The Horsham Rd Cemetery

NO. 119. MARCH 2005

The Georgian

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY *magazine*

Contents

Cover design by Jonáthan Newdick. It shows trees at Snow Hill in Petworth Park.

Printed by Midhurst and Petworth Printers, 11 Rothermead,
Petworth (tel. 342456) and Duck Lane, Midhurst (tel. 816321)
Published by the Petworth Society which is a registered Charity

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

Constitution and Officers

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

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

The annual subscription is £9.00. Single or double one Magazine delivered. Postal £11.00 overseas £13.00. Further information may be obtained from any of the following:

Chairman

Mr P.A. Jerrome MBE, Trowels, Pound Street, Petworth [STD 01798] (Tel. 342562) GU28 0DX

Vice Chairman

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

Hon. Treasurer

Mr A. Henderson, 62 Sheepdown Drive, Petworth (Tel. 343792) GU28 0BX

Committee

Mr Stephen Boakes, Mr Miles Costello, Lord Egremont, Mr Ian Godsmark, Mrs Audrey Grimwood, Mrs Betty Hodson, Mr Philip Hounsham, Mrs Anne Simmons, Mrs Ros Staker, Mr J. Taylor, Mrs Deborah Stevenson, Mrs Linda Wort

Magazine distributors

Mr Henderson, Mr Costello, Mr Thompson, Mrs Simmons, Mrs Grimwood, Mrs Hounsham, Mr Turland, Mr Boakes (Petworth), Mrs Adams (Byworth), Miss Biggs, Mrs Dallyn (Sutton and Duncton), Mr Bellis (Graffham), Mr Derek Gourd, (Tillington and River), Mrs Goodyer, Mrs Williams (Fittleworth)

Society Scrapbook

Mrs Pearl Godsmark

Coultershaw Beam Pump representatives

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

For this Magazine on tape please contact Mr Thompson.

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 .

Chairman's Notes

A classic Jonathan cover for a new year. Subscriptions again remain the same – thanks entirely to income generated by the monthly Book Sales. Pearl will be at the Leconfield Hall on Friday mornings in March to collect subscriptions from 10.00 to 11.00, but please note not on Friday 25th. This particular week it will be Thursday 24th. You can also pay at the Book Sale 12th March. You will see that this year Mr Henderson would like members' telephone numbers – it is often quicker and more convenient to ring rather than write. We have donated the proceeds of the January Book Sale to the Tsunami Appeal – several hundred pounds in all. I am sure that this is what members would have wished.

There are two excursions this year, details of the first come with the present Magazine. The second is to Shulbrede Priory in July – details in the June Magazine as also of the Society dinner to be held in early September. No one will need reminding that with numbers so limited anything other than an immediate reply is pointless.

Peter January 21st

Subscriptions!

Dear Peter,

With the annual request for the prompt payment of membership subscriptions come the monthly committee meetings where figures and statistics are pored over and comparisons with previous years are analysed at great length. We usually find that by September, following a ritual flagellation of the committee members and a great deal of wailing and gnashing of our worthy treasurer's teeth, the membership of the Society has once again settled down to a level not greatly dissimilar to the previous year.

This is not to say that achieving a steady membership is a matter which should be taken lightly. Indeed not, and for this we must thank the persistence of our treasurer. My point is that it is not a modern phenomenon that troubles us and similar organisations for if we cast our eyes back to Victorian Petworth we will find a scholarly equivalent of our honourable treasurer who rather than berate his poor committee chose instead to transmit his thoughts into prose and went so far as to publish them in the *Petworth Parish Magazine*. Perhaps we can now look forward to the literary response of our present treasurer.

Regards, Miles

From St. Mary's, Petworth, Parish Magazine March 1886.

Jottings From The Diary of An Honorary Secretary

Monday. Must begin to think about collecting subscriptions.

Tuesday. Have decided to begin tomorrow.

Wednesday. Ought to have called on _____to-day for his subscription, but didn't feel quite up to the mark.

Thursday. Still feeling below par, did not call on _____, but took a good long walk and a tonic instead. Really mean to call tomorrow.

Friday. Started with the intention of calling on _____for his subscription, but courage failed at the door.

Saturday. Have made it a rule never to call for subscriptions on Saturdays, so must go on Monday.

Monday. Called on _____; stayed three-quarters of an hour; but hadn't the cheek to ask for subscription. Great nuisance, as must publish balance sheet this week, and can't well call for a fortnight. Have paid subscription "on spec," and must hope to get if from _____.

A Fortnight Afterwards

Monday. Called on _____for his subscription but found he was out.

Tuesday. Called again, but "no go." Said "he had so many calls now-a-days." Came home and went to bed; burden of one's thoughts – "Is life worth living?"

Wednesday. Wonders will never cease! Received a subscription from _____ (not the same individual as above) without asking for it. Feel a different being; begin to think life is worth living, after all!

Putting Lynchmere on the map – the 13th annual Garland Lecture

Hilary Adair certainly did that – for us, when she described the achievements of the Lynchmere Society in bringing Lynchmere Common back to life and, to the world at large, as an example of what can be achieved by a community fired with love for its neighbourhood and enthusiasm.

Hilary now organises the 92 volunteers in the never-ending battle against the invasive silver birch, pine and grass to maintain a balance in which heather and all the attendant bird and insect life can flourish. Along the way, she has learnt practical skills and how to persuade individuals, charities and government departments to part with money in aid of the cause.

It started in 1997, when the Lynchmere Society, founded six years earlier, learned of plans by the Cowdray Estate, owners of the Common, to develop it as commercial woodland. The alternative was to buy it – for £350,000 – which had to be found within two months. Amazingly, £100,000 was raised locally, which brought Heritage Lottery funding for much of the balance. The Society is now into its second 5-year management plan, which is necessary for continued grant aid from the Lottery and DEFRA.

The Common had been untouched for 60 years and only one commoner remained, so no longer was bracken and heather harvested, trees coppiced or open spaces grazed. The control of the bracken, birch and pine has been achieved by trial and error, with spraying,

hand-pulling, mowing and now, to introduce a small herd of Shetland cattle. This has entailed fencing the perimeter, a controversial move at first, but, through good communication and consultation, including holding public meetings, it is now acknowledged to be both necessary and unobtrusive.

Two long-lost ponds have been restored and paths made accessible to wheelchairs and pushchairs, with seats at viewpoints. The local agricultural college runs courses for its trainee tree surgeons and eight volunteers from the Society have been trained to use chain saws. Twice a year, there are 'Log Days', when Society members can help themselves to logs cut up from trees removed during clearance, Non-members pay and help to keep costs down.

Hilary leads by example and has been on many courses to help her maintain her 'hands-on' approach to the work of the volunteers and to understand the ways to obtain funding without which the project would come to an end. It is satisfying, if exhausting work, but the return of wildlife, including nightjars, hobbies, honey buzzards, Dartford warblers and rare insects is especially rewarding.

In thanking Hilary, Peter commented that it was clear that she had captured the imagination and admiration of the audience by the flow of questions, which could have gone on for some time longer.

KCT

William!

Most people 'of a certain age' grew up on a diet of William stories – the 'Just William' books, radio and television series. We knew they were written by Richmal Crompton. Richmal was an unusual Christian name and many folk assumed the author was male. Even those who knew she was female, knew very little more about her.

So it was for most of the capacity audience, I suspect, when Alison Neil came to portray Miss Crompton in another of her amazing productions. Alison's genius lies in her ability to put together the events of an individual's life, weave in opinions, thoughts and emotions and present them in a meticulously authentic setting. Add to this the feat of memorising five different scripts, all of which she is taking to village halls all over the country: Mrs Beeton, Charlotte Brontë, Catherine Parr and now, Richmal Crompton (the fifth is about to go public) – all different characters, yet, for us, Alison is the person.

It takes four hours to set the scene, unloading the packed van, transporting costumes into the changing room and scenery, lighting and sound equipment and 'props.' up to the hall in the lift and then putting everything in place. Another two hours dismantling and packing up before Alison can set out for Reading (too late to go all the way back to Wales that night) and dropping off Fiona, the stage manager, lighting and sound assistant at Gatwick to catch a late train for Waterloo.

What did we learn about Richmal – the name a combination of Richard and Mal, an abbreviation for Mary, thought up by ancestors who wanted their names for their daughter?

Family background: clergyman father, mother from Lancashire, two sisters, one dying in infancy and never mentioned again and a brother, Jack; boarding school, Suffragist (acting within the law) before the 1st World War; classics degree from Holloway College; classics teacher at her old school, then at Bromley High School; always a writer, favouring love stories and mysteries, but eventually introducing William, inspired by the escapades of Jack and her nephew, Tommy. Her novels did not do well, but the demand for William stories grew. A conflict between continuing as a teacher or becoming a full-time writer was resolved when, after contracting polio she regained the use of her right hand and took this as a sign that her future lay in writing.

Later, she spoke for polio victims on the BBC's "Week's Good Cause".

It was at this point, half way through the performance, that we became even more aware of Alison's attention to detail. Not only did she, a left-hander, -hold her pen in her right hand – and the chalk for writing in Greek on the blackboard but she continued with a convincingly twisted foot to the end.

Bored with William, Richmal decided to drop him in favour of an 8-year old character, Jimmy, but public outcry and her brother Jack's provision of a large number of fresh plots, encouraged her to renew her efforts and so more stories, plays, wireless and TV series and even a film, followed. In all, Richmal Crompton had 13 collections of short stories, 37 William books and 40 novels published.

When her mother had died at the age of 78, Richmal had the premonition that she too, would live to 78. So it was that, aged 78, she died.

KCT

That was 30 years – that was!

How were we to celebrate the thirty years of the Society's existence? The question presented enormous problems to the Committee and to Peter, Chairman for the last 26 years, and to Ian and Pearl, photographers, video-recorders and custodians of the scrapbooks, in particular.

It seems an evening with a party atmosphere would be in order; slides of the activities over the years, some memorable, others largely forgotten – but there are no records other than minutes and a few press cuttings of the '70s and then 3,000 slides from the mid-'80s onwards, as well as videos. Our monthly meetings became noted for the refreshment interval as much as for the speakers and their subjects. Now we have 'down-graded' to coffee and biscuits as the teams producing the 'eats' diminished.

So how did it turn out?

Peter started by reminding old hands and informing more recent members of the first tentative experiments in bringing together the people of Petworth, so long divided by the circumstances of birth, employment, even war. One could ask now, thirty years on, is the Town better off for the presence of the Society or worse? Perhaps the answer is a draw.

There followed slides to illustrate the divisions that existed in the first half of the 20th

century, legacies of hundreds of years, then more of the events, the walks and the organisations with which the Society is proud to have links. It was perhaps alarming to realise that many of the characters, prominent thirty years ago, are no longer with us and that it was not only difficult to recognise, in the photographs, people we still see today, but also, ourselves. And we are told, we never change!

Those refreshments? Quite unexpectedly, Jill and Jennifer had offered to lay on 'savouries', which we were glad to complement with wine. We were in gastronomic heaven. "If we had known, we wouldn't have eaten before we came out" was heard time and time again and it all contributed to the party atmosphere we so wanted to develop. We staggered (if that's the right word) back upstairs for the 'unusual' raffle to be drawn. Unusual, in that people had been **given** a ticket as they arrived, so the odds were only about 8:1 against winning a prize, compared with the usual 25:1 – 9 winners, only 65 disappointed!

The evening drew to a close with videos of the Society's visit to Canada, receiving the national flag which had been flown over the Peace Tower at Ottawa's Parliamentary buildings, Fair Day and the restoration of the Shopham Loop of the Rother.

Well, it seemed to work and there's enough material for another evening of nostalgia in the future. We thank Peter, Ian, Pearl, Jill and Jennifer for all the work they put in to a lovely celebration.

KCT

Carols and wild blackberry cobbler. The December book sale.

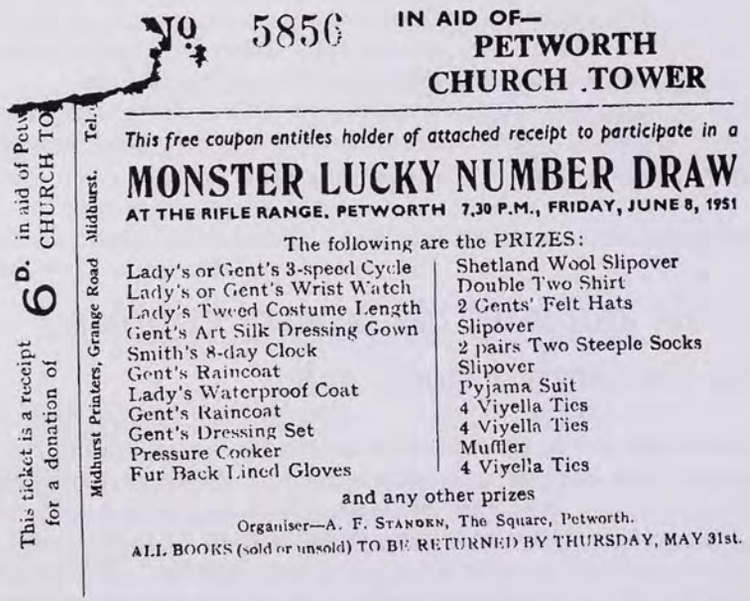
Writing a week or two after the December book sale I find my memories a little hazy. Cold in the morning with fog. The usual scrum at the beginning. "The biggest monthly book sale in the South of England," so we'd put out on the radio, being careful to insert the word "monthly". We could even be right, bringing the boxes up on the Friday we felt it was. Certainly no one challenged us on the day and there were fresh faces. Down to the radio coverage we supposed but you can never be sure. Anyway the newcomers took next year's list of dates which has to be a good sign.

And, all too briefly, the band played carols in the Square and the sun shone. You have to set out according to what you have. Yes, there's always the central 30p fiction section, the 50p fiction with the till at the north end. There's a huge amount of non-fiction this time and very little cooking, children's or gardening. The non-fiction runs all along the south wall. Another month the disposition could be quite different.

Hospital visiting in the afternoon. I leave the "team" to clear up. All very efficient, the more so it appears for the Chairman's absence. He's an interfering old fool. A really grey afternoon, they say, with a desolate wind-swept Square. A good sale but the curious record total of December 2002 remains unbeaten. There must have been special factors operating

that day, we can't remember now. Overall the year's takings are well up on last year. The sale gets bigger every year.

This quarter's piece of ephemera? The "funny what falls out of old books" bit? Well, I can say that the notion that people leave money in books is a complete myth. In four years I've never found anything at all. But how about this draw ticket from 1951? The ticket itself is free, but presupposes a donation in aid of the church tower. Clearly a circumvention of the existing gambling laws. The church spire had been removed in 1947. A rusty paper clip has damaged the left corner of the ticket but, otherwise, it's in good condition. The prizes seem to reflect the austerity of Festival of Britain year and suggest, too, that Arch Standen, the Market Square tailor, may have contributed more than his fair share of them! Steeple socks? Perhaps a brand name.



No. 5856 IN AID OF— PETWORTH CHURCH TOWER

This free coupon entitles holder of attached receipt to participate in a

MONSTER LUCKY NUMBER DRAW

AT THE RIFLE RANGE, PETWORTH 7.30 P.M., FRIDAY, JUNE 8, 1951

The following are the PRIZES:

Lady's or Gent's 3-speed Cycle	Shetland Wool Slipover
Lady's or Gent's Wrist Watch	Double Two Shirt
Lady's Tweed Costume Length	2 Gents' Felt Hats
Gent's Art Silk Dressing Gown	Slipover
Smith's 8-day Clock	2 pairs Two Steeple Socks
Gent's Raincoat	Slipover
Lady's Waterproof Coat	Pyjama Suit
Gent's Raincoat	4 Viyella Ties
Gent's Dressing Set	4 Viyella Ties
Pressure Cooker	Muffler
Fur Back Lined Gloves	4 Viyella Ties

and any other prizes

Organiser—A. F. STANDEN, The Square, Petworth.

ALL BOOKS (sold or unsold) TO BE RETURNED BY THURSDAY, MAY 31st.

This ticket is a receipt for a donation of 6D. in aid of Petworth CHURCH TOWER

Midhurst Printers, Grange Road Midhurst. Tel.

I've been known to "crack-on" about cookery books, we do get a lot of them, and while you need a selection at the sale, there does seem something of a glut on the market. One trendy chef can seem much like another. Surprising then that this quarter's book choice is a recipe book. I remember abstracting this one[1] from a pile of "cookery" picked up at Bury fête last July. No dustwrapper but otherwise clean and in good order - no trace of the dreaded "kitchen-staining." All in all a rather aristocratic example of the species. I certainly wouldn't want to try all the recipes but then is there any cookery book where you would? It begins with Greek and Roman cuisine - what about Roman-style egg custard? Then on to China-Mongolian meat cakes? - Persia and India. There follows a plethora of ideas from England from medieval times to the nineteenth century, seventeenth century continental and eighteenth and nineteenth century dishes from the New World. How about Australian cauliflower bake with ham and soured cream and two recipes from America - apple dowdy, apples baked with crisp bread slices and black treacle or wild blackberry cobbler - blackberries with a batter topping? See you at the March sale.

