NO PROFIT ACCRUES EITHER TO IAN AND PEARL OR TO THE SOCIETY. BUY ONE IF YOU WANT ONE. DURATION OF VIDEO APPROXIMATELY 2 hours 11 minutes.**

PEARL and IAN'S VIDEO

"A year of Events in Petworth"

| | | | |
|----------|------------------------------------|-----------|---|
| January | Opening of Sylvia Beaufoy Car Park | August | On the roof at Petworth House |
| February | "Millennium" Public Meeting | | Hidden High Street |
| | Owen Bridger Retires | | Max talks about the Rifle Club |
| March | Petworth Society Silver Jubilee | September | Lorna talks about the Bowling Club |
| | Petworth Society Exhibition | | Opening of the new Petworth Council Office |
| April | Palm Sunday Procession | | John Bly at The Cottage Museum |
| May | Linda & David's Walk at Moor Farm | October | Ian's Birthday Treat |
| | Craft Fair in Petworth Park | November | A look at the Storage Tanks under Lec. Hall |
| June | Concert in the Park (26th June) | | Remembrance Sunday |
| July | Kite Day in Petworth Park | | Fair Day |
| | Millennium Committee Meeting | | Petworth Society Evening |
| | Mention of "The Festival" | December | New Year's Eve - Millennium |
| August | Jazz at The Rectory | January | Petworth Celebrate Jesus 2000 |

"SO EASY TO REMEMBER"

Thursday March 16th Leconfield Hall

Joann Creed and Graham Rix

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Waltz | Chopin |
| Waltzing in the clouds | Robert Stoll |
| Lover | Richard Rogers |
| Some day I'll find you | Noel Coward |
| If love were all | |
| Concert study in D ^b | Liszt |
| A brown bird singing | Haydn Wood |
| Is it pain? Is it pleasure? | Mozart |
| Medley | Ivor Novello |

INTERVAL

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Waltzes | Chopin |
| The last rose of summer | Eric Mareo |
| The lights of home | Bernie Grossman |
| The man I love | George Gershwin |
| Someone to watch over me | " " |
| By Strauss | George Gershwin |
| The Laughing Song | Johann Strauss |

On **THURSDAY 4th APRIL** Petworth Conservatives are holding an open **WHIST DRIVE and CREAM TEA** to raise money for Leconfield Hall Funds. Start 2.30. For further details see local publicity or contact Jean Huggett on Petworth 343906.

Lastly please note error on centre photograph caption 31st January 1999 should be 31st December! Page 38 is of course reproduced from St Mary's Parish Magazine November 1926.

GILT & GASLIGHT

PRESENT

MILLENNIUM MEMORIES

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY KEITH MYERS

A WHISTLE STOP TOUR OF THE LAST 2000 YEARS!!

WE ESPECIALLY INVITE YOU TO LAUGH AND SING YOUR WAY
THROUGH THE TWENTIETH CENTURY ALL OVER AGAIN

FEATURING MUSIC FROM MUSIC HALL TO ABBA!!

PLUS GILT & GASLIGHT'S WACKY STYLE OF STORY TELLING AND SKETCHES



Christmas Evening

Saturday, 18th. December

7.30 p.m. in ^{the} Leconfield Hall

Admission £4.00

Seasonal Refreshments. Raffle.

This organisation is funded
by London Boroughs Grants

Gilt & Gaslight is sponsored by Wiseman Lee Solicitors, 229 Hoe St, Walthamstow E17 9PP Tel 0181 215 1000



Christmas / Spring programme. Please keep for reference.



Monthly meetings Leconfield Hall 7.30 p.m. Admission prices as indicated.

SATURDAY DECEMBER 18th Petworth Society Christmas Evening

Gilt and Gaslight Theatre Company present

"MILLENNIUM MEMORIES" see over page.

£4. Refreshments. Raffle.

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 19th

Slides for a Millennium: Peter Jerrome presents a completely new selection of slides of Petworth.
Part 1 1850 - 1919. [Part 2 in April.]

£1.50. Refreshments. Raffle.

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 22nd

Ian and Pearl's Millennium Video

£1.50. Refreshments. Raffle.

THURSDAY MARCH 16th

Joann Creed talks and sings Novello, Coward, Chopin, Strauss, Gershwin and others.

Programme and title to be finalised.

£4. Refreshments. Raffle.

Walks to begin in March. See March Magazine. Next year, they will be regular on the fourth Sunday of the month so that members can plan ahead.

Don't forget the Kevis Room talks at the Leconfield Hall January 24th, 31st, February 7th, 14th, 21st. Admission free. Details in main Magazine, page 6.

Lastly the Window Press takes leave of its senses for the Millennium:

The following books at a round £5 but only until December 31st.

- 1) *Tread Lightly Here* — an affectionate look at Petworth Streets.
- 2) *In the feast of St Edmund the King*. Petworth Fair from 1189.
- 3) *Not submitted elsewhere* — Garland photographs from the 1920s.
- 4) *Tales of Old Petworth* — stories from the mid nineteenth century.

ALSO at reduced price.

- 5) *Cloakbag and Common Purse* — the enclosure of Petworth Park ~~£4.95~~ £2.50
- 6) *John Sirgood's Way* — the story of the Loxwood Dependants or Cokelers ~~£40~~ £20 strictly until December 31st and while stocks last.

Please send to Trowels, Pound Street, Petworth GU28 0DX. Cheques payable to P. Jerrome. Add £3 postage for one or more books, £1 if ordering only Tales of Old Petworth or Cloakbag and Common Purse. Three or more books post free.

Merry Christmas.

Peter.

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 £8.00. Single or double one Magazine delivered. Postal £9.00 overseas £10.00. Further information may be obtained from any of the following:

Chairman

Mr P.A. Jerrome MBE, Trowels, Pound Street, Petworth (Tel. 342562) GU28 0DX

Vice Chairman

Mr K.C. Thompson, 18 Rothermead, Petworth (Tel. 342585) GU28 0EW

Hon. Treasurer

Mr P. Hounsham, 50 Sheepdown Drive, Petworth (Tel. 343461) GU28 0BX

Hon. Magazine Secretary

Mrs B. Hodson, 56 Wyndham Road, Petworth GU28 0EQ

Committee

Mr Stephen Boakes, Mr Miles Costello, Lord Egremont, Mr Ian Godsmark, Mrs Audrey Grimwood, Mr Andrew Henderson, Mrs Anne Simmons, Mrs Ros Staker, Mr J. Taylor, Mr Graham Whittington, Mrs Linda Wort

Magazine distributors

Mr Henderson, Mrs Mason, Mr Thompson, Mrs Simmons, Mrs Hounsham, Mr Turland, Mr Boakes (Petworth), Mrs Adams (Byworth), Mrs Hodson (Sutton and Duncton), Mrs Williams (Graffham), Mr Derek Gourd (Tillington and River), Mrs Goodyer, Mrs Williams (Fittleworth)

Society Scrapbook

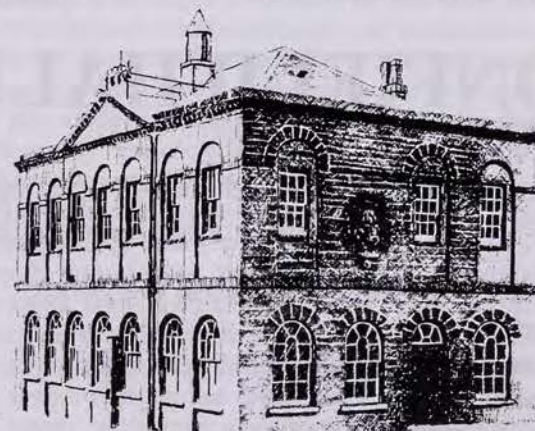
Mrs Pearl Godsmark

Society Town Crier

Mr J. Crocombe, 19 Station Road (343329)

Note: The crier may be prepared to publicise local community events and public notices for you, even snippets of personal news such as births, engagements or lost pets. It is suggested that such personal and business cries be made for a small donation to a charity to be nominated by the crier himself.

Reopening the Leconfield Hall. A project fit for a Millennium.



1) A new hall

Jonathan's well-known drawing of the Leconfield Hall is a reminder that by the time you read these notes the Hall should be open again. There may be a certain amount of tidying to do but the Hall will be in use. In fact I hope to have it ready for Petworth Fair, and on the following Monday for Ron Smith's talk. It will be a great relief to have the Hall operational once more and I am grateful to everyone who has worked so hard to produce an absolutely first-rate job in the minimum of time. Make no mistake: this is a massive restoration. I hope too that the long closure will have finally put paid to any lingering doubts about the Hall's importance as the focus and home of so much that goes on in Petworth. Attitudes must and will change. The old easy cynicism about the Hall is no part of a new century. Whatever justification there may once have been for this, and it was never an attitude I shared, there is no excuse for it now. Petworth has a hall it can be proud of, a hall that is worthy of its position as absolutely central to the town, whether you think of this in geographical terms or in terms of its crucial importance to most town organisations. There will be an official opening in the New Year.

If Petworth is looking for a millennial project it need look no further. I don't think everyone realises what a transformation has been effected. There is a lift. The old stage staircase and the spiral staircase are gone to be replaced by another staircase agreed with the fire authorities. The old main staircase is not quite so wide now. Upstairs there is cold running water and new stairs to the renovated gallery. There is a new, lower, more open, stage at the south end, while the old stage area is now open and the windows on the north side now exposed. There is much more light because of the additional windows and there are some seventy raked seats which can be pulled out from the walls. There is a completely new easy clean floor and the ceiling has been replaced.

The NEW & IMPROVED



LECONFIELD HALL

The new and improved Leconfield Hall is open again
Come and see all the improvements we have made. . .

- Lift to first floor giving wheelchair access everywhere
- New toilet for disabled people
- New stage, new floor, new lighting in the 1st floor
- Retractable raked seating
- Permanent stage lighting
- Larger carpeted committee room plus small room
- New and larger kitchen
- New improved staircase and new stair to gallery

Situated centrally in the Market Square, Petworth, try out the LECONFIELD HALL if you are planning events, meetings, sales, promotions, shows, parties, weddings, concerts, lectures, exhibitions, classes - any civilised activity planned for this or the next century.

The three Rooms, singly or combined, are for hire at very competitive rates. To enquire or to hire apply to:-

“ALLSORTS” shop in the Market Square, Petworth
or telephone 01798 343270

ALL THE HALLS ARE ACCESSIBLE FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

Downstairs too there is considerable change. The toilets have been reinstated and there is a disabled toilet. The new kitchen runs along the south side of the Hall and will have all new equipment including a refrigerator. The old kitchen is no more. There are dramatic changes too in the committee rooms. While the old partition remains and they can be hired and used as a double as before, the proportions are now quite different. The south room has the kitchen at the south end with a hatchway through into the room. This committee room will be smaller than previously while the north room will be much larger because the annexe that was formerly on the immediate left as you entered has become part of the room. This is now a large room with windows on both north and east sides. The flooring in this room has been replaced with carpet. The anonymous titles "north and south committee room" will be replaced with specific names. Suggestions are being considered. It is very likely that the old south room downstairs will be called the "Kevis" room, the larger the "Garland" room, the upstairs premises the "Gwenda Morgan" hall.

Such are the main changes. You will observe others. Petworth has a hall that will be the envy of other towns. Prices going through the roof? Not while I'm in charge. The best way to profitability is for Petworth people to use the Hall. There will be some price adjustments and a simplified charging structure but the Hall will still compare favourably with other local halls.

Lastly a word of regret that Owen Shepherd who as chairman of Petworth Parish Council and, latterly, as chairman of its finance committee had so much to do with helping the Hall restoration will not see the job completed. The same applies, of course, to Flora Thomas who died earlier in the year and as a member of the Hall committee had supported the Hall through some very difficult times.

P.

2) *The Petworth Society and the Hall*

As chairman both of this Society and of the Hall, I have to think how best the Society can help the Hall. I have no doubt that the Hall is indispensable for the Society: with the attendances we have for functions no other venue is suitable or possible for us, hence our relative inactivity since Easter. I am anxious not only that we keep our successful programme of monthly meetings but also, where we can, to demonstrate the new hall's capabilities. Here's our programme:

Hopefully the Hall will be back in commission for Fair Day, November 20th. I cannot be quite certain at this time. All being well, Ron Smith returns on November 22nd with his Garland lecture on the D. Day Crosswords. On December 18th (a Saturday) we have a return visit from the Gilt and Gaslight Theatre Company. They will present "Millennium memories", a century of song from Marie Lloyd to Abba. We're very much looking forward to seeing Dympna and her company again. As it's Christmas we've kept entrance prices to £4. Not bad to see a professional company!

Back to £1.50 in January to include refreshments. How do we do it? I don't quite know but it seems to work. In response to several requests I will offer a millennium slide show for the January meeting. Originally the idea was to cover the period from 1850 to the present day in one show, but on further consideration this seemed impracticable, so that we're going to start with the period 1850 to 1919. 1920 to the present day will follow in April.

In February Ian and Pearl will show their millennium video of Petworth in 1999 climaxing with the events of December 31st. You thought nothing ever happened in Petworth? You might just be wrong. The video will probably last for an hour each way with refreshments in between and be shown on our large screen, very like a cinema show. I've seen some early portions and it's definitely not to be missed. In March as part of our showing the capability of the Hall, Joann Creed, international singer and lecturer, talks to us and sings Ivor Novello, Coward, Chopin, Strauss, Gershwin and others (not necessarily in that order!). I'd hoped to have a visiting theatre company in April as well as the millennium slides but I'm still working on that. The Society is most eager to create the best use of the Hall and I hope other organisations will do the same.

On the topic of making use of the Hall, I've long felt that a more comfortable Leconfield Hall would be an ideal venue for informal talks or classes. As you know, for a number of years, I gave evening classes for Petworth Adult Education Centre. I was always convinced that a central position and a greater attention to the "customers'" comfort and some good refreshment would work wonders for numbers and now I'm proposing to try this out. For five Mondays from January 24th I will offer informal talks on Petworth history - or aspects of it. **No charge** but a small donation toward renting the Hall would be welcomed. Proposed subjects are:

January 24th

"Peota's worth and all that." Petworth's misty beginnings.

January 31st

Elizabethan and Early Stuart Petworth. Some real "characters".

February 7th

"In search of the Proud Duke". The sixth Duke of Somerset, the man and the "Myth"?

February 14th

"John Mance and his Petworth". Some sidelights on the early nineteenth century.

