

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY
magazine

No. 181.

October / November 2020



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Otway's, the grocer, at the south end of Market Square, Petworth, probably in about 1890. The premises became The International Stores, then Somerfield and now house the Co-op (temporarily removed for refurbishment). The only currently recognisable feature of the main building is the roof, now in 2020 without its chimney. Its shape and proportions suggest an earlier building than 1890 although according to the British Listed Buildings website 'the shop itself facing north is modern'. Photograph by Walter Kevis.

FRONT COVER

The garden of the Petworth Cottage Museum in early September 2020. See pages 43 to 45. Photograph by Jonathan Newdick.

BACK COVER

A flower head of marigold (*Tagetes* spp.) in the Petworth Cottage Museum garden.

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; to encourage interest in the history of the district and to foster a community spirit'. It is non-political, non-sectarian and non-profit making.

Membership is open to anyone, irrespective of place of residence who is interested in furthering the objects of the society. The annual subscription is £14.00, single or double, one magazine delivered. Postal £18.00, overseas nominal £25.00. Further information may be obtained from any of the following.

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WEBSITE

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CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

September 2020

Any organisation like this society which has contrived to survive virtually unchanged for almost half a century has to re-invent itself periodically, or at the very least, give the impression that it is attempting to do so. As a challenge this is predictable enough.

Quite different is the situation created by the Corona virus, at a stroke eating away at the very fabric of the Society. No book sales, no monthly meetings, no opportunity for members to meet, no AGM, excursions or Society dinner and even this magazine's quarterly appearance interrupted. Renewing a subscription becomes an act of faith, a statement of belief that, regardless of everything, things will return to 'normal' itself a somewhat ambiguous term. The magazine carries a heavy responsibility as the Society's only visible presence. The June issue, if belated, was well received as I hope this one will be. Re the June issue a correspondent writes, 'A wonderful choice of subjects, all well-written and of a length designed for easy reading.'

We include an article on the much-lamented Jumbo Taylor. The two eulogies at his funeral having already appeared in St Mary's Magazine. His many contributions to this magazine over forty years remain their own testimony to a unique personality.

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY FINANCES

Nick Wheeler

In the absence of the AGM, I thought it appropriate to provide an update on the Society's finances in the magazine.

First the good news: the twelve months to 29 February 2020 were positive ones for the Society with net incoming resources of £6,781 (2019 – £1,147). The big plus was Gift Aid where we received two payments totalling £3,643; in addition, subscriptions and donations were up close to £400 at £8,087. The revenue from Book Sales and Events and Meetings was broadly similar to 2019. At the same time, our expenses were down (2020 – £19,198, 2019 – £21,159) with worthwhile savings across all categories. This all means that the Society's accumulated fund at 29th February stood at £32,782.

Now for the bad news: For 2020-2021 our subscription income to date is well down at £5,606 compared with the full year for 2019-2020 of £8,087. There have been no Book Sales so no income from there, but we have still incurred costs of £1,548 (the garages for storage of books and the van). Not a pretty picture. As things stand, I see little prospect of a major improvement in these numbers assuming that there is no resumption of the Book Sales.

Changing Petworth (7)



Baxter's Smithy and the Iron Room at the junction of Park Road and Market Square in 1959. The Iron Room would be demolished in 1963 having been erected as a temporary building during extensive renovations to St Mary's Church in 1904. Photograph by Una Morgan.

Bulletin days (2)

A further selection of material from early *Petworth Society Magazines* in the days when they were known as the *Petworth Society Bulletin*.

THE WORKHOUSE (GLADYS JONES)

I remember the tramps (male and female) arriving during the evening. Their names, age &c. were entered into a book used for that purpose also where they had come from and next destination (usually East Preston where there was a workhouse). next they had a hot bath and a meal consisting of a mug of tea and bread and butter. there was always plenty of hot water which was heated in a tank situated at the entrance of the female casual ward.

The dormitories were comprised of wooden bunks in a row with a raised part at the top of each which served as a pillow. The bed clothes consisted of two blankets. at the foot of each bed was a rope pulley which enabled it to be raised off the floor for cleaning purposes.

A LETTER FOR QUEEN VICTORIA (BRENDA KNIGHT)

The Duchess of Abercorn, a very elderly lady who lived in some state at Coates, and was cousin to Queen Victoria, said to my father one day, 'Gordon, would you take this letter and post it in Petworth. It's for the Queen.' At that time the Petworth Post Office was in the Square and when my father got home he said to my mother, 'Flo, I've got something for you', and showed her the envelope addressed to Queen Victoria. Then he let her go down to the Square to post it.

ADDER FAT AT EBERNOE

Some commoners used to catch adders in March. They hit them on the head with a stick to stun them, then cut off their heads because snakes don't die before sunset. Then they'd slit them down the middle to the tail and extract the lump of fat from between the kidneys. This was 'frizzled up' in an old tin lid over the fire to render it down and then put into a jar. it was very strong and you used it sparingly by dipping in a match stick and just putting a tiny spot on your skin because it spread out so. it was a wonderful cure for all sorts of stings and skin troubles.

HORSES (JOE KNIGHT)

In my early days as second carter at Crawfold I had the 'shackler' – the horse that was used for odd jobs – a sort of 'odd man' horse. He'd go down to collect things at the station for instance, or do the dung cart. The odd

horse 'shackled' about doing anything that needed doing. Horses know instinctively if you don't feel confident. I never hit them, never used a stick on a horse in my life nor ever needed to. 'Ready boys', I'd say, 'Gee up' and off they'd go. I would whistle and sing to them: after all the horses and I were alone together for long periods as if the rest of the world didn't exist. I'd talk to the horses all the time – people would laugh and say, 'Joe's talking to his horses again', but I didn't care.

DOLE (RALPH HAMILTON)

I joined up in 1917 having been gardening up till then. When I came out I was on the dole for a month. The Labour Exchange at that time was a room at the Wheatsheaf Inn, then kept by Mr Bob Whitcomb. To get the 15/- [75 pence] a week you were allowed you had to have a paper signed by two well-to-do residents and I would bike into Petworth to collect my dole. If you were offered a job that seemed suitable you had to take it or you would lose your dole. Once when I was there a sailor came in and the man behind the desk offered him a job. The sailor said, 'I don't know anything about that I'm a sailor. I'll tell you what, you come out of that chair and I'll do your job. I could do that alright.' I didn't go to the exchange for long as I soon got a job as a gardener for Sir George and Lady Scott and I stayed there thirty six years.

A WIZARD (EDWIN SAUNDERS)

At Fox Hill there used to be a public house called The Fox and the man that used to keep it they called him a wizard. A man that used to work with me used to believe in wizards and witches and nothing would make him alter his mind and he always said it was true. I have had many a laugh at him. This is one of his tales. The inn keeper could turn himself into a hare, so he went out one night and turned himself into a hare and ran across a meadow and a gamekeeper saw this hare and as he had his gun with him he shot at the hare and hit it in the hind legs. The innkeeper turned himself into a man again but was very lame. the gamekeeper followed him and called at the Fox Inn and when he saw the innkeeper and saw how lame he was, the innkeeper said, 'You nearly had me tonight, hit me in my legs.' The man who worked with me swore it was true.

‘... there’s not an average Michael.’

Edward and Joyce Lywood in conversation with Andrew Thompson and Jonathan Newdick

Separated by the required Covid distancing, we are sitting around a circular table in a secluded garden in Kirdford. Sombre clouds in the south and a cool breeze, but the perfume of the roses reminds us that it is high summer – the solstice just a couple of days away. We begin by talking of a certificate awarded to E. Lywood (Edward’s grandfather and another Edward) for the best pen of two pigs at the Smithfield Club in 1893.



[Edward] ‘My grandfather was farming at Beech Farm, Nether Wallop, between Stockbridge and Salisbury in Wiltshire where I was born ninety years ago. But we’ve moved about a bit since then, or Father did. Lower Toot Hill Farm, Romsey (1935 to 1938) then Wakeham Farm at Rogate from 1938 to 1945. When we were there it belonged to a Dr Eardley Holland, who was a gynaecologist, not that I had any use for him, fortunately.’ His agent used to walk round the farm every week and one day he complained because the cows were fouling the grass and he got on to Father saying could we not organise some sort of bucket arrangement. Father told the agent to bugger off and stop off, which fortunately he did.

The government in those war days dictated what was grown, you had to grow so many acres of wheat and so many acres of sugar beet. And then after the war we were at Dumpford Park Farm, near Rogate from 1945 to 1968. Father was one of eight children – the third son. At Nether Wallop he’d had about eighteen cows, hand-milked of course, and they had a carter and two horses. His father was a lovely man with a big beard but how they lived I don’t know. He had pigs, some of them pedigree Berkshires. They’re practically a rare breed now; they’re too fat, and pork from them would be pretty nearly unsaleable these days.

When Father got married, in 1928, Grandfather retired and made the farm over to him. But Father didn’t even have enough money to pay the first week’s wages for his part time cowman and carter. He worked for his father for nothing. But they used to all play cricket. They were great cricketers and on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon when they were playing, the boys had to milk the cows and then go off to cricket and their father used to give them money for their tea and a beer afterwards.’

And where were you, Joyce?

‘Oh, I wasn’t even thought of. I started life in great Bookham, Surrey and we met at Elsted Young Farmers many years later.’

[Edward] ‘Father worked bloody hard and was stone deaf and when his father

Opposite. The certificate awarded to E. Lywood for the best pen of two pigs at the Smithfield Club in 1893. The award measures about 14 by 12 inches and its border is composed of garlands of oak and holly with ears of barley among poppies. At the bottom are carrots and turnips and in the roundels are various breeds of cattle, pigs and sheep with Queen Victoria in the centre at the top. In the centre at the bottom is the Royal Agricultural Hall in Islington where the show was held from 1862 to 1938 and which, in 1986, would become the Business Design Centre. The left hand border of garlands is a mirror image of the one on the right, meaning that the artist had to paint it only once.

died his five sisters each had one sixth of the business – a ridiculous way of going on. He said if my brother and I went into the business after we'd left school he would see that we were left a sensible share of the business because otherwise by the time he was ready to retire there would no way we could have survived. There'd be nothing to survive on.

When we started, tractors were just coming in and they were only on permit during the war. Father got a permit towards the end of the war, I don't remember exactly when, and we had a new Fordson. There was only one model and it ran on TVO.² The land at Dumpford was pretty heavy and the ubiquitous little Ferguson wouldn't have coped with it. We had John Deeres and Internationals also, bigger ones that would get through heavier ground.

