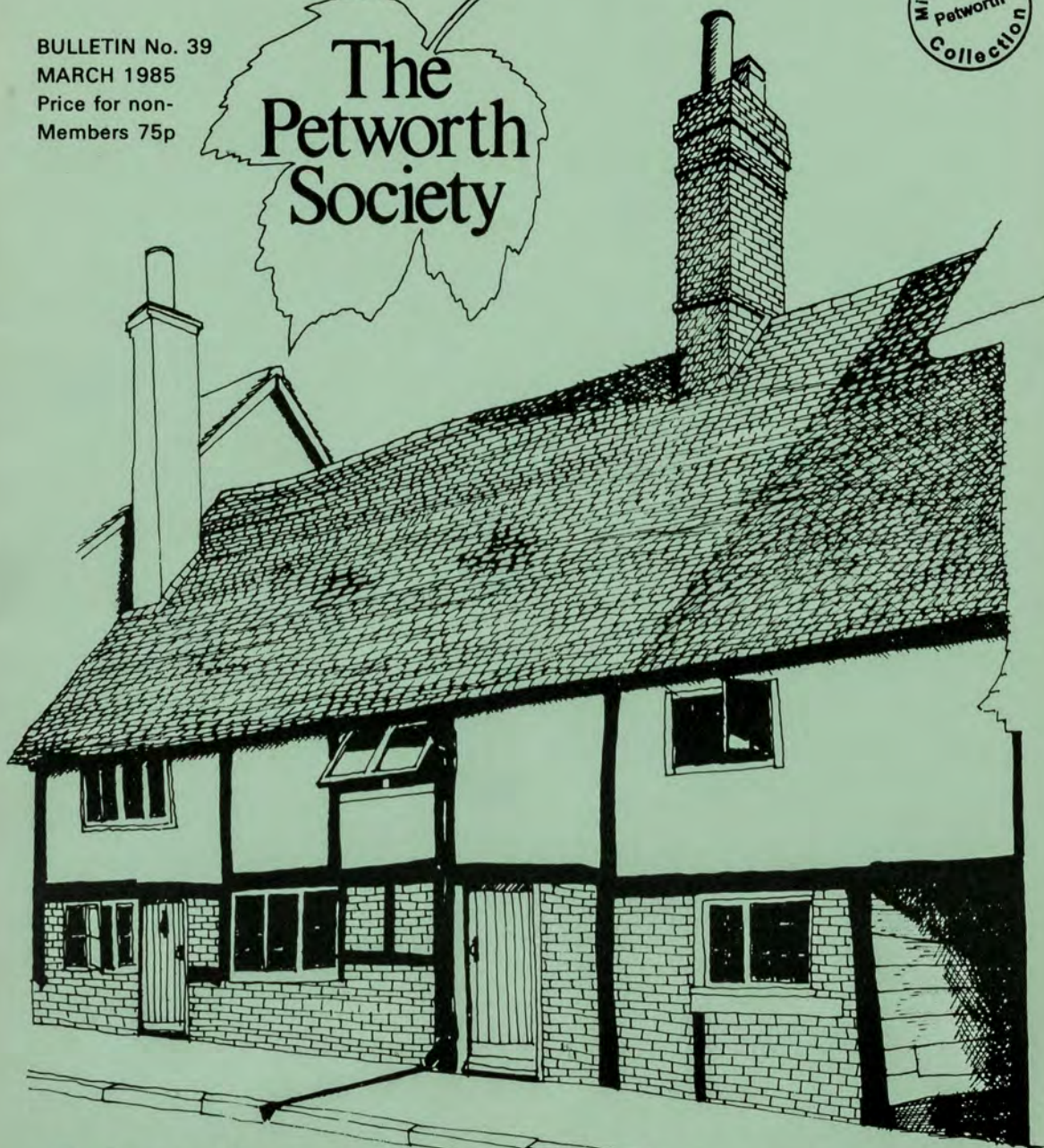


Miles Costello  
Petworth  
Collection

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MARCH 1985  
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# The Petworth Society



***Petworth welcomes  
back the Toronto Scottish - 28.4.85***

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Cover design by Jonathan Newdick drawn from a photograph by George Garland. It shows Old Cottages in North Street in 1952.

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## PETWORTH SOCIETY

Spring programme : please keep for reference.

SUNDAY 28th APRIL

The PETWORTH SOCIETY welcomes back

The TORONTO SCOTTISH REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION

Rough schedule of events: there will be an official programme of the day's events when all the details are settled.

10.30 a.m. Market Square Arrival in six coaches of Canadian party, comprising some 230 ex-Toronto Scottish Regiment veterans and their wives, with the pipes and drums of the Regiment's pipe-band. Welcome by Petworth Town Band.

10.45 a.m. (approx.) Parade forms up under Colour Sergeant Gill of the Queen's Regiment. The parade will comprise the Toronto Scottish pipes and drums, a colour party bearing the standards of the Toronto Scottish and Petworth British Legion, Toronto Scottish veterans, British Legion veterans, Petworth Fire Service and Red Cross, Petworth Town Band. Petworth Cubs, Scouts and Brownies will line the route to the Church. Parade moves off to St. Mary's Church via Park Road.

11.00 a.m. Service of remembrance in Petworth Parish Church.

12.05 p.m. (approx.) Brief ceremony in front of the war memorial  
Parade then reforms under Colour Sergeant Gill and marches back to the Square via East Street and New Street.

12.30 p.m. (approx.) Official welcoming ceremony in the Square  
Lord Egremont welcomes back the Toronto Scottish on behalf of the Petworth Society and the people of Petworth.

12.45 p.m. and onward. Running buffet for the Toronto Scottish  
given by Petworth British Legion and prepared and served by the Petworth Society.

The Canadians have a large number of optional visits during the afternoon see programme - but they will also be very keen to meet old friends and converse either in the Leconfield Hall, in the Red Cross Rooms or of course over a drink at the British Legion.

2.15 p.m. approx. The Toronto Scottish pipes and drums give a marching display in front of Petworth House. As on Jubilee Day there will be admission to the Park via the Grand Entrance.

The Toronto Scottish display will be followed by a display from the Knockhundred Clog-dancers and some traditional English Maypole dancing.

Later in the afternoon the main party will adjourn to Petworth Junior School to meet more Petworth people and some of the schoolchildren, and have light refreshment before departing for London. Times and details to be arranged.

This schedule is subject to alteration. We will try to see that most people in Petworth receive a detailed printed programme whether they are members of the Society or not. Members who live away but who would like a programme as a memento can write to me in early April. There will be no charge but I would appreciate return postage and a reasonable-size self-addressed envelope. Could I also at once thank members who have made donations toward entertaining the Toronto Scottish and say of course that we are always pleased to receive further donations from those who remember the help given by the Canadians in the darkest years of the war.

Peter.

SPRING ACTIVITIES:

Walks:

SUNDAY 14th APRIL

J's Bennyfold  
Walk. (See Bulletin 32)

Grade B/C

Cars leave Square at 2.15

SUNDAY 19th MAY

Jumbo's Stag  
Park Walk.

Grade B/C

Cars leave Square at 2.15

Monthly meeting:

THURSDAY 28th MARCH

Eva Alexander  
with herself and  
puppets.

Leconfield Hall 7.30 p.m.

50p admission.

Refreshments. Raffle.

Annual General Meeting:

WEDNESDAY 15th MAY

A.G.M. 7.15 p.m.

Followed by a talk by  
Alison McCann, archivist  
at Petworth House.

"Sermons, stuffed birds  
and savages."

The extraordinary career  
of the Rev. Mr. Ferryman.

ALL WELCOME.



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 or residence, who is interested in furthering the objects of the society.

The annual subscription is £3.00. Single or Double one Bulletin delivered. Postal £4.00. Overseas £5.00. Further information may be obtained from any of the following:-

Chairman - Mr. P.A. Jerrome, Trowels, Pound Street,  
Petworth. (Tel. 42562)

Vice-Chairman - Mr. K.C. Thompson, 18 Rothermead, Petworth.

Hon. Bulletin Sec. - Mrs. V. Sadler, 52 Wyndham Road, Petworth.  
assisted by Mrs. J.M. Hamilton and Mrs. D.  
Franklyn

Hon. Treasurer - Mr. R.A. Sneller, 16 Littlecote,  
Petworth. (Tel. 42507)

Hon. Membership Sec. - Mrs. R. Staker, 2 Grove Lane, Petworth,  
assisted by  
Mrs. J. Boss, North Street, Petworth.

Committee - Mrs. Julia Edwards, Lord Egremont,  
Mrs. Audrey Grimwood, Mrs. Betty Hodson,  
Mr. R. Pottington, Mrs. Sonia Rix,  
Mrs. Anne Simmons, Mr. D.S. Sneller,  
Mr. H.W. Speed, Mr. J. Taylor,  
Mr. E. Vincent.

Hon. Press Officer - Miss D.S. Gundry, Woodmans, St. Mary's,  
Drive, Fittleworth.

Membership enquiries to Mrs. Staker please, Bulletin circulation enquiries to Mrs. Sadler.

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Another new year and as usual a new cover. I hope you like Jonathan's drawing as much as I do. Looking back, the Christmas evening turned out very much like a party. It was nice (if sometimes a little uncomfortable) to see the Hall so full while Fred Shepherd's two films and Martin Muncaster's local humour were a combination it would be difficult to improve on. Jim Bracken's talk on Sussex Church Brasses was excellent but the atrocious weather affected the attendance. We would like to see him again next year when he returns from Australia. Doris Ashby makes a welcome return for the February meeting while March sees Eva Alexander returning with her glove puppets. I've never been a great fan of puppets but Eva Alexander is something different altogether and I've had innumerable requests for her to return after she came a few years ago. Alison McCann, Archivist at Petworth House, will speak at the A.G.M. on "Sermons, stuffed birds and savages: The extraordinary career of the Rev. Robert Ferryman". Yes, there is very much a Petworth connection, but is it the sermons, the stuffed birds or the savages? You can find out on May 15th. There is no meeting scheduled for April.

April does however see the return to Petworth of the Toronto Scottish Regimental Association. The Toronto Scottish were not the only Canadian regiment to be stationed here during the Second World War but they were certainly one of the most prominent. They will return to Petworth with their own pipe band and some 230 Association members and wives as the first stop on a Pilgrimage to Holland to mark the fortieth anniversary of V.E. Day. While the Toronto Scottish are the Society's guests and we as a Society are determined to give them a day to remember we are working very closely indeed with the British Legion and I must stress this is really an occasion for everyone in Petworth. The programme for the day will be finalised after I have written these notes but I would hope to give you a reasonably firm outline of the schedule for the 28th on the Activities Sheet that accompanies this Bulletin. I have tried to give this particular Bulletin something of a Canadian flavour and we are printing extra copies of this issue so that those Canadians who would like can take a copy home with them with the Society's compliments.

