

A bonnet
of red
milk wine &
Walavien
Warehams

Miles Gustilo
Petworth
Collection



NO. 105. SEPTEMBER 2001.

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY
magazine

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It shows a landscape at Gownfold Farm.
Cover design by Jonathan Newdick.

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THE PETWORTH SOCIETY SUPPORTS THE
LECONFIELD HALL
PETWORTH COTTAGE MUSEUM
THE PETWORTH PARISH MAP
AND THE COULTERSHAW BEAM PUMP.

Petworth Society Activities Sheet



Autumn/Winter Programme. Please keep for reference.

Saturday 15th September

Leconfield Hall 10 – 4

Petworth Society Book Sale

Admission free as always.

Tuesday 18th September

Beam Pump evening

Rolf Rowling talks on Coultershaw (slides) — followed by general introduction to the beam pump.

Leconfield Hall 7.30 p.m. Admission £2. Refreshments. Raffle.

Sunday 23rd September

Walk. "The five A's"

Annette And Andy's Autumn Amble

Leaves Petworth Main Car Park at 2.15 p.m. Cars.

Sunday 7th October

David and Linda's Blackbrook Walk

Leaves Petworth Main Car Park at 2.15 p.m. Cars.

Monday 8th October

Rachel Powell : Lewes : its history and buildings

Leconfield Hall 7.30 p.m. Admission £2. Refreshments. Raffle.

Saturday 13th October

Leconfield Hall 10 – 4

Petworth Society Book Sale

Thursday 8th November

Peter Jerrome : "Petworth from Mafeking to Armistice Day 1900–1918"
and "An Edwardian holiday" Slides.

Leconfield Hall 7.30 p.m. Admission £2. Refreshments. Raffle.

Thursday 20th November

PETWORTH FAIR

Saturday 8th December

Leconfield Hall 10 – 4

Petworth Society Book Sale

Saturday 8th December

Vanguard Productions present:
"Christmas Through the Ages"

Leconfield Hall 7.30 p.m. Admission £3. Raffle. Seasonal Refreshments.

Book Sales



The very successful Book Sales do help finance this Magazine, but, much more importantly, provide a regular Society presence in the town. People can enquire about the Society : new members can join. The Sales do depend, however, on a constant supply of books.

If you have anything at all for us please contact Peter (342562) or Miles (343227). Books can be left with Peter or Miles or we will collect by prior arrangement.

Peter 20th August 2001

Constitution and Officers

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

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

The annual subscription is £9.00. Single or double one Magazine delivered. Postal £11.00 overseas £13.00. Further information may be obtained from any of the following:

Chairman

Mr P.A. Jerrome MBE, Trowels, Pound Street, Petworth [STD 01798] (Tel. 342562)
GU28 0DX

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Hon. Treasurer

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Hon. Magazine Secretary

Mrs B. Hodson, 56 Wyndham Road, Petworth GU28 0EQ

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Mr Stephen Boakes, Mr Miles Costello, Lord Egremont, Mr Ian Godsmark,
Mrs Audrey Grimwood, Mr Philip Hounsham, Mrs Anne Simmons, Mrs Ros Staker,
Mr J. Taylor, Mrs Deborah Stevenson, Mrs Linda Wort

Magazine distributors

Mr Henderson, Mrs Mason, Mr Thompson, Mrs Simmons, Mrs Grimwood,
Mrs Hounsham, Mr Turland, Mr Boakes (Petworth), Mrs Adams (Byworth),
Miss Biggs, Mrs Dallyn (Sutton and Duncton), Mrs Williams (Graffham), Mr Derek
Gourd, (Tillington and River), Mrs Goodyer, Mrs Williams (Fittleworth)

Society Scrapbook

Mrs Pearl Godsmark

For this Magazine on tape please contact Mr Thompson.

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

The mixture as before, I think. Walks are gradually getting under way again with the relaxation of foot and mouth precautions but the programme has remained a little erratic. Occasionally, too, Museum events have clashed with Society events and this means for instance that there is no account of the visit to New Barn, Egdean. I have not written separately of the Garden Walk on July 2nd, well-attended and much enjoyed.

Peter 31st July



High Street, Petworth 1940s, a sketch by Harold Roberts.

Foot and Mouth – a topical title for the Society's activities

First, we give a summary of the Chairman's report given to the Annual General Meeting on 30th May, extracted from the Minutes.

Mr Jerrome began by commenting on the cancellation of Society walks due to footpath closures during the foot and mouth disease epidemic. He felt that although relatively few members joined in, many more, especially postal subscribers, enjoyed the accounts in the

Magazine and there was a feeling that the Society has 'lost its lungs'. In fact, all the other activities had gone ahead and two additional visits had been arranged for June: to Stedham Flower Festival and to New Barn garden at Egdean, to be followed by Anne's Town Gardens Walk in July. Another Book Sale would be held on June 16th. These sales provided a Society presence which had been missing since the closure of Mrs Simmons' shop (E. Streeter & Daughter) and now they stood on their own feet without the support of an evening with a speaker. A list of new speakers on local and natural history had been compiled for future use. The year had seen the publication of the 100th edition of the Magazine, continuing the building up of a valuable resource, a process which had to continue, recording the memories which would otherwise be lost. Deborah Stevenson's crosswords were a new feature, greatly appreciated. The Fair, although on a Monday, took place on a fine day, a gap in an autumn of atrocious weather and proved a good, busy evening. A member, Mr Robin Wilson, was looking to forge closer links between the Society and the Coultershaw Beam Pump. The Society was already involved with the management of the Leconfield Hall, an amenity greatly appreciated by visiting speakers and performers, and with the Petworth Cottage Museum.

Mr Ian Godsmark then illustrated the year's activities by projecting his slides of walks in Stag Park, on the Downs at Dunton, around Graffham and along the canal at Loxwood. There were Petworth's Toronto Friends, Mary Price and 'Dusty' Morrow, scenes at the Fair - in the Square, on the Leconfield Hall stage, Father Christmas and Robert Harris's caravan in the car park, and, finally, Gilt and Gaslight's Christmas performance and Alison Neal's portrayal of Charlotte Brontë. (A copy of the full, unconfirmed, Minutes may be obtained from the Vice-Chairman). After the business, Peter gave us a fascinating glimpse of Petworth during the First World War.

There are now very few people with first-hand memories of that time and Petworth's collections of photographs by the professionals Walter Kevis (whose career ended in 1908) and George Garland (who started in the 1920s) do not cover the period. We therefore rely on postcards and private snapshots from such as Jimmy Keen a roundsman for Knight's and a member of the Fire Brigade, and John Smith of Fittleworth. Most of the original prints have been thrown away.

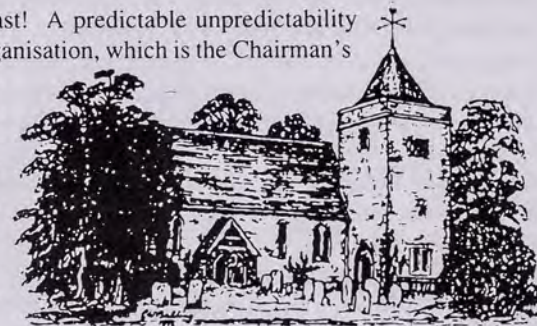
Petworth would never be the same again – a familiar cliché, but true, nevertheless. The War was a watershed in the town's history, which left a distinction between those men who came through the action in France and those who hadn't gone – and they didn't talk about it. So many women were left as widows or never had the chance to marry.

And so we were treated to a miscellany of pictures, fascinating insights into that time. Petworth people in 'period' costume, in Petworth's traffic-free streets, newly built Council houses, the first, in muddy Station Road, Dr Beechcroft and his five daughters at North House, a farm fire, a procession in aid of Belgian refugees, troops billeted on private families (20 in Avenings' attics), schoolboys working on allotments, the military hospital at Burton Park, a horse-drawn ambulance, the first postwoman at Fittleworth, an early tractor, more like a tank, German prisoners of war working at Thakeham, a travelling cinema in North Street, the Blackbirds singing group, a party for returned soldiers at Sutton, the Comrades of the Great War hut (later British Legion) before the Courthouse was built, the unveiling of the War Memorial.

So, the AGM – a lot from the mouths, some of it about feet. KCT
Sadly Mary Price died during the summer.

Flower Festival at St. James' June 10th

The Petworth Society at large – at last! A predictable unpredictability about the weather. Gossamer-like organisation, which is the Chairman's way of saying that cars leave from the car park and there's a lift for anyone who wants it, while others make their own way to Stedham. For a brief quarter of an hour or so, the Petworth Society seem to take over St. James' church, although whether quite all the Petworth visitors have actually come with the Society may be arguable.



Down the south aisle, the floral arrangements show the bright sunny colours of morning, and represent morning worship. As a counterpoint the windows round the church suggest the ecclesiastical year from Advent onwards – delphinium and campanula for a beginning. On the right of the chancel, a tape-recorder plays a suitably monasterial chant and there are alstromeria, carnation, bells of Ireland in great spires and gypsophila. Grapes and a wheaten loaf on the altar symbolise the centrality of Holy Communion. Angels of flowers with wings of gauze are the Angel Host looking up to the Cross the brochure informs us. The eye is drawn to the memorial tablets of an unfamiliar church. The lord of the manor rebuilding the church in 1850 from his base at Hollycombe. A tablet commemorates him, as another recalls Robert Cooke Bull, formerly of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, who died in September 1917, and was a long-serving rector in those days when a rector might remain in his country parish forty or even fifty years. 1917 would be a trying time indeed: one thinks of Mr. Penrose Petworth's embattled and overworked rector nearing the end of his Petworth sojourn at that time. No doubt the two men had at least a nodding acquaintance. Another recalls a son of Stedham dying of cholera in early century India. The pews in the north aisle have latched doors. Gerbera, purple stock and huge salmon antirrhinum, the sombre shades of evening, the colours of twilight and dark. Evening worship. Then the pebbles, rock and recess of an Easter tomb. "Christ is risen. He is risen indeed." Montages by St. Cuthman's and Stedham Primary School.

Out into the churchyard. The sunken private road running through it: this is a hallowed place indeed. The church yew is older than Christianity itself; some see here an ancient Druid site. Looking at the base of the tower, the present church stands to the north of the old one. The tower itself was rebuilt on the pre-Saxon foundation in 1673, apparently new bells had imperilled the original structure. The older stonework is clearly visible below a clear horizontal line. A pre-Saxon coffin outside – of solid stone. One of the party tries it out: it seems the pre-Saxons were not very tall. Talking to the Rector. Old links between Petworth, Stedham and Heyshott in early medieval times. Stedham and Heyshott traditionally linked – the old path for coffins to be brought to Stedham across the fields from the sister church.

Back through Iping and Chithurst, a narrow road crossing and recrossing the river. Stedham, says the brochure, is Saxon for "the water-meadows where stallions graze." Unfamiliar territory and passing spaces. The rain has kept off – just about. All in all an excellent, if belated, start to the year's outings.

P.

Flowers in Petworth Church Easter 1939

Cross of Harrisii lilies.

Pendants from screen : forsythia.

Uprights : daffodils.

Altar : Arum and Harrisii lilies.

In front of screen : flame azaleas.

Near baptistry (right of organ) : shades of blue cineraria. Edging : primroses.

Lectern and pulpit : orchids various.

Group to left by pulpit : shades of blue cineraria.

Old stone font : entirely lilies of the valley.

Windows : various.

St Thomas' Chapel : daffodils and narcissus.

Cherry blossom and primroses in windows.

Altar : lilies.

Also baskets of hyacinths and clumps of mignonette.

Taken from notes on the back of a photograph belonging to Mrs Florence Austin.

For photograph see main illustrations.

Thoughts at the Book Sale June 16th and 17th

Sunday is an experiment. Saturday certainly was a success, a great mass of books sold or "rehomed", depending on how you like to look at it. Certainly several hundred. By the end of the day the long tables have subsided a little, something like a flood ebbing. The red Penguin display at the north end against the hatch is something of a source of pride. "25 pence is very reasonable for Penguins" someone says with a magisterial tone. In fact 25 pence is the standard price for all books – just a few "aristocrats" at 50 pence on the island table in the centre. The army of boxes outside is waiting to be re-mobilised.

Is any book quite hopeless? A 1903 French Larousse dictionary is rescued from limbo and placed, amidst protest, on the 50p table. To my relief it goes immediately. I also "promote" a C.P. Snow with the once familiar olive dustjacket and the same happens. I stop while I'm winning. Saturday in fact makes a flying start, people getting to the Hall early so

that by 10.30 we're well on the way toward the Hall rent.

