



THE PETWORTH SOCIETY  
*magazine*

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THE PETWORTH SOCIETY SUPPORTS THE  
LECONFIELD HALL,  
PETWORTH COTTAGE MUSEUM  
AND THE COULTERSHAW BEAM PUMP.



## 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 £9.00. Single or double one Magazine delivered. Postal £11.00 overseas £15.00. Further information may be obtained from any of the following:

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### *Society Scrapbook*

Mrs Pearl Godsmark

### *Coultershaw Beam Pump representatives*

Mrs J. Gilhooly, Mr A Henderson, Mr T. Martin.

For this Magazine on tape please contact Mr Thompson.

### *Society Crier*

Mr Mike Hubbard 343249

## Chairman's Notes

*I attended the public meeting on Car Parking Charges. As I said in the last Magazine I could only assume that members in general were opposed to the charges. We had not canvassed the membership. The meeting, as public meetings invariably do, generated more heat than light – no surprise to anyone who remembers the combative bypass meetings of yesteryear. Mr Paul Over, from the District Council, presented an unconvincing case with some conviction. That is his job. He is after all a servant of the Council which employs him: whether he is or was a servant of anyone else seemed one of those cul-de-sacs down which public meetings are, so often, so easily, herded. The overriding impression was of a fait accompli. A consultation, certainly, but only in the technical sense that, as I understand it, the matter will be decided on a vote by district councillors, a majority of whom represent areas south of the Downs. In modern terms, perhaps, a "virtual" consultation.*

*There is a powerful argument that free car parking is part of the very aura of the economically challenged little towns to the north of the Downs, but in practical terms it is an argument hardly calculated to appeal to southern councillors. Present proposals aside, there has, over the years, always been an argument that some sort of differential charge or time limit be placed on the prime spaces nearer the town centre to stop traders and daily workers taking them and staying all day. No amount of pleading has ever addressed this and no voluntary system ever will. Might the Sylvia Beaufoy remain free to encourage a change of habits?*

*The imposition of charges must have far-reaching on-street consequences, not clearly signalled or explained at the meeting. Decriminalising and handing over to Council jurisdiction may help but begs the question of adequate enforcement and residents' right to park. My overriding impression is that the whole thing's rather silly and ill-considered. The sums involved are relatively small in comparison to the loss of atmosphere, inconvenience and (possibly overstated) effect on trade, while local disaffection with a council based south of the Downs needs to be taken into account. Glossy public relations brochures represent money thrown away when simmering disquiet north of the Downs is brushed aside so cynically, while the economics of the whole enterprise seem at best ramshackle. Contrary to some, I do not think that the Council have in mind to rack up the charges, once implemented, but these are early days. All in all a step backward for Petworth, Midhurst – and ultimately Chichester.*

*We have been fortunate indeed in our two town criers. Arch Knight would surely feel that his bell had come into very capable hands. John Crocombe had his own distinctive style, Mike Hubbard his. Both have given great service to the town: Mike of course, still does. He tells me that occasionally people remark on his resplendent uniform as an extravagance funded from public money. An extravagance it may be, but the regalia is entirely funded by this Society and its Book Sales. The Town Council have made no contribution and no contribution was requested of them. "Town crier" Mike*



may be, but the term is inaccurate : he is the Petworth Society crier and the Society have first call on his services. If local organisations wish to seek his help and Mike is agreeable, we, as a Society, are happy enough, but for all that he remains the Society crier.

I have heard nothing about the whereabouts of the W.I. Scrapbook. If it is lost, Petworth is the poorer. Crucial parts I transcribed in the 1970s but that is no substitute for the real thing. On a similar note, where is the Scouts Scrap Book for the war years? It surfaced a few years ago and has since disappeared. Does anyone know its present whereabouts?

A new season of Leconfield Hall films begins on Wednesday October 28th with an entirely new management team. I would hope to be able to give details of forthcoming attractions on this quarter's Activities Sheet.

Peter

October 21<sup>st</sup>

## Once more the Iona

Was it really five years since we had made the trip to Godalming Wharf to meet Chris Howkins? In the interval, of course, he'd entertained (and instructed) us in the hall, on the last occasion in May. A second narrow boat trip from Godalming. It's unusual for us to replicate an excursion but certainly not unknown: many would be making the trip for the first time.

Chris tells me it's his 24th season. The same dry humour, the same unpredictability. The stories, too outrageous to be apocryphal. "Stop, stop. you've left the horse behind," or "Surely the water's too deep for a horse." Ben ambles amiably out of the stable, no heavyweight, as horses go, at three quarters of a ton. A bigger horse would have difficulty with the low bridges. Cruelty? It's just a leisurely stroll for him, not really pulling at all. In 1815 narrow boats were more usually "pulled" by men, only 1 in 9 being horse-drawn. Chafing is pre-empted by an elaborate system of beads, wheels and rollers.

We're at the southernmost navigable point of the British Inland Waterways: there are of course more southerly waters but they have no direct linkage with the rest of the system. From here it's 19½ miles to the Thames, then right for the Kennett and Avon and left for the Midlands and North. Narrow boats are quite distinct from barges and intended for the restricted width of British Waterways. Harland and Wolfe built the Iona in 1935, the rudder, the kelson or keelson, weights four tons. Capacity 46 but from 2010 40.

We are soon passing through fields mentioned in the will of Alfred the Great and deep into Saxon history and tales of the old gods. These open fields grew 100 acres of barley, sufficient to keep the settlement in bread and beer. Such fields have survived only here and at Godmanchester. They were reaped by hand with a sickle, a handful of stems being gathered together before cutting. One particular square foot was traditionally never reaped. Chris thinks this square foot marks the site of the old gallows post, public executions continuing until well into the nineteenth century, the whole area was trodden down by the crowds and

water will still collect there in heavy rain. Purple loosestrife is growing in great profusion by the bank, Darwin, it seems, made a special study of this plant's various methods of pollination. *Convolvulus* is a garden escape and the boiled roots are a powerful antiseptic. Through the lock and on. Blackberries were an integral part of heathen ritual and "here we go round the mulberry bush" is rather more meaningful than might appear. There's a Unitarian chapel in the distance across the fields, dating back to days before the Toleration acts. On a visit Chris remarked on the unusually peaceful atmosphere. "No one has ever been afraid here," he was told. This was never Methodist territory: the Quaker meeting-house is the oldest in Surrey.



A relaxed Ben with his "minder." Photograph by David Wort.

Balsam pink and white by the river bank. Imported from India, and originally a stately home talking-point. It's unusual in its unique ability to compete successfully with indigenous flora. In less than two centuries it's attracted a host of popular names - Himalayan balsam, policeman's helmet ... Chris reels off nine to be going on with - there are plenty more. Surprisingly it's an annual propagated from the previous year's seed. Cut off the seed heads if you don't want it back. It has a bad press but it's very rich in nectar. The nectar is easily gathered and the plant prolongs the bee season.

Time for the turn and the return journey. Tea, scones, jam and (for some) cream. Just enough cloud cover to keep us cool in the mellow sunlight of late afternoon. Is it good policy to replicate an excursion? Gliding along the river the question hardly seems relevant.

P.



## The Petworth House Dinner. September 9<sup>th</sup>

Was it six o'clock or six thirty for those waiting to see the bedrooms? In the event it didn't matter too much, and, in the event almost everyone wanted to see them, making a conversational way up the wide staircase. Belzamine, Mrs Wyndham and Trellis. Guest bedrooms still used as needed and by no means mere show-pieces. It's a while since I've been up here and in the end, with one thing and another, about a quarter of an hour. Just fleeting impressions. The view east to the church tower, west to the Park.

Not such a fine evening as the night before. We've had sunnier September evenings for this event. Black clouds underlaying a Turner sunset. The Chippendale bed from 1770, town well-wishers for Lord Leconfield's marriage in 1911. Almost a hundred years ago now. "Petworth people made a great fuss" wrote Florence Rapley. A friend of Oscar Wilde killed in a shooting accident, a portrait of Violet Leconfield on horseback. A quarter of an hour doesn't even scratch the surface but everyone seems happy enough.

Down that majestic carpeted staircase for drinks. The chance to chat on the west front. Most take it. Our revered treasurer isn't here this year but we seem to be coping – for the moment at least. Keith and myself with Jill's help have arranged the seating. Ten tables of eight, one of six – a last minute cancellation.

Time to go in. An innovation this year. Jill's very substantial fruit baskets as table decorations. Whoever draws the slip with the cross wins, and they're well worth winning. The meal's as good – or better – than ever. Then there's Keith's quiz. Our table struggle to 17 – the winning table have 27. Have a go yourself - answers on back page.

"Best evening ever", seems a general opinion as we come out into a darkened Church Street, the more fortunate struggling with their fruit baskets. Not bad for what was originally a one-off. 2003 was it?

P.

## Bob's flint walk. September 20<sup>th</sup>

Not much sun, but little likelihood of rain. Right off the A283 immediately after the Little Bognor turning thence to park in Brian Dallyn's field. Hardly Sat-nav. It's mid-late September and the field is about to be drilled. Oats probably. "Optimal conditions," says Bob. Grass grows in lines where the summer crop has been taken off. To look for "struck" flints, or, failing that, waste core, pieces from which usable flint has been taken. We're on the Lower Greensand and most likely to find mesolithic flint at an age of some ten to six thousand years. Such remains are more frequent locally, it seems, than neolithic, six thousand to four thousand five hundred years ago. Pre ice-age palaeolithic flints, even if we could identify them with any precision, are less likely.

1. ORIENTAL PARSON
2. INTER
3. TOP TWENTY? MORE LIKE A HUNDRED
4. ARCTIC CHURCH
5. THE END OF THE MATADOR
6. DOG VALUE
7. GOT EAR DOCTORED
8. WE LIKE TO, AFTER A GOOD PERFORMANCE, IT SEEMS
9. CREEPY?
10. BAILEY'S MATE?
11. SOUNDS LIKE WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR'S NICKNAME
12. A FLOOD IN THE DAIRY?
13. DENIS, THE OLD CRICKETER
14. JUST ONE HUNDRED
15. CHICKEN RUN
16. NOT ATHLETIC HERE
17. LANK HARE – SPELLING MISTAKE AND ALL MIXED UP
18. IT SOUNDS AS IF YOU NEED THEM IN WINTER
19. NO KNOTS, STRAIGHT GRAINED
20. HAVEN FOR THE DAIRY HERD
21. TIN LIZZIE
22. CHEATING
23. IDEAL MEAT FOR THE PICNIC LUNCH
24. FOR A GOOD CROP OF POTATOES
25. HOW THE CUP OF COFFEE FELT ABOUT THE BISCUIT?
26. SURGEON AT WORK
27. IRON BARS MAY NOT A PRISON MAKE, BUT...
28. MAKING DO AND MENDING
29. WHAT COLOUR'S THE DOLLAR?
30. PUNTING
31. WHAT TO DO WITH UNWANTED ITEMS
32. WHEN DANGER THREATENS
33. PAY: NOT AND REVERSES
34. WHAT TO DO WITH TOMATO PLANTS WHEN THEY REACH THE REQUIRED HEIGHT?
35. HAUL THE TOWN INTO PLACE

Keith's Sussex Places quiz. Answers on last page.



It's not always possible to be definite about signs of working. Really fine specimens leave no doubt but there can be a large grey area. Weather and modern farm machinery can in various ways replicate human working. Things to look for are the smooth striking surface or "platform" – it can be quite small – the "bulb of percussion" and the ripples that come out from the bulb where it has been hit either with a "hard" axe, another stone, or a "soft" axe – usually an antler.

The Society spreads out over the field like an invading army. We're going with the slope down toward the alder-lined stream. A relative abundance of flints may indicate a one-time encampment by the stream. Bob has chosen a particular part of the field because of this. From flint alone it's not possible to reimagine the scene, our best guide has to be ethnography, the life of modern or recently studied tribes at a similar stage of development. Hazel branches, stretched skins, a sparsely populated countryside, such an encampment might have covered perhaps the area of a football pitch. The redder stones weren't much used, nor the lighter shade: the darker stones were preferred. We're somewhat behind schedule; progress through the field has been a trifle leisurely. For someone who's just added several thousand years to the history of Petworth, Bob is pretty relaxed. The sandy soil yields easily beneath the foot.

Up the footpath to the road then the long walk back to the cars. Up to Strood Farm to be greeted by Brian Dallyn. We look west. Talk of bullaces and mirabelle plums – perhaps the sample Brian shows us is neither. Ann Dallyn's Victoria Sponge, talk of a tennis court at the farm in the 1930s. Who had the farm then? A Mr Ford was there in the war years until at least the last 1950s. Anyway it's a brilliant sponge. There's a lot to be said for flint-hunting. We might well have another try next year – if Bob's up for it!

P.

## The Centenary Book Sale October 10<sup>th</sup>

So what happened at the Centenary Sale? Wild scenes of rejoicing? Did the helpers really dress up as inhabitants of Nutwood? Well, not exactly. There were difficulties. Podgy the pig was difficult to cast, as too the little Chinese girl. The chairman had his Rupert Bear pullover, but then he wouldn't have come if he couldn't be Rupert. You know what he's like. There were, of course, the usual iconic Rupert Bear table-cloths. The projected Queens Park Rangers theme? Again no agreement, but two of our most esteemed (and percipient) regulars presented a celebration carrot cake topped with icing that represented the all-conquering (well, not quite) blue and white hoops. And we did have the Society crier to dispel any bookish quiet, while light refreshments were provided by Annette and Andy. In the last resort, however, no amount of razzamatazz can alter the fact that a Book Sale is about books. Certainly not the best stock we've ever had, but both rooms were full and it was virtually all fresh.



