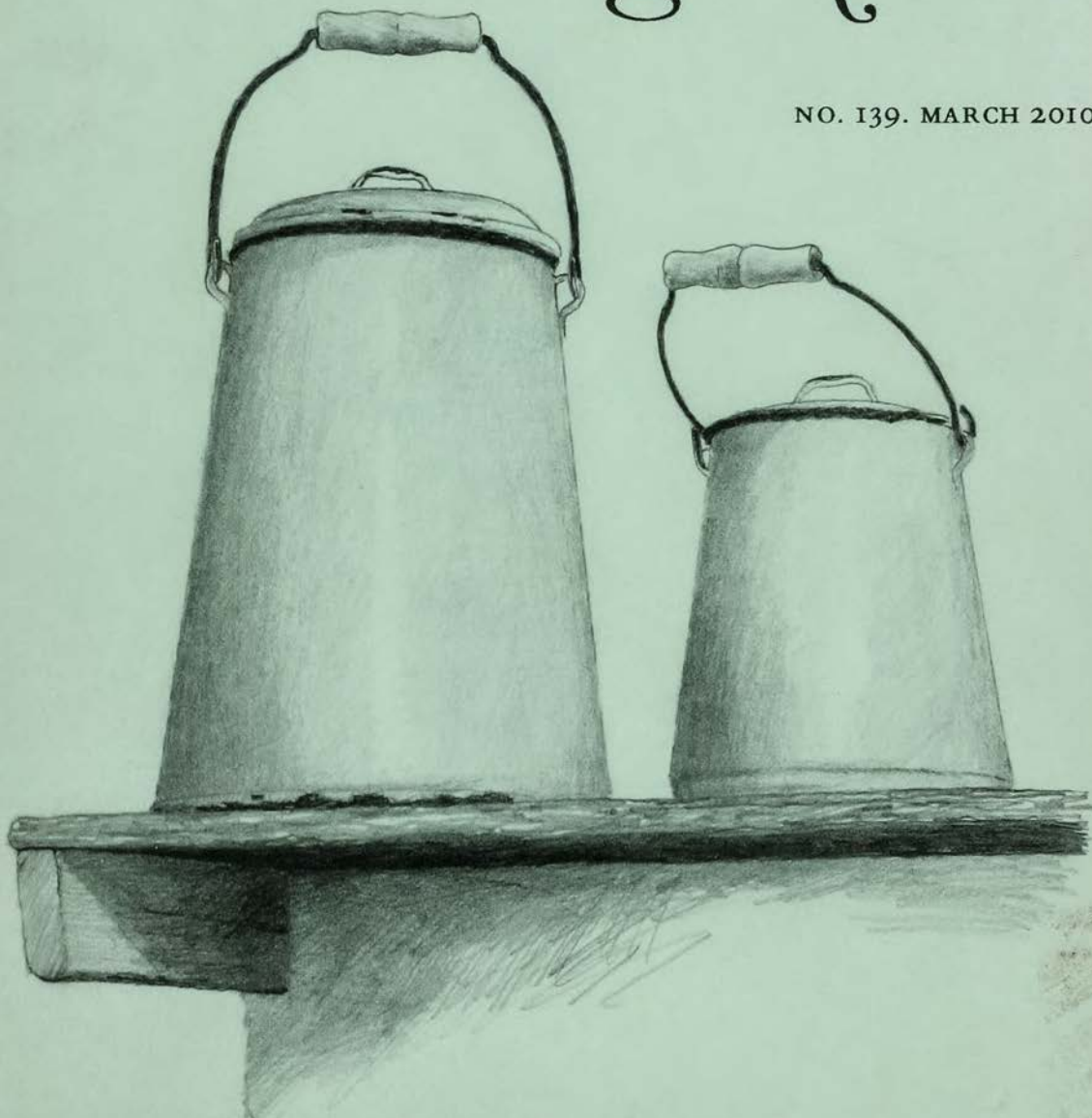


Miles Costello
Petworth
Coll.

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY
Magazine

NO. 139. MARCH 2010



PETWORTH COTTAGE MUSEUM 1910-2010

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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 £15.00. Further information may be obtained from any of the following:

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Magazine distributors

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For this Magazine on tape please contact Mr Thompson.

Society Crier

Mr Mike Hubbard 343249

Chairman's Notes

Welcome to a new year and to Jonathan's new cover drawing which anticipates a significant new Cottage Museum year : the centenary of the theoretical date of the reconstruction.

Subscriptions need to rise this year. Andy tells me that they have remained unaltered since 2001 (local) and 2002 (postal). The increase is a token gesture toward the growing discrepancy between incoming revenue and Magazine costs. You will know that subscriptions are already heavily subsidised by the monthly book sales, but even these, successful as they are, are struggling now to make up the deficit. I cannot sufficiently stress that if you are able to make a donation over and above the minimum this might well pre-empt another rise in 2011. The unusually severe weather, reflected in Jim Taylor's four colour photographs, took out the January Book Sale. Quite apart from anything else, we simply could not get books out of store. It is not something that has happened to us before.

Nancy and Norman Goodyer have, after many years, had to give up their Fittleworth Magazine delivery round, as too has Jill Biggs at Sutton and Bignor. It may well prove that Nancy, Norman and Jill are irreplaceable and that the subscriptions will become postal. Our grateful thanks to Nancy, Norman and Jill for their long service to us.

Re Magazine 138, Jeremy Godwin reminds me that last year's cover drawing is of a cartshed at Upperton and not a barn. Point taken. Derek and Janet Gourd draw my attention to a Dendy Napper in the Sutton/Cheam areas between the wars. He has a flourishing steam mill and bakery business. He would appear to be the son of the Dendy Napper mentioned in Susan Martin's article in the last Magazine.

It's sad to record the passing of Betty Hodson, for so many years a member of the committee and a real driving force in such events as the various visits by the Toronto Scottish regiment in the 1980s and 1990s. If advancing years meant that we saw rather less of her latterly, she remained in spirit a committee member long after she had left. Betty had a certain impatience with the formal and I think the epitaph she would most appreciate would be the affectionate recollection she left among all those who knew her and worked with her. Betty had just reached her ninetieth birthday.

We are delighted to have coopted Celia Lilly to the committee and pleased she has agreed to join us. As a relative "newcomer" to the town she will offer us a fresh insight. I hope she enjoys her time with us.

Peter 28th January

The height of ambition

We had Cliff. Dargonne, recommended by Jean Gilhooly (many thanks, Jean) to speak about climbing Everest in the 50th anniversary year (1952-2003).

The Scouts, rock climbing, long distance walking leading to mountaineering and eventually tackling the seven peaks, the highest mountains in each of the continents. Everest was his fourth.

Illustrated by slides depicting life in Nepal from Katmandu to Everest Base Camp, Cliff soon involved the audience in the massive undertaking. With Cliff. was an American, a Canadian and a Colombian.

Equipment and clothing are available in Katmandu, some of it from previous expeditions 'recycled' as a source of income by Sherpas. Finding size 11 climbing boots however, posed a problem, Nepalese being of small stature, only solved on the last day of the team's stay there. Supplies were carried by pack animals, a cross between a cow and a yak and later by pure-bred yak – an animal best allowed wide passage.

On the fortnight's journey to Base Camp at 17,000 feet, to be undertaken slowly to adjust to diminishing oxygen levels with altitude, there were stops at Buddhist shrines and monasteries where the climbers receive blessings for their journeys.

From then on it was a matter of establishing Camps 1, 2, and 3, travelling to and fro up to six times between each, ferrying equipment down and up or across dangerous crevasses on the glacial ice flow. Ladders are maintained by Nepalese 'ice doctors' through the climbing season, lasting just a month between the time when the 100 mph jet stream winds have moved north and the monsoon arrives from the south. The thin air means that, despite night temperatures down to -40°, the sun is powerful during the day and care must be taken to protect the eyes, lips, nostrils – even under the chin – from sunburn, reflection up from the snow.

It being the 50th anniversary year, there were many teams attempting the climb, overcrowding causing delays, as well as the jet stream being reluctant to leave and predictions of an early monsoon, resulting in a 'window' of only two weeks for the final assault on the summit.

Cliff.'s account of the tensions experienced, leading to his final "Do we or don't we?" ascent with one of the team, ensured that we shared something of the anxiety and emotion of the final achievement. Forty minutes on the summit allowed for a satellite phone-call home to mother – "Guess where I am, Mum – on the top of Mount Everest". "Oh that's nice, dear". Then a broken film in the camera, the loss remedied by the gift of a Fuji disposable camera from a Japanese there also, which produced a perfect print.

Such a disappointing turn-out for an inspiring speaker, so engaging with the audience that questions came thick, fast and long!

Well fed before the expedition, Cliff. lost 35 lbs. in the nine weeks he was away.

KCT

Christmas Evening – Plan B

Our much-anticipated Christmas Evening with the Allsorts Concert Party fell victim to the accompanist's back injury. But, never fear, Miles is here! Scheduled for a meeting in January, he agreed to bring his magic lantern show forward and, with Ann's seasonal decorations around the screen, a Victorian theme, with mince pies, wine and an up-market raffle, the atmosphere was set for a convivial evening.

The slides showed scenes of Petworth people from the mid-nineteenth century up to the 1920s and featured the familiar streets, but with buildings such as the Iron Room, Snow Hill House and the Half Moon Hotel (on the site of the present NatWest Bank) now gone. Shops and houses in Church Street in front of St. Mary's Parish Church, once forming Petworth's centre, were pulled down over a hundred years ago, opening up the aspect and later allowing space for the Town's War Memorial.

The people inhabited an entirely different world from the present day, predominately agricultural and Petworth-centred, their formal dress contrasting sharply with today's informality.

Peter has spent much of the last 40 years talking to people, encouraging them to record their memories and his commentary to the lantern slides brought them to life, although there is always the regret that the names and often the occupations of the people featured are missing and lost beyond recall.

There was 'audience participation' as members contributed their own recollections – and other comments – which added to our Chairman's own self-deprecating brand of humour.

It would have been easy to overlook Miles' contribution. He has half a dozen magic lanterns in various stages of repair and a collection of 3,000 slides, relatively few of Petworth and some he has made himself as they are no longer produced commercially. Miles is a great asset to the Society (and the Hampers Green community) even if he does prefer to 'hide his light under a bushel' – or inside his magic lantern!

KCT

Self-catering on the wild side

You hire a car when you get to your destination and then you're free to go wherever you please. That's what Dorene and John Taylor did, only the destination was Zimbabwe and the car was a Toyota Landcruiser, fitted out with two tiny beds, one doubling as a bench during the day, two gas canisters, a minute fridge and a cupboard. Two water containers, two petrol tanks, but no shower, no loo.

At our January meeting, we were treated to Dorene's account of their three-week journey of 200 miles to the Okavango Delta in Botswana, along a track over deep sand, rocks and tree roots. The only humans they encountered, it seems, were two South Africans, whose holiday was cut short when their entire food stock was appropriated by a troupe of baboons

who mounted a well-planned raid by diverting the campers' attention for a few minutes.

Dorene and John's approach is to live with and respect the wildlife they encounter, giving time and space, even when that involves spending a night with a flatulent bull elephant blocking the rear door of the 4X4. The positive results, apart from the obvious thrills and pleasures of living in a wilderness, were the photographs on slides which we were privileged to share. The sensitive use of light at dawn and dusk on the scenery and animals, highlighting patterns and textures, left a lasting impression.

The photographs came after the interval: first, of the journey itself and then of all the animals and birds which have been so much a part of the Taylors' experience on their annual visits to other parts of the African continent over the last 15 years: Buffalo, hippopotamus, lion, impala, kudu, elephant, baboon, zebra, serval, Cape fox, wild cat, wildebeest, vervet monkey, giraffe, hyena, red hartebeest, springbok, wild dog, bush buck, rhinoceros, cheetah and leopard. Those were the animals. Then the birds: the giant kingfisher, purple-crested lory, ostrich, secretary bird, goshawk, tawny eagle and others with African names, needing an African to write down. Finally, atmospheric shots of papyrus in morning light and a typically magnificent African sunset.

Just what we needed on a cold January evening in Petworth.

KCT

“Let not the bold traveller be scared...” The December Book Sale

December isn't my favourite Book Sale month, nor, I suspect, will it be Miles'. It's barely seven o'clock on Saturday and the morning Square is dark, deserted and cold, boxes are being transferred from van to Hall. At least it's not raining. The weather for November was atrocious, once in a hundred sales awful. The Square turned into a squally lake and some of our bigger customers did not brave the floods. Some come a long way.

Today there's a superabundance of Penguins. Perhaps there's a corporate word for Penguins - like a *richesse* of pine martens. The overflow demands a somewhat controversial relocating of cooking, children and gardening, in some ways the Cinderella sector of the sale. It's very, very busy to start with but quiet in the afternoon. A good total but the really big totals come when the afternoon plays its part. It often doesn't. Today even a pound or two will make this a record year and we've taken this in the first minutes. By ten thirty the £1 table, piled high at ten, is down to single book level.

I've forgotten to bring up the two volumes of the Oxford Compact Dictionary (1971 Edition), with the microfiche print and the magnifying glass. It's heavy. Thinking about it, perhaps the Society ought to retain for its own use a reference book of this calibre. It's probably a good idea, but it means finding room for another two books and sizeable ones. In practice we almost never retain books although I suppose it would be a fair “perk” for the work put in.

But here's a possible exception. Old series Everyman's Library, water-stained, frayed spine, no dust jacket, faded boards, extensive pencil annotation inside back cover. The sort of book you remove pre-sale; after all we do have standards. We'll never sell it on the day. Ironically the book's a gem. Richard Ford's *Gatherings from Spain*, published originally in the 1840s, this the third Everyman printing (1926). A very leisurely stroll - Ford would certainly not have been a modern texter - around early nineteenth century Spain by a Protestant gentleman with a very good eye, a mordant curiosity, an ear for language and more than his fair share of the prejudices and foibles of his class, particularly towards the Catholic establishment - a love hate relationship toward a country in which he had made a prolonged sojourn. Enough proverbs to keep even Sancho Panza happy and constant echoes of the knight of the sad countenance. Sancho might have been less taken with quotations from Horace, Martial and others. It's a sign of changing times that Master Ford does not trouble to translate them. A gentleman will know Latin, but Spanish needs an English version. In any case Richard Ford writes very much “in his own time”. The casual aside is integral to the whole book. Don Quixote thought it augured bad luck to meet a hare on entering a village. “Let not the bold traveller be scared, but forthwith stew the omen; a hare as in the time of Martial, is considered by Spaniards to be the glory of edible quadrupeds and to this day no old stager ever takes a rabbit when he can get a hare.” Just as well perhaps the old staggers weren't living on Lord Leconfield's estate between the wars! The book's becoming more fragile as I read on: the spine's virtually detached now. “One of the old vulgar superstitions in Spain is an idea that those who were born on a Good Friday, the day of mourning, were gifted with a power of seeing into the earth and of discovering hidden treasures.”

