

# THE PETWORTH SOCIETY



# magazine

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THE PETWORTH SOCIETY SUPPORTS THE  
LECONFIELD HALL  
AND PETWORTH COTTAGE MUSEUM!



Autumn Programme. Please keep for reference.

Walk Leaves Petworth Square at 2.15 p.m. Sunday 5th October  
David and Linda's autumn walk.

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Meetings: Leconfield Hall 7.30 p.m.

Tuesday 14th October

Tony Douglass

Stand and Deliver Us  
see over page

The 7th Garland Memorial  
Lecture

£1.50 Refreshments, raffle

Wednesday 12th November

Peter Jerrome

Materials for a  
"History of Petworth"

The first of two talks

1) The period before photography

£1.50 Refreshments, raffle

Monday 15th December

Extra special Christmas Show!

The Gilt and Gaslight Theatre Company present:

"When Movies were Movies"

A new musical to celebrate the golden age of cinema.

See our publicity.

Don't forget Petworth Fair November 20th!

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Evening classes: Herbert Shiner School : Petworth - Enquiries 01730 - 816683

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ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS Tutor Peter Jerrome

This spring there has been a considerable interest in an old question. Is Christianity substantially the creation of St. Paul? A recent book by A. N. Wilson put the thesis in sharp focus but is essentially a restatement of an old idea. What was Paul's relationship to the historical Jesus? Might the true position be slightly more complex than it seems? (Such positions often are!) Probably a good idea to look at what the Apostle actually said and try to make up our own minds!

Six talks beginning Monday 15th September

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IN SEARCH OF THE PSALMISTS Tutor Peter Jerrome

The Psalms are still in regular use for public and private worship but the oldest of them will now be nearly three thousand years old. Still they seem to speak to us over the gulf of years. The world however has changed immeasurably since they were written. Why do they still seem relevant? Did David, "the sweet psalmist of Israel," write them all, or none of them? How have different people reacted to them over the centuries? How do different translations vary and does this make any difference? Above all, what do we really know about their original setting?

Six talks beginning Monday 3rd November

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Nine talks on the history of Petworth begin 12th January

The  
Petworth  
Society

The 7th  
Garland Memorial Lecture



STAND AND  
DELIVER  
US



TONY DOUGLASS discusses  
a Parson / Highwayman legend  
of the 18th Century  
Sussex/Surrey borders.

THE LECONFIELD HALL

TUESDAY 14th OCTOBER

7.30pm.

Admission: £1.50.

Refreshments.

## Constitution and Officers

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

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

The annual subscription is £7.00. Single or double one Magazine delivered. Postal £8.00 overseas £9.00. Further information may be obtained from any of the following:

### *Chairman*

Mr P.A. Jerrome, Trowels, Pound Street, Petworth (Tel. 342562) GU28 0DX

### *Vice Chairman*

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

### *Hon. Treasurer*

Mr P. Hounsham, 50 Sheepdown Drive, Petworth (Tel. 343461) GU28 0BX

### *Hon. Magazine Secretary*

Mrs B. Hodson, The Cottage, Whitelocks, Sutton

### *Committee*

Mr Stephen Boakes, Mrs Julia Edwards, Lord Egremont, Mr Ian Godsmark, Mrs Audrey Grimwood, Mrs Anne Simmons, Mr D.S. Sneller, Mrs Ros Staker, Mr J. Taylor, Mr E. Vincent, Mrs Linda Wort

### *Magazine distributors*

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Membership enquiries to Mrs Staker please, Magazine circulation enquires to Betty Hodson or Bill (Vincent).

### *Society Town Crier*

Mr J. Crocombe, 19 Station Road (343329)

Note: The crier may be prepared to publicise local community events and public notices for you, even snippets of personal news such as births, engagements or lost pets. It is suggested that such personal and business cries be made for a small donation to a charity to be nominated by the crier himself.

## Chairman's Notes

*Just a brief note on the autumn programme. We're looking forward to hearing Tony Douglass on October 14th for the 7th Garland Memorial Lecture. In November I will give the first of two talks on "Some Aspects of Petworth History", dealing with the period before photography. I'll conclude with a second talk (February/March) on the period from the advent of photography. Don't forget the fair (November 20th) and a really special Christmas evening (December 15th) with a professional company.*

*Walks are on the Activities Sheet; you'll see this Summer's walks written up as usual. The reports take up a certain amount of space but they do seem to interest members — particularly perhaps those who no longer live locally.*

*Lastly a reminder that thanks to the hard work of Mr and Mrs Clark of Rustington, there is a complete breakdown of the Petworth census records for 1841 to 1891 inclusive available for consultation in Petworth Public Library.*

*Peter*

*24th July 1997*

## Re Magazine 88

Dear Peter,

With reference to the mention of 'cue' in the latest issue of the PSM.

The practice of shoeing oxen in Sussex and most other southern counties was common up until the turn of the century. However it was by no mean universal in the county, dependant largely upon the type of soil. Those oxen used on the pliable clay of the Weald would remain unshod, whilst the harsh flint of the coastal plain and the unforgiving chalk of the downs necessitated regular visits from the blacksmith. Arthur Young in his comprehensive survey of Sussex agriculture (1813) notes that Lord Sheffield can keep 18 oxen for the cost of eight horses on his Wealden estate, Young contends that this was partly due to the savings on the blacksmith's bill.

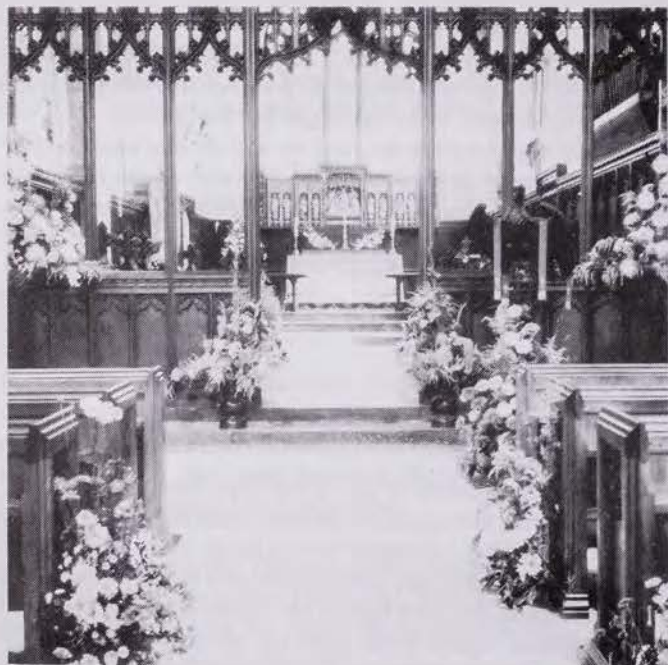
I am unable to find any archaic reference to 'cue' or 'kew', indeed the Rev. Parish in his Sussex dialect dictionary (1875) mentions neither word, and whilst Master Fitzherbert's 'Book of Husbandry' (1534) has a lengthy discourse on 'Whether is better, a plough of horses or a plough of oxen', once again no hint is given to a provincial name for an ox shoe.

The earliest notice of 'cue' that I have come across may be found in 'Provincial Words & Phrases in use in Wiltshire', J.Y. Akerman (1842). Akerman's definition was later reprinted in 'A Glossary of Provincial Words used in the County of Wiltshire', Dartnell & Goddard (1894), their definition is as follows - Cue: An ox shoe, only used on flinty grounds. In 1873 W.P. Williams published 'Provincial Words & Phrases in use in Somersetshire', once again only a brief illustration is given - Cue: The shoe of an ox's hoof, or a tip on a man's boot. Finally we return to Sussex and more recent times, Helena Hall in her expanded

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and augmented edition of Parish's *Dictionary of the Sussex Dialect* (1957) chose to not only list cue but also kew and queue - Queues: (So called because of their shape) Ox-shoes. Yours etc.

Miles Costello



*Flower Festival at St Mary's in the early 1960s. Photograph by G.G. Garland*

## St Mary's Flower Festival Petworth 4th to 6th October 1997 inclusive

The Flower Festival is now on target. Sponsorship has gone well; but of course we would welcome more interested parties! Lord Egremont has been particularly generous and encouraging and feels that the Flower Festival is an excellent way to mark the 800 year old link between the town and St Mary's.

The festival incorporates Harvest Festival services and Lunch on the Sunday. Other events taking place include a Harvest Market in the Leconfield Hall, a concert in the Church on the Saturday evening and an organ recital before Choral Evensong on the Sunday. Other plans are in the pipeline so please do look out for further information.

If you feel like getting involved, there are many areas where your help would be deeply appreciated:

1. Cake baking to include scones and biscuits.
  2. Offers of flowers and foliage to use during the festival. If anyone is growing gourds or marrows, we would welcome offers too.
  3. Actually helping to condition the plant material before it is used. This takes place on Wednesday, 1st October at St. Mary's.
- Please contact Marilyn Mountford (344161).

## The Friends of Courtlea

Courtlea home for the elderly has been in Petworth since the 1960s. I would imagine that everyone knows where it is, even if, for some, it may seem a little remote. It shouldn't seem remote, because it's very much an integral piece of Petworth as an inclusive caring community. We at Courtlea are very anxious to strengthen and stress Courtlea's importance in the wider community, as readily identifiable in that community as the Public Library or the two schools.

To further this aim we have started an informal "Friends of Courtlea" or "Friends of the Home" and already have some ten or more volunteers. We need more, both to help residents in various ways, and to extend a greater awareness of the home into the community at large. "Friends" meet for a chat on the last Friday evening of every other month and anyone is welcome to just look in and see what's going on. We really do want people to look in. Courtlea isn't a fortress. The Friends are simply a loose organisation of people of all ages who would like to contribute in some way to Courtlea. There's no standard way, you simply do what you can and what you'd like to do. The focus at present is on the Coffee Morning and Bring and Buy Sale held on the last Saturday of the alternate month. The next one will be in August and then October. It's 10-12 in the morning and extensively advertised locally. It raises a little money for funds for Courtlea, but equally, and just as important, makes people aware of Courtlea. It also offers a chance for visitors to come to Courtlea and just have an awareness of it, especially valuable for someone who's beginning to wonder how much longer they can manage at home on their own. As you can imagine, there's plenty of scope for helping with stalls and that again is where "Friends" can be so useful.

Apart from the Coffee Morning, there are innumerable opportunities for volunteers to lend a hand. Car drivers might occasionally take residents for hospital appointments, or even give a resident a short drive in the country. It's difficult to exaggerate the stimulus given to someone who has a chance to see green fields again and made to feel wanted and valued

by a world outside Courtlea itself. Cars aren't everything though, a Friend can just come in for an hour and talk to someone, once a month even. That's just as valuable. A pressing specific need we have at the moment is for someone who can play our little electric organ occasionally to entertain the residents. Is there someone reading this who could do such a thing?

Bingo on Tuesday afternoons is very much an open house. We like to bring in as many players from outside Courtlea as we can. Again there's a need for helpers. Not all the residents can read their numbers without help. Keeping open house again enables elderly people who are thinking about Courtlea to familiarise themselves with their possible new surroundings at their own pace.

On a broader front than the Friends, we'd like to make everyone aware of Courtlea as a precious Petworth resource. Don't forget its continuing and crucial role as a help for carers. Elderly people can come in for a short stay to give carers a rest, or come in just for the day or part of the day to give carers a day out or simply the chance to keep an important appointment. Courtlea can also help those clinging to their own independence a chance to come in for a week or two, relax, recharge their batteries then come out and start again. If people can stay at home, they are encouraged to do so and Courtlea can be a great help in this. As manager it's not my job to arrange admissions but if I'm contacted I can quickly put anyone in touch with the appropriate person.

One final point I'd like to make. Don't forget Courtlea's crucial role as a resource for local people. All residents come basically from Petworth or the outlying villages like Wisborough Green or Loxwood. We don't normally cater for people outside the area. Courtlea is precious to Petworth, please think carefully about how you can help us, not just to keep, but also to develop a tradition of caring.

Anna Seago was talking to the Editor

Anna can be contacted on 342717.

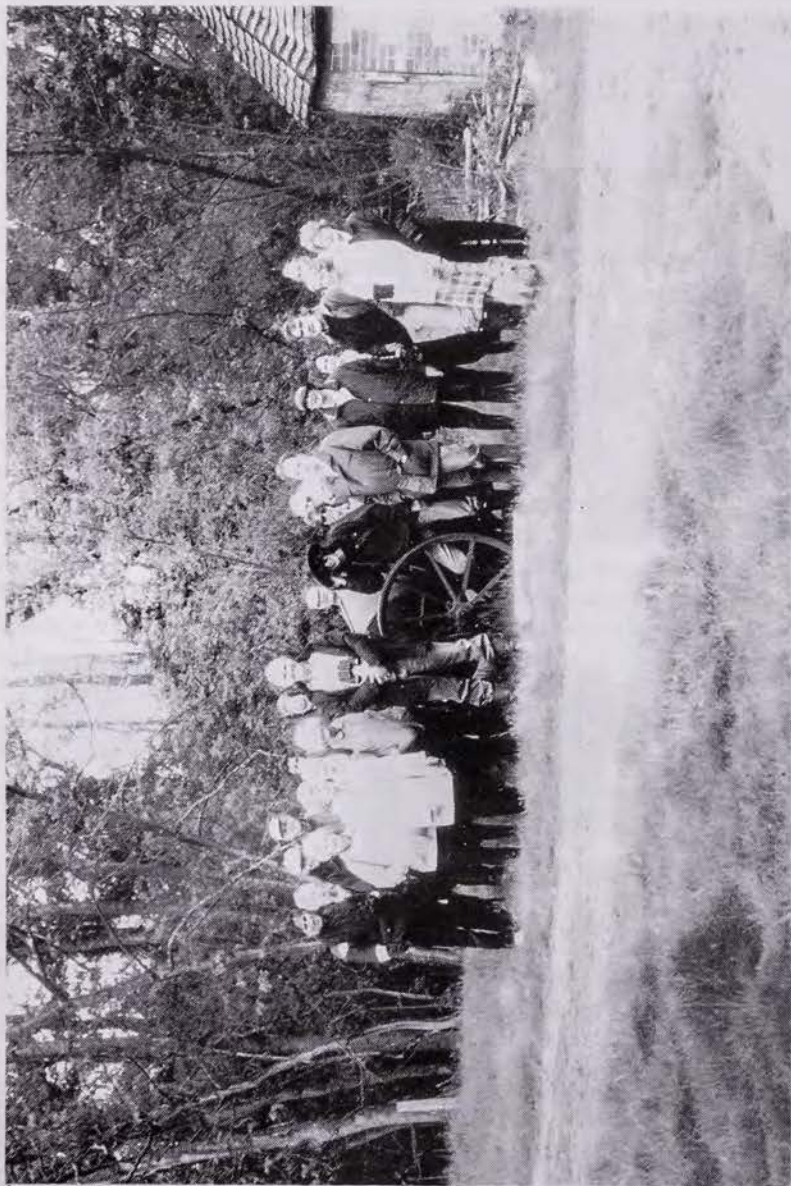
## The Peter, Philip (and Ian!) Show

As usual, the 23rd Annual General Meeting dealt with formalities quickly, albeit with due attention to detail and courtesy. The Committee was re-elected (although an infusion of new blood will be needed before long - say, within the next ten years or so!) and the financial situation was reported as excellent - no rise in subscriptions this year.