The worst thing about Dumpford was that it was a bally wet old place. There was not much soil, I don't know what you'd call it really. It was rotten clay and of course the water didn't get through the clay. It wasn't a nice farm and we were glad to get out of it. The best thing we ever did was get out of there.'

[Joyce] 'The best soil was in the farmhouse garden and when Edward's mother died we moved with two babies into the farmhouse. One of those babies is now at Marshall's and his baby is at Marshall's too. Edward's mother was only 52 when she died and Grandpa lived with us for ten years and he did all the garden for us. Before that we had a little bungalow just up the road. I always remember Grandpa doing the wages on a Friday and the men used to come to the back door and he used to put the money and write the details, so much tax and insurance and what not, on a scrap of paper and put it down and then put the notes and then the coins on the top four or five little piles and he used to take it out and one day he said to me "You take the tray out today dear" and I knew then that I had arrived.'

[Edward] 'The farm at Dumpford wasn't a Leconfield farm; it belonged to Colonel Baker from Northchapel. All our neighbours were Leconfield tenants, or if they weren't Leconfield they were Cowdray. All bar this one farm. Now, I don't know the detail of it but that farm had changed hands at one stage around the turn of the century and we believe was lost by betting on cards on a train from Waterloo. We were there for about 23 years. We went there almost the week the war ended and we stayed there until 1968 when we came to Marshall's.'

[Joyce] 'Edward was in partnership with his father and his brother, Warwick, and in 1966 Leconfield offered his brother Battlehurst Farm and two years later they offered us Marshall's so we decided to move from Dumpford and Warwick took Battlehurst and we ran the two together until 1976. The two farms adjoined with a total of about 600 acres.'

[Edward] 'Now of course they are separate again because our son Roger

was leaving school and wanted to come on to the farm, and Warwick's son Jonathan who was two years younger, also wanted to farm. So in 1976 we split the partnership. We were mostly dairy with about a hundred cows at Marshall's and a further hundred or so at Battlehurst and now they've got 400 at Marshall's. They are mostly cross-bred now and I think it's a shame but I'm told that cross-bred are the thing to go for. When I left school, apart from one Guernsey and one Friesian we had all dairy shorthorns. They look right in the fields but they can't compete for milk production with the Friesians, not on equal terms.'

[Joyce] 'Roger went to agricultural college from 1974 until 1977 and came into the partnership in 1980.'

[Edward] 'We also did 120 bullocks a year and a thousand pigs a year – we used to do top quality pork to 120lbs dead-weight. They were all inside. Occasionally we had a few sows but they were a disaster – we just weren't equipped for them. I used to buy weaners at eight weeks or thereabouts and we used to sell them at 120 lbs. We bought some from John Thompson the inseminator – we used to have a lot from him and from another farmer in Kent who was tied up with motor racing. We used to go to Chichester market when it was going and that's where I used to like buying them. It was quite a social occasion. In round figures they matured at about 20 weeks. I'd feed them in the morning first thing when I went out and four weeks out of five I took them to Petersfield abattoir, usually on a Friday. It was alright, but pigs are a fluctuating market, they always were – but I used to like pigs. When we put up the current dairy unit the pigs had to go and the beef had to go and now they don't grow corn any more.'

Joyce goes into the house and reappears with an orange Sainsbury's carrier bag containing two big ledgers and what looks like a school exercise book. The ledgers are the accounts books for the various farms and the exercise book has a label pasted to the front cover reading 'Cattle Movement Book'.

[Edward] 'When Father retired about fifty years ago I sorted the office out a bit and kept copies of all the old accounts and that sort of thing. I put them in the drawer in the desk in the office at Marshall's and they are still there today.'

[Joyce] 'We were required always to have movement books and we found this one which started in 1932 and it begins when Edward's father was at Nether Wallop and then it goes on to Lower Toot Hill Farm at Romsey, Wakeham Farm at Rogate and then Dumpford Park Farm. It goes right the way through. Grandpa used to do the books always – he kept them up until a month before he died and then I notice all my writing for the remaining pages.'

[Edward] 'It's fascinating. Some of the prices, the money in and the money

Right.

The two accounts book ledgers.

A typical entry is, on a left hand page:

'14/11/51. W. Budd & Sons (fork handles)

£1. 5. 6d.'

And on the opposite page:

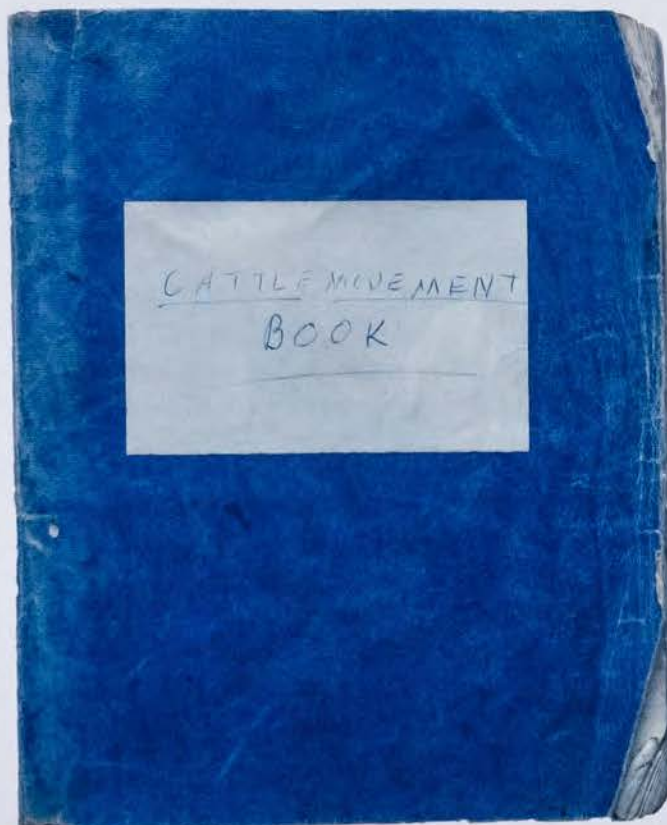
'17/11/51. 1 calf £1. 10. 0d.'

Which suggests that in that week in November 1951 there was a profit of four shillings and sixpence (about 23 pence in today's currency).

Below.

The Cattle Movement Book.

The first entry is 'Jan 5th [1932] 1 cow & calf to Salisbury Market. Messrs Woolley & Wallis, Castle Street', and it ends with '32/3 [1967] 43 ewes to Baker's of Rye, Kent'.



out "Calf one pound and ten pence". When I'd done my time at college one of the things I used to do was the bank. I used to go to Lloyd's in Petersfield every Friday morning and draw forty pounds and that paid our living and the wages for the staff and I never ever drew more.'

[Joyce] 'At Marshall's at one stage we had seven workers but we did lots of contracting and then in 1984 Edward started a business with George Chandler from Moor Farm and our son-in-law Patrick. We started Kirdford Drainage and we did loads of land drainage because at that time you got a grant of sixty per cent – we drained Moor Farm, Marshall's, Benefold, Crawfold and many more. Now in some places they are smashing up all the drains to get the fields wetter again. Climate change. The fields are too dry now.'

As if on cue it begins to rain and Joyce asks if we would like to step inside now and have a cup of tea. Is that allowed? She says we'll do the social distancing. The home-made sponge cake is superb.

[Edward] 'Gerald Reed started working for us on the first of January 1947. His father was our last carter and Gerald was twelve when they came to us – he was in the last year that left school at fourteen and worked for us ever since but sadly he's not too well now. He's eighty eight. Only a boy really. He got a long service award from the Queen at the Royal Show and Roger and Jonathan went to the show for the presentation. He was lucky because she went the year that he got it. He came originally as a sort of boy tractor driver. And then he wasn't keen on cattle but he realised that if he did a certain amount it would be helpful to us and also it would make a big difference to his wages. For many years he did every other weekend and he did make a tremendous difference. Doug Newens used to be cowman and he used to help with the boys' football in Kirdford at one time. He died about a month ago but he was with us for 35 years, and Vic Eldridge, he was another one. He was with us for thirty years but quite a few others have been and gone a bit quicker than that. Currently our most experienced member of staff is Michael Godsmark who has been with us for forty years. Michael is from Petworth, everyone relies on him and he manages all the farm machinery. Another Michael, also from Petworth who came to us via Brinsbury, does most of the milking and has been with us for seven years. Brinsbury always come for farm walks and Michael now takes them. He is very loyal and once stayed overnight in the barn because there was a cow about to calve and he wanted to be there.'

[Joyce] 'To avoid confusion he is known as Big Michael, but there's not an average Michael.'

[Edward] 'When we came we had just Marshall's but we took on three other farms – Westlands, Benyfold and Gownfold so with Battlehurst that's five different holdings. Because they had only eighteen cows at Gownfold it was costing more to have their milk collected than what the milk was worth. And it's a shame, a real shame. It costs as much to collect from eighteen cows as it does from two hundred.'

I don't know what it costs today because I am a bit out of touch with it but the last time I was conscious of it they charged £13 every time the milk lorry came down the road. Now, I've no idea how they work it but it's every other day and if you can't do every other day because you haven't got enough bulk storage they charge you... I think it's about one penny a litre to collect it.'

[Joyce] 'But at Marshall's Farm now Kate, Roger's daughter, and our grand-daughter, who is now in the business is going organic because that too is worth quite a lot extra.'

[Edward] 'It takes two years to become organic and they are just over half way. The feed you buy in has to be of the right quality. They have relaxed it a bit – at one time you would have to use organic straw. Well, there isn't any. You know, there just simply wasn't any and so now you can use any straw or reed if you can get it. I wouldn't want to use reed as bedding, it would be second choice. We now buy straw from neighbouring farms.'

Were you following on directly from someone at Marshalls?

[Edward] 'No. At that time several Leconfield farms became vacant. They put in a manager at each one for a couple of years to tidy up until a suitable tenant was found.'

I remember we bought a Caterpillar tractor second-hand in 1968 which cost us something like £600 when we first went to Marshall's Farm because there was such a lot of clearing to do. The deal we did was we didn't pay a going-in valuation except for the hay and straw but we had to take on the dilapidations on the land which was horrendous really but things worked out alright.'

