

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY magazine

No. 182. March 2021



litterarum et huius pontificatus nostri alius Quinto decimo
Sancti Roberti de Baggesbury de aduocato ecclesie de Winton.
Robertus de Baggesbury omnis sancte ecclesie filius tam
 presentibus quam futuris in domino salutem. Nouit dilectio uestra
 me per redemptionem anime mee necnon et uniuersorum et omnium benefactorum meorum
 et defunctorum presentium etiam et futurorum donasse et propria manu sub
 nostro sancte crucis signo confirmasse ecclesie sancte et sancti archiepiscopi de
 archiepiscopo ecclesiam de Baggesbury que ad me iure patronatus
 pertinebat dimisit cum omnibus pertinentiis et libertatibus in perpetuum et
 noscimus hinc testibus Thoma archiepiscopo et alii. *Parificatio Will de*
Baggesbury in presentia tam episcopi Winton de aduocato ecclesie de Winton
Omnibus christi fidelibus ad quos presens scriptum pervenerit etiam ad
 possessionem Thome episcopi salutem in domino. Nouit dilectio uestra quod
 Willms de Baggesbury in presentia nostra et presentium vestrarum heredis donatio
 nem quam Robertus pater suus fecerat de ecclesia de Baggesbury in
 natus de archiepiscopo eandem ecclesiam in manus vestras oblatum resigna
 uit et omne ius quod in presentia ecclesia nunciavit etiam in omni libertate et
 omnino quieti clamavit et in pura et perpetua elemosina monachis
 ibidem deo amantibus ecclesiam illam concessit. Nos autem memorata ipsius
 Willms concessione ratam habentes et firmam eam presentibus scriptis et sigillis
 nostri testimonio confirmamus. Acta sunt hec anno incarnationis domini
 millesimo. CC. lxx. apud Eborac die sancte ecclesie uirgatis presentibus suis
 Waltero priore Thome. Alexandro decano Winton Thoma archiepiscopo
 Winton Godofredo archiepiscopo Thome et alius. *Confirmatio honoris*
Honoris eius seminis semper dei gratia de aduocato ecclesie de Winton.
 dilectio filius abbas et conventus de archiepiscopo salutem
 et apostolicam benedictionem. Sicut annuere sedes apostolica prioris uotis et honestis
 petentibus per litteras fanore benivolentium impertiri. Eiusdem dilectio in domino
 filii uestri iustis postulacionibus orato concurrentes assensu de Eborac
 Worthy et de Baggesbury ecclesias cum omnibus pertinentiis eandem possessi
 ones et alia bona uestra sicut ea omnia iuste candida ac pacifice possi

Baggesbury

Baggesbury

26. 7. 10.

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY
magazine

No. 182, March 2021



Ten boys, six girls and three staff of Petworth Infants School in about 1890. The boy on the far right has either fallen off the wall and is in the act of climbing back or perhaps he was not trusted to be as adventurous as his fellow, and apparently older, pupil who sits statuesque on the gate pier almost out of picture on the extreme left. All the pupils except for one boy appear to be wearing hats – some of the girls' being particularly decorative. Photograph by Walter Kevis. See 'The Infants School' on page 38.

COVER PICTURE

A detail from two pages of the cartulary featured on pages 20 – 21.

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY

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 plus the parish of Egdean; 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, anywhere and the annual subscription is £14.00, single or double; postal £18.00, overseas nominal £25.00. Further information may be obtained from any of the following.

PRESIDENT

Peter Jerrome, MBE.

CHAIRMAN

Alexandra Soskin, Egdean, Petworth
acwhockenull@gmail.com

HON TREASURER

Nick Wheeler, Coppards, Middle Street,
Petworth GU28 0BE.
nicholasnwheeler@hotmail.com

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Gemma Levett, 18 Greatpin Croft,
Fittleworth RH20 1HX. (01798) 865064.
robandgem@aol.com

TRUSTEES

Miles Costello, Lord Egremont, Peter Jerrome,
Alexandra Soskin, Nick Wheeler.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Miles Costello, Gemma Levett, Jill and Adrian
Lovett, Alexandra Soskin, Nick Wheeler.

MAGAZINE EDITOR

Miles Costello, 9 South Grove, Petworth,
GU28 0ED. (01798 343227).
milescostello68@gmail.com

Designed, typeset and produced by
Jonathan Newdick and printed in Chichester
by SRP Design and Print.

MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTORS

Di Robertson, Linda Wort, Peter Jerrome,
Keith Thompson, Anne Simmons, Debby
Stevenson, Angela As, Byworth, Pat Turland,
and Annette Swann (Petworth), Chris Vincent
(Byworth), Philip Wadey (Sutton and Bignor),
Gerald Gresham-Cooke (Tillington and
Upperton), Carol Twite (Fittleworth) and
David Burden (Duncton).

SOCIETY SCRAPBOOK

Debby Stevenson.

SOCIETY TOWN CRIER

Nigel Flynn. (01798) 343558.

WEBSITE

www.petworthsociety.co.uk

BANK

Natwest Chichester
Sort Code 60-16-27
Account 89087186

The Petworth Society supports the
Leconfield Hall, Petworth Cottage Museum, the
Coultershaw Beam Pump and Petworth Fair.

Published by The Petworth Society. Registered charity number 268071.

For members, the Petworth Society (the Society) holds your personal contact and associated details as a digital record. The information is required for the operation of the Society and for no other purpose. The information will not be shared with any third parties, other than HMRC in respect of any Gift Aid claim, without your express approval. Should you cease to be a member of the Society and, following the 'statutory period' of two years, the information will be removed from our records. For further information on the Society's Privacy and Data Protection Policies please contact the Treasurer.

CONTENTS

	The Petworth Society	2
	Chairman's notes	4
	Editorial	5
	Letters	7
Judy Sayers	George Attrill (1886 – 1964)	8
Anonymous	The Show of the Century	10
Miles Costello	A Gog walk	15
Miles Costello	Petworth Fair	17
Old Petworth Traders No. 34	William Bishop, wine & spirit merchant	18
	From the National Newspaper Archive	18
Alison McCann	An historic cartulary	20
Miles Costello	The Petworth Rat and Sparrow Club	22
	A Kirdford Curse	22
Jonathan Newdick		
after Timothy J. McCann	'The strokes re-echo o'er the spacious ground'	23
Drusilla Ford	A housemaid at Petworth	29
	Christmas Day at the workhouse	32
Miles Costello	A Petworth workhouse recipe	32
	The opening of Petworth public lavatories, c. 1935	33
John Wakeford	Working at Olders	34
Mrs W. M. Wandsworth	Cow minding	36
Miles Costello	From Facebook	38
Steven Elliott	'The bus ride cost tuppence'	41
David R. G. Johnston	The old farmhouse	45

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

From the retiring chairman, Peter Jerrome

After almost 42 years Keith and I have decided that it is time for a change of leadership. This will be the last magazine that I am involved with. Clearly the Society will change; it must. Petworth itself has changed radically since 1979. There will be different emphases; a new approach may bring the Society to those it has previously failed to attract. This is a natural progression. I have enjoyed my time as Chairman and tried to combine an abiding interest in the town, its history and surviving tradition, with an underlying refusal to take it all too seriously. It is hardly for me to comment on my success or otherwise other than to point to the 168 issues of this magazine since issue 15 in 1979. Keith and I would like to conclude on thanking members for their loyalty over four decades and to wish our new Chairman every success for the future. My involvement in the Society has by no means ended as I will remain as a trustee and Life President.

From the new chairman, Alexandra Soskin

It is my firm belief that history can inform both our understanding of the present and our view of the future. A shared heritage, and the values that derive from it, help to bind society and provide points of reference for younger generations as they develop their own views on life. It is an honour to be taking over the chairmanship of the Petworth Society from the legendary Peter Jerrome. Peter has built a highly regarded organisation, and the magazine, forming its backbone, enjoys a loyal and enthusiastic following.

Whilst Peter has now relinquished his front-line role, members will be delighted to know he is not retiring completely from the Society. He remains a trustee, and has just accepted the role of its president. So he will not be too far away. During 2020, the measures taken to combat coronavirus curtailed the Society's activities. This situation is likely to persist for a while yet in 2021 whilst the vaccination programme is rolled out. However, the magazine continues, now under the editorship of Miles Costello supported by Jonathan Newdick and the 'distributor' volunteers (listed on page 2). Between them they ensure that the much-praised magazine is created and delivered, keeping the Society's 'backbone' in good shape. Petworth is endowed with a particularly rich and special heritage. It matters that we, today, respect and foster this heritage so that future generations can also enjoy and benefit from it. Since the Society's foundation, Petworth has seen, and will

continue to see, change. We need to play our part in preserving – and promoting – our heritage as this happens. A gradual evolution of the Society will help ensure that its future – and Peter's legacy – is all the more secure. I look forward to working with all the volunteers, who give so generously of their time and efforts, to take Peter's work forward.

EDITORIAL

Miles Costello

This issue of the magazine is unique in that it is the first since 1979 not to be edited by our retiring chairman Peter Jerrome. That will be a surprise to many of you and no less of one to me, for I had not expected to be called upon to produce the magazine. Of course I hope that you find it interesting and to the standard that you have come to expect, though the greatest acknowledgment would be if you found no change at all.

I hesitate to reflect on the effect of the pandemic that we have experienced, and indeed are still living through – that will be rehearsed endlessly elsewhere. If last year taught me anything it is to take nothing for granted. However, what is a certainty is that Peter and Keith have retired as chairman and deputy of the Society. I am sure that more will be written on their contribution to the success of the Society at a later date. They will be greatly missed and difficult to replace in their day-to-day roles.

At the time of writing the immediate future of the Society is not in doubt, however there are many questions which remain unanswered and must be addressed by our committee. After all, Petworth is vastly different from the inward-looking, small town that it was when the Society was formed. Looking back at an early membership list it is clear that a large proportion of inaugural members were either born in the town or had grown up here, which is clearly no longer the case. Petworth now looks outward for much of its needs whether employment or leisure. Membership of the Society has not been immune from this change and is now almost equally divided between local and postal subscriptions. On the subject of subscriptions I must ask you all to pay as soon as possible. I am

sure that you are aware that this magazine is expensive to produce and the current membership subscription in no way covers the cost. In fact every membership is subsidised by the income generated by the book sales. This is not a problem in normal times but without the book sales the Society is running at something of a loss which could not be sustained.

It seems almost trivial now to bring up the matter of book sales. Regulars will know that our last sale was in February, a full year ago. I can say with honesty that both Peter and I, along with our excellent team of helpers, have greatly missed the monthly event. We saw the day as the public face of the Society. New friendships were forged and old ones restored. We must, however, plan for the future and I hope that sometime this year we will be able to resume the sales. There are a certain number of books in store but we can always do with more. So if you are intending to do a post lockdown clear-out please don't hesitate in giving me a call on 01798 343227 or, if you are able you can always drop them off at 9 South Grove.

Finally, it has been a long held convention that we do not include obituaries as a matter of course; however, just occasionally it seems proper to do so, and in this case I am sure you will agree that my break from tradition is justified and so I include the following very brief tribute to Tony Penfold.

It goes without saying that those with first-hand experience of the bombing of Petworth Boys' School in 1942 are becoming fewer as each year passes and I am sad to say that we have lost another survivor of the disaster. Tony was an avid reader of this magazine and I got to know him quite well when speaking to him for an article about the Petworth Boy Scouts. I was struck by how deeply affected he had been, and indeed still was, by the awful tragedy he had witnessed as a child. Tony, or 'Scrammy' as he was known to his oldest friends, was a quiet, humble man who despite our chats could not quite get to grips with the notion that others would be interested in his life. How wrong could he have been? Tony was a regular at the annual memorial service to mark the bombing and even attended last September's ceremony at the Horsham Road cemetery. Tony was Petworth through and through and incredibly proud of his family's deep roots within the town, he passed away on Wednesday the 18th November.

is anyone there

who would like to join the committee of the Petworth Society to help with digital matters?