Time to meditate on that curious and unpredictable animal, the Square. Saturday it was quite busy, people bustling in and out of the showers. The road surface is being redone and there are no road markings. Parked cars and yellow cones intermingle uncertainly. "Have you any Agatha Christie?" People come in with want lists of a particular author Hammond Innes, Nevil Shute, Dick Francis. I find an unfamiliar cloth-bound Agatha Christie. Forgotten novels from the period between the wars, the days before television. A few have library labels gummed in. What or where was the Academy Library? "There will be an extra charge of 6d per week or part of a week if this book is retained beyond the time allowed." A jumble of stamped dates in 1947 with pencil annotations. Another with the familiar green "Boots Booklovers Library" crossed out ... there will be others.

Sunday's not as busy as Saturday, but it's an opportunity to sort things out. Phil and Andy have already imposed some sort of order on the fiction, even beginning to group by authors. Miles has a reasonable morning and we even venture a limited "cull" – out of date school text books, books with broken backs or unreadable spines. Cooking's a strange category. People aren't too fussy about them being absolutely pristine but we have to cull any that have suffered too much in the kitchen. The World Book of Fish Dishes – gone Outside a huge polo team lorry comes through the Square. Did someone say lorry ban?

A lull and then we're busy again, even a Pekinese panting round the tables. Jane Fonda's workout book ... money clinking into the plastic box that serves as a till. By four o'clock it's time to close doors, at half past it's time for a tactful suggestion that it may be time to go.

It's all gone well. A Society presence, the very occasional new member, meeting the public. "When's the next one?" "August 11th."

P.

Jeremy's River Walk in the Land of a Thousand Stiles

The day began rather ominously with a recorded message on my answering machine from a confused non-member living in Worthing who proclaimed an interest in inland waterways, evidently he was looking forward to the walk and wondered which river we would be following. I managed to put him straight and with that his interest seemed to diminish. Was this, I thought with some trepidation a sign of things to come, how wrong could I have been.

A small but enthusiastic group met Jeremy beside the Monument at Upperton and following a flurry of introductions we obediently followed our leader into the woods, eager not to be left behind. As we entered the darkness of the coppice I looked back towards the Monument, half hoping to catch a glimpse of a ghostly Mr Peacock, a former tenant of the

castellated folly he would, for the princely sum of one penny, show visitors the wonderful views from the top of his home. The moment passed and my attention returned to the disappearing group ahead of me.

Ideal walking weather, mild with a cooling breeze, just right for the open spaces where the sun could have been a little oppressive. No we were not familiar with the area I assured Jeremy, and with that he settled down to a highly educational narrative of the history and flora of the district. We were to pass Nithurst and Salmonsbridge, names so familiar and yet never previously visited by me. For the most part the path was wide and gently undulating though occasionally the rampant bracken forced our little band into crocodile fashion. A giant dragon-fly catches our attention as it darts here and there amongst the wild honeysuckle and the towering seed stems of the almost finished foxgloves. River Common appears out of the woods, a cluster of old cottages, isolated, very much like Ebernoe. This was Gumbrell territory added Audrey without further ado, no one questioned her further, after all one doesn't question Audrey. A mushroom field, the group spreads out eyes scanning the ground, a few acres later and Audrey has a bag full.

No botanist, I rely on the expertise of my travelling companions to advise me on the name of the many varied and interesting plants we pass, Rose Bay Willow Herb, Scarlet Pimpernel, a Sloe tree with a few small fruits clinging from less than accessible branches. I recognise the wild raspberries and Audrey and I lag behind to feast upon them, even braving the stinging nettles to get a better share of the harvest. Bexley Hill appears in the distance; at last I have a fixed point to get my bearings though not for long for once again we disappear back into the woods.

If ever we do this walk again I will count the stiles, we have certainly seen just about every size and shape imaginable and at a rough guess we must have climbed over twenty or so of the cursed impediments. I can tell you it was a wonderful relief to come across a lone kissing gate especially that it was at the top of a long ascent when a stile would probably have finished many a more experienced walker. Up Jacobs Ladder and along the Folly path, high above us Jeremy spots a stand of Butchers Broom, quite a rarity I am assured and it is important to keep the location secret for fear that travellers would cut it down to sell as holly at Christmas. We follow the slow, muddy river Lod for a short while before even that seems to tire, or perhaps it was Jeremy's poetry that sent it off in a different direction to us.

I haven't mentioned the Barn Owl box, Lodge Farm, Pitshill or the ancient bridges; in fact there was so much to see that surely River must be a worthy candidate for a revisit in the future.

MC



Sunday, July 22nd.

Jeremy's
Tillington and River

A snail recycles Jeremy's walk poster at Upperton.

A Question of Pubs

Does anyone remember Sid Fry or Ken Peacock? Sid was tenant of the Wheatsheaf public house, which of course stood next door to Somerset Lodge in North Street. Wally Thorn was landlord of the pub when it closed in 1959 however Sid was there for a period during or after the Second World War, and Ken Peacock who was Sid's son-in-law probably took over from him prior to the arrival of Wally Thorn. The years from around 1939 until the pub's closure are something of a grey period and I would welcome speaking to anyone who has recollections of Sid, Ken or Wally during their time at the pub.

On the subject of public houses it is only a relatively short time since the Mason's Arms in North Street became for some unknown reason the Stonemasons. Anyway, does anybody remember the old Mason's Arms sign? I seem to recall that it was black with an armorial coat on it. But what was the coat of arms, perhaps the Freemasons who knows? Surely someone must have the answer. If so please get in touch with me.

Finally am I the only person to get pleasure out of the way the exterior of the Star now

looks? The new owners have certainly managed to retain the unfussy appearance of the property while at the same time ensuring that it looks welcoming to the passing visitor. An added bonus of course is the decision to drop the 'New' tag from the name and so revert to the ancient title which has been in use in the town centre at one location or other for certainly four hundred years and possibly more, and while I cannot comment on the interior of the hostelry I certainly don't recall seeing the outside of the pub looking this good for donkeys years.

Miles Costello Tel. 323227

A Note from Mrs P Payne of Mindhead

To the Bulletin Secretary,
Dear Mrs Hodson,

I have a bit of information that may be of interest to Bunty Musson. The Reverend Howard Beech had a daughter Winifred, who married the Honourable John Fortescue in 1914. Sir John Fortescue, K.C.V.O. as he became, was Librarian at Windsor Castle from 1905 to 1926. In addition to writing *The Story of the Red Deer*, among other works, Sir John wrote *The History of the British Army* in 13 volumes and edited the Correspondence of King George III.

Ill health forced Sir John to retire to a warm climate and they settled at Dormaine de Fort Escue near Grasse. Sir John died in 1936. Lady Fortescue, whose letters home gave a vivid picture of life in Provence, published them as *Perfume from Provence* (recently re-printed) an instant best seller. This was followed by a second book and after she had been forced to return to England after the outbreak of World War Two, she wrote an account of her wartime experiences. This I have never read.

Unfortunately, my local Reference Library recently suffered flood damage (the staff loo "blew" over a weekend) and some book stacks are inaccessible so I cannot check up as to whether Lady Fortescue is now dead.

There were no children so far as I know.

One very charming anecdote from *Perfume from Provence*. On every wedding anniversary Lady Fortescue sat down to dinner, wearing her wedding dress, to the great admiration of the two little maids at Dormaine de Fort Escue. How many of us could do the same?

Much enjoy reading the magazine though I am a Border Scot myself. Still, my husband's researches suggest the Paynes came south from Yorkshire in the service of Northumberland. As they say in't North, "We're all Jock Tamson's bairns."



Lord Egremont unveils commemorative plaque to celebrate 21st anniversary of Coultershaw Beam Pump restoration. 18th July 2001.
Photograph by Rolf Rowling.



*Tobogganing "Round the Hills" in the late 1930s.
Photograph by S.T. Jerome. See "Pictures and reflections..."*

'Pillow Lace', the 'Gugnunks' and other matters

Kath Vigar writes:

Mrs Cownley, housekeeper for Lord Leconfield often features in the magazine. I remember her when we lived at The Lodge in 1923. She always dressed in long flowing black robes a belt round her middle on which hung a huge bunch of keys. Out of hearing, she, (Mrs Cownley) was always spoken of as "Old Gal Cownley". The girls' sitting room faced our yard. I often used to chat with them, two girls were making what I believe was called "pillow lace". This lace was a work of art, beautiful, it was worked from a kind of pillow using umpteen bobbins. I've never seen it since, I don't think it was a local lace. I wonder if it was brought down from Cockermouth as I know Lord and Lady Leconfield visited there during my time. The audit room I read is now a restaurant, in my young days we had wonderful Christmas parties there, how times have changed, of course that's going back so many years. When my father was the second night watchman he used to call the maids at 4.30 a.m. during the winter as they had to get all the fires going yet when I chatted with them they all seemed happy, no doubt some of the girls came from very large families and were very poor. When I was first an under nurse I received £20 a year, a winter and spring suit all beautifully tailored, all indoor uniform, and all food etc, much, much more than shop girls, everything was so much cheaper to buy too.

• • •

This is a copy of an old snap I came across whilst going through some of my old photographs, what happy memories it brought back to me. I was seventeen years old when it was taken, we were out for the day in Littlehampton a favourite seaside town within easy reach of Petworth. I cannot remember whether we all travelled by train or Southdown bus. Godfrey Mayes is on my right, Lena is the little girl on my left and Jean is in my arms. How I loved the Mayes family, Godfrey was killed in the war. The young girl is I believe Molly Jeffery and the two boys are the Ford boys, cousins of the Mayes children.

I wonder how many of the older generation remember "Uncle Dick" and Pip, Squeak and Wilfred from *The Daily Mirror* of all those years ago. I think Pip was a dog, Squeak a penguin and Wilfred a rabbit, Uncle Dick was just uncle. Their badge is on top of the van. The animals were known as "Gugnunks". It cost 2p to join then, I think. Quite a sum was given each year to charity by the "Gugnunks", when we met other Gugnunks we would use the passwords ick, ick, pam boo, and were given the passwords back, goo, goo, pam nunk. I hope you understand all this, I know all the children enjoyed it. Uncle Dick and the Gugnunks used to visit different seaside places each summer, Uncle Dick is in the van.

• • •

How very interesting I found Bunty Mussons' conversation with Miles Costello. I remember Bunty very well. I was born in 1910 and I see Bunty was born in 1912, Dr Kerr was our family doctor, he operated on me and took my adenoids and tonsils out in Petworth

Cottage Hospital. Bunty I remember was a pretty little girl. My outstanding memory of her is when Petworth Park lake was frozen over for weeks. Her mother I believe sat her on a chair and skated up and down with her, she, Bunty was wearing a most lovely pair of brown boots which made me green with envy, they were buttoned up each side. I worked as a pupil teacher under Miss Maggy Wootton at the Infants School, one of the sweetest ladies I've ever met.

I also knew a Mr and Mrs Pugsley who had a daughter named Rosie, they then lived in a large house in Petworth opposite the entrance to Tillington Road, he (Mr Pugsley) was an agent for a kind of sick club called The National Deposit, members paid so much a year and then had help during sickness or death. Mr Pugsley rented a small room in the Town Hall. I remember walking from Tillington to pay our subs I think it was only pence as wages were so low in those days. I think I am writing about the war years. I knew Miss Eade too, she was another lovely lady. Did she not end her days in Somerset Hospital?, I am not sure.

Mr Leazel I knew, he was a friend of my father's I believe they belonged to the British Legion which was in Grove Street. Is it still there? maybe not.

Dr Beachcroft I remember Dr Eardley-Wilmot and his wife lived opposite us in North Street. Dr Wilmot always had a little white highland terrier with him, Mrs Wilmot taught me at Sunday School in Tillington when we lived there, that must have been during the war. I wonder how Mrs Wilmot travelled from Petworth each Sunday morning as buses were't running then. She was another sweet lady. I have so many happy memories of her, she (Mrs Wilmot) gave me the grounding in my faith which thank God I still have.

The Podmores I so well remember when they lived at Tillington, one of the daughters was interested in the Scouts. I always called "the Scout" Miss Podmore, my Miss Podmore because I with a little friend Edie Bryder used to join them for walks. I remember Mr Madgewick the motor scout, I believe I went to school with a daughter. I somehow believe the family came from Wales and settled in Petworth, maybe I'm wrong. Mr Underhill, Podmore's chauffeur I knew very well, he married the sister of Mrs Mayes, Lord Leconfield's chauffeur's wife. Whilst on a visit to Mr and Mrs Underhill at their little bungalow in Grove Street after having had tea we were invited to listen to the wireless, having fiddled around with something called a catswhisker? Mr Underhill gave me a pair of earphones and to my amazement I heard the chimes of Big Ben. Think of life then way back I suppose 1924 and now the year 2001 what a difference.