Then came the interesting bits. First, the Chairman's Report, traditionally woven around slides of the year's activities, most of which seemed to include food, recorded by Ian Godsmark and David Wort. There were the walks around Iping, Stedham, Pulborough, Burpham, South Stoke, River and Ambersham, visits to Frith Hill and Lodge, Fittleworth Grange and Bookham Commons; the display for the County Record Office Road Show staged in the Leconfield Hall and the Christmas Evening. The Society was particularly



*Part of Class 1 Grafton School at Petworth Cottage Museum 5th June.*



*With the Petworth Society at Chillinghurst May 11th.  
Photograph by Ian Godsmark.*

grateful to Mrs Ann Bradley for arranging the display and for her other stage arrangements at monthly meetings. Peter had earlier referred to the 300 postal subscribers whose link with Petworth was through the Magazine. There were also those who enjoyed the Magazine, which was passed on to them, but did not join the Society, which was a pity. The Society's wide appeal and large membership meant that there was always a good response to the various events. The Society exists for members to take out of it whatever they choose.

The second bit, even more interesting since most people only needed reminding of the Society's doings, but very few had first hand, or any knowledge of one of Africa's smallest countries, once known as Nyassaland, was Philip Hounsham's presentation of Malawi, 'the warm heart of Africa'.

Philip took us on two imaginary journeys: the first by cargo/passenger steamer along the 365 mile length of Lake Malawi. There was the commercial activity at the ports, there were settlements reached only by boat, the backdrop of mountains often in the distance and sometimes sheer cliffs rising from the water's edge, and the memorable dawns with a glowing sun coming up through the mist over the lake.

The second journey was inland by road, more often than not, a dirt track and a tortuous route up into the mountains. Here were rapids and waterfalls; jacarandas, bougainvillea and giant poinsettias, and crops. Malawi is an agricultural country with no mineral resources. There was tobacco, tea, sugar, groundnuts and vast pine forest plantations, but none of it, apparently, able to sustain an economy capable of raising the country above Third World status. Colonised by the Bantu in the 1st century A.D., the Arab slave traders established routes through Malawi, but the country was effectively discovered and explored for Europeans in 1859 by David Livingstone. Blantyre, the capital, is named after his Scottish birthplace. So the missionary influence has been powerful over the last hundred years. The people are hard-working and reliable and are found throughout Africa in responsible posts.

A chance remark at a Committee meeting had resulted in a most interesting evening, backed with an amazing display of artefacts, photographs and posters. Here was a country waiting, if not entirely ready, to receive tourists. Philip could have started taking bookings that evening!

KCT

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## David and Linda's Stag Park Walk May 11th

In at Limbo Lodge, David quickly pointing out a nuthatch nest in an oak. The nest had been started by a spotted woodpecker apparently but the nuthatch had taken it over. David said we might see the buzzards if we were watchful but in fact we didn't. Down the broad, hard military road with the greenness of early spring on either side. Bugle already in dull full blue flower, dogs mercury, young bracken and wood spurge. Off the public footpath and away



to the right. We were quickly at Figgs Pond and its new companion Upper Figgs. We had seen the latter briefly last year with a wintry rain lashing the grey surface. In fact the last time we had effectively been in Stag Park was two years ago. Upper Figgs then had been newly clayed and empty, waiting for water. The Stag Park ponds are rain-filled there are none of the springs that flow into the lakes in Petworth Park. Jumbo had kept largely to the old contours of the seventeenth century pond, with a little filling out at one end. We stood on the bridge between Figgs and Upper Figgs watching the water lapping at the sand-bags. The connecting ditch between Figgs and Upper Figgs was black with tadpoles. A coot sat in a high nest in Figgs. It watched us for a while then got into the water, obviously waiting for us to move on. The wind made for a fragile brightness, a day with character you might say. As we walked across the field we could feel the wind, in the woods we had been sheltered. On the way to Jackson's Lake, David pointed to a hare racing away in the distance. "You only see them up here at this time of the year," said David. Skylarks launched themselves against the wind into the grey clouds. In front of us appeared the wall and, on the other side, the Upperton-Lurgashall road.

Right for Jackson's Lake Pond, the new earth of a badger sett and the wind blowing the surface of the water. Could you draw or describe it? Probably neither. Over a bridge into the bluebell woods on the way to Cocks. The latter, we found, had been empty all last summer, drained and cleaned out. Ponds need maintenance, they can't just be left to their own devices. They were crucial for the old people, and the old people made sure they were kept up. The stonework on either side of the penstock had been renewed and the clay sides carefully puddled. The recent rain had partially filled the pond. A narrow channel connected it with Jackson's Lake.

On to Glasshouse, the only pond used for coarse fishing, all the rest are trout ponds. Carp and roach - not pike as far as David knew. This is always the most "natural" looking pond. Unlike the others it had always remained in water and not been reinstated. It would probably need to be renovated in the autumn. I'd heard Jumbo talking about this. On to Chillinghurst, always the highlight of a walk in Stag Park. A brooding presence? Too facile. It was both more and less than that. The barn lay open on one side. Barns are not the pragmatic buildings they once were. We could see bluebells through the open side. Matthew Taylor came here in 1720, I had seen something about it at Petworth House. It would have been less remote then, lying, I suppose on the road from Lurgashall to Northchapel. The rusting drill still lay on the edge of the field. We'd seen the docks in green leaf by the barn, caught the heavy scent of May. The lapsed orchards on the field side were a riot of late spring greenery. Chillinghurst, boarded up but intact, preserves its own peculiar mystique.

Once more over the wind-blown fields and through the bluebell woods. The clear wind-blown air seemed to make the blue more intense. Out eventually on to the high footpath that commands a view of Stag Park farm buildings. A small piece of pond and a tiny cluster of trees. The wind blew on the high ground. The pigeon cote was silhouetted against a black sky. Moving on, a few sheep were still lambing in the barn, black legs, white legs like pencils. The rain hit the tarmac in large drops that spread as they hit the ground. Across another wind-blown field.



Photograph by David Wort

Anglers at Great and Little Spring, the immediate banks had been mown for them. On to the land of the marching pylons, Luffs away to the right, with the quick glance at Luffs we'd seen all the ponds this time. An ideal time to see Stag Park, the vegetation green but not spent, the bluebell woods protecting us from the worst of the wind. A lost domain - or perhaps that's an overworked phrase. We would be out to look at the tulip trees in five weeks time.

P.

## To see the tulip trees 17th June

There were some thirty members in the Car Park: if the weather had been less threatening we might, I think, have had more. We don't do evening walks very often - perhaps we should. Linda said the frost had in fact taken most of the blossom on the tulip trees this year, but a few flowers had survived high up. David had gone on to Limbo Lodge to open the gate.

Once in Pheasant Copse we walked up the central track, enduring memorial to wartime activity in these woods. Now orchids bloomed in the June grass of the verges. The weather

wasn't good; it hadn't been in 1993 either. Was it really four years since we'd last made a special trip to see the tulip trees? Twice we went and the weather was unkind each time. A solitary angler at Luffs, the (not entirely) madding crowd didn't seem to worry him. He chatted away, nonchalantly hauling in a fair-sized trout as he did so. Thunder had been rumbling from our first setting foot in Pheasant Copse and was never to be far away all evening. After Luffs the rain came. The surface of Luffs had been very still, the marching pylons mirrored static in the water, the atmosphere thunder-still against a wild black sky. We passed Great and Little Spring, eyeing up the anglers' weighing hut. A possible refuge if the heavens opened? It was a bit like musical chairs. Did we seek shelter or go on? We went on.

The tulip trees? The line of them stood out clearly, flanking either side of the track. Violet Leconfield had had Mr Streeter plant them in the mid-1930s, so I understood. The flowers were certainly sparse this year but they were there. This was one of those walks when, supposed to be observing things for this report, I strolled at the rear, chatting, while those at the front took a perverse delight in telling me what I'd just missed. The white owl in flight, the roe deer with fawns. I did make the acquaintance of a large brown toad but this didn't seem entirely adequate among such a galaxy of different sightings.

At Figgs the rain made the pond surface dance and blew the white umbrellifers on the island. Ian's camera flashed and suggested the lightning that was never far away. At Upper Figgs the rain blew into us across the open land and the short grass by the pond side was alive with tiny toads. By this time the longer grass in the rides was glistening with rain drops. Ian stopped to take a slide of an unhealthy looking holly bush with a great drop of scarlet berries. Scarlet holly berries in early summer? Well, there it was. We were lagging behind again.

The clean skeleton of a fallow deer lay at the edge of a ride. Even I wouldn't be too slow to catch that! The bleached bones made you realize what a large animal it is. The rain eased a little, even a mocking hint of sun. Perhaps if we'd started at eight o'clock ... perhaps. Back to the lodge. We looked up at the oak where we'd seen the nuthatch in May. Sadly, David reported that something had pulled the nest out - probably a grey squirrel.

P.

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## Anne's Garden Walk June 29th

We didn't do a garden walk last year but we were very much back this year. First Mr and Mrs Penfold's small but beautifully kept plot at the rear of the Royal British Legion. A miniature well, and all so much in order that despite Mrs Penfold's assurances that it was alright to go into the garden everyone tended to stand outside and look in. Down to the Museum garden to admire, among other things, Steve's Victoria Cross poppy. The runner beans were already in full scarlet flower. It's a protected, walled garden but the wind tends

to sweep round the walls. The angelica was blown to a crazy angle.

On to Brenda and Gerald at the end of Egremont Row. Clearly with nine or ten gardens on the list we were going to have to move. Gerald's garden however was just the sort to bring everything to a complete halt! A giant mullein, no one had ever seen one like it. Gerald said it didn't flower at all last year. It had ridden out the weather with disdain and stood tall now, shooting in all directions from the central stem like a petrified sparkler. Red berries of daphne mezereon, yellow alchemilla, the latter very much a theme of the afternoon. Extracting the company proved difficult. The weather was uncertain and if it did prove difficult, it would be nice to get at least some gardens under our belt. Gerald likes talking to people in the garden, he reckoned he'd had some 250 in the two days of the Hidden High Street event at the end of May.

Eric and Betty Sadler's at Sheepdown, the bottle brush shrub giving us a cheery welcome. Eric didn't seem particularly happy this year with some of the turf but his visitors could see little wrong. Was it really in order to tread on the Cumberland lawn? Looking over the sturdy wooden fence we could see the rabbits running out of the bramble and bracken. Eric certainly needed a sturdy fence, it was rather like the Roman Empire faced with the barbarians. One breach of the defence and....

Round the Sheep Downs making for Grove Lane. It was a day of pastel shades, no bright sun. The view of the hills in the distance, a cut hedge with the top lime green. To Mr and Mrs James' garden at Grove Lane. Crimson house leeks and all manner of herbaceous plants. A feeling of space — the long view to the Chichester Road and the Downs. On to Lynnette at No 1, another quite different garden but still the feeling of space. The smell of honeysuckle and a distinctive sunken part. The weather began to look threatening: over the playing field, past the Herbert Shiner School with a tea-dance in progress then on to John and Dorothy Wakeford. A garden of bowers and fruit with a well-tended vegetable patch. The weather threatening and tea calling but here was another garden where you could comfortably spend an afternoon. Urgency did not seem the afternoon's watchword.

Up to Mr and Mrs Puttick at Littlecote. A very distinctive garden - alchemilla by a pool, how many variations we had seen, feverfew, white phlox and a bay tree. A garden that was home to one or two trees from the original Littlecote House. Very quiet and peaceful with the owners away for the day. On to see John and Karen who gave us a great welcome - a riot of poppies, scarlet in the recovering sun. Phacelia heads and newly dug potatoes in a trug. Again necessary to move the visitors on, new perspectives here and so much to see and talk about. A quick look in at Steve and Diane's in Wyndham Road, the Victoria Cross poppy again, an unusual standard pyrocanthus, then just along the road to Anne and John's for tea and cake.

The Gardens Walk is the oldest Society event and clearly very much alive. I wonder where we'll be going next year.

P.

## Peter and Marian's River Walk July 20th

John had pulled a muscle so this walk was an alternative to the one advertised. Not much point in altering the posters though. A quick run-round with Jumbo on the Thursday. Instead of Arundel Park we'd go along the river. John and Gloria's walk would probably be rescheduled for September.

Starting from Rothermead, brown the dominant field colour, peas for cattle feed scorching in the sun and the drying stems of linseed. To Hungers Lane, familiar to some, but magical new territory to others. The tree canopy over the sunken lane was welcome after the blazing sunlight. Was this rutted lane really the old high road from the south? The old smugglers spreading stories about a headless horse. A sunny Sunday afternoon didn't seem the best time for visions of a world unseen. A couple coming up the lane to meet us looked very much of our own world.

Once out at the bottom of the lane by Rotherbridge, we took the track to Perryfields - "open land where pears grow", an echo of a Saxon England long past. Had Rotherbridge itself, so quiet with the horses in the sunny field, really been where the old Saxon "hundred" met? At any rate, Perryfields on the river seemed as solitary as always, just the barns and the chugging irrigation engine. From Perryfields the surprisingly well-kept path along the riverside, kept up for the anglers and fringed by pink balsam and high nettle. Into the river meadows, a herd of black heifers briefly doubling our numbers, before retiring to the river. An immemorial scene, cows standing in the water but a skeletal alder pointed to future change. Is the alder-flanked river to become a sight of the past? We had seen dead alders and Jumbo had said that, as the season advanced, the first signs of decay will be visible in others. A disease, equivalent to Dutch elm, is rife among alders. David said that a tree once dead really needed to be pulled out. If not, it would eventually fall into the river and be swept down to Coultershaw.

On to the lock remains at Ladymeal. David pointed out where the old stables had been for the spare horses. Gone now but only for a few years. Should such survivals be left or the country returned as it had been before? Or should this spot remember an industrial past? After all there's a lot of reusable stone in the old canal fixtures. The cows were here too and the ragwort seemed to shine in the late afternoon sun. Where in parts of Petworth Park the scarlet and black caterpillars of the Cinnabar moth had stripped the ragwort of leaf and flower here the ragwort seemed to rest secure. Cricket bat willows in the hedgerow would be harvested when ready.