This would not necessarily involve carrying out the work personally but we would appreciate advice on such things as web sites and digitisation of archives etc. If you would like to help please contact Alexandra Soskin at acwhockenull@gmail.com

LETTERS

Not quite the last Petworth plumber and a tribute to Peter Jerrome.

Dear Miles,

I read with interest your piece in the last magazine about the Vincent family of Petworth plumbers. You suggested that Bill Vincent, my father, may have been the last in that long line of plumbers. However, I am pleased to say that is not entirely so as my son John has followed in his footsteps and although working in a very different world from past generations, the connection with plumbing still endures. After graduating from UCL John now works for Max Fordham Engineering Consultants who specialise in renewable energy technologies and sustainable design, heating, lighting and ventilation. Pipes, wires and boilers in Bill's day, what would he have made of all of the changes? Perhaps the key difference between the two is that a lot of John's workings, calculations and designs are done on a computer. Slightly different from hand crafting lead and copper in a workshop in Golden Square. I do wonder if something been lost along the way?

Chris Vincent, Petworth.

Dear Peter,

I've just been reading the latest *Petworth Society Magazine* and it has given me – as all the magazines have given me since I subscribed four years ago – a great deal of pleasure. There is always something unexpected and thought-provoking, always a door opened. To have kept that up over so many issues is truly phenomenal. What a gift to a place and to local historians of today and tomorrow and to everybody else who will chance upon these store-houses of the ordinary and extraordinary, of life and character and work and talk and community. I am very sorry that the future of the magazine is uncertain. I know that the archive of back-issues will live on – so big, so full of voices – and will have a major legacy, even if one doesn't know quite how or in what form.

Alexandra Harris, Oxford.

Alexandra Harris is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and a Professorial Fellow in English at the University of Birmingham. For her next book, due to be published by Faber this year, she has taken a small area – in the Arun Valley – and discovered how people at different times have expressed their surroundings. She pays heed to unwritten lives, eclectic sources, and is asking 'who was here?' The book will contain significant sections on the Petworth area.

George Attrill 1886 – 1964

Judy Sayers

The following article was published in 2004 in Judy Sayers' book *The Old Village Trades and Crafts of Fittleworth*. She has kindly given us permission to reprint a small part of it here. Some readers will have heard of George Attrill, although clearly many won't. Having been 'discovered' by Bob Copper, the Sussex writer and member of the Copper family of folk singers, Attrill became something of a minor celebrity in the folk-song world¹. Of course, he was already well-known in Fittleworth and indeed as far afield as Petworth, and while he never courted fame his name has become synonymous with traditional singing and folk-lore in our part of West Sussex. Copper, writing for the *Worthing Herald* in 1955 described Attrill as 'A man who typifies the rapidly dying race of old time countrymen. A steady, methodical worker who goes quietly yet effectively about a job and sticks at it until it is finished. He finds his pleasures in the simple things of the countryside and knows his native acres intimately through all the various moods of the changing seasons. Nature seems to have lost the mould in which these types of men were cast'.

Everyone knew George Attrill. On weekdays you would find him in the village trimming the verges and the hedges, sweeping the paths and cleaning out the ditches, keeping it all in apple-pie order; for George was the village roadman, employed by West Sussex County Council. He cut a striking figure: strongly built, with a fine red beard, gold gypsy earrings, usually wearing a waistcoat over his shirt. The tools of his trade were barrow, broom and shovel and his swop-hook, which he used with a practised hand at a steady pace.

Born in Fittleworth, George spent most of his 78 years in the village, only venturing forth while a young chap to work in a wood yard and several farms, all within the county borders. He was a true countryman with a wealth of knowledge about the ways of the countryside, all the old superstitions and natural homemade remedies, cider and wine making, vegetable growing and many of the old country songs. George had a strong voice and knew more than seventy of the songs by heart. He had learnt many of them when he was young from sing-songs at the Swan on Saturday nights when the men would get together to sing the songs that had been passed down from generation to generation. Some of the songs were so long that three men were needed to perform them, all from memory, the words never being written down.

George was known as one of the happiest men in Sussex and, although he didn't travel very far, he lived a full and busy life. He was a great sportsman, playing football, darts, quoits and bowls. In cricket he was both a batsman and bowler and earned the nickname 'W.G' after the famous W. G. Grace, another 'bearded' gentleman. He was a long term member of the Rifle Club and was an excellent shot both with the gun and the catapult.

Away from sport another of George's interests was the 'Tipteers' or 'Mummers' play. Again this was something that had been passed down through the generations and was usually performed at Christmas time. George was responsible for its revival in the village and of course he knew all the words by heart. He always played the part of Father Christmas; with his own beard he didn't need a disguise.

During his lifetime George must have seen many changes, even in Fittleworth, but his own lifestyle remained relatively unchanged. He lived by himself with only his cat for company in a single-storey cottage at the edge of Hesworth Common, where he grew his own vegetables and did his own cooking. His Sunday dinner was usually cooked in a large pot over a fire in the garden. A strict order for the ingredients was followed, allowing for the different cooking times, so meat and

liquid went in first, the potatoes a little later, followed finally by the remaining vegetables. The meat came from Durrants the Fittleworth butchers. Every Saturday lunchtime, as regular as clockwork, George would get on his trusty old bicycle to ride down to the Swan. As he passed the butchers he would throw his basket for butcher's boy Eric Kitchener to catch, and then carry on his way to the Swan. While he was having his drink a piece of scrag-end or whatever would be packed in his basket and as he cycled back Eric would run out with the basket and George would take it without ever dismounting from his bike. How's that for personal service!



George Attrill (right) with his fellow West Sussex Council roadman Bill Sebbage. Photograph by George Garland.

¹. See Bob Copper, *Songs and Southern Breezes, Country Folk and Country Ways*, William Heinemann, London 1973.

The Show of the Century

Anonymous. Introduction by Miles Costello

The author of the following report of The Royal Counties and Sussex Agricultural Show is unknown and may well remain so; I have however reproduced it here with the permission of Chris Vincent who has the original document. Many readers will remember the show which took place at Soanes Farm on the fields adjacent to the main Petworth to Chichester road at Haslingbourne Crossroads in June 1962. It was a huge affair and nothing quite like it had taken place at Petworth before. The event generated an enormous amount of excitement in the town and throughout the district; attendance was very high, surpassing by some 13,000 visitors the centenary show which had been held at Windsor the previous year. The first day was noteworthy for the steady drizzle which dampened the proceedings, however the following three days were reasonably fine. Admission was ten shillings for adults and three shillings for children.

The content of the report suggests that the author came from an agricultural background and which may have been his intended audience if the piece were to be published. Sadly there are no references to the entertainment side of the show such as the funfair or the participation of the local schools and community in the event; however, despite its obvious limitations the report is an important record of the show and as such I have left the text unedited.

In 1962 we had the honour of having the Royal Counties Show and County Show combined with the Hackney Horse Show which was held by kind permission of Lord Egremont on his estate. It was described as the 'Show of the Century', the last Royal Show being held in Horsham in 1889. The show covered sixty acres and was held just outside the town for four days. The opening address was made by Major Mant, chairman of the Rural District Council. President of the show was Mr Macmillan who lives at Haywards Heath. He was accompanied by his wife when visiting the show on the second day and presented all cups and prizes. The band of the Royal Marines Portsmouth Group played a programme of music on each of the four days of the show and gave displays of ceremonial marching in the main ring. One of the attractions for young and old alike was the parade of hounds, a different hunt paraded each day. The hunts were the Crawley, Horsham, Chiddingfold and the Leconfield foxhounds, the Cowdray Hunt and Southdown foxhounds. They appeared with their two huntsmen and whipper-ins. The parades can only be described as a real part of the countryside.

The horticultural exhibition was one of the biggest held at a Royal Show and was described as a miniature Chelsea. At the end of the tent there was an impressive sight of a garden layout with ornamental trees and shrubs, a rockery and lily pond with a wooden seat nearby. This was exhibited by a Sussex firm the Barnham Nurseries of Bognor Regis. They won both the gold medal and champion prize. Two wonderful displays of market garden produce made by the East Sussex Farmers Union also won a gold medal and special prize and also the West Sussex Growers. The exhibition included many lovely roses.

The Sussex Exhibition had a vast number of cattle and succulents on display, which proved a great interest to many! The Women's Institute had some lovely floral arrangements on display in an adjoining tent. What interested most dairy farmers was a working demonstration of a one man dairy unit for sixty cows in it. It was run in conjunction between The Ministry of Agriculture and The Leconfield Estate. The admittance to the demonstration was by a footbridge over the road which had been built by the Sussex Sappers. The demonstration included a four unit milking parlour and automatic feeding, and a large yard divided into a bedding area and self-feeding area with concrete mangers. There was barn storage for hay and straw for 150 days. The dairy had a 175 gallon tank installed and a condenser unit with room for a second tank when necessary.

The estimated cost of the entire building was £9,503 of which part may be eligible under the farm improvement scheme for a grant. There were many controversial views by farmers who watched this one unit demonstration as to whether the system would be a success or not as every farmer has his own methods of working his dairy, and it would be very difficult to convince farmers to change from one system to another especially if that involved very high costs. The new system would have to be proved first and show economic costs over the other ones before being considered in the usual areas of the county of Sussex. For the dairy farmers there was a varied display on numerous stands of milking parlour equipment and various types of milking machines.

There were over two hundred and eighty stands representing firms from many parts of the south of England on which were displayed agricultural implements which included dung spreaders, ploughs, various trailers and different makes of tractors. Also on view was a self-powered combine harvester. Parades of farm machinery were held in the main ring.

To further egg production there were displays of battery houses, hen coops and runs, with different methods of feeding for the best results. Displayed on one stand live chicks, cockerels and turkey poults advertising the firm's products and feeding methods.

A Highland cattle breeder had on exhibition on one stand, two pens of Highland cows with their calves and they are used for grazing on the hills



Three details from a needlework collage of Petworth which was made by ten and eleven year-olds with Mrs M Hill at the Petworth Girls' School for an exhibition in the education marquee at the 1962 Sussex County Show. It would later hang in the Petworth Primary school until 2002 when it was moved into the Leconfield Hall where it remains. The complete collage measures 40 x 65 inches and it documents many facets of life in and around Petworth.

ABOVE An impression of Petworth Fair.

OPPOSITE ABOVE Part of one of the ponds in Petworth Park with a willow tree, a swan and cygnet and a heron who has caught a fish which is rather too big for him to deal with. A cheeky dog and a large black bird seem intent on helping him with his difficulty.

OPPOSITE BELOW Another part of the pond with a horse chestnut in flower and a mallard duck and drake. The girl with her dog on a lead appears also in the scene of the fair:

and are not very docile when with calves. They caused much interest among spectators. Trees are the inheritance of our countryside and grow for centuries. There were woodland and plantation competitions for conifers and hardwoods and the best managed woodland open to competitors in Sussex and Surrey. The forestry section included a selection of exhibits of products including gates for farms, copse gates, hunting gates and timber stiles and the old kissing gates.

The Forestry Commission described some work directed by the Forest Research Station at Farnham. The work of the arboriculturalist is to study the life history of the trees and how they grow in various soils and climates to the better production of English woodlands. The geneticist has the task of seeing only the best trees are grown from seed. The pathologist keeps all diseases and pests under control if possible. Various methods were shown for forestry operations such as machines used in ground preparation and for the extraction of timber. Trees are the home and coverage of wildlife and nesting place for birds and they complete the picture of the countryside.