February 21st

John Trevenen Penrose, Rector of Petworth 1906-1919. The man and his Petworth.

Come to one, come to all, or of course come to none! The choice is yours. Entrance open to anyone. It's something I've had in mind for a long time and the refreshments should be good at least. Begin at 7.30.

P.

Chairman's Notes

I think I've said much of what I wanted to say already. A notable feature of this millennial issue will be the three Day Centre conversations. I am most grateful to Jill Marchant for suggesting and facilitating the idea.

Anything special for a millennial issue? No, very much the "mixture as before" I think.

Lord Egremont and his millennium committee seem to have the festivities well in hand. On other matters, the lorry route discussion continues and definite progress seems on the way, while discussions also continue on the provision of more appropriate street lighting for Petworth, and even on a possible reprieve for the Horsham Road chapel. I would have to stress the word "possible".

One last word, this is to some extent a "Hall" Magazine - if you really want to have a feeling of the hall's immemorial past read "The Whole Truth" in this Magazine. Nothing gives a better feel of the often austere history of this crucial but occasionally infuriating piece of Petworth.

Peter 27th October 1999

Re Magazine 97

The last Magazine provoked considerable discussion. The article on Frank Lacaita drew a lot of interest. Charles Lacaita was a speaker at Petworth's prestigious Men's Mutual Improvement Society at least twice in the years before 1914, once on a visit to Australia, once on a visit to the Himalayas. He spoke and showed slides on botanical subjects. More perhaps in the next issue. James Alleston's mystery machine was used to peel peaches prior to their being dried. It could also be used for apples. Apparently there is a similar machine in the American Museum at Bath.

Re Ron Clark's photographs at Burton in the last issue, Nancy Kingsley recalls: "My sister and I used to go to the three o'clock Sunday service at Burton Church. One of the congregation had dozed off during the sermon which happened to take in that part of Acts where Eutyches falls from a window having fallen asleep during a sermon by St Paul. The lady concerned suddenly woke up and exclaimed, "If you're alluding to me, I'm not asleep!" The Roman Catholic Biddulph family at Burton Park did not encourage use of the Anglican Church on their land, kept it locked and used it to store wine. The Anglican rector was at one time reduced to getting two of the Rapley boys to effect an entrance so that he could hold a service and prevent the right to do so lapsing through non-usage".

Only space for one query this time.

Bill Westlake has presented to the Society a small silver plate loving cup, eleven centimetres in diameter across the top. It bears no date but was awarded to Sgt. Dawtrey of or by the Middlesex Yeomanry Cavalry for "lemon cutting". The cup was given to Bill's mother when the family lived in number 336G High Street, to the rear of the Royal British Legion premises. Walter Dawtrey was living in the present Legion steward's house and Bill remembers mowing the lawn for Walter Dawtrey and helping him with weighing up and bagging seed for both root crops and cereals in a shed at the back.

I would assume that lemon-cutting would mean slicing a lemon suspended on a string as the competitor rode by. Can anyone expand on this?

P.

A new clock for the Cottage Museum

The long case clock kindly presented to the Museum by the Friends of the British Antique Dealers' Association through the good offices of Mr Brian Baskerville carries the name of James Pearson, Petworth. It has an attractive floral dial and a plain deal case. It is an unpretentious piece of furniture and is very much the sort of object that might hold a treasured position in a fairly humble home.



John Bly, Chairman of the Friends of the British Antique Dealers' Association Trust with Lord Egremont at the official presentation of the new clock. They are looking at photographs of the Museum. Photograph by Ian Ormerod-Wilkinson.

As a clockmaker James Pearson is elusive, although examples of his work are not uncommon. Possibly he was as much a repairer and retailer as a maker; the various components having been assembled and put together by Pearson rather than actually produced by him. "Petworth" may indicate as much about the prospective buyer as it does origin. The date is between 1790 and 1810. Other Pearson clocks are known with Trotton

and Rogate Dials. It may be that Pearson's base was Midhurst; possibly he had premises at Petworth too. Certainly Pearson is not a common Petworth name and there is no mention of him in Pigot's Directory of 1828 or in the 1841 census which postdates the clock by several decades.

As to the clock's history, it is agreed that it has been in High Street within the memory of anyone living. Mr "Bob" Stanford who lived in the house and died this year could never remember a time when it was not in the house. His grandparents, the Palmers, ran a sweet shop in the front of the house from the early century. The shop is very well remembered by older Petworth residents. Of later years it was run by Phyllis the Palmers' elder daughter. It closed shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War. The shop window was removed and the house reverted to exclusively private use.

Whether the clock was always at 1 High Street is a moot point as evidence for the occupation of the High Street premises in the nineteenth century is not at present available. It remains a possibility that the clock has never left High Street during its nearly two-hundred years existence. It can be said with certainty that it was in High Street at the time of Mrs Mary Cummings' tenure of 346 just up the road.

At a ceremony on Thursday September 23rd Mr John Bly on behalf of the Friends of the British Antique Dealers' Association officially handed over the clock to Lord Egremont, patron of the Cottage Museum.

P.

'Ladders and other engines of war' Audrey's August adventure 15th August

We'd first visited Burpham in June 1994, one of those rare walks which seem to live in the memory, redefine other walks and eventually create a mythology of their own. We had gone to Burpham in mid-June. It was Village Day and the gardens were open, but we knew that if we started looking at gardens we would never get going at all. Little-used North Stoke church, South Stoke too, but first Burpham church itself, always associated with Tickner Edwardes and full of flowers. The mysterious singer, first encountered in the lane at South Stoke where the Indian bean tree grows. Later he would fill the small church with his voice in anticipation of the Boat Service that we never actually saw, a service with which it later transpired, he had nothing whatever to do. "We had had a great expedition into a world that the sun had enchanted, we'll come to Burpham again I'm sure." (Magazine 77)

We came again in August 1996, this time starting from Amberley, walking through to Burpham then back to Amberley. It was later in the year, and the landscape seemed somehow emptier than we remembered. "When we had come before the annual Boat Service was being awaited, now the glory was departed. The singer we had heard two years ago was a memory and the church undecorated ... we sat in the pews and I could look out of the open door to the flint wall of the churchyard, beyond that there was a garden." (Magazine 86)

It was three years now to the Sunday. We'd always intended to come back and here we were. Some veterans of previous visits, some newcomers. August holidays always make for a sparse turnout. Audrey and Rita had a variation this time; we would drive to Arundel, take the train to Amberley, then walk back.

Stations seem tired these days; peeling paintwork, buddleias wild in the car parks, minimal staff. Arundel's no different to any other. Someone in the ticket office and a machine outside for when they're not. A poster inviting nominations for best-kept station. A while to wait, then we're trundling through low-lying meadows. It seems a long way. Have we all this way to make up on foot? Apparently we have.

Out at Amberley. Down to the Sunday road where on the last trip Ian had picked a bewildered pigeon out of the road and put him into the relative safety of someone's garden. Down the long road to North Stoke; there are a lot of people about today. Shall we go to North Stoke? The road turns and it's away to the right. This time we decide not to; there's a fairly long walk ahead of us. Down the side of a stubble field. Bales cylindrical against the skyline, black plastic flapping in the wind. Some are clearly last year's, this year's are still in the field. A causeway over wet lands, a legacy, someone said, of days when the tiny Stoke settlements might be cut off by the winter waters. We came to a great tree trunk now almost completely eaten away by insects and realize that it was here in 1994 that we'd stopped and eaten what had been left over from the Toronto Scottish visit the previous day. The trunk, perhaps a casualty of the great storm, had been cut to make a rough seat. Now it was on the way to dissolution.

Margaret had seen Red Admiral and Speckled Wood butterflies and we still had a long way to go. Perhaps we shouldn't stop at South Stoke. There was a feeling that to go again would break a spell. After all the singer wouldn't be there. Already he was taking on the character of a myth. After some deliberation, some of us go, those who do not wish to break the charm wait. It's quiet in the church, the big Bible is open at the Apocrypha, (1 Maccabees 5), the eye falls on verse 30 "innumerate people bringing ladders and others engines of war". An enemy attacking Judas the Maccabee. It all seems a long way from South Stoke. Perhaps a visitor has idly turned the page. There are people about, more than we remember on previous occasions. Back to the myth makers waiting on the other side of the bridge.

The Arun is the fastest flowing river in England, it seems. The tidal race sweeps up from Littlehampton. It's not a river to take for granted. Trains go by but they have settled into this carless landscape, they're almost restful. A pair of swans with six grey cygnets have taken charge of a sidestream. We've reached the cottage that is supposed to have had something to do with Tickner Edwardes' Tansy. I suppose it was showing the film that first attracted us to this landscape. We're not going into Burpham today, skirting the high field on the left where the bison graze, then "Jacob's ladder", the steep set of steps that lead up into the village. We pass that by. A heron flies low over the drainage dykes. Walking on over the low land, keeping the rides on the right. Half a large fish lying on the path. Making for the A27; now here's some real traffic for you. Across the lights. It's not rained but it does on the way home. Thanks very much Audrey and Rita.

P.



*The Cottage Museum sitting-room with the new clock in place.
Photograph by Ian Ormerod-Wilkinson. See "A new clock for the Cottage Museum".*

Petworth Dec: 29. 1836

Sir

I was very sorry to find that you had left Petworth in the morning before I could see you; as I could have wished you to have seen the Church in which there are some antiquaries relating to the Percy Family. Isobelyn of Louvain who married the Heir of the Percy Family & Estates in the reign of Henry the First & probably died in the reign of Stephen, is buried in the Church, and the ninth, tenth & eleventh and last Earl of Northumberland with their wives are buried in the Chancel, but in the long interval between these two periods, there were

'Three Bridges' Peter and Marian's local walk. September 12th

The weather is still holding - just. Last week the Rother Meadows were baked by the sunshine yet still a cool green. I had watched two canoes coming up the river under a cloudless sky. From the foliage by the river at Perryfields I had watched them unobserved, rather like an Indian on the Amazon. Such thoughts aside, it's cooler today. Peter and Marian's walk. Where's Marian? A strained leg. I apologise.

Parking in Rotherbridge Lane. Now it's time to give the walk a name. Peter and Marian's three bridges walk (lower case). If we'd postered the walk as such, people would have thought we were carrying the new train idea to extremes. Arundel is one thing, Crawley and Three Bridges another! In fact it's the relatively new Leconfield Estate bridges across the Rother that we're going to visit.

We're off, down the stony track, past the entrance to Hungers Lane, then right at Rotherbridge. The footpath runs along the rutted way to Perryfields, but we've permission to follow the lazy bending of the river bank. The first bridge is a solid workaday structure replacing a narrow swaying piece of plankery that inspired no confidence at all. We're soon over and walking up the incline to the old railway track. A quick look at the glorious slanted brickwork of one of the bridges, decaying now. There's another, less spectacular one just ahead of us. Walking along the man-made embankment that was once a railway line. What labour! Memories stirred: the Pullborough train running through to Midhurst Grammar School in the 1950s. A kind of disreputable legend. Petworth boys went of course on the "Petworth bus".

Walking on the canopy of leaves gives way to a vista of open fields. Cathanger away to the left. A large piece of white plastic sheeting or sacking blows from a tree, not, someone observes, the kind of thing to meet on a dark night. Bearing sharp right at the side of a field, dried pea haulms crackle underfoot. Young peas are growing from spilled pods. Down to the second bridge by the high nettles. Tom's sharp eye has picked out some wild hops growing in the hedgerow. Seed impurities perhaps or a survival of long ago when this area grew hops in some quantity. The Shimmings valley was heavy with them. Alder catkins blow as we stand on the bridge, this countryside of alders is threatened by a disease that attacks the trees. Many have died already.

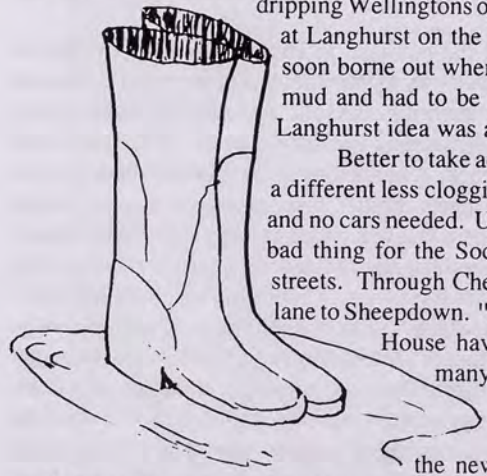
Up to Ladymead - it's just a few yards upstream from the bridge. Part of the lock structure stands four-square in the water, the vegetation giving it all a gothic aspect. Last time we were here there were cows in the shallows, today Ferna the dog has it all to herself. Back to Perryfields, first through the meadows then a narrow path hard on the river, the pungent cloying smell of balsam. Perryfields is the third bridge, replacing the old metal and concrete one that had been there as long as I can remember and doubtless an age before that. The old bridge lies stranded in the field, pieces of dead ivy still clinging to it. Perryfields with its barns is solitary now that the cottages have gone, it must be thirty years and more now. A lonely cypress with a bifurcated trunk is a reminder of those days.

Back along the watermeadows again, avoiding the track from Perryfields. A fisherman standing by our first bridge is the first person we've seen since we started. Blackberries heavy in the hedgerows. They're very sweet now. In a day or so they'll spoil.

P.

Audrey's last walk of the season October 17th

Time, Audrey thought, talking it over with Rita, to sample the delights of home for the last walk of the season. Not that they had not tried to do justice to Keith's lugubrious drawing of dripping Wellingtons on the poster, Audrey and Rita had tried a walk at Langhurst on the Balls Cross clay. Keith's forebodings were soon borne out when Audrey's Wellingtons became stuck in the mud and had to be retrieved - with the utmost difficulty. The Langhurst idea was abandoned.



Better to take advantage of the autumn sunshine and explore a different less clogging world. A good concourse in the Car Park and no cars needed. Up Rosemary Lane and into Grove Street. No bad thing for the Society to make its presence felt on its home streets. Through Cherry Orchard and into Angel Street, then the lane to Sheepdown. "Brydone's Lane", someone recalled, Orchard House having been home to the Brydone family for many years. As a collector of notes from the Magazine I'm called back to a primrose on a mossy stone wall, last of the old - first of the new season? It's all down to day length and sunlight rays Tom. It's the long sunny October days that make the plant think of spring. White convolvulus in the hedgerow. "Grandmother, grandmother, jump out of bed". Audrey twists the stem and the white flower leaps out. "Mary, Mary ..." is a similar name it seems.

