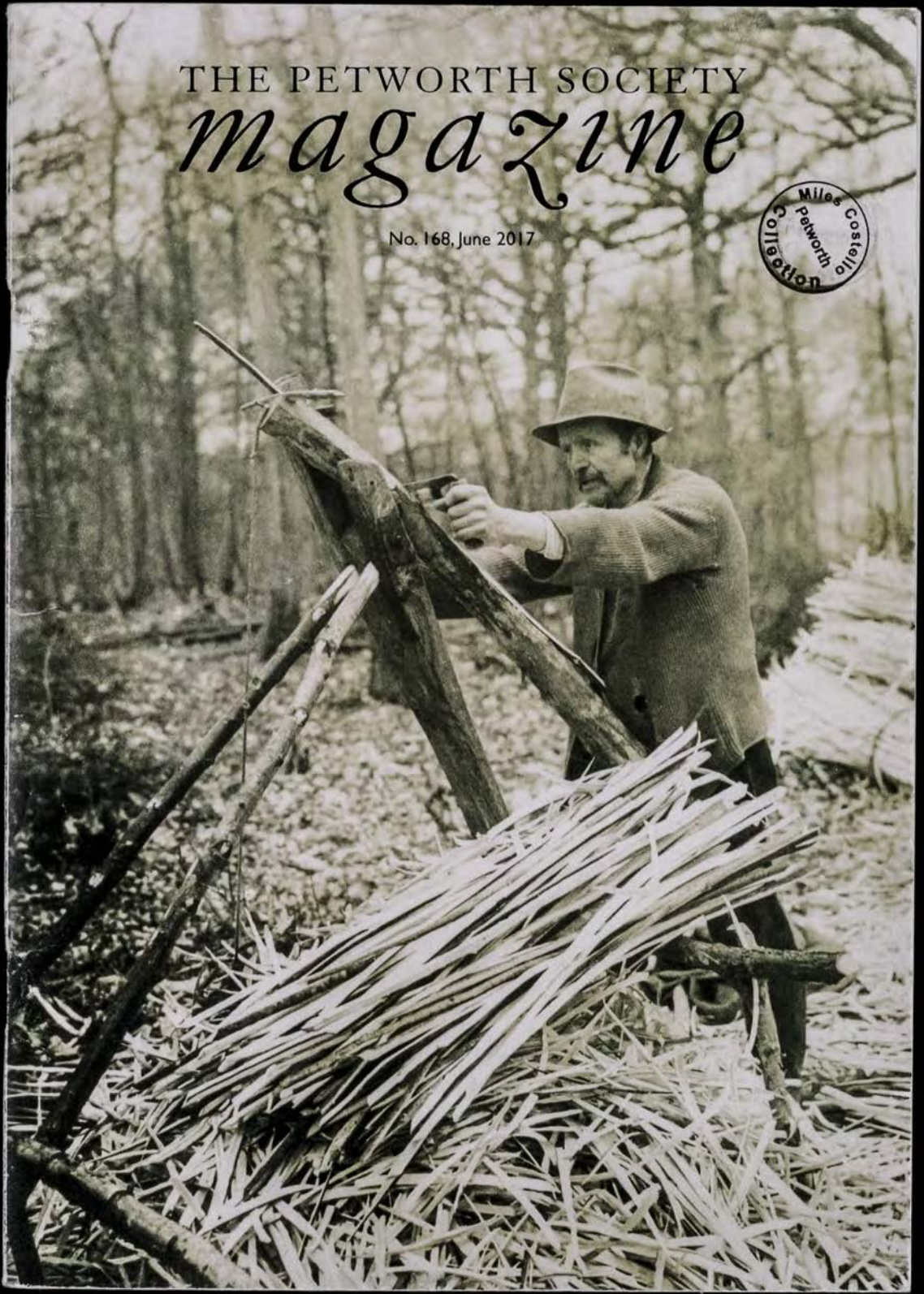
THE PETWORTH SOCIETY
magazine

No. 168, June 2017



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An unusual postcard by Shoesmith and Etheridge of Hastings. It will come from, perhaps, the late 1940s. Note the well-defined track down the hill and the famous oak at the Brook edge.

CONTENTS

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 objects of the society.

The annual subscription is £14.00, single or double, one magazine delivered. Postal £18.00 overseas nominal £25.00. Further information may be obtained from any of the following.

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FRONT COVER designed by Jonathan Newdick.
Cover picture: "Hoopshaver" by George Garland.
Compare "Easter Saturday at 346" in this issue.

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www.petworthsociety.co.uk

Chairman's notes

You will see that I have so far departed from the usual pictorial centrefold format as to draw attention to change in Petworth from 1880 to 1970. Petworth was no more immune to change in that period than it is now, but the process was more gradual. If it accelerated after 1970, it has become headlong with the arrival of the digital age. In forming this Society in 1974 Colonel Maude insisted that the new initiative could not resist change per se, nor should it; it could at most use such influence as it had to monitor that change. He would wish, too, that inevitable change be underpinned by an awareness of what had gone before, and, ideally by deep-seated support from all sections of a very diverse community. Without such support, change can only feed of itself and ultimately gasp for air.

Clearly I am not alone in questioning the advantage of "informatory" signs "Round the Hills". Thanks to all those who contacted me about this. We can only hope that on this particular issue, sound counsel will prevail.

Re "On visiting Mrs Adsett" (PSM 167) enquiries are continuing.

Sue Ransom writes:

"I was wondering if anyone could help me. Several years ago there was a lovely article in the *West Sussex Gazette* about a lady married to the miller at Lurgashall Mill and how she would walk to the village and fell for the School Master, I have often wondered where the story came from, was it from a book or someone's family history?"

Greenacres
Bowlhead Green
Godalming
Surrey
GU8 6NW

*Please find order form for Society dinner: it was overbooked last year.
**STOP PRESS: Please see "The Virgin Mary Spring" page 47.

Peter

"No more immune to change ..."

Demolition of the old workhouse premises in 1960, considered the most "beautiful" workhouse in Sussex after that at Battle.
Photograph by George Garland as are the two following.

Damer's Bridge 1960, preparing the entrance to the new Car Park.

Pound Street 1960, the front door steps reflect a more leisured traffic flow!

Fair comment

Someone said Robert Harris talked about the history of village fairs and his family's involvement seven years ago, but we haven't been able to find a report of the meeting in the Magazine. Who remembers?

There might have been some repetition this time and a lot left out. Robert has so many dates, family names and facts that come tumbling out, making note taking almost impossible. A good crowd came along, including a number of Harris fans from far and near.

The origins of Petworth Fair 'beyond memory' in the 12th century are well documented. The Harris family have been bringing sideshows and rides since 1987. The Fair here had been in decline through the 1970s. In 1985, on the instigation of David Sneller (happily present on the evening), Peter Jerrome met with Lord Egremont and Robert to plan a revival.

The next year's Fair was a resounding success. The traditional date, November 20th, can produce some unpleasant weather and the life of a fairman is never easy: the planning, the setting up and taking down, wind, rain and mud. But they are born to it, "a blessing and a burden" says Robert, but as the brothers get older, the physical demands are telling. On principle, he has no plans for the future.

Fairground amusements go back to the times of knights in armour at least, when their sons practised the arts of warfare on horseback with a contraption of revolving wooden horses. This led to the first roundabouts or carousels (Italian: carosello – a tournament for horsemen).

The Harris involvement goes back six generations to the 1850s, basket weaving and timber felling in the winter, sideshows at village fairs in the summer. Weather records of the period show extreme variations of temperature far greater than now which lead Robert to ask, "Was it global warming or the prospect of another Ice Age then?"

In 1891, a roundabout was purchased for £1000, to be followed in 1893 by a steam traction engine.

At the turn of the century, the Red Flag Act demanded a 5mph speed limit on the three-trailer road train carrying the fairground equipment, including the Gallopers. Later, this was the subject of an argument about the legality of towing three trailers which the persistent Robert won with his extensive knowledge of tradition, custom, law and persuasive power!

In 1932, the family obtained land in Ashington for a base, still living in traditional caravans (Robert's grandmother was a Romany and he speaks the language). He didn't live in a house until 1983 and even then, summers were spent in caravans.

Timber haulage saw them through the war years.

The 1987 Great Storm brought a six-month contract for tree clearance. Far more to tell than time would allow.

The loyalty of the Harris brothers in providing the mainstay of Fair Day over the past thirty-one years, overcoming the arson attack on the Gallopers in 2005, prevailing over sometimes atrocious weather, as in 2016, has endeared them to Petworth and Society members especially.

As a mark of esteem in which they are held and our gratitude, Peter presented Robert with a cheque for £350. For once, he was lost for words!

We look forward to November 20th, 2017.

KCT

Coasting along Sussex

In terms of speed, covering 100 miles in 90 minutes, 'coasting' is hardly the term one would use, but we know what Dr Geoffrey Mead meant. We could have been in a helicopter, taking in the scene from Thorney Island to Camber Sands, as the photographs revealed how the geology and human activity have influenced the coastline from Roman times until the present day.

Thorney was indeed an island, protected from the south-west by the Isle of Wight, so that, in 1860, ground was claimed from the sea to form fertile agricultural land for growing grain. There were tide mills. Castles were built at the head of sea inlets all along the coast.

Apart from Roman villas and the palace at Fishbourne, human settlement came much later, notably with the 'shanty towns' of redundant railway carriages from Pagham eastwards, later to be converted into desirable residences. Bognor became the first seaside resort town, requiring the construction of sea walls and groynes to contain erosion and the drift of shingle.

An area of sand dunes at Climping, before Littlehampton and Shoreham, elegant in their day, together with Hove and Brighton, sprang up with the arrival of the railway and accessibility from London. Behind these towns was the agriculturally rich coastal plain, ending at Brighton's cliffs.

There was some industrial development at the ports, notably Shoreham, which hosted a theatrical colony, early film production and later, the power station – all gone now. Brighton expanded in the 1820s, where many owners of small(ish) plots built in a variety of styles, whereas the few owners of large plots in Hove were able to develop classic terraces.

The sea cliffs starting here are not solid chalk, but are composed of rock fragments, less stable. Then it is solid chalk until, at Newhaven, it is overlaid with sands and clays. A mid-19th century fort guards the Ouse estuary. The town appears sadly run-down today.

Then comes Seaford, a 'Limb of the Cinque Ports' and the first of the Martello Towers, built in the 1860s in a chain right through to Kent, when it was feared that invasion by the French, led by Napoleon was imminent.

The Seven Sisters cliffs, extending to Beachy Head, led to Eastbourne, another elegant resort, as is Bexhill beyond the Pevensey Levels, with the castle dating from the arrival of the Romans and another, 20th century landscape of 'informal settlements'.

St. Leonards and Hastings, a mix of architecture and, at the Old Town end, the largest shore-based fishing fleet in Europe and another castle on the sandstone cliffs. Clay too, at Fairlight, where landslips make access to the shore difficult and dangerous. From Cliff End to Rye, more rich grazing marshland before Romney Marsh in Kent.

Rye Harbour, two miles from the town as the sea receded, has light industry and fishing boats. We were reminded of the loss of the lifeboat, together with the entire crew, at sea in a storm in 1928, leaving the village without a generation of menfolk, a situation which faced Petworth following the 1942 bombing.

Across the River Rother lies Camber Sands, crowded with day trippers and holiday 'campers' in the summer, but beyond, at Jury's Gap, huge stretches of sand, completely deserted, outstanding natural scenery and a haven for birdlife.

After refreshments, an unusually comprehensive barrage of questions, ranging from memories of the Camber Tram to evidence of Brighton's Chain Pier and the problems facing walkers at Selsey arising from recent flood and sea defence work and the R.S.P.B. restrictions on the nature reserve.

Geoffrey's enthusiasm for his subject, his wide-ranging knowledge and his skill in conveying it all to the audience made this a most enjoyable and fulfilling evening. More, please!

KCT

Linda's Pitshill walk. 23rd April

Pitshill, at once familiar and unfamiliar. A long spell of iron grey April weather, cold and dry, a prevailing feeling of lack of moisture. Is the Upperton Road more congested than usual? Does the ever-growing presence of cars become oppressive? Perhaps the Horse Guards are particularly busy … perhaps. We walk down beside the Park wall, then, crossing the road, past the old school building and skirt the pub shrubbery. Bluebells at the roadside, some a deepish purple, others of a lighter shade. Flowers on one side, so that the stem droops with the pull of gravity. Apparently it's all explained on the Internet. Everything's explained on the Internet. I prefer a little mystery myself.

The road that borders the cemetery is so narrow that debris rides high in the middle to give the appearance of an asphalt farm track. No vehicle will take the centre of the road. We bear off to the right into the vineland. In the hedgerow and beside the path are legions of dandelions, already predominantly white with countless clock "heads". Row upon row of vines, it seems that a miniature tractor cultivates the narrow space between them. Suddenly the sun appears, then as

Pitshill about 1900.
Photograph by Walter Kevis.

suddenly retires. Out on to the familiar road with the rhododendrons and view down to the Manor of Dean.

To the right through the woods and the sight of Pitshill from the footpath, rhododendrons to our right. We circle round to be greeted by a vociferous quartet of small dogs behind a fence. Bearing with the path towards Upperton. Through the Sunday afternoon village, and walking beside the Park wall again, crowding weeds at the foot, white dead nettle and dandelion on the grass verge. Thanks very much Linda.

P.

