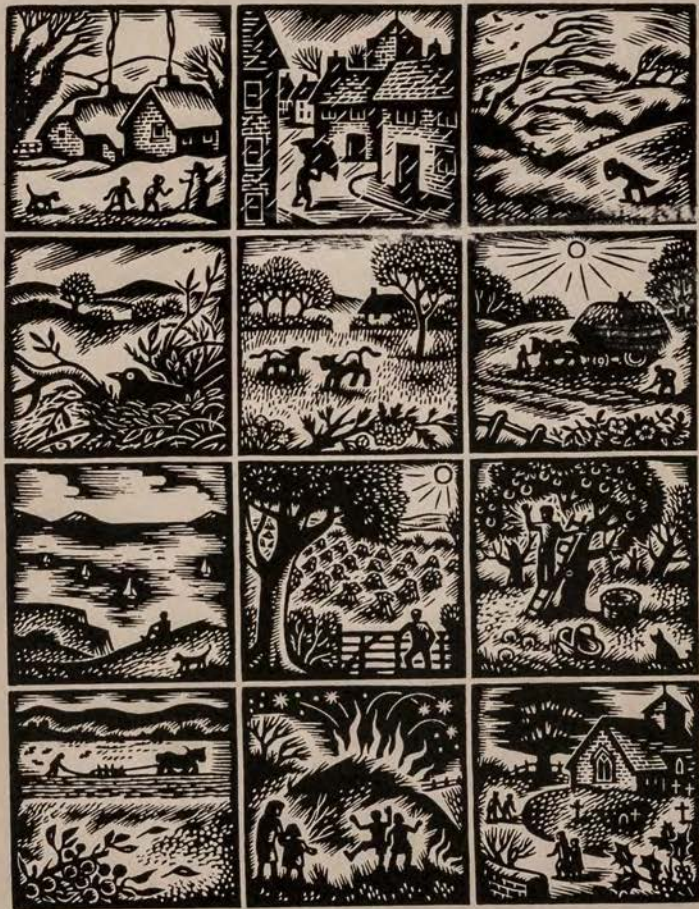




# THE PETWORTH SOCIETY



# magazine

NO. 87. MARCH 1997. PRICE TO NON-MEMBERS £2.00

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THE PETWORTH SOCIETY SUPPORTS THE  
LECONFIELD HALL  
AND PETWORTH COTTAGE MUSEUM!



Spring Programme. Please keep for reference.

**Special Event:** Thursday 27th February:

Three's Company present:

**WEST END MAGIC!**

From the magic of the West End to the delightful ballads of Cole Porter, Three's Company take you on a whirlwind tour of the very best of this century's popular music.

Tickets £4 Davids

This is the Society's February meeting.



**Special Event:**

THURSDAY 13th March

Petworth Cottage Museum Presentation Evening. Leconfield Hall

7.30 p.m. Admission no charge — refreshments.

An introduction to 346 High Street — slides, discussion, readings and a few real surprises!

Followed by

SUNDAY 16th March

Petworth Cottage Museum open day - 2.00 to 4.30. Come any time during the afternoon and be shown round Petworth's very own Museum. Admission free.

**N.B. Petworth Cottage Museum Charity Shop open for a limited period only in what used to be Corralls in High Street. Don't miss it.**

**Visit:** Sunday 23rd March

Special pre-season opening of Petworth House for the Petworth Society. Arrive at Church Lodge at 2 p.m. Depart 4 p.m. Tea and biscuits. There should also be a chance to look at Mrs Cownley's Scrap Book now kindly donated by Mr Leslie Whitcomb to the National Trust. Admission to House is free, small charge for tea and biscuits.

I am sorry this clashes with Palm Sunday but we couldn't do anything about the date, the last Sunday before the House reopens.

**Monthly meetings:** Leconfield Hall 7.30 p.m. Refreshments. Raffle. £1.50.

Tuesday 11th March

Chris Passmore:

Applesham — the story of a  
Downland Farm

Slides

Thursday 10th April

Ian Swinney:

Bookham Commons — History,  
People and Wild Life

Slides

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 6th May

Philip Hounsham

Malawi — "the warm heart of Africa"

Slides

7.15 start

**Walks:**

Leave Petworth

Car Park

at 2.15 p.m.

Sunday 30th March

Steve and Diane's

Spring Walk

Sunday 11th May

David and Linda's

Stag Park Walk

Dogs on leads please.

**NOTICE:**

Saturday March 22nd Leconfield Hall 7.45 p.m.

A Concert by the Warnham Handbell Consort

Tickets £4 to include refreshments.

Good raffle.

Proceeds to St Mary's fabric fund to help toward Tower repairs.

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WEALD & DOWNLAND OPEN AIR MUSEUM events

enquires 01243 - 811475

**Saturday 8th March:** Buildings in the Landscape - the Western Weald. First of four meetings/site visits led by Marjorie Hallam. 2.00 - 4.30.

**Friday 28th March - Sunday 13th April:** "Remains" - an exhibition of sculpture and photographs ..enduring thoughts of man the careful builder and shaper of the landscape - Ted Vincent (of Burton Common, Petworth) and Jane Meredith

**Sunday 30th and Monday 31st March:** Traditional Food Fair

**Wednesday 16th April:** Special Sussex Gardens - talk by Consie Dunn, County Organiser, National Gardens Scheme West Sussex. 6.30 - 7.30

**Thursday 22nd May:** A sketching day around the Museum with help from Petworth artist Jan Roddick.

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**End of May:**

**SPECIAL EVENT!**

Petworth Cottage Museum presents:

Sunday 25th May }  
Monday 26th May } from 2 o'clock

"Around Petworth's hidden High Street"

Stalls, gardens, music, teas and the Museum itself.

Further details see local publicity.

# THREE'S COMPANY



From the magic of the West End to the delightful ballads of Cole Porter, Three's Company take you on a whirlwind tour of the very best of this century's popular music

THURSDAY 27 FEBRUARY 1997

LECONFIELD HALL  
PETWORTH

7.30pm - Admission £4.00 - Refreshments

TICKETS FROM DAVID'S, MARKET SQUARE, PETWORTH  
TELEPHONE 01798 342 811

This performance is brought to you through a partnership between the village hall and the Sussex Entertainment for Village Halls scheme, funded by South East Arts and the districts and boroughs of East and West Sussex.

## THE PETWORTH SOCIETY

Annual Subscription March 1997 to February 1998

Subscriptions for the Magazine for 1997/98 are now due and should be paid to:-

The Hon. Treasurer

Mr. P. Hounsham,  
50 Sheepdown Drive,  
Petworth,  
West Sussex GU28 0BX

OR

The Membership Secretary

Mrs. R. Staker,  
71 Wyndham Road,  
Petworth,  
West Sussex GU28 0EG

Local Members may pay direct to Mrs Anne Simmons at:-  
E. Streeter & Daughter, Lombard Street.

Rates for the Magazine are:	Delivered	£7.00
	Postal	£8.00
	Overseas	£9.00

**In order to keep the costs of the Society to a minimum, it would be appreciated if you would pay your subscription as soon as possible after the receipt of this notice. If you do not wish to continue membership, we would be glad if you would so advise the Society. The above actions will enable the Committee to confirm the printing run and also avoid the expense of having to send out reminders for payment of subscriptions.**

**Please make cheques payable to The Petworth Society.**

I, .....

of .....

Postal Code.....enclose my subscription for 1997/98 £ .....

cash/cheque and (optional), I add..... toward the Magazine fund,

(delete if not applicable).

\* If you have already paid for 1997/98, please ignore this reminder.

## Constitution and Officers

The Petworth Society was founded in 1974 "to preserve the character and amenities of the town and parish of Petworth including Byworth; to encourage interest in the history of the district and to foster a community spirit". It is non-political, non-sectarian and non-profit making.

Membership is open to anyone, irrespective of place of residence who is interested in furthering the object of the society.

The annual subscription is £7.00. Single or double one Magazine delivered. Postal £8.00 overseas £9.00. Further information may be obtained from any of the following:

### *Chairman*

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

### *Vice Chairman*

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

### *Hon. Treasurer*

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

### *Hon. Magazine Secretary*

Mrs B. Hodson, The Cottage, Whitelocks, Sutton

### *Committee*

Mr Stephen Boakes, Mrs Julia Edwards, Lord Egremont, Mr Ian Godsmark, Mrs Audrey Grimwood, Mrs Anne Simmons, Mr D.S. Sneller, Mrs Ros Staker, Mr J. Taylor, Mr E. Vincent, Mrs Linda Wort

### *Magazine distributors*

Mr D. Sneller, Mrs Mason, Mr Thompson, Mrs Simmons, Mrs Hounsham, Mr Boakes (Petworth), Mrs Adams (Byworth), Mrs Hodson (Sutton and Duncton), Mrs Williams (Graffham), Mr Vincent (Tillington and River), Mrs Goodyer, Mrs Williams (Fittleworth)

Membership enquiries to Mrs Staker please, Magazine circulation enquires to Betty Hodson or Bill (Vincent).

### *Society Town Crier*

Mr J. Crocombe, 19 Station Road (343329)

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

## Chairman's Notes

*I'm very pleased to say that subscriptions remain the same this year, I expect you will be too!*

*I hope you like the new "Country Calendar" cover, designed by Jonathan and featuring a 1961 wood-engraving by Gwenda Morgan. As usual there's a lot to fit into the present issue but I have decided not to serialise the two longer contributions "Preparing the Vegetables" and "New England", so perhaps the number of individual items may be a little less than usual.*

*The atrocious weather in the days before the Fair meant of course that for the first time since 1987 the Gallopers couldn't be put up. They were not present for the 1986 revival. The site on the north west corner of the Hall is quite exposed. Robert Harris pointed towards the Downs and talked of "a wind straight from the Azores". Well, wherever it came from it was a fair old wind. The wild weather also put paid to the idea of running some of the fair by steam in the traditional way. Well, there's always 1997.*

*A word about the spring and summer programme. You'll see that we have a visit to Petworth House on the 23rd March. On the preceding Sunday we have a guided visit to the Petworth Cottage Museum. Of the various Petworth activities that I am involved with, I think, leaving this Society on one side, that the Cottage Museum is the most pleasurable. I hope to expand on this in the June Magazine but I really do feel that 346 High Street is a tremendous asset to Petworth. Why? Simply because it gives so much enjoyment to so many people, both visitors and stewards. Visitors because it's something that really interests and enthuses them, stewards because of the different people they meet and the response that they receive to the individual attention they give their "guests". The Museum's not just for adults; so many school parties have written to say how much the children have appreciated their visit and go on talking about what they have seen for long afterwards. We are having a presentation at the Leconfield Hall on Thursday 13th March. We've got all sorts of ideas and hope to make it quite an evening. The Society open-day follows the Thursday's presentation.*

*The lorry ban seems to be moving, if very gradually. No one doubts that something needs to be done about Petworth's traffic but there will be members who feel that this is not that "something". What's to be done? I don't know. I don't think anyone knows. On any reading the western route (and I have never been a supporter of this idea either in theory or in terms of it being a realistic option) is years away. What of Petworth during an indeterminate interim? It can only be said that the present plan has an inbuilt monitoring of its gradual implementation at each stage. Such monitoring is crucial and needs to be seen by everyone as objective. It cannot be self-indulgent.*

*Finally, John Crocombe the town crier has had a short spell in hospital and will not be "crying" for a little while. I very much hope that he will soon be fit again. In his short time of office he has made the position his own and contributed something very special to this historic town.*

*Peter*

*28/1/97*

Don't miss!

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THURSDAY 27 FEBRUARY 1997



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## The Cellars of the old Star Inn

Workmen digging a trench in High Street uncovered in January what appeared to be the entrance to the cellars of the old Star Inn, mentioned in a conveyance of 1706 as adjoining the Beast Market (Golden Square) on the west. Miss Beck (SAC 99) gives other references to the inn in 1618 and 1680. Treswell's 1608 map shows a building aligned north to south at the bottom of the present High Street, with a large yard to the rear, no doubt stabling. The cellar appeared a considerable structure of brick some twelve feet high. Presumably it would have taken barrels for the inn. The Star would have been demolished to make way for Whitehall now the Midland Bank, itself a reuse of the old name Attehall for the property, a usage that may well precede the Star Inn itself. Before anything further could be done "someone from the Council" ordered the cellar to be flooded with concrete in the interests of "safety". This seemed to everyone interested to be extraordinary. Surely some compromise could have been reached? If Petworth really is the jewel in the County Council's crown why vandalise that history without which Petworth is not Petworth at all?