The Hackney horse show which ran in conjunction with the Royal and County Show proved to be of great interest to all horse lovers. There were many horses on exhibition which included Shire horses, light horses, hunters, hacks and moorland ponies. There were 1,076 horses entered. The old coaches and teams brought back many memories to those who can remember them in use at the turn of the century. They competed for the Stoke Wood Challenge Cup and Perpetual Cup. Eleven teams took part and were driven on a private road. They looked like a print from an old book. Jumping took place on each of the four days. They included the Petworth and Wyndham Stakes and the Royal Counties Championship. It was a miniature Wincanton and made those with farmers blood tingle with excitement. No show is complete without cattle, sheep and pigs. Sheep entries have diminished over the years while cattle have increased beyond all recognition. There was a record number of Jersey cattle ever held at any one show.

Her Majesty the Queen won a championship prize with her Jersey cow Windsor Cressida. His Majesty's King George VI prize for the best recorded dairy herd of over forty cows was awarded to Leslie Langmead of Chichester. He won the replica challenge cup presented by the late King George VI. There were a dozen breeds of cattle entered in various classes and they all reached a very high standard. Six different breeds of pigs were on show for the purpose of bacon and pork. Prizes were awarded to different classes.

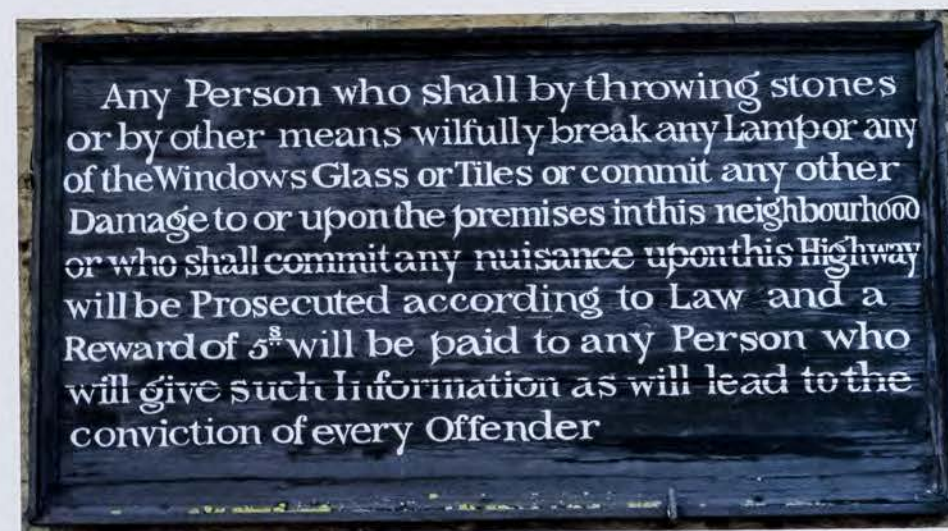
The prizes have all been awarded now and the cattle long since returned to various parts of the country. 'The Show of the Century' has passed and all that now remains are happy memories of it. Well-trodden grass and empty notice boards where once hung the posters in the Market Square. The quaint old medieval town of Petworth looks forward to another century and perhaps another Royal Show.

A Gog walk

Miles Costello

This walk which visits the Gog, the Dog's Grave and the Virgin Mary's Spring is circular, roughly three miles long and is not difficult at any time of the year if taken at a leisurely pace.

Start at Bartons Lane at the very top of North Street at its junction with East and Church Streets. The first property in the lane, a former coach house, displays this remarkable sign above the door upon which is written a caution to vandals who once frequented this part of the town.



Follow the lane past the high wall of the Bartons graveyard on your right. If the gates are ajar it is worth inspecting. Long closed to burials it was established as an urgent addition to the churchyard which had become overcrowded and unhealthy. From here the lane descends sharply to a gate and here you have reached the end of the lane and it is worth taking in the view. To the right the path takes you 'Round the Hills' while below are the Rectory Fields falling away steeply to the Shimmings Brook. A vague and precipitous path leads directly down to a stone bridge over the little stream while a somewhat meandering option makes for a slightly longer but much easier descent to the bottom of the valley. On reaching

the stream rest a while as you prepare for the ascent to the Gog. Suitably refreshed, cross the bridge and follow the hedgerow upwards keeping it on your left; we are now in the mediaeval town fields and if you look carefully the ancient field ridges are still clearly visible.

Continue onwards and upwards until eventually you reach the summit of Sugar Knob Hill. Looking around you will have superb views of the town and Park and even as far as the Surrey Hills. In front you will see a field gate which leads to a barn, ignore that way and head slightly to the left where you will find the footpath marker and the entrance to Lovers Lane. This is an ancient sunken track that will take you directly into the Gog. At the top of the lane is a track to the left and right while diagonally opposite is a narrow path that will lead you to the Dog's grave. Having taken the path you will pass through a small holly grove and then you are into a dense chestnut coppice. Follow the path for about 150 yards and in a shallow dip you will find the grave on your left, caution for it is easy to miss. The grave marker, decorated with a regimental badge, is set on a small cairn and the name Zeke is carved into the weather worn stone. Stay awhile and reflect on the time in the summer of 1944 when these woods were filled with the sound of young Canadian soldiers preparing for D-Day and the Normandy Landings.

Retrace your steps to the top of Lovers Lane, turn left and follow the track until you come to the recently refurbished Goanah Lodges, cross to the rear of them and continue on past a covered reservoir on your left. You will shortly enter open country and pass a group of farm buildings. The lane continues on but the footpath turns left on a bend and crosses a wide open field until you reach the main Petworth to Pulborough road some few hundred yards below the Welldiggers Arms public house. Follow the pavement down the hill towards Petworth until you reach the junction with Byworth, turn into the village and almost immediately you will see a footpath on the right. Take the path and proceed downhill until you reach a brook crossed by a wooden bridge. Having crossed the stream turn left and in just a few yards you will come to the Virgin Mary's Spring and an opportunity to refresh yourself with the beautiful clear water. It is well worth splashing some of the water on your face for it is said that it has medicinal benefits for any weakness or ailments of the eyes. Rest for a while and consider the thousands of pilgrims who have visited the spring since mediaeval times. Refreshed, turn back towards the bridge but instead of crossing the stream follow the track until having walked upwards for some distance you will come out at the very end of Angel Street where you can then walk into the town. It is possible, however, to have taken a slightly different route, a mistake easily made, and you will arrive in Grove Lane very near New Grove; if so, simply turn right and follow the lane into town by way of the High Street.

Petworth Fair

Miles Costello

A fair has been held at Petworth on St. Edmund's Day November 20th for over 800 years and so it was with sadness that last year's event had to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 crisis. The last time this had happened was during the second world war, and then Arch Knight who was Master of the Tolls, erected a trestle in the Market Square as a gesture to the importance of the fair, and he carried on doing so on each November 20th throughout the war years just as his father had done during the first world war.

Of course many fairgoers will be concerned that with the fair cancelled there may be difficulties in restarting it this year, however, unlike many similar fairs, Petworth was not established by Royal Charter or licence but continues to this day by prescriptive or customary rights which cannot be extinguished even if a fair is not held.

As luck would have it the November lock-down was not quite as severe as the earlier one and with movement still within the rules Gemma and I met early on Fair Day and made our way to the Market Square. Shops shuttered, damp road, eerily quiet and with just the spirit of earlier Fair Days to keep us company we erected a trestle, a simple nod to tradition, just as Arch Knight had done so many years before. No fuss, no audience, a quick photograph to prove that we had been there and then away before attention was drawn. Another Fair Day had come and gone. Strange times indeed and I wonder what Arch Knight would have made of it.



Arch Knight setting up a trestle to mark Petworth Fair Day during World War II. Photograph by George Garland.

William Bishop, wine & spirit merchant

No. 34 in the continuing series of old Petworth traders. Miles Costello

Not to be confused with the well-known Bishop family who traded as boot and shoe merchants in Lombard Street, our William Bishop appears to have left little record of his time in the town. Grandly described as a wine and spirit merchant, he was born in Wiltshire and had previously run the Prince of Wales public house in Chelsea. William, his wife and three children came to Petworth at the turn of the century when he became either the manager or tenant of the newly-built Swan Hotel. Constructed to replace the old Swan Inn, the building still stands at the junction of Market Square and Saddlers Row. Having opened in 1899, Bishop was most likely the first occupant of the impressive new hotel. Unfortunately little is known of him other than a reference in a trade directory for 1903 and the invoice opposite. Dated June 1901, it is directed to the Petworth solicitor John Pitfield for a luncheon for 30 persons at two shillings a head plus attendance at 7/6d. One bottle of whisky and 12 bottles of claret bring the total to £5.19s. 6d. The dinner was a sizeable affair and though the occasion remains unknown it would probably have been held in the function room on the first floor of the hotel. Bishop's tenure at Petworth was unremarkable and his business career at the Swan was short for by the end of 1904 he is declared bankrupt and a receiver is appointed to manage his affairs. By 1905 the hotel is taken over by the Sussex Public House Trust, a new manager is in place and Bishop's name is expunged for ever from the trade directory.

FROM THE NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ARCHIVE

The Board of Works. *The Newcastle Courant*, July 29th, 1749

The Board of Works have given Orders for repairing four of the twelve Arches from the East to the West Side of Westminster Hall, which are found, upon Examination, to be very bad after which the Roof of the said four Arches only is to be slated this Summer. The other eight Arches will, 'tis thought, take up two Summers more in repairing. Mr Philips, the King's Carpenter, has purchased 6000 Weight of strong Oak from the late Duke of Somerset's Estate at Petworth, to repair that Roof.

21/6/ 1901			
Mr. Pitfield			
Bought of W. BISHOP,			
WINE & SPIRIT MERCHANT,			
SWAN HOTEL,			
PETWORTH, SUSSEX. KD			
March 25 th	30 Luncheons at 2/-	£	0 0
	Attendance	£	7 6
	1 Btl Scotch Whisky	£	4 0
	12 Btl Claret	£	2 5 0
		£	5 19 6

Sentence of Death. *The Sussex Advertiser*, March 28th, 1757

On Saturday Last the Assizes ended at East Grinstead for this County, when two received Sentence of Death. William Fey for stealing a Black Mare, the property of Joseph Lambert of Chichester, and another Black Mare the property of Alexander Sowter, and John Ayling, otherwise Pullin, for Robbing William Hampton on the Highway near Petworth of a Thirty-six Shilling Piece, one Crown, one Half-Crown, some Small Silver, and a Silver Watch.

