THE PETWORTH SOCIETY *magazine*

NO. 72. JUNE 1993
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Contents

The wood-engraving on the front cover is by Gwenda Morgan and illustrates Gray's Elegy. That on the back is of Egdean church.

Designed by Jonathan Newdick

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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.

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Chairman's Notes

Just a brief note this quarter. The new format for the Magazine seems to have been generally welcomed. There are more words to a page now so we may have marginally less pages. There remains however a great deal to fit in! Most activities over the last quarter are covered by special reports, but I need to mention here the usual litter clear-up on the first Sunday in April and particularly the visit to Petworth House in March. Well over a hundred members were there and it was a chance to see the House at leisure including the refurbished North Callery, also of course to walk in the Pleasure Grounds at daffodil time. Our thanks to Dr. Diana Owen, the new administrator, and her staff for entertaining us, giving us tea, and making everyone so welcome. We all know the difficulties over "bypass" and relief routes, but there remains and there has been for some years a great wish by the Trust to mend relations. It is a long process but a rewarding one and Petworth can only benefit from a continuing and growing dialogue.

What else? The monthly meetings have been very full; sometimes requiring the gallery at the Leconfield Hall as an outlet. The walks and visits you will find described. A party of 40 will go to Toronto in September as guests of the Toronto Scottish Regiment. I am not myself making the trip but am very pleased to leave the party in the capable charge of Anne Simmons. The Bath trip in early May is fully booked but, of course, still to come as I write. There will be a report in the next issue.

Peter *1st May 1993*

P.S. I am sorry there is probably no room in this crowded Magazine for the second part of "George Garland's early days". This is to follow in the September issue.

Leconfield Hall Report

Nearly six months already since my first report on the restoration of the hall - now to be known as the Leconfield Hall and not as formerly Leconfield Memorial Hall.

The first aid work has been completed and we are extremely grateful for the generous assistance we have had so far from Lord Egremont and the Estate, from the Department of the Environment, West Sussex County Council and Chichester District Council. Chichester's Planning and Leisure & Tourism Committees both contributed.

In February after submissions from five firms with special expertise in restoration work, we appointed Purcel Miller Tritton of Winchester as architects. They are architects to both Chichester and Winchester Cathedrals. Mr Gary Seymour has now prepared his proposals and

estimate of cost which is now with English Heritage and the two Local Authorities. Mr Seymour considers that much of the first aid work we have already done will suffice in the long term: so fortunately his estimate is appreciably lower than mine. By July we should know whether grants will be sufficient, together with our own funds and what we can realise locally, to complete what we have started and then to think about improving the interior. We shall shortly be announcing a series of special events in the Hall which will extend the range of uses - and raise funds for restoration. Not that it is under-used. Owen Bridger, caretaker since it was converted nearly forty years ago, estimates that if we had a turnstile at the entrance it would register 25,000 in a single year!

The magnificent baroque bust of William III, which was removed to the safety of Petworth House a few years ago, is being copied. Lord Egremont has commissioned Michael Major, a sculptor specialising in this work, to make a replica. He had already done similar work for me in London when a Roman statue was found below one of my buildings in Moorgate, London. The "negative" has already been made in Petworth House and the "positive" is now being cast in white stone aggregate and resin, lighter and more weather resistant than the marble original which can of course still be seen below the great staircase in Petworth House.

The finished work will be placed in the niche on the north facade of the hall and will be unveiled by Lord Egremont immediately before the Annual General Meeting at 7.00 on 24th June. Members of the Society will be welcome to attend this event, though only residents of Petworth may vote at the AGM.

Raymond Harris

FOR "SUPPORT THE HALL" - LECONFIELD HALL SATURDAY EVENINGS
See ACTIVITIES SHEET. Beginning with "What a Performance!" August 28th.

Mystery Photograph

Connie Bayley wonders if anyone knows this rather distinctive house - possibly in the Loxwood-Wisborough Green area.

The mystery photgraph in the last issue was of Littlecote House not long before it was demolished.

Peter.

Don't You Believe It!

[In which your dilatory Editor is suitably admonished by an alert reader!]

Railway Pudding Magazine No.71

Railway pudding a long forgotten recipe - don't you believe it!

This was a regular pudding in my childhood in London (I was born in 1909) and is still made frequently by myself and by my married sister. Cut into strips 4" long by 1 1/2-2" wide before bringing to the table, we serve it with stewed fruit rather than with jam. The hand written recipe I have suggests suet (not that we ever used this) as a possible alternative to butter or good dripping; needless to say, during and after World War I butter was replaced by margarine. Railway pudding stores quite well in a tin and is a useful snack.

Yours sincerely,

Miss W.E. Adams.

Toads 1993 London Road

Following our successful experiments last year a party of volunteers erected the toad fence on Sunday 7 February 1993.

As January had been so wet and mild a number of toads had been moving already and some had been hit.

However February and most of March were dry with quite cold nights so the movement slowed considerably.

A team of helpers covered every suitable evening and up to the 13th April almost 1200 toads were safely taken and released into the park. The greatest number were on the 3 nights of 15th, 16th and 17th of March when 726 were found.

Obviously this will vary from year to year depending on suitable weather, damp warm evenings being the best.

Talks are now taking place with the National Trust to try to get a permanent barrier and one or two tunnels under the road so that the need for manning every night is unnecessary.

My grateful thanks to all those who risked life and limb in often inclement weather and sometimes didn't even find one toad.

David Sneller

A request for help

Diana Owen, the National Trust administrator at Petworth House is very anxious to find any additional pictorial information on the old kitchen at Petworth House. You will recall Mrs Digby's apparently unique photograph in the last issue. Has anyone anything similar or has anyone any recollection at all of those who once worked in the kitchens? Please write to Dr. Owen at the House or simply ring 0798 - 42208.

Peter

Your help please

As from
25 Park Lane,
COWPLAIN,
WATERLOOVILLE,
Hants. PO8 8AD.

Mr. D.N. Goble writes:
I am researching the history of the Bedfordshire Regiment and am looking into the history of a Petworth man who served during the First World. He was
John W. Boxall
who served in the following regiments:-

32965 Bedfordshire Regiment
winning a Military Medal (London Gazette 28-1-1918)
72794 Royal Army Medical Corps
6078493 Royal West Surrey Regiment
and Corps of Military Police.

He must have been in the army for at least eighteen years as he was awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

It is believed that around 1953 he was employed by the United Services Club in Portsmouth.

Any details of his service, family - general details, death and burial would be most helpful. All information would be kept in the strictest confidence.

John and Gloria's Valentine Day's Walk

A group of 34 members with 4 dogs of different sizes left Petworth Car Park en route to the Grange Centre, Midhurst where some members donned their boots for the 4 mile walk. We set off around South Pond where they are dredging the pond for silt, Edinburgh Square to St. Ann's Hill where work is in progress clearing the site to uncover the remains of an 11th Century Fortress first occupied by a Norman Lord named Savaric Fitzcane. Up onto King John's Walk with a view of the River Rother, Cowdray ruins and Polo Ground. From there on a clear day one can see the King Edward VII Hospital. We carried onto Balls Barn Farm, where towards the end of the footpath Cowdray House came into view. We came out onto the Stedham Road crossing Coster's Brook up into a plantation and down to Costers Mill Cottages, the Mill ceased

operation in the 1930's and the equipment is now down at the Singleton Museum. From there the walk proceeded into the pretty village of West Lavington passing the Church and Primary School to Highstanding Lane through a field to the Wharf and back to South Pond and Grange Car Park.

G.P.

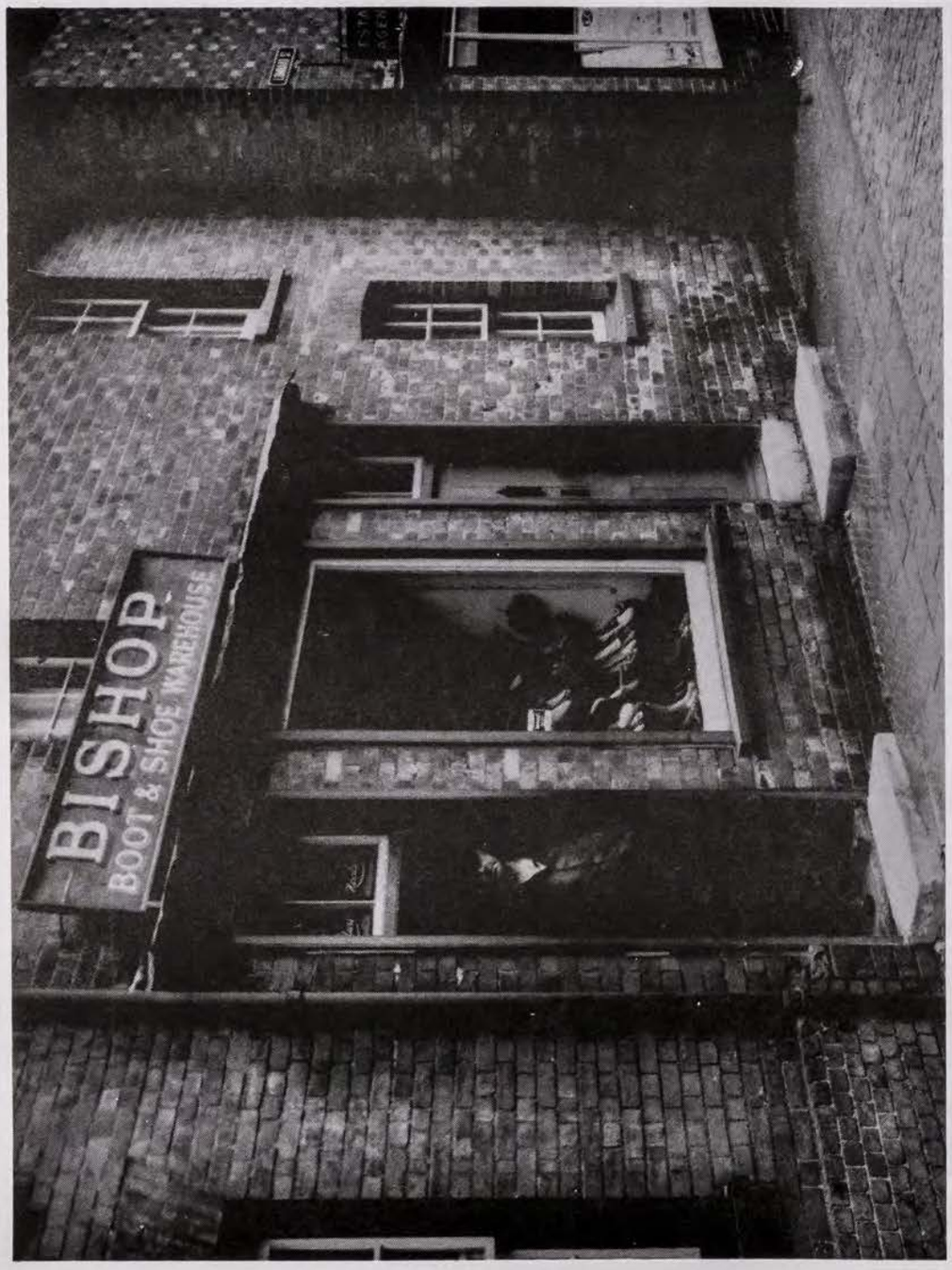
David and Linda's early Spring Walk

It was a marvellous day. Too many to count in the Car Park, certainly fifty not counting the dogs. By car to the Gog. It's still eerie up there when one remembers the woods as they were before the great storm. A lunar landscape one would almost think. On a superficial view it's as if Coates Common had been transplanted to Brinksole. Silver birch is beginning to colonise but regeneration remains slow. The bracken at this early stage of the year was a uniform desiccated winter brown. Down first into the Gog woods, skirting the Lodges, a look at the famous view to Petworth Rectory, Park and House, then to see the dog's grave, a miraculous survivor of the great storm - Zeke, something of a mascot for encamped Canadians in the darkest days of the war, had been run over by a dispatch rider. The brown, round-edged stone's rough inscription is still legible and the grave is still tended. It seems further along the ride now than it was but that just shows how difficult it is to find one's bearings now in this "treeless wood". Along the rides past Monument Cottage and Montpelier to come out on Kingspit Lane. A brief look across to the Brinksole woodman's cottage where Florence Rapley had so often visited her cousin Ellen Stenning some eighty years or more ago. The position the same, the cottage apparently rebuilt. There had been a roadside pond there then. Into Flexham Park to turn sharp right, skirting the quarries. There were two new trout ponds and the site of the old "bone" mill. We supposed the bone was ground for fertilizer. Little now to recall it, a wall going nowhere, a gate and the alignment of the road just as in the photograph we had.