We've digressed. What's all this to do with the Oxford dictionary? Well Richard Ford's a great one for the recondite word. I'm going to try a few on the Compact Oxford:

1. Illote (page 125) is not in the shorter OED. Ford uses it of a servant not too fussy about hygiene. It means “unwashed”. The “Compact” quotes this particular example and no other.
2. Cates (page 131) is not quite so rare. “Cold partridge or turkey, sliced ham or chorizo - simple cates.” Originally the word was used to distinguish bought (as opposed to cruder homemade) provisions. The word seems to be echoed in the shop in the Arcade at Petworth.
3. Vivers (page 174) “a prudent man will always victual himself in Spain with vivers for three days at least” seems to mean much the same as cates but appears to defeat both dictionaries. It can also carry the meanings, fish-pond, rootlet, or offer a variation on “viper”.
4. Snowery (pages 183) again stretches the dictionaries. Ford glosses with the Spanish word *neveria* and says that it's an appendage to a hotel, a place “where ices and cakes are supplied”. *Neveria* is the normal Spanish word for an ice house.
5. Maragatos (pages 89) is hardly fair and does not seem to have passed into English as a loan-word. It applies to a class of muleteers in the Leon/Asturias region of Spain who are said by some to be of Germanic origin. Their desire to remain apart from the rest of society, seems something like the attitude of the biblical Rechabites (Jeremiah xxxv).

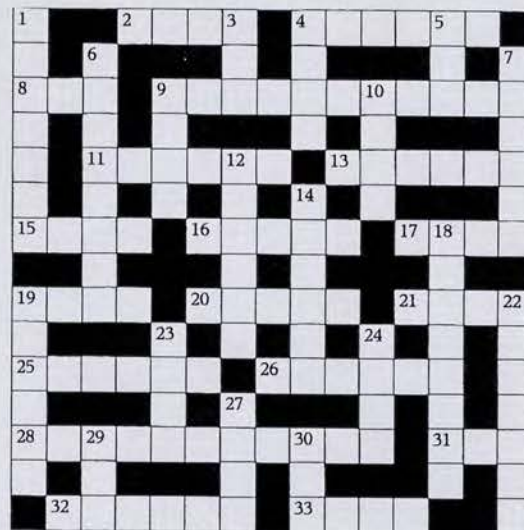
We've digressed - again. Well it just goes to show that “you can't judge a book by its cover.”

P.



Sancho Panza as governor of the island. A Luther Roberts woodcut.

Deborah's Spring Crossword



Down

- 1 & 32 ac How to mark out the parish on Rogation Sunday (4,3,6)
 3 Spoil in March (3)
 4 Large bar of chocolate perhaps (4)
 5 Put two and two together (3)
 6 Pre-Christian tradition, now a child's game, once practiced in Sussex on 9 dn & 25 ac (8)
 7 Regularly recurring (6)
 9 & 25 ac The time to eat 18 dn & 13 ac (4, 6)
 10 A platform in the daisies (4)
 12 & 14 Barnet seen to best effect in seasonal millinery (6,6)
 18 & 33 ac Easter food - once thought to guard the home from evil (3,5,4)
 19 Flies hard becoming fairy-like (6)
 22 Game played at Tinsley Green each 9 dn & 25 ac (7)
 23 Get up now to hear the birds' chorus (4)
 24 Pastry and eggs dish (4)
 27 Book of the New Testament (4)
 29 Greek letter (3)
 30 Retreating tide (3)

Across

- 2 & 4 Petworth churches have an annual procession on this day (4,6)
 8 Poultry hutch which should survive wet weather (3)
 9 Sussex floral occasion celebrated on 1st May long before more recent traditions began (8,3)
 11 Go quietly, sweetheart, to find the bird (6)
 13 Fruit and marzipan cake eaten at Easter (6)
 15 Heroic narrative (4)
 16 One might give 12 & 14 dn another airing here ... (5)
 17...and it might be described thus (4)
 19 Easter is definitely this - usually chocolate! (4)
 20 18 dn & 33 ac were once one or two for just one of these (5)
 21 Flower support (4)
 25 see 9 dn
 26 Less fresh (6)
 28 Len scraping away, giving the house a spruce up (6,5)
 31 Old name for the sun (3)
 32 see 1 dn
 33 see 18 dn

Solution to 138

Across

2 Boat, 4 Ladies, 8 Tar, 9 Westminster, 11 Willow, 13 Russia, 15 Cant, 16 Barry, 17 Spit, 19 Cosy, 20 Flint, 21 Clap, 25 Narrow, 26 Heroic, 28 Portraiture, 31 Oft, 32 Spring, 33 Noel.

Down

1 Titanic, 3 Tis, 4 Lamb, 5 Eat, 6 Drawings, 7 Dreamt, 9 Wild, 10 Noun, 12 Oracle, 14 Prance, 18 Palace Of, 19 Canape, 22 Painted, 23 Boar, 24 Home, 27 Sing, 29 Rip, 30 Urn.

The eagle-eyed among you probably noticed two errors in the Petworth Society 2009 Crossword. 4 down should have referred to 17 ac. and not 16ac., and 12 down had (6) letters not (7) as stated in the clues. Apologies! Sorry for any confusion caused.

The Society Crier – a letter

“Criccieth”, 11 Dawtrey Road, Petworth GU28 0EA
Telephone 01798 343249

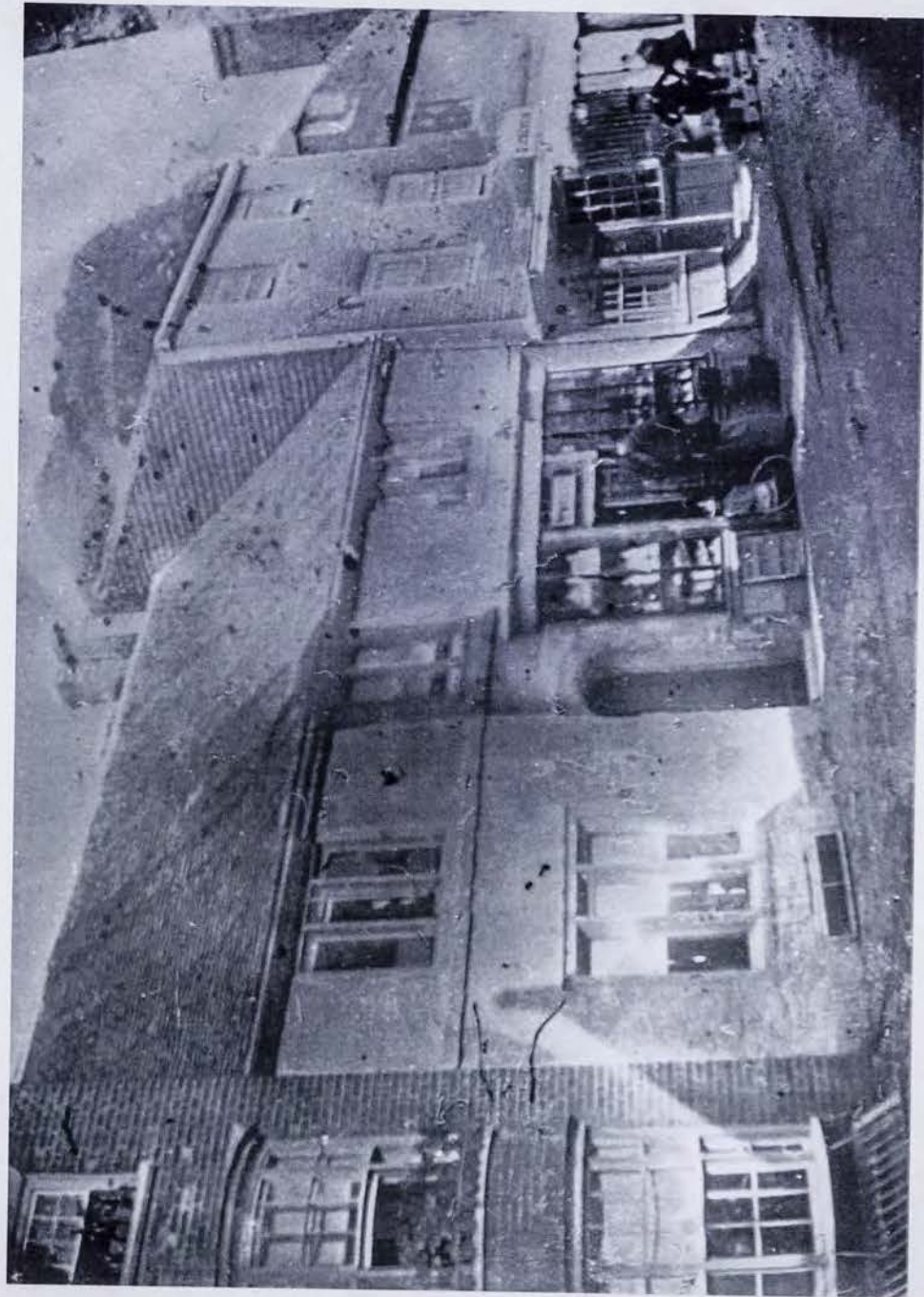
Dear Peter

Over the two years that I have had the honour of being the “Petworth Society Town Crier” I have received many wonderful comments regarding the beautiful Town Crier uniform. All of the items, coat, bloomers, shirt and cravat were made by seamstress Mrs Margaret Gibson and paid for by the Society. However I am being constantly questioned as to why I do not have buckled shoes to complete the outfit. I am therefore writing to inform you that, due to the kindness and generosity of John and Kerry Bridle of Fairfield Close, Petworth I am now the proud owner of a pair of buckled shoes.

During my time as Town Crier I have already worn out one pair of shoes attending various events which include weddings, fetes, Petworth Town Fair, Horn Fair at Ebernoe, switching on of Petworth Christmas Lights, Bignor Park Garden Fete, the Princess of Wales’ Royal Regiment event held in the Town and Margaret and Ivan Wadey’s Golden Wedding Anniversary at the lovely Butcherland Farm. Ivan and Margaret requested no presents just donations to their favourite charity and they raised £7,500 for the Macmillan Nurses. All the donations which I have received as Town Crier have also gone to various charities and I will let you have a list to show to your Committee.

Getting back to the shoes: this summer we have looked in Chichester, Worthing, Watford, Horsham and Bognor for buckled shoes and the only ones we could find were between £150 - £250. If, as you can see, I am going to need a new pair of shoes every two years this would be a dear do! I have therefore compromised and purchased a new cheaper pair of shoes.

I will now relate the story as to how John and Kerry Bridle came to make and provide buckles for my new shoes.



Houses in front of St Mary's Church about 1870. The shop (centre) is probably Morgan the chemists. It is possible that the burly figure with the hat is Morgan himself. One of the very oldest Petworth photographs. See Old Petworth Traders (2).



North Street January 2010. Photograph by Jim Taylor.



Market Square January 2010 – another Jim Taylor photograph.

It was the 31st October (Halloween Night) and my wife June had made up little parcels of goodies for any children calling at our door. We ended up with some thirty callers, probably due to the fact that June, wishing to join in the spirit of the evening for the little children living near us, had lit the path with night lights and put a pumpkin outside the door. It was lovely to see the children around the town enjoying themselves and all were polite and well behaved – this includes the adults who came with them to join in the fun!!

When the last group of children called at the door an adult all dressed up in costume stepped forward and said: “Does the Town Crier still want buckles on his shoes, and if so would he please drop them up to my house tomorrow and we will fix it for him?”. Just like “Jim Will Fix It” but in this case it turned out to be John and Kerry Bridle. They have made a brilliant job as you will all be able to see when I wear my new shoes at Petworth Town Fair. I am very grateful for what they have done and through the Petworth Society Magazine I would like to thank them.

Yours sincerely
Mike Hubbard
Petworth Society Town Crier

Petworth Marble - an update (see also PSM 132 pages 10-11)

You may remember an account of a search for Petworth Marble over a year ago. Courtesy of information from Plaistow Parish Council, I was alerted to a seam of the rock that had been uncovered near Kirdford as part of new foundations at Sparrow Farm. Some test blocks were transported and a number of sculptures have since developed. Noticing the difficulty with which it is worked, I was intrigued by the amount of Petworth Marble in Chichester Cathedral - in many of the pillars. In further conversation, it appears that much restoration of the Petworth Marble is now performed with Purbeck Marble, which has visibly smaller winkle shells and a stronger more stable structure - very important in times when budgets must be agreed and met.

So how does it carve? Well, it doesn't really carve easily. The white shells are calcified remains within the brown/black matrix which derive from primeval muds. Where the stone has laid down well - appropriately trampled by *iguanadons* and such - it is a fine stone - but more often than not there is a distinct strata of good flattened material, with other layers being very soft and brittle. Some are glutinous and almost like Christmas pudding - complete with the mincemeat feel. So you can imagine the horror of working with a large block only to be confronted with an area that is patently *not* stone in the midst of your carving. Fine for a sculptor who works *with the material* like me - not so good for the stonemason who works up designs to order! But where it is good, it is remarkable - a depth of colour from white to browns and blacks with as much tonal range as a good photograph. It provides such a

colourful surface that the forms need to be simple to 'read' well in sculpture.

Two works will be unveiled at Worthing Museum as part of my exhibition 'Carvings and Claywork' from 20th March to 19th June 2010. Sadly, a large work is too impractical to start until a commission for a permanent indoor work presents itself. Like alabaster, its gleaming qualities are ruined by being outside, despite the stone being very hardy in the well calcified sections. Many paving and tomb stones around Petworth are found to be Petworth Marble on closer inspection - their shallow gleam lost over the centuries, but the wrinkles are still visible to the curious. Take a look at some of the old slabs around your houses.

The Worthing exhibition will feature 40 works, many of which have connections with the area. A recently completed triptych of terracotta heads is entitled *Sussex Siblings* (277 years) and includes a former Byworth resident; there will also be a bust of Duncan Carse, the broadcaster, voice of BBC Radio 'Dick Barton' and Antarctic explorer who lived at Fittleworth for 50 years.

You can see more about Petworth Marble in Roger Birch's book: *Sussex Stones - The Story of Horsham Stone and Sussex Marble*, Roger Birch (2005) ISBN 978-0955125904.

Jon Edgar

John Edgar: Carvings and Claywork

free entry March 20 - June 19; Tues-Saturday 10am-5pm (200 yards walk from the Waitrose carpark)

Worthing Museum and art Gallery, Chapel Road BN11 1HP



Sparrow Sleepers (Petworth Marble)

"It's hard work, Robert."

Petworth fair 2009

A howling wind, violent scudding rain, day-glo fair posters torn from their drawing pins and lying like scarlet flowers among the soaking leaves in the gutter. Welcome to Petworth fair week. Some quizzical Saxon or Norman shade must be chuckling to himself. Whoever in their right mind would set a fair in November? Even given the vagaries of English summer weather, it seems perverse.