An historic cartulary

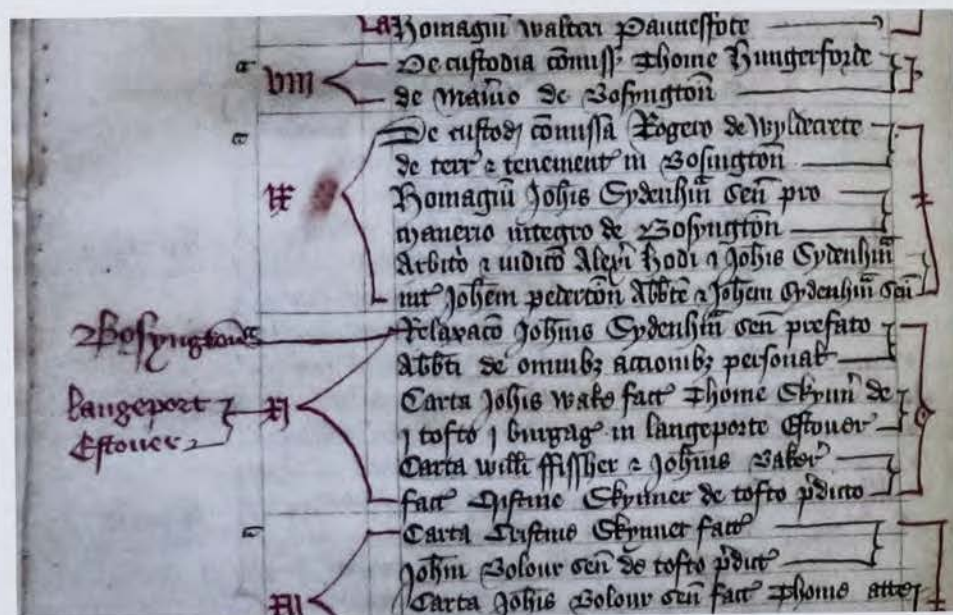
Alison McCann, archivist at Petworth House. Photographs by Jonathan Newdick

A cartulary is a collection of charters or records, especially those relating to the title to an estate or monastery. This one, which is written on vellum, dates from the fifteenth century, is from Petworth House Archives (PHA 11,601) and is reproduced courtesy of Lord Egremont. In 2000 when we were moving the Archives from the old Estate Office to their present location, I was making a final search of the shelves of the old nineteenth-century strongroom. As I felt to the very back of a deep and narrow shelf, I touched a volume, which, when I had managed to fish it out, proved to be the Athelney cartulary, which, as far as historians were concerned, had not been seen since the late eighteenth century. We plan to include an extended article on this unique codex in a future issue.

OPPOSITE ABOVE A record of gifts of marshland (with a neatly stitched repair).

OPPOSITE BELOW An account of St Cuthbert's appearance to King Alfred, when he was hiding in Athelney marshes in Somerset.

BELOW A detail of the (still usable) index.



The Petworth Rat and Sparrow Club

Miles Costello

Founded in 1917 at the height of the first world war, this strangely named society was most likely an off-shoot of The Petworth and District Agricultural Association. Many Sussex clubs, encouraged by their local authorities, had reacted to a need to maximize harvests in support of the war effort. The old adage when sowing a crop 'two for the farmer and one for the pest' had always been true but now there was a nationwide effort to limit the damage done by pests. Bounties would be paid for catching vermin, and farmers clubbed together to organise competitions. At a meeting in the spring of 1918 the organising committee of the Petworth Rat and Sparrow Club reflected upon the success or otherwise of the founding year. The results of the competition which had taken place the previous year were announced. In first place was W.A. Meachen who was awarded the top prize of £1 for the extraordinary achievement of having killed some 1,154 sparrows, 232 rats, 245 moles, and also collected 63 sparrow's eggs. This amazing feat is hard to explain. Was Meachen a gamekeeper? If so he was certainly efficient as he would have had to kill 22 sparrows a week for the whole year as well as a rat or mole for every day. A prodigious if somewhat macabre achievement by any standard. Second was E. Thorpe with a slightly more realistic 132 sparrows, 277 rats and 230 moles for which he received ten shillings. At the end of the meeting Mr. J. Cooper who farmed Quarry Farm in Grove Lane was elected Hon. Secretary of the club. Little else is known of the Petworth branch although other Rat and Sparrow clubs continued well into the 1950s. If anyone can expand on the limited details that I have mentioned I would be happy to hear from them.

A Kirdford curse

We believe in Sussex that a curse lights upon the ground on which human blood has been shed, the same effect being produced as would follow the sowing of it with salt, that it will remain barren for ever. There is a dark-looking piece of ground totally devoid of verdure in the parish of Kirdford, which is said to have been once green with grass, but the grass withered away soon after the blood of a poacher who was shot there trickled down upon the spot.

From Charlotte Latham, *Some West Sussex Superstitions Lingering in 1868*. The Folk-Lore Society, 1878.

'The strokes re-echo o'er the spacious ground'

Early cricket at Petworth. Jonathan Newdick after Timothy J. McCann

The earliest known reference to Petworth men playing cricket is to be found in a report in the *Reading Mercury* in July 1754 of a match played on the bowling green on Lavington common between a team from Midhurst and Petworth and the famous team from Slindon. The two-innings match was begun on 21 June and was finished on the following day. Despite Slindon leading by 64 runs after the first innings, Midhurst and Petworth won easily thanks to Mr John Bolton, a given man from West Dean, and Mr John Clare of Midhurst who together scored the required runs in a memorable partnership. Unfortunately the account does not reveal the names of any of the Petworth players – presumably none of them came up to the standard of either Mr Bolton or Mr Clare.

It was nearly thirty years before the first reference to cricket being played at Petworth was recorded. Then, in 1783, in a letter to James Upton Tripp, his agent, the 3rd Earl of Egremont wrote:

Sir, I received a letter today from Mr Carlton to desire leave for the Gentlemen of Petworth to play Cricket in the Park. I write him word that I had not the least objection to it & I shall be much obliged to you if you will take care that they never meet with any molestation. I am sir, your most obedient humble servant.

Egremont.

It appears that no details of the ensuing match have survived but in July of the following year Petworth played a two-day, match with Hambledon – not the famous Hambledon club but the Hambledon Town team. Petworth won and they are recorded by the *Sussex Weekly Advertiser* as Sherwin, Carlton, Docker, Hurst, Ayling, Shadwell, T. Goldring, W. Goldring, W. Johnson, H. Johnson and Pain. Sherwin distinguished himself in the second innings by scoring 83.

Petworth next played as part of a combined team with Northchapel and Tillington in June 1785 against Farnham at North Green in Reading when they were trounced by an innings. In July they played Farnham again and, despite playing at home and with six given men from the Hambledon club, they still lost, this time by four wickets. The return match was played at Holt Pound Green near Farnham but was left unfinished with Farnham 213 runs ahead with four wickets in hand. Once again, the names of the Petworth players are not recorded – probably

PETWORTH CRICKET CLUB.

ESTABLISHED, September 22nd., 1843.

President,

J. WELLER LADBROKE, Esq.

Committee.

BAKER, MR. H.
DAINTREY, MR. A.
GREEN, MR. J.
MILLYARD, MR. G.

MILLYARD, MR. W.
ORSBORN, MR. H.
PHILPOTT, MR. J.
SHERWIN, MR. T.

WRIGHT, MR. W. S.

MR. J. W. ORSBORN, TREASURER.

MR. W. DEATH, HONORARY SECRETARY.

RULES.

1st. Every Person wishing to become a Member of the Club, to sign these Rules, and to pay One Shilling, towards the Funds of the Club, and Sixpence for a Copy of the Rules.

2nd. No Member to be admitted after the First of October next, unless by ballot at a Meeting of not less than five Members, and any Member so admitted, to pay up his Subscription from the First of October, to the time of his admission.

3rd. Honorary Members to be admitted on subscribing Annually Ten Shillings or upwards, and to be liable to no other payments.

4th. The Treasurer to keep a just and correct account of all Subscriptions, Fines, and other Monies received by him.

5th. The Secretary to receive and answer all challenges to the Club, keep an Account of, and collect the Fines, and pay them over to the Treasurer, and assist him in receiving the Subscriptions.

6th. The Committee of Management to consist of Nine Persons exclusive of the Treasurer and Secretary, who are to be Ex-officio Members; such Committee (four to be a quorum) is to decide as to all Matches to be played by the club, determine all disputes arising on the Rules, and have the general management of the affairs of the Club, and to meet, when expedient, at the Swan Inn. The Committee to have power, on the resignation or death of any of its Members, to elect others in their stead.

7th. The Committee to provide Bats, Balls, Wickets, &c., at the expence of the Club.

8th. Every Member, not honorary, to pay to the Treasurer a Monthly Subscription of One Shilling throughout the Year, commencing on the First of October, and payable in advance, and if any Subscription and fines be not paid up at the time appointed by these Rules every Member making such default to be fined for the First Month, Sixpence for the Second Month, One Shilling, and if such subscriptions and fines be not then paid, the Committee to have power to exclude the defaulter.

9th. The Club to commence their Meetings for practice on the First Monday in May and to continue to meet twice a week, viz, Monday and Thursday, for practice, until the last Thursday in August inclusive.

10th. Every Member not present on the Club Ground on the Weekly Days of practice, by $\frac{1}{2}$ past 6 o'Clock in the Evening, to forfeit three pence.

11th. No Person residing within Two Miles of the Town (not being a Member) to be allowed to play on the Club Ground, but any Person not resident within the above distance, will be allowed to play, by being introduced by a Member.

12th. Every Member playing in any Match for the Club, to be allowed Five Shillings from the Funds for his expences.

DEATH, PRINTER, PETWORTH.

after such performances they were disinclined to remain anything but anonymous.

It would be thirty-four years before a Petworth team is recorded as playing another match. The next reference to local cricket was a report of a match played between eleven of Lord Egremont's Troop of Yeomanry and eleven of Sir Cecil Bishop's on Highdown Hill in July 1797. Continuing the military theme, there exists a letter from Lord Egremont's agent to a Percival Hart dated 16 June 1805 stating that 'Lord Egremont has no objection to the Petworth and Parham Troops playing their match of cricket in his Park.'

Arthur Haygarth was a noted amateur cricketer who played for Sussex between 1844 and 1861 but he is best remembered today as a cricket historian, publishing his *Frederick Lillywhite's Cricket Scores and Biographies* in fifteen volumes between 1862 and 1879. He lists a number of matches played 'in the 3rd Earl of Egremont's park at Petworth House', the first in June 1819 when Petworth, together with the Midhurst crack, W. Hooker, played Storrington. Petworth with Duncton played Midhurst at Burton Park in August 1820 and Petworth, Duncton and Tillington played Midhurst at Midhurst in June 1822. The next match in Petworth Park was Petworth (again with Hooker) against Storrington on 22 August 1822 with the return match being played at Storrington a week later. Not one Petworth player reached double figures in either innings. Petworth played a two-day match away against Brighton in June 1824 and in the following month Petworth Park played host to a match between East and West Sussex while in August it hosted the county team against Godalming. In September 1825 Petworth with Duncton took on Midhurst in the Park and the season was rounded off with two more matches against Midhurst, the first at Midhurst and the return in the Park on 19 and 20 September.

The 3rd Earl of Egremont was principally a racing man and it is not at all clear how interested he was in cricket. Certainly the family were followers of the game, for three of his brothers are listed on a broadsheet of 1786 as members of 'The Cricket Club', sometimes styled 'The White Conduit Club', and later known as the MCC. There is no evidence that Egremont ever played the game, either at school at Westminster or later. Possibly relevant is a note from the Petworth House Archives '...John Long for money paid to a bookseller for a poem on the game of cricket, sent to Mr Tripp [presumably James Upton Tripp] in the country'. The book was almost certainly James Dance's *Cricket. An Heroic Poem* with its notable line 'The strokes re-echo o'er the spacious ground' of which a reprint was published in 1771 at a price of one shilling. Egremont is occasionally mentioned as being among the host of aristocratic spectators at the Prince's Ground in Brighton when the Prince of Wales's enthusiasm for the game led to a great increase of cricketing fixtures in the town in the 1790s. For instance, we know that he watched Petworth play Brighton at Brighton in May 1825 when he

presented two haunches of venison to the teams for lunch.

Later, as Lord Lieutenant of Sussex, Egremont offered financial support for the formation of the county club in 1836 by subscribing to the Sussex Cricketing Fund and was immediately offered, and accepted, the patronage of the venture. However, how much these were merely charitable donations and how much they showed real enthusiasm for the game is not clear. What is clear is that he gave permission for his park to be a regular venue for cricket matches in the 1820s although quite where they were played is uncertain.