P.

[1] Katie Stewart and Pamela Michael: *Wild Blackberry Cobbler and other old fashioned recipes* (Dent 1984)

Medlars can be something of a blind spot .... late opening at 346

28th November - the Museum's penultimate opening of an extended season. It will open on Friday for the Christmas lights evening. Coming up a little early to put a few tulip bulbs into wet, unwelcoming, soil. Spring seems a long way off on this bleak November afternoon. But then bleak afternoons are what it's all about - candles, hurricane lamps, paraffin lamps and coal fires. It's a curious anomaly that 346 is closed when it's at its most dour and characterful. Mrs. Cummings must have found the winters long and the summers all too fleeting. Or perhaps she never had the leisure to think like that. And winters were colder then. "Hard winters put men out," Bill Ede once told me in lapidary style. "And the winter of '29 was hard." You've only to think of the lake frozen hard and the skaters on it.

Once we're under way the afternoon passes in a blur of conversation. It's gone five before Miles and I leave. By this time it's totally dark and we need a torch to lock up. And the conversation a ragout of the familiar and the unfamiliar. Does the long case clock fly in the face of reality? Quite possibly. If not that then what sort of clock would a lady like Mrs. Cummings have had? Surely everyone would have had a timepiece of some kind.

Condensation on the window; it's cold outside. You wouldn't get that in summer, that feeling of being holed up against the world - no logs piled in front of the fire - a pudding on the range. You'd certainly miss the fire today whereas in summer it's difficult to see it as other than a conscious archaism. It isn't of course: however sweltering the summer day, the fire has to be kept in for hot water and cooking. Nor is this so odd; most of us can remember ranges or Rayburns where we did the same thing.

The gipsy flowers, explaining that the whole point is that the shavings all come off a single piece of wood. And the rag rugs: "Very easy to make" someone recalls. "You'd cut up old suits - that sort of thing. We weren't a poor family by any means but in Lancashire just after the war there was simply nothing available. What was produced went for export."

It's getting very dark by four o'clock. The wallflowers outside offer a promise of faraway spring. You begin to realise just how dark 346 would have been on a winter's night. Mrs. C. would need to live easy with her own company. Three children in London, no

telephone. They might as well have been on another planet. We can never gauge what Mrs. C. felt about winter nights. Acceptance was all perhaps. Early to bed and then the welcome harsh light of morning. And you'd not want to use the thunderbox on a winter's night.

The darkness makes for a greater sense of intimacy. To sit talking in the parlour, visitors, local and from a distance, materialising out of a cold dark empty town. No matter what Eliot said, November is the cruellest month. Quince in the handbowl in the stone sink shines a luminous yellow, and medlars. Some people know what the latter are, some don't. The idea of something needing to have rotted before you eat it isn't an easy one. Medlars can be something of a blind spot.

P.

'It's not a circus, it's a fair' Petworth Fair 2004

The fair's on a Saturday this year and it's now Friday morning. There's a good sprinkling of cones already in the Square and it's only eight o'clock. Presumably Harris brothers put them out when they loosened the bollards in the Cut last night. The rusting iron "hats" for the bollard holes have already been abstracted from the downstairs cupboard in the Hall, as too has the bus stop, making its annual pilgrimage across the Square to New Street. It's a still clear day, one of the big yellow fair posters is lying crumpled and wet with dew by the Leconfield Hall seats. Another large one for a local women's wrestling tournament has suffered the same fate. Vandals don't like advertising to be too bold, it seems. Perhaps it offends their sensibilities. Being a vandal may demand a certain delicacy. Or perhaps not. The grass growing round the bollards looks undisturbed but in fact Robert and co. have eased and oiled them for quicker removal. One was very difficult - there's always one. Once back home I have a string of telephone callers - the fair's being promoted on the radio.

11.30 Friday. How fragile the fair tradition is, so often threatened over a thousand years. I'm talking to Fred Harris as we look for the marker nails in the road on the east side of the Hall. Have they too been there since Doomsday? Well, the Harris chair-o-planes have only been coming since 1986. Will the scaffolding in Aladdin's Cave foil the precision of the Harris calculations? What appears at first to be a major problem does not raise its head again. It's that eerie period when the Square's virtually emptied of cars but the machines are still to come in. Steve the traffic warden's done a good job. Still a cold, still day with just a hint of prim sunshine, ideal for setting up. The fair has coped (just) with its old enemies - nineteenth century clergymen and prosperous tradesmen - or Arundel borough disputing the rights in the seventeenth, but today's enemies are grindingly subtle. Insurance, licences, safety legislation, lack of capital, will they eventually unite in an unstoppable flood that sweeps tradition away before it? The anonymous finally achieving what no one has managed in a thousand years. Or perhaps the fair will transmute in some unimagined way? A corollary of these difficulties, of course, is the media interest. Petworth fair is a survival, an anomaly, in a standardised, aseptic age. Just what television and radio are looking for. Is Petworth really the oldest

The Ranville stall was another innovation at this year's fair. Photograph courtesy of Midhurst and Petworth Observer.

surviving street fair in the South of England? The radio said so, and no one has challenged it. I'd be a little more circumspect myself.

Saturday morning 7.30. A Somerfield driver seems a little disorientated. He'll need to come through the town instead of, one supposes, turning down from the Park Road corner. Or perhaps he doesn't fancy negotiating the Cut. I wouldn't myself. Wouldn't it be easier to turn right into Saddlers Row against the traffic, stopping vehicles in the Cut? So he asks, but no one seems to go along with him. "Whatever do they want with a circus in the Square? In this day and age." "It's not actually a circus, it's a fair." The driver, it seems, is not on the side of tradition. Circus or fair it's all set up now, just one or two spaces marked out for smaller stalls still to come.

Saturday afternoon. Clogdancers. The Upper Hall is packed. The weather's poor, it's raining off and on and it's cold. Probably the worst night since we revived the fair in 1986. Well if you hold a fair in November what do you expect? This year we've Punch and Judy sideways-on on the stage. Three performances at hourly intervals. The maestro certainly earns his money. "You do need numbers and a receptive audience," he says "playing for half a dozen children is much harder than it is for thirty." The second performance attracts the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, two elderly small boys sitting spellbound but stopping short at audience participation. Eight characters in all, the Beadle certainly needs (and gets) a little explanation. A curiously patrician policeman - definitely not from the Hullo, Hullo, Hullo, academy. The gleaming green crocodile, happy enough out of the water it seems, wife beating and the rest. Punch's world certainly coheres somewhat uneasily with modern social thinking.

The poor weather outside makes for a long early evening period. There's a smell of ripe Camembert in the Lower Hall, the Ranvillois in their traditional costumes make a nice change. There's even a hint of snow outside. Billy Benson, it's said, recalls snow in 1957 but today's is so insignificant it hardly counts. There was a heavy fall in 1951, the famous Noyes gallopers were brought but not set up. The Harris family remain their usual cheerful selves but it's not going to be one of their better days. Meanwhile the town band gives an extended performance upstairs, but when they finish the spirit seems to go both outside and inside. Better weather next year perhaps.

P.

More on the table cloth

The 'mysterious' table-cloth (PSM No.116, June 2004) will be a record of the 'Annual or Yearly Meeting of Friends', i.e. those named on it were the representatives sent by their Monthly Meeting each to the Friends' most senior business- meeting, the Yearly Meeting. The Religious Society of Friends have long been known as the Quakers, ever since their founder George Fox told a magistrate that he 'ought rather to quake before the Lord'. They gave their dates in plain manner (their speech, dress, and general conduct was to be plain and direct); months had no names other than the numerals within the year's 1–12. Thus January was First Month; June, 6th Month. Until the 19th century, 9.8.05 (to quote one on the tablecloth) would be Eighth Month 9, 1905 (or 8th Mo. 9, 1905). Quakers refer to each other as Friends.

A few years ago, numerous Friends worked a large tapestry of Quaker history. This is now on show in the Friends' Meeting House, Kendal.

Jeremy Godwin

Almost the third blonde!

Attentive readers of the article on Franco's 'lifting' from the Canary Islands in 1936[1] will remember that Douglas Jerrold, with Luís Bolín, a main instigator of the plot, had suggested that the presence of 'three blondes' would help toward giving the trip to the Canaries a measure of credibility. In the event Jerrold had had to settle with Major Hugh Pollard for two.

Hermione Nicholls recalls that in the mid 1930s her family, the Eliots, were friendly with the Pollards and very much on visiting terms, Mr Eliot and Major Pollard being particularly close. Her memory is that the family moved at roughly the time of the Canary Islands expedition. She connects them with Howick Farm at Fernhurst and a property on the Bedham Road at Wisborough Green. Hunting was a common interest and Mrs Pollard, whose eyesight was poor, also rode to hounds. Despite her handicap horse and rider negotiated fences with some aplomb. Hugh Pollard was a rather droll man, an expert on firearms and possibly also on cooking. He had in early years travelled extensively.

Hermione recalls that, after Major Pollard died, probably in the 1950s, she visited Mrs Pollard, by this time in a nursing home at Midhurst. It was near Christmas and Mrs Pollard was going off to spend Christmas with one of her daughters. Hermione's main link with the family was through Diana the elder daughter. The other daughter, April, would perhaps be still at school at the time of the Canaries expedition. In later years Hermione lost touch with the family. Her impression is that Diana lived in Oxford and possibly did not marry.

As a great friend of Diana's, Hermione was approached to travel as 'the third blonde' but Mr and Mrs Eliot would not hear of it. The whole enterprise was extremely risky, 'harum-scarum' might be a better word. Mrs Pollard herself had misgivings but went along with her husband's enthusiasm as she usually did. Dorothy Watson, the second girl was a few years older than Diana, Hermione can just remember her, as she does her role in delivering eggs for a farmer at Fernhurst.

When Hermione's parents heard of the adventure, successful as it had been, they felt they had been quite right to refuse permission. It was said that the plane had been fired on during its journey over Republican Spain, although this does not seem to be confirmed by the participants in their recollections. After the war the Pollards lived at Midhurst, hence Mrs Pollard's eventual residence in the nursing home.

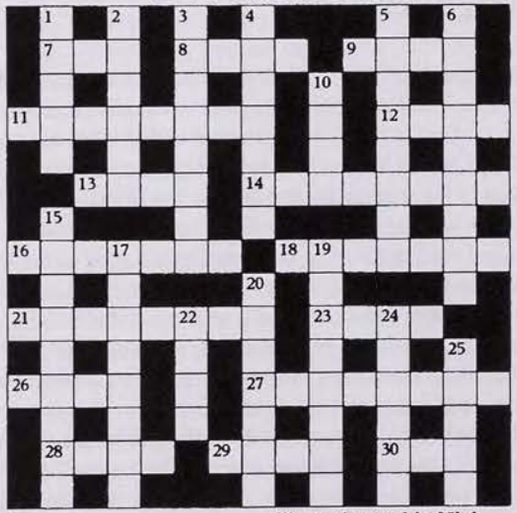
Thinking of Franco, Hermione recalls too the Sehmer family from Northchapel. As with many of foreign, particularly German extraction, they had suffered quite false accusations of spying during the 1914–1918 war. On the outbreak of hostilities in 1939, Mr Sehmer

[1] PSM 118 page 32

enlisted in the British forces but it would appear that he fell into the hands of the Spanish authorities and died in one of Franco's prisons.

P.

Deborah's Petworth Crossword



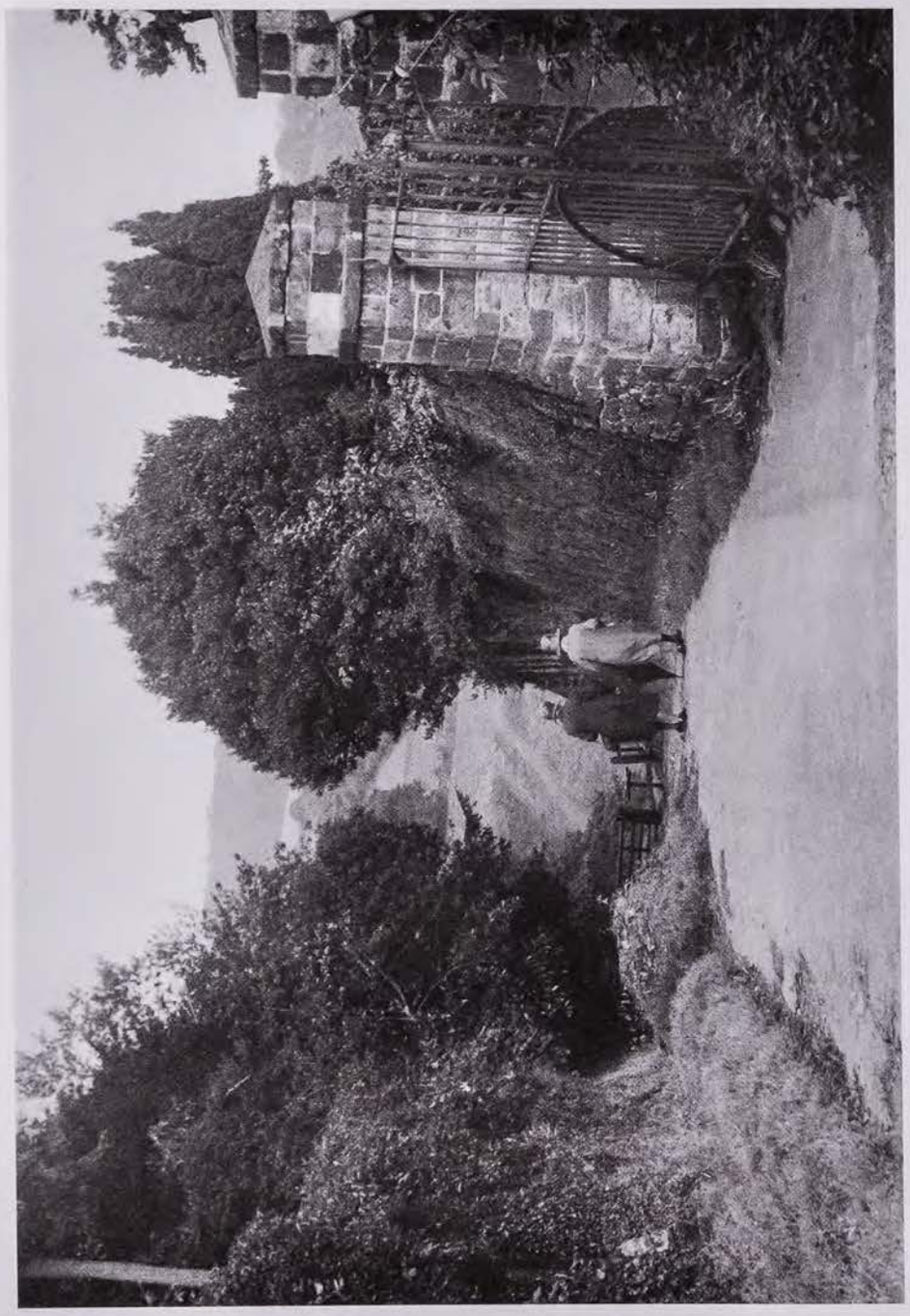
Across

7 An enclosure for hens (3)
8 C19th Petworth broadsheet edited by Thomas Seward (4)
9 Bill of fare (4)
11 Illegal dealer, who might have clandestinely used Hungerds Lane (8)
12 Backstitch from east to give a sheepish answer (4)
13 Shepherd and Turpin's gun! (4)
14 Park Road chapel which has something in common with Mr. Scrooge (8)
16 & 18 Oriental sounding library located in High Street in early C20th (7,7)
21 Temporary home for Grinling Gibbons whilst working at Petworth House (3,5)
23 Due about now – don't forget! (4)
26 Underground entrance (4)
27 Main route to Coultershaw before Station Road was built (4,4)
28 Bartons Lane clothmakers did this when making the local "Kersey" material (4)
29 You'll find her in 6 dn. (4)
30 & 10 dn Petworth Friendly Society (3,4)

Down

1 He might have had a bed for the night at the workhouse (5)
2 Noble sounding Petworth family who owned a grocers shop in New Street (6)
3 C18th house in Pound Street, until recently local council ofiices (8)
4 & 20 "Proud Duke" who is said to have travelled through Petworth in an ornate sedan chair (7,7)
5 Males at heart of a strong belief – discover a building! (8)
6 Native American fruit bearing shrub, naturalised in this area (9)
10 see 30 ac
15 Shown deep area of Petworth? (5,4)
17 Pessimistic feeling in Mr. Garland's studio?! (8)
19 Save slob – pardons (8)
20 see 4 dn
22 Once commonly used draught animals (4)
24 Poet who described himself as "A boy that sings on Duncton Hill" (6)
25 Could Denis be sneering? (5)

George Garland in the 1970s pictured with "Parker" the cat.
See "An alternative to floristry."