Finally you will see another slight annual adjustment in the subscription rates. The subscription is of course an annual dilemma



for the committee and a significant part of our January meeting was devoted to discussing it. We would have liked to have held the old subscription figure at £2.50 (single or double) giving the Society an effective subscription of 6p a year when the Bulletin cost was taken into account. We do have a certain balance in the bank. The question was the usual one: should we hold down the subscription this year and dissipate our balance or should we again make a marginal increase that would enable us to hold our ground financially? We could of course reduce the Bulletin size or even consider the possibility of selling advertising space but there is no indication that these alternatives would be acceptable to a consensus of the membership. What I think made up our minds for us was the possibility of Value Added Tax being levied on printed matter in the next Budget. If this does happen, on the old subscription the Society would probably not be solvent by next March. I know the membership of the Society is already very large for a town of Petworth's size but if just a few of those who "borrow someone else's" Bulletin were to join and have their own, it might help to bring down costs and hold the subscription for a year. There is of course a proportionate rise in postal and overseas subscriptions. By all means let me have your views on this matter; we have done what we think is best for the Society but I like to think I am prepared to consider other views.

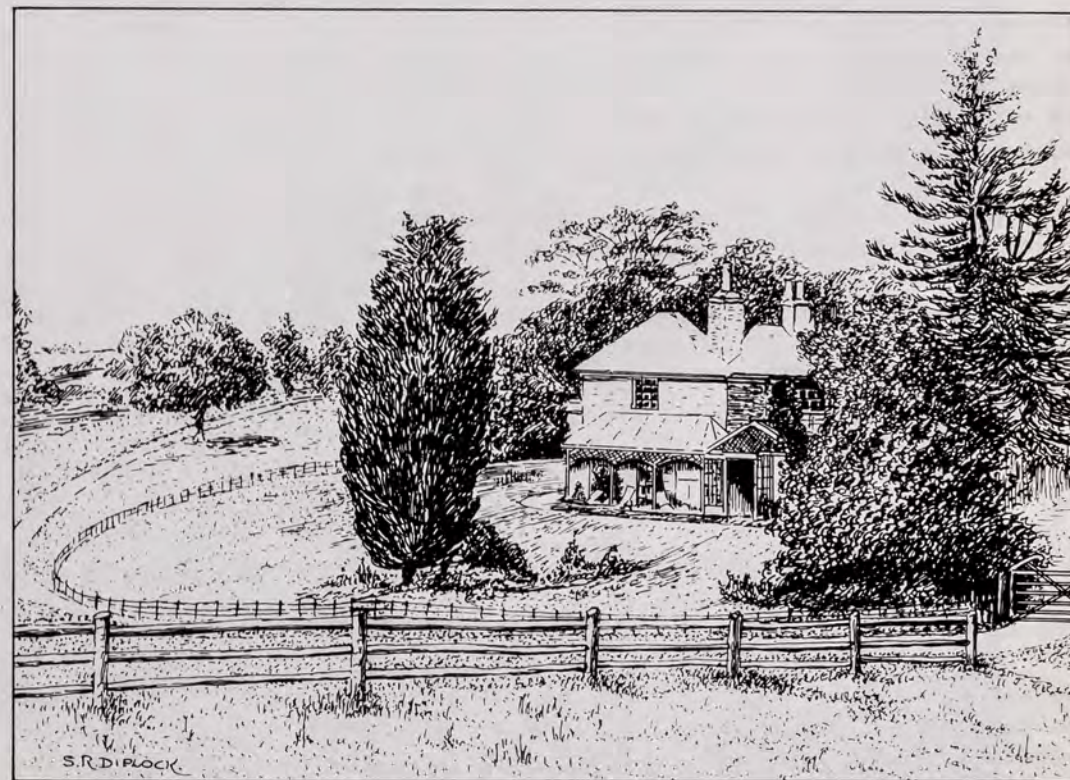
Peter. 1st February, 1985.

#### A MISHAP AT HILLIERS

I used to deliver bread round Byworth, River Hill, Little Bognor then to the top of Fox Hill and back into Petworth via the Horsham Road, in later years with a motor-car but first with a pony cart. Coming down from Fox Hill I would deliver to Mr. Stapylton at Hilliers. He was a magistrate and kept quite an extensive household, a chauffeur, a gardener and a number of servants. You'd always be very careful to drive round to the back so that the cart wasn't to be seen in front of the house. One day as I came out of the drive to turn into the Horsham Road from Hilliers the wheel came off the pony cart. It didn't do any damage and the cart didn't keel over, the whole thing just seemed to sink slowly into the ground. What could I do? I'd still a whole lot of bread to deliver, Moor Farm and the cottages there, Flathurst and the Pest House, quite a trudge on foot. I shut the pony cart, borrowed a big sack from Mr. Thorpe the gardener at Hilliers, put the bread into the sack and tied it on the pony's back. I then put

the rest of the bread into my bread-basket, put the basket on my back and clambered aboard the pony. And so the pony and I finished the round. I must say we looked a very odd combination coming back through Petworth. Mr. Hazelman looked amazed when we got back to the bakehouse. "Whatever's happened to the cart?" he said. "It's up at Hilliers", I replied, "The wheel's broken in half." So we borrowed another cart and went off up to Mr. Maybank in East Street (now Petworth Antique Market) for a wheel. "I'd better come out with you", he said, "and bring the cart back". And so we did, tying the damaged cart onto the back of the other cart.

Bill Herrington. Perth (Australia).



Hilliers in the early part of the century.  
Drawn by Rendle Diplock after a photograph by Walter Kevis.



## GROWING UP AT KILSHAM

It was September 1942 when Dad (Jim Sayers) gave up his job near Steyning to come back to Petworth where he had lived as a boy. So six of us children, Mum and Dad came down Kilsham Lane on a lovely sunny day. With blackberries thick on the hedges we children (three boys and three girls) were delighted to be living near the river and the old swing bridge.

Not so mother. I think we came from a comparatively modern house with electricity and flush toilet to tilly lamps and loo down the garden. Very primitive to say the least and nearly 4 miles to walk to town.

Still she got on with things without complaint (at least to our ears). Dad was cowman on Rotherbridge Farm for about 16 years, we had a lovely happy childhood with all the countryside to wander about in with Peggy our Alsatian dog. We used to swim in the Rother in those days, sharing it with the cows - or playing in the keeper's boat which always leaked and was forbidden of course.

When it rained really hard we didn't go to school because the river rose very quickly and the bridge was under water in no time.

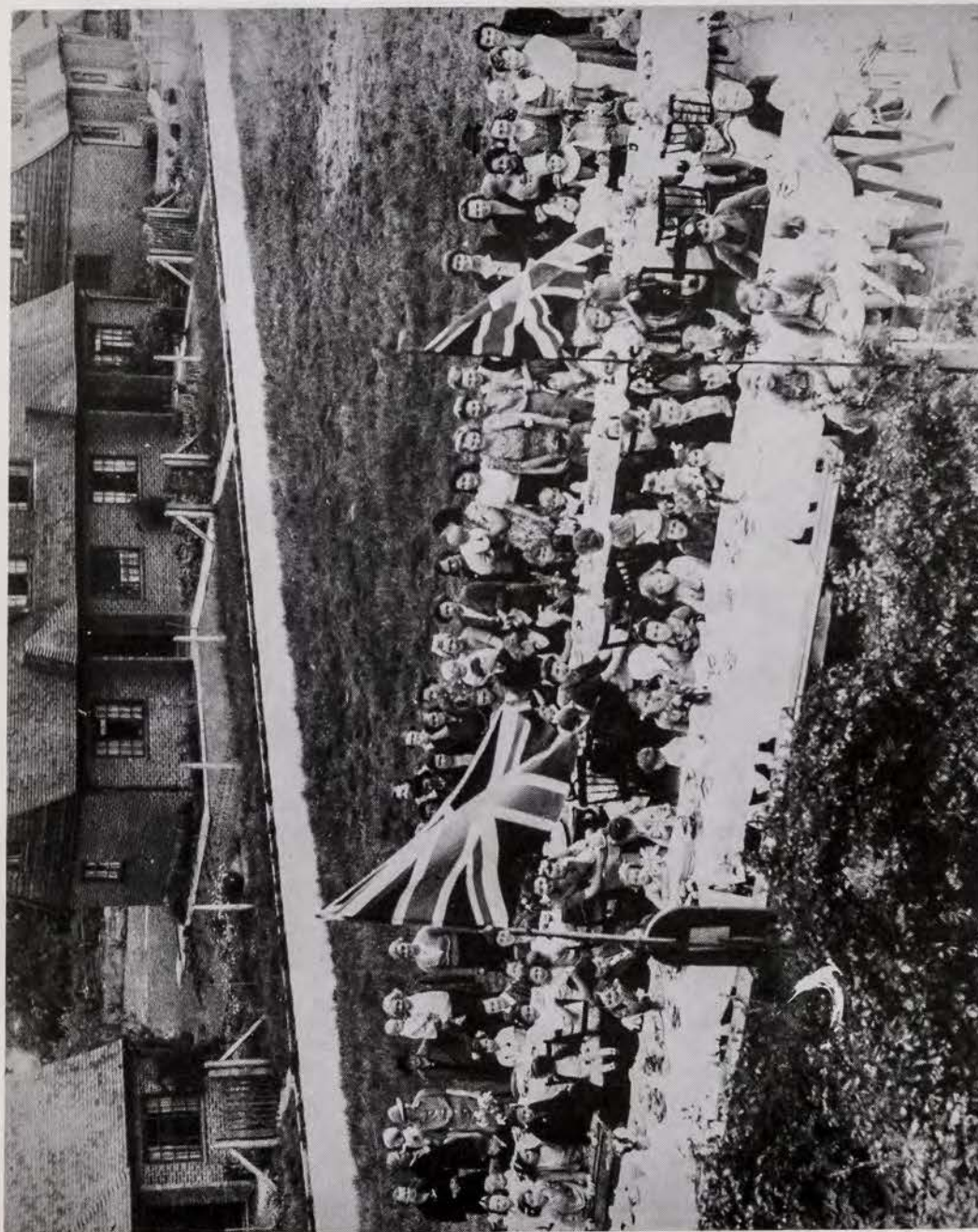
Mum and Dad both worked very hard, and so did we children for that matter. There was no water laid on so we had to draw it from the well, enough to fill two milk churns to keep mum going for the day. There was wood to be chopped and sawn, we all had jobs to do.

Everything had to be carried down from Petworth of course, also paraffin to get from Rapleys Garage up on the Duncton road.

Dad grew everything we needed in the garden, although he always insisted he never liked gardening. I don't ever remember mum having to buy any greengrocery.

He also mended all our shoes, even we girls had to have studs for walking up our rough lane. I quite see the sense of it now, but we hated it at the time and couldn't wait for summer to wear plimsolls.

When the weather was too bad to be in the garden Dad would make pegs, cutting cocoa tins to make the bands. It seemed he was always doing something. I think his only relaxation was a spot of fishing. He would catch pike or eel sometimes.



Hampers Green V.E. Day Celebrations May 1945.  
Photograph by G.G. Garland.





Petworth V.E. Day Celebrations 8th May 1945.  
Photograph by G.G. Garland.