Down the diagonal path towards the Virgin Mary Spring. Some go along the top path and down the other way. As a maker of notes I can't offer any explanation for this. Are we going to cross the bridge towards Byworth? We were, but Audrey's decided to alter the route slightly. We'll go on past the Spring. Recollections of summers past, stuffing the outlet pipe with grass, then letting it out and seeing how far the water will carry, almost to the brook itself if you did it well.

On towards Haslingbourne, the field over the footbridge is bathed in the mellow October sunshine. We walk on, mud briefly by the airman's stone as there always is. A bare tree long ago struck by lightning. Briefly to the scurrying road then back with relief by a footpath through a garden. Stubble fields with the long view across to Soanes and Grove and Lane. Heartsease among the stubble. The dogs, wet from the brook, plunge about in the

stubble. The footpath runs along the edge of Spring Copse. The old path through the copse ends now in a tangle of vegetation. Cutting away left up the slight incline through the old Quarry Farm and back into Grove Street. Time to wander through Cherry Orchard again, round the Egremont Row path that looks from a height onto Angel Street, then Round the Hills. The lychets of the town fields are not so obvious in the bright October sun, they will return with the shadows of early evening. A look into the Bartons, the high view of Shimmings from the cemetery. Back down Lombard Street and into the Square. Another season ends - here's to the Spring again!

P.

'This is a rum do ..'

George Garland treated the legacy of his predecessor Walter Kevis with a certain studied nonchalance, as befitted, perhaps, someone who had, according to tradition, saved the priceless glass negatives from destruction in 1951. In the mid-1960s the world of Walter Kevis seemed much nearer than it does now, over thirty years on. Garland would print off copies for me from the big glass plates, always charging the regulation six shillings and sixpence. Quite a stiff price in those days, but long years of eking out a precarious living had taught Mr Garland that "a labourer is worthy of his hire." At that time the Kevis pictures of Petworth and district were kept in the attic at Windmill House while the thousands of portraits awaited an uncertain fate in cardboard orange boxes (Outspan) which I had provided for their storage. They "lived" in the then derelict house that Mark and Florence Mills had once had in the garden. The safe haven of Petworth House was still along way off.

Mr Garland lived at ease with the negatives he had rescued. He knew them well enough, but they had their allotted place in the order of things and did not exceed it. Quite often, indeed, he would put his own copyright stamp on the back of a Kevis print. Definitely a pitfall for the unwary. A photograph from the 1880s might turn out to be taken by someone who was born in 1900. Precocity indeed! Occasionally he would confide some thoughts about one. "This is a rum do", he'd say, or words to that effect. "Jukes in Golden Square, they're in the directory for 1881 but they weren't here long, I've often wondered about them". They had apparently taken over from Benjamin Challen and after a brief period sold out to Otways (who also had what is now Gateway). My own print is annotated by "between 1878 and 1882", and in these more stable Victorian times this was a shortish tenure. It would not be so now. Clearly, however, in Victorian terms, Mr Jukes was something of a bird of passage - and almost a century on, one of local history's little mysteries.

I suppose my later acquiring of an account book with a gilt crest embossed on red and bearing the legend S. Jukes, family grocer, provision, wine, spirit and ale merchant, Golden Square, Petworth, only drew attention to George Garland's question. What, after all, had happened to Mr Jukes? Another "dunno" of local history. It's full of them. The account book ran from November 1880 to the end of September 1881, probably it closed with the death of

the customer rather than with the departure of Samuel Jukes. It had its own interest, as such books always do, but it wasn't going to do any more.

Some questions will always remain unanswered, but not all of them. Even King Arthur himself had to acknowledge that it wasn't every day that a Green Knight came to breakfast, but he did come once. A transatlantic voice on the telephone. "I've been told you're the person to ask about my family history.." How often one hears this. Sometimes it leads somewhere, sometimes it doesn't. "My father was born in Petworth in 1879, Henry S. Jukes." George Garland's question was on the way to being answered. Ellen McCabe was a very sprightly lady from Florida who had heard about Petworth all her life and now at last was coming to see it. Her father had gone to America when he was about eight, never returned to England but always kept a child's memory of a Petworth he had left when he was four, too young perhaps to have many more recollections than the name and a few childish impressions. Ellen remembered her grandfather Samuel well; he had died in 1929. The Jukes, father and son, always remained aware of their English beginnings, and Henry never lost some English mannerisms. 'I can't' with the English long 'a' as opposed to the transatlantic short one, and always a "rasher" of bacon as opposed to the American slice. Samuel Jukes had had a little shop in Barrington, New Hampshire, but when Ellen knew him in the 1920s he was living in retirement in Boston, his wife Ellen died a year or two before he did, Ellen had spent a summer with her grandparents in 1924. Henry Jukes had moved to Florida in 1915 and there had been some talk of the family moving to Boston. In the event they didn't. Henry had gone to prep school in Boston. There was a family story that Henry had left school and gone to work in a Boston outfitter's because he wanted to wear long trousers instead of the short knickerbockers his mother insisted that he wore to school. Henry had married in 1917.



Ellen McCabe sends us this billhead from the United States

Samuel Jukes and his wife Ellen (née Rudman), had been brought up in Andover and had had, it seems, one or two business ventures in the Ropley/Alversford area prior to coming to Petworth in 1878 to take on Benjamin Challen's old-established grocery business in Golden Square. Samuel would need to have had a certain working capital to take on such an enterprise. It may be that Ellen, possibly the more financially astute of the two, thought that it might be safer to take what capital they had and go to the New World.....

Ellen was driving to Andover with a friend. This was the second time she'd been to Petworth to see me. They'd already been into the butcher's in the premises of Samuel Jukes' old business. All one shop then. Some one hundred and twenty years on, the building remains quite recognisable as compared with the photograph. The brick facade over the ancient timbers looks a little tired after more than a century but it's all much the same.

Visitors pouring into the late July car park as I see Ellen off. Samuel Jukes will mean little enough to them, as little, no doubt as we will to visitors another hundred and twenty years on.

P.

A Letter from Petworth

"Art Patron, eccentric, agriculturist, philanthropist, George O'Brien Wyndham, third Earl of Egremont, was a true child of the 18th century. He kept open house for anybody who cared to visit him, the only stipulation being that the guests must not expect irksome duties of hospitality from their host. They were at liberty to make what demands they chose of his large, unorthodox and undisciplined staff." Ursula Wyndham, Astride the Wall (1988).

Most good things happen by chance, and the offer - from a London bookseller - of an 'Egremont' letter was just too good an opportunity to miss. Not cheap by any means, but then how do you put a price on something which is unique? Alright, I had only recently purchased the 'Nuland' letter (reproduced in issue 97), but I managed to banish any thoughts of financial embarrassment to the back of my mind and proceeded to email my order to the London dealer, while at the same time noting the irony of using that electronic medium which threatens to displace the very means of communication which I was about to purchase. Within a few days the precious parcel arrived on my doormat, confirming that our postal service has improved somewhat since the third Earl's day. The letter is interesting but of no great importance. The recipient is one Sir Cuthbert Sharp who was something of an authority on northern antiquities and was probably keen to research the Percy family connection with Petworth. Egremont is clearly embarrassed by his failure to welcome Sharp to his house and attempts to make amends by proffering a few comments on his ancestors, albeit with a considerable degree of inaccuracy. Putting aside the failings so evident in the letter it is still an interesting record of an important era in the history of Petworth. It confirms - if confirmation were required - the much documented notion that the third Earl kept an open house at Petworth. We know that

Turner, Constable, and Carew were among the many great artists and men of letters who trod the path to the great house during what has become known as 'the golden age' at Petworth, and it is hardly surprising that amongst the scholarly confusion which characterised Petworth during his tenure that Egremont should remain unaware of his guest until after the latter's departure.

Miles Costello

Petworth Dec. 29. 1836

Sir

I was sorry to find that you had left Petworth in the morning before I could see you, as I could have wished you to have seen the Church in which there are some antiquities relating to the Percy family. Jocelyn of Louvain who married the heiress of the Percy family & estates in the reign of Stephen, is buried in the Church, and the ninth, tenth & eleventh and last Earl of Northumberland with their wives are buried in the chancel, but in the long interval between these two periods, there probably was little intercourse between the Percy family and their property in Sussex, and all their houses in Yorkshire, now in my possession, were ransacked during the civil wars and also Cockermouth Castle now belonging to me. Probably Alnwick had the same fate. In consequence of these events I think it most improbable that any information respecting during (sic) that long interval can be found in my possession. When you return into the South, if I am still alive, I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you & in the mean time I am your faithful humble servant

Egremont

The cross post to Petworth is not so convenient as it ought to be and I did not receive your letter announcing your visit until after you were gone. I mention this as you may have thought my reception of you rather extraordinary.

To

Sir Cuthbert Sharp

To the pyramids and back - the story of a Garland photograph

Whenever I come to Petworth, and I do come when I can, I go to the Cottage Museum if it's open. My family are in a nearby tea-room but I expect that while I'm talking to you they'll just have a second cup. I love coming to the Museum because, apart from being fascinated by it, I can look across to Windmill House where I spent the wartime years. It was two cottages then, with another house in the garden. Like other Petworth evacuees, I came from Peckham, but as it happened I didn't know the other evacuees very well as I'd only just arrived at the school. Even its name escapes me. Of the journey down I remember nothing, only of finding myself

in a hall or a large building; memory connects it strongly with Pound Street although of course I may be wrong. I was taken by the hand to stay with Jimmy and Joyce White in High Street. I was there for about a year before I went to live with Jimmy's mother. Jimmy had been called up in December so I didn't see him much. His wife worked as lady's maid at a big house somewhere opposite the church. My father had been called up in September 1939 and my mother, of course, stayed in Peckham.

My memories are mainly of living with old Mrs White at 321. She had her son "Sonny" with her. He used to work for the Estate, initially as a labourer, then in the Gardens and latterly on general duties at the House. After the war he lived with a sister and from time to time we'd come down to see them. Sonny had a marvellous head for figures, and I was always trying out sums on him.

What an extraordinary coincidence it is that out of the thousands of Garland portraits my sister and I should both be among the dozen or so picked out by Photoworks to be exhibited in the Leconfield Hall. There's a curious story attached to this. These very portraits taken of my sister and me by George Garland (or perhaps one of his assistants, I have no memory of them being taken at all) were sent out to my father who was in Egypt. He got a local photographer to reproduce them with my father on one side and my mother on the other, with the sphinx and the pyramids beneath.

My sister Rita, who came down a little later, stayed with Nurse Knight. It was considered advisable for Rita to be with the District Nurse because my sister had a tendency to be asthmatic. My mother would come down *Sylvia Duchesne in Rosemary Lane c 1945.*



at weekends to see either Rita or myself, but, curiously, she didn't usually see both of us at the same time. I think Nurse Knight seemed to prefer it that way. My mother's ninety-one now.

Kind as old Mrs White was, I felt quite lonely at first. I didn't have my relatives here and I didn't see my sister a great deal. In later years I made friends locally, Mary Clegg being a particular friend of mine. I went to the Infants School but soon to the Girls' School in East Street. At the Girls' School the evacuees and the local girls were taught separately on either side of the big hall with the tortoise stove. As time went on most of the evacuees filtered back to London, so that eventually there were only six or seven of us left, so that we joined up with the local girls to form a single class. I remember the bomb at the Boys' school; we were sitting in the hall at the Girls' School when there was a single clump and we thought at first that one of our chimney pots had fallen down; it seemed that near. Did this lead people to suppose they were safer in London? Curiously it didn't seem to. It was said that as Ribbentrop had visited Petworth House before the war, the Nazis knew all about the priceless pictures there and would make sure they weren't damaged. They wanted them for themselves. This was just a rumour: I don't suppose there was the slightest truth in it.

Grandma White was quite elderly but tried to involve me in whatever she did. She worked in the kitchen at Petworth House, helping out when needed. Once I was allowed to stir the gravy for the House! I kept a couple of rabbits in a cage in the garden for a while. There was then a house in what is now the garden of Windmill House. Florence Mills lived there, rather unwell at the time, I remember.

Was I sorry to go back? After all I was probably the last of the evacuees to return and was still here in 1946. I don't know that "sorry" is quite the right word. I always knew I'd have to go back, but I had been away from London for a long time and there was certainly a lot of adjusting to do. I'd had effectively no contact with local Peckham children since 1939, whatever accent I'd had then had merged into a Sussex one. No, it wasn't going to be easy.

It's the first of September 1999, I'm in the Cottage Museum and it's sixty years to the day since I came to Petworth. Petworth's important to me, I spent nearly seven, mostly very happy, years here.

Sylvia Carter (née Duchesne) was talking to the Editor.

Sylvia adds this postscript:

"I wonder if any of the more mature ladies of Petworth remember a trip to London just after the war. I believe they came to the Albert Hall for a W.I. convention. Some of the ladies including Grandma White came to lunch at my home in Peckham. My father had just been demobbed and had bought our first television set. The ladies actually sat through Andy Pandy, the test card and the trade film. Maybe this might jog some memories. As my mother said it proved we didn't keep coal in the bath and we had running hot water (5 hot taps in all) as some had thought!

The memories I have of Petworth are selective, I think that is because I was only six and children have a knack of pushing things back into their sub-conscious minds. I do remember the dog-fights, the noise of the German bombers on their way to London and the American soldiers. Tap dance classes and one day I was Prince Charming in a pantomime. We used to

collect wild flowers for Mothering Sunday and Grandma White insisted I should have my bunch of wild flowers from the altar and she sent them to my mother for me in London.

We used to make jam and can fruit with the W.I. for sale and have homemade scones after our work was finished. Grandma used to take me with her when she played whist.

When Grandma died I had started work. Maud her daughter wrote and told us she was being buried on the Wednesday. We received the letter on the Monday. My mother and I rushed to Petworth and found that they were so sure we would come they had made arrangements for me to go in the first car following the coffin. To this day the memory of that acceptance as a family member overwhelms me."

We have printed extracts from Hugh Whitcomb's memoirs in the last two Magazines. As with much of Hugh Whitcomb's material this finds no echo elsewhere and is quite new. Written in the 1970s and recalling the late 1920s, this is on any reading an extraordinary yarn. Ed.

An epic journey - to Cairo and on!

The following story of two of my school-friends may be of interest.