Then into Little Bognor. A look at the garden of the old water mill. Last used in 1895 announced a shining brass plaque. The streamside garden was ablaze with daffodil and leopard's bane and we admired a majestic dark pink hellebore. So much to see in the friendly March sunshine. Back across the fields to River Hill and through the woods to Kingspit Lane. A really good walk on a lovely day.

P.

Lombard Street in the 1920s. Photograph by G.G. Garland.
(See "The loss of Petworth Spire.")



"My favourite tradesman..." Charlie Bishop in Lombard Street. Photograph by G.G. Garland. (See "Hold it up and you'll hear it tick.")

Visit to Frith Hill and Frith Lodge

The Jekyll lecture had put everyone's minds in the direction of garden planning so it was no surprise that the numbers required the party being split into two, roughly fifty in each, perhaps more. We had as, it turned out, walked past here with Riley on a relentlessly wet day, Riley pointing the houses out as we trudged on in the rain. On that occasion we'd come up the track from Wet Wood but this time we came up in cars from Pipers Lane. Ann Bradley had warned us it was a long way up and it was. We parked in a lush green meadow with, in the distance, the lake at Shillinglee gleaming in the rather watery sun.

Frith Lodge, the "smaller" of the two gardens was green - spring green, and the dominant flower colour at this early season was the blue of forget-me-not, intensified by the dull atmosphere. Rabbits were a problem said Mr Cridland, or, at least, they had been. The whole boundary was sturdily netted. The two cottages were right on the Leconfield-Shillinglee boundary . No, the garden was not greatly influenced by Jekyll. The box hedges were two years old, clipped at the side last year but due for top-clipping this year. All sorts of interest here and not what I would call a "small" garden. Tulips in natural grass, a hedge of hornbeam trained to wire, a venerable pig sty now used as a shed. There was ferns already incurling through the brick base and thrift and alchemilla too. I liked a very distinctive euphorbia with a red eye, a white valerian too.

Mr and Mrs Warne's garden was in fact four, and impossible to do justice to in such a brief space. Just impressions: the huge border by the high wall would be a riot of summer colour plenty of scope for Jekyll-type planing here. The white garden was still to come of course. A bed for Queen of the Night tulips in full bloom, fritillaries in the high grass. Squirrels were partial to these we were told. We spent ages in the herb garden, trying to identify plants - bergamot, lemon balm, lad's love, native cranesbills, someone would have a suggestion for most of them. Galega or Goat's Rue with its upright smooth foliage defeated everyone until Mrs Warne came to the rescue. A bed of Rosa rugosa would be a mass of bloom later - the "thunderbox" looked out over the clouded fields. Here's another chance: and that's not all, there are all sorts of things to buy on June 10th and coffee and lunch if you want it.

P.

FRITH HILL

NORTHCHAPEL · PETWORTH

Thursday 10th June

from 10a.m. until 4p.m.

ON VIEW:

Walled Gardens with:
Herbaceous Borders, Shrubberies,
Old Fashioned Roses & Arbour, Herb Garden,
White Garden & Gazebo

Entrance: £1.50

ALL PROCEEDS TO CYSTIC FIBROSIS RESEARCH TRUST

Open under the National Gardens Scheme 12th/13th June 2-6p.m.

The development of the English Garden

Jennie Hook, garden designer and ex-Secretary of the Garden History Society, giving an illustrated lecture on the development of the English Garden, described gardening as the only living art form. Ann Bradley's decoration of the stage with garden tools, furniture and flowers provided a perfect background for another expert presentation.

The Roman occupation brought political stability, leisure time and the first pleasure gardening, at least for the better-off, with hedges and fences necessary only to keep animals out. With unsettled conditions following the departure of the Romans, gardens, chiefly growing herbs, became confined within castle walls. As life became more peaceful again, self-sufficient monasteries were established in fertile valleys, growing food for the residents and travellers. In medieval times, gardens were established outside castle walls, with fruit trees and rectangular beds 3 feet wide to facilitate attention from both sides. Larger gardens became popular as the monarchs toured the country (notably Elizabeth I), both for pleasure and to provide the vast amounts of fruit and vegetables the entourage needed. Very few Tudor gardens survive to the present day, although some have been reconstructed. They featured evergreens, water and fountains, viewpoints (claire voyez), wide gravel paths and "knots" - often replaced with lawns in Victorian times with the invention of the lawnmower in 1848. Much of the Tudor garden

architecture was in wood, hence its poor survival record, but Montacute House has stone Italian features. When Charles II returned home after the Civil War, he brought ideas from France, replacing the regular geometry of the "knots" with the swirls of the parterre. William and Mary introduced Dutch influence. They went to the Kensington firm of London and Wise to plant up Hampton Court. The same company also provided the plants for Petworth House. Upon her succession, Queen Anne called them back to remove much of the planting. The Grand Tour now became an accepted part of the education of rich young men and so gardens came under Italian influence, with mock ruins and follies and a growing informality. Evidence for the appearance of gardens at this time can be gained from the backgrounds in portraits and in embroidery.

We were treated to slides of Stourhead, created by an educated amateur, Petworth, the most perfect Brown landscape, Bowood, where Repton brought the garden back up to the house, Alton Towers with immaculately maintained gardens behind the theme park, with Indian, Chinese and Japanese features; the rock garden at Oxburgh and a mysterious Chinese garden at Biddulph Grange, with its illusions of extending over a much larger area.

Referring to the cottage gardens, Jennie spoke of their establishment in the Tudor period, when they were large and very efficient in ensuring succession and re-cycling. With the Enclosure Acts and the Industrial Revolution they became reduced in size, but eventually, fashionable, which all started with the Mangels inviting Gertrude Jekyll, the gardener, and Edwin Lutyens, the architect, to tea among the rhododendrons at Lutterworth Cross, Farnham. Further popularised by Helen Allingham, the painter, the results are still to be seen at Hidcote, Sissinghurst, Denmans and Great Dixter - camellias, rhododendrons, woodland, daring planting in herbaceous borders and "wild gardens" evolving in today's environmentally-conscious climate. England is now a living museum of plants from all over the world.

K.C.T.

Frederick Arnold - Petworth's happy scholar

There must have been many motives in the minds of the 95-strong audience for Dr. Nick. Sturt's lecture on the life and work of the Revd. Frederick Arnold - interest in local history or wild flowers, puzzlement, curiosity or, as always, the assurance of a good evening out among friends and the prospect of some excellent colour slides of flora and the locality. All must have been well-satisfied on all accounts.

Born in the old Post Office in Market Square in 1831, a son of the Postmaster and (for 64 years!) Parish Church organist George Frederick Handel Arnold, Frederick Arnold came under the influence of the famous Revd. Thomas Sockett, a family friend and his tutor. With qualifications from Trinity College, Dublin, he taught for a while at Chichester Choir School and then, on ordination became curate at Barlavington, whilst still living in the Cathedral Close at Chichester. His wife whom he married in 1855, came from Durbans Farm, Wisborough Green and had worked for the family in the Post Office. He was installed as Rector of Apuldram in 1861 on the day that the Chichester Cathedral spire collapsed, a coincidence he remarked upon at the time. He moved from Chicheter to West Ashling, becoming Rector of Racton in 1865, holding the living until he died in 1906. The Arnold family remained influential in Petworth until recently. Frederick's nephew had a printing and stationer's business in Middle Street, now part of the Card Shop, and his daughters, the Misses Arnold, are still remembered.

It appears that a century or so ago, clergymen had time to devote to their hobbies and in 1863 Arnold was giving lectures which were later published as his History of Petworth. 1887 saw the publication of the first Flora of Sussex, the product of his own excursions and reports from fellow botanists, including Thomas Sockett's son, Henry, Rector of Sutton.

In his research, Dr. Sturt has followed in Arnold's footprints around Sussex, looking for the plants mentioned in t he Flora. On Petworth's walls he has found the Petworth plant, thick-leaved stonecrop, with only one other site reported in Sussex. He found more plants in Rosemary Lane, at the Virgin Mary Spring, Hilliers (daffodils, of course) and Gore Hill (corn marigolds). In Petworth Park, the fringed yellow waterlily and autumn ladies tresses, but no longer, sadly, the monkey orchid. Ferns in Hungers Lane and, at Rotherbridge, purple loosestrife, the common yellow waterlily and flowering rush. On Duncton Common, sweet gale has probably gone, with bog orchid and marsh gentian. On Chichester's East Walls, a rare hawkweed and the familiar red valerian, although constant restoration work makes it difficult for plants to become established. At Fishbourne Marsh, southern marsh orchid, water whorl grass, water avens, English scurvy grass, sea milkwort, long-bracted saltmarsh sedge and a blue form of scarlet pimpernel (now to be found at Graffham). At West Ashling, tussock sedge, alder and a hybrid water avens. At Funtington, rusty back fern.

We were fascinated by Nick's descriptions of the ingenious devices employed by orchids to ensure their pollination by flies and shared his excitement at finding plants mentioned by Arnold still thriving on their reported sites, but the marsh helleborine on Funtington Common had not survived: instead modern gravel workings that supported thousands of spotted orchids. Unhappily, thrill turned to disappointment two years later when the area became a land-fill site and they were buried beneath builders' rubble. In all, over 30 species now appear to be lost in the whole of Sussex, victims of disappearing downland pasture, woodland, heath and flower meadows, together with building and road construction and the lowering of the water table. Graveyards remain as wild flower refuges, and the last picture, of wild sage (clary), a plant of religious significance, flowering in Racton churchyard today, typified Arnold the botanist and Arnold the churchman.

KCT

Heyshott Down Nature Reserve

We enjoyed yet another informative and congenial evening when Mr. Simon Thomas, full-time warden of the Heyshott Down Nature Reserve spoke about his work. The Reserve, covering about 100 acres, was set up by the now 2,500-strong Society of Sussex Downsmen in 1923 to protect rare lichens and mosses. With the wider present aim of encouraging management of sensitive areas with a wide range of rare species, there are now four sites - three of special scientific interest, including 50 acres of north-facing scarp and 10 acres on the crest, and one of archeological importance. There is also close co-operation with Graffham Downland Trust and other conservation groups join in, with grant aid from English Heritage.

Coppicing, pollarding and the creation of permanent glades provide different habitats for plants, birds, insects and the rare hazel dormouse. Coppicing on two rotations of 8 and 15 years ensures that at no stage is a total environment destroyed. The first cut allows light back in, resulting in a great surge of flowering plants, but as the trees grow up again, different plants in turn become dominant or dormant as seeds or roots. The wood removed from the cants is sold as thatching spars, hurdle stakes or firewood, measured in cords 8' x 4' x 4' and removed from site by heavy horses from the Weald & Dowland Museum. Pollarding at a height of 9' was originally introduced to avoid deer grazing on foliage, but the trunks also provide homes for many animals. In the over-mature woodland, fallen timber is left for the insect life. Attempts to control deer with electric fencing are not entirely successful.

A flock of 11 Southdown wethers helps to maintain the unimproved downland grass and scrub, boosted by 6 ewes on loan from the Weald & Downland Museum. It is hoped to increase the flock of sheep to 21. Here there can be over 30 species of plants per square metre.

Slides of many flowers followed, with comments on aspects of their importance and interest: spurge laurel - the earliest to flower; the unfairly-named stinking iris; ladies bedstraw - host to the bloody-nosed beetle; round-headed rampion - the emblem of the Sussex Downsmen, which has increased from 40 to 160 plants since the introduction of grazing; viper's bugloss - well-adapted to harsh conditions; adder's tongue fern - up from 80 to 200 plants; 15 species of orchid, including common twayblade, fly orchid, greater butterfly orchid - reappearing after 30 years' absence and increasing as a result of hand-weeding, the white helleborine or egg orchid, bird's nest orchid, musk orchid - over 1,200 specimens spreading vegetatively. And then the butterflies: the speckled wood in the over-mature woodland; the small heath, which has decreased since grazing; the common blue on unimproved grassland; the dingy skipper and the green hairstreak, which has a wide range of plants on which it lays its eggs.

