

NO. 121. SEPTEMBER 2005

A detailed black and white illustration of three large, leafless trees stands on a grassy hill. The trees are rendered with intricate, dark lines for their branches and trunks. A simple wooden fence runs across the middle ground in front of the trees. The background is a plain, light-colored sky.

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY  
*magazine*

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Cover design by Jonathan Newdick. It shows trees at Snow Hill in Petworth Park.

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

## 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

### *Vice Chairman*

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

### *Hon. Treasurer*

Mr A. Henderson, 62 Sheepdown Drive, Petworth (Tel. 343792) GU28 0BX

### *Committee*

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

### *Magazine distributors*

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

### *Society Scrapbook*

Mrs Pearl Godsmark

### *Coultershaw Beam Pump representatives*

Mr S. Boakes, Mrs J. Gilhooly, Mr A Henderson, Mr T. Martin.

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

*You will find accounts of the summer activities inside. The occasional late cancellation meant that although everything was fully booked there was a minimum of disappointment. There is, as usual, a waiting list for the September dinner. I think we have an impressive line-up for the season's monthly meetings. Time of our Lives Theatre have no show this year but I hope to see them again late in 2006, as too, perhaps Alison Neil with her new show. Don't miss the October meeting this year : it could be unusual. Don't say I didn't flag it up.*

*You will see that I have made an effort to give this Magazine something of a V.E. Day feel. Four classic Garland photographs form the centre pages. In fact Garland's coverage except for a few set-pieces is sparse, while recollection of this period is limited, certainly as compared with the period between the wars. I include a couple of Garland news features from 1940 to give a wartime background and one or two other pieces of varying relevance. I am particularly pleased to have Lewis Golden's reflection of events in a wider world. V.E. Day must always imply an awareness of a world wider than the parochial.*

*Lewis Golden has been treasurer of the Cottage Museum since its inception and his astute management has built up a valuable capital fund. He now feels it is time for someone else. Financially and otherwise the Museum is a Petworth success story : any initial uncertainties are well behind us. Would anyone like to see what the position involves or do you know someone who might? Lewis would see that there was a gradual and relatively painless transition. Please help – ring either Jacqueline Golden (342320) or myself (342562).*

*Congratulations to the Coultershaw Beam Pump committee for their jovial 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on July 13<sup>th</sup>. This was extremely well-attended and much enjoyed and they were most fortunate with the weather.*

*Tim Wardle offers an update on the Leconfield Hall Friends appeal immediately following these notes. It was very successful. As so often with this Society local support was very gratifyingly supplemented by our very strong postal base.*

*For the rest, if I don't see you at the dinner or book sales, hopefully you will find the new monthly meetings to your taste.*

27/7/05 Peter

## Leconfield Hall Appeal

Dear Peter

Thank you very much for giving such full coverage of the Leconfield Hall Friends scheme in the June issue of the Petworth Society magazine.

I promised to write and let you know how the scheme was going in time for the September issue, and I am pleased to report that, at the time of writing (early July), more than £1,300 has been given by around fifty people in donations ranging from £10 to £100. Most of the donations have been by gift aid, making a donation of £10 worth nearly £13.

This is an excellent result and goes a considerable way to filling the gap in the Hall's finances. I would like, through your pages, to thank all the generous people who have supported this worthwhile local charity.

I intend to produce a small newsletter in the autumn to update all the new Friends on the progress and publicise forthcoming events at the Hall. Since launching the scheme, funding from the Petworth Festival and the Parish and County Councils has enabled us to purchase some air conditioning units to counteract the sultry summer evenings we are hoping for again this year. These were particularly needed by the Festival, but I do hope that other users will benefit, and more use will be made of the fine auditorium upstairs in the summer months.

When one donates money to a large national charity, one sometimes wonders whether it has any real impact on the finances. I hope, with the Hall, that donors will see that the money is needed and properly used in the maintenance and proper management of this important local amenity.

More Friends, with donations large or small, would be extremely welcome, and I would be delighted to send further forms out to anybody able to help. I can be contacted at work, at the Leconfield Estate Office, Petworth, GU28 0DU, on 01798 342502, or telephone Kate, who assists in administering the scheme, on our home number 01798 342354, or by E-Mail to

Tim Wardle  
Hon. Treasurer

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## The 31<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting

There was an air of uncertainty as members gathered. Due to the previous month's speaker's cancellation, Peter had brought forward his own AGM presentation, leaving its own space. The solution was somewhat innovative, so would it work? There was the possibility that the evening would fizzle out with members returning home wondering what, if anything, had happened.

More of that later. The usual AGM business proceeded as normal, with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Treasurer pretending to run an efficient operation. Here are extracts from the unconfirmed minutes:

"Treasurer's Report. The Honorary Treasurer, Mr Andrew Henderson, presented the Independently Examined Financial Statements for the year 1st March, 2004 to 28th February, 2005, copies of which had been distributed to members attending. He reported that membership subscriptions were slightly down, from 651 to 638. Donations were up. Income

from Fair Day had been affected by poor weather reducing attendance. The annual dinner and outings were consistently over-booked. The monthly book sales continued to prove exceedingly popular and the income, up by exactly £1,000 to £6,046, made it possible to hold subscriptions at the current level for another year, to fund resources and preservation of archive material, including putting photographic slides on to CD and to make a donation, together with a collection taken on one of the Society walks, in aid of the Tsunami Appeal." (£411)

The Committee was re-elected en bloc in the absence of fresh nominations.

"Chairman's Report. Mr Jerrome said that the year's walks had included bound-treading for the 4th year, two night-time walks on the chalk path in Pheasant Copse and two 'instructional' walks along the Rother, conducted by Andrew Thompson, showing conservation work. The Wey river trip had been over-subscribed, as had the two forthcoming visits to Chichester Harbour and Shulbrede Priory. The annual dinner was always popular. The book sales, while entailing a lot of work, kept the Society in the face of the public and produced a considerable income. The magazine remained the principle means of contact between members and thanks were expressed to Midhurst & Petworth Printers.

Mr Jerrome had stepped down as Chairman of the Leconfield Hall Trustees, but the Society's link was maintained by his successor, Mr Andrew Henderson. The Hall was essential to the Society's existence. There were also close links with the Cottage Museum and the Coultershaw Beam Pump Trust, with representatives on both committees. Slides were shown to illustrate the activities which also included Alison Neil as Richmal Crompton, the Time of Our Lives Music Theatre and Mel. Myland, the puppet master. The Chairman thanked Ian and Pearl Godsmark, David Wort and Miles Costello for their photographic recording of events."

And now came the innovations. Always keen to offer members freedom of choice, there was on offer:

1. Refreshments – of course.
2. On the big screen, a continuous showing of Ian and Pearl's video-recording of the recent visit by ex-pupils of the East Street Girls' School, now the home of Mr and Mrs Peter Luttmann-Johnson.
3. An invitation to a private showing at Petworth House of photographs of Leconfield Estate employees and the Egremont family.

These options could be taken in any order – hence the possibility that all would make the same choice at once, even leaving the Leconfield Hall and not coming back. That didn't happen and the evening was judged to be a great success.

KCT

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## Beating the bounds. May 1<sup>st</sup>

Again a good crowd, partly drawn perhaps by the prospect of walking on territory not normally open to the public. Bound-treading has become something of an annual celebration.

Despite a hint of drizzle in the morning, the afternoon was perfect for walking and it was good to welcome David Pollard back after a couple of years, Keith Hyde-Dunn having proved a most able and affable substitute for the rural dean.

In at Limbo Lodge, quickly noting the surviving huts that remain as a token of military presence during the war. It's sixty years now from V.E. Day. A larger than usual quorum of dogs, all eager to be off. We're quickly at a deserted Luff's Pond, moving on from there to Upper and Lower Spring; these are the only ponds we shall see on this particular walk. A large dog jumps in and shakes himself on the revered figure of the Treasurer. Upper Spring, says David Wort, who worked on it, was cleared last year to a depth of five feet. Extra depth was needed to give the fish some respite from the summer sun. The island, too, was enlarged. A solitary fisherman in a boat lands a catch. Whether he appreciates his large and unsought audience we can't say. He's too far away from us. A full rod, says David, includes access to all lakes, a half-rod excludes the three we have visited. The fishing is all trout. Miles explains the parish boundaries. David Pollard gives a blessing - fish are as much a part of Rogationtide as anything else. Up the familiar slope to look down on Stag Park Farmhouse and across to the dovecote, then it's right to go down the lane towards Hoad's Common Lodge. Fields of rape on either side, the cloying scent hanging on the windless air. There's a buzzard gliding over the trees in front of us. As we near the London Road the speeding cars seem to be travelling on top of the park wall. We reach the Lodge, over the grating and for once the road is quiet. We cross and plunge into the woods. This is Hoad's Common. We skirt Osiers and the golf course to take in the pheasant sanctuary of Raffling Wood. The bluebells are extraordinary - you'd have to be there to experience them. Red water providers for the pheasants at intervals along the uphill path. The land which rises at the top has no bluebells in the lee. Perhaps they will grow in light shade but not without sun at all. Moving on to see Petworth away to the left, it's difficult to adjust to the unusual view. Geese at Grinsteeds and we're back to walking along the road to Limbo Lodge. If some of us are still lamentably vague about precise geography and parish boundaries, we've all enjoyed "beating the bounds".

P.

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## Chichester Harbour Cruise 26<sup>th</sup> June

We were certainly fortunate with the weather - a coach trip to Itchenor through a sunny countryside. Time for a leisurely ice-cream on the quayside then a walk along the jetty to board the Solar Heritage, specially chartered for our party of fifty. A perfect day, the breeze light and blowing gently into the open-sided boat, the sea green and looking, deceptively, like slow-moving jelly. The boat is environmentally friendly, solar-powered by means of panels in the roof, the concept originating on the Swiss lakes. Chichester Harbour, the guide told us is fifty miles round an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and an S.S.I. In no time we were away, Bosham church to starboard, a thousand years old but with parts dating from the ninth

century, Knut's daughter, drowned in a mill-stream, may be buried there. Harold and Knut were related by marriage. In fact the history and legend of the area is a study of its own. The guide spoke of differing approaches to the ever probing sea, of making holes in the sea-wall at certain points to allow the invading sea to come in and out - something of a compromise with the elements, appeasement almost. In the 1870s enterprising local farmers had reclaimed some of the land, but the success was short-lived, the sea returned to claim its own. And the bird life, much more evident in winter and at low tide, but always a feature, makes the harbour a site of international significance. The number of egrets (rather like a small white heron) is rising for instance. Those round lumps of concrete on an island fringe are not survivors of old war defences but were put there for the little terns. In fact the terns still seem to prefer sun-warmed rocks. And over there, cormorants in some numbers, unusual as they tend to be somewhat solitary birds. Their wings aren't waterproof: after they've dived for fish they need to hang their wings out to dry. Gulls and a heron in convocation. That's Thorney Island - used by the military but with some restricted access for the general public. In the hazy distance is the mass of the Isle of Wight. Salt marsh is an important and somewhat uncommon habitat - completely covered at high tide, completely uncovered at low. Just visible on the horizon is the Spinnaker tower at Portsmouth. That's Hayling Island, and, swinging round, Goodwood and Stoke clump. Some say the Romans guided ships into harbour by fixing on an ancestor of the clump. Kingley Vale, the largest yew forest in Europe is clearly visible. And, talking of the Romans, the discovery of artefacts dating to some half a century before the invasion under Claudius has led to speculation on Roman penetration long before. Oh, and some Vikings are said to have stolen the bell from Bosham church. The reluctant relic foiled them however by disappearing overboard as they fled. Did we hear the bell as we went over "Bell Hole"? Well, no, we didn't, but despite that we've all had a marvellous afternoon.

P.

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## Visit to Shulbrede. July 24<sup>th</sup>

A very wet morning after a long dry spell. Water dripping from gutters. Had I really put 2.00 on the Activities Sheet? I was still in 2.15 mode. If the Chairman doesn't know what he's doing .... left at Fernhurst crossroads then right for Lynchmere. Shulbrede is at the bottom of the hill. Three years since we were last there. Some, like me, were revisiting, for most, perhaps, it was the first time. The priory had been founded in 1180 and much of the original building has gone. Making a religious foundation was a way of compensation for possible misdeeds in this earthly life. Prayers in perpetuity for your soul would have some effect on your fortunes in a different world. Perpetuity? Henry VIII had no truck with it but as Ian, our genial guide, pointed out it was a nice idea.

The party was divided into two and being on Ian's right I went round with him, as I had done last time, Laura taking the other half. Had the septuagenarian prior really kept seven whores as Thomas Cromwell's agent claimed - or - not to be outdone - the sub-prior another

seven? While the canons may not by this time been exactly Victorian, Henry was not too fussy about pretexts. In the distant past the canons had been deer-poaching at Cowdray or was it Petworth or so it was said ... but seven whores? In any case the Bishop of Chichester had already to an extent pre-empted the king. By 1535 Shulbrede wasn't a particularly juicy bone to gnaw. The Bishop had made away with roof lead and the bells.

Funny, I'd never realised a buttery was where you kept the butts. Obvious when you think about it. And the cellarer had that Tudor fireplace to keep him warm. After Henry VIII Shulbrede was for centuries a tenanted farmhouse then, finally, used for short lets. Originally rented by the Ponsonby family they soon bought it from Cowdray and it has been theirs ever since.

There's a wealth of material in the house so that, even if it rains, as it has on each of our visits, there's plenty, almost too much to see. Arthur Ponsonby's daughter, Elizabeth, had been one of the original "Bright Young Things", and wanted to take to the stage. Gerald du Maurier, a family friend, advised confidentially and most vigorously, against it. Under an alias, she figures prominently in Evelyn Waugh's *Vile Bodies*. Then a look at the refectory - and the locutory - in theory the only place where the rule of silence might be broken. How strict was observance in the priory's heyday? Impossible to know.



*Hubert Parry at Shulbrede c.1905. His car is 12hp cylinder Darracq.  
Courtesy of Laura Ponsonby.*

Then upstairs, the Hubert Parry connection, the famous frescoes, post-medieval certainly. The fox and the raven, the former with only his rump now remaining. The arms of James I. Up until the abolition of copyhold in the 1920s this room had been used for the manorial court. And Hubert Parry's piano - he was Dolly Ponsonby's father. On our last visit Rosemary had grasped the nettle and played Jerusalem. Today no one was bold enough. In the Parry room, the precious manuscript of Jerusalem with the annotation, "wrote a tune for some words of Blake's *Bridges sent me*." So much else to note but the bell goes for tea. Here the Petworth Society are really on home ground. Oh and I haven't mentioned the garden, viewed between the downpours. Dolly Ponsonby's Italian sunken garden - herbs and flowers, the scents hanging on the damp air, feverfew, tansy, pineapple mint and the old Chapeau de Napoleon rose .... Croquet set up but Ian says they haven't got round to a game yet. Well, they won't today. I really enjoy a visit to Shulbrede. Third time lucky with the weather? Give it a year or two and we might even try!

P.

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## 'It's you've got the accent, not us.' Reflections on the June book sale

Just a brief moment sitting in the corner before the sale starts: the sun is pouring in through the north window of the Hall. A fairly smooth set-up, although this morning the 30p fiction needed a little attention: the removal of a few "scruffs" and reinforcing from the spare boxes. Now it's that distinctive ten minutes or so when we're set up and waiting to go. A bus pulls in outside. The queue makes no move; they're waiting for the Hall doors to open, not for the bus. The bus and the unresponding queue strike an odd disharmony. I look to the maple leaf flag draped above the centre partition. June isn't traditionally one of our best months, but we're always ready to be surprised. This time we've tried to concentrate everything into the two rooms but there's still an overspill into the passage outside. No jigsaws this time but there are some records and a plethora of videos and tapes. Andy announces that it's opening time and makes for the doors.

There follows the almost ritual opening half hour or more. No money is taken and incomplete silence holds the two rooms fast. No one speaks but there is the constant sound of books being moved around and boxed. "Scrum" is the in-word for this period. The "regulars" are all here and their numbers grow monthly. Come once and they'll take a leaflet and come again. That's the point of growth. It's quite appreciably busier year on year. In that first half hour no one pays and no one leaves. Great towers of books rise behind the counter. There will come a time to reckon up but it's not yet. And the "quality" table with the Rupert Bear table cloths - yellow dots £1, red dots £2 is already decimated. We're not ten minutes gone yet. The spirit of the sale seems to transmute into the Square itself or is that simply my imagination? Someone from Cambridge - surely he can't have come specially?