Over the solid new bridge and on to the old railway line. It was quite flat; steam engines don't like gradients. No sign of adders sunning themselves but the next day Jumbo would come across one curled under a drainage pipe. A few metal posts recalled the railway and days when the train stopped to leave mail and newspapers and collect milk. A world of hard physical work but arguably less pressure. On along the track, the decaying red brick bridges, Victorian masterpieces. Should they just be left to decay? There would come a time when their passing would be lamented. Mrs Rapley's skew-bridge, but in those days just before 1914 the trains still came through, picking up the single track tally at Hardham Junction.



Ladymeal in 1889.

Down to the river, again high pink balsam. Now the sun had retreated behind clouds and the heavy scent of the balsam was lost. Another path kept up for the anglers - docks in fresh leaf - the sort of path where you'd get wet feet in the dew. Back to Rotherbridge up the stony lane to Crossole and along the path through the fields. Then sitting with cold drinks on John's lawn, quarter past five and no one appearing anxious to go.

P.

## Saturday afternoon at 346

Saturday afternoon at the Cottage Museum, half past three. A lull. Quite busy but all the visitors have gone upstairs. I can hear Marian warning them about stepping across the non-existent landing. Having lit the fire early on, I now find it's gone out. Unusual and careless. I wish it hadn't. It's June 28th, mid-summer, the skies are leaden and it's cold. Miraculously it's not raining however. It's just the day for the comfort of a fire. Some visitors this afternoon come from a coach of doll house enthusiasts, eager to explore Petworth as well as the Doll

Museum. They tend to arrive in groups of three or four, surprised to find their friends have hit on the same idea. "Just like Granny's house at Battersea, except for the polished lino. She used to walk everywhere in stockinged feet, even on the stairs!" I'm glad we don't have lino on the stairs at 346. Realism isn't everything.



Sitting downstairs by the dead fire. The hiss of the gas lamps, the scarlet patches in the rag rug. Today the incessant rain seems to have seeped into the very spirit of the garden. It needs a touch of sun to lift it. The angelica's a tower blown crazily to one side. The white poppy heads are shattered and blown, even the rangy old-fashioned phlox are weary of the endless battle with the elements. The golden marjoram triumphs in all conditions and will need to be cut back. The hemp nettle too, confined as it is to a small brick border, is like some rebellious

barbarian army. It needs watching. Ann likes it for decoration. Dark clouds, the clock ticks away, the sound of laughter upstairs. Valerian looks tired in the window vase, sweet peas and coreopsis less so. In the garden you can hear the sound of rehearsal for the National Trust concert in the park. It hasn't actually rained this afternoon - yet!

A knock at the door, some more from the Doll House outing and a French family. Father, mother, two grandparents and a young daughter. The husband and wife have good English, the others less so. The occasional French word or sentence helps. French people don't seem very *au fait* with coppers - I'm not even sure there's a French word for it. I explain that the copper really looks too new, as so often echoing Agnes Phelan's visit. How many times one comes back to 1919 and Agnes and Mrs Cummings' two granddaughters spending a sunlit fortnight in the country. Sunlit at any rate it now seems in retrospect. Plate rack I always remember, "l'égouttoire", one of those useless pieces of information that stick.

Explaining the garden's mix of vegetables and flowers, the bright, attractive leaves

and stems of ruby chard, the green shallot shoots just beginning to flatten. Steve's Victoria Cross poppy, sure enough the open petals do show an enormous mauve cross. Appropriate enough given the Crimean echoes in the cottage. Sage leaves are motionless in clay pots under a sullen day. The "larvae" wiggle in the water butt. I had watched them as a child in another such butt, and, unprompted, someone earlier in the afternoon had said exactly the same. The cottage is part of a communal memory, coppers, water butts, shallots, the smell of gas, exhausted fumes .....

The same old explanations but fresh for each visitor. The kitchen would have been darker then than now. The insistence that running water would be new in 1912. Florence Rapley wrote of it being laid on at Heath End in 1911. Mrs Cummings, a lady as religious as Florence, if less articulate, and of a different religious persuasion. Mrs Cummings as an Irish Catholic in early century Petworth, a sojourner in a strange land. Sixty years in

Petworth and still a sojourner. A solitary lady Agnes thought. Quiet dark evenings at 346, no television. A cliché of course but truth is often hackneyed. How much we don't know, shall never know, and perhaps have no right to know.



P.

## The day Arthur Hill foiled a mail robbery

A horse-drawn Royal crested mail van lurched through the winter night 60 years ago as the driver gently cursed the horse and urged it to put on haste for Petworth.

Suddenly from the darkness of the deserted road a muffled figure leapt out and grasped the back of the van calling on the driver to stop . . . or else.

But Arthur Hill, the driver, was determined not to stop the Royal mail, and certainly not for a footpad intent on theft.

He slapped the reins across the horse's back, yelled at it to get moving, and as the motion of the van became more violent he leaned over to where the man was climbing aboard and brought his loaded cosh down hard on his hands.

The would-be mail robber let go in pain and fell off the van on to the road.

Nursing his bruised hands he ran away, obviously not wishing to argue further with Mr. Hill's life preserver.

The story of what might have been a great mail robbery was told to an Observer reporter by the driver himself. Mr. Arthur Hill is now 87 and is the last surviving driver of the old horse-drawn Petworth-Pulborough mail van. The incident happened between Fittleworth and Stopham.

He and his 80-year-old wife, Mrs. Sarah Ann Hill, now live at Egremont Alms Houses, North Street, Petworth. Mr. Hill still keeps the cosh, which was given to him to help guard the mail, and can only recall the one occasion when he had to use it.

It came in handy in other ways. While making the drive he killed many an unsuspecting rabbit in the moonlight by throwing the cosh at it.

Mr. Hill started work on the farm of Mr. William Dawtrey when he was ten — but he was not supposed to have left school and his father got summoned for it. The influential farmer soon smoothed matters over and young William carried on working, keeping crows off the corn.

When he was about 17 he went to work for Mr. Henry Streeter, who hired out horses, carriages and wagonettes.

He started driving the red-painted mail vans at the time of the Boer War and after four years he left, but returned some time later and worked on the mail for a further five years until the start of World War I, when the horse drawn vans were discontinued between Petworth and Pulborough and Petworth and Petersfield.

Mr. Hill recalls with pride that the mail always got through — whatever the weather. He set out every night to Pulborough and after plying between the railway station and the Pulborough Post Office, at that time situated in Church Hill, on the site of the Chequers Hotel, he would return to Petworth in the early hours of the morning.

Wearing a greatcoat with gold braid and red armlets, Mr. Hill cut a colourful figure in the light of his candle lamps. He knew the route so well that the times of his calls never varied more than a few minutes. "We did not dare be late else there would be trouble," he said.

He described Pulborough Station as a lively spot. It was bleak and cold at nights and it was difficult to load the mail by the light of flickering candles and having to calm a fretful horse.

Mr. Hill recalls one occasion when the mail was late. In slippery conditions his horse fell when climbing Stopham hill, breaking one shaft in half and the other in three pieces.

When the van did not arrive at Fittleworth a postman was sent out to look for it. He found Mr. Hill guarding the mail, and as he took over the watch Mr. Hill returned to Pulborough to borrow a van so that the mail could go through.

Mr. Hill joined the Army at the outbreak of World War I and saw service in France. In 1919 he went back to work for Mr. Streeter, but it was the age of the motor car, and his 30 horses had been reduced to three or four.

He then joined the Leconfield Estate and worked for 25 years on the staff.

He worked as a game carter for Leconfield, and used mules to draw the game cart on shooting days. He recalls, that a seven gun shoot would kill as many as 1,000 birds some days.

Mrs. Sarah Hill's maiden name was Carver and she came from Graffham. She was also well used to driving a trap. Her father was blind and she drove his trap for hire. "I knew Midhurst like the back of my hand," she says.

One thing Mr. Hill never told the Post Office when he drove the mail was that he occasionally did his courting on the van. "I was not supposed to pick people up, but sometimes I used to take my Sarah for a ride," he said with a smile.

[This article written either by George or Sally Garland will have appeared in one of the local newspapers in the early 1960s. Ed.]

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## Gleanings from the West Sussex Gazette 1886-7

2nd December 1886

A mad dog.

On Tuesday week as Superintendent Ford was by chance passing along one of the streets of the town he observed a dog (of the sheepdog brand) go deliberately at a little girl of the name of Hill (living in North Street), apparently at her face, but it appeared afterward that the child had been seized by the shoulder, and in examination it was found she had been bitten. Supt. Ford had the dog secured and it was taken to the Police Station where it was seen next morning by Mr. H Hopley the veterinary Inspector of Pulborough, who after half an hour's waiting certified it to be suffering from rabies. An order was accordingly signed by the Local Authority directing the dog to be killed and regulations were made that for the space of the calendar month from 24th ult. "no dog shall be at large within the parish of Petworth, unless under the control of some person or properly and sufficiently muzzled", and that all stray dogs should be liable to be seized and destroyed. We hear that by the kindness of Lord and Lady Leconfield the child has been sent to Paris to go under the treatment of M. Pasteur.

16th June 1887

Jubilee treat for Lord Leconfield's workmen.

Last week 127 workmen on Lord Leconfield's estate had a trip to London. They first visited St. Paul's and were afterwards driven in excursion brakes to "Buffalo Bill's" entertainment, where they were regaled with a capital dinner and each presented with a shilling. They returned by the last train having spent a most enjoyable day. On each occasion they were accompanied by the heads of the various departments. We scarcely need say that all fully appreciated Lord Leconfield's kind treat.

4th August 1887

Opening of the Ebenezer Chapel.

Services were held at the above Calvinistic place of worship on Monday afternoon and evening when there was a full attendance, a goodly number coming from a distance. The sermons were preached by the Rev. W. Sinden, minister of Regent Street chapel, City Road, London, who spoke from 1 Kings ix3. This place of worship has been erected by Mr. Eatherton for the use of the congregation formerly worshipping at Providence chapel. Services are held on Sunday at eleven am and three pm.

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## A Tillington Childhood (3)

I remember that there were hundreds of Canadians billeted in Petworth Park. One bright summer evening, they came marching through Tillington with the band playing. My brother and I were allowed to watch them from the confines of our lodge gate prior to having our bath. The band and the excitement was too much for us, so we decided to join in the march. I was six and my brother eight and we walked through Upperton, up to the Pheasant Copse, out to the London Road and ended up at Limbo. In the meantime, a search party was sent out for us. We were eventually found by a boy named Georgie Sadler who put me on his shoulder and carried me home. My brother followed on foot - we were exhausted. I don't remember being smacked, no doubt Mum was pleased to see us back safe and sound.

A great joy during those years was our Saturday visits to the pictures, held in a room at the back of the Swan Hotel, Petworth. We used to prefer the winter as then we used to carry a storm lantern which would throw most awful shadows from the trees. One film I remember was "Elmo the Mighty", and I believe the actress in it as an Elspeth Gray, (I may be wrong). If the film was a bit rough and the 'baddies' were winning the pianist used to bang on the notes and we stamped and clapped then when the 'goodies' eventually won, the whole building shook. We behaved as if we were really taking part. My brother, mother, and I used to walk back to Tillington. It used to be pitch dark as there were no street lamps in those days. We were happy with these simple pleasures.

I remember our two comics, Tiger Tim and Rainbow, and books I used to read were "Bill Codey" (Buffalo Bill), "Little Match Girl", "Wide World", and "Chrysties Old Organ". I believe Mum's magazine was "Sunday Stories".

The Bryders kept goats and my brother and I each had one on a rope. With the Bryder family we used to take the goats to graze up on the grass at Upperton Common. We were

gone all day long on a Saturday during the summer. We had our food packed up and were thoroughly happy. We picked blackberries, climbed trees and played hide and seek. I remember those days with a feeling of nostalgia.

One year, someone set the undergrowth on Upperton Common alight. We walked to see it - it was dreadful to watch our picnic places alight, but more terrible to see were the rabbits rushing out screaming with their fur alight. That year had been a very dry one, no doubt making everything as dry as tinder.

I remember the dreadful 'flu' epidemic of (I believe) 1917. Everyone around went down like ninepins. I remember watching the funeral of a certain Mrs Foster who died leaving seven small children. My mother, brother and I were in bed with it and we were looked after by our lodger, Mr Harris. He used to leave the food outside the bedroom door and my brother, who wasn't so ill, used to fetch it. We eventually recovered, and I remember feeling very wobbly. Quite a number of men in the war lost their young wives during this terrible time.

We had a long handled bell hanging outside our lodge gate and every evening some of the local lads would tie a long piece of cord to it, go round Hill Top about 100 yards away, and keep pulling the bell. My poor Mum was almost driven to distraction. Directly she untied the cord, it was tied up again and so it went on until she spoke to the local policeman (a Mr Stoner) who soon put a stop to it.

Another time, I remember my brother and I had our baths and were sitting in our night clothes having our bread and butter and cocoa. Mum had just put some boiling blackcurrent jam in jars and told us not to touch it whilst she went out in the garden. I took the spoon from my cocoa, dipped it in a pot of jam and put it in my mouth. I screamed, spat it out and it went down the neck of my nightie, travelled down my tummy and ended up in my navel. For a very long time, I had a line down my middle and a severely burnt tongue.

At the end of our garden there stood a hovel (stable). It was a very solid building of brick. It had a loft overhead in which bales of chaff were kept and the grooms used enormous knives to cut it up.

A ladder was fixed to the side of the hovel wall to reach this room above. My mother had forbidden me to climb up this ladder as the chaff cutters were so dangerous. As usual I disobeyed, climbed up the ladder and reached the top and there staring down at me sat the largest owl I'd ever seen. Its eyes looked the size of saucers and as large as an ostrich. I climbed down the ladder and cried with fright to myself as I know my mother would have smacked my bottom. A field a little way from us was called the 'Remount'. It was full of mules waiting to be shipped over the France. I think there were hundreds - I wonder if the older people remember them?

We had two young soldiers living with us who used to work with the mules, Harry Bennyworth and Tommy Hill. They used to sing all the latest songs of that time, but sometimes using the wrong words, viz. instant of "It's a long way to Tipperary", they always sang "It's a long way to Tickle Mary". We thought the latter were the real words so started to sing them at our Christmas School party. My mother hauled us away - we never could understand why. We thought we were being punished for nothing. It was never explained to us - we were told we were rude.