Louis Simond, a Frenchman, wrote in 1811 that 'Egremont suffers the peasants of his village to play bowls and cricket on the lawn before the house.' It seems clear from this that matches were played on the lawn immediately in front of Petworth House rather than on the ground where the present Petworth club plays its matches, and certainly not under the clump of trees where Turner placed his cricket match. J. M. W. Turner's painting *The Lake, Petworth, Sussex. Fighting Bucks* which hangs in the Carved Room at Petworth House has been dated to 1827 or 1828. It shows a cricket match in progress under a clump of trees to the south-west of the park. However, the match is not being played in the correct part of the park, the cricket depicted is from a period much earlier than the date of the painting and the rules of the game are clearly from a much earlier period. More helpful is W. E. Witherington's painting *Fete in Petworth Park in 1835*, which shows a cricket match in progress in front of the house.

Whatever the situation in the 1820s and '30s, in 1838 everything changed when Colonel George Wyndham, the 3rd Earl's successor, banned the playing of cricket in his park. Perhaps he was concerned for the 825 window panes in the west front of his house. In the following year a Petworth Cricket Club was formed at the Swan Inn. It was reported that the Gentlemen of the Cricket Club had petitioned Colonel Wyndham for permission to be allowed to practice cricket in Petworth park but the Colonel refused even to read their letter and protested against any cricket being played there. The club held a further meeting in May 1840 but it doesn't seem to have flourished, for in September 1843 there is a note in the *Sussex Agricultural Express* concerning a new Petworth Cricket Club with a follow-up note in the following month that the new club is 'going well'.

In May 1844 the club played on Hampers Common and in July they played two games in Fittleworth. In August the same year they played against Marylebone on the 'new ground adjoining Petworth Park' – probably Lodge Field in Frog Farm where the Petworth Club played their matches until 1852. Between November and December 1843 Lord Egremont's accounts show the estate workers enclosing a new cricket ground from Lodge Field, Frog Farm and from 1844 to 1851 the tenant of Frog Farm had his rent reduced by £12 per annum for the cricket field. It would be much later before they moved to the present ground inside the park.



Petworth cricket eleven in 1876. The photograph of the players has been cut out and pasted on to a watercolour background. The work with the scissors has been carried out skilfully with the exception of the loss of the upper part of a chair leg with the result that Richard Blagden at the far left has been in danger of falling out of the picture for 144 years.

Mr Blagden's comrades are, from left to right: Charlie Mitford, Willie Blagden, Walter Holland, Bell, Stedman, Willie Mitford, Cuthbert Mitford, James New, Mr Malden, Gentleman (looking decidedly louche in his smart blazer) and Fred Holland. Reproduced courtesy of Simon Watson, photographer and watercolour painter unknown.

This article is an edited version of 'Early Cricket at Petworth', a paper by Timothy J. McCann which used as source material Petworth House Archives, local newspapers and Arthur Haygarth's Frederick Lillywhite's *Cricket Scores and Biographies of Celebrated Cricketers from 1749 to 1826*, vol I.

A housemaid at Petworth

Mrs Greest née Drusilla Ford – from the *Petworth Society Bulletin* No. 24

The housekeeper at Petworth had given me detailed instructions about coming from my home in Derbyshire, down on the train to Kings Cross, then by taxi across unknown London to Victoria. I had the exact time of the train to Pulborough, where I had to change to go along the branch line to Petworth – just a name to me then. The other travellers alighted and disappeared, the train moved off and I was left alone. After about five-minutes a horse-drawn carriage pulled up and a voice said, 'Are you the new housemaid for Petworth House?' I would know the driver later as Bill Barnes. We set off for Petworth House up the slight hill from the station and into the old town.

I had always wanted to work in a big house and already had a year's experience in a smaller house carrying a staff of four housemaids, but Petworth was so much bigger. I had applied through an agency and they sent me a choice of two or three places at which to apply. As my family pointed out, Petworth was in fact the furthest from home but I liked the sound of the name and here I was on a month's trial. After a month I would be sent for if satisfactory and asked if I would like to stay. Equally of course if I didn't like it at Petworth then I could leave. If I stayed my travelling expenses from the north would be refunded – no small matter for a housemaid. Usually the House liked to take girls from away; perhaps they felt that local girls would inevitably see things that were better not talked about with their families.

Life in a great house was disciplined and organised and the housemaid knew her place. Instant dismissal lay in wait for anyone who misbehaved. The food was marvellous, the wages of course low and paid only once a quarter. In the morning we wore print frocks with cap and apron. These had to be bought ourselves – the print frocks were not uniform and we could wear different colours. In the afternoon we wore black dresses – again bought by ourselves – with little white aprons and black stockings.

The day began with a call from the night-watchman. There were two watchmen each with a distinct tour of duty. The first served from ten til three and the second from three till six. Needless to say it was the second watchman who woke up the housemaids but it was still quite early, a quarter to six in the morning. He had to go on knocking on the door until he got an answer; then he would move on to the next door. There were eight of us in all. Our first task was to clean out all of the downstairs rooms including the fires. We had until eight o'clock to do this and

then it was breakfast. Breakfast was in the housemaids' sitting-room and we were allowed half an hour for this. It always amuses me to think that the very first conversation I heard at breakfast on my very first morning went something like this: 'There are some new people coming to the Cricket Lodge in place of old Mr. Tree, some people named Greest from Hampers Green or somewhere like that'. Of course it didn't mean anything to me then and I didn't even know what the Cricket Lodge was, but it stuck in my mind as first impressions so often do. I never thought then that I would become Mrs Greest.

After 8.30 we would go upstairs, cleaning the bedrooms as they became vacant. There were often house parties and weekends would be particularly busy. Parties would come to Petworth for the shooting or hunting while in Goodwood week the house would be absolutely packed. On the other hand, Lord and Lady Leconfield would often be away as the London season began in May and they might be away for as long as three months. This was no time, however, for the housemaids to put their feet up, rather an opportunity to give the house a good clean. We'd wash down the walls and shine up the steel grates and bars on the fire, sometimes it would take a whole day to get a steel grate really clean.

As I have said, we were eight housemaids under the housekeeper at this time in the late 1920s and there was also a butler and an under-butler, two footmen and a steward-room boy. The last was really a kind of apprentice and he would not be allowed in the dining-room itself but would wait on the upper servants in the steward room. In this way he would learn the art of the butler.

We were allowed one day a week off and every other Sunday we could have a free afternoon and evening or a free morning. When we were off we had to be in by 9.00 p.m., unless that is we were going to a dance, in which case we had to get special permission and let the night watchman know because it would be him who would have to let us in. If we were free in the evening we could play cards or listen to the gramophone we had but we were not allowed to mix with the footmen. Footmen and housemaids had to keep strictly to their respective apartments.

If we were on evening duty we would be told when the visitors had gone up to dress for dinner and would then slip into the downstairs rooms to sweep the hearths, shake the cushions and generally do a quick tidy-up before they came down again. When the visitors did come down we would in turn go upstairs, turn the beds down and generally tidy the bedrooms. By now it would be our supper

This account appears also in Peter Jerrome,
Those that are never seen ... below stairs
at Petworth House, Window Press 2018, a
collection of memories of life below stairs at
Petworth House between 1918 and 1939.

time. We hadn't worked all day of course: we would work until 2.30 and have the rest of the afternoon until tea-time free.

When meals were ready the bell would ring and we would come over to the servants' block. 'Below Stairs' isn't an accurate description of life at Petworth for we of course did live in the House itself but rather in a different block. Visitors would have a printed notice (and I still have one) telling them that if the bedroom bells were not answered between eight and 8.30 a.m., 12.15 and 1.15 p.m., five and 5.30 p.m., and nine and 9.30 p.m. this was because the servants were having their meals. If there were a real emergency a footman would eventually answer the bell. Even when we were actually on duty the house guests would usually simply call us rather than ring. We had a list of guests who were expected so that we could familiarise ourselves with their correct titles and with what bedroom they would use. The 'blue landing' was often full and a house party would often number a dozen or more. It was usual for the guest to bring their own valets or ladies' maids and these visiting servants would sleep in the attics of the house itself and not in the servants' block. Colonel Carter, clerk of the court at Ascot, was a frequent and popular visitor. Lady Leconfield herself would often hear me cleaning the bathroom and call out to me and she came to see me at home the first Sunday after I was married.

The laundry maids we saw rarely, only for Christmas dinner in the servants' hall and of course they lived at the bottom of North Street and not in the house itself. We housemaids were given an allowance for laundry but often did not send our washing to the laundry but did it ourselves and kept the allowance. We would wash our things secretly and then sneak into the sewing-lady's room to use the iron. This went on until we were discovered and the housekeeper soon put an end to our pranks. We housemaids got on well together and once one left there would be a tendency for others to move on too. The nursery maids we hardly ever saw nor did we as housemaids have much contact with the Leconfields' adopted children Peter and Elizabeth.

I loved the work and after I had been married for a few years I went back to work at the House and I've worked there on and off ever since, latterly of course for The National Trust. It was the second world war that finally destroyed the kind of life I have spoken of. Servants wore livery up till then but not after, and of course during the war the number of men available was very limited, while after it there were never again the numbers of servants that I had once known.

Christmas Day at the workhouse

From the *Sussex Agricultural Express*, 30th December 1890

By permission of the Guardians, the inmates of the Union-house were allowed the annual treat to be provided for the festive season. At breakfast, they partook of boiled ham, bread and butter, and coffee; and dinner consisted of roast beef of the finest quality, vegetables, and plum pudding, with a pint of ale or stout for each inmate. After dinner, dessert was served; it included apples, oranges, nuts, biscuits &c., and port wine, the wine being kindly sent by Dr. R.J. McDermott, medical officer of the workhouse. The dining hall had been very tastefully decorated with various mottoes and devices, which included, among others, the following: 'A bright and happy new year to all,' 'Petworth Union,' 'Long life and posterity to the Guardians of the poor.' There was also a large portrait of General Gordon, wreathed with holly and ivy under the Union Jack, and on a red ground, in white wool letters, were written 'Not Forgotten.' The visitors to the house during the day were Mr and Mrs Granger, Mr Steddy Austin, Mr Shepherd, and Mr Hodgson. Presents were also received from Messrs. Otway, Austin, and Holt. After tea, which consisted of tea, cake, and bread and butter, the hall was cleared, and all were allowed to enjoy themselves, having another pint of beer and a fresh supply of tobacco. Several good songs were given, and at a quarter to ten, the evening's amusements having drawn to a close, hearty and repeated cheers were given for the Guardians; also for the Master and Matron (Mr and Mrs Simmons). Pleasure and satisfaction were unmistakably stamped on every face, and many were the expressions of happiness and contentment.

A Petworth workhouse recipe

Miles Costello

Take half a pound of beef, mutton or pork; cut it into small pieces; half a pint of peas, three sliced turnips, and three potatoes cut very small; an onion or two, or a few leeks; put to them three quarts and one pint of water. Let it boil gently on a slow fire about two hours and a half, then thicken it with a quarter of a pound of ground rice, and half a quarter of a pound of oatmeal (or a quarter of a pound

of oatmeal and no rice). Boil it for a quarter of an hour after the thickening is put in, stirring it all the time; then season it with salt, pepper, or pounded ginger, to the taste. If turnips or potatoes are not to be had, carrots, parsnips, or Jerusalem artichokes, or any garden stuff, will do. This well-boiled is pleasant, and very nourishing. As a pint only will be wasted in the boiling, it will be a meal for three or four persons, without bread or drink; nor will it cost over four-pence.