*The crier gives an extra pzazz! Miles Mike and Peter take a break at the Centenary Sale. Photograph by Pearl Godsmark.*

Nine years, almost, from January 2001. We try to conjure up those uncertain half-forgotten beginnings. Miles had the original idea – no doubt about that. There has been the occasional Book Fair (not really the same thing) in the Hall, but I don't think that influenced us. More seminal, perhaps, was an enormous National Trust Book Sale at Petworth House. Much of what was left was sent off elsewhere but there was still a residue, did we want it? We can both remember sorting through boxes in the Cow Yard. A run of Psychological Research magazines. We had at least one trial effort in 2000. Early days: supermarket trays loaded on to private cars. At least two abortive Sunday openings with blunted stock and a deserted Square. 20p. a book and one room in the Hall and donors complaining we weren't charging enough. The idea of having Society evenings coinciding with Book Sale Saturdays, but that didn't really work either. The growing conviction that the event was perfectly capable of looking after itself. In 2009 the van's crucial but an expense to service and run. All new stock now, or very nearly, each month. And very efficient help. We can set up and take down within the hour even though the logistics of the sale are formidable. ....



So how did the day go? Well, whatever reservations we may have had about the month's stock, there was a following wind, some days even with much better stock, you don't have that. You know you have to do it all in the morning, anything in the afternoon is a bonus. It's a September record, narrowly exceeding 2006. A special day? Think about this: a veteran of our very first sale tells us that it's 150 years to the very day since Petworth Station was opened in 1859.

P.

## Sylvia's autumn walk. October 18<sup>th</sup>

To park at Tillington on the verge by the Park wall, weaving a way through the usual rash of stationary cars. Then to walk through Sunday afternoon Upperton, sweet chestnut lying, leaf and fruit, in the road. At the junction some go off to see the Monument; others simply wait. Off into the woods with Blackdown glimpsed across the valley through a screen of trees. A long narrow path looks down on the steep scarp but we eventually come to walls and steps. It's dark and quiet in the autumn woods, and there's no sign of a bustling life there must once have been. Who built these steps, these stone walls, and why? A short cut to Tillington church and school? The mossy stones have nothing to say. Is that the long straight bole of a hornbeam? Do hornbeams have long straight boles? In any case that's not a hornbeam leaf. That bole's a sycamore, that one's a poplar. A little further and we're suddenly in the main street of River, once a working village. We think of long years of labour, forming a patina over time, now no more. A man might live at River – Lurgashall perhaps – it doesn't matter where, and need to be at Bury at 7.30 ready to start. No travelling time allowed. A big saw slung across the handlebars and tied in place, and a heavy tool bag on the back. A house with a policeman's helmet outside, why? It would be years ago now. Kingdom House, half-remembered stories of Blackshirts. Vines glimpsed yellowing green through the roadside hedge, row upon serried row. Traditional Mitford Estate territory at one time. In a while we pass the "Old Estate Office", then, later on, Manor of Dean itself away to the right. The rhododendrons are in bud and there are more vines, even the odd bunch of tiny green fruit, left, apparently, from the gathering. Sheep in the fields; will the vines eventually replace them? A water trough is overflowing; the ballcock needs attention. A solitary light blue chicory plant by the side of the path, scarlet holly berries blazing in front of us. Soon we're looking at the grove in Tillington Churchyard, bathed in the late afternoon sunlight. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord", the lettering is becoming indistinct. There's a green dog-fouling notice on the gate, incongruous but probably necessary. Working villages – once upon a time – wine country – history throws up some strange juxtapositions.

Thanks very much Sylvia.

P.



*Sylvia's autumn walk. Photograph by Ian Godsmark.*

## What a performance!

The Willows Folk Club from Arundel opened the 2009/10 season of monthly meetings with an entertaining show of music and banter.

The Society's Town Crier, Mike Hubbard and another Petworthian, Peter Carver, are among the Club's members, Mike providing the links between items with his songs and hilarious stories with a distinctly Irish flavour, some of which might even have been true, while Peter surprised some and pleased all with his harmonica solos.

Chris. Davis, the Club leader, has a good singing voice and is versatile on the guitar and mandolin. Ray (accordion), George and Jasmine (songs and guitar) completed the company, giving a well-balanced programme of songs, ranging from the more traditional folk to popular old-time favourites, earning a whole-hearted response from the hall in the choruses.

The whole team came together for the final song, 'Goodnight Irene', after which, Peter (our Peter), having thoroughly enjoyed the evening, promised an 'exciting' programme of talks and performances over the next eight months.

KCT



## The Leconfield Hall

The Leconfield Hall has stood in the centre of Petworth for more than two hundred years, and still acts as a hub for activities in the town. It is a polling station, an art gallery, a Masonic lodge, a theatre, an arts centre, a concert hall, a cinema, a meeting room, a saleroom, a dining room, a wedding and party venue. In fact it is more or less anything the people of Petworth would like it to be.

As a two storey listed building, it is expensive to maintain. There is a lift for the disabled and elderly for instance, and the call out cost for maintenance or repair is not far short of £100. There is a large area to clean, there is some fairly sophisticated projection and sound equipment, the fabric of an old building requires frequent attention, heavy use means wear and tear, and there is an alarming insurance premium. The annual running costs exceed £20,000 per annum. A surprising proportion of this is met from the hiring income, but there is an annual deficit which varies between £2,000 and £5,000.

The volunteer committee of trustees aims to raise funds for this important local Registered Charity to meet the deficit and keep the building in good order. Some years ago now, a Friends' Scheme was started. More than seventy people have generously signed up as Friends, making an annual donation of between £10 and £50 each. This scheme currently raises about half the annual deficit. Unlike big national charities, giving to a small local charity is very effective as the donors can see how their money is spent and can see it is not wasted in needless administration or publicity.

The other way funds are raised is through organising events at the Hall. The recent big band concert provided more than £400 for the Hall. The Film shows, at their peak, were comfortably raising more than half the Hall's annual deficit, but rising costs and dwindling attendance last year led to a temporary cessation. Now the films are back.

The new run of films started in October with the classic Cole Porter musical *High Society*, followed in November with *Some Like It Hot* set in prohibition era Chicago starring Marilyn Monroe, singing I'm Through With Love and I Want to be Loved By You, with Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon disguised as members of an all girl band.

There will be no film in December, and the film on Wednesday 27th January will have been selected by the time you are reading this. There will be posters around the town, and details should be posted on the Hall web site – [www.leconfieldhall.org.uk](http://www.leconfieldhall.org.uk) (it is easier to just type "Leconfield Hall" into Google.) If there is sufficient support, it is intended to continue showing films on the last Wednesday of each month except December, and with a summer break.

Help is always welcome with the film shows. As well as operating the equipment to show the films, assistance is needed to take tickets, show people to their seats, run the bar, and make tea & coffee. If you would be able to help, please contact the Hall Chairman, Andy Henderson, on 01798 343792. It would be good to get up a rota of helpers, as the films not only raise much needed funds, but are very popular in the town and are a worthwhile enterprise in their own right.

Many thanks are due to Juliet Fynes, Anne Simmons and Joyce Rendell for organising

the films for so many years. Juliet, Anne & Joyce are taking a well-earned rest, but hope to attend the films for pleasure from time to time.

Please do support your excellent Town Hall. If you can afford to make a modest annual donation to the Friends' Scheme, it will be much appreciated. If you attend the films, or help with them, that too raises funds towards this worthwhile local amenity.

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## Wisborough Green School in 1921



Ros Staker sends this photograph of Wisborough Green School in 1921. It would be in the time of Mr Crawford who retired after 32 years' service as headmaster in 1925 to be replaced by the equally long-serving Mr H.R. Cooper. One would assume that Mr Crawford is standing to the right of the picture. As the school roll in the early 1920s was over 100 this may well be one of two or three representative groups taken on the same occasion. The photograph does not appear in Liz Sargeant's excellent history of the School (1990).

P.



1875	Mr Sherwin		
	To M. Ovenden		
Aug 26	Rep. Flower Vase	9	
	New Button to Tea Kettle	9	
	1 Coffee Pot	4	6
Sept 4th	Rep. Sunshade	1	0
	Rep. Sewing Machine		9
23	Rep. Tea Kettle		2
	Rep. Lock	1	6
Oct 20	1 Mask Oven	14	0
	Fixing Gas Stove	4	0
	Turn a Tap and Pipe	3	0
	Rep. Corkscrew		2
		1	10 7

1875	Mr Sherwin		
	To M. Ovenden		
Aug 26	Rep. Flower Vase	9	
	New Button to Tea Kettle	9	
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	Rep. Sewing Machine		9
23	Rep. Tea Kettle		2
	Rep. Lock	1	6
Oct 20	1 Mask Oven	14	0
	Fixing Gas Stove	4	0
	Turn a Tap and Pipe	3	0
	Rep. Corkscrew		2
		1	10 7

Settled June 22 1876  
M.A. Ovenden

[I am not sure what is meant by 1 Mask Oven. Ed]

## Old Petworth businesses – a quarterly series

### No.1 Owendens in Saddlers Row.

Owendens would have been a fixture as the end of the nineteenth century. As retail ironmongers they would appear from the window display (see Kevis photograph in main pictures) to have dealt in smaller items and from the invoice reproduced to have placed a heavy emphasis on repair as opposed to retail.

Clearly Mr Ovenden (or possibly an employee) was a skilled tinsmith and locksmith. It seems likely that the business closed (or was already closed) when Bacons the shoe shop moved to Saddlers Row on the demolition of the old houses and shops in front of the church (c 1896).

P.



Actually it's six miles to Pulborough from Petworth! An Edwardian postcard with a postmark 30<sup>th</sup> May 1910.



# Petworth Society 2009 Crossword



## Across

2 see 25 ac.

4 see 22 dn.

8 One of the crew (3)

9 see 18 dn.

11 Tree with local folk club connections (6)

13 This country's gardens were the subject of a spring lecture (6)

15 There's no such word as this! (4)

16 He designed 18 dn./9 ac. and our Petworth obelisk (5)

17 It was once used to cook the Christmas roast (4)

19 Nice and snug (4)

20 Sought-after material in September walk (5)

21 Show appreciation (4)

25 & 2 ac. Chris Howkins insists it's not a barge (6,4)

26 Showing extreme courage like the captain of 1 dn. (6)

28 "The Forgotten Paintress" specialised in this kind of work (11)

31 Frequently - as the poet might say! (3)

32 The season for the traditional Stag Park walk (6)

33 Hope yours is très bon! (4)

## Down

1 Ill-fated ship that provided a topic for a winter lecture (7)

3 It is one way to say it (3)

4 Cooked on 16 ac.

perhaps (4)

5 Try not to overdo this at Christmas (3)

6 Some of Jonathan Newdick's were exhibited in Petworth House in July (8)

7 Was in a reverie - about a white Christmas? (6)

9 Untamed (4)

10 It can be common or proper (4)

12 Classic good advice obtained here (7)

14 Move like one of Santa's reindeer (6)

18 & 9 ac. Outing destination unseats MPs to create fine laws (6,2,11)

19 A small bite to eat (6)

22 & 4 ac. Made-up visitors that delighted lepidopterists this summer (7,6)

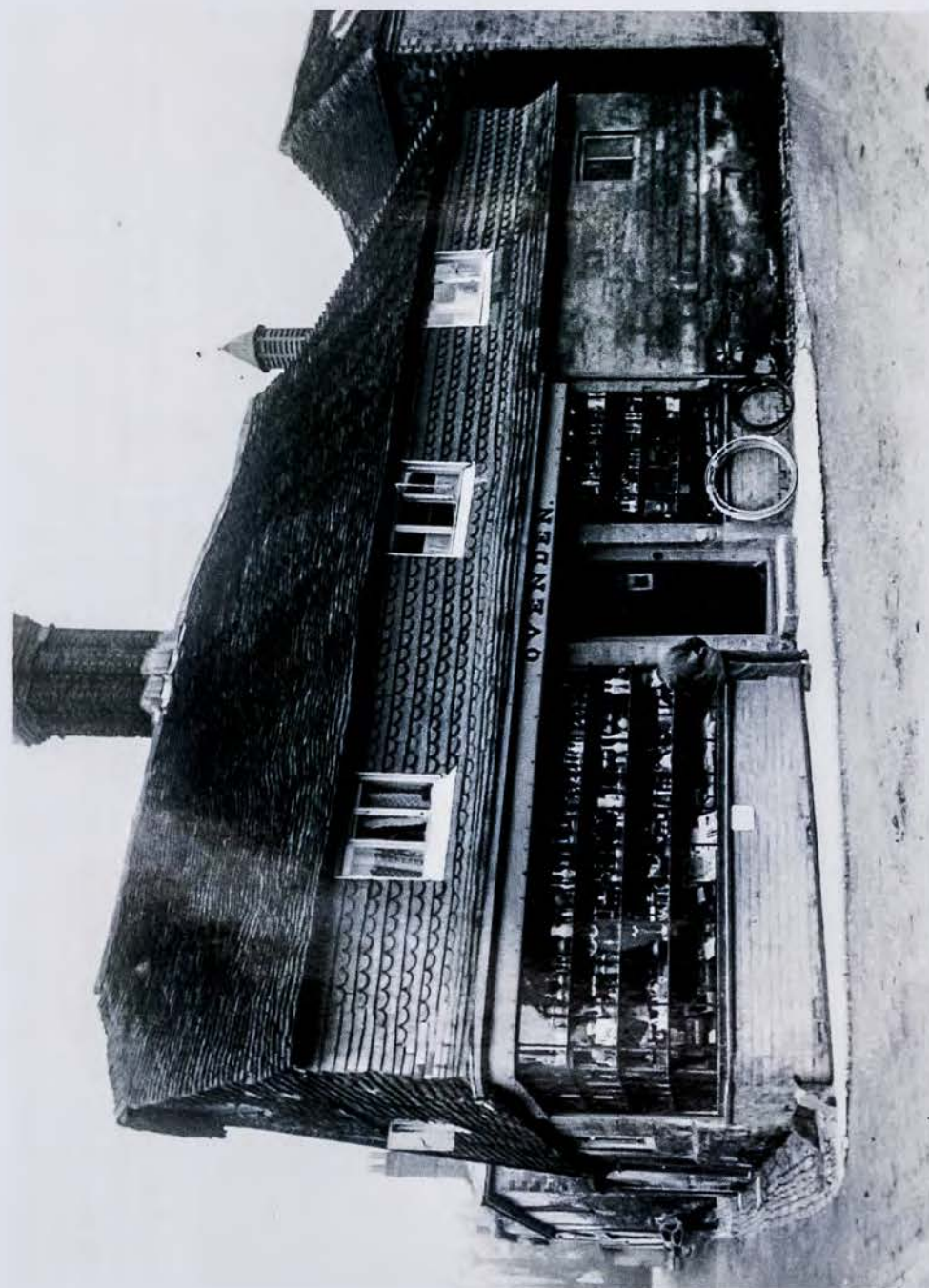
23 The head of a medieval Yuletide feast (4)