Peter

## Coultershaw Water Pump — an appeal

Dear Peter

Some of the members of the Petworth Society are familiar with the water pump at Coultershaw, but I would be grateful if you could make space in your newsletter/journal to reach a wider membership.

The Coultershaw pump and water supply system are historically important, representing an early (1782) example of public water supply, for besides serving Petworth House it fed 7 "public cocks" and no less than 137 connections to houses, pubs, the prison, breweries etc. The pump is unique as being the only *working* example of its type; we know of only two other examples, which are both local, one being at Bignor Park (broken up for scrap) and the other at Woolbeding House (derelict but complete).

As you know, we hold public open days during the summer months to show the pump working, and during the winter carry out maintenance, and other work to improve the displays.

Visitor numbers increased significantly last year, due to Bank Holiday openings and better publicity, and our small team of volunteers, most of whom come from a distance, e.g. Shoreham and Chichester, were hard pressed to cope. So I wonder if any members of the Petworth Society or their friends would be interested in helping us, however little (but regularly!), in any capacity ranging from acting as stewards or guides on open days, publicity, display layout, site maintenance and occasional basic engineering. We should also like to develop educational visits for schools.



I should be very happy to explain what is involved to anyone interested, and can be contacted at 11 Arlington Close, Goring-by-Sea, Worthing BN12 4ST, telephone 01903 505626.

With all good wishes for the New Year - Yours sincerely.

Michael Palmer

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## Petworth Fair 1996

With atrocious weather sweeping the country on the eve of Petworth Fair, a forecast indicating continued high winds and lashing rain prompted the decision not to erect the gallopers at this year's fair.

In the event, the ancient fair held on the November 20 each year, saw dry, cold conditions, accompanied by a biting wind.

The South Downs Galloping Horses are normally built-up on the sloping road adjoining the Sussex town's market square. Provided by Harris brothers of Ashington; it was agreed, when speaking to *World's Fair*, that in hindsight, they could have safely operated the machine in its usual position.

A somewhat different story from a mere 24 hours earlier, as the brothers struggled against the elements to erect their other attraction here, the Chairoplanes.

Situated at the lower end of the market square, the German-built set of chairs, as ever, attracted the attention of the local teenagers. Older townsfolk stopping nearby to enjoy the sounds of Norman Hobbs' 52-key Bursens fair organ, cared for by Colin Glover.

At this point, it was a pleasure to meet up with fellow *World's Fair* correspondent, John Lovatt. Together a visit was made to the various displays provided in the adjacent Leconfield Hall. The Gypsy caravan models of Ray Sadler always impress, several of which carry winning medals from the prestigious Model Engineering Exhibition.

Peter Jerrome, co author of the book *In the Feast of St. Edmund the King*, the history of Petworth Fair, was present with a selection of his local history publications. As Chairman of the Petworth Society, Peter was one of the driving forces behind the revival of the flagging fair a decade ago.

Falling mid-week, the showmen could only expect a couple of hours business at best, picking up slowly from 6pm onward. The townsfolk are proud of their fair and offer as much support as can be expected in the current economic climate. By 7.30pm, the square was full, but within an hour, numbers had dropped off appreciably.

Standing at the top of Market Square was an attraction for all ages, the Jungle Adventure Fun House of Brad Mitchell. Freshly painted, lettered and looking smart, the same owner's darts round 'un stood in front of the Fun House, while around the corner in matching style was his cork shooter.

For the youngsters, Bill Benson presented his mixed toys juvenile, standing alongside

his attractively lit cup and saucer ride. Billy also provided the only refreshment trailer at the fair, along with his ball in the bucket joint.

Jo Anne Mayne celebrates her birthday on fair day, and this year with husband Gary, provided their rings and blocks. Also offering rings and blocks was Billy Chambers, Jr., while Billy Chambers, Snr. presented his pellet target shooter.

Philip Crecraft had his can can stall in operation with Julie Crecraft looking after the darts stall. Pic a pack and darts were offered by Alfie Penfold, with Terry Palmer also working darts in his side joint.

An innovation was the knock 'em downs presented in a hoopla by William Freeman, who also had his burst a balloon stall nearby. George Searle had his feed the ducks here, with Thomas Benson providing his Crazy Jumbo Cranes.

A colourful addition to the selection of attractions this year was provided by Mrs. Castle offering palmistry in the guise of Gypsy Priscilla Lee.

All in all, Petworth fair is best described as a fair held in the time-honoured traditions, presented by the townspeople for the townspeople.

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[This account by Peter Hammond appeared (with some alteration) in *World's Fair* for November 29th last year. Ed.]

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## Pleasantly surprised

The Christmas Evening was variously advertised as being "changed format" and "rather different" and there was a good turn-out prepared to be "pleasantly surprised".

So, while it may have been disappointing that there were no appearances of the Town Band or the Petworth Edwardians, long-established and appreciated for imparting the Christmas feeling to these evenings, it was reassuring to have the two eleven years old (nearly and just) harpists, Julia Shipway from Northchapel and Harriet Disley of Petworth, performing their harp solos within an appropriately festive stage setting by Ann Bradley. Julia and Harriet are a credit to the Hindhead Music Centre, where they receive tuition. They were warmly applauded by a delighted audience as they ended their contribution with a duet.

Punch and mince pies were served and then Leslie and Grace Baker, surprise guests who had proved so popular earlier in the year, appeared with another programme of songs and memories of the music halls. Leslie's enthusiasm and easy rapport soon had everyone singing the choruses, although he was unable to persuade any lady present to join him for the more romantic or cheeky duets!

This was interrupted by complete mayhem as Father Christmas, St. George, the Turkish Knight, King of Egypt and the rest of the Kirdford Players' mummies burst upon the scene with their traditional and yet somehow spontaneous play = just one of half a dozen calls they were making that evening to collect for the N.S.P.C.C. Another surprise, if not a shock!

Comparative calm was restored as the Grand Christmas Draw took place - 16 more

pleasant surprises - then Leslie and Grace continued their programme, ending with all joining in a rousing rendition of "We wish you a merry Christmas".

KCT

## 'Not All Sunshine Hear ....'

*Not All Sunshine Hear, A History of Ebernoe*, by Peter Jerrome. Illustrated by Jonathan Newdick. Published by The Widow Press. Price £40.

"I would prefer to see this book as a stimulus to further enquiry." This is what Peter has said in his introduction.

It is by this criteria, that the book should be judged, not its price! A book that could have been produced in the normally expected price range would not have been the same book. I count myself among the Philistines who thought they would have liked it cheaper and full of photographs. Now I concede I was wrong. This book is something special and different. I have enjoyed being made to think about how Ebernoe has fitted into the scheme of things from the Dark Ages up to recent times, and I have just sheer admiration for the amount of research that has gone into it. The fact that it is so readable is marvellous. There are also some fine illustrations and the layout of the pages is pleasing to the eye. It would have been a pity to lost any one of its 200 A4 size pages.

I would have liked a drawing of the iron-working but Peter tells me that he and Jonathan finally decided against this because it would have confused rather than otherwise! Jonathan's drawings of buildings are both evocative and masterly. The fact that often they are not as I remember them from constant passing makes you think about the apparently familiar. Jonathan often draws at unexpected angles. Siblands is a good example: from the footpath it looks open, from Jonathan's angle of vision less so. Crossways at Balls Cross is another example: I'm used to seeing it from the public highway not from the back!

Even though the book has had to have such a limited ownership, it is important because it has been published and the information collected together. It will be available through the library for those not lucky enough to have a copy. Already many more people than 150 have heard Peter's talk about Ebernoe. Hopefully excerpts will now appear in the Petworth Society Magazine. Already, because of the publicity the book has had, more facts and pictures are coming to light. I think Peter's desire to stimulate interest in Ebernoe has succeeded.

Janet Austin

### *Editor's note:*

As you will know *Not All Sunshine Hear* sold out within a week of publication. Keith Thompson holds a Society copy which members may borrow and there are copies in the West Sussex County Library. Local history books are very difficult to produce and sell and this may be one way of doing it. We may well do the same with a history of the Loxwood Dependants or "Cokelers" this autumn, ie a very limited edition with the price held as low as possible, given the future scarcity of the book.

## 'Not All Sunshine Hear ....' — a footnote

*Eric Sherwood writes:*

My father used to tell of a Dutchman who lived, probably, at Hoebridge Cottages, Ebernoe, and was known as Wally Do-Dun-Can. In the summer he used to walk about in a barrel held by two straps - all round Ebernoe and district. Father was always talking about it but I have never found anyone who could remember him. The period would be between the wars.

## Frank's Private Library?

I love second-hand books, and was working for one of the major London book-dealers. I'd been there two years when the idea suddenly came to me, "Why not go home and do the same thing?" When I spoke to my boss he was very supportive; he knows Petworth well, and a partner has a friend who lives down here. My old boss often comes in to see how I'm getting on. I stayed another year in London before becoming "the other half of Frank's", on the corner of High Street and Middle Street, formerly Petworth Provisions, formerly Hazelmans.

Well, where shall we start? "Rare" books? "Rare" is an indefinable term. Really rare books are usually in museums or private collections and don't often become available. They're a specialist preserve and a very expensive one. "Rare" in more practical terms doesn't invariably mean old. A rare book can be old but not necessarily, conversely an old book is not necessarily rare or valuable simply because it's old. Old Bibles are a good example. A rare book can be one published in the last twenty years. It could be one of a limited print run, often from a small private press, often indeed privately published - sometimes abroad. It could be war reminiscences, or the first volume of a poet, who, three or four volumes of verse later, is beginning to make a name. £30 to £50 could be the price for such a book, a far cry from the £12,000 or so you might pay for a rare antique table in a showroom. Most rare books are of course more than twenty years old, but a book's age is not the criterion. Take a first edition of W. H. Auden say, or an early T. S. Eliot volume - or perhaps a rare book on a subject like *Real Tennis* - most books on this subject are in large private libraries. Some works like Eliot's *Waste Land* have been republished as facsimiles of the initial edition, but this doesn't really affect the issue: it is the first edition that matters, it's the first edition that remains the magnet for collectors. What is the attraction of a first edition? I think it's that you're looking at this particular book as it was when it first hit the market, before it acquired any later interpretation or criticism. In a sense, you're the first person to read it. It will carry no reviews or comment and it is as if you've regressed to a time when only the publisher, the writer and you yourself know the work. As if you've recognised the merit of the work before anyone else.

Not all first editions are valuable, far from it. Many books never get beyond a first

edition but that doesn't make them valuable or even collectable. Think of all the fiction that's published and doesn't survive, books of a moment that a public library will remove from the shelves after a few years. So much, fiction in particular, doesn't survive and was probably not intended to. To take an extreme example, you've only got to look at the serried ranks of paperbacks crammed into plastic trays at the next Jumble Sale you go to. Any bookseller must be aware of a vast underworld of forgotten or outdated books. I try to have in my shop only what I think has a chance of interesting someone. Obviously this is subjective: effectively it comes down to what I think is interesting. But I do need to feel happy with the stock, to feel a certain kinship with it, to feel I have the best bookshop of its kind for miles around. I simply **have** to be selective. Obviously if I'm buying single items the problem doesn't exist but if I buy a random lot of books at a sale, I have to be ready to be tough, to select rigorously and jettison what isn't going to merit a place on my shelves. Criteria can be a book being hopelessly dated. Or a book may have been cheaply produced on poor-quality acid paper which will soon deteriorate. I've known books like this where the text has become illegible. That's not the end of the selection process: some books "sicken" on the shelf, just sit there immovable. In time I'll mark them down to join the cheaper volumes in the room at the end. Although I've so many books in stock, I feel I know each one and have a good idea of how long it's been in stock. Sometimes I offer books that belong to other specialist dealers; a pencilled mark indicates. You have to keep sorting stock, freshening up the stock, it must never be stale. Most books will sell over a period of years but you haven't limitless space and time. It's not quite like a supermarket giant where shelf space has to be relentlessly costed, but that element has to be present. If things seem a bit quiet I always take the advice of my old boss to get out, buy books, liven up the stock and get things moving again.