I would be interested to know the result if anyone is prepared to attempt the recipe.

THE OPENING OF PETWORTH'S PUBLIC LAVATORIES, c. 1935



A Harold Roberts cartoon dating from about 1935. Many of the characters would have been recognisable at the time but some eighty-five years later it is probably no longer possible. It is, however, likely that the clergyman on the extreme right is the Reverend Provis, while the saluting fireman at the back on the left is probably Arch Knight, the long serving member of the Petworth brigade (see also page 17). The lavatories were next to the present Market Square Garage and the building was until recently home to the rather more pleasantly perfumed Red Cross. When they closed, probably in the late 1960s, they are remembered as being singularly unattractive.

Working at Olders

Miles Costello in conversation with John Wakeford

I was playing down at the river with Ron Stanford and we were larking about by Rotherbridge when Ron said he had to get off to work at Olders. I remember it well as it was just before my twelfth birthday and though we went to school together he was somewhat older than me and I wasn't aware that he had a job. It turned out that he was leaving school at the end of term and he wondered if I wanted to take his place. I walked home, got changed and went up to the shop with Ron and was given the job there and then in advance of him leaving. The hours would be five to seven each evening and then from nine to ten p.m. on Saturdays. This would be my first job and it was good money at ten shillings a week and I got another bob [a shilling, about five pence] for delivering Sunday papers for Dolly Newman who lived in Station Road. This was really good for part-time work as when I eventually left school at fourteen and took up an apprenticeship I got just five shillings a week for a full-time job.

When I first started at the shop Mr Charles Older was still there but he was a good age. There were also his son Arthur and daughter Dora working in the shop. Another daughter Amy looked after the house which was next door to the Hobby Horse in New Street, however I hardly saw her at all, perhaps just the odd occasion when I had to go down to the house to drop something in from the shop or to collect clean dusters. Arthur, who I thought at the time was a bit blunt, lived just outside the town at Byworth Corner. He had a couple of cherry trees in his garden which were always under attack from starlings so there was a bell which he would ring to scare them off. When Arthur became too old to climb the trees I would have to go up and pick the cherries.

My role was then known as the shop boy, it was really to do absolutely anything that was required of me. One of the jobs was to count the food coupons, it was wartime and most people came in and did their shopping with them. Neither Arthur nor Dora liked this job and so it was always delegated to me and I would also take the coupons round to the Food Office in the High Street and get them checked. Other jobs included cleaning the windows, delivering orders and grinding coffee. The big coffee grinder was upstairs in the storeroom. It had a huge wheel and if you got up enough speed it would continue on its own for a short while and you could take a break.

People in those days would come in with their own specific requirements which meant that you may have to blend several types of bean. Cheeses needed to be prepared as they came covered in wax to preserve them. The wax had to be removed which could be quite a job. Mr Steele who worked in the shop would soak an old sack and lay it over the cheese which then softened the wax and made it easier to remove. Mr Steele was as deaf as a post which made communicating with him quite difficult. He lived in Egremont Row in Angel Street and I believe his son managed the electricity generators at Petworth House.

Olders were known locally as high-class grocers and this was very much reflected in their clientele. We were probably a little more expensive than some of the other grocers but the shop attracted people like the Eagers, the Wilson-Hills and the Suttons from Tillington House, in fact most of the big houses shopped there along with the better-off tradesmen and professional families. Marjorie and Emily, the Misses Arnold would often come into the shop; one had the newsagents in Middle Street while the other had the little stationary shop next to the Dairy in East Street. Emily was known, though not to her face, as 'Long Em' due to her height. They appeared to me to be very old-fashioned ladies at the time.

I didn't do many deliveries around the town except to Petworth House where the evacuees were staying; occasionally I would cycle out to Rotherbridge and Stony Hill and to the Blundens at Snow Hill in the Park. During holiday times I might go out in the van with Dan Hill the driver.

There was a lady who used to collect the orders for Upperton and Tillington. She lived in the house that overlooks the sports ground at Upperton. Anyway, on Friday evenings she was expected to stay late at the shop to help count the food coupons, being a bit nervy she didn't like walking home on her own so I had to walk with her. As we walked up the hill to Upperton the big searchlights would flash across the sky and we could hear the guns and bombs along the coast. The searchlights were in the field just before the Welldiggers pub but later they were moved down to Byworth near Froghole.

I remained at Olders until I left school though I was off for a while when I was injured in the Boys' School bombing. Jim Spashett took my place while I recuperated and he was eventually given a full-time position in the shop.

Cow-minding

Mrs W. M. Wandsworth née Simpson – from the *Petworth Society Bulletin* No. 19

I suppose we were the last smallholders on the stretch of road between Petworth and Northchapel to graze cattle on the common. We moved to Grinsteads in 1922 and, having only five acres, we had not enough grazing for five cows and a horse and to put meadow up for hay, so the cows had to be 'minded'. I well remember the day, soon after we had moved in – the first day that I should have been at school – it was too wet to go to school in the morning but about 11 a.m. it cleared and I was sent out to mind the cows. We were between Grinsteads and Limbo Farm when the school attendance officer came along on his motor cycle and wanted to know why I was not at school. On my stating that it had been too wet, he made the obvious reply that it was evidently not too wet to mind cows and that I was to go to school that afternoon. I was only ten and rather frightened by this, so took the cows straight away home and went to school that afternoon. It was a two mile walk.

While we were at school mother minded, and while doing so knitted all our socks and stockings. There we four younger children at home, besides father, so that she was kept busy. I remember that she was so indignant once – when she was minding the cows, somewhere near Mile House, when a car came along, a fairly rare occurrence in those days, and one of the cows chose that moment to cross the road and the car had to stop. They actually complained to the police and mother was fined 2/6d for allowing the cattle to stray. As she said, they were not being allowed to stray, she was looking after them, and you cannot tell a cow that it must not cross the road!

We grazed the cows from Scrases Hill to Hampers Green, a gentle progress, leaving the cow-minder time to look about and find all sorts of things – like a wild medlar tree near Mile House. I wonder if it is still there? And in that area there were the small butterflies, both blue and brown on the gorse, and all sorts of spiders. There were many wild flowers growing on the verges, ladies slippers¹, small pink convolvulus, harebells and lovely grasses. Near the hunt kennels were blue periwinkles. In the early spring, and only found under the wall between Card's Lodge and Hunt's Lodge, were white violets, sometimes lots of them. I always had a thrill when I found the first ones. It's a good many years since I picked wild white violets under that wall! Grazing as they did, all along the verges of the road, the cows kept the grass and weeds down and they must have helped the road-man, Mr. Hill, considerably. During one period, on Saturday Mornings, we took Mr

Peacock's cattle (he lived at the foot of Scrases Hill) and minded them with ours and for that I earned fourpence a week – this went towards buying my shoes.

Our cows were so domesticated that we could go and sit on them when they were lying down and it always amused us when people coming by would say 'would you mind walking with me past the cows, as I'm rather nervous'. All sorts of people passed along the road. Once I was reading some old comics when a string of gypsy caravans passed. This was not unusual of course, what was different this time was that a small boy came out of a caravan and asked if he could buy the comics. I explained that they were old ones, (they had been given to us). 'That don't matter, we ain't read them' he said, and gave me twopence. Seeing that I had threepence a year on my birthday, this was riches! Once when I was about fourteen and rather tall for my age, minding the cows by Waste Waters, a young man came by on a bike, I think that he was probably on a cycling tour. From his subsequent behaviour I conclude that he thought 'Simple village maiden' and so I was, but not as simple as he. Cows make excellent guard dogs as they can moo at a goose! Only two things made me nervous when cow-minding. If the cows got 'neddy' as we called it (attacked by a horsefly) then they would up their tails and just run, usually towards home, when the poor things would get right under the Park wall into the deepest shade and it was sometimes difficult to drive them out. The other thing was the fear that if another herd of cows were driven along the road, would our cows go off with them? Fortunately they never did. We stayed out only in the mornings, taking a piece of home-made cake for lunch. If it poured with rain we sheltered as best we might and I have often got wet and dried again and never hurt.

Darkie, Crumple, Bluebell, Snowdrop and Gypsy were the names of our first cows and they were always referred to by name. They were hand-milked twice a day, and the milk carried into the 'middle-room' and poured into shallow milk pans. The cream had to rise and then mother skimmed the milk to remove the cream, made the butter and took it to Petworth on her cycle. How often have I had to help with the churning, an end over end churn, when the butter refused to come and it seemed hours standing churning. Then the butter had to be made into half-pound blocks with the butter pats, wrapped in grease proof paper and put carefully into the basket for mother to take.

1. This is clearly not the lady's slipper orchid which in England grows only in north Yorkshire.

From Facebook

Miles Costello

Despite, or, perhaps due to the lock down, our Facebook group, Petworth Past has gone from strength to strength and as of November had a membership of well over 750. Here are a few short extracts from the considerable range of subjects that have been discussed and commented upon over the last few months.

THE INFANTS SCHOOL

Little remains of the old infants' school at the top of the High Street, parts of the playground wall were incorporated into the boundary of the public library but little else to rekindle memories. Alan Simpson, however, posted a photograph of the white-painted wooden railings which still straddle the short slope that leads up from High Street to the library. A relic from the past, they were put up to check the progress of children who otherwise might run out on to the busy street. The rails stand as a memorial to the countless children who would have climbed over them as they made their way home. Another set of rails in the Back Lane near the public toilets would have fulfilled a similar purpose but like their High Street counterpart are now almost obsolete. Talk of the rails soon turned to the school and schooldays with Lynne Barham née Dunford recalling 'I can remember having the ruler across my legs because I dropped my handkerchief in the playground. It seems that I was punished for spreading germs. Funny how things stay in your memory'. Recollections of the school were mixed for Janet Blunden née Knight, 'I remember Miss Dabson, Miss Waller, Mrs Gadd, Major Prince and Mr and Mrs Hill. There was also a terror who would slap you just because she could. I would be slapped on Fridays for getting mental arithmetic sums wrong. Two wrong equalled two slaps and so on'. Jackie Wood née Brash recalled the toilets, outside of course '...with icicles hanging down in the winter. If I remember rightly the walls were green and yellow.' She went on 'Miss S***e was an old time matron. She always stood in front of the class with hands crossed in front of her. Many a time she whacked me with a ruler or threw the blackboard brush at me.'