Does Bunty mean the Mulberry tree that used to hang over the wall of the Back Lane. We as small children had to dodge the fruit in case we took the stain on our shoes indoors, I believe the garden is now a car park.

Deborah's Crossword with answers to Magazine 104's



Across

- 1 Early name for Golden Square – a trading place with animal connections (5,6)
 9 Influential Petworth land-owning family (5)
 10 Show family, once associated with Petworth Fair (5)
 11 A trap – the ruination of mother? (3)
 12 An artist with 11a. brings in the harvest (5)
 14 see 13d.
 15 A countryfied thespian from Graffham (6)
 16 A Petworth bridge – with no water (6)

Down

- 18 He's got into a muddle in the middle of Angel Street (3)
 20 "Oh! the ---- high to the cool sky! And the feel of the sun-warmed moss ... " (Galsworthy) (5)
 21 Alkaline washing solution used in the laundry (3)
 22 A carer in the Cottage Hospital (5)
 24 Sounds like the way to behave in a large country house (5)
 25 Horticulturists' annual invitation to the public (4,7)

Down

- 2 Inside the tea tent food is consumed (5)
 3 One of seven (3)
 4 see 17d.
 5 Girl's name – shortened (look no further than the Pet. Soc. Committee!) (3)
 6 Girl's name derived by beheading C12th queen who gave her brother the manor of Petworth (5)
 7 Ancient road to the west of town, once a favourite smugglers' route (7,4)
 8 Rude Mechanicals entertain with his works during the Petworth Festival (11)
 12 Medieval association of craftsmen or merchants (5)
 13 & 14 a. Popular pub in local village – the ideal retreat in a downpour (5,3)
 17 & 4d. Nag made wrong turning and ran into local wartime diarist (6,6)
 19 Archaic term for cloakbag or purse (5)
 21 Washed in the laundry using 21 a. perhaps (5)
 23 Sounds like he is going to make some money (3)
 24 Traditionally the reason why Sussex horses and women have long legs (3)

Solution to No. 104

Across

7 Boathouse, 8 Tudor, 10 Ancestor, 11 Olden, 12 Etch, 14 Laguerre, 17 Hampers, 19 Saddler, 22 Gaslight, 24 Past, 27 Idyll, 29 Cokelers, 31 Sugar, 32 Decorated.

Down

1 Pound, 2 Street, 3 Root, 4 A Stroll, 5 Curd, 6 Town Crier, 9 Song, 13 Her, 15 End, 16 Sagacious, 18 Pal, 20 Amp, 21 Stacked, 23 Gilt, 25 Selham, 26 Green, 28 Year, 30 Knob.

Pullen/Elliott families – an enquiry

Mr Alan F. Clarke, 5 Chelveston Crescent, SOLIHULL, West Midlands, B91 3YB
Tel. 0121 704 4337 is seeking information on his family history. Can anyone help him with the following names – any of them?

PULLEN• Annie Elizabeth born 1894, Balls Cross, married Edwin William Clarke 1926, Redhill

PULLEN William born 1867, Petworth, married Annie Cordelia Elliott 1891, Petworth Register Office

PULLEN Thomas born 1835, Petworth, married Mary Vanns c1860

PULLEN John born 1800, Kirdford to Henry and Elizabeth Pullen

*Annie Elizabeth (my mother) had two surviving sisters, Alice who married Ernest Greenfield, lived in Horsham, and Ethel who married Gilbert Kilner, lived in Alfold.

ELLIOTT James born 1843, Kirdford, married Ann Collyer 1865, Chertsey, Kelly's Directory of 1890 lists James as being a Shopkeeper/Farmer at Balls Cross

ELLIOTT Charles born 1808, married Mary Wackford 1833, Kirdford

ELLIOTT John born 1783, married Elizabeth Woodford, 1804, Kirdford

ELLIOTT Thomas born 1766, married Anne Lickfold, 1782, Stopham.

Early days at the Polish Camp

Mr Ron Hazelman notes:

I have a reply to an article in Magazine No. 104 June 2001 about the Polish Camp during 1946. I heard about an R.E. company being formed by the large building firm of Patchings of Worthing consisting of all tradesmen in the building trade.

I rang Patchings up and asked if there were still vacancies, they said yes but don't ring us again ring the recruiting office at Brighton and they will arrange your medical. In the mean time I told Ken Boxall and Gordon Gibson about it so we all eventually joined 721 Artisan Works Co. and on the ninth of May were enlisted into the British Army at Barracks in Chatham, Kent.

We were fitted out with kit and gas mask – nothing else and the following morning one of the directors of Patchings became our Captain and the foremen became sergeants and corporals. I never thought this could happen in the British Army but it did and it worked very well.

To cut a long story short Reigate became the south eastern command. We did a lot of work there then we heard the Company had got the job of building a Camp at Petworth which became the Polish Camp eventually which was situated at the far end of the Lower Pond. The Company was going on a refresher course to Aldershot but owing to the large amount of building material from the summer camps they wanted this moved to the Park to be used on the new Camp so myself and Ken Boxall were to stay and chop two holes in the Park wall to bring the stuff in. This was at the end of 1941.

The Camp was built and we heard we were en route for Liverpool where we eventually arrived at the Earl of Sefton's estate at West Derby a suburb of Liverpool. We were there for six weeks before embarking for the Italian campaign in Sicily.

In a Museum garden – late June

It's difficult to find a colour that rivals that of the orange hawkweed, Hieracium aurantiacum, a small, and, on the face of it, insignificant, member of the dandelion family. It's magnificent in June and transplants easily. There it is, basking in the sun by the brick path at the very bottom of the Museum garden. The London Pride is going over while the white heads of perennial candytuft are a spring memory now. Violet leaves sprawl pale round the clothes-line pole: a few desiccated pieces of bark hang precariously on. How different from the first opening five years ago, when we had to lop the willow sprouts as they came out of the newly cut wood. Time moves on, even in a 1910 garden. There are changes in the house, the opening of the attic two years and more ago, the gypsy's wooden flowers and pegs this year, the butter pats redundant on the kitchen table, arcane additions to the sewing collection upstairs ... but of their nature they will now be relatively minor. Not so, perhaps, the garden, which steadily evolves. A crucial change was the realisation that if Mrs Cummings had an allotment, she wouldn't be growing carrots, shallots or even ruby chard or runner beans in her back garden – or probably not. The days of our fitting vegetables in among the flowers have gone. Only the two gooseberry bushes and the rhubarb survive. The vegetables did become a little tired by the end of the season and, after all, it's in the nature of vegetables that you pull them up and leave a space. People like realism, up to a point, but probably balk at caterpillar-infested cabbages. And you can't leave shallots in after July can you?

In fact the oblong plot (almost square) with the light, probably shallow, soil and full sun has evolved into something that certainly isn't modern, but may or may not suggest 1910. Pieces of plant from different places, mostly "free transfers", like the house furniture a kind of Foreign Legion, have settled in to become more than the sum of the individual parts, that's how people would have operated then, there were no garden centres in 1910 and nurserymen

were perhaps the province of the better-off, Mrs Rapley, though, bought her Mrs Sinkins pinks, as I recall, from away. I can't imagine Mrs Cummings being so bold, but who am I to say?

Tradescantia, "Moses in the bulrushes", splits easily, so does astrantia, with its long-lasting small pink heads – very attractive to small insects. Hatties' pincushion. The very word "pincushion" seems to evoke another age. The original plant was bought at Ebernoe Church plant sale, solidly lodged in a plastic pot at Langhurst with the Wealden clay sticking purposefully to it. It's been divided several times since then. The buckler sorrell is another easy divide: sharp leaves for very sparing use in salads. The red sorrel flowers are beginning to show. The trollius (globe flower) isn't so happy this year, just one forlorn golden cup. It's a plant of wet marshes, not this light earth with stones that bakes in the mid-morning sun. The tall old-type phlox Lady Egremont insisted on at the beginning



Entrance to 346 High Street after heavy rain. 1999.

have more than justified their place and are now veterans of several splits and replantings. They're taller than modern varieties and don't snap at the base. In July they'll dominate the garden – "Queen of the border" in every sense. Poppies and foxgloves are the flowers of June however: the latter had looked decidedly anaemic while in spring leaf but then long spines of mottled pink and white are now at their confident best. A year or two ago they lined one side of the entrance path but they're gone now; gardens are a parable of change. Strangely the monarda (bergamot) thrives here in the hot dry soil. My herb book describes it as "an aromatic swamp plant" native to the United States. It's known there also as "Oswego Tea" and "Bee Balm".

So many of the flowers inhabit that uncertain marcher territory between cultivation, garden escape and wild. Alkanet is one, the wild anchusa. It grows in profusion in Bartons Lane, the delicate blue taking over for a brief period in late spring, particularly in the wall opposite the Bartons Cemetery. Delicate the blue may be, but the plant's a robust one and needs careful monitoring. "Probably not native", says the Flora. Then there's ox-eye, cranesbill and yellow poppy while yellow loosestrife (creeping Jenny) flourishes in the parched narrow border under the high west wall.

The gooseberries are still inedible but just tingeing to red. In a little space by them are a few calendula, replanted from elsewhere but originally self-sown. They look weary in the sun. Helenium with its bumble-bee daisy heads will bloom later but the slugs have taken a toll. What do you do with slugs in a 1910 garden? Nasturtium are coming up from last year; to an extent cultivating a garden like this is an exercise in the self-sown. A few love-in-a-mist imported this year will add to the mixture next year. Some candytuft from last year have seeded themselves but not as many as you'd expect. A much underestimated flower, annual candytuft I always think. And talking of nasturtiums, this year we've put in some Empress of India, dark crimson flowers riding above slate foliage, named in honour of Queen Victoria and originating in the 1880s. What did Mrs Cummings, a southern Irishwoman, make of Queen Victoria? Goodness knows.

Herbs? People often ask about them. They're here if you look. There are some in pots by the door, sage, parsley, there's rosemary against the back wall, lemon balm, oregano and thyme in the main plot. The wild aquilegias are in green seed pod, an arum lily and a hosta by the privy wall but the bricked-up aperture whence the old thunderbox was cleared is carefully kept visible. A spray of loganberries escaped from next door baskets in the sun by the west wall and the back wall is completely covered with pink roses

By the time you read this, it will all be quite different. Summer will be fading fast. If you're passing 346 look in and see what's happening. The Museum may be closed but the garden's a haven of quiet and, perhaps, somewhere to collect your thoughts.

P.

H.V. Morton at Fittleworth in 1939

When a man has knocked about the world, it goes without saying that he must have talked to a number of barmaids on a variety of subjects: but, looking back over something like twenty years, I cannot recollect one such conversation which has left any impression on my mind.

I may have encountered dull barmaids, or I may not be the kind of man to whom barmaids confide their more memorable thoughts.

In the little village of Fittleworth, in Sussex, or to be more exact, in the snuff-brown bar of the "Swan", Fate suddenly relented and decided that it was time I should have an interesting conversation with the girl who leaned across the bar.

It began, ordinarily enough, with a talk about the beauties of the local countryside, and then diverged at some point on the difficulty of photographing wild animals in their natural haunts.

The girl told me that she had been getting up at six o'clock for the past few mornings in order to photograph a family of foxes living on Fittleworth Common.

It was a difficult job, she said, and it was necessary to creep up step by step, praying that a twig would not snap beneath her feet; then she had to wait as still as a stone until the little foxes came out and played in a patch of early morning sunlight.

They were just like puppies, or like something between puppies and kittens, as they chased each other about and rolled their little red bodies over in the bracken.

The light had been deceptive that morning, but she thought she had taken a good picture. Just when she had done so, the vixen became aware of her, possibly her sharp ears heard the shutter click, and, with a "most peculiar bark," she called her young ones to cover.

I thought that no one, except perhaps Thomas Hardy, could have imagined a barmaid in the bracken, watching for little foxes. Indeed, sitting there under the black beams, I began to feel that I had somehow got into a Wessex novel.

"Oh, how I should love to photograph a badger!" she sighed, with the same expression with which a barmaid in a less rustic place might have expressed a wish to see a certain film star.

She came, not from Sussex, but from the grand county of Suffolk, and when she first arrived she felt almost like a foreigner. The Sussex dialect is still strong, and some of the words in use are difficult to catch at first. They call a lane a "twitten," and they call a dyke a "dick."

While she was telling me this, the figure of a huge man, with an apron of sacking round his waist, loomed in the shadows of the bar in the act of drinking a tankard of beer. At her words, he removed the tankard for a second and said in a deep voice, as though proposing a toast, "Good old Sussex!"; and then immediately lifted the tankard again and put it down empty.

We talked about otters and badgers, and about a grasshopper warbler that had been heard in those parts; and I went away with the pleasant feeling that I should always connect Fittleworth with the only interesting conversation I have ever had with a barmaid.