1. Sir Eardley Lancelot Holland was senior obstetrician and gynaecologist to the London Hospital for twenty years. In 1943 he was elected the fifth President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. His academic achievements were many and, deservedly, he was regarded as one of the most outstanding obstetricians of his time.

2. Tractor vaporising oil, a petrol and paraffin mix that emitted blue smoke with a characteristic but not unpleasant perfume.

'... a town of sharp curves'

Miles Costello

The following letter, of which I have a copy, may well be from Frederick Merrifield, an eminent barrister and Clerk of the Peace to both East and West Sussex County Councils. The recipient is unknown but may be Captain G. K. B. Drummond, the Chief Constable of West Sussex and a man well acquainted with Petworth. Merrifield is concerned about the speed of motorised traffic in the town and the risks to both two- and four-legged highway users. His demand for a reduction of the speed limit is highly speculative and unlikely to be successful as just four years earlier the national limit had been raised from 12 to 20 m.p.h.

I do wonder what Merrifield would make of today's traffic although at the time of writing a 20 m.p.h. speed limit for Petworth is being proposed. Whether it will be implemented is quite another matter, and whether such a restriction would be observed is yet another matter again.

1st June 1907

Dear Sir,

I wish to call your attention to the speed of motor cars through Petworth town. I do not know whether you are acquainted with Petworth but it is a town of sharp curves and many crossroads and I am of the opinion that all motor traffic should be limited to a speed of not more than four miles an hour. I do not know whether you have any power to enforce such a regulation but unless something is done, there will some serious accidents.

Last week a motor ran into a horse and carriage, fortunately with only slight damage. I myself have had several very narrow escapes and now find it necessary to walk my horse past all turnings and round all corners.

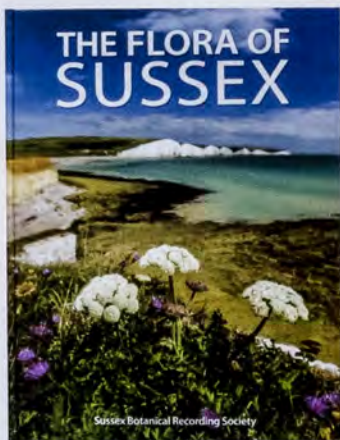
Motor cars should be made to keep to the proper side of the road in going round corners but invariably they take the wrong side. As a ratepayer, I would call your attention to the damage being done to the roads by the steam traction of material. In many cases the road is being made quite dangerous.

Yours faithfully,

F. Merrifield Esq.

'Dandelions are not simply dandelions'

Sussex Botanical Recording Society, *The Flora of Sussex*, Pisces Publications, ISBN 978-1-874357-81-0, 428 pages, £48. Reviewed by Jonathan Newdick



In 1864 the Revd Dr Frederick Arnold published his history of Petworth. *Petworth: a Sketch of Its History and Antiquities* which was published in Petworth by A J Bryant is today effusively described by Amazon (with inevitable American usage) as '...being culturally important and is part of the knowledge base of civilization as we know it.' Amazon seems less interested in another of Arnold's works, his *Sussex Flora*, first published in 1887 with a second edition 'with numerous additions' edited by his daughter Marian in 1907. For the last thirty years of his life Arnold was Rector of Racton, a parish too small to have its own rectory but whose very smallness gave him time to study the Sussex flora

from his home on the edge of Chichester Harbour and four miles from his parish.

The next significant figure in the mapping of Sussex flora was Lt-Col A H Wolley-Dod with his *Flora of Sussex* in 1937 and then in 1980 came the *Sussex Plant Atlas* compiled by P C Hall. The *Sussex Plant Atlas* contained distribution maps for most species but it is a dowdy, unappealing production and, in this respect, quite the opposite of the book under review.

The decades between Arnold's book and *The Flora of Sussex* saw technological changes beneficial to the recording of the flora but at the same time other changes detrimental to the flora itself. Such changes inspired Paul Harmes and Alan Knapp to update the *Sussex Plant Atlas* and this they have done magnificently. Alan sadly died before the book was published but he had '... a gift for writing ingenious scraps of software [to] make it work.' The detrimental changes are covered in Frances Abraham's chapter on 'Changes in land management since 1940 and its effects on the Sussex Flora'. It is one of the strengths of the book that the editors have chosen not to rail against such changes but to note them quietly and in an unbiased way. Other chapters cover the history of botany in Sussex, its geology and soils, habitats, conservation and an assessment of the changes since the *Sussex Plant Atlas*.

As well as technological changes beneficial to the recording of flora since 1980, recent years have seen improvements in commercial print and production that would have been inconceivable to Frederick Arnold. These have been both beneficial

and detrimental to *The Flora of Sussex* – the benefits are obvious but it is a pity the designers seem to think a murky brown is a suitable second colour, and the graphic treatment of species' names is unfortunate. Today's production software enables designers to do almost anything – they must take care not allow the software to take control. That said, the pages of this book are far more restrained and consequently more successful than those of the same publisher's *Butterflies of Sussex*.

Some of the distribution maps include colours to show the six chief geological areas of Sussex although most are printed in black only, with a pale blue for the sea. This is a pity but, coloured or not, they are clear and helpful. The map below represents wild raspberry and is reproduced to the same size as that in the book.

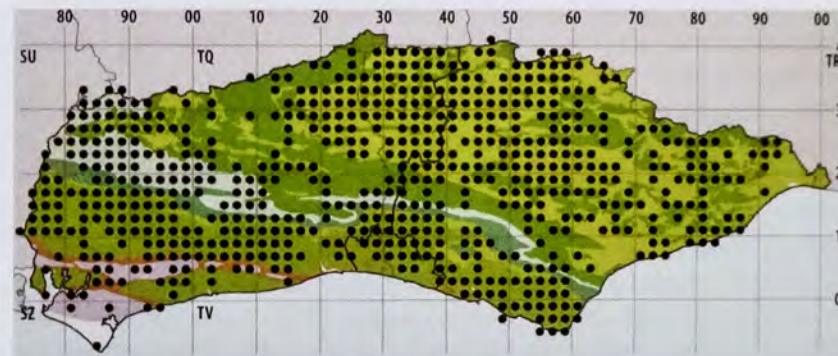
As well as the distribution maps, the paragraphs which support them and the above-mentioned chapters, there is within the pages a wealth of botanical knowledge. For instance for anyone, including this reviewer, who thought a dandelion is just a dandelion should think again: there are 81 closely related species in Sussex. Dandelions are not simply dandelions.

In the 139 pages of species' accounts in Frederick Arnold's second edition he mentions Petworth (including Rotherbridge and Coultershaw) 73 times. The pages of *The Flora of Sussex* are four times the size of Arnold's book and there are 428 of them so it is a fair bet that Petworth gets some mentions. An on-line edition of the book could tell us in seconds – something for the future perhaps. Nevertheless, this book is a splendid achievement and should have a place on the shelves of anyone interested in or concerned with Sussex plants or with the future ecology of the county.

A final thought. None of the ten editors of *The Flora of Sussex* is a clergyman although among the long list of recorders there are several, suggesting perhaps that although we are unlikely to see another William Keble Martin,¹ the days of the clergyman/naturalist are not yet over. Let's hope they are not.

1. William Keble Martin, *The Concise British Flora in Colour*, Ebury Press and Michael Joseph, 1965.

Below: The distribution map for wild raspberry from *The Flora of Sussex*.



The Sussex Rambles of Capt. A. E. Knox

Shaun Cooper

Most of the very few Sussex books which tell of A. E. Knox tend to associate him only with the village of Trotton – guided no doubt by that all too brief entry concerning him in *Highways & Byways in Sussex* by E.V. Lucas:

‘At Trotton Place lived Arthur Edward Knox, whose *Ornithological Rambles in Sussex*, published 1849, is one of the few books worthy to stand beside White’s *Natural History of Selbourne*.

That sentiment was perhaps itself an echo of how *Ornithological Rambles in Sussex* was described in the *Quarterly Review*:

‘Though written by a man whose profession and habits differ in many respects from his, the volume continually reminds us of our old delight, White of Selbourne,’ – and indeed a more recent article about the author was just simply titled: ‘The Gilbert White of Sussex’.¹

In that article, it says that Knox took on the lease of Trotton Place after: ‘a brief sojourn at George House (originally the George Inn) at the top of East Street, Petworth.’

This comment suggests that his time in Petworth was quite short and of little significance, yet in fact he lived in the town for ten years, and it was here where he wrote *Ornithological Rambles in Sussex* and another book as well.

Arthur Edward Knox was born 28th December 1808 in Dublin, the first son of John Knox of Castlerea in western Ireland. The family were wealthy landowners, and A. E. Knox was educated at Brasenose College, Oxford, and then he joined the Second Regiment of Life Guards. In 1835 he retired at the rank of Captain and married Lady Jane Parsons, the daughter of the 2nd Earl of Rosse. At first, the young couple lived in Kempton, where Lady Jane’s parents had a residence, and it was here that their first children were born: Lawrence Edward in 1836, and Maria Jane two years later.

Towards the end of 1838 though, Lady Jane took a house called West Cottage in Aldwick near Bognor, and Knox, who was a keen ornithologist, spent much of that very cold winter in the pursuit of wild-fowl at Pagham. Shortly after this, the family moved to Barkfold Manor, Kirdford, where one of his brothers had been living. Some of the details in this paragraph and the rest of the article come from reports in various old Sussex newspapers, and in many of these, short though they all are, a lot of interesting information can be gleaned. For example, in the *Brighton Gazette*, 11th November 1841, it was recorded that Lady Knox had arrived (in

Brighton) on Tuesday to visit the Countess of Rosse, and that her Ladyship had returned to Petworth on Saturday. Then on the 18th, the paper carried a report of a dinner held at Petworth House in honour of the Duke of Cambridge, which noted that Mr. and Lady Jane Knox arrived there with Mr. and Mrs. Dickens. I think this means the author Charles Dickens and his wife Kate.

Indeed from that point onwards, there were often reports in the papers of Mr. and Lady Jane Knox being at Petworth House with Colonel Wyndham and his guests.

In the *Rambles*, Knox writes of the Barkfold years without mentioning the place by name. ‘I was at that time living in the weald, about six miles to the north-east of Petworth, and I had taken considerable pains to increase the number of pheasants in the wild, picturesque hangers and woods with which my residence was surrounded...’

