

The
Petworth
Society

Miles Costello
Petworth
Collection



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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 or residence, who is interested in furthering the objects of the Society.

The annual subscription is £1 (minimum). Further information may be obtained from any of the following:-

President -

Chairman - Mr. P.A. Jerrome, Trowels, Pound Street,
Petworth.

Vice-Chairman - Mr. K.C. Thompson, 18 Rothermead, Petworth.

Hon. Secretary - Mrs. B.G. Johnson, Glebe Cottage, Bartons
Lane, Petworth. (Tel. 42226)

Hon. Treasurer - Mr. R.A. Sneller, 16 Littlecote,
Petworth. (Tel. 42507)

Hon. Membership Sec. - Mrs. J. Boss, North Street, Petworth.

Committee - Lord Egremont, Mrs. Audrey Grimwood,
Mr. R. Pottington, Mrs. Sonia Rix,
Lady Shakerley, Mrs. C.M. Sheridan,
Mrs. Anne Simmons, Mr. D.S. Sneller,
Mr. J. Taylor, Mrs. D. Thorpe.



Mr George Stevens of Piper's Bridge. Drawn by Mr Charles Orr-Ewing from an original photograph taken by G.G. Garland in 1934



A rare postcard showing a procession moving up New Street led by the Town Band. Date probably 1900 - 1912 - what would be the occasion?



The Toll house at Coultershaw. Part of the old Toll house at Rotherbridge was supposed to have been incorporated in this new building (now demolished).

COLONEL MAUDE

Our first and only president Colonel Maude died on June 6th at the age of 93. His angular figure was universally known in the town, and in the years before the Society was founded he acted as a kind of focus for information, comment and discussion on matters pertaining to Petworth. Nothing was too much trouble for him and all enquiries, however humble or unpromising, would receive painstaking and courteous attention. He had an unrivalled awareness of Petworth's past both historical and architectural and a definite vision of the kind of Petworth he wanted to see. He knew that Petworth could not, in an age of universal change, remain static. No one could turn back the waves and he did not attempt this. He sought rather to see that inevitable change was appropriate and in keeping. Protest for its own sake he would not countenance. The Bulletin had of late pleased him greatly and its continuance in its present form he would consider, I am sure, an indication that his insights had not been lost sight of.

The Petworth Society was only one of his many interests in the town even if perhaps he saw it as a means of combining many of them. We would be interested in joining with other town organisations with whom Colonel Maude was connected in exploring the possibility of a fund to set up some public tribute to his services to Petworth.

P.A.J.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

As I pointed out at the Annual General Meeting in May, a conspicuous weakness of this Society has been the lack of opportunity for members to meet on a regular basis. I hope that the series of monthly meetings in the Leconfield Hall beginning on Tuesday October 16th will go some way towards remedying this. The meetings will begin at 8.00 p.m. sharp and there will be a standard charge of 35p to help with our costs (e.g. hiring the hall) and to allow for light refreshment. As you will see we have tried to offer a varied programme and to appeal widely. The first speaker will be Mr. Marshall on "What to do when your car breaks down". Mr. Marshall has had long experience with Rolls Royce - rather less experience I would imagine with breakdowns! On Tuesday November 13th The Lady Jane Turnbull (née Grey) will talk on "Lady Jane Grey" and on December 10th there will be a show of garden slides belonging to

Mr. Patrick Synge. If there is anything you would like on the Spring programme don't hesitate to tell me or any other member of the Committee and we will see what we can do.

Please note our other Autumn activities. I would particularly draw your attention to the Ebernoe expedition on Sunday 14th October. David's expeditions are invariably much enjoyed as also are Mr. Sheridan's summer visits to smaller Petworth gardens. I should mention that I have written to the County Council on the Society's behalf in support of the campaign to prevent the commercial felling of 9 acres of old wealden woodland at Ebernoe. The article by Miss Abraham in this issue gives some idea of the richness of this area from a natural history standpoint.

It is a great pleasure to announce the co-option of a new member to the Committee in Mrs. Audrey Grimwood of Grove Lane. I am delighted that she has agreed to serve and I know she will be a great help to us.

If you like this Bulletin a concrete way of showing your approval would be by making a gift toward the Petworth Society Tombola Stall in the Leconfield Hall on October 6th. Any profits will go to the Society's funds and as Lady Shakerley observes in the following note objects can be left either at the shop here or with Anne Simmons at Streeters.

To close on a personal note. My book "Cloakbag and Common Purse" should appear in early September. It deals with the growth of Petworth Park during the sixteenth century and the dispute between the 9th Earl and his tenants over enclosure and other matters. The format will be similar to the Window Press' previous production "Tales of Old Petworth". I will also be giving an informal course on local history at the Petworth Centre for Leisure Activities on ten Mondays from September 24th. Main enrolment is at the Herbert Shiner School on Tuesday 11th September.

P.A.J.

PETWORTH ORGANISATIONS SUPER-MARKET

This Event, at which most Charities and Societies in Petworth will join on Saturday, October 6th in the Leconfield Hall from 10.30 - 12.30 a.m. and 2 - 4 p.m. will have stalls for plants, produce, groceries, preserves, cakes, books, bric-a-brac, raffles, nearly-new

clothes, flowers and fancy goods. The PETWORTH SOCIETY will run a TOMBOLA: all the proceeds of which, (after the rental for a stall has been paid) will benefit our funds.

We will be very grateful for any contributions to the stall, which our Members may care to give us! It is not only a bottle Tombola (though these are welcome); but anything edible or attractive will be gladly accepted. Possibly it may prove convenient to leave gifts during the day; in which case MRS. SIMMONS (Streeter and Daughter, opp: Church) or MRS. JERROME (Jerrome's in Pound Street) have kindly offered to accept them. However, any Member of the Committee will be glad to take any contributions brought to them. Please help us!

E.S.

PETWORTH BUS SHELTER

The vexed question of a Petworth Bus Shelter remains with us. As you will know a number of Parish Council suggestions for a free-standing building in the Square have been rejected by the County Council. The Parish Council have now requested and received from Mr. Webb of the County Council a plan of what the Council would themselves consider fitting. Their solution is not to offer a free-standing building but to utilise part of the Town Hall itself. This part is the north-west corner i.e. the trestle and store-room on the right as one enters the building. The front window would have the existing glazing cleaned or new clear panes added and the double doors on the north-west corner by the notice-board would be removed so that the shelter stood open. The existing frame and fan-light would however remain. The existing double-doors would be rehung inside against the back wall of the shelter to give an exit for the present fire-escape and the shelter then sealed from the Town Hall itself with a 4 inch blockwork wall rendered and decorated on both sides. Fixed bench seating could be provided.