But perhaps we're forcing the ancient fair into a modern mindset. The present one-day fair must stand or fall by November 20th while the old fair was for nine days "in the feast of St Edmund". It could accommodate the occasional damp day. "A nine day wonder" – if you like. And it was commercially important: business was business and you'd attend whatever the weather. Travelling traders, entertainers and hangers-on went from fair to fair. The weird date probably reflects some long-forgotten agreed itinerary. The other components of the itinerary may have vanished but Petworth, above all, is a survivor.

As it happens, the weather relents for the morning of the 19th. There's a strong wind however and a decidedly unpromising forecast. The customary clearing of the Square. By one o'clock we've been in the Square from 10.45. Next year we'll have to post warning notices. For 25 years now, we've worked on the assumption that an hour's waiting is an hour, more or less. No longer, a car's still blocking the north side of the square. Eventually it has to be removed. I doubt whether warning notices will solve the problem but it might help. The Harris brothers have seen it all before; there probably isn't too much they haven't seen before. "Not a bad year", Fred observes. There have been more small engagements, fetes and school weekends, less emphasis on the big events with their high attendance premiums and so much crammed in that fairground rides become a poor second in the rush for cash. It's a late start, but, with the weather still holding, they'll make up quickly enough. They were working on the Gallopers the previous evening, the legacy of a car ploughing into the back of them as they returned from an event a few weeks ago. They've removed the bollards in the cut this morning. As always, one was "difficult", probably the one with the designer stubble of pale grass round the base.

The Gallopers begin to rise. The "very pineal gland" of any fair, George Garland observed using a somewhat surreal, medical metaphor in 1934. Nearly eighty years ago, yet, in the chequered history of the fair, but a watch in the night. A thousand years doesn't give immunity though, the fair remains desperately fragile. Think of the sheer hard work, the physicality of it, the naked struggle with the elements. In a world of the "virtual", it's the embodiment of a different way of thinking, a challenge to participate rather than click or watch, a kind of parable for the dilemmas of modern life. And it's genuinely "unmissable", not the kind of "unmissable" where you miss and then replay at your leisure. Miss it and your only recourse is next year. "Call me again a day that is past" was the angel's challenge to the ancient seer. He couldn't. We can't. And if the weather's awful, that's it.

And in the evening the rain comes, just as predicted. Heavy rain, but perhaps the wind moderates a little. By seven o'clock in the morning it's still raining and the wind rucks the pale green canvas on the roundabout. A flap opens and Robert appears from the interior. They've patrolled the fair during the night. The shadow of the longest night still hangs over the fair. Five years ago. For the foreseeable future it always will. "It's hard work, Robert." He neither agrees or disagrees. For a fairman this is simply the way it is.

At last. It's nearing four o'clock. The torrent of rain has ceased, no need for Noah to send out raven or dove. Mike, buckles on his shoes, and the "bell mellifluous" in his hand, has done the rounds of the town. It's time to open. "In the year of our Lord 1276 (1273 I think, but you don't argue with the crier). Eleanor de Perci the King's justices-in-eyre..."

Some of the Harris brothers and helpers are in the bus shelter, a kind of improvised grotto. Waiting. Waiting is the essence of fairs. Waiting and weather. And there's Dave the Spieler, top hat, lilac waistcoat and sixty years fairground experience. A valuable addition to a growing tradition - the opening ceremony, the Hall back-up, the defiant playing of the Band as the Gallopers go round. The Spieler's is a dying art, a casualty of the megaphone and the matter of fact. But what a world of hyperbole is disappearing with the Spieler - boxing booths, the snake girl in her closed glass cage with eighteen foot reptiles - the ghost train. "If you don't come out laughing, you should see a doctor."

Into the Hall. Talking in the grotto, I've missed the clog dancers and the Punch and Judy is already in full flow. Children screaming at a curiously unobservant Mr Punch, sausages careering across the stage and a marvellous Lincoln green crocodile eerily at home in a very unfamiliar habitat. Then there's the unchanging but impossibly villainous face of Mr Punch. In a Health and Safety world, there is probably need for the homily at the end; Mr Punch is certainly not an example to emulate. Everything in the Hall's going well, the Society tombola crowded. And outside the four yellow jackets are changing with the hour. Time to be a yellow-jacket myself, time also to remember that the Museum, lit by candlelight and offering free opening, is very much part of the fair. There's a roaring fire and the gas lamps are surprisingly bright. It's very cosy indeed. Would Mary Cummings have left the warmth for the fair? She would certainly have seen the lights in Golden Square, possibly even a caravan in High Street. There's a good crowd to see the Museum at its most atmospheric.

Back to the Square. The other stewards sensibly tending to patrol the marches between the fair and the Star. Back in the Hall the band are well into a polished routine. It's busy inside and out and it's coming up to 8.30 and that iconic moment when the band play on the Gallopers, another reminder of the longest night.

Robert has an eye on the weather. Once the band has played Sussex by the Sea, there's a feeling of anti-climax. Time to think about taking down.

November 21st. It's seven o'clock and the Square's empty of cars and clean as a new pin. It'll be the 21st November next year before you see such a thing again. We've been lucky. Later in the day there's howling wind and scudding rain. This is where we started. The oldest surviving street fair in the South of England (and who says otherwise?) has notched up another year.

P.

We who breakfast off Wedgewood plates

Green Pastures, Weston Lane, Oswestry, Shropshire SY11 2BB
☎ 01691 653571

My sister in law the former Margaret Green now resident in Exeter and daughter of the Petworth water and sanitary engineer Mr Norman Green in the years 1937 and onwards, has sent me some copies of the Petworth Society Magazine including issue 118 dated December 2004. Margaret is a member of your Society but presumably could not bear to part with more recent copies.

Issue 118 includes a picture of Alison Neil as Richmal Crompton in later life. I claim an interest because I was instrumental in having Just William included in the library of the Petworth Boys School in about 1938 to 1940. It was not a huge library, in fact about ten books perched on the window sill and a rather strange selection including a title: He Who Once Eats Off A Tin Plate, a book translated from the German and about the period from leaving prison to returning. On reading it I wondered what genius thought it suitable as 10% of an elementary school library.

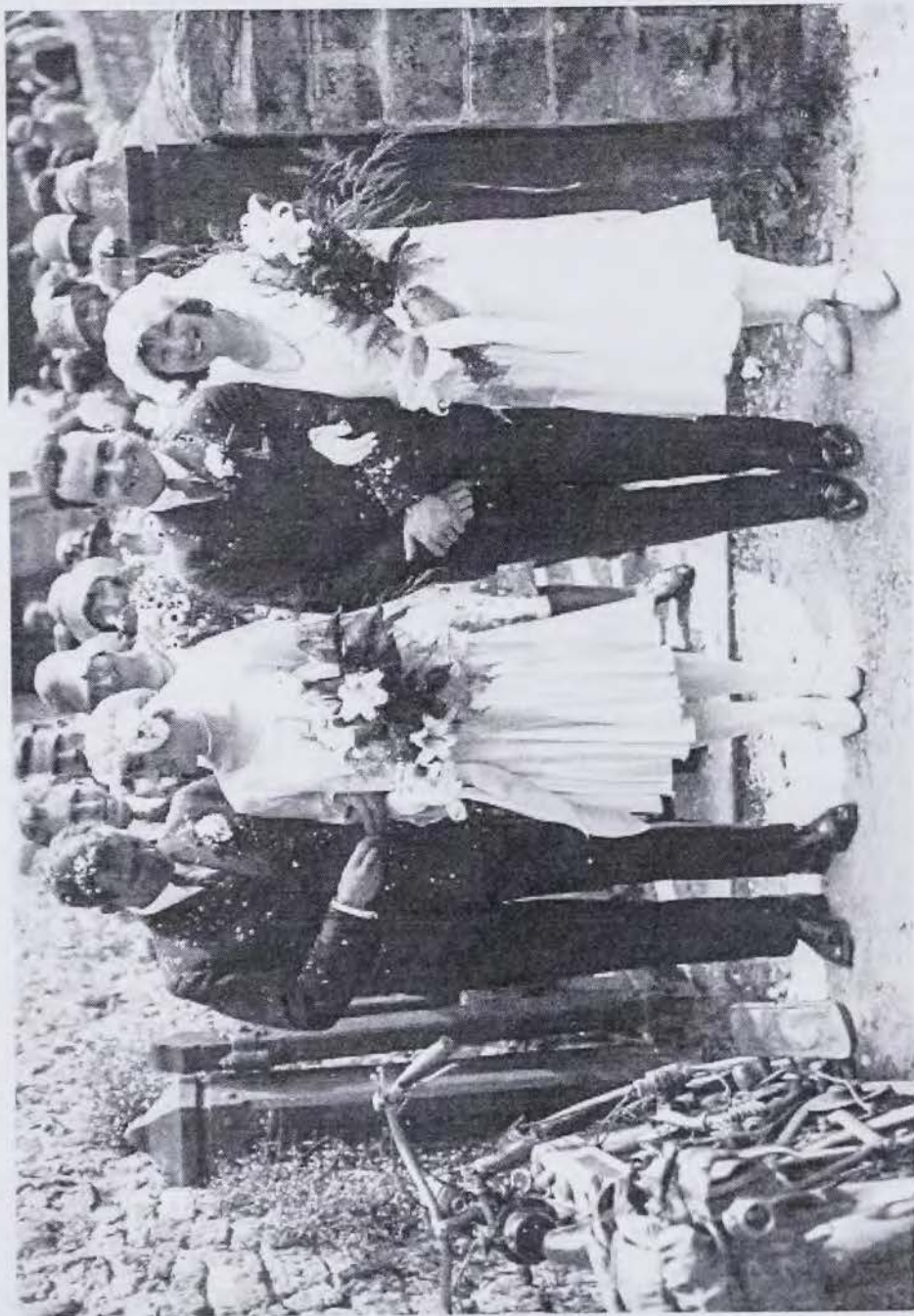
When we in the class, standards five, six and seven were settled into writing our compositions one day the teacher and head master Mr Charles Stephenson, who was also the scout master and church organist, asked us if we wanted any special books for the library as he was engaged in the onerous task of making selections. I put my hand up and said yes please Just William by Richmal Crompton. I had seen it in Mrs Weaver's shop window and the drawing on the dust cover made it look attractive.

Later in life I married a lady who took a yokel as a marriage partner in defiance of her mother's middle class pretensions and she then requested a full set of Wedgewood crockery from the well to do family friends as wedding presents. Forty years on I still use the remainder of the set regularly and as a token of salutation to the Tin Plate book I decided that if daft enough to write memoirs it would be called We Who Eat Off Wedgewood plates. Perhaps the Tin Plate book and the fact that it has been impressed in memory for seventy years was not such a bad selection after all. But I liked Just William better.
Frank Scammell.

A double wedding at Tillington church in 1930

Sylvia Chandler writes:

Grace Redford was born Grace Wadey, the second daughter of George and Amy Wadey, at River Common in May 1907. She went to Tillington school with her brother and sisters. When she left school, she left home (with her younger and older sisters, Winifred and Violet) to go into service in Hove. While working there, Grace and Winifred met their future husbands.



Fred and Grace (left), Ted and Winifred (right). From a photograph by G. Garland.

Grace's husband would be Frederick Redford, a cobbler and a South of England swimming champion, while Winifred would marry Alfred (Ted) Field, another sportsman, and, by trade, a carpenter and cabinet maker.

The wedding at Tillington church on June 7th 1930 was the first double wedding at Tillington for fifty years. Both couples set up home in Portslade Old Village until Grace and Fred removed to Bideford in Devon. Their only son, Kenneth, would have a dental practice at Northian in the same county. In latter years Grace spent eight happy years back in Sussex at Vallance Rest Home in Hove, moving back to Devon only in January 2009. She died in Devon in October. She is survived by her two grandchildren and a great grandchild, also by her younger sister Ethel Ross.

[Editor's note: We don't usually print wedding photographs but this is a very unusual one. Has there been a double wedding at Tillington since? It is also a reminder of the number of wedding photographs taken by George Garland. Because of their personal rather than general relevance, they are so often left out of account in discussing his work.]

Out of the dustbin. The story of a Petworth photograph

Walter Kevis's photograph of the Petworth Park Friendly Society with their newly presented banner (see centre pictures) is amongst the very latest examples of his work. He would leave his Lombard Street premises in 1908, having lived and worked in Petworth for some thirty years. The photograph was taken on the morning of Wednesday 19th June 1907 at New Grove, at that time home to the Leconfield Estate land agent H.E. Watson. The banner had been worked by Mrs Watson and her daughter. On that day in June Petworth celebrated "Club Day", the annual holiday for members of the Petworth Park club, a sick benefit society dedicated to employees on Lord Leconfield's estate. By extension, the day was an open holiday for Petworth people in general. St Mary's Parish Magazine reports that, "all the members" assembled at New Grove for the official handing over of the banner. The photograph shows the two ladies seated and Henry Whitcomb, secretary of the Society, receiving the banner from H.E. Watson. The ceremony preceded the usual procession to church "where a most appropriate sermon was preached by the Rector". Afterwards there were the usual festivities in Petworth Park, games, dancing, brass bands and refreshments, supplemented this year by a cricket match between Petworth and Storrington.

A little surprisingly, this very late Kevis photograph has not survived in negative form in the Kevis collection at the West Sussex Record Office. My first acquaintance with the photograph came when I was delivering groceries to a house in Hampers Green. It would be perhaps the late 1960s or early 1970s. The picture, ripped from its frame, was lying on top of a dustbin. It had been bought at a jumble sale, the frame reused and the photograph discarded - clearly it meant nothing to the purchaser.

ESTABLISHED 1877.

MEMORANDUM.

October 23 1907

From W. J. Kevis,
Photographer & Picture-Framer,
Market,
Leconfield, Petworth,
SUSSEX.

To Mr H. Whitehead
Estate Office
Petworth

WEDDING PARTIES, SCHOOLS, GROUPS, HOUSES AND GROUNDS PHOTOGRAPHED ON THE SHORTEST NOTICE.

To Mr G. G. G. of Leconfield Park

July 20.	2	Copies	3.0
— 26 th	34	do	2.11.0
Aug. 6 th	26	do	1.19.0
Sept 4 th	18	do	1.7.0
	80		£6.0.0



Kevis
with Mrs

The invoice reproduced indicates that a significant number of prints were made, presumably for distribution to members of the Club. It is a reasonable assumption that many cottages on the Leconfield Estate had a framed copy and it is appropriate that this particular one now hangs in the Cottage Museum parlour. In fact, Mary Cummings would probably not have been a member of the Society, very much, I would think, a male preserve.

The banner, of course, can still be seen at Petworth House, although the "Club" largely pre-empted by the Lloyd George Insurance Acts, continued in an attenuated form until the 1950s when it was disbanded. There are Garland photographs of a rather anaemic Club Day procession in the 1930s, but "Club Day" will not have survived the war.