This was back when there weren’t so many pheasants in Sussex, and indeed it was Knox who encouraged local landowners to breed these birds in larger numbers, pointing out that despite their occasional predilection for barley-ears, pheasants are actually the friends of the farmers, due to the vast amount of crop-destroying insects they consume.

On 24th February 1842 the *Brighton Gazette* noted that Captain and Lady Jane Knox had returned to Barkfold. Then in April the *Sussex Advertiser* reported that ‘Mr. and Lady Jane Knox have given up their seat at Barkfold, and have come to reside at New Grove House in Petworth.’

In December of that year, the *Brighton Gazette* noted that ‘Mr. and Mrs. Dickens have left Petworth House and are on a visit to Mr. and Lady Jane Knox, New Grove.’

They were still living at New Grove when their second daughter Alice was born in 1845, but shortly afterwards they moved to George House in East Street. It must have been during this period, when he was living at George House, or maybe back in New Grove, that Knox began compiling the letters and entries from his journal concerning his observations of birds to form his first book, which was published in 1849, quickly followed in 1850 by a second slightly enlarged edition, and another new book as well: *Game Birds and Wild Fowl: Their Friends and Their Foes*.

In the early summer 1849, Knox delivered two lectures about the British

birds of prey at The Literary and Scientific Institution in Petworth, and on both occasions the hall was packed to capacity.

In his *Ornithological Rambles*, he tells how he captured a young heron in Parham Park and brought it back to Petworth, where it seemed content to stay in his stable-yard, and spend its days sitting cheek-by-jowl with the large watch-dog. In another tale, he relates how he saved the ravens of Petworth Clump from the depredations of the keepers and local boys, and the book includes a picture by Knox of how the Clump looked back then. Unlike Gilbert White though, he has a sense of comedy and the dramatic, and this is aptly illustrated in the following anecdote, concerning a pair of barn owls.

Some of these owls have lately found sanctuary in the yews and ivy of the churchyard at Petworth; and their hard breathing, late in the evening, has more than once arrested the attention of passers-by, who fancied that some jovial neighbour had been 'brought to', and was reclining in an adjacent gutter, under the somniferous influence of the potations dispensed at the beer-shop, having taken advantage of the legal indulgence 'to be drunk on the premises.'

The book also includes an annotated Systematic Catalogue of the birds of Sussex. Despite the all too frequent occurrence of the words 'killed' and 'shot' this section is also interesting because Knox records the provincial (ie. Sussex) names of some of the birds.

His third daughter Helen was born in 1851, and then at the start of 1852, the family moved to St. Anne's Hill House in Midhurst, just in time for the birth of Arthur Henry, who was baptised at St Mary Magdalene, in April. Knox frequently took his family for long vacations in Ireland, visiting relatives and friends there, and also to Scotland and abroad. In 1853 though, he sold his estates in Ireland, which amounted to some 40,000 acres.

Meanwhile, his son Lawrence had joined the Royal Navy, and he later went into the Army and served in the Crimean War. In 1858 Lawrence left the Army and married his cousin Clare Charlotte, whose father was Colonel Ernest Knox of Co. Roscommon, and then the following year, at the age of 22, Lawrence founded *The Irish Times* newspaper.

Opposite. The osprey, from the frontispiece of the third edition of *Ornithological Rambles in Sussex*. A. E. Knox writes of the osprey that 'while the term "golden" is often applied erroneously to the cinereous or sea-eagle, the osprey, or fishing hawk... is as frequently honoured with the title of the latter bird, at least in this part of England, where, although far from abundant, it is of much more frequent occurrence than its gigantic namesake.'



Even after they had left Petworth, Knox maintained many ties with the town, and still went hunting with his friends. A report from the *Brighton Gazette* in 1859 tells how he and Colonel Wyndham and five other men in one day shot 433 pheasants, 41 hares and other game. In July 1861, Knox became Lieutenant of the Sixth Sussex (Petworth) Rifles, and in the summer of 1863 he was one of a number of people who gave lectures at The Institute.

The time the Knox family lived in Midhurst must also have been a happy one, as according to the *Surrey Gazette*, 10th January 1860, they were much loved by all of the townsfolk. The report though tells of the sequence of events which led to Knox having to leave the town. Midhurst is on the Cowdray estate, which belonged to the Earl of Egmont, and in April of the previous year he had stood as the Tory candidate in the local election, but Knox had proposed his friend Mr. Mitford as the Whig candidate, and Lord Egmont had lost. The Earl was also the landlord of St Anne's Hill House, and on the night of Christmas Eve, Knox was served with a notice to quit, with the option of paying an increase of 40 per cent rent. As the original rent was £73 per annum, I feel sure that Knox could easily have afforded the higher rent; but clearly if he had chosen to remain at the house there would have been even more problems between the two men.²

So it was that the Knox family found themselves having to leave Midhurst and it was this which brought them to Trotton. Now there began a period of great changes for all of them. Alice married Colonel Horace Newton and it seems they mainly lived in Trotton too, as at least four of their children were born there. In 1870, Helen married Charles John Fletcher, whose father was the High Sheriff of Sussex, and they began a family, initially also living at Trotton House. Then in 1873, Lawrence died of scarlet fever at his home in Dublin. And in 1875, Maria was married to William Irvine, in Dublin, and they went on to have three daughters.

Knox's third book *Autumns on the Spey* was published in 1872. This is mainly about salmon fishing and deer-stalking, long before either of them became popular, along the River Spey in Scotland.

In an article about him in *Sussex County Magazine* in 1948, 'A Centenary for Sussex Bird Lovers' by S. J. Teideman, it says 'He seems to have lived the life of a country squire during his sojourn in Sussex, and took a great interest in the rearing of pheasants.' But in fact, both he and his wife came here to stay, and are buried in the churchyard of St. George's, Trotton. She died in 1883, followed by Alice in 1885. And Knox was living at Dale Park House, Madehurst, with Helen and her family, when he passed away in the fall of 1886.

1. 'The Gilbert White of Sussex' is by Roger Chatterton-Newman. *PSM* 78, December 1994.
2. Some of the information for this story is from the *Catholic Telegraph*, 21st January 1860.
3. Knox was also one of the founders of the British Ornithological Union in 1858.

The Big Freeze

'Jumbo' Taylor and Miles Costello

It is almost sixty years since the memorable winter of 1962-63 that would later become known as 'the Big Freeze' and which was one of the coldest winters on record.

Petworth was badly affected, as was most of the country and with many of the streets blocked even those which were still passable were reduced to single file as huge piles of snow were pushed to the sides. Pavements disappeared and pedestrians and motorists were forced to share the little remaining space. At Petworth it wasn't a white Christmas that year though it was bitterly cold during the run-up with an easterly wind bringing record low temperatures from Scandinavia. Over Christmas the wind changed direction and coming directly from the north the temperature fell even further.

On Christmas Eve 'Jumbo' Taylor, the Water Foreman on the Leconfield Estate recorded in his works diary 'A bitter wind, took ladder and ropes out to [Upper] pond but only 1/2 frozen over'. The reason was to test the ice for skating; though unsuccessful on that occasion, before the winter was over Jumbo would be able to drive his Land Rover on to the pond. That simple diary entry on Christmas Eve would be the first indication of what was to come that winter. He would spend the next six or seven weeks fighting a losing battle repairing burst water pipes to numerous outlying Leconfield properties while his men would suffer the thankless and seemingly endless task of clearing mountains of snow from farm roads only to find that within hours the drifting snow had once again made them impassable.

Mon. 31st Dec. 1962 Snowed heavily & drifted badly
 Tues. 1 Jan. 1963 Snow again Monday night. Blackbrook & Bennyfold [farms] cut off.
 Average of 4ft of snow for length of 500 yds in lane by pond. Cleared 80 yds.
 Wed. 2 Jan. Blackhouse Lane with tractors cleared 60 yds up to gate
 Thurs. 3 Jan. Raining hard.
 Friday 4th Jan. Clearing snow Blackhouse Lane.
 Mon. 7th Jan. 5 Men dig way through snow.
 Tues. 8 Jan. 4 Men clear snow at bungalows [Grove St].
 Wed. 9th. 2 men clear snow by Grand Entrance [Petworth House]
 Thurs. 10 Jan. Sanded Petworth House drive. 8 inches of ice on Park Rd.
 Fri. 11th Jan. 2 men clear snow Blackhouse Lane. 25 degrees frost.



A photograph taken by George Garland of ice floes on a river; probably the Rother. 'Jan – Feb 1963' is the only information given on the back of the print.

Sat. 12 Jan. 22 degrees frost. River frozen from Coultershaw Bridge to Pikeshoot. Picked up dead duck.

There then appears to be a brief lull in the weather or at least it is not referred to directly. However, on Monday 14th Jumbo is at Hoads Lodge on the London Road where it seems there may have been a frozen pipe as he records 'built fire round pipe across stream'. It isn't clear whether the fire was successful or whether the pipe simply froze again, for the following day he returns to Hoads Lodge and writes 'used torch on pipe over stream, water free'. Obviously exposed pipes were particularly susceptible to freezing.

Thurs. 17 Jan. Went to Buckfold [farm]. Pipe frozen under concrete. Dug out & got water through.

Fri. 18th Jan. Still bitter cold, 25 degrees frost.

Sat. 19th Jan. Amen Farm [Fittleworth] no water. Went out in afternoon & traced pipe. Kept snowing hard & very cold. No luck. 29 degrees frost.

Sun. 20th Jan. Back to Amen Farm. Still no good. 28 degrees frost.

Mon. 21 Jan. River froze above and below [Coultershaw] mill. 30 degrees frost last night. 11 inches ice on [Upper] pond.

Tues. 22 Jan. Amen again. It takes two of us all day to cut a hole 2ft square in a frozen road with a pick and shovel.

From Wednesday 23rd to Friday 25th Jumbo spent his days at Amen desperately trying to restore the water supply to the farm. Every time he repaired a break or managed to free a frozen section the water would just refreeze further along the pipe. On Saturday 26th he would be at Montpelier Farm on Brinksole Heath where he would have the same problem of frozen pipes. As soon as water stood still in a pipe for more than a couple of minutes it would freeze.

The week of the 28th began with a rise in temperature and some water pipes began to flow again.

Wed. 30th Jan. Turned colder again in the afternoon.

Thurs. 31 Jan. Very cold again.

The Jan snow was still hanging around and causing problems.