Perhaps not, but he seems disappointed he won't be able to make the July sale. Good heavens - we're moving the Penguin section along already - a fair expanse of clear green table top has appeared. If people want a book they'll usually pick it straight up: if they leaf through it, it's almost certain they'll end by putting it down.

And underneath the tables there are those all important empty boxes. Flat for fruit and vegetables, square for wine. Melons from Costa Rica. "Cucumis melo" proclaims the livery but do we really need the Latin name? The melons from Morocco seem less scholarly. Cauliflower boxes, Israeli parsnip boxes and those smaller, slightly deeper broccoli boxes that seem so light compared with the orthodox flat box. The drawback, of course, is that they don't hold quite so many books.

Another bus has arrived outside - engine running this time. *The Connoisseur, a Magazine for Collectors*. The issue for March 1920 - the Magazine had been running since 1901. We've one or two of the earlier ones out separately but there's a good run from the 1920s going as a set. Or there was. It's gone. *Euclid I-IV*, a book on Rhodesian witch doctors, a nice copy of A.E.W. Mason's *No Other Tiger* but no dust-jacket. It was probably written during his long sojourn locally. The 50p fiction, once so tight, is sagging. Andy's feverishly refilling the 30p fiction, or we suppose he is. He's vanished in the south room throng. And feverish? Is that the right word for such an august personage as our treasurer?

Those towers of books are inching toward the sky itself. Why is this one leaning over? A quick check indicates that there are videos in the middle. If the pile does topple then the leaning tower of Pisa will merge with the tower of Babel. Something needs to be done. A book on Seretse Khama - have I spelled the latter word correctly? Ruth Williams was a secretary just down the road from us in London. I can still remember the reporters and cameramen hanging about outside the house waiting for her. Oh yes there were reporters and paparazzi fifty-five years and more ago. But perhaps the names will mean nothing to you .....

After: ons are important. The storm of the morning is over. It can be relatively quiet. Today is livelier than usual - a good deal livelier. There are visitors about. Coaches quite likely. A different, more leisured feel. The edge of quality has been blunted. That's why it would make no sense to open again the Sunday (even if we could face it). The whole thing depends on that cutting edge of "quality". When that's gone you've simply got tables of books. Afternoon visitors like to buy a book or two, perhaps fill a carrier, as a memento of their trip to Petworth. It's something we all do when we're away from home. "These two are going a long way," a voice draws. "That accent suggests Australia." "Accent? Oh no, it's you people that have got the accent not us." Fair comment. We shan't see those two books again. It's one of those days when you could go on but four o'clock's four o'clock. It's a long enough day as it is. Andy (or was it Miles?) has brought the sign in. It's been a good day - a very good day. Did someone say June wasn't a good month? .....

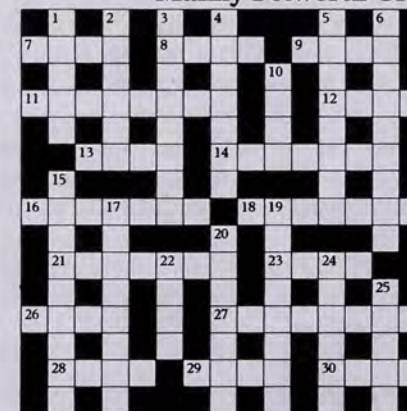
And when it's over you consider the philosophy of it all. Yes, it's a lot of work. On the day you forget the month of preparation that precedes. And, yes, the Society, within reason, is freed from petty financial constraints. But there is a wider issue. We collect the residue from local fêtes, coffee mornings, house clearances and of course whatever people like to give us. What would happen to those books without us? Almost certainly they'd be

thrown away. Now we have to be selective to an extent. If we fill the Hall with rubbish, we're dead in the water before we start. Books can't be treated as sacred cows. They're not. They're not somehow exempt from the rules that govern everyday life. If you try to sell stale apples, you probably won't. Similarly with books. There are books which have served their time, spin-offs from half-forgotten TV series, browning popular novels from between the wars, or, come to that, from the 40s and later. There are even books which as far as one can see never had a time at all. Or shabby book club survivals, torn bindings, broken backs. We like to give most things a chance but there has to be a day of reckoning. We've thousand upon thousand books in store but we can't just pile them up. Something has to give, something has to go to be pulped. What we must do is filter. If something has value it will find a home. We've saved it. Not all our books find new homes but thousands have. Where would they be if we hadn't been on the scene? That's what it's all about and that's what makes it all worth while.

P.

**Has anyone a waterproof garage, shed or barn we might use for books?: It doesn't necessarily have to be in Petworth itself. Phone Peter 342562 or Miles 343227.**

### Mainly Petworth Crossword



#### Down

- 1 & 20 Row of cottages named after Petworth's famous family (5,7)
- 2 & 5 Petworth ironmonger still in business and a baker who isn't! (6,8)
- 3 see 11 ac.
- 4 Early chemistry practised by the Wizard Earl (7)
- 5 see 2 dn.
- 6 Hampshire common - subject of 13<sup>th</sup> Garland lecture (9)
- 10 Fittleworth Inn (4)
- 15 The homeless and destitute sought refuge here (9)
- 17 William Jacobs owned extensive ones in Station Road (8)
- 19 Distinctive features of 1 & 20 dn.(8)
- 20 see 1 dn.
- 22 Once an entertaining room in Petworth (4)
- 24 Maiden name of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl's wife ... (6)
- 25 ... who commissioned two paintings by this artist/poet (5)

#### Across

- 7 Not entirely beautiful description of a boy friend (4)
- 8 Slippery customers - fishy too! (4)
- 9 Mrs. Cummings' Christian name (4)
- 11 see 16 ac.
- 12 To engrave on metal - a method frequently used by 25 dn. (4)
- 13 Queenly name (4)
- 14 Get mother close to the car - it's the least one can do (7)
- 16, 11 & 3 dn Canadian army unit stationed at Petworth in the war (7,8,8)
- 18 Petworth's was an inspiration to Turner (7)
- 21 Reeve in charge - to accept what's offered (7)
- 23 Rainbow goddess (4)
- 26 May have been used in Petworth laundry (4)
- 27 Our French twin (8)
- 28 Produced by 26! (4)
- 29 See the future in a crystal ball (4)
- 30 Forgery (4)

## Solution to 120

### Across

1 Roman Palace, 8 About, 9 Decapod, 11 Hue, 12 Sol, 13 Sands, 14 Modish, 16 Bosham, 20 James, 22 Out, 23 Far, 24 Dadaism, 25 Adorn, 26 Rottingdean.

### Down

2 Ozone, 3 Artists, 4 Paddle, 5 Laces, 6 Pagham, 7 Odes, 10 Punch, 15 Domed, 17 Outward, 18 Marina, 19 Norman, 20 Judy, 22 Saint, 23 Flora.

## Letters to the Editor

1) *From Mr Keith Thompson*

Re "Just flying a kite, Peter." (Magazine 120)

As a child, I was taken by my father to a lantern lecture at the Methodist Church Hall in Rye. It was given by a missionary on furlough. Although I don't recall anything about the lecture, I do remember it ended with everyone singing the hymn "Day is dying in the west, heaven is touching earth with rest; wait and worship while the night sets her evening lamps alight through all the sky." Each verse had its own slide, with the words superimposed on sunset scenes.

More recently the late Canon Johnson at Seaford College used to hold annual Songs of Praise - type services at the college for Over-60s clubs using lantern slides, not all of which were of a religious nature and some had moving parts operated by the projectionist.

Re "Cork-up"

This is similar to the Winkle Club in Hastings. Members have to carry a winkle shell to produce when challenged ("winkle up") or pay a fine. Winston Churchill was made a member when Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports.

2) *From Alan Chapman:*

12/07/2005. River House, Warningcamp, Arundel, W. Sussex BN18 9QY  
telephone: (0903) 883176

Dear Mr Jerrome,

During 1940-41 my father was stationed in Petworth and I recall that the Commando H.Q. was in London Road. We stayed at Mrs Penns and I attended the local infants school.

I would be interested to know if anyone remembers the location of any of these. I regret that after 65 years I am unable to recognise any of the locations,

Yours sincerely,

Alan Chapman

3) *From Mr Henry Chetwynd-Stapylton* in response to 'A bit o' Green Aish' Magazine 118  
16 April '05 8 Jubilee Terrace, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 7XT

Dear Mr Costello,

I was given a copy of the Petworth Society Magazine of December '04 and much

enjoyed reading 'A Bit O' Green Aish' not least because Mabel Boakes recalls Sunday School at Hilliers. My great-uncle Henry C-S and his wife Mary lived there until he died in 1926. They had a daughter 'Esther' - who was born in 1889 and lived with her parents until she married in 1921. I have no idea of which specific years Mabel recounts but 'Essie' - Miss Stapylton was probably in her twenties and I suppose might have seemed 'old' to a child. I did not know that 'Essie' conducted a Sunday School and it seems slightly out of character - but there is an alternative.

My great uncle's two unmarried sisters lived at Northchapel for a time and were often at Hilliers. They would have been in their fifties and would undoubtedly seemed really old to a child. I could see one of them running Sunday School classes. I wonder if Mabel could hazard a guess as to how old 'old Miss Stapylton' was at the time?

My uncle also had a son, Miles, but he died of war wounds in 1916 - there is a memorial to him in Petworth Church.

I myself was taken to stay at Hilliers in 1923 and am told enjoyed rolling down a bank on to the tennis lawns - of which pleasure I have absolutely no recollection - I was two at the time. Mabel is quite right - the family removed to Wisborough Green (in 1926) and my cousin 'Essie' died there in 1977 by which time she really was old (88) but no longer 'old Miss Stapylton' for she had married Arthur Osmaston of Hawkhurst Court all those years ago.

Yours sincerely

Henry Chetwynd-Stapylton

## A horse in the parlour - not at 346!

The lady at the nursery had said that the salvias were the old-fashioned "scarlet sage", rarely seen now. Certainly the leaves had nothing of the smoothness of modern hybrids. "Commercial nurseries don't like them because the stems are somewhat brittle and liable to break if they're carted about ..." and of course the modern hybrids are more spectacular. That said, however, the older plants have a more robust habit. "Take the tops out and let the plants branch." She'd taken some tips out of another box, planted them up, and created a tray of miniatures, already in flower, and just a few inches high. We'd need the standard plants, of course, and, after a while adrift in their new surroundings at the Museum, by early July the plants are putting on leaf and beginning to show tiny scarlet flowers. To the rear are rudbeckias with a few calendulas interspersed among them. A couple of self-sown larkspur, the tradescantia, the long-suffering filipendula, a pink sweet-william and bedding dahlias in the right hand border. Dahlias are definitely an Edwardian plant, Florence Rapley often mentions them in her diary. Strange how they always seem a modern introduction. Oh yes, the gooseberries are turning crimson and the cistus is beginning to shed its petals. But here's a problem: the dahlias have clusters of black aphid round the neck. What would Mrs. Cummings have done about that? Perhaps she just shrugged her shoulders, "1910 was a bad year for aphids." Somehow it doesn't seem quite right, and you have to be wary of taking



realism too far. No one wants to see a ravaged garden - even in the cause of "reality". Resourceful lady that she was, Mrs. Cummings would no doubt have tried the old soap and water treatment. Tell it not in Gath, but I might try something stronger.

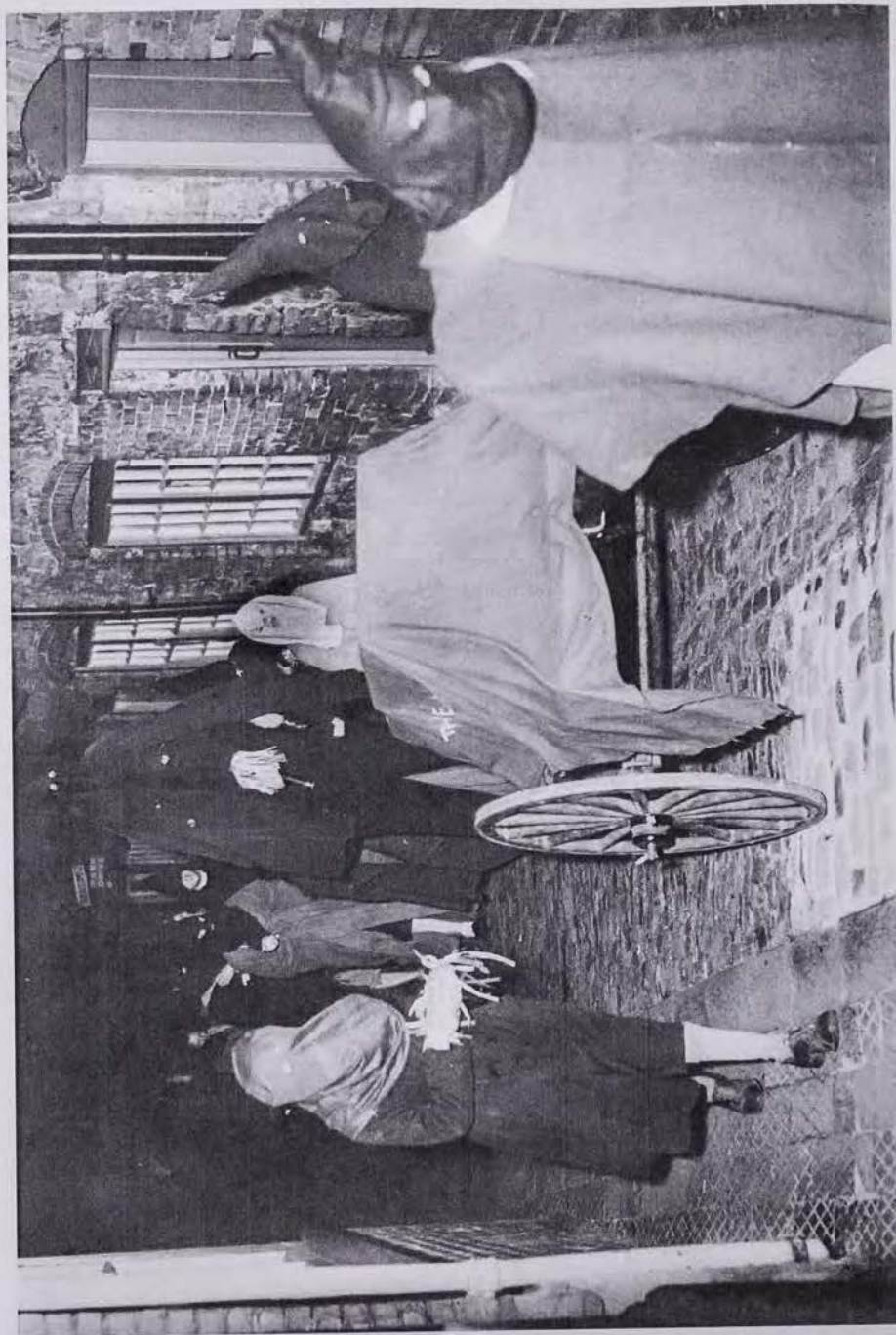
July 3<sup>rd</sup>. We're hardly set up before a couple are in, the open sign clanking noisily on the gate. It clanks more if you don't get it quite straight. The Sunday High Street is as quiet as only the Sunday High Street can be, but people do, over the afternoon, defy the emptiness. Another couple almost immediately, but after a minute or two the lady wants to be left to her own devices. Very unusual - I can only remember this once before in ten years of stewarding. That's a visitor's prerogative but you don't get the best of the Museum that way. While I'm still talking to the first couple in the parlour, she's done the circuit and is steaming out of the back door, husband trailing behind her. Well at least she's "done" the Museum. At last the solitaire board has some marbles - it always seemed a little forlorn. The marbles need to be kept in a bag, a precaution against a child swallowing one - you never know. The fire's going well and the clock ticking the afternoon away. All couples this afternoon and at pretty regular intervals. "That slanted board on the bottom of the door's the biggest I've ever seen. Do you get floods here?" "No, we certainly don't get flooded, but it is rather large now that you mention it. I've never thought about it before." "Was the mangle really made in Petworth?" "No, that's the seller not the manufacturer. It will have been made elsewhere." "We've got a similar one and want to get it done up. The roller's suffering just like yours is." "Funny how memory plays tricks. This takes me right back to my grandmother lying ill in bed. But I can't remember her at all, just for some reason, the name of her housekeeper." "Wouldn't there have been more herbs in the garden?" "Well, actually, there are quite a lot if you look for them: marjoram, rosemary, sage and lemon balm certainly. We've not got the parsley this year and no thyme. Perhaps Mrs. Cummings grew these on her allotment." "With the back door where it is, you can't walk right through the house and out. My aunt in London used to have to take off the cart and bring the horse through the sitting-room and out into the yard at the back." Well I can't cap that, but it's been a good afternoon.