The Tragic Prince.
The March book sale

Fiction has to be the lifeblood of the Book Sale, and hence indirectly, of the Magazine. Non-fiction is important, of course, but that large central table is always a focus of attention. Fiction is a never abating monthly avalanche – paperback, hardback, Victorian, Edwardian, between the wars and later: Penguin, Pan and the rest. So many will simply slip through to the "collector" and be lost. Next month's selection must be completely fresh: our clientele demand no less. I sometimes think this quarterly Magazine piece is a token attempt to set a kind of fixed point in the torrent.

Here's A. R. and R. Weekes' *The Tragic Prince*.[1] The Weekes sisters lived for some years at Slindon and find a brief mention in the *Sussex County Magazine*[2], Agnes having died on returning home after picking blackberries. Not "Sussex" writers per se, the Weekes sisters were relatively prolific writers of popular fiction. A dust jacket cover of 1930 finds them high on a list of Messrs. Ward Lock's popular authors and in the exalted company of such luminaries as Dornford Yates, Edgar Wallace and Leslie Charteris. They might write with a Majorcan background but seem to have specialised in the popular genre of the Ruritanian romance, exemplified by Anthony Hope's seminal Prisoner of Zenda (1896). The sisters created a fictional state, Neuberg, bilingual in French and German and hovering vaguely on the borders of France, Italy and Austria.

Neuberg's existence once granted, the reader is plunged into an extraordinary world dominated by the louche, enigmatic, often wilfully cruel, Prince Heinrich, himself trapped in a dynastic marriage to a wife who is unable to return his affection. Heinrich's sworn enemy is the mysterious Valentin, leader of the

"League", a submerged voice of popular discontent, always threatening to dethrone the tyrant but endlessly waiting for the moment to strike. Minor characters come and go at the whim of a labyrinthine plot, while the more substantial, like Mercedes the dancer, the suave but improbably English chancellor Msr. de Luc, and the engagingly unorthodox Parisian chief of police Msr. Suchet are flung hither and thither on the restless ocean of the plot. The writers may well have regretted killing off Heinrich in 1912[3], which forced them to make later adventures retrospective. *White Hands Cannot Offend* (1930) opens with a public whipping, has the aristocratic heroine in the hands of the League and enough twists and turns to make even Dick Barton dizzy. I liked *White Hands* more than *The Tragic Prince* and thought I'd ask Shaun Cooper, who knows about these things, if he had heard of the sisters.

The March Sale? Quite an occasion with a display from Otter Bookbinding as a variation. I think they'll return on a fairly regular basis.

P.

1. Andrew Melrose (1912).
2. November 1940.
3. Russell Thorndyke faced a similar problem after killing of Dr Syn in 1915. His solution was the same. See P. Jerrome: Eleven Sussex Books (2014).

Easter Saturday at the Cottage Museum

It's 3.15 at the Cottage Museum. A brief lull between visitors. I look across to the still glowing range. Half an hour ago I'd picked up one of the "pimps" from the fireside scuttle. "Pimps", I explained, "is a local dialect word and the crafting of them peculiar to the Petworth area." I often think of Ella Lee (Marshall then), sixteen perhaps and fresh down from Burnley to work as a housemaid at Petworth. It was October 1937. "Open fires were very much part of the job, and I was sent out for some 'pimps'. When I got outside I realised I didn't know what I was looking for. I had to go back and ask." In fact Museum visitors seem happier to think of "small faggots". Pimps at 346 are, despite appearances, for display only: they're too big to use on the Petworth range. I glance sideways to the marvellous Diamond Jubilee (1897) kerchief, now beautifully framed, on the parlour wall, a gift to the Museum from Ella.

Earlier this month I was given a set of black and white prints showing the late Peter Wakeford pimp-making in Palfrey Copse, just off the London Road in 1983.

Following the early tradition of George Garland, Graham Stemp had taken them to accompany a detailed account of the crafting of pimps in this Magazine.[1] Some of the photographs had featured then. In the same Magazine we have Frank Wadey on brick making at Colhook, or Peter Brandon on the town's ancient fields, a seminal interview with Bob Whatrup, transported from Lambeth to live with the Holden family on Ebernoe Common, Bill Ede on 1920s Petworth and earlier and so much more. "We would think nothing if we were decorating a house, say at Fittleworth, of stacking up the handcart with planks, steps, pasteboard, trestles, everything we would need, and setting off on foot – the pair of us pushing the handcart up the road together."

Is such recollection part of the soul of a town? Or, perhaps, towns don't have souls. This Magazine can operate only on the basis that they do. Petworth, we may think, now and of old, has always been too busy, too preoccupied with a humourless workaday present to bother with its 'soul'. In issue 168 we can only press on and keep the faith.

P.

1. PSM 34 December 1983.

Pineapples at Petworth

These days I find very little to my taste to watch on television; probably a sign of galloping age. Just now and then there is an *epiphany moment*, usually on BBC4, that stops me actually getting rid of the machine, although a recent such *happening* came while watching "Who Do You Think You Are?" For me, these have usually become "Who The Dickens Are You?", but for once I recognised the subject, and after the first ten minutes or so, it became fascinating, with musical connections to the Brighton Pavilion. The really amazing bit came within the final ten minutes, when Sophie Raworth was exploring a family link to Kew Gardens, which led to a Yorkshire nurseryman at Tatton Park in Cheshire. And for me, the "Wow!" moment came about only because I had been in the Record Office that morning, going through some Petworth deeds.

I had been contacted about a house in Petworth, and ever ready to enlarge upon my experience of local buildings, I turned up to view, having done some groundwork with early mapping. That had established the property owner in 1839, and how and when the ground plan had changed over the next six decades. Most notable in 1839 there was a large L-shaped non-domestic block, shown in

grey, described as 'hothouses' and gone by 1874, behind the smaller rectangular dwelling (in pink) along the street frontage. Although there was no detail in the actual building that I felt could be earlier than the early 1800s, it and its curtilage posed questions about its original form and layout, how and when additions had been made, and how it had functioned over time. The site itself is of interest, given its relationship to Petworth House, I had spotted an ownership link to some Petworth deeds, and my interest just happened to coincide with the archivists' monthly trip.

Ordering Petworth documents is often a bit of a lottery, for if you get it wrong, it's another whole month before you can try again. This time I had over 20 documents to go through (1791-1860), and they *did* relate to the site I had visited. Moreover, around 1836, there was a description of the property as *'new built with shop lately erected'* (by the owner named in 1839) with "stable, *"coalpit, pineries and pinepits, hothouses, and greenhouses"*. In my ignorance, it crossed my mind that those glasshouses must have been like the specialist firm 'Architectual Plants' at Brinsbury, near Pulborough. And then that evening I watched television.

Sophie Raworth's ancestors had not just been nurserymen, but were producing the 'must-have' table decoration of the eighteenth century ... pineapples. And they grew them in '**pineries**' and '**pine-pits**', with artificial heating arrangements. A whole new avenue of exploration has been opened up for me; chasing up specialist articles on the history and development of pineapple culture, finding how they were originally used as table-decorations, until they got too rotten, and understanding how and why their form directly influenced architectural embellishments.

I need to go through that first batch of deeds with more care, and I think there may be some more documents that are relevant; there is at least an 1844 plan for a new pine-pit catalogued, but my reference is still earlier. However, I will have to wait another month!

Annabelle Hughes

Greenfingered Petworth?

My partner Judith and I have not lived in Petworth long enough to have known the town's Horticultural Society, long established and still fondly remembered. Keen gardeners ourselves, we felt we could at once cultivate our own interest and share that interest with others of a like mind. We are separate from the flourishing Petworth Community Garden but support its aims and are ready to help if requested. Our recently formed Gardening Club meets at the Leconfield Hall on the first Thursday of the month and we can expect to greet some twenty of our members, our total membership being now over thirty. Small beginnings perhaps, but we are growing (in both senses!). A typical meeting might comprise a brief welcome, news of recent projects, and an outside speaker talking about some aspect of gardening – recent examples are organic gardening, pruning fruit trees and a talk on the (locally-held) National Allium Collection. We usually include an outline of seasonal work in the garden and a general sharing of opinion and advice. Yes, we do need greater publicity, hence my talking to you, but the Observer newspaper is always helpful. I hope this article will draw attention to what we're trying to do, and certainly everyone is welcome at our gatherings. We've also helped in a more general way; tidying the Boys School grave in the Horsham Road, or preparing the War Memorial for Remembrance day. Petworth in Bloom is another initiative. Ultimately we might hope to enter the town in competition but we're a little off that at present – we only began in September. At the moment we must take first things first and grow the Gardeners' Club; without this backbone we cannot really proceed with confidence.

We now have an allotment of our own on the Station Road site, some sixty metres to the north of the Community Garden. On taking the plot over we built a new shed base and although we have overgrowth of high grass, eventually we'd hope to grow bulbs, seeds and shrubs for general improvement of communal areas in Petworth. Early days!

We keep in touch with members largely through E-mail. For us, the Gardeners' Club has to be above all about enjoyment, a fun night out, with gardening very much in mind. And with the Red Cross no longer offering a Petworth Secret Gardens event might not Club and Society work together to continue the walk? You say it was an integral part of the Society programme in its early years. I'm sure we could revive this event with any proceeds going to the Petworth Community Garden.

Michael Pengilly was talking to the Editor.

"It wasn't that she didn't remember ..."

Elsie Whitcomb died in 1974. Born in 1890, she never married and I do not think she was ever absent from Petworth for any length of time. She was the last of a very large family to live in what is now the House in Pound Street, just across the

road from Trowels. I was often away from Petworth in the late 1960s and Elsie would come over to sleep for the night. The Whitcomb family had been prominent, dominant perhaps, in Petworth church and choral circles in the earlier century and some had had influential positions on the Leconfield Estate. Elsie herself had worked in the Estate Office for years but was now retired. If in Elsie's earlier years Petworth had an 'establishment', then certainly the Whitcomb family had been part of it. By the late 1960s however, Petworth had changed, but Elsie perhaps had not.

I didn't write *Elegy for a Small Shop*[1] with Elsie particularly in mind, but I always feel her spirit informs or, perhaps presides, over some parts of it. This doesn't necessarily reflect Elsie but the remembrance of her would be on my mind. "She had come home and cried after the funeral. Virtually no one in church. Who remembered the old tradesmen? She would be the last of that privileged clique who had the coveted last right on the carousel"

The Whitcombs had been "thick" with "Mrs" Counley the legendary housekeeper at Petworth; indeed Mrs Counley had left her treasured scrapbook with the family. She had retired to live at Mrs Watson's in Stone House, High Street and died there just after the war. Mrs Watson like Fred Streeter had been a family friend of my grandparents. Was it Mrs Watson who gave me a book for Christmas *Carrots at Orchard End* or was it Mrs Briggs wife of Captain Briggs, the Leconfield Estate agent? Time blurs such distinctions. Mrs Watson was broad Scots and her late husband had worked with the hunters in the Petworth House stables. At the very least Elsie had been on the fringes of that brittle lost world. "It wasn't that she didn't remember, or even that what she remembered lacked interest, simply that she could no longer be bothered to remember it. The present was trial enough, the past baggage. Or perhaps it was that those who had shared that past with her were gone. You couldn't share it with those who had not been there. Their attitude was all wrong: enchanting it might be in retrospect but it was a mistaken enchantment: she knew only the real enchantment of having been there. Were the people who inhabited that world really larger than life? Surely no one, then or now could be larger than life?"

And Elsie would draw names, apparently at random, from that lost past – out of a metaphorical hat if you like. Miss Colquhoun always wore fancy hats. Was she something to do with the Rectory? Possibly even companion to Mrs Penrose? The sight of the rector's wife was failing in these last years before 1914. Years later Elsie remembered Miss Colquhoun coming back to Petworth on a visit. But when? No one seemed to remember. For some reason Miss Colquhoun and her hats stuck in my mind.

A while ago I was shown a few pages copied from a photograph album

Miss Colquhoun.
Two photographs.

spanning those last years before 1914 and the traumatic years that followed. In a socially stratified Petworth, families of a certain social standing usually had one. The album reflected life at North House in North Street, traditionally home to one of the Petworth doctors and at this time of Dr Charles Wilson, Charterhouse, Oxford, and St Thomas' Hospital. As a General Practitioner he seems to have had a special care for Tillington. He would be killed on the Western Front in 1918. The 1911 census has him living in some style at North House with his wife, young son, and a nurserymaid, cook and domestic servant. Clearly Miss Colquhoun was on easy terms with Dr Wilson, accompanying the family to a picnic at Bedham. Two photographs show her with and without her famous hats.

For Dr Wilson see Trevor Purnell's *Village Boys Still* (2016). There is a fascinating note on the background to Dr Wilson's memorial tablet in Tillington Church and an account of his earlier career and war service.

P.

1. Peter Jerrome: *Elegy for a Small* Shop (Window Press 2015). 100 numbered copies.

No internet presence!

Some years ago I corresponded with Peter Jerrome whilst rediscovering Petworth marble for some sculpture I was making. A note followed in the Society Magazine but we did not actually meet.

I later met Peter in connection with a new sculpture I was creating on the Downs and my thoughts appeared in a longer article in PSM. I also had the opportunity of explaining to the Society what I had in mind. Talking to Peter, he showed me a recent Window Press publication *Eleven Sussex Books* (2014), an introduction to such classic "Sussex" writers as John Halsham, Tickner Edwards and Rhoda Leigh. Before I left he gave me the latest Window Press production *Elegy for a small shop* (2015).