Mon. 4th Feb. Went to Mitchel Park [Northchapel] and wrapped pipe across stream. Snow not so deep now.

Tues. 5th Feb. Went up to Frith [Northchapel] Wind S.E. but bitterly cold up there.

Wed. 6th. Had very heavy snow this morning from 8.30 to about 10.30.

Thurs. 7th Feb. Snow is still very thick up in Flexham Park.

Thurs. 14th Feb. Had 8 hours snow.

Sat. 16th. Very cold again.

Tuesday 19th Feb. Weather bitter cold, still freezing.

This was his last mention of the weather that winter.

Jumbo Taylor, who died in the summer, left a large number of diaries which contain an almost daily record of work carried out on the estate.

When shall we do it again?

Peter Jerrome

A dispiriting presence in the foyer of the Leconfield hall. On a bleak March day we are here to tell enthusiasts that Book Sale No. 224 is cancelled. As always, some have come a distance. At least one car sets off back to London. A majority, however, have already decided that the sale has been cancelled, or that the threat of the virus is too much – or simply put the two together. Book Sale and social distancing are essentially incompatible. Significantly, instead of the usual avalanche of incoming books we have only a single box as a reminder, if we needed such, that books are heavy. We haven't brought the stock up and the lack of visitors as compared with the usual throng seems to endorse our decision. We are at least spared the logistical nightmare of taking it all back. Over all hangs the unspoken question, to be echoed endlessly in the months ahead, 'When shall we do it again?'

And so into the unknown territory of pandemic. Self-isolating, Covid, lockdown, all the vocabulary of a crisis. The illusory but persistent notion that what has been put off for years can now receive attention. That elusive 'another day' in fact never comes: lockdown brings its own inbuilt brand of lethargy. The mind simply slips into a lower gear, a slower rhythm. Magazine 180 is delayed. Book Sale No. 225 or is it 224 floats somewhere on a hazy horizon. A gloomy March morning slips into unwilling memory, the days lengthen and high summer comes and goes.

Living on chestnuts, raw and boiled

Keith Thompson

If I had been living in Petworth in September, 1941, I would have been in the Boys' School and would very likely been another victim of the bombing. I was ten years old. Now, as I was told, not many years ago, I am a newcomer, having arrived only in 1961, 59 years ago.

As it was, I was in my home town, Rye, in East Sussex.

When the second world war started in September 1939, Rye received

evacuees, children from London. We were allocated Irene, an eight-year-old, from a school for partially-sighted children. She settled in well and her parents came down to visit her one weekend. At that stage the beaches weren't closed with mines and barbed wire as they would be later, so they decided to take her to Camber Sands. On their return, we were rather shocked to learn that they didn't have to pay for Irene on the bus as they hid her under the seat.

Everyone was issued with gas masks. The evacuees devised a 'sport' whereby everyone sat on the cliff (once above the sea line but now two miles inland since the sea retreated 200 years ago). The gas masks were released, in their boxes and allowed to roll down the hill, to everyone's delight, especially as many burst open on the way.

In school, we spent some lesson periods practising wearing our masks in case of a gas attack. By blowing hard we could produce a very rude sound, to the great annoyance of our teachers.

Meanwhile, Irene had been replaced by Ronnie, but not for long, as with the withdrawal of our troops from Dunkirk, and there was the threat of invasion, Rye became an Evacuation Area itself, instead of a Reception Area. There was an official evacuation of children to Bedford, but my parents decided that my mother, brother and I would go to stay with my uncle, aunt and cousin in Horsted Keynes, not really out of danger as the Battle of Britain was fought overhead. Indeed, on our journey by train, between Eastbourne and Lewes we could see another train behind ours being machine-gunned by a German fighter plane. One night, a land mine was dropped at Dane Hill, making the biggest crater I have ever seen.

I was miserable at school there. We sang 'When I survey the wondrous Cross, on which the Prince of Glory died' at every morning assembly, so I was quite relieved when we three children contracted measles.

As all the women and children had had to leave, the men formed themselves into mini communes. My father, a clerk in a corn merchants, a builder and the manager of Boots the chemists, lived with the Baptist minister in the manse, living, as far as we gathered, on chestnuts, raw and boiled.

That didn't last long, but our Rye Junior School didn't reopen, so a number of us went to the village school at Udimore, two miles away. Usually, we went on the bus. Sometimes, we walked. We took packed lunches while the headmistress provided hot water for us to make a drink with an Oxo cube.

Eventually, enough children had drifted back to Rye for the school to reopen full-time, so we returned. When the siren sounded an alert for an air raid, we ran across the playground to the brick-built air raid shelters, but often there wasn't time, so we hid under our desks, peeping out as the ack-ack

guns set up a deafening reception for the raiding aircraft.

At home, we had dug-out – a large hole for an Anderson shelter which my father had bought from the local iron works. Later, as the war progressed, there was a general distribution of Anderson shelters by the Town Council. And they were free. As children, our play revolved around the war around us, digging trenches, setting up observation posts and booby traps. We became experts in aircraft identification.

There was a period of bombing at night, so we slept in the shelter. It was especially frightening when we could hear the bombs whistling as they fell, wondering if the next explosion would be on us. When a terrace of houses was hit, my father, who was also in the Auxiliary Fire Service, wouldn't let us go down to see the damage as body parts were being collected in sandbags. On one occasion as we were coming out of school, there was machine gun fire from a German fighter which injured a mother and her daughter. I had got further up the road with friends, ran into the nearest house and hid under the dining table. Hit and Run raids like that seemed to come on Wednesday afternoons, which we dubbed 'Bombing Day'.

In 1943, I passed for the Scholarship, for entry to Rye Grammar School. (It wasn't called the eleven plus then). As the Rye buildings had been requisitioned as a military hospital, the school was still in Bedford, with the pupils billeted with local people. A Victorian villa for the main classrooms, science, gym and woodwork at Bedford School, assembly, art, domestic science, school dinners and weekly social events in the Russell Park clubroom and a classroom in the clubroom of the Fox and Hounds pub. We had a school Scout Troop which paraded weekly at a local tennis club and Field Days once a term in the countryside, passing tests, cooking and playing 'wide games'. On two occasions, we went out to a farm to help with the potato harvest, for which we received 1/6d [eight pence] pay. A friend and I were cycling back in pouring rain when a large tree came crashing across the road just as we had passed – a lucky escape. Workers were coming out of a factory nearby, so we decided to leave them to deal with the situation. No rush-hour traffic, with no private cars then.

After each morning assembly, teachers walked or cycles between sites, as did pupils when necessary, some of us balancing chairs on our bikes. There were five-minute gaps between lessons, when a certain amount of horseplay took place, such as lighting paper aeroplanes in the electric fire and launching them across the room and various tricks with carbide in water which give off flammable acetylene. Amazingly, no harm resulted and lessons took place in good order, accepted, it seemed, as natural and normal.

Looking back, I have great admiration for our teachers.

My billetters provided me with a good, if very strict, life. They did not allow

me to read the newspapers as they felt the news was not good for me to see. We were allowed home to Rye for the school holidays, being escorted across London from St. Pancras to Charing Cross by prefects. It may appear incongruous, especially as in the summer of 1944 there were doodlebugs, the rocket-propelled flying bombs, which meant that we were in and out of the air-raid shelters again.

But it was at the beginning of June in 1944 that the headmaster announced in assembly that The Second Front had opened. It was D-Day and the drive through France and Germany had begun. By Christmas 1944, the Grammar School at Rye had become available again. At the end of July, everyone travelled back by special train. It took all day. On arrival at Rye station, I was sick!

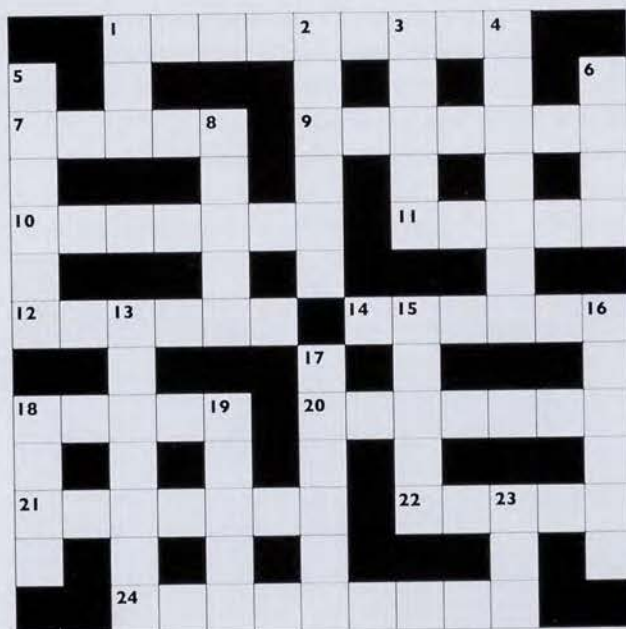
That was really the end of my wartime experience and life was back to normal, despite the continuation of food rationing.



An undated oil painting of a scene in Rye by E. Stretton Hawley, probably from the early twentieth century. The grey buildings to the left are Keith Thompson's father's corn stores. The scene and the relaxed atmosphere would have been little different from this in the time of his reminiscences, despite the limitations to everyday life imposed by the effects of a world war. The painting is reproduced courtesy of Julia Edwards.

CROSSWORD

Compiled by Debby Stevenson. Solution on page 48



ACROSS

- 1 See 16 down
 7 Carew's sculpture of the 3rd Earl's hound is placed in this pond (5)
 9 Feature near St. Mary's, designed by Barry (7)
 10 Closed in 1966, but today a good place to have tea ... (7)
 11 ...or for a stronger drink, a pint of this in The Star or Stonemasons? (5)
 12 Taxes used to support the church (6)
 14 Garden for growing

- medicinal herbs (6)
 18 Covered in evergreen (5)
 20 Feature of the Pleasure Ground which gives views to the north (7)
 21 Bowling action on the cricket pitch (7)
 22 Applied white coating to walls (5)
 24 Early name for Lombard Street (3, 6)

DOWN

- 1 Useful for visitors to have one handy for 3

- perhaps (3)
 2 Pigs were once herded from the coast to Petworth to feed on these (6)
 3 Walks around Petworth Park for instance (5)
 4 In a sadly dilapidated state, like Bedham church for example (7)
 5 Petworth apple cultivated by 3rd Earl (6)
 6 Short piece of satire (4)
 8 Put the flags up (5)
 13 National Trust tried to find Neptune's spear (7)
 15 Tom got in a hole looking for somewhere to stay (5)
 16 & 1 across A water colourist whose paintings included scenes around Petworth (6, 9)
 17 Michael Cummings served here (6)
 18 ---- Hitchens - an artist who lived in Graffham woods during the war
 19 Padre got caught in the curtain! (5)
 24 Hawthorn (3)

Book Sale thoughts: King Arthur and the shepherd

Peter Jerrome

It's one of those books that are an uneasy fit into any recognised Book Sale category. Too small to have much chance on the regular tables, too good for the oddments boxes. A few pounds on the internet, uncommon rather than rare.¹ 44 short pieces with black and white illustrations.