Customers? Well, quite a proportion, especially in the season, are people who've come to Petworth for the day, and intend to go round every shop. Middle Street is a quieter corner of Petworth so by the time they get to me they've probably spent an hour or two looking round already. They painstakingly look over Frank's stock then move to the bookshop. Sometimes they stop in their tracks. What is it? Some kind of eccentric display, an unannounced museum or perhaps they've stumbled into Frank's private library? Well you never know. Once they realize it's a bookshop, they may take to their heels, or have a good look round. Just occasionally something will take their fancy. Their thoughts may even turn to asking for a copy of a book they once had and have lost, a friend has borrowed it and gone away, or perhaps they see a book that would interest a friend, or they might see a better copy of a book they already have and like; just occasionally they might buy a book as a souvenir of a day in Petworth. Perhaps they see something that is relevant to their particular hobby or sphere of interest. Mostly they won't buy anything, but all is not lost. When they go home they tell their friends there's a good second-hand bookshop in Petworth, and the friends may come in specially to look at what is on my shelves. Cottage Museum visitors take an interest and often buy and it's probably the Museum that brings them to a part of Petworth they might easily not have explored otherwise.

Dealers form a significant proportion of my customers. Some have shops of their own, while some are what is called "runners", looking for a book priced at less than its market value,



*"Lambs in Burton Park". A timeless picture by George Garland.*



*Where were the Gallopers? William Freeman's Knock 'em Downs 20th November 1996.  
See Petworth Fair 1996. Photograph by Peter Hammond.*

but knowing where they can get full market value for it. As a matter of policy I generally price well below market value anyway so that I can keep the stock turning over. Can I seriously under-price? Occasionally, I expect. I cover a huge range and am stronger on arts and literature - and even that is a fairly extended territory! Most dealers come from London and the South East, some from elsewhere in the U.K., Europe, even Russia, and from Australia. You get to know them and they tend to come round on a regular circuit, once a fortnight, once a month, once a year - perhaps once in three years, I haven't been here long enough to find that out! Sometimes I'll reverse roles, taking a book or box of books to London as a "runner".

Then there are the regular locals, who keep an eye out for what interests them. Without being too inquisitive, I gradually build up a rough idea of what they might be looking for. Local regulars shade into collectors proper. What do they collect? Well virtually anything, different collectors have completely different tastes, it might be prize bindings, illustrated books from the 1930s, a particular author, or the authors of a particular literary group. No, I don't think collectors are magpies, they do like to read the books. I've had some nice collector's pieces: a set of pre-war Graham Greene first editions springs at once to mind.

Sussex books? Ah, that's a special subject. I've always got some in stock but the scarcest don't stay on the shelves very long. No dealer finds Sussex books easy to come by. I think that if a house is cleared, the relatives take out the Sussex books for themselves and clear out the rest. I often acquire books privately, perhaps it's part of a house-clearing, or perhaps someone's got too many books and needs to create space. People often send books to auction, but at the risk of being accused of special pleading, I'm not convinced that's the best policy. I'll always pay market value for certain types of book, whereas at an auction the unusual and valuable can be submerged in a lot that's otherwise undistinguished and priced accordingly. It's a truism that people at an auction are looking to pay as little as possible.

If people are looking for a particular book I can advertise for it in the trade press. Success rate is about 40%. It's not particularly profitable: the wants list itself of course is an advertisement that needs to be paid for, and if someone knows you want something they'll be sure to ask a premium price for it. It's nice to help someone find a book, but what with advertising, postage and looking for a fair price, its main value is building up relationships and the sheer pleasure of finding a book for someone.

It's good too when someone comes in the shop and says, "I don't suppose you have a copy of..." and I can say, "Yes, here it is." Sometimes it's more difficult. Someone may say, "I wonder if you have a copy of that book with a green cover I was reading at my friend's last week. It's got a character called John in it..." Well, I do the best I can.

I've been here for seventeen months and intend to be here for years. The pleasure is in actually handling books and helping people find what they want. I enjoy opening on Sundays and will be open on Sundays from Easter until Christmas, as so many people who come to Petworth on a Sunday seem to appreciate finding the shop open. So few shops are open that if visitors come back to Petworth they'll probably come on a weekday. Over all though I like to feel, as I've already said, that I've as good a little second-hand bookshop as you can find for miles around.

Andrew Railing was talking to the Editor.

## A Tillington Childhood (1)

I was born at Tillington Lodge on Petworth Estate on 10th August 1910 and as I have so many happy memories of that lovely little village I feel I must write my memories down before it is too late, life has changed so much since my very happy childhood.

Our lodge comprised six rooms - three downstairs and three bedrooms. The rooms were quite large, I would say more square than oblong. The three downstairs rooms were known as scullery, kitchen and front room. An old shallow sink stood in the scullery under which was kept a pail, scrubbing brushes, and house flannels. The slop pail was white enamel with a lid which had a kind of button in the middle of it to lift it from the pail. This pail was used to take upstairs to empty the 'slops' from the chambers kept under the beds. We called these containers 'poes'. Then there was the water to be emptied from the washhand stands. What a lot of work this made. This was emptied on the garden, no doubt to do far more good to the soil than all the new fangled stuff that is put in the ground now. At least none of this destroyed our natural habitat. On second thoughts, I've decided it's easier to have a flush toilet. The fireplace in the scullery was known as a 'duck's nest'. Three bars across with a bare space and a large ashpan underneath. Wood was usually burned in this fireplace. As a treat, Mum used to put jacket potatoes in the warm embers - the best tasting jacket potatoes one could eat, skins cooked to a crisp with the insides beautifully soft with a slightly smoky taste. There was a lovely old table in the scullery and Mum scrubbed it until it was almost white. Most of the cooking was prepared in this room. Our pantry led off from the scullery and was quite a large room, always full of jams, pickles, runner beans 'put down' in salt, pickled eggs in earthenware pots in waterglass. I so remember the pickled walnuts - my mother and brother loved them, not my father and I. We always had plenty in the larder. Even during the war we had a lovely garden. Mum managed to grow vegetables and fruit. Sugar was scarce, but we managed to keep a few chickens.

The kitchen led off from the scullery with a well worn brick passage connecting the two rooms. The kitchen to me was always a comfortable room. In it was an old fashioned polished oak table, which had a chenille cloth on when not in use, four chairs and a dresser. There was coconut matting on the floor. The kitchen range was in this room and all cooking was done on this.

The front room was kept for special occasions. The fireplace had a mantle piece over the top on which stood lots of lovely little ornaments - no doubt of great value today. The furniture comprised a leather suite sofa, a ladies arm chair with small curves for arms, an armchair for gentlemen, and four dining chairs, a polished dining table, ornaments and pictures all over the place. There was linoleum on the floor, and net curtains at all the windows, with dark blinds during the war. Narrow lino covered stairs.

The bedrooms were rather sparse with lino on the floors. Two had single beds and one a double bedroom, each with a washhand stand, chair and towel rail. Only the large room had a suitable fireplace. We went to bed by candlelight, oil lamps were used for lighting downstairs. We sometime used a very tiny oil lamp instead of a candle - what a fire risk. I don't remember serious fires, but plenty of chimney fires which were allowed to burn themselves out.

Our dress in those days was very simple. My mother wore bloomers, rightly named as I'm sure if they were blown up she would take off. Bloomers were very baggy with long legs. I believe a material took over later called 'celenese', but I'm not sure when. Most underwear was made of flannelette or cotton. Mum wore a vest, cotton in summer, a fleecy lined cotton in winter. Over her vest she wore 'corsets', a really cruel contraption. It had bones sewn in it, spiral spring affairs - these made the garment stiff all round. It had a lace at the back which was threaded like a shoe lace. These bones stuck in my Mum's bosom so she had a wad of material under each bosom to take the pressure off. Corsets came up so high in those days that bosoms seemed to be poked under the throat. When these corsets came by post (I believe from the old store - Williams) they were in a long box in two pieces, accompanied by a long lace. A bust bodice was worn (bra), then a petticoat with very wide shoulder straps, a blouse and long skirt. An overall was worn for work and a long pinafore for afternoons. For dirty work, scrubbing etc., a coarse apron was used, usually made of sacking or any material that didn't show the dirt. This was tied round the waist with two thick pieces of tape. Stockings were worn all the time and usually kept up by garters. For outdoor wear, a blanket cloth coat and awful pudding basin hats were worn with thick shoes or boots.

My father wore a thick vest and long pants down to his ankles in winter and summer (long johns) now, flannelette shirts for winter, thinner ones in summer, all with loose collars. These were fastened at the neck by a stud. His trousers seemed to be the same material all the year round. Mum knitted Dad's socks. Those were nearly always 'Heather mixture' wool. His work boots were very thick, with quite smart ones for Sundays. He always wore jackets and caps and was always well dressed. He wore ties for best and mufflers to keep warm. He also wore a waistcoat. My brother wore a vest and Mum used to make us both linings from old sheets to wear inside our knickers. Perhaps there were no pants for little boys or perhaps it was cheaper to have linings which took the place of pants. For best, my brother wore a Norfolk jacket. This had knickerbocker trousers with a jacket, a cap, socks knitted by Mum, with thick boots for school and thinner ones for Sundays, shirts thick and thin. I believe my brother wore a bow tie with his suit. He also wore jerseys and knickers for school with garters to keep his socks up and a coat in winter.

I wore a vest, thick and thin, blue fleecy lined knickers with linings for the winter. For summer, cotton knickers with lots of lace on the legs, a petticoat, a replica of Mum's, dresses for summer and jumpers and skirts for winter; hand knitted socks with button up boots. I still have the button hook used in those days. In the winter, I had a coat which Mum usually made, woollen hand knitted hat in winter - Tam-O-Shanter style. If I shook my head, I'd love the feeling of the tassel on the top bouncing up and down on my head. Straw hats in the summer, either with flower trimmings or with streamers at the back (two pieces of ribbon hanging down). We all wore hand knitted gloves to keep us warm in winter. I've remembered our dress from 1914 to 1919. Of course, materials improved after that date, making a much wider choice of everything in the shops.

I must add that Mum always brought masses of wool which matched socks or stockings so that when the feet wore out, the garment was unpicked to the ankle and re-footed. What patience!

Mrs K. Vigar (to be continued)

## Rickett's Meadow and Other Matters

Dear Peter,

I enjoyed the get together of the Cottage Museum Stewards last week very much.

I was surprised when several people told me they didn't know that the land where the houses are built on the Sheepdowns used to be allotments for the tenants of the Leconfield Estate cottagers who had no garden.



*Mr Simpson outside his shed on Sheepdown allotments.*

Having a family of twelve children my father was allowed thirty rod of allotments where he grew fruit and vegetables and kept pigs and chicken.

The rent for our cottage in Lombard Street was two shillings and ninepence a week for many years until it was raised to three shillings and ninepence so I think the allotments must have been rent free.

The cottage had four bedrooms, a small kitchen and front room and two rooms above the wash house. The top room Father used to store potatoes, onions, apples etc, and the bottom one Mother put up clothes lines to dry the washing on rainy days. The wash



*Mr Simpson with Phyll at Ricketts meadow.*

house and copper we had to share with the next door neighbour, we had a mangle each and had to share the small back yard although we were lucky to have a toilet for each family.

The two cottages are now one house.

The site where the Scout Hut is was meadows and was used by Mr Ricketts the Haulage Contractor who lived in the house adjoining the Cottage Museum. My father worked for him over forty years and at hay making time we children would take bottles of tea for the men to drink, (no thermos flasks those days) although they were given beer at the end of the day. If you think this would interest the Society members I've put in two photos, one on the allotments and the other in the meadow with the haystack.

Phill Sadler

## A Duncton apprentice

At 1996 Petworth Festival the West Sussex Record Office staged a display in the Leconfield Hall for two days. Among the exhibits was a pile of photocopied apprenticeship indentures with the children's names left blank; visitors could try their skill with a quill pen to write names in on them. One of them was between the Overseers of the Poor of Wisborough Green and Pierce Nugent of Duncton, dyer and clothworker. Duncton here has its old variant spelling "Downton". The indenture is undated, but refers to the Sovereign as Queen, and has 18th-century style and writing, so is pre-1714 (Queen Anne).

In those days, each parish saw to its hard-up, and placed out their children as soon as old enough to learn a craft or trade and earn a living, to get them off the parish books. Masters or mistresses living afar off were preferred, to minimise the ex-apprentice's chance of return to the home parish's care. Pierce got his labour-force free, apart from the outlay stated on the indenture; Wisborough Green got rid of another mouth. The child's parents (if alive) were not consulted.