The Window Press run since 1976 by Peter Jerrome and Jonathan Newdick was quite new to me. Clearly it was not operated with a view to profit, and recent productions have been limited to 100 copies individually numbered and signed. The books are notable for Jonathan Newdick's meticulous design skills. The Press, Peter told me, did not seek reviews other than a casual notice in the local press and with books selling virtually at production cost there could be no discount available and no obvious method of distribution.

I looked up *The Window Press*, which has published his and other works since the 1970s. There was no visible presence in the digital world, no sign of its existence online for others to find. I then turned to the book, which I had intended to pass straight on to someone in the hope that they might give it a review. But on dipping into the contents, the spine became a little less stiff; I relaxed into it, to the end.

The very existence of the Press seemed to me to go to the root of a very modern, or perhaps, not so modern dilemma; we artists are left in a difficult position if we wish our works to be noticed in our lifetimes. Whether it be sculpture or drawing, poetry, prose or music, there is a balance necessary to find a middle ground where people may happen upon and have a chance to access the work. Otherwise, there is so much going on in modern life that no-one notices other than those closely-associated with the work's creation. And knowing how difficult it is to get people to view – let alone comment – on creative exploits, I started a review – or at least an appreciation – myself.

At first sight we have a simple account of operating a small shop on the edge of a small town. If you like, a reflection on the ongoing loss of village shops through the dissolution of their customer base. It was a process already insidiously under way when Peter's parents took over the shop in 1951. Not directly involved and at school, Peter would later reflect, "In those days the shop was simply a presence, an unquestioning, continuing background. If there was a rhythm I did not detect it, nor did I try." Peter had taken over in 1966, combining the shop with university lecturing and school teaching.

It soon appeared that the shop was a treasure house of conversation and memory.

> " The old lady in the sweet shop would toy with different pieces of Dolly Mixture to get the weight exactly right on the scales. He'd go in there on the way to school. Half way down the hill, it was. Listening to him you'd wonder why he remembered. After all, it was years and years ago. Now he was standing in a different shop, but children still came in for sweets: the choosing and the anticipation still seemed as important as the sweets themselves. Rain puckered the pavement puddles and the wind puffed them up with a malignant grey ambition.

Memories were like dolly mixtures: tiny pieces of experience. "

> " "¼ lb of coffee crunch." He might, perhaps, be in his late sixties. It is his weekly treat. Every Saturday afternoon he'd walk up the road. It was a long way; he lived in some kind of hostel. He had a lisping foreign accent and thick glasses. You'd feel there was a story there on which you could not intrude. Similarly it seemed wrong to try to enter into his childish enjoyment. "

" On the delivery round, people might take on another dimension. The radio's on. A woman talking about pronouns. It's dark in the kitchen and there is the smell of cooking swede. Are they really interested in the language programme? She answers the unspoken question by switching the voice off. No compunction. You almost feel for the voice, so casual is the movement. Even to have thought they were listening seems somehow indecorous. The old man breaks off a piece of tea-finger for the dog. The dog doesn't snatch, takes it and turns his head away to eat it. Meditative you might almost say. "

" He would retreat further into a lost past: his father, as a boy, unsettling the performing bears – were there ever more than one? – in the dosshouse yard. By next day they'd have moved on. Not his personal recollection, of course, but he did remember the old woman stumbling across the back yard to the W.C. It would be the middle of the night and the lantern cast a giant shadow. It was the dark where the lantern didn't penetrate that troubled him. Still did, at least in dreams. The old woman, it was said, spoke to the mice as they ran along the mantel-shelf. "

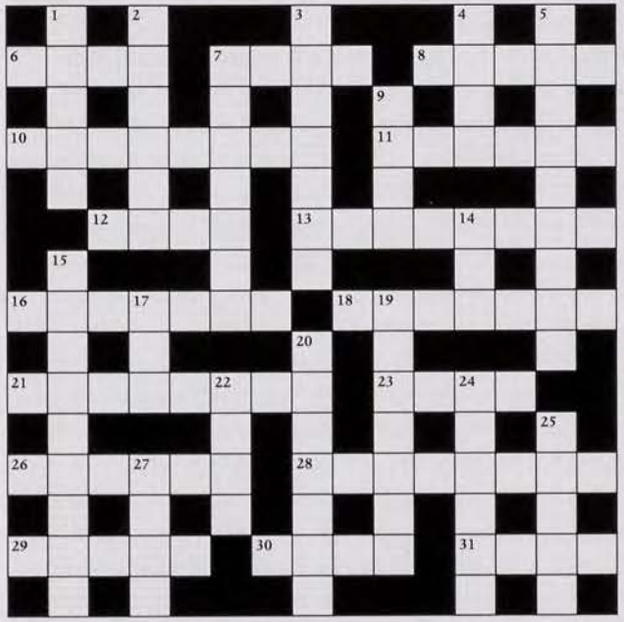
Or:

" It would be nice he thought, to go back to Oxford, to relive those years. But it was a lifetime ago. He'd need to be young again and that might be too much to ask even of a benevolent deity. Croquet on the college lawn … if just once more. The shepherds had taken their time coming from the west door and last year's Joseph was making a decidedly reluctant return. He didn't mind the offices. It didn't seem strange to say them with no one there. There was God, of course, but even he seemed more solitary with the passing years. The pair of them thinking of an unthinking parish. "

I talked to Peter about the Window Press and its apparent indifference to the media. He seemed largely unconcerned. It was important to put things on record, for the rest it was a matter of chance. Sometimes the books sold out, sometimes they didn't. "Elegy" wasn't really about small shops; it was about distilling experience. It was about memory and tradition in a small town, as it was dragged reluctantly into an alien world. It was, he said, whatever anyone was prepared to see in it.

Jon Edgar

ROYALTY IN SUSSEX CROSSWORD



5 & 24dn King who ordered the building of Brighton's Royal Pavilion (6,3,6)
7 Satirical cartoon or attack (7)
9 Distinctive clothing (4)
14 Hurried in a grand manner (3)
15 In a royal residence this could be thrones and banqueting tables! (9)
17 Was thrown in the sea during a notorious "party"! (3)
19 Became the next monarch (7)
20 In the National Anthem we ask God to scatter them! (7)
22 A tiny bit (4)
24 see 5dn
25 A court official (5)
27 Daughter of James II (4)

ACROSS
6 A trio of Biblical kings (4)
7 Richard I had the heart of one (4)
8 An important battle was fought here between Henry III and Simon de Montfort (5)
10 Stripped of weapons (8)
11 He enjoyed a sleigh ride through snowy Brighton with Queen Victoria (6)
12 Sport of princes! (4)
13 Charles II travelled through this village when fleeing to France (8)
16 A favourite pursuit of Henry VIII when visiting Petworth House (7)
18 Too many banquets made Henry VIII and the Prince Regent like this! (7)
21 Historically the Sussex coast has always been vulnerable to this (8)
23 Lace would have adorned this part of a royal coat (4)
26 The last of this Royal house to visit Sussex was 27dn (6)
28 King Edward VII opened a sanatorium here – now sadly gone (8)
29 Give permission (5)
30 The monarch has this role in church and state (4)
31 Connecting lines in a family (4)

DOWN
1 Spanish town famously captured by the English during Elizabeth I's reign (5)
2 Emperor of Japan (6)
3 Henry VIII, Edward VI and Elizabeth I were all entertained here (7)
4 Bay, symbolising glory, is an example (4)

SOLUTION TO CASTLES CROSSWORD

ACROSS
6 Egremont, 8 Toga, 10 Sea, 11 Amberley, 13 Volumes, 14 Ammo, 18 Furies, 19 Chaise, 21 Limp, 22 Stephen, 25 De Braose, 27 Sty, 29 Tilt, 30 Pevensey

DOWN
1 Lewes, 2 Arm, 3 Invader, 4 Boar, 5 Gatehouse, 7 Midhurst, 9 Ebb, 12 Bodiam, 15 Moated, 16 Oubliette, 17 A Captive, 20 Steeped, 23 Won, 24 Stays, 26 Rule, 28 Ash

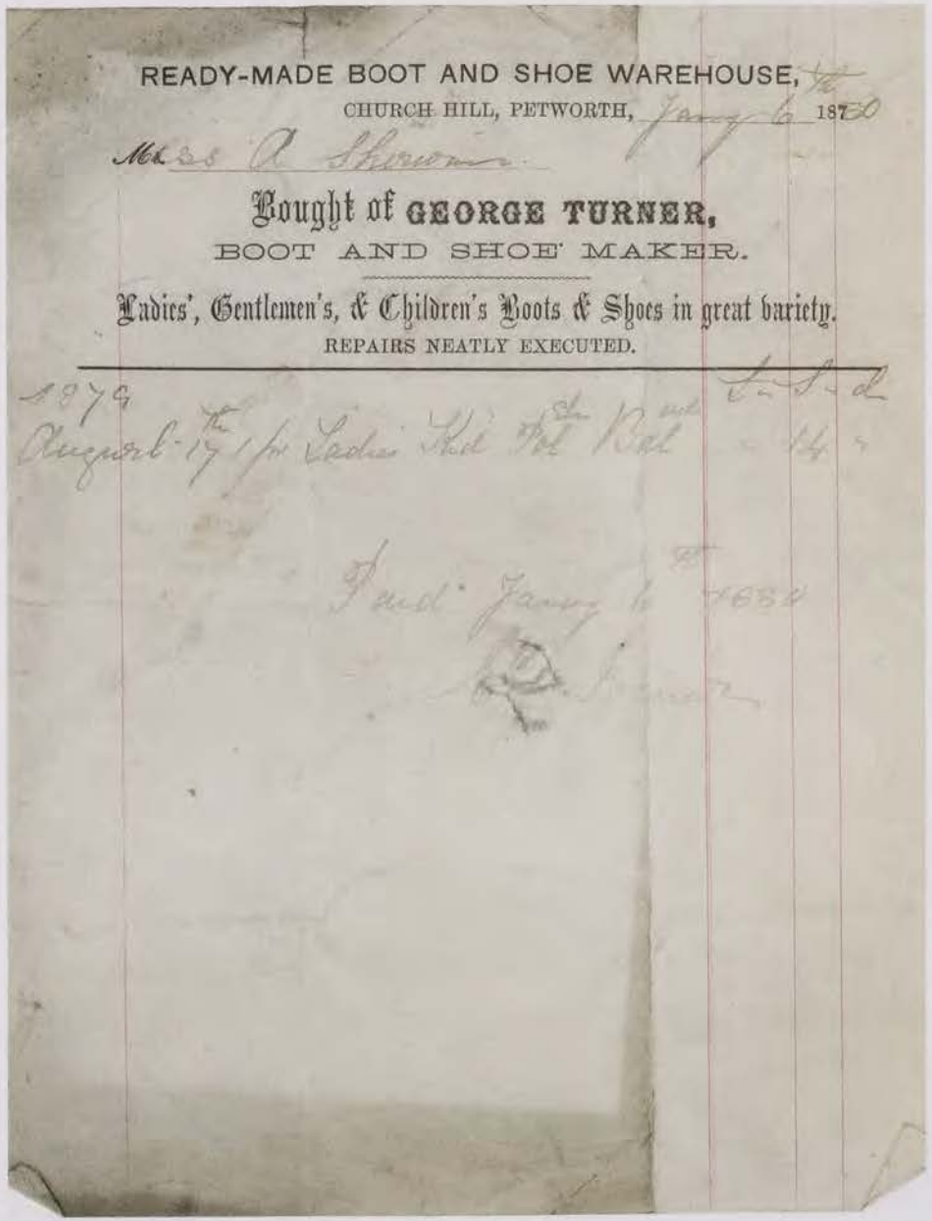
The 203rd at Petworth

Limbo, as its name suggests, is on the edge, neither in Petworth Park nor entirely outside of it. Barely a mile north of Petworth and just a scattering of cottages clustered around a farm, the tiny settlement is remarkable only by its name which has both captivated and confused historians for many years. To the west of Limbo and inside the park wall is the Pheasant Copse, a heavily wooded area, it serves as the back door to Stag Park which itself lies immediately to the north. Accessed by a single lodge the copse is well known locally as being home to thousands of servicemen and women during World War II, and in particular those who took part in the disastrous Dieppe Raid of August 1942, and sometime later the more successful Operation Overlord, or D-Day as most of us know it.

A footpath follows the gravel road which runs through the copse, now tranquil, little remains of its former identity; the iron clad Nissen huts have been bulldozed or simply rusted away into the undergrowth. The huge concrete water tower that stood so long beside the park wall, a resolute relic of our recent past, has now been demolished. Concrete tank traps, a seemingly pointless last defence against the invasion, are buried beneath the spongy turf, scrape away the surface and huge tracks laid to support the heavy military vehicles can be found as resilient as the day they were built, no pot holes here. A single pre-cast hut – not Nissen – stands just inside the Limbo Lodge gate, its survival a testament to the sturdy construction and its continued use as a forester's workshop.

Memories of being stationed at Petworth, and in particular The Pheasant Copse, are relatively scarce. Most service personnel remained only for a short time before moving to more permanent camps elsewhere, or indeed the continent. There are however a series of recollections by members of a U.S. Military Hospital which record the period before they embarked from America right the way through until they were demobilized at the end of the war. The lengthy accounts refer only briefly to the period at Petworth and quite often not at all, however what little reminiscences survive reveal a faded picture of a crucially important period of our history and how the Pheasant Copse played a part in it.