After Mr. Whitney retired from Rotherbridge Dad worked at Frog Farm and we moved up to the Rotherbridge Lane cottages next door to the Keeper.

Then when Dad retired he and Mum went up to the Park Lodge at Tillington for a while. By this time all we children had left home.

Dad has been gone several years now and Mum lives at Rudgewick with my brother John.

From:- Mrs. I. Stevenson, 20 Ruskin Way, Cowplain, Portsmouth, Hants.

### GETTING RID OF MY COUGH

I only really came to Petworth because I had such a terrible cough and the doctor told my mother that the London fogs weren't doing me any good. I had been to Petworth before as it was the home of my mother's parents but of course actually living there was a rather different matter. It would be in 1904 when I was seven that I was sent to Petworth to breathe the purer country air. Moving to Petworth certainly had an effect on my later life but I'm not sure about the cough - I've still got it and I'm 87 now! I remember my mother taking me to Clapham Junction near the house where we lived in Ashbury Road and putting me in charge of the guard for the trip to Petworth. I sat by the window watching the houses and fields go by and didn't stir at all until we had to change at Pulborough for the branch line to Petworth. I had been strictly warned on no account to speak to anyone and I didn't. I'd made the trip before of course, but to be on my own was something quite different. When I got to Petworth there was a horse-driven cab waiting to take me the mile and a half to the bus office in Market Square, then I walked up Lombard Street to Knights' the bakers, my mother's parents. I don't think people always understood the situation and they used to call me Mog Knight although my real surname was Clement. They often seemed to think I was something to do with one of the aunts!

Why was I called Mog when my christian names were Annie Beatrice giving me the initials A.B.C. before I married? Well it couldn't have been because my name was Margaret could it? In fact I was the third child of a family of six and when my sister Flo was born I had a rag doll that an old aunt had made me. I used to call it



my moggie. When I saw my mother in bed with my new sister I said, "My mum's got a moggie but she hasn't got mine." After that the name Mog stuck and I've never lost it.

Lombard Street was almost a little community of its own in that last decade before the Great War. There was Knights the bakers and next door Mrs. Knight the greengrocer - no relation. Further

down on the same side was Dolly Westwood's (now the Blackbirds bookshop) she sold wool and haberdashery. Weavers the newsagents were then at the bottom where King and Chasemore are now. They were soon to move over to their present position. Their predecessors had been Burdens the newsagents. Bishops the shoe people were next door. Then as now there were fewer shops on the opposite side. Mr. and Mrs. Kevis who sold cigarettes and tobacco and carried on business as a photographer were tucked in on the left as you went up the cobbled street. Did I know them? Oh yes, of course I did but they did tend to keep themselves to themselves. They had



Knights the bakers and Knights the greengrocers. Lombard Street C1920. A drawing by Rendle Diplock.

no children and they left a few years after I came to Petworth. Further up in "Ebenezer Villas" was a small private school similar to that run by the Misses Austin at Boxgrove in Pound Street.

Grandad Knight, my mother's father and Uncle Arch's father too of course was baker, confectioner, billposter and town crier, quite a curious combination. He was certainly a leading figure in Petworth life. The bakery premises have now been converted into two separate houses but in those days the bakehouse itself was at the top of the passage leading from Lombard Street. It had two doughbins and two ovens. Here too the bags of flour were stacked. Another room was known as the doughnut house, a big room with a fireplace. Here the doughnuts were made. The shop was on the right facing the street, while the sitting-room was on the left in the front. The beams in this room had a very distinctive rounding on them, a sign of great age. I don't think there are any other like it anywhere in Petworth. There was a large cellar and to the back a refreshment room where we served dinners and teas. Did we have staff? Oh no, Granny Knight and my two aunts were out in the kitchen baking, also Uncle Arch - he wasn't married then. Uncle Jim wasn't home very often; he married a Miss Bishop whose parents kept the Church Lodge and he was usually away with the First Lifeguards. There were steps to the loft; a cab-driver had once lived there and the loft had hooks on the beams where the harness had been hung. Grandad Knight had a horse and cart for delivering bread and there were stables at the back reached through that same narrow passage that's still there - bakers' carts were small and narrow remember. We kept two horses and also in that confined space found room for an outside lavatory, a chicken house and a manure heap! The eggs we used ourselves: the eggs for baking were needed in quantity and came in crates especially for the bake house. The horses liked to come to the kitchen door for a titbit. No, I don't think they had names: bakers' horses were just bakers' horses in those days. I don't remember them having particular names.

Grandad Knight made the muffins and crumpets himself, cooking them in the kitchen on a special stove with a flat top, perhaps some 2½ foot square. Crumpets were made in steel rings with a quite different mixture from that for muffins, the crumpet mixture being poured into the special steel rings, each greased beforehand like a cake-tin. Grandad Knight had a special jug for this. The muffin mixture however had to rise, then, when cooked, the muffins had to be lifted one by one out of the pan and the flour shaken from them, Grandad Knight had a special knife like a pallet knife for prising



them out. Muffins were much larger than crumpets and a muffin should be cooked on both sides then pulled open to put the butter in the middle. Crumpets and muffins both needed re-toasting and both could be cooked on a toasting fork in front of the fire. They were sold in the shop; we didn't go out with them. Another Knight speciality were their famous lardy rolls at 7 for 3d.

Grandad Knight combined the making of muffins and crumpets with being town crier, an ancient office associated in the past with keeping the market in order. It was still taken quite seriously and he had the town crier's bell. He didn't dress up but he did usually take with him notes of what he had to say. "Oh Yes, Oh Yes, Oh Yes," he'd begin and ring the bell three times. "This is to give notice ...." and then he'd give his message. At this time it wasn't big events like the outbreak of war but rather local news about forthcoming events in the Iron Room or the Town Hall, a cricket match or something like that. The organisers would bring him the details and pay him a shilling for publicising them. The hand-bell was made of brass and had a wooden handle. Perhaps someone might have lost a brooch or an animal had strayed. Grandad Knight would give notice of it. He had a fairly set round: Petworth being rather more compact as a town then than now. He'd walk through the Square, up New Street, then up East Street to the Church. One of his ancient privileges was to collect toll from the fair-people on November 29th. The caravans in those days would park half-way up Lombard Street and I can remember seeing him go up into the caravans to collect the toll; they didn't have to pay a lot and he was usually some little time in each caravan. I expect they gave him a drink as well as the toll. Caravans also parked right up New Street on both sides, keeping well in to let the traffic come through, also in Golden Square and in Park Road up by the Iron Room. The proper gipsy caravans kept to these streets, Lombard Street being too narrow for them. We at Knights didn't have a stall at the fair, but it did make us busy in the shop with so many people coming in from the outlying villages. Eagers in the Market Square would always clear their window on Fair Day and put in their Christmas toy display - big objects that would tantalise the children (who were hardly likely to receive presents of such magnificence) - toy cars, rocking horses, giant teddy bears, things like that.

Grandad Knight was a popular old man and very well-known in the town. I remember he used to sing a special song Cathleen Mavorneen at Christmas. Christmas was very different in those far-off days before the Great War. We always had turkey and would have our meal

in the old kitchen, then move down to the beamed sitting-room at the front. There would be myself, Granny Knight (although she died not too long after I came) Grandad Knight, the two aunts, Uncle Arch and Alice Knight, possibly Uncle Jim too if he happened to be home on leave.

Did we make Christmas cakes? Well of course we did. I remember one year we had so many to make I stayed up till 11 o'clock icing them and was so tired I simply couldn't do any more so just left them on the kitchen table as they were and went to bed. Uncle Arch made the cakes and I iced them. Now the bakers' boys in those days often came from the outlying villages like Sutton and slept in instead of going home. When they came down for breakfast they found the table covered in Christmas cakes, some iced some not. "Good Gracious", they said, "Whatever's the matter with Miss Clement?" and had to clear the table before they could have breakfast. The boys would make the dough, help in the bakehouse, look after the horses and take the bread out on the round. During the war the boys were all called up and Uncle Arch and I had no help in the bakehouse at all. There were a lot of things we couldn't make too, because we simply couldn't get the stuff. I forget how many bakers' boys we had; some came back from the Great War but others, alas, didn't.

Did I go out of Petworth? Not very much, although I liked to go back to London once a year if I could. I usually went with Brenda Knight. We did however do a certain amount of outside catering in the villages around Petworth. Even then most of our catering was in Petworth itself, in the Iron Room or the Town Hall. One of my very earliest Petworth memories is of helping with the committee breakfast at the Cattle Show held in Petworth Park. Although I was only seven or eight I had to lay the table and put out the cutlery for seven o'clock. The committee were getting everything ready for the show. Grandma Knight had made tea in a great urn and Grandad Knight brought up the urn and the cooked breakfast in his horse and cart. It was a proper breakfast already cooked by Grandad Knight, bacon and eggs that sort of thing, all in big dishes. It was charged out at a shilling a breakfast. Petworth Park Club Day was another catering occasion: we'd have a stall out there and sell teas, cakes and sweets. The Flower Show was another big occasion with food served in big marquees. Local ploughing matches too we catered for, doing teas this time.

A regular trip - not far this time - but it had to be done every day, was up to the still-room at Petworth House with an ounce of