"Turn left and confront the narrow view of the Gog ..." See "See man's ... taking us round the town." The Bartons. August 21st 1931. Photograph by George Garland.

Solution

Across

1 Canal Cruise, 8 Radio, 9 Nigel, 12 Sere, 13 Barn Owl, 14 Iona, 15 User, 16 Warbler, 17 Cull, 21 Unapt, 22 Delve, 23 Thirty Years

Down

2 Addle, 3 Ado, 4 Urge, 5 Salve, 6 Crop Circles, 7 River Rother, 10 Aurora, 11 Follow, 12 Slur, 13 Bawl, 18 Laugh, 19 Tyler, 20 Fair, 22 Doe

---

Petworth thoughts

How do you see Petworth if you live outside the town? Come to that, how do you see Petworth if you actually live there? Nothing but antique shops? Or cowering away behind those high walls? Such judgements have always come easily - perhaps a shade too easily. "This barbarous and outlandish spot" wrote one visitor two hundred years ago. A hundred years on and E.V. Lucas would find the spell cast by Lord Leconfield somewhat oppressive. "Present in the very air of the streets as is the presage of a thunderstorm." Some have thought it never stops raining at Petworth, the troops billeted here in 1914 had renamed it "Wetworth" by the time they left in the early spring of 1915. A visitor in 1936 found it rained whenever he came. He was not deterred: he felt that the rain gave Petworth its special character. "Tread lightly here. The very air is heavy with memories." When I've been away people have said, "Petworth? Just that wall and Mr. Streeter." Well, Fred Streeter's been a long time gone now but the wall remains.

And now. "It's full of antique shops." Well, it is at present, but nothing's permanent except for Petworth itself and, you may think, the wall. Can we however, already in 2005, detect a slight change? Antique shops to boutique style shops? Too early to tell. One thing's pretty certain, however, the old family shops will not come back, the occasional newspaper letter column lament notwithstanding.

Change and permanence. Some things remain. A certain spiritual obstinacy, or the medieval field system the old peasants ridged and terraced. Look at it when the shadows lengthen. The old allotment ground to the south is largely gone, the orchards with their spindly lichen-covered trees. And the church spire taken down in 1947. Time may dull the pain of the school bombing in 1942 but it's still there beneath the surface. Look in the newly refurbished Leconfield Hall and see the Canadian Maple Leaf flag, once flown from Parliament Buildings in Ottawa. It's there to commemorate a shared sorrow. The Toronto Scottish Regiment were among the first on the scene that Michaelmas day.

Some survivals are fragile: the Ebenezer Chapel, still functional, tucked in on the bend facing the high wall of the old stables. Sometimes Petworth offers a delicate balance of old and new. The Petworth Cottage Museum recreates a worker's cottage in 1910. But winters

seem milder now, and you can't replicate the bitter cold. "Hard weather put men out," an old man once told me, "And the winter of '29 was hard." The lake in Petworth Park was frozen solid. Were men still cutting the ice in great blocks and transporting it to the great ice house in the yard? Can anyone remember the rhododendrons on the lake's south side not being there - or the wisteria on the solicitors' in the Market Square? Actually I've seen a photograph of the building without the wisteria but it's a very old one.

Petworth changes and will change. The estate bells no longer summon men to work, nor do the men line up to be paid by heads of department like Mr. Wilcox or Mr. Allison. Feudal? If you must. Reserved I would say. Petworth doesn't throw itself at you, but persevere and you'll find a depth you won't easily find elsewhere.

P.

[Originally written for the Tandem Magazine where this article appeared in slightly altered form.]

'How She With Her Flattering Tongue Did Deceive'

The following broadside is part of the Samuel Pepys collection of ballads housed in the Magdalene College Library, Cambridge. Although impossible to say how old the ballad is we do know that this version was published between 1690 and 1705 the period when the printer J. Blare was operating from London Bridge. Unfortunately for us the original writer chose for his principle characters two of the most common surnames in Sussex making it now almost impossible to identify them, assuming of course that they are not fictitious. Ned Slakes "that son of a whore" is equally difficult to trace and may well be a cleverly disguised alias. And so while the characters of the ballad may remain unknown there can be no doubt that the sentiments of the song will be instantly recognisable to any modern day beau rebuffed for another.

Miles Costello

The last Dying Words of
Robert Boxall, of Petworth,
To His
False-hearted Lover, Margaret Mills

To the tune of *Farewell My Dear Johnny* &c. Licensed according to Order

Farewell my dear Peggy whom I love so,
Your absence to me has created my woe,
Because I believed your flattering tongue,
Which deceitfully left me in sorrow undone;

But I will forgive you with all my whole Heart,
Yet even be the Minute and Time we did part,
Of all Women living, you are false as God's true,
And so, my dear Peggy, I bid you adieu;

For since I do find you both false and unkind,
I'll set it as light as the maddening Mind;
My means, it seems, was too slender, therefore
You married Ned Slakes, that son of a Whore.

God send you more means, and I better Grace,
I hope to prepare for a better place.
Where flattering Lovers can never molest
My happiness, being forever at rest.

Remember, dear Peggy, there is a day to come,
On which you must answer for all you have done,
In making such large Protestations to me;
Oh! pardon, good Lord, for I can't pardon thee.

Oh! pity Peggy her covetous Mind,
Which was the first cause of her proving unkind;
Her promise she broke for a hump-bak'd Mate,
I wish that she does not repent it too late.

If Peggy so true unto me had been,
Then all these Sorrows I never had seen;
But I must complain of her being unjust,
For where is the Maid that a Man now can trust?

I strive to forget it as well as I can;
Yet, nevertheless, when I think of the Woman,
How she with her flattering Tongue did deceive
My innocent Heart, now in sorrow I grieve.

As I do Work, there Weeping I sit,
And find that I cannot my Peggy forget;
That love which is rooted and lock'd in my heart,
'Twas a pleasure to meet, but a sorrow to part.

Could I but be freed from the pleasures of Love,
I solemnly swear, by the Powers above,
This firm resolution I'll readily make,
Ne'er to believe a young Maid for her sake.

But Peggy may grow wealthy and flourish a while,
So long as kind fortune is pleased to smile;
But if I should die for you, now after all,
You then may be forced to think of my fall.

Be careful young Men, what ever you do,
Lest flattering Maidens, they ruinate you;
By woeful experience, alas! I may say,
She studied my innocent Heart to betray.

London: Printed for J. Blare, on London-bridge.

Grove House in the 1920s

Sue Osborn writes from
Cedar Flat, Spetchley Park, Spetchley, Worcester WR5 1RS. 01905 - 345323

Dear Peter,

I am really interested in finding out more information about Grove House and am hoping the following information from my aunt will start the process. Perhaps people reading the Magazine will remember my grandparents and their daughters.

My grandparents William and Constance Pardoe lived at Grove House in 1922, possibly before. They had three daughters, Daphne, Beryl and Pamela (my mother). Beryl born in 1922 and my mother 1924 were both born at Grove House.

My aunt Beryl recalls the following – The house had a large kitchen and a big walled garden where they grew an abundance of 'strawberries'. A friend of my grandmother, a teacher, who was interested in the house thought there was a priests 'hide out'! upstairs. The annex – presumably Grove Cottage was rented to a writer Christine Chandler.

A Mrs Whiting did the housekeeping and lived in a cottage on the other side of the road. Her husband, a small stocky man, was a woodman on the Petworth Estate. They had two daughters Joan and Angela both a little older than my aunts, who were allowed to take Daphne and Beryl for walks on the Downs where they had a tiny mug hidden in undergrowth by a Spring – the water, my aunt mentions, was lovely and cool on a hot summers day.

On the way to the Downs they passed pig styes and an orchard.

Mrs Whiting's cottage was terraced and small with a communal courtyard at the back. My aunts would stay with the Whitings when my grandparents went to London.

Aunty Beryl recalls being told off by Mr Whiting for eating green apples from the orchard which made her ill.

My aunt remembers the sweet shop – possibly the post office where you went down a step to the shop floor and also the dressmaker my grandmother visited who lived in a cottage just off the Square. She thinks it is more than likely that the mid-wives Read and Allen brought my mother and my aunt into the world.

Aunt Daphne Pardoe standing outside Grove House.

I enclose a copy of a photograph of my aunt Daphne standing outside Grove House. My aunt doesn't recall any more information about Grove House, other than they rented it. They did a house swap with a family living in London who wanted to live in the country. My aunt can't recall the family name but I imagine they moved about 1926. [Can anyone expand on this account? S.O.]

The George Inn

On the site of George House at the junction of North Street and East Street.

Once incorrectly supposed to be situated in the Market Square this ancient property has in fact stood almost opposite the Church for over four hundred years and together with the Angel Inn formerly belonged to the long forgotten Rectory Manor. Regrettably many of the records of the manor have been lost and it is with some difficulty that we are now able to piece together a rather vague history of the old inn.

We are able to say with confidence that the inn was in existence in 1600 for it was in that year that the celebrated balladeer Thomas Deloney is thought to have died. Author of a novel entitled *The Gentle Craft* which he had written as a tribute to shoemakers, Deloney relates in chapter six the account of a journeyman cobbler named Tom Drum leaving Petworth to seek his fortune in London. Sadly our writer makes only a brief reference to Petworth and then simply to mention the 'sign of the Crown' and 'the hostess of the George' to whom Tom Drum owes ten groats. Minor references they may be but of great importance in establishing an early date for both inns. Incidentally there is no evidence to suggest that Deloney, a silk-weaver by trade, ever visited Petworth.

Seventeenth century references to the inn are sporadic and we must glean what very little information is available. A Rectory Manor court roll of 1613 has an entry recording the death of one John Cooke who held a house called the George.[i] An indenture of 1625 recounts an agreement between the 9th Earl of Northumberland and the townspeople of Petworth concerning the upkeep of the water supply from Hungers Lane to the town and refers to conduits at the Church stile, the Market Place and against a common inn called "ye George".[ii]

An inventory of John Carpenter dated November 1672, while quite comprehensive, lists little of the paraphernalia one would expect to be associated with an inn. In fact were it not for the presence of a barber's shop and several named bedrooms it would prove difficult to substantiate. The chambers were the Anchor, Cross Keys, Half Moon, Fleur De Luce, Bull and Crown. By naming the rooms it would suggest that their decoration would reflect their names and it is likely that they were quite extravagantly painted. Each bedroom was adequately furnished; the Bull chamber for example contained a bed with pillow, curtain and valance, a table, a cupboard, a marble dressing stone, and a great trunk, by no means sparingly furnished for the period. In the great cellar were sixteen kilderkins of beer and ale.

Just two years later in 1674 an inventory of the goods and chattels of Geoffrey Goodier is made and once again several of the bedrooms are named, we have the Flower De Luce, Half Moon, Crown, Anchor and Dolphin. Either this new inventory contains less detail or perhaps the standards in the inn have declined for certainly the chambers are not as well furnished as just two years earlier. Kenyon in his essay on the inventories suggests that the George should be capable of taking in 12 guests, and with the other three principle inns a total of 50 beds should be available at Petworth.[iii] To enforce this theory that the inn seriously declines in the two short years between the accounts Kenyon demonstrates that the inventory value of the George in 1672 under Carpenter was £190 yet in 1674 it has fallen dramatically to just £69.

After 1672 it is only possible to trace the history of the inn through the various tax assessments and minor references to the property in indentures and mortgages. In 1683 a rate is made in which 'Mr Pennington for the George' is amerced the sum of 5d.[iv] While the reference to Pennington is slight he clearly established his tenure of The George for almost a century later the property is described in an indenture as 'Formerly called the George inn, theretofore in the occupation of William Pennington but since divided into several tenements and sometime in the occupation of John Mitchell'.[v] Jane Wind is assessed for land tax on the property in 1753 and by 1760 it is in the hands of her husband John Mitchell who retains ownership of it as far as the land tax records tell us until at least 1791. Certainly the inn ceased operating sometime between 1683 and 1753 but exactly when is not known.

Earlier researches have generally agreed that the old building having reached the end of its useful life was demolished around the turn of the nineteenth century and the present George House constructed on the site. However a short visit to the house would soon dispel that myth for much of the old building survives despite suffering from the effects of a serious fire around the time that it was thought to have been demolished. Clearly a new façade and extensive reconstruction of the front of the house took place though large portions of the original building have survived intact. A much older two-storey building projecting at right angles from the Georgian façade contains a bedroom with a well-preserved and very decorative wall painting of a large star adorning one wall, clear evidence if it were needed of the survival of a painted chamber. The cellars are also survivors of the old inn.

It is now not possible to imagine how the old inn may have appeared before the fire and the subsequent extensive rebuilding. Was it a coaching inn? Did it have a large yard like the later Swan and Half Moon? The answer is probably no on both counts. We certainly know that it was once an important inn though I suspect that by the time that Tom Drum left Petworth at the end of the sixteenth century that it was probably past is zenith and would gradually decline over the following century and finally shut down altogether perhaps a hundred years before the disastrous fire. With the closure of the nearby Crown Inn the centre of commercial power had slipped south away from the area around the church and the arrival of the great Market Place coaching inns would herald the demise of the older Petworth establishments.

Owners of Occupiers of The George Inn up to 1683
John Carpenter 1672
Nicholas Mason 1673
Geoffrey Goodier 1674
Mr Pennington 1683

Miles Costello

---

i Beck. Some Petworth Inns and Alehouses in *Sussex Archaeological Collections* 99
ii Petworth Society Magazine 19, p.15
iii G.H. Kenyon. Petworth Town and Trades 1610-1760. *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 96, 98, 99
iv Arnold. *The History and Antiquities of Petworth*
v PHA O.G. 6/B

'Some man's ..... taking us round the town.' Confessions of an occasional guide

Petworth residents may sometimes view their town with a quizzical eye, but visitors tend to let their imagination wander. Petworth is the quintessential English country town and if it seems sometimes a little aloof, that is part of the magic - its prerogative if you like. Over the years I've taken numerous groups round the town and, in so doing, evolved both a set route and a kind of commentary on that route. The highest number I've had is about a hundred (definitely not recommended) the least, perhaps ten or a dozen. The hundred was for a very early Petworth Festival. I arrived in Market Square to find a milling throng. "Is there something on?" I asked. "Some man's supposed to be taking us round the town," was the reply. I did.

Petworth can be reticent. Scratch the surface and you'll find depth - but you have to know where to scratch. I've known people who have come to Petworth every week for twenty years or more and who were transported by a first view of the Shimmings Valley. "We never realised it was there." Perhaps in writing these notes I am betraying my own trade secrets. I doubt it. Any guide with any sense will plan his or her own route and provide their own commentary. And after all I do find a mention in Pieter Boogaart's very successful anthem to the A272.[1] "Peter Jerrome ..... catch him if you can." Obviously Mr. Boogaart didn't find me that elusive.

Start in the car park with three short extracts to give a context. First a provocative early nineteenth century lamentation on Petworth and its sprawling decrepit buildings and uncouth inhabitants - "this barbarous and outlandish place." Visitors tend to spring to the town's defence: surely it can never have been as awful as that. Then E.V. Lucas, writing in 1904 of the heyday of the great house and Petworth as Pompeii with Vesuvius emitting glory from above. Lastly a bus-borne Sussex journalist visiting in 1936. A rainy day. "Tread lightly here - the very air is heavy with memories."

Through the arcade, once Dawtrey's granary, to stop outside the HSBC - subconsciously always the Midland Bank. Golden Square is a relatively new name, an upgrading of the old "Beast Market." In similar vein the Causey became Lombard Street, thus consigning to history memories of the old open sewer with the causeway in the middle. Following a similar line of thought, the façade opposite reflects the merchants' preference for solid brick rather than timber framing. Tastes change. B.C. on an inset panel. An indication of age? "What's he saying? Pętworth's very doubtfully Roman isn't it? Has he completely lost it?" I hasten to point out that B.C. stands for Benjamin Challen, grocer, entrepreneur and supporter of the Independents whose Providence chapel once seated two hundred. The Independents were a real force two hundred years ago. Now their mantle has fallen on the U.R.C. congregation. Diagonally across is York and Lancaster House, now divided, shop premises with some exquisitely panelled rooms above. Tradition has it as once an inn. Perhaps.

---

[1] *A272. An ode to a road* (2000) page 91

Up past Avenings to filter along the narrow pavement on the Hall's east side and hemmed in by the parked cars. Most encroach. A few weeds grow out of the wall, Cambridge blue lobelias are self-seeded no doubt from the hanging baskets. Into the Hall; so many pass in cars and hardly give it a thought. For so many Petworth people, too, it's effectively taboo. It shouldn't be. It's impressive now, up and down. Upstairs can be a revelation - the spacious feel, the retractable seating, downstairs, the two rooms and the Maple Leaf flag that flew once from Parliament Buildings in Ottawa. It reflects Petworth's links with the Toronto Scottish Regiment and a shared grief.