One story particularly caught my attention. It's a fine July evening. Sewingshiels on Hadrian's Wall. An old shepherd is sitting propped against one of the great stones of the old castle. Between the usual seasonal tasks he's knitting a pair of stockings for the harsh northern winter to come. The persistent midges spoil what would otherwise be a marvellous evening. So much so that he feels he would be better back in his kitchen at home. As he swats the midges he loses hold of his ball of wool and it rolls into a tangled mass of nettles and briars. As he forces his way into the undergrowth the clew² seems to have a life of its own, ever running ahead of him. It leads him into a strange green world in which even his hands and fingers acquire a green shade. The clew leads him to a curious round-headed door, through it and into a narrow passage. Toads scamper on the floor, there is a clap of pigeon wings and three young yellow owls hiss a challenge to him. He comes across an enormous hall lit by a mysterious white fire and a radiant silver lamp. There is a table with beautifully carved legs and on the table lie a sword in its scabbard, a garter and a hunting horn. On a throne-like chair sits a king. The shepherd knows at once that it is Arthur. He wears a beautiful chain, has rare rings on his fingers and a crown set 'with gems of the purest water, some golden like crocuses, some blue as the speedwell, some as green as the green in the cup of the snowdrop, and some as red as the holly berries in winter.' The king and his court are asleep. The shepherd takes up the sword and the king's eyelids flicker. He draws the sword from the scabbard and the king's eyes begin to open. He cuts the garter and the king stirs again. The shepherd knows somehow that if he blows the horn the sleepers will awake. He returns the sword to the scabbard and flees. As he goes a deep noble voice follows him:

O woe betide that evil day Who drew the sword, the garter cut,
 On which this witless wight was born, But never blew the bugle horn!

Back in his kitchen he has time to repent his lack of courage. Try as he will, he can never again find the enchanted hall.

A simple, almost wistful story and, for one reader at least, a haunting one. All turns on the shepherd's failure of nerve. Yet, if he had blown the horn, the story collapses. It is one of fear and lost opportunity. Exposed to the harsh air of reality, Arthur and his court will crumble into dust. They are safer where they are; their natural habitat is the imagination. The shepherd, not the king, is the hero or antihero of the story.

In this strange, twilight, virus-haunted period, is it fanciful to see Arthur as symbolising the Petworth Society Book Sale, the differences being that unlike the shepherd we have the opportunity to find the secret hall again.

1. F. Grice, B.A. *Folk Tales from the North Country drawn from Northumberland and Durham*. Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., 1944. 2. A ball of wool.

Below. Arthur and his court asleep. An illustration from the book.



‘... a particularly intrepid mouse’

The concluding part of life at a Petworth solicitor's in the 1980s. Andrew Brooke

The afternoon was usually spent seeing clients or dealing with more time-consuming matters than routine correspondence. Office hours were 9 till 6 on Mondays and Tuesdays; 9 till 5 on other days. This was to coincide with local buses which ran just past the hour. It was only when it was realized that none of the staff any longer took the bus that the hours changed. Overtime on Saturday was rare but not unknown.

Dress at the office was – and I think still is – fairly formal, and clients would often apologize for turning up under-dressed. Even today when ties are rarely seen in the City I understand it is the solicitors who still wear them. Before coming to Petworth I had occasionally worn a bow tie to work, but I felt I had to give that up when I discovered that Patrick Anderson liked wearing them. I recall too that he had the coats of his suits cut unusually long, so that they came down half way to his knees. If a client died and he was attending the funeral, he would that day swap his usual country tweed suit for something more sober, and carry a rather worn bowler hat.

As well as Patrick Anderson and Robert Longmore (who in those days were always Mr Anderson and Mr Longmore) the office employed Richard Muir to conduct litigation and Harold Huggett and David Trickett to assist with conveyancing. For the first year or two I remember they were just ‘Huggett’ and ‘Trickett’ without the ‘Mr’ as they didn’t have a solicitor’s qualification. I, however, who was their junior but did, was always ‘Mr Brooke’. This outdated method of demarcating the staff soon petered out, and it was not long before some staff were using Christian names!

It so happened that I joined the firm from one where nobody smoked. Not so at Anderson Longmore & Higham where there were half a dozen smoke-filled rooms. David Trickett smoked a pipe and it was not unknown to go into his room and not be able to see him for the smoke. Ash trays were always on hand as a courtesy to clients who smoked.

As the office (now Wisteria House but then unnamed) had been built as a private house, it was not that well-adapted as a place of work, and people were scattered round it in a rather haphazard way. For my first month, for example, I shared an office on the top floor only about ten foot squared. Then I moved to a long thin office full of clutter on the first floor where I remained (as it were) until I retired. It had an enormous table which took up half the room, as well as racks of

files, a filing cabinet, bookshelves, my own seat and two seats for clients. Looking back I find it extraordinary that we thought it appropriate to see clients in such an office environment rather than, as now, in an interview room. As with other rooms looking out on to Market Square, the light was better in February, when the wisteria was pruned, than in say June, by which time daylight was reduced by foliage to a sort of greenish glow so that it was a bit like working in an aquarium. Working at the front of the building one was able to see and (in summer with the windows open) to hear what little went on in the Square, including of course the Fair. Anyone telephoning the office from outside Petworth on November 20th would very likely be bemused to hear the sound of raucous music, over which I had to shout, explaining that it was only temporary. A sound I became used to hearing was that of cars backing into one another followed by the angry voices of the occupants. In summer we would hear tourists commenting on the wisteria: 'Gee, just take a look at this plant!' from Americans and 'Why ever don't they cut back this wretched wisteria?' from the English.

The attic was an indescribable clutter. As the lavatories were up there at the far end of it, there was a sort of corridor through the junk, and the wooden-backed pigeon-holes containing bundles of correspondence, filthy with age, some of them getting on for a hundred years old. One day when trying to trace the source of a damp problem, Robert Longmore and I discovered that if you broke the back off one of these sets of pigeon-holes, the attic was suddenly flooded with light from an alarmingly wide crack in the wall behind it. The repairs (which were partly down to me as I had recently become a partner in the firm) could only be carried out if we first cleared the attic, and it was in the course of doing this that I discovered, behind a partition, several baskets full of the private correspondence of Mr John Pitfield, the senior partner from about 1900 to about 1930: cards from his empire-building brothers, invitations to tennis parties, seed catalogues, family news from a sister in Devon, circulars from the Conservative Party and numerous tradesmen's bills. The Petworth Society has them all now. The (weekday) invitations to tea were sufficiently frequent to show that the life of a solicitor then had been a far more leisurely affair, and the tradesmen's bills (often still in their envelopes, unopened) showed that Mr Pitfield had been a very slow payer. In one case he was receiving a bill for painting his house with a similar figure carried forward from the occasion five years before when it had last been painted. Perhaps that was not so very unusual in 1920.

I was taken on to help with wills, trusts and probate work, but was expected to turn my hand to other types of work if the need arose. As recently as the 1980s solicitors were as much GPs as specialists. A client might come to see you about making a will, but when he asked to see you again you rarely knew whether he wanted to change the will, ask you to represent him on a driving charge, get

him a divorce, complain to his neighbours, draft a partnership agreement or (in the case of a small but troubling minority) talk to you at length about potential litigation against people like the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Metropolitan Police Commissioner to stop them spreading germs into people's homes by way of their television sets. Solicitors have a duty of confidentiality which makes it difficult to say much about the clients, even anonymously.

The fact that one did not over-specialize meant, I suppose, that one saw a greater variety of people than is the norm today. But there were (and probably still are) the friendly ones, the hostile ones, the arrogant ones, the anxious ones, the saintly ones, the contemptible ones, the amusing ones, the thick ones and the downright unreasonable ones. I remember for example, a farmer, now dead, who came to see me in 1980 and asked me to help him draft a will. I did so and wrote to him inviting him to come and sign it. He did not come. I wrote again, choosing seasons when farmers would be less busy. I telephoned. All was to no avail. After about six reminders, he called at the office in 1995 at an inconvenient moment, without an appointment, and asked to sign it. This he then refused to do, complaining on reading it through that it was now at least ten years out of date. His calling without an appointment was not unusual, as many clients would simply turn up and hope to be seen; be slightly peeved if for good reason they couldn't be. I think this must have been a Petworth trait as I don't recall it happening in Worcester.

Visits to see clients in their own homes were, of course, occasionally necessary. It was by doing this that I learned just how primitive some of the country dwellings around Petworth then were. I recall one example (surprisingly recent) when a distinguished London lawyer, solicitor to Princess Diana and various other public figures, needed to see a client of mine who, rather improbably, held information which would assist a major corporate client of his in High Court litigation. I went along to 'see fair play' and to give him a lift from the station to the remote Sussex farmhouse where she lived. On a bitterly cold winter's day we sat in a draughty parlour, unlit as a matter of principle, in front of a roaring log fire, but with the doors and windows all open in a futile effort to stop the chimney from smoking. Half way through the discussions, a particularly intrepid mouse ran across the flagstones and paused in front of the fire, staring at us like something in a children's cartoon. On the way back I asked the visitor if he had got all he needed. 'I think so,' he answered 'but when the mouse appeared I'm afraid my concentration rather went to pieces.'

As my career progressed, such incidents became rarer, just as life in Petworth became more attuned to life in the country as a whole. Where now are the characters? The illiterate who called in to ask me to read his mail to him and said I was his benefactor? The lady whose missing deeds turned up on top of the

canopy of her four-poster bed? The lady who died leaving a pile of empty bottles in her kitchen four foot high? The lady who wrote obscene poetry and asked for a cremation service for her Pekinese? The answer is that they have all died, and the work became duller. At that interview with Patrick Anderson back in 1979 I think what he wanted to know was not so much whether I knew what to say to this extravagant diversity of people as whether I would learn how to say it. He himself proved that you could become a good solicitor without necessarily knowing much law so long as you could figure out what made the clients tick, and advise accordingly what would best suit them.