The village is among the recognised beauty spots of Sussex. It is an irregularly grouped cluster of sleepy little cottages, some white and thatched, some half-timbered: and it looks, as most old villages do in England, and this is the true secret of their beauty, as if it had grown up as naturally out of the soil as the oak trees and hedges.

There is a romantic old mill, and a mill race that comes tumbling out of bushes to form a dark pool near a grey bridge; there is a good Early English church dedicated to St. Mary; there is an old yew tree in the churchyard. There are other less tangible beauties; such as the fall of light and shade which has enchanted many artists, who have left what I trust is not their best work, on the wooden panels of the smoke-room at the "Swan".

As I wandered round the village, I thought how silent and reserved such places are. Visitors come to them, look around and say how "pretty" this is or how "nice" that is, but of the great procession of humble human life that has been passing through them for long centuries they know nothing; neither is much to be known.

We know that the knight of the Hall went on the Crusades, or that he died in the Wars of the Roses, or that, in more recent times, the squire had sat in Parliament; but of the hundreds and thousands of common people who have been born and have died in the place there is no record. I can never look at the little Fittleworths of England without wondering what their big moments have been, for no life is too quiet and retired to be entirely free from emotion and excitement.

Now and then a painstaking vicar, or someone interested in the history of a village, will

go to the trouble of searching the Record Office, the parish registers, and the Manorial Rolls, in the hope of gleaning one ear of local corn; and the result is always worth while. We cannot have too many village histories.

Fittleworth is lucky in having found its local historian in the Hon. Lady Maxse, whose little book, "The Story of Fittleworth," came into my hands by chance: and I commend it to all who would like to write the annals of their parish.

I know, having read this book, what I could never have guessed, and this is why a place near Fittleworth is called Plumpudding Corner. It seems that from 1279, when Fittleworth was already an old village, a weekly fair used to be held at the neighbouring village of Egdean, then an important place. It was at Plumpudding Corner that the crowds attending the fair used to buy plum puddings, cooked for them in a row of ovens which have still left their mark in the meadows.

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Another thing which impressed me while reading the slender records of a village like Fittleworth, is the way towns have drained such villages of their industries during the last two centuries.

When roads were bad and communications difficult, and before factories catered for the many, each village, no matter how small, was a nest of trades. These little places were almost self-supporting. They had their own shoemakers, weavers, tailors, carpenters, builders, and so on, while the cottagers made their own bread, grew much of their own food and brewed their own ale.

No village was complete, of course, without its witch, whose rhymes and remedies were respected by people who would readily pour doctor's medicine down the sink.

Fittleworth's witch lived under three pine trees on the top of Wyncombe Hill, and it is said that on cloudy nights her charms worked wonderfully, but if the moon broke through and revealed the spire of Fittleworth Church, they just fizzled out and her power departed. The last wise woman of Fittleworth was a Mrs. Cooper, who was curing adder's bite and giddiness in cattle well into the last century.

So, as I walked about Fittleworth looking at the sleepy old cottages, I thought: you've seen quite a lot of life since Saxon times, but your story is not, as a sentimentalist would like to think, that of dear old ladies cutting flowers in the front garden, but of men and women with their full share of generosity and kindness, of malice and villainy, of bravery and cowardice, of wisdom and stupidity: in fact, small as you are, you are an adequate fragment of the great world.

Note:

H.V. Morton was a very prolific writer between the wars. This article under the title "Annals of Fittleworth" appeared in the now defunct *Daily Herald* on July 27th 1939. It is a typical piece of journalism of the time relying heavily of Lady Maxse's *Story of Fittleworth*. I have omitted a story retold directly from her book. The original article carried a picture of Fittleworth Mill.

Ed.

'My first night in the trenches . . .' 1916

This description by Hugh Whitcomb (born 1898) appeared in the *Midhurst Times* for July 28th 1916. It had previously been published in the Midhurst Grammar School Magazine. Members will recall Hugh Whitcomb's memories of Petworth from Magazines 96, 97, 98. These were written probably in the 1970s : this account is, of course, contemporary. Whitcomb was in the 13th Royal Sussex Regiment. [Ed.]

"MY FIRST NIGHT IN THE TRENCHES."

Midhurst Grammar School Old Boy's Experiences.

In the recent issue of the Midhurst Grammar School Magazine, H. Whitcomb, 13th Royal Sussex Regiment, writes as follows on "My first night in the Trenches":—

"After marching practically all day we halted at billets just behind the firing line, there to stop till it was dark enough to venture into the trenches. My particular billet was an old barn riddled with bullets, and I lay down on the straw and wondered what it was all going to be like, and hoping that all would be well with us. It was a Sunday evening, and I thought of the people at home going to church, and wished the war to be over so that I could go back and do the same things again that I used to do."

"We were issued out with trench boots, or 'waders', and shrapnel helmets, and then, everything in darkness, started for the trenches headed by a guide from another regiment. We went along by platoons in single file, so that the German gunners should not have a good target to aim at, which they do by means of flares."

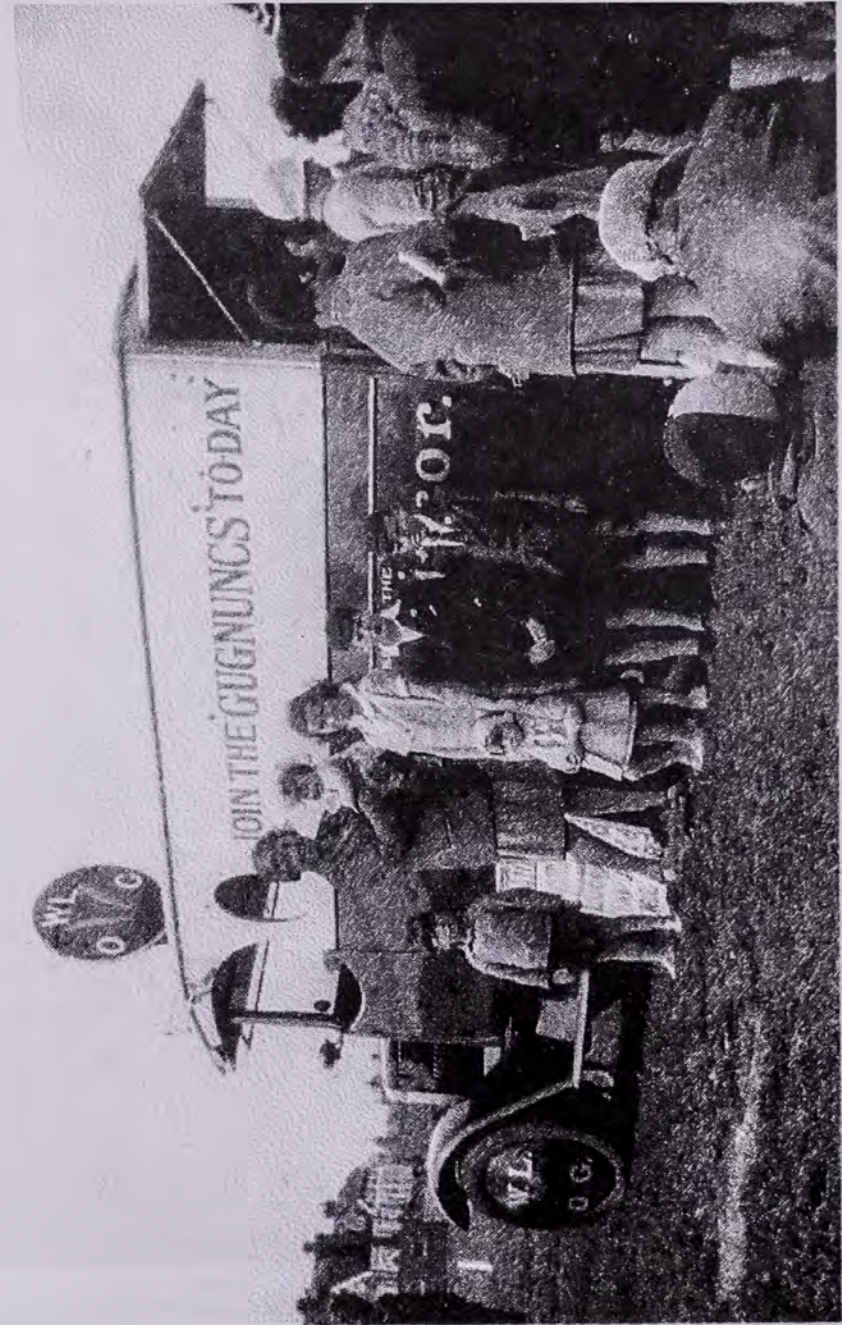
"As we got nearer stray bullets came whistling by us, but they were very high, and did no damage. This was our first baptism of fire, and, though a bit nervous at first, we soon got used to it, though we kept very low, and went along very gingerly."

"At last we came to the communication trench where we encountered lonely sentries who sang out a cheery goodnight, and wished us good luck. Occasionally we came to piles of blackened ruins, the former homes of French farmers and peasants which showed up very ghostly in the moonlight."

"After more trudging and groaning under the weight of the pack, we arrived in the trenches, where we relieved some men of another regiment who were going back to rest."

"We were each given a certain place to stand at, and were told how to carry on. One half of the men then went into dugouts to get a few hours much-needed rest, while the other half were put on as sentries till they were relieved in their turn. I was put on first, and took my post as sentry to watch any movements of the Germans and to occasionally fire a shot to let them know we were alive. I looked over the parapet and was surprised to see the German trenches only about eighty yards away. Then their machine guns started firing and I ducked my head and kept it well down till they had stopped."

"The night was not at all dark, and I had my first view of no man's land.' It would be impossible to describe what it was like, so I will not try to do it. After some time I was relieved and turned into a dugout and slept till morning."



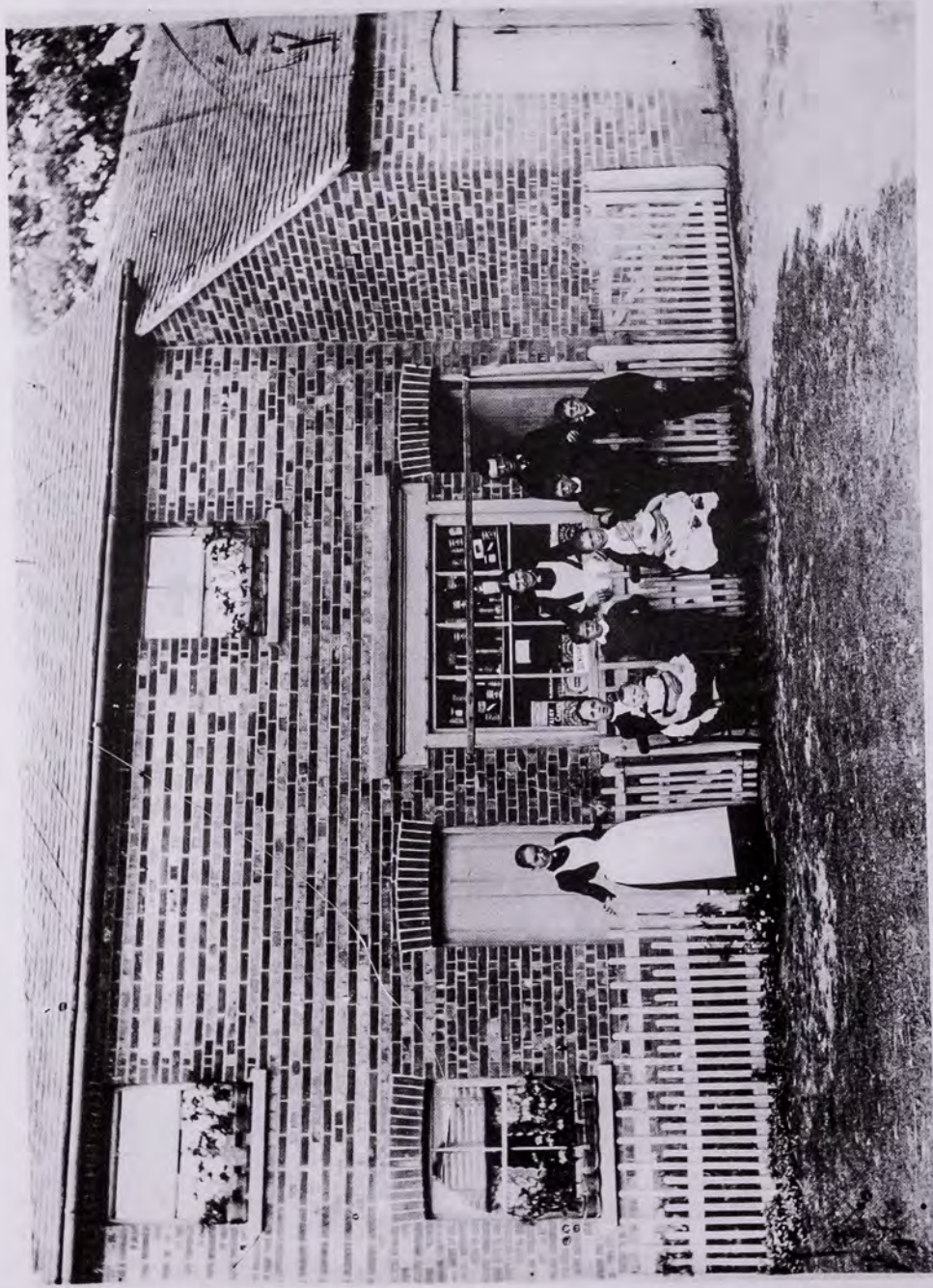
The Gugnuncs at Littlehampton.
Kath Vigar (second left) with members of the Mayes and Ford families, 1920s.