P.

*P.S. 4<sup>th</sup> July. Aphids, yes, but was there violent hail in 1910?*

## 'This side of the moon'

"The school... set in surroundings in which one would expect Robin Hood and his merry men to appear at any moment.." So the Diocesan Inspector visiting Ebernoe in 1943. And it was a glorious summer day for the launch of "*Ebernoe Church of England School*" written by Frances Abraham, scheduled for 4 o'clock. At 3.30 it's still fairly quiet, except for a genial group of some half a dozen sitting out in deck chairs in the church car park waiting for proceedings to begin, and a mountain of food in the church. By four o'clock there are people everywhere and you haven't noticed the transformation. It happens at Petworth fair every November.



"PETWORTH V.J. CELEBRATIONS. Accompanied by moans and groans "The Funeral of the Axis", organised by Miss Joyce Dabson, passes up Lombard Street, on its way to the Sheep Downs where a large bonfire, made by the Petworth Boy Scouts, was burnt." Original Garland press caption. Does anyone remember this?



*Ebernoe School old pupils 2005. Photograph by Bill Shimmin. Courtesy Chichester Observer Series. See 'This side of the moon'.*

And myself? Well having worked with Katherine Walters on the history of Ebernoe<sup>2</sup> published in 1996 (was it really that long ago?), I've granted myself honorary citizenship. Had I not written (page 12) of Ebernoe as being "as much a realm of the spirit as a geographical entity?" But don't take my word for it. Here's W. Graham Robertson, the theatrical designer writing after his first visit in 1926, "I really got as near fairyland as we are likely to do on this side of the moon." Or, later, "Each year we return feeling nature must have dreamed it, and that such a place cannot really exist..."<sup>3</sup>

Time to talk. Of how Mr Morrish became churchwarden at the beginning of the war. Originally a Methodist, and a lay preacher, by 1940 it was obvious that travelling in wartime would be virtually impossible. There was no petrol. With a dispensation from the bishop, he became an Anglican, and resided long years at Ebernoe as warden. And here's John Gange, an evacuee at Ebernoe. He's here today and comes down from London most Horn Fairs, although he's missed the odd one over the years. Mrs Pullen the first head teacher is buried in the churchyard, as, too, Mrs Brown ninety nine years later, one of her successors. Both graves are unmarked. Entering the churchyard by the Silver Jubilee gate, Alan Willmer, so familiar to Petworth people in the 1950s rests here with his wife.

And what would these quiet spirits think of the plastic tables and chairs in the churchyard? If you like, what **do** they think? And those voices of fifty years and more ago - the school closed in 1951. A voice cries, "Ivan, I'd know you anywhere."

Ivan rings a bell and calls the "school" to order. The book release coincides with that of Harry Potter and the "*Half-Blood Prince*". Should we worry or they? Time to sort the sheep from the goats - ex-pupils only for the newspaper photograph. The chosen troop over to stand in front of the old school house. "How are we doing Ivan?" "Two yards to the right." Bill, the photographer, is standing on a pair of steps. "Oh and can we do it again? Molly's just arrived as she's been crucial for the book."

"There was no water at the school - certainly before the war." "It must have come from a well some distance away. The grown-ups saw to that." "The old wells are covered now but in 1976 we opened ours with a view to putting in a pump. The water seemed to be alright but then it rained."

The book springs from the finding of the school records, so long forgotten. A letter is extant from the County Archivist of the time suggesting that Mr Shawcross the rector deposit them at Chichester. He didn't. Stephen had found them in the old teacher's cottage by Wassell Mill. His grandmother had been the last head teacher.

"And did the dentist come to the school in the 1940s?" Opinions differ. A consensus seems to think that initial inspections were at the school - or was there a kind of mobile clinic? Anyway, treatment seems to have been at Ebernoe House itself. And how innocent everything was (or at least appeared) in those days. "You used to have red hair." "I used to

<sup>1</sup> Published in 250 numbered copies at £9. The launch was particularly for the many former pupils who had contributed to the book's production.

<sup>2</sup> "*Not all sunshine here*" a history of Ebernoe. (Window Press 1996).

<sup>3</sup> See Kerrison Preston : "*Letters from Graham Robertson*" (1953).

have hair." "After 1951 we came to Petworth on the old Aldershot and District bus and then transferred to the Midhurst bus."

Gnats spiral in the churchyard shade. It's been a hot day. Cucumber sandwiches, egg and tomato, coffee sponge. The books are selling well. They'll also be on sale at Horn Fair a week Monday. The later afternoon sun casts the shadow of the Jubilee Gate on the baked earth. A trio of elderly ladies are already making their way back along the path by the high bracken. Few of those present live at Ebernoe now, fewer still, perhaps, could afford to. Ebernoe is at once utterly changed and utterly changeless - a curious balance.

Any editor has to be very wary of printing poetry but sometimes circumstances are exceptional. This was given to me on the day and seems to encapsulate some of the spirit of the day and feelings of the school itself. I have omitted three lines at the end.

#### The Copse

Come with me and I'll take you to a secret place I know.  
See there amongst the spotted leaf,  
The orchid in its pink profusion grows.  
Starlike anemone, violet, primrose,  
And bluebell claims the eye,  
Greeting a sea of rippling blue,  
Sighing and swaying, wafting their scent,  
In the light soft spring air.  
So soon they will all be gone,  
To sleep beneath their blankets of leaves.  
But their colour scheme and soft perfume,  
Will linger with me,  
Until spring comes round again.

M. Whatrup Carr

P.

## Two Garland Newspaper Stories from 1940

### 1) Sutton May Revels

#### WELCOME REVIVAL DUE TO THE WAR?

It seems befitting (writes a correspondent) that this year Sutton May Revels should be treated somewhat in retrospect - at least, by those of us who have attended this delightful old-time function since about 1921. We remember those days, when most people in the village dressed in fancy costumes, and the procession started from up by Bignor Church, and wended its way down the steep hill there and on to Sutton, pausing for a short religious service under the oak tree at the bottom of the hill leading up to Sutton's one inn, the White Horse. The late Mrs. Johnstone was living at Bignor House in those days, and we remember the keen interest she took in the proceedings, and how she used to watch the people from her invalid chair up by

the front of the inn. The late Mr. Seth Charman and his white pony were figureheads in the processions in those days.



"We remember those days ...." Sutton May Revels in the early 1920s.

Then came the memorable time in 1924, when Mr. Newman, the Rector, resplendently attired as "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," led the village children through the street and lanes of the village to the shrill notes of his pipe, which feat was chronicled in many of the London newspapers of that time. Later we saw the birth of Sutton Folk Dance Club, which became famous to the extent of dancing at the Albert Hall in London, and came, in due course, to take a prominent part in the village's May Day celebrations. And so on to 1937, when the Folk Dance Club died, and the old-time May Revels looked very much like doing so, too.

The next year, Mr. Newman, once more in the guise of the Pied Piper, and with the help of Mr. and Mrs. E.T. Holding, made a spirited effort to keep the thing alive, but last year Sutton's May Revels were not held, and appeared to have died out. This year, paradoxically enough, calamity in the form of war throughout most of Europe seems to have brought about a revival of Sutton's old-time custom!

Organised by the local Women's Institute in general, and Mrs. Cramp and Mrs. Neale in particular, the May Revels were held on Monday to raise funds to provide comforts for men of our fighting forces. One of the largest processions seen in the village for some years formed outside the old Rectory (and the Rectory at Sutton is old, indeed!) and to the strains of Mr. Miles' accordion, supplemented by Mr. Perry's drums and Mr. Vile's whistle pipe, danced the traditional Helston Furry along the village street and on to the lawns at Beck Hall, the

residence of Capt. and Mrs. Worsley Powell. In the procession were the May Queen (Sheila Moore), riding in state on pony "Pellet," led by his owner, Miss P. Solomon; the Queen's attendants, Phyllis Rapson, Joan Rapson, Brian Verrall, and Colin Bone, carrying the traditional regalia; and folk dancers from the old Sutton Club, the Bury Club, and the Petworth Club, the latter wearing Tudor costumes.

On the large lawn at Beck Hall, with the sunshine warming the scene and with the scent of May blossom in the air, the May Queen was crowned by Doris Poore, who, in the voting at the school, had been her nearest rival for this day's coveted honour. Then there was the traditional Maypole dancing to Mr. Miles' fiddle music; and the entrants for the fancy dress sections were judged by Mr. Oliver Hall, R.A., Lady Mersey, Mrs. Hill, and Mrs. J.S. Courtauld, and prizes were presented by Lady Mersey to the following:- Women: 1, Mrs. Penfold; 2, Mrs. O. Hall. Girls: 1, Miss Bryant; 2, Josephine Lovestone; 3, Phyllis Vaughan. Boys: 1, Basil Thayre. Men: 1, Mr. W. Miles.

Then all present recaptured the spirit of Merrie England as the folk dancers performed many old-time dances, after which, at the Women's Institute Hut, there was an admirable picnic tea, ably supervised by Mrs. Gardner, Mrs. Pengelly, Mrs. Penfold, Mrs. King, Mrs. Miller, Mrs. K. Francis, and Mrs. Campbell. Meanwhile there were side-shows - darts (in the charge of Mr. Anthony Bertram), spinning wheel (in charge of Mr. C. Goodger), and flowers, fruit and vegetables (in charge of Mrs. E.T. Holding).

At length came the "tit-bit" of the day, a play in tableaux entitled "Dream of Empire," an allegorical story of Britannia. Admirably produced by Mrs. Cramp and Mrs. Neale, with the commentary well spoken by Mrs. Anthony Bertram, and the incidental music ably supplied by Miss M. Howell, the production lacked only that bigger stage to make it better even than it was. At its conclusion Mrs. Oliver Hall called for a well merited vote of thanks from the crowded room for those who had worked so hard to make it the spectacular success it had been. A whist drive followed, and finally a dance.

*West Sussex Gazette* 16<sup>th</sup> May 1940

## 2) **Petworth's Tranquil Life must come to an end** **BIG CALL FOR HOME DEFENCE VOLUNTEERS**

A good crowd attended in Petworth's Market Square on Thursday last week, to listen to addresses given by Mr. Wilcock and Mr. Wilson Temple, staff speakers of the Ministry of Information, and by Mrs. Rosemary Provis, local representative of the Ministry of Information stressing the possibility of invasion of this country, Mr. Wilcock called for volunteers to the L.D.V., and also for women to give full time, or as much time as possible, to the local nursing service. The speaker, emphasised that the tranquil life of the pretty rural town of Petworth, must come to be regarded as a thing of the past, for the time being, at any rate.

### **Warnings Against Gossip**

Describing members of his audience as our second and third line of defence, Mr. Wilson Temple called for volunteers for any work of national importance, and gave out a sharp warning against gossip and the spreading of unauthenticated news.

He called upon all who could to lend or give their money for the country's needs, and emphasised the necessity for everyone to refrain from drawing out their money from Post Office Savings or any such accounts.

Mrs. Provis, who, with Colonel Mayne, is the local representative of the Ministry of Information, spoke of local arrangements for the dissemination of news, in the district in the event of a breakdown of the normal method through the medium of the newspapers and the wireless. She explained that a Bureau had been established at Petworth, and that she and Colonel Mayne were the local representatives. In the events of a crisis all official news bearing their official stamp would be sent to Chichester, which would be their key town for this purpose. Bulletins would be prepared at Chichester and returned to Petworth for exhibition there, and for distribution to various parishes in the Petworth Rural District.

### **Place for Bulletins**

In Petworth these bulletins would be able to be seen at the following places: on the door at "Newlands" in Pound-street; in the show case by the gate leading into Mr. Garland's Studio in Station-road; in the British Legion box by Mr. Syer's shop in the Market Square; in the "Imps" box in New-street; on the door of the British Legion Hut in High-street; on the door of the Boy's School in North-street and at the entrance of the Angel Hotel in Angel-street.

Mrs. Provis implored all not to believe any rumours in the event of a crisis in their district, but to wait for the official news and direction bulletins which would bear the official stamp: Petworth Bureau, The Rectory, Petworth, and which will be seen with as little delay as possible at the various points she had mentioned. In conclusion she appealed for more volunteers for the Petworth Red Cross Detachment, and directed any volunteers to apply to Mrs. Ethelston the Detachment's Commandant who was present.

*Southern Weekly News* 29<sup>th</sup> June 1940

## Special Constabulary 1939-1945

List of Special Constables residing in Petworth, eligible for duty in case of emergency.

Head S.C.	W.J. Cragg, Middle Street, Petworth.
Sergts "	W. Baxter, Angel Street, Petworth.
" "	W. Dawtrey, Lancaster House, Petworth.
" "	R.W. Graham, Damers Bridge, "
" "	A. Wilcox, Pound Street, "
" "	W.D. Morgan, Market Square, "
S.C.	S.J. Allen, Lombard Street, "
" "	A.W. Atkins, 28 Station Road, "
" "	J.R. Baker, 12, Grove Lane, "

S.C.	J.H.S. Bennett, Egremont Row,	“
“	C. Bishop, Lombard Street,	“
“	C. Bowdidge, Lombard Street,	“
“	W. Caine, Pound Street,	“
“	R. Cockshutt, Market Square,	“
“	G. Curtin, Angel Street,	“
“	A. Curtis, Middle Street,	“
“	T. Dale, Lombard Street	“
“	C. Denman, East Street,	“
“	R.N. Denyer, North Street,	“
“	A.S. Diplock, Station Road,	“
“	S. Eager, Market Square,	“
“	H. Earle, Lombard Street,	“
“	R.H. Edwicker, East Street,	“
“	W.F. Ford, Percy Row,	“
“	H. Gray, East Street,	“
“	J.F. Gray, East Street,	“
“	W. Hammon, Percy Row,	“
“	C. Harper, Saddlers Row,	“
“	W. Herbert, Golden Square,	“
“	A. Howard, Station Road,	“
“	G.F. Jeffrey, 329, Grove Street	“
“	G.A. Kenward, Fox Hill,	“
“	A. Knight, Lombard Street,	“
“	H.C. Lambert, Egremont Row,	“
“	C. Leazell, Rosemary Lane,	“
“	S.K. Latchford, Pound Street,	“
“	P.D. Muir, Grove Lane,	“
“	A.K. Older, Byworth,	“
“	W. Payne, East Street,	“
“	F.C. Peacock, North Street,	“
“	G. Pellett, Market Square,	“
“	A.H. Pullen, Station Road,	“
“	S.C.C. Rapley, Heath End,	“
“	J. Sadler, Shimmings,	“
“	E. Saunders, Station Road,	“
“	A.S. Searson, Grove Lane,	“
“	E. Streeter, Church Road,	“
“	F. Streeter, The Gardens,	“
“	W. Tate, Angel Street,	“

S.C.	V.G. Thear, North Street,	“
“	G.W. Thayre, Church Hill,	“
“	E.F. Turner, Council Cottages,	“
“	M. Turner, East Street,	“
“	L. Vincent, Park Road,	“
“	A.M. Weaver, Lombard Street,	“
“	J.W. Whetham, High Street,	“
“	H.G. Whitcomb, Market Square	“
“	H. Whitcomb, Pound Street,	“
“	R. Whitcomb, Pound Street,	“

## A long hot summer

The celebrations 60 years after VE Day and VJ Day remind me of the joy of that summer of 1945.