24 No place like it especially at Xmas (4)

27 Express the joy of Christmas in glad music! (4)

29 Get the wrapping off - quick! (3)

30 Essential equipment of Petworth Society tea ladies (3)



Ovenden's on the corner of Saddlers Row. See "Older Petworth traders."





Over the years we've found it impossible to get a satisfactory picture of the Book Sale in full spate – at about 10.15 in the morning. Here's something completely different: 2.45 at the centenary sale, with some, but not all, of our helpers prior to clearing up. Note the decimated Penguin section (furthest from camera) and the remnants of the £1 table (nearest camera) with the yellow £1 tickets.

Photograph by Pearl Godsmark.

## Wartime Selham

I was very interested in Margery Burn's article "We kept the pub" in the September Magazine. The Sherman family kept the Three Moles all through the war years and Margery's brother Joe took it on for a couple of years after Mr Sherman. My grandfather Winkle Ayling, the Lickfold baker, universally known as the "Bun King", was also an entertainer and was asked by Mrs Clem. Morley and Mrs Konig, who farmed Hurlands, if he would do a turn at the Selham fete. Grandad was a veteran of the 1914-1918 war and a member of the British Legion so he readily agreed. The aim of the fete was to raise money for parcels to be sent to prisoners of war. Grandad took me along as stooge and I recited Albert and the Lion, my first appearance in public as an entertainer. I was six years old.

We had just finished when some German planes came over. There was machine gun fire and everyone ran for cover. Bombs were dropped at Lodsworth and River and Grandad and I later found a massive crater on the footpath between River and Lodsworth.

James Morley and Sons were the area's biggest employers; five of my family worked for them at one time, my mother being in the office from 1928 to 1935, when she married. She always remained great friends with Tom and Glad Morley. Glad was a notable pianist and played for wartime concerts and, in fact, at concerts and entertainments long after the war. She accompanied Gracie Fields more than once and showed me a picture taken with Gracie.

Margery mentions Selham station and the Three Moles. Both were at the very centre of local life, particularly during the war. Morleys sent out great quantities of chestnut fencing and pit props for the mines, hence the train was popularly known as "James Morley's flier". Morleys were also coal merchants and their coal came into Selham station, as did my grandfather's bakery supplies and Pinks Lemonade and their distilled water for engines. Tons of local sugar beet left Selham too.

When Grandad had finished his Wednesday round which took in Ambersham, Graffham and Selham, we would always call in at the Three Moles for a drink and a laugh with Alf Sherman. He always said, "Winkle, you are a born comedian as well as a master baker." I would be given a bottle of Pinks Portello and a packet of Smiths Crisps with the blue salt packet.

Mike Hubbard

## Fame at last!

Editor's note:

*I am well aware that in many ways this article replicates "A white enamel mug" in the last Magazine, but that I would suggest, is just the whole point. Here is the reverse side of the famous "was talking to the Editor" formula. Beryl Bent has given me permission to reproduce this account written for family and friends.*



*What the article also does is to point up the importance of the Cottage Museum as a focal point, magnet almost, for visitors to Petworth (and there are many) with some sort of Petworth background. There is nowhere else that fulfils such a function so comfortably. If Petworth can seem to a stranger a little preoccupied, the visitor will find at 346 High Street a direct route to the heart of the town.*

P.

"I'll be round at 10 o'clock so be ready", said my son Malcolm. I was being taken to see Grove House again, in Petworth, West Sussex, a birthday present from Malcolm. I was born there and lived at Grove House until about the age of five.

I was just finishing my breakfast at 9.30am when Malcolm arrived. "We can go now if you are all packed up". There was just a flask of coffee to make to go with the lunch-time sandwiches and then we were off! I could see why Malcolm was in such a hurry when I got into the car; he was anxious to see whether his newly purchased 'Sat. Nav.' would direct us to Petworth or Penzance! Once we became familiar with the "six miles to the roundabout; fourth turning on the roundabout" (was that the third or the fourth?) re-negotiating, re-negotiating, so that must have been the third – Malcolm got it right in the end.

Whilst going along I was telling Malcolm what I knew of Grove House. We had moved there after sharing Grandparent Woodward's House at 95 Cheltenham Road, Southend (very up-market in those days) because of the shortage of housing after the 1914-18 war; we were lucky to get the house at Petworth with Dad commuting to London in his Rover car – this had a fold back hood. Two rooms of the house were let to a children's authoress called Christine Chaundler. She was very fond of my sister Daphne (20 years older) who was a pretty child with shoulder length wavy hair and a great chatterbox, this no doubt endeared her to Christine who gave us a book written by her called "*Judy the Tramp*". This book contained a character called Daphne and I was very jealous about that. I also remember clearly the cottage opposite Grove House where the housekeeper lived along with her husband and daughters Joan and Angela who were a little older than Daphne and me. Mr Whiting, a small dour man, was a woodman for Lord Leconfield at Petworth House. At times Joan and Angela were allowed to take Daphne and I for walks over the Downs – getting there by passing smelly pig styes – now allotments. There was a spring where we had hidden a white enamel mug in the undergrowth and we would all have a drink of the lovely cool spring water. I have since been told that the spring is still there and is called The Virgin Mary Spring. (Incidentally I was christened at St Mary the Virgin Church in Petworth).

I recollect that my parents had to go to London for some reason and I was sent over to Mr & Mrs Whiting's cottage to sleep. I remember very vividly going up the stairs to find, what to my mind, was, "a landing" and sitting on the top stair crying my eyes out, repeating I'm **not** sleeping on the landing, I'm **not** sleeping on the landing. I woke next morning to find myself in a child's bed – on the landing! I also remembered us visiting Fittleworth a lot and couldn't think why – but more later.

We duly arrived in Petworth and Malcolm was delighted to find there were no parking charges. We were in a part of Petworth I couldn't remember where it seemed that every other shop sold Antiques – Malcolm just drooled over all the Treen exhibited. After a cup of tea

we made our way to Arundel Holt Court – about two miles out of Petworth (no Hotels there) for our two nights B & B. The hotel was a lovely country house set in acres of garden. We decided on an early night and after a substantial breakfast next morning made our way back to Petworth – and to Grove House. The house has now been divided up into two by putting in an extra front door, but when we lived there it was just one house.

After lunch our next visit was to the Museum. This was in an old cottage, previously inhabited by a seamstress for Petworth House. The Steward at the Museum became quite excited when I asked him for information on Grove House, as I had been born there, and immediately made a 'phone call. A few minutes later the editor of the Petworth Society Magazine arrived clutching pen and note pad and wanting to know all I could remember. I told him about the walks on the Downs and the enamel mug, also refusing to sleep on what, to me, was a landing in Mr & Mrs Whiting's cottage. Peter said he had quite a lot of information on Christine Chaundler and would forward it on to me – which he has done. I now learn that Christine Chaundler had a cottage built in Fittleworth so I have presumed her stay at Grove House was whilst waiting for her cottage to be built, and we then visited her there – hence our many trips to Fittleworth as I was always told my parents were very friendly with Christine. Daphne would probably have stayed at Christine's whilst I was sent over to Mr and Mrs Whitings to "sleep on the landing".

After our chat with Peter we were shown up to the next floor – the main bedroom in this Cottage Museum. Off this bedroom was another flight of narrow stairs and at the top, lo and behold "The landing" – although it was known as the spare bedroom. I had forgotten there was a second flight of stairs. I told Peter that neither Daphne nor I went to school in Petworth but I do recollect Mother teaching us our "Numbers and Letters" each day.

Sister Pamela was also born at Grove House on 8th June 1924. My arrival was on 5th July 1922 although Mother always maintained it was on the 7th (my "copy" certificate says the 5th).

Back home on Friday, and as I said "fame at last" even if it does come at aged 87 years and twenty days!

P.S. Malcolm has now obtained a copy of Christine Chaundler's book "*Judy the Tramp*" – another birthday present for me.

Beryl Bent

## A very ordinary lady

*A particularly attractive feature of the Society's annual dinner is the opportunity to meet just a few of our legion of postal members, many of whom live at some considerable distance from Petworth. Susan I had known only from a brief telephone conversation but she was coming from Walsall with a friend. It seemed a good idea to put them both on the Chairman's table as they probably wouldn't know anyone..*



*As it turned out Susan and Carole would have fitted in very comfortably anywhere! After Keith's Quiz with Carole having won the fruit, Susan rather diffidently handed me a ten page typescript. At first glance it looked a rather forbidding piece of work, a thicket of names and dates. Family history doesn't usually travel well without the particular family interest. Once home I began to read ... and read on.*

*I suppose that in thirty years and more of editing this Magazine I have handled material of all kinds, some of which I have felt it my duty to reject. In its existing form Susan's article was not really fitted for the format of this Magazine but, with Susan's permission I have edited and abridged her text. I don't like interfering with someone else's work, particularly someone as competent as Susan, but she has agreed this version. While unique is a word that needs to be used sparingly, I have to say this is one of the most extraordinary and thought-provoking pieces of research I have seen. I add my own comments at the end.*

P.

<sup>1</sup> The full text is available on [www.freewebs/susanhistory](http://www.freewebs/susanhistory) or e-mail at [martis1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:martis1@hotmail.co.uk)

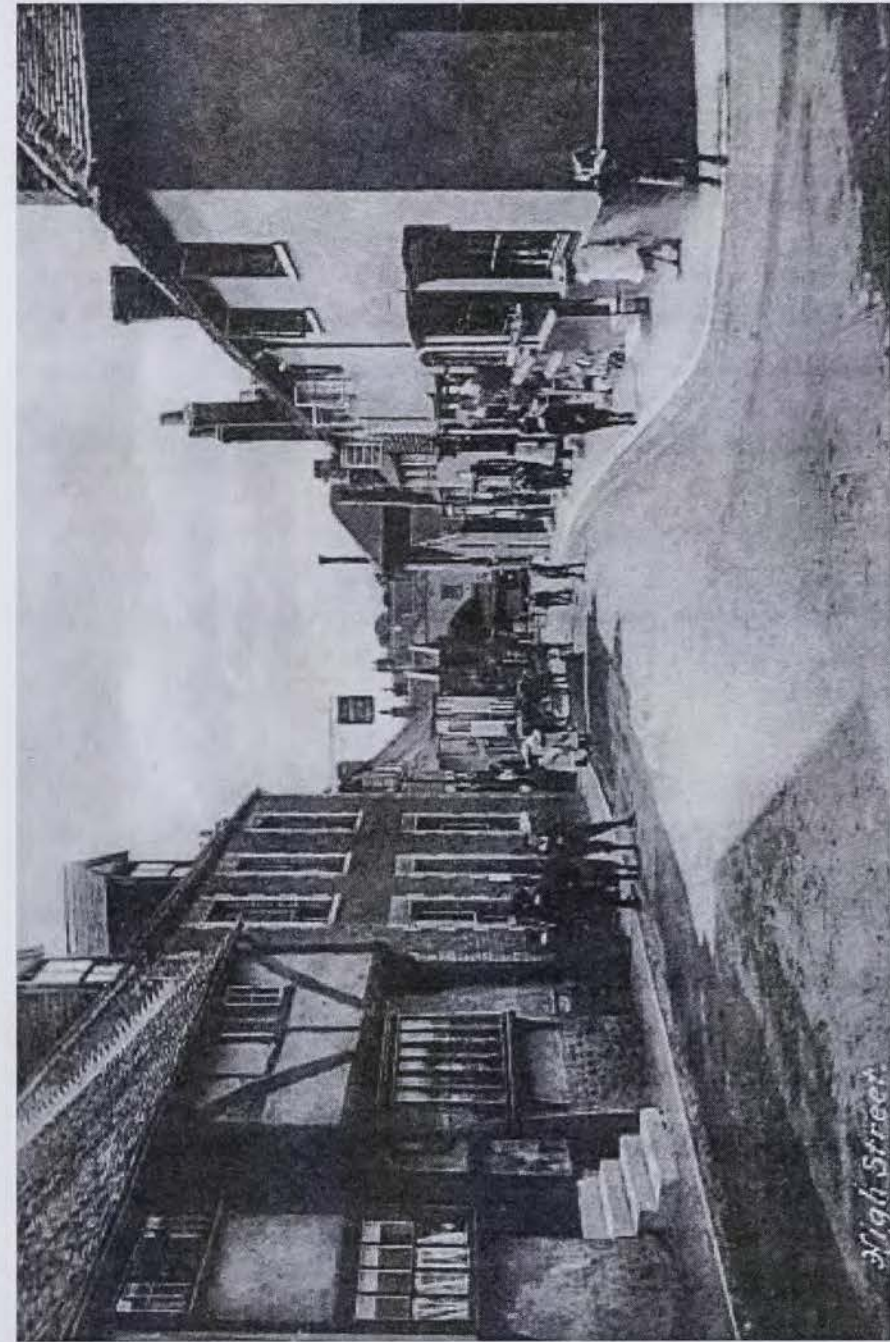
I have a remote family connection with Rose Jane Boxall but it was the chance discovery that she had been widowed three times before the age of 35 that set me thinking about her. I wanted to find out more about her and began to see what was available in census records and directories. I also began to collect certificates. The results were surprising.