The merit of the plan is that, as can clearly be seen from the photostat plans, it blends well with the surroundings and is in no way obtrusive. On the other hand we must sympathise with the Leconfield Hall Management Committee who, while most anxious that Petworth should have the bus shelter it so obviously needs, are concerned at the loss of valuable storage space and particularly at the shelter's vulnerability to attack by vandals. The interior of the shelter seems destined to attract the writer of graffiti and the glass front window

and fan-light unless reinforced would, one fears, need constant replacement. The room too is rather small and curiously high in relation to its seating capacity. If there is genuinely no alternative then this scheme, imperfect as it is, has at least the merit that it can be put into action fairly quickly.

After a careful committee discussion and an inspection on the site a suggestion has been made to the Parish Council and the Leconfield Hall Management Committee that the security of the Hall could be made more effective by bringing the exit from the fire-escape either through the wall where the present notice-board is sited or in place of the window on the west wall. This would leave the possibility of making the back wall of the shelter solid, and the shelter itself completely self-contained - possibly at the same time making a fire-exit that would be more acceptable to the relevant authorities.

PAJ/KCT

RIDDLE-ME-REE composed by members of the
Young Petworth Society of the Herbert
Shiner School

My first is in office but never in post,
My second's in downland and also in coast.
My third is in Middle and also in High,
My fourth is in worth but never in By.
My fifth is in fifty but never in miles,
My sixth is in railings and also in stiles.
My seventh's in Damer's and also in Bridge,
My eighth is in Valley but never in Ridge.
My last is in deer and also in hound,
My whole is where doctors are now to be found.

Answer: Fairfield.

THE FIRST PETWORTH FESTIVAL: September 14-17

The idea of a Petworth Festival of English Music and Art was born last September and publicly launched at a meeting in the Leconfield Hall on December 11. The organisation of a festival from scratch is not the sort of operation one can improvise, but it seemed then that we had reasonable - though not ample - time to mount the first effort this September. As things have turned out, our time-table was badly dislocated by difficulties with printing, and as a result the publicity leaflet giving full particulars of programmes and booking arrangements, which should have been ready early in June, appeared only in mid-July. Mrs. Evershed's splendid campaign to enrol Friends of the Festival, who are entitled to priority booking - her address, by the way, is The Garth House, Tillington (Petworth 42881) - had far too long to be conducted with inadequate ammunition. Copies of the leaflet can now be easily picked up from the Festival Secretary (Miss Johnson, The Blackbirds Bookshop, Lombard Street) and at the Booking Office (The Connoisseur's Music Shop, High Street).

It was emphasised at the Leconfield Hall meeting that the Festival was intended to be one for everybody, including children. (There will be a film for them, 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang', at the Youth Centre, and Joan Aiken will be telling her children's stories in the Red Cross Rooms on the Saturday afternoon while rowdier jollifications are going on in the Square outside.) The more serious note will be sounded at the outset of the Festival by Lord Clark in a talk on Turner in the Carved Room of Petworth House and the, connection with Turner will be continued in a Monday evening programme of music the 3rd Earl of Egremont and his friends might have heard while the master was painting 'Petworth: Music Party'. Art will also be celebrated in a collection of important paintings specially relevant to Sussex which Sotheby, King and Chasemore are mounting in the Leconfield Hall, while local craft will be displayed in the Lower Hall.

It is fitting that Elgar should feature prominently in the musical programmes: with his String Quartet (composed at Brinkwells, near Bedham) played by the Delmé Quartet side by side with Sir Michael Tippett's new quartet composed for this year's Bath Festival; with the Enigma Variations in the Brighton Youth Orchestra's programme; with the Introduction and Allegro (and two shorter pieces for strings) to be played by the Monteverdi Orchestra under John Eliot Gardiner;

and by songs which David Wilson Johnson will sing at Brinkwells itself - now the home of the Festival's artistic director, Robert Walker, himself a composer represented in the programmes.

And the music will not all be 'serious'. True to our motto of 'something for everybody', it will range from a disco at the Youth Centre, and Humphrey Lyttelton and his band playing at a venison barbecue in Petworth Park, to 'songs from the thirties' in the back room of the Red Lion after the Monteverdi Orchestra's concert in the Parish Church.

G.A.

EBERNOE COMMON

At the time of writing, late July, a substantial part of the superb old woodland on Ebernoe Common is threatened with felling by the new owners, and by the time of publication its fate will probably have been decided. I keep my fingers crossed, practically plaited. The Common is classed by the Nature Conservancy Council as of Grade I scientific importance, and is well-known to ornithologists, entomologists, lichen-lovers and fungus-fanciers - as well as to those who just enjoy a good walk. In fact it represents one of the only scraps of the old Wealden forest remaining in a relatively natural condition. Being on the edge of the Wealden clay, there are also bands of sandy soil, and the flora is interestingly varied in the smaller areas of heath, scrub, marsh and grassland.

The woods consist mainly of oak and beech, with some yew, ash, birch, field maple, crab and rowan. There is also a scattering of wild service, Sorbus torminalis, an old forest indicator, with its beautiful, rather maple-like leaves, flat heads of white flowers, and small brown berries in autumn. Midland hawthorn, Crataegus oxyacanthoides, is fairly common, and has shinier, less deeply lobed leaves than common hawthorn, C.monogyna, with which it hybridises. Spring is the best time for flowers in the densely wooded parts. Wood anemones, wood-sorrel and bluebells cover the ground, and yellow-green wood spurge appears almost luminous in deep shade. Moscatel, Adoxa moschatellina, and opposite-leaves golden saxifrage, Chrysosplenium oppositifolium, (incongruously pompous names for this modest petal-less plant) are two inconspicuous early flowerers in damper places. Primroses, violets, and early purple orchids prefer the lighter shade of once-coppiced areas and banksides. Later in summer, little flowers in the thickest parts of the wood, but wherever a fallen tree allows

sunlight to penetrate, species such as the bright yellow wood pimpernel, Lysimachia nemorum, bog stitchwort, Stellaria alsine, and the various willowherbs are soon in evidence. Butterfly orchids, Platanthera chlorantha, can be found in one or two places. In July the St. John's worts come into their own - six species of them on the Common, including a few bushes of the exotic-looking tutsan, Hypericum androsaemum, which later produces splendid berries which turn from green, through bright red, to gleaming purplish-black. Most St. John's worts grow on sunny banks where fields border the woods, but the tiny trailing H.humifusum is found in woodland clearings and pathsides. Furnace Pond is at its best in July, when it is covered with water lilies and edged with yellow flags, and although the bird-life has suffered in recent years there is still plenty to be seen. In late summer interesting plants can be found in some of the small areas of scrub and old grassland - plants such as pepper saxifrage, Silaum silaus, a yellow-flowered, stiff-stalked umbellifer which is certainly not a true saxifrage and in which I have so far failed to detect any pepperiness. Nearby, the succulent orpine, Sedum telephium, flourishes in light shade.