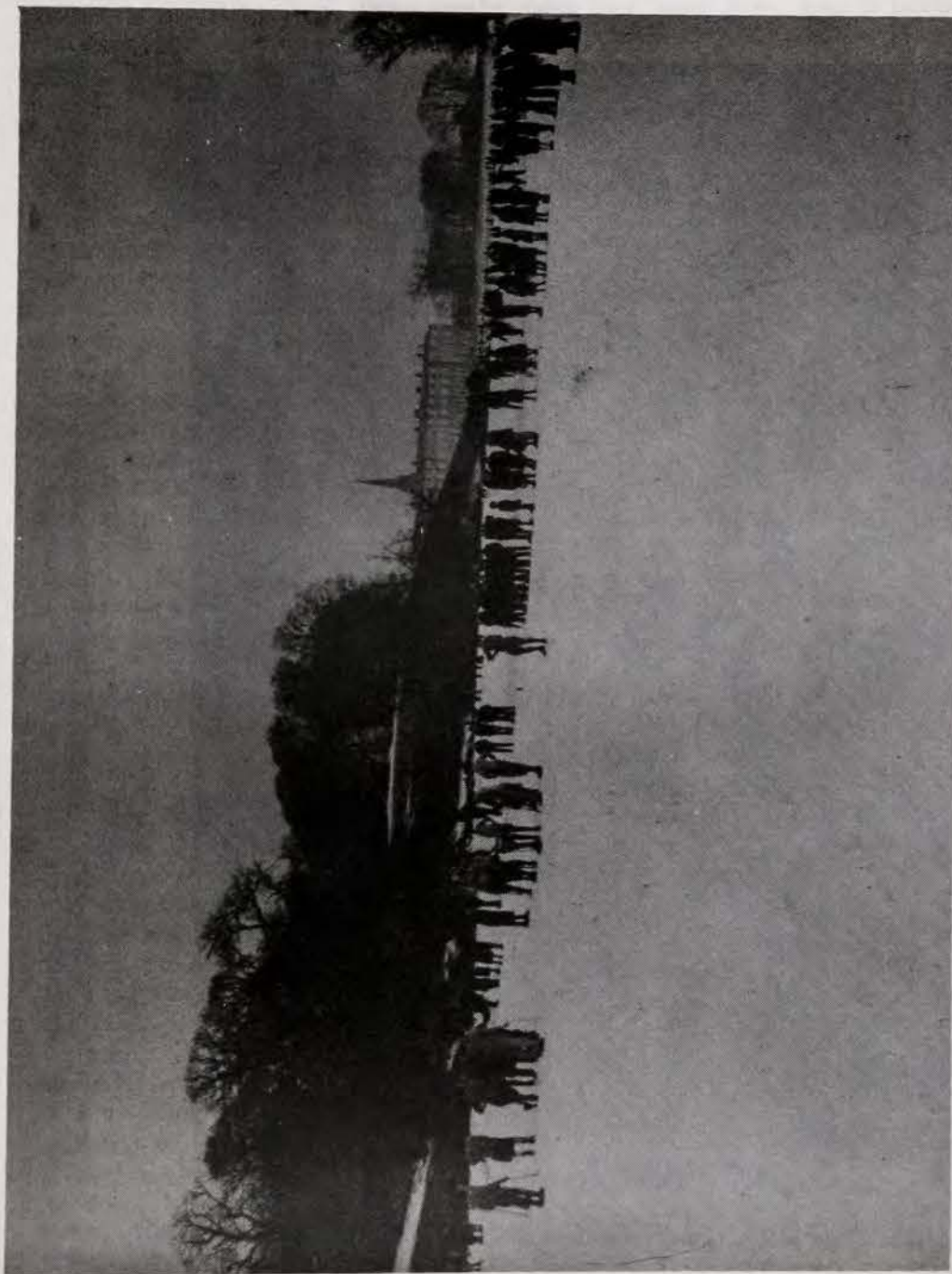


yeast. I'd go in at the Chruch Lodge entrance, Mr. and Mrs. Bishop had the lodge in those days, go up the long stone passage, clonk, clonk on the stones and go into the still-room on the left. They made a lot of fancy things there for Petworth House but a single ounce of yeast, it was always the same amount, wouldn't made any bread to speak of. Perhaps they used it for some special rolls. It cost a penny an ounce and we rendered an account quarterly.

Winters seemed more severe then than they are now. If the lake froze in Petworth Park Lord Leconfield would allow the Park to be kept open at night and we could go up there when we closed the shop. Oh yes, I could skate and I had my own pair of skates, most people had. I think I must have left them at Petworth when I moved. People wouldn't have their own skates nowadays unless they lived near an ice-rink. I think that goes to show what I mean about winter being more severe. It wasn't just one year either; there were several years when skating was allowed, but the ice had to be really safe, several inches thick before Lord Leconfield would allow skating at all. We had to walk from Lombard Street up to the Cricket Lodge in Tillington Road, there being of course no tunnel entrance to the Park in those days. Bicycle lamps would be used when it got dark and there would be a fair old crowd out there.

I suppose I belonged to most things. There was Daisy Whitcomb's concert party which rehearsed over Thayre's shop in North Street. We'd begin at the Iron Room, then go "on tour" round the villages, Kirdford, Balls Cross places like that. Even at that time we hired a car to take us. I can't now call many of the names to mind but I know Horace Steggles was one of the troupe at one time. During the war we girls had to do male impersonations because all the boys were away and I can remember one musical monologue of mine, "My book, my pipe and Jack." Jack was a little Jack Russell. To do the monologue I had to borrow Daisy's brother's suit. When he came home on leave I had to get it back post haste. Probably he wasn't all that annoyed though as we later married!

Mrs. Upton at the Grays was another who loved to put on shows. I always liked to go up there and take part in the theatricals. I was the youngest one there and after it was over there was always a big supper. Mr. Upton was very kind and always pointed out what were the nicest things to eat. The drawing-room would be cleared out and there would be a ball. I remember once Granny Knight sent a baker's boy up to collect me as it would be midnight



Skaters in Petworth Park 1929.  
Photograph by G.G. Garland.





At Zeke's grave in the Gog woods c1953.  
Zeke was a black Labrador belonging to the men of 577 Squadron. He was only a few months old when he was run over by a lorry. The men of the Squadron cut a piece of stone, carved an inscription on it and put a metal emblem on it in the Squadron's red and green colours as a memorial to Zeke. The stone still remains there.

Photograph by G.G. Garland.

before it was all finished. Mr. Upton went to the door when he rang and said to him, "You can't take her away now, you'd better go down into the kitchen and have something to eat with the servants." So my escort had to wait.

Another fairly regular trip was down to the Rectory to have tea with Mrs. Penrose the rector's wife. As she was also an "Annie" she called these occasions "Annie's tea-parties". I was also a lieutenant in the Girl Guides and we would often go away to camp. I remember we once stayed at Bishop Otter College in Chichester. As the Captain was Mog Upton, things were a bit difficult when people asked for "Mog". We had to say, "which Mog do you want? Mog Knight or Mog Upton?"

When I married I ran a little sweet shop in North Street where Mr. Boss' antique shop is now, my husband's father had an ironmonger's shop between the sweet shop and Messrs. Fox the outfitters. My husband himself had a workshop in Barton's Lane. In old Grandad Thayre's time it had been more of a blacksmith's but by this time the business was more mechanical: iron-work, weeding that kind of thing. My shop was more perhaps of a little general store than anything else - cigarettes, some groceries, the sweets and, kept to one side, paraffin!

Mog Thayre was talking to Audrey Grimwood,

### SOME REMINISCENCES OF THE CANADIANS

#### 1) The Prairie Plumber

The Prairie Plumber was a Canadian soldier who came to England and eventually married a local girl, going to work for his father-in-law as an assistant plumber. Because he came from Canada and talked so much and so often of the praries he rapidly became known as the "PrairiePlumber". I can remember working with him on some new council cottages at Bury. It was winter-time and we had got to the stage when the roofs were on but there was a great big opening where the fire-place would eventually be. It was cold and we used to make a fire lunch-time from old ends of timber and sit round it as we ate. To prevent it smoking we nailed a piece of plaster-board across the top rather like what we used to call in the old days a "blower" in other words a piece of sheet-metal that would lift up on a hinge and prevent a lot of the smoke coming out into the room. At lunch-time as we sat round the fire



the Prairie Plumber would tell us a yarn or two about the prairie and the things that happened out there. We loved hearing all this but the trouble was that we could never be sure when he was being serious and when he was simply pulling our legs. There might be a dozen or fifteen sitting round the fire depending on how far the house was toward completion - carpenters, bricklayers, electricians, various tradesmen.

Well, the stories went on over several lunch-times and eventually one of the lunch-time listeners who happened to be good at drawing began to doodle on the plaster-board over the fire: soon there was a little bear looking round a tree-trunk just as The Prairie Plumber had just been telling us! Slowly from these small beginnings, the plaster-board began to build up a picture of the Prairie Plumber's Canada. He would tell us of Peace River Valley where he came from and so Peace River Valley would go onto the board. Or there was the solitary train that would come once a week up to the limit of its track and then go back again. The train and the track would be added to the picture. He'd talk of the buck-rabbits he'd shoot with a gun in either hand, or about the coyotes, all sorts of things, and like magic each lunch-time the picture on the plaster-board grew more crowded. His father had been a trapper and in the summer would go right up through the forest, staying in a succession of tiny huts where he kept stores of food. He'd be on his own for seven months trapping for furs and pelts. And so the huts and the forest and its animals and birds would be added to the tapestry over the fire. Even I had a go, not at the animals and birds, I left these to John but I was quite good with a tree or a railway track. I've so often in later years wished we'd kept that piece of plaster-board. When the site was finished I'd often see the Prairie Plumber around and he'd roar with laughter pull two imaginary pistols from his pockets and blast away with either hand at the jack-rabbits. "Wham! Wham! he'd say. I remember him doing it in Tillington Village Hall the last time I saw him. Was he pulling our legs? I never knew and he'd never tell us!

B.H.

## 2) Around the Camps

The Prairie Plumber certainly knew something about pelts. Everyone in the building trade after the war carried a catapult but he was a particularly good shot with one. If he shot a squirrel he'd have the pelt off in a flash and stretch it out on a stick - something he'd obviously done many times.

Mr. Sumersell my boss was the Prairie Plumber's father-in-law and he became concerned when his son-in-law hadn't been heard of for a good six weeks. He was out in Italy. When a new intake came into Brownings Camp on the Kirdford road he thought the best thing would be to find out from them where the 51th Division were and see if they could offer any clue to his son-in-law's whereabouts. Not a very good idea in war-time conditions. Before we knew what was happening we'd both been arrested and locked up in the guardroom. We were kept there all day guarded by what seemed to me, as a boy of fourteen, to be some very large Canadians indeed armed with pistols in fat-looking hosters. Looking back I'm not sure the Canadians took it all very seriously. We did however and spent a very anxious day before we were released.

Working out in the camps as a plumber's apprentice I'd notice things about the Canadians that to us seemed rather unusual. I always remember them as wearing gloves, whatever job they were doing, and when they wanted to roll a cigarette they'd first take off one glove and roll the cigarette with one hand. The widespread use of gloves would be the legacy of a colder climate. They'd use loose tobacco, not strands, it looked almost like dust.

The Canadians were fascinated by Mr. Sumersell's old 1927 canvas-top Austin 7 - one of those with celluloid windows. It almost seemed to cast a spell over them. We worked at most of the local camps and I remember once either at Brownings or Barkfold looking round a corner to see six hefty Canadians carrying the long-suffering Austin waist-high down the road!

We worked for the Garrison Engineer whose H.Q. were in Petworth and we'd maintain the boilers and do general maintenance, often when the camps were empty awaiting a new intake. I remember Fred Sumersell was the camp policeman, his job was to keep an eye on the camps when they were empty. We used to get food at the camps and what surprised us was the Canadian habit of putting different things on one plate like a pork chop, a hot bread roll and a helping of canned peaches. The Canadians weren't great tea-drinkers and we almost always got coffee with our meals. I remember once the cook saying to my boss, "Like a drop of tea?" When we went out with him to get it, it turned out to be a 7lb box of loose tea. All highly irregular but we didn't argue about it. The way the Canadians stoked the boilers used to horrify Mr. Sumersell. The boilers might blow out steam and boiling water but the Canadians didn't take much notice of his objections. They seemed to be on first-name terms with



their officers and were allowed to paint and decorate their vehicles, not something that the British Army would have approved I think.

J.G.