By Christmas 1943 preparations were beginning for D-Day and the whole of the south coast was becoming a vast holding area for allied troops. At Petworth the Canadians had more or less taken over The Pheasant Copse while the British 27th Armoured Brigade had set up home in the neighbouring Park creating a huge embarkation area and tank holding camp. Meanwhile on the 29th December 1943 the 203rd General Hospital embarked from Staten Island, New York State upon the troop ship USAT Brazil bound for an unknown destination. The ships list for the hospital was made up of 490 enlisted men and 100 nurses plus officers and


READY-MADE BOOT AND SHOE WAREHOUSE,
CHURCH HILL, PETWORTH, 187
Bought of GEORGE TURNER,
BOOT AND SHOE MAKER.
Ladies', Gentlemen's, & Children's Boots & Shoes in great variety.
REPAIRS NEATLY EXECUTED.

Invoice of George Turner, shoemaker. Church Hill Petworth 1880.
Once a town of individual working shoemakers and repairers, Petworth, it seems, now imports its footwear from outside. The use of pencil here and elsewhere will continue.

M

We keep the Largest Variety of BOOTS AND SHOES,

Bot. of **BACON & Co.**

of Reliable Makes, at Prices to suit all.

CHURCH STREET, PETWORTH.

TERMS CASH.

Date	*Exd. by*			
Tan Boots,				
Tan Shoes,				
Plimsolls,				
Glacie Kid Shoes,				
Glacie Kid Boots,				
Slippers,				
Evening Shoes in large variety.				
Men's Hand-sewn Boots & Shoes, in light and heavy makes.				
The Sensible				
The Supremus				
The Scholars				
The Public School				

Bacon and Co were soon to leave their traditional premises in St Mary's churchyard and move to Saddlers Row (now Garden Antiques).
A pencil note on the reverse gives a date of October 1897.

DON'T MISS THIS!!

A "Gem" Tea Set will be

Given with 1-lb. 2/- Tea,

FOR EIGHT DAYS ONLY,

Commencing FRIDAY & SATURDAY, September 7th & 8th, ending SATURDAY, Sept. 15th.

ALSO THE FOLLOWING EXTRAORDINARY PRESENTS

WITH ½-lb. **2/-** TEA	**A Pair of Handsome Flower Vases.**	WITH ¼-lb. **2/-** TEA.	**A Useful Jug, or a Wooden Wash Board**

Double Cheques given if Preferred. Ordinary Cheques not available for above.

INTERNATIONAL TEA CO.,

New Street, Petworth.

Printed at the INTERNATIONAL TEA Co.'s Steam Printing Works, Mitre Square, London, E.C.

The International Stores would remain in New Street in premises adjoining the Red Lion (now The Leconfield) until the 1920s when they moved to the present Co-operative premises in Market Square. This flyer will be from the 1890s.

THE

PETWORTH BALL

WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE

TOWN HALL, PETWORTH,

On Wednesday, December 29th, 1909.

DANCING 9.30.

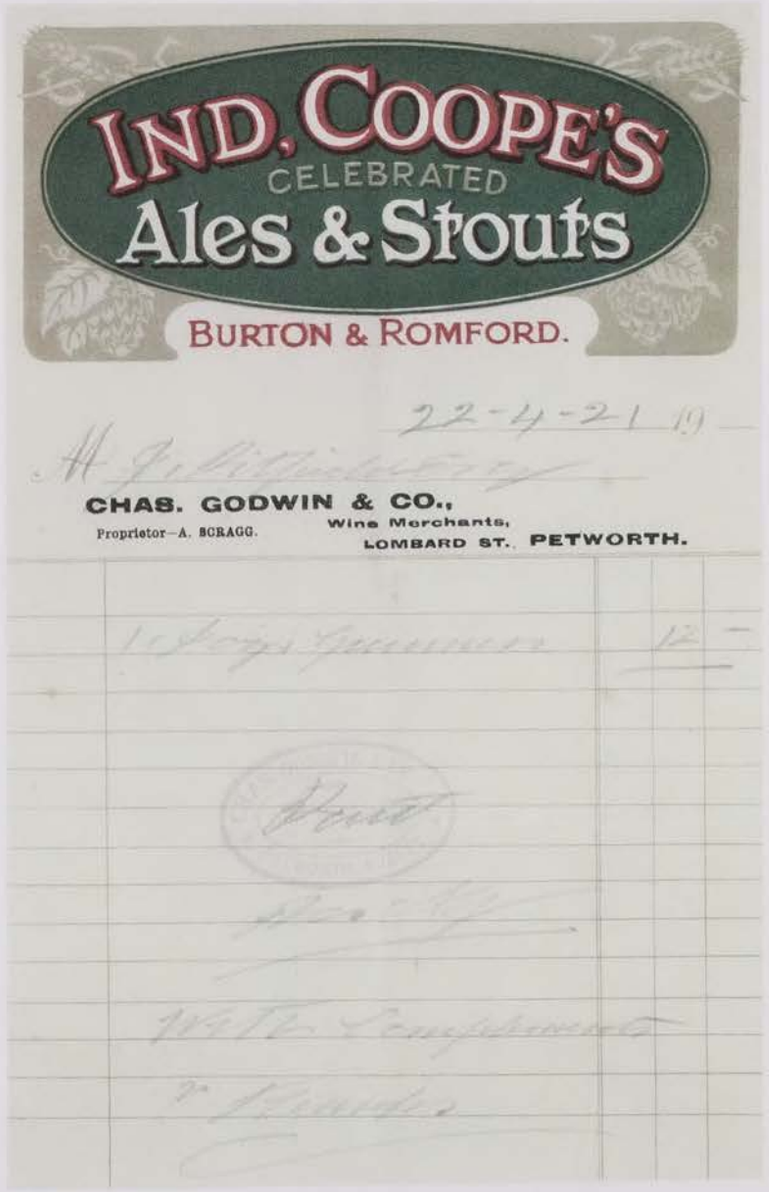
Stewards:

L. L. Constable, Esq.,	C. C. Lacaita, Esq.,
Douglas Hall, Esq.,	Col. Kenyon Mitford,
Major Helme,	Col. Simpson,
George H. Johnstone, Esq.,	Col. Skinner,
Col. Barrington Kennett,	The Earl Winterton,
The Lord Leconfield,	A. P. Wyatt, Esq.

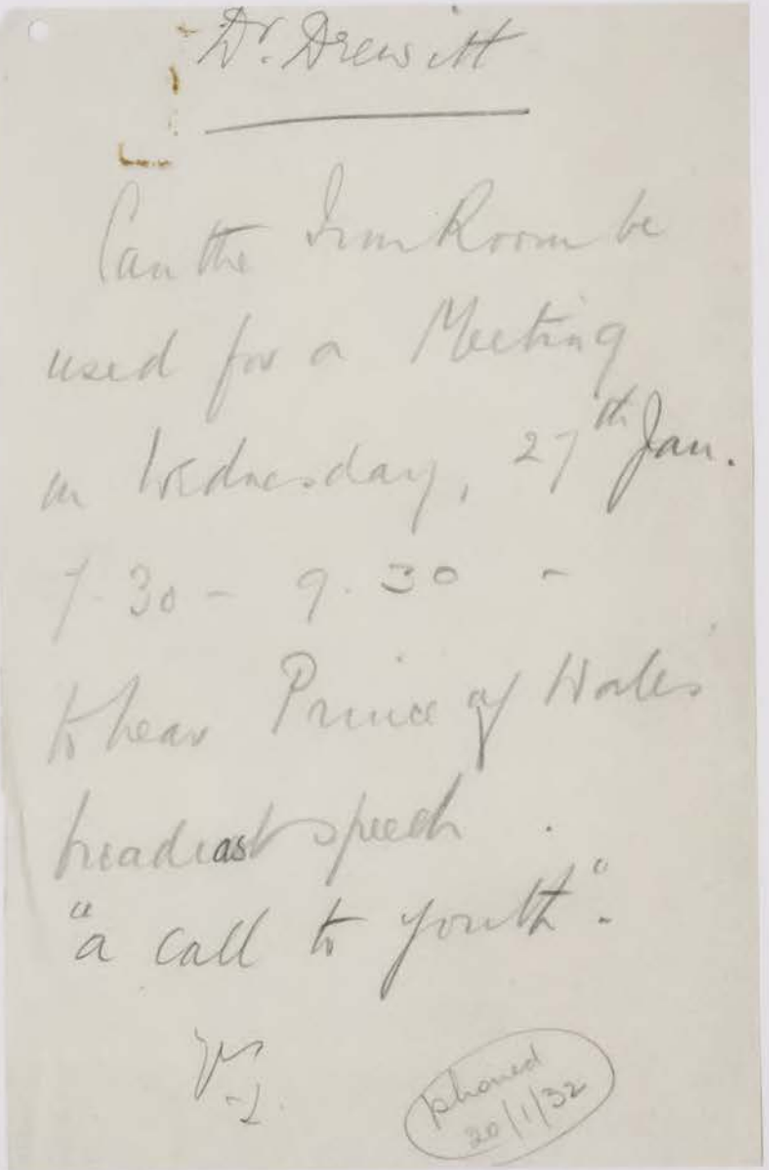
Tickets--15s.

Of MRS. OSBORNE BARWELL,
Barkfold House,
Billingshurst.

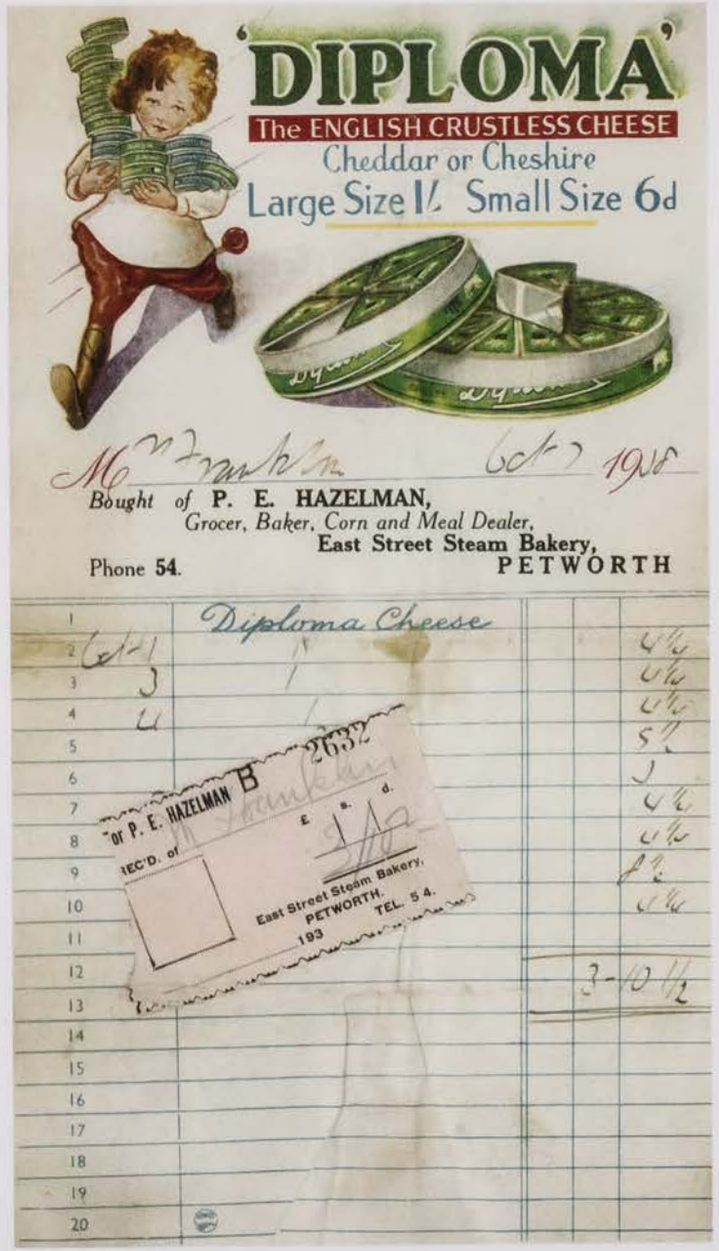
The list of stewards alone indicates that the Petworth Ball was an exclusive affair. The Swan Inn and the Town Hall would be connected by a canopy spanning the road between them.