Rose Jane Boxall had been baptised in Petworth on the 25th October 1867, the daughter of Henry Boxall and Eliza Kinggett. Her father, originally from Lodsworth, and born in 1811, was sixteen years his wife's senior. A second Henry Boxall (born 1843) appears to be Henry Boxall's son, either by a previous marriage or another liaison. By the 1861 census Henry Junior is living with Henry and Eliza in the Red Lion Yard at Petworth just off the High Street at the back of the old Queen's Head pub, at one time the Red Lion. Eliza had a son too, Henry Percy Boxall Kinggett, aged six in 1861. He also lived with Henry and Eliza. Rose would be one of a number of children born to Henry and Eliza at Red Lion Yard. By 1871 the family seem to have fallen on hard times. Henry Boxall is recorded as an unemployed tailor, and his son as an unemployed agricultural labourer. Henry Senior died in 1877 and by 1881 Eliza was supporting a considerable family by working as a charwoman. Rose and her sister Emily (later Mrs James Henley) were living at home.

The Red Lion Yard was a notorious slum, perhaps the poorest and most densely populated area in the entire town. Miles Costello is hardly exaggerating when he writes of it as "synonymous with poverty and deprivation in Victorian Petworth. TB and typhus were rife in the cramped and over-populated hovels that were crowded into this area"<sup>1</sup>. Looking back to the turn of the century in 1989 Dollie Mant<sup>2</sup> recalled her mother's charitable connection with the Red Lion Yard, although she perhaps underplays the sheer wretchedness of the area.

"It was the custom for charity workers to be allotted a particular "district"; I think the Rector did this, and Mother had the old Red Lion Yard as hers - a very populous area in those days. Taking on a "district" was no light matter although my mother seemed to have the light touch

<sup>1</sup> PSM 108    <sup>2</sup> PSM 56



*High Street about 1905. The Red Lion Yard will be away to the left, centre picture. Does anyone know what the large tower is to the rear of the picturee?*



that was needed. A regular weekly visit, repeated over a period of years, meant that enduring friendships were formed. One family, I remember, always had a tart cooked for them, it was a regular weekly ritual. Mother never missed a weekly visit, knew who was ill, who needed help, how the children were getting on, in fact everything that a family friend would know. The Christmas when my father died he had bought blankets for Mother to give out to the "district" at Christmas but he said to her, "It's so cold, they ought to have them before Christmas". They did, but he died on the 20th December. Mother didn't let it make any difference to us children although she must have found it hard."

Quite possibly Rose had left the Red Lion Yard before Mrs Mant's connection with it. After leaving school she may well have entered service or, like her mother, worked as a cleaner. In 1889 she married William Chantler at Billingshurst. Chantler, a maltster, brought with him three children from a previous marriage. After the birth of a son, another William, early in 1891, William Chantler died of enteric fever and exhaustion, the latter characteristic of the final stages of typhoid. Typhoid, gradually being brought under some sort of control in the 1890s, is a bacillus spread either by human contact or contaminated drinking water. Without antibiotics the standard treatment was constant sponging with cold water, and immersion for long periods in a cold bath. The treatment was not notably successful.

Rose and young William were living in Caffyns Road, Billingshurst, next door to Rose's parents-in-law. She, like the Chantlers, had two teenage girls boarded with her, probably children in the care of the London Poor Law Union. Rose's own mother Eliza would continue to live in Red Lion Yard until she died in 1917. Mrs Mant would certainly have known her well.

Rose married again in 1893, this time in Brighton, Caleb Miles being the youngest of a large family from the Graffham/Lodsworth area. Like his father, Caleb worked as a farm carter, but he would later be a brewer's drayman. There were two daughters of the marriage but on 12th August 1897, Rose was widowed for a second time, Caleb, like William Chantler, falling victim to typhoid fever. There had been a serious outbreak in Chichester, and he may well have visited the city in his work as a drayman. Alternatively Rose may just possibly have been a carrier. Efforts were made nationally at this time to isolate known carriers. Caleb had died in August and a daughter, Dora, was born at the very end of May in the following year. Given Caleb's desperate state of health, it seems possible that the father was in fact Caleb's brother Job whom Rose married the following year. Technically the marriage was illegal; the Marriage Act of 1835 having barred a man from marrying his brother's widow. The Act was not repealed until 1921 but seems to have been disregarded on occasion, sometimes deliberately, sometimes in ignorance. Clearly the Chichester Registrar raised no objection although he must have noted the repetition of the name Miles. At Dora's birth Rose was living at 41, Victoria Road, Chichester.

By 1901 Rose had moved to 116 Oving Road, Chichester, her son (Willie), by William Chantler, now living with his paternal grandparents in Billingshurst. Job was a stoker in the Royal Navy and away from home a good deal, sometimes on shore station at Portsmouth. He died at 36 Florence Road, Chichester, from heart and kidney inflammation possibly caused by a bacillus of some kind, on the 17th August 1902.

In 1911 Rose is living at 14 Washington Street, Chichester and working as a



*A gallery of Garland studies at Petworth Ploughing Match in the 1950s to accompany Gerald Reed's article. Original press captions.*

*Petworth & District Ploughing Match. S. Payne, from Stag Park, Petworth, winner of the 1st prize in the horse ploughing section.*





*Petworth & District Ploughing Match. A general view of the ploughing in progress in the horse plough class. The dry, dusty condition of the ground can be seen from the photograph. The competitor nearest camera is J.H. Wadey, the champion. W.R. Dummall, employed by the Hon Clive Pearson, is the further competitor.*



*Petworth & District Ploughing Match. There were only two couples entered in the horse ploughing classes (the lowest since the Society started in 1906). Here they are in action, Mr A.H. Retallack's pair in charge of ploughman J.H. Wadey, from Stopham (nearest), and Viscount Cowdray's fine pair of dapple greys in charge of ploughman J. Feast. Wadey won the ploughing class, and Feast for the best groomed pair with the cleanest harness.*





Petworth & District Ploughing Match. J. Miles, winner of class 3 (for three furrows ploughs of 2½ acres) attracts a gallery.

charwoman. She has another daughter, Kathleen, a sister to Dora, but also Helena Briggs Miles aged 2. The two older daughters were already in service. In May 1917 Rose married for a fourth time, at Portsmouth Registry Office. The groom was Frederick Briggs, a painter in H.M. Dockyard and presumably the father of Helena. Rose is now living at 23 Tower Street, Chichester and Frederick in Southsea. Frederick is recorded as a bachelor so if he is indeed the father of Helena, the delay in marrying is a little puzzling. Frederick and Rose were exactly of an age, and Frederick's father had been at one time station-master at Shoreham. He had then moved on to Littlehampton. Frederick died at 2 Denmark Villas, Spitalfields Lane in May 1925 of "caecinalous stricture of the oesophagus and secondary cause asthmatic coma". Rose was a widow again.

In the summer of 1926, Rose, then aged 59, married for a fifth and final time. Her new husband was Dendy Napper, originally from Wisborough Green, but at one time a baker and confectioner in Chichester. He appears in Kelly's 1909 Directory. The marriage was brief and ended in tragedy. Apparently unhinged by the serious illness of his brother Edgar at Rudgwick, Dendy put his head in the gas oven while Rose was out at work. She had left in the morning and learned of his death only when she returned in the evening. Vera Dunsby, lodging with the Nappers at 2 Denmark Villas had been the last person to see Dendy alive. She had left the house to do her shopping and Dendy had asked her when she was coming back and she told him. The coroner returned a verdict of "suicide while of unsound mind".

Rose did not marry again. She was still at Denmark Villas in 1940 and 1950 while in 1954 she is living at 61 Spitalfields Lane. She died, aged 88, in 1955.

Susan Martin.

#### Editor's note:

*Rose had had a hard life. If her latter years may have been relatively settled, to say that she had more than her fair share of tragedy seems almost facetious. Even a bare outline of her life, and that is all that the documentation can provide, gives an overpowering sense of sadness and all too human frailty. Did Rose ever look back to the Petworth she had left in 1889? Did she sometimes, while her mother was still alive, come back to see her? Old Mrs Boxall died at the Red Lion Yard in 1917. If Rose did look back she could have had few regrets. The Red Lion Yard was no place to be sentimental about. Walter Kevis, who photographed most of Petworth in his time, left no record of the Yard, while Petworth society in all its carefully guarded gradations would want little to do with it.*

*In a way we know so much and yet in some ways we know nothing at all. The documentation raises questions but offers no answer. We have no idea what Rose looked like, no hint of her inner feelings. And there are other questions.*

*Why, for instance, did Frederick Briggs wait so long before marrying her? Rose's early life in Chichester is something of an odyssey and there may well have been other stopping places, almost certainly rented. At Denmark Villas, the landlord Charles Tapner lived next door. We can be quite certain that the Red Lion Yard did not encourage introspection, the very struggle to survive would see to that, but Rose must, occasionally, dimly, have pondered on the ways of Providence. "Good old days"? Certainly not in the Red Lion Yard.*

P.



## Riding in the cab

I was born in March 1935 at St Mary's, a large rented house more or less opposite Fittleworth Church. It wouldn't be long before we moved to Hill Top at Tillington. My uncle Bert was living at 414 Heath End, now Honeypot Cottage, and cycling in to work at Boxalls the Tillington builders, while my father was living at Hill Top and cycling in to work at Coultershaw Mill. It seemed logical to exchange houses, both rented, which they did. I had spent two years at Tillington School but I don't remember much about it.

When we moved to Heath End, my mother wanted me to go to Petworth school while my father wanted me to go to Duncton, where Miss Botting who had taught Dad and his two brothers, was still teaching. Dad won the argument and I went to Duncton. For some reason, on the 29th September 1942 I was at home; I've no idea why, and standing in the garden at 414 Heath End. I can see the whole thing still. It was a grey, overcast day and a plane suddenly appeared out of the clouds, more or less directly over Heath End. I knew without even looking, from the sound of the engines, that it was German. It flew over and I could see a massive column of dust and smoke. Word soon got round that the North Street Boys' School had been hit.

My father was by trade a painter and decorator, having served a seven years apprenticeship, probably at Boxalls at Tillington. He told me that for the first three years he was not allowed to do any actual painting, just preparation and rubbing down. With the war on, however, he was working at Coultershaw Mill, a reserved occupation. It was a Hollingdale tradition to work at the mill, Dad being the third generation. Mr Gwillim also had North Mill at Midhurst and Wassell Mill at Ebernoe, both working at that time and Dad might travel to either as an alternative to Petworth. Shifts were of twelve hours at a time. I remember him telling me that lighting at the mill was by candle and that walking from the mill to the machine room in the dark could be a frightening experience, particularly with candle grease on the floor and surfaces. You needed to be strong to work at the mill, picking up 20 cwt. sacks of flour simply went with the job.

From Duncton I won a scholarship to Midhurst Grammar School. It was 1945 and Mr Lucas who had come just before the war had settled in with a completely new regime. I caught the Pulborough train at Petworth station. On the early train at ten to eight one of the younger drivers would sometimes let me ride with him in the cab. The train carried a driver and guard.

The Pulborough train, the Petworth bus and the Chichester bus were just some of the feeders to the Grammar School and we would have to go to Midhurst Station to catch the train home. Once we had been playing football and arrived late at the station having run all the way. The train had waited a few minutes for us but given us up and was already making for the tunnel, a good 150 yards on, when the guard saw us. The train shunted back and picked us up. Losing the train was a serious business. How on earth would boys from Fittleworth and Pulborough get home?