We cross the Square deprecating the ever-turning traffic. Surely it was easier when the Cut was open. A stop in the north-east corner to survey the Square. To think of Henry VIII's rent roll from the 1540s. The physical aspect will be quite different but the old names do correspond to modern premises - Mewes, Belchambers, Teelings and the rest. Is the Square the ancestral home of Petworth fair? Or was the fair relegated to the Fair Field? The conundrum remains. Why is William III on the Leconfield Hall plinth? Well, he did come here briefly in 1704. But why him? Perhaps as Ursula Wyndham once sensibly pointed out, they were looking for something to put on the plinth when the Hall was rebuilt in 1793 and William happened to be available. The rest, as they say, is history.

Up Lombard Street. To lament the loss of the steeple view. Nearly sixty years on the beheading still throbs for some. Brief homage to Walter Kevis' north light studio with its wooden cladding and a reminder of Petworth's peerless photographic tradition. The Causey was Petworth's Jacob's ladder leading from earth (the Market Square) to heaven (St. Mary's) but the old open sewer would have put the metaphor under strain. No need to look into the church, visitors can do that themselves.

Along Church Street to essay the crossing perilous. In fact the North Street traffic will usually stop to allow a party to cross. We gather to look across to Barry's obelisk, a town thank you to the Third Earl of Egremont for supplying the town with gas. Why is it painted light blue?. I haven't the faintest idea. Just above is the famous vandalism notice: Petworth, like most other places I expect, has always boasted a few home-bred hooligans.

Down Bartons Lane to turn sharp left and confront the narrow view of the Gog, with a quick look into the Bartons cemetery. Often enough the grass is too wet to do more. Round the Hills and the full view of the Shimmings Valley. The old road to London and the Earl of Northumberland and his retainers appearing out of an Elizabethan mist. Glad no doubt to be in sight of home at last. Shimmings away in a more modern Elizabethan mist - a shim or will of the wisp? A nice thought, but no more. In fact some medieval Simmonds once lived here. On to note the rectangle of the Upton family tennis court still discernible in the grass and then the sloping hay field adjoining the road. "Mrs Upton's haying" so urgent once is hardly an echo now. And, of course, there's the ridged medieval field system. Take your time, get the light right, and see it come alive.

But you can't take your time. There's more to see. The Catholic Church, so extravagant-seeming when it was built a century and more ago, the view across to Egremont Row. We cross Angel Street, note the coach turning space opposite Greys. Make our way through Cherry Orchard and into a leafy Petworth that the casual visitor almost never sees.

By Shimmings. Mrs Upton's hay-making about 1900.

Up past Percy Terrace with those huge chimney stacks to stop at the wall by the old Magistrates' car park. The cell bricks of the old gaol have been reused here. Dates and names etched into the brick reflect solitary confinement in the 1820s. Scratch the surface .... to think of William Mance and the old gaol's grim regime - treadwheel, hard labour and "hasty pudding." Small wonder recidivism was rare in West Sussex.

Just time for a quick look at the Museum, hoping visitors will want to return and bring others with them. They often do. It will be now a good hour and a half since we set off. Petworth may still seem aloof, but with luck the visitors will now feel confident enough to think that aloofness only skin deep.

P.

The Horsham Road Cemetery
A Brief Account of its Establishment & Current State

In recent years there has gradually developed a sense of unease concerning both the condition and the future of the small chapel that stands in the Horsham Road cemetery. Now almost derelict, the building would require a good deal of money spending on it to return it to its former condition and as each winter passes so it deteriorates further. Such is the state of the surrounding cemetery and the extent of the undergrowth that it is now impossible to gain entrance to the chapel and it can only be supposed that the inside is in a similar condition to the exterior.

It would seem that ownership of the chapel has in the past been somewhat ambiguous with neither the parish council nor the church having any great enthusiasm for claiming responsibility for its upkeep. However quite recently it has been suggested that the property may be of some value, perhaps for development, and now the question of ownership is being taken more seriously and both the parish and the church are taking advice on the matter.

With this renewed interest in the chapel it would seem a suitable opportunity to take a brief glance at what little is known of the history of the cemetery, and to consider the complex legal framework by which such properties were created and administered.

We know of course that the Horsham Road cemetery is the direct descendant of the old parish burial ground in Bartons Lane; this in turn was the successor of the church graveyard, which by the beginning of the nineteenth century was seriously overcrowded and considered a danger to public health. Consecrated in 1805 the former Bartons glebe would ease the problem of burial space for little more than half a century, for by 1857 the graveyard was full and the great and good of the parish vestry would once again have to discuss the thorny issue of providing a new cemetery for the parish.

One would think that the provision of a few acres of land on the edge of the town would present no real problem to the vestry. However, unlike fifty years earlier there was now in place legislation regarding exactly where you could establish a cemetery, certainly not nearer than 100 yards from any dwelling house, unless written permission was given by the owner and any tenant. The law required that the condition of the soil be an important consideration when determining the site for a new cemetery. The thick clay of the Sussex Weald was renowned for its water retentive properties and so extensive drainage systems would have to be put in place in order to prevent graves becoming waterlogged and the horrors of seepage from the decaying bodies contaminating watercourses. The clay also acted as an airtight seal to graves and hindered decomposition, so preventing or at least delaying the reusing of burial plots. All in all the choice of a location for a new burial ground was a matter not to be taken lightly.

A vestry was held in May 1857 to hear the report of a committee formed to consider the requirements of a new burial ground. The working group had been instructed to consider two possible locations, the first at Lowheath on the road to Fittleworth and the second a parcel of glebe land by the Horsham Road. The committee would report upon the advantages and disadvantages of each location, taking into account public opinion, costs, and legal requirements. Beginning with the Lowheath site it was pointed out that the principle advantage was that Lord Leconfield would give the land to the parish at no charge, a not inconsiderable factor in its favour, the main shortcoming being the significant distance from the town, some one and a half miles from the parish church. The report added that a burial ground at this location would be of great disadvantage to the poor of the parish who would find it difficult in obtaining bearers prepared to carry the corpse such a distance, and even where the cost of a carriage or bier could be met by the bereaved then the problem in wintertime of negotiating the difficult hill to Lowheath could not be overcome. The clergy were equally unhappy with the Lowheath proposal as they felt that the distance involved, along with the custom among the labouring classes of burying their dead on Sundays, would seriously restrict their work on what was their busiest day of the week. It was also reported that if this location were adopted then the construction of a cemetery chapel would be essential for it was generally felt that the remains of the dead should be carried through a church before interment, and with the parish church so distant this could not always be convenient. Finally the close proximity of a beerhouse (the present Welldiggers Arms) to the proposed cemetery was considered to be of the utmost unsuitability. All in all the advantages of a free piece of ground were seriously outweighed by the drawbacks.

The report went on to consider the second option that was a parcel of glebe land known as Petworth Mead in the Horsham Road, situated some 590 yards from the parish church. This was generally considered to be the favourite among the parishioners. The land belonged to the Rector and would come at a price and the soil was heavy clay and would require deep drainage. However it was considered that any costs would be offset by the saving on the construction of a cemetery chapel which it was considered would not be required if this location were adopted. Another important benefit to this second option was that a Burial Board would not need to be formed – a considerable saving in itself – if a chapel were not built. Indeed the cemetery could be purchased through a generous loan of £560 given by the curate Reverend Charles Klanert for the purpose. The Reverend Thomas Sockett would receive £250 for the two and a half acres of glebe, and the expense of draining, enclosing the land with a low wall and the erection of a gate would amount to a further £268 which with the charge of £48 for consecration expenses would effectively account for the sum offered by Klanert. The vestry accepted the loan and it was agreed that the curate would receive 5% interest per annum over 20 years.

The loan would prove to be an essential factor in the creation of the cemetery. For with the funding from Klanert the vestry had avoided having to raise a rate to purchase and develop the land, and so avoided the need for a Burial Board. Indeed the land was acquired under the *Church Building Act* (1819) rather than the *Burial Act*. This meant that the control of the cemetery would remain in the hands of the rector and his churchwardens rather than in a semi-autonomous Burial Board.

The vestry having adopted the recommendations of the committee the necessary work

was carried out to secure the boundaries of the land and with extensive preparation of the ground including setting out of footpaths and the installation of numbered grave markers the cemetery was duly opened.

The vestry had based much of their decision on adopting the Horsham Road location upon the savings made through avoiding the need of a cemetery chapel, and so it is with some surprise that just six years later in 1863 a very brief statement in the minute book announces that a vestry will beheld to consider a proposal to build a cemetery chapel with money given to the Rector by Lord Leconfield for that purpose. No debate is recorded and the assembled vestry votes unanimously to thank Lord Leconfield for his generosity and the matter is not mentioned again in future minutes. By the end of that year the chapel has been built and a plaque put in place to record his Lordship's generosity.

Having built the chapel the ownership of the building may have been uncertain from the very beginning. After all Lord Leconfield had given the money to the Rector not to the parish, so it could be assumed that the building would have remained in the ownership of the succeeding Rectors, however the chapel was built on land purchased by the parish to be used as a cemetery and must surely then have belonged to the parish. It does seem likely that this latter theory is correct and the only question really is who are the rightful successors to the church vestry, the Parochial Church Council or the Parish Council?

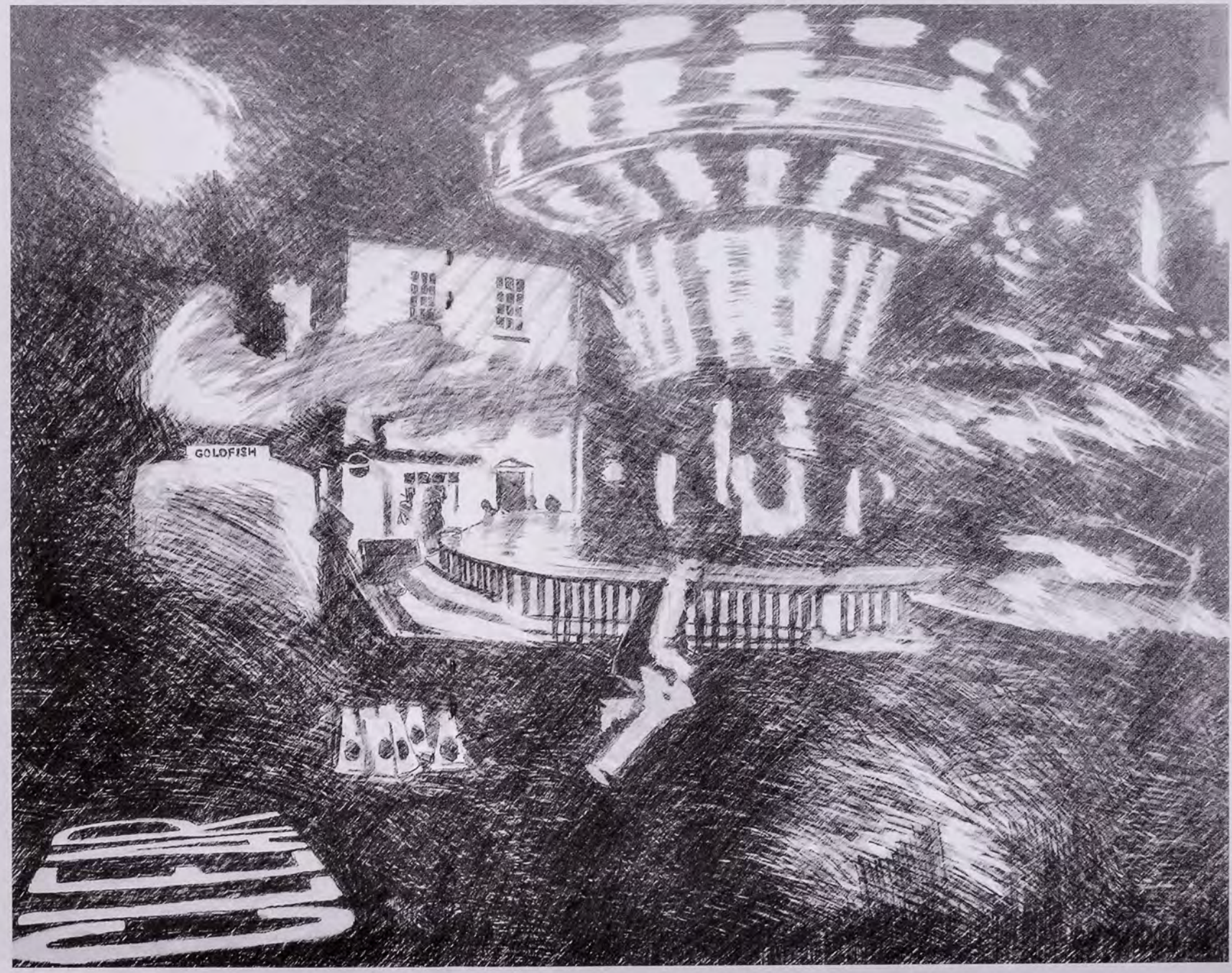
Once ownership of the chapel has been established then the legality of any development becomes an important issue. What is evident is that under the *Land Clauses Consolidation Act* (1845) the trustees of a closed cemetery can let, lease or sell any portions thereof that have not received interments. Clearly the chapel has not been used for burials and so would fall within the remit of this act. It would appear that the act simply requires that the ownership of the cemetery be passed to a board of trustees who then have responsibility for it and who can dispose of the unused portions and the proceeds used for the maintenance of the remaining portion.

An alternative and probably simpler method of disposing of the chapel would be for the leasing of it under *An Act to Amend the Laws Concerning the Burial of the Dead in England* 18 & 19 Victoria. (14th August 1855). The act allows for a burial board with the sanction of a secretary of state to lease any portion of the burial ground that has not been used for interments. This amendment also seems to enable the parish to avoid having to transfer ownership of the cemetery to trustees; it may however require the establishment of a burial board.

The success of any of the above suggestions depends of course upon the presumption that the parish council is the legitimate successor to the parishioner's churchwarden and overseers of the parish.

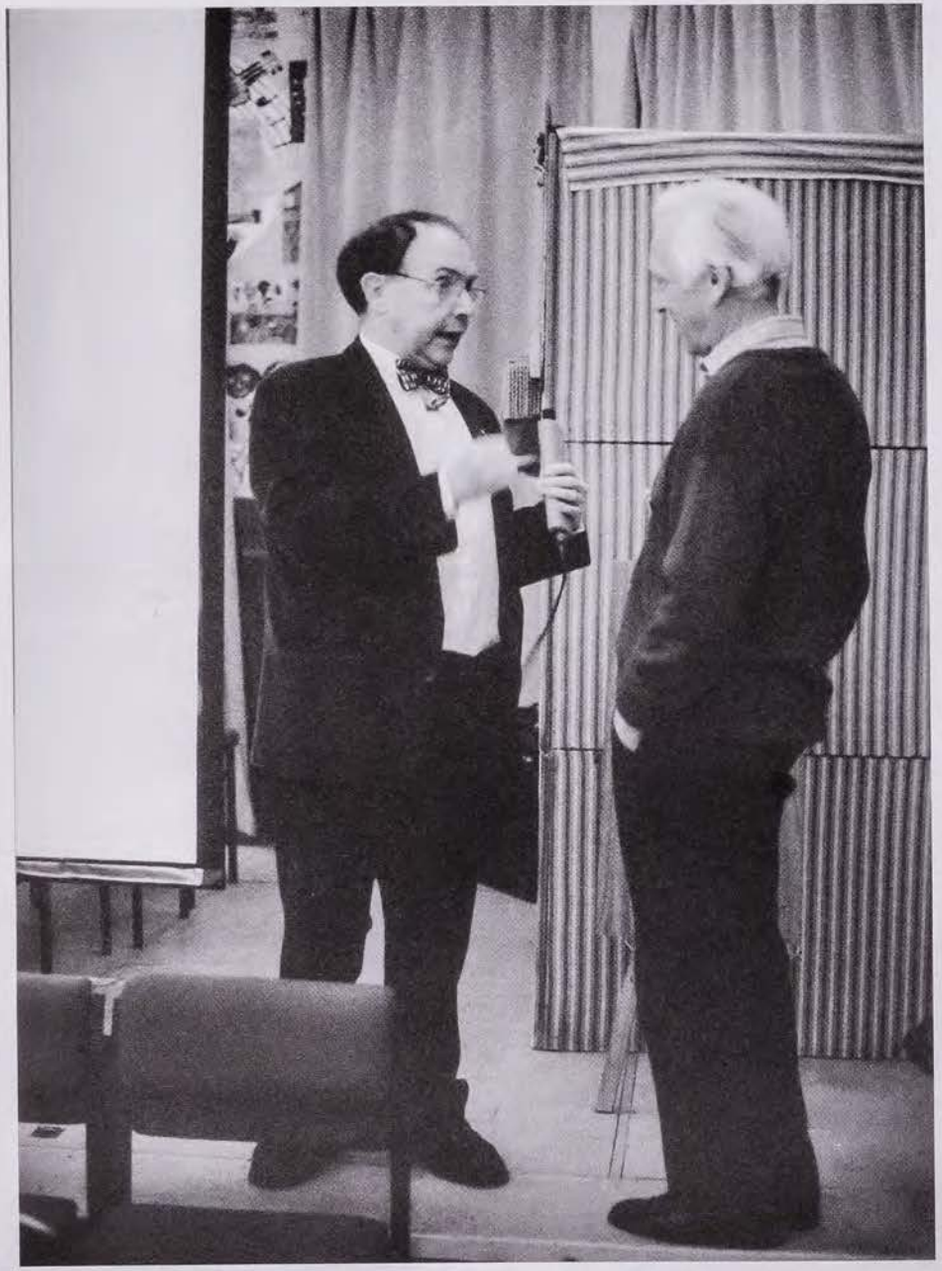
Once the issue of the chapel has been concluded it should then be possible to consider the matter of the cemetery as a whole. If it should be necessary to pass ownership of the property to trustees or a burial board, or if responsibility remains with the parish then certain duties should be carried out, which judging by the state of the cemetery have not been. The aforementioned act of August 1855 is quite unequivocal on who had the duty to maintain the cemetery.