In autumn one is occasionally lucky enough to find large red berries growing out of the centres of the leaf-like flattened branch-stems of butcher's broom - it flowers freely but rarely produces fruit. This is the time of year for fungus forays - in a good year an astonishing variety of fungi can be found, particularly under beech and birch, and on decaying fallen trunks. A brilliant display of scarlet fly agarics can usually be relied upon, and several of its even more poisonous cousins. Edible varieties include wood blewits, horns of plenty, parasol mushrooms, and the delectable shaggy Lawyers Wig, Coprinus comatus, a member of the Inkcap family.

I am sadly only the most amateurish of botanists, and can only give a scrappy account of a few of the many interesting plants to be found, but in the last months I have discussed the Common with many species of professional naturalist. They all agree that it is an area of the greatest importance. Let us hope that it is preserved as such - both for the rich variety of the flora and fauna, and for the sheer beauty of the woodland for those content to walk and enjoy.

Frances Abraham.

AUTUMN COLOUR GARDENS

Autumn colouring in October and early November is one of the great reasons for garden visiting and we are fortunate in having some of the finest within reach of a short drive of Petworth, even if not actually on our doorstep! Of these Sheffield Park, near Uckfield is pre-eminent with masses of flaming Japanese maples and nyssas, the North American Tupelo tree, arranged with great skill around two lakes. The garden is now owned and maintained by the National Trust although the house, a gothic mansion, was sold separately. It also has some exceptionally fine trees, the large sweet chestnuts and oaks are thought to be more than three hundred years old although at intervals, some oaks were felled for the navy. Graham Thomas, the former garden adviser to the Trust, tells of two giants felled in 1777 which took 24 horses each to haul them to Lewes at four miles a day and thence to Chatham, a contrast to modern haulage. Incidentally one of the best accounts of the garden can be found in his recent book "Gardens of the National Trust", a sumptuous volume with lovely illustrations, published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson and the National Trust, a book which I can heartily recommend to all garden visitors. A little study of it will greatly enhance their visit.

The first earl of Sheffield employed Capability Brown who designed the form of the two main lakes. Another unexpected incident at Sheffield Park was the first Test Match against the Australians which was played there about a hundred years ago. But the planting which we largely see today was made by a landscape architect, Mr. Pulham, for Mr. Arther Soames. One of them had a great eye for form and colour and planted masses of upright and spreading conifers and among them a magnificent collection of autumn-colouring trees and shrubs. In the last few decades of the nineteenth century the mass of conifers introduced from Western America by the famous plant hunter Douglas and others and raised from seedlings was beginning to become more widespread and around the lakes Mr. Soames was able to group tall upright pillars of cypresses with spreading trees like Cupressus macrocarpa and contrast yellow-needled ones with bluey greys and all shades of green, while among them he planted seedling Japanese maples and the eastern American Nyssa sylvatica which colour in varying brilliant shades of orange, yellow and crimson in October and November and together produce a picture of great beauty as their shapes are reflected in the water. An additional feature is the russet brown of the spires of

Taxodium distichum introduced earlier from N. America, with the bark and the flickering lightness of the silver birches and the great white clumps of pampas grass whose plumes are often eight feet tall.

For summer interest he also planted great masses of the hardy hybrid rhododendrons in varying shades of pink and crimson and white and cream and they give another season of colour throughout June and early July, a great spectacle, and the garden is well worth visiting then as is also the picture of varying shades of green in the spring and masses of daffodils in late March and April.

An unexpected feature of Sheffield Park which one comes upon suddenly during the walk around the lakes is a double border of the autumn-flowering Gentiana sino-ornata, one of George Forrest's best introductions from Western China in the early years of this century. The great dazzling blue trumpets are brilliant in colour and make a great display. It is placed in a flat bit of short grass and one comes on it quite suddenly; although opinions differ as to whether it really fits into this landscape, it is so alien a colour, but still I know of no finer borders of this gentian in the South of England. It needs a damp place as it presumably has here and is better replanted every few years from division of the clumps. One can imagine Forrest's excitement as he came on it on the high moors and rocks of the mountains bordering Tibet, although unfortunately he was a man of few words and has not handed down to us any account of that moment in 1904 when he found it on the Mi Chang Pass, high up between 14,000 and 15,000 feet. It is surprising and quite unexplained that this species has settled down so well in alien lands at low altitudes, while others he recorded, growing close, and also of great merit, have refused to remain with us for long!

Two other very lovely and notable trees among the many at Sheffield Park to which I would like to draw your attention are Pinus montezumae, the very long needled grey pine from the mountains of Mexico, it comes from Popocatepetl, and Picea breweriana from high up in the mountains of Oregon in Western America. Its long drooping branches hang gracefully around it and, after rain, each drop of water looks like quicksilver. It is very slow growing when young and takes years to reach a few feet so the thirty feet of the specimen here is uncommon. Both these trees are always sought out by connoisseurs of trees. The Pine is near the house end of the garden a little away from the top of the upper lake, while the spruce, (Picea) is among a group of trees around the upper lake.

The Bluebell railway with its steam engines also has its terminus in the village outside and for railway enthusiasts is well worth a visit.

Other gardens notable for autumn colour and open to the Public and well worth a visit include Wakehurst near Haywards Heath, Nymans near Handcross, and Winkworth arboretum near Godalming, all belonging to the National Trust, the former being leased to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and also Leonardslee, at Lower Beeding, near Horsham, belonging to Sir Giles Loder, Bt. who has also one of the most extensive collections of rhododendrons and camellias in the country. For opening times of these one should check with the National Trust handbook or local papers.

Patrick M. Synge.

A LETTER FROM PHA BY 11 PETWORTH TRADESMEN
TO THE EARL OF EGREMONT PROTESTING ABOUT THE FAIR

23RD NOVEMBER, 1835

My Lord,

We are sorry to be obliged to trouble your Lordship, but having tried every means to rid ourselves of the inconvenience and annoyance of a number of Carts being stationed in the Market Place, and the space near the Half Moon having been occupied by dealers in Crockery Ware since Monday last to such an extent that no carriage could approach the door of that Inn, we are reluctantly compelled (as remonstrance has no effect) to apply to your Lordship, for assistance in the matter.