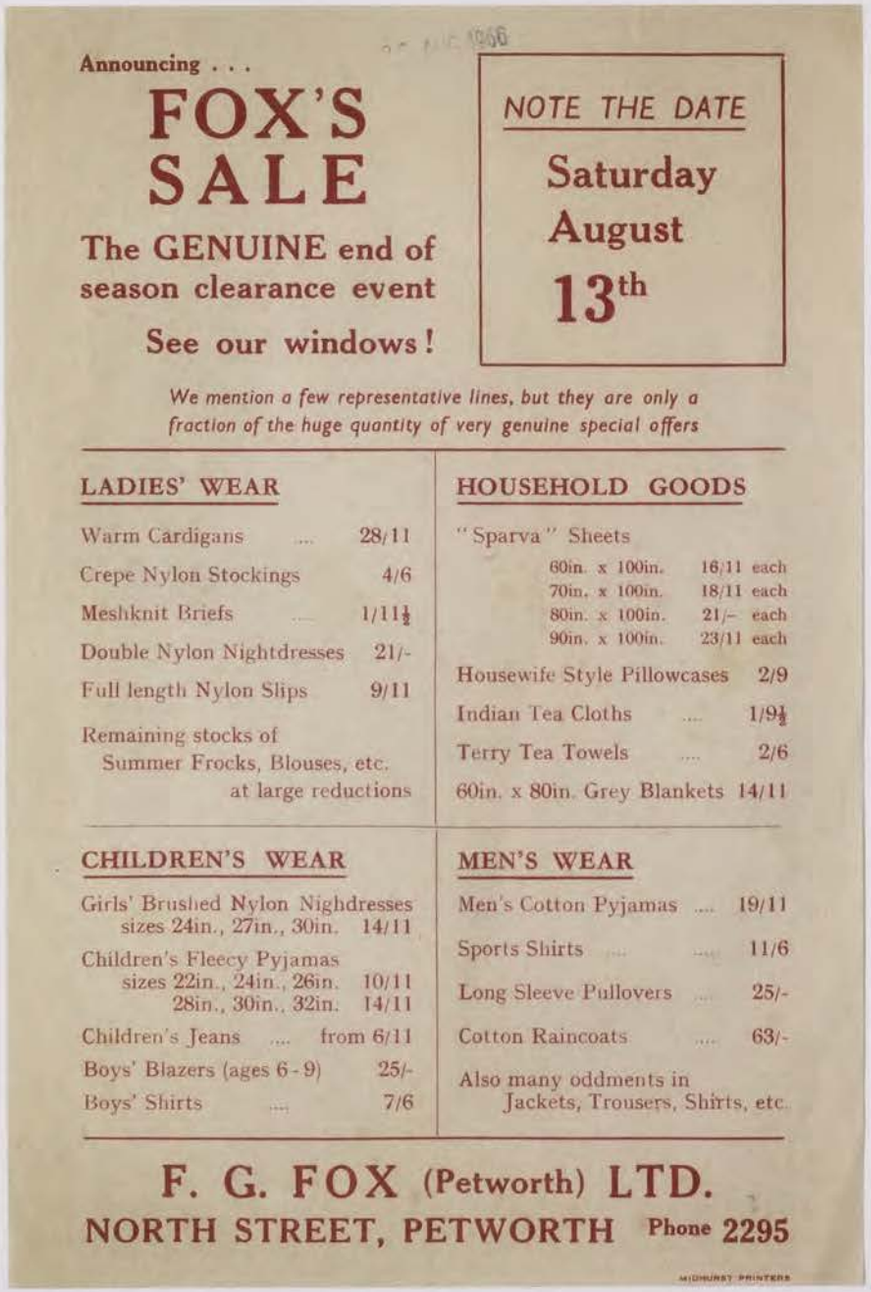
Under various names Godwins the wine merchants had operated on the north-east side of Lombard Street since at least the early years of the nineteenth century. The premises have now been converted to residential use. Invoices from between the wars are much less common than these from the period before 1914.



The old insularity is threatened. Compare George Garland's famous study of the 'characters' listening-in at the Old Square Tavern in Market Square in the 1920s. Here Mr Griffith, his lordship's land agent seeks permission for a radio transmission in the Iron Room, originally a temporary replacement for St Mary's. It lay to the north of the present NatWest Bank premises. Lord Leconfield signals his agreement at the foot.



Messrs. Hazelman occupied the corner site in Middle Street that is now The Hungry Guest. October 1938.



Announcing . . .

FOX'S SALE

The GENUINE end of season clearance event

See our windows!

NOTE THE DATE

Saturday August 13th

We mention a few representative lines, but they are only a fraction of the huge quantity of very genuine special offers

LADIES' WEAR

Warm Cardigans	28/11
Crepe Nylon Stockings	4/6
Meshknit Briefs	1/11½
Double Nylon Nightdresses	21/-
Full length Nylon Slips	9/11
Remaining stocks of Summer Frocks, Blouses, etc. at large reductions	

HOUSEHOLD GOODS

"Sparva" Sheets	
60in. x 100in.	16/11 each
70in. x 100in.	18/11 each
80in. x 100in.	21/- each
90in. x 100in.	23/11 each
Housewife Style Pillowcases	2/9
Indian Tea Cloths	1/9½
Terry Tea Towels	2/6
60in. x 80in. Grey Blankets	14/11

CHILDREN'S WEAR

Girls' Brushed Nylon Nighdresses sizes 24in., 27in., 30in.	14/11
Children's Fleecy Pyjamas sizes 22in., 24in., 26in.	10/11
28in., 30in., 32in.	14/11
Children's Jeans	from 6/11
Boys' Blazers (ages 6-9)	25/-
Boys' Shirts	7/6

MEN'S WEAR

Men's Cotton Pyjamas	19/11
Sports Shirts	11/6
Long Sleeve Pullovers	25/-
Cotton Raincoats	63/-
Also many oddments in Jackets, Trousers, Shirts, etc.	

F. G. FOX (Petworth) LTD.

NORTH STREET, PETWORTH Phone 2295

MIDHURST PRINTERS

Messrs. F. G. Fox on the corner of Rectory Lane announce a "clearance sale" August 1966.

various other members of staff. The voyage, accompanied by a convoy of over 100 ships, was without incident other than some cases of seasickness.

Just 9 days after leaving America the 'Brazil' arrived off the coast of Scotland and a few days later the 203rd was heading south by train and the long journey to Sussex. The nurses were not impressed with what they found at Petworth. The Nissen huts had clearly been well used prior to their arrival and the first task was to clean them up. It was suspected that the huts had been used for target practice during an earlier conflict though in reality they had been home to thousands of servicemen who had passed through the copse on their way to embarkation camps and then Europe. Mattresses were frequently complained about, straw stuffed and 'as hard as biscuits' they barely offered any protection from the hard boards of the old cots. If sleep was eventually found it would be frequently disturbed by flashes of light and vibrations caused by bombing raids over London and the suburbs. Blackouts for the windows had to be made, cantankerous stoves mastered and worst of all the English beer drunk. The long walks into Petworth to visit The Angel or The Swan, or somewhat closer The Horseguards at Tillington where the girls would cram into the small backroom huddled around the fire to try and get some warmth back into frozen bodies. Together with the normal cold of an English winter the stay at Petworth was marked by incessant rain.

Ist Lt. Harriett McRay LeCours: 17 January 1944

Somewhere in England, actually this was Petworth, Sussex, our first stop in England after disembarking in Scotland and traveling south).

Got some airmail stamps today. V-Mail is supposed to be faster but those little bitty sheets don't give much space. But I can tell you that we live in a very damp place these days and the weather is much on the wet side. We do calisthenics in the mornings beneath some big trees – oaks, I think, and they drip water down on us. I guess those exercises are supposed to keep us in shape because we don't have much to do here. I thought once we hit land after the boat trip over, we' d be busy at once, but now I know what they mean by the Army saying "Hurry to Wait."

17 January 1944. We live in quarters of various sizes and my friend, Esther Meng, who is always next to me in the alphabetical line-up, and I are lucky because we share part of a Nissen hut. These are buildings built of corrugated steel which have concrete floors – named after a British engineer, Mr. Nissen. We have a little stove for heat and a couple of very nice enlisted men keep us supplied with coal. The coal produces a lot of soot and they have had to clean the chimney a couple of times.

We sleep on wooden beds with straw filled mattresses. They are pretty hard to sleep on and not too warm. I am glad to have the hot water bottle that you told me to bring. That

with my canteen filled with hot water, help put a little warmth in the GI blankets we use. I would guess the temperature is not so cold, but there is so much dampness that it really penetrates.

19 January 1944. Yesterday we had our first pass and went into town, riding a double-decker bus. The countryside is lovely with history written all over it. Funny little houses with crooked roofs which appear very picturesque.

We can buy no food or clothing so it doesn't leave much to shop for. But I bought a book on the British Empire for 7 shillings 6 pence and a calendar for 9 pence, some vinegar to use for hair rinse, some wave set and a glass. All these things I carried in my pockets and arms all day since there are no sacks in the stores. Then we ate dinner in a small café, which had no heat of course. We shivered but we were hungry and had a thin slice of boiled ham with parsley sauce, something that tasted like flour mixed with bacon grease, mashed potatoes, Brussel sprouts, soup, a roll with no butter, tea and a jam tart. Cost: 2 shillings 10 pence.

People are so nice to us, and we notice there is no big rush to get places. People placidly queue up for a bus and there is no pushing or shoving. Some just stand and read their newspaper while waiting. Why are Americans always so impatient???

22 January 1944. My roommate went to town and brought back a little brush to keep the stove and hearth clean, some water softener, a clothes line and some toilet paper! The latter is not very good but every time we go to the latrine we carry it with us and bring it back. She also bought some sort of cellucotten to use for Kleenex as they don't have any in the PX [Post Exchange – similar to the British NAAFI] and we get only a box a month anyway. Did I tell you we washed our shirts by hand and then ironed the collars, cuffs and front part with a canteen full of hot water, it worked fine. Someday the rest of our belongings will catch up with us. P.S. We had an orange for breakfast.

25 January 1944. It's Christmas in England tonight! Your package came and I have to admit I am a wee bit homesick. Thanks so much. The fellows had to take the chimney down again and it was loaded with soot. We are burning compressed coal dust now since the coal supply is gone, very dirty. But I have learned to be a good fireman. Some of us went to tea last night given for a few officers and nurses by the Women's Institute of a nearby village Petworth. The people were so nice to us and want to be helpful. They are very grateful to the US and think there is no one quite like FDR!

Not everyone felt the same way about the Americans stationed at Petworth, feelings were certainly mixed. Roy Standing (They Were Happy Days. PSM 139) recalls an earlier period even before the arrival of the Canadians and the ill-fated Dieppe Raid. A young lad, he was living with his parents at Limbo Lodge when the Pheasant Copse camp was first established. "1941 saw the Americans moving into the Park and the adjacent Pheasant Copse. Needless to say Limbo was a hive of activity during the war and the local families did well out of the troops. While we took full advantage of anything that was available from the troops Dad was the first to admit that he didn't like the Americans. He always blamed them for an incident at Vimy during the First World War when he lost a lot of mates. Father would frequently remark 'they weren't no good in the first war and I don't suppose they'll be much use in this one either'. Fortunately Mother had a more sympathetic nature and would often invite in a soldier who she thought could do with some company. Her philosophy being that he was somebody's son".

The 203rds stay at the Pheasant Copse was short – barely four weeks – and by the middle of February the whole hospital had moved to a location near Swindon and into more permanent barracks. Of course the long anticipated Operation Overlord would begin with the D-Day landings on June 6th and the hospital was set up to receive many of the expected casualties. While the final days leading up to the invasion would mean endless hours of enforced idleness or rehearsing drills, there was a sense of anticipation, and of course immediately following D-Day the hospital was almost overwhelmed. Lt. LeCours recounts that in a single day over 300 casualties went through the wards. By the end of July the fighting was moving further into Europe and the hospital needed to keep up with the action and so once again the 203rd was packed up and moved across the Channel and eventually to Paris where it remained until early November 1945, and having dealt with an estimated 65,000 patients the unit was deactivated and the staff returned to The United States.

Miles Costello

- Further information regarding the 203rd General Hospital can be found at http://hospitals.med-dept.com/203rd.General.Hospital
- See also Jumbo Taylors excellent account of 'Some Military Remains in The Pheasant Copse' in PSM 22, 1980.
- The drawing is 'The Pheasant Copse Camp' by Eugene B. Wittlake.

Saturday could be a long day

It was, I suppose, 1938. My first job, giving an income that might range from nothing at all to sixpence a week, involved delivering parcels of footwear for Mr Letchford, proprietor of "Bacons" the Boot and Shoe shop on the north west corner of Saddlers Row as it adjoins Park Road. The shop is now Garden Antiques. I worked every evening Monday to Saturday earning a halfpenny or a penny for parcels within the town proper. A delivery to Byworth or Tillington might pay twopence. For extended trips of this kind I'd borrow someone's bike if I could. There seemed no hard and fast rule about payment; it rested very much at the discretion of Mr Arch Pullen who managed the shop for Mr Letchford. Sixpence would give me enough for a visit to Stan Collins' newly built Regal cinema in the Tillington Road (now the Youth Centre).

I was, of course, still at school, but was soon looking for a "proper" job and I found one at Major Syer's, the outfitters on the north east corner of the Square (later H. E. Wakeford). Hours were 4.30 to 7.30 Monday to Friday and Saturday morning 9 to 12, returning at 4.30. In double summer time I might well work later. My duties were at once general and specific. First I had to clean the Major's work room upstairs. Two buckets, one used to wet the cloth he was pressing: the other saving him a long trip down to the alley at the back. I suppose a mistake might have fixed colours rather more permanently but the Major didn't make mistakes of that kind.

As I had with Mr Letchford, I delivered items purchased at the shop, even going as far as Fittleworth. I much preferred this part of the job to routine dusting and cleaning. Friday made for a long day as the shop, like so many others, opened well into the evening and had to be swept out when we were finally closed. I used a material rather like a mixture of sand and sawdust, intended to stop the dust rising and called "Dustmo". The problem with it was that it collected in the cracks and crannies of a well-worn floor and was difficult to pick up with a dustpan and brush, the more so in the shop's murky lighting. Always addressed simply as "Boy" I would sometimes be berated by my immediate boss Mr Archibald Standen ("Arch"). Major Syer himself seemed a man of few words.