P.

Old Petworth Traders (2) Francis Gaudrion Morgan

If, possibly¹, Francis Gaudrion Morgan was not Petworth's first photographer, he was certainly Walter Kevis's most significant predecessor. We have to assume that the majority of his photographs have been lost but those that do survive are important. The only surviving photograph of the Old House of Correction towering above Grove Street is usually attributed to Morgan as are a number of other originals copied in the late 1960s and then in the possession of the late Mr Rogers at Lodsworth. They come from the 1860s and early 1870s. A large number of portraits by Morgan survive bearing his stamp on the reverse and mounted on card but the subjects are rarely identifiable. The invoice reproduced gives a date for the establishment of the Morgan business as 1834. It seems likely that F.C. Morgan took over from his parents in the 1850s when he had qualified as a Chemist. Photography would be a sideline. The Morgan shop premises stood in Petworth churchyard in the row of houses demolished in 1896. Constance Lady Leconfield² looking back to the late 1860s writes:

"Then also houses surrounded the Churchyard, leaving open only the gateway leading to the south door. In one of these houses lived Morgan the Chemist, who also practised photography in a little glass studio close to the Bartons."

There is no indication that Morgan practised photography after the mid-1870s. It may be that he had come to an arrangement with the incoming Walter Kevis, who did not practise as a chemist, confining himself to tobacco and other sundries. By 1888 the Morgan business had passed to F.G. Edgar who does not seem to have practised photography either. By the 1880s, perhaps, photography was moving beyond being a Chemist's sideline into a full-time occupation. Morgan himself retired to Brighton, dying there in 1893 at the age of 73. The invoice depicted comes from 1881. Brands Beef Essence as an invalid medicine needs no explanation.

1 See Petworth's Photograph Prehistory (PSM 133)
2 Random Papers (1939)

P.

ESTABLISHED ANNO DOMINI 1834.
Church Street
PETWORTH.

18

No. Sherwin

Bo. J. F. Gaudron Morgan
Family & Dispensing Chemist.

*Supplies Prescriptions & Family. Recipes carefully prepared
with Plants & Colours of all kinds*

WILSON & SCATLLE MEDICINES LEATH & ROSS'S HOMEOPATHIC MEDICINES & PREPARATIONS

		£	s	d
1880				
Jan 29	A Mixture	1	6	
	A Lotion	1	-	
Feb 5	See Brand's Cell. Beef	3	-	
May 3	A Mixture	1	-	
June 15	Mixture	1	6	
	Lotion & Prescription	1	6	
	22 Mixture	1	6	
		11/1-		

Paid J. F. Morgan
3/1/81

“Very much part of a team”

I was born at Chiddingfold where the family walking-stick factory of Lintotts was based. It had been founded by my grandfather. My two sisters and I were not expected to work in the factory and we were all three apprenticed to the drapery trade in London. My eldest sister went to Derry and Thoms, my next sister to Bourne and Hollingsworth, while I went to Parnells at Pimlico. They were all large establishments. I was sixteen and had never lived away from home before. So far from being upset by this, I quite enjoyed the new experience. The hostel, like the shop itself, was right opposite Victoria Station and a good place to see celebrities going to and fro from the station. I remember seeing the King and Queen and various stage and society people. My bedroom at the hostel looked right across to the station.

As girls we had been to the small private school in Woodside Road at Chiddingfold run by Mrs Rugman. She was very Irish, very strict and quite capable of losing her temper. She was, for all that, an excellent teacher and largely ran the school herself. When she retired I went to another private school nearby. Miss Lockwood's. It was, I suppose, unusual to have two small private schools so near one another in somewhere like Chiddingfold.

I did two years in London as an apprentice but grew tired of being at everyone's beck and call and took a job with Cauldrons' at Guildford - much in the same line. When the shop closed at the outbreak of war I was at home for a while and took a temporary job at Lodsworth with the Randall family who ran the village stores. They were a nice happy family and I got on well with them. Time came, however, when I had to do some work of "national importance" and I applied for a position at Petworth Post Office. I was sent to Oxford for a month to train - not only to learn the work, which included savings accounts and telegraphy, but also correct manners at the counter - how to be polite, if you like. I would stay at Petworth Post Office until I married in 1948.

During the war Petworth Post Office was very busy; there were camps all round and much mail going out to Canada and elsewhere, including cables. A cable was rather like a telegram except that it was taken down at Petworth and phoned through to the Horsham Depot for transmission usually abroad. When I went to Petworth, Mr Crook was the postmaster. He and his wife lived in the flat above what is now the East Street sorting office. Petworth Post Office was a busy place - a hive of industry - there were three on the counter, three in the working-room, Mr Hughes, Mr Dean and Dorothy Elliot and two or three in the telegraphy room. Remember that Petworth was still a Head Office; it would not be until after the war that it came under Guildford.

Mr Crook retired and his deputy, Mr Dean, took over as acting postmaster until Mr Myers replaced him. Petworth was the only local office that dealt with vehicle licensing: the alternative was a trip to Chichester or Guildford. We did not, however, handle passports.

I had left when I married but was soon back on a temporary basis, originally for a few days, then sometimes for weeks at a time. I'd work as one of the counter staff. When we first married we had a tied cottage at Gore Hill where my husband was working as a gardener. Then we had a spell on the Isle of Wight before returning to Sussex - to Bordon Wood on Mrs

Lamb's estate outside Midhurst, again gardening. It was so out of the way that we didn't really like it and when Jim began working in the gardens at Petworth House we came back to Petworth. The old Lord Leconfield had died by this time but I well remember him walking Rounds the Hills or up to the Gog with his distinctive yellow gaiters or spats and his dog. Fred Streeter? Yes, he was perfectly alright as long as you did your job properly.

My husband wasn't that keen on gardening; he'd have preferred to use the training he'd received in the RAMC during the war. He started work at Budgenor Lodge at Easebourne, a former workhouse, then operating as a home for old people. He worked as a medical auxiliary and drove to and fro from Petworth. The matron at Budgenor was moving to a new old people's home at Billingshurst and asked my husband if he'd like to go with her. We bought a little house at Wisborough Green, at last able to break free from tied cottages. I was still in regular contact with the Post Office at Petworth and worked as relief, coming in on the bus, Jim having the car. We were eventually able to buy Grove House in Grove Street. It was already divided by this time into Grove House and Grove Cottage and had been, I would imagine, since before the war. When Jim came to work at Courtlea it was, of course, ideal.

I loved the Post Office and particularly remember Jack Bartlett's time in charge. He'd been a clerk at Petworth, trained as a postmaster and eventually returned. Jack was a born performer, and Margaret his wife loved to sing. I was always, in latter years, there on a temporary basis but I felt very much part of a team. Don Simpson, like Jack, a local boy, was postmaster when I left. And then there was the postmen who were there when I joined in 1948 – Harry Kent who lived in Lombard Street, Charles Caplin from the Gog, Fred Hill who had once driven the old horse-drawn mail cart, Mr Muskett from Grove Street. There were so many others. Phyll Sadler was a great character and a great one too in the concert party.

Pat Baxter was talking to Janet Gourd and the Editor.

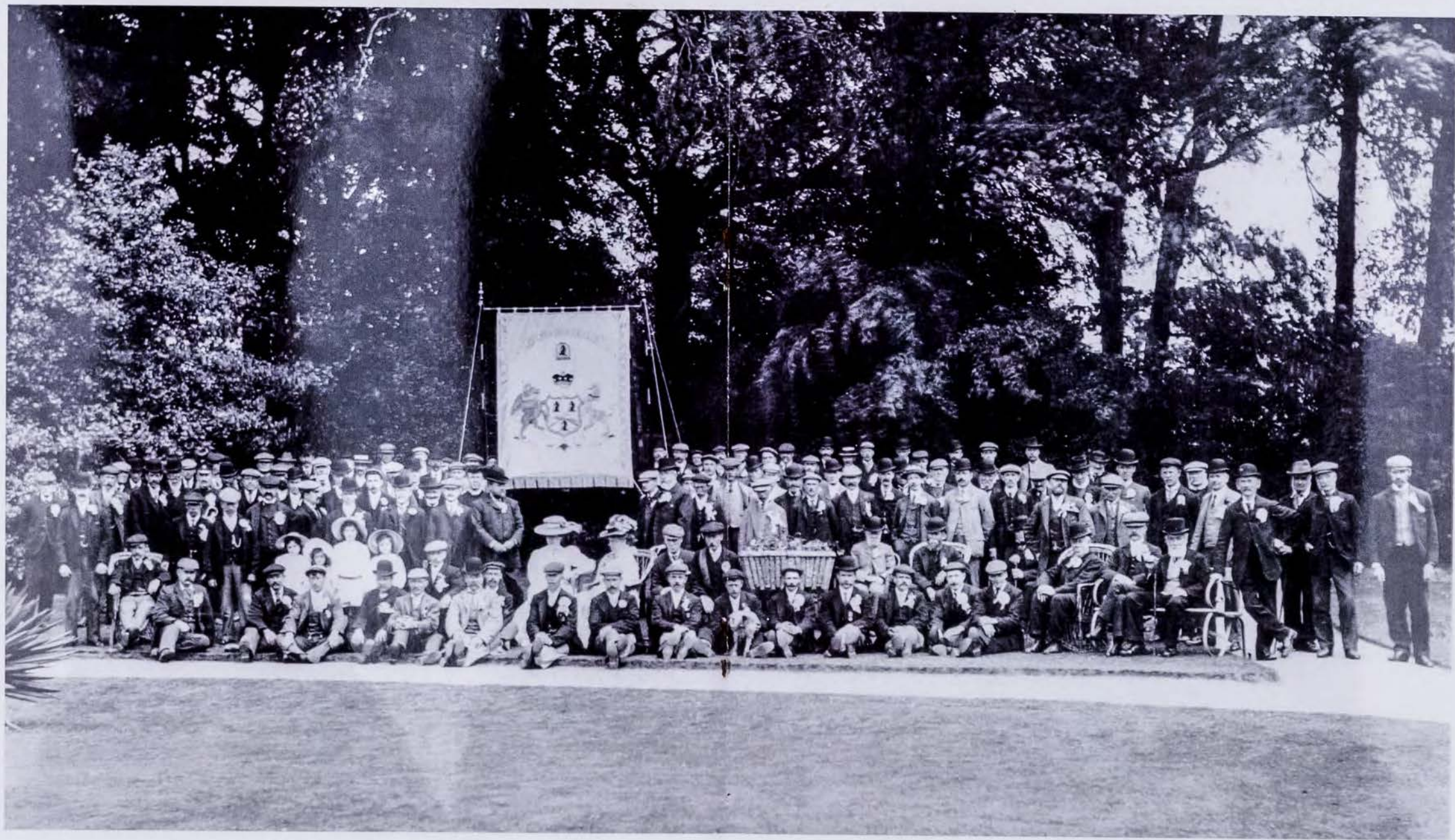
The maid's box

The maid's box in the bedroom at Petworth Cottage Museum is too often simply ignored. In fact it is one of the most evocative objects the Museum has to offer. Like the Polyphon downstairs, it might be considered peripheral, something that Mary Cummings might have had, but probably didn't have. We have no reason to suppose that Mary was ever in service; she had been trained as a milliner, but for all we know she may once have had a maid's box, so many young girls did. For all that, if 346 High Street is to reflect an era, then the maid's box is as redolent of that era as anything in the entire cottage.

The box was a generous and important donation but is not directly related either to Mary Cummings or to Harriet Speed who would so vividly illuminate its use. I was fascinated by a talk given by Harriet a number of years ago to Petworth Women's Institute, replicated essentially a little later for stewards and friends of the Petworth Cottage Museum's tales. I was fortunate enough to have tea with Harriet on a number of occasions when she was in her



Bognor Mills early last century. See Bognor Mills 1887 - 1916.



Petworth Park Club at New Grove 19th June 1907. Photograph by Walter Kevis. See The Story of a Petworth photograph.



This Walter Kevis print clearly comes from a damaged original. It is marked Mrs Simpson copy Tillington 1896. I think it may be a water cart used to lay dust on the roads. Am I right? And does anyone recognise the background? Ed.

late eighties. She would always insist on providing tea, sandwiches and cakes. In later life Harriet's catering skills were almost legendary and she specialised in cooking for private dinner parties. Her great ambition was to be awarded the coveted Cordon Bleu, and when she had been to Paris to attain this, she was extremely proud.

In earlier life Harriet was all too familiar with the maid's box. It had had implications that, for her, not yet fourteen, were quite unexpected. Just before her birthday, Harriet, the youngest of a Tillington family of thirteen, was told by her mother that they would be going to Petworth shopping. Harriet's initial thought was of a birthday present but she was soon to discover otherwise. Mrs Howard took Harriet into Austens in the Market Square to buy a maid's box. It suddenly dawned on Harriet that the box had an unlooked-for significance: she was to leave home. The box was to accompany her to her first "live-in" position, as junior housemaid at Lodsworth House, all having already been arranged. The box would be used for Harriet's personal things: Sunday clothes for church, boots for best, underwear, nightdresses, cotton and flannelette for summer or winter, huckaback towels. Life in such an establishment would be strictly regimented but Harriet remembered the occasional break in the routine. A group of friends would gather in the centre of Lodsworth and then cycle to Bognor. Harriet was also a keen dancer, and when she could, attended local dances. After a while Harriet would take a similar position at Bury – the box being carried on the crossbar of her brother's bicycle.

Harriet married into the Hurst family, builders at Lodsworth, and, eventually widowed, would return to Petworth on marrying again.

From a conversation between Ann Bradley and the Editor.

Bognor Mills 1887 - 1916

Very occasionally in these pages I have mentioned Leconfield Estate tenant files. With their heavy duty brown envelopes and their invaluable but sometimes indecipherable carbon copies they sleep the years away in the archives at Petworth House. An acquired taste perhaps. Just once in a while one surfaces in private hands, usually through the last century sale of a freehold. For some reason I have one such file concerning the two mills at Little Bognor.

As a representative of the genre the file is fairly typical and illustrates at once the limitations and the fascination of this material. In some ways it's the very limitation that gives the fascination. Nothing is explained and familiar figures from the Leconfield Estate establishment interact with strangers who flit briefly into the half-light and as quickly disappear. Fixtures are H.E. Watson the Leconfield agent and J.B. Watson, his namesake, who would succeed him in 1909, Mr Downing from the Park, Mr Allison the water foreman and the ubiquitous Henry Whitcomb at the Estate Office, acting on the instructions of H.E. Watson when the latter is away on business in Yorkshire. The file is marked 1887 to 1896, with a continuation to 1912 and 1916 and reflects the demise of the Bognor Mills as a working entity.