The terms of the indenture vary from county to county and era to era. In Cumberland it often said, of boys. "His master's secrets he shall not divulge; matrimony he shall not commit; taverns and gaming-houses he shall not frequent"; but this Duncton one requires him merely to serve his master as faithfully as he can until he is 24 years old. (In Cumberland, the term was usually seven years; as also elsewhere). Pierce was to teach him "the art and mystery of a Dyer and Clothworker", i.e. all the trade secrets and knacks, and give him enough proper "Meat, Drink, and Apparel, Lodging, Washing, and all other Things necessary and fit for an Apprentice." "And at the end of the said term, shall deliver to the said Apprentice double Apparel of all sorts, Good and New, (that is to say,) a good New Suit for the Holy-days, and another for the Working-days" i.e. two "demob" suits, one for Sundays, one for weekdays!, both good and new, not cast-offs or seconds. Cumbrian apprentices never got these, but Sussex's did (this section is in print not handwritten, i.e. standard Sussex practice). Pierce was illiterate, but none the worse for that. Many were, in those days.

Jeremy Godwin.

## Growing up at Avenings

I was born at Avenings, Golden Square, the home of my grandmother, Mrs Eva Mant, in 1923. My sister, Joan, was born there in 1921 and my brother John at Easebourne in 1930.

My first memory is of being in my brass cot watching pigeons or doves on the roof of the Chapel opposite. Mr Moyer, the butcher had his shop nearby and could be heard chopping the meat for long periods.

Later, I climbed out of the cot and delighted in looking at my grandmother's stained-glass window in her drawing room. It consisted mainly of small birds and rectangular pieces of glass, red and other colours.

Joan and I would be taken for walks in the town by our mother (née Drusie Mant) and my aunt and godmother, Dolly Mant. We sat in a very high pram with large wheels, probably late Victorian.

Later as we grew older we enjoyed walks to the Gog, from where there was a superb view of Petworth Church which at that time had a steeple, and to the hills and the Virgin Mary spring. How we enjoyed the clean cool water and wild strawberries growing there on a hot summer's day. The dogs, Pat and Peter came with us, two terriers which we enjoyed brushing and combing and icing small cakes for their birthdays. I remember seeing a double hedge where rabbit wires were set and how irate the man was as we walked along it, probably disturbing the rabbits.

Joan was at school at Petworth from 1927 - 1937, but came home to Angmering, our home, at weekends. On Sunday my father, George Wells, who had lived at the Angel Hotel would drive us all to Avenings for the day, a lovely drive down Bury Hill with the superb view of the Amberley Chalkpits.

My grandmother always had our favourite chocolate ready and we had lovely meals. She had a cook named Dorothy and a maid called Edie. We would often go to Church in the evening, once we took them to a toy service for less fortunate children.

Petworth Fair in November was always a highlight. We watched the large engine towing a long line of vehicles, parts of the roundabout and I think the same engine powered the roundabout. From Avenings drawing-room window we were fascinated to see the stalls, swingboats, small merry-go-round, coconut shies and caravans. Later we were taken to the fair to enjoy ourselves and to spend our pocket money. My brother was very pleased when my mother won a large blue stuffed rabbit for him. It was our ambition to ride on the roundabout at midnight. Next day the whole lot was dismantled in a very few hours.

Our other grandparents and their son, John, lived at the Angel Hotel. Despite always being busy, we were made very welcome, and were given money every Christmas and birthday. There were often small puppies and kittens on their lawn.

The nursery at Avenings was quite large, with naked gas-jet lights, always a good fire, Battle of Waterloo wall-paper and a large rocking-horse on a stand which moved across the room if we went fast enough. There was a large carved cuckoo clock and a superb mahogany cabinet containing a large collection of bird's eggs, butterflies and moths. There was a food-lift to the kitchen, and Joan and I enjoyed riding up and down on this. Our friend Phil

Hounsham who was my age came daily to play bringing his collection of model farm animals and toy soldiers, and apples.

Fishing was a great interest of my father's. He once caught a large pike, which was stuffed and in a glass case at the Angel. I was keen on fishing and went often with my father to the river near Petworth Mill. He caught mainly trout and pike which we enjoyed eating. I was aged 6 when our fishing licence was issued by Lord Leconfield and it was for G A Wells and daughter. We used mainly worms for bait.

There was a large family living nearby and we took a large jug of gruel to the mother every evening when a new baby was born. The father died when the children were quite young and all were fitted out with black and white check clothes.

There were many tradespeople in Petworth at that time. Mr Dean the fishmonger was a ventriloquist and talked to the fish who answered him! Miss Rose Ricketts kept a sweet shop and we often visited her to buy sweets at 2oz for a penny. Mr Knight was a baker in Lombard Street and we bought hot rolls on mornings when we met our grandmother from Holy Communion.

Our grandmother was a Churchwarden at Egdean, a very small church, from 1924 - 36. She taught me to pray and through taking me to churches stimulated an interest in old buildings, and I have visited churches small and large in many different areas. I am so lucky now to be within easy cycling distance of St. Peter's Church, Selsey, and of Earnley Church, a 13th century gem which is well worth visiting.

When I was about 9 I liked to explore and one day I noticed a ladder up against the wall of a building at Avenings which had once been a stable. On climbing to the top I was delighted to see through the trapdoor a penny farthing cycle with solid tyres, I have not seen one since.

Adjoining the nursery was a large room, known as the store-room. In it were always numerous clothes, shoes, hats, dresses, etc., many of a bygone age, waiting to be sold at the next jumble sale. We children enjoyed dressing up in these when we played charades. Other games were various card ones, also my aunt had a large collection of jig-saw puzzles.

Christmas at Avenings was lovely. My cousins Keith, Betty and Derrick Mant and their parents were there. We always enjoyed turkey and Christmas pudding with toys inside. Friends and relations were so generous to us. We were given boxes of sweets, my aunt always knitted me gloves and a jumper, toys, and three boxes of crackers, one with fireworks, a luxury box with crepe paper hats attached and a more ordinary one. We all attended a church service on that day.

Jean Marshall

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## The Town House

From earlier times, and continuing into the twentieth century, yet within living memory, 'The Workhouse' was a fact of life! Indeed, for the extremely poor, or any likely to suffer a total

loss of home - a dreaded fact of life!! Although intended as a place of refuge, the very word workhouse would, I believe, arouse anxiety in any likely to experience it. Treatment within may have been kind, but the circumstances were not, and apart from the bare necessities of food and shelter, creature comforts must have been almost non-existent.

Petworth has had its workhouse for the surrounding area. Situated at the very bottom of North Street, the fact that it is no longer in existence is one of the major blunders of officialdom. It was pulled down in the late 1950s. At the end of its life as a workhouse, and for the last few years of its life, it became a very 'upper crust' girls' school - rather an ironic turnabout! It was a lovely building the plain brick paved forecourt a perfect foil for its rather stark but elegant simplicity.

Several earlier Petworth Society magazines have interesting references; in that of September '81, Peter tells of the somewhat complicated local taxation raised in 1763 for the administration of poor relief. He also refers for that year, to one Edward Arnop, butcher of Petworth, who was to take over the management of the workhouse in agreement with the churchwardens and overseers of the poor. The system was (and I believe it was the same for all workhouses) that the master received a certain sum from taxation, and had then to run the charity to make a profit, as in a business. All expenses had to be covered, including his own, although the house was rent free. Thus, the conditions for inmates could be governed by the parsimony or otherwise of the master, a somewhat severe regime being almost inevitable. Any money earned by those in residence went to the master; hence I imagine the word workhouse.

Not a lot is known about its origins. It was a freehold of Petworth Rectory Manor, and records are few. It was previously known as 'The Town House' Chambers Dictionary tells me that, 'a Town House was a house or building used to conduct the business of a town'. This would suggest to me what we would now call a public building.

It was listed in 1680 (Petworth House archives) as being leased, with land, to one Thomas Stradling. The next date on record is 1717, and it is again listed as 'The Town House', but, workhouse has been written in against the entry - it would seem then not to have been built as a workhouse.

A deed of the 'Mason's Arms' in 1730, describes the adjacent property as a 'new workhouse - lately built'. This would suggest that it was either rebuilt or converted, sometime between 1717 and 1730. There would appear to be no other information.

Alas, any clues or indications of its very beginning that might have been discovered inside the house, are gone forever with its demolition. We shall probably never know any more.

Never having been inside, I know nothing of the interior - but it doesn't need a wide stretch of imagination to realize that it was probably rather grim! There can't be many people alive today who have had personal experience as residents, but, if any there are, and reading this, I ask their forgiveness. Forgiveness for having unwillingly caused embarrassment, or revived painful memories. For, along with many other people, I have complete and wholehearted sympathy for their plight - respect too for their courage and endurance in the situation.



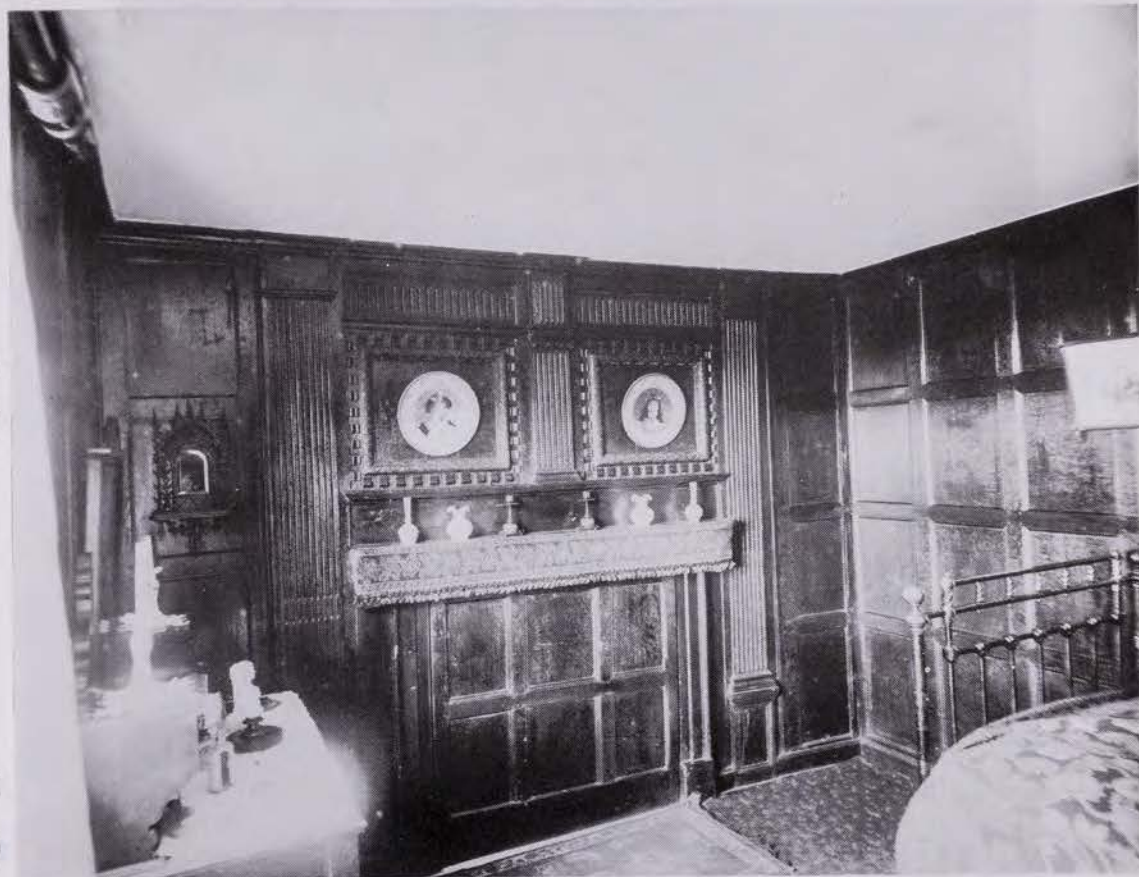
*Shotterland on Ebernoe Common (now demolished).*

*These pictures were taken as slides by David Gilhooly in the late 1960s. Shotterland stood very near the present Siblands.*





Kirdford "timber-throwers" working in the woods 1930s.  
L-R Back Row: Harry Knight, Eli Peacock, Curly Williams, Fred Plummer, Jum Ford, Phil Foster.  
Front Row: Darkie Peacock, Ted Peacock.  
Photograph courtesy of Peter Wakeford.



This Walter Kevis picture was found by Audrey Grimwood hidden behind another in an old frame. The name Mr Ireland is written in pencil on the back of the mount and an accompanying note bears the legend: "Mr V. Thear,

Dear Sir,

Can you frame the enclosed photo plain oak and glass. If so please let me know approximate cost and oblige,

G.W. Thayre,  
North Street,  
Petworth."

Any suggestions? Photograph must be pre-1908.