As the year started, we of the 1st Airborne Division were standing by in England. We had taken part in the invasion of North Africa in November 1942, Sicily in July 1943 and Italy in September of that year. In September 1944 there was our ill-fated operation at Arnhem in Holland. What had fate now got in store for us?

The news that my brigade was to go to Norway on VE Day or soon after, not by parachute or by glider but flown in by Royal Air Force bombers, was greeted with happy anticipation. The plan was to accept the surrender of the German Army and then to seek out war criminals. That army was quite numerous in Norway, but there were not many of us. Therefore we were relieved to find that the agreement to surrender was honoured without breach, although as we circled over Gardermoen Airport near Oslo and saw the lines of German fighter aircraft drawn up and apparently ready for take-off, we had been none too pleased.

The flight in had given a hint of the warmth of the reception which would greet us. I had arranged to lie down in the bomb-aimer's position in the nose of my aircraft, so as we flew in across the west coast I could see the proud Norwegian flag fluttering from every flagpole that could possibly be brought into use. As we arrived in Oslo the Norwegians gave vent to their joy of being free once more. We were the conquering heroes, and we could do no wrong. Even our red berets gave special pleasure as we mingled with university undergraduates who customarily sported a not too dissimilar form of headgear. Every girl looked young. Every girl looked lovely. This was the life!

After some days the brigade moved out some 40 miles to the north of Oslo where we established our headquarters in a building which had been used by the Germans for expectant mothers, formerly a hotel but later a girls' school as my wife and I found when we visited at the invitation of the Norwegian government for the 50th freedom anniversary celebrations in

1995. The headmistress showed us round. It was a nostalgic return, for it was from here in 1945 that I and fellow officers would motor into Oslo every evening, using one of the pool of cars confiscated from the German army, enjoy a party or two or three or four, then motor back to headquarters by 4 o'clock in the morning and be challenged by an obviously envious guard. We still had to be ready for parade at 6.30 o'clock and military duties until the afternoon. Then one could swim in the nearby river before getting ready afresh for the night's activities. After some months of this demanding regimen even the toughest of airborne soldiers began to wilt, but a week's leave enabled us to recover for a while by travelling further north through the stunningly beautiful countryside and, clad only in shorts, going skiing on a glacier.

The only note of caution in all this was the thought that we might soon be on the way to the Far East to help prosecute the war against the Japanese, but with the advent of VJ Day in August even this check to our enjoyment was removed.

It was a long hot summer.

Lewis Golden

## Petworth's lucky blackbird comes home

Petworth (Sussex) has its lucky blackbird. One of 24 that belonged to a wayside sign, owned by Mrs Churchill, proprietress of The Four & Twenty Blackbirds Tea Rooms, opposite the Parish church.

The sign stood by the roadside near to the Petworth Boy's School which was bombed by the Germans on Michaelmas Day 1942, and soon after this tragic event it was missed.

A few days before "D" Day a large army convoy was held up outside the Four & Twenty Blackbirds, and Mrs Churchill, who herself took out some cakes to some of the waiting drivers, noticed a blackbird on the front of one of the vehicles, and recognising it as one of "the twenty four" of the missing sign, accused the driver of having stolen it. She was assured that it had not been stolen, but found in a field just outside Petworth, and had been affixed to the vehicles for luck. "Well, if you think it might bring you luck you had better keep it", she said. And then the convoy passed on its way.

In course of time, Mrs Churchill received a letter from the driver of the lorry from overseas, saying that they still had the blackbird on their vehicle, and promising that if it brought them luck, (the writer and his four mates), they would return it when they got back to England. It did bring them luck, and the blackbird, freshly painted, and bearing the badge of the East Riding Yeomanry, together with the names of the places into which it has adventured in battle, has been returned to Mrs Churchill by the now demobbed driver of that "D-Day" lorry!

A Garland feature from the 1940s.



Jig-saw made from photo taken in garden of 'Currvsers' in East Street.  
 Back Row L-R Mrs Gordon Knight ?  
 Front Row L-R Mrs Street ? Aunt Ted ?

## I Don't Imagine That He Was An Uncle At All...

My father was Percy Knight, son of Gordon and Florence Knight who had the grocery and provisions shop on the corner of East Street and New Street. I doubt if there is anybody alive who remembers my father though they may well have known his younger sister Brenda who lived in Petworth all of her life. Father was born in 1899 the eldest of three children; Brenda came next and then there was Cecil the youngest.

I have clear recollections of my Grandmother Florence as my sister Sheila and I used to spend the wonderful long summer holidays at the Knight family home in East Street. Sadly I never knew my grandfather as he had died in 1907 of diphtheria I believe. In those days terrible epidemics would kill thousands of people in just a matter of weeks. Anyway Grandmother Florence was left to take charge of the family business which occupied the premises that is now a travel agency. There was more than one family of Knights in Petworth at the time and Grandmother was universally known as Mrs Gordon Knight, I suppose to distinguish her from other members of the family though not all of the Knights were related.

I have no idea how long the family had the shop though it must have been many years for they had once lived in the large property just down the road called New Street House though I imagine that they moved to the smaller house in East Street when Grandfather died or perhaps when Percy and Cecil left home.

I was born on the Isle of Sheppey where my father was a bank manager. I don't really know how we ended up there or whether Father served an apprenticeship at Petworth but that is where we lived and so the annual trips to Petworth were something of an expedition to us two young girls. We would travel to Petworth with Mother and then Father would join us much later, I don't suppose it would have been possible for him to take the whole summer holidays off work. I have a distinct recollection of Pulborough Station and then the bus journey to Petworth, why we didn't continue on to Petworth Station I don't know, perhaps it would have meant the inconvenience of changing train or a long wait for the connecting train, who knows but Pulborough Station it was. The bus ride to Petworth was full of excitement and anticipation for Sheila and I and as we drew closer to the town we would compete to be the first to see the beautiful spire of the parish church. I can remember the shop quite clearly, it was what was known then as a general provisions shop, in other words it sold just about anything that was perishable and lots of things that weren't. I would spend many happy days helping Grandmother and Aunt Brenda in the shop, sitting at the big wooden bench weighing pounds of tea or sugar into paper bags. I would also help make up the orders which were an important part of the business and everything had to be just so, no room for mistakes. Mr Keen was the obligatory male presence in the shop and he would do much of the heavy work as well as cutting up the hams and cheeses, he also delivered the orders around the town and no doubt further afield, he certainly must have had a busy life! Aunt Brenda never married and she would spend much of her time helping in the shop with Grandmother Florence while Aunt Ted

who I believe was Grandmother Florence's sister looked after the house in East Street. I think that she was a member of the Collins family from Byworth, which would of course mean that Grandmother was as well.

Besides Sheila and myself we would often meet with Uncle Cecil's two daughters, our cousins. Cecil had moved to Barnstaple where he operated a taxi and like us his family would come to Sussex for the summer holiday. I have a feeling that they would stay at their maternal Grandparents who lived at Sutton, however we would meet up and go for long walks along the Downs sometimes even as far as Chanctonbury Ring, a good distance indeed as we were really quite young.

I have rather indistinct recollections of certain persons who would wander in and out of my life. Only seen on the Petworth visits they would be almost forgotten for much of the year only to reappear on our annual pilgrimage to the town. There was a man I knew simply as Uncle Bill, I don't imagine that he was an uncle at all, however he would appear daily at the house in East Street with quantities of vegetables that I assume were for domestic use rather than in the shop. Uncle Bill would be sent away with a covered plate containing his dinner, only to return the following day with an empty plate and more vegetables. Who he was I don't suppose I will ever know though I believe that he may have lived in Thompson's Almshouses in North Street. Another character was Miss Daintrey who lived just across the road from us in East Street. Not in Daintrey House but next door in the Court I believe, through the door in the wall. We would have to visit her out of politeness but I am not sure that I really enjoyed it. She must have been a very good friend of Grandmother's for we have several wonderful paintings done by her. There was also Mrs Ernest Streeter from Clock House opposite the church; she was another of Grandmother's sisters and a frequent visitor to East Street. I am not at all sure how many Collins sisters there were, however I have a photograph taken in the garden of the East Street house in which Grandmother Florence, Aunt 'Ted' and Mrs Ernest Streeter are joined by three other elderly ladies of a strikingly similar likeness, I cannot help but suppose that they may all be great aunts of mine.

I have faint memories of the Boys' school being bombed but we weren't at Petworth at the time and it would be some nine months after the tragedy happened that the summer holidays would bring us back to the town and I suppose that by then the initial shock of the disaster would have been over and the matter would not have been spoken about.

As the year went by we visited less frequently, Sheila and I got older and Grandmother died in the late 1950s. With her passing so was broken that invisible cord attaching us to the town. Aunt Brenda remained and we would occasionally come and visit her but really those idyllic summer holidays at Petworth were a thing of the past and we had our own lives to lead.

Maureen Bailey was talking to Miles Costello

## Walter Caine - a recollection

Although I've never actually lived here, Petworth has always been a special place for me. I'm here today with my daughter on a visit from Wales where I have lived now for over fifty years. My connection with the town? Older residents will certainly remember my grandfather Walter Caine who had the greengrocers in Pound Street (now Outhouse). He left Petworth in 1951. My mother, Alice Winifred Caine, was one of four children by Walter's first marriage and had been born at Elsted in 1899. Walter's first wife died in the influenza epidemic that followed the 1914-1918 war and he had married again. His new wife, Norah, came from Devon. By the time that I was visiting in the 1940s Walter and Norah had been together for some twenty five years and there were two children, Wilma and John. Of the four children from the first marriage, Jim went to Wales where he worked as an estate gardener, while Bob would go to Australia. My mother and Helen, the other daughter, went into service in London. Both later married, Helen eventually following Bob to Australia. There are now a considerable number of descendents over there. I was brought up in Brighton and have been staying there for the last few days.

We didn't visit Petworth very often; after all my grandfather now had another family, but I probably came more than the others. I'd come up on the old 22 bus from Poole Valley. When I did come, however, I'd stop for a whole weekend or even an entire week. Norah was an excellent cook and had a most peculiar large paraffin range in the kitchen (I'm sure it was paraffin). She was adept at making jam and ice cream which she sold in the shop. I don't know how she made the ice cream but I don't think she had a machine. I was here often enough to make friends with a girl named Jean - I can't remember her other name - who lived down the road. Her mother worked for Norah in the house. It was wartime and the occasional visit to the Regal cinema was a great treat. One Christmas during the war Norah put on a big party in this very room where I'm talking to you. I can still see the pure white icing on the cake and the silver dragees. Nothing out of the ordinary now, but a different matter under wartime conditions.

Grandfather had an allotment where the fire station is now and an orchard further up the incline. Most days I'd go down with him to feed the pigs which were just up from the road on the left. I'd sleep upstairs in the room over this one but was expected to be very careful with the lights. I once ended up straying into the Caines' bedroom in the darkness. Uncle Jim (Russell) was Grandfather's brother-in-law and was a big, jolly man who kept the Queen's Head pub in High Street. It's now an insurance office but the small front door looks the same. Uncle Jim had a wife, Polly, and some children. They lived over the pub and I remember going up there to see him. I don't think that as a minor I was allowed into the bar itself. When Uncle Jim died the family moved. I seem to recall, to a bungalow at Midhurst.

Of the two children of the second marriage, John was away during the latter part of the war. He had a shed in the garden for repairing cycles and also the little shop that is now the Salon. Wilma worked for the Ministry of Food. As to why Grandfather initially moved from Elsted to Petworth I don't really know; I think perhaps he worked briefly on the Leconfield



"Mr Churchill's official announcement of the end of the war was heard in Petworth Market Square through the medium of Mr Ernie Card's mobile loud speaker."  
[Original Garland newspaper caption.] 8th May 1945.

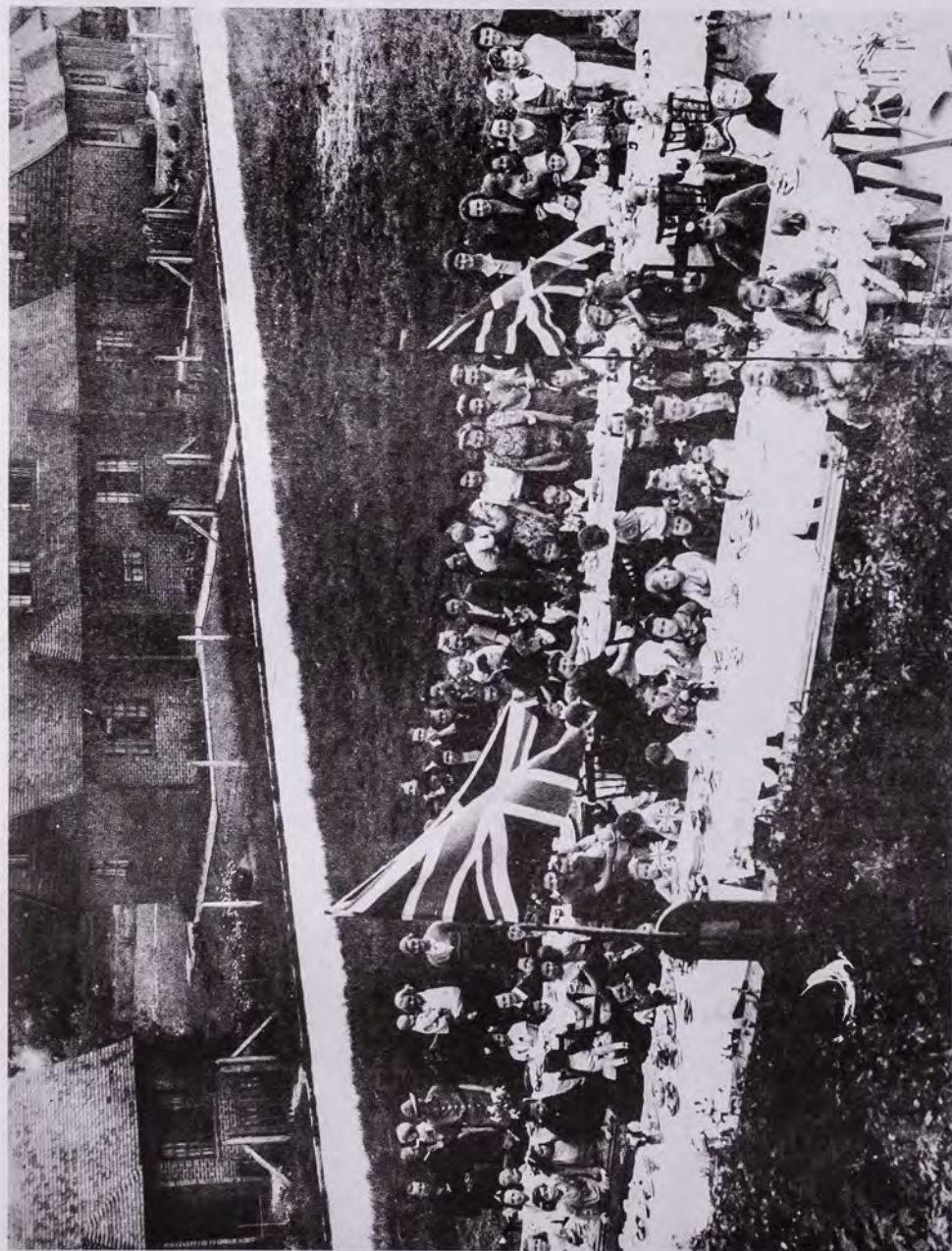




*A similar view.*



"A thanksgiving service was held in the open air in Petworth Square on Sunday. All the various organisations were represented and the ladies' robed choir were in attendance."  
[Original Garland newspaper caption.] 13th May 1945..



*Hamper Green Victory Celebrations. 19th May 1945.*

Estate, he was a skilled bricklayer by trade. I suppose he had the chance to rent the shop and start up on his own and he did.

Helen Jones (née Black) was talking to the Editor.