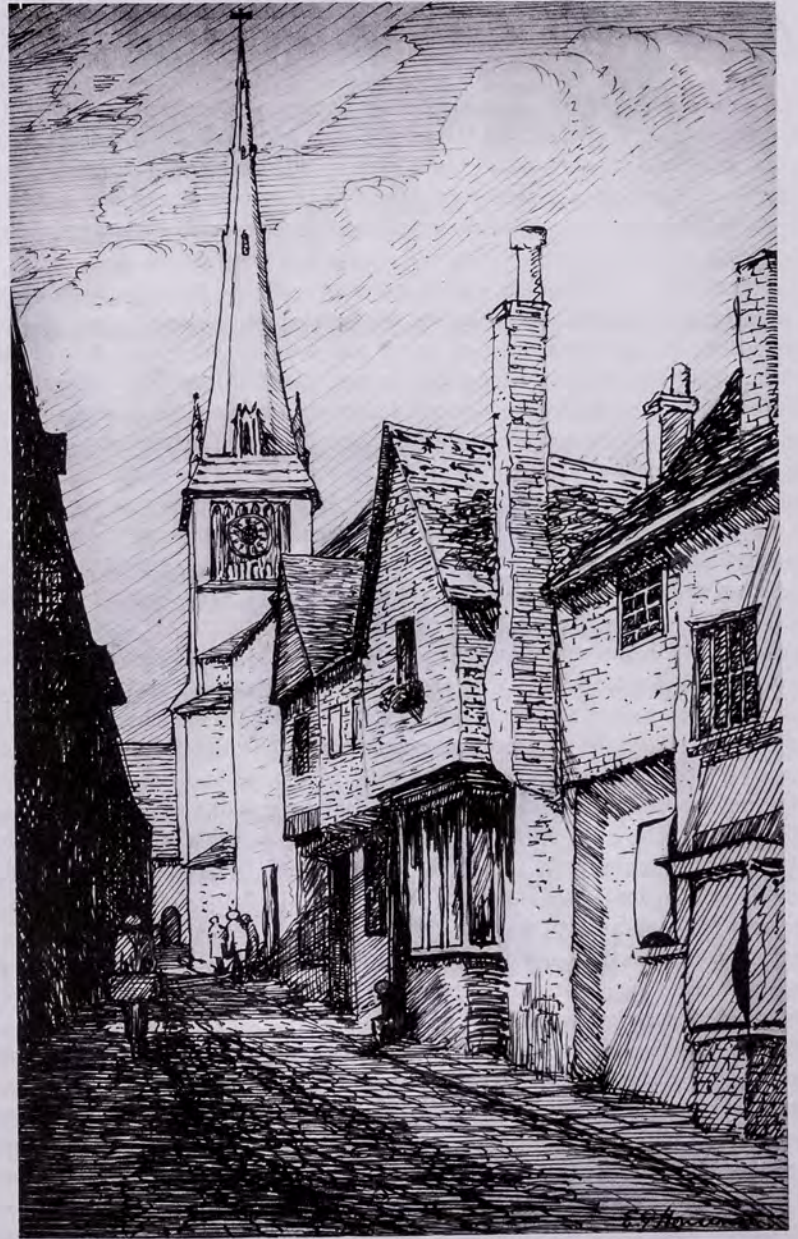
*Cottage garden at Upperton in the mid-1930s.
Photograph by G.G. Garland. See "In a Museum garden – late June ..."*



*St Mary's Petworth Easter 1939.
Photograph by G.G. Garland. See "Flowers in Petworth Church Easter 1939..."*



*Elliott's Shop, Balls Cross 1890s.
Photograph by Walter Kevis. See "Pullen/Elliott families – an enquiry ..."*



Lombard Street by E.G. Houseman.

A Bonnet of Red Valerian

What is it about a cemetery? To my mind it conjures up an image of a cold municipal burial ground, regimental in its neatness, and devoid of the character, antiquity and, dare I say, charm of the rural graveyard. Rationally of course there is little difference between a graveyard, churchyard, burial ground or cemetery, however that overgrown plot of land at the very tip of the Bartons, where the tarmacadam disappears and the pitted lane cascades out of view and into the depths of the Shimmings Valley will always be a graveyard to me.

I suppose that on reflection it was the towering walls and permanently shackled gate which gave the graveyard an almost fortress like appearance. A drawbridge with guarding sentinels and the all-pervading sense of power and isolation that emanates from the yard would have completed the illusion for all but the most hardy of juveniles. It must have been a combination of all of these unrecognised sensations that first attracted my young and inquisitive mind. Why lock a graveyard I recall thinking to myself. After all there was nothing in there to steal, was there? Surely then the answer must be that the place was not a citadel at all but a prison, and the fortress like walls were not for the protection of the good folk within but on the contrary were built to prevent those same poor souls from escaping. The unsophisticated reasoning behind this hypothesis must surely be recognised by every school boy who has scampered past such a graveyard as the Bartons, averting one's gaze in fear of attracting the notice of the horrors that must surely dwell within.

Living in North Street the Bartons was on the very edge of my childhood domain and though I knew the lane well I was wise enough not to pass along it unaccompanied. Safe among a group of playmates, acts of bravado were not uncommon, though even then bolstered by numbers we would make only mock attempts to scale the walls before hastily departing, boasting to each other of our conquest, while at the same time abiding by an unspoken rule forbidding any member of the little tribe to look back for fear of seeing what he dared not.

The passage of time play tricks on one's recollections though it will be many more years before I forget that morning during a summer school holiday, lazily patrolling the boundaries of my childhood kingdom I dared to glance – albeit from the safety of the kissing gate which stood guard at the eastern end of the lane – towards the graveyard and to my horror the usual scene had altered beyond recognition. Even from such a distant vantage point as the gate it was quite clear that a huge section of the graveyard wall had collapsed spilling tons of stone and debris into the lane below.

Word spread fast of the catastrophe, such things did not happen in our little confined world and the rest of the North Street tribe were soon on the scene. Fearless in our numbers it was not long before we ventured closer, the younger ones averting their gaze while relying on older members to relay details of the scene back to them. My journey past the landslide was as speedy as my dignity would allow, looking, and yet, fearful of the imagined horrors, I could not bring my eyes to see. Those roots must surely be bones and that large round wall stone could be a skull. It was only a short while before officialdom took over and the lane was sealed at either end for fear of yet another collapse. Mock cries of disappointment were uttered

from my confederates as we were ushered away from the scene and we trudged home to our parents and younger siblings chock full of tales heavily enriched by our juvenile imaginations.

The wall was soon rebuilt and life returned to normal for a short while. Patrolling of the boundaries carried on with little to break the tedium of those long, hot summer holidays. The occasional impostor, usually from the town, though occasionally as far a field as Station Road would send alarm bells ringing down the street, though with a mutual sense of self preservation these intrusions rarely escalated into anything other than verbal standoffs.

A year or two passed and the landslip was only a distant memory when one day yet again engaged upon a listless saunter I wandered into the cool shade of Bartons Lane. The wall still stood as before though now it appeared free from the bonnet of Red Valerian and the insidious effects of the strangling ivy that had covered it in earlier years. The recent mortar - still not dulled by time or weather - stood out like an unhealed scar as if to remind the casual visitor of the trials that had befallen the lane in recent years. These differences apart one thing stood out above the rest, the never open iron gates were ... open. I instantly satisfied my thoughts with the idea that it was the mythical grass cutter. I say mythical because though he was often spoken of, not a single member of the tribe had ever actually seen him. I edged forward nervously to try and catch a glimpse of this mysterious intruder who was braving the interior, and there before me stood a huddle of men, recognised immediately as 'estate' workers. The nearest member of the group turned and glanced in my direction and with a stroke of his arm, resembling for all the world a windmill sweep, he beckoned me forward. Nervously I approached the assembly until I was able to see the object of their interest. A pile of turves, a wheelbarrow or two of soil, a large stone slab, and a hole. A hole, I mentally repeated it to myself as if to confirm my thoughts. The Wyndham tomb, what else could it be, a family member had just passed away and the workmen were preparing the vault for the interment. The solemn nature of their task had clearly not dulled their natural inclination for mischief, the stone steps were clearly visible and judging by the roguish grins on the workmen's faces I was about to become added, albeit temporarily, to the list of residents of that noble sepulchre. Without further ado I spun on my heels and with only a modicum of dignity departed whence I had came, the sound of the men's mocking laughter following me through the graveyard gates and down across the Rectory fields.

Subsequent recollections of the Bartons are too many to mention and the burial ground continued to figure highly in my childhood activities until eventually my family moved further down the road and out of the street and with the move came a new tribe and with the new tribe came a new set of boundaries and the importance of Bartons Lane began to diminish.

It is now many years since those idyllic days of childhood and while my memories of the Bartons dimmed, my interest in the lane spurred me on to find out more about that place which played such an important part in my childhood years.

That the graveyard is of no great antiquity is beyond doubt. Designed as an overflow to the cramped churchyard of the parish church, which stands at the opposite end of the lane to the Bartons, the former parcel of glebe land was first offered to the parish by the Reverend Charles Dunster in 1805. A committee of Churchwardens and Parish overseers was hastily

formed to consider the generous offer of the rector and subsequently to determine the expense to the parish of walling in the proposed burial ground and preparing it for receiving the dead of Petworth. In July of 1804 the Vestry agreed that John and Thomas Upton should be employed to survey the site, procure materials and enlist workmen for the building of a wall and for erecting a gate. This decisive movement forward was brought to a sudden halt when at the next meeting of the vestry it was decreed that the existing low, dry wall could be repaired and a section that was previously unwallled could be sealed by a fence or hedge. The Reverend Dunster was clearly unhappy with this blatant meanness and keen to get the best possible job done he urged the Vestry to fund the walling of the whole plot as soon as possible. While Dunster was prepared to exert a certain amount of pressure on the Vestry in order to get his own way, he was astute enough to realise that should the Parish come to the conclusion that the cost of preparing the Bartons as a graveyard was prohibitive and his idea be rejected he would be once again left with the problem of an overcrowded churchyard. With more than a degree of good judgement Dunster reluctantly agreed to the less costly alternative of a fence or hedging, with the option that should the enclosure prove less than effectual he could at a later date demand the construction of a more substantial structure. It seems that following the Vestry meeting a certain amount of behind the scenes politicking went on, for at the next Vestry and for no apparent reason, a decision was taken to replace the old dry wall abutting Bartons Lane with a mortar wall some five feet above ground level, and the wall on the west side of the burial ground was to be increased in height, presumably to make it stock proof.

We must assume that the enclosing of the ground was carried out to the satisfaction of the Reverend Dunster for in the minutes of a Vestry meeting of October 20th, 1805 the rector is recorded as addressing the assembled committee as follows:

The new Burying ground having been consecrated, and being ready for use, it is found expedient to make a regulation that some consideration shall from this time be paid for the indulgence of being buried in the old Church Yard, because if it is permitted to all who may wish it, the Evil of a crowded burying ground will probably remain. In future therefore before any ground is broken up in the Old Church Yard for any funeral, the sum of One Guinea must be paid to the Rector.

Like all good committees the Vestry was keen to establish what we today would call working groups, and the management of the new burying ground having offered an ideal opportunity for yet such another layer of administration a committee was formed to consider the plan of the graveyard. In effect their remit was to decide where to begin the graves, where common graves should be sited, to allocate a part reserved for brick graves, and also they were to decide on a regulation depth for the graves. On November 15th after due consideration the working party reported their findings to the Vestry and proposed:

That the whole of the graves be regularly arranged – that the brick graves, vaulted graves, or those marked by stones begin at the south wall, and the common graves at north, or against the holm hedge, and that they be arranged by stumps put in by the direction of Mr Thomas Upton. That the depth of the bricked graves shall be seven feet; of those who die of small pox or other contagious diseases, six and a half; and the depth of common graves five feet and a half; and the Sexton shall have a staff properly marked for the above purposes.