As is usual with such documents there is no preamble; everything is assumed. The mill may be ancient; it may be relatively modern: we are not told. As a general principle small water mills were hard work and dependent on seasonal flow of water. On the 3rd August 1887 Alfred Knight the tenant is in arrears of rent to the very considerable sum of £75. H.E. Watson writes directly in longhand for him to attend at the Estate Office on the following Monday. "If you are unable to come please send a cheque." In the circumstances the sentence seems curiously unrealistic. No outcome of the meeting is given, but on Lady Day 1888 Alfred Knight signs a formal letter resigning the tenancy from Michaelmas. Whether the letter is written for him by the Estate Office or by someone acting for him is not clear. On the 11th August he promises to pay £10 from the arrears in September and then monthly instalments of £5. "If he does any thrashing for Lord Leconfield this is to be put to the credit of his rent account." Whether Alfred Knight ever made any impression on the arrears is not clear.

By August, with Alfred Knight's tenancy fast expiring, H.E. Watson is writing to W. Stenning at Yew Tree House, Hascombe. He will see him on Saturday next regarding the mills. A note from Henry Whitcomb informs Mr Watson that Stenning had in fact worked for Alfred Knight for some three years but is now living at Hascombe. The next step is to establish references; Mr Harris from Bramley being another previous employer. Estate bureaucracy seems to have been somewhat leisurely and it is not until the 11th September that Mr Watson is ready to finalise. Too late. Mr Watson had promised to reply in ten days, but William Stenning, hearing nothing, has abandoned the idea.

It would appear that the mills are lying vacant, and in May 1889 a Mr Cross from Bognor seeks permission to put his horse into the plat(?) at the Mill. Mr Watson is away in Yorkshire. In June of the same year a new applicant appears, Alfred Covey from Wisborough Green. He sees Mr Watson and the usual references are required. Mr S. Harris from Wisborough is cautious. Covey has worked for him some five or six months but "as regards his position as to pocket I know nothing about (sic) - but I believe him to be a steady man." Mr C. Saunders from 134 High Street Lewes is more forthcoming. "Covey was with me nearly six years as General Miller. I always found him steady, honest and obliging."

By the 12th of July Mr Watson is prepared to let the mills to Covey but again there seems to have been some difficulty with the Estate bureaucracy. By the 11th September he offers to see Covey at the Estate Office. Again too late! Mr Downing from the Estate had failed to communicate with Covey as agreed and the latter has withdrawn. "I have decided not to have anything to do with Bognor Mills as I have been out of work so long that I must take another situation." Clearly wires have become crossed. A letter from Mr Downing admits that he had been informed about Alfred Covey a month previously but he had not been told that the matter was pressing. Although Covey had been to the Office three or four times no one had troubled to tell Downing, who is himself of the opinion that Covey has simply seized the chance to withdraw on other grounds. Whatever the truth of this, Covey is no longer a prospective tenant. Curiously enough, when Alfred Covey enquires again about the mills in December he receives a flat refusal from H.E. Watson.

✓ Amberley
April 1. 1892
To The Right Honourable
The Lord Leconfields Estate
Littbognor Mill.
I will new gear Pit-wheel
with heart oak Cogs in
a workman like manner
for the sum of £. 10. 0
Your kind favours will oblige
your obedient servant
Jas @ Mills
To W. Whitcomb Esqr.
Estate Office Petworth

Estimate from Jas. C. Mills for repairs to Bognor Mills 1892.

In April 1890 with the mills apparently still vacant, William Stenning returns for a meeting with Mr Watson. He is looking for "a small business for grist work and baking if it would be in good repair." Once again references are taken up and Mr Harris replies as he did before. By April 30th all is set up for William Stenning to sign the agreement. There follows some correspondence about fruit in the garden, Mr Carn of Little Bognor has possession until Michaelmas but with William Stenning now the tenant he will have the use of the garden after that. Two estimates from James Mills the Amberley millwright are for Nutbourne Windmill and seem to have been included in the file by association with an estimate from Mills in April 1892 for putting in new cogs for the gear pit wheel at a cost of £6.10.0. Mr Watson accepts the tender on the condition that the work is done immediately.

By July 1893 William Stenning is clearly having trouble. He writes to H.E. Watson to apologise for non-appearance at the Estate audit. He has found difficulty in getting in his quarterly bills and seeks a month's respite on the rent. By January 1896 he is seeking a reference from Mr Watson for a position as miller at Oakwood Mill, Ockley. Mr Watson has no difficulty. William Stenning is honest and straightforward and has simply shared the fate of other small millers in the depressed agricultural situation.

In May of the same year William Collins of Little Bognor enquires, but declines the mills because necessary improvements to the house have not been made. There follows the usual discussion about the orchards when the mills are vacant. In 1902 there are complaints about leakage from the tank "that used to turn the mill wheel." Mr Allison is to look at this. Another complaint follows in 1913, as in 1903 from Miss Wright of The Holts, of excessive overflow from the mill pond. For some time it has occurred when the pond was full after heavy rain but water has lately come through at a low level. This may well threaten the bank itself and the supply of water "to Brookdean and this house."

By February 1913 the mill stones are to be sold to Hugh Joyes at Fittleworth Mill. The final act is played out in May 1916. F. Harris from the Swallow at Watersfield pays £6 to remove the iron from the old mills. J.B. Watson agrees on condition that Harris make good any damage.

Never less than a struggle, the Little Bognor mills had finally breathed their last.

P.

The Cottage Museum prior to opening in 1996. A personal recollection.

While memory is still relatively fresh, it is, perhaps, a good time to set down what I remember of the beginnings of the Cottage Museum. And what better year than 2010, exactly a century on from 1910 the theoretical date for the reconstruction? Already it's difficult to remember the exact sequence of events; with the passage of years events tend to run together and fall out of sequence. We are already looking back two decades.

From the late 1980s Ann Bradley had envisaged a Petworth "Museum". It was a vision shared, perhaps, by few, but Ann is a determined lady and Lord Egremont was known to be sympathetic. However, despite the occasional polite exchange of letters, there matters appeared to rest.

One morning all changed. I still had the shop then, it would be the early 1990s. "I've something to show you." I set off in Ann's wake. Saddlers Row, Damer's Bridge, High Street and across Middle Street: 346 to be precise. I'd passed the cottage hundreds of times, hardly given it a look, and I was quite unaware of the walled garden at the back. Lord Egremont was prepared to offer 346 at a purely nominal annual rent. Pipe dream, it appeared, was about to transmute into reality. Mrs Slee, the previous tenant, had, as an invalid, been latterly confined to the ground floor. On a superficial view, the cottage, while certainly not reflecting the 1990s, didn't really reflect any particular period. Like most places, it was a hotch-potch of differing sometimes discordant elements.

The garden, understandably, was neglected, mainly down to rough grass. There was a 1940ish shed. We would later learn that in the 1930s there had been a somewhat contentious right of way from Middle Street. Now the back part of the shed blocked the way and the brick wall had been filled in. One or two shrubs, I remember a rather nice daphne that might perhaps have been kept. There was a dead rook as a rather lacklustre welcoming party on the first floor landing, a metric sink, a good cellar with a brick floor, some 1930ish plumbing and a 1960s brick fireplace in the parlour. A flight of steep wooden stairs led to an attic and the view from the attic window was superb. As Lancelot Brown might have commented, there was a "capability" but capability and reality seemed that morning a fair way apart.

It was difficult to suppose that we would be offered such an opportunity again, but there were some disquieting questions. What did we mean by "Museum"? It's a riddle that nearly two decades have not really answered. Another word is needed and that word doesn't exist. Of course 346 is a showcase of a kind, but the artefacts, while interesting in themselves, are essentially part of a larger coherent whole, a social portrait of an epoch, or, more accurately, a small segment of an epoch. But what epoch? Clearly there would be dangers in retreating so far into history that modern visitors would find it difficult to relate, while, equally, we could not locate so near in time that we lost the frisson of distance. In any case, we were looking at a particular context, a Leconfield Estate cottage, a reflection of life on one of the great landed estates.

Before or after 1918? 1918 was an obvious watershed. Was the Leconfield Estate, despite all appearance, quite the same after the 1914-1918 war? By chance I had been working on Florence Rapley's Heath End diary for the years 1909-1912 and had been surprised by the turbulence of those immediate pre-war years. Here was no period of calm rudely interrupted by hostilities. There had been no calm, rather a widespread questioning of fundamental assumptions. George V had come to the throne to confront a sea of troubles. Open war between a Liberal majority in the House of Commons and the Conservative peers in the House of Lords, industrial unrest on an unprecedented scale, suffragist agitation and an, as yet, unpartitioned Ireland sliding toward civil war. If the Leconfield Estate provided shelter from the worst of the storm, those within would at least hear the rain beating against the window panes.

At the time Raymond Harris and I were working together on the renovation of the

Leconfield Hall. I had had first hand experience not only of his competence but of his infectious enthusiasm. Would he help? In the event, he would be an inspiration. Anne Simmons had expressed an interest, as had Janet Duncton. Janet's District Council background might well be helpful. Then Jacqueline and Lewis Golden were suggested, at that time they were relatively new to the town, but certainly not to the locality. They too were prepared to help : in fact their contribution was to be crucial.

Reaction from the Museum establishment was cautious. Annie Hood had seen too many such schemes, however well-intentioned, come to grief, for her not to play the Devil's Advocate. Volunteer help could be difficult when initial enthusiasm began to drain away in later years and even in the early 1990s an endowment of £70,000 was a minimum requirement. We simply didn't have it. Yes, the project might work; but we needed to be aware that it could just as easily fail.

The Leconfield Estate was prepared to put the Cottage in full structural order at no cost to the Museum, while five different local builders were prepared to put in their time and expertise, again without charge. It's not everyone nowadays who knows how to build a working copper. A public appeal worked well; there were private donations and a grant from Chichester District Council and there was, of course, the constant help and advice of the Leconfield Estate. Raymond Harris had made a successful lottery application on behalf of the Leconfield Hall and was now asked to go through the whole tedious process again. Any grant made would by now have to be retrospective : we were within sight of the prospective opening date. The lottery application seemed, almost literally, "to tick all the right boxes" so we were optimistic. In fact there was one box it didn't tick. Grants were not made to leasehold premises. Six weeks to go and lottery funding was out.

Decisions were now having to be made almost on a daily basis and against a background of continuing work with an opening day hurtling towards us. Gas lighting was put in by Suggs of Crawley - some fittings were new, others retrieved from Leconfield cottages where they had remained in use over generations. The parlour fireplace had been replaced by a "Petworth" kitchen range, Leconfield had one in store. Ian and Pearl Godsmark had made a painstaking record of the changes to the Cottage, while Max and Ann Bradley with Raymond Harris had bought in some of the larger pieces of furniture. By no means everything had to be bought : I remember a particularly productive visit to Hoes Farm, was it with Max or Raymond? We were given, among other things, a bed painted the old Leconfield brown colour (soon to replace the contemporary battleship grey) and a venerable plate rack. Lars Tharp from television's Antique Roadshow bought on our behalf two very impressive Crimean war jugs. Why the sudden interest in the Crimea?

Enquiries had shown that the occupant of the Cottage in 1910 was, predictably enough, an employee of Lord Leconfield. They had also indicated that the occupant was no run-of-the-mill Estate worker - indeed Mary Cummings was far from typical. She had lived at 346 from 1901 and would remain there until 1930. She worked at Petworth House as a seamstress. Of Irish extraction, Mary was a devout Roman Catholic. Nothing very unusual in that you might say but transpose the situation to 1910 and you might think differently. An insular Petworth might not be hostile but it could be reserved: Mary was something of a stranger both by birth and by religion.

We had a dilemma. Did we simply set Mary on one side and reflect an anonymous, typical, household, or did we reflect Mary's own life at the cottage? If we did this we would have to go where the path led us. We couldn't fudge the issue. Mary's cottage, if such it was to be, might remain spartan but it would reflect Mary, or, more accurately, Mary as we might imagine her to have been. At the very least an accomplished seamstress (and a trained milliner as Mary was) would leave her mark on the decor. Chenille table-cloths, chenille curtains. Why not? Rag rugs, a selection of irons, we now knew that Mary had taken in private work.

Meanwhile Ann was working tirelessly on the decor. Mary's sudden "appearance" offered more scope for the interior. Above all, visitors would identify or at least feel they were in touch with a real person rather than a cypher. We chose to take the Mary Cummings route and we have never regretted it. There were photographs of Mary's husband among the Kevis portraits in the Garland collection, all copies of older prints. According to Census records Michael Thomas Cummings, formerly a farrier in the 8th The Kings Royal Irish Hussars was some twenty years Mary's senior. Presumably Michael Thomas had died. Service records showed him as having been sent out to the Crimea as a reinforcement, and to India in the wake of the Mutiny. Mary then was a widow. The jugs and photographs a memorial to a lost husband. We were later to be disabused.

Time was passing. Max and Ann working ever harder on the decor. Some objects we were offered were too good to turn away. The Polyphon for instance. Would Mary Cummings have invested in such a thing? Or the splendid clock in the parlour, later to be replaced by the present long case clock. Or the opalotypes in the sewing room, colour tinted photographs printed directly on to sensitised white glass. Again, perhaps, not something Mrs Cummings might have had, but they do serve to illustrate the type of private client Mary might have looked after and the clothes they wore.

The figure of Mrs Cummings at work in the sewing room often startles the unwary visitor as he or she mounts the stairs. Ethel Goatcher had known Mary Cummings relatively well - a stoutish short lady walking into Duncton at regular intervals to pay the gardener for the upkeep of the family grave in the churchyard of the Catholic church there, calling in at the Post Office and staying for a cup of tea. The figure was made to Ethel's specifications. In the event Ethel was not at all convinced with what we received back. It doesn't really matter : the figure remains a symbol rather than an actual presence.

Another slight discord was the discovery that Mary was no widow. Very unusual for a Roman Catholic couple at the time, let alone a family, the couple had gone their separate ways in the mid-1880s. Michael Cummings working as a journeyman farrier in Wimbledon. He would still be alive in 1910 although there is no indication of any contact between the two. Mary had had to raise the children herself and at the same time clear up residual debts and rent arrears.

Jacqueline Golden quickly took over the general administration of the Museum, as also the Museum inventory. She would be quiet, unassuming and totally efficient. There were stewards to find, rotas to fill, money to collect daily. The Museum keys would be collected by the duty stewards from Frank Loonat's shop on the corner of Middle Street. Lewis Golden dealt with the finances. Lady Egremont laid out the garden with an imaginative mix of vegetables and flowers. Later the discovery that Mary had her own allotment would give a change of perspective.

And suddenly it was time to open. Lord and Lady Egremont arriving for the ceremony in a vintage car, the band playing in the lane opposite 346. That Foreign Legion of objects we had assembled had to fuse together as a team there would be changes, there would be a sharpening of focus, but the basics were in place. The attic would be opened up, the days of opening would eventually be altered : a Petworth Sunday can be very quiet. Above all we would meet Agnes Phelan who had stayed at the cottage with Mary's two granddaughters in 1919. Agnes would be an utterly irreplaceable link with the real Mary Cummings. It's good to know that Agnes is still with us, now a centenarian and still living where she always has — in Walthamstow.