## A little dribble of airy water (2) - concluded

There was no easy way to locate leaks. If you had, say, a leak in the pipe from Wassell Mill at Ebernoe, you simply had to walk the pipeline looking for a wet place in the field, or perhaps turn off a stopcock to see if the meter still ran. You'd repeat the process until you would isolate a section. During the summer you'd look for a ditch that had water in it but would usually be dried up. It was all very much a matter of trial and error. Once you'd located the leak, the section needed to be dug out, the leaking pipe taken out, and a connection inserted to replace the faulty piece. Some of the pipework would be very old indeed.

Mr Allison had put in the 6,000 gallon reservoir at Bunchel's Copse in the Gog in 1936, taking water levels and picking up a series of springs then running from gravity across the fields to Ratford, Palfrey, Osiers, Langhurst Hill and on to Great Allfields at Ebernoe, picking up isolated cottages and cattle troughs along the way. It wasn't in my time, of course, but I've heard the men talking of digging out manually and then laying the long lengths of galvanised pipe covered in white frost.

I didn't see Mr Allison a lot, as I have said. To someone so much younger he seemed abrupt. He had a lifetime of achievement already behind him. He it was who laid on water for Sutton, in nine foot lengths of cast iron pipe from Glatten Hanger. Boring for water was a speciality of his. His plans remain amongst the Estate papers and are still of use today. There are some for the Railway Hotel (now Badgers) in 1901. He always seemed to know where water could be found. Perhaps this was something to do with his ability to divine. During a dry spell he'd drilled a 70 foot shaft another 80 feet and, yes, he found water. He had a particular interest in the Virgin Mary Spring. He reckoned it was on the same water table as the well in the kitchen at New Grove, and that the water running east-west, came originally from Belgium.

Lord Leconfield, now toward the end of his long reign, was as remote, or more remote than Mr Allison. He might come across us while we were working, ask us what we were doing or, perhaps, where we were going next, and continue his walk. Captain Briggs had left as agent in 1946 before my time, Mr Shelley was the new agent. My first sight of him was pushing a bike up Park Road on the way to the old Estate Office in the present servants' block. That was before he bought Miss Upton's old Austin 7. Cars were still sufficiently unusual to make them individual. In those days the agent lived at Littlecote but Mr Shelley would later move to Tillington Cottage.

I left the Estate in 1949 and went back to the butchers. Jimmy Keen taught me to drive and I did the round for Mr Payne. Mr Allison died in 1951 and Mr Godsolve as clerk of works, took on the water department. An A40 was bought for the department's exclusive use. Mr Godsolve seemed keen for me to return so I did. The Estate still had the old outliers,

Dumpford, Didling and the rest and all was much as it had been when I left - the workmen were much the same, the work the same. Only Mr Allison had gone. Times were changing though. Mains water was essential as too was improved drainage. The war had given great encouragement to land clearance. An era was passing.

Jumbo Taylor was talking to the Editor.

## 49 miles from London

The "49 Miles from London" milestone in New Street is a fine specimen of varied lettering incised on pale yellow stone c.1800 (give or take a few years). The word "London" is in italic capitals, very similar to the word "London" on the Boathouse fronting the Lake in Petworth Park. Within the Boathouse, it is on your right, near the door, as you stand with your back to the Lake. It is about six feet up the wall, i.e. its inciser was about 5ft. 9in. tall (unless he incised it on a block that was later inserted).

Plainly he was "in" with Lord Egremont, or the Park would have been closed to him. On completing the milestones (Lord Egremont was a leading Trustee of their turnpike), or before, the inciser must have strolled in the Park and visited the boathouse and made his mark on it as well.

The first milestone north and south of Petworth is at first floor level, traditionally to assist gentlemen riding by on horseback, e.g. returning from the hunt. Perhaps this is unique to this road.

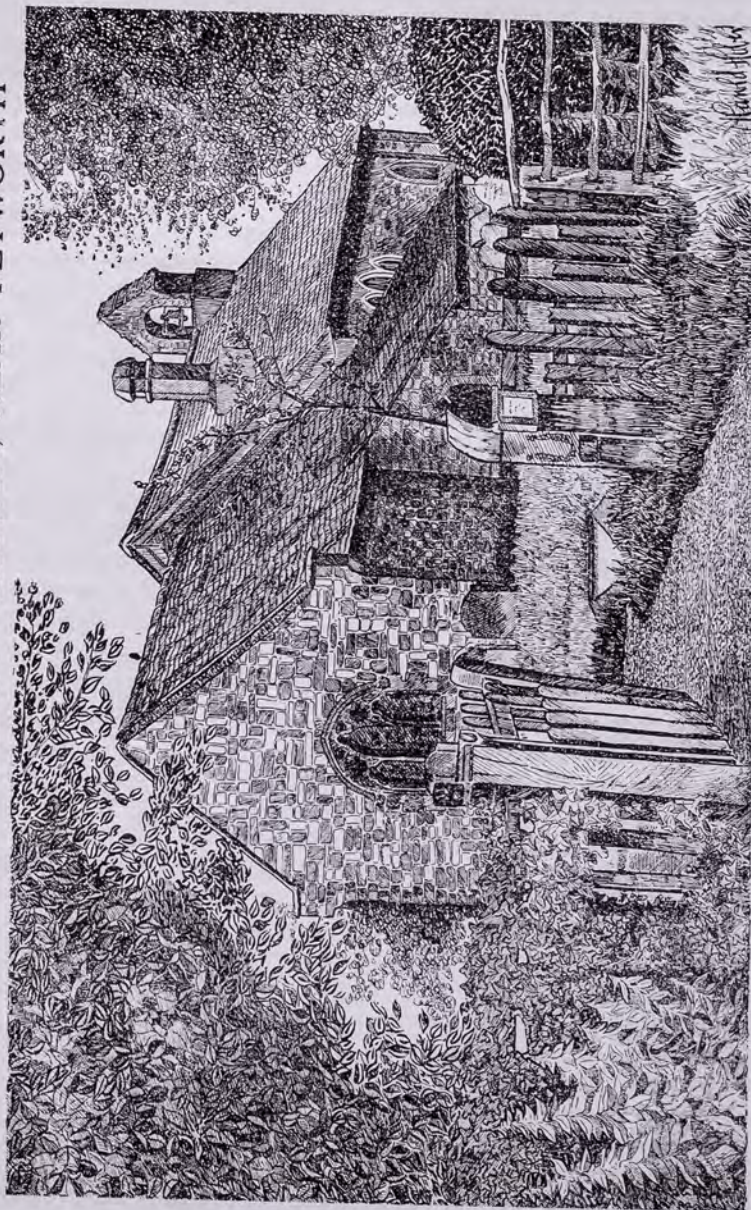
Jeremy Godwin

## What Acon saw when he came to Petworth

"The market town of Petworth", said John Leland in the early 1540s (ed. Chandler, 1993, p.455) "has greatly increased since the time when the Earls of Northumberland used to stay here occasionally." Thus for Leland. The Percies (the said Earls) had their own chapel within their manor house, the core of Petworth House as now is; but what the town had is shown on the map of Britain in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, known as the Gough Map, after an earlier owner. Drawn up c.1350, it shows Britain's main settlements and their churches; some of those churches still survive unchanged today, enabling "Gough" to be checked and shown not to be stylised. In his opinion, the main settlements in the western Weald were Petworth, Midhurst, Chiddingfold and Stopham. Easebourne is omitted.

Also shown is Chichester. Of the Weald's places hereabouts, Stopham's was the grandest church, but it was still a simple one. Chiddingfold, Midhurst, and Petworth's had each even simpler. This would be nave and chancel, without tower or spire.

## QUAINT LITTLE EGDEAN CHURCH, NEAR PETWORTH



MR. H. Roberts, Wisborough Green, has drawn this sketch of Egdean Church, two miles from Petworth. The church (St. Bartholomew's) is small but very interesting, inasmuch that it is artistic, old, and of good architecture.

*This Harold Roberts drawing appeared in the West Sussex Gazette - probably in the 1930s.*

Treswell's Map (1610, ref. PHA 3574) shows Petworth's buildings in elevation, and the church as having an 8-sided spire which was over twice the height of the tower. Leland says that Acon built the spire, but did he also build the tower as well? "Steeple" in those days could describe both tower and spire. Had Petworth come into money so soon after the 1350s and their aftermath of the Black Death, social upheaval, and worsening climate? Acon was in Petworth in Richard II's reign, i.e. the late 14th century. He had the money and the motive.

Jeremy Godwin

## The Rulemaker of Petworth

### Joseph Solomon Johnson

I first realised that there were Sussex connections some time ago when I discovered that one of the family had set up business in Horsham as shown on the 1891 census at 29 Barrington Street. At the time I filed the information away as I was looking at another member of the Johnson entourage who had become a leading light in the Independent Labour Party.

The Johnson family business was started by Benjamin JOHNSON who was born in Bethnal Green in 1819 and spent the last ten years of his life in Caterham Asylum where he died in 1901. In the admission and discharge registers of which I managed to obtain copies he is described as a Rule Maker so it was obviously a trade the family were proud of. Benjamin had four sons and three daughters, one of whom, Charlotte Caroline, was to become my grandmother. Of the sons, three became Rule Makers like their father. The focus of this story is Joseph Solomon JOHNSON.

He was born in Bethnal Green in 1850 and married Louis HILLYER on Christmas Day 1872 in St Giles Church, Cripplegate, in the City of London. This is the church where, on 22 August 1620 one Oliver CROMWELL married Elizabeth BOURCHIER so Joseph and Louisa stood in historic footsteps! They had four children; Joseph Solomon born Islington 1878, Amy Béatrice born 1880 in Islington, Albert Alexander born 1882 in Islington and Florence Grace born 1888 in Petworth. Unfortunately Florence's birth certificate records her birth address as Petworth with no details as is so often the case with some Victorian clergy! Joseph is still listed in Islington in the Post Office directory in 1884 so it is likely they moved to Petworth between then and 1888 when Florence was born.

The family moved to Horsham in the next couple of years as the next record is on the 1891 census at 29 Barrington Street where Joseph describes himself as a Rule Manufacturer with son Joseph Solomon age 13 'working for father'. What prompted this move will never be known.

The next appearance by the family is on the 1901 census in Edmonton. Edmonton had become a Johnson enclave as most of Joseph's siblings and their families had moved to this area. Whilst researching for marriages I found the marriage of Florence Grace JOHNSON to Alexander George William WIDDEN. She and Alexander married in the Congregational Chapel in Golden Square on May 14 1921. This is now the United Reformed Church.

Witnesses at the wedding were Joseph Solomon JOHNSON her father, a Rule Maker (master) and her brother Joseph Solomon JOHNSON jr, also a Rule Maker. Their address was the Institute, East Street. So once again the lure of the Sussex countryside had called Joseph Solomon back.

I briefly turned to Florence's husband Alexander and found him on the 1891 census in Kirdford, a few miles from Petworth with his parents, brothers George and John and sister Marie at Black House (farm house).

Interestingly, his father George is shown as suffering from paralysis for 11 years and this is a line of research which I will be pursuing.

A visit to Petworth was indicated and I spent an afternoon walking the very roads and lanes of my predecessors on a beautiful sunny Sussex day. My attention had been drawn to several books about Petworth written by Peter Jerrome which I realised had the answer to many of my questions. In one there was reference to Mr Johnson the Rule Maker and his workshop, and a description and history of The Institute, which address Florence and William had given on their marriage certificate. This institution was an attempt to provide some basic education for the poorer classes at the ratepayers expense and included a reading room. It appears to have been started around 1871 and became the cause celebre of one Thomas Seward a member of a local ironmonger family but his outspoken views did not endear him to the Evangelical Rector of the time Charles Holland who threatened to resign if Seward's position of Honorary Secretary was confirmed in 1891. Thomas Seward died suddenly in 1892 and on his death was found to be possessed of a huge library. In Kellys directory for 1915 it is described as having 'a reading room, 3 billiard rooms and a lending and reference library of 3000 volumes'. The Institute would carry on in various formats for many years but eventually faded away. The red brick building is still in East Street. What connection Florence and Alexander had with The Institute will probably remain unknown. She had no special educational qualifications that I can find on any documents and Alexander is described as Auxiliary Postman (on marriage) a Retired Council Roadman (on Florence's death certificate) and as a Retired Slaughterman (on his own death certificate).

I visited Peter Jerrome and was met with great courtesy. He found a copy of the Petworth Magazine which contained the most remarkable story by Bill Payne, one of my great uncle's apprentices and a picture of his workshop. It seems that Joseph Solomon found life in the Sussex countryside much preferable to the metropolis. He is described as a 'kind and clever man who could not resist handing out money to beggars and children'.

It seems the rules were made from a wood called Lancewood which was hand planed, sandpapered, French polished and then cut to size. There were 3 foot rods, 5 foot surveyors rods with a spring clip in the middle to fold in two, school rulers, tee squares and spirit levels. The company also made the brass ends. The workshop was probably the last of its kind doing such work by hand as machines were invading the process and Joseph Solomon couldn't compete pricewise although his rulers were undoubtedly of far better quality. From other research it would appear that his father Benjamin travelled the country selling the Johnson rulers as I have him on census returns in Leicester (1861) and Cheltenham (1871) staying in local hostleries.

Joseph's wife Louisa died aged 72 of heart disease and pneumonia on January 13 1924 at the Institute, her son, Joseph Solomon was present at the death. Her burial service was conducted by Mr Jones, Congregational Minister on 18 January 1924. Joseph senior moved to live with Florence and Alexander in a cottage in Grove Lane, Petworth. Time and tide finally took its toll and he closed the company in the late twenties. He died, aged 81, on 12 January 1932, at 306 North Street from Influenza and Myocarditis with his son Albert Alexander, who had travelled down from Edmonton, by his side. His service was on 16 January 1932 and Mr Whatley, the Congregational Minister conducted the ceremony. So the last of the Rulemakers was laid to rest in the town he had come to love and where he had spent much of his life. I am reasonably certain that they were both buried in Petworth Cemetery on the Horsham Road but as its use ceased in the 1960's it is now rather overgrown and hazardous and to find their graves would be an impossible task even if they had any memorial stones.

Florence and William WIDDEN continued their life in the Sussex countryside for another 20 years. They had no children. Florence contracted lung cancer and spent the last few months of her life in the Cottage Hospital Petworth where she died on 15 March 1959. Her niece Frances Dollemore arranged the funeral. Alexander, meanwhile, could not cope alone in the house at 4 Wyndham Road, Petworth and was transferred to Budgenor Lodge at Easebourne which was the Midhurst Workhouse and Poor Law Union, now occupied by a religious organisation. He died two weeks later in the Union on 28 March 1959. I have no information about their burials or cremations. So the last link to the Rulemakers of Shoreditch was finally broken.

I will always have a burning desire to own a Johnson ruler so perhaps members would look in their tool boxes and set my longing to rest! It seems that they were marked with the family name so would be unmistakable. I have to express my appreciation to Peter Jerrome for his help in my research.

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[For working at Mr Johnson's see the account by George Payne in PSM 44. Ed.]

## St Mary's, Petworth, before Barry

In issue number 118 of this magazine, Miles Costello published part of the manuscript notebook of a nineteenth-century Petworth resident, who gave an interesting account of the rebuilding of St Mary's church in the late 1820s, together with informative notes on the furnishings of the church in the later part of the century ('Copied by Eliza Green 1859'). The article included a reproduction of a pre-1865 drawing of the church showing the spire which had been added in 1827-29 to the design of Mr (later Sir) Charles Barry; the spire is also

illustrated in the famous view of Petworth House published by Horsfield in his *History of the County of Sussex* (1835) – and, of course, by many subsequent photographs, such as the one by Kevis which served as the cover illustration for this magazine in 2004. Less frequently illustrated is the tower of the church before the building of the spire, but two pictures exist from before 1827, both of which show clearly the top of the tower without the Barry spire. These drawings are part of the Sharpe Collection of Watercolours and paintings in the possession of the Sussex Archaeological Society, which houses the originals at its Michelham Priory property near Hailsham.

### *The Sharpe Collection*

The local collection consists of nearly 400 watercolours, pencil sketches and pen and ink with wash drawings of Sussex churches. Some of these, all showing East Sussex subjects, are the work of an unknown artist, and were mainly drawn in 1797. The bulk of the collection, however, including all the West Sussex material, is the work of Henry Petrie (1768-1842), historian and antiquary, who was for 23 years Keeper of Records in the Tower of London. His campaign of drawing and sketching in Sussex lasted from 1802 until 1805, with a few 'extras' in 1806, 1807, 1809+ and 1839. He appears to have visited Petworth in 1805, when his itineraries show that he was as near as Stopham and Tillington, though there is now reason to believe that he came to Petworth the previous year, when he visited Midhurst and Easebourne.