"Dustmo" had the unfortunate habit of appearing visible to Mr Standen but all too invisible to me. Instruction or advice was no part of what might in modern terms be described as "work description". After a while I realised that the run of the floor boards and their splintering grooves ran to the limit of Mr Standen's vision at the eastern (Lombard Street) end of the shop, where, hidden by a tailor's dummy, there was a trap in the floor, when once collected, the "Dustmo" could be swept in and thence into next door's cellar. By the time the ruse was finally

Mr Arch Pullen.

discovered, if it ever was, I was long left. In fact both Mr Standen and the Major, if a little gruff, were very kind. Mr Standen would give me socks that were faulty or low grade, handkerchiefs and socks at Christmas, and, in later years a good discount on purchases. In fact I bought all my clothes from them until I left Petworth in 1950.

Saturday could be a long hard day at the tailor's, even compared with the long Friday evening. First I had to wash the shop windows. Cold water, chammy leather, and soft cloth to polish. This involved working from a rickety step ladder on a sloping pavement and hanging on at times to a bucket of water with one hand, clutching a wet chammy with the other and feeling water running up my arm. In the winter particularly the water could be very cold, especially after a hard frost. Those early years of the war seemed especially cold to a boy of thirteen still in short trousers. The windows and general cleaning took most of the morning. No tea-break, let alone tea! Mr Standen would go off down to Golden Square to "Wises" (or was it perhaps "Tunks" by then?) leaving the Major briefly in charge. In fact the Major often didn't appear at all. If he did he'd revive his spirits from a hip flask, not unusual for the many retired Indian Army men in and around Petworth at the time.

By 12.30 I'd be home for dinner, never "lunch" in those days. It was Saturday the

and I'd be due back at the shop by 4.30 so the afternoon was something and nothing. I've often thought about this: by the time I'd had dinner I could perhaps go for a bike ride or perhaps a solitary walk. Solitary? Well, the point was that if I met up with school friends I'd risk dirtying my clothes before I returned to the shop in the afternoon. Also I was preserving my energy, for Saturday was a long evening. It might be 9.30 of a summer night before I left. According to the work ethic of the time, the humbler the employee the less he was permitted to sit down even if there was nothing to do.

If I were to say, "I've finished dusting," I would be told, "Start again" or, better perhaps, "Go and keep out of sight." I was glad to get home with my pay and to bed after a long day. After a year, greatly daring, I asked for a pay rise and, to my astonishment, was given a twenty-five per cent increase to five shillings a week. I worked for Major Syer until my thirteenth birthday.

At this point there came an opportunity to change my hours of work and receive the same income. This involved an hour 4.30 to 5.30 in the late afternoon, Monday to Friday with two hours on Saturday morning added to the usual afternoon work. The job was fairly routine: I had to feed and clean a dozen chickens for Lady Leconfield's chauffeur, Mr Brown, who lived in the flat above the Estate garage in the North Street Cow Yard. It was good to have Saturday a little freer, not to speak of the long evening. It's strange that I can remember my various after school jobs, but little about the day's happenings at school.

This would be my last part time job. In April 1942 I went to work at the Carpenter's Shop in the Leconfield Estate Yard, under Mr Arthur Godsalve, clerk of the works.

From notes by the late Jim Taylor at Thompsons Hospital.

The Vicar's daughters
Rose and Agnes Russell Weekes

Between them, Agnes Russell Weekes and her sister Rose wrote at least forty-six novels, as well as many short stories and serials, which were published here, and in America, Australia, and South Africa, during the first half of the 20th century; and yet until now almost nothing has been known about either of them.. There is a brief item about them in an issue of Sussex County Magazine, an even briefer note in the Slindon book, and a curiously confusing entry about Agnes in the Oxford companion to Edwardian fiction, but aside from mentioning a few novels, none say much about either of the sisters or their family background, other than that Rose was the eldest and they lived in Slindon. On-line literary research archives have even less to say, and none give a bibliography.

The entry in the Edwardian fiction book notes that they wrote The Tragic Prince together and that it "concerns the disputed succession to the throne of the Ruritanian princedom of Neuberg" – but has nothing else about that, other than what is in the entry for Ruritanian romance.[1]

Ruritanian romance is a sub-genre of fantasy fiction, and although I have not read *The Tragic Prince*, it seems unlikely that it is actually set in Ruritania because this was an imaginary place created by a different writer, and because it is not mentioned in other novels that Agnes and Rose wrote set in or near the equally imaginary Neuberg. Ruritanian stories are always set in a fictitious country or region in the middle of Europe. The genre takes its name from the land called Ruritania which features in the most well known example of this kind of fantasy: *The Prisoner of Zenda* by Anthony Hope, published in 1894 – though there were a handful of slightly earlier novels of this type, notably *Prince Otto* by Robert Louis Stevenson. Ruritanian stories involve romance and adventure, castles, sword-fights, duels, horse-riding, treacherous usurpers and so forth, and generally the story revolves around someone from a lowly background, usually English, who becomes mixed-up in the courtly intrigues or is discovered to be a long lost heir to the throne.

A number of writers contributed novels to the genre, including Elinor Glyn, P.G. Wodehouse, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Leslie Charteris, J.B. Priestly, and Winston Churchill, but by the 1930s the trend had run out of steam and almost vanished. The 1955 film 'The Mouse That Roared' has a very Ruritanian setting and plot, and the influence of Ruritanian fantasy is also noticeable in the 'Game Of Thrones' series.

But, to come back to Agnes and Rose Weekes, what's interesting about them in this context is that *The Tragic Prince* (1912) is not the only Ruritanian novel they wrote set in or near the imaginary Neuberg. There are also: *The City of Lilies* (1923); *The Lily and the Sword* (1929); *White Hands Cannot Offend* (1930); *The Emerald Necklace* (1934); *The Affair at The Vere Arms* (1935); and *Clarefontaine* (1941). These books often mention characters who feature in others of the series, and there are recurrent themes too, notably those involving captives and prisoners and a group of bohemian revolutionaries known as The League.

Some of the other books the sisters wrote are set in Spain, particularly on the island of Majorca, and it seems they often holidayed there until the Spanish Civil War. Neither of them seems to have written anything autobiographical, yet they also wrote a few novels set in England, and it is in these that we probably read their memories of home and their old haunts, particularly in the evocative

descriptions of country scenery – wherever the story is supposed to be take place. They lived in Slindon, yes, and they both died there too, but that isn't where they were from.

Their father, Walter Weekes was born circa 1835 in Devon, the youngest of five children. By his mid-twenties he was working as a Maths Tutor. His brother was ordained in 1854 and worked as a priest in Pembrokeshire, and Walter himself was ordained in 1867.[2] In January 1868 he married Emily Helen Blundell Shury who was from Middlesex.[3] They moved to Warton near Birmingham, which was Walter's first parish as priest, and it was here that Henry Wilson and then Helen Mary were born, but in 1871 the family moved to Rochester in Kent, when Walter was made Minor Precentor and Sacrist at Rochester Cathedral.

Rose Kirkpatrick was born in 1874, and Agnes Russell in 1880, both at Rochester; but in 1881 their father became vicar at the little village of Sutton at Hone, when the preceding vicar retired, and the family moved into the vicarage there. Here, near the River Darenth in north Kent is where Rose and Agnes had their childhood and youth, and when we read wistful descriptions of the English countryside in novels such as *The Laurensons* and *A Fool in the Forest*, we can be fairly certain that whatever part of the country the book is supposed to be set in, it is actually memories of the countryside of their youth that they are recalling, in the enamelled meads of the silver Darenth – and that is not surprising, as they lived there for about twenty-six years. Indeed, out of those of their books I've read, whether set in England or Spain or Neuberg, all feature characters who are aged between seventeen and late twenties, mostly siblings and cousins – which suggests the stories are possibly semi-autobiographical fantasies of their youth. A number of their novels also feature brothers or cousins in the army, and/or brothers or fathers who are vicars.[5]

Henry joined the Royal Engineers in 1888 and became a Lieutenant in 1892. In 1894 he married Katherine Harman, who was from Cork. Their daughter Rona was born in Karachi, India though, where Henry's regiment was stationed. He went on to become a Colonel and was awarded an OBE and the DSO. He retired in the early 1920s and the family lived at Gillingham, which is also in northern Kent. His sister Helen married a barrister called Walter Cook in 1900, and they lived in northern Kent too, at Sydenham. Curiously, the American edition of *Clair De Lune* (1922) is dedicated to Helen, but the later English one is not. The American edition also has this verse, which I assume is by Agnes, beneath the dedication:

> In memory of the memories we share
> Wide sunny rooms; the cuckoo's April call;
> The silver Darenth rippling through its fair
> Enamelled meads; the scent of flowers that fall.

Very little is known about Rose, other than that she wrote fiction and also collaborated with Agnes writing some novels and even short stories. Generally, anyone who has written about these two seems to consider Agnes to have been the more significant, probably because from 1909 onwards she was the editor of some of a series of Shakespeare's plays, and also editor of various books to do with such literary figures as Keats, Shelley, Scot, Addison, Milton, Dickens and others. One would assume that she too wrote some poetry, but the single verse quoted above is all I could find.

She had matriculated in the summer of 1898, and then taken University of London examinations, although she studied at home.[4] She was awarded Bachelor of Arts, and Master of Arts. Her first novel was published in 1899, *Prisoners of War*, as by A. Boyson Weekes – although Rose had written some of it as well. Then in 1903 Rose had a short story published, and in 1904 her novel *Love in Chief* came out, as did *Yarborough the Premier* by Agnes, and they both had lots of short stories published over the next few years in The Smart Set, Lady's Realm, Harper's, The Grand, and other periodicals and newspapers.

However that period was not a good time for the family. Their father's brother had died in 1895, and in 1900 his sister Amelia's daughter died, followed in 1905 by Amelia as well. Then towards the end of 1906 Walter's health began to deteriorate, and in March the following year he collapsed while preaching a sermon. He stopped being the vicar and became the church clerk instead, and the family left the vicarage and moved to a house in Clapham. But in December 1907 he died, and sometime afterwards, Rose and Agnes and their mother moved to Cambridge, where their cousin Henrietta was living. In 1915, their mother's only sibling, Augustus Hutton died in New Zealand, and she died three years later.[6]

> The Reverend Bene't Hood (he was a Cambridge man, and liked to spell his name accurately, with its apostrophe) had been rector at Fairholme for five-and-twenty years. His cure was a handful of sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth century flint-and-brick cottages with licheny slate roofs, lying on the south slope of the South Downs, six miles from the sea, eight from a library, four from a station, and something like a thousand from town. Behind the village the hills took three miles to climb to their full height of eight hundred feet; lovely, lonely hills, crowned and garlanded with beechwoods, a dozen square miles of wild country traversed by nothing more disturbing than a farm lane. Here grew cowslips, primroses, and orchids; wild rose and rock rose; thyme and marjoram and sweetbriar; Canterbury bells and harebells and rampions blue as gentians; the pink-and-sapphire gaieties of centaury and bugloss, and acres of the rosebay willowherb, which

clothed the slopes like a mantle of crimsom velvet embroidered in silver. Margaret Hood could never make up her mind which of the months was the loveliest. She had been born at Fairholme rectory; the Downs had enfolded her young life as the calyx enfolds the rosebud and she was never quite happy when she was away from them.
(*Upstairs Downstairs and* – 1932)

When Rose and Agnes came to live in Sussex is not known. Henrietta had never married, and when she died in 1923, this may have prompted the sisters to consider living somewhere else. They moved into a cottage called Gassons in Slindon, Sussex, where Hilaire Belloc's mother had lived until her death in 1925 – but the earliest I can definitely place them there is 1930. Yet this means that at least fifteen of their novels were written at Slindon, including two of the Neuberg series, and that the fictitious village of Fairholme, which features in the oddly titled Upstairs Downstairs and – is probably based on Slindon.[7]

Agnes Russell Weekes and her sister are a bibliographer's nightmare though, because some of the books are by A.R. Weekes, and some are by R.K. Weekes, but others were by both of them, either as by A.R. & R.K. Weekes, or as by Anthony Pryde and R.K. Weekes. Anthony Pryde was a pen-name definitely used by Agnes, and probably by Rose as well. Not only did they collaborate with novels, but also on short stories and serials too, and a few of these are also as by Anthony Pryde and R.K. Weekes. Furthermore, some books were just as by Anthony Pryde, usually (but not exclusively) those published in America, and even more confusingly, some of these were subsequently published here in England as by A.R. Weekes. The only guide through all this is that they just seem to have used the Anthony Pryde name for some of the books published 1920 -1929. In the following list, which is in chronological order, all the titles in italics are by both of them; titles with an asterisk are by Rose only, and the rest are by Agnes, some initially published as by Anthony Pryde.

Prisoners of War. Love in Chief*. Yarborough the Premier.
The Fall of the Cards*. Faithful Unfaithful. Fellow Prisoners*.
The *Tragic Prince*. The Laurensons*. Seaborne of the Bonnet Shop*.
The Massareen Affair*. Maqueray's Duel. Convict B14*. Jenny Essenden.
Nightfall. Clair De Lune. An Ordeal of Honour. *The Purple Pearl.*
The City of Lilies. Spanish Sunlight. The Son of the House. Rowforest.
The Rowforest Plot. Sea Nymph*. *A Fool in the Forest*. The Secret Room.
The Lily and the Sword. White Hands Cannot Offend. Esme's Sons. Mignotte*.
The Emerald Necklace. Upstairs, downstairs and –. The Story of Leland Gay.
The Figure on the Terrace. Tenth of September. Wandesforde Brothers*.