As usual, plenty of questions rewarded with answers from a matter-of-fact expert, totally dedicated to his vocation, plus another appropriate and attractive arrangement on the stage by Ann Bradley, superb refreshments by the 'Byworth Team' and an eleven-prize raffle.

KCT

The Jekyll-Lutyens Partnership

The partnership between the gardener, Gertrude Jekyll and the architect, Edwin Lutyens, was the subject of the illustrated talk given by Mr. Michael Edwards, himself a practising architect who, with his wife, is restoring a Jekyll garden at his home in Godalming.

The programme began with slides of typical West Surrey architecture, some examples of which can be found over the border in the Northchapel and Rudgwick areas. The buildings, with their tile-hanging, Bargate stone and oak framework - silver-grey, not black - were featured in Jekyll's book "Old West Surrey". At the time Lutyens was designing in an Elizabethan style influenced by Stokesay Castle, but after their first meeting over tea, the two began the partnership, he the architect, she the garden designer "painting with flowers" as she put it, at the turn of the century. She was further influenced by her visits to the gardens of France and Italy.

Lutyens designed "The Hut" for Jekyll, which she surrounded with the drifts of colour for which, 150 years after her birth, she is now so noted.."Munstead Wood" followed, the house facing the garden, not the road.

Further slides depicted borders, water features and architectural details of many subsequent commissions. Today, the Godalming Museum is being developed in Jekyll/Lutyens style: a gazebo, intricate brickwork, topiary, rose pergolas and swirling paving. A Gertrude Jekyll garden is also being constructed at Hampton Court to commemorate the 150th anniversary.

Finally, colour photocopies screened from an overhead projector, illustrated the fantastic results which can be achieved within two months of planting, which must have been a dominant factor in the demand for the services of the gifted garden designer. An audience well in excess of a hundred had enjoyed yet another informative evening with an enthusiast with practical experience of his subject, further enhanced by a typical display of plants and gardening artefacts arranged by Mrs. Ann Bradley.

K.C.T.

The Loss of Petworth Spire

I am so often asked about Petworth's church spire which was taken down in 1947. I include in this issue a classic early Garland view of Lombard Street, an inspirational poem by "C.G.F.", which I am sure echoes the views of so many, and an undated press cutting apparently coming from 1947.

The loss of Petworth Spire

On that sad day when Petworth lost its spire,
"There went", he said, "a something from the town:
That needle on the Downs would point us higher
Than church or house or field we here can own.
We saw it distant from the southern plain
Repeat the theme of spired Chichester;
Or seen from northern Blackdown's slopes again
It pointing stood; a landmark near and far."

We can but mourn the steeple that is gone,
As once the exiled Jews more deeply sad
Lamented by the streams of Babylon
And thought they ne'er would see what they had had.
We know for them another glory broke,
The Lord can speak again who once hath spoke.

C.G.F.

THE STEEPLE SHAKES

When car passes

16 STONE STEEPLEJACK
Is not enjoying this job.

Mr. William Larkins, 16-stone man who is dismantling the famous "crooked" steeple of the church at Petworth, Sussex, is not enjoying his job.

"This 125-year-old 120ft. steeple is more than crooked – it's dangerous," Mr. Larkins said to-day.

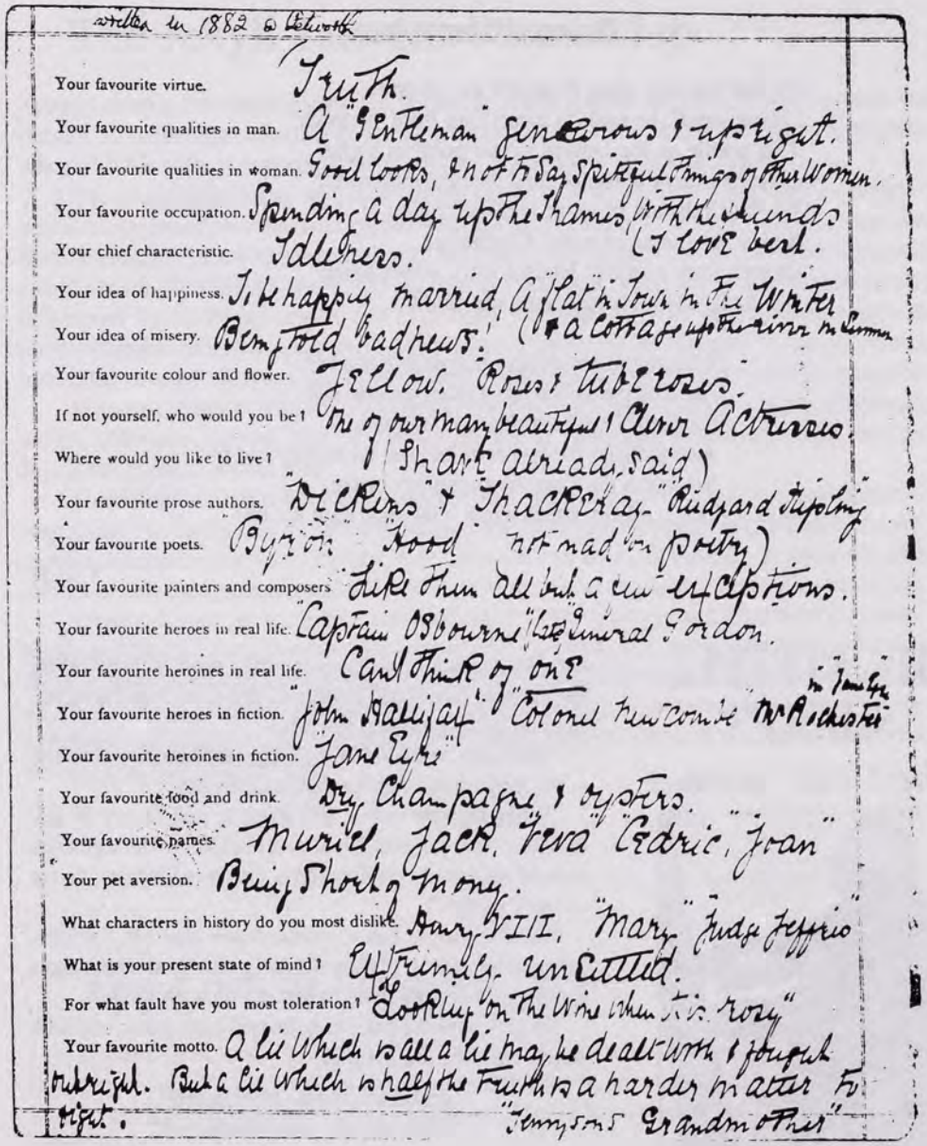
"When my two mates, Bill Keeling and Jimmy Wiles, and I are climbing our five slender ladders to the top of the steeple we notice that the whole structure vibrates if a car or lorry passes."

But the steeple has to come down and Mr. Larkins, whose two joys in life are climbing church steeples and a quiet game of dominoes, is getting on with the job.

Soon Petworth's famous spire will have gone, and with it, perhaps, the old couplet,

"Proud Petworth, poor people,
"High church, crooked steeple."

The steeplejacks complain that they are expected to work on basic ration, and when the Ministry of Labour "direction" lists were issued, they were put under the heading, "chimney sweeps."



written in 1882 at Petworth

Your favourite virtue. Truth.

Your favourite qualities in man. A "Gentleman" generous & upright.

Your favourite qualities in woman. Good looks, & not to say spiteful things of other Women.

Your favourite occupation. Spending a day upon the Thames, with the Swans

Your chief characteristic. Idleness. (I love best.

Your idea of happiness. To be happily married, a flat in Town in the Winter & a cottage upon the river in Summer

Your idea of misery. Being told bad news!

Your favourite colour and flower. Yellow. Roses & tuberoses.

If not yourself, who would you be? One of our many beautiful & clever Actresses

Where would you like to live? (Shan't afraid, said)

Your favourite prose authors. "Dickens" & Thackeray." Rudyard Kipling

Your favourite poets. Byron. Hood. not mad on poetry)

Your favourite painters and composers. Like them all but a few exceptions.

Your favourite heroes in real life. Captain Osbourne. Gen. Gordon.

Your favourite heroines in real life. Can't think of one.

Your favourite heroes in fiction. John Halifax. "Colonel Newcombe" Mr Rochester in Jane Eyre

Your favourite heroines in fiction. Jane Eyre"

Your favourite food and drink. Dry Champagne & oysters.

Your favourite names. Muriel, Jack. Vera" Cedric." Joan"

Your pet aversion. Being short of money.

What characters in history do you most dislike. Henry VIII. "Mary" Judge Jeffries"

What is your present state of mind? Extremely unsettled.

For what fault have you most toleration? "Look up on the Wine when it is rosy"

Your favourite motto. A lie which is all a lie may be dealt with & forgot. But a lie which is half the Truth is a harder matter to fight.

"Tennyson's Grandmother"

A page from a Petworth commonplace book 1882.
Courtesy of Mrs M. Clarke. Bedhampton.

Daniel Lee of Petworth and Bath: Researching the Byworth Connection

At a time when the Petworth Society is undertaking a visit to Bath, it is appropriate to recall the inscription on a tablet to be found on the wall of the parish church of Saint Mary the Virgin, Petworth, on the right, just inside the south door:

IN MEMORY OF MR DANIEL LEE, OF THE CITY OF BATH,/WHO DIED APRIL THE 8TH 1849, AGED 97 YEARS.

HE WAS A NATIVE OF THIS PARISH, AND BY HIS WILL GAVE AND BEQUEATHED/ TO THE RECTORS AND CHURCHWARDENS THEREOF, AND THEIR SUCCESSORS/ FOR THE TIME BEING, THE SUM OF SEVEN HUNDRED POUNDS, THREE PERCENT/ CONSOLIDATED ANNUITIES; UPON TRUST THAT THEY SHALL, FOREVER/ HEREAFTER, TWICE IN EACH AND EVERYEAR, PAY AND DIVIDE THE ANNUAL/ DIVIDENDS OF THE SAID SUM EQUALLY UNTO AND AMONGST THREE OF THE/ OLDEST AND MOST DESERVING POOR, EITHER MEN OR WOMEN, WHO SHALL BE/PARISHIONERS OF STROUD AND BYWORTH WITHIN THE SAID PARISH OF/ PETWORTH, AND MEMBERS OF THE ESTABLISHED PROTESTANT CHURCH.

AFTER PAYMENT OF LEGACY DUTY AND EXPENCES OF TRANSFER, THERE/ REMAIN'D A BALANCE OF SIX HUNDRED AND TWENTY THREE POUNDS/ SEVENTEEN SHILLINGS; WHICH SUM IS NOW STANDING IN THE BOOKS OF/THE BANK OF ENGLAND, IN THE NAMES OF THOMAS SOCKETT RECTOR,/THOMAS CHRIPPES AND WILLIAM COLEBROOK CHURCHWARDENS OF THIS/PARISH IN TRUST FOR THE PURPOSE DIRECTED BY THE TESTATOR.

If the facts are accurate and Daniel Lee was 97 when he died on 8 April 1849 then he was born at Petworth in 1751 or 1752. It would be interesting to know more about Daniel, his family, and about his connections with Byworth and Stroud, as well as with Bath. This short article presents some inconclusive research findings on the Byworth connection which may nevertheless be worth recording.

Reference to the International Genealogical Index for Sussex discloses the baptism of a Daniel Lee at Petworth on 22 June 1755. Apparently this is not the same Daniel Lee, since by 8 April 1849 this one would 'only' have reached the age of 93. Whether they were one and the same person or two different people, Daniel Lee (b.1751-2) and Daniel Lee (b.1755) both have a claim on the attention of historians of Byworth. In the latter case, it may only be so that his family can be elimiated from an interesting story.