*In Petworth workhouse, September 1904. The words "Petworth Union" can just be made out on the edge of the blanket.  
Photograph by Walter Kevis.*

The June '80 Magazine gives a 19th century recipe from a list of workhouse recipes in Petworth House archives. Using half a pound of meat, an assortment of vegetables, oatmeal, seasoning and several pints of water, it is said to provide a meal for three or four persons and not to cost above four pence!! (that would have been 'old pence'). It sounds quite unappetising but must have been typical of the stringent economies in everyday use. The Magazine of December '81 has an article by Miss Jones, the daughter of a former and latter day master and matron. She tells among other things, of the arrival of tramps, both male and female; of their formal admission, having a hot bath, followed by a mug of tea and bread and butter. As well as the tramps, there were old, sick, and infirm persons, and sometimes children placed there in care, the latter would have to attend the local school.

I get the impression from Miss Jones's writing, that her parents were kind compassionate people, and their establishment probably among the best managed. I have a vivid personal memory of several girls in workhouse care during my school days at St. Mary's in East Street. No longer a school, although with frontage unchanged, it is now a private house.

At the time of which I write, it would have been about 1926 - 1927, I and my classmates aged about twelve or thirteen years were in the headteacher's class, when several of those girls arrived among us. I think there were four, probably not of one family, and about the same age as ourselves -- but - their appearance set them cruelly apart. All were quite nice looking, even pretty, but their hair was cropped very short, no ribbons or slides such as most girls wore then, and they were very scrubbed and clean.

Their dresses, all alike, were of thick, coarse, navy blue serge, but with no pretence of either shape or style! A drawstring around the waist, and others at neck and wrists were pulled in to 'fit'. Thick black woollen stockings and black laced up leather boots completed the outlandish outfits. That it was all warm, strong and durable was obvious, but, if so designed to show the taxpayers that their money was not being wasted, then, it succeeded only too well!

Those girls must have felt their position keenly but were protected from further embarrassment by not being present at morning prayers.

We were all already seated in class when they arrived, slipping quietly into vacant desks in the front row. Neither were they in the yard at break time - and they seemed to disappear unobtrusively just before school finished in the afternoon - thus not being subjected to any less than tactful remarks from the rest of us!

No one should have been humiliated because of deprivation. Taxation is nothing new. The Christmas story tells of Mary and Joseph going to be taxed. We all pay, either directly or indirectly, a proportion of which must go towards what today is called Benefit - but what in those days was known as Parish Relief.

Things are entirely different today, and vastly improved - apart that is from the degree of homelessness. That in my humble opinion is a national disgrace, and should be addressed accordingly. Any existing workhouse buildings, not otherwise transformed could well be converted into bed-sits or flatlets for single homeless people, thus continuing their usefulness in today's society.

Marjorie Alix.

## At far Pallinghurst (4)

Every six weeks on a Sunday morning, my sister Midge and I, would walk down to Wanford Mill, near the Haven for a haircut. Dad would give us the money in an envelope and Mr Alf Buckman cut our hair. He always said he enjoyed cutting us girls' hair because we were very blond, in fact nearly white. He had a large family, and I don't know what he worked at during the week. Mr Buckman didn't actually live in the mill but in one of the mill cottages which had been built for the poor by Mr Nelman who owned all Aliblasters before Col. Hemsley. Originally Mr Buckman had lived in the last little bungalow which has just been knocked down, next to Woodfalls.

Saturday evenings in the summer we would have a treat and walk through the footpaths to Baynards railway station to a pub called the Turlow - it is still there today and in use. We would have crisps and a penny bar of chocolate and a grapefruit juice, sitting outside the pub - no children were allowed in those days. We would watch the old steam train go by. It ran from Horsham to Guildford. Other Saturdays we would go to what were called Cherry Fairs at different pubs. There were fruit stalls, coconut stalls, etc, and very enjoyable family evenings there were, where the Rudgwick Band would play and village people met.

### *Village Life*

I also remember the village celebrations of the jubilee of King George V and the coronation day of King George VI. They were also held at Gaskyns. All the village people were there. There were pram races, we had tea and we were given mugs.

In the field on the left hand side of Goblins Pool, the annual village flower show would be held and on the same night there was a big fair with roundabouts to finish it off.

There was a butcher's near the school called Clarks, and we would quite often have to remember to call on the way home for scrag ends to make stews, and there was a shop at Tisman's Common which a nice old couple kept in part of their house. We would also have to get bits there to take home. The couple were called Mr and Mrs Tuff. They had a daughter Eileen, who taught us at Rudgwick School. They were a nice family and on Sundays always did a lot of walking round the village. Eileen Tuff who is still alive, used to walk all the footpaths on the Pallinghurst Estate to keep them open.

Miss Tuff's parents' shop was one of the rooms of their old house. The house is now called Exfold Wood. There was a flagstone path up a long garden. Mr and Mrs Tuff served in the shop. The rice, flour and sugar came in huge hessian sacks which were stored in the shop. I remember the huge scales on brass chains. On one side was a big marble plate where the sugar, flour and rice which had been scooped out of the sacks, was put on to weigh. I remember the handmade paper cone bags. Mr Tuff would wrap a piece of paper round his hand, twiddle the bottom, and then fold the top in. Later there were dark blue strong paper bags. The cheese came in huge rounds, always with rind on which was on a large marble slab and was cut by wire into wedges the size people wanted.

Another little old shop was kept by Miss Hurst in her garden at Bucks Green. It was burnt down but no-one knew the reason, and then she had a new shop. It happened when I was a very small kid. The new shop was built on the side of her house and was a little general

store. It is now a private house on the 281 road.

Bonfire night at Rudgwick was another event. We would all set out to walk to Rudgwick where the Rudgwick Band played. The whole village walked and carried hand made torch flares. When we got to the huge bonfire, old Mr Butcher who had a fish and butcher's shop at the top of the Street, would climb to the top of the bonfire, sit on an old chair, and then shout the slogan of "Guy Fawkes reigns" - everyone would throw their flares and light the fire. He would be down at the last minute. Sometimes we thought he wouldn't make it down!

Behind the Queen's Head pub, there was the Queen's Hall - my mother went to the whist drives there. In the winter my father would send my eldest brother to meet her. She came home on her own one night saying she hadn't seen him. I don't suppose she had, he had dropped off to sleep on the curved brick wall opposite it and missed her.

The hall was also used for the local amateur pantomime.

Once a year the parish church laid on a free outing - a Saturday to Littlehampton. We would go by charabanc which are called coaches today. We would all be given rolls of coloured streamers. Going up Bury Hill, we would open the windows and let them hang out blowing in the wind. Of course these days, it wouldn't be allowed. Being a litter lout, one could get fined a lot of money. Sometimes I think there is too much red tape and rules today. It seemed a much happier world we lived in in those days!

My youngest brother, Bob, was christened at the little church at Tisman's Common. What an event! He was dressed in a long lace gown and all our relations came to the do. In those days a christening was a big event. He had been born up at Brickkiln. Nurse Jarmain from Loxwood cycled through the lanes to deliver him. That was on August 14th, 1934.

Another event in the lanes and outside our house on Sundays, was the arrival of the Horsham Motor Cycle Club who would come up dirt tracking. They slipped and slid on the hairpin bends. What laughs we had. If the ground was not slippery enough, we used to have to water it.

### *The People*

Mr McAndrew had his own racehorses and grooms. They lived at the stables at Pallinghurst House. Mr McAndrew had his own chauffeur. First there was Mr King who later moved to the Cricketers Pub at Tismans, and then Mr Woodhatch, who was sadly killed in a road accident.

Mrs James, who used to ride with the Leconfield Hunt, rented Tisman's Park which was a much smaller house than the one there today. The Hunt would organise a Point-to-Point at Tisman's Park. It would always run on a Saturday in April and all the elite of the district came, and the bookies were there taking bets. On the Sunday morning us kids would get up, take a knife and dig round where the bookies had stood, digging for sixpences and any coins which the bookies had dropped. We also collected up the beer glasses which had been thrown on the ground. It was Castle's Brewery and I have still got a glass today!

The hunt also used to hold a local meet at Tisman's and Mum used to take her apron off to follow the hunt. I well remember one instance when I was small, old Lord Leconfield rode along and says to us kids, "Open the Gate" (no please) and my Mother says "Open the

bloody gate yourself. I don't breed kids to do your dirty work." And he did with his hook. Of course she wouldn't have said it had it been Mr McAndrew.

Near the Mucky Duck which was then the Cricketers, there lived two old sisters by the name of Miss Finches. They had a big old green car a two seater, but the boot opened up to two more seats. One Miss Finch was totally blind and one, blind in one eye. Quite often they would give us a lift home, and when we told Dad, he would say you know that they only got one eye between two. He only joked about it of course, but we laughed.

Our Mrs Hearsam, who taught us at Rudgwick, lived in a little wooden house down through Tisman's Common, and later moved below to a bigger wooden bungalow with huge front garden with a path and it had arches with rambling roses up to it. She had an old sit-up and beg bike, and after school she would whizz down Foxhill, and us kids would say to her, "Don't get off Miss Hearsam (we always called her Miss although she was a Mrs) we'll push you," which we did to up near the Working Man's Club.

One family I particularly remember were the Papperitas. My father did their gardening at weekends to earn some spare cash. I thought they were very posh. They lived in a quaint old cottage beyond Barnsfold Farm. Mr Papperitas was Greek and wore a little skull cap. He was away on business most of the time. They had two daughters Rita and Doreen. They were a lovely family and when we passed their cottage each morning, they would be sitting at breakfast in front of the window and they would always wave to us and we would wave back. (Miss Tuff tells me that their names were Vita and Dorina but we always called them Rita and Doreen, like we called Hope Rough, Oak Rough and I now believe Chill Beans is Chilbeams, because we only ever heard these names, never having seen them spelt).

Below the Papperitas' cottage is Barnsfold Farm. It was two cottages then. Old Mrs Lillywhite lived in the one nearest to Brickkiln. It was only just up the green lane, past the pub, but she was a short hefty old dear. When we left for school on winter mornings, she would love to call my sister and brother and I in and give us a big mug of hot milk with sugar. We would sit in the corner of her big inglenook fireplace in front of a roaring fire - she liked a glass of cider. Our mum used to give us orders "Now don't go in to ole gal Lillywhite's this morning - you'll be late for school and get a black mark on the register!"

Mrs Reeves was another attraction for us kids. The Reeves family farmed in a small way on the Loxwood Road. They lived in the cottage called Barnsfold and rented fields near our old house. They had cart horses and wagons. Carts had two wheels and wagons had four. We would get out and help them with the harvest and ride on their carthorses. Mrs Reeves had a gun and used to take us kids with her shooting. She also made cider and used to love to get my sister and I down to her house. (Well my sister Midge was good at milking the cows). One day my sister got a bit pickled on it, so my father forbid us to go there again.

Another farm much nearer to Brickkiln, and also in the woods, was Lonesomes. It was rented by the Newman family. Old Mr Newman rented the farm from Mr McAndrew. He would quite often be coming home up the lanes pushing his old trade bike when we were coming home from school. They had two sons and two daughters. Annie, one of the daughters, she was a fine pianist. She would be playing away while the chickens ran in and out of the house. They never seemed to have much furniture and they never ever shut the doors.

Mrs Powell, an American lady lived at Hale Farm near Tismans. The Turners and the Smiths lived in the cottages and worked for Mrs Powell. When the Turner and the Smith children went to school they had satin dresses, bows to match in their hair, and black patent shoes. Mrs Powell obviously paid her farmworkers better wages. We envied the clothes worn by those children (who were local like us) while they envied us with our studded boots because we could slide on the roads and pavements.

Dad's family were Rudgwick people, but Mum's came from Chichester. She met Dad when she was in service in the district. Dad's brother, Uncle Harry who was the estate decorator, and Auntie Mil lived at Tisman's Common. They had three sons and two daughters. Auntie Mabel was Dad's sister who lived at Bucks Green. She was Ron and Ethel's mother. Her husband was in the navy. In the villages those days, quite a lot of people were related to one another.

Across the Common at Tisman's, there was an old cottage called Gravel Pits, there lived a big family called Cheesemore. Mrs Cheesemore wore a thick winter coat with thick fur collars and cuffs. Mr Cheesemore worked for Mr Ireland who owned Exfold farm at Tisman's Common. He owned quite a lot of land and had several workers. My lifelong school friend, Joyce Manderluff, and their family also worked for the Irelands. I only remember the two youngest Cheeseman girls by the names of Toby and Babe. They would be the same age as my sister Jessica now 73 and Harold my brother 75. They had a lad lived with them by the name of Rusty Wright. One day going home from school we heard this gruffing noise from behind the hedge. When we looked in the opening to the field there was Rusty and my brother having a fight on the ground, Midge and I, who were six to eight years younger than the fighting pair, jumped on Rusty to free my brother.