One thing is clear: the availability of Legal Aid in 1979 meant that the firm was potentially catering for the needs of the whole town, and not just those who could afford the fees. The cuts in the legal aid system broke the bond between firms of solicitors and the communities they served. Few lawyers actually relished doing legally aided work as the government were the ones paying for it and they sometimes seemed no quicker than Mr Pitfield in settling what they owed; but most firms felt a moral obligation to put up with the inconvenience and the poor rates of pay if it would help those who could not otherwise afford it. Now commercial considerations have led many firms throughout the country to abandon that obligation and I think that is a matter of much regret. I recall a UK-wide conference of lawyers in about 2000 where we were addressed by a stereotypically canny Scots lawyer. 'Why should we do work which is not profitable?' he asked. I think the question was rhetorical, but I wish now that I had had the courage to answer it.

In splendid isolation

Miles Costello. April 2020

I certainly wasn't counting down the days although I had been planning and looking forward to my retirement for almost two years. Initially I would reduce my hours to a three-day week and then finally in late March of 2020 I would retire. What could go wrong? Retirement would give me more time with the grandchildren and also the opportunity to do all of those things that I had been putting off for years. The barn at Coultershaw, which the Society has used as a store for ages, was in desperate need of a clear out. A new kitchen at home, to keep costs down I would labour for the builder, and of course it was planned that with spring in the air there was always plenty to do in the garden. All of this without the usual book sale tasks which have kept me busy almost

every weekend for nearly twenty years.

The big day has arrived, no fuss at work – my choice, and then, as if he had planned it, the Prime Minister announces the Coronavirus lockdown, and what's more it is to come into force immediately. My builder, recently recovering from a serious illness, goes into total isolation. Only essential work is allowed – does clearing the barn at Coultershaw count as essential? Probably not, but even if it were, the recycling tips are closed so nowhere to get rid of the rubbish. The book sales are suspended for the foreseeable future – will they ever restart? Well, that leaves the garden and writing though with so much time on my hands even that lacks the urgency of trying to squeeze it into pre-retirement days.

Gardening, writing and walking. Walking, writing and gardening. It is now mid-April and my day has settled into a rather mundane routine. Gardening



'Proud and ancient...' Soanes Farmhouse. A drawing by Jonathan Newdick. In September 1834 John Constable made a drawing (now in the Lady Lever Art Gallery, Liverpool) of the same house which he was told was called 'Wicked Hammond's House'.

and writing are quite predictable though the first relies very much on the weather while the second depends upon my frame of mind. As for walking, that is a pleasure that I had long forgotten, not dependent on the weather or the vagaries of my mental wellbeing, it is just walking, one step at a time, not long walks or even short walks, just walking. We are blessed at South Grove that a gate at the bottom of our garden leads directly on to a field at the very southern edge of the town. To older residents this is Soanes Farm, while to many others it will be just another one of those fields where vast quantities of salad crops are grown. The field is enormous, in fact it is so large that I cannot see one end of it from the garden gate, it just disappears behind the Primary School in the direction of Grove Lane. I don't know whether the field had a name in the past, it probably did, perhaps 'Big Field' or the '100 acre field' who knows, but I am calling it 'George Garland's Field'. This, after all, seems quite fitting to me as it was here at South Grove that he lived when he was first married and here in the 1930s and '40s that, looking out onto the field, he took so many of his iconic farming photographs. Men working the land as they had done for centuries and framed by the distant South Downs with the cottages at Stony Hill in the background, and it was here that he witnessed the final agonies of horse drawn farming. Thankfully George Garland was here to record it.

It was towards the end of the second week of lockdown that I decided to investigate the field. Wellington boots, walking stick and on my wife's insistence a mobile phone, apparently she had little confidence that I could make it and would almost certainly need to summon assistance. But what a field, it is huge, probably twice the size that it was when Garland took his photos, the 1950s had evidently seen hedges ripped out and the field enlarged, even Sandy Lane, a track which once ran across it had been ploughed in so as not to interrupt the progress of the ever larger farming machines.

I set off and soon South Grove disappears from view as I follow the headland along the edge of the primary school. Peering through the hedge, the playground is quiet, the school effectively closed. The bank which formed the perimeter of the old Herbert Shiner School playing field has been planted with quickset and now creates an impenetrable barrier. The ground is rock hard despite the wet winter and now we have had the driest March on record. I stumble on, the thin soles of my wellington boots offering little protection from the uneven ruts. The remains of last year's planted crop of goodness knows what has been sprayed with a herbicide and is rapidly wilting. Ahead, the rear of houses in Grove Lane come into view and in respect for their privacy I give them as wide a berth as possible. Standing silent I can hear the crows, or are they rooks, at nearby New Grove, the great house is sold and the family in the process of moving. Petworth without a DePass, it would once have seemed unlikely,

strange times indeed. Turning south I walk parallel with Grove Lane, I wonder to myself if anyone calls it New Grove Lane anymore, probably not, and make my way to the furthest corner of the field and there standing picket as it has done for centuries is Soanes Farmhouse. Proud, ancient and empty it appears abandoned, for in recent years it has been rejected both as a restaurant and a public house, perhaps it has outlived its usefulness, unable to find a purpose in a vastly altered world, a square peg in a round hole. I dwell briefly on what the future can hold for the beautiful old house but come to no conclusion and decide to move on. I could have crossed the lane and continued my excursion towards The Sheepdowns and eventually Byworth but that is not my intention today. Turning my back on Grove Lane I begin to follow the field hedge west. I say hedge when it is to all intents and purposes a young wood planted perhaps as a wildlife corridor while also shielding future development from the distant Downs.

Having walked the field almost every day since that first expedition I have come to know that the wood is home to rabbits, foxes, numerous pheasants – springtime survivors of the winter massacre – and a family of six nervous roe deer. On closer inspection it is at its widest just some fifty yards across and sadly spoiled by the remains of hundreds of plastic sapling tubes which lie scattered on the ground, they have long outlived their usefulness in protecting the young trees and yet having survived for a good many years they are testimony to their apparent durability. The wood forms the southern boundary of the field and continues for several hundred yards until it finally peters out as it reaches Station Road. It is here that I notice for the first time the glorious silence. I have never known such quiet and there is an overwhelming sense of splendid isolation, no cars, no aeroplanes and best of all no motor bikes. Utter and complete silence such as I doubt will ever be witnessed again. I consciously cherish the peace and reflect on a recent theory that birds are singing quieter this year as they do not need to compete with the noise of human activity. Could that be right? Turning north I follow the gentle incline which runs parallel with Station Road and back to South Grove. The walk has taken little over half an hour and during that time I have stood and watched the family of deer, disturbed by my approach, scatter anxiously across the field. I have gazed in awe as a single crow, protecting its young, repeatedly mobs a bird of prey, the crow winning. I have almost stumbled upon a startled young fox, and yet who was the more alarmed? I have deliberated on what the future holds for my grandchildren once normality returns, and wondered what shape it will take. I have worried about my daughter and daughter-in-law, both nurses, and finally I have asked myself what George Garland would have made of this insane world that we now live in.

The milk was still collected in churns

Jane Adsett née Curnick in conversation with Miles Costello

The name Curnick came originally from Cornwall though my father Frank Curnick and his younger brother Bob farmed for some years on the Marlborough Downs at Ogbourne Maizey in Wiltshire. The brothers served together in the local Home Guard during the war but had different ideas about farming and so Dad, with my mother Nancy and two young daughters, decided to leave and start out on their own. Dad looked around for a while and eventually came across Burton Mill Farm near Petworth, a mixed arable and dairy holding that was vacant and for which the owner was looking for a tenant. Dad applied and in the Spring of 1951, having agreed conditions with Mr Thriscutt, the previous tenant, the four of us moved in, Mum, Dad, sister Sally and myself to begin a new life at Burton Mill Farm.

I was only four when we came to Burton Mill and it was decided that I should begin school the following September. Mum wanted me to go to Duncton. However, Dad suggested that it would be better for me to start at Northend House School in Petworth. Mr Kennedy had a chauffeur gardener named Eric Blakeney who had his sister living with him and her daughter, who was a couple of years older than me went to the school and Dad thought that it would be convenient for him to take me when he took his niece in each day. The school I believe was once the workhouse and when I was there it was run by a Mrs Baggely. The only proper teacher was Mrs Stevenson and after two years of learning very little I moved on to the convent at Midhurst where I remained until I left school at sixteen.

Burton Mill Farm belonged to Mr Albert Kennedy, a wealthy businessman and owner of a company named Stothert and Pitt which made cranes for dockyards. Evidently he had long fancied a country estate and so he bought the farm from the Courtauld family at Burton Park. There were two main houses on the farm which were attached like a letter 'T'; Mr Kennedy living in the front one which was known as Burton Mill House, while we lived at the rear property which was Burton Mill Farmhouse. The farmhouse had four big bedrooms, it was a large house though hardly modernised at all, however it must have seemed quite comfortable as our grandmother on Dad's side would move in with us each Christmas and go home to Marlborough at Easter. Her home in Wiltshire was really quite basic and so she would live with us during the worst of the winter. My husband and I went back to the farmhouse a few years ago when it was for sale and much to my surprise the wallpaper in my bedroom was exactly how we had left it when our family moved out.

The farmyard at Burton Mill was accessed by a track which runs up from Burton Park Road and past the cottages at Burton Common. At the top of the track was a barn and beyond that the milking parlour, dairy and cooling tank. The milk was still collected in churns each morning by the Milk Marketing Board. When we first moved to the farm the Midhurst to Pulborough railway line ran through it and we had several fields on the far side which could only be reached by actually walking across the line. I can still picture the trains now though of course by the time that Dad gave up the farm the railway had long since closed. Beyond the railway track the northern boundary was the Rother, while to the east it was Shopham Bridge Farm and to the west Burton Rough, quite a compact farm really and something of an oasis squeezed between the much larger Leconfield and Barlavington Estate properties.