Daniel Lee (1755) was the son of John and Sibella. John and Sibella (or Sibel or Isabella) seem to have had at least two other children, Mary and Elizabeth, baptised at Petworth on 29 November 1741 and 23 December 1750 respectively. John Lee married Isabella Greenfield at Chichester, All Saints, on 20 July 1735.

A marriage licence of 23 October 1771 relates to the marriage at Petworth of a Mary Lee to Thomas Hammon, both Petworth residents for 'several years'. Both were said to be aged 30. The IGI has two entries for what may be the same marriage: Mary Lee to Thomas Hammon on 24 October 1771 and Mary Lee to Thomas Hammond on 27 November 1771 (at Petworth in each case). The Mary Lee who was the daughter of John and Isabella, and the elder sister of Daniel (1755), would presumably have been just thirty at the time of the licence and the marriage. (The thirtieth anniversary of her baptism was on 29 November 1771).

In the last quarter of the C18 and the first quarter of the C19, a Thomas Hamman (or Hammon or Hammond) was a prominent member of the Byworth community. He was a farmer, with other business interests, who lived at Trofts, a house which stills stands, and the deeds of which go back to the C16. Through the kindness of Mrs Brenda Salmon of The Old Rectory Fittleworth, the present writer has obtained the information that there is a Hamman altar tomb at Fittleworth with inscriptions for Thos Hamman of Byworth and other members of his family including his wife Mary. This information is consistent with data contained in Thomas Hamman's will of 1827 (proved 24 December 1829), which is at the WSRO.

The Fittleworth MIs say Thomas Hamman died on 12 December 1829 aged 93. He was therefore born in 1736 (just possibly 1735) and in October 1771 was aged 35. His wife Mary died on 20 April 1816 aged 70. She was therefore born in 1745 or 1746 and in October 1771 was aged 25 or 26.

If the marriage licence of 23 October 1771 is accurate in stating that Thomas Hammon and Mary Lee were both aged 30 at that date, they cannot be Thomas Hamman of Byworth and his wife Mary. That Mary may not even have been a Lee.

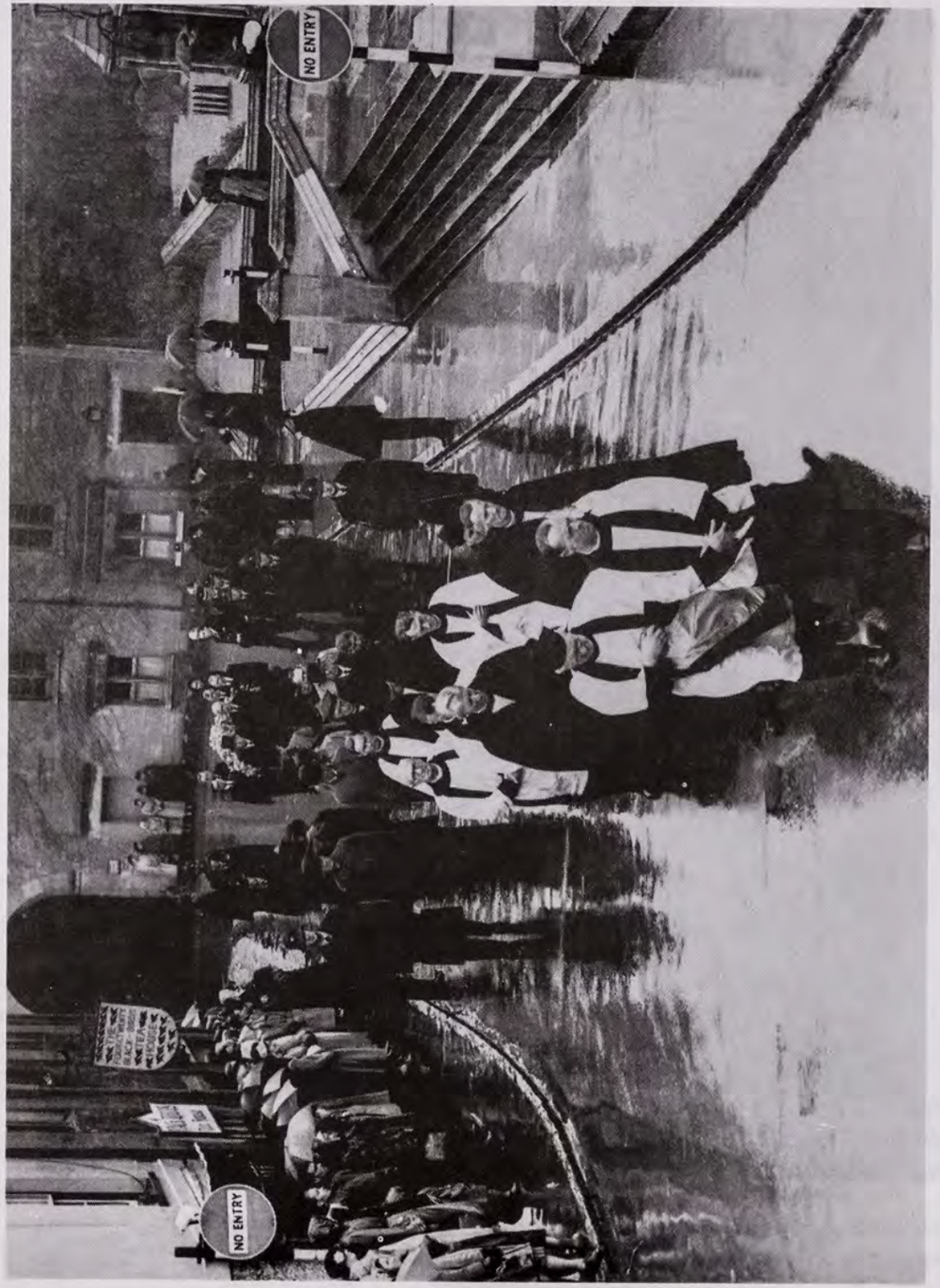
It is noteworthy that Thomas and Mary of Byworth had five children whose baptisms wee registered at Petworth, and none of these was before November 1771. The first was William, who was baptised on 7 November 1771.

It Thomas and Mary Hamman of Byworth were not the Thomas Hammon and Mary Lee in the marriage licence of 23 October 1771, it is a coincidence that they started having children baptised immediately after that date. True, a baptism on 7 November is very close to a marriage date of 24 October, and the wrong side of a marriage date of 27 November. In his will, Thomas Hamman left significant property in houses and land. However, his son William received no property: merely a weekly allowance of ten shillings for life plus a legacy of one guinea.

The complexity of the situation can now be appreciated. If Mary Hamman of Byworth was the Mary Lee of Petworth who married Thomas Hammon in October or November 1771, then the date on the marriage licence is only an approximation: she was 25 or 26 and not 30.

But if the Mary Lee in the marriage licence is the daughter or John and Isabella Lee who was baptised in 1741 the age is just right. So the conclusion seems to be that Mary Hamman of Byworth was not the Mary Lee who was engaged to be married to Thomas Hammon in October 1771. Yet by strange coincidence she did marry someone called Thomas Hamman, and they started their family in 1771.

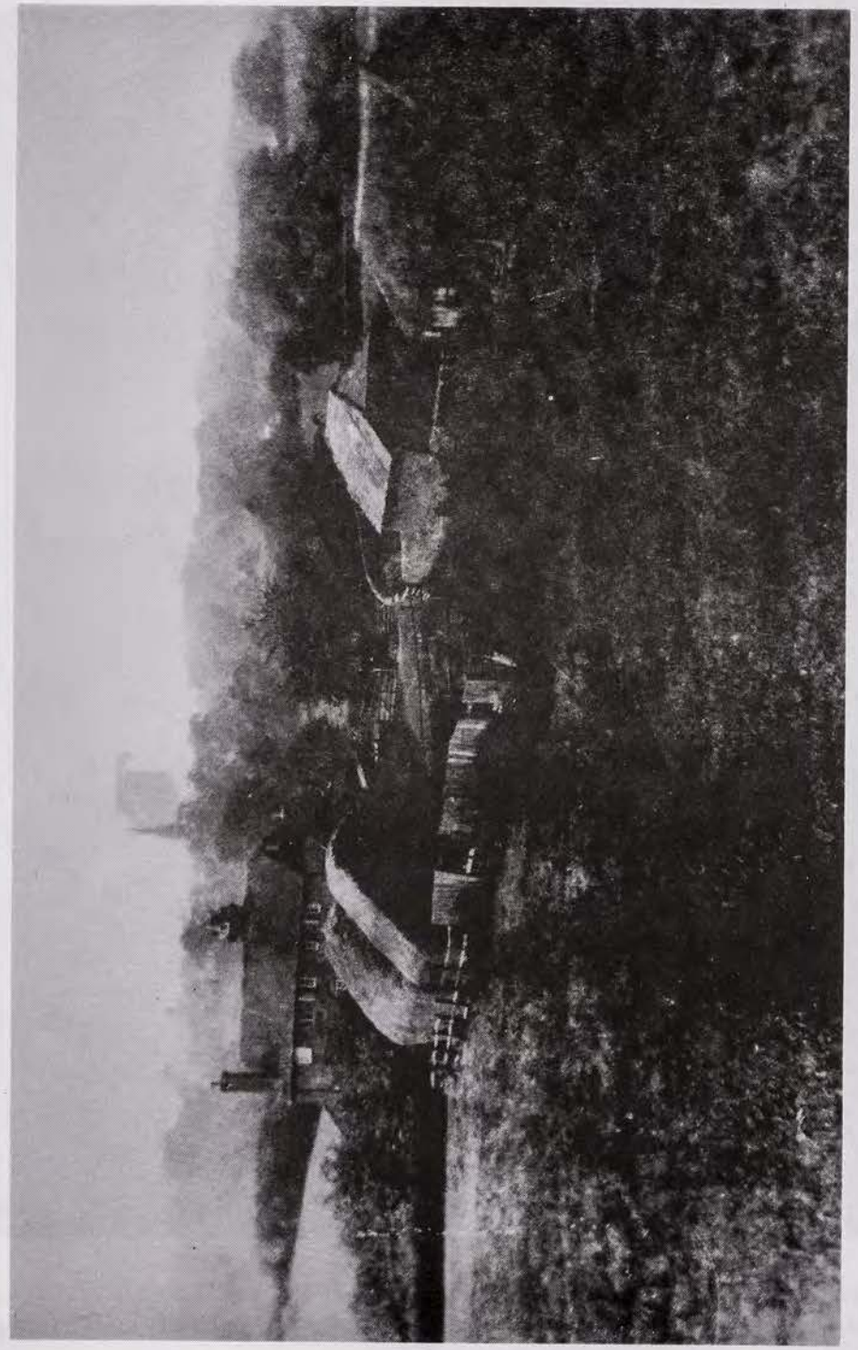
To have followed the argument thus far will have required patience, but the problems outlined here are worth solving. First, there is the interest of clarifying the history of the benefactor Daniel Lee. Then the story of Thomas Hamman of Byworth and his family also



Lord Leconfield's funeral April 1952.
Photograph by G.G. Garland. (See "Hold it up and you'll hear it tick.")

Costers Mill Farm, West Lavington February 1934.
Photograph by G.G. Garland. (See John and Gloria's Valentine's Day walk.)

Little Bognor Bone Mill c 1900
(See David and Linda's early spring walk.)



Another mystery photograph. Where is this? It should be easy.

deserves to be told. The researches of the present writer, a descendant of Thomas Hamman of Byworth, disclose numerous points of local historical interest which it is hoped to present in further articles.

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[I have often wondered about Daniel Lee as his memorial tablet is in such a prominent position in St Mary's Church. Can anyone throw any light on the Lee or Hamman families?

Ed.]

The MEACHEN family gets OLDER!!

My more recent family history studies have realised interesting links between two old Petworth families and I would very much like to hear from any member or reader who can help expand the following known connections of OLDER's with my own relatives, the MEACHENS.

George MEACHEN and Eliza STEER had a number of children including daughters Jane MEACHEN born 1835 and Bertha MEACHEN bore 1848. Bertha married James OLDER in 1869 and Jane had two children by David OLDER, who was a Police Officer with the Metropolitan Police. Their children Henry and Herbert were born in London in 1861 and 1868 respectively, but at the time of the 1871 Census were staying with their grandmother Eliza MEACHEN (nee STEER) in North Street, Petworth.