Punch and Judy was an innovation at Petworth Fair. Photograph by Keith Sandall.



Jonathan Newdick's reading of Petworth Fair.

This is a monoprint from a drawing made at the 1992 fair and keen-eyed readers will see that it is two views combined into one. We are looking through the chair-o-planes north from outside the Star and also south towards Barrington's estate agents. It is a comment on the restlessness of the event and a reflection on the constant movement from one attraction to another.



Our vice-chairman and the puppet-master in earnest conversation at Petworth Fair. Photograph by Keith Sandall.

In every case in which any order in council has been or shall hereafter be issued for the discontinuance of burials in any churchyard or burial ground, the burial board or churchwardens, as the case may be, shall maintain such churchyard or burial ground of any parish in good order, and also do the necessary repair of the walls and other fences thereof.

Incidentally it may be worth pointing out that the parish cannot interfere with the grave stones or tombs in any way unless that they be in such a condition that the ground cannot otherwise be put in decent order. This order may be interpreted to imply that no authority can lay down or remove gravestones simply to make them safe without at the same time maintaining the surrounding ground.

Whatever the outcome of the legal process to establish ownership of the chapel it is hoped that this opportunity to restore the cemetery, which incidentally has received burials as recently as 1988, will not be wasted.

Miles Costello

Philosophy at the Smithy

There is a picturesque smithy down the Sussex lane where I live, and there on a hot summer's afternoon one can take one's ease on a seat of old tree trunk, under the cool protecting branches of the large chestnut tree which, at a certain time of the day, casts a big shadow over the smithy door. And sitting there one can hear words of wisdom flowing from the lips of the shrewd Sussex men who are my neighbours in the place.

In winter time one can join the company around the fire inside, for William, the smith, is partial to the company of his fellow men, whether he is working or not; and he is none the worse a workman for it all.

Standing by the smithy fire a day or so ago, and mighty glad to be sheltered from the biting no' easter that was raking the hedges outside, I had William as my sole companion, and conversation between us ensued much as follows:

Myself: 'Did you see that at NONAME bench the other day a man was fined five pounds and two guineas costs for selling a twopenny packet of cigarettes after 8.0'c ?'

William: 'Yes! and I thought the punishment was out of all reason to the gravity of the offence'.

Myself: But this man had transgressed in a similar way before, it seems'.

William: 'Yes! so it said in the paper. But the customer could have bought the cigarettes from a machine outside the shop if he'd thought to do so; and after all the shop was still open for the sale of other things'.

Myself: But William, we have a government, and they make these laws and if people are not going to keep them afterwards this same government must surely have been wasting its time ?'

William: 'Very likely they do waste their time, pretty often'.

Myself: 'But surely a man like you, who is the prototype of Longfellow's famous hero,

do not rebel at the idea of law and order, and justice ?'

William: 'Now you raise a point, when you mention the word justice. Do many of us really understand the meaning of the word ? A man has been given an unreasonably long term of imprisonment for stealing food when he has been hungry, yet some of these so-called gentlefolk can go to an honest tradesman and BUY goods from him, knowing full well that they have not the slightest intention of paying for them -- and how does your law and justice help you if you have been so tricked, for tricked you certainly have been ?'

Myself: Why! but my dear William, there is the County Court. If someone has bought something from you and will not pay for it you take out a County Court summons against them, and they have to pay'.

William: 'Have you ever taken out such a County Court summons against anybody, Master Jimmie?'

Myself: 'Well, no'.

William: Well, see, I have; and a rare job it was, too.

Note: This Garland article from between the wars reflects a rather less frantic world than ours and also perhaps Garland's own concern over the occasional bad debt!

Telling Tales of Tillington, Sutton, Byworth &c?

Following on from Jeremy Goodwin's "A Tillington Royalist?" (Petworth Society Magazine, No 118, December 2004) it was apparent that an Alan Carr was Clerk of Tillington by the year 1666.

> *"MEMORANDUM that about the ffist day of March Anno Dmd 1666 I Alan Carr of Tillington in the County of Sussex, Clerk, being with Jane James of Chiltington aforesaid widdow (who was sicke in body but of pfct memory) moving her to make her will She answered that her estate was weake, had not wherewith to make a will & might live to spend all that She had but urging her to wch one She intended that She should leave declared her mind in these words. That wch is in Thomas Brooker's hands I give to his children. The rest wch is here I give to this woman & her children (meaning Jane Brewer widdow) Or to this womans children (I doe not pfectly remember wch) And her desire was that Mary Greenfield the poor wretch (as She called her) should have some of her clothes & Twenty shillings in money of her moneys in my hand. In witness whereof ..... sett my hand June 24: 1667 Alan Carr."*

Henry James married a Jane Barnard at West Chiltington in 1616. According to the nuncupative will of Jane James, widow, she had dealings with Thomas Brooker. Thomas Brooker (baptised at Richmond, Surrey in 1623) was in service to the 9th, 10th and 11th Earls of Northumberland, and finally rose to the position of auditor to the Percy heiress, the Duchess of Somerset. Thomas Brooker was a Presbyterian, and after retiring to Tillington he was buried there in 1699.

Aged "about 41", the bachelor Thomas Brooker, of Petworth, married in June 1666, but didn't have any children. His Westminster marriage licence shows that he married a widow, Frances Gibbs, also of Petworth. Frances Gibbs, aged "about 35", didn't have any children but brought with her to the marriage a young Thomas James, the orphaned son of her sister, who was destined to become a Presbyterian Minister.

By March 1685 Thomas James was living in London, staying at a "messuage or tenament" owned by Brooker and situated in the parish of St Anne's, Soho. After living in London, James became a private chaplain in Berkshire. By November 1688, it appears Thomas James resided at William Carr's Berkshire address. William Carr stood as a candidate for the Reading elections in 1688 and was appointed fifth Cursitor Baron of the Exchequer in March 1688/9. The Carrs were related to Philip, Lord Wharton, the well known patron of religious dissent during the 17th century.

As a young man, Thomas James made a number of surprising acquaintances. He knew William Penn, the Quaker, "I could say many things of him from personal knowledge" "He hath been oft at our Table for dinner, & once I dined at his seate in Worminghust [Warminghurst] with 2 Baronets". So Thomas James may have become acquainted with William Penn through his West Sussex connections.

Probably as a result of James' chaplaincy, "some of his accounts of national events were obtained as a result of personal contacts with those involved. Two anecdotes about the Old Pretender were obtained this way from the Montagu family. James was particularly eager to record any details which appeared to point to a conspiracy concerning the Prince of Wales in 1688. 'I my selfe heard the Lady Montague (who was formerly the Countess of Northumberland)' say that she had seen evidence for the Queen having given birth. Concerning another incident involving the young prince, 'Also I remember the Lord Montague (made a Marquiss by K. William) being asked at our table, where I then was, about his knowledge of the matter'." (Dr David Wykes)

Frances Brooker died at Tillington in 1694, but by this time her nephew, Thomas James, was married and established as the Presbyterian Minister at Ashford in Kent. On 11 November 1698 Thomas Brooker of Tillington signed his final will and testament; one of the four witnesses was John Bowen, a steward at Petworth House. Brooker was buried at All Hallows, Tillington, on 5 January 1698/9 and the value of his estate was such that his Executors paid a 10 shillings mortuary fee to the church. Brooker's death was presented at the Petworth Court on the 17th of January and the Prerogative Court of Canterbury probate is dated April 1699. For some undisclosed reason, on "7-12-1699", Brooker's estate was "Seized & Devised conditionally" by the three Executors: George Thornton, gent, John Aylwin, gent, and John Bromfield, stonecutter.

According to Brooker's will, Thomas James, Minister of the Gospel, was given £250, all Brooker's books and his "Silver Tankard which hath my Lord Vaux his Armes ingraven on it". Thomas James, along with an Abraham Fulshurst, was to share the proceeds from the sale

of Brooker's property in Princes Street, Soho, "to be paid at the discretion" of the Executors. Brooker's great friend Thomas Hallet, the Presbyterian minister at Petworth, was given £50 and a bequest of £4 was made to the meeting-house at nearby Byworth. Susanna, the wife of John Cooke Esq of Petworth, was given "the picture of the Noble Duchess of Somerset". Small sums of money were given to Brooker's named servants and a number of local widows. Larger sums went to Brooker's many "kinsmen".

Brooker's "Coppyhold Estate (being Severall Coppyholds) known by the name of Coxland" was to be offered to the Duke of Somerset for £650 "which is but the consideration" Brooker paid. Brooker wrote "I did alwaies intend after my decease to give [Coxland] to Mr George Thornton upon such easie terms as that it might encourage him to go on cheerfully in serving that Noble family with dilligence and faithfullness". The Thorntons were an important family at Petworth and nearby Sutton. Lord Leconfield tells us they came to the area from Yorkshire. Lancelot was first to arrive; he was responsible for disbursing the expenditure on the younger children of the executed Charles I, while the Earl was acting as their guardian.

In 1660, following the death of the vicar Aquila Cruso, the 10th Earl appointed Lancelot's brother, the Reverend Thomas Thornton (who Calamy[1] called "an after conformer"), to be Rector of Sutton, Sussex. The Reverend Thomas Thornton had three sons: Joshua succeeded his father as rector, Thomas was a tradesman and a financier with a shop and a house in London. The eldest son, George Thornton, became the auditor of the Duke of Somerset's receipts in Sussex, Yorkshire, Northumberland and Cumberland, and was the person, in London, with whom Brooker regularly corresponded (Petworth House Archives 683). From the content of those letters it is obvious George Thornton was Thomas Brooker's confidante and knew much about his personal affairs, as well as those of Brooker's relatives. George Thornton is the first named of Brooker's Executors and, after Brooker's death, George paid £650 for Coxland, as well as the fine of £50 for admission.

The rents and profits from Brooker's freehold estate at Tillington were to be divided equally between Mary Harris, "now the wife of Richard Harris of Bister [Bicester] in the County of Oxford, Joyner" and Francis Russell, "the infant son of Francis Russell late of St Margarets, Westminster". At Sutton, in June 1674, the Rector, Thomas Thornton, performed the marriage, by license, of a Mr Richard Harris to a widow, Mrs Mary Russell. On 26 June 1679 at Sutton Thomas Thornton officiated at the marriage of Francis Russell, of St Margaret's Westminster, to Mary Lander of Tillington. An "infant" Francis Russell, son of Francis and Mary, was baptised at St Margaret's, Westminster, on 7 August 1686. Brooker's dying intention was "that Mary Tribe the Mother of the said Francis Russell" should enjoy the rents of his House in Richmond, Surrey, during her natural life.

Thomas James, the Presbyterian Minister, mentions "Cosin Harris and her Husband" and "Cosin Russell", gender unknown, in his letters to Brooker (Petworth House Archives 683), but Brooker's eldest sister, Joan Russell, predeceased her brother so the Russells were almost certainly Booker's relatives. I haven't researched the Russell branch of Brooker's family but apparently they have their own tales to tell. One story involves "Cousin Russell", a certain William Coles Esq of the Middle Temple, (probably the Mr Coles who was the Duke of Somerset's solicitor in London) and a circa 1696 Chancery Suite. Also, what became of

Brooker's nephew, Charles Russell, who "some years since took on voyage into the Indies"? Brooker's will and his letters to George Thornton include a number of intriguing references to "Mr Coles" and "Cousin Russell".

Thomas Brooker of Tillington also features in a Lodsworth will probated in 1701. Nicholas James, of Lodsworth, "Bodysmaker", made his last will and testament on the 4th of April 1690, eleven years earlier, when he was "prest to serve their Majesties at Sea". This coincides with William and Mary of Orange being proclaimed King and Queen on 13th February 1689. Nicholas James named his beneficiaries as his "loving Grandmother Jane Bettesworth of Lodsworth, widow", his mother Jane Botson[?], his brother Robert James and his nephew William James, son of Robert. "And lastly I make my very good friend Thomas Brooker of Tillington in the County to be Executor in trust of this my last will and testament". The will was witnessed by Ann Smith, Sarah Carter servant to Robert Smith, and Robert Smith himself. Robert James was granted probate in 1701. Robert James and his wife Martha were both buried at Lodsworth.

For more detail, and further information, my book *Thomas James, Minister of the Gospel, "Without Tombstone" (1660-1733/4)* was published in October 2002. An academic's view, *"A Minister's case is different from all other men" Thomas James's early ministry*, written by Dr David Wykes the Director of Dr Williams's Library, was published in The Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society, Volume 7 No 2 July 2003.

Sue Coward

---

[1] A Gordon *Freedom after Ejection* 1917. Thomas Thornton and Thomas Hallet are both listed. The time frame of the listing for Thomas James has been proved to be incorrect.

Fiddlesticks!

Whether he liked it or not, as a newspaper photographer with a crucial sideline in local journalism, George Garland was, from at least the early 1930s, a purveyor of the ephemeral. If his reports (or Mrs. Garland's) are now entombed in newspaper files or recoverable in part from a look at his file books, his glass negatives and surviving prints immortalise, or at least freeze in time, a world that was of its essence transient. Here, for what it is worth, are football teams, local amateur dramatics, fancy dress groups, flower shows, village revels and the rest. If time eventually lends a certain enchantment, it also blurs. Names that once came readily to mind dissolve until, at a distance of sixty or seventy years, one football team, flower show or fancy dress group will become virtually indistinguishable from another and the interest shifts from particular to general. Time takes away the freshness of experience and time can be merciless. What once seemed hilarious will appear to a later age as merely laboured. Pictures of grown men dancing on an amateur stage in gymslips and hob-nail boots do not always wear well.

Such thoughts are occasioned by the loan of a battered envelope of memorabilia - photographs, cuttings and programme kept by the late Gladys Morley. The envelope bears the handwritten legend "all the shows I have played at" but this is clearly an overstatement. Gladys Morley was in considerable demand as an accompanist and would have played far more frequently than the contents of the envelope reflect. As the material was kept for private purposes captions and dates are few.

An only child, Gladys was brought up at the Old Wheatsheaf Inn in North Street where her father, Bob Whitcomb, was landlord. She clearly had a measure of the musical ability of her Pound Street kinsfolk. Gertie Whitcomb (later Mrs. Pulling) was a noted organist while Elsie Whitcomb had a fine voice, as too had some of her brothers. Perhaps because of her pub upbringing Gladys' tastes in music were a little more adventurous than those of the Pound Street family. When she married she would live for some years at Selham and in later years as a widow at Arnops Leith in Angel Street.

Far the oldest survival is a programme for an entertainment by the "Blackbirds", a troupe of local ladies with a musical bent. This was staged at New Year 1918 in aid of the Petworth War Supply Depot. An ambitious programme contains some nineteen pieces performed by such local stalwarts as D. Moyer, D. Boorer, P. Streeter and Elsie and Gertie Whitcomb. Gladys, a few years younger, plays the male role in the concluding sketch. "Mrs. Baxter's Baby." Several group photographs survive showing the Blackbirds troupe with their distinctive striped blouses, ties and white trousers, but Gladys does not appear on them.

By the late 1920s Gladys had her own dance band for local engagements, often working in conjunction with Cecil Knight who also had a small band. In 1931, by now Mrs. Morley, Gladys is helping the newly formed Petworth Players[1] in their first season. Perhaps the new group were initially chary of risking all on a single play, perhaps Variety was what audiences were looking for; at any rate, the programme offers a farce, a gipsy medley, an interlude, a duologue, a song and a "dramatic incident". Gladys appears as a soloist in the medley and as "Mrs. Walker" in the concluding farce.

By the late 1930s, Gladys has taken up the role for which she is best remembered, that of piano accompanist. She plays, for instance, at the IMPS[2] concert in aid of Institute funds in February 1939. The venue, of course, is the old Iron Room in the Market Square. The ensemble is a youthful one and again the accent is on Variety - fifteen songs and sketches.