From early days Dad would take me to Portsmouth to watch football. We'd catch the

63 bus to Chichester from Heath End. From Chichester station we'd go on to Fratton. The problem was that the Portsmouth train was due to leave Chichester a few minutes before the bus reached Chichester. The driver knew that for us to catch the train he had to be at the station a few minutes early and we came to rely on him. Originally I had a little bench on which I'd stand between Dad and Uncle Reg. Uncle Bert at Tillington wasn't as keen on football as we all were. After going to the Cinema at Petworth on Saturday evenings I was able to get the Football Mail to take home to Dad with all the day's results. It was in time for the last bus home.

Dad was a great gardener and 414 had a large garden. He won the prize for best garden at the Duncton Show more than once, the judge being no less than Fred Streeter himself. Dad was always a strong fit man. I remember him doing a day's work and then cycling down to Rustington to see my mother in hospital, then cycling back. He had one of the big old fashioned Raleigh bikes.

I didn't really make the best of my time at Grammar School for one reason or another and eventually left to work in the gardens at Seaford College where my Uncle Reg was working in the gardens. He'd been in Burma during the war and was awarded the Military Medal for gallantry under machine-gun fire, and, although injured, refusing to leave his position until everyone was evacuated. It was something he kept very quiet about. Because of his injury he was sent back to India to recover but somehow managed to get on a boat home. Returning late at night to Pulborough station and recovering as he was, he walked back to Seaford College where he had one of the lodges. A memento of his days in the Army was a beautiful Japanese sword which he kept hung up in his living room. My aunt hated it and eventually made him get rid of it.

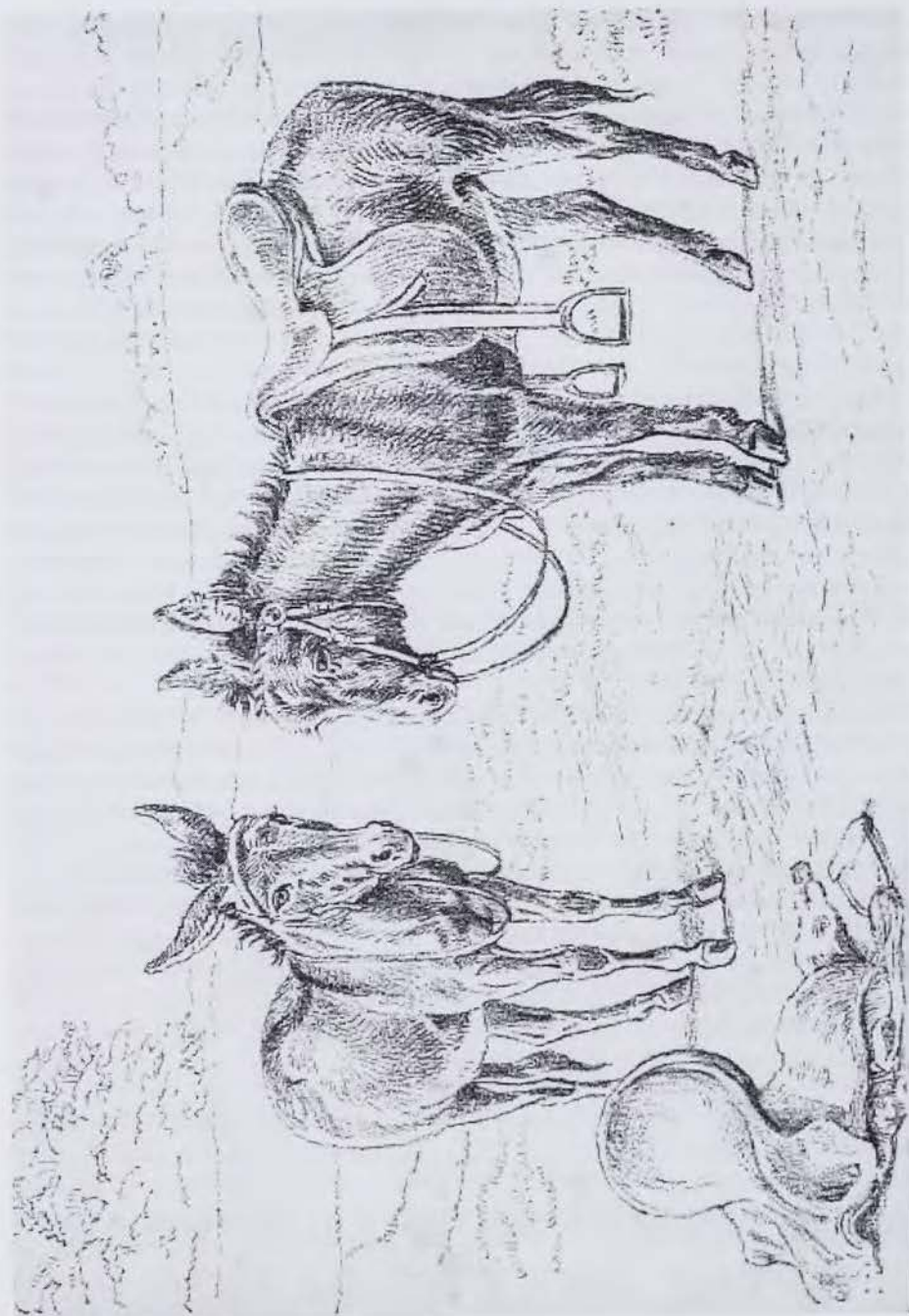
I received £1 for my first week's work at Seaford College: I gave ten shillings to my mother and with the other ten shillings bought a pair of boots. After a year at Seaford I left to work for Woolfords the Petworth builders as a labourer. I remained there for eighteen months until I was called up for National Service in the R.A.F. It was 1953. I cannot say I had any great aptitude for building work but I had kept at it. After service mainly in Egypt I returned to Woolfords for another eighteen months. Bill Davies and Jack Clifford, two of Dad's work colleagues, who were special constables suggested I apply to join the West Sussex Police. I was accepted and served thirty years. I am often back in the town as my sister still lives there, but we are settled in Horsham after 26 years, and in fact have just started stewarding at Coultershaw Beam Pump. Now that's really returning to my family roots. I had a very happy childhood and teenage years living at Heath End. There was so much freedom and a good community spirit amongst the residents.

Norman Hollingdale was talking to the Editor.

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## NEW MEMBERS WILL APPEAR IN THE NEXT MAGAZINE





*A second animal study from the series of twelve mentioned in the last Magazine (page 32).*

## “I’m 92 years old and I’ve lived this”. Thoughts on the 2009 Cottage Museum visitors’ book

We are approaching the end of September and the visitors’ book is almost full. Perhaps we’ll get another to see out October or simply wait for a new one next April. The Guide, too, will have to be reprinted, a few revisions made. Perhaps, funds permitting, it might be completely redesigned. Whatever we decide, it will be a fourth printing. Attendances this year are averaging fifty a week, significantly up on last year, and up by a good half on 2007. Clearly the Museum is no nine days (or nine years!) wonder.

To what extent can a good year be attributed to external influences? It’s a moot point. Certainly there is a general feeling that in a year of recession like 2009, local attractions are likely to benefit from enforced economy. At £2.50 (50p for children) a visit to 346 is hardly, in modern terms, expensive. The comprehensive guide book, too, at £2.50 is also excellent value.

A crucial point to take into consideration is that the sky cannot be the limit when it comes to visitors. 50 a week is comfortable, 70 probably manageable, but 100 would see a diminution of the essential Museum experience, a reciprocal exchange between steward and individual visitor or family unit, ideally on a one-to-one basis. Of course it can’t always be achieved but idealism needs sometimes to challenge finance.

Now the visitors’ book. We have some 650 entries for the first six months, of which some two thirds are multiple, usually couples, sometimes family groups. Perhaps some five-sixths of all visitors sign. On a very busy day stewards may not be able to suggest an entry, but most visitors are happy, even eager, to sign. The book offers four columns, name, approximate address, how did you hear about us? and comments.

The great proportion of visitors come from the Home Counties but individual visitors can come, unsurprisingly, from anywhere in the British Isles, Wales, Scotland, the north, west and east being well represented as too Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United States, and most European countries. “Exotics” this year are Algeria and the Cayman Islands.

Probably the most significant column is the third which gives some idea of the success of our advertising and may suggest new or changed initiatives. Leaflet distribution is crucial but, as we found last year, only part of a greater whole. There are also the free entry voucher campaigns, new last year, but likely to become a regular feature. The *West Sussex Gazette* helped us this year and last, while the *West Sussex County Times* is a new venture this year. While it may be argued that a free entry voucher does not generate income, it does raise the profile of the Museum and visitors often make a voluntary donation. A judicious placing of the voucher offers can enliven the duller months. Experience suggests that the Museum’s busiest period is likely to be mid-July to mid-September. The local Tourist Information Centre, the Library and Tiffins in the High Street are important feeders complementing our use of leaflets. Recommendation from family and friends plays a surprisingly important role,



as of course does recommendation from Petworth House. Many people now make a trip to Petworth the occasion for another visit to 346. And why not? Another day, a different pair of stewards, a new perspective. It's unlikely you'll find the same stewards twice.

Equally surprising and almost rivalling leaflet distribution, while quite unlike it in its totally random effect, is the huge number of people who come across the Museum while simply strolling through the town. This is perhaps the more surprising because the Museum is somewhat off the main local routes. Then there's an initiative, quite new this year, advertising in the bi-monthly *Sussex W.I. Magazine*, originally suggested by Boxgrove W.I. after a successful visit last year. It's inexpensive and has already paid for itself. We'll almost certainly advertise again next year. Somewhat similarly, if I'm taking groups round the town, W.I., U3A or other, it's a good idea to offer a quick taste of 346, give them leaflets to distribute and hope they see enough to bring back their friends for the full version with fire blazing and full stewards' commentary. Indications are that this does happen. Heritage Days with the offer of free entry, perform a similar function.

Local advertising is clearly a key factor but it's not always possible from comments in the book to analyse it accurately. "Brown sign" is probably clear enough, as is "Poster near church" but something as non-committal as "local notice" can be interpreted in various ways. Camp sites and B and B's are often mentioned, usually without more precise specification and there is the usual legion of random entries. Here are a few examples from many:

Telford Rural Life Centre, Stag Inn, Balls Cross, BBC Radio Sussex, Lurgashall Post Office, Parham Plant Fair ... There are many more. The comment, "Your reputation is so widespread that we just came" is gratifying but with publicity there's always work to be done.

Then the final column. Your comments. I acknowledge that it's not always easy to find something different to say. I flinch at the dreaded word "nostalgia". Officially the Museum doesn't "do" nostalgia. You have only to read Susan Martin's article in this Magazine to realise that nostalgia is a very dangerous word. I don't know when the slums in the Red Lion Yard were razed, sometime between the wars, but clearly for most, if not all, of her occupation of 346, Mary Cummings would have been in close proximity, if only geographically. "Time warp", "Step back in time" are standards. "Just like my grandmother's" takes us forward a little. "Could not be more authentic" that's better as is "Loved the smells". Visitors often confuse the whiff of spent gas with escaping gas itself. It's a characteristic smell of the cottage. "What can we say – just wonderful", "So, so, so beautiful, I absolutely love the cottage", "Just came across you. Really enjoyed our visit – more than we thought". How many visitors are lost to us through the misnomer 'Museum' – we have no exhibits in a formal sense – just a coherent context. "A stunning reproduction – a wonderful treat", "A gem of visual history", "Even saw things I remember using", "Wonderful to see the other side of life after Petworth House", "Proper 'living' history", "I'm 92 years old. I've lived this", "Pity we couldn't sleep in Mrs Cummings' bed". I'm not sure about that one, nor, I suspect, would be Mrs Cummings. "I liked Lord Roberts in the cupboard", "Brings back memories of cottage in Somerset where we were evacuated in 1940-43" or simply "It feels so warm, so right".

And lastly the stewards, the backbone of the Museum. Theirs not to stand quietly, absorbing the atmosphere, but to engage with the visitors and explain. 346 doesn't explain



*Detail of sewing room at 346 High Street.*

*Photograph by Louise Adams – courtesy of Chichester Observer Series.*





*Swans at the Polish camp in June 1962. Photograph by George Garland.  
See Poland, Siberia .... and Petworth.*

itself. As I have said already, 346 is a reciprocal experience. Here are just a few comments: "Brilliant, made much better by enthusiastic guides", "Enjoyed hearing the history. Two lovely ladies to tell us", "Lovely house, so informative, such nice ladies" - or "Extremely interesting to me as a seamstress myself and the stewards were lovely". Oh and, by the way, not all our stewards are ladies we do have men as well!

P.

## Doing a job properly doesn't take any longer ....

My earliest years were spent in the Rogate/Trotton area, my father working for the Lywood family. Perhaps my first memory is of having my tonsils removed at the old Royal West Sussex Hospital in Chichester. It was Christmas and we all sat round a table with cakes and candles. Then there was the cold winter of 1937/8. I would be five. We had a kind of scullery outside the cottage and two robins took to sheltering in there from the weather. One day the cottage door was left open and they came in and settled on a picture frame, something they would then do whenever they had the chance. Our insurance agent remarked on how lifelike they were. "They're certainly lifelike," he was told, "they're real birds." They stayed with us until the snow cleared.