It appears that with the opening of the new burial ground the awful problems of the Churchyard were finally laid to rest and the issue of providing for the departed of the town was solved, albeit for a somewhat brief period of time. It was however soon quite apparent that with the limited boundaries of the Bartons graveyard restricting any thoughts of further expansion and coupled with the Victorian passion for reserving family plots and the construction of great grave memorials the recurrent issue of overcrowding was once again to become an important issue with both the clerical and secular authorities at Petworth. Within some fifty years the good citizens of Petworth were looking towards the Horsham Road for relief from an overcrowded Bartons graveyard and so the cycle would begin once again.

Now the Horsham Road, that's what I call a cemetery! It stands on the very northern perimeter of our North Street territory, separated only by the busy main road; it was according to our parents strictly out of bounds. If only they had known, but that's another story for another day .. perhaps.

Magog

Gwenda Morgan's Diary

November 17th to 30th 1939

Nov. 17th. Another wet day. Hens. Cowsheds. Vinnicombs came with cowcake, pigmeal and wheat. Took food to the young calves. 3 in the stable and 4 (one a baby bull) in the barn in the rickyard. Milked, cleaned sheds. New vests and stockings arrived. I ordered them the beginning of Sept. Stockings always seem to need mending these days and I've been existing on two pairs that are by now covered with darns.

Nov. 18th. Cymru and I have been taking our walks in the blackout every morning, with owls hooting and all very eerie; but today will be the last dark walk for a bit as the clocks are put back tonight. There was a lovely dull rose-y glow over the Gog this morning. Hens. Went with Parker in cart (with Sailor, of course) to Frog Hole barn with cattle cake. Then I walked back with two pieces of iron (for fixing the roller onto the tractor) to where Mr Thorne is rolling a meadow. Then helped Stoner fix extra stakes where needed in a fence round haystacks. It is Saturday and I went to lie on my bed for ½ hour, and actually slept for 2 hours!

Nov. 19th. Sunday. The extra hour in bed was lovely. Out with Cymru at 8.15. Bright and sunny. A treat after so many dark walks, and he thoroughly enjoyed it. The holly tree at the top of the Long meadow looked marvellous. Bright red against a bright blue sky. (Sounds awful, but it did look nice.) The children very thrilled at having a little piece of garden for themselves by the summer house. Una did gardening, Daddy and I went to church.

Nov. 20th. Fair Day, but no fair at all this year. Land Army badge arrived with apologies for not sending one before. Oh, well – may as well wear a badge and be in the fashion. Hens. Sheds. Filled sacks with corn while Tom carried them up to the loft of the barn. Filled up more pig holes in the meadow. Milked, cleaned sheds. Cows now have hay

to eat as well as treacle cake. Dark early because of winter time. Bought coloured towelling for cow flannels. Blackman and Tom very good in letting me use theirs up till now so I'll present them with new ones now that new ones are needed. Much colder, a bit of frost last night.

Nov. 21st. Hens. Pig holes again, ah me! Milked, cleaned sheds. One cow (Joan, I think) tore Mrs T's table cloth to shreds. She must have leaned right over the fence to get to where it hung on the line. Enemy aircraft over Kent last night. 10 ships sunk by mines in 3 days.

Nov. 22nd. Hens. Pig holes, milked, cleaned sheds with Nobby's help. Gets fairly dark now by 5 o'clock. Went to lecture on Sussex.

Nov. 23rd. Rained all day, a miserable drizzle. Hens, sheds. Helped Mr T tighten up nuts on a very rusty harrow. It's been out of doors for a year and now that he wants to use it he brings it in and oils it. Milked, cleaned sheds again. Midget back in sheds again. Men said she is a dirty little b—, and she is. She messes up the floor and walls for yards around. A lot more ships being sunk by German magnetic mines.

Nov. 24th. Hens. Mr T killed a rat that had made a comfortable little nest in the hen run. Mrs Thorne's auntie's dog (Sheila) stole Mr T's breakfast haddock and remains were found under the wardrobe in his bedroom. Cleaned cowsheds, pulled beetroot and carrots. Milked, sheds again with Nobby's help. He is quite a help. Una to pictures first house, Daddy and I to second to see "Stage Coach". Blackman's birthday yesterday so I gave him some chocolates.

Nov. 25th. Saturday. Painted the tractor blue.

Nov. 26th. Sunday. Daddy and I to church. Very wet day. Halfway through this exercise book, tomorrow will begin my 14th week at Hallgate (and almost 3 calendar months since I began).

Nov. 27th. Wet Monday, wet, wet, wet — 'orrid, and a beastly wind too. Got soaked. Blackman appeared in yellow waterproof leggings which he wore over his rubber boots. Hens. Helped Mr T and Parker make a scratching place up in the yard for the hens. Milked, cleaned sheds. A hen walked over the bonnet of the tractor while the paint was wet on Saturday afternoon. (Mr T had left the tractor house door open thinking the paint would dry quicker).

Nov. 28th. Hens. Back to Petworth with Mr T to fetch paint for painting ladders. (Dark brown. Would rather have done them blue, and everyone else thinks blue would have been nicer too, but Mr T is colour-blind). At five minutes to 12 o'clock Stoner was hurriedly painting boards red to put in the hedges as a warning to huntsmen not to jump because of wire. Hunt had already been going on for an hour. Very cold day, but dry and bright. No signs of cowmen at 2 o'clock. Gone to watch the hunt. When they came I helped tie up the cows. (They are usually already tied up when I arrive). Milked, cleaned sheds.

Nov. 29th. Hens. Painted ladder amid hens, cat, and sow. The ladders to be painted rest over the partitions of the bottom pigstyes. Blackman came along and talked about milking and Tom etc. He thinks Tom may leave (he may be called up for the Army soon and he seems sort of restless anyway and gives notice quite often though nothing has come of it yet). Blackman says if he leaves, Stoner will help more with the milking, and Mr T may suggest paying me but that I may have to come in the early morning too. Don't think I could work 6 hours during

the day as well as early milking though. Afternoon: Milked, cleaned sheds. Evening: to lecture with Helen, on Stone, Bronze and Iron Age this week. Last week was on Ice Age. Mr Armstrong is a very interesting lecturer. I shall look forward to Wednesday evenings.

Nov. 30th. Wet again. Hens, Sheds, Ladders. Sunbeam's calf arrived. Milked, sheds.

Russia has begun to bomb Finland. Haircut.

Notes:

Gwenda is still working as a land-girl at Hallgate Farm, Byworth.

Nov. 18th: Cymru is Gwenda's dog.

Mr Thorne — farmer at Hallgate.

Nov. 19th: Long meadow (?)

Children: evacuees staying with the Morgan family at the Old Bank House in the Market Square.

Una is Gwenda's step-mother.

Nov. 22nd: Nobby [Blackman].

Nov. 26th: Note in margin: (13th?)

Nov. 29th: Helen (?)Austin.

In search of the man with the Marionettes

Talking to me in 1983, Bill Ede had dim memories of travelling players coming to Petworth over seventy years before. It was still possible to recall those years before 1914. Howard's Plat was an open meadow off Station Road roughly in the position of the present Fire Station.

"When we lived in High Street before the Great War we had a man and his wife lodging with us for a week or so. They were travelling marionette players and used to do a show every night for the children. This would have been on Howard's Plat. They put on Punch and Judy, that sort of thing, but I don't think I actually went to see them. It would have been under some kind of tented cover and almost certainly in the summer. It must have been a hard life travelling from one little town to another." (PSM 34).

Henry Whitcomb could remember one particular travelling company, Taylor's Gaff, stopping for about a week and bringing stage curtains and marquee by horse and cart and siting their living wagons in the meadow. A play about the Red Barn murders led him to stay for two consecutive performances, having crawled in unofficially under the awning to begin with!

Even in the 1980s these memories were very dim. Now they are as extinct as those of the performing bears corralled overnight at the back of the old Queen's Head in High Street.

Such thoughts are occasioned by the random survival of a handbill and letter from Clunn Lewis, in his own words "the old Sussex and Kentish showman." I am doubtful that Clunn Lewis is the marionette man mentioned by Bill Ede, and I don't think it's certain that he performed on Howard's Plat. He writes in 1911 that "he has given up the tenting for many years" but this may only refer to his "digs." Nor is there any indication that he travelled with a wife.

Dolly Dramas, Farces and Varieties.



Funny Fantocinni! Harp Solos, &c., &c.

Presents the Original Middleton's Marionettes.

Established 200 Years.

Private Parties, School Treats and Bazaars attended.

FOR TERMS AND PARTICULARS ADDRESS:—

*85, Union Street,
Maidstone,*

A prospectus for Clunn Lewis.

What is certain is that Master Lewis was a familiar figure in the Petworth area in Edwardian times and that he was taken ill here in 1909. By December 1911 he was a man of 63, and finding life difficult. "We used to be very popular in Petworth and district," he writes, "But other times other manners." Audiences were perhaps looking for greater sophistication, something rather less genteel.

Clearly Clunn Lewis had been well-known at one time and his links with an older travelling tradition had elicited the interest and sympathy of luminaries like Bernard Shaw, G.K. Chesterton and Ellen Terry. I reproduce Master Lewis's 1913 brochure which suggests that friends were seeking to restore the puppeteer's ailing fortunes. In fact any revival would be at the mercy of Lewis's advancing age and infirmity and the events of the following years.

Clunn Lewis had, in 1913, been on the road for forty-seven years, and his marionettes seem to have been famous in themselves. Who was the original Middleton and how had Lewis come to acquire the puppets? Perhaps they still exist. Unfortunately, the Mask, presumably a somewhat ephemeral magazine for the puppeteering fraternity finds no echo even at the British Library. Has anyone any light to throw on Master Lewis?

Bill Ede and Henry Whitcomb's recollections are conveniently summarised in *Tread Lightly Here* (1990) page 227.

P.

Of milk, wine and Warehams, though not necessarily in that order

My first rather brief involvement with the milk trade was through Mr Arthur Scragg of Battlehurst Farm the other side of Fox Hill on the Wisborough Green Road. We were living at Godwins the wine merchants in Lombard Street at the time, and Father, who had by then retired from the police force, was manager of the shop, and Mr Scragg was the owner. For some reason Mr Scragg decided to set up a milk bottling plant at Battlehurst and he determined that I should teach Dorothy Watson, who was working on the farm, to drive, in order that she could deliver the bottled milk. Anyway after I had finished teaching Dorothy and with my mission accomplished I was sent back to work at Godwins. I suppose that the bottling plant was quite innovative for its day, at least around here, after all the other milk roundsmen like Gus Wakeford and Mr Whitney were still delivering by churn, laboriously ladling out their milk into their customers' jugs. As you can imagine this early link with milk was rather tenuous and it would be quite a time before I became involved again. Meanwhile Mr Scragg, who I suppose

was something of an entrepreneur, had set up a business in one of Mr Denman's properties in East Street; it was a sort of off-sales for his Battlehurst milk and other dairy products and became well known in the district, this business was known as The Petworth Dairy Company. By coincidence my sisters Norah, Gertie and Di all worked there, first for Mr Scragg and later they took it over and ran it themselves, Gertie and Di remaining for many years.

As I have said Father had retired from the police force to take up the position of manager at the shop near the top of Lombard Street which was later to become Findlater's and which is now Threshers but was then Godwins the wine and spirit merchants, I suppose that would have been about 1930. With the job went the house that my parents and four of us children promptly moved into. The door to the accommodation was where the office is now and I believe that it was number 19 Lombard Street. The shop was much smaller then because there was not the huge range of wines that are available now. We bottled our own beer in the garage, the beer arriving in barrels from Ind Coope or Guinness and being transferred into the bottles. I don't think that this practice went on for very long as it was not deemed viable. Wine from the shippers was lowered down into the cellar and put up on racks for a week or two before it was filtered and decanted into bottles. The metal ring from which the barrels were anchored as they were lowered into the cellar is still set firmly in the flagstones outside the north end of the building near the entrance to the old surgery.



The 1923 open-top Talbot-London in the late 1940s. Girl on bonnet Pam Chandler from Folkestone.

Occasionally a trip up to London would be called for, perhaps a big house had put in an order or an important collection had to be made. It was quite a treat to be able to drive up to London though it was really quite rare. On one particular occasion I was caught speeding on Kingston-by-Pass in Godwins Ford delivery van, the fine was £3, which was a huge amount in those days and seemed rather harsh to me. I held my first driving licence in 1928 when I was seventeen though like my wife Rene I have never had to pass a test and still drive regularly even now. My last task before I left Godwins in 1936 was to teach Maurice Howard to drive. I well remember sitting beside Maurice as we drove down Station Road and the van wandering all over the place as he tried to control it, happy memories.