At Tisman's Common, there lived the Street family. They were religious and were Conscientious Objectors and they went to a chapel up Lynwick Street. The chapel was the Plymouth Brethren and they didn't believe in fighting in the war and so were exempt. Our family and others in the village didn't agree with that. We all thought that our brothers and others fought to save such people as them, though they were a nice family to talk to. Old Granny Street as known to us all, started a sweetshop in her house towards the top of Foxhill. It didn't last long. One wouldn't be able to do that now owing to restrictions in planning.

We had two doctors in the village, Dr Miller lived up Church Street, Rudgwick and Dr Nixon lived at Red House just below the Club.

Vera Jones (to be concluded)

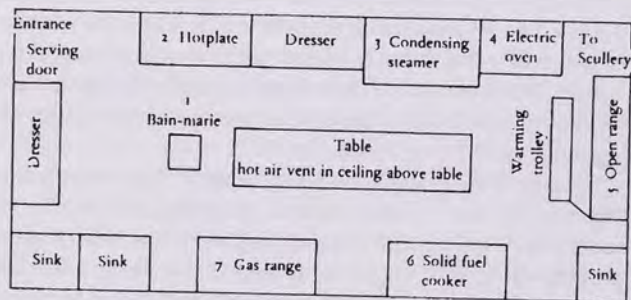
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## Preparing the Vegetables

I came to Petworth in the autumn of 1937 and left in January 1939 because my father was ill. I had been working on the Isle of Wight as a nursery maid but it was very seasonal. Petworth was only meant to be a temporary position because I was replacing a girl who was going on holiday for a fortnight. She didn't come back so I rather wondered what I'd let

myself in for. The job had come through the Susan Bond agency in Chichester. I hadn't a lot of experience of work as I'd stayed on at college until I was sixteen. I wanted to do art but my parents couldn't afford for me to stay on. It was a common enough story in those days. Mr. Grant the chef at Petworth House wrote to me and came down to the agency to interview me. He obviously felt I could do what was required even if it was only for a fortnight.

Whatever my shortcomings I knew how to beat an egg and I was soon at work beating a dozen eggs slowly for twenty minutes. Chef would use them for sponges. Although I was often cooking vegetables for twenty people, the curious thing was that we didn't do huge amounts of each, as there was always a choice of half a dozen or more. These came basically from the Gardens, and Fred Streeter would come up into the kitchen once a week to discuss what was available. After that the boy would come up every day with a wheelbarrow of vegetables. Often it would go back to the Gardens for a refill. If there were a lot of house guests he might come up with a large tray as well as the wheelbarrow. The vegetables would be cooked on the gas range (7) on the east side in the diagram. As I recall, the solid fuel boiler (6) was bigger than the one in the kitchen now, so I think it may have been put in after my time. You can see on the wall where the old one was, certainly bigger than its replacement, but both were coal-fired. We used the condensing steamer (3) for sponges and Christmas puddings.



There are three steamers now but in my time there were just the two with a free space in the middle. The boiler in the scullery provided the steam for the condensing steamer, warmed the hotplate (2) and provided hot water for washing up. Underneath the hot-plate is an extensive compartment and I particularly remember venison being brought in from cold storage to be thawed. It would come in frozen absolutely stiff. Look at that block in the floor, anyone new coming into the kitchen was offered a shilling by the chef if they could get the grease out of the floor, someone had clearly spilled grease on it. No one ever earned the shilling, perhaps no one even tried - if you look closely enough you can still see the stain sixty years on. The dresser at the end by the serving door was always kept clear, this was where the food came back from the dining room, the silver plate being returned and the food transferred to china. It would then be put into the two big pots on the range and kept for stock. One held consommé, clarified with egg shells. The stock would be kept simmering day after day, being changed once a week. I don't remember the bain-marie (1) at all. It was used to provide a slow heat for custards and sauces. The open range on the north side (5) was used

only at Christmas in my time. The fire would be laid the day before, and the men would fit the chains that operated it. The men would put on protective hats and coats and help with cooking and basting the meat. It was very hot work, for of course the fire had to be kept going constantly. Because it was so hot in the kitchens we were allowed a fire in the bedroom to avoid extreme changes of temperature. The kitchen was scrubbed once a day, one of us taking half lengthways. The west side had the most unoccupied floorspace, so if it was half-day you'd try to get the east side to do. There was a white table-cloth and an individual work-board for each of us. This is how we'd stand at the big table.

2nd Kitchenmaid Doris Standing	Head Kitchenmaid Olive Tomkins
1st Kitchenmaid Joan Pine	Chef Mr. Grant

I didn't have a lot to do with the Pastry Room, a kind of annexe on the south side of the kitchen. The chef worked there on the marble top. Like all chefs Mr. Grant tended to be somewhat secretive, but I got on well with him and he let me watch him doing his piped sugarcraft. Cream horns he would make too, you can see the equipment in the cupboard. In 1937 Mr. Grant made a Coronation cake. I remember it standing on an upturned tomato box, the white icing decorated with green. There were metal toy-soldiers on horseback and big bunches of iced roses which could be lit up electrically when Lady Leconfield flicked a switch. We knew it would work because we'd already given it a try in the kitchen.

What we knew as the kitchenmaids' sitting-room is now reconstructed as the chef's sitting room. It probably had been once, but the old order was changing even in the late 1930s. There was a bigger table then than now at which we'd sit to have tea at five o'clock before the evening shift. We'd have the afternoon free. The scullery was very much Fred Baigent's domain. Here the rabbits, served twice a week to the servants, were skinned. Oysters came up from Cornwall, twenty-four a week and Fred would open them. When I was asked to lend a hand I found how difficult it was. Oysters were certainly not for the servants. Fred would pluck the poultry in the scullery and get things ready for the chef, much in the same way as we did in the kitchen, his perhaps was a stage before ours. I remember once being asked by the French chef who succeeded Mr. Grant to fetch a brace of pheasants from the scullery. Fred Baigent wasn't there and I couldn't find any birds plucked. When I told him about this, he told me to get them ready. I said it would take ages to pluck them even assuming I could. He pulled a face, made two quick nicks (or so it seemed) and simply pulled off the skins with the feathers. No trouble at all. Fred Baigent might have been out of the scullery then but he was a continuing presence. When the chef made an ice cream bombe, he'd turn it out, put the meringue on top and with a few deft flicks (again as it seemed!) turn the meringue into a bird. Then with the greatest delicacy Fred would scorch it on top.

As kitchen-maids we saw almost nothing of the housemaids, and certainly nothing of

the laundry staff. We did not really have to deal with Mrs. Leversuch the housekeeper (except to collect cleaning supplies once a month). We were accountable to the chef. Mrs. Cownley the old housekeeper who had left some four years previously was still mentioned as a kind of unseen presence. In fact as kitchen-maids we even used different stairs to the other girls and woe betide anyone caught on the wrong stairs! We used the same stairs as the footmen who wore black morning coats and wasp waistcoats in blue and yellow with silver buttons. Mr. Nudds the butler was very solemn, very precise and particular. We didn't really have much to do with him either, but I remember us once being ushered into the housemaids' sitting room to listen to the King's Christmas broadcast. We were sitting listening as the broadcast finished and the National Anthem came on. Mr. Nudds came in, heard the Anthem and sprang to attention. We continued sitting and afterwards Mr. Nudds gave us an almighty telling-off for our "disrespect". Occasionally I'd go to the stillroom to grind coffee if we had run out but I don't really recall how it was laid out. I would think the sink was on the opposite wall to where it is now.

The footmen had to come into the kitchen to collect the food, then they'd take the trays down the steps and through the tunnel to the House; what they couldn't take with them were the gravy boats because they were on legs and could easily fall over. Sometimes I'd run behind with the gravy boats, but this would only be when it was busy, at other times the third footman would do this. I might go part of the way and hand over, but I only once got so far as to glimpse the dining room. There was a strong sense of "ownership", if that is the right word. The silver was, of course, jealously guarded and locked up. I remember once being short of a gravy boat and saying, "I know where I can find one," going to the footmen's silver cupboard and "borrowing" one. Robert the footman wouldn't speak to me for a fortnight afterward. It was almost like using the chef's own knives!

Mr. Grant was a nice man in his own way, strict certainly, but kind. By this time he was a man of sixty-three and probably not too far off retirement. He suffered with rheumatism in his neck and one of the footmen from the House used to come over and massage his neck. Mr. Grant had a niece who appeared from time to time but otherwise, apparently, no family. He had a cat whom Lady Leconfield called Marmalade but whose real name was Tibbles. I can never remember Mr. Grant using books, he seemed to carry his knowledge in his head. He certainly had standards: a housemaid was expelled from the kitchen for coming in wearing sandals and non-regulation stockings. Chef's bedroom and sitting-room were next to where the Education Room is now, adjoining rooms. At Christmas, he went out into the town and bought us all a length of material for Christmas. He'd take a fatherly interest in us and he'd say things like, "Put your scarf on, it's a cold day" - if we were going out. Not to say he wasn't firm. I remember once going to Armistice Day service at St. Mary's. I had a half-day and for church we'd change and put on light stockings. As, when we came back, it was only a little while to go before I finished, I didn't bother to change stockings. Mr. Grant waited a day until we were on our own and said quietly, "If you don't mind, it's black stockings in here". He hadn't wanted to speak to me in front of the others. The head kitchen-maid took chef in his breakfast, but I would take in early morning tea. He had his supper in the servants' hall. Even with meals he kept an eye on our interests: the ladies'



*Joan Pine at Cockermouth in 1937/8.  
See "Preparing the Vegetables".*

Home number  
Petworth 4

I will refund the cost of phone  
with you for

18-10-37

The wages are £11-1  
a week

Y. brief for you

I have just heard

from Sam Road that

you are requiring temporary

work. I am requiring a temporary

girl for kitchen & general work

at the above address. If you

would meet me at Free Lane

office to-morrow Sunday

afternoon you shall see what

he thinks. Petworth to Chichester

I would explain to you

the work if you can come

with your phone me before

leave to say you will be there

Mrs. J. Anthony

(W) P. Grant

In the Lady Leconfield

Initial letter to Joan Pine from Mr Grant chef at Petworth House, 18th October 1937.  
See "Preparing the Vegetables".  
Courtesy of Mrs Joan Bessant

maid once sent us part of a joint to carve for ourselves. Mr. Grant objected saying, "I don't just want it sent up, it needs to be presented properly". In fact he cut the joint into appetising slices and laid them out properly, put on a garnish of parsley and made it look entirely different.

My father brought up for me a gramophone and a couple of records, one of them was Rhapsody in Blue. The chef liked the gramophone and the two records. Lights were out at eleven o'clock but Mr. Grant had a special dispensation because of his rheumatism. He'd often keep the light on all night. One morning I knocked on the door to bring him his morning tea, thinking nothing of the fact that the light was still on - it wasn't unusual. Mr. Grant was dead however, still holding the cat. I was only seventeen and it was a great shock for me. At the time I thought the doctor very severe. "Haven't you seen a dead body before?" Well, I hadn't, but he was so austere that I suppose it made me pull myself together. That may be what he was trying to achieve. He gave me a big bottle of medicine which I promptly poured down the sink. Detectives came and asked me about what had happened. I really didn't know. I remember saying to them, "You'll have to ask the scullion," meaning Fred Baigent. They didn't know what I was talking about, they'd never even heard the expression. In fact the scullion was a crucial member of the kitchen staff. I think the whole thing would have ground to a halt without Fred Baigent constantly working, as it were, behind the scenes.

The chef died on July 9th and we were due to go up by train to Cokermonth with the family. The head kitchen-maid had to take the chef's place, with both kitchen-maids; normally only I, as the senior of the two, would go. I was due for a week's holiday in Wales on my way back so I left the train at Crewe. My luggage for Cokermonth had all been labelled to Lady Leconfield. One of the porters gave me a great deal of attention and was probably disappointed with the threepence which was all I could afford for him!

We'd get up at 5 o'clock, an hour before the housemaids. Time to get the fire going - or it might be that Fred Baigent had already lit it. Chef would make fresh scones for the family for breakfast and we'd have our breakfast in our sitting-room next to the kitchen. We'd work the morning getting everything ready for the mid-day and evening meals, the latter being the more important and requiring the greater preparation. The junior kitchen-maid cleaned our rooms. As you can see we were fairly self-sufficient and were not encouraged to mix with other groups like the housemaids. By this time in the late 1930s there were only two juniors in the kitchen but still three beds in the bedroom, a sign of changing times.