My father worked originally for Carnegie then went on for the Lywood family at Wakeham near Rogate and thence to Dumpford at Trotton. My sister, who was several years older than I was, walked with me the three and a half miles across the fields and back to Rogate school. It would be just before the war. I left Rogate school at Christmas 1946. There was talk of a scholarship to Midhurst Grammar School but I didn't want to go there. I wanted to go to Churchers College at Petersfield. What with one thing and another I think I'd have tried harder if I felt a place at Churchers was at stake. Anyway, I left school at fourteen. I had never been to any other school; I liked Rogate school and it was a good village school of the time. Employment wasn't really a problem, or, put it another way, it was already decided that I would go to work with my father on the farm. Edward Lywood and I started work together. I remember the date, 6th January 1947. My first job was to cut kale for the cows. It was cold and by the time I'd finished the snow was coming in. The cut kale was never picked up and the rest of the kale never harvested; it just rotted in the field. The winter of 1947/8 was the hardest for years. We spent much of our first days simply thawing out pipes in the cow sheds - or trying to. Many pipes burst and I remember icicles hanging from wires. The weather was so bad that the milk lorry could not get up to the farm and we had to take our milk in churns from the farm up to a temporary collection point, the Blue Anchor at Trotton - we'd also take the Carnegie churns up as well. When the weather lifted, I often worked with the horses but not ploughing or drilling, at fifteen I wasn't yet considered up to that, but I'd be harrowing, rolling, horse-hoeing: sugar beet, mangolds and swedes. This was towards the end of the horse era, the farm at this time had one horse and two tractors. Dumpford farm grew corn, kale, mangold, swede and potatoes. Casual labouring I suppose you could call my first year -



weeding and hoeing and cutting hay with a knife from the loose rick. The horse certainly wasn't difficult, the cowman would take him out of the field with the horse and cart and when he'd finished work, give him a knob of cake and let him amble back into his field by himself. I'd help Dad with the thatching but again, looking back, there is a feeling of the end of an era, something of which I would then have been only dimly aware, if at all. Balers were coming in but only gradually.

Dumpford had three fields of light sandy soil with the rest clay. The latter fields were flat and, in a wet autumn, if the soil didn't drain the seed would rot. You couldn't plough again in the spring, but you could try a drill to reseed. Even then it was quite possible to end up with nothing. I started tractor-driving in the autumn of my first year, I wasn't yet fifteen. I couldn't, of course, go on public roads but in practice we hardly ever took the tractors out of the farm. The main excursion would be to take sugar beet to Elsted Station. The old Midhurst-Petersfield line ran through the farm. The resident tractor driver would do this. Tractors were second nature to me as to so many boys brought up, as I was, on a farm. Even at the age of eight I'd move the tractor on as they were picking up sheaves at harvest. No health and safety then! At Dumpford my main concern was shifting cake, mangolds and straw for the cows. The farm had a few pigs and a number of chicken, the last very much the concern of Mr Lywood. Everything was geared to the cows.

The cows were largely kept in during the winter, but not, of course, entirely. Exercise is crucial for blood circulation and blood circulation has its effect on milk. Cows cannot be left to stagnate over the winter. Dumpford's farm buildings stood in a rough circle, leaving a very large yard with a patch in the middle, again of some size, where the cows took their daily exercise. Exercise would also give the opportunity to clean out the stalls. There were fifty or sixty cows at this time and all hand-milked by two men and two Land Girls – there were still Land Girls working well after the war. Once again, looking back, it's possible to see this as a period of transition, we were already beginning to use a vacuum pipe, precursor of the milking-machine that was to come. One worker did the milking, the other washed the udders and took the milk in buckets to the cooler.

The summer was much the easier season; the cows were out in the field. For the first year they were simply allowed to roam over the whole field; after that the field was divided with the use of electric fencing, the cows concentrated into one part of the field before moving on to the next. Yes, summer was easier: in the winter there was so much dung to shift about, the senior tractor driver, myself and two Lithuanian workers. They used a sledge to spread the dung over the fields and would be doing this all day. They were good cheerful workers and were dropped off at the farm every morning and collected every evening. I can still picture them sitting eating their sandwiches at lunchtime. I think the van came from Billingshurst.

My work was mainly with the tractor but I would fill in as relief milkman as needed. I was now old enough to take the tractor on the road but first I had to have a proficiency test. It wouldn't give me a full licence, only certify that I was competent enough with the tractor to be allowed on public roads. The examiner came out to the farm and asked me to get the tractor out of the shed. I was then to drive round the farm and come back, the examiner meanwhile remaining in his car. When I returned he instructed me to make an emergency stop

when he held up his hand. At some 7 m.p.h. this wasn't too taxing and I had passed.

Rogate Ploughing Match was to be held on the next farm and Edward's father, Charles, asked if I would like to go. He was very deaf, a legacy of war-time service with the guns, but he could lip-read well and spoke very softly. A nice man and I respected him. He was stern but fair, and a stickler for time. I think I had something of an ulterior motive. I was still only the under tractor driver, but if I could make something of a show at Rogate I might end up doing rather more. It was 1950/51 and there was a special prize of £2, effectively for best novice. £2 was more than a week's wages. But could I do it? My father had ploughed with horses and I had from Wednesday to the Saturday to transfer that knowledge to tractor ploughing. Charles Lywood did his bit: he had Haycock and Gerrard, the Petersfield engineers, out to look at the two farm ploughs. I had the three-furrow plough which, apart from altering a disc, didn't need much attention. The senior driver had the other plough and that needed a certain amount of attention from the engineers.

Although a small local event, Rogate seemed daunting enough at the time. There were some eight or nine competitors divided into two classes – professional and amateur. A little confusing. In fact professional simply meant someone who had previously won a ploughing competition, amateur, someone who had not. I won the £2 and later, at the Harvest Supper in the evening, learned that I had won £3 for the best individual performance. £5, I was rich! There were some eighty to a hundred in Rogate Village Hall for the supper, mainly farm-workers, another contrast between 1950 and the present day. Charles Lywood was pleased with my performance and said to me, "If you don't ever do worse than that, you'll be alright." Praise indeed. I felt I'd proved my point – more tractor-driving, less general labouring. Well if I had made a point it didn't seem to have registered; things went on much as before. Eventually the other tractor-driver left but he was replaced by someone else who didn't stop long.

It was 1952 and I was engaged and looking for a house. Charles Lywood said to me, "I don't want to lose you" and agreed to find a house which he did. Our wedding, booked for September was brought forward and we were married in Coronation Week, June 1953. I was now very much the farm tractor driver but also doubled as relief milker. This could be tedious but the extra money was useful.

It was a time of enormous change on the farm. Houses were being taken down and farm buildings going up, bigger sheds, silos, all sorts of things. There was government funding to encourage greater production and the introduction of "marketing syndicates". This meant that three or four farmers would get together and pool their capital to buy machinery. There would be government funding also which was to be repaid over a period of years. A curious feature was that, although the equipment was shared, there was a "sole operator" condition. The largest shareholder was technically the owner and only he could actually use the equipment. A notable innovation was the baler: instead of putting the hay in a rick, it could be baled in the field, then picked up on a sledge. All this had consequences for me, working as I did for the sole operator. When a farmer's hay was ready, and this was the decision of a moment, I had to get over and bale it. I might have just finished relief milking and be called out to bale hay on a neighbouring farm. "My hay will be ready about five o'clock" might not be music to my ears. Baling might be of hay but also, of course, of straw, rather less urgent. And the



tractor work went on, ploughing, drilling, spraying. By this time I was competing at Petersfield Ploughing Match, much bigger than Rogate, of course, with a measure of success and, over a period, moving on to take prizes.

A big change came in 1966 with the Lywood family beginning to look east, recommended to the Leconfield Estate by Mr McHardy at Stag Park. For a time they retained Dumpford after they had taken Battlehurst on the Horsham Road in March 1966. What might have been a difficult decision for us as a family was avoided; the children could remain at Midhurst Intermediate School. In March 1968 the Lywood family took over neighbouring Marshalls. It was a strange time for we still had the cows at Dumpford. My family moved to Ganders Gate, Kirdford, and I was commuting by tractor between Dumpford and Kirdford. Of course the traffic was less heavy in those days and the trip would take about an hour each way, longer if we brought the combine-harvester, although I didn't usually drive that. The last was a job for very early mornings when there was very little traffic on the road.

I was still interested in competition ploughing and made a first appearance at Petworth Ploughing Match in 1966 and have competed every year that it has been held: there have been at least two occasions when the match has been called off, certainly once for foot and mouth disease and the other because the site was waterlogged. Some forty years and more and Petworth this year was my final appearance.

After an uncertain period, ploughing matches are flourishing: Petworth, Petersfield and West Grinstead attract both competitors and spectators. I've ploughed at Sussex County Matches and even in the National Championships. I'd been nominated for this after competing at Woodlarks Workshop in Surrey, a two-day charity event in aid of a school for the disabled. I remember the event coincided with Findon Sheep Fair. I've never ploughed with horses but horse-ploughing does fascinate people and attract spectators. There's an element of nostalgia as well as the spectacle of these noble animals in full flow.

Competitive tractor ploughing has changed greatly in the years since 1966. In those days, you'd simply enter with a farm tractor cleaned up and adjusted for the occasion. The next step was to have your own tractor, kept mainly for such occasions. Another short step was a bespoke or custom-built match tractor. As a working ploughman I operated with a farm plough for some years but eventually bought my own match plough. Curiously enough, it was the first specific match plough I had ever seen. I first saw it in 1966. The man who owned it decided to give up championship ploughing and in 1980 he was prepared to sell it on to me. By this time foreign match ploughs were becoming more common and a competitor in a fair way of business, perhaps not agriculture at all, but treating competitive ploughing as a hobby, might buy an imported match tractor and plough with refinements of all kinds. I've used my tractor since 1980 but it's no show exhibit; it remains in daily use and is cleaned up for matches. I'd have to say, though, that this is rather unusual. Allowing for inflation, a tractor that has been well looked after will probably rise rather than fall in value. I've won prizes for best-maintained tractor and best-kept garden, but that's another story. I could mention also ploughing with vintage tractors; it's something that has become very popular and like horse-ploughing attracts spectators in some numbers.

It will be obvious from what I have said that I have seen great changes over a lifetime

in agriculture. There will be changes to come. Is the future of ploughing itself in doubt? The new idea of min-till, minimum tillage claims to lessen the carbon-print of traditional ploughing by simply discing up the ground, stirring up the top soil, spraying the rubbish, then using a power-based drill to sow. Some do this, others don't. It's probably less suitable for dairy farms where there is lots of manure to incorporate and there must be worries about spraying. Does this negate the benefit of lowering the carbon print? We shall see. Certainly ploughing matches look set to continue; they're as popular now as they've ever been, perhaps more so. One thought to finish. Doing a job properly doesn't take any longer than not doing it properly. I've always tried to live up to that.

Gerald Reed was talking to David Burden and the Editor.

## Poland, Siberia . . . and Petworth

### Prologue:

It is surprising that we have so little on the Polish camp in Petworth Park, former army huts reutilised as a home for Polish people displaced at the end of the war. The camp would remain in existence until the mid-1960s. There is, I think, no obvious trace of it in the present Park. We have only the brief but evocative memory by Anna Hughes in PSM 104 and her father's contemporary drawing of a room. There are a handful of Garland photographs but these are mainly external views and do little to lift the veil of silence.

The prospect of a visit by Wladyslaw "Walter" Swirski to Petworth after an interval of sixty years seemed an opportunity not to be missed, but in fact things did not go entirely as planned. As it happened Petworth is tangential to Walter's story but as a background to the suffering of a people what Walter has to say is as powerful as any description of the camp itself could possibly be.

P.

### 1 Poland

I was born in May 1923 in a village of some four hundred people. The closest town was Tarnopol, in those days part of Poland, but now in the Ukraine. Our farm had been originally part of a large feudal estate but the owner had had to sell what he was unable to cultivate himself to local people. It was a form of land redistribution. My family bought three hundred hectares, a very comfortable holding. We grew wheat, rye, sugar beet, buckwheat, oats and barley, gradually turning pasture into arable. While we sent some crops like wheat to the market, self-sufficiency was the order of the day. Farmers like us would load up a sack of wheat or rye, go to the local mill and bring the flour back for domestic use. We had a fair labour force, six pairs of horses and the men to work them. I'd ride some four miles into the local school; the horse knew where he was going and I could, if I wished, even read a book as I made my way along.

A reflection of an older scheme of things was Mikola, a kind of family retainer, who



lived with us, ate with us, was paid by us, but having no family of his own, gave all his earnings to his brother and his brother's family. Not everyone in the village had land and, when it was harvest time, those who did not plough, sow or pay taxes, would come to the farm where every tenth sheaf would be theirs. Their sheaves could be picked out because they were so heavy – I could never lift one – and, to be quite sure, they would tuck a few wild flowers into the top to identify it. Share-croppers, you would call them in English, I think. My father invested in a single cylinder diesel threshing machine and, pleased with this piece of modernisation, said to my grandfather, "I'd like to buy a harvester." Grandfather was not impressed. "And what are the poor people going to do?" he asked. The harvester remained something for the future. Responsibility for the less fortunate was part of the very fabric of society. Most of the "share-croppers" were Ukrainian but some Polish.

We were two hundred kilometres from the Russian border, Ukraine then being part of the Soviet Union, and eighty kilometres from Lvov. Ukraine, we liked to recall, had been Polish until 1793. The local school taught the first four grades but grades five to eight had to be taught at the larger school at Jeziena. I would go with the other boys from the village, in the harsh Polish winter on a large sleigh, seven of us. The school stood back some twenty yards from the road, with paving blocks in front. At ten o'clock precisely every Tuesday and Friday, you could see the Roman Catholic priest, the Greek Catholic (Ukrainian) priest, and the local rabbi walk purposefully to the school. According to our religious persuasion we would be taught in separate classes from ten o'clock until twelve.