As the war entered its later stages, Gladys teamed up with the "Fiddlesticks", at one time Jack Elton's concert party, but now including also Teddy Horsman from Plaistow. Elton's seems to have been a comedy act, Horsman's a not too serious magic routine. The make-up of the party was obviously fairly variable and might allow for guest artists like George Garland with his yokel act, Gladys Morley being however the regular accompanist. Jack Elton's concert party were at the third Annual Supper of Littlehampton Home Guard in December 1943 and the fourth a year later. The anagram menu disguises some fairly Spartan fare; the 1943 entrée gives an idea:

[1] They would disband in the early 1950s

[2] Junior Imperial League Petworth Branch

CLOD ONEGUT OR AMPS
HADEMS TESTAPOO
SPORTUS

By the end of the war menus are just a little more adventurous. At the annual dinner of the West Sussex Association of Building Trades Employers there is a choice of roast chicken and bread sauce or roast guinea fowl with game chips. Entertainment is by the Fiddlesticks concert party, Gladys Morley at the piano. On Boxing Day 1946[3] Horsman and Elton are appearing together with the Fiddlesticks concert party as the cabaret at the Clarehaven Hotel, Bognor Regis. Christmas Day had seen a concert[4] at Lodsworth, organised by Gladys herself in aid of the Merchant Navy[5] Comforts Fund, the programme notes that Fiddlesticks "have appeared at over 100 shows in practically every army camp in West Sussex during the last twelve months." A Garland photograph of Fiddlesticks performing in the Iron Room at Petworth even shows the photographer himself, resplendent in a dinner jacket. A newspaper report of a show at Fittleworth reports him, rather more appropriately, as "complete with smock .... and retailing some of his evergreen stories about his rustic mate Eli Enticknap."

By the late 1940s there is no more mention of the Fiddlesticks concert party but by that time Gladys was in great demand as an accompanist. There are programmes for Deanery Revues and for the Tillington Players, the latter all recruited from within the village itself, except for Gladys, who, living at Selham, counted as a foreigner. A newspaper report from 1955 notes that before each performance at the village school "desks, tables and other equipment had to be moved." Three hundred people watched the Players' two Variety performances and they played also in other local villages. It may be that some who read this will remember seeing the Fiddlesticks or even perhaps appeared with them. Certainly there will be those who recall the Tillington Players of the 1950s either as performers or audience.

Perhaps the programmes are more evocative than the photographs or the newspaper reports. Mainly from the 1940s, they evoke Spartan times both for food and entertainment. Television still lay largely in the future and live entertainment was a rare treat. In its casual almost throwaway style this envelope tells us more perhaps than something more formal. The ephemeral can suffer at the hands of time but occasionally it is the only thing that can defy it.

P.

[3] Or, possibly, 1947

[4] The newspaper cutting lacks a year

[5] Mr. Morley had served for some years in the Merchant Navy

FOR YOUR **ENTERTAINMENT**

TEDDY HORSMAN Presents:

"FIDDLESTICKS"

Snappy! Quick-Fire! Melodic!

TEDDY HORSMAN

COMPERE and MAGICAL COMEDIAN.

Violet Geldert	"Wendy"	Betty Percy
A Charming Singer of Songs.	Card Manipulation & Paper Tearing.	Our Juvenile Soubrette & Dancer.

Gladys Morley	Betty Page
The Pianistic Expert of Rhythm.	Songs of the Moment.

JACK ELTON

CHIEF OF THE GAGSTERS.

SKETCHES. GAGS. MAGIC.

A Voluntary Concert Party sent to you by Capt. Phil. Park, R.A.O.C.,
Sussex District Entertainments Officer.

Date _____

A Fiddlesticks poster from the 1940s.

An alternative to floristry

It was the summer of 1955 and I was still at school at Rydon at Thakeham. I would be fifteen in the August and didn't really know what I was going to do when I left. My mother suggested my becoming a florist. I was standing in the queue waiting to speak to the Careers Officer when the girl in front of me said, "I have no idea what to say." "I'm going to say florist," I said. The girl replied, "I'll say that as well." When I reached the Careers Officer he said, "I've just given the last florist job to the girl in front of you." My mother then said, "Why don't you do photography?" As Audrey Picton before she was married and as a friend of the Leeson girls from Fittleworth, my mother had, before the war, often posed for hiking and similar pictures with George Garland, the Petworth photographer. She contacted him and he must have said something like "If she comes and helps me with weddings while she's still at school, I'll take her on when she leaves." I did this and started at the Studio in Station Road in August 1955. I remember I wasn't actually fifteen until a week after I had started work.

At the time I went to the Studio there was another, older girl there called Margaret Turner. I seem to think she was a farmer's daughter from Ashington but I may be wrong. Initially I worked with her in the darkroom. It wasn't an apprenticeship as such and I earned £1-5-0 a week. However, as the bus fare took nearly half my earnings I couldn't give my mother anything for my keep. I used to have Wednesday afternoons off, so on Wednesdays I'd cycle back and forth from Pulborough to save the bus fare. I enjoyed the darkroom work but I can't say I enjoyed weddings. If there were two on a particular day Margaret Turner would do one, and George the other, I going with him to learn and to take some of the pictures. The equipment, of course, was old and the preparation seemingly interminable. The light meter was a real performance, George pushing his glasses up on to his forehead to peer at it. Meanwhile everyone was waiting, frozen in a pose. I always became terribly embarrassed but George never did. On a bitterly cold day everyone might literally be frozen (not just in a pose) but George went his own way - always at his own pace. As for me, I just wished the ground would swallow me up.

It was somewhat similar, if perhaps not quite as bad, with outside functions, Women's Institute, (George always called W.I. the Wild Indians) school parties and sports. If I wasn't needed at the Studio I'd go out to learn how to take that kind of picture. Sometimes, at the weekend, I'd bring the camera home to take something like the Pulborough Remembrance Day parade or the floods (more extensive then than now). Once there was a Christmas dinner at Harwoods at Pulborough and I had the job of taking photographs. I had to stand on a chair to take them. It never occurred to George that this would be an ordeal for me. When I had been at the Studio for some time I went up to Petworth House to take an Egremont group photograph for the family Christmas card. We then ran off what seemed hundreds of prints and put them into folders. I was so worried about the trip to Petworth House that Mrs. Garland let me take Vivienne Beesly, who was working at the Studio by this time, for company. I took the pictures in a courtyard outside, the family and their pet pony.

After some years I left. It wasn't that I didn't like it at the Studio, it was simply that the money was so bad and I still had the bus fare to pay. I was offered a job in a shop at Pulborough,

more money and no bus fare. Some time later Mrs. Garland contacted me: would I come to see her and have a chat? She desperately wanted me to come back, there would be more money, bus fares would be paid and there would be commission for events like weddings. Well, I did enjoy the work: it was simply the finances that had been impossible, so I went back. Equipment was still basic, ancient might be a better word. George seemed to have a natural affinity with the second hand. On periodic trips with a friend to Rochester he'd pick up second hand camera equipment, never new, also other articles like binoculars or typewriters. BOAC trays and rugs I remember once. And very good quality they were too. We bought some. This was something of a personal sideline for George.

I was back to Mechablitz (I think that's how it's spelled) - the flash system. It was a block some eighteen inches long, some nine high and three broad with batteries that had to be charged the day before. The Mechablitz hung on a strap over the shoulder and would be fixed to the camera when needed. It was then switched on, the photographer meanwhile holding everyone in fixed pose, not daring to move, until the flash came. It could take some time. On occasion it might even not work at all. It was in the nature of things that Mechablitz would be needed at some crucial point, like cutting the wedding cake. It certainly did nothing for my nerves! I couldn't drive at this time and when I did weddings on my own I'd go on the bus complete with camera, Mechablitz, tripod. I cannot say I enjoyed it and was sometimes so nervous I couldn't eat: I never said how frightening I found it all. George wouldn't have understood anyway - nothing of that kind ever seemed to affect him.

Most of the time, however, I worked in the Studio with Mrs. Garland, of whom I was extremely fond. While George, for some reason known only to himself, invariably called me Blossom (my real name is Heather), Mrs. Garland always called me "young 'un", or sometimes "kid". Margaret Turner, for some reason was always called simply "Turner" while Vivienne was "Beezle". My family were somewhat prim and I found the use of nicknames something of a novelty. And there were the jokes. George Garland was a very witty man. The jokes certainly weren't what I had been brought up to, and mild enough in modern terms, but I'd never have dared to repeat them at home. All in all, this was a complete eye-opener for me. I'd be in fits of laughter. George really was a dry old stick. He seemed so old too. Looking back, it's almost impossible to think that he was then ten years younger than I am now. Perhaps it was the way he dressed, or the way that he never hurried, particularly when he drove. Did he ever move out of third gear in the old Ford Popular? As he was rather deaf the sound of the gears didn't affect him at all, but going through towns and villages I found myself almost involuntarily sinking deeper and deeper into the seat. Winter weddings I particularly dreaded: he'd take side-roads if he possibly could and always stop when he met the headlights of an oncoming vehicle.

In the 1950s and 1960s the photographic work had a tendency to be repetitive, less innovative than between the wars. George Garland photographed what he thought he could sell - the bluebells, the first lambs, the primroses, cider-making, while, of course, he could still place agricultural pictures in magazines like the *Farmer and Stockbreeder*. The difference was that the pictures now represented the increasing mechanisation of farming, the old horse studies were either impossible to find or simply a conscious archaising or romanticising.

There were too the usual local press outlets like the Brighton-based *Southern Weekly News* and *Sussex Daily News* and the *West Sussex Gazette*. Once I took pictures of a baby hedgehog in the garden at home and these were widely circulated. Another was of a kitten drawing milk from the udder of a cow. I think that by the mid and late 1950s the world with which Garland had felt most at home was already passing. The old men of the 1930s had gone, while the war had effectively destroyed the age-old culture of the horse in agriculture. "Characters", like working horses, were now few and far between. Something I particularly remember from this time is taking copies of pictures by two very different local artists, Ivon Hitchens and Claude Muncaster. I never knew quite why: perhaps it was as some kind of photographic record of their work.

As I have said, I was very attached to Mrs. Garland. She taught me my printing and finishing skills and, of course, it was well-known that whatever the antiquity of the equipment at the Studio, the results achieved were second-to-none. Mrs. Garland, I think was pleased to have someone who was more interested in printing and developing than they were in taking photographs. George himself printed rarely, only for the very occasional private order. When Mrs. Garland died and the work was put out to outside firms there was a noticeable drop in quality. We worked hard, making up all our own chemicals. I had to do this virtually every week; nothing was bought ready made: the physical labour of mixing fixes and developer was simply part of the Studio routine. I'm sure the attention Mrs. Garland gave to washing and drying accounts for the permanent quality of the prints. It was Mrs. Garland who kept the business going. We did work very hard. Sometimes she'd say, "Let's have a rest, put your head on your arm on the desk and let your mind go blank."

When I first went to work at the Studio, the Garlands were still living in a council house at South Grove. Mrs. Garland would go home at lunchtime and I'd remain at the Studio. In the morning I'd be there first to open up, Mrs. Garland would arrive next, then George himself. Sometimes for lunch I'd cook myself something like beefburgers on the old stove they had, or I might have brought sandwiches, or, getting off the bus in the Square, simply bought something from Knights at the Tavern.

Mrs. Garland died a few years after they had moved to Windmill House in High Street. When I married I left and lived for a short while at Portsmouth before returning to Pulborough. George must have got back in touch with me: there wasn't anyone to do the printing. I returned on an irregular part-time basis.

Heating at the Studio was primitive. Two storage heaters for the whole premises, supplemented by round, grey paraffin stoves if required. The paraffin fumes tended to hang in the air and Mrs. Garland was a regular smoker. There was no heating at all in the dark room and cold water running all the time. Toilet facilities? In the hedge or at Mrs. Chaffer's next door.

Mrs. Garland was quite different to her sister, Mrs. Philpott, whom she would sometimes go to visit. Although Mrs. Garland's Christian names were Phyllis Sarah she was universally known as Sally except to her sister who always addressed her as "Gamp." Invariably on a Wednesday afternoon Mrs Philpott and Mrs Garland would go out.

The Kevis collection? Well it wasn't called that then. We had the great mass of glass negatives at the Studio. And I used to look at them. They always fascinated me. There was

a way of turning them to the light so that you could see the negative as a positive. Once I came across what appeared a negative of a dead baby but thought it was wrongly labelled. In my lunch time I made a print of it. The caption was right. The prominent ribs of the poor little thing quite put me off my dinner. I simply couldn't eat that day.

Yes, I enjoyed working at the Studio. It was never dull: you never knew who might come in or what would happen next. And the Garlands. Mrs. Garland so kind and George always his own man, awkward, but humorous, never to be hustled out of his rhythm. I could not and will not ever forget either of them.

Heather Greene was talking to the Editor.

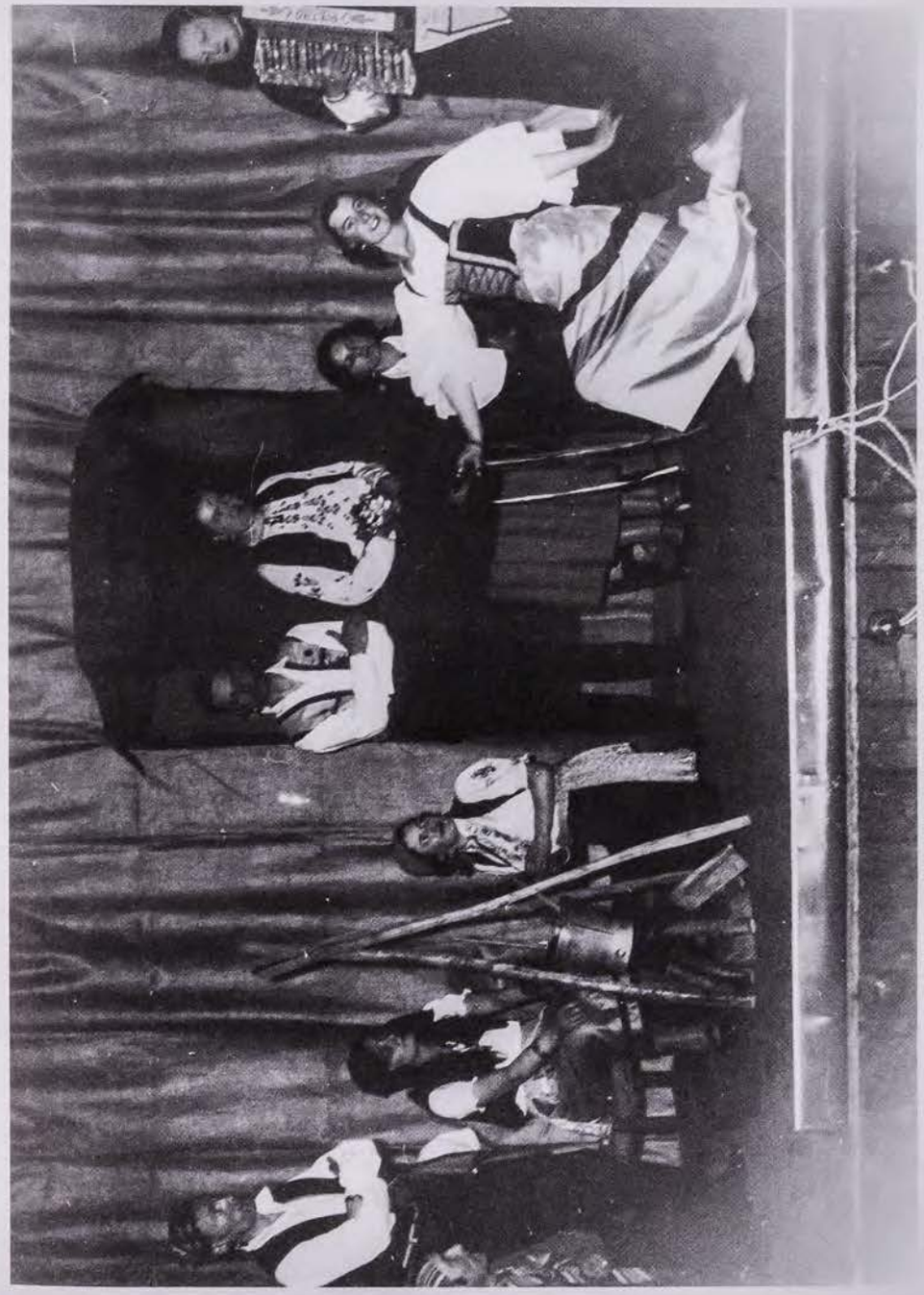
A Petworth Childhood (3)

In 1938 there was lots of excitement in the Knight family because both Mum's sisters were to be married and I was to be a bridesmaid at both weddings. In April Aunt Chris married George Messenger who was in the regular army, and in July Aunt Syb married Len Page who worked on Duck's Farm at Little Common. We liked both our new uncles but we weren't too happy about Uncle George taking Aunt Chris away because whenever he had come to Hill Top to see her, he had brought her a box of Black Magic chocolates which she shared with us.