Affair at The Vere Arms. A Brother for Richard. Ninety in the Shade.
Son of Spain. Cousins Political. Carol and Evelyn. *Revel's Wife.*
The Green Cross. Cousin Clare. *Clarefontaine. Alda Abducted.*

Seaborne of the Bonnet Shop (1914) is about the owner of a West End bonnet shop who marries his assistant, but the marriage hits problems when she discovers that her husband is ashamed to introduce her to his family. *Clair De Lune* (1922) has a similar plot: a playwright marries the girl who was his best friend in childhood, but the marriage runs into trouble, and it's up to her to save it. *The Purple Pearl* (1923) has a sort of Ruritanian story-line: the eponymous pearl was given to Lord Mereworth by an Indian Begum. This lord had three sons who were always at enmity with each other and with him. He hides the pearl and some treasure in his castle, and gives each of his sons one third of the map that shows its whereabouts. Of course, none of the sons will help the others, so a feud begins which lasts two generations. Violet and Winnie are grand-daughters of the eldest son; Martin is grand-son of the middle son; and Bernard is grand-son of the youngest son. Martin joins the Guards, and is captured by the Germans and made a P.O.W. and a German gets hold of his portion of the map. There are lots of adventures, but ultimately Winnie and Bernard find the Purple Pearl, and Violet and Martin get married. *Alda Abducted* (1942) is about a girl who is abducted in the Spanish Civil War, and was based on a story by Rose which was originally published in The Lady's Realm magazine in 1911.

We know little about what Agnes and Rose were like. Their family background was very upper class, possibly from landed gentry. Their father was a talented musician, and so we can guess that they played the piano and were good singers too. They seem to have often holidayed abroad. The entry about Agnes in Sussex County Magazine says that "before the Spanish Civil War they divided their time between Slindon and Majorca, and many of their stories had the Spanish setting with which they were so familiar." According to *Ancestry.com* they also went to South Africa, in 1936. However, if they did frequently go on holiday, they must have been fast writers, because from 1920 – 1942 they had thirty-six novels published, and Agnes was also the editor of two plays by Shakespeare and books of verse by Milton, and Shelley's *Adonais* of John Keats.

Agnes died suddenly in September 1940 after a walk collecting blackberries on the hill near her home, in Slindon.[8] After her death, Rose stopped writing and: "devoted her tireless energies to the comfort and help of those in need."[9] She died in February 1956, aged 82.

Both are almost forgotten now, but they should at the very least have an entry about them in encyclopaedias of the fantasy genre for their series of Ruritanian novels set in Neuberg. A lot of people wrote such novels, but very few wrote a

whole series of them.

Shaun Cooper.

References

1. *Edwardian Fiction An Oxford Companion* (1997) by S. Kemp, C. Mitchell, & D. Trotter.
2. All of the information in this article about when Walter Weekes was ordained, etc. and about his death is from an item on the Sutton at Hone local history website and, along with the note about him being a talented musician, was compiled from his obituaries. There is also a photograph of him on the site.
3. Some of the information about births and marriages etc. comes from *Ancestry.com* (library edition). It seems that Emily's father, George Shury, died when he was just 34. According to one Census form his occupation was "Gent". Emily's mother Sophia had owned a school, but she died in 1865.
4. The sentence about matriculation is essentially from *Edwardian Fiction*.
5. Sutton at Hone local history website.
6. *Ancestry.com* (library edition).
7. I was able to place Agnes and Rose in Slindon as early as 1930 through copyright entries about their books on-line, some of which include the address of the author(s). However it should be noted that there is some confusion in the Slindon book and SCM Nov. 1940 p.372 about where they lived. JDR says Mrs. Belloc lived in Gaston Cottage, and then that Rose and Agnes lived at Gassons, whilst implying it's the same cottage. But they're two very different places in the village.
8. Sussex County Magazine, November 1940, p. 372.
9. *Slindon A Portrait of a Sussex Village*. J. Duggan Rees, 1988.

The Chairman intervenes – a conversation

Chairman:
This is Issue 168. I last spoke to you in 2008 (PSM 131 March 2008). Almost a decade now. I'd like to probe some points I made then.

Editor:
In other words you're calling me to account.

Chairman:
Someone has to; although I wouldn't put it in quite those terms. In 2008 I detected in the Magazine a rather bookish tendency that had not been present before. I mentioned Alain Fournier and Madame Recamier. I queried their direct relevance to Petworth.

Editor:
I talked then about a "magic carpet" and a "realm of the spirit", and, as I recall, was quite unapologetic. I like to see in the evolving Magazine just a hint of the wider perspective of the old *Sussex County Magazine* – to look for the best of two worlds, neither mutually exclusive.

Chairman:
Hm. If I have a few qualms about this, I am pleased to see that recollection remains, as in 2008, "an essential ingredient of the Magazine mix."

Editor:
It has to be, I have to requisition the past but I have also to say that that past is more elusive than it was. Possibly the early issues echo a time when people had a greater rapport with the past, perhaps this reflects changing demographic patterns, even the passage of time and my own growing older.

Chairman:
The membership remains fairly constant over the years. It's large for a local society of this kind, and swelled of course by the significant postal membership. For these the Magazine has to be the voice of Petworth in 2017. But is it?

Editor:
The Chairman's notes will inevitably reflect the voice of the Chairman but whether they speak for the membership as a whole, still less the town, is difficult to say. I try to be even-handed but this is at the risk of being anodyne or equivocal or both at the same time. My thoughts in the present PSM 168 can perhaps be read in different ways. On an issue where I feel strongly such as the intrusion of "informative" signs Around the Hills I am careful not to represent my own views, however widely shared, as a Society consensus. In such cases my own voice can be no more than one in a chorus of others.

Chairman:
I am not sure that this answers the question. As in 2008 I ask about a wider Petworth that receives no coverage in this Magazine? Petworth Festival, The Fringe, the revived Petworth fete …

Editor:
The answer is relatively simple. Neither Magazine nor Society can be all things to all men. The Magazine cannot speak for everyone in the town, nor would everyone in the town want the Society as its mouthpiece. Remember that, unlike an organ such as *Petworth Pages*, the Magazine circulation is limited by subscription. You do not pay £14 or £18 annually without thinking. Membership implies a certain commitment. The Magazine is for those who share the Society's interests. *Petworth Pages* exists on its own terms; has a different agenda and

different priorities.

Chairman:
I asked in 2008 whether you found producing the Magazine time consuming or a strain.

Editor:
The answer is the same: neither. Without the Magazine there would be an awareness of available material and the lack of a vehicle for it. That would be a strain.

Chairman:
Sometimes I think that you use the Magazine to promote the Window Press.

Editor:
Why not? While the Press operates financially independently, it is not set up to make a profit and its aims do not differ from those of this Magazine. I see no conflict of interest.

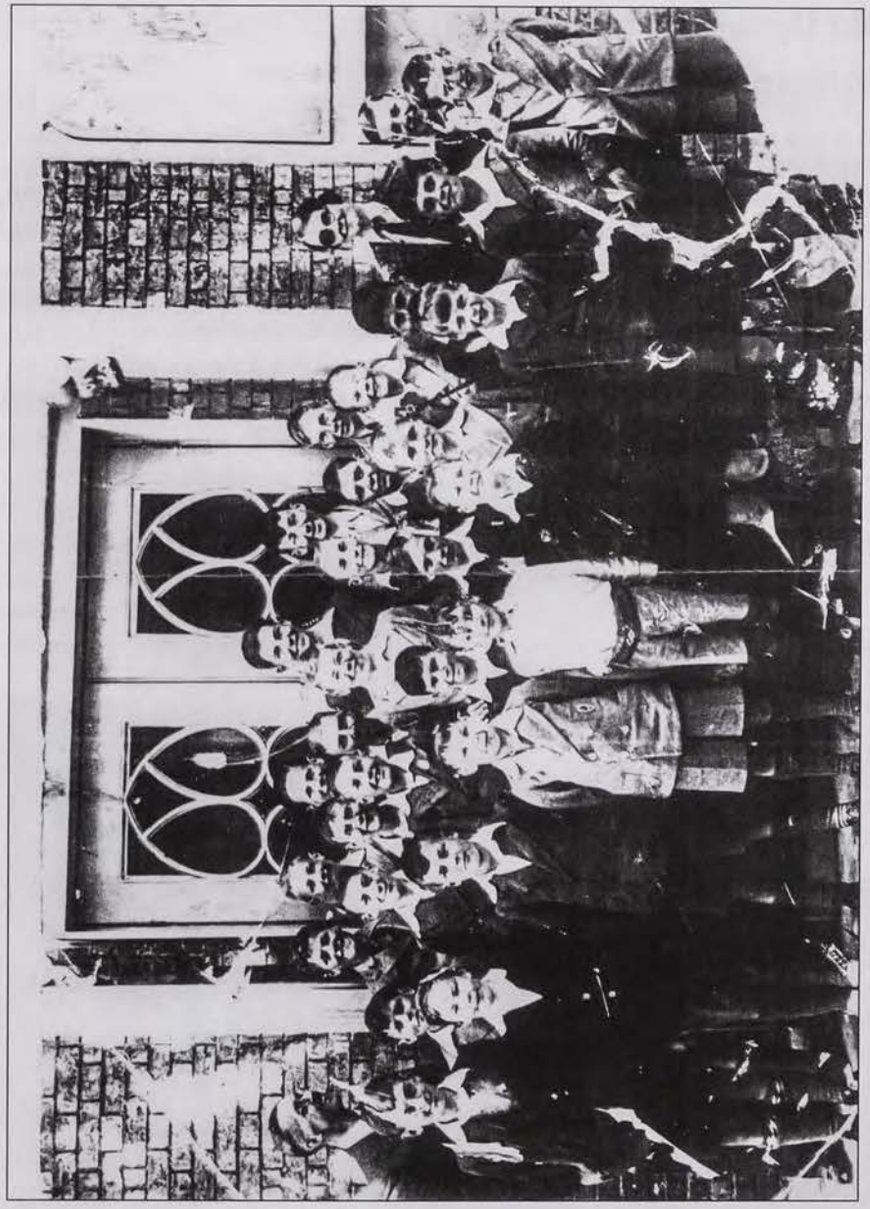
Chairman:
We know that the Society has since 2001 been to an extent dependent on the Book Sale: indeed the Magazine is partly subsidised by it. Have you any thoughts on this?

Editor:
The Sale certainly impinges on this Magazine both financially and in content, but more than that, it attracts not only local members and non-members but many others from a distance. It's a social event, an occasion; above all it's light-hearted. Historic Petworth has always had the capacity to look at itself in the mirror and indulge a wry smile. Some sectors of modern Petworth can take themselves too seriously.

Chairman:
You've been directly involved with the Magazine since Issue 1 in 1974. How do you see the future?

Editor:
I don't. I don't look beyond the next Magazine, the next Book Sale, the next Fair. I hope you enjoy the latest Issue.

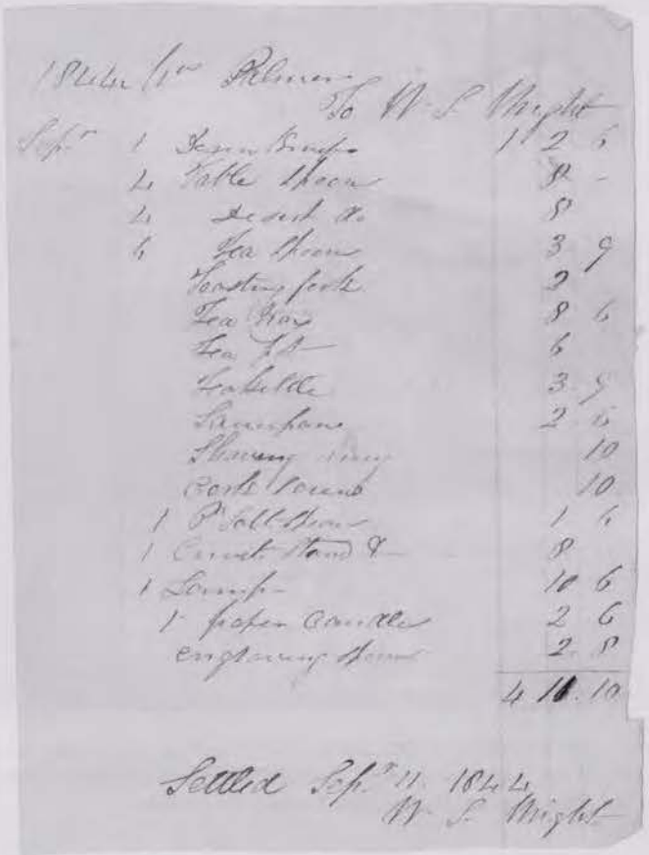
Peter was talking to himself. Well, you know what they say.



With the 75th anniversary of the school bombing at Michaelmas this year, this photostat is clearly relevant. The lost original is obviously damaged. Mr Stevenson the headmaster is unmistakable but otherwise identifications and location are unknown.
Can anyone help?