Eighth grade completed, it was time to move on to technical school at Tarnopol, working with metal and wood in addition to continuing with the subjects we had studied previously. I was sixteen and had just started my second year. It was September 1939. Hitler and Stalin were in alliance. Suddenly the Russians poured over the border. I remember watching the tanks come in, not using the road, but straight over the fields. Our land was mainly arable so there was nothing to stop them. I just stood and watched. We were devastated. My father had fought the Russians between 1918 and 1921 and couldn't believe this was happening all over again in his lifetime. We didn't know it then but this war service was to take on a sinister significance for us all.

At Tarnopol everything changed in an instant. Russian became the language of instruction. History and geography took on a Marxist slant. Religion was wiped from the syllabus. The Polish government sent what units it could out of the country, naval, military and air force. There was some token resistance but it was sporadic. What could Polish cavalry do against Russian tanks? Resistance was futile. Germany and Russia celebrated with a grand parade in the city of Lublin, German troops first, the Russians bringing up the rear. Living, as we did, near the railway line I could see the trains coming out of Russia travelling west, loaded with oil and wood for the German war machine.

Clearly there was little point in remaining at school. When I went to the station on the Friday night I couldn't get a ticket, the train was already packed but I jumped the train as it left the station. It would be my last day at Tarnopol. Jews were moving east from the German sphere of influence toward the relative safety of the Russian border. Many were exhausted and spent the night sleeping at our house before moving on. They travelled by horse and cart,

by train or simply on foot. The Lvov road was choked with fugitives. There would be another exodus in June 1941 even deeper into Stalin's Russia to avoid Hitler. Having left school I worked on the farm.

## **2 In transit**

February 10th 1940. It was four o'clock in the morning. We were woken by a knock on the door. A Soviet officer and two soldiers with rifles and bayonets, also the local policeman with a red band on his arm and a rifle. "Hands up," in Russian. Someone had given the authorities a dossier on us detailing my father's previous war service. Later we had our suspicions and felt our betrayers had designs on our land. We had befriended them in good times and perhaps been too open with them. Nothing was ever proved. From an official point of view, too, we were uncomfortable people: we were of some note in village life and like almost all Poles had steadfastly refused to join the Communist party. I had organised the Young Eagles, rather like the Boy Scouts while my mother was prominent in several local organisations. "Get ready, you're leaving," said the officer. My father asked why. You are "vrag naroda" an enemy of the people, he was told.

We were given half an hour to leave and loaded on to a sleigh. It was February, the height of winter, and we were locked up with some sixty or more others in a cattle waggon at Jeziena station. The lavatory, if you can call it that, was a hole in the floor and there was a belly stove in each waggon. Mikola had rushed to Grandfather to tell him what had happened and the family organised a desperate rush to the station with extra food and blankets. The Russian soldier on guard refused to allow the waggon door to be opened, but after some frantic pleading the officer in charge told him to open the door and allow the goods to be passed in. It almost certainly saved our lives. The blankets were desperately needed: the sides of the waggon were two inch boards but otherwise there was no protection from the weather and little or no food. The steam locomotive pulling the waggons stopped periodically and a soldier would beat on the sides of the waggon to ask if there were any dead. There often were; children and the elderly being the most vulnerable. When the train stopped for water or fuel someone would be allowed out to fetch boiling water from the continually boiling kiryatok that was a feature of all Russian stations. Everyone took a little but water was scarce and certainly not for washing purposes. Our family had salted ham with us. We killed two pigs over the year. Father one at Easter and Grandfather one at Christmas, shared out half a pig at each season. With no refrigeration the meat would be marinated and smoked. In better days I could remember going up the loft ladder to cut a slice of ham, taking some bread, then out into the garden for a clove of young garlic. Being rather better equipped than most we shared our meagre rations as best we could.

## **3 Siberia**

It was the 28th March and we had been travelling since the 10th of February. Siberia is vast and we were beginning to realise just how vast. At last we were released from the waggon. Not everyone had survived but our family was intact. Now it was to be open trucks. Smoke was already rising from them. On one side between the door and the loading area smoke billowed forth. Each individual truck ran on its own power, gas generated by birch chips. No, I don't understand it. I didn't understand it then, and I don't now, but it was true.



The burning birch powered the truck. Every so often we'd stop to take on more birch. Fortunately for us it was late March and, even in Siberia, a little less cold. On and on we went, my eyes smarting and sore from the birch smoke. Eventually we stopped at a village of wooden huts or cabins. The lighting in each cabin was extraordinary: a strip of pine forced into a cleft in another piece of pine. Light came from the flame but there was no respite from the smoke. The Russians were quite friendly and brought us alcoholic brajka to drink. Unfortunately it smelled like slurry from our farm despite their insistence that it was "chorosh" good. And, in no time, we were moving on. At last our destination. No cabins this time, just trees. We had to cut down the trees to build our cabins. I suppose I seemed more educated than some and I was set to mark the timber that men with horses were pulling out of the forest to float down the river.

The wood was piled up ready and my job was to record what was scrawled in pencil on the end of each piece of timber. I had a kind of pipe which I used to duplicate the original pencil mark in tar. The point, of course, was that the tar marking would remain as the timber floated downstream. The marks graded the timber. I soon realised that the markings were not always reliable. A piece of timber might be marked as good but, in fact, be hollow and hence useless for sending downstream. I could tell this by striking the end and I began to alter the marks accordingly. The foreman learned of this and I was hauled before the local NKVD official - the secret police. I explained. There was a tense moment as four of my re-marked logs were examined. Each was hollow. I don't know what happened to the foreman but I was told, "If you're that smart, you can take over as foreman". Time to reflect on the old saying, "If the fish had kept his mouth shut, he wouldn't have got a hook in it".

My new job was to reckon the cut timber by cubic metres produced by each family and it put me in a difficult position. Each family had a spartan bread ration which would be increased according to how far they exceeded their norm. I came under intense pressure from the weaker families to upstate their production to give them more bread. I really had got a hook in my mouth! Questions were being asked about missing timber, when the police chief called us in with startling news. Hitler had reneged on the Ribbentrop pact with the Soviets and invaded Russia! We would be issued with a pass to travel at will in Russia and join the Polish army. I was 16,000 cubic metres of wood short but insisted, "It's still out there in the forest, you just need to find it". Time to be off! A Polish army waggon with four horses arrived at the camp. I knew it was Polish because only Polish army waggons had four horses - even if the driver was Russian! I left my parents and would not see my mother again until the war was over.

The rest of the war is a story in itself. Czklow, Tashkent, Iran, Iraq, Palestine, North Africa, flying first Mosquitoes, then Lancasters ..... Hitler, in a strange way, had probably saved my life.

#### 4 Petworth

And so to Petworth. The war was over and I was studying aeronautics in Fulham, still technically in the Polish Air Force. My parents had come to the Polish camp in Petworth Park. I caught the train and walked to the camp. It was so long since I had seen my family. I would be married at Duncton Church and our engagement party would be at Petworth. The camp

itself I can remember only dimly, the huts of course, but I only came down at the weekends, I never actually lived in the camp. Each hut had a kitchen but the toilet unit would serve several huts.

My younger brother left for Canada and my parents would follow within a year. Polish people take easily to Canada: the climate is so similar. This is my first time back and, at 86, I find it difficult to adjust. The Petworth of the 1940s was so different: dark with dances at night. We've had a really good day, Gill Wilkinson kindly spent the morning with us, visiting Duncton Church where I was married and having a tour of the town. Then lunch at Trowels and the afternoon talking. We're due at the Sacred Heart for Mass at 5.30.

Wladyslaw Swirski was talking to Les Stringer, Kathleen and Gareth Davies and the Editor.

NB. There may be a few inaccuracies in this account of our conversation as I was unable to check with Walter before he left.

P.

## Petworth in 1791 – towards a glimpse

The following notice was reproduced in the *London Gazette* in 1790.

"An address from the Poor to the Wheat Hoarders, Farmers, Butchers, Brewers, Bakers etc on the present High Price of Provisions

*We hope, that the Bread in the price will abate*

*And Bakers remember to sell us full weight,*

*To stop our Proceedings in M\*bs for the wheat*

*Likewise that the Butcher do give some Relief*

*In the present high Price of Mutton and Beef*

*One Penny less in a gallon of small beer,*

*Fall Butter and Cheese for this Shamefully dear*

*We hope these few lines will afford us some ease*

*Or we will rise a M\*b and do as We please*

We had better be lanchd into Eternity at Once than submit to your Diabolical Imposition and starve by inches.

N.B. Any Person who shall take down this Paper may depend on being particularly Noticed, when we are assembled."

Commenting in 2006 I observed:<sup>1</sup>

"There is a definite artifice here and a curious combination of lightness and menace. Is this the work of a pauper radical with a literary bent or an educated sympathiser? The animus seems directed more against the local petty bourgeoisie than society's upper echelons. In fact

<sup>1</sup> *Petworth from 1660* (Window Press) – henceforth abbreviated as 1660.



our knowledge of Petworth in 1790 is too fragmentary to permit even the gentlest probing of the poem's background. We can say only that Petworth was no more comfortable with its poor than anywhere else."

In discussing anonymous literature of this kind<sup>2</sup> E.P. Thompson notes that the genre had a long pedigree, often shading into direct attempts at financial blackmail. This is clearly not the case here. The Petworth notice, "an eloquent rhyming manifesto"<sup>3</sup>, is unusually literate and has a detached almost mocking tone. It makes no mention of possible arson, although the threat of the mob was real enough to be taken seriously. The Gordon Riots of 1780 would be a recent memory. Originally anti-Catholic, they quickly degenerated into an orgy of looting and vandalism, an opportunity for the lower orders to vent their frustration with the acknowledged inequalities of contemporary society. Even closer in time, no one in 1790 would be unaware of events across the Channel. 1789 was a date impressed on everyone's mind. The Earl of Egremont<sup>4</sup>, nonchalant as he might appear, even in old age was still haunted by visions of 1789. Such an upheaval must never happen here.

Thompson<sup>5</sup> sees a certain formal element in notices of this kind, they function almost as a safety-valve, "an effective signal to the authorities to attempt to restrain prices, to regulate the markets, to institute subsidies or activate charities in anticipation of riot". This would help to explain the otherwise puzzling lack of reference to the upper echelons of society. There is no evidence of widespread rioting in Petworth at this time, although given the lack of information at our disposal, we have equally no evidence of palliative measures.

The *London Gazette* was no popular broadsheet. It was an official publication of government and authority.<sup>6</sup> The reporting of the Petworth incident would not be reproduced for its news value but as part of an official notice offering free pardon to anyone who would give information as to the originator of the notice, information leading to their conviction. A reward of £100 was usual. Safety-valves such notices might be, but their authors were not looked upon with any less disfavour for that. Punishment on conviction could be extreme. If the writer remained anonymous in 1790 and we have every reason to suppose that he did, we are hardly likely to penetrate that anonymity in 2009.

Writing in 2006 I had to concede that late eighteenth century Petworth seemed "beyond coherent recall"<sup>7</sup>. I had recourse to the Boddy letters,<sup>8</sup> correspondence of a Mrs Boddy, formerly of Petworth, but now living in comfortable circumstances in London. The letters are functional but highly allusive, extraordinarily vivid but often difficult to interpret, casting an uncertain light on a few people, otherwise known either marginally or not at all. A drawback in that the centre of gravity of the letters lies early in the next century rather than the 1790s.

<sup>2</sup> E.P. Thompson in *Albion's Fatal Tree* (1975). He gives the text of the notice in Appendix IV.

<sup>3</sup> Thompson page 276.

<sup>4</sup> 1660 page 124.

<sup>5</sup> Thompson page 279.

<sup>6</sup> Thompson page 255.

<sup>7</sup> 1660 page 77.

<sup>8</sup> Part of the Mullens/Harrison Archive. Courtesy of Mr C. Harrison.