I have digressed somewhat as it is milk that we are supposed to be talking about and we must move on over a decade towards the end of the 40's and I was working for Scats in East Street. Anyway this chap named Gallie Chesterfield – his real name was Frank though he was always known as Gallie after a well-known sportsman - had bought an old 1923 open-top Talbot / London tourer from Froggy Thayre who had a workshop in Bartons Lane.



The Bartons August 21st 1931. Photograph by G.G. Garland. See "A Bonnet of Red Valerian ..."



*Lord Leconfield with Dick Allden and Bill Boxall at Petworth Ploughing Match late 1940s.
Photograph by G.G. Garland. See "At one end of the tape..."*

The car was giving Gallie a lot of trouble and invariably it failed to start, and even on the occasions that it did fire up you could be sure that it wouldn't run for long, so I offered to take a look at it. It was ages before we realised that it had been fitted with a faulty coil and eventually we were able to put it right. This meeting with Gallie was rather significant in that his father was the owner of one of the local milk rounds, Mr Chesterfield and Gallie operated out of Collins Marsh Farm near Hawkhurst Court between Crimbourne and Cold Harbour. The Chesterfield family lived at Wisborough Green while the brother and two sisters of George Barlow the previous owner of the business lived at Collins Marsh, the only connection that the farm had with the business was that the milk was delivered there from the Co-Op depot at Guildford and stored in a garage for delivery; there was a cooler of a fashion and washing facilities with which to clean the churns, however what little equipment there was had been inherited from Mr Barlow and was basically defunct. Gallie who by then was about 18 had been given notice that he was shortly to be called up for his national service and so a replacement for him would be needed, in the event his conscription date was to be deferred for some months but of course this was not known at the time. Anyway Mr Chesterfield in his desperation asked me if I wanted to work for him and as Rene and I were living at the time not too far away at Hyfold Cottage at Stroud Green, and more importantly the money on offer was pretty good at £7 per week, I took the plunge. This would have been about 1949 and the job suited me down to the ground for I could do both of the Chesterfield rounds at Petworth and Wisborough Green and still be home by early afternoon, with plenty of time to work on private motors to earn some extra cash. Mr Chesterfield, it seems, was, like Mr Scragg, something of an entrepreneur and probably never intended keeping the business for too long, for in the past he had successfully built up relatively small rounds before selling them on at a good profit. I had hoped that when he came to sell up he would consider giving me first option on the business, however one day Mr Chesterfield arrived on our doorstep with Gordon Harrison and announced that he was selling the business to him. Needless to say I was a bit put out at not being given the opportunity to buy the rounds but after Gordon offered me a job with him, and a not insignificant pay rise, I felt a little happier with the situation. Really things carried on much as before, I did the deliveries while Gordon who lived at Pheasant Court Farm near Northchapel did the books and more or less just left me to get on with it.

As I have said, I had rounds at both Petworth and Wisborough Green, but it was Graffham which offered me the opportunity to break into the business on my own accord. Graffham had two roundsmen, one was a chap named Phillips who was landlord of the White Horse pub and the other whose name escapes me, and I really should remember it, offered me the chance to purchase his round. This was quite a well developed round of about 60 gallons and would have been more than enough to keep me busy. We agreed a reasonable price of £300, which included a model Y Ford pick-up truck, and having concluded the deal I applied and was granted a milk licence from the Ministry of Food office in High St. I now had to tell Gordon Harrison that I was quitting to do my newly acquired Graffham round. On being given the news Gordon immediately offered me a partnership on very good terms and so the new round was incorporated into the existing business. With the increased work we had to think of somewhere else to take delivery of and store the milk, the garage at Collins Marsh really

wasn't big enough any longer and what with recent government regulations it was with some urgency that a new place had to be found. I was aware that the old Leconfield dairy at Flathurst was empty and I went to the estate office and enquired about renting it. The estate were only too happy for us to take the dairy over, after all it had been unused for some years and was really rather derelict but having cleaned it up and with new fridges installed we moved in. We took the brave step of purchasing a Brush electric float to run out of Flathurst, we had purchased it a good way off and I drove it back to Petworth, we got almost to the dairy before the huge batteries faded and died.

Gradually Petworth Dairies grew and the other roundsmen in the district found it increasingly difficult to compete with us and in some cases went out of business. It soon became apparent that there were still too many operators all covering the same area and the situation could not continue. There was Vera Whitney from Upperton who had taken over the round from her father who himself had delivered milk with his horse and cart for years. I think that Vera had probably given up her round during the 50's. Dick Robinson from Pest House near to the dairy also did a round as did Ron Cross from Soanes. These latter two eventually joined Gordon Harrison and myself to form a limited company. This would have been in the autumn of 1958 and the memorandum and articles of association rather grandly described us as '*Manufacturers, collectors, bottlers, wholesale and retail suppliers, purchasers, importers and exporters of, and dealers in milk, cream, condensed milk, milk powder, dried milk, milk by-products, ice cream, poultry, honey, vegetables, fruit, tea, groceries, eatables, provisions, and farm and garden produce of all kinds*'. Gordon, Dick, Ron and myself all took equal shares in the new company and the articles of association were witnessed by our newly appointed dairy foreman Frank Clarke of Wyndham Road.

The day of the small roundsman had gone forever and in order to survive one had to become bigger or form a cooperative such as Petworth Dairies. We purchased other electric floats in addition to the Brush and took on extra roundsmen to meet the demand for milk deliveries. Flathurst was rather an unfortunate place to operate electric milk floats from, for which ever way you went you had either Cemetery Hill or Fox Hill to climb before you could get anywhere, these steep slopes took their toll on the batteries and it was not uncommon to have to tow floats back to Flathurst at the end of their rounds. For a short time we bottled our own milk, this would have been T.T. milk of the highest quality and purchased solely from Mr Riddell at Keyfox, we made a healthy profit from bottling and selling this milk but it came to an end when new government regulations were introduced. I well remember delivering to the Polish Camp in the Park. The women would all come out to get their milk and it was a job keeping track of who had what and how much they owed, if we didn't know their name we would just write 'Pole' in the account book against the amount of money they had paid. Rene my wife quite often did the Wisborough Green round and Gordon Harrison's sister did Northchapel. Later Rene would join me on the electric Petworth round for five days a week and we spent much of our time together. Christmas was always an interesting time on the milk rounds, it seems that nearly every customer would offer us a drink or three! If I remember rightly orange wine was something of a favourite and one Christmas Rene had been offered – and accepted – a little more than was good for her and she ended up crashing the float into

a telegraph pole outside of the police station in Grove Street. Heaven help anybody doing that today.

I suppose that the dairy partnership was quite successful, after all in 1959 which was the first full year of trading we sold over £56,000 worth of milk, the following year it was £61,000 and by 1961 it was rising rapidly to £75,000. 1962 £84,000, 1963 £90,000, and the sales remained around this figure for the following two years that I was with the company. Nothing stays the same for long and it must have been 1965 or 66 that I got restless and decided to sell my share of the business to 'Son' Baker who had worked for us for some time. I never returned to the milk business and I can't say that I regretted leaving, after so many years of getting up at the crack of dawn in all weathers it was a pleasure to have a break from it.

Bill and Rene Wareham were talking to Miles Costello.

'Gallie' Chesterfield who now lives in Norfolk kindly confirmed some of the early details in a telephone conversation that he had with Miles.

A view of Red Squirrels

My husband's grandfather was Percy Austin who, at one time, had a nursery in Station Road. My mother-in-law, Gertie Austin, had been a Ballard. The Ballards, originally from London, were well-known in early century Petworth where Mr. Ballard had been head electrician at the House. Before that, I was told, he had been in Wales, putting electricity into the mines. He and his wife lived in Percy Terrace. I come from Richmond in Yorkshire but, when working at Petworth Cottage Hospital towards the end of the war, saw a certain amount of my husband's aunts, Helen and May Austin, who also lived in Percy Terrace. It was wartime and my fiancé, Jack, was in Africa and I needed to find a job. Although, at 22, I was quite young, I was well-qualified, having started my training as a nurse at the early age of sixteen. I had done fever training in Bradford, general training in Darlington, obtained an ear, nose and throat certificate and the administration certificate essential for a matron. By this time I was a State Registered Nurse and had an overseas diseases certificate. All in all, if I was young, I was certainly well qualified.

I'd only been at Petworth Cottage Hospital for a week when the matron, Miss Elphick, fell ill. Despite my youth I was immediately put in charge; there was no interview or anything like that. Miss Elphick never returned and I continued as matron until I left.

At the Cottage Hospital I lived in, of course. It was wartime and staff were difficult to find. There were no Red Cross personnel and we had three auxiliaries and two ward-maids. The auxiliaries would wash and dress patients, while the ward-maids basically kept the wards clean. Cooking? As there was no cook, as matron I had to do it. The Hospital had a small operating theatre and a surgeon used to come down from London for small operations, tonsils and such like. It was nothing for me to be all "scrubbed up" in the theatre and then have to

go off and see how the meal was doing in the kitchen. All for £5.12.6 a month! I did have my own personal maid who did things like washing. And I could look out of my bedroom and be sure to see red squirrels. If I were very hard up my mother would always help me out. I left the Cottage Hospital when my future husband was due back from Africa. In fact he was delayed and I transferred for a time to Middlesborough Isolation Hospital.

In Petworth Lord Leconfield was the "kingpin of everything." I'd heard a lot about him but had never met him. I don't suppose I seriously expected to. One day it was raining, flinging it down, and I saw an old man with a black Labrador outside the Hospital. I went to the door. "You're sopping wet," I said, "You'd better come into the kitchen for a coffee and dry off a little."

So he came in and we sat in the kitchen and talked. I had absolutely no idea who he was. "Where do you come from?" he asked, no doubt noting what was clearly not a local accent. "Yorkshire" I said. "I've a place in Yorkshire," he replied. He talked about his wife, at that

time in a nursing home, and of his adopted son, Peter. By this time his clothes were drying and I gave him an umbrella. "I'll have this returned tomorrow," he said. He was clearly someone accustomed to giving orders. "If you're passing this way always look in" I said. The next day a youngish man appeared with the umbrella and thanked me profusely. It was Peter and I had, of course, made the acquaintance of Lord Leconfield. I had soon found out anyway – when I went back into the wards, the patients were out of bed and looking out of the window. "What on earth are you all doing?" I asked. "That was his lordship," they said. "Oh yes," I said somewhat smugly. "He's just been having coffee in the kitchen."

When I was married I'd come to Petworth to renew acquaintance with my husband's aunts May and Helen who lived in Percy Terrace. I had come to know Helen quite well when I



May and Helen Austin in the 1950s.

was at the Cottage Hospital. We had a lot in common I always thought. We'd talk about all sorts of things. She was quite literary and would often go to London on some literary errand. She knew Rudyard Kipling well from an early age. "Boe" his intimates called him. She had a number of letters from him which, most unfortunately, were destroyed when she died. Helen was particularly fond of flowers and knew all the botanical names. She was equally knowledgeable on birds and animals, she was also rather more flexible than her sister May. I used to hold parties at the Cottage Hospital and "everyone" came. Although it was wartime the guests brought drink in some quantity, and seemed to have little difficulty in acquiring it. Being a little naïve initially I suppose, I would greet them, offer them a drink, then have one myself. The result was disastrous. Fortunately Helen appeared, escorted me to the kitchen and dosed me with black coffee. "Never mind," she said "we all get the animal instinct sometimes."

Florence Austin (née Sinclair) was talking to the Editor.

Pictures and Reflections

On polishing glasses

We were living at Roselle in North Mead between the wars. Mr. Martin, the landlord at the nearby Masons Arms only had one arm. I remember looking into the pub and seeing how he polished glasses, holding the glass under the stump of his arm, and a marvellous job he made of it. Pubs were dark mysterious places for a child and certainly out of bounds. Even later on I never went into one unless perhaps the Swan for afternoon tea or a dance. If we were out in the car somewhere in the country, my father would go into a pub for a drink and bring the ladies out a glass of white port or something similar. Farmers would go into the pub on market day. Teddy Holliday from Langhurst Farm at Balls Cross was a family friend and would always have a beer on the way back from Barnham Market. I'd often walk to Langhurst from North Mead, coming back in the dark, but no one gave it a thought then. We'd have port, sherry and cider at home for social purposes, but never spirits. Pubs attracted a certain aura – and it was one of disapproval. Once I saw a man lying flat out on the pavement outside Nurse Allan's house in East Street. As a child I thought he was ill or even dead, but when I went into Mrs. Gordon Knight's, the grocers on the corner, I was shooed away and told the man was simply drunk. It was clearly something a child was not supposed to know about, let alone see.