### 3) Canadians at Bennyfold

Labour was difficult to come by in 1945. I kept applying for help but I never got anyone. It was haying time and I had thirteen acres, ten of kale and three of mangolds getting out of hand. These crops have to be kept clean, "set out" as the saying is, or the yield is poor and of course if they're full of rubbish and it seeds there are all sorts of problems stored up for succeeding years. I kept on asking for extra help but I was getting nowhere. Eventually someone suggested the Canadians (still waiting to go home although by this time the war was over) might be glad of a little extra pocket-money. I went through the fields and roughly horse-hoed along the line of the drills, then went up to Austins and bought eight special small hoes to get at the rubbish in amongst the plants. It wouldn't matter too much if a few of the plants were cut down, we'd always sow these crops quite thickly.

The first time the jeep came up to the farm I said, "There's the hoes how many's going to stay?" Six got out. I paid them 2/6<sup>d</sup> an hour and the same thing would happen each evening - "How many's stopping tonight?" They would work a basic four hours, sometimes going back to the camp for meals and I paid them ten shillings - always cash on the night. They would usually come from the Pheasant Copse Camps, "Waste Waters" as we always called it after the outflow from Petworth Park Lake that used to lie out beside the London Road.

Sometimes if I was haying they worked by themselves. They certainly didn't need to be watched. They took an interest in the farm and its working and liked to ask about the hay making and to watch how the loader raked it up. When they'd finished the thirteen acres they wanted to know if it had really paid me to have them hoe it. Of course if had, the Canadians did me a very good turn. They were interested too in the little fields seven acres, ten acres, areas like that. I used to dung heavily and for corn could get a yield of 40 bushels an acre but their fields were vast and couldn't be so intensively manured so that their yields were less heavy per acre. While they might agree that our corn yield per acre was better than theirs they were very scornful about our timber: even

our larger trees seemed to them not much more than brushwood. I suppose what with the corn and the timber we counted the score as about even. They were good workers; if one of them got behind with the hoeing the others would get after him so that he caught up.

One evening I was hoeing and there was a group of five at work and another group of two working by themselves. It emerged that the two had been at Dieppe and that this shared experience kept them together and at the same time kept them apart from the others. Many of the men had scars and bullet marks. I suppose they came for about a month, different men each evening or the same men but in different combinations. We missed one whole week because several thunderstorms kept us off the ground altogether.

I remember one evening getting up to the top of the field and stopping for a rest. It was twenty minutes to ten. I looked up at them and said, "What're you going to do? Leave off or go back down the field a little ways?" There were eight of us, one to a drill and they turned to work back down the field. When it was ten o'clock I said, "We've gone far enough." We were already some way back down the field. The eight of us had done a lot in the odd quarter of an hour or so. They said to me, "How long would it take you to do all that on your own?" That's how they were, it wasn't just the pocket-money. They really did take an interest.

J.P.

### PETWORTH'S DEFENCES IN EARLY 1940

To judge by the weapons allotted to the Petworth House section of the Local Defence Volunteers in July 1940, Petworth was not well-equipped to resist a determined attack. The Petworth House platoon had 12 Short Lee-Enfield rifles, 180 rounds of .303 ammunition, 2 blank practice clips of 5 dummy cartridges, 3 oil bottles, 3 pull-throughs, 22 Local Defence Volunteer arm-bands, 22 size seven caps of which two were to be returned as not being large enough, 12 bayonets which did not fit the rifles supplied, and a quantity of 4" by 2" pull-through rag. Other sections of B" company will no doubt have had similar armament.

Some other precautions had also been taken. Poles had been planted by the Ministry in an effort to stop gliders. There were set up-right like hop-poles some 10 to 15 feet above the ground haphazardly across large fields that might be suitable for landing gliders. They would be set some hundred feet or more apart: a glider needs



some hundred yards or more in which to stop. It is doubtful whether they would have stopped gliders landing, although they might have pulled them up rather abruptly. The poles were either taken up at the end of the war, or simply left in the ground until they rotted away.

At three points in the town; at the top of Shimmings Hill, just south of Somerset Hospital in North Street, and opposite York Cottage in Pound Street, a series of holes, in practice concrete pits some two and a half feet deep were excavated, these were some one foot square across the top. To allow traffic to pass these holes were filled with removable concrete slabs. In the event of attack these slabs would be removed and angular pieces of steel inserted which would in theory prevent the passage of motorised vehicles such as tanks and armoured cars. These angular pieces would have been constructed from old railway lines and, while never used in earnest, were certainly used in exercises.

In the wall in the west side of the road both in North Street and Pound Street gun-ports were cut out which would give protection and a reasonable field of fire in the direction the enemy might be expected i.e. up or down the road. The gun ports are still visible in Pound Street and North Street. The position overlooking Shimmings Hill was on the top of Mount Pleasant but there were no gun-ports here, just sand-bag protection.

At four other points on the roadway, leading into Petworth, there were a number of cylindrical concrete blocks each approximately the size of a 40 gallon barrel, and stacked ready for use at the road-side. The largest size were to be stood upright in the road, so that a tank might theoretically run into it and spin out of control. A smaller type in the shape of an inverted mushroom, would rock back on its base when a vehicle made contact with it. Both types had a hole in the middle and could be manhandled with iron bars if necessary. The mushroom type were also popularly known as "concrete dollies". Some of the larger type are still in the Brook below the Withy Copse, at the tunnel entrance to Petworth Park in the old Cow Yard, and at Coultershaw. After the war many were used by farmers as milk-churn stands. Some of the concrete dollies are still to be seen in the Pheasant Copse.

A single perimeter barbed-wire fence comprising two separate rings of wire as a base with a single ring on top to form a triangular shape protected at least part of the town but not all of this was



H.M. Queen Elizabeth (now the Queen Mother) meets the Toronto Scottish at Pitshill in 1943.  
The series of four photographs reproduced here were all taken by Charles White  
and appear here courtesy of Mrs. E. White.





Pitshill 1943 (2)



Pitshill 1943 (3)





Pitshill 1943 (4)

permanently installed. It ran from the top of Shimmings Hill at its junction with the Withy Copse footpath, around the southern and eastern boundaries of the Copse where it remained more or less permanently. It then proceeded northwards in an irregular line approximately half-way up the slope between the brook and the path to a point behind the Rectory Garden, to swing then north west to be attached to the garden wall of Somerset Hospital. It continued along the south side of the garden of Somerset Hospital to meet up with the tank trap in North Street. This portion of the line was not laid permanently but could be set up in an emergency. Such was the north-eastern section of the fence; it was intended to carry on the fortification to protect the town from the south but this does not seem to have been effected with any degree of conviction, although there were sporadic lengths of barbed wire at certain key points such as Red House.

Other defensive gun positions, not manned of course in normal circumstances, were set out in places where the maximum field of fire could be obtained over a given area. Such places were the eastern boundary of the Rectory Gardens overlooking the Shimmings Valley, the eastern boundary of Somerset Hospital garden overlooking the northern end of the Shimmings Valley, the western end of the tunnel entrance into Petworth Park and the western boundary of the south lawns adjoining Petworth House, including the Gardens. A particularly advantageous site was that surrounding the Red House headquarters situated due south of Petworth Police Station (and now in the grounds of Lund House) - this would give an excellent field of fire over the whole of the southern area and also to the west. The nature of the weapons to be deployed would vary: two pound anti-tank guns on most of the key positions, with an assortment of light or small arms i.e. bren-guns and rifles in 1940 and possibly a few two inch mortars. One item of ordnance which it was hoped to have included in the defensive system was a mortar known as the Blacker Bombard which was currently being developed at Coates Castle under the direction of Colonel Blacker.

There were two basic L.D.V. observation posts: one at the Gog (see Bulletin No.37) and one at the north end of Petworth House. The latter would seem to have been manned by L.D.V. members who were also Leconfield Estate employees. The following is an entry for a typical night in 1940, taken from a notebook kept by them.



Thursday July 25

L Hill } 9-30 to 10. Searchlight activity  
L Braigent }  
L Wheatley }

10 - 12<sup>PM</sup> Red and yellow  
lights observed in  
N.E. direction  
looked like signals being  
given with very lights

10. 12-30  
Searchlight activity  
Planes above

12.-30 to 5-30  
Nothing to report.

J. Taylor.

PETWORTH CINEMA (10)  
The beginnings of the Regal

Mondays as usual were devoted to bill-posting around the villages, which took me most part of the morning, and before I had my lunch, several posters and streamers needed to be changed on the cinema front hoardings. One mid-day I had nearly finished when two well dressed gentlemen stopped to look at what I was doing on top of an old step ladder, which I admit was a bit wobbly, but they just

waited for me to finish and come down. They asked me if I was the owner of the Cinema and I said that I was, I thought at first they were two film travellers, but I was soon able to dismiss this, because film travellers only came to see me on their own. Some did use the sharing of one car but they would never come together. I was given a business card and noticed they were directors of a small circuit of cinema operating somewhere in the Portsmouth area. I asked them if they would mind seeing me after lunch, and said that I should be at my small cycle office in the Golden Square. This they agreed to do. I changed my clothes after I had my lunch, and made myself respectable, just as I would do for an evening show. I then waited for them to arrive, but I had forgotten to tell them exactly where my office was. However as everyone knew this, they would have little trouble in finding me and at about 2.30 p.m. there was a knock on my door and these two gentlemen came in. I offered a chair to each, and there being only two chairs, I sat on my desk and just waited for one of them to speak first. I soon found out what they had come for. They were looking around small towns to build cinemas, and Petworth was one of the towns on their list. I told them I hoped in the very near future to be able to do exactly this myself, but found it almost impossible to find a suitable site, as the Leconfield Estate Co. owned most of the properties and land in the Petworth district. They informed me they had already been to the local estate agent and hoped that a site would eventually be found. I simply told them they were wasting their time because I had the first refusal should anything become available, and living in Petworth all my life I knew every inch of any available land that might be going. They impressed upon me that if I did not do something about it very soon, they would and we shook hands as they left. I then just sat down in a quandary. I kept on saying to myself, "This must not happen to me." After all I had started from scratch and had already put many years of hard work into my cinema concern. I must confess I had many sleepless nights worrying what to do for the best. I eventually came to a conclusion. The best thing for me to do was to make an appointment to see his Lordship himself. The very next day I sent a letter to his private Secretary asking him if he would be good enough to make an appointment for me to see his Lordship on a very private matter. Within the next few days I had a letter asking me what my business was. So I wrote another letter stating that I wanted to buy a small piece of land to build a modern cinema and would he therefore make the necessary arrangement for me to see him. Another letter came stating that his Lordship had passed my letter over to his land agent to attend to, so