THE RELIEF OF MAFEKING FROM THE PARISH MAGAZINE JUNE 1900

The Relief of Mafeking was received in the town with the heartiest acclamations of delight. On Monday, when the official news was received, the Bellingers rang a jubilant peal, and the Town Band paraded the streets and played dance music to a large gathering of people in the meadows below Grays. The whole town was decorated with flags and banners, and on all sides was plentiful evidence of the universal delight with which the good news had been received.

THE BIRDS OF MY GARDEN

Having a large garden in the centre of Petworth gives me great opportunity for bird watching.

The 52 species listed below have all been recorded by myself over the past few years and many of these are resident or regular visitors.

This is the 3rd year that Swallows have nested in my garage and 3 young left the nest on 19 June this year in spite of the late spring and I hope will now raise another brood.

Goldfinches have raised broods in my fruit trees for several years and I attract them all year by growing Teazles.

Several old trees and Ivy covered walls account for the visits by Woodpeckers and Warblers and the peanuts hung near my kitchen window for the Tits and the Siskins.

The cock Pheasant which spent one Christmas Day strutting around my vegetable garden obviously assumed that my dinner was already arranged but the Tawny Owl decided that one of my rabbits was good eating and helped itself.

I hope to add to this list by watching whenever possible but there is no truth in the rumour that I do my gardening while looking at the sky.

<u>Nesting (or closeby)</u>	<u>Feeding</u>	<u>Flying Over</u>
Starling	Mistle Thrush	Black Headed Gull
House Sparrow	Fieldfare	Herring Gull
Duncock	Redwing	Great Black Backed Gull
Wren	Jackdaw	Cormorant
Robin	Pheasant	Heron
Blackbird	Feral Pigeon	Mute Swan
Song Thrush	Wood Pigeon	Mallard
Great Tit	Pied Wagtail	Canada Geece
Blue Tit	White Wagtail	Lapwing
Chaffinch	Green Woodpecker	Kestrel
Bullfinch	Great Spotted	Buzzard
Goldfinch	Woodpecker	Peregrine
Collared Dove	Treecreeper	Tawny Owl

Nesting (or closeby)FeedingFlying Over

Swift	Long Tailed Tit	Rook
Swallow	Coal Tit	Carrion Crow
House Martin	Greenfinch	Magpie
	Siskin	
	Linnet	
	Willow Warbler	
	Blackcap	
	Chiffchaff	

David Sneller.

NEW STEWS FOR OLD (Continued)2. Old Ponds near Kilsham to the south of Petworth

Away to the south west of Petworth just beyond the river Rother lies the hamlet of Heath End. The old track running westward from the main highway near Heath End Garage leads down into a wooded heathland cut through with small narrow ditches and streams. Many years ago this heathland formed part of the old system of commons in the area and was the most southerly portion of Petworth's common land. The streams which wend their way down through these commons to join the river just north of Petworth railway station are fed basically from springs higher up under the Downs and in the surrounding heathland itself. The nature of the area lent itself readily to the construction of stew-ponds along the lines described in Bulletin No.16, and Kilsham Pond is shown on Treswell's map of 1610. It is thought that two other ponds existed further upstream at this time, although these do not appear on the 1610 map. Between this period and the time of James Crow's survey of 1779 the middle of the three ponds had disappeared and the site is marked as Pond Field. All these ponds were readily accessible; the main highway in those days passing some 300 yards to the west of Kilsham Farm and across the fields to the barn and cottage east of Rapley's garage. The road to Chichester passed down Station Road, turned right-handed down Rother Bridge Lane and continued over the old three span stone bridge at Rother Bridge.

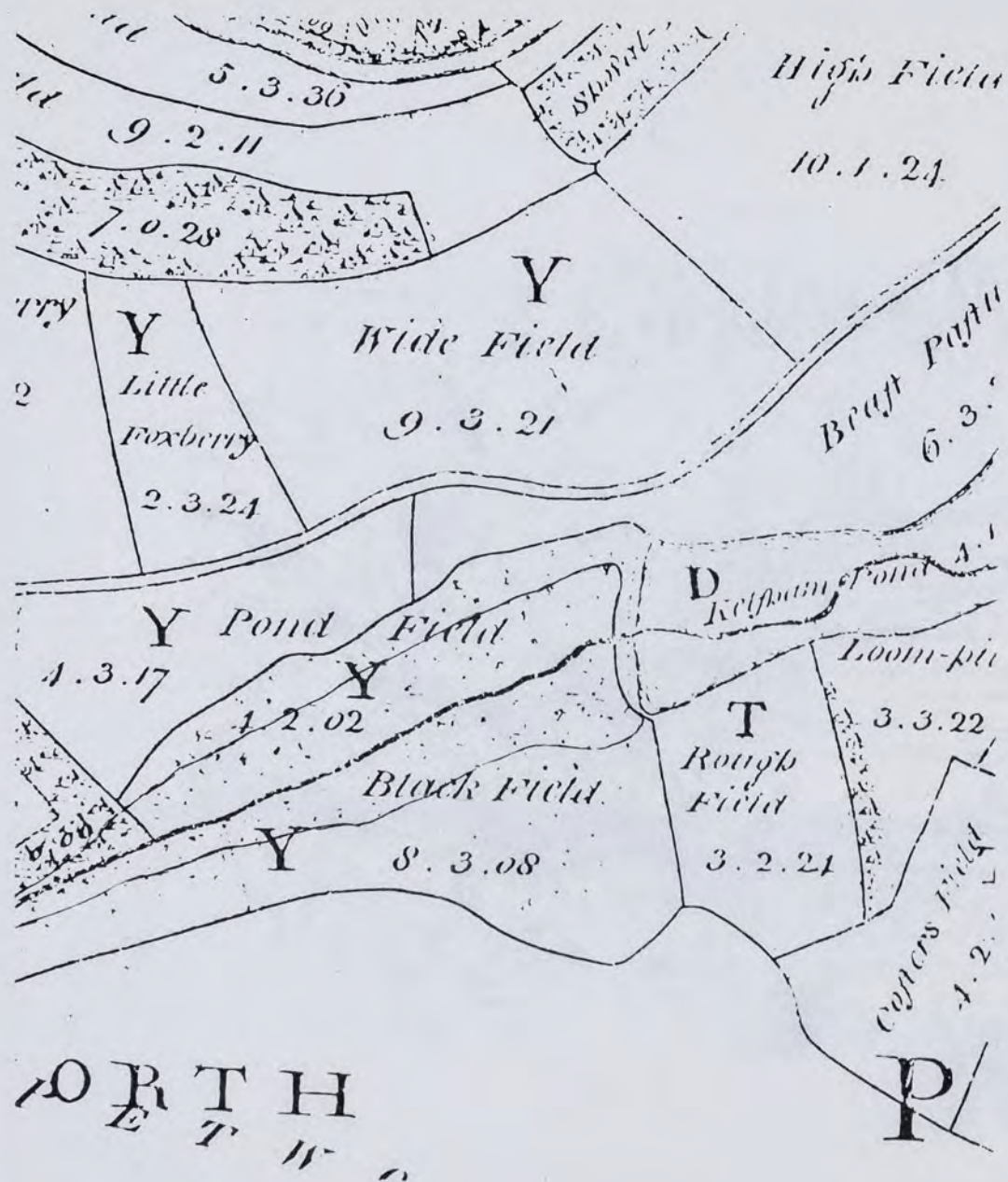
At the beginning of the nineteenth century this road was superseded by the present way via Coultershaw, and the bridge and toll-house at Rother Bridge were removed to be reconstructed on site at Coultershaw. As much of the old bridge as was practicable was to