My father was a member of the Petworth Club in Lombard Street. As manager of the Midland Bank his employers expected him to belong to clubs: it was good for business and the bank would pay his membership fees. In those days before the war the Club was a stronghold of the Masons, and my father was a Mason himself as his father had been before him. He was also treasurer of the British Legion and as such had a good deal to do with appointing the steward, controlling stock and checking the books. My mother had the strict attitudes of an older generation and although the Legion and Club were not generally considered as "public houses", didn't really approve. Officially my father would go up to the British Legion "to look at the books."

An old friend

I've just mentioned trips out into the country. We owned a Gwynne car, a 1923 model which we bought in 1928 and kept for some years. It replaced my father's previous motor-cycle and side car. The windscreen wiper, (there was just the one) was hand-operated by the driver. There was only one, the passenger, door and no self-starter so that if the engine stalled, the passenger had to get out to allow the driver himself to alight to crank the engine and hope it would fire. Imagine this happening, as it once did, in Streatham High Street in pouring rain.

The Gwillim family

My parents were friendly with the Gwillims who ran the mill at Coultershaw. I remember as a young girl the funeral of Mr. Gwillim Senior. He had a sheaf of wheat carved on his tombstone. My father was in morning dress and it seemed very much a gathering of men. When the Queen Mary was launched, I was told that Gwillims had the contract for flour, and that with every sample of wheat that came into the mill Mr. Gwillim would take some out and bake a batch of bread with the flour to see how best the flour could be used. He would then advise the chefs. The family lived on the right as you approached the mill bridge from Petworth, very close to the water with an orchard at the back. As a small child I can remember being taken to see part of an engine with dark water running round it – probably the mill race. Later I'd spend a lot of time waiting for the train at Petworth Station – for Victoria change at Pulborough!

Weighing the greaseproof

Older Petworth people will remember the smell of fresh coffee beans in Olders the grocers in Angel Street. Miss Older was very precise: cutting butter from bulk, putting it on a piece of greaseproof, then putting an equivalent piece of greaseproof on the other side of the scale to be absolutely fair.

Jack O'Lantern

I left the little private school in East Street when I was ten. While I was there the school put on a play called Jack O'Lantern in the Iron Room. One of our little boys came from a very wealthy family in one of the villages and at the end of the show, the family chauffeur and the nanny were sent to fetch him home. The trouble was that the young boy couldn't find his shorts. Looking extremely pained, because this was not part of his job, the chauffeur finally condescended to get out of the car and bring in a car rug to replace the missing garment!

Dolls

Like many ladies in her position, my mother was very aware of good works. She'd get her friends and acquaintances to give her half a crown. With this she'd buy a doll in Weavers, the Lombard Street newsagents and toyshop. They might cost a little more or a little less. She'd then dress them up and take them to London. They were exquisitely dressed and went to a parish in the East End of London to be put under the Christmas tree. My mother had originally responded to a radio appeal by the vicar who was a regular broadcaster. I think people in Petworth had little real idea of what the words "poor children" really meant until the evacuees came in 1939.

Butter from Flathurst

When we first came to Petworth we lodged with Mrs Watson in Park Road. Her

husband was one of Lord Leconfield's grooms. I remember that Mrs. Watson had a strong Scottish accent. An early memory is of my father's Aunt Sarah dying. We ordered a wreath, I suppose from the House gardens opposite. The wreath was of lilies and came in a big square box, and was brought across the road to Mrs. Watson's.

Mrs. Watson was a very practical lady, and much in demand for making Christmas cakes. I'd watch her go through the whole process: cake, marzipan, icing and decoration. Once I saw her put on the marzipan top and then decorate with cherries and angelica. I thought she'd gone completely mad. How could anyone have a cake without icing on the top? It appeared that they could! I remember walking across the fields with Mrs. Watson to Lord Leconfield's dairy at Flathurst on the Horsham Road to collect butter. From Mrs. Watson's house I could look out of the window across to the Grand Entrance at Petworth House to see the porter resplendent in his uniform and think that this grand personage was Lord Leconfield himself. When Fred Streeter came to the Gardens a little later, I was older and we had left Mrs. Watson's by then, but he would always share his knowledge of plants with me. People told me not to bother him, but he never gave me the impression that my enquiries were the slightest trouble.

Tobogganing

The picture taken by my father in the mid-1930s appears as one of the full page illustrations in this Magazine. I can't identify the men but I think they were familiar enough when the photographs was taken. The scene is obviously Round the Hills and I have an idea that one of the men broke his leg when they reached the bottom of the steep slope.

Mary Fraser was talking to the Editor
See also Magazine 103

The Talman family, a query

We have had an enquiry via the Petworth Society web page from a lady named Tracy Wingrove from Essex. Tracy is attempting to track down any living relative of her elderly father whose mother was Annie Talman from Northchapel. Annie was born in 1902 at Mitchel Park Farm to Edward and Hannah Talman and she later lived at 214 Frithfold Cottages. We know that Annie went into service and later appears at The Dell House, Ropley, Hampshire. Meanwhile Annie went through a difficult time and spent a period at North End House, Petworth where she gave birth to a daughter named Florence May in 1928. If anyone knows of a relative of Annie or indeed Florence May or can add any details to the Talman family tree please get in touch with me or contact Tracy directly.

Miles

Tracy Wingrove,
106 Ward Avenue,
Grays, Essex RM17 5RL.

At the end of the tape

I came to Petworth in September 1937 soon after I left school. My family background lay in farming but over the county boundary in Hampshire. I was articled to Mr. "Bill" Boxall, a partner in Messrs Newland, Tompkins and Taylor, Land and Estate Agents. Their premises were at the bottom of Lombard Street (now La Maison de Provence.) Mr. Boxall's assistant was Dick Spooner, unfortunately drowned at sea during the war. As a new boy on the staff, I was inevitably something of a dogsbody, picking up the trade. I had a pushbike which I used for collecting rents on the estates managed by Mr. Boxall, Pitshill and Dickhurst. Once a fortnight, too, I'd bike out to Graffham to pay pensions for Lord Woollavington's Trust. These were to old employees of his. Every Monday I had to go to Pulborough market by 7.00am to help with the cattle market.

One of the first events I remember came towards the end of that first September in 1937. It was Petworth Ploughing Match, and held that year, I think, at Manor Farm, Duncton. Bill Boxall was secretary of the Petworth and District Agricultural Association which ran the event. Being a new boy, I was given a badge with "STAFF" on it and told to walk round and see what was going on. An old gentleman came up to me and said, "Where's the watering-place for the horses?" "I don't know," I replied. "You ought to, you're staff," retorted the old man. "Go and find out and tell me." Off I went, back to the office (the Secretary's tent) and said, "An old gentleman with a big moustache, white gaiters and a black Labrador wants to know where the watering-place is for the horses." I had been approached by Lord Leconfield, the Association's President. It was my first encounter with him. He always attended the AGM in his capacity as President.

In those days the ploughing match comprised mainly horse teams, certainly more horse teams than tractors. There were also competitions for hedge-laying, corn, and field roots, the last two on a specimen exhibit basis – half a bushel of corn or six roots. Throughout the year there would be competitions on the local farms for corn, growing crops, leys (grasses), fodder crops, dairy herds, long service or best kept cottage garden, and at that time, rick building and thatching. I became secretary of the Association in 1956 and remained so until 1992. Formed in 1906, the Association has had only four secretaries since its inception, Mr. B.A. Nevatt, Mr. Boxall, myself and Nicholas Moore the present incumbent.

Before the war Mr. Allison of the Leconfield Estate measured out the portions for the individual ploughmen and had done so for many years. There was (and still is) intense competition among the local ploughmen: today it's particularly keen in the vintage tractor and ploughing classes. Vintage tractors now have to have been made before 1950 and there are as many vintage vehicles in competition as there are contemporary.

Gradually, after the war, the horse ploughmen disappeared. At one point in the 1960s we reintroduced a horse class but we had to pay the ploughmen to come, often from some distance, and the experiment was not really a success. Of late years horse ploughing has come back but it is a conscious revival rather than a continuing tradition. Connected with the old horse-ploughing competition were classes for the best turned-out horses and ploughmen

would spend days before a match cleaning and polishing leather and brass. When I came back from the war in 1946, however, the balance between horses and tractors had shifted decisively toward the latter.

In those early days prize-giving came at the end of the day and was presided over usually by Lord and Lady Leconfield from the eminence of a farm wagon. More recently there is, about mid-day, a sit-down lunch to which competitors and judges are invited with family and friends, usually over a hundred people. Prizes are presented at the end of the lunch by Lady Egremont who attends with Lord Egremont, the President. The ploughmen will have completed their stint during the morning. In the old days there was no meal at Petworth, just the travelling mobile refreshment stall and, of course, the obligatory beer tent.

Another great event in those early days was the Loxwood Fair and Show. Again Bill Boxall was secretary. The Show was held in a field behind Lakers Lodge at Loxwood, the Lodge was owned at that time by Mr. Hugh Nelson, Chairman of the Show Committee. The Show comprised a sale of Fat and Store cattle, sheep and pigs and also carthorses, hunters and hacks. The livestock were kept in pens of chestnut wattle made specially for the event by Morleys of Lodsbridge. Beside the sale of livestock, there was a very well-known and popular gymkhana and a funfair. The Loxwood Show was held early in May but barely survived the war. Intimately connected with it was the Loxwood Show and Fair Ball, a very popular event held at Petworth in the Swan Hotel ballroom and in the Town Hall. An awning ran across from the Swan to the Town Hall. No-one worried about traffic in those days.

When I first came to Petworth I stayed in lodgings: at different times with Mr. and Mrs. Moase at Coultershaw, Mr. and Mrs. Thorne at Hallgate, Byworth or Mrs. Collins at Byworth Post Office. I'd cycle into Petworth to work. In helping Mr. Boxall I'd go out on valuations of live and dead stock. I'd hold the end of the tape when he measured ricks. Mr. Boxall was also a respected valuer of standing timber and he and I would spend a lot of time measuring timber. There it was my job to hold up a pole measured in feet to measure the height of a butt. A special measure would calculate the girth. For this work in the woods I didn't have to cycle as Mr. Boxall took me in his car. Back in the office I'd spend hours copying plans, which involved tracing them laboriously by hand. By modern office standards technology in the 1930s (and later) was primitive indeed. At that time the partners in the firm were Bill Boxall and Arthur Whittaker and there were branches at Pulborough and Storrington as well as Petworth.

When the war came I was away for six years in the Army, returning in 1946. While Mr. Boxall was still there I was offered a partnership and the firm finally amalgamated with King and Chasmore. By examination I became a chartered auctioneer, then a chartered surveyor. We dealt with estate agency although with something of a bias toward the agricultural. More property was sold by auction in the 1950s and 1960s than it is now, and the farm sale on a farmer's quitting his farm was still relatively common. It is not so frequent nowadays because with farms tending to merge into larger units the incoming farmer is often a neighbour who takes over the existing stock much as it stands. Particularly before and just after the war we did a lot of what were called tenant right valuations. We had to value the outgoing tenants' "rights", often somewhat intangible or arguable, like the value of growing crops, temporary

pasture, or the unexhausted values of items like fertiliser or lime applied to the land. As a very young man in the late 1930s I was aware that farming was in some distress but not as aware of all the nuances as I would have been with the experience of later years. Many farmers came up from the West Country in the period between the wars. The reason? Simply that Sussex's relative proximity to the London market meant that they received more for their produce.

I made mention of my first acquaintance with Lord Leconfield, over sixty years ago, at the very beginning of my time at Petworth so it may be fitting to close with my final contact with him, I suppose about 1950. He asked me to go and see him in his study and said, "You carry out auction sales?" I said, "Yes." He said, "I want to sell all my tack by auction." For a hunting man like him it must have been a very sad decision. We had an excellent sale in the stable yard with people coming from all over the country.

Dick Alden was talking to the Editor.

Coultershaw Beam Pump and other matters

As you know the Society is forging closer links with the Coultershaw Beam Pump. A new trust is being formed, the eight trustees comprising four representatives from the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society (SIAS) and four from the Petworth Society. I'd hope to finalise this soon. Please give stewarding a thought : it's not onerous, does not demand technical expertise and could be for as little as half a day a year. Interested? Contact Robin Wilson on 01798 - 865774.



Book Sales

The August sale was a great success but we do need to replenish our stock – if you have any books for us - please ring Peter 342562 or Miles 343227. We will collect if it helps you.

Mr Robin Pulling will be in Petworth at the end of October for a few days. Many will remember his mother Mrs Gertie Pulling the organist very fondly. Robin left Petworth in 1946 and was last back here in the 1960s. Any one who would like to meet him again please contact Peter – 342562.

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