Vegetables, as I've said, were cooked on the gas range, the wheelbarrow coming up from the garden every day. I was particularly responsible for these. Lord Leconfield had a heart of celery with every meal and it was part of my job to get this ready, taking off the larger outside stalks. One day the celery was a little brown in the middle and I cut that out. A note came back from the dining room saying that in future his Lordship would like what he had been sent, brown and all. If it were too brown he'd sort that out with the Gardens. With the large variety of vegetables, amounts prepared of each seemed relatively small in proportion to numbers at table, each vegetable had, however, to be painstakingly done. Spinach would be cooked, puréed through a sieve and mixed with cream. Sprouts were tiny, cooked and then individually squeeze-dried in a cloth before being sautéed in butter, while carrots tended to be cut into batons. One thing the chef didn't approve of was putting

bicarbonate of soda into the greens to keep them green. One of the girls was told not to do this, and when she did it again, he said firmly, "I've told you once, I've told you twice but I'll not tell you a third time". Many vegetables were scooped out rather like pieces of melon. This may seem wasteful, but it wasn't really, as the odd pieces went into the stock. Sea-kale was a speciality, grown in the garden forcing-houses. The thin stalks were white with a purplish tinge. Celeriac seemed different then, a very white clean bulb; when you buy it now there seems so much root going up into the bulb. This would be cooked in round balls with stock. Black Spanish radish was cooked too, but cabbage I don't remember at all. Braised onion with cloves was a standard. Another standard was huge potatoes slices wafer thin, crisped, and laid out round a dish. The slices seemed as big as your hand. Banana fritters were then laid on top.

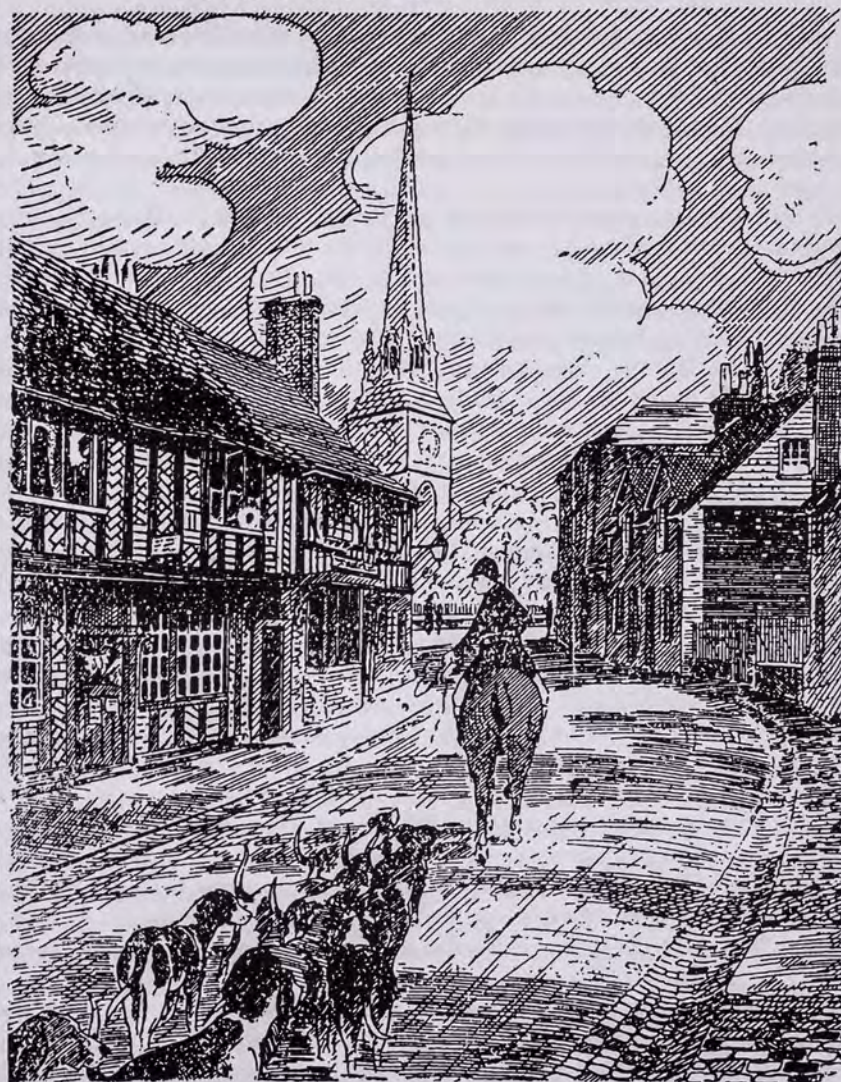
Spices were less commonplace then than now, less exotic too perhaps. Curry powder came in bottles, but there were particular ingredients the chef simply used. He didn't tell us what they were: they were part of his private lore. Lady Leconfield seemed quite knowledgeable too. Grouse were hung up in the larder until they literally dropped from the hook. There was snape pie or quail cooked whole, or woodcock. In the elbow of the woodcock's wing there was a little feather. This was much in demand as a paintbrush. A keeper managed to procure me two and I kept them for years. I finally lost them when my handbag was stolen years later at a railway station. Distinguished house guests? Neville Chamberlain, Haile Selassie? Quite likely, anyone could have come and we'd simply not know. I remember one of the footmen had been off duty but came back in time to bring out an ambassador's hat and coat. He was given a £3 tip. A lot of money in those days.

As servants we ate well by the standards of the time. That wasn't open to question. There was a roast Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday, buns or fairy cakes every day and a sponge twice a week. Rabbit I've already mentioned. I had half a day off a week and a Sunday once a month, but we had to be back in at Church Lodge by ten o'clock when the lodgekeeper locked up. Once I had been home to Portsmouth for the day and was sixpence short on my fare. I promised the conductor I would go back to the House to get the sixpence while the bus waited in Market Square. It was five to ten at night and the lodgekeeper waiting to lock up, but he kept open long enough for me to run down to Market Square and clear my debt! Mr. Carver at the Grand Entrance lodge knew my father. I think they'd been together in the Navy, and if my father came up to Petworth he'd go and see Mr. Carver. My oldest sister knew Petworth well, too, she used to camp in the Park with the Sea Rangers in the late 1920s. I don't think the discipline would have suited me. It was a long journey home for an hour or two and I'd usually stay in Petworth, explore perhaps. I was told by someone that the Park wall was fourteen miles round. I found it wasn't - or so I thought. In fact I'd only been round the inner wall. You could walk anywhere without worrying in those days.

Joan Bessent was talking to Diana Owen and the Editor.

The kitchen plan is drawn by Jonathan Newdick and comes from The Natural Trust kitchen leaflet.

PETWORTH CHURCH ON A HUNTING MORNING.



As to this sketch Mr. Harold Roberts, The Bungalow, Amberley, Sussex, writes: "This is a drawing of East Street, Petworth, finished from a pencil sketch made before the war memorial (which now stands in front of the church) was erected. The old shops on the left of the picture are some of the oldest in Petworth; the iron railings on the right are of the girls' school. Petworth Church is a landmark for many miles around. The foxhounds in Petworth streets are a very common sight; indeed, Petworth would not be Petworth without them."

A very early Harold Roberts sketch. Probably about 1918.



## New England

Although I did not appreciate it until much later in life, my schooldays were in one respect much different from those of my friends. Of course we had a great deal in common in the classroom, on the playing field and in our leisure but for one or two weeks of each school holiday I led a distinct and very different life from anyone else. I went to Petworth and shared in the working day of a gamekeeper to the extent that I could eventually have taken over much of the work.

Perhaps the association with Petworth calls for some explanation. Both of my father's parents came from that area and research shows that the families had been there for a very long time. The Sadlers, my grandmother's family, were firmly attached to Northchapel, whereas the Bakers favoured a number of villages in that area. Grandfather George Baker took to gamekeeping as did his brother (I believe he was called John but he was more usually known as Squeaker Baker on account of a high pitched laugh). I remember meeting Squeaker Baker when I was about fifteen and I recall a stocky, happy old gentleman with twinkling eyes; there was a photograph around that showed him holding a rabbit he had shot and smiling at the camera. The life of a gamekeeper in those days meant frequent moves to take over new beats and Grandfather was in the Heyshott area when my father was born. On leaving school at an early age my father began work as a gardener's assistant; my aunt once told me that he was employed by the local parson. Because it was felt that he had ability worthy of something better he was soon steered towards a more promising career on the railway; office boy at Selham station. The family history clearly indicates that the opportunity to work on the railway was one of the first chances to break away from the limitations of country life.

In the succeeding years Grandfather Baker moved at least twice to take over new areas. One move was to Wet Wood, about half a mile south east of Northchapel and from where my father had to walk to work at Selham about eight miles away. I recall him telling me that, as a growing lad, he had often eaten his sandwiches before reaching Petworth and had to survive for the rest of the day, including the walk home, on the kindness of some of his friends at Selham; they were hard times but walking long distances to work, or to visit friends, was just a part of life. A later move was to the Benges at the top of Duncton Hill where Grandfather died. By that time my father had already had promotion to the Epsom Downs Station as a booking clerk where he met George Bleach the signalman and married his daughter, Ethel. That last sentence contains another whole story that has had separate attention.

Meanwhile, in Sussex, my Grandmother Baker, now a widow with two daughters, was offered a cottage on the road between Petworth Station and Duncton. It was the first of a semi-detached pair on the right as you went towards Duncton and just beyond the turning towards Selham. The other half was occupied by Farmer House, his wife, two sons and a daughter. And that was where I came into the picture having been taken there as a baby by my parents. I was a visitor there for long enough to have some fairly clear memories of playing with the farm children, sliding down the sides of straw ricks and being fascinated by a miniature shed-like building that had been furnished with child-sized furniture and

fittings. Eventually both my Aunts married and, keeping up the family tradition, their husbands were game-keepers. Etty married Dave Brooker, a lively extrovert person who played the trumpet in the Petworth town band, and they moved to a beat near Kirdford. Annie married Arthur (Toby) Clarke and, with Grandmother Baker, they moved to a cottage at New England on Duncton Common about half way between Cathanger Farm and Cooper's Moor. Toby's home village had been Byworth (virtually an extension of Petworth) and he must have gone as quite a young man into the First World War. He returned home with injuries that took him to hospital for some time before he was released still suffering from damaged feet. In this condition he took up gamekeeping, which meant walking almost all day on feet that never ceased to give him pain.

Let me try and pinpoint the cottage at New England by reference to the 3.5" to a mile map of West Sussex. On the Duncton Road from Petworth you find Coultershaw Farm and then The Racehorse Public House; this is about the position of the one-time Petworth Station. Immediately opposite the station is a lane from which you can branch left past Kilsham Farm and on over the railway bridge into a large field. Turning right and continuing with a copse on your right you come to the area called Long Hangar. With the copse still on the right you enter a wooded area where a path crosses; the cottage was about 100 yards down to the left. Toby's beat stretched from just beyond the boundary of the River Rother to the north and a little below the Selham road to the south.

The priority concern of a keeper was to ensure that pheasants and partridges thrived and increased to provide good sport for Lord Leconfield and his friends. Fox hunting was a secondary interest, unlike the adjacent Cowdray Estate, and, as foxes were somewhat inimical to an abundance of game birds, they were unofficially, but actively, discouraged. Early in the year, around Easter, keepers were out walking the hedgerows identifying nests of partridges and pheasants and, where it was felt they could survive without too much danger, they were left alone. In other cases some or all of the eggs were taken and reared, either by incubation or by using broody hens, later releasing the young game-chicks into the wild. The hand-reared ones would then need to be kept under observation and fed by and for a time until able to fly and fend for themselves. Once or twice during the early Summer one or two neighbouring keepers would meet at Petworth House where old 'Acky' would harness up the mule cart and the party would set off for some bit of woodland where there would be emmets' nests. They were large teeming ant-hills. Toby and his friends would then roll up their sleeves, plunge large shovels into the nests and start to fill sacks with ants' eggs plus a considerable number of angry insects, many of which were still seeking revenge under the keepers' shirts when they got home. Despite the discomfort the keepers thought of this exercise as an enjoyable day out with a visit to a roadside pub to add to the pleasure. The game birds also welcomed this delicious addition to their normal diet. The climax of the year came around Christmas when shooting parties came to a keeper's area with all of the preparation and organization involved. The cottage and much surrounding space would be taken over and occupied by additional chairs, tables and equipment. Quantities of food and drink would be prepared for the shooting party and also for all of the support staff such as beaters and loaders. At the end of the day the party and, in particular, his Lordship, would

express satisfaction and, hopefully, leave behind a welcome tip as well as some of the surplus food and drink. The keeper, restored to his own parlour, could sit in front of his fire and assess the good and less good elements of the day and where improvements might be made during the following year.