The elder of the two, Harry Sear, a local farmer's son left our local Church school in about 1910 and became an apprentice to Mr Paul Thayre, who had been a blacksmith but had become a skilled agricultural engineer and who owned a car which was, I seem to remember, only the third or fourth in the Petworth area. In fact he soon mastered the intricacies of the internal combustion engine and after the 1914-18 war when tractors began to replace horses he was able to do minor repairs to them. The first and only garage operating in the district at that time was at Heath End, two miles south of the town.

Young Harry Sear thus had a unique opportunity to learn not only agricultural engineering but to acquire more than a smattering of motor vehicle repair work and soon after he had completed his apprenticeship he emigrated to Kenya. Not many years had passed before we heard that he had established a large and flourishing business as an importer and distributor of tractors and had become a wealthy man.

In the meantime he had been joined by Reg Thayre, the son of his first employer. Reg was a contemporary of mine, we being the same age and, incidentally, so much alike physically that we could have been identical twins. A little later a third Petworth young man, in the shape of Ken Moyer, another school friend of mine, joined the firm at their headquarters in Nairobi.

Harry had in the meantime learned to fly and had acquired one of the early Moth bi-planes which he found useful in looking after his widespread interests in East Africa. Eventually having become an experienced pilot he conceived the notion of flying home to England and invited Reg Thayre to accompany him. Poor young Ken Moyer had meanwhile died after only a few years in Kenya. It appears that he went down to Mombasa on vacation.

Mombasa has, I believe, a very hot humid climate, whereas Nairobi stands at a much higher and, therefore, cooler altitude. On his return to Nairobi Ken developed pneumonia and died. This was in the late 1920's - before penicillin had been discovered. I mention the rather sad story at this juncture in order to explain why Ken's name will no longer be mentioned.

Reg Thayre jumped at the chance to fly home and he and Harry commenced making plans for their journey which was really a hare-brained scheme at this comparatively early period in the history of flying heavier-than-air machines. Neither knew much if anything about navigation and incredible as it may seem they, failing to procure a proper route map, actually relied on a child's atlas! As they had to carry extra petrol, there being few re-fuelling facilities between Kenya and Cairo, they could take no luggage, and, in fact, in order to keep the weight down had to wear their light tropical kit. Even in Africa flying at several thousand feet in an open cockpit must have been chilly.

Before starting contact was made with the RAF which had a station in Egypt (then under British control) and permission sought to land in their airfield. This was refused, the Air Force people expressing the view that it was a mad idea, that they would probably go down in the jungle and that they (the RAF) had no intention of risking their pilots' lives in a search for them.

Reg Thayre, as far as I can remember, told me nothing about stopping places between Nairobi and Cairo, but seeing that these cities are something like two thousand miles apart and the range of that ancient Moth aircraft was little more than 200 miles there must have been quite a number of them. After 50 years no doubt my memory is not very reliable but all I can recollect about that hazardous first stage of the flight, as related by Reg, was that for hours at a time they flew over dense jungle and then over more open country, eventually reaching Cairo by following the course of the river Nile. To illustrate the almost nonchalant manner in which these two young men (Harry was about 34 and Reg 29 or 30) undertook this frighteningly risky journey in a single engined plane, they told me that on seeing what they took to be a large herd of pigs they descended much lower to get a better view and found they were elephants!

When they arrived at the RAF base in Egypt they took a chance and landed, despite the fact that they had been refused permission to do so. The RAF staff were furious and at first threatened to impound the plane but finally relented, refuelled it and sent them on their way with a caution. The next step was for them to make their way to the Mediterranean coast as they intended to follow the coast line until they reached a point opposite Sicily where they would have only a comparatively short stretch of water to cross. This they accomplished, landing on the 'toe' of Italy. Their atlas told them that mountains ran right down the spine of Italy so they simply flew low over the beaches until they reached the gap in the Alps through which they flew over the border into France. By this time they were both shivering with cold so landed in the first flat field they found and ran around until they restored circulation.

On their way across France they must have made other stops for refuelling which however were not described to me but the last episode was, and that was their nightmare crossing of the Channel. Whether it was foggy when they started I can't remember, but it was apparently so as they approached Dover as they said they suddenly saw cliffs in front of them and Harry just managed to pull the machine up and skim over the top. When I asked Reg whether they intended to fly back to Kenya, he grinned and said "not on your life."

There were no airlines flying planes to Africa in those far off times so our two heroes went back by sea having sold the plane in England. Neither of them reached the age of fifty.

A Christmas Party at Petworth House, the first since the ending of the Great War 1919 - 1920

The long eagerly awaited day had arrived, our Christmas Party at Petworth House given by Lord and Lady Leconfield for their tenants, mothers and children. My brother and I had a bath by the side of our kitchen range. I expect you all remember the zinc bath of that time with a handle each side. No-one had bathrooms in those far off days.

We were both dressed in our finery. I had the most beautiful clothes all made up from dresses my mother had bought from jumble sales. At that time all jumble was given by the wealthy. The majority of working class people wore their clothes out. In families it was usually handed down. Most mothers were good needle women, hence the smart party clothes. I remember my mother saying that mothers who were unable to sew were "shiftless". My brother wore a Norfolk suit for best, breeches, hand knitted socks and boots. I remember the boots had a tag at the back to make it easier to pull them on. We both wore coats, my brother a cap. I wore a crochet tammy, with a large pom-pom on the top fixed on to a lace chain. I loved the feeling when my pom-pom danced around on my head. I wore long button boots and knitted stockings. We each wore hand knitted gloves.

My mother wore a white blouse, a long navy serge skirt, a floppy felt hat, and a three quarter grey coat, most of it home made. My mother always smelled of 4711 eau-de-cologne a great favourite of hers.

Bedecked in our finery we trekked the mile to Petworth House. At that time we lived at Tillington Lodge. We met a number of friends on the way all coming from the numerous lodges and cottages. At that time the Estate employed workers from miles around, many lived in lovely cottages well maintained. Many have now been bought by wealthy people.

We eventually arrived at Church Lodge in Petworth where we all assembled in the Audit Room, an enormous room just inside the Lodge. I remember years ago wonderful dinners being held in the Audit Room for all workers, starting from the "Big Wigs" right down to the casual workers. The Audit Room holds between two and three hundred. We were then shown to the North Gallery, a room full of male nude statues, the first thing my mother said as we entered the room, was "Don't you two children look at those men's down belows."

The tables were laid out with every goody imaginable. Never had we seen such food to remember, as the war had been on so many years. There were sandwiches and cakes, jellies and pastes of every description. We said grace always before our meals and I must say every child was well behaved. There were well over one hundred of us devouring all sorts of

goodies. We were joined by the House Party, including children and their nannies, Dukes, Lords and Sirs all joined in the fun and for this particular evening there was no them and us. I remember my mother remarking to her friend having spotted a very thin little girl, "One of my meat puddings would do her good." Meat pudding has always been one of my favourite meals. I remember thinking, "Fancy living in a jolly great house and not having a meat pudding."

After tea we then adjourned to the Audit Room where there was an enormous Christmas tree which was adorned with candles and all kinds of baubles.

There was a huge pile of presents round the tree. Father Christmas had many helpers with him, and we children eagerly waited for our names to be called. I had a lovely handbag with (2) 1 shilling pieces inside, riches indeed. My brother I remember was given a box of soldiers.

After the presents were distributed we played games musical chairs, blind mans buff, oranges and lemons, all the gentry joined in. The party soon came to an end, we were all sent home with an apples and an orange. Very contented and happy with our lot.

Kath Vigar

Day Centre Conversations (1)

Actually I wasn't born in Petworth; my parents came here from Peterborough in response to a newspaper advertisement by Harpers in Saddlers Row for a gentlemen's hairdresser. The shop is now Baskerville Antiques. I was only three at the time so I imagine I just about qualify as "Petworth"! Certainly I don't have any real memory of Peterborough. At first we stayed with Mr and Mrs Penfold in Station Road but we soon moved to South Grove which was newly built then. My father was at Harpers for the rest of his working life, well over thirty years. The gentlemen's hairdressing was in a room on the left, the confectionery and tobacco was in the middle and the ladies' hairdressing was in a room on the right behind the sweet counter. Dad came as a gentleman's hairdresser: he had been apprenticed to the trade in Peterborough but when he came to Petworth he learned to do ladies' hairdressing as well. We liked to go into the shop because Mrs Harper always gave us sweets. We also went to Mrs Tyrell's in North Street who still sold sweets in the old-fashioned way, by weighing them into a paper cone she'd make herself. Mrs Thayre's at the top of North Street was another port of call when we were looking for sweets. Harpers were also well-known for their taxi-service, it was something Mrs Harper had started long before, perhaps during the 1914-1918 war. In my time Mr Harper himself did a fair bit of the driving.

My memories of Infants and Girls School are much like Marjorie's but are a year or two later. I was at the Girls' School in East Street when the bomb fell on the Boys' School. Of course we only realised what had happened later in the day. Joan Willis and I were washing up our Horlicks cups. It's strange how things stick in the mind, I suppose that anyone who was in Petworth on that day will still remember what they were doing and where exactly they were when they heard that fateful noise.

When I left school I went to work at Spiro-Gills which was part of Harwoods Garage on the corner of Park Road. There was a car showroom but also a kind of factory. It may well have made munitions during the war but when I was there it was turning out lengths of copper pipe with curious fins attached. We worked with lathes and other machinery and effectively there was a kind of assembly line. I never knew what the finned pipes were actually used for. Eventually Spiro-Gills moved to Pulborough but I stayed in Market Square working at the Bus Office (now Dallyns the Estate Agents). Strange as it may seem now, the Bus Office was an extremely busy place then. People used buses then and would come in to enquire about times. That was only a small part of the work; the buses then regularly carried local parcels and the packages needed to be weighed and ticketed. Buses were also used very considerably for delivering newspapers, each already rolled and addressed and it was the bus conductor's responsibility to throw them out at the proper place. I say "throw" them out, I don't quite know what happened if it was raining, after all I was in the office. Talking of newspapers, I think at that time you could buy them at the Star. Drivers (and conductors) were always in and out of the office and with hourly buses there were a fair number. The drivers would come in to sign up before going to their next destination. I worked at the Bus Office with Miss Rowe but after a while took a job at Coates Castle with Colonel Blacker. He too had made munitions during the war and employed a number of Petworth men, but this time I wasn't on the "shop floor" but in the office so I rather took what was going on there for granted.

Jean Hamilton was talking to the Editor

Day Centre Conversations An occasional series (2)

I was born in Damer's Bridge and lived there until I was ten. My father worked for Lord Leconfield as a bricklayer. Damer's bridge was a quiet backwater then, so much so that I used to sit out on the pavement with our dog. Dr and Mrs Kerr from Culvercroft made a great fuss of the dog and their daughters Ann and Bunty would come round especially to see him. The Kerrs always gave me a present at Christmas. One day the dog bit Fred Streeter's trousers and he was less than amused. Mr Graham, the school attendance officer, lived in the end house now demolished to make way for the Car Park. He'd go around the schools with his motor-bicycle and side-car. Mr Howard the chimney sweep was to our immediate left, while on our right lived the Misses Page, two sisters who seemed very elderly to us children but were very kind to us. The Hounshams lived over the butcher's shop and we were friends with them and the four Mott children whose parents kept the butcher's shop at the bottom of Market Square. It's now Barringtons the Estate Agents. Next to the butchers on the corner of Golden Square was Wise the bakers. They had a café as well on the premises, later the Tunks family would have the bakers. When Wises were there I would be sent round for a half-penny worth of stale

buns. I was to ask them particularly not to put in too many doughnuts as Bill didn't like them! Thinking back, I sometimes reflect that the bakers must have thought I wanted rather a lot for a half-penny even in those days! Next to the baker was Mr Money the greengrocer. It would be the early 1930s.

It was while we were living in Damer's Bridge that I first tasted turkey, very much a luxury then. My brother Bill had joined the Army at the age of fourteen and a half and was home for Christmas. "Come with me," he said, "I'm going to buy Mum something." The International Stores had a great display of turkey and other meat for Christmas in the window next to the Star. At that time the window opened out and the meat was exposed to the air. Of course there wasn't much traffic through the Cut then. I thought the turkey tasted absolutely marvellous and it was a Christmas dinner to remember. I'd often go down to Pound Street to see my grandparents who lived in Pound Place. My grandfather worked as a gardener for Mr and Mrs Morgan at the Old Bank House. My great-grandfather Standing Penfold had supervised the prisoners' work at the old Petworth House of Correction.

When I was ten we moved to Cherry Orchard and at about the same time I went to the East Street Girls School. Those were the days when you left school at fourteen. I can remember Miss Wootton, Miss Bevis and Miss Smith and a succession of student teachers. Ink I particularly associate with the Girls School, filling the inkwells from big bottles of ink. I only remember the ink. There was a little side room where it was kept and I expect they kept text and exercise books there too, but if they did, I've quite forgotten. I don't know that we were particularly poor; there were certainly people a lot worse of than we were but we did have to be frugal. Most people like us did. Mum's shopping would involve me asking for things like three pennyworth of stale cheese or so many pence worth of meat pieces. I've already mentioned the stale buns. It was something shopkeepers expected, a part of everyday life. No school meals then of course, the local girls went home for lunch but those who came from outside the town brought something to eat. Sandwiches, bread and cheese that sort of thing I suppose. The big school room was divided across by a green curtain.

I left school in 1940 and went to work at the Barn in Angel Street for Margaret and Lillian Upton and their companion Miss Jordan who also did the cooking. Miss Jordan was always called Nurse Jordan and had at one time been a district nurse. John Holman lived with the Uptons; he was a distinctive figure in the town with his invariable plus-fours. He had a curious way of holding his purse with his hand pointing downward. The Uptons had another sister who lived at Colhook and was, I think, married to Major Vincent at the brickyard. She often came to the Barn to visit. It was a rather old-fashioned household and I was quite glad to move on to work for the Tunks family, who had by this time taken over from Wise the bakers in Golden Square. It was wartime and they were extremely busy. Mr Tunks baked in what is now called the Old Bakery in the yard to the left. He'd bring in trays and trays of bread rolls and they'd be gone almost as soon as he'd brought them in. He was a first-rate baker. Troops, busmen, all sorts of people came into the shop. Yes, there were a lot of buses in those days. Lunches were served upstairs, Mr Bowyer the chemist I particularly remember coming in for lunch every day as, no doubt, did other local businessmen. I liked it there, but after a while went to work for Mrs Knight at the Old Square Tavern in Market Square. I served in the shop



This drawing is the only known picture of South Cottage, demolished in the 1970s to make way for the public toilets in the Car Park. See "No, that's not the right church..."