I used to love Grannie to visit us - she seemed so wise and knew so much about the country. She took my brother and I for lovely nature walks. We found lots of birds nests with eggs in and she knew the names of the birds who had built them. It was the last day of one of Grannie's holidays, and she was almost ready to go home when she turned to our black cat "Mullie" and said "Catch me a nice young rabbit to take home". Mullie did just that and she laid the rabbit at Grannie's feet - did the cat really understand, I've never forgotten it.

The war in the meantime was drawing to a close. Mum received a letter from my father from which she read "We've now got the Jerries on the run". Again I was a very puzzled little girl as my Granddad used to ask me if I'd used the 'jerry' before I got into bed. I remember thinking they must have clockwork jerries in France to make them run along, so I went upstairs to see if ours would do the same. I came down a very disillusioned little girl.

In the middle of the field next door to Tillington Church, there grew a hawthorn tree. One Sunday Edie Bryder and I decided to pick some berries off this tree and eat them. In the meantime, we decided to go in the church where there was a Christening. We sat just behind some of the guests and shot the hawthorn berries at some of the guests and went into uncontrollable giggling, especially if a berry caught the ear of a guest. I think they thought they were being bitten by flies - we never were found out.

It was during July 1917 that I was admitted to Petworth Cottage Hospital to have my adenoids and tonsils removed. My mother and I were driven there by Mrs Bryder of Tillington in her horse and trap, I believe we were charged 6 pence for the journey. After a sad farewell to Mummy I was taken by the hand by our family G.P., Dr. Kerr, to a room and put to bed. Dr Kerr went to a basin in the corner of the room to wash his hands and a nurse came over and put a kind of mask on my face, then dropped small drops of something (I later found out it was ether) on to the mask. It gave me a most awful choking sensation.

Still, I went to sleep and woke up in a room with one of the sweetest ladies I'd ever met. She turned out to be the Matron of Somerset Hospital in North Street, Petworth, - her name slips me at the time of writing, perhaps later it will come to me. My mummy came to fetch me - I didn't realise that I'd had my operation, only that Dr Kerr had given me a very sore throat. It took me a long time to ever trust him again. I was given a book and on the inside my mummy had written "To Kathie, for being good 1917". Sadly the book was lost years ago. Ironically, my mother died in Petworth Cottage Hospital during December 1985, almost 100 years of age.

One day, the school dentist called and a few of us had to walk to Petworth to have fillings. I remember the dentist's surgery was in one of the rooms over the old International Stores which in those days used to be in New Street. The drillings were absolute hell. I felt as if the whole of my head was being sawn off from the rest of my body. I screamed and screamed - we all did. A sorry little mob trekked back to Tillington, so relieved that our visit to the Dentist was over - I have hated going to the dentist every since.

One day my mother and I were going for an evening stroll in one of the nearby copses. Mum stopped to have a chat with a Mrs. Gilbert from a nearby lodge, when all of a sudden I felt insects crawling over me and stinging me. I was treading on a wasps nest. My mother

rushed me home and tore my clothes off, she was stung too, put me in a tin bath of tepid water and rubbed me all over with sliced onions which seemed to do the trick as by the morning the stings had gone down. I've been immune from wasps ever since.

During the Great War, my mother used to keep a few chickens, also cockerels, to 'fatten up'. One day it was decided we'd have a cockerel for dinner, so my mother wrung its neck". We children used to watch without turning a hair - it was all so much a part of life as all the men were away. Mum tied the cockerel up, dead, by its legs from a large hook hanging from the ceiling in the pantry. Later I went in the pantry to fetch the milk for a cup of tea and there was the cockerel sitting looking all forlorn in a dark corner. I called my mother and brother. My mother took pity on it and nursed it back to an almost normal life, but it had lost its cock-a-doodle-do - it only made a gruff squawk.

I have only ever been to hare coursing once in my life and I was very young at the time. It was held in a field along the Midhurst Road in what was then Ducks Farm. I remember the hare being caught and the crying it made. I've never understood how grown men could call that awful cruelty sport.

My mother worked very hard during the first world war. She had us to look after, the old lodger, who was working in my father's place, cleaned the school, and in the summer went fruit picking. All washing was done by hand and then boiled in the copper. It all had to be rinsed and then put through the mangle. This was an enormous wrought iron contraption with two wooden rollers. It had a large round screw on the top, similar to a wheel. This one turned so that the rollers were then suited for thick or thin mangling.

The toilets were "round the back". They were just buckets under the wooden seat with a round hole in it. All this had to be emptied and buried in the garden - things were rather crude yet we were spotlessly clean.

All the wood for the fires had to be dragged from the nearby copse. Frank and I used to make three journeys 'wooding' after school. It was a cold job during the winter, but we were well wrapped up. My mother used to knit our stockings and we wore our old coats and had lovely warming scarves tied round our heads. We wore hand made gloves about two sizes too large as mother used to say large gloves were warmer - the tight ones 'stopped the circulation'. I wonder how our parents knew this as they left school when they were eleven.

When we went wooding in the winter, my mother always promised us a bloater for tea. I believe I'm right in saying that they were twenty for a shilling. I am sure the man on the cart called out "Bloaters - twenty for a shilling". When we arrived home, we both had running noses, lovely red faces, were as warm as toast and as happy as sandboys after a tepid wash at the sink in the "hand bowl". (This was a bowl made of white enamel with a long handle attached to it. If it rested on the side of the sink, it used to rock to and fro making a horrible noise and we were told to "stop that racket".

We sat down to enjoy our bloater. Never had I enjoyed bloaters so much. My mother used to roll them in flour and deep fry them so they were crisp on the outside and lovely and juicy inside. How we used to love the roe. We had slices of bread with them as I think we were rationed, butter seemed to be a thing of the past.

Mrs K. Vigar (to be continued).

# Ebernoe Furnace Pond

## 1) General Observations

As I remember it was summer 1962 and it all began with the Fishing Club, whether it was, as I think, the old Kirdford Angling Club, or, at that time, the Fernhurst Club. They fished the Furnace Pond under licence from the Leconfield Estate, which of course, were then the owners of Ebernoe. Lord Leconfield had bought the old Peachey Estate in 1912, excepting Ebernoe House, which he had not wanted. The anglers were worried that there was not going to be enough water left in the pond for fish to survive. The culprit was the old brick overflow or spillway, damaged now by erosion and leaking badly. The old spillway was in such poor condition that the pond was slowly emptying. Such fish as there were, mainly carp, with possibly a few eels and some roach and rudd, were not likely to survive much longer. The anglers, who also had fishing rights at Wassell Mill, were convinced that without some action Furnace, the old iron-working pond on Ebernoe Common, would disappear. It was already choked with reed and would soon become clogged with smelly, dangerous mud.

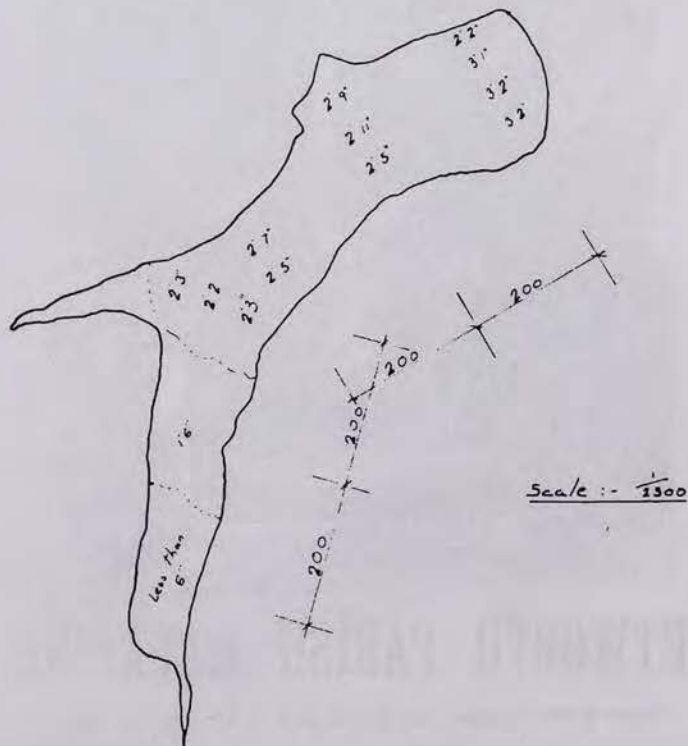
Feeling at Ebernoe was that the Furnace Pond was an amenity that the community had grown up with, very much a part of the Ebernoe heritage and tradition and the only pond of its type left in the Ebernoe area. Wassell and Colhook ponds had already been drained. Furnace is shown on Treswell's 1610 Petworth Estate map. It is to an extent artificial in that streams have been dammed to create a pond whose waters, carried over an angled launder or "flume", could be used to drive a water-wheel. This wheel would in turn drive the bellows at the adjacent furnace. Ore smelted here would be refined at the Wassell Mill forge. Another local furnace was at Roundwick.

The Fishing Club wrote to Mr Shelley, the then land agent to the Leconfield Estate. As it happened Mr Shelley was a member of the Sussex River Authority, he may even have been on the Board. Furnace Pond lies on a tributary of the Kird, the River Authority having responsibility as far as Hoebridge the other side of Wassell Mill. Mr Shelley asked the River Authority for assistance. A Mr Garland was in charge at this time and he was most helpful. The position was that if Ebernoe people wanted to save the pond and were willing to help with labour, then the River Authority would back them. So, of course, would the Leconfield Estate. It was however made quite clear that nothing would be done if the people of Ebernoe were not prepared to help themselves. It would be for the anglers and Ebernoe residents actually to reconstruct the old spillway. And so the workers got together, Ebernoe people, anglers and other supporters from the local area. Everyone felt something had to be done. If it were not, the Furnace Pond would become a bog. In its ruined condition the spillway would, during flood periods, allow everything to be carried away. Furnace then would clearly cease to support the wild life of a pond. Degenerated into a marsh, it would simply be a hunting ground for vermin of all sorts, squirrels, foxes, stoats and weasels. A pond is, after all, in some ways a protected environment. There would be no more frogs. With no fish there would be no kingfishers, no deer would come down to a bog to drink, nor owls fly low over the surface of the water.

AUGUST, 1962

13 MONDAY (225-140)  
Grouse Shooting begins

After tea went down to Furnace pond. took mixer to pond head. + most if not all of ebernoe. fence turned up to give a hand with concrete.  
Two tractors with boxes on back transported material to mixer. Took us until almost 9.0 PM to put in 6 yds a 18 cur cement.



Ebernoe Furnace Pond.

(Top) Jumbo's diary note of the first stage of the work (1962).

(Bottom) Water levels in feet and inches in January 1969. Lengths in feet on right.



No. 320.

PRICE - TWOPENCE.

August, 1929.



## PETWORTH PARISH MAGAZINE.

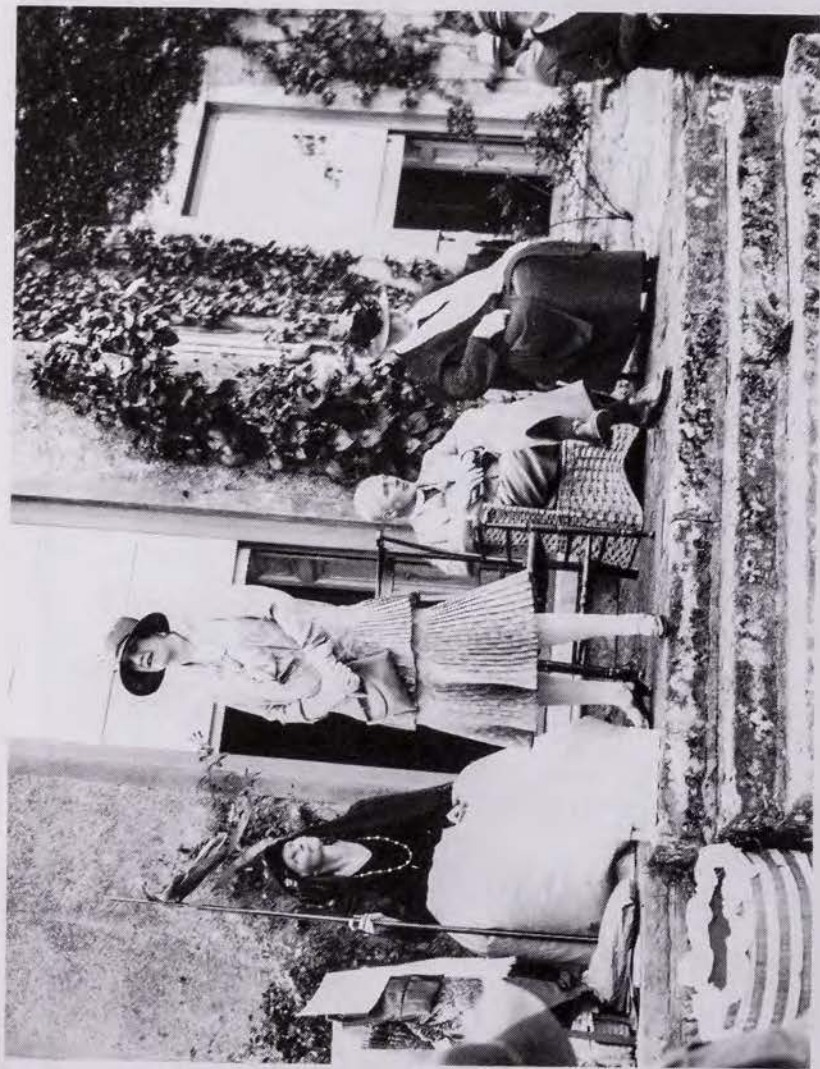
Copies of this Magazine may be had of MRS. ARNOLD, East Street.

Higham, Southwick Sussex

*The cover of Petworth Parish Magazine unchanged for over half a century until the late 1930s.*



*Valentine Powell Rector of Petworth 1919 - 1933.*



*Lady Leconfield opening the Rectory Fete at Petworth in 1929.  
L-R Mrs Powell, the Rev. V. P. Powell, and Lady Adelaide Dawney, Mrs Powell's mother.  
Photograph by George Garland.*

I was put in charge. The agreement was simple and clear, if Ebernoe and the anglers provided the labour: the Leconfield Estate would provide the material: sand, gravel and cement, transport, wheelbarrows, and the use of a concrete mixer. For their part the Sussex River Authority undertook to drive on the pond side, right across the breach in the banks on either side of the spillway, a single row of interlocking steel piles which would stabilise the bank and protect the works behind. These sheets would be driven in with a compressor. It was a summer night, the River Authority had done what they had promised, we had a complete load of sand and gravel and fifteen hundredweight of cement. It was more than an evening's work and the spillway was reconstructed behind the protective steel sheets. We had already put some rubble in to help make the concrete go further using parts of the old spillway. Those who helped were given a letter entitling them to fish in the pond.