"Finally the shifting earth wins the battle"
- A tree study at Kilsham.



An impression of Kilsham Pond at the time of Treswell's map. (1610)



A portion of James Crow's survey of 1779 showing the site of the middle Kilsham stew pond marked as "Pond Field".

be used for the then new bridge. The old way over the Rother via Rother Bridge was thereafter ignored by wains and wagons, there being at best only a footbridge over the Rother at this time. Hence the ponds at Kilsham, no longer adjoining a main highway, were destined slowly for decay and oblivion. As far as is known only one of the series of three ponds was used for the purposes of milling - the uppermost of the three to the rear of Herringbroom Cottages. The only evidence at present of milling is the remains of the head-wall dam, an old beautifully formed overspill stone weir, and debris still remaining from a demolished cottage. A building and a pond are shown on the 1875 ordnance sheet but it is not clear whether the mill was still in operation at this time or not. The two ponds downstream were used as long as they existed for fish - principally carp. There is reference to the movements to and from this pond of loads of carp at various times during the eighteenth century and also to the poaching of carp during the earlier part of the same century. These ponds, as with those at Stag Park and elsewhere, decayed through lack of general maintenance, although there is reference in early eighteenth century documents to repairs being carried out with clay, and to carpenters' work on the penstock.

Owing to the nature of the subsoil in this Kilsham area, basically gravel, peat, mud and general glacial debris, decay in this instance was probably swifter than was the case to the north of Petworth on the weald clay. The scouring action caused by the water passing through this subsoil stratum undercuts the banks and results in the collapse and slide of considerable areas of the surrounding heathland, temporarily sealing off the stream and forcing it to carve a new channel. This scouring effect creates an unreal tortured world of its own. Trees lean crazily at all angles, some even upside down, and great cracks appear in the soil prior to its slipping away. Under these conditions the roots of trees stretch taut as bowstrings and moisture drips from the fine root hairs as they take the strain - almost like sweat on the brow of a man. Finally the shifting earth wins the battle, the roots lose their grip, and the tree topples to join the dead of previous seasons.

To all appearance the sites of these ponds returned to nature many years ago; the beds and banks becoming completely overgrown with timber, trees and underwood - willow, alder, birch, even rhododendron, so that to the casual observer there was no indication that man-made ponds had ever existed there. However once the old sites are identified, reinstatement is always a possibility and, in the case of the

middle pond at Kilsham, is already under way. Generations of overgrowth and debris have been removed from the old site to expose an area which imagination needs little prompting to see once again as a pond. There is the clear outline of a sizeable, obviously man-made, basin of some four acres in surface area and with an average depth of a metre throughout. The reconstruction work to the pond-head takes the form of a draw-off pipe along the line of the bed of the stream and through the dam. This is controlled by a single valve set in a sluice-pit in the dam-head. The reinstatement of the breach in the dam and the remainder of the headwall is to be undertaken with clay material which in this case will probably have to be brought in from outside and suitably graded and rammed to provide a water-tight bank. The overflow (or overspill) works are to be constructed on the west side of the dam in the form of a weir similar to the old stone weir no longer used on the old pond upstream. The new weir is to carry normal and flood flows down through a reconstructed channel and back into the old stream some 100 yards below. In order to cater for migratory fish an attempt will be made to create a fish-pass of a suitable character along the course of the overflow stream. The purpose of the proposed reinstatement is 1) to provide storage facilities to enable water to be extracted for washing sand in the nearby pits, 2) to provide water to be extracted for irrigation purposes on adjoining farmland, 3) to restock with fish to create a fishery as at Stag Park ponds, 4) to enhance the beauty and amenity of the immediate area by recreating pond life, whether plant, animal, fowl or fish and 5) to bring once again to life an area that has lain in decay for well over a hundred years.

J. Taylor

MURDER IN CHICHESTER? A SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY MYSTERY

Most records that are discussed in these pages come from the Petworth House Archives or from West Sussex Record Office material like wills or inventories. The present record is unusual in that while it comes from the Record Office it forms part of the Chichester City Archives and concerns an event in Chichester involving a Petworth resident. A coroner's jury was summoned on the 23rd of June 1654 to ascertain the facts concerning the curious sequence of events that had led up to the death of Richard Barnes of Petworth

at Chichester in the same month, and there survive depositions taken before the jury and the verdict of the jury. From the different depositions the gist of the story gradually emerges.

Thomas Fenman, blacksmith, of Chichester, testified that on Monday the 29th of May 1654 Thomas Ripley, then or lately a servant to Richard Barnes of Petworth, had been in an upper chamber of the house of Richard Wollaston in Chichester and that Barnes had sought to have Ripley arrested. Ripley had struck Barnes with the poll of a hatchet making his head bleed and then escaped. Curiously Barnes despite the bleeding had not been cut by the blow he had received.

Richard Wollaston, victualler, of Chichester, deposed that on the 29th of May Richard Barnes and Thomas Ripley, his sometime servant, met in Wollaston's house in Chichester about the making up of some accounts. When they had almost reached agreement, they began to differ whereupon Barnes called the sergeant to the bailiff at Chichester and sought to have Ripley arrested. Ripley however locked himself into another chamber. When Wollaston next saw Barnes his head was bleeding and he said he thought the door had fallen against his head. The innkeeper washed his head with butter and beer and put him on a clean cap. When he was washing Barnes' head he had noted a kind of dent in the left side of his forehead.