Messrs Jukes, Golden Square about 1882. Photograph by Walter Kevis.
See "This is a rum do ..."



Old Mr and Mrs Penfold in Pound Street.
[This looks like a Garland photograph but it is not one known to me. Ed.]
Courtesy of Mrs M. Manning. See Day Centre Conversations (2).



*Winter Sports on Petworth Park Lake 1929. Photograph by George Garland.
See "No that's not the right church ..."*

or behind the bar if needed. The Tavern also did lunches and they too were very busy at this time.

Eventually I left the Tavern and went to work for Mr and Mrs Lund who were renting a house in Quarry Lane for the duration of the war. The Lunds came from Chislehurst in Kent. The war was still on but when it finished the Lunds had to move out of Quarry Lane as the owner wanted his house back. I went to Chislehurst to help the Lunds clear their house there. They were renting Red House (on the site of the present Lund House) from the Leconfield Estate. The Lunds would live at Red House for two decades. When they left Quarry Lane



Red House in 1963. Courtesy of Mrs M. Manning.

I left too, but when they returned to Petworth Mrs Lund asked me if I would come back. I demurred but Mrs Lund got me to agree to do two mornings a week on a temporary basis. Before long I was working five mornings a week. I was there for twenty-one years. Mrs Lund died and Mr Lund lived on alone at Red House, I say alone, but in fact in the early days he had a butler, later a housemaid and one or two other helps, while I did the cooking. He wasn't always here, spending six months of the year abroad. Initially it would be South Africa, in later years Australia. When he was away I tended to live in. Red House had at one time been the home of Colonel and Mrs Simpson, but it may be that there was a tenant between the Simpsons and the Lunds, I don't know. It was a large house and needed a considerable upkeep. The Lunds were wealthy people and I believe gave a considerable amount towards the church spire, although this wasn't generally known at the time. Mr Lund got me to make a rice

pudding and an egg custard every day just in case he wanted it. As often as not he'd want neither and I'd take the puddings home. When Mr Lund died I took the key of Red House back to the Leconfield Estate.

I had a cousin, Doreen Killick, who worked in Lord Leconfield's laundry. She's still alive but quite elderly now. Isabel Pendle was head laundress. She came, I believe, from Lockerbie in Scotland. I remember the huge boilers and driers for sheets and things like that. I often went down to the laundry to see her. One or two odd things: does anyone remember the Labour Exchange at Mrs Standen's little shop in Pound Street (now the Chinese takeaway)? I imagine it was a kind of bureau for servants. My father used to get up at four o'clock in the morning when there was a big "do" at the House. He might help with scouring the metal grates or cleaning the windows. One last thing: Christmas parties for children of estate workers. We'd leave our coats in the Audit Room. The party would be in the North Gallery, always a beautiful tea and an entertainment. Lady Leconfield would be there with the Leconfield's adopted children, Peter and Elizabeth. We each had a present to take home. One year everyone received a small box of chocolates. Obviously to a small child like me, Lady Leconfield seemed a very remote figure.

Marjorie Manning was talking to the Editor

Day Centre Conversations (3)

My father ran a bakery and grocery business on the corner of Middle Street and High Street, latterly Petworth Provisions it is now a book shop. An early memory is of my father buying his first Trojan car; it would be the mid-1920s. I always connect it with friends of my parents who used to come down from Ilford in Essex, he was a traveller with McFarlane Lang, the biscuit people. Well, anyway, the family used to go to Ebernoe Common, my father and mother taking my brother Bill, my sister Rose and myself. We'd play cricket or football, just a children's game. We had a terrier named Bunch who regularly came with us. We'd play up toward Willand and were thoroughly enjoying ourselves when we noticed that Bunch had disappeared. A few minutes later an irate farmer appeared carrying a dead chicken. "Your dog's killed my chicken," "Oh, no," my father said, "I know Bunch and he wouldn't do anything like that." Unfortunately Bunch chose that very moment to reappear with a mouthful of feathers. There was nothing my father could do but pay up! It only later occurred to us that Mr Holden, the farmer, having charged four shillings, (no inconsiderable sum) for the chicken, had gone off with it! It took my father a long time to live that down.

Talking of Ebernoe, my father often used to fish in the stream that runs under the road into the mill pool, catching roach. I don't think he treated them as a food fish; like most fish they are probably edible but I think you'd need to be fairly hungry to eat roach. Once he caught three specimen bream in the mill pool at Ebernoe. He always fished with a roach pole, a long, sectioned rod without a reel and with the line running under a bail driven into the top section. Such rods are made of graphite these days but were then of split cane. When he had something

on the line he'd hold the line tight by keeping the top part upright, then take off the sections until he had the catch within reach of his net. My father was a great believer in ground bait even though the water flows very swiftly out of the mill pool at Ebernoe. The groundbait, of course, flowed out with it, but he'd throw it as far upstream as he could to make the best use of it. He'd have a mixture of gentles, bread, bran and meal, slightly wetting it before rolling it into a loose ball. He then "cast it on the waters."

We children, five or six of us perhaps, did our own "fishing" in the brook in the summer holidays. If you go through the gate into the Virgin Mary copse and turn almost immediately left, there's a footpath to Byworth. Everything was less overgrown then and on the Byworth side of the brook was what would almost pass as a patch of sand - we could make sandcastles with flower pots. There were three kinds of fish we'd catch - or try to - sticklebacks, minnows and "chubbies" (small chub). When we children were there, the little fish would hide under the black stones. We'd stand by with our jam jars, gradually lift a stone and hope that a startled fish would jump into the jar. There might be half a dozen of us, and the great thing about being so near the Virgin Mary Spring was that, even in the hottest weather, we were always near a drink. We'd come out in the morning, go home for dinner, then, as often as not, go back again. We soon learned that it was a waste of time to bring home minnows or chubbies; they needed running water, but I kept a stickleback for two years in a goldfish bowl. My mother used to feed it with ant eggs which you could buy from shops in the town. I often wonder if there are any fish in the brook now.

My father didn't like us to be idle and would always find jobs for us. One day he said to me, "I have bought two lots of pigs today. Go down to Dawtreys, get a truss of straw, take it up the allotment and litter the pigs up well and feed them. He gave me instructions how much to give them; they were only eight of nine weeks old. Away I went, down to what is now the Old Bakery precinct but at this time was a pretty ramshackle old building. Mr Peacock was in there. "You know where the straw is." The truss wasn't heavy, even for a boy of eight or nine, but it was big and awkward. They were also stacked several high. I struggled to get one into my arms and then found a cat had messed on it and it was all over my hands. I could only wipe it off as best I could, put it on my bicycle and go up to the allotment. My father often went to the market at Pulborough; a man who kept a small farm opposite Fittleworth House had a horse and cart and would bring animals back for people.

Talking of the Old Bakery, there were three businesses there at this time: Dawtreys, Mr Wise the baker, and Mr Johnson the rule-maker. He used to fascinate me, his rules were twelve inches long, ebonised, with the metric system on the back. I still have one of his rules which he gave me. He had a big gauge model locomotive on a shelf. I imagine he'd made it himself. I often wandered into Dawtreys out of sheer curiosity and would carry on along the passage. There was an open space where a ramp went down to underground stables, not in use at that time, it was an eerie sort of place. It was this complex that was found during the recent excavations for the new Council offices.

Once or twice a week my mother gave me a halfpenny or perhaps a penny to buy sweets. I'd go into Mrs Tiplady's next door to us in High Street and buy them. One day my father said to me, "Your mother gave you money to buy sweets today, didn't she? But you didn't spend

it in the shop did you? Why not?" He was quite angry and I would only be five or six. I said to him, "I like to go and see what there is at Mrs Tiplady's." I suppose a halfpenny or penny was a lot of money in those days. After that I split my sweet money between Hazelman's, Mrs Tiplady and Mrs Tyrrell in North Street just below the entrance to the Cow Yard on the opposite side of the road.

"Dick" was an old man I remember well. I say "old" because he seemed old to me, he would be in his late fifties, I suppose. As I have said, we had an allotment, quite a large plot of ground, a corner piece at Cherry orchard with a shed at the end and pig pens on either side. The shed was well-constructed, weather-board outside, match-board inside. Once, when my father was up there feeding the pigs, Dick came up to him and asked if there was a job for him. He could do the allotment and look after the pigs. Dad said he could and Dick started work. What my father didn't realise was that he intended to move into the shed. All he had with him were two old army greatcoats, one of which he lay on, and one to cover him. My father was rather put out because it was a condition of his tenancy of the allotment from the Leconfield Estate that no one could reside there. Well, he hadn't the heart to move Dick on and no one said anything, and Dick lived in the shed for five or six years. My mother used to send him up meals, not every day, but several times a week. I usually went up with them. When Dick got to sixty-five he said to my father, "My feet are so bad, I'd like to retire." My father enquired about almshouses and eventually found him a place in Egremont at the top of Horsham Road. Dick moved in: there was a spring bed - no mattress or anything - but that didn't worry Dick, a bed was a real luxury. My mother still sent down the odd dinner and Dick lived there for some years. Such stories may seem strange nowadays, but I used to go out on the road with Duckie Herrington and often saw farm-workers moving into cottages. They'd move from farm to farm. Some didn't have a stick of furniture, just a box or two for the kids to sit on. Wages were very low and there were usually four or five children. Talking of allotments, I used to be sent up to Petworth House to pay the allotment rent on Audit Day. The lunch and handouts weren't for mere allotment holders, so I'd hand over my money, be given my receipt and be sharply on my way. The Audit Room always had a lot of white clay models of beef cattle on shelves along the wall.

I was a short time at the Infants School and then went on to the North Street Boys' School. To start with, in Mr Dewey's class I didn't get on at all, but the next year in Mrs Dumbrell's class I did much better and caught up. Jack Bartlett was in the same class as I and always cleverer than I was, beating me for the Taylor Scholarship to the Grammar School. I sat it again but didn't quite make it and left school at fourteen.

My father was going to Pulborough Market and my mother said to him, "If you see a warm coat big enough for Ron, he could do with one for the winter." There was a man who came from London and had a stall with that sort of thing - a kind of cheapjack I suppose. Well, Dad came back with an officer's "British Warm" three-quarter length coat, khaki of course, but good material and it fitted me a treat.

Soon after this Mr Stevenson, the headmaster said to me, "I've got two entries in the Scout Singing competition at the Royal College of Music. I want you and Cyril Sadler to have a try. Mr Davie will take us up to London." Mr Davie was the curate and he had just come

back from Australia, he had a Rhode two-seater with a dickie. It was November. Cyril had a full length coat but, as I have said, mine was only three-quarter length. As the journey went on I was absolutely shrammed sitting in the dickie and having no protection from the cold. I don't think I've ever been so cold. The Royal College of Music is by the Albert Hall. We didn't make any impression in the competition but we did get to see some of the nearby museums. The Rhode had a speed of some 35 miles an hour.

When my father bought the Trojan, it would be about 1926. It had belonged to the Rector of Lurgashall. Anyway, he started a supplementary round, Tuesdays and Saturdays, in addition to Duckie Herrington's daily rounds. On school days he'd wait for me at the top of Cemetery Hill to give him a hand. The round went up the Horsham Road, down the lane to Moor, back to the road and up to Hilliers, then, a little further on, left at the bottom of Fox Hill to Algy Moss at Westlands, then to the Steers at Blackbrook and right down to the three houses at Crawfold, almost as far as Balls Cross. Then we'd come back up to the top of Fox Hill turning left for Buckfold. Mr Carpenter the milkman lived there, like Gus Wakeford, he went round Petworth with his milk float. I went to Mrs Carpenter on foot, as my father didn't care to take the Trojan down the lane. Meanwhile he'd walk down the field on the other side of the hedge to the other two cottages where Jack Purser and Bill Wakeford lived. I'd then walk down the lane to catch up with him at Bill Wakeford's. Mrs Wakeford would always ask if we wanted a cup of tea. Cottagers never used cow's milk in those days; it was always evaporated or condensed. She'd put a drop of evaporated into the bottom of the cup then pour out straight from the pot. It took about a quarter of an hour, before it was possible to drink it. On a Saturday the whole Wakeford family would congregate there. Coming back to the top of Fox Hill we'd go left for Beechfields.

Beechfields was a house very like Littlecote (now demolished). The Price family lived there, Mr and Mrs Price, Ryan Price and his two brothers and sisters. The kitchen was at right angles to the main building. The Prices used to look after handicapped people and were paid an allowance to have them stay with them. Some could be a little disconcerting. I remember once being at the door, seeing a chink of light and the door opening ever so gradually to reveal a very tall man with a full black beard carrying a piece of meat on a long fork. It was quite alarming. He said nothing. It was one of the "house guests". He shuffled off to the stables; he was taking the piece of meat to his dog.

When I was about to leave school I asked my father if there was a job for me in the Middle Street bakery and shop. "No," he said, "You'll have to go out and find one." I went to see Jim Boxall the builder at Tillington and was taken on as an apprentice carpenter. I still make a few pieces of furniture for the family.

During the war I was in the Royal Engineers. In the spring of 1940 we kept a wary eye on the Armoury window in Tillington Road. It was quite clear that we would be conscripted. One day I saw a notice from Patchings, the Worthing builders asking for workers in the building trade to apply for a works company being formed by Patchings. I ran into Ken Boxall shortly afterward and told him about it. I rang Patchings on the number given and was told to get on to the recruiting office at Brighton for a medical. All being well, and Ken having decided to do the same thing, we received a letter telling us to go to Chatham. It was May

1940. We were only a few days at Chatham, kitted out and sent down to Cornwall for training. By this time Gordon Gibson, who was a roundsman for my father, was with us. After training we built various camps in different parts of the country including a new one at Camberley. Eventually we were sent to Reigate under South East Command. A lot of our work involved blackout precautions, fitting windows with wooden frames containing sisalcraft paper, one side tarred, then two pieces stuck together.

We finished one particular job and there seemed some uncertainty as to where we would be sent next. We found eventually that our destination was Petworth - to build a new camp in the park. It would later be the Polish camp. First however we had to go on a refresher course. A lot of our material was re-used from temporary summer camps that had been taken down. Ken Boxall and I were put on chipping out two large holes in the park wall to allow lorries to come in and out and then make gates of wood and corrugated iron. We were supposed to monitor the gates and work from daylight to dusk although I don't think we quite did that. The main thing was that someone was there to deal with the gates. Once I was at the gate when Lord Leconfield came along with his dog. He seemed to be looking at me but he didn't say anything and I didn't say anything to him. After a few moments he simply walked on.