What damages a pond if the spillway is in order? After all, there's nothing wrong with the reconstructed spillway after thirty five years or more, yet the Furnace Pond is clearly deteriorating. One reason is moles. As the pond level sinks in the summer they burrow deeper into the clay side looking for the worms that are themselves moving lower with the retreating moisture. A sudden flood will accentuate the damage. During the summer the exposed clay surface can crack and the ground open up. If there is autumn rain of any consequence before the cracks have a chance to contract naturally, they will tend not to heal soon enough. Decayed tree roots can also be a fruitful source of damage, acting rather as impromptu water channels. It was normal practice on the Leconfield Estate for Mr Allison to make an annual survey of all ponds, including, of course, Furnace, and to record his findings. There is a good deal of such documentation surviving now at Petworth. Ponds would be repaired as necessary. It's the embankment that is most at risk, there are few ponds like the Upper Lake in Petworth Park where the embankment is so large and has such a thick clay core that it is relatively impervious to attack by moles.

Bulrushes serve no real purpose in a pond except for nesting birds, they also take oxygen from the water, over a period making the pond stagnate. The sedge that is in such abundance at Furnace Pond now is much the same. It serves little useful purpose and is beginning to take over. The problem with cleaning out any pond is always: what do you do with the sediment and waste vegetation when you've hauled it all out? One solution is to drain the water and let the pond dry out. In this way the volume of spoil can reduce by up to 60% by evaporation. The spoil can be useful if it is mixed with lime to sweeten it - or ploughed in but there is of course the problem of transporting it. In the case of excavation and removal a machine can operate on timber or steel roller mats laid on the muddy bottom. If the pond is to be entirely drained, it's helpful to dig shallow main and herringbone drainage ditches on the surface.

## 2) *At the pond side*

### (a) *At the embankment*

The steps were there but unstable when we repaired the spillway in 1962. We came round from the side with the cement and sand. There was a lot more weed then than there is now, but of course across the pond head the water level was lower. What fish were left often had their dorsal fins poking out of the water. At this embankment end the water looks

fairly clear but it is of course (mid-April) very early in the year. The sedge reed won't help the pond at all, it creates a treacly black sludge underneath the roots, although it can feed on foul water and over a period even pass out clear water.



*Taking a boat on to Furnace Pond in 1937*

Here's the spillway and the steel sheets that the River Board put in. There's nothing wrong with the spillway: the pond must be losing water through lack of inspection and repair to the banks, summer evaporation and trees sucking water from it. Levels could be helped to some extent by use of the wooden board that goes across the mouth of the spillway. You can see the places where it fits but there's no sign of it. If it were in position at the appropriate

times of the year it would raise the current level a good nine inches. The sedge, the alders and the water-lily are all draining the pond of oxygen and of water. Glasshouse Pond in Stag Park isn't a lot smaller than this and is in many ways very similar. Luff's Pond in Stag Park is bigger than this and was drained and cleared out. The plants came back as if by magic. Furnace isn't a huge pond - certainly not more than three million gallons if it were full and it's far from that. It wouldn't fall within the terms of the Reservoir Act for ponds in excess of five million gallons: the Lower and Upper Lakes in Petworth Park, Lurgashall Mill Pond and the pond in River Park do fall into this category.

2) *At the pond side*

(b) *At the north/north west side*

Yes, it's terribly low on this north side, only approachable from private land at Hells Corner and the field by Warren Cottage. If the pond were to be cleared the spoil would probably need to come out this way. There's a track here of sorts - probably the Holden Brothers' animals from Willand used it.

Jumbo Taylor was talking to the Editor.

Editor's note.

This article was prepared in response to a suggestion at Ebernoe Parish Council that the reinstatement of Ebernoe Furnace Pond might be a suitable Millennium project. The matter remains under discussion with the Sussex Trust for Nature Conservation who own the pond. Early indications are that the proposed work would be very expensive. The Sussex Trust were due to explain their future plans for the whole reserve at a meeting at Ebernoe on July 31st.

(23rd July 1997).

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## Aunt Alice's toast and other matters

### *Blackberries*

If you were stung by a wasp, the remedy was to rub onion juice into the sting. This would take all the pain away. Every time I went blackberrying I'd carry an onion in my pocket. When I was a girl at Kirdford I pushed baby down to the Common to pick blackberries. Baby was still in the pram and I couldn't have been any age. As I put the blackberries into the jam-jar I'd give the odd one to baby. One had a wasp on it. It stung baby on the lips and they began to swell. There was I, down at the end of Great Common with the baby screaming and finding it difficult to breathe. His whole face seemed to be swelling at once. I was terrified and set off for home as fast as my legs could carry me. Mother brought the swelling down with a knob of blue, the same that was used for rinsing clothes.

### *Dock root tea*

Docks are bitter and it was usual with the "tea" made of boiled dock roots to add

liquorice to make it more palatable. The tea was made of roots not leaves. It was used as a drink to counter excess bile in the blood. Quite as good as medicine and not as expensive! The liquorice would be bought in stick form from the chemist. It had the hardness of a stick of rock. You literally chipped pieces off.

#### *Cures for rheumatism*

Dandelion juice was good if you had anything like a swollen knuckle. I had a great swelling on my knuckle and whenever I walked into Petworth from Westland I'd pick a dandelion, wait for the white sap to come then rub it on my knuckle. It cured it. But you must believe it's going to work. If you don't, it won't.

The old people used to carry a nutmeg in their pocket to ward off cramp. Grandad Duncton always did. Another suggestion for cramp was a piece of tarred rope. A cabbage leaf was certainly effective for rheumatism, I proved that. Bill Meachen had a badly swollen knee - twice the usual size. As estate carpenter for Lord Leconfield it was part of his job to dig post holes so big that he could go down into them up to his waist. After all a quarter of the post had to be in the ground. One day his knee was so painful that he could hardly get out of the hole he had made. His knee was so stiff that he couldn't move his leg at all. His mate said, "You've got rheumatism. When you get home put a cabbage leaf on the knee. Tie it on and leave it - that will cure it."

I proved this for myself. My knees were so bad I couldn't bend my leg and I was always falling about. When I went to bed I found a big fresh cabbage leaf and tied it over my knee, holding it with string above and below. In the morning I went to take the cabbage leaf off and it was like stiff brown paper, all the moisture had gone out of it. It cured my knee and although I am now 94 I still have no trouble.

Some people swore by salts - kreuschen, epsom and others. When my sister Dolly left school she worked for a time as a pupil teacher and lived with two older schoolmistresses. Every morning her first cup of tea had a small spoon of epsom salts in it.

#### *Birds eggs and popcorn*

To tell if a bird's egg was sound you'd put it into water. If it sank it was good, if it floated it was bad. We'd wrap them in newspaper, rake the ashes under the grate and put them in the hot ash. The newspaper would scorch and burn and stick to the eggs. After a while you could pick off the shell with the newspaper, leaving what was effectively a hard-boiled egg.

My mother used to keep a gallon of maize for her half a dozen chicken. In between feeds she'd throw them a handful of maize. The pantry was a square room with a larder near the floor and we'd take handfuls of the maize and put them in ashes just as we did the birds eggs. They'd pop out across the room. If mother found any she'd be very put out indeed. "You've been at my maize again." It was treated as a very serious matter.

#### *Winterpink wine*

Where the blackthorn grows you'll find the mauve berries in autumn. "Winterpinks". Mother would raid the hedgerow for them. She made all sorts of wine including cowslip. Three pound of sugar to a gallon? I can't remember.

Everyone in our part of Kirdford used to go to the "shop". Not really a shop in the modern sense but a room in a house with a shed for paraffin at the back. The woman who

ran it would put on a white apron if someone came to be served. She'd buy in things like lard, butter and sugar in wholesale quantities, then sell them off in whatever people asked for. She also baked and sold bread. My mother made her own bread of course but one morning when she was busy baking bread she hadn't got a loaf for dinner. She sent me down to the "shop" for one. I walked the couple of miles or so to the shop. I couldn't have been more than four - if that. I was just about big enough to ask for a loaf. On the way back I picked at the crust. It was delicious. I picked again, and by the time I got home I'd eaten most of the loaf. My mother was less than pleased.

Eventually the old lady with the shop retired and went to live in Guildford, taking her aged father with her. He was an invalid and, in the course of time, he died. She had him brought back to Kirdford to be buried. On the way home she said to the undertaker, "I know where you can get a nice drink, a drop of home-made wine." She was referring to my mother's noted winterpink wine. My mother only had one jar that year and as she held up the stone crock to pour the wine into a jug the top blew and the wine spurted all over the ceiling. Most of the bottle was wasted but there was just enough for the not very welcome guests.

#### *Flowers*

My aunt lived just round the corner from us and her brick courtyard was covered with lily of the valley. They used to bloom on short stems where they had been trodden down. There seemed a lot of wild flowers then and we girls were always picking them. I used to love picking flowers. I had to hurry home from school to help mother, being, as I was, the oldest of the children, but I still picked flowers. There was a field smothered in cowslips and I found one with a double stalk. I took it to school and my needlework teacher was fascinated. It wasn't two stems grown together but one big stem with a large flower on the top. She asked me if I could dig up the root and bring it to her. I went to look but never found it again.

#### *Chestnuts*

Grandad Duncton had one of the old-fashioned down-fires, much used for smoking bacon because of their gentle heat. He loved chestnuts and would snip out a small piece so that the heat didn't cause them to explode, then lay them in the ashes to roast. Then he'd bring them out. As Grandad dozed in front of the fire, our big old sheep dog ate all his chestnuts. Dogs like them too!

#### *Old sayings*

A favourite one, and very true was this. You sometimes hear it today. "One boy's a boy, two boys are half a boy, and three boys are no boy at all". Jonas' grandad was walking home with a friend who was somewhat the worse for drink. It was dusk and the owls were hooting as if they were saying, "Who are you?" Jonas' friend shouted out his name and followed it with, "I thought you'd have known that you bloody fools!"

A boy from Kirdford went to Westlands in Jonas grandad's time and Grandad gave him some big plums. He enjoyed them so much he kept swallowing them whole, stone and all. The next day he felt so ill he went to the doctor. Jonas' grandad asked him what the doctor had said. "He didn't know," he was told. "Did you tell him about the plums?" "Of course I didn't. You knows what's the matter, I knows what's the matter. It's his job to find out what's the matter and I'm not telling him!"

### *Eels*

There were giant eels in the muddy bottom of the pond at Westlands. I loved eel. Grandad Duncton showed me how to skin them. You'd cut the skin round the head and strip it off, then cut the eel up in portions like a fish and boil them. The boiling takes out some of the richness, also some of the oils, eel is a very oily flesh. After boiling them I'd fry them.

The skin wasn't wasted. Grandad would stretch it out over the broom handle and put it in a rack to dry. When it had dried he'd cut the skin into thin strips with a sharp knife and use it to bind on to tools like his fag-hook and bill-hook. It lasted for years and years and was tougher and more durable than leather. Granny had a pony and trap and the little short whip that she used was also bound with eel skin.

### *A snake*

Jonas killed a snake in the old pig sty between the pasture and the yard at Westlands, then he threw the carcass over the rail at the end of the pig-sty. Auntie Kate said, "What a pity you never got in touch with a Museum, they'd have loved that skin." Butterflies, moths, dragon-flies and all kinds of flies and maggots took their toll. When they'd finished there was just a perfect skeleton, head, mouth, backbone and ribs, all bleached by the sun and rain.

### *Aunt Alice's toast*

When I was a child Auntie Alice had her husband's sisters staying with her. They were quite elderly and always had toast - for breakfast and tea I suppose. They didn't eat the crusts and Auntie Alice used to save them and bring them to us. Mother had an old iron pot which she would fill with water, soak the crusts in it, and as she heated the water on the range, scoop out the softened crusts. These she would put into a bowl, mix flour with it, add a bit of margarine or dripping (no suet) and make puddings. She'd roll the mixture up, add a knob of butter, some sugar or treacle and make "toast pudding". We often had this.

### *A curious outing*

When I was a girl at Westlands, fourteen or fifteen perhaps, Granny went on a day's outing with one of the women's organisations to Hindhead. On the visit they went to the old gibbeting post. It was on a hill, she said, and no grass grew under it - just bare earth. She bought a set of postcards and a china gravestone miniature, both recounting a famous hanging there. A sailor was coming home on leave with his pay. Stopping off at a tavern in Hindhead he made the mistake of letting others see the money he was carrying. They followed him out of the tavern, killed him, and stole the money but were themselves taken and hung.

### *Rent day*

Grandad Duncton was very fond of singing and he and Auntie Dolly would sing a song about an oak tree. It was something about on the trunk was a limb, on the limb was a bough, on the bough was a branch, on the branch was a twig. It was very repetitive, rather like Lloyd George knew my father. Certainly it went on and on and I became very weary of it. When Grandad went up to Petworth House on audit day to hand in his rent, he always sang the same song, "Three cheers for the Red, White and Blue" - I don't know why.

If tenants stayed at the House for the day they could have a meal at night. Farmers came on a certain day and there were two days for cottagers. The food of course was provided by Lord Leconfield. Grandad invariably came home with a long clay pipe. Before I went

to Westlands I sometimes came in to Petworth with my mother's rent. We had by that time a cottage on the farm of my mother's brother and were Lord Leconfield's tenants. There was a bread and cheese dinner for cottagers, but if you took a bottle you could have it filled with beer to take home, you'd also be given slices of beef, lamb, cheese and a big hunk of bread. A "fry"

When the estate killed a deer, the keeper took the farmers a "fry", as they called it, with a piece of piping which you could cut into lengths and fry with the liver. The farmers would be invited to a rook shoot which they called a "rookery". They were allowed to take home some of the rooks to make rook pie. They would be very tasty because they would be young ones. How they distinguished young from old I've no idea.

### *Pies*

We used to make a pie or stew with all kinds of birds. Starlings we had to skin because if you didn't do this they were very bitter. With small birds I'd just cut the breast off - pigeons, even sparrows. The last made lovely gravy. Countrymen found birds easier to catch in winter, particularly when snow was on the ground.

### *Rats*

Rats were always about. We had a wire rat cage which we baited with baked potato. We always had a lot when we threshed the corn rick. Then the men shot them as they came out.

Excerpted from a tape of Mrs Nellie Duncton talking to Audrey Grimwood. See also Magazines 53, 54, 81, 83, 88.