By this time, Aunt Chris had worked at Pitshill for fourteen years and in appreciation of her service, the Mitfords paid for her lovely wedding dress, her 'going-away' clothes, her bouquet and the flowers for the church. She planned to have four bridesmaids: her friend Connie, Aunt Syb, Uncle George's sister Dora and myself. I was looking forward to meeting Dora who was the same age as me, but unfortunately, she went down with measles just before the big day. I had to walk up the aisle on my own, although the two adult bridesmaids behind me kept an eye on things and all went well. Uncle George's brother John was his best man. Molly Chandler, the organist, played Aunt Chris's favourite tune, 'The Londonderry Air', as we came out of church. Bill, who was three years old, presented the bride with a lucky horseshoe. There was a lovely wedding reception held at Tillington School. Uncle George was a corporal in the Worcestershire regiment and looked very smart in his dress uniform. His mother and two brothers had travelled down from London for the day but his father had stayed at home to look after Dora, who was very unhappy at missing all the excitement.

I wasn't so nervous at Aunt Syb and Uncle Len's wedding as I felt I was an 'old hand' at being a bridesmaid. Uncle Len's two sisters Hylda and Betty, were the adult bridesmaids and is brother, Ken was his best man. The reception was held at home at Hill Top and so once again that garden was the setting for some lovely family photographs. Both weddings were in Tillington church as Mum and Dad's had been several years earlier.

Although Petworth was only fourteen miles from the South coast, it was considered a safe area and a suitable place to send evacuees from London. The local police came around and documented how many people were living in each house and how many bedrooms we had. Then told us how many evacuees would be allotted to us. Their mothers accompanied children



Petworth "IMPS" in concert at the Iron Room in February 1938. See "Fiddlesticks." Photograph by George Garland.

Gladys Whitcomb (right) entertaining in the 1920s. See "Fiddlesticks." Photograph by George Garland.

under five, but those over five came alone. Many children were separated from their brothers and sisters and the whole experience must have been a terrible trauma for them. Some had never been to the country before and the wide-open spaces and cows frightened them.

Not every host family welcomed evacuees with open arms. Some hosts were elderly with families that had grown up years earlier. Some had never had children and had no idea how to cope with these city children. We waited excitedly to see what our evacuee would be like and I was very happy when they brought us a fourteen-year-old girl called Violet (Vi). She was just getting used to us when our next-door neighbour brought Vi's brother Georgie around and asked us to have him instead. She needed to have a girl, because she would have to share a room with the daughter of the house. I was very disappointed but we soon got used to Georgie, who was the same age as me. Vi spent a lot of time in our house so we came to know her really well. Georgie was a big tease and once chased me around the back field and put a large dead bird down my back! I can still remember what that felt like. Georgie was the youngest child in quite a large family and the only son. The relatives of the evacuees were able to visit them about once a month on a free coach from London. Georgie and Vi's sisters used to visit and they fascinated us children as they were very glamorous and wore fancy hats. We thought they were great fun.

The issue of gas masks for everyone was another thing to happen right at the beginning of the war. They came in 'square' cases with a long strap and we carried them over our shoulders. We were required to carry them with us at all times, and sometimes at school we would have to practice putting them on and carrying on with our lessons. The smell of the rubber was awful and we were always jolly glad to take them off. If any girl arrived at school without her gas mask she would be sent home to get it. Rita and I, both normally very law-abiding girls, decided to 'forget' our gas masks on the same day. We reckoned that if we took our time walking home and back again we should miss the first lesson, which was scripture reading the Old Testament through from the beginning wasn't very inspiring! The teacher accepted our excuses and sent us home and all would have been well if we had gone straight there. Unfortunately, we pushed our luck by going into Hazelman's to buy some sweets (lollies) to eat on the way. To my horror, we met one of our neighbours in the shop and she was carrying my gas mask. She had seen Georgie, who had asked her if she would drop it into the school on her way past. I then remembered that he had been walking behind us when we had been hatching our wicked plan. Of course he looked innocent and pretended he was just being helpful when I tackled him about it. It certainly spoilt our fun, because Rita had to walk home alone and I had to go straight back to school: we never tried that trick again.

When school broke up for Christmas 1939, Vi and Georgie went back to London. The feared bombing hadn't happened and as Vi was able to leave school their family decided they should return home. They both came back to Petworth for visits when they were adults and I was able to speak with them both when I was in England in 1994. They remembered Mum and Dad with great affection and had pleasant memories of their short time in the country. Georgie told me that he had been evacuated to another part of the country later on in the war when the bombing started.

The blackout was another thing we had to contend with right from the beginning of the

war. No streetlights were turned on and we were not allowed to show any lights from our homes or any other building: motor transport and bicycles had dimmed lights. We had to put up black curtains and make sure they fitted closely. I seem to remember that we had wooden frames covered with black material that fitted into the window and worked very well. No doubt Grandad Knight would have made them for us. If anyone dared to show a light the Air Raid Warden would come knocking at the door shouting the latest catchphrase which was 'Put that light out!' People were fined if they disregarded the warnings.

It was very difficult walking around at night. We were allowed small torches and couldn't really go out without one but the 'number eight' batteries became very scarce, as did a great many other things. There is a big private house called 'New Grove' between our houses and the town and it has always had the reputation of being haunted. In part of its grounds and right next to the road was a large rookery until the hurricane of 1987 completely devastated it. Coming past there on the pitch-dark night was very scary, especially as the large white cat that belonged to the house would streak cross the road just as our nerves were about to snap! Up until the war the lady of the house would invite all the children from Grove Lane up to the house on Christmas morning. She would give each of us a bag of sweets, an orange and other small gifts. We felt very brave as we stepped into the hall of this haunted house in broad daylight, but walking past it on a dark night was a very different story.

I also remember a particularly happy Christmas we had when all Mum's family was together at Hill Top. The smell of tangerines and cigars always reminds me of that time. It must have been 1938 or 1939 because there wouldn't have been any tangerines available after that. I remember us all sitting around the fire in the front room playing word games. A favourite was 'The Parson's Cat': it must have been an excellent way for us children to improve our vocabularies. Each person would have to think of an adjective describing the 'parson's cat', beginning with the letter "A". When we ran out of 'A' words, we would move on to 'B' words. It wasn't a memory game. The object was, to not be the one to give up and move on to the next letter of the alphabet.

Rationing was introduced very early in the war. Food rationing started on January 8th 1940. An adult weekly ration was as follows: bacon or ham 4ozs (125 grams), sugar 12ozs (375 grams), and butter or margarine 4ozs (125 grams). In July cooking fat and tea were added to the list of rationed items. Meat became a restricted food, with each person being allowed only the equivalent of nine-and-a-half new pence (25 cents) worth of meat per week; however, fish was generally available so there was always a long queue of housewives waiting outside the fishmonger. Later on more foodstuffs were rationed including cheese and sweets. I can remember we were allowed 12oz of sweets, which included chocolate, per month. There was a points system for other items such as rice, jam, biscuits, tinned fruit, meat and beans. Milk was also rationed. Infants were allowed fourteen pints a week, and expectant mothers and children up to fourteen years of age, seven pints – a pint is about 600ml. I can't recall what the allowance was for adults. At a later stage in the war, sugar, tea and butter or margarine was cut to 2ozs (60 grams) and adults were allowed only one egg per month. Country folk were better off then those in the city were, as we already had our vegetable gardens and hens. Before the war a large percentage of our food had been imported but, from 1939, the Merchant

Navy suffered terrible losses in their efforts to keep up the supply of food and other goods because German U-boats were sinking a great many of our ships. To ensure there was enough food to cover these losses, the public was encouraged to 'Dig for Victory' so vegetable gardens sprang up everywhere.

We also had clothing coupons but never enough. People were urged to 'Make-do and Mend': nothing was wasted. It all must have been very hard for the adults, particularly the mothers trying to care for their families but I can't ever remember feeling desperately hungry. Mum was always good at making a little go a long way. The meat ration would be saved to buy a joint for Sunday dinner and then we would have the leftovers cold on Monday. The quality of the meat was often very poor and Dad would say as he was carving it, "I wonder how many Grand Nationals this poor old devil has won!" Sometimes Dad would acquire a rabbit and Mum would make a delicious rabbit stew. We all had a good laugh when Mum gave Georgie a leg and he said, "Cor Blimey! I've never had a leg before. Mum always gives me the corsets".

One source of food that wasn't rationed will stay in my memory forever. A baker in town used to make what he called 'Agriculture Meat Pies'. The pastry was like cardboard, only harder, and it was wise to cover them with gravy and eat them hot. It was not a good idea to take the lid off and look inside. There would be few grey-looking pieces of gristly meat and lumps of turnip, swede and potato. I have always disliked swede and turnip and the smell used to put me off. They did fill us up though so I suppose they served a useful purpose.

Every household had to be registered with a particular grocer. We were free to choose which one and then had to draw our rations from that one only. Not all food that was on points was freely available. Tinned fruit, for example, was often scarce. Shopkeepers would keep these luxuries for registered customers only. The smart thing to do was register one member of the household at a different shop from the rest, so that the chance of picking up a luxury item was doubled. We were registered at Hazelman's and when, later on in the war, someone came to board with us who was already registered with Olders, it became my job to collect his one ration during my lunch hour. There were always several customers before me and the Miss Olders continued to lovingly wrap these minute portions of butter, cheese, sugar and tea in their customary unhurried manner. I have to admit that I no longer watched with 'fascination' but would be a nervous wreck watching the clock as my lunch hour ticked away!

Bill and I often went to stay with Aunt Syb and Uncle Len at Sickleham which was part of Duck's Farm. They lived in one of two cottages that were completely surrounded by fields. We loved our times out there and we would play with the children next door, one of whom was an evacuee. We spent our time picking blackberries and collecting as much wood as we could haul home. There was a hammock in the garden and I loved to curl up in it with a book, but it was close to some stinging nettles and if I stayed in there too long the others would tip me out which could be painful.

During our 1940 summer holidays we were staying at Sickleham when one morning at 5 a.m. we were awakened by Uncle Len shaking us and telling us we had to get up. He was always full of fun and we thought he was playing a trick on us. Unfortunately, what had begun was later to be called 'The Battle of Britain', although we didn't know it at the time. Masses

of German aircraft were on their way to bomb London and our fighter planes were sent up to intercept them and shoot them down. As we lived quite close to Tangmere, which was one of the R.A.F. airfields, we saw plenty of air action all through that summer. Quite a lot of planes were shot down all over the country, both German and British. It wasn't safe to be outside when these 'dog fights', as they were called, were in progress as one could be hit by a stray bullet from a machine gun. It was also advisable to keep away from windows.

Petworth, being consi ed a safe area, had no air raid siren for at least the first three years of the war, and also no public air raid shelters. Some people, Uncle Len included, had dug their own shelters and we headed off to this shelter at 5 a.m. on that lovely summer morning. I still remember the steep steps going down into the darkness and the earthy smell, and on a lighter note, the baker calling and passing some cakes down to us. I don't recall how long we stayed down there that day but I know my first thought was to get back to Mum and Dad in Petworth, three miles away.

Later on, back in Petworth, I have a vivid memory of us all sitting on sacks of potatoes under the stairs, eating stewed apples and custard as a 'dog fight' was going on overhead. Dad cycled home to lunch every day, and came in rather white-faced one day as a bullet had flashed past his head on his way home. One day when we stood at the top of the back garden we saw that the sky above the Downs was glowing red. We learnt afterwards that Portsmouth was on fire from all the incendiary bombs that had been dropped.

The adults must have been very worried during that summer of 1940 because an invasion was expected at any moment. The Germans seemed unstoppable. They had overrun most of Europe, and France had just surrendered. At school we were warned not to offer any information to anyone regarding names of places, nor to give directions to anywhere. All place names and signposts had been removed. I came straight out of school one day and a cheerful looking soldier driving an army lorry, called out to me. The following exchange took place. "What's the name of this place, luv?' *"Petworth!"* "How do I get to Brighton?" *"Turn left at the crossroads."* As soon as he had driven off I realised what I had done and worried about it for ages. But he didn't *look* like a German soldier or a spy.

Mum worked very hard during the war. She went back to work for Dr and Mrs Druitt and did their cooking and cleaning. Also, at home, she always had a house full of people to look after. When Georgie left we had several other evacuees. I remember Peter, then Douglas, both from Portsmouth, who only stayed for a short time. I believe their mothers were also in Petworth with younger children and eventually they were all able to stay together. Peter arrived with head lice and Mum used to go through all our heads twice a day with a scurf comb and douse us in paraffin. It was a horrible experience but we didn't catch anything. Later on we had Pam who came from London and she stayed quite a long time.

The Regal cinema was always packed with soldiers and one day Mum took us to see a really 'weepy' film. It was Spencer Tracey and Mickey Rooney in 'Boy's Town'. Mum and I had our hankies out and Bill was bored stiff. He turned round and suddenly shouted, "Coo, Mum, look at all these soldiers crying!" Everyone burst out laughing, which rather destroyed the mood of the film, but no doubt it made us all feel better.

I always got on well at school and quite enjoyed it except for Wednesday afternoons

I always got on well at school and quite enjoyed it except for Wednesday afternoonswhen we went up to Petworth Park and played stool-ball. Being absolutely hopeless at games I hated trying to hit the ball and was usually out for a duck. My only moment of glory was when, seeing the ball coming towards me one day when I was fielding, I put my hand out to protect my face and caught out one of the best players on the opposing team.

One Wednesday we arrived at the park to discover members of the Toronto Scottish Regiment marching up and down on our stool-ball pitch playing their bagpipes. Our teacher, Mrs Bell, gave us the option of going back to school and doing lessons and playing stool-ball the next day or watching the soldiers and missing out on stool-ball for that week. Although at that time I hated bagpipes at close quarters, I voted for the latter option. Anything, as far as I was concerned, was better than stool-ball. Years later my friend Peggy, who was an excellent player, tried to persuade me to join a stool-ball club with her. I was amazed that she hadn't remembered how hopeless I was. Needless to say, I let that opportunity pass me by.

The daylight air raids on London and other cities continued all through the summer of 1940 and then after one weekend in September when the Germans lost a record number of aircraft, they switched to night-time bombing. We would lie in bed, night after night, listening to the awful ominous drone of the planes. On their way back, they would drop any bombs that our fighters and the ack-ack guns had prevented them from dropping on the cities. Incendiary bombs set a hayrick in our back field alight and there were other stray bombs dropped round and about the countryside.

The news was bad from all quarters and people were very anxious about their relatives and friends in the cities and, of course, all of those in the armed forces. My friend Dat Smith's older brother was killed whilst serving in the army overseas. In May 1941 we heard the dreadful news that the British warship, *The Hood*, had been sunk off the coast of Greenland. Of her crew of over 1300 men, only three were saved. We were particularly upset because our cousin 'John the sailor' had been on *The Hood* the last time we had heard news of him. Eventually we heard that a short time earlier he had been transferred to another ship. We were greatly relieved to hear this, as it was only recently that his younger brother, Teddy, had died. Thankfully, John came through the war relatively unscathed and lived to see his grandchildren.

Sometime during that year Mrs Druitt, where Mum worked, had a fall and broke her hip. Her family asked Mum and Dad to go and live there for a while so that Mum could take care of everything. We must have been in the unusual position of not having any extra children or adults living with us at the time. I don't remember how long we stayed there but I know Bill and I really missed being at home. There was a lovely garden to play in but it didn't make up for being away from our Grove Lane friends. We couldn't wander all over the house of course and spent all our time getting under Mum's feet in the kitchen. At night we slept in the attic, which was a pleasant room overlooking the garden, but Mum and Dad were on the floor below and we were used to them being right next door to us and so we felt really isolated. Apparently, the family was so happy with the arrangement they asked Mum and Dad to give up their house and move in permanently. Thankfully, Mum and Dad had other ideas.

Rowner Mill, of which Mr. Harold Roberts, of Wisborough Green, gives us this winter glimpse, figured in recent correspondence in the " W.S.G. " After a Worthing reader had asked for information about the old water mill, Mr. G. D. Johnston wrote that it was mentioned in a deed of November, 1539, and again in 1638. Mr. F. V. Gravely, of Wisborough Green, stated that it was in use until 1914 as a mill in conjunction with Rowner Farm, and it drove a dynamo for electric light at Rowner House. More information came from Mr. G. A. Briggs, of Grays, Essex, whose grandfather, George Briggs, and his father, Joe Briggs, worked at the mill. It was from Rowner Mill on April 6, 1867, that George Baverstock set out before daylight to walk nine miles to Petworth to get married, wearing a white round smocked frock, as his grandson, Mr. A. F. Wooldridge, of Plaistow, recalled.