Boxall —, Tay-shop	Hoad William, (F.) Malster
Boxall Richard, (F.) Farmer	Holland William, (F.) Farmer
Bradley —, Half-moon Inn	Holt Thomas, (F.) Heel-maker, and
Briggs John, (F.) Butcher	Agent to the Sun Fire-office
Brossbridge William, Farmer	Hook Henry, Gardener
Brown John, (F.) Swan Inn	Hucker John, Farmer
Caplen William, (F.) Baker	Hubert Daniel, (F.) Shoemaker
Challen Benjamin, (F.) Chandler	Hurst William, (F.) Farmer
Challen James, Shopkeeper	Hurst James, (F.) Carrier
Christinas William, Farmer	Hurst Peter, (F.) Linen-draper &c.
Clayton John, Farmer and Horse-dealer	Ireland Henry, Linen-draper
Cloodley William, Shopkeeper	Ireland Isaac, Breaches-maker & Glover
Collins William, Shoemaker	Johnson William, sen. (F.) Taylor
Combs John, (F.) Shoemaker	Johnson William, jun. Taylor
Combs George, (F.) Blacksmith	Johnson John, Clock-maker
Combs John, Blacksmith	Keen William, Proprietor of the Pet-
Cox Robert, Mason	worth Diligence
Dale William, Miller	Knight John, (F.) Farmer
Dawley Ann, Shopkeeper	Knight William, Cooper
Dearling John, (F.)	Knight —, Baker
Denyer William, Farmer	Lianott John
Dowden Jethro, Breaches-maker	Loach Joseph, Timber-viewer
Dowden Peter, Glazier	Lucas Henry, Farmer
Dugdale Mrs. Lodging-house	Ludbey William, Shoemaker
Eade Henry, (F.) Tanner	Luff Robert, Gardener
Eade Robert, Collar-maker	Luff Richard, Collar-maker
Eade —, Farmer	Luff James, Wheelwright
Earwaker Henry, Carpenter	Lutman Peter, (F.) Tallow-chandler,
Edson John, Pigmaster	Grease, &c.
Edson —	Mansfield Thomas, (F.) Carrier
Edwards Thomas, Bricklayer	Marshall Richard, (F.) Farmer
Edwards James, Glover	Martin Mary, Mantle-maker
Edwards William, Bricklayer	Mills William, (F.) Mason
Feard Michael, sen. (F.) Farmer	Mills John, Mason
Feard Michael, jun. Farmer	Mills Henry, Butcher
Foot William, Shopkeeper	Mitchell John, (F.) Carpenter
Garland Henry, (F.) Taylor	Muggeridge Arthur, Taylor
Gibbs Mary, Plumber and Glazier	Nuth Mary, (F.) Tinsmith
Golding John, Wheelwright	Newman Edward, (F.) Grocer
Golding James, Schoolmaster	Newman John, (F.) Carpenter
Golding Sarah, Bookbinder	Olbourn John, Joiner
Goodyer Richard	Olbourn Peter, Farmer
Green Thomas, (F.) Tallow-chandler	Palmer Robert, (F.) Weaver, &c.
Greenfield John, (F.) Wheelwright	Parrott Benjamin, Schoolmaster
Grevatt Thomas, Cooper	Pearcock Alice, Baker
Hall John, Mason	Pearcock John, (F.) Farmer
Hammam Thomas, (F.) Malster	Pearcock Richard, Farmer
Hampton John, (F.) Farmer	Pearson Thomas, (F.)
Hampton Francis, (F.) Farmer	Peter Edward, (F.) Butcher
Hader Jesse, Shoemaker	Phillips William, Joiner
Hearley Edward, (F.) Malster	Price Thomas, Joiner
Hearley Elizabeth, Lodging-house	Pullin William, Sexton and Clerk
Herrington George, (F.) Farmer	Puttick John, (F.) Butcher
Hew Thomas, (F.) Schoolmaster	Puttick Edward, (F.) Brewer
Hew —, Ladies Boarding-school	Randall Jeremiah, Plumber and Glazier
Hill John, Gardener and Securian	Rothwell Richard, Collar-maker
Hind William, (F.) Cooper	Ross James, Cabinet-maker
Hind Henry, (F.) Cooper	Saint William, Farmer

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Shewin

Petworth traders in 1791. The central page of the *Universal Business Directory*.  
The letter F appears to stand for freeholder.



A completely different but, in its own way, no less difficult perspective is offered by the Universal British Directory for 1791. Here, if you like, is a window on Petworth in 1791 but it is a window only, there is no door that we can open and go in by. It may well be that, somewhere, hidden in this thicket of names, is the originator of the notice. Petworth has eight shoemakers, and shoemakers, inured, as they were, to long hours of solitary work were given to introspection and introspection could give rise to "democratic" thoughts.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, of course, we could be on entirely the wrong track.

The UBD<sup>9</sup> does not actually list the Earls of Egremont amongst the Gentry who head the entry. These are followed by Clergy (Anglican only), "Physic" and legal. Then come the "traders and etc". In theory these are independent, but often, we may suppose, dependent, to some extent at least, on the great house for work or trades. Farmers form much the largest single group, but the UBD unfortunately does not offer locations so we cannot be sure how far out of Petworth the directory extends. After the shoemakers, significant traders are: Masons 7, Butchers 6, Carpenters 5, Bakers 4, Coopers 4, Blacksmiths 3, Gardeners 3, Maltsters 3 and Wheelwrights 3. I append an alphabetical list as an Appendix but one or two trades are worth a separate comment. Some are hardly trades at all more, perhaps, public service like William Slarkes, keeper of the bridewell<sup>11</sup>, or John Andrews the exciseman. Given Petworth's reputation as a clock-making centre, it is perhaps surprising to find only Messrs Johnson and Taylor, the latter noted simply as a watch-maker, but Pearson, Tribe and Edsaw, teasingly left without qualification, are well-known clockmaking names. Two peruke makers may seem a little excessive, while Mary Martin, the mantua maker will later fall on hard times and make application to Somerset Hospital.<sup>12</sup> William Keen as "proprietor" of the Petworth diligence or stage-coach may be in a reasonable line of business. We may wonder where the diligence was housed.

A few names survive into Pigot's Directory of 1826, but we may be looking at father and son relationships with both having the same Christian name. Pigot's is arranged on a rather different basis to the UBD and comparisons are untidy. Clearly some trades have continued in the family since 1791: so we have William (1791) and John Grevett, coopers, Henry and George Garland, the Market Square tailors, and possibly Benjamin Challen the tallow chandler in Golden Square. There is a similar ambiguity with Thomas Wipenny the cutler, listed in 1826 as cutler and hardware ealer, or Peter Dowden the glazier, listed in 1826 as plumber and painter. Henry Hook the gardener gives way to George Hook, gardener and seedsman, while Thomas Price, innkeeper, makes an uncertain transition to waterproof hat maker. There may simply be a coincidence of names.

In 1791 there are two stage coaches backward and forward - destination not stated, presumably London, and two road-waggons from Petworth to London every Tuesday and Friday. Significantly, perhaps, in 1826 there are still two weekday carriers to London but also separate carriers plying between Petworth, Midhurst, Guildford and Chichester. The Petworth

<sup>9</sup> Hence as UBD.

<sup>10</sup> For "democratic" used in a hostile sense see "Hooligans in North Street" PSM 11.

<sup>11</sup> Probably the new House of Correction was still in building in 1790/1791.

<sup>12</sup> PSM 26 page 31. A peruke is a scullcap covered with hair - effectively a wig. A mantua is a gown or petticoat.

of 1791 is clearly introverted, inward looking and, economically, largely self-sufficient. Contact with the outside world is mediated to an extent by the carrier - the Boddy letters are proof enough of that. By the standards of 2009, Petworth in 1826 was still very insular but there are sure signs that in the period from 1791 that insularity was being breached, very gradually, but irrevocably.

The entry for Petworth closes with a note on Petworth House which concludes by offering some observations which in the context of the time may appear a little bold:

"..... all the principal apartments are furnished with antique statues and busts, some of which are of the first-rate value; a singular circumstance attending them is, that a great many; when the late earl bought them, were complete invalids; some wanting heads, others hands, feet, noses etc. These mutilations his lordship endeavoured to supply by the application of new members, very ill-suited either in complexion or elegance of finishing to the Roman and Grecian trunks; so that, in some respects, this stately fabric gives us the idea of a large hospital or receptacle for wounded and disabled statues."

The late earl is of course, the second Earl of Egremont who died in 1763.

#### Appendix. Petworth tradesmen in 1791

Auctioneer	1	Horsedealer	1
Baker	4	(and farmer)	
Blacksmith	3	Innkeeper	1
Bookseller	1	Lodging House keeper	2
Breeches-maker	2	Maltster	3
Brewer	1	Mantua maker	1
Bricklayer	2	[Stone] Mason	7
Bridewell keeper	1	Mercer	1
Butcher	6	Miller	1
Cabinet-maker	1	Peruke maker	2
Carpenter	5	Proprietor of diligence	1
[Tallow] Chandler	3	Plumber	
Clock/Watch maker	2	Postmaster	1
Collar-maker	1	Saddler	1
Cooper	4	mistress)	3
[Linen] Draper	2	Schoolmaster)	
Exciseman	1	Sexton/Clerk	1
Farmer	23	Shoemaker	8
Gardener /Seedsman	3	Shopkeeper	4
Glazier	2	Surveyor	1
Glover	2	Tanner	1
Groom	1	Timber viewer	1
Hatter	1	Toyshop keeper	1
Heelmaker	1	Wheelwright	3
(+ Insurance Agent)			

P.





*Don Quixote releases the galley slaves. A Luther Roberts woodcut.*

## The Happy Baker of Byworth, Sussex

If you told Frederick Thomas Henry Shoubridge—only baker in the tiny (population 200) village of Byworth, West Sussex—that he was today something of a unique survival from, and link with, the past, it is very doubtful whether the comment would be fully appreciated.

For, at 70 years of age (he has just started to draw his Old Age pension), he is quite unaware of anything very unusual about himself or his minute 13th century bakery. He is, in fact, a happy craftsman baker, turning out his six sacks of bread a week in his lean-to bakery, with very little in the way of mechanical or other assistance, and not overmuch concern for what goes on in the greater world outside.

Not for him the proud boast of the miles of bread produced by thousands of employees; not for him the concern with price maintenance; not for him the worry and fret of trade politics; not for him the common cares of his contemporaries.

His main concern is with the rheumatism which affects his craftsman's hands, and with the fact that there is no successor on the horizon to follow him in his silent, uncomplaining public service, which has lasted for over a quarter of a century.

And, indeed, he has not much to complain about today.

His sackage, plus the groceries and confectionery which he sells, plus his Old Age pension, enable him to live in modest comfort. His home is equipped with almost all that a man can desire, whilst the years of habit have accustomed him to his daily 4 a.m. rising (1 a.m. on Friday nights).

One small cloud on the horizon is the cost and availability of faggots—now prices at £3 a 100—which means that he is no longer able to obtain his essential fuel from the local farms. Nevertheless, the cost of firing his oven is still only 7d. for a batch of approximately 100 loaves, although it is not so long since the cost was only a penny. Yet it is still true to say that more modern methods of firing would cost him a great deal more, and maybe that is one reason why he is still a happy baker!

Overheads, in fact, are not of all that importance to a man who is paying £30 a year rent for his half-timbered residence, shop and bakery, not to mention quite a parcel of land and garage for two vehicles.

Nearby Petworth—a much larger village (pop. 2,729)—at one time boasted of four bakers, but has only one today. But demand for his product is no problem to Mr. Shoubridge for every loaf he bakes—and his output is supplemented by bread bought in from a Worthing baker—has a ready-made customer. Indeed, he maintains a three-day-a-week van delivery service extending to places with a 25-mile radius of the village.

Life, then, is comfortable for Byworth's happy baker. Despite its minuteness, the village has all main services. No longer has water to be drawn from nearby Spring Copse. Almost under the shadow of the South Downs, television brings to Mr. and Mrs. Shoubridge the latest in news and entertainment. Their car enables them to explore the surrounding beautiful Sussex countryside and seaside, to the extent that they are now running short of new places to explore.

And they are blessed with young company in the person of their niece, Joy, who combines



the responsibility of shop manageress, cake decorator and bakery assistant in one sturdy frame.

Before he became a master baker, Croydon-born Mr. Shoubridge worked at Whittings of Horsham and saw service in the 1914-1918 war. And he worked for his predecessor at Byworth, too, before eventually taking over the business 25 years ago.

The building itself in which the Shoubridges live, work and have their being—scheduled as an Ancient Monument—has interesting associations. Before two of the three cottages were thrown into one the Shoubridges' predecessors lived and traded in the one tiny building. They even had to draw a curtain between themselves and their customers when they took their meals—in the shop! Killing pigs, curing their bacon, rendering down the lard; all these were periodical ancillary activities which, however, the Shoubridges have not continued.

Celebration cakes for weddings, Christmas and similar festivities—even if perhaps they are not strictly in conformity with present-day decorative standards—are the responsibility of niece Joy who although she has never had a piping lesson in her life, is nevertheless successful in producing cakes which are both attractive and saleable.

Have we left the impression that Mr. Shoubridge is anachronistic in these days of plant bakeries and production engineers? Perhaps he is. But his customers don't seem to think so, and that includes nearby Coates Castle, whose Friday order is for 11 loaves.

And we didn't think so, as we drove away from this West Sussex hamlet, warmed on a chilly winter's day by contact with a man who thinks more of his craftsmanship than of his overheads and who, notwithstanding, makes a comfortable living from the traditional skill of his hands.

There's only one sad thought to bear away with the crusty cottage loaf and the flavoursome sandwich tin; the pity that, as yet, there's no up-and-coming young man to carry on and develop, with the skill of his hands for the satisfaction of a job well done, the tradition of the happy village baker.

This article appeared in the January 1961 issue of *The Baker*.

## Answers to West Sussex Downs and Villages Quiz

- |                |               |              |                 |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. East Dean   | 10. Barnham   | 19. Goodwood | 28. Patching    |
| 2. Bury        | 11. Bignor    | 20. Cowfold  | 29. Bucks Green |
| 3. Upperton    | 12. Kirdford  | 21. Ford     | 30. Poling.     |
| 4. Northchapel | 13. Compton   | 22. Didling  | 31. Selham      |
| 5. Goring      | 14. Singleton | 23. Coolham  | 32. Warnham     |
| 6. Petworth    | 15. Henfield  | 24. Eartham  | 33. Yapton      |
| 7. Rogate      | 16. Charlton  | 25. Duncton  | 34. Stopham     |
| 8. Clapham     | 17. Halnaker  | 26. Lancing  | 35. Pulborough  |
| 9. Crawley     | 18. Coates    | 27. Loxwood  |                 |