The result of his visit or visits was a watercolour showing St Mary's from the south-east, numbered 256 in the printed catalogue (*Sussex Churches*, edited by the late Verena Smith, 1979), which is reproduced here. There was, however, another drawing of the church, which had disappeared before the Sussex Archaeological Society bought the collection in 1975, and to which there is no reference in the catalogue. The evidence for this is in an archive of photographs at the SAS library in Lewes. This archive contains black-and-white photographs of all the Sussex drawings in the Sharpe collection, taken at the instigation of P M Johnston at some time between 1911 and 1934, while the collection was still in private hands. One of the photos is a copy of a drawing – probably not a watercolour, since the definition is better and the tones darker than in the copy of no.256 – apparently dating from 1804 and showing the church from the north-west. This is confusingly numbered 255, the number which in the published catalogue is ascribed to Penhurst. The photograph of the Penhurst drawing is 254, and that of Pett 254A (plain 254 in the catalogue). At present it is not known what happened to the second Petworth drawing after it was photographed nor why its number was transferred in the catalogue to Penhurst, which is out of strict alphabetical sequence. It is therefore of great value to have the photographic copy, which alone would confirm the wisdom of Johnston's decision to commission a full set of archive copies.

### *What do we learn from Petrie's drawings?*

Both drawings show the upper part of the tower before it was rebuilt by Barry. The belfry stage has a quatrefoil opening on its east face (no.256) and what appear to be clock faces to the north and west (no.255). Above this is a crenellated parapet with tall pinnacles at the corners. At a quick glance this would seem to be consistent with a late medieval date, but on closer inspection the pinnacles are devoid of crocketing, one of the hallmarks of architectural

design towards the end of the Middle Ages. They are smooth and obelisk--like in the manner of the approximate 'Gothick' style of the 18th century, and it is no surprise to read in Horsfield's *History of Sussex* that they had been built as recently as 1800, when a former 'leaden spire was taken down'. The same information is given in the 1835 edition of Dallaway, but several original papers in the Petworth House Archive make it clear that this work was carried out in 1804 at the earliest. The contract for the work, carried out by Turner and Page of Farnham, was not signed until mid-December 1803, when they also provided a fairly detailed specification. But, as ever, it proved to be difficult to get the contractors on to the site; they were still writing letters apologising for the delay in March 1804. If the date for drawing 255 is correct, it must have been taken very soon after the completion of the work, and is thus probably the earliest record of the short-lived parapet and pinnacles (when Barry removed them in order to build the new spire, they were less than twenty-five years old). The only possible competitor is a scale drawing of the south side of the tower and part of the nave (no. 11348 in the Petworth House Archive), dated June 1803, but the parapet detail appears to have been altered and may in any case be a proposal for the work rather than a record of its completed appearance.

In no.255 the topmost stage of the tower is shown separated from the lower party by an offset, but there is no sign of this on the east face of the tower as shown in no.256. The stage below presumably the bell chamber, has tall, fairly broad openings with pointed heads on the north and east faces, and possibly on the west. Below this, on the east face, is a smallish possibly square-headed window, whose jambs and sill still exist, though the opening itself is filled with modern brickwork belonging to the rebuilt upper part of the tower. Farther down, about on a level with the chancel eaves, there is a square feature of unknown purpose; this part of the tower is now covered by the modern vestry. On the south-east corner of the tower, rising almost to parapet height, is an octagonal stair turret; it was reduced in height in the course of one of the reconstructions. The present slit windows in the south-east face of the turret are not shown by Petrie: perhaps they were blocked at the time of his visit. In the south wall of the chancel Petrie shows three windows, each of two lights under a tracery circle. These still exist, though much restored externally; counting from the left (west), windows 1 and 2 have internal reveals with sunken quadrants, and are now separated externally by a buttress, not shown by Petrie. Window 3 has a chamfered reveal internally, and is separated from window 2 by a similar buttress. In the present chancel there is a fourth window, a relatively broad lancet close to the east end. However, this does not seem to be a modern insertion – the internal reveal has a sunken quadrant which matches windows 1 and 2, and the stone work is comparable – and one can only assume it was blocked and covered with rendering at the time Petrie drew the church. The chancel east window lacks detail, and it is not clear whether its form justified the present great window in the Perpendicular style. Petrie's south-east view does not show the end of the north-east (St Thomas's) chapel, but this may be the result of the artist's stand point. To the east of the chancel he shows a yew tree that no longer exists.

The north-west aspect of the church shown in no.255 is not unlike its present-day appearance. Apart from the top of the tower, the main differences are that there were two porches in Petrie's day; the west porch has been removed to show a doorway in the Perpendicular style (this and the window above by Barry). There must have been a north door

to which the north porch gave access, but this appears to have been removed along with the porch. The north aisle wall has been rebuilt at this point and there are two windows matching the only one visible in Petrie's picture to the west of the buttress, which is itself heavily restored. At the east end of the north aisle a dormer window has been removed; it seems to have matched those in the north transept. The north wall of St Thomas's chapel has been altered since Petrie drew it; the two buttresses are closer together than he shows them and there is no window between them, giving the effect of a shallow blind recess. Some way to the east of the church is another small building, presumably on the edge of the churchyard, since there is currently no property whose gable end is to the road frontage on this part of North Street. Whether this was a secular building (house or shop?) or perhaps the remains of a separate chapel in the churchyard, is unclear. Though such chapels were relatively common in the Middle Ages and sometimes survived the Reformation, there is no suggestion in the extant wills and chantry documents that there was one at Petworth.

Finally, the main difference to be seen today from the same viewpoint is the gable end and part of the roof of the south aisle, another of Barry's additions.

*Sir Charles Barry (1795-1860)*

Barry was plain 'Mr' when he worked on the church in Petworth. He was knighted in 1852, largely in recognition of his rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament after the fire of 1834 had destroyed most of the medieval buildings. The now familiar structure, with its tower housing Big Ben, is the result of the Gothic revival design brought to fruition under Barry's direction. Much of the design work and all of the fantastically detailed drawings were carried out not by Barry himself but by the talented A W N Pugin (1812-52), the great precursor of the Gothic Revival of the later 19th century. In the decade before the Westminster fire Barry was very busy building churches, and came to Petworth having largely completed St Peter's in Brighton (1824-28). This, according to Eliza Green's source was 'the new church at the north entrance to Brighton', though it is now in a very central position following almost two centuries of urban expansion. St Peter's mixes Decorated and Perpendicular features in a typical Gothic manner; the (liturgical) west tower (actually at the south end of the church geographically) has an elaborate parapet with tall crocketed pinnacles. There is no spire. According to Ian Nairn's informant, in a footnote to his Petworth entry in the *Sussex* volume of the Buildings of England a series, the spire of St Mary's was originally designed for St Peter's, Brighton. Elsewhere in the same volume, however, Nikolaus Pevsner remarks that Barry designed a spire for St Peter's in 1841, but it was never built. This is a slight contradiction that still has to be resolved.

Barry's son and biographer claimed that Barry *père* was less happy working in the Gothic style and was naturally more at home with Classical design (hence perhaps his reliance on Pugin in the matter of the Houses of Parliament). While he was supervising the rebuilding of St Mary's in Petworth he was also working on the church of St Andrew, Waterloo Street, in Hove (formerly known as the Brunswick Chapel; now redundant), which was based on French examples influenced by the Italian quattrocento. It dates from 1827-28, and was thus strictly contemporary with the Gothicising work at Petworth. The contrast between the two projects could not be greater.

At the age of twenty-two Charles Barry embarked on an architectural tour of France, Italy, Greece, Turkey and the Mediterranean islands, at a time when architects could still be self-taught. Returning home steeped in classical architecture, his first two projects were new churches in the Manchester area built for the Church Commissioners, whose preferred style was a simplified Gothic: Barry had to make a rapid study of the medieval Gothic to enable him to carry out these commissions. He did not join the Gothic Revival bandwagon, however, and churches were only a small part of his architectural output. St Peter's, Brighton, which he began before he was thirty years old, is one of the few examples of his Gothic-style churches. He made his name with public buildings, first the City Art Gallery in Manchester (contemporary with St Peter's), an example of the orthodox Greek classical style. He later turned to a more Italianate style, most famously represented by the Travellers' Club in Pall Mall. The Brunswick Chapel in Hove is a good local example of this style. His other work in Sussex includes Holy Trinity and the Royal Sussex County hospital in Brighton and the restoration of Hurstpierpoint church.

Postscript: Eliza Green's sources

A brief review of early 19th-century documents in the Petworth House Archive, undertaken as a background study for this article, has suggested that this was the source of much, if not all, of Eliza Green's information. In particular, the first two paragraphs of her 'Works done at the Church ...' seem to be largely based on, if not copied verbatim from, one of the papers in a group numbered 2979. A more thorough reading of the Archive would no doubt reveal the extent to which Eliza's notes derive from papers in Petworth House and whether they are accurate copies or paraphrases.

David Parsons

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## Hampers Green: The Beginning

The years following 1914 saw the largest proportional increase in what we now refer to as social housing ever seen in this country. By today's standards the increase was not huge but considering the relative low density of development in Southern England before the Great War the increase was astonishing. In little over two decades the character and appearance of numerous small market towns and their satellite village would be changed beyond recognition. Boundaries, which had previously remained unaltered for centuries, would be pushed out by a tide of council housing.

Petworth for example saw Station Road urbanized out of what was previously Mill Lane; a scattering of allotments, market gardens and open fields became a ribbon development with the effect of increasing the north – south extent of the town by almost one third. Even more marked was the development in Grove Lane, which had forced the town boundary way beyond the customary outer limits that had long been recognised as New Grove. The first council houses in Petworth were the twelve Lloyd George Cottages in Station Road. Completed in 1914 they were the result of the first attempt to rid the town of private slums and

many of the new tenants had previously lived in the condemned hovels that filled Red Lion Yard in High Street.

Until the late thirties all of the council developments – which included South Grove and Lloyd George Cottages – were situated south of the town. Very little thought had been given to developing the area to the north. Practicalities such as the hilly ground and the extensive tracts of common land probably discouraged any serious thoughts of expansion in that area. However by 1937 demands for housing had reached a critical point in Petworth. Much of the older private stock was in a poor condition and the Rural District Council was constantly warning private landlords that their properties required improvements and in many cases were uninhabitable and should be demolished. Bowling Green Cottages in Angel Street owned by the highly respected Upton family were condemned and subsequently demolished. Several cottages in Pound Street and North Street were deemed unfit and were also pulled down. If the owners could not afford to improve their properties then demolition orders were issued. This in itself could be an expensive option for the private landlords and often their only opportunity to recoup some of the cost was through the sale of the demolition materials.

The result of this haphazard slum clearance was to put ever-increasing pressure on the dwindling private stock. In an effort to relieve this problem the Housing Committee of the Petworth RDC was given the charge of finding a new site for council housing. It was not long before their eyes fell on the field to the north of Hampers Common. Belonging to an obliging Leconfield Estate and importantly not common land the area was ripe for development, and at a very reasonable £100 per acre the Committee agreed in principle to the acquisition of the land at the earliest opportunity.

As the news of the proposed development filtered out there appeared to be no organised objection to the scheme, though one correspondent did point out to the Housing Committee the health implications of an incinerator at the nearby Leconfield hunt kennels. Concern was also raised regarding the custom of gypsy families camping on the common though the letter did not elaborate on the reasons why this should impinge on the development. The only recorded dissent by a member of the RDC was from Mr Ben Wareham who favoured the alternative development of land at Cherry Orchard, his reasons are not recorded and in any case the Council determined to take no action regarding these concerns and negotiations began with the Leconfield Estate with a view to purchasing the land.

As often the Estate chose to place restrictive clauses on the Hampers Common land and these had to be considered by the Committee.

1. The whole land to be used for working class dwellings only.
2. The approval of the vendor to the design, layout and construction materials used in the dwellings.

These clauses were accepted by the council but with the subtle amendments that any use could be made of the land with the vendor's permission, and that permission could not be unreasonably withheld. Both parties appear to have been satisfied and it was now up to the Housing Committee to consider how many houses were to be built and what style they should be.

Mr F.J. Hodgson the architect and surveyor to the Council put forward several designs to the Housing Committee, his only brief having been to build them as cheaply as possible.

The first phase of the estate would comprise of some 20 3-bedroom semi-bungalow type houses and one block of 4 3-bedroom type houses suitable for overcrowding cases. These latter houses were designed so that they could be altered at short notice to accommodate large families. This would be affected by removing bedrooms from one tenancy to another and effectively creating a fourth or 'flying' bedroom which would be above the neighbouring living accommodation, a not uncommon practice on the estate until very recent times. This 'overcrowding block' comprises the present numbers 21 to 24 while the original 20 semi-bungalow type properties are formed from the present numbers 13 to 20 and 25 to 36. The two styles effectively created a horseshoe around the small area of grass at the top of Hampers Green accessed through the second or northern entrance from the Balls Cross Road.

Having decided upon the style of houses the committee were determined to reduce expenditure to the absolute minimum. Hodgson had estimated the cost for the semi-bungalows to be £350 each; a reasonable sum considering that the similar council properties in Grove Lane had cost £315 some time earlier. The housing committee consisting of Charles Leazell the Petworth builder, P.E. Hazelman, M. Tupper and T.W. Wyldbore were determined to drive down the cost even further and the District Surveyor was sent away to revise the designs and return with savings. Hodgson returned on 24 July 1937 and presented a whole series of suggestions to the committee. The cottages would no longer have porches either back or front. The W.C. would be placed inside, thus saving the expense of an additional building. This of course had the effect of reducing the size of the kitchen and larder. The coppers would be brick built instead of iron. The floors would be constructed of granolithic cement instead of 'Doloment'. This latter may seem purely a technicality though Hodgson did remark that the more expensive option would provide greater comfort for the tenants. Hudson's comments were noted but the comfort of the tenants was clearly not considered a priority and as usual the cheaper option was adopted.

Hodgson was keen to stress that a considerable saving could be made if the houses were constructed of local Midhurst White bricks but he warned that the appearance would not be so pleasing as if built of stock bricks. Unexpectedly the committee chose not to adopt the cheaper option and the estate was spared the unsightly glare of the Midhurst Whites.

Having settled on the cheapest design for the semi-bungalow cottages it was only the cost of the block of four 'overcrowding' cottages that had to be considered and after a short discussion the surveyor's estimate of £435.00 for each cottage was adopted.

The next step was to put the work out to contract and in January 1938 following a fiercely competitive process the tender of £9831 was accepted from Thomas Woolford the Petworth building contractor. Having won the contract Woolford immediately wrote to the Committee regretting that due to the pressures of 'work in hand' he would be unable to fulfil the contract and apologised for any inconvenience caused. The Housing Committee had no choice but to award the contract to the under bidder which had been the Tillington firm of J. Boxall at the tendered price of £9852.

The actual construction of the cottages was only part of the development. Extensive water and sewage works would have to be carried out. Extending the existing water supply from North Street to Hampers Green would cost an estimated £334. The contract for the



(no.256)  
Petworth Church from the South-East, by Henry Petrie, undated  
(from the Sharpe Collection at Michelham Priory; reproduced by kind permission of the Sussex Archaeological Society)





(no. 255)  
 Petworth Church from the North-West, copy of missing drawings probably by Henry Petrie, 1804  
 (from the Sharpe Collection at Michelham Priory; reproduced by kind permission of the Sussex Archaeological Society)

construction of roads and sewers for the estate was awarded to Franks Harris Brothers at £1461. Extensive groundworks would have to be carried out on the site before building could commence, and an access road would need to be bulldozed through the steep bank on the Balls Cross road.

In April 1938 the housing committee was informed that the sewers had been completed. The members were asked to agree that Mr W. Horton could rent for grazing the land not presently used for building.