Ron Hazelman was talking to the Editor.

'No, that's not the right church...'

My father worked for Lord Leconfield, basically as a smith although he did some night-watchman duties too. My grandfather had been the blacksmith at Duncton, starting off, I was told, by the Cricketers and then moving to a distinctive position below the Roman Catholic church. My father worked with him for a while and then drove the horse mail between Petworth and Petersfield. This was before my time. Very likely my father was already working for Lord Leconfield before the 1914-1918 war for he returned to work for the Leconfield Estate after it. Lord Leconfield had promised to keep a job open for any of his workers who joined up. As it happened, my father was wounded in France and came home. He had been in the Royal Horse Artillery. Because of his disability, he no longer shod horses, but made tree guards, gate hinges and often, too, ornamental ironwork. He was one of several employed in this way in the Estate yard, Ted Chaffer, George Simpson and Mr Crawley, the gunsmith. In all, my father must have worked for Lord Leconfield a good forty years. As a boy I would go to see my grandfather at Duncton, but by this time he was in indifferent health and I've no real recollection of the smithy. There is a well-known Garland "character" picture of him taken in the 1930s.

We lived in Percy Terrace in Grove Street. As well as working as a smith my father was a member of the Leconfield Estate private fire brigade. As far as I know it attended only fires on the Estate. There was a bell in the bedroom at Percy Terrace about the size of a dinner plate. It would be rung regularly as a test on Monday morning and a fair old noise it made too. I

seem to remember it ringing for the fire at Coultershaw Mill in 1923 but I would have been very young then. I have been told that the wiring for the bell ran from house to house passing through houses that didn't have a bell. The estate firemen had a uniform, I suppose they had to get into that as quickly as they could. Response by modern standards, was desperately slow. The engine had to be fired up before they could start and it had the reputation of being more than somewhat temperamental.

I remember a big fête held in what is now the car park, probably in the grounds of South Cottage which stood on the east side roughly where the toilets are now. I can't remember who had South Cottage then, later occupants were Dr Ball and Colonel Maude. The present car park was mainly garden and orchard. I asked if I could go in. "Do you belong to St Mary's church?" I was asked. I explained that my brother and I went to the Congregational chapel. "No, that's not the right church," I was told and that, it seemed, was that. Mr Powell, the rector, would come to the school periodically. One day he saw my brother and me and said, "I never see you in church". Again I explained about going to chapel. "That's no religion," he said. Those were the attitudes in those days. Mr Whatley was the minister then and we'd go, my brother and I, to the Manse for bible-reading. I went regularly to chapel until I was about thirteen. I wasn't made to go although I think my parents rather expected us to go. There were concerts sometimes in the bottom room at the chapel, and for services very respectable congregations. Saturday mornings I'd sometimes help the butcher in the slaughter-house in Trump Alley. One day he said, "I want your help with something". It was to hold down some sheep while he shot them. I didn't like this very much and the noise nearly blew out my eardrums. When I protested, he said, "Oh, I should have told you to put your arms over your ears." A quieter job was to wash out pigs intestines for sausage skins. We used brine for this. Again it wasn't something I particularly enjoyed.

When it came for me to leave school I was already doing a morning newspaper delivery round for Weavers, and getting 2/6d a week. I'd had a long time in hospital, and looking back now, I suppose I was fortunate to be still alive. It happened like this: winters in the late 1920s were very severe and the lake in Petworth Park froze hard. People who could afford skates skated on the frozen surface of the lake, we boys just slide around. I was pushed over and hurt my hip. It bruised badly. These things are part and parcel of growing up and I didn't think anything of it at the time. The bone however became diseased and I was very ill. Lady Leconfield put me in the care of Mr Bostock, the top surgeon in the field and made sure that as regards treatment I wanted for nothing. I was a year in hospital, and when I came home she would come from time to time to Percy Terrace to see how I was getting on. I needed cod liver oil and malt, expensive items for a family such as ours. "When he runs out," said her Ladyship, "Go to Mr Steggle the chemist and book them to my own account." I have to say that I grew very tired of cod liver oil and malt, but I often think about Lady Leconfield's interest. She didn't have to put herself out, did she?

My early ambition had been to join the Navy. I was always very impressed by a Petty Officer in the navy who used to come next door to visit his aunt, but of course my injury finished all that. As I was coming up to the time to leave school, Mr Thear, who had the same initials, V.G. as I had, suggested to my father that I might be apprenticed to him and learn his

trade. It was all fixed up between them and I was to be paid six shillings a week for the first year, eight to five Monday to Friday and four hours on Saturday. Mr Thear had a flourishing business in furniture restoring, upholstery and allied work and had an extensive clientele, particularly in the big houses round about. His premises were just off the old Red Lion Yard in High Street, just before the Clinic. Mr Thear was a brilliant cabinet maker and an expert too at inlaid work. He did a fair amount for Petworth House. Mr Thear's was very much a personal business, Alf Lucas was there for a time, left and later came back for a while, but it was essentially Mr Thear to whom people came. I was taught upholstery in particular but soon learned to turn my hand to whatever needed doing. Early on, Mr Thear had turned a new chair leg on his treadle lathe, then amazed me by asking me to make some holes in it with a bradawl, then fill them with wax. What, of course, he was doing was making sure the new piece fitted in with the old. "Distressing" they call it now. Mr Thear was the gentlest of men; I was really very fortunate. He'd never say, "I told you last time," always explain, never lose his temper.

In those days of course, you did what you were told and, as good-natured a man as Mr Thear was, he expected me to take the rough with the smooth. One job I hated was redoing mattresses, a sideline of Mr Thear's. The mattress case would be emptied of its horsehair interior which was then put on the "devil", a revolving drum with big spikes which could tear the mattress filing to pieces. The dust was unbelievable. I'd put a handkerchief over my face to stop some of the debris and it would end up covered with wet dust, effectively mud. It would never be allowed today. We used to provide this service for the Swan Hotel among other clients.

The Leconfield Estate was all-powerful, but provided that you did not get at cross-purposes with the system, it could be very good to its employees. My father retired to a house, a pension, free wood and rabbits and pheasants at Christmas. My father loved fishing and when he retired had permission to fish every Saturday in the lake. Employees in general were allowed to fish Saturday afternoons after work.

Whatever you might think about the Estate system, it did provide work and made Petworth in some sense a living community. Even in the late 1920s, in Grove Street which was well on the way out of town, you'd see the Estate workforce going to and fro, carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers, tradesmen of all kinds. There were many horses too. About seven o'clock in the morning the horses would come up past Percy Terrace, to go down Grove Lane, right at the junction and back up Station Road. People ran out to collect the manure for their gardens.

I left Mr Thear after four and a half years. I was earning £1.50 a week by now, but there was work relaying water pipes at very good rates and like a number of other Petworth men I went on to this. Then, with the war, I worked on maintenance for the Army, living first at Norwich; from there I went to Hasler Naval Base at Gosport. Eventually I was posted back here as part of a maintenance team looking after the local camps. I was at Bramshott for a while, then at the various Petworth camps and also Barkfold, the small camp at Brownings, and the large camp at Fernhurst. The Canadians were very friendly and we had our meals at the camp, a great help in those rather austere days. We were collected in Petworth, either in a little pick-up or in an army lorry, whichever happened to be available. Work involved getting the camps ready, repairing things like broken windows, routine painting. Towards the

end I worked mainly at Bordon. After the war when the soldiers had left and the Polish soldiers came and eventually brought their wives, the camps no longer came under the control of my employer, the Garrison Engineer. Mr Thear, my old employer, was unwell by this time and I had been doing some of his work part-time, so I did upholstery for a time on the first floor of what is now the old Bakery.

Having some knowledge of the old Bakery premises, I was interested in the "discovery" of the underground area once used as an air-raid shelter. It was approached by a steep incline, roughly where the present bookshop is. The incline was so steep that there were handrails. It led into an underground room, with, in late years, two doors and ladies' and gents' toilets. The room lay in the garden of what was then South Cottage and rose in a mound in the garden. There was an iron ladder on the wall as an emergency escape. It wasn't purpose-built as an air-raid shelter; my father always told me that Otways, the Golden Square grocers, had used it for killing pigs. There were concrete troughs there for the pork to be put in brine.

Vic Reed was talking to the Editor.

The Truth, The Whole Truth, and Nothing but the Truth?

The following article is reprinted from the pages of *The West Sussex Gazette* from January 17, 1861. The anonymous author is describing a visit to the town in January, 1861 when he sat as a member of the Grand Jury at the Epiphany Quarter Sessions which were traditionally held at Petworth. The writer would have been - as the law required - a freeholder of the county, and along with eighteen other persons (a Grand Jury could consist of between 12 and 23 good and lawful men) would deliberate over indictments and so establish if there was a *prima facie* case to be heard before sending a defendant for trial. Somewhat tongue in cheek the visitor compares his stay and the characters involved in the proceedings of the day with a previous sojourn in the town some six years earlier. The Sessions House of which the writer makes such disparaging comments is instantly recognisable as the town hall, to this day the building generates opinions like no other in Petworth, to many residents it symbolises the very heart of the town itself, the tangle of streets that surround it are the arteries supplying the life-blood of Petworth, on the other hand the writer sums up the feelings of many modern day motorists when in his own inimitable style he asks the question which has passed countless lips - 'Was it stuck up by some obstinate person to be in the way?' The writer tends to ramble on about the interior of the town hall and one begins to wonder if it really was as bad, as that. We do know that it was somewhat decayed at the time, and also that major refurbishment would take place a few years later. But to get a real flavour of the building we can look back to 1822 and the observations of yet another anonymous visitor to Petworth, 'The Market House is a handsome structure, erected about 32 years since by the Earl of Egremont, who is Lord of the manor

of Petworth. The upper part is used to hold the quarter sessions, the lower consists of piazzas, and at one end appears a bust of William III. This conspicuous ornament to the town very nearly occupies its centre.' (*Excursions in the County of Sussex*)

The eminent critic having satisfied his contempt for the Sessions House then turns his attention toward the members of the judiciary themselves. No one seems to be spared his attention, though fortunately the indigenous population appears to be relatively absent from the central proceedings and so escape the incessant flood of sarcasm. The poor Clerk of the Peace of some years standing is one William Langridge of Lewes, while the Chairman of the Sessions whose facial characteristics are described as '*more like a small crummy loaf*' is John Morgan Cobbett. The High Sheriff at that time would have been Charles Scrase Dickins a substantial land owner and resident of Horsham and his assistant Sheriff one John Jervis Carnegie from Rogate. Even the governor of the prison William Linton, who had succeeded the venerated John Mance some four years earlier, attending the sessions in order to submit his report to the visiting justices fails to escape the writer's comment, though fortunately, or probably because the writer had not previously met him, he appears to come out of it relatively unscathed.

At one stage the Grand Jury moves across to the Swan Hotel where they encounter Charles Dempster the landlord whom the writer recalls from his previous visit. Dempster like Linton escapes the worst excesses of the writer's criticisms, perhaps the juryman fears the possibility of detection and with it the loss of any future hospitality at the inn. It would appear the hotel was not used purely for refreshment purposes, a bill inserted in the court roll records the payment of £3 for the use of a room as a second court.

While in a fit of insular protectiveness it is simple to deride the juryman for his intemperate criticism of the town, we should perhaps be grateful that in putting pen to paper he has given us an entertaining view of the town and a narrow but interesting insight into the machinations of the Quarter Sessions.

Source;

West Sussex Gazette January 17, 1861.

Miles Costello

"Six Years Ago, Or the Desultory Observations of a Grand Juryman

Six years ago I was a grand juryman at Petworth ; and a fortnight ago I was a grand juryman at Petworth. I think I have seen Petworth once or twice in the interim ; but I do not think many of the grand jurymen who were drawn from the same district have seen Petworth since that time. Petworth has not many natural attractions to invite one to visit it ; and the place looks about the same as it did six years ago ; and I should imagine that if I were to say that it looked the same sixty years ago, or even six hundred years ago, I should not make a very rash assertion, although I could not swear that it was "the whole truth and nothing but the truth ;" and this is the first law associated with Petworth, as I have always seen it.

Being such an occasional visitor to Petworth my connections are principally with the Sessions House. I wonder who was the architect of this building? And what was it designed

for? Was it stuck up by some obstinate person to be in the way? It has a very gloomy appearance and seems to have one end devoted to the bill sticker and to be furnished on the ground floor with some wattles which are never used, and in the roof by a clock which won't go. I have heard that a market is held hereabouts periodically, which is chiefly governed by three Arundel pig dealers. Opposite the bill sticking extremity one or two shops seem to have stuck on to it like barnacles. I know nothing of the interior arrangements on the basement; as I have always had a dread of peeping in, fearing that I might be mistaken for somebody against whom there was a former conviction. The grand entrance is round the corner—everything in Petworth is just round the corner—and here are some squat folding-doors, about the size of an old-fashioned farm house chimney fire-place ; and the staircase seems to be the chimney where bacon is dried, for there is always lots of saw-dust—an article peculiarly associated with bacon drying—on the road up. The chimney looks square enough, but is somewhat tortuous—characteristic of the town again—possibly to prevent its smoking. When one gets at the top of its flue, if he hasn't been a jurymen before, of course he pops into the wrong door, and gets round the wrong corner, and finds himself where he ought not to be. However, when he does push into the dingy apartment, he can well imagine the assimilation of the fire-place and the chimney ; for the sessions room evidently consumes its own smoke, and has consumed it so long that it looks about the same colour as a London fog. The window blinds have the appearance of being washed in pea soup, and made so nice thereby that the mice have nibbled the corners off. Altogether, like the old town, the room retains its musty flavour exactly as it did six years ago.

It must have been a Petworth man who mapped out the tank in which the barristers sit, and where the jurymen, reporters, witnesses, prisoners, and prosecutors fit in ; for all are made up of corners. There is an awfully cold and uncongenial aspect about the place, as if it were a large county vault, opened quarterly to terrorise society ; and it makes one half suspect that down the trap-door from which the prisoners are hauled up, there is a stock of gibbets and ogres to appal all who do not stick to "the whole truth and nothing but the truth." I don't think I should like to look down there, without a witness to corroborate what I saw.