Mary Wollaston, wife of Richard Wollaston, said that Richard Barnes had, about a month previously, attempted to have Thomas Ripley arrested at her husband's house at Chichester. However Ripley and his wife had locked themselves in a room. Ripley then shouted that if anyone broke open the door of the chamber he would do him a mischief and kill him if he could. Barnes having got open the door, came down again with his head bleeding saying that the door had hit him on the head. He would not be persuaded that anyone had in fact struck him. Ripley then departed with a hatchet in his hand.

Robert Barnes of Chichester, cordwainer, deposed that on the 29th of May he was in a lower room of Richard Wollaston's house in Chichester. Richard Barnes, his brother, had found the door of the room, where Ripley had shut himself in, open. After this he came down with his head bleeding and said he thought it was the door that had done it. Robert Barnes saw a small wound on his brother's head, and Ripley leaving with a hatchet in his hand which he waved up and

down about his head as Barnes was running upstairs.

Dorothy Manning, wife of Henry, a yeoman, told how she was sent for on Monday afternoon, to come to Barnes at Richard Wollaston's house and dress his head. She said that she perceived a small wound on the left-hand side of his head. When she had dressed the wound, she desired him to seek a skilful surgeon, for she thought the wound to be dangerous. She dressed the wound several times afterwards with a salve Barnes brought from his surgeon in Petworth, following written directions; the night before he died she was sent for again, but would not touch the wound and desired him send for a surgeon. She told the court that the last time she had dressed his head, Barnes had told her 'that his man Ripley had strooken him with a hatchet - but he had not thought the rascal would have served him so'. Barnes also told her Ripley had a hatchet conveyed to him by someone - he thought perhaps the 'mayd of the house'.

Edward Laclott, Chirurgian (surgeon) from Chichester, when examined said that the previous Tuesday at about 10 o'clock, he was summoned to attend Richard Barnes, lying at the Spread Eagle in Chichester, to stop the bleeding of a wound in his head. Laclott applied 'astringent medicines and a collar to stay the bleeding', he also asked Barnes to lay on his other side to prevent the bleeding. When he was found next morning he was back on the other side. When examining Barnes after his death - at the request of Barnes' mother and brother - he found that the wound was not so deep as to penetrate the skull, but there was 'a putrifaction in it from the outside'. What connection the wound had with Barnes' death he was unable to say.

John Haslen the elder, barber and chirurgian of Petworth, testified that Richard Barnes had received a wound on the left side of the head which he had dressed after stopping the bleeding. Haslen said he did not consider the wound to be mortal and considered he would have cured Barnes within ten days if he would be 'ruled by him'. Haslen stated also that Barnes told him Thomas Ripley gave him the wound with a poll of a hatchet when he sought to arrest Ripley.

John Haslen the younger, of Petworth, barber and chirurgian, told the court that on Wednesday 16th June Barnes sent for him (Haslen the elder being away) to come to him at his home in

Petworth to dress his head. When Haslen arrived he found the wound bleeding. He dressed it, and advised Barnes to stay at home, under his care, when he would be cured 'by God's help in four days'. He says also Barnes told him he came by his wound by Ripley. Barnes however refused to stay at home but insisted on going about his business, and seeing he was so determined Haslen gave him a salve and written directions for dressing the wound.

This then is the recorded evidence; there remains but one more document - the verdict of the coroner's jury called to enquire into the affair. Their judgment runs thus:-

'The said Richard Barnes uppon Wednesday the one and twentieth day of this present June 1654 about nine of the clock in the morning dyde at Chichester aforesaid in his bed by God's visitation. And that hee came to his death by no other means to their knowledge'.

Into that one would read in today's language - death by natural causes. What happened to Ripley is not known, but he was apparently cleared by the coroner's jury - a theory in the handwriting group was that possibly Barnes had been hit with the hatchet handle by Ripley and then cut his head as he fell against the door. Ripley is mentioned in the Petworth Parish registers but nothing is known of his subsequent fate. And what of Barnes - what was the business that necessitated his being so regularly in Chichester? - even to the extent of ignoring the advice of his physician? Having died in Chichester his death is recorded there and there is no mention of him at all in the Petworth register. So where in Petworth he lived and for how long cannot be ascertained. As to the two surgeons, or chirurgians as they were then called, father and son, their inventories do survive to tell something of the style of life they lived.

If a tale must have a moral, and all the best ones do, the moral to this story must be that butter and beer do not make a good remedy for cuts in the head!

Sonia Rix

HORSE-THIEVES ON HAMPERS COMMON 1804

PHA 6315 and 6316 are parallel files of material from the year 1804 dealing with the trial and ultimate conviction of Richard Carter and James Combes for horse-stealing. Both men were known to travel widely throughout the southern and western counties but the case at issue and their downfall solely concerns the theft of three horses from Hampers Common in February 1804. One file (6315) deals with the arrest and conviction of Carter, while 6316 recapitulates the evidence on which Carter had already been found guilty and deals with the case of Combes (alias Jethro Cheeseman). The present notes deal with the latter file. The main document in this file is a brief setting out the prosecution case against Combes, five large pages almost certainly in the same hand as set out the case against the hooligans in North Street the previous year (see Bulletin No.11). Among other documents in the file is a folded handbill with annotations that lists the missing horses, a black mare, a bay horse and a bay mare pony, and another (handwritten) bill offering a reward of 20 guineas for the apprehension of Combes. It should be remembered, and it is quite obvious from the present case, that with at best only a rudimentary police force, the onus in such a case lay on the injured party to take action to recover his property and challenge the felons, then there would arise the question of a possible prosecution.

The brief sets out first the case against Combes, alias Cheeseman, and then the evidence of the six prosecution witnesses. The hand-written bill gives a description of Combes the wanted man "stout made, about five feet eleven inches high; fresh-looking of a light complexion and hair; is said to have lost the first joints of the two fore-fingers of his left hand (on which he wears a glove or handkerchief)". He was the son of a travelling razor-grinder of Iping in Sussex, had already been apprehended for the offence once in the west country but had contrived to escape.

By the time of the brief prepared for the Southampton Summer Assizes of 1804, Carter, his colleague, had been convicted and executed at the Spring Assizes of that year and Combes, having been arrested at Kirdford in April and committed to Horsham Gaol, could not have looked with much optimism to facing identical charges on identical evidence.