Jane and Bertha had another sister (born Petworth 1850) who may be the Emma MEACHEN from Wisborough Green who married Frederick OLDER on 4/10/1875.

The girls father (George) had a second or third cousin of Sidney K (Kinchett?) MEACHEN who in1863 married Elizabeth OLDER, born in Petworth in 1844. The 1881 Census shows them to be living in a house (also in North Street) with their children and a boarder Charles OLDER, a 71 year old widower, also born in Petworth, possibly of course Elizabeth's father. Surely some, if not all these OLDER's are related to each other and if so I think you will agree that here at least are two families that enjoyed each others company!!

My own research into these and other facts will continue but if any reader is able to assist me with any information, I would welcome learning more about the OLDER family of the period stated, or also of course any MEACHEN.

MR. G.M. MEACHEN, "LA GRANGE", CLOS DE LA HAUTEUR, MONT AU PRETRE, ST. HELIER, JERSEY JE2 3FB.

Chief Broken Eagle's Wing. Raven's Wing ... something like that

The Great American West came to Petworth one night. It must have been 1944. Pre to D-Day. Some of us recall that we had Commando's of The Royal Marines, Pioneer Corps, The Polish Air Force at Burton. Our Dog Cygan was one of them ... before He came to live with us ... The American Army and The Canadians. They all assembled for the D-Day Landings which were shortly to create that moment in Our Island History.

We were the Local Youth Group, who all were madly in Love with Our Leader ... County Organiser ... Cannot remember Her given name ... Joyce was it? ... Mrs. Parsons ... Her Husband was of a Light Infantry Regiment. There was a Miss Daniels in that hierarchy ... Cannot remember much of Her ... She was fair and attractive ... Petworth had many Lovely Gals ... When we are Sixteen ... This night we were attending The Iron Room, a Dance. Cannot remember from where The Music. Only whirling dresses, smartened Young man, Brilliantine and Perfume ... and Guests from among the assembled Armies, by special invitation only, of course. The Americans and The Canadians were not allowed into the Village on the same evening... One wonders why! I remember my stint on the door, taking the money. This Gentleman appeared at the door. He was Big as a Bear, Brown as Nutmeg with hair as Black as the Night, eyes wild, looking for trouble and quite drunk. Demanding entry. Forgetting details. Somehow we received him into the crowded room and sat him down on a chair in the corner. A Voice. One of our Guests. "That's Chief Broken Eagles Wing. Raven's Wing ... something like that. He is a full blood Crow Indian Chief out of the wilds of Montana Country. He is Dangerous. If He is liquored up ... He is real mean ... I think that I should alert the provos ... You stay clear of Him. He is our problem. We'll take care of it." We did not need telling to stay clear. I kept one eye on Him. Curiosity perhaps as much as anything. Half alarm, Joyce Parsons was approaching Him. She sat down in the chair next to Him. Began to talk to Him ... Discretion the better part of Valour ... I hung back. She talked. He seemed to listen. She stayed awhile with Him. As she left Him I summoned up such courage that I had and approached Him rather as though I was approaching a Wild Horse.

Tears streamed down the Chief's face. He was far from His Native Plains. They wouldn't serve Him any more Whisky ... said that He had had enough ... they were waving Beer glasses about ... singing "Here's to the Next Man to Die". He did not want to die. Not on some silt bedraggled rocky shore in the cold water of The Channel, downed by a cowardly sniper's bullet. What was He doing in this little Island place? Crossing the Big Lake was something of an adventure but it had palled under the lowering skies, the cold rain, the gloom. The very Storms did nothing to speak to a Man's Spirit. They came, they flashed, they went. He had walked the place that they called Park and had waited for the Thunder to roll the distant Hills. It had just rained, cold and wet. He had spoken to a noble Stag but the deer had ignored Him and carried on grazing, unconcerned.

There was a Britisher General, whose name He remembered from one of the Outpost Forts

on the Snake River when He made His four Moons Hunt. Montgomery. He had looked hard into His eyes for a long second as he had walked the ranks. "Kill the Enemy" He had said. He remembered from the days of His Childhood, the Tribe had had enemies. They had raided and harassed, stolen the cattle and whatever else they could find. They had come whooping in on ponies waving spears. It was not easy to equate this Enemy he could not see and was little more than a fierce glare in The General's eye. He did not want to kill Germans. The only Germans that He knew were a Family of Farmers down the long valley who had sheltered Him and Fed Him until a great Storm had rolled away over the distant mountain peaks of His Homelands.

I sat down beside Him. There was nothing to say. Nothing to do. Perhaps a little companionship, unspoken, might help Him.

Two burly Military Policemen came around the dancers. "Hullo Chief. Hope that they didn't fleece you with the whisky bottle again. Time to go back to Camp." ... He rose to his full height. Gave an imperious look at everyone in the crowded Hall. He looked at Joyce and raised his right hand in open palm salute. Gave me the merest of glances, and with the two Military Policemen dwarfed alongside Him, He walked out into the night.

I fear that He may have died on "Juno" beach and lies under the cross at Reviers and the waving Flags of the Monuments which declare of the thousands of Gallant Canadian, American lives which were thrown into the dreadful maelstrom of the Folly of War, where Man must Kill Man and desolate the Countryside of Places far from their Homelands. He had to be a target figure.

In the hope that, if He did not make it, His Spirit is revered in His Native Lodges. And if He returned to His Homelands and is at rest among Sons and Grandsons, or is buried on the Mountain ...

Hail to The Chief!

c

John Francis

Petworth in line and wash

You must enjoy what you paint and ideally I like to be outside painting and sketching. I've never done oils and am basically a water-colour artist. I have experimented too in acrylics, a quick-drying type of paint, not unlike ink, which has a semi-gloss finish. I've lived in Petworth for over a year now and find it's a very good area for an artist: the countryside is relatively unspoiled, the South Downs are near, and the estuaries on the coast are within an easy drive. In fact I've known Petworth for years and find it's an attractive town and very friendly.

If I'm going to do a local picture, I'll look for the right setting before I do it, that is the right vantage-point and the right time of day. An artist has to be aware of, and look for, shadow. It's shadows that give a picture depth. The artist always has an eye to the sun. The time of year is important too: not just in the obvious sense that if one is going to draw the magnolia in the National Westminster Bank garden then one will probably do the drawing when the plant is in

blossom - it's more that the light tends to be better in the summer months. As a rule of thumb I would say winter is for studio work, summer for outdoor work but it's a rule that's made to be broken.

A good example of how I work is the pen and wash of East Street that is reproduced in this Magazine. It's a picture that I'd already had sized up for some time. The recent roadworks simply gave me an unusual opportunity. The usual problem for an artist in East Street is, of course, traffic but for the period of the roadworks I had the street to myself. Quite exciting really, tucked up in a doorway, hardly noticed, half-hearing conversations going on without reference to me as I stood quietly at the side of the road. A sketch will take perhaps twenty minutes. It's done in "line" ie waterproof fibre-tip pen, just the sort of pen you can pick up anywhere. It has to be waterproof ink of course otherwise when you colour it in later with the water-colours, the water-colour "wash" would blur the lines. In certain circumstances you might want the blurred effect, in which case you'd use a water-soluble ink but it's more likely you'd want the original lines as a framework for the colour. I might make a note of colours, or simply remember them. After all I'm not looking to make an architectural drawing but to give an impression - to catch the mood not photograph it. I work quickly but that's the secret of water-colour. I always think it needs ten years of hard work before you can do a fifteen minute sketch. The appeal of water-colour is its immediacy. You can spend months on an oil, endlessly changing and rechanging until you get the effect you want but this seems to me alien to the spirit of water-colour. If you put the effort into a water-colour that you do into an oil you'd simply overdo it and destroy its basic character. You must have the confidence to be quick and you don't require the traditional large north-facing studio window because you don't need the sharp light that is needed for oils - particularly the big ones. In fact my studio faces south looking into the garden, very bright and cheery.

As I have said, while I like to experiment eg with acrylics, my basic medium is water-colour. I have a special interest in flowers and have exhibited for several years at the Society of Botanical Artists in London. I can spend a long time on the study of a cottage garden, perhaps two and a half months, but it has to be intermittent work. I am concerned above all with effects of light and colour and this is probably why flowers interest me so much. Botanical studies effectively started with the great early nineteenth century influx of plants from abroad. There was no photography so plants and flowers were painstakingly recorded in water-colour. I have done this kind of precise botanical work; there's one of a lily on the wall there, but my natural tendency is to work in a more impressionistic style.

I do take commissions for "house portraits" ie house and garden but it's important to show samples of one's work beforehand so that there is agreement about style. Artists can have completely differing styles and what will please one client will not please another. Some water-colour is simply brushwork with no lines, or you can put in a framework of lines in pencil and rub them out when you apply the wash. As I have said, this has the effect of softening the impression the picture gives. Or of course you can leave some of the original lines in. You need to do this for instance if you have things like windows and pavement edges. The less lines the softer the effect. I also do occasional "workshops". These are little classes when two or three people come for the day. We'll take a special theme for the day like "winter trees" or "skies",

or we may try out difference techniques in landscape, line and wash or portraying a summer garden.

Often I go out with my sketchbook to note down something that I happen to come across. I don't know what it will be until I see it: that's how an artists works. A sketch-book is the artist's notebook. I might have a picture of Shimmings and need a pair of riders to give it some life. Hopefully I'll have a suitable study handy in my sketch-book and incorporate it in my finished picture. I use the sketch-book to experiment too: charcoal and water-colour, pencil and water-colour or different types of pencil. Look at those apples sketched in various media, I'm quite pleased with them. I do a certain amount of still-life work. I also like to draw dolls, I have one or two colourful handmade favourites, which I often draw. It's something jolly to do on a winter's day. People like them and that's what painting's about. I produce these doll paintings as postcards, something I also do with some of my other pictures.

I held an "open house" one weekend last November and will have another this November. This year however I have an Exhibition in the Education Room at Petworth House, beginning on Saturday July 17th for about ten days and taking in two weekends. There'll be landscapes, flowers, still life, seascapes, townscapes, all sorts of pictures. Some work is framed, much is not, simply mounted. In recessionary times selling unframed means a reduction in price and, in any case, many people now like to choose their own frames. Some even like to do the framing themselves. Some half of the work, probably more, will be local. I've built up since my last "open house" in November and a good deal of the work has been produced since then. There are Petworth street scenes and a number of views of Shimmings and Petworth House and Park. There will be some experimental work too - different techniques in acrylic and ink. You must always experiment if you want to improve. There is no charge for admission. I'm very pleased to see anyone. I'm most anxious that no one feels they have to make a purchase, an Exhibition is for people to look. Prices start from £5 and plenty of postcards and prints at much less than that! I do hope you'll come and see what I've been doing!

Jan Roddick was talking to the Editor.

"Hold it up and you'll hear it tick"

My parents lived in London in the late 1940s and I was four when we came to Petworth to live at New Grove in 1951. I have a vivid memory of being brought to Petworth House to see my great-uncle Charles. He was obviously very ill and I suppose that even as a child I sensed he was about to die. He had the ground floor room that we now use as a dining-room converted into a bedroom. There was a nurse in attendance and I distinctly remember being brought in

to see my great-uncle. He had an enormous gold watch, or so it appeared to me, and he gave it to me to hold, saying, "Hold it up and you'll hear it tick." I held it up and could hear it tick just as he said. He was in his pyjamas, lying in bed. He had a red face and seemed a kindly old man. He spoke very gently to me. It was the only time I saw him for he died soon afterwards.

My parents didn't move into the big house immediately. The title had passed to Lord Leconfield's brother Hugh Wyndham, a noted antiquarian, who was married but had no children. He too was elderly by now and had already decided that he did not want to come and live at Petworth House. My own grandfather, Edward Wyndham, Lord Leconfield's next oldest brother, also declined. Both brothers gave up their right to inherit, leaving the estate in trust for my own father John Wyndham, Lord Leconfield's nephew. A lot of work needed to be done at the House; central heating in the private rooms and much else so we stayed on at new Grove for a while.