But the most striking thing to a juryman is, that all the same officials remain where they were left six years ago. But they *don't* look quite the same—but pretty nearly. Reader, I must confess that I am *not* the same. My top is a *leetle* balder ; but just fancy the relief it was to me to count eighteen bald heads in the Grand Jury! This was a gleam of sunshine in the foggy building. But there sits the Clerk of the Peace just where he did six years ago. He has before him the same great black stage-coach looking portmanteau ; the same elaboration of parchment. I only wish I could see *his* head ; but I never did see it, for he always wears a well-powdered wig. I know it to be powdered, for there is the same refuse of powder on the collar of the black gown which I saw there six years ago. Has he been sitting there ever since I was a grand juryman six years ago? I declare I never saw him anywhere else. Has that black portmanteau remained there? Failing seeing the top of his head, I look to other points ; and I think I could almost swear—although I have never heard of the fact being registered in the county archives—that the Clerk of the Peace has undergone a dental operation since I saw him six years ago. This is at all events consoling to put in juxtaposition to my extra baldness ; still

I don't think he displays the same advancement in age that I do. He is too good looking ; but I believe the wig to be the great point in his favor.

But just look round at the officials! The individual who shouts "God save the Queen" in a sort of semi-chorus style, which seems to add, "For he's a jolly good fellow," and who stands with a wand, and says "Make way for the Grand Jury," has surpassed me at all points. His top is balder, certainly ; his nose is redder and riper ; and a tooth has vacated its usual place ;—all this looks well. And don't the Governor look balder on *his* top. I think so. Poor Mance! he has departed in the six years! As for the Sheriff's officer, he never will look older ; he must have been about the same age that he is now when he first entered the world. Well, well, I can put up with that, because I don't suppose he was ever young ; but "our reporter" is as young and as fresh as ever. I hope this is peculiar to the newspaper profession ; and I trust I look so ; but I know I don't. But hush! here comes the Chairman. Not the same Chairman of six years ago. *He* has retired ; and so has his deputy, during six years interim. But I recognise in the present learned Chairman one of the bigwigs formerly of the pit beneath. His face looks just the same ; perhaps his countenance is squarer, more like a small crummy loaf ; but his features are small and his eyes as penetrating as ever. I think he shows the six years. He is quite grey ; and he, with the Assistant Chairman and the High Sheriff, and another magistrate, are all using gold eye glasses. Yes, all four! and I don't think they used them six years ago. They look down the same calendar printed on blue wove paper as if they were getting it by art and had been all the six years in learning it ; while one with thin hair—I always look to this point—has a *West Sussex Gazette* which he is reading. I know he is grumbling inwardly about the small type ; and I wonder what would be the consequence if he were to order the man with the wand to place "our reporter" into the prisoner's box, to be tried for injuring the eyes of the public by the use of small type ; and if he did so, could he call a policeman to give evidence thereon from "information be had received?" Then I look at the jurymen who stand in such awe around the pit below ; and I reflect that the *old* jurymen of six years ago are too old to be jurymen now ; and the eighteen bald heads around me take their place. Some of them will be bowled out in another six years ; and I shall be of the senior bald-headed fraternity. This is something very distressing to one's thoughts ; because, after all, six years isn't long—at least it doesn't seem so. One thing strikes me, and that is, that petty jurymen are growing out of round frocks into black coats ; and I am pleased at this ; but I wish some of the petties would comb their hair off their foreheads and look a little more intelligent. By the bye, I think petties retain a more bountiful crop of hair than the grands. I was fain to attribute this to the greater working of the brain on the part of the grand ; but I was met with the somewhat coarse reply from a petty, "That some men's heads sweats more than others." Shouldn't I like to find a true bill against *him!*

My reflections are cut short, however, by a peremptory desire to take the book in my hand ; and to take off my glove and use my *right* hand, and swear to observe the same oath on my part "which your foreman has taken on his part," &c. I fancy the governor looks at me as if I were a likely man to refuse to use the right hand and take off the glove, and he contemplates me as a nice juicy subject for prison rations. I think he would like to "report" upon me ; and find a former conviction. The Clerk of Peace, however, gives the oath in a very

sang froid manner ; but I *know* he doesn't pronounce it so clearly as he did six years ago. The eighteen bald heads pop up and swear the same thing, and then the learned Chairman fixes on a foreman—and how politely he addresses him to be sure!—and tells him he will have nothing to do and he hopes he will do it properly. He says but little, but every sentence he appears to force into the understanding of the foreman with the gold eye glass ; first he puts it on his nose, inspects the calendar and says something ; then he takes it off his nose and points it at the foreman, as if it were an instrument for firing ideas from his head to that of the Grand Jury, through the foreman. The more emphatic he becomes the more he digs at the foreman with the gold eye glass. Then we are all dismissed to our duties exactly as were were six years ago ; and I don't think but what there are the same number of prisoners we had six years ago. They look on the calendar to be about the same. We then go down the chimney the same as we did six years ago ; and run into the same tavern and into the same room as we did six years ago, as if by instinct ; and as if it wasn't but six days ago.

Going up the stairs of the Swan, I see the same bar—exactly the same as it was six years ago. I cast a smiling look at the pretty barmaid, which *isn't* responded to as it was six years ago ; and I am led to the reflection that the pretty barmaid was perhaps a little child of thirteen, six years ago, and that I am growing an old fool. Passing into our room I encounter the same energetic landlord. He certainly has all the bustle of six years ago ; but I detect little personal points bespeaking six years' wear and tear, and am satisfied. Still his voice is here, there, and everywhere. In his hotel he is like a rooster in a farmyard ; and if a man be smoking in a room where he ought not to be, or any other little delinquency is going on he routs him out in a jiffy. There is no nonsense about him, and one must get up pretty early to impose any blame upon him. Then again he comes in to the grand Jury, just as he did six years ago—and I hope he may do so in six years time—and asks, "Gentlemen, what time would you like dinner?" The point is settled, and away we go to work just as we did six years ago ; accomplish our business, eat our dinners, and perform everything in the same manner as we did six years ago, sitting in the same chairs and leaning on the same tables ; and talking about the jury six years ago, and the number of those present at that time who are too old now and number present now who will be too old for the next draught of jurymen—all just as we did six years ago.

Then comes the time for starting home. Our vehicle draws up by the old sessions house just as it did six years ago. We are all ready to start, with the exception, of one who we are obliged to stop for, just as we were six years ago. Everything, in fact, looks around precisely the same ; but while the old streets, the old buildings, and the old sessions house look no older than they did six years ago, the jurymen alone—and perhaps the window blinds, being of the most fragile material—show six years wear and tear. It only reminds one of the short duration of the life of man—how quickly the seven stages tread upon our heels, one after another. In another six years your humble servant will have progressed another stage ; the eighteen bald heads will have gone by the stage allotted to juryism. What other changes will have taken place among those whom I have just summed up? Wisely we cannot tell ; but seeing the tender stuff we are made of, and the short time we are allowed to strut in this world, let us all live a much as we can in peace and harmony, and "do unto others as we would they should do unto us." If our heads get a little balder I know they grow wiser in communing with life ; and that

wisdom should teach us to be more charitable one towards another, and treat all mankind tenderly. To this sentiment the gentleman with the wand may say, "God save the Queen."

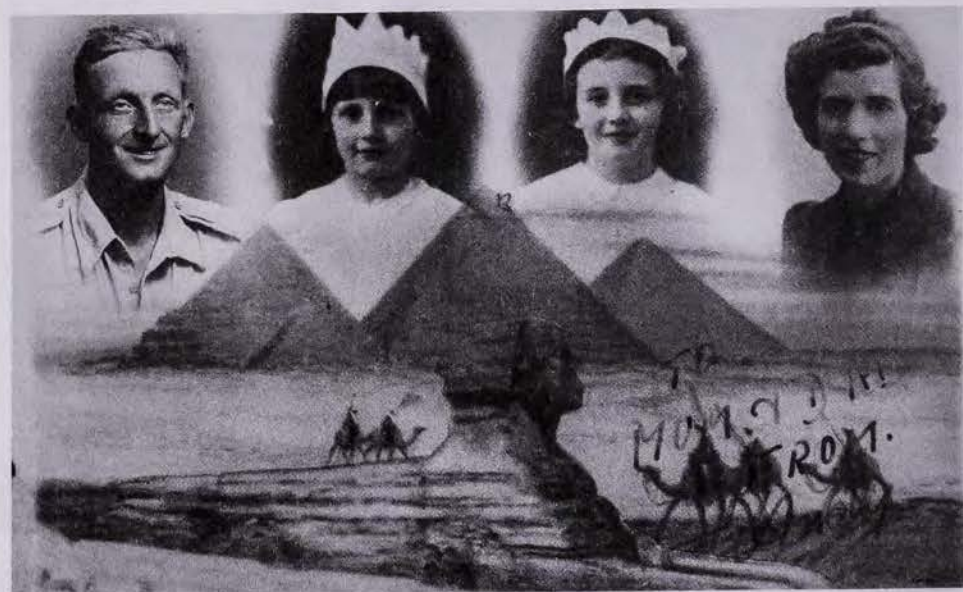
P.S.—I have said that men grow wiser as they grow older. I wonder what the reader will think of my intelligence six years ago, when in the present effulgence of my wisdom I am guilty of penning such an article as this. There's one thing, I don't care. So there!

'We shall need no flypapers in August' Once more 1915

In Magazine 88, largely through the sheer chance of having been given a virtually complete set of the *West Sussex Gazette* for 1915, I tried to give an impression of that year as seen through a reading of this particular regional paper. I made especial reference to Petworth. I thought it might be worth trying to see the same year from a very different perspective, that of *St Mary's Parish Magazine*. The coverage of the *Gazette* at this time was rather wider geographically than it is now, running west to Portsmouth, north to Croydon and Mitcham and east to the Kent border: It remains however essentially a regional paper. *St Mary's Magazine* has at once a much narrower scope than the *Gazette* and a much wider one. Its news of St Mary's is of course intensely local but its inset is intended to appear to a popular audience nationwide.

By 1915 *St Mary's Parish Magazine* was well established. From 1884 it had offered a platform for many Petworth societies and organisations; most of which, unless they were denominational, had some contact with the parish church. 1915 marks something of a break; it would be the first year that magazines would not be bound at the year's turning. Since 1889, the year's magazines had been bound in the scarlet and gold livery of the Church Monthly. For 1915 however Mr Penrose the rector had reverted to the inset *Home Words* which had been bound with the earliest issues (1884-1888). After 1915 the magazines would not be bound again.

St Mary's Magazine for 1915 had a grey paper cover showing the church and steeple from Rectory Lane, a view which had done duty since 1884. Petworth Parish News was kept to a four-page broadsheet bound round the Inset, another page or so would carry advertisements, not at this time oversubscribed, as regular blank spaces show. As always, the Rector's letter takes precedence, then follow reports on the few local activities that had survived the War's beginning, lists of men joining up, news of casualties, still relatively light at this time, at least compared with what was to come, and the usual parish registers. By the beginning of 1915 the Rector had no clerical help, those halcyon days when there were two curates to assist, would have seemed years rather than mere months ago. *Home Words*, the new insert, was a 24 page magazine printed with occasional highlighting in bright red. It had a backbone of regular monthly features to include Red Letter Notes from The Mission Field, a single page miscellany obviously culled from letters home. Its companion Red Letter Church News



Top Sylvia Duchesne. Photograph by George Garland.
Bottom A montage of the Duchesne family.



Mr and Mrs J. Cooper with daughters and soldiers billeted on them. February 1915.
(See "We shall need no flypapers ...").

offered a platform for local churchgoers. They might write on some local curiosity or long service record as chorister, organist or verger. There was a page or so on making Sunday clothes and no self-respecting Inset could afford to be without its serial, usually some form of romantic snakes and ladders, running for six issues and with specially commissioned illustrations. In *Home Words* this would take seven pages, more than a quarter of the whole. There would be notes on the Gospel readings for the month, on Sunday School stamps and a devotional article of some sort. While there was a religious slant to most of the material, the specifically religious articles were kept reasonably concise, in the hope perhaps that they would be read along with the more easily digestible material. The mix was bound together with the occasional short story, patriotic poem or hymn, but particularly with articles by regular contributors. H. J. Shepstone writes informatively on the biblical lands, with the coming of Turkey into the war no longer immune from the conflict that was ravaging Europe. S. Leonard Bastin writes on a broad range of household and general subjects, while Agnes Giberne writes on astronomy with a popular style and a devotional slant. Other contributors are less regular and deal with various issues relating to the war as it affected life at home. The Inset made a determined effort to hold the interest of its readership and no doubt in this it was reasonably successful.

What immediately strikes the reader of the local notes as he comes from the issues of previous years, is their relative sparseness. The *Parish Magazine* of the immediate pre-war



"The younger Petworth choristers were treated to a visit to the Crystal Palace."

years had teemed with news of organisations of all kinds, Temperance and Band of Hope meetings, Zenana bazaars, missionary meetings, Mrs Upton's theatricals, men's discussion group, the Rectory Fete, Club Day, Mothers' Union, Boy Scouts, meetings to oppose the disestablishment of the Church of Wales, and the Mens' Mutual Improvement Society, perhaps the doyen of them all. The impression given may be misleading; pre-war Petworth remained a very segmented society: but there can be no mistaking the change of mood in 1915. Those pre-war days had seen annual excursions for choristers, men and boys, Petworth and Byworth, both separately. Choir members returning from Brighton found the journey home difficult because of dense fog. "It was midnight before we again arrived at the church gates." The younger Petworth choristers were treated to a visit to the Crystal Palace. In 1913 a correspondent, perhaps one of the curates, waxes lyrical about "Bognoritis", a fever prevalent in children toward the end of June. "Children who have the fever dream of scampering shoeless over shining sands, of witching waves, of dashing donkeys, of irresistible ices, of bath buns, boats and bathing, of piers and penny peep shows."