BACK ALLEY

A photograph of Back Alley or Back Lane which runs adjacent to the main car park had comments flooding in, Mick Wakeford recalled the pigs that Mr. Playfoot the

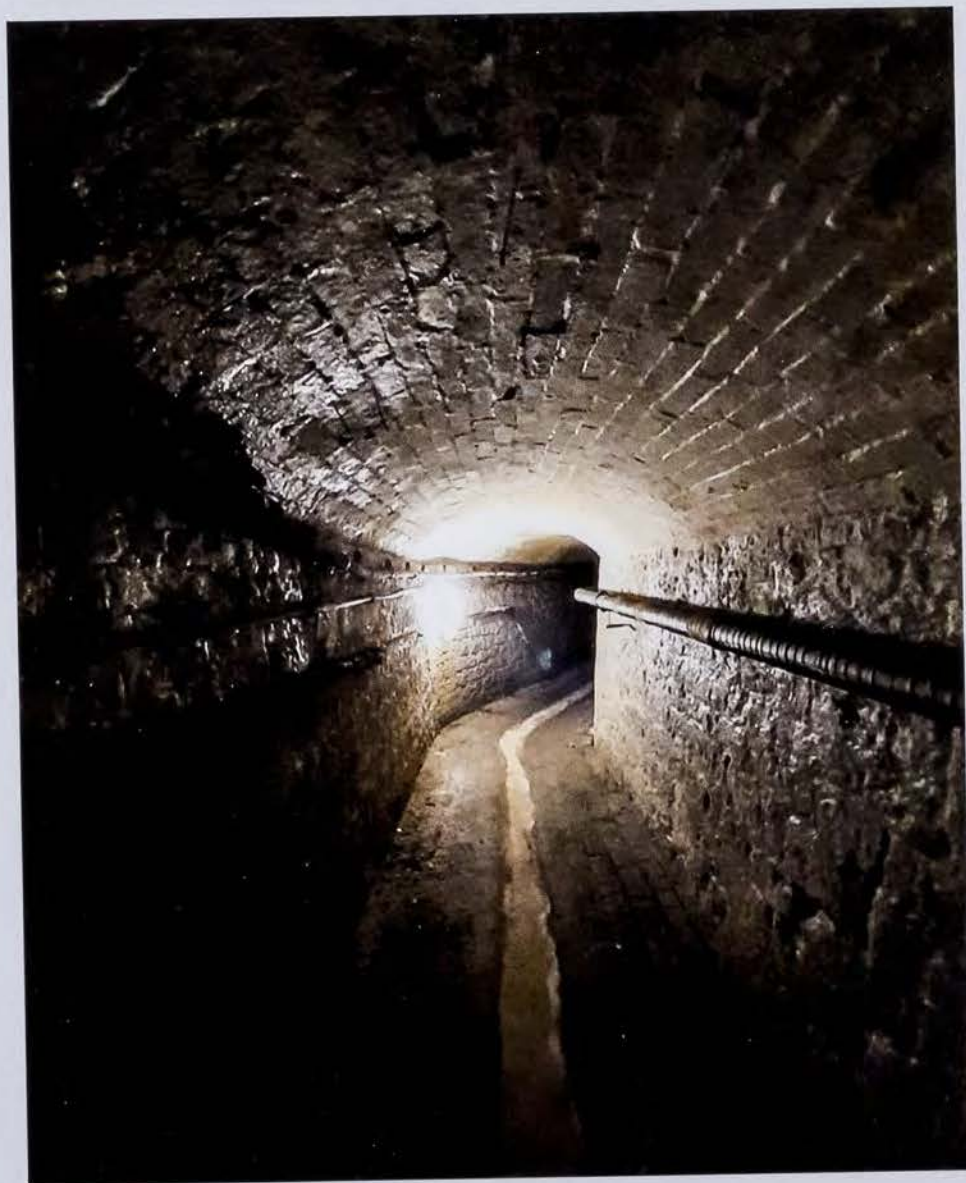
butcher kept on the land where the children's playground now stands. Mary Dixon née Puttick said 'Mrs Ball, Dr Ball's wife had a vegetable garden just inside the wall at the T-junction of the alleyway, where the communal garden now is sited. The Balls lived in a house where the public toilets are built and had a massive garden covering most of the car park area complete with hazel grove. Mrs Ball also kept geese. My mum was their cleaner for many years and when they were on holiday in the south of France mum had to feed the geese'. Jean Garrett recalled 'I remember an orchard where the playground is now and my sisters taking me with them to go scrumping, the only thing was when we got caught they ran off leaving me there to face the music.' Robin Wadey also remembered the area before the car park was built and recalled that the wall on either side of the alley was much higher then, in fact as a child he had fallen off the wall and broken his wrist.

THE WOOD YARD

David Carver, our Leconfield Estate roving reporter, sent in a series of recent photographs of the Petworth House 'Wood Yard'. The building, which abuts the churchyard in North Street is anonymous from the outside but in fact plays an essential part in the workings of a great house. The photograph on the following page shows the tunnel by which firewood and coal were taken to the house. This really is a hidden world separated from busy North Street only by the huge stone wall. Group member Roger Benson explained, however, that 'The tunnels are usually open between May and late July for guided tours. They have to close for the rest of year because they are hibernation sites for many species of bats. These tunnels were also used by servants for carrying food to the main house. There is a well for bringing up water in the middle of the tunnel and in the eighteenth century, a donkey was used to bring up the water.' Jeremy Wakeford recalled that 'I used to have a Saturday morning job up the house taking the logs along those tunnels to a room near the lift and also filling the baskets next to the fireplaces in various rooms... the worst one was going up to the top floor!'

As usual the comments began to digress from the original topic though Debbie Wakeford remembered: 'Our father, Reg Wakeford, was a Leconfield worker and night watchman for many years. I used to go to work with him during the summer holidays and spend all night with him walking the tunnels and corridors and inspecting all floors to keep the house safe. A key had to be turned in different locations at timed intervals. If this wasn't done alarms went off. I loved being in the old house. It was creepy in the dark, especially the tunnels and the top floor servants quarters. We walked most of the floors with just torch light. I scared myself to death one night when I shone a torch into a room and met my reflection in a mirror. I was really frightened but was only about eight years old at the time. Great memories.'

A tunnel at Petworth House. See 'The wood yard' on page 39. Photograph by David Carver.



'The bus ride cost tuppence'

Growing up at the Welldiggers. Steven Elliott. Part one

My grandparents were Win and Jim Rovey and they began their married life at the Welldiggers' Arms at Low Heath near Petworth where two of their children were born, Claire in 1924 and Anne five years later. Anne would later become my Mother. The pub was run by Anne's grandfather John Harvey Holden and her grandmother Isabel Sarah Holden. The 'Diggers' as it was generally known, was originally two cottages and owned by Henty and Constable before it was taken over by Watneys. John Holden had been landlord of the White Hart at the top of the High Street in Petworth before moving to the 'Diggers'. It was at the White Hart that mum's auntie Dolly caught polio and became confined to a wheelchair. Dolly was very talented and taught herself embroidery as well as being a good knitter. She played piano for sing-songs in the pub and enjoyed cribbage with the customers. The Holden's were co-founders of the local cribbage league until the depression when in October 1931 John wrote to the league saying that owing to unemployment and other reasons, his team would not compete in the league during the coming season. It was not long before my grandparents moved to Westside Bungalows at Tillington where mum's younger sister Celia was born in 1934. Like all of the local children mum went to the village school, walking every school day along the causeway, past the Horse Guards pub and then the Post Office which her aunt Elsie ran with her mother-in-law Eva Streeter. Mum has been complimented on her handwriting which she would have learnt at Tillington.

Mum was ten when her grandfather John Harvey Holden died on 2nd February 1940 during that very hard winter. Shortly afterwards her family left Tillington and moved back to the Welldiggers Arms. On the day it was snowing and their possessions travelled in a cattle lorry which was not an unusual transport for moving house at that time. Celia was just six years old, and being the youngest sat up front in the cab. The pub licence was transferred to Win, who ran the bar with the help of mum's older sister Claire. Dad Jim still worked for West Sussex County Council and never served in the bar but looked after the cellar. Mum said the worst job at the pub was cleaning the glass on all the oil lamps each day. Like all other local pubs the only food sold at that time was bread, cheese and pickle.

While at the Diggers mum went to the girls' school in East Street, Petworth. She would walk, especially in the morning, down the road from the Welldiggers

and meet up with the Byworth children at the bus stop. The bus ride cost tuppence. During the war, school classes had to be held in the town hall as well as the school because of all the evacuee children. A couple of days after her thirteenth birthday on September 29th 1942 Mum went over the road to the Post Office to buy savings certificates at playtime. Later, the girls heard bombs falling but didn't know where. Mum recalled that the husband of Mrs Butt her teacher came and said where the bombs had fallen. Mrs Butt had come down from Tooting with the evacuees to teach at the school. The headmistress called the school together and told the girls what had happened; because of course some of the girls had brothers at the Boys' School. Mum said that it was terrible and something that she would never forget. It was at this time that mum's Aunt Elsie Streeter and John Streeter her cousin, together with Elsie's mother-in-law, Eva were working at the Petworth House laundry next to the Boys' School and living in Laundry Cottage. On the day the school was bombed, John Streeter, aged five, was off school, he would normally have gone up to the infants'. When the bombs dropped John's grandmother Eva was killed and John was blinded in one eye. His mother Elsie was talking to someone outside in the street but was unhurt. John had to spend a lot of time in hospital. Unaware and out of touch, John's father, Henry Streeter was a prisoner of war in Italy.

At the Diggers John Holden used to have a pony and trap for getting around and a cart for delivering beer to the big houses in the district. Mum would sometimes go with him. The pony, trap and cart were kept in a big stable block at the pub. She would also go with her grandfather when he took the horse to Fittleworth to be shod but hated the smell of the burning hoof when the shoe was nailed on. They also had a mule and one time Mum was returning up the hill to the pub and the mule stopped going and refused to start again. During the war they no longer had any animals and so an electricity generator was kept in the stable block. With no pony or mule the only form of transport was by bicycle or bus.

When mum left school at fifteen she went to work at Austens in Market Square, travelling on the bus from the Diggers with her friend Meg who lived at Riverhill. The ironmongers in Market Square didn't look too different when she went back in 2019 except the office area at the back had since been opened out to extend the shop. Mum remembered selling nails by weighing them out and buying sweets from Miss Ricketts' little shop on the corner opposite the Swan Hotel. There were always telegram boys in the town delivering their post by bicycle. During the war the house where Mr Daintrey had his solicitors practice in East Street was a YMCA. Dances would be held in the Iron Room or upstairs in a building near the White Hart which was known as The Club Room. It was there that mum lost her nice new coat which she had left in a side room. When



The 22 bus which the children will have caught to go to school, seen here passing through floods at Stopham on its way back to Brighton. Photograph reproduced courtesy of Gordon Stevenson.

she went to collect it someone had exchanged it for a scruffy old one. She was furious. Mum also enjoyed going to the pictures and occasionally would take Doll, but of course this meant pushing her in her wheelchair down the road from the pub and up Shimmings Hill to catch a matinee. The cinema was just in the Midhurst Road and was all on one level with an aisle either side but no balcony.

During the war Mum worked at Coates Castle as a typist for Colonel Blacker who was an inventor. There were also draughtsmen and testing engineers there. Several young women met their future husbands in the Petworth area during war. Mum's sister Claire met a Canadian serviceman named Donald MacClean. The Canadians were camped in the northern part of Petworth Park, near Hampers Common, in Nissen huts. Claire and Don were married in Egdean Church and of course the celebrations were held in the Welldiggers. After the war Claire went to join her husband who had already been repatriated to Canada. Gran and Mum went with Claire and her daughter Alison, seven months old, to Victoria Station from Petworth where there were lots of babies and young children. All the women and children had to be booked in at Victoria before boarding coaches that took them to Harwich where they caught the boat. It was September and there was rough and stormy weather. Mum and Gran had a sad journey back to Petworth.

Mum's future husband, Tony Elliott was a radio-operator with the Royal Marines stationed just outside the town at Flathurst. In early 1945 he had been

withdrawn from Holland, having landed with an invasion force at Flushing as an Army commando. This was for further training prior to joining the advanced party for the invasion of Japan. The Marines used to walk across the fields from Flathurst to the Welldiggers. In the event, the surrender of Japan meant the end of the war and Dad was de-mobbed at Chatham Barracks in 1946 after which he returned to Petworth to work in the woods on the Leconfield Estate while studying forestry. Tony worked with Bob Exall, who survived the bombing of the Boys' School with his brother John, as well as Joe Coleman who lived at Low Heath down the road from the pub. Joe and Ethel Coleman would spend their evenings in their oil lamp lit sitting room playing cribbage, sometimes with a glass of Mrs Coleman's home-made wine.