## Soft Soap and Soda

I went to Petworth House on the 6th of May 1920. Not that I actually remember the date but you say you have it on the House wages list. I'd spent a week or two at Eagers in Market Square but I didn't like it there. I'd also worked for a while for Mr J.B. Watson the land agent for the Leconfield Estate in his house at Littlecote. I was house parlourmaid and general allsorts, doing housework and also working in the dining-room. Mrs Watson, as I recall, was an Indian lady, who was often in bed resting. A Mrs Slater was the head housekeeper. While there I became friendly with Maggie Simpson who came in daily and lived in Lombard Street and I used to go to have tea with the Simpson family. My father had been a farmworker at Northchapel but during the 1914-1918 war he worked with old Mr Carver at Petworth Gas Works. We moved into the Gasworks Cottages in Station Road. I've often seen my father cleaning and filling the retorts at the gasworks, "torches" we always called them. If Dad was on that particular shift he'd light the town gas lamps.

When I was at Littlecote with Mr Watson, I met someone I'd known at the East Street Girls School, Maggie Lloyd, who lived in East Street. She suggested I join her in working at Petworth House. I was duly interviewed by Mrs Cownley, the housekeeper, who seemed

very strict. Someone had left and I was told in no uncertain terms: "We have manservants here but there must be strictly no fraternising." Mrs Cownley had a big black cat and wore a wide black band in her hair. She was short and stocky.

Looking at the names on the wages list I can remember most of them, more by the Christian name than the surname. Nellie Foster and Harriet Mapston married and lived in Petworth and I did meet Nellie once in later years. Basically the housemaids weren't local girls, Nellie Foster, I know, came from Staffordshire. "Seen and not heard," was our watchword, given to me by the second housemaid very early on. Cora Styles was the lady's maid and it was part of my job to call her in the morning with a can of hot water. She had a room in the House itself, up in the attic close to the nursery. I'd carry the brass can with the water through the tunnel and up the stairs to her room. By breakfast at eight o'clock I would already have been about for a couple of hours or so. There were eight housemaids including two seniors, one of whom, Lucy, was in immediate charge of us. She must be Kate Benfield on the wages sheet, people were often known by different names than their actual Christian names, surnames didn't come into things much. The six junior housemaids were divided into three pairs, second, third and fourth and Maggie (Kate) Lloyd and I worked together. The fourth pair of housemaids were very much on the bottom rung.

When we got up in the morning we'd have a cup of tea in the housemaids' kitchen. The night before the footmen would have let the head housemaid know which grates had been used, so we knew what we had to do. Grates were of burnished steel and had to be cleaned using emery paper, both fine and coarse, they were rubbed with a chain held in what was effectively a kind of glove. The grates weren't easy to clean and it was very hard work. I remember cleaning the grate in Lady Leconfield's room very early on and Lucy making me do it all over again because it wasn't right. Grates had to be done before breakfast, which was brought from the kitchen to the servants' hall. The food was good: no question of that. In the morning, after breakfast, it was scrubbing - the stone hall, the oak hall, the marble hall. Always plenty to do - and more. Lunch was at twelve o'clock.

Maggie Lloyd left not long after I arrived, although, as I have said, we worked together for a little while as "fourths". Maggie was a rather independent spirit and ended up by cheeking the head housemaid. The last I heard of her she was married and living near Horsham but I lost touch with her. Dorothy Boswell came not too long after me. She was in fact from Cocking near Midhurst but the housemaids tended to come from farther away, usually arriving at the station to be collected by the horse bus.

Lunch would be, as I have said, at twelve precisely, and at two o'clock we'd go to our room for a rest. When we came back we'd have changed: the print dress and mob cap of the morning becoming black skirt and blouse, lace cap and apron. In winter we'd light the bedroom fires for visitors, and as "fourthies" (ie the fourth, most junior, pair of housemaids) it was our job to keep them going. The rule of thumb was that if the door was open we could go in and make the fire up. If it was closed we didn't go in. Lady Leconfield often rested, particularly after hunting. If I went in and she was in bed, she'd say, "Good afternoon," and I'd just get on and make the fire up. In the eighteen months that I was at the House I saw Lord Leconfield himself only the once. For some reason we were late cleaning the Marble Hall

and he came through.

The footmen were Thomas and William. Yes, here they are in the wages list with Freddie Gamage the stewards' room boy. He had arrived at about the same time as I did and came from Clapham in London. He had to look after the housekeeper's room, and other rooms used by the senior servants. We used to eat our first course with the senior servants but then they'd all go off to the housekeeper's room to be on their own, have a drink perhaps. As "hall boy", Freddie, who was sixteen or seventeen at the time, looked after them. There were two girls in the stillroom, washing the china. I think they came from Yorkshire. Departments were kept well apart; the kitchen people I had nothing to do with at all, let alone the chef himself! We slept three in a room, Maggie Lloyd, Nellie Foster and myself. My mother bought my uniform for me when I started. We were given half a day off a week and alternate half-day Sundays, ie one week morning, next week, afternoon. We could please ourselves about church.

The Marble Hall was not cleaned every day, perhaps once a week, or when Lucy thought it needed doing. Washing took the colour out of the black slabs and when it had dried we did the black squares over with salad oil. How we muttered if the footmen walked over them with their rubber shoes. The Grand Staircase? No we never went near it, at least when we were working, that wasn't a job for the "fourths", the seconds did that. I remember that Lord Leconfield used to have a bath in his dressing room, the water being heated by coal and taken up by the valet. The big coal bins were all along the landing and kept filled by the "odd man". On a Friday we couldn't use the bathroom in the Servants' Block as it was Mrs Cownley's bath time and the door was kept firmly locked while this ceremony was in progress. Mrs Cummings the sempstress? I heard the name but I can't recall ever seeing her. Mr Wickham the butler I saw rarely, but I well remember Mr Mason the groom of chamber in his black coat and tails. He'd have a special care for inkpots and was in charge of letters. I didn't have them of course as I lived locally, but they meant a lot to the girls from away. "Any letters, Mr Mason?" they'd ask. "All in good time in the Servants' Hall," he'd gruffly reply. Mr Bradbury the valet I remember but I didn't come into contact with him.

Lucy, the head housemaid, liked a drop of stout and she'd sometimes send me down to the Lombard Street wine shop to get one for her. One night I encountered Mrs Cownley who wanted to know where I thought I was going. When I explained it was for Lucy it was alright. Pay? Well, there wasn't much of it, was there? I'd keep some for outdoor clothes and give the rest to my mother.

Spring cleaning? Yes, when the family were away we'd do all the big rooms. Some of them had a square carpet on boards and the seconds would sweep the carpet while the fourths dusted the floor boards round the edge of the room. The thirds used to do all dusting, working meticulously with dustpan and brush. No, they didn't use salt or tea-leaves to gather the dust.

I'd left the East Street Girls' School when I was fourteen. I never liked the head teacher but I can't now remember her name. My brother worked at Frog Farm, he'd left school at twelve as soon as he passed his Labour Exchange examination. He'd come up to the House from Frog Farm with eggs and butter but I never saw him.

Saturday mornings we'd scrub out the pantry cupboards. We had nothing to do with the house guests but there was a place from which we could watch the guests go in to dinner. Sometimes, too, if it was very quiet the gardeners would let us go in to see the tables they'd decorated with flowers, and all the silver laid out. We'd also scrub out the gardeners' room near the chapel. I remember Maggie Lloyd going into the chapel and pretending to make a reading from the Bible. It was pretty bold and we'd have been for it if we'd been caught. "Poke to you," Maggie would say.

Men came down specially to clean the curtains and they also cleaned the statues in the North Gallery. The Grey Stairs leading into the small dining room had to be done with pipe clay. There was a carpet in the middle, and you'd simply brush it on as a kind of paste, being terribly careful not to get any on the edge of the carpet.

Remember the pictures? Heavens no. We were kept too busy to look at pictures. I do remember Henry VIII though. At spring cleaning time the brass was taken into the North Gallery to be cleaned. Soft soap and soda we used. I never cleaned brass after I was married. I insisted my husband did it. I reckoned I'd cleaned enough of it in my time!

In December 1921 I wanted a change and went to Mrs Cownley to give in my notice. She said there was a job going at the London House, 9 Chesterfield Gardens. I took it. My parents were living at Snow Hill in the Park then but they soon moved to Rudgwick. I didn't stay long at the London house, going to work for Lady Portsmouth at 16 Mansfield Street, then going down to Hampshire to work for her nephew. It was here that I met my future husband.

Gladys Brasington was talking to Diana Owen and the Editor.  
The House wages list is PHA9561.

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## 'Get out, Henry!'

My father had several brothers and sisters, one of whom was Charles, Lord Leconfield, "Uncle Charles" as we knew him. George Wyndham, the eldest brother, had died young in the 1890s. "Reggie" Wyndham had been killed in the 1914-1918 war. Other brothers were Hugh, who like my father, would later assume the title, and Humphrey. Although my brothers Henry and John, and my sister Ursula, and myself were brought up in Leicestershire, we invariably came to Petworth between the wars to spend Christmas. Almost all the Wyndham family came with their children. There were exceptions of course in that sometimes my married aunts would spend the festival season with their husbands' families but by and large it was true that the extended family spent Christmas at Petworth. In the 1920s our family tended to stay from Christmas to New Year, but once we had been sent to boarding school we went home soon after Christmas. After all, we wanted a little of our holiday at home! No doubt my first visit to Petworth was in 1923 when I was two but I would imagine that I can remember back to about 1925. We didn't miss a Petworth Christmas until 1939. By then of course the war had come.

We came to Petworth Station, changing for the local line at Pulborough and would be met by a one-horse closed brougham, the trunks being put on top. Particularly distinguished guests might still at this time have a landau to meet them. We slept in Attic No. 5 which has a marvellous view of the park. We had a roaring fire and the same comfort as those downstairs. A maid came in to light the fire about seven o'clock in the morning before we got up. It was very necessary, as there was, of course, no central heating and it would otherwise have been bitterly cold. Our Nanny was with my brother John and myself and possibly, in the very early days, a nursery maid as well. As soon as we went to boarding school, of course, all this stopped. We had meals in the nursery, and all meals, breakfast, lunch and supper, came up on the old-fashioned lift, to be borne a hundred yards along the top passage. I never remember the food, however, as cold.

We were often in the kitchen. I have in my mind's eye a picture of ten large turkeys roasting on ten spits. Probably as a child I exaggerated the number, but remember there was a large dependent household to feed. The chef never seemed to mind us hanging about. I remember that he was a brilliant pastry cook. One of his creations was a Christmas cake with electric bulbs that lit up. Mrs Cownley, the housekeeper, I just remember, rather like Mrs Tiggywinkle with a long skirt. As well as the kitchen we used to go into the stillroom in the hope of being given a sweet. We often were!

One Christmas it snowed so hard that there was great concern as to whether the roof would stand the weight. All night we could hear men on the roof shovelling the snow over the edge. They used the large wooden shovels with LL carved in them which you say are still in the roof. Did we go into the town? Oh yes, we'd go and buy little presents for Christmas. Once too I went to some kind of function in the Iron Room. Once we went to a children's party at Peper Harrow near Milford, Lord and Lady Middleton lived there then.

We would be up by eight or soon after, to be downstairs by nine o'clock. An invariable preparation for Christmas in the early days was the expedition to collect the Christmas tree. There was a wonderful open carriage called a brake in which you sat facing one another in the back. Off we'd go, through the park, which looks, now, much as it did then, into the Pheasant Copse and in one of the groves there we'd find our tree. We thought we dug it up but looking back I realise that it would already have been loosened and got ready for us. Christmas carols were a feature of the season. We would sit in the Marble Hall and the church choir, no doubt suitably augmented, would sing for us. I particularly remember Mr Gibson, Aunt Violet's chauffeur. The Christmas tree was, I am sure, put in the Audit Room for the children's party, notable to a child for its strange high windows. I remember seeing Father Christmas at the window, apparently stuck where he was and unable to get down and protesting that there was no chimney! A ladder had to be fetched. During the party it gradually dawned on me that Father Christmas was in fact my own father, although I think this discovery only really crystallised earlier doubts. One Christmas there was a children's pantomime put on for the grown-ups in the North Gallery. It was all taken quite seriously, and the estate carpenters put up a proper stage for us. My role? Very minor, I think, I can't even remember what the pantomime was. It could have been Cinderella.

Everyone went to church at Christmas, and there would have been thirty or forty of

us but remember there were various morning services and not everyone went at once. We always sat upstairs in the gallery. Elizabeth Wyndham dropped her teddy bear over the gallery parapet and it landed on the Rector's wife's head! No, I don't remember any service in the chapel at the House itself.

As you can see the House would be very full. In those days in the late 1920s the men used to keep together in the day time, often in the White Library, while the ladies tended to be next door in the Red Library. As far as I could judge, the men smoked and read the papers. Men and women joined up later on, going into the Square Dining Room and what used to be called the Van Dyck room between the Marble Hall and the Carved Room. I think you now call it the Little Dining Room. Between tea and dinner children and adults played games in the Marble Hall and everyone joined in, it was mainly charades and dumb crambo. Teams were sent out into the Beauty Room to make their plans for the charade. Dumb crambo was a variation of charades where you could mime but not speak. A rather formidable lady called Mrs James, a famous Edwardian figure, took it on herself to instruct us in the technique of dumb crambo.

Dinner in the Square Dining Room was superb. Not an enormous number of courses though. We joined the party when we were about sixteen. I remember a very early occasion when Uncle Charles took exception to the junior diners like myself drinking champagne. My mother (who, incidentally, was completely teetotal), thought this rather stingy. So next year there were two types of champagne, inferior for the boys, very good for everyone else. Uncle Charles was a hearty eater, but following the custom of the time had nothing for lunch, simply a large breakfast and substantial dinner. We children found him rather an alarming figure. He gave us all £1 for Christmas. He didn't talk much but, if he did, he could be very amusing in a dry sort of way. He loved Petworth and the surrounding country and didn't go to London in the way that people of his position usually did.

A great occasion was the Boxing Day meet at the Gog and Magog. Uncle Charles didn't like the crowd but acknowledged that the event was something of a spectacle for the town. Large numbers of people turned out. The mud in the Gog tracks was unbelievable. As I say Uncle Charles thought the crowds interfered with the proceedings but basically had to make the best of it. He had a groom named Fred, and once, with Uncle Charles getting a little irritated, Fred appeared with the cry, "They've found, my lord." Uncle Charles drawled, "Every cloud has a silver lining." When Uncle Charles was older and couldn't jump, Fred used to ride beside him looking rather like the White Knight in Alice in Wonderland with an axe, cutters, anything that might enable him to cut a way through and prevent Uncle Charles having to jump. Fred wore a very smart blue livery and was popularly known as John the Baptist - because he prepared the way of the lord!