Old Petworth traders (23). William Stoper Wright

Scratch the surface of mid-nineteenth century Petworth and you will find the elusive figures of William Stoper Wright, and his son, also William. The Wrights are connected with both Trowels in Pound Street and what is now Barringtons in Market Square. W. S. Wright had commercial premises in what is now the Star Yard in Market Square. This handwritten invoice from 1844 would suggest that as a tinsmith Wright would make items to order. Mrs Harriet Palmer, a widow in comfortable circumstances living at Avenings was clearly a significant client. Certainly in later years the Wrights, probably the son, combined property owning in Petworth with residence at Potters Bar in Hertfordshire.



The Virgin Mary Spring

I have had charge of this society since 1978 and in that time I have tried to avoid the confrontational. I certainly took an independent line in opposing the western bypass route through Petworth Park and I think subsequent events have justified my position. Allied with this was my cooperation with Dr Diana Owen to allay the then prevalent hostility to the National Trust. It is perhaps a measure of our mutual success that this is almost forgotten. It is axiomatic too that I have consistently opposed the old House and Town dichotomy, almost now (but not quite) a thing of the past.

I feel however that I need to put my views on the line on another matter. Local members will have seen a great deal about the Virgin Mary Spring in the local press but members at a distance may be unaware of recent events. A large timber structure has been placed on the path immediately adjacent to the spring, dwarfing and obscuring it. I have protested vigorously about this, as have other Petworth people. The structure has been described as a "desecration" and I regret I have to endorse this. Its placement appears to reflect a complete misunderstanding between Petworth Town Council and a platoon of statutory authorities, following an initial request concerning a muddy area on the footpath.

The Virgin Mary Spring a hundred years ago.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of this issue, the structure needs to be removed: there are other less invasive and draconian ways to deal with a problem that is occasional rather than chronic. The "bridge" is completely out of proportion and shows a gross insensitivity to Petworth's natural environs and history. The Petworth Society cannot stand idly by in face of such an extraordinary misjudgement and apparently wilful disregard for the town's ancient tradition. If it does so the Society can have no justification for its existence.

Writing in *Petworth Parish Magazine* in the 1920s, Lady Mary Maxse[1] asked: "What legend attaches to the Virgin Mary's Spring, whose waters even in my childhood were supposed to cure sore eyes?" Writing a little later she echoes an older tradition that pilgrims travelling west to the shrine of St Richard at Chichester rested briefly at the White Horse Inn at Fittleworth before passing the Virgin Mary's Spring to sample the healing waters. A separate, perhaps, apocryphal tradition says that the Angel Inn was so called in deference to the famous spring, the pilgrims stopping off at the inn on their way west. Take them or leave them, such traditions are part of the "soul" of the town. Or perhaps it doesn't have one.

What sort of Petworth do you want? Contact Petworth Town Council with your comments.

Write to:

The Clerk
Petworth Town Council
The Old Bakery
Petworth
West Sussex
GU28 0AP

or email:

clerk@petworth-tc.co.uk

P.

1. A noted local historian and sister to Charles third Lord Leconfield. Born in 1870 she died in 1944. The passage is quoted in P. Jerrome: *Petworth from the Beginnings to 1660* (2002).

Note:
This Magazine was already in print when I was apprised of the situation. I have managed to insert this article but not a picture – for this see the *Observer* newspaper for Thursday 11th May and the Activities Sheet for this Magazine.

Random thoughts on the 1841 census

The 1841 census is an uncompromising, unsentimental document. It was to record but not to reminisce. Imaginative input will soon dissolve into subjectivity. Occasionally a figure from the Tales of Old Petworth will leap from its pages: Eade's partisans in the battle of the rival coaches, Haslett the bootmaker, or Boxall the Lombard Street spirit merchant, as too, of course, John Osborn Greenfield himself. At best we can make some tentative suggestions about Petworth in 1841, even perhaps try some questions which we cannot answer.

How many of Petworth's army of artisans and craftsmen: carpenters, bricklayers, blacksmiths, plumbers, painters, plasterers, cabinet makers, sawyers and the rest were part of the workforce at the great house? The census does not say: Petworth House Archives might afford some answers. Lodgekeeper, huntsman, whipper-in or gamekeeper will leave less room for ambiguity. The census gives over a hundred very various trades, callings and employments. Some reflect factors either unique to Petworth or, at least, unusual. Petworth's grim House of Correction catered for the whole of West Sussex and explains the presence of turnkeys as, too, Standing Penfold, sack and rope maker in the prison factory. The Earl of Egremont had provided the town with gas, hence the "gasburners", while his lordship's long term interest in inland waterways is reflected in the wharfingers at Coultershaw.

If the pioneering 1841 census asks fewer questions than its later counterparts, it does ask whether respondents were born in the county. The answer is overwhelmingly affirmative: the great majority, we may suppose born in the town itself. Incomers are few and the more noticeable for being almost, in biblical terms, "resident aliens." Schoolteachers, clergymen and medical men would perhaps adapt more easily. Members of the legal profession tended to be local and to come from the wealthy families who formed the backbone of the Petworth "establishment". Prospective doctors from a gentry family like the Blagdens moved away to train. One would return to practise in the town. Such long-established families would identify with certain larger houses, often rented. A very occasional, more mundane, exception ripples the parochial surface. Why should James Heath, glass and china dealer, come to North Street with his wife and three children. And was the move a success?

Another incomer would be Mr Woodcock with his little school in populous, overcrowded North Street, attended by the children of Mr Pullen the Pound Place waywarden. Exiled Scots are to be counted on the fingers of one hand; one was William Melville the Church Street tailor who would be a prominent Petworth figure for decades, and the lynchpin of the Angel Blue Friendly Society as it battled

in vain with the growing power of the new federated societies like the Oddfellows and the Foresters. Melville might give a rendering of Auld Lang Syne at functions. No doubt J. O. Greenfield as host at the Angel and Melville with the "Old Blue" would be on familiar terms. Of this the census can tell us nothing. Predictably, the female staff "below stairs" at Petworth House come mainly from beyond the county, but even in 1841, not exclusively so.

In a still largely pre-steam age Petworth looked to be self-supportive: contact with the outside world being mediated by the carrier. The town had several, operating different routes and a kind of breathing tube to the world outside. At this time the carrier's services would, no doubt, be very much the prerogative of a minority living above subsistence level.[1]

Petworth was a town of self-employed tradesmen. If shoemakers greatly outnumbered cordwainers, we may have simply a quirk of language but there is only one pattenmaker. Over thirty men were plying the trade in 1841. The shoemaker's was a solitary occupation, allowing time to think, too much in the opinion of some: shoemakers had a reputation for being subversive. They would no doubt have had acquaintance with Petworth's half-dozen tanners and fellmongers.

Reflecting that same self-sufficiency, Petworth had an abundance of tailors, presumably, like the handful of weavers, operating largely from home as would the dozen or more female dressmakers. "Hairdresser" in 1841 would lack its later overtones: it was a rigorously male preserve. The census has no barbers – at least not by that name.

A trade or occupation would often pass from father to son, another factor making for population stability. An extreme example is the Howard family, Petworth sweeps for a century and more. A single member of the family is already at work in 1841. Petworth's heyday as a clockmaking centre seems to have passed by this time but the remaining "watchmakers" will have been able to turn their hand to most things horological. If Petworth could boast three lady straw hat makers, other towns could no doubt do the same. The horse still reigned supreme as it would for generations but the railway would soon encroach and challenge the old insularity. Ostler, groom, coachman, post-chaise driver, testify, like the carrier to this age-old form of transport. And there was Mr Goatcher the Station Road nurseryman, evoking images of the extensive garden land on the town's southern edge. Some occupations, however funded, shade toward the civic: Master Cooper, the Rectory Lane bailiff, the two midwives, the excise officers, William Edwards, the muster master, or Mr Wells the relieving officer.

Butcher, baker, draper, mercer, ironmonger, stationer: Pigot's contemporary directory will suggest some larger shops but so often a business would operate

from a private house without obvious commercial frontage, a certain ambiguity is part and parcel of both Pigot and the census. Did the solitary tea-dealer function as an agency in a single room or compete with larger stores like Challens in the Market Square? Certainly the two corn dealers would need larger premises.

Petworth's population in 1841 was not greatly different to the present day but its disposition was entirely at variance. Shorn of the modern estates, everything was packed into the confines of the ancient town. It takes a conscious effort of the imagination to fit the large families of the census into the available space. If the centre of the town is in 2017 at once expensive and, in proportion expansive, in 1841 virtually the whole population was crammed into what is now the old nucleus. Privacy, except for a privileged few, was hardly a valid concept at all, while, even here, the presence of servants, indispensable as they may have been, was a constant. Most families would sleep many to a room, several to a bed, while slums like the Red Lion Yard off High Street would if possible be more noisome in 1841 than earlier. It is perhaps surprising to find Jonathan Ritson, wood carver at the great house sharing one of the tenements in the notorious Red Lion Yard. Here, and probably in the adjacent Holland Buildings, lurked poverty, unemployment, drunkenness, disease and death. The Red Lion Yard was the graveyard of hope and opportunity, a human quagmire.

Farming was, of course, horse-dependent and labour intensive. Take a short walk to the outskirts of the town and the monotonous roll call of "Ag. Lab." begins. Certainly a number lived in the town, but immediately outside they dominate. Byworth has a handful of relatively sedentary craftsmen but otherwise would empty of men in early morning. It is clear that the old practice of labourers living in the farmhouse persisted, as it would for the rest of the century and even beyond. Kilsham a mile to the south of the town is an example. It was a practice not limited to an agricultural context; a number of young mercers are recorded living in at Greens on the north-east corner of Lombard Street.

"Retired" is a word strangely alien to 1841. "Workhouse" is perhaps a partial synonym. At 98 was William Stanford at Strood still plying his trade as lath and pin cleaver? He would have been alive at the time of the '45, even if he would perhaps have been too young to remember.

Candle maker, cutler, confectioner, limeburner, wool-stapler. Unusual trades, like unusual names, suggest questions that are ultimately pointless, perhaps frustrate the very spirit of the census. Temperance Ludby was sixteen in 1841, she would die unmarried some half a century later and be buried at Bersted near Bognor. Martha Flintoff had come to Petworth to work at the great house. In her mid-twenties at the time of the census, she would marry William Tooth the draper in 1855.

In the census we can, if we so wish, try to evoke the spirit of people we can never know, even perhaps claim to catch a hint of the "still sad music of humanity" but the census does not encourage facile excursions of this kind. We should, perhaps, turn to the workhouse, remember, Betty Higden's "Kill me sooner than take me there"[2] and the tragic juxtaposition of abandoned mothers and resigned elders – or Petworth's grim House of Correction with its soul-destroying treadwheel, eighty prisoners and more including a female beggar and a charwoman. If Master Greenfield could look back to the "good old days", there were others for whom those days had never existed.

P.

Notes

1. The world of the carrier was a world very much its own. A quarter of a century before, a Petworth resident had written, "I have sent you a hare killed on Tuesday which please to accept as it is a very trifling present ... it is seal'd S on the forehead and as a private mark has a cut through the left ear close down to the head with a penknife. If it should not agree with the above description hope you will decide to refuse it and inform me as a stale hare is not worth taking in."
Courtesy of the Mullens/Harrison archives. Quoted in P. Jerrome: *Petworth from 1660 to the present day* (2006) page 73.
2. Charles Dickens: *Our Mutual Friend.*

Petworth Society Outing to Standen

On Thursday 12th October there will be a Petworth Society outing to Standen House and Garden, near East Grinstead. Standen was designed by Philip Webb as a home for James and Margaret Beale and their seven children. The William Morris interior contains some of the finest examples of Morris's work, while retaining the atmosphere of a family home. It is situated in an idyllic rural position with views across the High Weald Area of Outstanding Beauty, and has a beautiful 12-acre hillside garden originally established by Mrs. Beale in the 1920's. As well as the formal gardens there is a large vegetable garden, orchard and recently restored Quarry Garden, which re-opened this year. Footpaths lead out of the gardens into woodland and down to a large reservoir.

The gift shop sells Arts and Crafts inspired goods, woodland crafts and plants from the Standen collection. Produce from the garden is for sale near the car park, and a second-hand bookshop is located near the house. The Barn Café serves homemade cakes, hot lunches and cream teas, or you can buy drinks and sandwiches to take away. Picnickers are welcome anywhere around the grounds and there is also an allocated picnic area. Wheelchairs are available and there is a wheelchair route around the grounds. For more information on accessibility ring me on 343496.

We will travel by Richardson's coach, leaving the Sylvia Beaufoy car park at 9.30 and arriving in Standen about 10.40. There will be a short introductory talk before we look round the house – free flow. The coach will leave for home at 3.00, arriving back in Petworth at approx. 4.10 at the Sylvia Beaufoy.

Standen is a National Trust property so members have free entry. For non-members the group rate entrance fee is £10. The coach fare will be £14, including the driver's tip, which makes a total of £14 for National Trust members and £24 for non-members.

If you would like to come on the outing please complete the form and send with a cheque made payable to The Petworth Society, to Debby Stevenson at 3 South Grove, Petworth, GU28 0ED. Telephone no. 01798.343496.

PLEASE NOTE: AS I WILL BE AWAY, YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE YOUR OUTING TICKETS UNTIL THE END OF SEPTEMBER.

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I/we would like to go to Standen on 12th October

Name/s .....

.....

Address .....

Phone number .....

I enclose a cheque for £..... (£14 per person National Trust member/s)

(£24 per person non-member/s)