Combes, claimed the brief, was perhaps the most daring and notorious of a group of villains who had for several years infested the southern counties. While in Horsham Gaol he had admitted to stealing nearly 100 horses in Sussex, Surrey, Kent and Hants. The facts in the Hampers Common case were these:

William Baxell, a licensed hawker, travelled the county with a house waggon. On the evening of Thursday 2nd February 1804 he had left the four horses he used to drive his waggon on Hampers Common. He saw and fed them about 7 o'clock in the evening but the next morning he missed three of them. The fourth had been fettered. After searching the commons and lanes nearby he strongly suspected them to have been stolen and his suspicions were further aroused by a report that two unusual persons riding a single horse had come on the Thursday to the Angel Inn (just without the town of Petworth) and had left the Inn early that same evening. While in Petworth they had bought a distinctive long hunting-whip with a hammer handle. Baxell had a handbill printed on the Saturday offering a reward and on the Sunday himself set off westwards in search of the horses and the persons he suspected to have stolen them. By enquiring at the turnpike gates he traced two men and four horses through the Barnet, Alresford and Winchester until he came to White Parish, the first parish in Wiltshire, where he found and identified two of the horses which had by then been exchanged by Carter and Combes with local farmers.

William Muggeridge, assistant ostler at the Angel Inn Petworth, would tell of the events of a Thursday afternoon in February. Two men had come to the Angel Inn riding on the same horse. They had had the horse put into the stable and came into the inn for beer. Muggeridge had been with them a while in the kitchen and Combes had asked the ostler to drink with them. When Muggeridge declined, Combes threatened to throw the beer in his face if he did not. The two men gave Muggeridge to believe that they were smugglers who had been up country with goods. Carter said they were bound for Petersfield but Combes said Reading. Combes went out and returned with a long hunting-whip with a hammer handle which he said he had bought in the town. This was a whip particularly calculated to drive several led horses. The pair left about six that evening, a dull rainy Thursday, and Combes paid Muggeridge for the horse feed. After they had gone a conversation ensued in the kitchen. Some said they looked like smugglers while others thought they looked more like horse-thieves and that it was likely there would be some report of

stolen horses. For that purpose they had kept the date (the 2nd of February) in mind. On the Saturday the hawker, Baxell, came and enquired whether there had been any suspicious persons at the Inn. Muggeridge had seen Combes when he was brought to Petworth for commitment and had spoken to him.

William Baxell would tell how by enquiring at the turnpike gates and public houses he had traced the fugitives westwards, and how in doing so he had been assisted by the peculiarity of the long hunting whip with the hammer head. He had travelled via the Barnet, Alresford and Winchester until he came to White Parish, the first in Wiltshire, where at the King's Head Inn he learned that two of the horses had been exchanged there - one with Robert Curtis of White Parish and one with John Dibden of Sherfield English in Hampshire at the Sherfield English public house. The prosecutor accompanied by two others had gone from Winchester to Robert Curtis' house where he found the black mare. Thence they had gone to John Dibden's where they found the bay mare pony. The bay horse had been offered for sale at 7 guineas, but this they found still in the stables of Mr. William Purchase at the White Horse Inn, Romsey. The next witness, William Trimb, landlord of the Sherfield English public house would bear this out and had been present at the transactions with the horses.

Robert Curtis would testify that on the evening of February 4th, when returning from Romsey Market, he had called at the Hatchet Public House in Sherfield English where he found Combes (alias Cheeseman) and Carter, who represented themselves as horse-dealers. Four horses were in the Hatchet stable together, all very wet, dirty and weary as from a long journey. Curtis agreed with Combes to exchange the black mare for two guineas and a blind horse belonging to Curtis. When Baxell the prosecutor came to Curtis' house on February 7th and having produced handbills descriptive of the horses, claimed the black mare as his own, Curtis had resigned the mare to him. After Carter, having already been arrested, had said that the bay gelding was at the Shoulder of Mutton Public House about two miles below Langham and that Combes was to be there at a cock match, Curtis and others had gone there in pursuit. However while they had found the horse there, there was no sign of Combes as the cock match had been deferred.

John Dibden would give evidence that on returning from Romsey market he too had called at the Hatchet Public House and found

Combes and Carter there. They appeared to him to be horse-dealers. Their horses were very tired as if they had come a long journey. Dibden agreed an exchange with Carter and took the bay mare pony (No. 3) for a colt belonging to Dibden, while Combes received 1½ guineas to boot. Combes had negotiated with Curtis over the black mare and when Carter was asked how he had come by the bay mare pony, Carter had replied that he had him from a potter named Tulip on the Poole Road towards Ringwood.

Thomas Sharp, father of the licensee of the Shoulder of Mutton Public House two miles below Langham in Dorset, would say that Combes and Carter had come there and left a bay gelding for him to keep. On the following Wednesday Curtis and others came, claimed it as a stolen horse and took it away. Sharp had himself previously been offered the horse in exchange for one of his and a guinea, but he had declined. When, some days later, Combes came to the inn for the horse, he had been apprehended but had somehow contrived to escape.

So much for the prosecution evidence and conclusive enough it must have appeared. The unfortunate Combes did come before the Assizes and, "being an old offender and having been before convicted and transported for horse-stealing", was executed at Winchester. A newspaper report is in the file along with various other documents, such as the court calendar and miscellaneous expenses connected with the case.

P.A.J.

A MARVELLOUS ENCYCLOPEDIA

PHA HMC 116 is a manuscript book from about 1630 containing some 300 pages (not all of them filled) and forming a kind of handwritten encyclopedia on all manner of curious love, astronomical, legal, historical, medical and general. Here one finds set out an exhaustive list of hunting terms, a list of different types of rogues and vagabonds, a list of ships of the world, of surgical instruments and of the signs of the zodiac.

The hunting terms in particular are very rich and many of the words while still to be found in a good dictionary must have long since passed out of common use. When tracking the quarry who would now distinguish between the "slott" of a hart, the "view" of a deer or the "treading" of a boar? Nowadays a tail is a tail but in the language of the hunt the word tail was applied only to the hart's tail. There was the "single" of a deer, the "wreath" of a boar, the "bush" of a fox, the "stearne" of a wolf and the "scutt" of a hare. A hart had a different name for every year of its growth over a six year period e.g. at two years a "brokett" at four a "staggard". If hunted by a king or queen a hart was known as a hart royal or a hart proclaimed. A first year cony was called a rabbit, the term cony properly only applied to the full-grown animal.

Those who like group names such as a "pride" of lions may be interested to know the terms for a pack of wolves (a rout) or of pine martens (a richesse), or the technical terms for game at rest. There was a special word too for the starting of each particular species of game, so a deer was "broken", a buck "dislodged", strictly speaking it was only the hare that was "started". Strangely with regard to noises made by animals a hare "belloweth", more predictably a fox "barketh" while a wolf "howleth" and a boar "fremeth". In the mating season a boar "goeth to the brimme" but a fox to "clickettings". Hart or deer droppings were known as "fumetts" or "fumishings" while those of the hare were "crottells" or "cratisings" and those of a boar "lesses".