Talking of livery, the servants' livery was blue with a waistcoat, I think, of wasp yellow. Lodgekeepers had a blue frock coat and a top hat with a cockade. We had a great deal of respect for the servants and, as children, tended very much to look up to them. The butler I do not remember but I think in the 1930s he was Mr Warrington. The "groom of the chamber" despite his prestigious title, was effectively the second butler. My mother said his task was to keep the writing tables tidy and the inkwells full, look after the nibs and pens.

Most rooms had a couple of writing tables and most bedrooms had one. The stud-groom was Mr Burton who was also known as the "non-working" groom. That meant he didn't do manual tasks like changing the straw in the boxes. He looked after the horses' overall welfare and veterinary requirements and supervised work in the stables. He wore spongebag breeches and brown gaiters.

Once I was given a beautiful miniature horse and cart and was playing with this in the Red Library when one of my aunts came in and said, "What a lovely horse and cart, who gave you that?" I replied, "The footman." This caused a good deal of hilarity. What had happened was that my Uncle Hugh had given it to me and asked the footman to unwrap the parcel for me. I heard he was rather put out. I just thought the footman had been kind.

Pictures? One or two made a particular impression on me as a child. Le Nain's study of peasants in the Beauty Room always had a deep effect on me and there was a picture of my grandfather with Percy Wyndham which used to be in a passage off the Grand Staircase. We were always very aware of the Turners and I think the whole picture collection gave us something of an ability to observe.

Henry Green, the novelist, was the son of my aunt Maud, and for a time I had worked with him in his father's coppersmith business. He told an amusing story of how, when staying at Petworth as a young man, he had been walking in the Gardens. It was after lunch, a time when no one took too much notice of the guests, and he met up with another guest, Lord Hugh Cecil, who later became Provost of Eton, and was a much older man than Henry. Eventually they strolled in the Real Tennis Court where Uncle Charles was involved in a match with the professional. They sat down in the space provided for spectators. Uncle Charles was playing less than well and becoming somewhat irritated. As he missed another easy ball, he roared, "Get out, Henry". Lord Hugh Cecil quietly said to Henry, "We'll sit here for five minutes more and then go quietly".

As a boy, the estate world was a marvellous place to explore. I was always fascinated by the electric house with its two electricians constantly on duty. You could never use electrical appliances at the House because the electric house produced a voltage which was unsuitable for them. In early days I loved to ride the pedal car through the tunnel linking House and Servants' Block and through the other tunnel through which coal was brought in. At Christmas time there always seemed to be an "odd man" in the tunnel scurrying somewhere with coal.

The stables at that time were very beautiful. The children's ponies were kept immediately on the right hand. The hunt horses were kept here and at Flathurst on the Horsham Road. Even when I was young, however, the carriage horses were being replaced. There were some wonderful carriages in the stables but already they evoked an age that had gone; there was a coach which my father and Uncle Charles had both driven before 1914, travelling between the Metropole at Brighton and the Metropole in London. Mr Barnes was the groom who looked after the ponies. At one time he lived above the stables. He was a great companion to Uncle Charles in later years. We also used to visit the Laundry, going through the tunnel under the road. The Laundry was at the top of the Horsham Road and destroyed when the school was bombed in 1942. I can remember going into the laundry but



can't be specific about the equipment. About the tunnel, which no longer exists, I was told the following story. When Uncle Charles' eldest brother George Wyndham died in the 1890s it was thought that, as a token of respect, the pallbearers should be the longest-serving men on the estate. They would carry the coffin from the House chapel, down through the Pleasure Grounds, through the tunnel and then down to the Horsham road cemetery. In the nature of things they were very elderly and on the way they became so puffed that they had to put the coffin down and stop for a rest.

I came to Petworth just the once in the war years. We were on manoeuvres in the Petworth area and I came, not this time by railway, but on a motor-bike! The atmosphere at the House was sombre. Aunt Violet was away. She was already showing the instability that would cloud her later years. I remember that when war came in 1939 she had bought a motor-bicycle and been induced to pose for the Tatler sitting on the new bike wearing a tin-hat. As she was six feet tall it looked rather incongruous.

Excerpted from a tape of the Hon. Mark Wyndham, OBE, MC, talking to Diana Owen.

## A surfeit of 'fête-ing' - St. Mary's Parish Magazine 1925-1935

While the distinctive red bound volumes of the *St. Mary's Parish Magazine* for the period from 1884-1914 (in fact the first five issues are bound in blue) will be known to some readers, issues from 1915 onwards are unbound and far less likely to have survived. I believe there is a set in the vestry at St. Mary's but I am not sure whether it is complete. For the eleven years from 1925 to 1935 I have 99 copies out of a possible 132, exactly 75%, quite enough to give a "flavour" of Petworth at that time. The *Parish Magazine's*, is, of course, a very particular view. As an organ that was, of its very essence, denominational, it could, as it does now, act as a notice-board for some of the town's premier organisations, but had of course no authority to speak for the town's significant non-conforming or Roman Catholic tradition. These were not really oecumenical days. Nor of course would the *Magazine* speak for that increasing section of society who were indifferent to organised religion in any form. It would have been an unusual parish magazine if it had! In fact the *Magazine* for those years often seems to exist as much from the impetus created by its having survived for forty years and more than from any great sense of inspiration. The cover drawing was the same as it had been in 1884 and was still going in 1935. The *Magazine* always carried an inset of some kind, these probably tended to change in accordance with the churchmanship of the rector. Certainly the *Magazine* saw several during its first fifty years.

By 1925 there is a new inset "The Sign", possibly more in line with the full "Catholic teaching" that the new rector Valentine Powell had professed when first coming to Petworth in 1919 (see PSM 54). Lord Leconfield, Powell had then noted, "had no sympathy with my

catholic outlook" but had told the new incumbent "to go ahead but not too fast". In January 1925 Valentine Powell is some years into his Petworth ministry and hoping that recent improvements to the *Parish Magazine* will, by increasing circulation work toward making the *Magazine* self-supporting. Instead of the usual accounts of past treats that so usually take up the post-Christmas magazine he proposes to "make use of some delightful articles the editors have procured for their readers".

It has to be said that the articles turn out to be of varying quality, the best usually being the periodical contributions by Mary Maxse. Some of these would later be reprinted in booklet form in aid of church funds. The *Magazine* was co-edited by Miss Mayne of Archway House who contributes a series of gardening hints, a source that would be later exploited by Fred Streeter himself. Mary Maxse's first notes are on Henry Percy, ninth Earl of Northumberland, who with Walter Raleigh was one of the first to set the fashion for smoking. By May there is an article on St. Cuthman while Mary Maxse is discussing Algernon the tenth Earl and Miss Mayne is exhorting her readers to "keep the Dutch hoe going in season and out". Rogation Sunday at St. Mary's was marked by a procession. "Weather permitting the usual Procession through the fields and gardens to pray for God's blessing on the crops, will leave the church at 10 a.m. The Sunday School children will form the procession accompanied by the clergy, teachers and any other adults who would like to take part." Quite possibly the Rogation procession had been an innovation by Valentine Powell. It does not seem to be mentioned in later years. In June 1925 the Rector laments the poor attendance at Ascensiontide, a thought constantly echoed in earlier magazines and reflected also in the diary of Florence Rapley (1909-1912).

The Sunday School treat at Bognor on June 22nd was clearly a highlight, some two hundred children and grown-ups participating. The sea was a perfect calm, some enjoyed a row, others donkey and pony rides, others paddling and bathing and "all of us a very good tea" - very much a feature of such traditional outings. In the autumn 190 members of the Mothers Union had tea in the gardens of Barlavington House courtesy of Mrs Enthoven, while the Boy Scouts (26 boys and 3 helpers) were at Kynance Cove near the Lizard in Cornwall and Lady Maxse was writing of the Duchess of Northumberland, widow of Joscelyn Percy last Earl of Northumberland, who married again, moved to Paris with her new husband, and is often mentioned in the letters of Madame de Sévigné. Miss Mayne continued to advocate the constant use of the Dutch hoe even as the season declined. It will be noticed that Mary Maxse leaves the rebarbative figure of Joscelyn's father, Charles, sixth Duke of Somerset well alone!

By November, with the impending departure of Mr. Mackie the curate, Mr Powell is shorthanded and facing the need to reorganise services, a situation familiar enough to his predecessor Mr Penrose at the close of the 1914-1918 war. The days when Petworth rectors like Sockett and Holland had a clutch of curates effectively "in training" were long gone. On a happier note Mr Powell could reflect, "My co-editor and myself are feeling much pleased at the letters and other expressions of satisfaction with the recent numbers of the *Magazine* that we have received from various readers. We find copies travel not only over large parts of England, but even as far as South Africa and Canada. The greatest cause of satisfaction

seems to be articles on old Petworth from the pen of Lady Maxse." Looked at from a perspective of over seventy years, this seems a fair appraisal, Mary Maxse's articles still read well. A sign of autumn was Miss Mayne's advice to make notes of attractive varieties and colour schemes for use next year. Advertising was still at pre-war prices, 10/6d. a year for a small space, a guinea for a larger one, but the *Magazine* was still losing money, less than before, but still losing. Mr Powell would have been aware too that his supply of articles was precarious. One solution was to reprint from other sources, often from the *Times*; it may well be that Colonel Maude, later to found the Petworth Society, who worked at the *Times*, placed occasional material. An early example is an article about Ken Wood at Hampstead reflecting the spoliation of the landscape by paper (greasy and otherwise), and cigarette boxes, also the ruthless grubbing from the earth of primrose roots, daffodil and bluebell bulbs, ferns and foxgloves, "carried off in reckless triumph". The article could certainly easily be transposed into a Petworth context.

The *Parish Magazine* had always been a notice board for organisations like the Women's Institute and indeed its beginning in 1884 owed a great deal to the urging of Mrs Upton's Mothers' Union. In January 1926 the W.I. report laments a disappointing attendance of 86 members out of a nominal 174. Had a change of date contributed to this? That was the only thing the reporter could think of. Miss Mayne was into another year of gardening notes, advising the early season manuring of rose beds, raspberries and loganberries but clearly facing the perennial difficulty of the gardening writer - how not to repeat last year's advice in the same words.

The three ancient cemeteries, Bartons, churchyard and Horsham Road were in poor repair and the suggested solution was voluntary working parties on Saturday afternoons. Even in those relaxed days, it was always going to be difficult although a start was made. A fire at Woods, the builder in Angel Street, gives a sudden insight into an older Petworth, £45 being collected by public subscription to buy the workers the tools they had lost in the fire, other firms in the town making significant contributions. The Mothers' Union acted a version of the Pilgrim's Progress in the Iron Room and for Lady Day were exhorted to "consider it an obligation to attend one of the services in church, whether at 7, 8 or 10.30". The Rectory Fête suffered at the hands of the weather, the stalls being forced to retreat into the Rectory itself, the drawing-room accommodating the Band and the kitchen hosting the Hoop-la "for the first and last time". The Flower Stall had to brave the elements and remain in the garden. It may be that this experience as much as the lack of a curate induced Mr Powell to avoid having an annual fête if he could possibly do so.

Despite the glowing report of the Sunday School outing to Bognor the previous year, it was decided to take the children to London Zoo for 1926. There were fewer children this year and the spectre of the weather hung heavily. "What can the children do at the sea-side in torrents of rain?", asked the *Parish Magazine*. At least they could take shelter at the zoo, even if they spent the afternoon studying the monkeys! 130 travelled, one small boy being lost and asking a policeman the way home to Fittleworth, ended up at the Police Station where he was eventually recovered by the Rector. Traffic between Petworth and London was by no means all one way. Mrs Mant's jumble sale raised £25.10 for the Pearson Fresh Air Fund,



Christmas at Petworth House 1925.  
L-R Masters Mark, John and Henry Wyndham and Miss Ursula Wyndham.  
A photograph by George Garland. (See "Get out Henry!").



Mr Arthur Hill with the cosh which he used to carry on the old horse-drawn Petworth/Pulborough mail van.  
See "The day Arthur Hill foiled a mail robbery".  
Photograph by George Garland (1964).

enabling 300 children to have a day in the country, and a lucky six to have a fortnight. Petworth itself entertained a large party of children from the poorest parts of London for a day in the country.

Litter was very much on the mind of the *Magazine* editors, and readers were exhorted to use the wire baskets put up by the Parish Council at each turn-stile on to the "Hills" or "Terrace". People might then enjoy the view without it being obscured by blowing paper, fruit skins, or cigarette boxes. The W.I. offered prizes of 3, 4 or 5 shillings for the three best papers written by members on "Where litter comes from and how we may prevent it". The Rector's great interest were the Bethlehem Tableaux put on over Christmas and in the Rector's own words "no ordinary theatricals but an act of devotion to our Lord". The form was an appropriate carol or hymn, the reading of the Gospel, and then a tableau of the relevant scene.

Litter remained very much a preoccupation in 1927, Mary Maxse beginning with an aristocrat's view in January. She recalled earlier days in Scotland when fishing parties put their lunch wrappings back into their pockets rather than sully the riverbank with them. Nearer home she could speak from her own experience of four cottages near her home at Little Bognor. The cottages simply dropped all their rubbish into the stream that flowed at the bottom of her garden. She witnessed a constant procession of old tins, pots and cigarette wrappers and even the occasional dead cat or dog. Even worse was to come. In February the *Magazine* laments, "It seems strange and sad that in these days hooliganism should still break out in Petworth when so much is done by willing helpers to fill in the spare time of boys and lads with scouts and cubs and lads' institute and football clubs etc. It seems extra unnecessary that they should spend their time in destroying the seats that have been put up by public subscription many years ago for the pleasure and comfort of the townsfolk..." In December when Major Bavin had an audience of some 300 people in the Iron Room for a lecture on community singing, the *Magazine* reported, "One steward was unable to enjoy the evening as he had to spend all the time outside trying to cope with unruly lads and girls who tried to spoil everyone's pleasure. When will this hooligan element in Petworth cease?"

On church matters, repairs to the steeple having been accomplished, Mr Powell could report, "It is a wonderful blessing to know that our steeple is again safe and should last the lifetime of every adult in the parish". Not, as it turned out, one of Mr Powell's more inspired forecasts. He hoped that £400 outstanding could be raised by donations rather than a fund-raising event. The Prayer Book controversy was occupying the church at large, "Everyone is of course discussing it with some or lesser degree of knowledge". It was an index of the concern that when in July 1928 a decision was made, Mr Powell could congratulate the B.B.C. on having closed down after the announcement of the Prayer Book measure. "It must have impressed on careless folk the importance of the momentous decision and what it means for the church in our country."