When Dad first took the tenancy it came with a bungalow called Rat's Castle which stands at the very top of the track by the farmyard; we also had two Burton Mill Cottages further down the track, George Phillips and his family living in number two while the Moorey family rented number one next door. George worked for Dad and he and his wife had four sons and a daughter. The remainder of the cottages at the Common belonged to what I called the monastery, which in fact was a Jesuit priests' retirement home at Burton Hill. There were about a dozen of the retired priests and monks living there and every Friday I would walk over and deliver eggs that they had ordered. Most of them were Irish and I knew them all as Brother Mac as I couldn't remember their individual names. The Brothers would sometimes walk down to the farm and chat with Mum or occasionally ask her to return a book when the mobile library came around. The Common was quite a little community in those days with families coming and going. I remember Mrs Cargill and the Moorey and Steer families but of course there were many others.

Mr Kennedy was still very much involved in his business and would spend Monday to Friday in London, coming down just for the weekend. The family worshipped at Duncton and later at Coates where he had the nice path leading up to the church made. There was an old bungalow by the side of the mill pond where a Miss Long and her brother lived when we first moved to the farm. The bungalow fell into disrepair after the Longs died and Mr Kennedy had it demolished and a new one built further away from the road. When he retired he moved into the new property which he called Burton Mill Lodge and Burton Mill House was let to a Mrs Williams who was an old friend of the family. Some years later Mrs Kennedy sold the bungalow to a Miss Haig who I believe was a member of the well-known and very wealthy whisky family. Mrs Kennedy, by then a widow, moved to Torquay.

Life was very quiet at Burton Mill though both my sister Sally and I felt that we were fortunate to grow up there. There was a youth club in the old Duncton

village hall run by Mr Taylor, the headmaster of the village school. A friend of mine lived in the bungalow at Chalet Corner and we would go to Sunday school together at Duncton. There was a bus stop at the corner but we would quite often pocket the fare and walk to the church either down the Straight or through Burton Park. We had a huge amount of freedom to wander where we liked, and there was very little traffic on the road, though a bus did pass us twice a week on Tuesday and Saturday. In fact it was the regular bus that was involved in an incident which gained a lot of attention in the press and caused quite a lot of disruption locally. It must have been 1962 or 63 when part of the mill pond dam collapsed washing away the road foundations, and the bus, with passengers on board slipped into the ensuing hole. There were no injuries and the passengers calmly disembarked but the resulting road closure made it even quieter than it had been. There followed a lengthy legal battle between Mr Kennedy and the County Council over who was responsible for repairing the damage to the dam and the road. In the end Mr Kennedy lost and he transferred ownership of the mill and mill pond to the council but with lifetime rights to the mill. Of course we haven't really spoken about the mill as it didn't come with the tenancy of the farm. It had long stopped grinding corn but the Courtaulds had a turbine installed before the war which powered a saw that Mr Kennedy used for cutting logs in winter. The top or third floor of the mill was used as a garage and other than that the building wasn't used at all.

My parents would go into Petworth most Fridays where Dad would visit the bank while Mum did the shopping. Of course, most shops delivered then so she would order her meat or whatever and it would be sent out to us. Hazelman's had the shop at Sutton and Les Harland the manager would also deliver to Burton Mill. They made a comfortable living on the farm. Dad was easily satisfied and didn't have a jealous streak in him and certainly never worried about what other people had. Mr Kennedy's widow put the farm up for auction in 1977 and my parents moved out at Michaelmas that year. Dad had worked past his retirement age and as George Phillips was a couple of years younger than him Dad waited until George was retiring age. They remained good friends even after Mum and Dad retired to Bristol.

I left the farm in 1970 when I married and my new husband and I moved into a flat above Windmill House in the High Street. Windmill House belonged to George Garland, the Petworth photographer and we had been given a reference from Jean Bland from the Stag Inn at Balls Cross who knew George well. Once we were in he became like a sort of grandad to both of us. He spent our first Christmas with us and we would often have lunch together or he might go and dine with Mr Bryder the undertaker, although he was not so keen if they had someone laid out that he knew. We were very happy living at Windmill House and were very fond of George.

Enforced sabbatical

Peter Jerrome

First Sunday after lockdown eases. Mid July. A quick look at the museum garden. Through a sparsely-filled car park. A couple deliberate at the ticket machine. Two other visitors make a casual foray up High Street, they carry on into Grove Street, pass the museum without a glance and disappear. The museum is 'enjoying' an enforced sabbath. It is surely impossible to conjoin perspex screens and social distancing with 1910.

Quite possibly no visitors will see the garden until next year. The gazanias have been generously spaced for easy hoeing and keep the ground clear of the persistent shamrock and self-sown calendula. Helium in vivid shades of orange and red, drawn by the enclosing walls and blown by a fitful breeze. On the table in the scullery *Common-Sense Cookery* by Colonel Kenney Herbert. Would Mary Cummings have needed such a guide? More likely, simply go day to day at most, one son at home in 1910. Inscribed inside, the name 'H. J. Andrews, August 1908'. After nearly twenty years of book sales I should know better than to wonder pointlessly about H. J. Andrews, but I do. Fowler's bottling thermometer, well, possibly. Drummer dyes on the wooden copper lid 'for cotton, silk and wool', and the inevitable Reckitt's Blue.

Mike Pope has made a marvellous job of restoring the iconic meat safe outside, perhaps our most tangible link with a long past. The museum artefacts, originally imported, have now acquired the patina of a quarter of a century, venerable now in their own right and for visitors having a self-confidence all their own: will the old phrases re-echo this year? 'This is how we imagine a Roman Catholic lady's bedroom', 'The King's Royal Irish Hussars' and the rest.

The gipsy flowers grow ever more brittle with the years and a darker shade of brown. Could we ever replace them? Is the tear on the Red Riding Hood print in the attic getting just a little longer? The populous Goss cabinet on the stairs gleams in the diffused sunlight. I glimpse 'the scissors that cut the tape at the official opening in 1996'. Next year will see the museum's quarter century.

On the following pages is a selection of photographs by Jonathan Newdick of some details of the Cottage Museum garden in early September. Apart from opening the door of the meat safe, not one of the pictures was styled or arranged. They remain, therefore, as what in Mary Cummings' day would have been known as 'snaps'.



From Facebook

Miles Costello

My Facebook page has now become a group named 'Petworth Past'. At the time of writing the membership stands at over 300.



CORONATION DAY

In early June I posted a photograph of Coronation Day celebrations taking place in High Street on the evening of June 2nd 1953. The photograph by George Garland showed a group of people – some dancing – outside Mr Card's plumbing and electrical shop. Things got off to a good start when Carol Kendall née

Dunford recognised her mother, sister, brother and husband in the photo, however further comments tended to focus on the occasion rather than the photograph. Avril Godfrey née Caine recalled receiving a commemorative five shilling coin from Mr and Mrs Wyndham in Petworth Park while Liz Evans née Salter believed that she was given her coin by Mr and Mrs Lund in the Market Square.

The Lunds lived in Red House which was later demolished to make way for the present Lund House. Ziggi Janiec recalled that his school joined a procession which ended up in Petworth Park via the gate on the Midhurst road, where there were floats and a fair. Of course, many people watched the Coronation on television though few were fortunate enough to own a set in 1953. Janet Duncton née Hazelman recalled that 'In Upperton we had a TV but it had to be run by an engine outside. Most of the village came up to our front room to watch the coronation parade. OK all the time the engine didn't run out of fuel. By the way, the engine was in the old outside bucket and chuck toilet'.

Don Simpson pointed out that his family 'spent the afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. Lucas in Grove Street, they had a small television, one of the few around at the time'. Valerie Sharp née West was living at the Mason's Arms in North Street where her grandfather was landlord and she remembers her father putting the television in the public bar for the customers to watch. Was

it a clever ploy to attract customers or simply a neighbourly gesture?

THE BUFFS

A photograph of a Buffs children's party in the big room at the Red Lion pub in New Street from the mid-1960s bought a flurry of comments, with Jackie Wood née Brash responding that it 'probably was the Buffalo's Christmas party for the members' kids – or Dad's funny club as we used to call it'. Following a good deal of online debate many of the partygoers were identified. Seeing an opportunity I decided to ask if any former Buffs were still alive. My request was met as expected, by a stony silence, a shame as it would have been useful to have gained some first-hand information about the Petworth Enterprise Lodge which was formed in 1926, though perhaps it is too late now. Incidentally the Buffs, or to use their full name, the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes still have lodges throughout the English speaking world and their members are dedicated to charitable works, mutual support and friendship.

Another but much earlier photograph of a Buffs Christmas party from 1937 was sent in by Don Simpson. Don managed to identify two former landlords at the Red Lion but no one else. If proof were needed, the photograph sharply illustrates that first-hand memories of 1937 have now all but disappeared.

GLEBE VILLAS

A photograph dating from the turn of the 20th century of schoolboys walking past the newly built Glebe Villas in North Street reminded Ziggi Janiec of a time shortly after the war when 'we walked two by two all the way from the camp to school every day. Somerset Lodge just further up was empty and seemed to frighten us seven year olds each time we passed by'. The camp that Ziggi refers to was the former Polish Resettlement Camp in Petworth Park. Of course the photograph was from a much earlier period. One keen observer noted the absence of the ever-present white wooden railings that have become synonymous with that part of North Street. The railings – much older than Glebe Villas – had been removed while the new houses were being built.

THE VINCENT FAMILY

This photograph of a cistern sent by John Vincent all the way from Orkney raised a few laughs but surprisingly and refreshingly no lavatorial jokes. The name on the cistern was 'Leonard Vincent plumber Petworth'. The family have a long history of plumbing in the town dating right back to William Vincent of Grove Street in the 1870s. Later came Sydney who had a yard in Angel Street and Leonard who operated out of Lombard Street. Of course more recently there was Bill with his three-wheeled van. Fondly remembered, he was a stalwart of The Petworth Society and the last of the long line of Vincent plumbers in the town. Incidentally, the now retired three-wheeler still survives on Orkney.



CROSSWORD SOLUTION

ACROSS 1 Muncaster, 7 Upper, 9 Obelisk, 10 Station, 11 Stout, 12 Tithes, 14 Physic, 18 Iviad, 20 Rotunda, 21 Overarm, 22 Lined, 24 The Causey

DOWN

1 Map, 2 Acorns, 3 Treks, 4 Ruinous, 5 Russet, 6 Skit, 8 Raise, 13 Trident, 15 Hotel, 16 Claude, 17 Crimea, 18 Ivon, 19 Drape, 23 May