A hare "soreth" in the open field, "doubleth" to deceive the dogs and "traceth" in the snow. We might know a young hare was a leve-rett, but not that a three year old was "a greate hare". A one year old boar was a "pigge of the sounder", only at his fifth year was he a full-grown "sanglier". The hart or buck could be hunted from midsummer day to "holy rood" (probably the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross on the 14th of September) while the fox and wolf could be hunted from Christmas to Lady Day. The hare was hunted from Michaelmas to midsummer but the boar only from Christmas to Candlemass (February 2nd).

P.A.J.

TEA AT THE RECTORY

FROM THE PARISH MAGAZINE 2ND JULY 1886

BY AN OLD WOMAN

"Well, I never!" That's what I says to myself as I turns the corner in the garden, and sees the tables and the things set out. "Well, I never did." Such table cloths and ironed all of 'em, and the bread and butter, and the cake, and the strawberries, and the cream, and the cups, and the spoons, and the saucers, and the tea-urns, "fit for gentle-folk," says I. And when we sits down and afore we begins, Mr. Holland he gits up and takes off his hat and he says, "Ladies," says he, "sixteen cups each and everything else in proportion, that's my invitation." Now, seein' there was about thirty of us, we thought that was pretty handsome, so we laughs and says, "Thank you, sir;" and then grace was said, and we sets to.

Well, after tea we turns our seats round, and we looks at the view, and talks to one another maybe for half-an-hour; and then there was some music, and some singin' by a young lady as had a beautiful voice. "Ah!" I hears Master — say, "that fetches me, that do; there's nothin' like singin' for swellin' the feelin's." "That's true," says I, for I felt myself just as I felt when I lost my old man.

Well, after that it was time to go home, but afore we goes Mr. Holland, he gets up and he says, after talking about the happiness of youth and the experience of old age; he says, "Nothing gives me and Mrs. Holland greater pleasure than to welcome here every year as we do you my dear friends from the Somerset and Thomson's Hospitals." Them was his words, tho' I aint quite sure of the grammar; which it was a very kind thing to say. I gets up and I says, "Thank ye, sir, and the same to you and many of 'em;" which was the only words what I could think of, but I don't think nobody heard me except Mrs. —, and she says, "There Mrs. sit down, it aint for the likes of you to speak," so I sits down; but I should a liked he to know as how we was very grateful.

"Ah!" says I to Mrs. —, as we drives back in the pony-cart, "its days like them what makes life happy."

LETTERS

"To the Editor.

Dear Sir,

As a follow up to our book, 'The Best of Fragments from France by Capt. Bruce Bairnsfather', published to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Armistice of WW1, we are researching for a biography of the famous WW1 artist and cartoonist Bruce Bairnsfather. He created the immortal character, 'Old Bill'.

During WW2 Bruce Bairnsfather was appointed official cartoonist to the U.S. Air Forces in Europe. He lived with his wife, Cecilia, at the Old Forge, Northchapel, from about 1939 to 1948, commuting to Chelveston, Bedfordshire, and returning to Northchapel at weekends. He then moved to 'Barn Close' apparently adjoining 'The Old Forge' and stayed there until 1951. The telephone number of The Old Forge was Northchapel 260 in 1948. We also believe that Captain Bairnsfather's father, Major Tom Bairnsfather lived at 'Goffs Farm', Northchapel, tel: Northchapel 47 in 1943.

When his father died, Bruce Bairnsfather had an extension built onto The Old Forge for his mother, Janie Bairnsfather. The extension was made by a local builder, Mr. F.J. Hodgson.

We would very much like to hear from anyone who met or knew of the Bairnsfathers during WW2, or who can tell us where The Old Forge, Barn Close or Goffs Farm were. Any significant help will be acknowledged in our book and every letter will be answered.

Yours truly,

Tonie and Valmai Holt (Major and Mrs.)
40 Wolmer Gardens,
Edgware, Middx. Tel: 01 958 4488."



"Well, if you knows of a better 'ole, go to it."

Bruce Bairnsfather's most famous cartoon .(See letter to the Editor)



This was copied in 1894 from a much older and probably rather poor original. It is likely to be Petworth but this is not certain. If it is, where was it taken?

Mr. F.L. LEESON of the West Sussex Tombstone Group asks on behalf of the Sussex Family History Group if any members would wish to transcribe tombstones before their inscriptions are lost.

Further information can be gained either from Mrs. Johnson or direct from Mr. Leeson himself at - .

108 Sea Lane,
FERRING,
West Sussex.
BN12 SHB.

OUR FIRE ENGINE

FROM THE PARISH MAGAZINE FEBRUARY 1886

I am glad to say a sufficient quantity of hose, leather and canvas, has been purchased for the engine, which is now in good working order, if unhappily it be called into service for any fires. At the last practice, and after a supper that followed for the members of the Brigade, Capt. Stedman tendered his resignation on account of health not enabling him to carry on the work to the satisfaction of his own mind. The thanks of the Brigade were tendered to him for his past long services, and he expressed his willingness to assist at all times when his services would be useful as a member of the Brigade.

I believe no one is yet appointed to succeed in that office, but no doubt the right man will be found. Meantime Lieutenant Richardson is well able to act with a willing and united corps.

AUTUMN ACTIVITIES

MIDHURST AND PETWORTH GROUP
SUSSEX TRUST FOR NATURE CONSERVATION

WEDNESDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER PAGHAM HARBOUR LOCAL NATURE RESERVE
Meet 11 a.m. Sidlesham Ferry. Bring Lunch. No Dogs Please.
LEADER David Sneller

PETWORTH SOCIETY WILDLIFE GROUP

SUNDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER PAGHAM HARBOUR LOCAL NATURE RESERVE
Meet 10.30 a.m. Sidlesham Ferry. Bring Lunch. No Dogs Please.
LEADER David Sneller

SUNDAY 14TH OCTOBER EBERNOE COMMON (See Article)
Meet at Ebernoe Church 2.15 p.m. No Dogs Please.

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

For the Local History Course at The Herbert Shiner School see
Chairman's notes. Course begins Monday, September 24th.

Handwriting Group at TROWELS - fifth season.
Begins Tuesday OCTOBER 2ND.

EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Petworth Public Library from early September.
"FETES, FAIRS and REVELS"

TUESDAY OCTOBER 16TH LECONFIELD HALL
Mr. Marshall "What to do when your car breaks down"

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 13TH LECONFIELD HALL
The Lady Jane Turnbull (née Grey) "Lady Jane Grey"

MONDAY DECEMBER 10TH LECONFIELD HALL
Garden and other slides belonging to Mr. P.M. Synge

All at 8.00 p.m.