Advertising was still hard to come by, the main reason probably for the *Magazine* still not paying its way. My copy for August 1928 has recipes, bakewell, apple batter pudding, jam sponge, written in pencil into the abundant empty advertising panels. The supply of articles too is sporadic at this time. Mr Streeter had taken over the gardening notes in 1927

and his thorough detailed articles are still worth reading. 1928 is a quiet year. In August Mr Powell had begun a small collection of prints, plans and other Petworthiana "in the hope that these may form the nucleus of a collection". Like all such collections in an older Petworth it has disappeared without trace.

1929 begins with a report on the Bethlehem Tableaux so dear to the Rector's heart. The April issue laments public attitudes to the daffodils recently planted around the War Memorial, "The moment the bulbs began to show this year, those that escaped the damage of dogs were looked upon as flowers to pick for private possession". A theme that will be echoed over the years is this from the same April issue: in complaining of the poor attendance for the Archdeacon's Lent lectures Mr Powell observes, "These lectures were of very considerable interest and would, I am sure, have drawn crowds at almost any other place. Can it be true that Petworth does not want to hear?" This is a note that would be sounded frequently enough over the following years, but it is the beginning of a self-perpetuating myth. There is no evidence that Petworth people are less receptive than other people. Perhaps they simply know what they like. In a similar vein Mr Powell laments that Bishop Tugwell, formerly Bishop of Western Equatorial Africa, making one of his periodical returns to Petworth had had a not over-numerous audience to hear him preach. In fact those who had known Tugwell - Florence Rapley who died in 1918 was one - would be elderly now. Tugwell had come to Petworth as curate in 1880 and left Petworth for Africa in 1889, nearly forty years before.

The organisations went on much as usual. The Scouts were at the Birkenhead Jamboree attended by the Prince of Wales, the Missionary Guild had a talk by Mrs Rogers about three years as wife to the priest at Tristan da Cunha. Dr Bell, the new Bishop of Chichester, paid his first visit to Petworth early in November 1929. Mr Powell was increasingly adverse to the inevitable fund-raising, noting in November that a temporary organist, with the necessary cost of travel and lodging as well as salary, would mean a large addition to the budget "and I fear this will necessitate some form of bazaar in 1930".

Articles remain difficult to find and often have no Petworth interest at all. Often the Petworth part of the *Magazine* contains some blank pages. Mr Streeter's articles ran for a year or more then succumb to the old problem of repetitiveness. Mr Powell despairs of finding an assistant priest, "suitable or unsuitable". I would have thought an "unsuitable" one would have caused as much trouble as he saved!

Mission meetings continued to bring news of far-flung enterprise. On April 4th the Rev. Gomez spoke on mission work in Borneo. In June the Mothers' Meeting motored the 96 miles to Canterbury and found the tomb of the Black Prince much enhanced by great vases of white lilies. The Mothers' Union entertained a party of mothers from the Lady Margaret Hall Mission at Vauxhall in London. Again a *Magazine* voice cries (apparently in the wilderness) "Sunday morning in the Market Square makes me ashamed of our town". How could public opinion be aroused to prevent this litter of paper and refuse? The best of some very miscellaneous articles are again by Mary Maxse and arise largely from her connection with Mawer and Stenton's recently published work on Sussex Place Names. These articles give the *Magazine* a certain strength and coherence and they can still be read with profit

today. 1930 closes with the usual Bethlehem Tableaux.

In 1931 the Chiddingfold Players performed Mrs Cowley's 1779 farce "Who's the Dupe?" in aid of the Church Building Fund. The theatrical designer W. Graham Robertson was the moving force behind the Players and he mentions at least one of his Petworth visits in his published letters. Meanwhile Messrs Brown and Polsons' demonstrator offered the W.I. an excellent exhibition of swiss roll and pastry making. In June the Rector noted, "We are not going to have a Rectory Fête. After all these years of fête-ing it is time we gave it a rest". Fêtes seem in latter years to have bothered Mr Powell - perhaps it was simply their proverbial vulnerability to the vagaries of the English summer. Still there was no sign of an assistant clergyman and, with no house available for him, little likelihood of one. Discussion on building such a house continues somewhat desultorily all through this period. A talk by Mrs. Hoyle to the W.I. on Sussex folk-songs was well received. "She has a very sweet voice and sang unaccompanied and was afterward much interested in hearing from some members of the Harvest Home songs sung in Petworth in days gone by". This is a tantalising hint at a line of tradition that for Petworth at least appears completely lost. The next meeting discussed aspects of old Petworth and members were asked about a possible market held in the open space between Lombard Street and East Street and "called in old maps the Port". According to the speaker the entrance was by Denman's shop in East Street. On what basis this supposition stood is not clear. At Christmas Mr Powell strikes an eerily modern note: "I believe that too often the approach to Christmas is a wild rush of buying presents and preparing for guests and feasting, so that the real meaning of the Feast is almost, if not entirely, lost."

1932 again begins with the Chiddingfold Players - on this occasion with "The Liar" a farce first performed in 1760. The audience, however, was disappointing. Mr Powell notes, regarding the forthcoming season of Lent a remarkable change since he had come to Petworth in 1919. "When I first came it was very noticeable how carefully the season of Lent was in one way observed, even by those who were not regular attenders of the church. Public opinion did not demand, and even condemned, organised amusements: and I remember being asked if I should have a strong objection to a Whist Drive being held."

In April "GM" appends a short but well-written account of the return of the rooks to Petworth churchyard, "The winds of winter appear to have removed all trace of last year's nurseries; so that building operations have to start again from the foundations". This year there would be a fête but "on more simple lines, no carnival or fancy dress". In keeping with this new stringency, music would be supplied by wireless. The British Legion fête, however, held in the Park in August, featured a flying display in which "the thrill of seeing a plane in any position except the horizontal (was) almost too much for some of the spectators". Church finance remained a problem. Already in August Mr Powell was pondering an organ report "which embodies terrifying possibilities of expense". He hopes however that "minor repairs will carry it on for the present". By November, "Your Church Council is trying to steer the ship of Church finance through the storm of national depression". In December Mr Powell writes, "It is not easy to make up one's mind to leave the best friends a man ever had, and on Sunday morning I found it very difficult indeed to tell you that the time has come for me

to go elsewhere." Valentine Powell's Petworth years were over.

Mr Davie, the curate, who had finally answered Mr. Powell's call for help, took over during the interregnum, moving to Brighton in May 1933. G. S. Provis the new rector, was inducted on the 24th April of that year. In April some 200 people were present in the Iron Room for lectures and lantern-slides by the Archdeacon of the Arctic, perhaps not surprisingly icebergs and bobsleighs featured prominently in the pictorial part of the talk. The *Magazine* seems by now to have lost the brief impetus of 1925 and to limp tiredly from month to month. There is an increased tendency to reprint articles that had appeared elsewhere, whether apposite or not and the interest of the *Magazine* depends very much on the quality of the accompanying inset.

In January 1934 the Chichester Diocesan Players, a group founded by Dr Bill, the Bishop of Chichester, had a disappointing audience for their production of "Tobias and the Angel". Canon Young's lectures on the Old Testament concluded that "the prophets with their message for all time, cannot be properly understood without some knowledge of the conditions of the age in which their prophecies were written and what they meant to the people who first heard them". Fred Streeter had for a time left Petworth and Mr Salway, his successor, has a try at gardening notes. In May he was advocating the sowing of wallflowers, Canterbury bells, myosotis, sweet williams, polyanthus and violas for the next summer. His last contribution came in June, Fred Streeter had returned and he had left. G. S. Provis, the new rector, probably found it difficult to adjust to Petworth. His article "Perplexing Petworth", reproduced in PSM 88, comes from this time.

1935 saw the return of the Bishop of the Arctic, last seen in Petworth two years before as Archdeacon. In March his diocese was the subject of an article in the Sign inset. The church spire was still giving concern, a Mounted Gymkhana being staged in the early autumn to provide funds. Scaffolding erected for repair work had been destroyed in a storm and its collapse had in turn damaged the church roof. 1935 was Silver Jubilee year and the *Magazine* notes, "The old town took on a gay and albeit youthful aspect as all the streets waved flags from almost every house and legends invoking blessing on the King and Queen ran across the streets or up and down the houses. In the Market Square a medley of small flags danced joyously in the air."

Shall these bones live? Is a perusal of the *Parish Magazine* simply an academic exercise? A means of filling a few magazine pages for the Petworth Society? Well, we hardly need to do that! What is gone is gone, you may say. But is it? Modern Petworth is the inheritor of the Petworth of these magazines. It has inherited their problems and it has inherited also any solutions offered to those problems. Certainly the *Parish Magazine* for those years is a pedestrian production, no doubt many parish magazines were (and are) much the same. On one level, of course, there is the occasional rather disconcerting modernity, the reminder that new-seeming difficulties can be old ones too, like Mr Powell's objections to the commercialisation of Christmas, or the concern with litter. Hooliganism too strikes a modern chord but hooligans are age-old. Petworth history is full of them. It is the modern drug dimension that is new. We note too that in those far-off pre-television days the support for traditional groups like the W.I. or Mothers' Union was much larger than today. Women stayed

at home and if you lived in Petworth you tended to work in Petworth and seek your social life there.

Underlying these obvious points of interest, however, there seems also an indefinable malaise, never alluded to openly, but there all the same. After all a *Parish Magazine* is very much a public organ, certainly not the place for introspection. Valentine Powell will be remembered by few today. Oral tradition portrays a rather theatrical figure, even perhaps someone a little larger than life. I suppose his interest in the Bethlehem Tableaux and support for the Chiddingfold and (later) the Diocesan Players can be adduced in support of this. Tradition has it too that he found some very entrenched positions in the Petworth of the 1920s and there is nothing in the Magazines that would lead me to doubt this. Such difficulties never however appear in explicit form.

Perhaps Petworth was suffering a crisis of identity. The town's old self-effacement vis-à-vis the great house was giving way - if slowly. Petworth was no longer as much under the spell of "Baron Leconfield" as it had been when E.V. Lucas at the turn of the century had found that spell "unmistakable, as present in the very air of the streets as is the presage of a thunderstorm".

But if Petworth was no more a kind of garrison town for the Estate - what was it? That was the question. It hardly knew. A facile answer was to retreat into the old "them and us" attitude. But that solved nothing. The Boys School disaster in 1942 and the loss of the church spire in 1947 would strike in quite different ways at the heart of the town. Petworth was a place that lacked enthusiasm and self-confidence, a note sounded by Mr Powell himself long years before in discussing the Archdeacon's ill-attended Lenten lectures.

Petworth in 1997 has, to an extent, moved on. "Them and us" still has some stubborn pockets of resistance but the future can hardly lie there. Petworth in fact has increasingly to be an organic whole facing an interested and eager world as a community with a common interest. Outsiders love Petworth and it is as well for Petworth that they do. This is no panacea; all small towns have large problems and Petworth is no exception, but such an attitude can be at least a tentative beginning and in its own way a solution to the malaise of the late 1920s and early 1930s.

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## New Members

Mr and Mrs K.G. Baker, Derrydown, 91a, Hillside, Banstead, Surrey, SM7 1EZ.

Mr D. Carter, 113, Kings Road, Haslemere, Surrey.

Mr and Mrs R.F. Kenney, South Goringlee Farm, Harbolets Road, West Chiltington,  
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Mrs M.E. Lucey, Saxton House, Plaistow, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 0BX.

Mrs M. Luck, Angel House, Angel Street, Petworth, GU28 0BG.

Mrs S. Barstow, 10, School Close, Fittleworth, Pulborough, RH20

Mrs P. Bruce, Brookside House, Northchapel, Petworth, GU28 9EM.  
Mrs B. Cunningham, Treve Cottage, River Common, Petworth, GU28 9BH.  
Mr and Mrs W. Earney, 9, Guillards Oak, Midhurst, GU29 9JZ.  
Mr I.J. Flanigan, 6, Furze Road, Rudgwick, Horsham, RH12 3ES.  
Mrs. J. Rhodes, 108, Woodlands Road, Hull, East Yorkshire, HU5 5EE.  
Mrs A. Wooldridge, Rickmans, Plaistow, Billingshurst, RH14 0NT.  
Mr and Mrs C. Adsett, Honeysuckle Cottage, 4, Greengates, Lurgashall, Petworth,  
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Canon and Mrs C.D. Biddell, 3, Park Terrace, Tillington, Petworth.  
Mrs R. Collins, 4, Allfreys Wharf, Pulborough, RH20 2BN.  
Mr and Mrs R. Ellks, 4, Chilcrofts Cottages, Kingsley Green, Haslemere, Surrey, GU27  
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Gillian Duffield and Peter Pesterfield, 2, New Street, Petworth.  
Mr and Mrs J. Fooks, 96, Glebelands, Pulborough.  
Mr and Mrs Haines, 12, Allfreys Wharf, Pulborough, RH20 2BN.  
Mrs M. and Miss R. Hardwick, Stable Cottage, Heath End, Petworth.  
Mr and Mrs Harber, 21, Orchard Close, Petworth.  
Mr and Mrs A. Henderson, 62 Sheepdown Drive, Petworth.  
Mr and Mrs Huke, 12, Sheepdown Close, Petworth.  
Mr and Mrs J.E. Hunt, 6, Bushfield, Plaistow, Billingshurst, RH14 0AF.  
Mrs I.M. Hyde, Corner House, Bury, Pulborough, RH20 1PF.  
Mrs P. Manuel, 19, Orchard Close, Petworth.  
Mr S. Orwell, Orchard Cottage, Bignor, Pulborough, RH20 1PQ.  
Mrs E. Peacock, 32, Hampers Green, Petworth.  
Mrs Pidcock, Heatherlands, Bracken Lane, Storrington, RH20 3HS.  
Mr and Mrs P. Prowse, Gamel House, Kirdford, Billingshurst, RH14 0LU.  
Mrs R.G. Ramsey-Rae, Little Wakestone, Bedham, Fittleworth, Pulborough, RH20 1JR.  
Mr N.F. Rush, Killinghurst House, Haslemere, Surrey, GU27 2EL.  
Mrs G. Taylor, 3, High Street, Petworth.  
Mr and Mrs E. Wallis, 45, Sheepdown Drive, Petworth.  
Mr and Mrs G. Stannard, Twinnies, Beetlehook Common, Kirdford, Billingshurst,  
RH14 0JS.  
Mrs R.L. Wilson, The Grove House, Little Bognor, Fittleworth, Pulborough, RH20 1JT.  
Mrs M.L. Rolls, 47 Sheepdown Drive, Petworth.  
Mr and Mrs Wooldridge, Common House, Plaistow, Billingshurst.  
Mr and Mrs Leathers, "Oldhams", Fox Hill, Petworth.  
Mrs P. Kingsley, Chapel House, 97, Main Road, Danbury, Essex.  
Miss P. Turner, 6, Butts Meadow, Wisborough Green.  
Mr P.J. Williams, Old Post Office, Duncton.