Clearly Lady Leconfield was very interested in the development and she addressed a letter to the housing committee regarding the provision of fruit trees in the garden of the council cottages. Not surprisingly the committee resolved that no further action be taken in view of the doubtful authority of the council to incur such expenditure.

By February 1939 the major work must have been all but completed for Mr Boxall is petitioning the council for additional payments for laying out paths which had not been agreed in the original tender. The Housing Committee agreed to allow paths to be extended from each entrance gate to the road kerb and to pay Mr Boxall for this work. The original design of the estate did not allow for any footpaths to be laid adjacent to the highway and all verges were to be put down to turf. It would appear that the Committee considered footpaths to be an unnecessary expense when the tenants could use a perfectly good and traffic free road upon which to walk.

The Rural District Council minutes do not record the completion of the first phase of the Hampers Green development though we do know that the present numbers 13 to 36 were fully tenanted before the outbreak of war, and the second phase of numbers 1 to 12 and 37 to 44 had been awarded to Saunders (Contractors) Ltd in June 1939. Over the coming years there would be many alterations to the estate and the properties. After all the first cottages had no electricity installed as the RDC were unable to agree with the electricity company the cost of laying a supply to Hampers Green. Lighting was gas and then only downstairs. Upstairs it was candles or oil lamps, unusual for new properties even in 1939. The estate would eventually have footpaths constructed and the road which was originally concrete would be overlaid with tarmac. In September 1940 31 tenants signed a petition calling upon the RDC to treat the concrete road so as to make it less conspicuous to enemy aircraft. True to form the Housing Committee chose not to take any action regarding the petition and it would be much later before the tarring work was carried out.

It would be another ten years before the last phase of the Hampers Green development was completed, families still taking up tenancies of new properties in 1950. Clearly the war years had made any sort of construction difficult not least because of the shortage of labour and materials. However, with the influx of refugees from Europe and the destruction caused by the bombing of the major cities the housing at Hampers Green would prove all the more necessary. In the years following 1945 The Green, as it became known developed into a close-knit community from which many of Petworth's successful organisations evolved. Hampers Green Drama Group would eventually become Petworth Players and for many years The Green could regularly muster a half decent football team with Dickie Taylor from number 14 as coach. Bonfire night on the common was celebrated as well as anywhere and it would

attract revellers from the rest of the town. Every major celebration from VE Day to The Golden Jubilee has been celebrated here. As the years went by the large families for which Hampers Green was known have grown up and now the number of children on the estate is only a small part of what it was. The estate is certainly a quieter place now but sadly it is also lacking the community spirit enjoyed by residents of the 50s and 60s. Most of the Polish families who moved in from the camp just up the road have dispersed throughout the district leaving just a few of the original refugee families, recognisable only by their surnames but remembered for their important role in developing the community. Of the original tenants of the first phase only Reg Withers lives in the same house that he moved into. What is surprising is that so many of the families or their descendants have remained in the town. Just glancing down the list below almost every surname is still well known in the town and gives some hope for the continuity of many of the old Petworth families.

Here is a list compiled by Peter Baigent in 1999 of the original tenants of numbers 13 to 36. It is not conclusive and may have errors in which case I would welcome any further information.

- |                                          |                                                 |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 13. ?                                    | 25. Hunt                                        |
| 14. Richard Taylor (Little Dick)         | 26. Hill (the Salter brother of below moved in) |
| 15. Wallace                              | 27. Salter                                      |
| 16. Carver                               | 28. Pottington                                  |
| 17. Shane                                | 29. Standing                                    |
| 18. Bushby                               | 30. Duncton                                     |
| 19. Talman                               | 31. Carter                                      |
| 20. Stoner                               | 32. Smith                                       |
| 21. Hamilton                             | 33. Humphries                                   |
| 22. Coombes                              | 34. Withers                                     |
| 23. Baigent                              | 35. ?                                           |
| 24. Johnson (then Hill from 26 moved in) | 36. Charman (then Sopp)                         |

Miles Costello

## On not driving Mr Eden

Although I now live in Bognor and have done so for nearly twenty years, I was born at the shop in Saddler's Row that is now Baskervilles, and ended up sleeping in that same bedroom in which I had been born. Apart from a spell of National Service in the Navy and a period of a few years when, with my parents living in the shop, I had a house in Billingshurst and came in every day, I was in constant contact with the shop until I retired. In the late 1930s I went to Miss Botting's little private school in East Street opposite the old Post Office, but I hadn't been there more than a year when she gave up - small private schools did tend to come and go - and my mother said, "Let him rough-it for a while" and sent me to the Boys' School in North Street. Despite my mother's words, I settled in happily enough. I was about eleven

when my parents decided to pay for me to go to Midhurst Grammar School. It was 1939. In fact the summer holiday was considerably extended because we had a letter from the headmaster to say that because Lady Margaret's School from London were evacuating to Midhurst, preparation was being made for their reception. I didn't realise but it was a time of great change at Midhurst; Mr Lucas, the new headmaster, having some very "progressive" ideas as compared with his long-serving predecessor, the Rev Heald. Midhurst still operated a six day week with school on Saturday morning and would continue with this well after the war. The school was concentrated essentially in the old building, consisting of an assembly hall with a long corridor leading off. Offices and classrooms ran off the corridor. At the north end was a detached swimming pool and the laboratories stood at a right angle to the main building. Whether to accommodate the evacuees, who came to the school afternoons only, or as part of the new regime, or, perhaps, both, afternoons were given over to "activities" such as sport, debating or gardening. A fair number of boys came from Petworth on the two-hourly service bus. If you missed it, there wasn't another one for two hours. I was lucky: my grandmother lived in Midhurst and if I missed the bus home I could go and see her. Meals were in the old building with some of us going next door to eat with Mrs Barnes, then as now an eating place, although the cuisine is Indian. It certainly wasn't then! It must have been some private arrangement between Mrs Barnes and the school authorities. Many of the staff were long-standing and many would continue for generations, "Bogey" Brown, "Bear" Stuck, "Little Bill" Williams, "Jacko" Jackson. Mr Lucas was always "Luke" - unofficially of course. I think he insisted on "Sir" being dropped as a form of address and masters being called "Mr .....". Every master had his nickname and once given it would pass from generation to generation.

A particular memory is of the Boys' school bombing at Petworth. It's not simply that we lost friends in the tragedy but because I am convinced that we actually heard the impact at Midhurst. Perhaps to reassure us, the teacher said, not realising, of course, the immediate significance of the noise, "This sort of thing's happening all the time in Russia." It was only when the Petworth bus boys were called in to see Mr Lucas that we learned something of what had happened. We were all sent home for the day. I still think we actually heard the bomb at Midhurst. Depending on how and what the bomb strikes the sound and vibration can travel long distances, or, of course, hardly register even locally.

My parents ran what is now Baskerville Antiques as a tobacconist and hairdresser. As is often the case with long-established businesses, the beginnings were somewhat haphazard. My mother was always known as Pim (not, as sometimes written, Pym), although her real name was Emma. No one called her Emma and probably few realised that was her real name. Some say the name "Pim" came originally from a pimple she once had on her face but this may well be made up to explain the nickname. The fact is, I don't know how she got the name. She had had a boy friend at the beginning of the 1914-1918 war, I don't know what happened to him, perhaps he was, like so many others, killed. Anyway, he drove a van for the Royal Mail. Very state of the art for the time. When he was about to be called up he took Pim out for an hour in the van and showed her how to drive it (no tests in those days). With the Royal Mail desperate for drivers, Mother applied and was taken on - something that would have been out

of the question before the war. The trouble was that, when the men came back from the war, the Royal Mail delivery once more became an exclusively male province.

My mother had acquired a taste for driving and decided to start a taxi service. She was then living with her Purser sisters at the Red Lion in New Street, keeping the hired car in the Red Lion yard. She operated a tiny office in a room to the side of the present premises in Saddlers Row, the main shop being occupied by the old-established saddler, Mr Weekes. However old-established, saddlery was giving way before the onslaught of the motor car and Mr Weekes was giving up. The shop premises were to be sold and Mother would have to give up the office. There was a way out though: if she really wanted to keep the office, she'd have to buy the shop as well with the living accommodation. Houses were no easier then than they are now and Mother had just married. It was decided that the newly-weds would somehow buy the whole thing. But what on earth to do with the shop? They really only wanted the old office premises. My mother had an uncle who had been a tobacconist for years and he suggested that they use the shop as a tobacconist. "After all," he said, "You won't need any qualification and I can recommend you to firms I've always dealt with." And so the tobacconist business began. I'm not sure where the hairdressing came from. My parents didn't know anything about hairdressing and had to hire someone to do it. He was an Italian, Mr Pizzarro, or some name like that and he didn't last long. Then came the "temporary" appointment of "Wally" Ball, originally from Peterborough. He may well have come in reply to an advertisement in a trade journal. He would continue at "Harpers" for generations. He was trained as a barber, but not in ladies' hairdressing, but he could use curling tongs. From this it was but a short step to ladies' hairdressing. A basin was put in and a second private room utilised. It was about the time when permanent waving was coming in and the new room cum salon was simply too low for the "chandelier" type of permanent waver - something of the height of a standard lamp with a distinctive shallow dome on top. This time the big sitting-room was commandeered and the smaller room reverted, in theory at least, to private use. I say "in theory" because the trouble was that when we became busy we had to shampoo then move clients back up into the old room to go under the drier. No one would put up with that now.

Meanwhile the taxi business was continuing. Few people had private cars between the wars and we employed two drivers with Dad filling in as well. Sometimes Lord Leconfield would write for a car but as he had his own chauffeur I was never really sure why. Anyway he did. He always insisted on being driven by a man. Conversely Lady Leconfield would sometimes ring for a car but she always insisted on being driven by a woman - my mother of course. It's difficult to believe now, but the police had little motorised transport then, only the occasional two-seater M.G. sports car. They used to ring Mum up if they needed her - sometimes in the middle of the night. I suppose for the usual run of work they used bicycles. The coming of the war in 1939 more or less knocked out the taxi business - you simply couldn't get petrol and the drivers had left for the war. Dad was just too old for active service but, like everyone else, had to contribute to the war effort, whether it be A.R.P., Home Guard, Observer Corps or whatever. Dad was a uniformed War Reserve Policeman - a Special Constable. Once I remember Supt. Dobson ringing up and saying, "Have you still got your car? And have you any petrol? I've a job for you. I want you to take Anthony Eden to London. He's got to be

in Parliament urgently." It appeared that Eden had been in the area and that his car had broken down. Dad hustled about and duly turned up only to find that Eden had lost patience and set off for London driven by a woman policeman in one of the M.G. sports cars. It didn't mean the trip to London was off - far from it. Eden had left his detective behind, so Dad had to go up to London with him. On the way back he travelled



*One of Pim Harper's "fleet" of cars 1920s.*

in solitary splendour with an otherwise empty car and the police sports car in front as an escort. Cars could travel at some speed even then. It was nothing to cruise at 60 m.p.h. and, of course, there was so much less on the road.

In fact the taxi business didn't survive the war. My parents sold the remaining hire car and, for a long time, didn't have a car at all! I broke the deadlock in the end by buying myself a car - I never fancied motor-bikes. I couldn't yet drive, however, and the irony was that Dad had to ask me if he could borrow the car when he wanted to go out. Looking back on regular work before the war, Mr Allison, the Leconfield Estate water foreman, didn't drive and Dad had some kind of contract with the Leconfield Estate to take him out to jobs. "Bring some boots with you," Mr Allison would say with his gruff Yorkshire accent. He expected Dad to accompany him across the fields, not simply sit in the car and wait for him to come back. We'd often buy big cars that were being replaced by the local gentry. One I remember came from the Bartelot family at Stopham. We used them for weddings and funerals which were a staple of our trade.

Before the 1914 war, Mother had worked as a barmaid at the Maltsters Arms at Findon, some branch of the Purser family ran the pub. The Pursers were a widely dispersed family locally and closely connected with another extensive local family, the Wakefords, who among other things, had the Glebe Farm on the Horsham Road. "Gus" Wakeford, delivered milk and was known as the "Midnight Milkman" because it was often twelve o'clock in the morning before he got round. Perhaps "Noon Milkman" would have been more appropriate. It wasn't so much that he stopped and talked to customers, although no doubt he did, it was more that because of family connections he had first to go up to Bennyfold to collect the milk.

Obviously our position in Saddlers Row meant a continuing awareness of the Swan Hotel, perhaps at its most prosperous in that period between the wars. Once someone who worked for the Sun Insurance Company was staying at the Swan and looked across to the Sun symbol on our building. He could see that it carried a low number, a sure sign of age. When

he got back to the office, he checked and found it was indeed a very early sign. There was too the Washington stone, now set into the building at street level. The Washington family lived in Saddlers Row for a century or more and are recorded as carriers. Sometimes visitors from the United States enquire about a possible connection with George Washington, but I am not sure that any concrete evidence has emerged either way.

At the end of the war I was in the Scouts. Mr Stevenson, the former scoutmaster, had been killed in the school bombing in 1942 and Miss Joyce Dobson, daughter of the local police superintendent, had taken over, and very efficient and enthusiastic she was too. Several times she even took us camping for a summer week in the New Forest. It was the only holiday most of us would have, even if it was a kind of "working" holiday. We'd spend our time "brashing" in the forest, that is trimming trees with an axe. For V.E. day we had a free afternoon and went up into the Gog Woods for a celebratory camp at our own special spot. We each took our own meal. We left for home quite late. Coming back over the Sugar Knob I could see the church spire lit up. Stanley Collins from the Tillington Road cinema had contrived to get the projector light from the Regal turned, like a searchlight, on the steeple of St Mary's. When I arrived back in the Square, people were dancing and had a bit of a fire going in the Square itself. Someone broke into the store where waste paper was kept on the corner of Park Road and got the fire really going. In an instant a large notice-board that stood in the garden of the Westminster bank, where, in later years, the Christmas tree would be put, joined the blaze and people were standing on the great blazing board and trying to stop others getting off. Things were becoming rather wild but Dad like the other reserve constables had instructions not to intervene unless matters became seriously out of hand. Even so we removed our own shop fascia just in case.

Reg Harper was talking to John Harper and the Editor.

## The day Emma drove a mail van

In her youth Pim Purser was an unusual and a remarkable girl, and although she is now Mrs. Emma Harper, of 125, Whyke Road, Chichester, and is 74 years old she still retains the spirit and liveliness of the days when she was a girl.

There cannot be many women born at the end of the 19th Century who had such an exciting youth as Pim Purser.

They called her Pim because when she was little she had a pimple on her nose. ("The pimple went but the name stayed on.")

The time was 1916. Britain was at war. The situation had gone from bad to worse and from all over the country men were being called up for service. There was one man who used to drive a mail van from Petworth to Petersfield, but he too had to go to fight for his country, and someone had to be found to replace him.

"I had never driven before. But he took me out about twice and gave me a lesson — and then I took over."

### WAS SHE THE FIRST?

Mrs. Harper has never heard of another woman who drove mail vans as early as this. Possibly she was the first. But it was still an experience that she loved, the work was very exciting and even possibly dangerous although he never realized this.

"They told me I was brave, but I didn't think so, I was never afraid."

At 8 every evening she left her home in Petworth, where her father kept a public house, and drove her van along the road to Petersfield collecting the mail bags from Midhurst, Rogate, and Harting on the way.

She used to get to Petersfield — about 17 miles in all — at about 10 p.m. and after unloading her mail would sleep until about 3 a.m. when she drove home again. Then she slept in the morning, looked after her van, and started again the next evening.

Seven days a week she worked, and they paid her a man's wage — but it was still only £2 10s.

### GERMAN MAIL

Later Mrs. Harper was switched to another delivery, and she worked in the Pulborough and Storrington area. One of her duties then was to deliver mail to the German prisoners of war at Sandgate.

"The things they used to send the prisoners," she said. "Old black bread and I don't know what — all the way from Germany."

Another of her tasks was deliveries to a Canadian camp at Bramshott.

"Some days I would be going up there and they would know at the post office that the Canadians pay was in the mail — and they got paid a lot you know — and the boys would say to me: "Careful, girl, don't let anything happen today. Take care, Pim'."