another appointment had to be made to see the agent. I gave him to understand in my letter that I would have liked to see Lord Leconfield himself, but under the circumstances it appeared this was not possible. However, an appointment was made to see the agent, and I was very fortunate to see them both, his Lordship being not far away, listening to all that I had got to say. I explained that my father and his father before him had served under the Leconfield estate as a farmer for many years and I would appreciate it if they would be good enough to take this into consideration in my particular case. The agent listened very carefully to all that I had to say. I thought it a good idea at this time to mention that on more than one occasion Lady Leconfield had hired my Hall for her "At Home" parties where I had the pleasure of showing lantern slides and films she had made from photographs, taken herself in Black Africa. I further stressed the point that a modern cinema would bring more outside people into Petworth and the traders would welcome such a project. The agent made more notes on his pad, but I could feel that he had already had a talk with his Lordship who was still in the same room. My interview last about 20 minutes and ended with the agent closing his note book saying, that he would let me know the position after consulting with his Lordship. I shook hands with him and thanked him for his co-operation in this matter. All that I had to do now was to wait for results. Several days elapsed and each day seemed a week until at last the letter arrived with the usual Estate Office printed envelope. I started to open it with trembling fingers, hoping for the best. The agent informed me that his Lordship had carefully considered my request and took a very sympathetic view in my case. However, the only piece of land that he would consider selling was a site situated about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile out of the town. This particular site at the end of North Street had been derelict for many years and was not suited for anyone to build on, and much too far out of the town. I was not disappointed about this because I had at last been offered some building land. I had to be very careful not to appear to refuse it out of hand, so I let a whole week pass by without doing anything rash, but just looking around every corner and space owned by the Estate. I found nothing suitable but then suddenly I had an inspiration. I was standing in front of my cinema looking due west on to the Midhurst Road. There were a large number of allotments owned by the Leconfield Estate Co., and although this was situated on the brow of the hill, I could visualise the building of a cinema, car park and a dwelling house. I made it my business to go to the Council offices and asked them if I could borrow an ordnance survey map of Petworth, keeping what I had in mind to myself. I made three

tracings showing exactly the position of the proposed cinema, I then wrote to the agent thanking his Lordship for the interest he had taken and saying how sorry I was not to be able to accept the piece of land as suggested, on account of the position. I enclosed however a site plan of some allotments which I would consider a proposition, and would his Lordship kindly consent to selling me a piece of this land owned by the Estate Co.? I could do no other now, than to wait results. Several days passed, but I heard nothing from the Agent not even an acknowledgement to my letter. "No news", I thought "is good news." Nine days passed by and at last the letter arrived on the twelfth day, I couldn't open it quickly enough. In the letter it stated that his Lordship has considered my application for a piece of allotment land situated on the Midhurst road and according to my site plan, he would be prepared to sell me eleven allotments for the purpose I had outlined, and had therefore instructed the Estate Solicitors to commence negotiations for the purchase. I just jumped for joy at last something had come my way, and to make matters more exciting we were expecting a happy event after four years of marriage. It now seemed everything had started to come at once and we were eventually blessed by having twin daughters, so our lives had to be adjusted accordingly. The conditions under which the land was being sold to me was that it must not be used for any other purpose than an entertainment hall, that the dwelling house was not to be leased out or made into a guest house but solely for my own or other private use. These conditions I approved. The other conditions were that I had to pay all legal expenses including compensation to the eleven allotment holders for the loss of their product. It took several weeks to complete and exchange contracts for the sum of £700, but at last the land now belonged to me. In September 1936, with the help of a business friend, plans and specifications were drawn up and then presented to the Council for approval. There were several modifications that had to be made, such as the operating box floor to be of iron 10" girders inserted by reinforced concrete and to be carried through on to the front fasciawall supporting the canopy. Also two 18" ventilating fans mounted in a trunking between ceiling and the roof. The boiler house and gents lavatories were to be of a separate nature adjoining the building and entered from outside. This idea I thought would be adequate in the summer months but not so convenient in the winter period. However at that time this was a bye-law. The exterior brickwork and decorating had to be approved. Soon however the plans were ready to send to the West Sussex County Council for their final approval, and they were duly passed, providing I



made a separate entrance from the main road for coming in and going out, divided by a centre island, and that all electrical work was to be wired in metal and steel conduit. This I agreed. The next thing to do was to find a builder and get other estimates and furthermore that I should trade locally. Within 10 days I received estimates from several builders which varied in price from one to two thousand pounds, so I took the middle estimate. The next thing I had to do was to find the cash to build, leaving the value of the land as security. So remembering my old organist friend in Tillington, I decided to go to him for help, as he was a Director of a Building Society in Bognor. After waiting about a month, owing to a committee meeting, I received a letter from the Society stating that I had been recommended by the finance committee to get a mortgage payable over a 25 year period and that payments would be made in stages as the building progress, and would I please let them know who the builder was. I eventually signed a contract with Mr. Boxall a Builder in Tillington. So Tillington, more or less, was closely connected with the building of the cinema, and within two weeks of signing the contract lorries, shovels, pickaxes started to appear making an opening into the site from the main road.

T.S. COLLINS (to be continued)

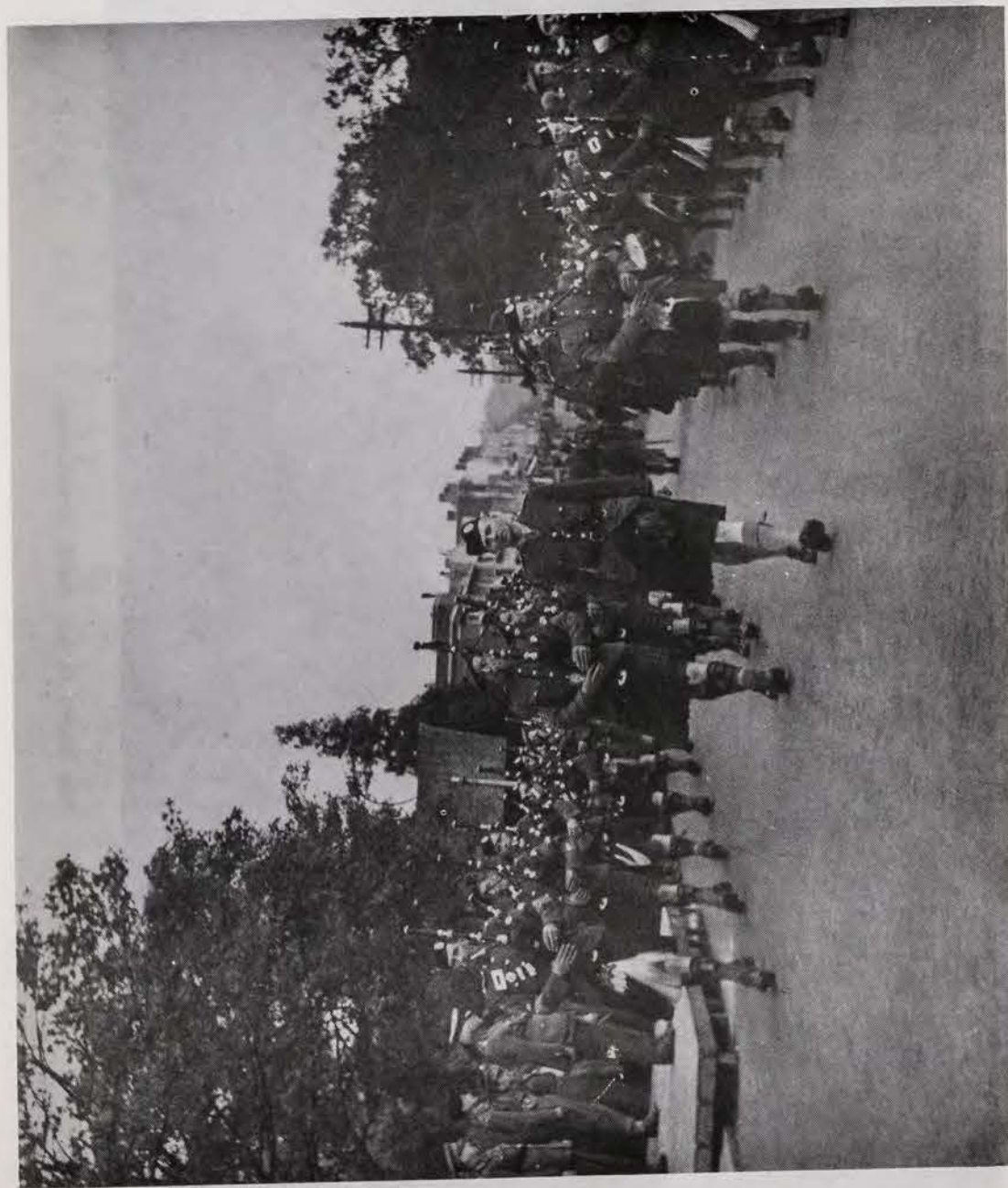
### A SHEPHERD'S DAUGHTER (3)

#### WOODING AND WASHDAY

Our Saturdays and some summer evenings were often taken up with collecting wood to burn on our fires, as there was not much money to spare for coal. We usually went with other children, all after the same thing.

We would go to the woods at the foot of the downs and pick up dry sticks or break down dead ones and make up bundles tied with string, sometimes carrying them on our shoulder and then for a change we would lay them on two long stout sticks and one carrying in front and one behind. Occasionally we would take them halfway home then go back and fetch some more, so we would not have so far to go the next time.

We had to get a store in for the winter and sometimes we would run out when the weather was extra cold and we had to kick the snow about to find the wood. Sounds rather hard nowadays but it was a



Canadian pipers on parade c1944. An official Canadian Army photograph.





Mog Thayne at her North Street shop.

way of life then and we really enjoyed it. Quite a lot was needed on washday, that was one of our chores, chopping it up for the copper fire.

Washing was a full day's work in those days. First boiling the water, then washing the whites by hand, followed by a boiling with soap and soda added, then taken out and rised twice, some "Reckits Blue" added to the last rinse. Finally the coloured things washed and rinsed, then came all the cleaning up.

Thank goodness we did not have to carry our water far then, for there was a tap at the back between the two cottages. This was a great relief to all especially mother.

We did not have hot water bottles but mother used to put bricks in the oven to get hot, then wrap them in a piece of blanket, they kept warm for quite a long time. Ironing clothes was a slow job too, with the little hand irons, propped up on a brick in front of the fire, usually doing one or two garments before changing for another hot iron, wiping the ashes off with a cloth.

#### CHRISTMAS

If there was one time of the year we looked forward to more than any other it was Christmas. How excited we were, it just could not come quick enough for us, and we were quite big before we found out who Father Christmas was, then somehow a lot of the magic went. However, before we were enlightened about that, we were no trouble to get off to bed Christmas Eve and hung one of our black stockings over the foot of our brass bedstead. Then long before it was light next morning, one or the other of us would wake up and feel at the foot of the bed to see if He had been, then it was not long before all were awake and chattering with excitment, feeling all the lumps in our stocking and wondering what was inside.

Mother, knowing there would be no peace until we had looked inside them would come in with a lighted candle and take us all into her room, where we all sat around on their bed and emptied our stockings. They both pretended they had not seen them and looked as surprised as us, and father would say "my hi, fancy that now". Our presents usually consisted of things like hankies, tin toy scales with perhaps a few small sweets to weigh on them, a cracker, sugar mouse, pencil, and always an apple, orange and



nuts in the bottom, sometimes even a three-penny piece which was a lot of money to us then.

I guess our parents often wished they could have given us more, but I am sure they felt well rewarded by the excitement we got from them.

Well, after we had looked at all our things, we put them all back into our stockings and then it was off back to bed and keep quiet until it was time to get up. I guess we were much too excited to sleep anymore, but looking back now I cannot help thinking how kind they were to let us look at our things so early when they must have been woken up in the middle of their sleep.