As a child I could know nothing of such matters but unbeknown to me the Leconfield Estate was passing through a crisis unparalleled in all its long history. I don't mean that it was threatened by changing attitudes, Lord Leconfield would have known better than anyone that

Lord Leconfield in the 1920s.
Photograph by G.G. Garland

the old days of implicit obedience and a huge workforce were gone forever. The Leconfield Estate could live with that. Any large estate will evolve in response to changing patterns of social thought, or fail to do so at its own peril. The problem was at once more straightforward and more directly threatening, one that cut to the Estate's very heart. It was death duties

Lord Leconfield had been a landowner on the grand scale - had it not been said that in the early century one could walk from Petworth to Shoreham and never set foot on non-Leconfield land? The route may have been circuitous but in essence the saying was true. There had been desultory selling before 1952 but never enforced selling in response to a massive capital demand.

Death duties posed the dilemma that the Estate could survive as an entity only at the cost of being partially dismantled. It is a dilemma that has haunted us ever since 1952. A slight relief was that no duty was payable on the House itself; that had been made over to the National Trust in 1947. For the rest, however, the situation was desperate. A large part of the Sussex and Cumberland estates would need to be sold and the whole of the Yorkshire estates. The price of land was low then which compounded the problem. In addition a number of pictures and much of the good furniture were given to the nation in lieu of duties. It was a watershed. In the face of such a massive financial blood-letting, the Leconfield Estate could never again be the force it had been. Commenting on its later history people so often suggest that my great-uncle would have lamented this or that. "It wouldn't have happened in Lordie's time", or "The old Lord Leconfield would have a fit if he saw what was going on". Such comments merely illustrate a misunderstanding of the crisis of 1952 and after. Nothing could ever be the same again. Great-uncle Charles was a realist. He knew that things could never be the same again, he knew that an age had gone. It is not the Leconfield Estate that lives in the past, it is those who look to transplant the situation before 1952 into the utterly changed world of today. It cannot be done. I too wish it were possible but I have to live in the real world. It is no service to my great-uncle to live out a fantasy. The old Leconfield Estate had died with him in 1952.

Hugh Leconfield died in 1963 and my grandfather Edward Wyndham became Lord Leconfield until he too died in 1967. The two brothers' forfeiture of the right to inherit had spared the Estate another set of death duties and the title passed to my father John Wyndham. In recognition of his services as private secretary to Harold Macmillan he was created Lord Egremont, technically a new title but effectively also a resuscitation of an older one which had been in abeyance since the death of the Third Early of Egremont in 1837. Yes, he could have called himself Lord Leconfield, as I can. I am Lord Leconfield as well as Lord Egremont. In practice however we have tended to use the Egremont title which is, in a way, older than Leconfield, Colonel Wyndham being created Lord Leconfield by Queen Victoria in 1859.

We continued living at New Grove for a year or more after Lord Leconfield died but most afternoons I would come up to the House to play with the marvellous train set that had belonged to Lord Leconfield's adopted children, Peter and Elizabeth. It was probably 1954 before we finally came to Petworth House to live. I certainly remember moving in and the nursery at the top of the house. I had a little room of my own and I liked that. In 1956 I would be sent to boarding school, Heatherdown near Ascot. It does not exist any more. No, I didn't dislike the idea: I quite looked forward to it, after all I would meet children of my own age. My upbringing

was in some ways more subject to what was considered appropriate than most people's. Being heir to somewhere like Petworth House imposes its own restrictions. There are things you can do in my position and things you can't. I would not say you have greater or lesser freedom of action. It is, if you like, a different kind of freedom.

Before I went to Heatherdown I had a governess, Miss Austin, who lived with her sister in Percy Terrace, while "Nanny" spent a lot of time with me as was normal in a household such as ours. "Nanny" is over eighty now but remains a family friend whom we are always pleased to welcome back here on holiday. I do not want to give the impression that life before Heatherdown was solitary. It was in no way that. My particular companions at that time were Andrew and Patricia Wales whose father was clerk of the works then, and Michael Robertson, son of the head forester, who went on to appear on children's television. It was at this time in the 1950s, either before I went to Heatherdown or during the holidays that I really got to know Petworth and was out in the town for much of my time. Not only that, but I would ride all over the Estate with Mr Barnes the groom. A real martinet he seemed to me but he certainly taught me to ride. A favourite excursion was to ride out to Stag Park, Chillinghurst and Ragham, while another was up into the Gog woods and into Flexham Park. At first it was just Mr Barnes and I, later my sister, who was four years younger, joined us. It seemed a huge age gap then, less so now of course. I think if you are as I was, "inducted" into a particular countryside at that age, the consciousness of it never leaves you and you have an awareness of, and sensitivity to, change that you could not acquire in later years.

Looking back today on Petworth in the 1950s, what strikes me most is that Petworth has lost the old feeling of being the centre of an agricultural community. It is no doubt a process which had already started between the wars. After all agriculture is no longer the major employer it once was. The town seemed more crowded in the 1950s, there was a tangible impression of people coming in from the villages and there were lots of little shops to cater for them. So many in Lombard Street for instance. And the tradespeople - Miss Older in Angel Street, Arch Standen the tailor in Market Square; Mr Moss the chemist was still in East Street where Wilson Hill had been. There were the Eager brothers, or, perhaps my favourite tradesman, old Mr Bishop in Lombard Street. When I was very young he called me Max. As I grew a little older he graduated to Mr Max. He always seems in memory to be standing at the door of his little shop. I suppose he went back into the shop some times but I only remember him at the door.

There were buses bringing people in from the villages, people who had a feel of the country about them, more exactly perhaps a feel of the land. There were still characters, but there was a difference from those George Garland had portrayed in his photographs of Petworth life between the wars; such few characters as remained were becoming divorced from their true agricultural roots, on the way to becoming eccentrics rather than genuine characters. Surely I am right in thinking that the traffic was worse then - you remember the long lines of traffic Sunday nights, stretching right down Pound Street and Station Road, and the Specials at Bacon's Corner and the Pound. At Goodwood time we would stand outside the Main Entrance collecting for the Red cross. Goodwood seemed more of an occasion, less anonymous than it is now. The traffic was horrendous.

The loss of the regular buses has made a difference. Even the half-forgotten bus stops seem symbolic now, the one by the old Iron Room and the one outside the Leconfield Hall. I know that buses still stop outside the Hall - but only intermittently. It was the regular hourly service that inspired confidence and kept Petworth in close touch with its hinterland. There were more pubs too. Again I think this was connected with people coming into Petworth more than they do now. Almost every Sunday I was at Sunday School, Mr Yorke being the Rector then. There were many more people working in the Estate yard in those days and I was allowed to play about with tools and other bits and pieces. In this period in the 1950s I was as close to Petworth as any child could be and it is a feeling that has never left me. I am never sure whether to be amused or upset at suggestions that I have lived in a kind of cocoon, sheltered from the real Petworth. Who would be so bold as to claim to know the real Petworth? Does anyone? What is the real Petworth?

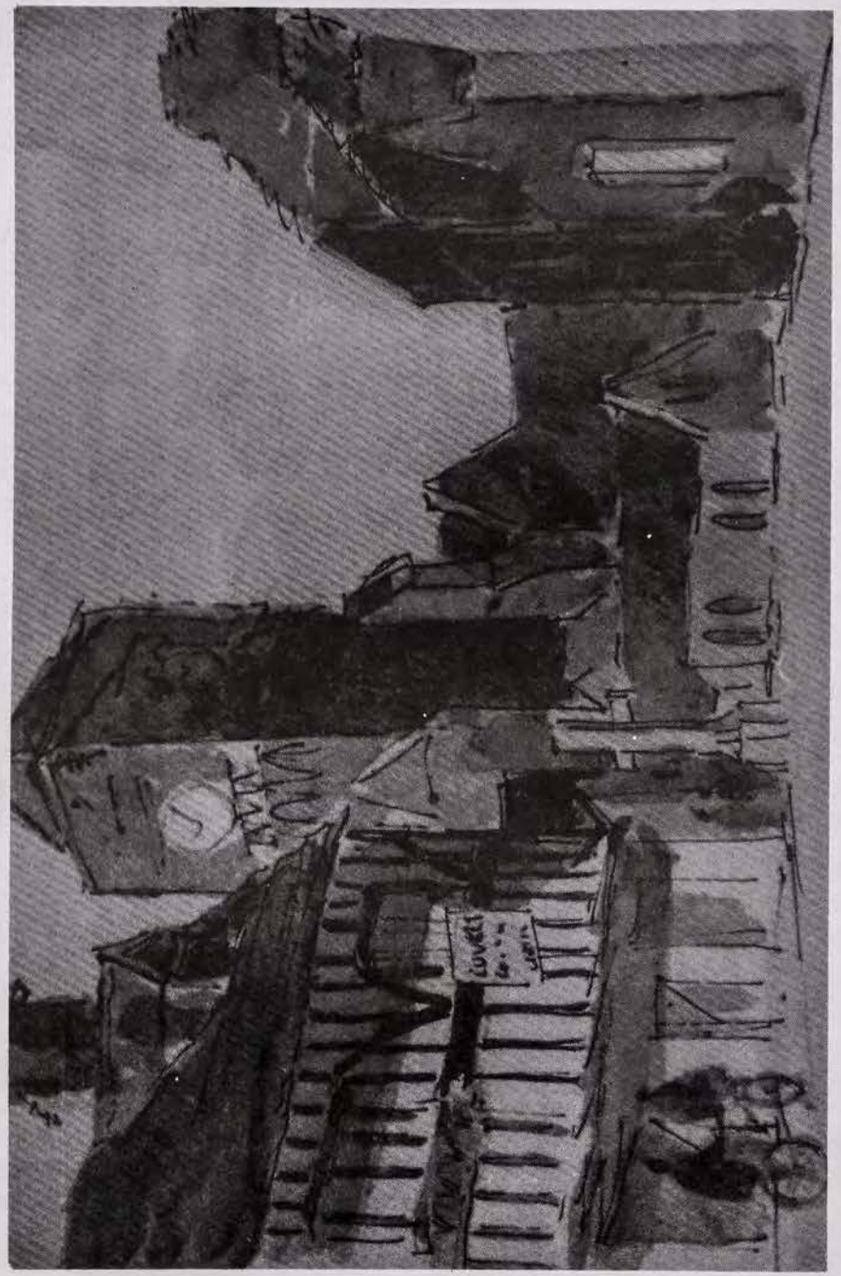
Eton followed Heatherdown. A predictable enough progress I suppose for someone from my background, just as Heatherdown had been predictable before. I was back however every holiday. Petworth after all is my home, always will be, always has been. Even when I went to Oxford I still had the awareness of the Petworth in which I had grown up. After Oxford I worked in publishing for a couple of years before my father became seriously ill. He was only 52 when he died in 1972 and I could not reasonably have anticipated succeeding to the title at such an early age. After all if he were still alive he would only be 73 now and the Wyndhams generally are a long-lived family - look at great-uncle Charles and his brothers. It was the early seventies, I was two years out of Oxford and the Leconfield Estate was facing such a crisis as it had never known in all its long history. Worse even than in 1952. After all in 1952 we had much more land there to sell, perhaps even some that could have been considered expendable. Anything now would cut to the quick. Capital was still depleted after 1952 and my father had simply died too soon to enable provisional planning to take proper effect. The Yorkshire Estates were already gone, and much of the Cumberland. Extensive sales would be needed and the very future of eight hundred years of history was at stake. I could not carry on in London; here was a crisis that demanded my total attention. I needed to be on the spot. I could not handle the situation by being an absentee landlord, nor did I want to. I waited to see the crisis out, living here with it. Hence the sales; not a cynical operation to raise money but something that the Leconfield Estate had to do to survive in any recognisable form. Contrary to some suggestions Leconfield does not raise capital at the instigation of its agents in order to earn them commission. We sell to pay taxes imposed by the state and I can assure you I keep too close an eye on this to allow any agent to hoodwink me! Taxes have led to this retrenchment, taxes and borrowing money to pay taxes. Do not misunderstand me. I am not complaining about the system. We must accommodate the system. It is right that we should be taxed. This is a democratic society and these taxes are the result of decisions of successive elected governments. Leconfield have never questioned this.