For most people the war came as something of a shock. The signs had been there but hostilities were something else. There were a few perhaps who saw war as addressing a certain unease in society at large; if short and sharp it might pull together a nation divided several different ways, Lords against Commons, employer against employee, suffragette against society at large, Protestant against Catholic in Ireland. Germany at least was a tangible enemy. Writing in late July 1914, Mr Penrose, rector of Petworth and an Irishman himself, was concerned above all with Ireland, a tinder-box waiting to explode. This was the Ireland of the Curragh Mutiny and the smuggling of guns into the port of Larne. If there were to be trouble it would surely come in Ireland. He noted however "a black cloud" hanging over Europe, and preparations for war on hand on all sides. Writing just a month later, and with war declared, he is addressing a disturbing question. Was it right for any Christian nation to go to war? He was not alone, there had been considerable church opposition to the Boer War, and missionaries, whose charges had been brought up to see Christianity as a religion of peace were finding it hard to explain how two or more Christian nations could become embroiled in a war that would develop into one of an unimaginable savagery. Mr Penrose quoted a friend and fellow-clergyman writing to the press, "Nobody disputes my right to wage war on a tiger if he attacks me. If a physical tiger, why not a moral tiger?" It is the Kaiser, the great war lord of Germany, with his haughty ruthless and arrogant military caste around him who have forced war upon us by invading Belgium. The church bells would be rung at noon each day and Lord Leconfield would chair a public meeting about the Civil Guard. Meanwhile volunteers were leaving daily for the front. By the autumn there were Belgian refugees staying at the Swan Hotel and in the Iron Room.

In January 1915 Mr Penrose is exercised with another problem, one that exercised many thinking men. If the German people were guilty of the barbarities alleged against them, how might this be reconciled with the pre-war impression of them as, in Mr Penrose's words, "naturally kind, affectionate and docile." He had already hinted at the answer short months before: the German people had been led astray by their rulers with their doctrine of 'Might is Right'. Public opinion in England was much influenced by atrocity stories, many of which

after the war were shown to be either exaggerated or completely false. Mr Penrose was in no better position than anyone else in 1915 to judge the truth or otherwise of such reports.

On a more mundane level, the new year brought a fresh serial in *Home Words*. Readers of the ousted *Church Monthly* would have been able to finish "The Bread-winner", an improving tale with the inevitable happy ending and reward for virtue, looking back vaguely to the late century and having a certain flavour of Dickens about it. Indeed the great man himself made a "guest" appearance, if only as attracting the hero to one of his famous one-man shows. The new *Home Words* serial was 'Days of Doubt', clearly commissioned well before the outbreak of hostilities, a romance of farming folk set in an unspecified region of "shippens" and "linhays" a world quite remote, one imagines, from the everyday experience of most readers of *Home Words*. For the rest H.J. Shepstone is informative on Palestinian shepherds and a patriotic poem seeks to make sense of the increasing carnage and the loss of young lives by thinking in terms of a "great promotion" from one world to another. "Come up higher" was the message. Such sentiments were felt by many people, both churchmen and lay, to be a facile way of dealing with a problem that grew daily more pressing. Could there be another way of explaining it all? The Bishop of London expounded such ideas in emotive sermons. He had a considerable following but most of his episcopal colleagues were far more cautious.

Agnes Giberne writes on astronomy. Red Letter Church News among much else draws attention to the uncanny likeness between the vicar of Malvern Wells and the Archbishop of York, and to a school in rural Gloucestershire with just three pupils.

As yet, Petworth's main contribution to the war effort, apart from the volunteers already sent to the front and the reception of Belgian refugees, was to receive two battalions of soldiers billeted in the town. It was perhaps something of a relief to feel that there was something tangible that could be done. In the Rector's words, "Those who cannot shoulder a rifle or fight in the trenches" could at least make the soldiers welcome. A change in the weather would have helped and in January Mr Penrose hopes for fairer weather for them. The troops themselves rechristened Petworth "Wetworth". For the rest, those left in Petworth, Mr Penrose could advise only "a great revival of believing prayer" and self-denial for the sake of the refugees. It was crucial too that, in the fervour of war, foreign missions, local missions, waifs and strays and Dr Barnardos should not be forgotten. Nearer home the church spire needed attention again!

An article in *Home Words* by S. Leonard Bastin contains some curious lore, it is entitled "Britain's Wasted Foods" and probably does more to encourage a feeling of the need to tighten belts than it does to induce the magazine's readers actually to try out the suggestions. Horse chestnuts dried and ground to powder will make excellent biscuit flour once the injurious juices have been ground and dried out. Similarly the starchy roots of the wild arum can be used to make flour. The leaves of the sloe make an acceptable substitute for tea if other supplies have been cut off. "It is authoritatively stated," that the large black seeds of the yellow flag can be crushed when ripe, roasted and used for coffee. The qualification at the beginning seems to suggest that Mr Bastin himself had not tried this particular nostrum!

By March the Rector is bidding farewell to the billeted troops, and savouring the

opportunity for Petworth to have been of service. "We have had the privilege of doing something for our gallant guests of the past three months, the memory of this part of our share in the Great War will have to be handed down to our descendants along with the names of our husbands, sons and brothers, who, by sea and land, are serving in the same righteous cause." In fact, the Parish Council, meeting on February 13th, had passed a resolution requesting the military authorities not to send more than one battalion to the town in future; there had been considerable overcrowding in certain quarters.

In the inset a devotional writer tries to tackle the problems caused for religious thinking by the war with reference to St Paul's parable of the potter: he concludes, "In the mysterious calling and election of God, Britain is the elect nation of the world today. We say it in all wonder and humility. For it is not we but God who has done it ... we don't know why a little island in the Atlantic mists, which might well be a fishing station or one of the little appendages of some foreign despot, should be the proudest empire of the world..." Such sentiments were not unusual at the time, although not all churchmen would have subscribed to them and Mr Penrose makes no reference to such ideas.

On a more mundane level the serial winds its convoluted course and S. Leonard Bastin writes, appropriately enough, at Easter on the Mexican Resurrection plant which dries out completely and blows about as desiccated lifeless balls which miraculously revive in rain. There is an account of a novel way of teaching children musical notation, and, on a more sombre note, details of obtaining special memorial cards to honour the fallen. *Home Words* was also running a two-part series on how the Public Schools honour their war dead. The Rector's note is very short in April but there is a separate note, probably from his pen, urging those who were eligible, and had not enlisted, to do so.

In May the Rector is thinking of the lengthening casualty lists that the newspapers were carrying. "After eight long months, the strain and pressure of the war are increasing not diminishing." Again he struggles with the feeling of helplessness. "We cannot make shells but we can pray." With food growing shorter, a Rogation Service was offered for farmers and gardeners. Attendance was disappointing. On a more down to earth level, the Magazine advised on measures to discourage the house-fly. Disinfectant should be used when spring cleaning, kitchen refuse should be burned, and saucers laid out filled with a mixture of formalin and milk. "If all will make ruthless war on the flies in May, we shall need no flypapers in August." In *Home Words* H. J. Shepstone writes on Damascus while E. J. Hardy, a retired forces chaplain, under the title Brothers in Arms, strikes an unusual note, giving examples of camaraderie between German and English soldiers. It was a theme to which he would return periodically under this title, and one that contrasted strangely with the violently anti-German feeling on the home front, inflamed by the relentless casualty lists, the Zeppelin raids, the sinking of the Lusitania and the introduction of poison gas.

One of Mr Penrose's strengths appears to have been his ability to sympathise with his parishioners and in June it was their turn to comfort him. His son, and last surviving child, was reported missing. "Our trouble has also brought us very near in thought and prayer to those of you whose husbands, or sons, or brothers are braving the dangers and privations of this dreadful war." He adds later, "There is reason to think that he is a prisoner in the hands

of the Germans." Unfortunately this was not the case.

The far-flung missionaries continued to write in to the Red Letter Missionary Page. Some outposts were so remote that even in mid-1915 they had not heard about the outbreak of war. After a total eclipse on Rarotonga in the Cook Islands the ousted god, Tangeroa, was believed to be up to his old tricks. He had taken his first revengeful bite out of the sun and was threatening to devour the whole. The missionary had to calm his alarmed charges. In a devotional article a writer makes another attempt to derive some moral lesson from the increasing slaughter. Perhaps the working together of the allies might offer a pointer to the future in the mission field. "If we could be as tenacious in missionary work as we are in pressing the war..." Nearer home the serial rolls to its predictable pastoral climax, while a short story features a servant girl whose fiancé returns from the war while her mistress receives the news she has dreaded. A greater interest in France as an ally leads to a comparison of French and English housewives. A potentially contentious subject is treated fairly tactfully, drawing attention to the French housewife's winter-long store of potatoes, onions, haricot beans, peas, lentils and edible chestnuts and her liberal use of butter and cream, "to an extent that would make a big hole in the British housekeeper's allowance." A recipe follows for an old-fashioned currant suet pudding and honours end even.

In July the Rector returns to the nagging problem of voluntary enlistment. There was no conscription at this time, but those who had not volunteered were coming under increasing pressure and tensions were becoming apparent. Lord Leconfield, among others, was a determined proponent of conscription and guaranteed employment to anyone working for him when they returned from active service. Mr Penrose once more urges those eligible to enlist and asks if it would be possible for men who had volunteered and been rejected on medical grounds to wear some kind of badge. Clearly the Rector was disturbed by the effect of this problem on relations between different members of his flock.

The children's annual treat in June was held in Petworth Park, no railway excursions being allowed. "Bognoritis" would have to subside on its own this year. In *Home Words* J. H. Shepstone writes on Egypt with photographs of the sphinx and the pyramids, while E. J. Hardy once more explores that strange half-world of camaraderie between enemies, animosity forgotten in the moment of suffering and death.

As a clergyman, Mr Penrose felt it his pastoral duty to derive some crumbs of comfort from an increasingly comfortless situation. The soldier in the trenches, the men in our warships are in their sacrifice finding God, "There is an uprising of religious earnestness, of prayer and of Bible reading in the Army and Navy such as many would have thought impossible ... who would have thought that this awful war could ever be the occasion of England's conversion?" He was, of course, whistling in the dark.

In *Home Words* S. Leonard Bastin was exploring a pressing problem. What about the increasing number of wounded soldiers and their convalescence? He offers some suggestions for things they can do while recovering. One is to press flowers with liquid wax, another is to take a well-laden branch of some fruit, such as a gooseberry, place it in a saucer kept continuously filled with clear water and so tie the branch that it remains part of the growing plant but also has some of the tips of the fruit continuously in the water. The fruit will swell

to a positively gigantic size in just a few weeks. While the wounded would certainly be glad to be home, to what extent such pursuits would salve wounded spirits is not clear. In Petworth itself there was Hospital Day and French Flag Day, a procession and collection for refugees being concluded with a symbolic union of France and England.



"Before her gleamed the lights of Mellecourt, behind her whistled Prussian bullets."—Page 203.

"The new serial was now in full flow."

The new serial 'A Tale of Two Wars' was now in full flow telling a tortuous tale of romance against the background of the Western Front, relying, as popular serials often do, very much on the use of coincidence. It would conclude at the year's end with both heroes, somewhat fortunately, returned wounded from France. The Rector continues to call on eligible men to enlist and approves the Derby Act which was a step toward conscription. "There is no blinking

the fact that voluntary service in the present crisis is a failure from the point of view of justice. Every mother or wife with sons or husband at the Front is feeling it deeply." In fact the Derby Act involved a personal canvass of all men between eighteen and forty and an invitation to enlist. There was no compulsion and many still declined.

By October the Rector is concerned at possible invasion and with air raids. "The peace of our homes has not yet been disturbed by any outward signs or sounds of war. I may mention that, at the other end of Sussex, with a favouring wind they can often hear the guns in Flanders! It was in fact a curious feature of the war that it was at once so close and yet so far away. Alan Wilkinson observes, "An officer could breakfast in the trenches and dine the same evening at his London club." No doubt this would be exceptional, but it would be possible.

Letters were coming back from the men abroad. The censor might be purposefully vague about location, and soldiers (and sailors) did not wish to further alarm anxious relatives at home. The worst was kept out of the letters even before the censor intervened. A film showing conditions in the trenches sickened and horrified its audience who had no idea of what this life was really like. This was not until early in 1916. The gulf between public awareness at home and the soldiers in the trenches was growing and in some ways is at its sharpest in the pastoral writings in magazines like *Home Words*. Here were outsiders trying to force a pattern into what seemed patternless and, in trying to do so, creating a monster. Mr Penrose quotes a few random lines from letters home. There is the usual complaint about a monotonous diet of bully beef and biscuits, another writes of water being brought sixty miles on the back of mules. Not all Petworth men were on the Western Front.

In November the Rector gives thanks for a good harvest while S. Leonard Bastin writes at length on keeping church flowers fresh, another example of wartime thrift. Some of his ideas are ingenious and well worth a try eighty years or more later. H. J. Shepstone is as readable as ever. There is a feature on St. Dunstan's hostel for blind soldiers and sailors, which of course would play an increasing role as the war went on. Air raids had brought in the Lighting Act; fewer lights were to be used in St Mary's and the seats in the gallery and north and south aisles at St Mary's have been taken out of use. In December Mr Penrose espies a possible curate; he had had a few months' help during the year but basically operated on his own. S. Leonard Bastin writes on chemical gardens as a pastime for the wounded and there is a feature on fire drill for women. The Rector looks for some glimmer of light in "these dark days." "May God give us grace to seize it, so that through the refining fires of this grievous war our gold may come forth purified for his service."

Comparatively lengthy as this article is, I have of course summarised an extensive body of material and have been highly selective in my quoting of it. "*Home Words*" makes no direct reference to Petworth but it does serve as a foil in which to set the Petworth church news which was bound around. In fact the Petworth part of the Magazine speaks basically with a single voice, that of the beleaguered Rector Mr Penrose. His bewildered flock would look to him for some kind of guidance and he would feel it his duty to offer it. Little use complaining that he himself could see virtually nothing in the darkness. Was the war part of a battle for divine justice, fighting with the angels against the despoiling of a smaller country? Or was it perhaps a punishment for national sins, the growing profanation of Sunday and the dereliction of

NEW YEAR'S EVE

IN PETWORTH

SEE IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM WITH
FRIENDS AND FAMILY AT A FREE

STREET PARTY IN THE

MARKET SQUARE

FAIRGROUND ATTRACTIONS from 6pm

CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT from 6pm

TORCHLIGHT PROCESSION WITH THE

TOWN BAND 9pm

CANDLES AT MIDNIGHT

MUSIC TO DANCE AND LISTEN TO

for EVERYONE with the

FABULOUS FUG BAND 10pm - 2am

followed by DJ LIVEWIRE DISCO

TVs in Austen's window for national events

"NEW STAR" PUB OPEN

Organised by local people ("The Petworth Millennium Celebrations Committee") with funding from Petworth Parish Council, local businesses and individuals and the support of the Leconfield Estate

Provisional programme for Millennium at Petworth.

Some events are subject to granting of the relevant Public Entertainment Licence.