P.

They Were Happy Days

My father was a gamekeeper on the Leconfield estate and as was usual in that profession he would be moved to a new beat every couple of years. This was a strict rule on all of the big estates and ensured that the keepers did not get too comfortable or familiar with the locals and were less likely to compromise their position. This moving here and there was not so difficult for a single man but when he came out of the army, having served in the Great War, he met a girl named Alice Tickner. Alice was working at the International Stores at the time and she was having none of the moving about and so when William proposed that they should marry she accepted on the condition that he found a job that did not require the frequent moves of a gamekeeper. William became what was known as a woods carpenter at Petworth where his job included making and maintaining field and coppice gates. Lord Leconfield liked to see the gateposts made from chopped wood and so no sawn wood was used in the coppices. I know that Father once used a sawn gatepost in a wood at Shillinglee, after all he was pretty confident that it would not be spotted so far from Petworth, needless to say Lord Leconfield came across it and made him take the post out and replace it with one cut from the copse.

I was born at Mile House at Limbo, and later we moved across the road to the cottages opposite. There were two cottages at Mile House with Mr and Mrs Ted Peacock and their sons Alf and Reg living next door. Across the road there was Jesse Howard in one cottage and a woods carpenter named Gane in the other and in due course we would move into the third cottage. Most of the cottages at Limbo have now been 'done up', and what were once several cottages have been made into single houses. There were quite a few families and a good many children around the place when I was growing up. A whole gang of us would walk into school each morning no matter what the weather. The older boys would have the shortest walk to the bottom of North Street while the girls would go to East Street and finally the infants had the longest trudge to the top of High Street.

Saturday was shopping day and the whole family would traipse into town. The first stop would be a little shop opposite the entrance to The Cow Yard in North Street. Mrs Tyrell sold sweets and with my penny pocket money I could stock up for the whole week. A penny went

a fair way at a bag for a farthing and while the sweets were all weighed out of big jars Mrs Tyrell always added a few extra for good measure. Of course all the traders delivered and so it wasn't a matter of carrying all the shopping home, Mother just went around the various shops ordering what she needed for the coming week and it would be fetched out to Limbo by the delivery men. While Mum and my sister did the shopping Dad and I would stand in the Square and listen to the town band. Bill Steer used to play the big drum and it fascinated me to see how he could keep the beat. Years later when we worked together he would remind me of the times that I stood alongside him staring at the drum. On the way home from shopping we would, invariably call in at the Masons Arms. The woman who ran the pub was I think a relation of Mother's and the two of them would have a natter while Dad had a pint. This stop was always a welcome rest before the long walk along the London Road to Limbo and home.

1941 saw the Americans moving into the Park and the adjacent Pheasant Copse. Needless to say Limbo was a hive of activity during the war and the local families did well out of the troops. Dad and I used to go to the shows put on in the Park for the Yanks. Bing Crosby and Bob Hope were among many stars that came to Petworth. There was a big hut in the camp which was used as a theatre and it would be absolutely packed full of soldiers. While we took full advantage of anything that was available from the troops Dad was the first to admit that he didn't like the Americans. He always blamed them for an incident at Vimy during the First World War when he lost a lot of his mates. Father would frequently remark, 'they weren't no good in the first war and I don't suppose they'll be much use in this one either'. Fortunately Mother had a more sympathetic nature and would often invite in a soldier who she thought could do with some company. Her philosophy being that "he was somebody's son".

I was still at school in 1942 when the Boys' School was bombed. Good luck would have it that ten of us older boys would go up town and take carpentry classes in a room near to the old forge next to the Iron Room. The classes had been set up for the Londoners who had been evacuated to Petworth and we were invited to attend. We were halfway up North Street by Glebe Villas when we heard the bombs hit the school and were amazingly fortunate not to have been in the building at the time.

Mr Balchin was tenant of Limbo Farm in those days and he had a son who was killed at the Boys' school. Sadly he never could bring himself to speak to me after his son died and even some years later when I was working for Charlie Peacock we had some jobs to do at Limbo Farm and Mr Balchin would walk by me and not ever speak. I could only suppose that it was due to his son being killed and me surviving the bombing.

I left school at fourteen and went straight away to work for Charlie Peacock the Petworth builder. I say Charlie but in fact his father Fred was still alive then and so I suppose I worked for him. At first we had a yard up in Angel Street which had previously belonged to Mr Cooper the builder. Fred Peacock had worked for the firm for some years until Mr Cooper retired in the early 30s and Fred had taken over the business. Not long after I started a lady bought the house next door in Angel Street and wanted the yard for her garden. Well, as Fred only rented the yard, we had to move out and he ended up getting some land at the bottom of North Street at Hampers Common where Lucking Brothers have their yard now. Of course we needed a workshop and it so happened that Kirdford village hall had become available. The old building

was made of wood and galvanised iron and so it was not too difficult to take it down and put it back up at Hampers Common. It made an excellent workshop. Later we would build a mortuary next door where Charlie would run the undertaking part of the business. I was employed to train as a carpenter and spent much of my time with Bill Steer from Egdean. Bill was a carpenter joiner and had come with Fred when he took over the business from Mr Cooper. Another employee was Harry Long; Harry lived in Percy Row and was a fireman. I don't know what the arrangement was but he would work for Peacocks on his day off from the fire brigade. Working for Peacocks you had to be a jack-of-all-trades and this suited me just fine. While I was officially a carpenter joiner Charlie taught me to lay bricks which given that certain jobs could be quite slack during the winter meant I was able to keep working.

We did a lot of work for The Leconfield Estate as did most of the small building firms in the area. Council house maintenance was another reliable job that kept us busy. Another good customer was Sir Cyril Shackerley over at Fittleworth. We spent a good deal of time over at Coates Castle converting the place into apartments.

I was soon taught to make coffins by Bill Steer, and Fred or Charlie would give me the measurements and off I would go. Bill liked nothing better than a practical joke at someone else's expense. Anyway a commercial traveller had been pestering Charlie for ages trying to get a timber order out of him, one day he came around as usual and Bill saw him coming and got into one of the recently finished coffins and laid down. When the traveller entered the workshop he asked me if anybody was around. I replied that I was alone and the traveller was about to turn around to leave when Bill slowly sat up in the coffin and said "Can I help you at all". The look on the poor man's face was something to behold and he turned tail and shot out of the yard never to be seen again. Very often I would be down the yard of an evening making a coffin while Charlie was up at the Wheatsheaf enjoying a game of darts. You didn't have a lot of time to make a coffin as each one was individual. I hadn't been on the firm long when I noticed that old Fred would keep eyeing Bill Steer and me up whenever we were working close together. I had no idea what he was up to until one day he suggested that I should become a bearer and could walk on the opposite side to Bill as we were of similar heights. When Charlie had a funeral to do he would hire a hearse and a driver for the day. I don't suppose that the amount of business warranted keeping an expensive vehicle standing idle most of the time. Fred and Charlie lived at 302 North Street, it was a shack of a house then as were all of those cottages but it has been done up nice now. Like me Charlie never married.

One evening Charlie had a call to say that Harry Wakeford, who was one of the men who would sometimes help out with bearing, had died and could Charlie come and fetch him. Charlie asked me to go with him to Pulborough where Harry lived but I couldn't because I already had made arrangements to take Arch George down to Chichester as a favour. Charlie was not bothered as he managed to get Len Lintott to go with him. What happened when Charlie and Len got to Pulborough is unclear however Len told me later that Charlie and Harry's window got into a hell of a row over something or other and Charlie had a heart attack and dropped down dead. Poor old Len had two bodies to fetch back to Petworth.

As far as the business was concerned we all thought that was the end and I suppose it was really though we had been part way through a job at Balls Cross where we had been

converting the old post office into an antiques shop for some people called Collins. Fortunately Mr Collins was keen to see the work completed and he agreed to continue paying our wages and cover the cost of any materials and so we carried on until the work was done.

Needless to say with Charlie's death and the completion of the Balls Cross job I would need to find a new job and it wasn't long before Mr Wales the Leconfield Clerk of Works called to see me and offered me a job as a carpenter on the estate. The security of Leconfield appealed to me and I accepted the offer from Mr Wales. Father had by this time retired and we were living at Limbo Lodge at the entrance to The Pheasant Copse. One day Mr Luard the Leconfield agent called me in and suggested that I take on the tenancy of Limbo Lodge, well that was all very well but Father having worked for over fifty years on the estate was entitled to a rent free cottage and as we were living together there did not seem anything to be gained by me taking over, in fact there was a great deal to be lost as with me the tenant I would have to start paying rent. Anyway after some discussion Mr Luard proposed that they would increase my father's pension to compensate for me paying rent for the lodge.

I have lived at Limbo all of my life and while I am at present in Midhurst Cottage Hospital for a short stay I hope soon to move back to Petworth though I doubt that I shall be going back to Limbo.

I believe that I was the fifth or sixth generation of my family to work for Lord Leconfield and whether working for the estate or for Charlie Peacock they were happy days.

Roy Standing was talking to Miles Costello.

"Don't jump the gate!"

There have been Holdens at Ebernoe and Colhook as long as anyone can remember. There's a classic picture by Walter Kevis of my grandfather by the walnut tree at Colhook, with stacks of faggots ready to be sent off to London. "Pimps" for kindling were another Holden speciality: I still have my old pimp-making machine, although there's no demand for it now. My mother came from Elkham at Balls Cross and was one of the Duncton family, Alf Duncton at Elkham being her brother. Elkham has always been a part of me, as it was of her.

My father had gone to work for Mr and Mrs Burrell at Burrells Mere Lurgashall in 1926/7, before I was born, commuting to work from Elkham. After a while the family moved to June Cot, just off the crossroads at Lurgashall. It had been newly built by the Burrells to serve as a staff house, my father being the gardener. The builders were Enticknaps of Whitley and a manhole cover there carried the date. The house is now known as Moses and Bullrush.

My mother was a noted horsewoman and well known at gymkhanas and other events; she kept her horses and ponies at Elkham. When Mr Burrell died, Dad went on working in the garden, right through the war years, until Mrs Burrell herself died. It would be the late 1940s. Crossways right on the crossroads was an older house, also belonging to the Burrells at that time and used for Mr Bicknell the chauffeur. June Cot where we lived was just off the

crossroads on the right as you go on toward Northchapel. When June Cot eventually came up for sale Dad and I managed to buy it. Mr Bicknell was still paying rent after Mr Burrell died but working for the Admiralty. Every last Saturday in the month I'd be asked to take my motor-bike into Petworth to pay Mr Bicknell's rent at Messrs Newland, Tompkins and Taylor in Lombard Street. Mr Boxall would be sitting in the office and he'd say in his gruff way. "I knew you would be coming today, boy." Mr Bicknell would later move down to Portsdown Hill with the Admiralty.

Living where we did, it was Lurgashall school for me, but every Friday night I'd be off - back to Elkham. My mother travelled to and fro to Elkham on the back of Dad's motor-bike. I was always keen on motor-bikes, but an early mishap with Dad's Austin Chummy when I took the hand brake off and the car ended in a ditch, didn't go down too well.

Lurgashall school had three class rooms, infant, junior and senior. I remember Mrs Chalfont, Miss Carn who left to go to Petworth and particularly Mrs Townsend - definitely not a lady to be trifled with. She kept a big cane in her desk. If she produced it and laid it on the table; that was a threat. After that there was no further warning and she certainly knew how to use it. Very occasionally the warning was left out. One of the boys (this time I wasn't involved) had stolen a tin of his father's snuff. The boys had been outside trying it out but in class they just couldn't stop sneezing. Out came the cane directly. I had to feel sorry for the boy who'd taken the snuff - not only was he caned at school but when his Dad learnt about it he got out the belt! Mrs Townsend's father, Mr Fyfield, used to take us down to the school garden by the Village Hall. He was very deaf and if there was activity overhead - it was wartime - he wouldn't hear and we had to get him with us down the stokehole for shelter. For my last two years at Lurgashall, there was a canteen with school meals at twopence a day - previously, like most of the other children who didn't go home for lunch, I'd taken sandwiches. My mother stayed on at Elkham when my sister was born and so did I. Consequently I went to Ebernoe school for six months. No hardship for me to be at Elkham all the time - as it was I was there every weekend and all holidays. I might even earn the odd penny or two. One particular incident got me and some friends into the most terrible trouble. They'd been threshing at the farm and we made a pile of cavings (residue) from the threshing, stole some raisins from the kitchen at the farm, and put stringed hooks on them, then attached the string to a post. The pheasants swallowed the raisins and the hooks. Alf Duncton found the unfortunate birds and killed them, but we were told that if the gamekeeper had found them first, we might well have lost the farm. The incident was kept very quiet.