At this time I had had no technical training in farming and management. Why should I have had? My father was still a young man when he died. I had not been to agricultural college, all that I knew of the Estate, and it was a good deal, had been picked up almost casually over the years. I had a lot to learn, and quickly, but I have always found this stimulating and twenty years

on I like to think that I am still learning. I cannot be remote. I have to make day-to-day decisions. I would like to stress this: someone in my position cannot be remote from their Estate. The idea of remoteness is a romantic myth. Two hundred years ago perhaps a landowner might be remote from the workings of his estate but then only at his peril. You need only to read the letters of Charles Seymour, sixth Duke of Somerset, in the eighteenth century to see what an iron grip he kept on the Estate, even when he was away at court he knew exactly how many melons were in each glass house. Remoteness is not a tradition at Petworth and in this day and age is a practical impossibility. I read books about agriculture, I talk to people and I try to learn from my mistakes. A golden rule is not to make any decision in haste or under pressure. I am dealing with an entity that has been formed over many centuries. One false decision could dissipate a great part of it. Caution must be a watchword. Take the question of possessions. I sit here talking to you surrounded by the treasures of hundreds of years. They are mine and yet I hold them in trust for future generations. No; I don't find this oppressive but it does give me a heavy responsibility and a recurring dilemma. Should I sell for the sake of the Estate or do I by selling for the sake of the Estate diminish that Estate and break the trust that is reposed in me? Which is the greater duty - to use them for the benefit of the Estate or hold them because they are part of that Estate?

We do not employ on the scale we did. We can't. Labour is very expensive. Petworth and its villages are not dependent on the Leconfield Estate in the way that they once were. But before we lament the passing of the Estate as a significant force in the area, remember that we still run 12,000 acres. What would have happened to that without the Estate? What about the piecemeal developments, the gradual changes in the character of the land, that would have happened if we had sold it all off in little plots and parcels? It is a question I never hear asked. More than this however, the Leconfield Estate is all I have. The idea that somehow it doesn't matter to me is ludicrous. It has to matter to me. It is my birthright and my trust for the future. I have a heavy responsibility not only to the future but to the present. Our priorities are to look after our own employees and our pensioners and see that our tenants are able to farm profitably. They must come first.

We have about 250 tied houses and cottages and since 1972 we have been engaged in constant upgrading. With a reduced workforce there is of course a surplus over requirements for staff. But it's not as easy as some think. Many properties need drastic modernisation to be let or sold. The constant process of renovation is hampered by the equally constant burden of death duties. Remember death duties have repercussions over long periods. Money raised to pay them can still be a drain on resources many years later. I agree that the process of renovation has been slow. No doubt there have been mistakes in management. No organisation is perfect. But in the circumstances this renovation must be slow. Death duties remain a brake on capital spending. Yes, there are improvement grants, but these are a proportion of outlay. There is no escape from outlay. I am always rather bemused by simplistic comments about empty Leconfield Estate housing as if this could solve the town's housing problems at a stroke. If only the problems and their solutions were as simple as the pundits think. The Leconfield Estate is not a statutory authority; it has no obligation to house people who are not or have not been its employees. We are not the District Council. We do help with housing, we always have done



East Street in pen and wash. Drawn by Jan Roddick. (See "Petworth in line and wash.")

One of Jan Roddick's "doll" pictures.
(See "Petworth in line and wash..")

but we have no statutory duty to do so. Rents were fixed by fair-rent officials of the District Council until that system was done away with a few years ago. Since then we have consistently charged local people less than the full market rent. But we cannot give these houses away. What else would you have us do? Rents are high in this area. If we charge uneconomic rents then other pieces of the Estate will need to be sold to make up the shortfall. Is that for Petworth's ultimate benefit? The Leconfield Estate cannot take on the role of a kind of substitute welfare state. They may have been an element of this in the past but it is not possible now.

What changes have I seen? Well certainly farming methods have altered; farming is, and has to be, more intensive. Leconfield farms cannot opt out of this. Fields are larger and there is a bias toward crops rather than animals. Not just here - look at the downland. I know that technically we no longer hold land on the downs (our last piece at Upwaltham was sold in 1952) but that does not invalidate my point. Having conceded that we have to move with the times in farming, we are still aware of a continuing stewardship over the land. We have planted thousands of trees in my time. On the home farms, which we cultivate ourselves, we farm commercially but have tried not to change the look of the landscape. The Leconfield attitude to public access is very relaxed as compared with estates in others parts of the country. I do not mind people walking over the estate as long as they do not leave gates open, start fires, or let their dogs run out of control - access is a reciprocal thing surely. But you cannot keep an estate like this as if it were a garden. We do the best we can but there are an awful lot of fences and gates and we are always going to have restricted resources as regards men on the ground. We employ as many men as the estate will bear and I always try to avoid redundancies.

I would like to think further about change. Petworth is often dismissed as "feudal". But is it? You only have to set the idea down on paper to realise that it is absurd. E. V. Lucas visiting Petworth at the turn of the present century could write that the Leconfield Estate was "as present in the very air of the streets as is the presage of a thunderstorm" - or that Petworth was "like Pompeii with Vesuvius emitting glory far above". If by Vesuvius he means the Lord Leconfield of the time I hope that no one thinks of me like that! Any incumbent of Petworth House in the last decade of this century must be aware of drastic social changes and be prepared to act accordingly. Of course I am on all sorts of Committees but I do not make a point of attending all of them. How could I? I have a young family and I could easily be out most evenings during the week. But it is more than that. I do not see my role in Petworth as one of making decisions relative to particular local organisations. I am diffident about becoming a public figure in that sense and I think I am right to be so. Local organisations need to regulate their own affairs without "his Lordship's" views. I will always give advice if asked - but I would rather be asked. I would not want to "foist" myself on the town.

I am not remote. If people want to see me, I will see them. I have always done this. I am particularly pleased to be a governor of the Herbert Shiner school but I am pleased above all to be in Petworth - Petworth is my life. I have a great commitment to Petworth and I do like to be involved. I am amused to hear that "I am never seen in the town". I can only think that those who say this either do not know me by sight or think that it can't be his Lordship because he's wearing scruffy clothes. I can assure them that it is!

Relations with the National Trust are excellent. I am delighted to have an old friend from

Cumberland, David Sekers, as Regional Director and this year to welcome Dr Diana Owen as administrator at the House. As you know Norman Thomas, who has worked so hard on Town-Trust relations, has retired. I know Diana is extremely keen to continue along these lines. Of course I have a predictable line on the "bypass" issue but what I lament most is the feeling of division that the discussion engenders. David Sekers and I feel this very keenly as I know you do.

I hope this interview gives some idea of the range of issues that concern me; as you know my writing gives me an alternative focus which I am sure provides a certain freshness in dealing with day-to-day estate matters. It is a great privilege to live at Petworth House. It is good to have such a house so near to, and part of, the town. So many of the great houses are miles out and cut off from their immediate environs. Above all I hope that my great-uncle would feel that we had in very difficult circumstances kept his Estate together as a recognisable entity and that we had kept his memory and his tradition alive as he would have wished.

Lord Egremont was talking to the Editor.

"Cooked by cannibals" ... in Petworth!

Petworth: the kind of small ancient township whose charm so far as I am concerned and I am sure, many others, unfailingly draws its one time familiars back again and again. One of the nicest things about it is that it remains pretty much unchanged through the years keeping any nasty shocks to a minimum.

My introduction to this attractive neighbourhood was in the Spring of 1936 when having seen an advertisement in The West Sussex Gazette for a shorthand-typist in the offices of Newland Tompkins and Taylor in Lombard Street, a firm of Estate and Land Agents, I applied and was engaged.

I was recommended by my new employer to lodgings in Grove Road with Miss Ford a kindly middle aged lady and her elderly father. This venerable old gentleman, having for many decades been in the employment of the Leconfield Estate before a late retirement, was thereafter secure in a life tenancy of the tied cottage in which he had already spent a great many years.

I was, at that time, a young woman in my late teens, not of an age to properly appreciate the compact elegance of the central market place and the streets radiating out to open downland, but at the same time, not at all unaware of the pleasure my youthful senses derived from such an environment.

Over the ensuing three years I spent my weekdays in my little upstairs office typing the letters dictated by my immediate boss, Mr. Boxall, who was, I think, one of the partners in the firm, and applying myself to the frequent copying of agreements, leases and inventories. The front ground floor office was occupied by two young men, one of whom was studying for a career in the profession. I had little idea of the working activities in which they were engaged down there, but true it is to say they spent a fair proportion of their time upstairs where I was.

Better, there was always a hearty fire burning away in my little room the winter long and I could always gaze out of the window on to the square to relieve any tedium. I oversaw two fairs in the Market Place. (I don't know why not three). Great fun that. Popular tunes were loudly broadcast all day; among them, most persistently; which I suppose is why they remain imprinted in my psyche to this day; The September Song (the leaves of brown came tumbling down/ remember, that September, in the rain) or words to that effect, and Little Old Lady Passing By as sung by Gracie Fields. This one I believe they also played again the second year!

Owing to the extremely low charges of my landlady I managed to maintain myself on what must be regarded even for those days, as a rather modest emolument, and, too, rather modest living conditions. A very nice house, standing in a central position in a substantial looking terrace but with a minimum of mod cons. No bathroom, and the W.C. way down the garden. This facility was, however, situated in a strongly built closet, itself housed inside the commodious wash-house which in turned accommodated a bath of imposing size. It was, therefore, here that one took one's weekly exhaustive ablutions.

The only source of hot water supplied by the copper, under which a fire had first to be lit and nursed, the water having then to be laboriously baled out into the vast bath. I soon found this a hiding to nothing for by the time I had ladled three or four inches of what had started off as hot water into the expansive space was barely luke warm by the time I stepped in. In cold weather especially this was cruelly uncomfortable and my solution was to resort to submerging myself directly into the copper. It was heaven in spite of my feeling that I was being cooked by cannibals. It was wonderful to fold up almost to the neck in really hot water. There was no real danger of its ever becoming dangerously heated because the fire soon burnt down. Of course, there could be no subsequent coddling in the form of donning a dressing gown and jumping straight into bed, it being necessary in the interests of common decency to dress fully for the return walk the length of the garden path with, on a bitter night in winter, the addition of overcoat, hat and scarf.

It is not to be thought I did nothing but work and sit nightly with my respected hostess and her parent listening exclusively to Band Wagon and Big Hearted Arthur etcetera on the battery wireless, although I most often did. A high priority was visits to the local cinema whenever funds allowed, an expense I could not, nevertheless, rise to every week. My preferred choices were for films in the Grace Moore 'One Night of Love', any Shirley Temple, and 'Jungle Princess' with Dorothy Lamour and Ray Milland kind of genre.

From Grove Road I would use the twitten running down to the area not much short of the picture house, never feeling, even on the darkest of nights, any twinge of fear of being accosted. I followed this route on a recent return seeming to recall that the walls forming the narrow pathway ran the entire length of both sides which is not the case now. What lay in place of the present development I can't say since I was unable to see over.

A particularly pleasant summer pursuit would take the form of evening strolls along the easily accessible downlands; sometimes in company with my landlady and her little dog, Nellie; sometimes in tranquil solitude. I never minded which. It so happened that I never got to know many people during my sojourn from first to last although I attended a young peoples' association which I always found most enjoyable. This lack was, no doubt, owing to my main

interest being largely confined to being picked up by my regular young man friend who came in from Worthing to waft me away in his old Bull Nosed Morris.

This otherwise serene, even bland, interval came to an end when the threat of imminent war reared its ugly head in 1938, a time when gas masks were delivered to all persons accompanied by instructions for securing to the head to guard against attack. I can think of no other single event until then that so brought home the stark reality of what might be imminent war than these nightmarish appendages. I had been given to understand ever since I was old enough to understand anything that The Great War had ended all war.

However, as we all know, Mr. Chamberlain negotiated an agreement with 'Herr' Hitler excluding us from his predations so that was all right. Safe after all. I can't remember what happened to the gas masks arising out of that arrangement: on the face of it is would seem logical for the recipients to return them from whence they were issued.