The Christmas day we had all those goodies our aunts sent from Staffordshire, including a large pork pie, and of course whatever mother could afford to make, it all went far too quickly.

#### SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

My eldest sister was very good at sewing and made dresses etc. for my younger sisters long before she left school, using mother's sewing machine. I remember her telling me once when her teacher and another were talking about sewing how she made a mistake when cutting out a blouse and cut both sleeves for the same armhole. Up till then my sister thought they were meant to be the same, so she learnt one tip that day she would never forget!

Blouses, like dresses, were worn high up in the neck and when the very small 'V' neck came out, one of the local girls came to our house wearing one and when she had gone mother called her a "brazen little hussy!" I wonder what she would say about some of today's fashions!

Our teachers were very nice, though rather strict, but they probably needed to be to keep order. The head mistress kept a cane hanging on the wall behind her desk, which she did not hesitate to use when she thought it necessary. Some of the big boys would grab hold of it sometimes as it came down and make threatening remarks. I used to feel sorry for her but she always managed to keep a firm hand over them.

When the weather was fine in the summer, we sometimes had our desks moved out into the playground for lessons; we liked that. Our

drill or P.T. was just lining up with hands on hips, arms up-stretched, knees bend etc., and a run round the playground to warm up.

One morning when the head mistress was inspecting us before going into school, she suddenly stopped when she got to me and kept looking at my feet and then my face, until I had to look down myself to see what the trouble was, and my boots instead of being black were grey. That morning when I went to clean them I found the polish tin empty, so used enameline instead which mother used for the grate. They looked quite alright to me until I was against all the black ones, didn't my face go red!

Our summer outings were thrilling occasions. Before I was old enough to go they used to go in waggonettes and pony traps belonging to men in the villages. They always went to Littlehampton, and all the children had to get out and walk up the hills, including the long Bury Hill which is quite steep, but my brother and older sisters said they did not mind this a bit, they were much too excited about going to the seaside. By the time I was old enough to go we went by charabancs, this was very exciting.

We would set off with sixpence each to spend, feeling like millionaires, the equivalent of two and a half pence today! We all took a picnic lunch and met up at a certain place for tea. This outing was the only time we ever saw the sea when we were really young.

Our annual concerts were another highlight of our lives, when the actual day arrived we were allowed to go to school with our hair done up in curlers or plaits, so that it would be nice and wavy in the evening, some were tied up in rags.

The girls all wore white dresses with red, white and blue sashes draped over one shoulder and tied under the arm the other side, and looked very smart altogether. We all sat in the front rows of the hall and parents and friends behind, then went up on stage as our turn came.

In one sketch when I was quite young several of us stood in a row in nighties and bare feet and holding a candle-stick. Then one at a time we stepped forward and recited a few lines, then stepped back and the next one went forward until we had all said our bit. A few of the lines I remember are, "How would you like to have a



fly settle on your nose, and not know how to knock it off, eh?  
How would you like to crawl upstairs then fall from top to bottom  
eh? How would you like to crawl across the carpet and pick up a  
pin, then have it snatched away just as you begin to enjoy your-  
self? Isn't it enough to spoil any baby's temper, eh?"

In another amusing act involving the older children, one boy was  
dressed up as a grandmother with bonnet and shawl, and children  
standing each side of her sang,

"Granny's come to live with us for the sake of peace and  
quiet,  
She says she's fond of children too, and thought she'd  
like to try it.  
Now granny's growing young again with Tom and Dick and  
Fanny,  
She'll never leave us any more, we're all so fond of granny."

Then granny would dance all round the stage with the children hang-  
ing on behind, all singing,

"Whoopsala and away we go, on the back of granny O,  
Trot and canter to and fro, that's a good old granny."

My next to youngest sister once recited a very nice poem which was  
very popular, she was especially chosen for it as she really was  
the youngest of six girls, it went:-

"I'm the youngest of six and all of us girls,  
Let me tell you a few of my woes,  
For now, as you see, I'm getting quite big,  
I never have any new clothes.

Mary-Jane is the eldest, and Polly comes next,  
So Jane has the frock when quite new,  
Then after a while, when it's shabby and worn,  
It's passed on to Polly, then Sue.

When till at last, every tucks been let out,  
And all round the bottom is frayed,  
Dear mother unpicks it, and makes a fresh hem,  
And for me, the whole thing is remade.

Mother darns it, where it's worn rather thin,  
Puts a bow on, to hide a misfit,  
Then puts a clean pinafore over it all,  
Just to hide, where she darned a big slit.

I know that dear mother's most clever and kind,  
At patching things right to the end,  
But I cannot help wishing that clothes wore right out,  
That nothing was left her to mend.

There's quite a long history attached to my boots,  
Once, in the dim past they were new.  
Tis three years ago, since they came as a gift,  
One Christmas, for good sister Sue.

She wore them nine months, then bequeathed them to Poll,  
They got much too small as you see,  
Then Meg had a turn, then Betsy, then Nell,  
At last, they descended to me.

Dad soled them and heeled them, quite dozens of times,  
Put clumps on to make them quite stout,  
But still mother says the uppers are good,  
At this rate, they'll never wear out.

Oh, how just for once, I would like all new clothes,  
Instead of the leavings of others,  
Why, even this pinny, which may look alright,  
Is made from an apron of mothers.

I sometimes have wished that my sisters were boys,  
And all of them younger than I,  
For trousers, and coats, would not turn into frocks,  
However much mother might try.

I must now say goodbye, and run away home,  
Or mother will be in a fix.  
She finds me most useful in doing odd jobs,  
Although I'm the youngest of six.



## WAR DAYS

When I was seven years old the 1914-18 war broke out. I was not old enough to understand fully what it involved, but I remember our parents talking to the neighbours about it and looking very worried, and one day mother received a letter from her relations in Staffordshire. After reading it, she turned her back on us, picked up her apron and cried in it, we were very worried and upset as we had never seen her cry before, she always tried to hide such grief from us. When she had recovered sufficiently she told us her favourite brother had been killed, that seemed to bring home to us the real seriousness of the war.

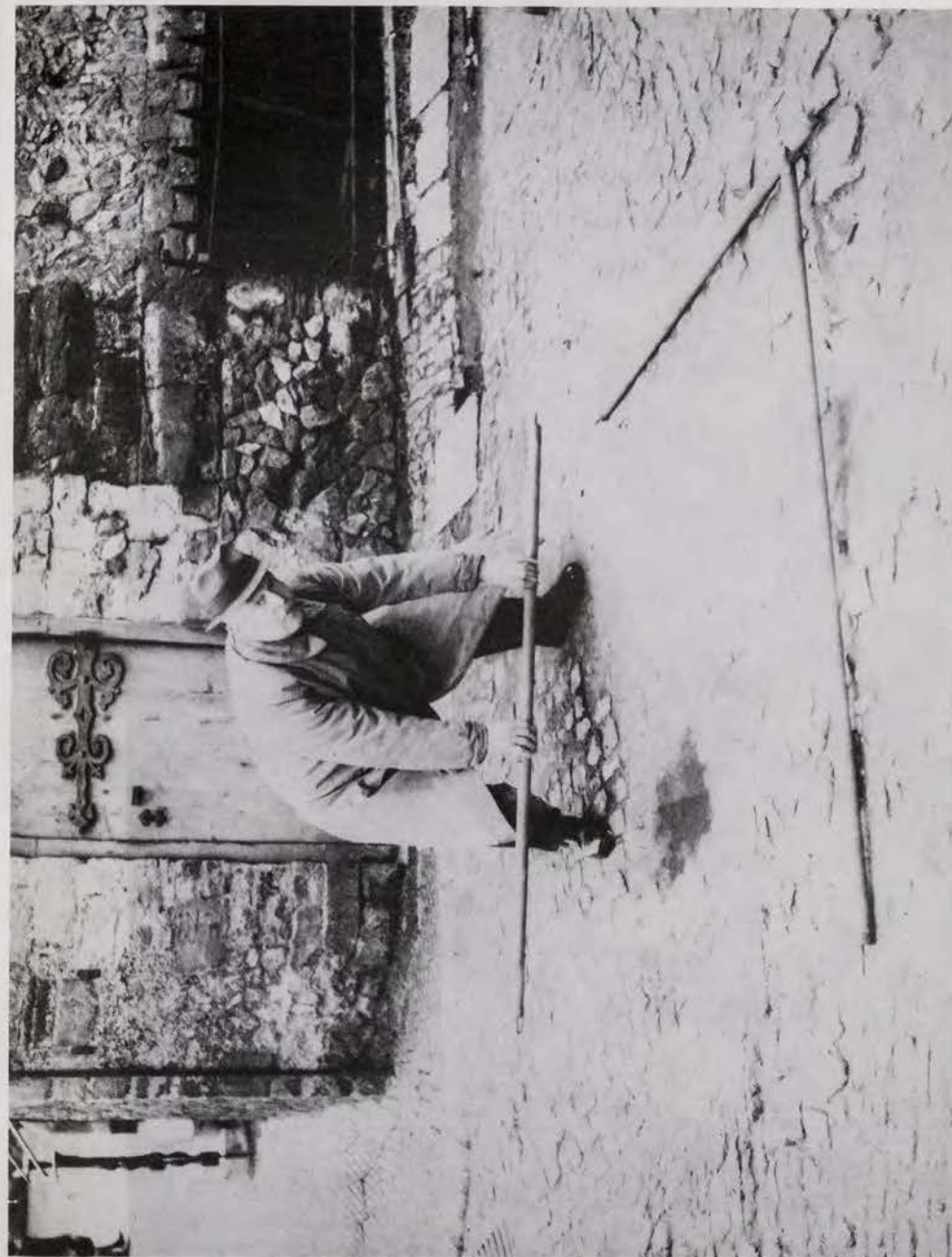
Then there was a plane crashed not very far from our village, killing two airmen, we thought this was terrible.

After a while Bignor Park House, quite close to our village was used as a kind of army hospital, and I can remember seeing the men lying in beds on the verandah, as we walked through the Park. As they improved they would sometimes walk along to our school, many still on crutches, and we would sing to them.

Then one day someone called to see father about being a special constable or warden to help the effort, or course he agreed, and when asked if he could ride a bike as it would be a great help, he replied "no sir, but I can ride a horse", which made him smile. I do not remember what his duties were exactly but he wore an arm band.

With a lot of men being called up to fight, some of the older children were allowed to leave school at twelve years old instead of fourteen, to work in their place, my brother was one of them. One of his jobs was to go on the downs, where the ground had been sewn with corn, and scare the birds off the seeds, "rook scaring" it was called and he used a very noisy rattle for this. Sometimes he had to pick up stones lying in the fields and stack in lumps to be collected, we would sometimes go and help him.