This atmospheric Harold Roberts drawing of Rowner Mill, Wisborough Green (with the attached information) appeared in the West Sussex Gazette *in the early 1950s.*

In October, I became ill with pneumonia and was sent to The Cottage Hospital. There was one women's ward and one men's ward and I was the only patient in the women's ward. As soon as I was admitted to hospital they dressed me in a waistcoat that was lined with a poultice. It was lovely and warm and my sore chest soon began to feel better. They gave me 'M and B' tablets but I have no idea what those initials stood for. Antibiotics were still not available to the general public. Although I was well looked after I was terribly lonely. After a few days an old lady was admitted and she coughed all night and then died. Then a baby came in and it cried all night. The worst thing though, was the lack of visitors. They were only allowed to visit for two hours on Sunday and Wednesday afternoons. When Mum asked if she could bring Bill in to see me the Matron was extremely rude to her and said "NO" in no uncertain terms. Thank goodness hospitals have changed since those days. I was worried that I might not get out in time for Bill's seventh birthday, but not only did I just make it, but I had a lovely surprise as Mum and Dad had moved back home. I still remember what a wonderful feeling that was.

I wasn't fit enough to go straight back to school and so went to stay with Aunt Chris, where I did lots of knitting. I made several pairs of gloves and socks etc. for the armed forces and so I made khaki gloves for them as well. At the meetings the ladies would read out letters of thanks from the soldiers who had received the parcels of woolies.

After the summer holidays in September 1942 Bill, being only a few weeks short of his eighth birthday, moved from the Infants School to the Boy's School. This was situated down the bottom of North Street and was even further from Grove Lane than the Girl's School. After the first two weeks, Dad met the milkman who delivered milk down Grove Lane just before heading down to North Street. He told Dad he gave several Grove Lane boys a lift and had room for Bill as well. The second day Bill had a lift to school, it was a very wet morning with very low cloud, and as he went off Mum was cross with him because he wouldn't keep his rain hat on as he said it 'looked silly.'

I went off to the Girl's School and at about 11am we heard what we all thought was a very loud clap of thunder. Shortly after this, the girl sitting behind me went out to the toilet and when she came back she said lots of people were running past the school and she had heard someone say that the Boy's School had been hit by a bomb. We hadn't heard what we usually referred to as 'a funny sounding plane' or anything. We didn't really believe this until our teacher's husband came into the room and told us it was true. A lot of my classmates had brothers in the school and we were all shocked and very upset.

When I got home, Mum had changed in to her 'going out' clothes as she thought we might have to go and visit Bill in hospital. She couldn't find a pair of stockings that weren't laddered and so I gave her a new pair that I had received as a birthday present. Dad, along with all the other fathers was down at the school helping to get the boys out. He also kept going to the Police Station to try and find out if there was any news of Bill. It was late afternoon before he came home with the terrible news that Bill had been killed. We were all stunned and couldn't really believe it. Our house seemed to be full of people. As well as relatives, Dr and Mrs Druitt were there and later on the Rector and Mrs Godwin paid a visit.

My friend Joan (Winks) came down to stay the night we me and in fact she stayed every

night for several weeks. I shall always be grateful to her for this. Joan's two brothers weren't at the school. Her elder brother, John, had already left school and her younger brother, Bob, attended Midhurst Grammar School. I spent a lot of time with Joan and her family over these terrible days. Her mother was a lovely kind and generous lady and she just 'adopted' me as one of her own.

The Headmaster, Mr Stevenson, one of those killed, was also the church organist. Joan's brother, John, aged fifteen, was taking lessons from him so John was suddenly 'promoted' to church organist and had to play for all the special services that took place at this time. I can remember him practising all the hymns and worrying about it all. He went on to become a very good church organist.

The final death toll was the Headmaster, Mr Stevenson, an assistant teacher, twenty-six boys and a man and woman who lived nearby. A great many people were affected either directly or indirectly. From our twenty-four houses down Grove Lane, six boys had been killed including all the boys our friendly milkman had taken to school that day. The poor man was devastated. Also killed were the farmer's son from the farm just down the road, and a farm-worker's son who lived around the corner. Others from our houses were injured. Some of the older boys had a lucky escape because they were at a woodwork class in the centre of town that morning. None of the evacuee boys were involved because they went to school in another part of town.

Although the town must have been in chaos, those in charge of such things quickly organised a military-type funeral to take place on the Saturday, four days after the tragedy. There was going to be a communal grave for all the victims down at Petworth cemetery. Our family had absolutely no connection with Petworth cemetery: all the Knight and Herrington families had been buried at Tillington. So when Dad heard that one family had opted to have their son buried elsewhere, he and Mum quickly made arrangements for Bill to be buried at Tillington. I believe they were strongly criticized for this but it was the very best thing they could have done. Granny Knight lovingly tended Bill's grave for the rest of her active life and Grandad carved an oak cross, which, after sixty years honourable service, was replaced with a simple granite memorial. Bill's family funeral was on the Friday: Mum and Dad said that I needn't go if I couldn't face it, so I spent the time with Joan and her family. Unfortunately, although chrysanthemums are lovely flowers, the smell of them always brings back vivid memories of this terrible time.

Grandad Knight and Aunt Syb attended the boys' funeral on the Saturday and it was a very big affair. The Toronto Scottish soldiers were greatly involved. They were camped at Pheasant Copse not very far from the school and had played a big part in the rescue operation. Surviving members of the regiment have made several trips back to Petworth over the years and they always visit the boys' communal grave in the cemetery and attend a church service commemorating their close ties with Petworth. A new altar was dedicated in St Mary's Church in memory of all those killed and there is a book of remembrance with all the names recorded.

The bombing of the school made front-page news in newspapers all over the country, but, as no place names were used, Petworth was referred to as 'A small town in South-east

England'. They did publish the casualty list though, and when Aunt May and Uncle Jim saw Bill's name they and cousin Edie came to Petworth straight away. I can remember being ever so pleased to see Edie as she and I always enjoyed each others company. She showed Joan and me some new pencil and paper games. One was 'Battleships' and another was 'Crosswords' and we showed the girls at school and before long, on wet days when we couldn't play outside, all the girls would be playing these games. Another thing that helped me over this dreadful time as reading. I had just started reading 'Little Women' and managed to lose myself in that for an hour here and there.

Years later my daughter asked me if we had received any counselling following the tragedy. This was unheard of in those days and as people all over the country were suffering loss in one way or another it would have been hard to find anyone to actually do the counselling. I remember feeling I had to be strong and not give way to my emotions, as that would have upset Mum and Dad even more. Looking back, it felt as if one day I was 'one of the children' and the next day, an adult. The first time I ventured up to the town with Joan and her mother, a woman called out to me saying, "Joan, I haven't heard what happened to your brother. Is he alright?" Joan's mother told me to walk on whilst she talked to her. Later on, when going out with Mum, I used to get very angry and upset at the stupid tactless things other people would say to her. I suppose at the time people felt they had to say something, even if it was completely inappropriate. When I went back to school the week following the bombing, my teacher said to me "How is mother, dear?" and I said, "All right, thank you," and that was that. As far as I can remember it wasn't mentioned again.

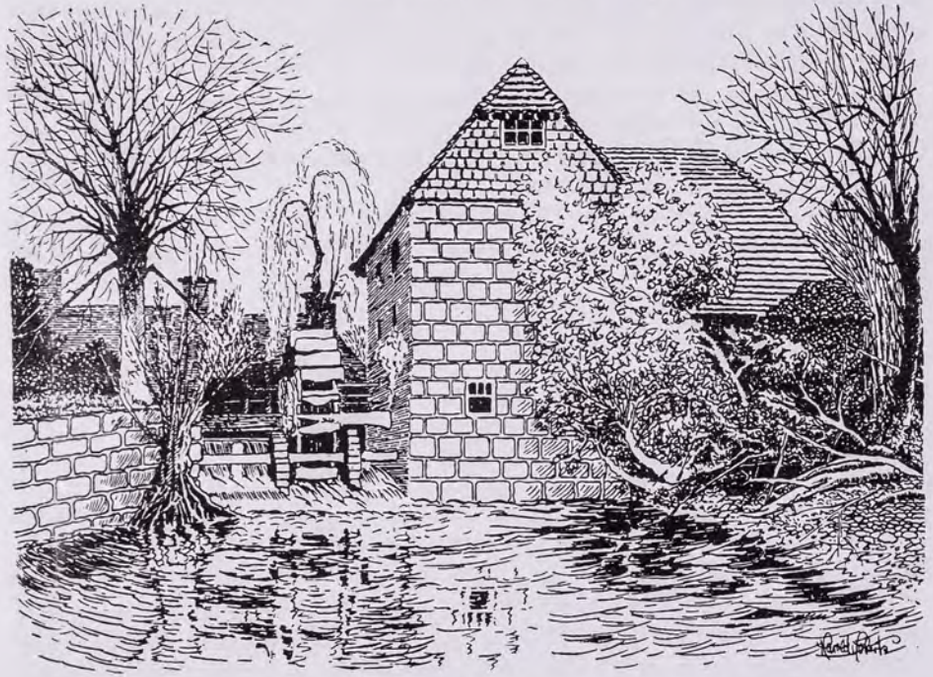
Money poured into Petworth from all over the country. I know there were meetings called to try and decide how to use it but have no idea what was eventually decided. Miss Upton called at our house one day with a bar of chocolate for me. It came from Canada and a note inside said something like, "Good wishes from the members of our club." I was really pleased to receive this and wanted to write and thank them but couldn't think what to say, so I never did.

I don't suppose Mum and Dad ever really recovered from this tragedy, but they were wonderful and never became bitter. They continued to reach out to other people, especially children, all through their lives. It is very strange the things that stick in one's memory. Soon after Bill was killed, I was visiting at Hill Top and Granny gave me some cold custard to eat. She said, "I saved it for you dear, because I know how much you like it." Actually I absolutely loathed it and it was Bill she always saved it for. I couldn't bring myself to tell her this, so managed to eat it, slowly!

Written by Joan Dench and edited for the Magazine by Miles Costello.
The unabridged version can be found online at www.dench.net/story

Concluded.

FITTLEWORTH MILL 1956



The late Mr. Harold Roberts, of Wisborough Green, took a particular pleasure in drawing the old water-mills of the countryside and this sketch of Fittleworth Mill, which stands in the grounds of Mill House, home of Brig. and Mrs. G. P. Hardy-Roberts, was done not long before he died. It is a subject which has been painted by many artists, including Constable and Turner, and more recently, Bruce Bairnsfather, the "Old Bill" cartoonist. Although the stone structure of the mill dates back many years, there is evidence that it replaced an older wooden one. The mill belonged to the Bishops of Chichester between the 13th and 19th centuries, and in 1873, shortly before it was sold, the rent for a year was £6. A recent owner, Capt. Gerald Deane, who set up his own electricity plant at the mill, believed that there was enough power to supply the whole of Fittleworth.

This Harold Roberts drawing of Fittleworth Mill (with the attached information) appeared in the West Sussex Gazette *in 1956.*

A village that 'went to it' Heyshott makes its own air raid shelters

This might well be called the story of the village that "Went to It" ! It is the story of a village that felt keenly the need for the protection against air raids of its children, and set about providing it ... "off its own bat".

No steps had been taken by any authorities in rural areas to provide air raid shelters, and the people of Heyshott, having nearly 90 children in the place (locals and evacuees combined) decided that the position of these children might well be considered dangerous; so it was decided to do something about it .... but the question was how ?

A penny rate in the village would bring in about £ 8.0.0., which would obviously be inadequate. A three penny rate, 'tis true, would bring in about £ 22.0.0, but the Parish Council, had no power to levy such a rate, and in any case many people in the parish are not too well "breeched" financially.

To grapple with the problem the chairman of the Parish Council, Mr S. Knight, called a public meeting ... and it was then that things began to "hum" !

A sub-committee was formed, plans were drawn up, a small army of volunteers was immediately forthcoming and, a site having been procured on Farmer Arthur Lovejoy's farm (which is on the Cowdray Estate) digging was commenced ... all within 20 hours !

All labour was voluntary. The men of the village would come home in the evenings after a long day in the fields, maybe, and set about this, what was to them, a labour of love.

A large amount of materials for the work was given by local farmers and residents, but there were still such things as nails, creosote and timber to be bought and paid for.

But these village people were undeterred by such details. Air raid shelters for the children were needed, and air raid shelters they were going to have ... come what may ! If necessary the cost should be met by means of public subscriptions afterwards, but "have" first and "afford" afterwards was the motto of the day !

With such zest did these men of Heyshott work that in the evenings only of a month they built in the field on Farmer Arthur Lovejoy's farm two air raid shelters which must surely be the ne plus ultra of any air raid shelters in any village anywhere in England. Indeed, so palatial are they that they should, without further delay, be named .... and I would name them ... The Ritz and The Savoy !

And it came about that soon after the work was completed the fame of it was spread to distant Chichester, and from there came the County Director of Education, and soon after him the County Architect; and between them they decided that such public spirited effort should be recognised by Authority, so the West Sussex County Council's Education Committee have promised the people of Heyshott £ 5 towards the cost of their air raid shelters.

This will leave to be found a balance of £ 2.12.6., which will allow for the provision of a pump for use during the coming winter months if necessary.

This money has to be found, and, for what it might be worth, here is my suggestion ...

to you, Head A.R.P. Warden Fowler, and you, too, Billeting Officer Tom Poulton. When you have visitors to inspect your shelters in future charge 'em a small fee. If people are willing to pay shillings to inspect the Roman Villa at Bignor surely they will pay sixpences to have the privilege of inspecting Heyshott's Air Raid Shelters for its children ?

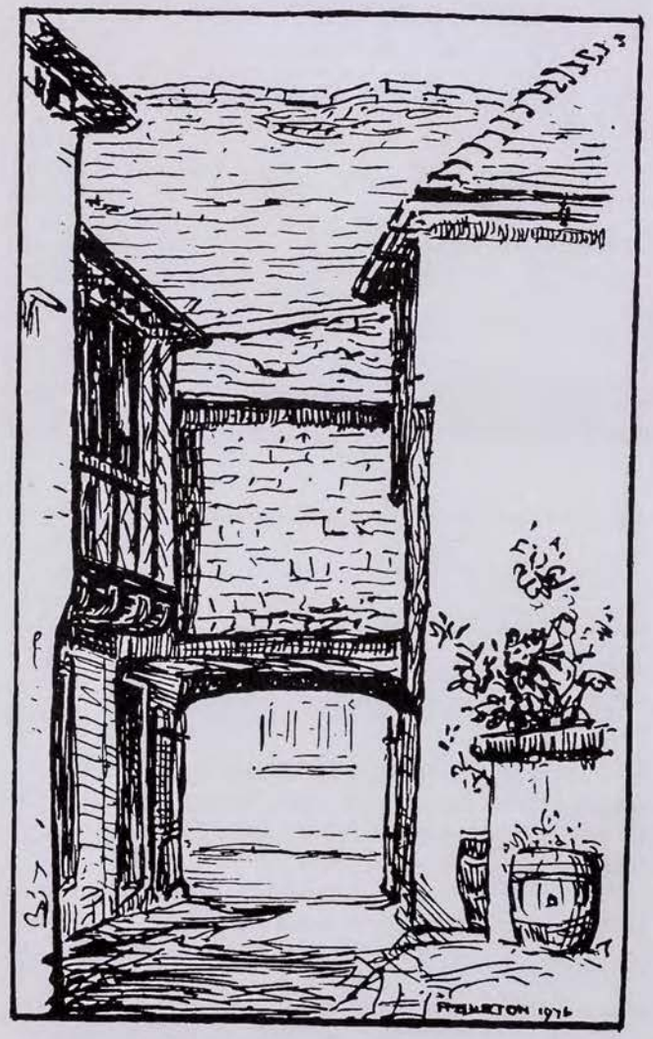
But, if you do adopt this idea .... remember you let the press in free !

.....

From: Garland, Petworth.

This Garland article would seem to come from the early 1940s and is a good example of the type of morale-boosting newspaper reportage of the time.

Petworth Brownies 1950s?
Photograph by George Garland.



East Street from "Denmans". A Drawing by Frances Burton, 1976.

But did he actually go in? George Garland at Chatham in 1958.

New Members

Mrs. S. Dunnett	73, Noyna Road, Tooting, London, SW17.
Mr. & Mrs. G. Gresham Cooke	The Old Post House, Tillington, Petworth, GU28 9AF.
Ms. J. Langbridge & Mr. J. Rastrick	4, Montier Terrace, Angel Street, Petworth, GU28 0BQ.
Mr. P. Burden	47a, Selsdon Road, West Norwood, London, SE27 0PQ.
Mr. & Mrs. T. Etheridge	Hinton, New Bridge Road, Billingshurst, RH14 9LS.
Mrs. S. Foreman	16, Kew Gardens, West Meads Drive, Bognor Regis, PO21 5RD.
Mrs. A. Knowles	Myrtle Villa, Village Street, Newdigate, Dorking, RH5 5DH.
Mrs. P. Pike	3, Riverside, Shoreham-by-Sea, BN43 5RU.