Some time before the September of the following year I had left my longsuffering landlady in Grove Road to take up a sub-tenancy of a large unfurnished room advertised locally as being suited to a single business woman, a description I rather fancied applying to myself. It was a large light room on the first floor back of a house just off the main road close to the church, a truth which was borne in upon me when I discovered the clock struck the hours all but in my ears. However, like everybody else in that area I soon became accustomed to it and if anyone had asked me if the clock disturbed me I would have answered 'what clock?'

Now catering for myself I had to make myself conversant with the local food shops and discover what I could buy for a shilling and many was the time I hovered uncertainly outside the butcher's in, or close to, Golden Square wondering what cut I should ask for. Chops usually won and my diet veered very heavily towards this easy choice. There was no fear then of asking for the wrong thing or the wrong weight. Of course I learnt in time and was good training for future home cooking! I continued on in my apartment until, I think, early in the following year after war was declared. Arising out of this and the fact that the home was in a target area by bombers, my mother took my sister, still a child, to stay at the family rented holiday cottage near Chichester when, owing as much as anything to the difficulties of travelling, I, with some reluctance, gave up my exciting taste of absolute independence to join them and so it was ta-ta to Petworth as a place in which to reside.

Although those three haphazardly adventitious years must be regarded as comparatively ephemeral the quality of their span was enough for me to have affectionately harboured the influences inherent in the locale as a whole with its mellowed architecture and surrounding downland, the graceful expanses and flowing streams of which are ever present to reward even the most casual sweep of the eye. No wonder the place is loved and admired. No wonder people want to visit.

Vive la Petworth!

P.M.A.

Why should we be sorry?

John Sirgood, founder of the Dependants or "Cokelers" was a great letter-writer, using letters as a personal way of overseeing the several chapels he had founded. He died in 1885 and his letters grow more numerous in his latter years. Early letters are much more sparse. John Sirgood never had personal charge of any particular community but preferred to travel round on a kind of circuit, keeping in touch by letter but very much at the pulse of each separate "cause". When the chapels began to be built in the early 1870s John Sirgood anointed elders to take charge of the communities he had founded. So William Hampshire was anointed at Lord's Hill and John Overington at Loxwood. I think the custom of anointing as opposed to simply designating ceased very early. I never knew it in my time. The letters were written either to particular persons or to a whole church. Sometimes they were intended to be read in church, sometimes in the tea-room afterwards. Some of course were simply personal but this still meant they could be read out if there were something of benefit to the community in them. There almost invariably was.

The letters mention people who were basically younger than John Sirgood, many of whom lived on into my own time or were still remembered by the brethren. So many of them I had known in my young days or had heard others speak of. There were many who remembered the old days, even the attempted suppression of the Loxwood Dependants in 1861, or the tradition of preaching outdoors, still continuing in some areas even after the chapels had been built in the 1870s. Langhurst Hill or Roundhurst, Gunshot Common or New Pound, remote Wealden outposts, these were the Dependants' strongholds and here in the early days the brethren would preach in the open just as John Sirgood had done, first on Clapham Common and then at Loxwood. Peter Pacey would preach at Langhurst Hill - people walked there just to hear him, or there was Tom Rugman, or Jesse Puttick from Balls Cross, a short thick-set man who suffered from rheumatoid arthritis in later years and was pushed to chapel in a bath chair.

These are just a few of the Dependants to whom John Sirgood wrote.

One whose memory was kept alive in our meetings was Hannah Osborne who died young. She was in her early thirties when she died in 1887 so I never knew her. How often though have I heard her mentioned in testimonies! Everyone who spoke of her said what a lovely person she was. She worked as a servant in Chester Square in London. When I drove for Mr. Riley Smith at Loxwood I remembered the number of the house and having once to go next door where she had been in service, I stood and looked at the steps up which she would so often have gone and thought of her. When Ellen Luff mentioned her in our meetings she always called her "dear Hannah". Hannah often acted as a scribe for John Sirgood, writing his letters for him. His will describes her as a draper of Northchapel. Another figure from the early days was Marjorie Oelkers. She was of German extraction and a rather large lady. William Comber of Lord's Hill remembered her living at Clapham. "I was a very young man," he said, "and she was such an affectionate sister. When she saw me she'd gather me up in her ample bosom." John Sirgood would urge her not to be so effusive but it was her nature.

I was brought up at Norwood where George Haynes was leader in the early days. He died, aged 78, at the end of January 1916. I was only a little boy then and I remember that my legs

used to hang down from the chapel benches. Louie Taylor found a large wooden box and covered it with material to act as a kind of impromptu hassock. Once when George Haynes was on the platform his seat broke so that my "hassock" had to be borrowed for use as a replacement seat. George had been a sailor in the early days and I have an idea that he had something to do with the slave trade. These were very hard times and the captain would come round every so often to ask if there were any complaints. George said it always paid to say, "No, Sir". He used this often in his testimony, urging us not to complain of our lot, everything was in the hands of God. "No complaints." Brother Haynes had a lovely head of black curly hair. In his Norwood days he worked as a painter.

Blind Annie was a Loxwood Dependant who lived in a small cottage opposite the Spy Lane chapel. When Henry Aylward, later leader at Loxwood, came from Sevenoaks to live with the Loxwood brethren in the mid-1880s, Blind Annie came with him too. She was a diminutive person but she had a marvellous singing voice. How often have I watched her with her Braille bible. At Christmas she always read that passage where the prophet says, "His name shall be called Counsellor".

Hannah Cock was a Lord's Hill sister and lived in the little cottage next to the stores. She had originally been with Eliza Stemp at Warnham. She had a cockatoo that nodded at her as she talked to it. "It does obeisance to me," she used to say. She was housekeeper to William Hampshire and John Rugman in the early days.

Henry and Jane Piper lived at Warnham where Henry was leader when the chapel was first built in 1874. Henry was a burly man and I remember him well in the 1920s. In later years I knew his son Ben who had a ginger beard and sat beside his father on the platform. The family were very poor in the early days and I've heard them tell how once, when they were turned out of their tied cottage, another brother took them in. They were five to a room and when one of the boys caught a fever everyone expected to catch it too. They didn't. The family had a little pig and when it was killed the lard was put into a pot and the lard lasted so long it was as though God had multiplied it. Had not the same thing happened to the widow at Zarephath in Elijah's time? Henry's great saying was "Give God time." I never knew Jane Piper, she died in the early days but the family lived at Barling Hill farm just outside Warnham and eventually prospered. When Henry Piper died there was an election at Warnham to decide who would be leader. Benjamin Piper, Henry's son, and William Booker were nominated and votes were cast on slips of paper. No, it wasn't a competitive election, William Booker had most votes and was pleased that he had, but was equally pleased that his margin was a narrow one. Ben had often taken his father's place and the election was not meant to humiliate anyone. It didn't. Sometimes elections were on a show of hands. At Norwood James Brightman had been put on the platform by John Sirgood himself. James was leader after George Haynes but one Sunday in 1925 he insisted on coming to the meeting on Sunday morning despite suffering from bronchitis. The bronchitis turned to pneumonia and he died on the Tuesday. Alice Slade was elected leader on a show of hands and remained leader until 1932. Charles Taylor would have been a good leader if he had been elected. He sat behind the rostrum and was another of John Sirgood's original appointments. In those days there were four on the Norwood platform: James Brightman, Louie and Charles Taylor and Alice Slade. The number would vary between chapels. There were five on

the platform at Loxwood. Was it an honour to be on the platform? Well, I suppose it was but that wasn't the way we saw it. In our view those who were on the platform were those who should be on the platform. It was as simple as that.

Carrie Foster I remember in later years. She had known our founder well and a number of letters are written to her personally. She lived at Loxwood in a cottage opposite the Stores with Mary, her sister. She sat bolt upright in chapel. When Mary Foster died my grandmother had her cape I remember.

Stephen Franks died in 1909. I never knew him. He worked at the flour mill near Lord's Hill. Brother Wells from New Pound was the father of Sarah (Sally) Baverstock. Sally was another who was infirm in later years and would be brought into chapel from Plaistow in an old T-model van, carried on a kind of sedan chair with two handles at front and back which could be retracted. She was the last sister to be put behind the desk by John Sirgood himself.

Alfred Powell from Chichester I knew well, he was another who was eaten up by rheumatoid arthritis. You see I was so much younger than they were. Those who had been with John Sirgood in the early days were growing old - after all our founder had died in 1885. I remember Alfred coming to one or two meetings at Loxwood. His wife was not a Dependant herself but she was terribly kind to Alfred. He wrote the hymn, "Doubts do not a Christian make". He used also to write letters to the brethren, this despite the fact that he could hardly write with his distorted hands. Henry Aylward would read them to the meeting. Although he lived at Chichester Alfred's father had been a Northchapel man and Alfred always considered himself a part of the Northchapel meeting.

Just a brief mention of four more Dependants who are sometimes mentioned in the letters. Kitty Enticknap was someone to whom John Sirgood would sometimes write personally. She was one of the original Dependants and I remember her as a very upright, precise lady. She lived at Loxwood and had a laundry at Alfold. She became Mrs. Ernie Standing when she married. Ann Quelch was another of the very early Dependants; she had white wavy hair and very poor sight and always sat in the back row at the Spy Lane chapel. Susan Street composed some of our best known hymns. She was a tall lady who lived at Norwood in my time. She and Thomas, her husband, had been brethren at Northchapel in the days before the chapel was built. Lastly, John Hemmings who died when I was only a boy. He came from away but had settled at Norwood where he ran the Dependants' subsidiary shop half a mile away from the main stores. I remember him with his white apron coming up to the big shop for things like tea and cheese. He didn't carry a big stock in the smaller shop.

So many I have known and it gives me a great feeling of affection to remember them. Am I sad at their passing? No, I would not say that I feel sad: our funerals, as you know, were never sad. As we sing:

"We are sure that we shall miss them
But shall say, "God's will be done,"
And like them be always ready
When the Lord shall bid us come."

Why should we be sorry? We sorrow not as those who have no hope. If we sorrowed it would betray our hope, for this is just a short span compared to what is to follow.

Alf Goodwin was talking to the Editor.

Commotion at Sheepdown!

From the "Sussex Advertiser" 2nd April 1892

A NIGHT ALARM. -- On Saturday night last the usual peaceful serenity of the inhabitants of Sheepdown-lane was rudely disturbed. About ten o'clock a tremendous racket was heard, as if someone were engaged in knocking a wooden building to pieces with the force of a Nasmyth hammer. This continued till past midnight, without the scared inhabitants being able to locate the disturbance or satisfactorily explain it. The knocking noise was then changed to the sound of hoofs stamping on boards, as if a couple of amorous elephants were engaged in ponderously waltzing over a hollow floor. This was accompanied at intervals by the most awful blood-curdling groans, impossible to describe, but which might be conceived if one could imagine a Megalosaurus lamenting over an acute attack of stomachic disturbance. Now and again a variation was afforded to these horrors by the piercing squeal of a cat, disturbed in the pursuit of some nocturnal enterprise by these unusual noises. One belated wayfarer, who had taken refuge behind the gate of the allotment gardens, affirmed that he saw gleams of light hovering around, but this was probably the freak of an affrighted and apprehensive imagination. At length all was silent, all was still, and balmy repose was allowed to settle down in the sylvan solitude of the Sheepdowns. In the morning the cause of the disturbance was plainly manifested. A horse belonging to Mr. Downs, seems to have been seized with a fit, and in its struggles produced the noises above described. But the curious part of the story is to come. Readers of Dickens will probably remember that Mrs. Gamp's knocker had the peculiar attribute of waking all the neighbourhood without disturbing the slumbers of that gin-drinking old lady. In like manner the horrible din created by this horse, whilst disturbing the people living in the cottages on the edge of the Sheepdowns, was not heard by the residents of Mr. Down's house, although the stable is only a few yards from that gentleman's back-door, till long past midnight. However, all's well that ends well, and the poor animal's sufferings were terminated by a merciful bullet, which served the double purpose of relieving its sufferings and preventing it from again disturbing the silent watches of the night. It would be well if all midnight mysteries were as satisfactorily accounted for as this one.

It is clear from the 1891 Census that the house is Orchard House.
This piece is almost certainly written by the paper's Petworth correspondent Benjamin Arnold.
Our thanks to Janet Austin for drawing our attention to it.

Ed.

A list of new members will appear in the next Magazine.