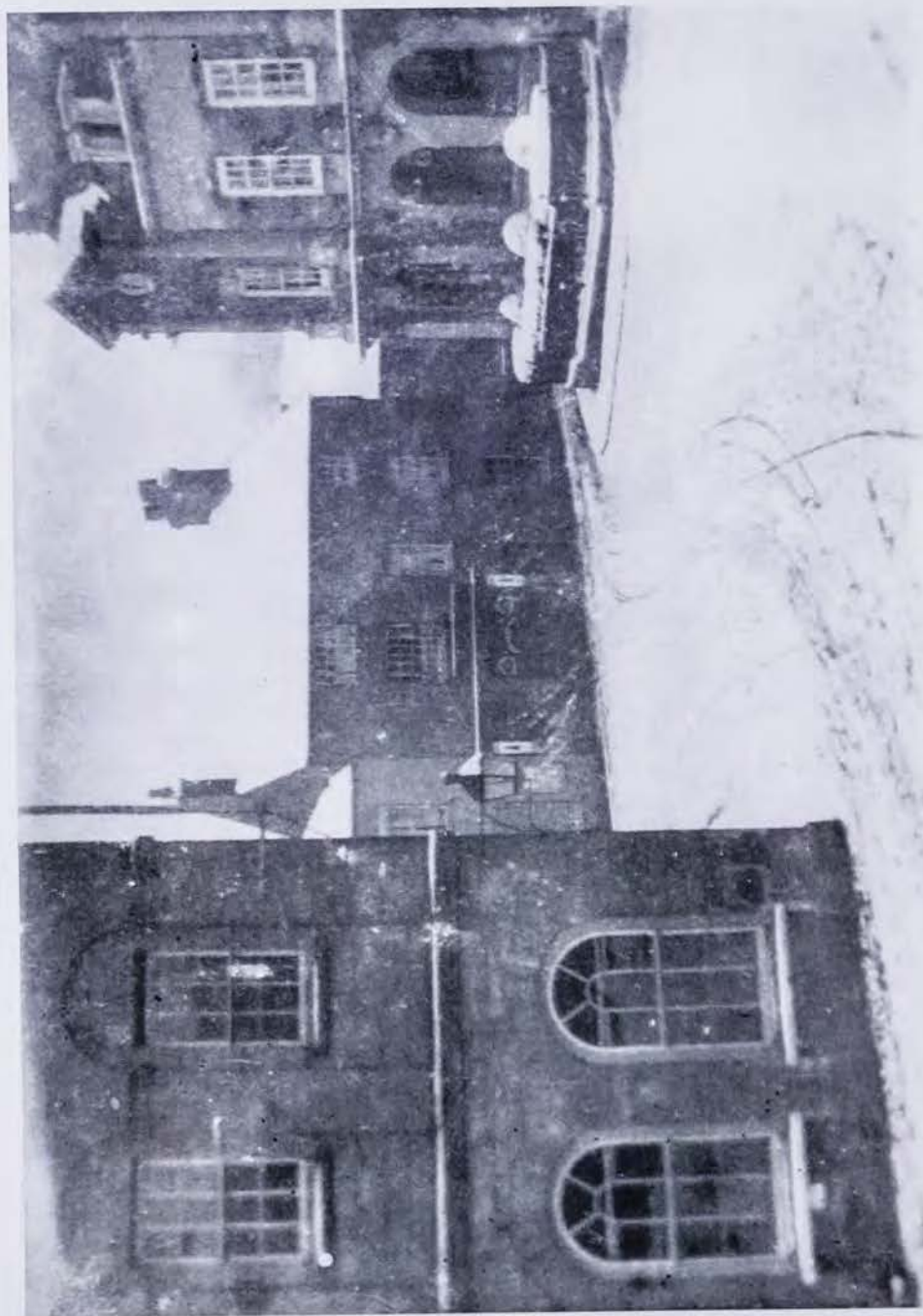
The six months at Ebernoe, a much smaller school than Lurgashall, of course, did involve a fair walk from Balls Cross, especially if the road was flooded as it so often was, I had then to walk in across the fields via Butcherland and Furnace Pond.

When I left school, there wasn't much question as to what I would do but, in fact, it would not be at Elkham, although I would always be there when I had time to spare. I went to work for Sid Seldon at Lower Diddlesfold. I would get there at 6.30 in time to help out with milking - after that it would be general work - leading the horse up and down the rows with the hoe or the drill, one row at a time. I still have a horse hoe, but it's a bit rusty now. The war was still on and Mr Seldon had a new under-cowman. "We can manage", he said to me, and it wasn't necessary for me to get in before seven o'clock.



Two more Jim Taylor snow scenes.





Where are the snows of yesteryear? This rather scruffy snapshot probably comes from the 1920s. Clearly snow could become messy even ninety years ago. Note the absence of cars and the lamp in foreground.

As you go up to Diddlesfold, you leave the maintained road when you come to the common. At that time there was a five bar white-painted gate across the road. I opened the gate and shut it again as I did every morning, got back on my bike and set off up the slope, alighted again and leaned the cycle up against the granary. Bill Woods, who rented the dairy for his milk round, was doing his bottles. The next thing I knew I was flat on the ground. A doodlebug had landed in the gateway I'd just gone through and blown the gate to pieces. I was on the ground on top of my bag and broken thermos flask. I was some 250 or 300 yards from where the device had landed and the blast had been channelled through the narrow gap between the granary and an adjoining barn. The two buildings had taken some of the force of the explosion, and I'd been to an extent protected by them. The two cottages nearer the gate had been much less fortunate, only the W.C.'s were left standing. There was complete chaos. Bill Woods was covered in black dust but otherwise unharmed; the boiler room next to where he had been bottling had a kind of heavy mache paper on the ceiling and this had come down on to him. Not a piece of the gate remained. I was lucky, Miss Mann with her baby was killed in one of the cottages and the effects of the tragedy lingered for years. There were some who, while not physically injured, carried the after effects with them for the rest of their lives.

Soon I was back at milking again, the under cowman having left, then haying, hoeing or whatever was needed. Mr Seldon still had two working horses with his three or four tractors and the war was still on. He wasn't a young man by any means and it wasn't long before he gave up the farm and Sir John Lee took it. It was one of several Lee farms and there was a considerable transference of equipment between them. I remember one curious incident, comical it now seems, but hardly so at the time. We had to take a tractor and trailer to "Warnborough" along with a large blue water cooler. George Mann the cowman had no licence for the road, come to that neither had I, but the equipment had to be transferred. "Cecil and Pip, you'll have to take them." "But I don't have a licence." "You can drive a tractor can't you?" "Yes, but not on public roads." "That'll be alright." So we set off for Warnborough. Well we made it to Warnborough and looked for the farm. South farm Warnborough was the address. Blank faces everywhere. There we were just off the Hogs Back and totally bewildered - we phoned the farm. "What on earth are you doing over there. It's not South farm Warnborough - it's South Warnborough near Basingstoke." We were on our way again. We left our equipment including the tractor and trailer, but how were we going to get back? No one had thought of that - a car had to come and fetch us. At the end of the year the process was reversed : South Warnborough was sold and what was left from the sale came back.

By this time I'd taken my tractor test. The examiner didn't seem to want to operate on the farm's tarmac but on the unmade road. There had been a big crater left by the doodlebug and this had been rough-filled with brick and debris. When I made an emergency stop the tractor jumped all over the place. At the same time I had a test for driving with caterpillar tracks. "I'll come back later," said the examiner. "No, on second thoughts I'll do it now, my next test can wait." In my time I've passed tests for tractor, caterpillar tracks, motor-bike, car, hedge trimmer and commercial vehicle.

The year's ricks hadn't yet been threshed and we were sent to Allmans at Birdham to

fetch a second-hand threshing drum with rubber tyres. I don't think anyone realised how big it was. We took a tractor and loaded up. All went well until we reached the top of Duncton Hill coming back. George Mann was standing on the draw bar to hold the drum back and we had a rope to pull the handbrake and another to release the catch. It would be a matter of creeping down the hill in bottom gear. This was difficult enough, the trailer was carrying too much weight for the light tractor we had. When the rope broke on the handbrake, George jumped off the draw bar and tried to put a block under the wheel, but he couldn't for fear of being struck by the wheel. So we careered on down the hill, fortunately there was nothing coming up. It was autumn, however, and the tractor started skidding and jumping in the leaves at the side of the road. I held to the centre and turned off the engine - there was smoke coming from the brakes. In those days there was a manned A.A. post at the bottom of the hill and the A.A. man rushed out to see what was going on. There was white smoke everywhere and a strong smell of paraffin. The A.A. man rushed off down the road to stop any oncoming traffic - there was certainly a Southdown bus. We careered straight across the road at the bottom of the hill to come to rest in a hedge on the Sutton road. Mr Whitney, the farmer, came out, I was shaking all over and soaked in paraffin. A few days later we came back to retrieve the tractor.

I stayed on at Lower Diddlesfold for some five years, mainly doing tractor and lorry work. They had a white cob on the farm; it was used for the occasional job, and in an earlier life was said to have been with Bertram Mills' Circus. Certainly, if you touched it gently with a stick the cob would rise on its hind legs.

One day I took him up to the blacksmith at Roundhurst for shoeing, leading him from Diddlesfold on a long rein. Thinking about the journey back and with my legs aching, it occurred to me that he must have been used to riders at the circus. No doubt he was, but was I prepared for what was to happen next? I'd no saddle, only the long leading rein but I clambered on a trailer at the forge and was soon on the cob's back. "We're going home." We started fairly sedately, but the cob began to gather speed. "Don't jump the gate" but he did, and we raced through Upper Diddlesfold without stopping. When I got back there were comments on how quick I'd been. It took me a while to live that down. Perhaps I should have known; we only used the cob for odd bits and pieces on the farm. He'd do the same if he were horse-hoeing, start off quietly then gather pace - and that was no good at all.

I had married in the early 1950s and we lived at Potlands Cottage at Northchapel until 1967. I was then working at Pheasant Court Farm. The work, as on any farm, could be heavy, 2¼ cwt. sacks of a standing lift were standard. A lot of my work involved the local stations, either delivering or picking up. Stations were very much at the heart of things then, Fittleworth, Petworth or Selham. I'd collect sugar beet pulp in bags for feed. It would come dry and needed to be soaked. The very last lot I collected from Selham certainly wasn't what we were expecting; it came in solid blocks sixteen inches long, a foot wide and six inches thick. We were expecting the normal hessian sacks and we had a trailer but no side-boards and we had to ring the farm to get the side-boards sent along in the van. Another pick-up was basic slag in hundredweight sacks but terribly dusty and filthy dirty.

Ploughing matches? When I was at Lower Diddlesfold the farm manager called me to one side and said, "You're in the ploughing match" - just like that. "Oh yes - what tractor shall

I use? I decided to take the old Case tractor and a Ford Elite plough. I was sixteen or seventeen and ploughed at the Petworth match for years, but stopped when I was at Pheasant Court.

In 1964 I left Pheasant Court, farm work was beginning to play my back up and I went to work on David Gill's fruit farm at Lurgashall. Gray Shotter from Northchapel lent me a plough and I started competitive ploughing again. After a while I moved into the vintage section with a 1937 Alic Chalmers B. I remember wanting to go to a match at Ardingly and not being able to find anyone to take me. I borrowed a tractor and trailer from Ray Baker at Upper Diddlesfold and went on my own.

David Gill, who was very well known locally for his skill with puppets and marionettes, gave up the fruit farm after I'd been there for a few years. Jim Bradley took over and went on until the E.E.C. decided that orchard holdings of less than twenty acres were not viable.

Odd things. Alf Duncton was always at Elkham and so was I. He didn't have a car and would drive his tractor into Petworth for his shopping. He had a 2.2 rifle for gamekeeping and used to leave it in his cab. I would say to him, "You can't do that," but he just laughed.

A curious incident occurred after we bought a tractor from the Steer brothers at Blackbrook farm. My son wanted a Standard Fordson - they seemed easily enough available but we simply couldn't get one locally. We heard there was one in a field at Blackbrook. We rang Bert Steer and he said, "I've got one down here. It's in the middle of a pig field." Over we went, offered £20, pumped up the flat tyres, finally got it going and were off. It had originally been bought new in 1937. We did it up, took a lot of trouble with it and in the end it looked really smart. We were at a steam rally and Bert was looking at it. "That's a nice tractor you've got there. I had one like that." "What happened to it?" "I sold it, I can't remember who had it." "You're looking at it, that's the tractor we had out of your pig field." I'll swear there were tears in Bert's eyes. It had certainly been a good £20 worth - we had the spade lugs, iron wheels and virtually a whole engine in spares. It hadn't been used in years.

Pip Holden was talking to David Burden and the Editor.

No fires in the rickyard!

My accent might suggest otherwise but I've lived in Sussex a fair time. My father had worked on the farms around Scarborough. Family tradition was that part of his job involved collecting swill from well-to-do homes and that he met my mother when she was in domestic service at one of the houses. Another family tradition was that my parents had had an earlier family and lost them, possibly in an epidemic. I do know that my parents moved to York where my father worked as a journeyman labourer, going from farm to farm on seasonal work such as haying, harvesting, ditching and the like, whatever was needed. My father died about the time I was born; he had been wounded in the 1914-1918 war and never really recovered. My mother was left a war widow with very little support.

There was a war pension of ten shillings a week, but she found bringing up a young

family on her own a struggle. She was advised, persuaded might be a better word, to ask for parish relief. "They will help you," she was told. They did and she was given an extra three shillings a week. When she collected her war pension the next week, she had seven shillings instead of ten; the three shillings had been deducted.

A curious coincidence had far-reaching consequences for myself and my sister Elsie. She was playing in the street when the district nurse went by on her bicycle and knocked her over. Just days later the same thing happened in the identical spot. Rightly or wrongly the district nurse took it into her head that Elsie wasn't properly supervised and went to the authorities. The outcome was that I was sent to the Bluecoat School in York. It was a charity school with a particular responsibility for orphans. I was five and the regime was austere. The school, which was for boys only, although there was a separate one for girls, wasn't large in modern terms, some seventy in all. We were up at six o'clock weekdays and seven on Sundays. Beds had to be stripped every morning to see that they were in good order – not wetted or anything like that. Then time to wash, as often as not the water would be cold, someone having forgotten to light the boiler the previous night, or tepid. After breakfast there were jobs to be done, or redone if not satisfactory, cleaning the yard or the playground, that sort of thing. Breakfast was spartan, lumpy porridge and one slice of bread with a scrape of margarine. Uniform was regulation blue coat, grey short trousers and socks tipped with yellow and blue. The school itself was a bungalow with three classrooms, junior, senior (the largest, in the middle,) and intermediate. I remember the big blackboard and the large cane that lay across the top. A boy stole it and carefully sawed it into pieces but it was simply replaced by a plimsoll. Sunday saw church at ten o'clock in the morning. Sunday School in the afternoon, and church again in the evening. There was morning communion for those who had been confirmed and a walk in the afternoon in place of Sunday School for those who were old enough.

By 1935 I was out at work in York as a chocolatier at Rowntrees and would remain there until I was called up at the outbreak of war.

I suppose I wasn't unusual in the sense that war service in North Africa, Italy and elsewhere made me aware of a wider world. I would not live in Yorkshire again. I'd already met my future wife at Bramley in Surrey and we were married in 1945. Ivy's father was a farm cowman who made a point of changing farms at least every two years. Ivy asked him once why he was always on the move – sometimes he'd hardly unpacked before moving on. His answer was that if you stayed longer than two years the farmer would begin to put on you. While there may well have been some truth in this, his attitude was fairly typical of the time, particularly among workers of his generation. The tied cottage situation made for an enduring feeling of insecurity and in some ways the urge to move on was a way of coming to terms with that.

Ivy's parents came originally from Wiltshire but were working on a farm in Berkshire. We were with them for a while when I was on demob leave from the Royal Artillery, but the time was fast approaching when I would need to find a job – not much call for a chocolatier in rural Berkshire! I saw one advertised at Petersfield. It was a farm cum smallholding, but the main business was a riding school. Children came to be taught to ride and I was essentially the stable lad, getting the horses ready and cleaning up. We had Thursday afternoons off.

As a job it was perfectly alright and I made the adjustment to the new work. One

Thursday afternoon we'd gone into Petersfield shopping; Ivy had put our washing out on the line. When we came back one of the children had thrown a great clod of mud at it. It might seem trivial, but, somehow, that finished us. I answered another advert, in the Surrey Advertiser, for a job at Ripley, on the other side of Guildford, going to the interview in my one and only suit, demob, with pinstripes.