Mrs. E.J. Pentecost (to be continued)

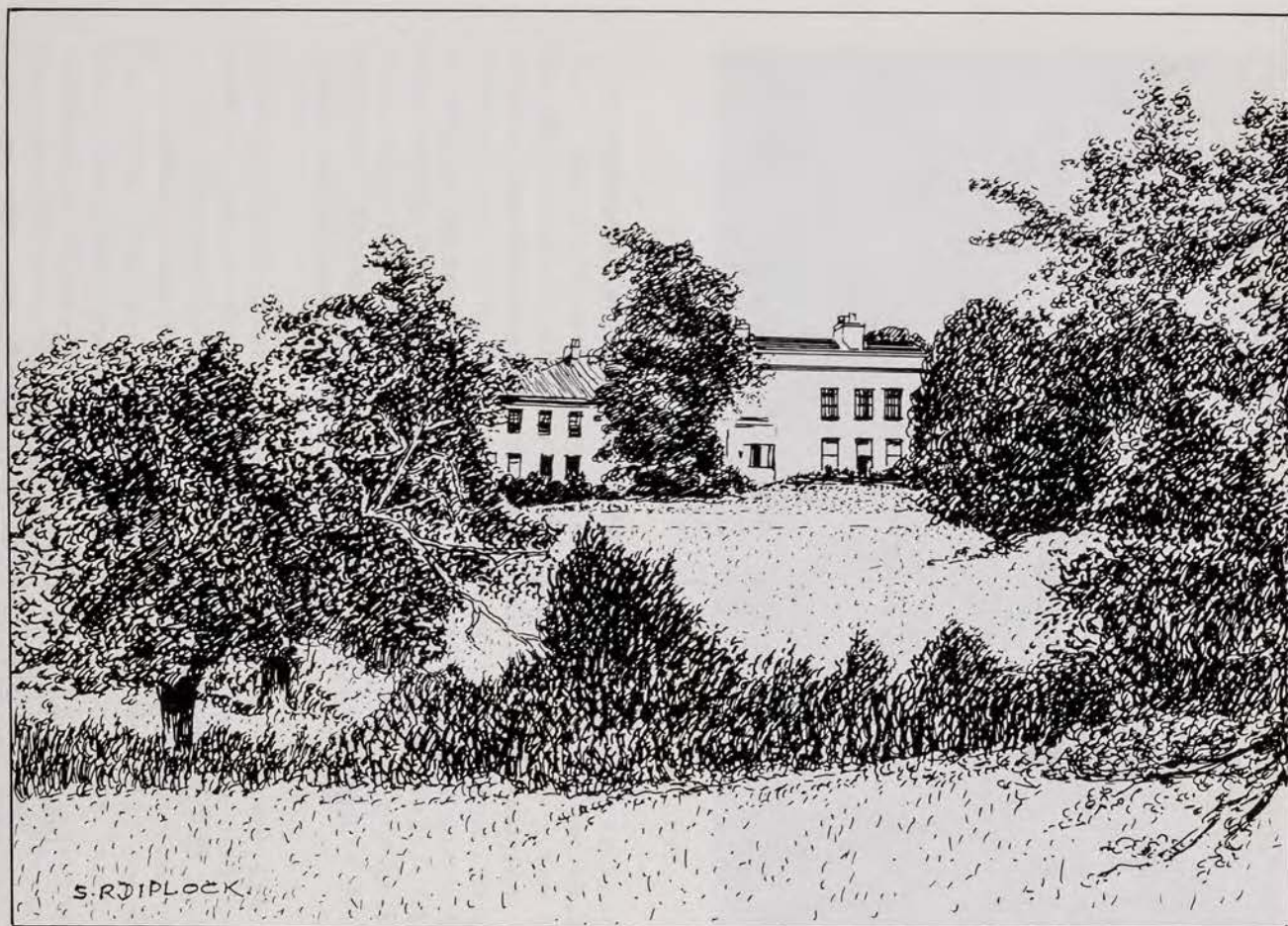


Arch Knight laying out a stall to keep the charter for  
Petworth Fair from lapsing November 1940.  
Photograph by G.G. Garland.



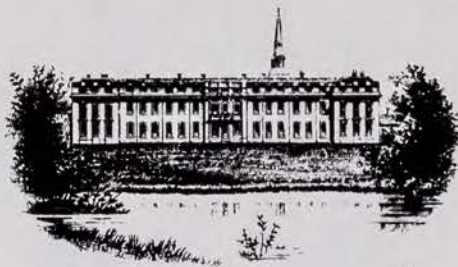


Drinking beer in jam-jars because of a shortage of glasses.  
Kirdford September 1943.  
Photograph by G.G. Garland.



Bignor Park House from the rear, an early century view  
drawn by Rendle Diplock after a photograph by Walter Kevis.





*W. Pitfield*

**Lady Leconfield**

**AT HOME**

**Wednesday, December 8th,**

**3-30—6 o'clock.**

**The well known Raconteuse**

**Miss RUTH DRAPER**

**will give a selection from her stories.**

**R.S.V.P.**

(FOR REFUSALS ONLY.)

Lady Leconfield "At Home". (See page 22).  
The card probably comes from the 1920's.  
(Courtesy of Messrs. Anderson, Longmore and Higham)

HIGH BUILDINGS, EBERNOE AND THE CHITTY'S



A wedding in the Chitty family. Ebernoe about 1935.

Last September a cousin and I went on pilgrimage to Ebernoe, to visit our Grandparents' grave in the Churchyard, and while there met Mrs. Walters, who has encouraged me to write a few memories of our Grandparents, George and Annie Chitty. How sad it is that when you are young you pay little heed to the whys and wherefores of family movements, and unless your parents are given to chat about their childhood, much of the history is lost. How I wish we could have had taped conversations and coloured pictures to record the past, for much is now forgotten, our parents are gone and the questions go unanswered.

My mother, Louisa was 16 years old in 1901 when the family moved from Harting to High Buildings. She was the one girl in a family of 10, and came after four brothers, so right in the middle of this big family, and no doubt was kept at home to help her mother cope. She did go into service as housemaid but not until she was 19 years old. Her older brothers were already at work, at least two were employed at a Bakers in Harting and were in lodgings there. They used to cycle home to High Buildings on their day off and Uncle Jack got very wet on one of these journeys, resulting in his being very ill with rheumatic fever. After some weeks he was well enough



to visit home again and sent a postcard to his mother to tell her to expect him. The postcard was delivered by the old village postman with the remark, "I didn't even know he boy'd been bad!" A family saying to this day.

Postcards were the usual way of contacting one another then, before the 'phone came along and I have a few postcards sent from the boys to their mother. One sent on the 23rd December 1904, reads - "Dear Mother, Just a line to let you know we shall be home on Sunday night by the 8 train. I should like a cap, Vic a tie, and Austin a pair of gloves" - the rest has faded. It was written in pencil, and I guess refers to their Christmas gifts, oh it does say "if anyone is going into Petworth". For a half-penny stamp this would be delivered right to High Buildings in time for someone to go shopping on the 24th!

Ernest the eldest, was in the Army, and was to die far from home in October 1901 at Natal in South Africa. Mother would tell the sad tale of his red tunic being taken out from its wrapping each spring, brushed, aired, and wept over by Grandmother. The two youngest boys Austin and Guyon attended Petworth School, they were both very bright and stayed until they were 14 years old. Mother left school at 12, as no doubt the other brothers did. But in spite of that short spell of education they were all very bright and did well in life. Two of the older ones Fred and Gilbert emigrated to Canada as boys (an assisted passage I expect). They settled in Saskatchewan where after a few years very hard work they married two sisters and prospered as farmers and became quite figureheads in their community. Gilbert died in his nineties in 1975. Their children have recently visited Ebernoe. Austin's name is on the War Memorial in the Churchyard. But I have no details of his regiment or how he died, or where! Life at High Buildings was very hard. It was never a prosperous farm and the impression I have was that Grandad wasn't a good farmer, but that no doubt was because he had no capital only the energies of himself and his sons. Oliver worked for his Father for many years after he returned from the war (1914-18). Mother tells of having to go and collect every drop of water in the dry summers when the well (situated just outside the front door and described vividly by her as "an old land soak"), ran dry. I don't know how far they had to go but every drip was precious. There was a bench outside the back door equipped with bowl and ladle and a coarse cloth for washing your hands and it was used over and over again, woe betide you if you absently mindedly emptied it away! Till her dying day

Mother couldn't waste a drop of water altho' she lived in a house with all mod-cons. She couldn't waste anything indeed, so hard had been her upbringing.

To us High Buildings and Ebernoe were names that conjured up a sort of magic. We were townees and to think of that rather gaunt building perched up on the hill at the end of the long rough lane was like something out of a book, and Ebernoe with its Golden Steps, Hammer pond and the sprinkling of cottages was all part of the mystery and like a romantic story. Life there in Mother's day was not a bit romantic. She looked after the fowls, helped with the milking, made the butter, drove the horse and cart into Petworth for supplies and of course helped in the home. Cooking was done by Grandmother, over the open fire, with a huge hook to string over the heat the saucepan or kettle. If you were lucky enough to get the chimney seat you could peer up into the smoky blackness and see daylight at the top. Tho' it was only twigs and wood that created the heat, Granny used to make her own bread, bake cakes and pies in the side over. Saturday was baking day and the rest of the week most of the food was served cold except perhaps for potatoes. On Sunday nothing was cooked and even the potatoes were cold! Even tho' there was plenty of wood around, it all had to be gathered and was precious and used sparingly.

The huge kitchen with its flagged floor covered here and there with a rag rug was the draughtiest of places, with passages off to the front door and front room (seldom used), and on the other side to the back stairs, larder and dairy. No wonder we all wanted to sit in the ingle nook. I only remember one winter visit, I think Granny was ill and Mother had to go. We occupied the front bedroom (approached by the front stairs thro' the front room) and tho' we cuddled together in the feather matted bed, the cold crept into our bones and in the morning the water in the jug on the wash stand had a layer of ice and even the contents of the chamber pot were frozen!

(to be continued)

from Mrs. P. Collier,  
107 Barrington road,  
GORING-by-SEA.



NEW MEMBERS

Miss. H. Alsford, Barton Cottage, Barton Lane, Petworth.

Mrs. Anstey, Tylands, Selham Road, Lodworth.

Mr. R. Barber, 188 St. Johns Way, Thetford, Norfolk.

Mr. E. Holden, 11 Cabbett Road, West Borough, Guildford.

Mrs. D. Hill, 13 Hampers Green, Petworth.

Vida Herbison, "Coopers", Green Lane, The Street, Jevington,  
Eastbourne.

Mr. Howard, Warren Hamlet, Storrington.

Mrs. E. Johnson, Pound Cottage, Station Road, Petworth.

Mrs. King, 56 Greatpin Croft, Fittleworth.

Mrs. R. Messinger, 9 Bramble Bank, Frimley Green.

Mr. Rea, "Ingleborough", Barlavington.

Mrs. I. Stockman, 72 Hammer Hill, Lynchmere.

Mr. and Mrs. Tatner, Badgers, Fittleworth.

Mrs. J. Downer, 47 Brittany Road, Worthing.

Mrs. E.M. Garman, 7 Mant Road, Petworth.

\* \* \* \*



Plus d'vall 23