*This snapshot shows the Leconfield Estate "emmet" cart. Does anyone know where it was taken?*

genuinely in danger of becoming extinct due to our use of chemicals in farm and field. In one respect the gamekeepers had a strict code; traps set to catch so-called predators had to be looked at every day and a keeper who was negligent about this was condemned by his colleagues. A great deal of forestry and coppicing contributed to the estate management and, although the work lay in other hands, the day to day protection of these areas from negligent visitors or even poachers was part of the work throughout the year. Most regular poachers, particularly of game birds and rabbits, were in those days mostly well known to the keepers and, although not too seriously pursued, attempts were made to discourage them and so keep their activities reasonably confined. Toby, of course, was not very athletic and so was unlikely to trouble his neighbourhood poachers too much. For this reason he liked, if he suspected they were active, to send me quietly round to a point just above their escape route. He would then blunder along, give a shout or even fire his gun in the air so as to encourage their retreat then, just as they got level with me, I would shout something like 'They are coming your way Fred' and then proceed to rush around making a fair bit of noise. Toby used to chuckle after such an exercise and say, "That should keep them quiet for a bit!" Once each year there was a 'good public relations exercise' referred to as 'cottage rabbits' week. Rabbits were a serious menace to agriculture in those days so this annual effort was made to reduce

Many of the other activities of a gamekeeper were concerned with the breeding and protection of game birds and these included a constant warfare against those birds and beasts considered to be natural predators. Today we look at old photographs of a keeper's 'larder' displaying the suspended bodies of hawks, magpies, owls, stoats and weasels with justified horror but we live in more enlightened times, or do we? The predators continued to thrive in uncle Toby's day but today they are

numbers by shooting, by setting snares and by using ferrets and the target set was a pair of rabbits delivered to every cottage on the estate. Thousands of rabbits would probably be raised over the estate and the keepers were working very long days.

Very essential to every keeper's work were his dogs. Both Toby and David Brooker had a good name for the training of dogs and there were usually one or two labradors or retrievers under training or actually working. I never knew either of them to hit a dog but the demand for absolute obedience was paramount, particularly for the safety of the dog; if, when hunting, a rabbit or hare was 'started' then it was vital that the dog should drop to the ground and remain still to avoid being shot. Dogs, when working, would run ahead, move to the left or right and freeze in response to small voice signals. Toby also had a personal dog, a lively cocker spaniel named 'Geisha' of whom I have a photo. Training came hard to this fairly eager and impetuous animal and one day he crept out after us when he had been deliberately left at home. When Toby spotted him he dropped his haversack on the ground in the coppice where we were and told Geisha to sit and guard it. That was fairly early morning and the dog was still there when we returned late afternoon. Toby thought that he had made his point.

When I first went to Petworth I was too small to accompany him on his rounds but it wasn't long before he would take me out on his evening round to check a few traps or shoot a rabbit for the pot or for his ferrets. As time went by he began to take me out on his all day exercises and I would carry my own bread and cheese and a bottle of cold tea. I soon learned to walk exactly in step with him and to avoid stepping on any small twig that could break and make a sound and I was happy to hear him tell others that he sometimes had to look round to see if I was still there. The final accolade was when he began to take me on exercises held in conjunction with his neighbouring colleagues. Having worked alongside him for several weeks every year for more than ten years I knew his area and seasonal tasks very closely and occasionally, if his feet or health were particularly troublesome, I could help him out for a day or two.

I suppose the world was a fairly safe place for youngsters in those days and I was able, from a fairly young age, to travel to Petworth on my own. I would set out to Epsom Station with a small case, a bicycle and any extras that happened to be of current interest such as a fishing rod or an air gun. I might have to change trains, perhaps at Dorking or Horsham but certainly at Pulborough. Sometimes I would be met at Petworth but at other times I would make my own way to New England either by the Kilsham route or else via Rapleys. Rapleys was a garage about half a mile up the road towards Duncton where it was possible to turn in and follow a more interesting walk to the cottage. This was a common way to approach New England as it was useful to be able to pick up a candle lantern left ready at the garage or a gallon of paraffin for the kitchen stove.

The cottage was a two up and two down building with a spacious pantry leading from the kitchen area. The parlour had a wood-burning range that served both to heat the room and also to cook most meals. Collecting and cutting up wood was a regular exercise to keep a constant supply of fuel available but there was no shortage in the surrounding woods and coppice areas. The furniture included a red covered settee and two easy chairs plus four dining-room chairs and a red cloth covered table with an oil lamp in the centre (my son, Ian, now has this lamp). There were the usual china dogs on the mantelpiece and two or three cases

of stuffed birds or animals on the walls. The kitchen had a large working table and chairs and additional small cooking could be done on a paraffin stove; there was a bread oven in the wall but this was seldom used. There was a well outside the back door that was very deep but I cannot ever recall it running low and its stout wooden lid was always kept in place when not in use. The privy was down a short path, concealed by laurels, and finding it on a dark wet night was all part of country living...so too was clearing it out once or twice a year to enrich the large vegetable garden.

There were days when I couldn't accompany my uncle, particularly if he was meeting people from the estate office, but there was usually plenty to occupy my time. There were bows and arrows to make, trees to climb and fishing lines to set down by the Rother (mostly baited with rabbit offal and attracting eels which grandma was happy to cook and eat). When my father could get away for a week-end I loved to get him out with me; he could still recall the things he had done as a boy and he could make whistle pipes from ash wood that would play tunes and introduce me to all kinds of games using natural material. We also used to have games of cricket in front of the house on a fairly level piece of ground. Being surrounded by woodland and brambles meant that hitting had to be restrained and a particular offender against this gentleman's agreement was Grandad Bleach when he came down. Once too often he hit the ball over into the kitchen garden and my father went to retrieve it. He returned with a large rotten apple concealed in his hand and tossed up a tempting full toss to Grandad who was unable to resist and then complained about the mess that had to be sponged off his suit.

I liked, when possible, once a week to walk via Rotherbridge, Perryfields and Frog Farm into Petworth to spend my ninepence pocket money buying such things as the Magnet, some sweets or a new sorbo ball. Whilst there I could visit Frank Sadler's family at Cherry Orchard and play with a second cousin, Cyril (he was, sadly, to die quite young from peritonitis following an appendix operation).

Relations, in fact, were to be found in almost any village around Petworth and from time to time we went to places like Duncton, Tillington, Lodsworth and Northchapel. Auntie Annie also did quite a lot of moving around in connection with her dressmaking which brought her into contact with a good many of the local minor gentry. She had been apprenticed at Coates Castle as a young girl and had become very skilled at her trade and this was always a useful supplement to their income although her charges were very low. On one occasion she was provided with an exclusive pattern by someone like Norman Hartnell that had cost about one hundred pounds and she had made a wedding dress, bridesmaids dresses and a going-away dress all in her tiny cottage. The fruits of her labour appeared in the national press that covered this society wedding. At New England Uncle and I could often arrive home to find a horse tethered at the gate whilst the rider was inside having a fitting. In passing it is worth mentioning that Uncle could often anticipate visitors by his ability to recognise hoof marks or cycle treads along the lanes.

It wasn't always necessary to walk to Petworth as a rather primitive mini-bus met the trains as they arrived at Petworth Station and conveyed them back to the Square where Cockshutts Bakery and tea-room also served as a bus station. Auntie Annie went in once a week to buy her dressmaking bits from Eagers and also to place her weekly order with the

International. It would be a fairly small and basic order but, looking back, the astonishing thing was that it would be delivered to the house; it could never have paid them to send a van along a rough lane and then for about a mile along a field track with a small package of bread, cheese, butter etc., and yet no-one would have expected other than that a delivery was an obligation. Perhaps one item of the order would be of interest, namely a consignment of tins of condensed milk; strangely fresh milk was a rarity not only at New England but in many remote cottages a long way from the nearest farm.

The life of a keeper and his family would have been seen as quite good in the context of the countryside at that time. It was a secure job with accommodation, a good garden, a plentiful supply of rabbit meat and enough pay for the basics of life but no more. His annual holiday was no more than a long week-end usually spent at Epsom and the highlight would be a visit to the Crystal Palace. In old age there would be a move to another small cottage and about ten shillings (50p) a week to augment the state pension. It was Toby's chosen career and probably one on which he early set his sights so it was unfortunate that the war left him with injuries that did not match up to the demands of keeping. Eventually, just before the outbreak of the 2nd World War, he had to give up and he was moved to a small cottage in Petworth plus the pension mentioned above. There was a second move to an Almshouse on the edge of Petworth. His health did not improve and my father and I used to go down from time to time to maintain his garden. Finally he had a spell in Petworth Cottage Hospital before moving to an Infirmary at East Preston where he died.

Ken Baker

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## Pictures from Nepal

We were treated to an evening of delights when local artist and Society member Jan Roddick, in her warm and easy style, gave an illustrated account of her trek in Nepal over Christmas and the New Year.

Glorious scenery photographed with an artist's eye: the unfamiliar architecture, fascinating village life, together with the water-colours which perfectly captured the contrasts of light and shade, mountain and valley portrayed both the simple and sophisticated aspects of that intriguing country. The trip had been arranged through the Petworth travel agent, Kirsty Bates.

Jan, and Ann Brown, with three other British travellers, flew to Katmandu, the capital of the kingdom in the Himalayas. Most of the population of 19 million live in the three main cities, Buddhists and Hindus in harmony. Here they explored the streets, markets, shops and temples. Holy men and holy cows, the "living goddess", women washing in the river, all reflected a way of life so different from our own.

After two days' acclimatization, the party made the 40 minute flight (9 hours by coach was the alternative) to Pokhara where they joined their three Sherpa guides, eight porters, five cooks and two chicken, which provided fresh eggs and, finally, a curry. The footpaths

they followed wound through valleys and along mountain sides, over precarious suspension bridges and through rhododendron forest. Along the way were stone resting places where the walkers sat, with their rucksacks lodging at a higher level behind them. At night they slept in tents, carried ahead and erected before their arrival by the porters.

The images that will persist in our minds from the slides and paintings after this evening are of displaced Tibetan carpet weavers, a mule train, pumpkins on a corrugated iron roof, terraced gardens, exotic birds and flowers, hills, clouds, lakes and mists, pink light on snow-capped mountains and, perhaps most symbolic in portraying the peace and concord of a fascinating country, the Bhuddist and Hindu trees, a pipal and a banyan, growing side by side, their branches inter-twining in harmony.

Jan ended with the question "Where next?" We look forward to the answer.

The presentation is available to other organisations on request.

KCT

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## Gleanings from the West Sussex Gazette 1884-1887

13th November 1884.

A Bonfire night revival.

The fifth of November this year excited an unusual amount of interest owing, no doubt, to the club that had been formed for bonfire boys. In the morning, as has been usual for many years past, an effigy representing "Guy" was carried through the streets of the town accompanied by a host of small boys to do the necessary shouting etc. In the evening at eight o'clock the "Boys" mustered near the Pound (about 60 in number), formed into a procession and paraded the town with torches, headed by a couple of men on horseback, a fife and drum band, an effigy of old "Guy" and a banner bearing the inscription "Success to the Petworth Bonfire Boys". Each member of the Club was dressed in some peculiar garb, with a mask, they thereby rendering themselves unrecognisable. After parading the town the procession moved towards Hampers Common, where a huge fire was to be lighted, and the effigy of "old Guy" was to be committed to the flames. About nine o'clock the fire was lighted, and at this time some hundreds of onlookers were present. Fireworks of all descriptions were lighted and rolled about over the green and the numerous tar balls swinging about in different directions made the scene very animated. In the town during the evening, coloured lights were placed by Mr. Morgan near the old church and Petworth House, and had a very pretty effect. Very few squibs were let off and the procession was most orderly, and the bonfire boys of 1884 well-behaved. The promoters of the club are, we believe, Mr. Thompson and Mr. R. Hunt of this town and we must say that the arrangements were carried out in a most creditable manner, and another year there is no doubt the club will be more liberally supported and arrangements made on a more extensive scale. Fortunately rain held off until the display was nearly over, when it came down rather freely for a time.