I was given the job and would stay for eighteen months. This was farm work pure and simple, but I had learned enough at Petersfield to be fairly comfortable. Meanwhile my father-in-law had moved to Duncton to work on the Manor farm. He must have felt more settled because he would remain there until he retired. Ivy and I would come down from Ripley to see her parents but it was a tortuous and tiring journey. Bus from Ripley to Guildford, then the train to Haslemere, bus from Haslemere to Petworth, then the walk to Duncton (no buses). We'd walk from one lamppost to the next, then run from that to the next one, anything to break the monotony. Two cottages in Duncton High Street went with the Manor farm. When a job and one of the cottages became available, it seemed a good idea to come to Duncton.

When the farmer at Ripley paid me on the Thursday morning – it was always a little brown envelope – I told him I was giving a week's notice, as was the practice in those days: I would be leaving the next week. He walked back into the house with me, sat down in a chair and tried to persuade me to stay. I told him that my mind was made up. I didn't see him again until the Tuesday, when he tried again. "Have you changed your mind?" I hadn't.

We were moved by Jack Yeatman in his cattle lorry – nothing unusual in those days. He didn't charge us, possibly he charged Mr Whitney £1 – possibly not. Mr Whitney was to be my new employer. We moved into the cottage in Duncton High Street, one cottage away from my parents-in-law. "Dub" Connor had the cottage in between, a pensioner by this time, he was an expert fruit-grower who had worked at Duncton Mill Farm with the Turner family. He planted some fruit trees at the foot of Duncton Hill of which some certainly survived until comparatively recently.

I would now be working with my father-in-law and I thought that as he had been doing this work all his life, he'd pass on what he knew to me. Not a bit of it. He said in his Wiltshire drawl, "No, you. You be younger than I be. If I teach you, you'll be taking my job." In practical terms he'd get the sack and have nowhere to go. There was no animosity; we got on perfectly well. His reply was completely matter-of-fact. His attitude was symptomatic of the insecurity bred into farm labourers and similar workers by the tied cottage system. It expressed the insecurity of a generation. I had to learn by my mistakes, as, no doubt, he had.

I'd help with cattle, calves and the rest, always to the incessant thump of the pump sending water from the stream to a great tank in the barn. The pump, made by Blakes of Accrington, had a rubber valve which had periodically to be cleaned with a coarse file, otherwise the whole thing would clog up. The pump supplied water for the cattle but was not drinking water. The farm was still Leconfield Estate then and the pump was under the supervision of Arthur Allison, the water foreman, then well into his eighties. Mr Godsalve, the clerk of the works, would also make an occasional appearance. Charles, Lord Leconfield, I saw just twice, once, in a crowd, and then at somewhat closer quarters, at a one-day cattle show in the park. It would be, perhaps, 1948 or 1949.

Roy Whitney, the farmer, had two brothers, farming locally, Frank at Rotherbridge and Syd at Upperton – there was another brother, Perce, who was a blacksmith at Bramley in Surrey. In fact, Roy Whitney would be the last Leconfield tenant at Manor farm. It would be sold after he retired in 1966. The farm was some 360 - 370 acres, very much centred round Duncton village and it included Redlands and the big meadow opposite the Cricketers, the fields adjoining the church and a number of wooded rews, some no longer existing.

Sacks remained heavy lifts even in the 1950s, 2¼ cwt, but the coming of the “high arm” which enabled a sack to be lifted by hydraulics was taking some of the backwork out of agriculture. There were still times, however, when a sack had to be lifted bodily. With corn, I learned to grip a handful through the hessian to give me a grip.

When my father-in-law eventually retired, he lived at Redlands for a time, but my mother-in-law died and he found it difficult on his own. We would then go and visit him at Budgenor Lodge, Easebourne.

There was a clearer, less wooded, view of Duncton Hill in those days and Ivy and I saw a little black object careering down the hill. As it came nearer, we could see that it was a pram. We rushed out thinking that there might be a child inside. The pram hurtled round the corner at the bottom of the hill and slewed off right into the entrance of the farm. Inside was no child, but a tramp, a roadster who had steered the pram down the hill and round the corner simply by shifting his body weight from side to side. No one objected to his stopping for a while, but Roy Whitney certainly objected to his lighting a fire in the rickyard. The tramp was soon on his way.

Tramps were nothing unusual in those days; they had their particular routes, although the regular progression from workhouse to workhouse was already fading into memory. Some people remained very generous toward itinerants. The Rev. Tatchell at Midhurst was noted for this, while Mrs McNab at Duncton House would always have something for them to eat and drink, or even, perhaps, a little money. Tramps might pass such information on, but were never importunate. When we lived in the High Street, Ivy would go across to help Mrs McNab in the house. Years ago, the yard had gone with the old vicarage and the rector's pony and trap had been kept there. I understood that the McNabs had moved in when Mrs de Fonblanque, well known as a suffragette before 1914, had died. The old centre of gravity for Duncton was at the hill end of the village, hence the name High Street. Old Duncton Church adjoined the Manor farm, as too the school house. Only the cemetery remains of the church, but the old school building is still in use.

The Manor farm day started around five in the morning. The milk had to be ready for the blue Express Dairy lorry to collect two hours or more later. The milk would be taken to the Dairy's Billingshurst depot. There were ten gallon churns in those days, the older ones were seventeen gallons. Churns were, of course, metal, and even empty, no job for a man on his own.

A link with a vanished past was the lady who went round gleaning after the harvester; she reckoned to pick up enough to see her chickens through the winter. Roy Whitney was happy enough. Another hint of older days : when we first came to Duncton, you'd see, all along the Northchapel Road, from the Ebernoe turning and towards Petworth, animals tethered by

the road to crop the verges – goats, sheep, even cows. A metre from the road the verge went with the farm. I remember one farmer mowing the verge and throwing the greenery back over the hedge for his cattle.

Arthur Brown was talking to David Burden and the Editor.

The Ayres ceiling

One of the few undisputed Petworth photographs by F.G. Morgan depicts the demolition of Bryants the stationers and the former Church Lodge premises in 1872.¹ A new lodge would be built—the present one. Bryants stood within the churchyard and at right angles to Church Lodge. No building now occupies the site. F.H. Arnold,² a contemporary of Morgan, relates that a building opposite Bryants, not shown in the photograph, had been purchased by Lord Leconfield and demolished to increase the width of the street. Clearly there was a narrow corner. The premises had once been part of the old Crown Inn, extending apparently from the corner as far as Lombard Street, formerly known as the Causey, and was described in the Petworth Register Book as “one house which was anciently called ye Crown Inn, near ye church gate, ye corner house on the left hand coming up from ye market, containing six tenements.” The old Crown premises, for the Inn no longer existed as a separate entity even in 1673, were the subject of Ayre's charity a gift by Richard Ayres to the use of the poor of the parish.

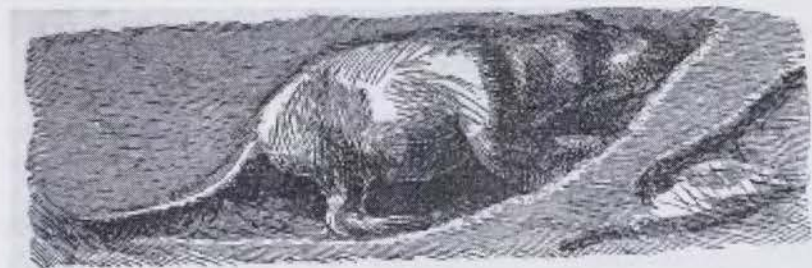
Arnold (page 116) offers a stirring account of the old inn as he imagined it in its heyday: ““The Crown” must have occupied a considerable area. Its front and projecting wings faced the churchyard, and a magnificent view of Petworth Park with the hills in the distance, was, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, to be had from its large upper room; and supposing a solitary traveller then seated in it, and deferring his journey on a wet and dreary day, he could also from a back window look down on the inn-yard behind. The waggons jolting into it from town might for a while occupy his attention, but the comfortable hearth would soon attract him, and his curiosity being aroused he would examine the arms above it, and then proceed to survey the quaint figures of human beings and animals which in succession met his eye.”

Whatever the attitude of Arnold's imaginary traveller, there is no doubt that Arnold himself was fascinated by what remained of the plaster ornamentations and had first hand knowledge of them, although by his time they were so badly mutilated that he could only

¹ See *Petworth: Time Out of Mind* (Window press 1982) pages 18 and 19 and *Tread Lightly Here* (1990) page 33. In fact the figures were not, as I indicated in 1990, destroyed by the fire of 1899, but had been removed in 1871/2.

² F.H. Arnold: *The Ayres Ceiling Petworth. Sussex Archaeological Collections XXIV* 1872 pages 115-119. This article is effectively a reworking of the older article. Old articles (like old soldiers) never die ...

delineate a few figures. His impression was that the coat of arms was spurious, with random heraldic devices supporting a Latin quotation from the 8th Psalm, "Thou hast put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen."⁴ The text offered the artist an opportunity "to represent



the animal and vegetable kingdom, as then understood in subjection to man". Arnold gives a list of the animals and plants in so far as it was still possible to discern them.

He was much more interested in the representations on the ceiling of the various stages of human life from infancy to second childhood. He had no doubt that here was a near contemporary portrayal of Shakespeare's Seven Ages of Man.



An introductory design, not part of the series, was particularly well-preserved; it was on the left-hand side of the fireplace and showed a woman kneeling by the side of a baby lying in a wickerwork cradle on rockers. The first figure in the series itself was for Arnold a clear portrayal of

"The infant

Mewling and puking in the nurses' arms."

Unfortunately the next figure, identified by Arnold as "The whining schoolboy" is described but not illustrated in the article

"He held an open book, and with doleful visage was on the ground; while on his back, in an

⁴ The text is the motto of the Butcher's Livery Company and may well echo the medieval "shambles" or butchers' market.



NURSE AND CHILD.



PANTALOON ON SNAIL.

Drawings courtesy of Sussex Archaeological Collections 1872.



PETWORTH SOCIETY ACTIVITIES SHEET

Spring programme. Please keep for reference.

Monthly meetings. Leconfield Hall. Refreshments. Raffle. 7.30 except for Annual General Meeting.

Wednesday 17th March :

Janet Pennington : Witches, Warlocks and Wellingtons.

7.30 £3.

Thursday 22nd April :

John Bartlett : The Whitbread Round the World Race : A personal account.

7.30 £3.

Wednesday 19th May :

Annual General Meeting followed by Andrew Thompson : Wild life on the Western Rother.

Admission free. **Please note this meeting starts at 7.00.**

Monday 29th March :

Petworth Cottage Museum. Open evening for Society members. The Museum will be open from 6 o'clock. No charge – Society members only.

Walk : Sunday 25th April

Debby and Gordon's return visit to Kingley Vale.

Cars leave Car Park at 2.15.

For Andy's Royal Courts of Justice excursion. See accompanying sheet. It is likely to be overbooked.

STEWARDING AT THE COTTAGE MUSEUM?

ENQUIRIES — PETER ON 342562.

Please note:

Wednesday 17th March: Annabelle Hughes: "Unlocking Duncton's Past".

Annabelle's talk will give Duncton its place in history and a view of rural industrial and social life in this small Sussex community. The evening will also mark the launch of a Duncton Archive; please bring your memories (and photo's) to help us make a start.

Duncton Village Hall. Doors open at 7.0 p.m.. Light refreshments. Donations at the door would be appreciated to help with the costs of the evening.

Unfortunately this date clashes with Janet Pennington's talk but this is an important initiative please support.

For Book Sale dates see over.

Subscriptions may be paid at the March Sale. 10-12 noon in the Leconfield Hall foyer.

Peter 22nd February

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY BOOK SALE

2010

2ND SATURDAY IN EVERY MONTH

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343227**

ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE – TUESDAY 15 JUNE

A visit to the Royal Courts of Justice has been arranged for Tuesday 15 June. Because of the anticipated number who will be interested in the visit two tours have been organised, one commencing at 11.00 and another at 2.00. The tours last approximately 1.5 hours and the remaining time can be spent at your own leisure. There are a number of attractions close by – Covent Garden with its street performances, the Floral Hall which contains the Apple market, the London transport museum and many places to find a lunch. There is also Somerset House which contains the Courtauld Institute and not far away is St Pauls Cathedral.

The coach will leave the Beaufoy Centre at 8.15 in order to be in central London in time for coffee before the morning visit at 11.00. The afternoon visit commences at 2.00 and the coach will leave for Petworth at 4.00 with an estimated arrival time of 6.00pm

The cost of the day will be £20 per head and this covers entry to the Royal Courts of Justice, coach hire and gratuities.

If you would like to visit London on 15 June please complete the slip below and return it to the Treasurer, no later than 1 May. Allocation of places will be on a 'first come first served' basis.

.....

I should like to visit the Royal Courts of Justice on 15 June and bringguest
(maximum one)

I enclose a cheque for £.....made payable to The Petworth Society.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Slip and cheque to be sent to AJ Henderson, 62 Sheepdown Drive, Petworth GU28
OBX

opposite direction from his head, was seated his schoolmaster, with uplifted hand about to be applied.”

Arnold notes further that the schoolmaster has a hood on his shoulders and a rosary suspended from his girdle. From then until the end of the series was so damaged that little could be made of it – possibly a helmeted warrior, possibly a judge. However “an attenuated human being was in a sufficiently good state of preservation to be recognised as that figure of the ancient farce” the lean and slippersed pantaloons”. A final, again much damaged, illustration depicted the return to second childhood. He saw the designs as “boldly conceived and spiritedly executed.”

Arnold conjectures that the unknown artist may have been brought to Petworth by Henry Percy, ninth Earl of Northumberland, in the years after his release from the Tower (c 1620 to 1632). This dating would make them a very early commentary on Shakespeare.

Arnold concludes: “Owing to the kindness of Lord Leconfield, such portions of this quaint relic of the Stuart period as could be preserved were given to the writer, and exhibited to the members and others at the late Chichester meeting, in the Lecture Room of the Literary Society and Mechanics’ Institute of the city.”

Of the future history of the remains I have no knowledge. It is unlikely that, almost 140 years later, they still survive.

P.

New Members

Mrs. S. Barnes	44, Sheepdown Drive, Petworth, GU28 0BX.
Mrs. B. Bent	21, Park Avenue, Bideford, North Devon, EX39 20H.
Mr. and Mrs. M. Brown	Stapleforads, Sutton, Pulborough, RH20 1PN.
Mr. D. Carver	150G, Little Allfields, Balls Cross, Petworth, GU28 9JR.
Mr. B. Field Wright	New Grange Rest Home, Homefield Road, Worthing, BN11 2H2.
Mrs. S. Giles	Cave Farm, Oldfield, Bridgenorth, WV16 6AQ.
Mr. S. Grinsted	Ivy Cottage, Northchapel, Petworth, GU28 9HX.
Mrs. R. Hedges	25, Canada Road, Arundel, BN18 9HX.
Mrs. G. James	1, Houghton Lane, Bury, Pulborough, RH20 1PD.
The Revd. T. Wright	The Rectory, Petworth, GU28 0DB.

1735