Dad was lodging at the Welldiggers at the time and in the afternoons Mum would take a drink up to him, cycling along Kingspit Lane to Flexham Park where he was cutting chestnut, and then they would race back down to the pub on their bicycles. Before long they decided to get married and also to move to Epsom, Dad's home-town, where there was more work. They were married on the 27th August 1949 in Epsom and settled down in the town. They regularly came back to Petworth during holidays over several years. Also soon after the war, Mum's sister Celia met her husband, Alan Pierce while she was working at Midhurst and moved to Langley near Slough so all three daughters of Win and Jim Rovey had left Petworth soon after the war.

I was born at Epsom on 21st March 1951. Dad, Mum and I used to go to Petworth every holiday, Christmas, Easter, and Whitsun and for two weeks in August. By that time, Gran and Grandad had decided to give up the Welldiggers and they arranged with the Whitcomb family that they would swap. They would move into Regent House in Grove Street with Gran's Mum Isabella and her sister Doll and the Whitcombs would take over the pub. When we visited we always went by train from Epsom to Pulborough then caught the Southdown bus from the foot of the station approach to Petworth. It was a double-decker bus which would sometimes hit low-hanging branches with a loud banging noise as they bumped along the roof of the bus. We would get off at the top of Shimmings Hill and walk along the high-walled lane that ran behind Regent House, where Dad would whistle our approach and we would turn out the alleyway and back along Grove Street to the house.

The kitchen in Regent House was where the family lived most of the time warmed by a solid fuel range. Gran did all the cooking but Grandad looked after the fire. After all, he drove a steam roller, an Aveling & Porter, for West Sussex Council on a road mending gang so it came naturally. In the second world war he was away building airfields. He was a veteran of the first world war, having served in the Royal Engineers in France. Regent House was bigger than the

flat we lived in in Epsom; it had an upstairs and a cellar. I wasn't allowed in the cellar, which made it all the more fascinating although I think that I was allowed a peep one day. The kitchen, which acted as the living room, had a walk-in pantry with a stone floor. There was no garden, just a big yard with a row of garages at the back against the wall that local people used to rent. I was told that a boy had climbed on to the roof of the garages and fell off cutting himself badly which, true or invented, was repeated to discourage me from ever climbing up there. I just remember great granny Isabella Sarah Holden née Streeter who lived with them until she died in 1955. Next door along a passage was Gran's aunt, my great-great-aunt, Grace Streeter, who worked as a housekeeper. I would be told to go and see auntie Grace to say hello and she would give me a Wagon Wheel which in those days was enormous. It kept me quiet for ages. Grace never married although she had ended an engagement. Her father, Henry Streeter went to live with her in Ryde, Isle of Wight where he died in 1936. At the front of the house there was a shallow garden behind a moss-covered stone wall which was rough to the touch and tickled your hand. Either side of the short path were trap doors down to the cellar. I think I was told it was a beer house at one time. Pubs are big in our family. The pavement outside was made of distinctive criss-crossed dark tiles. Even as a child you knew there was something special about Petworth.

To be continued

The old farmhouse

David R. G. Johnston

Opposite the Lurgashall turning on the Petworth to Northchapel road, there is a narrow lane that branches off to the right. This old lane leads down past Pheasant Court Farm, then carries on for a further half mile to the remotely situated Freehold Farm. Here, in this isolated dwelling we lived during the late 1950s – and it was in this rambling old farmhouse that my mother would lose herself during the quiet moments of the day, fully absorbed in her curious interest – the pressing of numerous wild flowers that she gathered while out on walks. Each specimen was meticulously placed and named in scrapbooks that amounted to a considerable number of volumes over the years. Not content with this, her ever inquisitive mind induced her to study archaeology, which, in turn led to collecting unusual items. This hoard of relics included a number of flint and iron arrow-heads, a beautifully polished flint axe head, a quern stone, a genuine Pyecombe shepherd's crook and

an assortment of stuffed birds in glass cases. And so it was that our house displayed objects of fascination in every nook and cranny. The front room was laden with perhaps the most curious. There was an antelope's head, with a fine pair of curved antlers, all stuffed and set upon a smartly varnished shield. This animal bust, with its vacantly staring glass eyes, hung as a feature on the wall to the right of the north-facing window. The wall opposite displayed another deer's head, below which was suspended a stuffed pygmy alligator. The spaces between these freakish objects were filled by various 'Miss Pears' prints and a fine picture of the dog 'Prince', the first world war mascot.

Not content with this striking display of ornaments, the old lady had crammed more of her peculiar exhibits along the surface of the sideboard. There stood a beautiful stuffed green woodpecker, protected from dust by a perfectly domed glass cover. Beside this decorative bird was arranged a number of ammonites. But the most amazing specimen of all was the dried skull, with serrated bill, of a swordfish. For strangers entering the room for the first time it was a place that inspired immediate interest, arresting the attention and drawing the eyes from one curious artefact to another. Their amazement finely coming to rest on the window, and the garden beyond. Ah, yes – the garden. On warm summer days the old lady would often be found wandering around the borders, admiring the beauty of the flowers. 'Don't they look lovely?' she would say, as I stepped outside to join her. She would then pause, stretching her gaze across the meadows, as if listening – I would listen too – to take in the unaccountable stillness – the soft breathing of the land. Far away sounds would then become noticeable. The hoots of the children playing on the village green in Northchapel, two miles away, would drift over the great woodland. Softened by the distance, their voices would rise and then taper off in diluted strains – miniature threads that would float on a breath of warm air – and there, faintly in the distance, the ever familiar call of our yearly visitor – cuckoo! cuckoo! A wonderful moment, so much enjoyed.

The following is a brief description of the upper rooms in Freehold Farmhouse. The impressive oak staircase led straight up to a balcony, with simple carved railings as a secure fixture; the complete structure overlooking the hall from directly above the rising stairs. Four bedrooms led off from this open-sided corridor. Three to the right, facing east and one, at the far end facing west. The latter was always my parents' bedroom. The first room at the top of the stairs looked out over a cluster of old farm buildings, grouped together to form an enclosed yard for livestock. A massive, seventeenth-century oak barn was the main feature, flanked at both ends by cattle hovels of a similar period. The great age of these structures had mellowed to such a rustic charm that they appeared as if they had sprouted out of the ground and were all part of the natural landscape.

Of the three rooms I periodically slept in during the years we lived in the house,

the first was perhaps the most pleasant. It was always comforting to open sleepy eyes of a morning in this light and airy chamber and hear the gentle stirrings of cattle down in the yard. Or the farmer and his stockman, rising before dawn to tend the hungry beasts with hay and straw while deprived of the fresh open fields. The sound of the men's earthy voices drifting up to the window in muted phases, with sentences barely audible. Their harmonious patter occasionally broken by old Harry Pateman's infectious laughter. Followed by softer mutterings as they again resumed their essential labours. A smile forming on the lips of the bedtime listener,



A selection of family photographs of Freehold Farmhouse taken between 1957 and 1961. The farmhouse; a family group; a distant view of Freehold with its barns, and Harry Pateman hoeing vegetables in the garden.

as the mind set to wondering what harmless prank he had played to spark the full bodied, raucous burst. Such treasured memories separate this peaceful room from the others.

The middle bedroom was a dark, oak-beamed sanctuary that escaped my attention, for I only used the space as a temporary measure for a couple of weeks. The third and final refuge, I occupied over the greatest period of time. With the window facing north it was always the coldest chamber. How I shivered during the bitter nights of winter, with only a blanket or two, and a few heavy overcoats as a cover on the old iron bed. There, I would rise piercingly cold, then stagger to the window to scrape ice from the inside of the pane; if only to peer with bleary eyes at the sheets of white frost that covered the fields. The warmest room was the old man's and his wife's; the west-facing bedroom. It was through this sunny space we would traipse on trips to the attic. A tiny door in the far corner of their room was the entrance to a cramped set of stairs that corkscrewed up to the two light and airy lofts. On reaching the topmost step a door opened in to the east-facing apartment, always known as the 'museum room'. All the knick-knacks, artefacts, objects of obscure use or existence, cluttered up the tables in this little haven. Birds' nests, birds' eggs, odd and fanciful pieces of wood with interesting peeling bark, shepherds' crowns, minute flint arrow heads and all descriptions of dried and pressed flowers and umpteen scrapbooks, all lay piled, one upon another, as evidence of my mother's obsession to collect and hoard.

The attic room opposite, facing west, I somehow managed to claim as my art studio. Here, I finally graduated from simple pencil sketches to my very first attempts at painting with water-colours. Poor examples as they were, I found amusement and quite a pride in the amateur representations of the countryside I produced. The old man though, found no interest, or value in the time that I spent creating such whimsical artwork. 'That'll never get you anywhere!' He would grumble. 'You wanna git off out there, and do some proper work. Doing that ain't gonna earn ya livin'! Come on, git off out there to the shed, an' saw some wood for your mother!' To protest was useless, so I always silently obeyed. But there were of course, those opportune times when I was able to sneak up to this convenient loft to enjoy my pastime of sketching and painting. The window to my tiny studio looked out from below the half-hipped gable of the house and down to the sizeable garden. Further afield, the views stretched over acres of undulating meadows and ancient woodlands. There was too, the advantage from this high point, of catching the first glimpse of old Harry, as he returned from work. Far away, his figure could be seen trudging home along the lengthy lane. Then it was time to pack up paints and race off out to the shed, saw in hand, as a proof of my willing industry.

David R. G. Johnston is a Sussex author, artist and photographer.

A. p. m.

inno pation pte dng July de dñi illino p^{mo} quinquagesimo p^{mo}
Vestrumm applicum sup decimis & aliis rebus
Innocentius Epus servus servorum dei. dilecti filius de Gerofye de
dumstable prioribus Bangor & Lincoln diocesis saltem & apostolicam
dilecti filii abbas & conventus apud de lachet nobis conquerendo mon-
stravit qd abbas & conventus apud de omelch. magr & frs hospitalis
de pabelond. Willms Erlegh miles & quidam alii clerici &
laici Lincoln pation & Barisbur civitatem & diocesis sup quibusdā
decimis pecunie summa legatis pasturis possessionibus & rebus aliis numeris
aut usibus deo qd discretionem v^{re} p apostolica scripta mandamus p^{re}sentis
p^{re}sentibus convocatis auditis causam & appellatione remota sine debito
terminatis facientes quod decreveritis p censuram ecclesiasticam firmi-
ter observari. Testes autem qui fuerint nominati si de gra odio ut
timore subtraxerint censuram olli appellatione cessante compellatis p^{re}sentis
a testium phibere Dat. lugduni xij. kalens April. pont. n^{ost}
anno p^{re}sentis. . . illud vestrum applicum sup decimis & aliis rebus.

III

A. p. m.

Gregorius Epus servus servorum dei dilecti filius de Gerofye de
de Cuswile prioribus & thesaurario p^{re}sentis saltem & apostolicam
busiacorum dilecti filii abbas & conventus de lachet nobis
conquerendo monstravit qd abbas & conventus de omelch. magr
p^{re}sentis hospitalis de pabelond. henric de Erlegh & qdhes de lura
militres & quidam alii clerici & laici pation & Barisbur & conventus
civitatem & diocesis sup decimis possessionibus & rebus aliis numeris
aut usibus deo qd discretionem v^{re} p apostolica scripta mandamus quā-
tums partibus convocatis auditis causam & appellatione remota
ta sine debito decidatis facientes quod decreveritis p censuram
ecclesiasticam firmi-ter observari. Testes autem qui fuerint nomi-
nati si de gra odio ut timore subtraxerint p censuram cessante
appellatione cogatis p^{re}sentis a testium phibere