### A GUN — JUST IN CASE

"I had to look after my van. I didn't know anything about it when I started, but I gradually picked it up. We had to crank them you know — no self-starters or anything. And sometimes my van used to backfire something awful. It threw me right over once, and I broke my arm."

The van was lit by oil lamps at night which used to blow out, and she had to get out and light them again.

Asked if she had run into any trouble she said: "I used to keep a gun, you know. I shouldn't really have had one, but I always carried it with me in the van. It was an old antique one and I never had to fire it, but I think I would have known how to if I had to defend myself."

When the war was over the original driver came back and took up his post again. But Mrs. Harper could not give up her motoring. First she saved up money, and then for £250 she bought a new T-Ford and ran a taxi service in Petworth.

That was the first taxi service in the area. Business thrived and she kept it going until her marriage to Mr. Tom Harper in 1926, by which time she owned three cars.

### POLICE WORK

In Petworth after the war the police did not have any cars, and "Pim" used to be called out at any time of the day or night to help the police in their work.

"There used to be an old bell on the Town Hall at Petworth, and when there was a fire or anything they would ring it. Out I went, and I would drive the superintendent.

"I could tell you some stories. There was the time when the Super was chasing a

prisoner. It was in the early hours of the morning and we went over the Downs looking for him. We ended up near Chichester and we joined up with the Chichester police.

"We were near a pub, and the Super went in and woke up the landlord and I went in with all the men and we had beer and bread and cheese.

"Then there was the time when I was out with the Super, and we were chasing poachers. He caught them, but he said to me: "Pim," he said, 'you mustn't come too close. You wait with the car down the road — you might hear some awful language.' Oh, it was fun."

#### FOND OF RACING

Mrs. Harper admits to being very fond of the races. Something which was instilled in her when she was young, for she used to drive everyone in the taxi to the races.

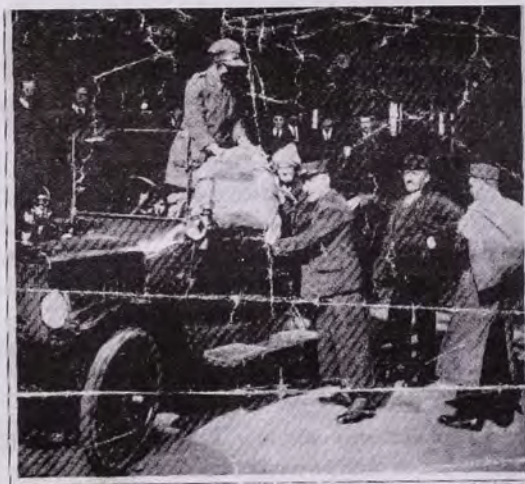
"I went to Ascot and Goodwood, and to the Derby at Epsom, and to an old course that used to be at Gatwick. I used to be booked up a year in advance.

"Once I had three old toffs from Petworth in the car and we were going to Ascot when we had a puncture. They got so worked up, but I told them it would take me ten minutes to change the tyre and I did it."

After their marriage, Mrs. Harper and her husband started a hairdressing and tobacconist business in Petworth, which Mr. Harper still runs. His wife taught him to drive when they were courting, but she has had to give it up recently because her insurance company will not insure anyone over 70.

She is still very interested in cars and loves going out with her husband. Mr. Harper travels to Petworth every day since they moved to Chichester last year, but Mrs. Harper has now retired.

Reprinted from the *Observer* July 8<sup>th</sup> 1966.



BRINGING THE MAILS FROM PETWORTH (SUSSEX) TO THE G.P.O.  
MISS PURSER, AN EX-SERVICE DRIVER.

Our intrepid printer will do his best with this important photograph. It is from a badly damaged, unidentified magazine cutting dated October 4<sup>th</sup> 1919. An explanatory caption reads: "*As soon as the seriousness of the great railway strike was realized by the general public, there was a rush of volunteers to help. Crowds of ex-officers, ex-soldiers, and ex-service women-drivers, amongst others, besieged the offices from which appeals for assistance had been issued. Volunteer crews manned many express trains on the railways.*"

*Pim Purser standing with mail bag.*

## Sub-post-offices in Petworth District in 1910

Petworth is no longer a head post-office but time was when it administered a network of some twenty-five sub-offices running east to Washington, north to Northchapel, south to Sutton and west to Lodsworth. Possibly Petworth's exalted position owed a little to the town's historic importance, a little, too, to deference to Lord Leconfield. A somewhat sparsely filled "Establishment Book" was recently loaned to me and reflects the situation in 1910, and particularly the implementation of a new superannuation scheme for postmen. Today it plays a descendant on a world that has almost totally disappeared. Postmen delivered on foot, by cycle or on horseback, and sub-postmasters would also deliver, while, in most cases, pursuing another occupation - often grocer or shop-keeper. A sub-office might share a single room in a private house, manned by family members - and part of a tiny village shop. It will be seen from the list that the three largest sub-offices, Pulborough, Storrington and Fittleworth were effectively full time - the smallest office, judging from the salary, was Byworth. For reference I have compared the 1910 list with Kelly's Directories for 1907 and 1918. What, in modern terms, is extraordinary is the continuity. Sometimes a postmaster has died and his widow takes over, but by 1918 comparatively few sub-offices had changed hands. Each entry testifies to a living village and each will have its own story, now largely forgotten. Perhaps the two best surviving descriptions are those of Lurgashall in H.S. Root's *View of Edwardian Lurgashall* (Window Press 2000) and Ethel Goatcher of Duncton in PSM 52. If anyone has anything that would fill out the bare bones of the list, I would be interested.



*Tillington Post Office a hundred years ago. Presumably the postmaster is William Street. This P. rare postcard courtesy of Mr and Mrs Knox, Hangleton.*

## SUB-POST-OFFICES PETWORTH DISTRICT 1910

SUB OFFICE	NAME	OCCUPATION	APPOINTED	SALARY	KELLYS DIRECTORY (IF DIFFERENT) 1907	KELLYS DIRECTORY (IF DIFFERENT) 1918
Ashington	William Carter Chappell	Grocer	21/11/07	46-5-0	George Duke	Robert Christie
Balls Cross	Thomas Payne	Farmer	15/10/71	18-10-0		
Bury	Philip Grinsted	Grocer	02/03/98	41-0-0		
Byworth	John Sadler	Painter	01/10/06	11-5-0		
Codmore Hill	Charles John Whippe	Grocer	01/01/09	13-5-0	Edwin Carn	Frederick Dudman
Coldwaltham	George Sayers Roberts	Grocer	12/10/96	26-0-0		Mrs Ellen Roberts
Fittleworth	Stanley Hart	No private occupation	01/01/92	82-10-0		
Graftham	Frederick Pescod	Grocer	29/07/71	57-10-0		
Lavington	George Challen	Labourer	28/10/76	18-15-0		Not found
Lodsworth	Emma Harriet Arkell	Stationer	11/11/09	49-5-0	Edward Arkell	John Talbot
Lurgashall	Elizabeth Farthing	General shopkeeper	19/05/84	15-10-0		Leonard Farthing
Mare Hill	Amelia Fanny Willmer	General shopkeeper	01/03/05	22-15-0		
Cootham	William Laker	General shopkeeper	01/01/90	24-10-0		Frederick Mustow
Dunton	Thomas Herbert Goatcher	Gardener	28/01/03	27-10-0		
Northchapel	George Pullen	Painter and general shopkeeper	08/02/98	31-0-0		
Nutbourne	Nellie Gocher	Grocer	14/02/07	26-5-0	Mrs Henry Gocher	
Pulborough	Frederick Walter Waller	Postmaster	01/07/09	150-0-0	William Woolley	
Stopham	Walter Warner	Baker	01/10/94	16-5-0		
Storrington	Emma Child	No private occupation	02/12/01	117-0-0		
Sutton	William Neal Harwood	General shopkeeper	20/04/83	37-5-0		William Hare
Thakeham	Samuel Everden	Grocer	09/10/00	29-5-0		
Tillington	Mary Street	Stationer	05/05/08	33-10-0	William Street	
Washington	Ernest George Floate	Grocer	06/05/91	45-5-0		
Watersfield	Martha Pennicott	General shopkeeper	06/05/03	22-0-0		Frederick Pennicott
West Chiltington	Benjamin Allam	Grocer	22/03/04	48-10-0	Arthur Wilkins	

## "OLD, RAMBLING, AND PEACEFUL"



"OLD, rambling, and peaceful" is Mr. Harold Roberts' description of Byworth, Petworth, where he made this sketch. To quote him further: "A village off the beaten track with an atmosphere of rural England which continues to be unspoiled by jerry-buildings and roaring motor traffic."

Byworth Post Office to the right. A picture from the West Sussex Gazette probably in the 1930s.

# An enquiry from Petersfield

To Mr. Peter Jerrome, Petworth

I have an interest in the postal history of Petersfield in Hampshire and in my collection of entires (letters) I have one written by George Daintrey to his father living at Petworth.

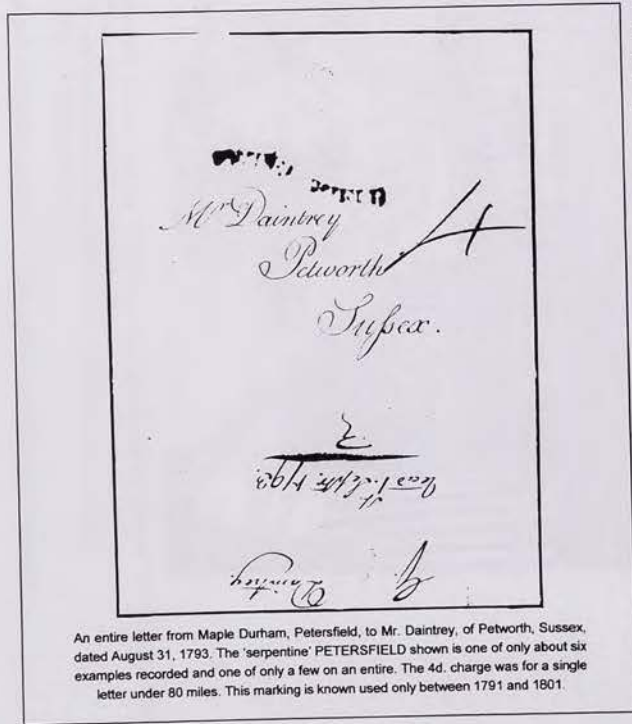
The letter is dated August 31, 1793 and (as can be seen from the photocopies) is beautifully written, attracted a postage rate of 4d. (the charge for a single sheet letter travelling under 80 miles) and sent from Maple Durham, near Petersfield.

Maple Durham is close to the village of Buriton, and from the letter it seems that young George was receiving his education from a Mr. Dusautoy at Maple Durham House, which was demolished in 1829.

Research on the Internet shows that the Daintrey family has long been connected with Petworth.

Was young George later to become the father of Edwin Daintrey, who was born in Petworth, and became a successful solicitor in Australia? Who was George's father?

If anyone can help me to unravel the history of this letter I would be most grateful.  
Thank you.



An entire letter from Maple Durham, Petersfield, to Mr. Daintrey, of Petworth, Sussex, dated August 31, 1793. The 'serpentine' PETERSFIELD shown is one of only about six examples recorded and one of only a few on an entire. The 4d. charge was for a single letter under 80 miles. This marking is known used only between 1791 and 1801.

David Allen (Petersfield)  
Email: (toscajoy@yahoo.co.uk)  
Telephone: 01730 261244

David Allen,  
Boundary Cottage,  
6 Garage Lane,  
Station Road,  
Petersfield,  
Hampshire GU32 3DE

Dear Papa

I should be much obliged to you  
to send me Homer, Xenophon, or Lucian, or all of  
them (if you have them), as Mr Dusautoy says it is  
time for me to begin them. I hope all Friends are well  
at home. Give my Duty to Mama and Love to my  
Sister. M<sup>r</sup> and M<sup>rs</sup> Dusautoy desire their Comps<sup>s</sup>,  
and I remain, Dear Papa,

Your dutiful Son,  
George Daintrey }  
Maple Durham }  
August 31<sup>st</sup> 1793.

TUESDAY December 13<sup>th</sup>

Paul Campion :

Mastermind – Secrets of the Black Chair



Known for his appearances on many different TV and Radio quizzes, Paul takes us behind the scenes at this most challenging quiz and other popular shows.

Admission £3.

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TUESDAY January 24<sup>th</sup>

"A hundred years after Trafalgar". Petworth in 1905.

Peter Jerrome. Slides.

Admission £2.

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THURSDAY February 24<sup>th</sup>

David Battie FRSA

"My unusual career"

David has appeared on the Antiques Roadshow since the first series in 1979 and makes numerous other radio and television programmes.

Admission £5.

N.B. This is a talk.

David will not be giving valuations.



And on FRIDAY 24<sup>th</sup> March

"Honour Thy Father and Thy Mother". The recollections of Lillian Hunt – details in December Magazine.

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**SUE RYDER CARE SHOP IN PETWORTH** would like to thank everyone who has supported the shop over its first ten years – customers, donors and volunteers.

Is there anyone who would like to work as a volunteer? Help on Friday and Saturday afternoons would be particularly welcome. Just pop into the shop for details.

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Members will be interested in the following course of lectures:

**English cathedrals and monasteries**

*Tutor: David Parsons*

Cathedrals are a major part of our architectural heritage and the remains of medieval monasteries are some of our most spectacular and important ruins. Not just picturesque, they illustrate the changing attitudes to religion and ritual over many centuries.

**Two separate courses:**

Time: Mondays 7-9pm Starts: 26 September 2005 Venue: Chichester College

For fees and to enrol ☎ venue on 01243 781424

Time: Wednesdays 10am-12noon Starts: 28 September 2005 Venue: Midhurst Methodist Church Hall

For fees and to enrol ☎ Midhurst and Petworth Adult Education on 01730 816683.





## PETWORTH SOCIETY ACTIVITIES SHEET

Autumn/Winter programme. Please keep for reference.

### PETWORTH FAIR SATURDAY 19TH NOVEMBER

WALKS Cars leave Petworth Car Park at 2.15

### SUNDAY September 25<sup>th</sup>

Miles' Dog's Grave walk.

### SUNDAY October 30<sup>th</sup>

Andy's "keep it close" walk.

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### ANNUAL DINNER:

TUESDAY September 6<sup>th</sup> - already fully booked. There is a waiting list. [Numbers limited to 88.]

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## BOOK SALES LECONFIELD HALL

2<sup>ND</sup> SATURDAY 10-4. Admission free.

**Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>**

**Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>**

**Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>**

**If you have books to donate please ring Peter 342562 or Miles 343227.**

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### MONTHLY MEETINGS:

LECONFIELD HALL 7.30. Refreshments. Raffle. Prices as indicated.

### THURSDAY October 20<sup>th</sup>

Mel Rees (as Anthony Mann)

"From where I sit."

Author of W.H. Smith's Book of the Month, in addition to *"From Where I Sit"*, Mel has also written *"Further thoughts of Chairman Mann"*, *"As I was saying"*, and a novel *"The Club"*. All are published by the Trouser Press.

"Grumpy Old Men meets Victor Meldrew."

"Courageous enough to write what most of us think." (*Croydon Advertiser*).

"Rude, insensitive, self-opinionated, sexist and very very funny." (*Wandsworth Borough News*).

"I don't know why he doesn't get a proper job." (Author's mother).

Admission £3.

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### THURSDAY November 24<sup>th</sup>

"The Bosun's Call"

Ken Stephens and Fiona Murfitt entertain. Songs with a Sussex maritime slant.

Admission £3.

## A Petworth Bell-founder

Among papers at Petworth House there has recently come to light a copy of the inscriptions on the six bells of Petworth church which were taken down in 1827 and exchanged for eight bells. The latter were recast in 1924. The inscriptions read:-

- 1<sup>st</sup> Bell - Altho I am but small I will be heard  
above them all, 1767. (Thos. Swaine fecit.)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> " - T.S. 1767
- 3<sup>rd</sup> " - M<sup>r</sup> Thos. Lickfield. Thos. Swaine made me in 1767
- 4<sup>th</sup> " - Thos. Swaine made us all six in 1767 at Petworth
- 5<sup>th</sup> " - Thos. Swaine made us all, 1767. The Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr John Wickins, Rector of this Parish
- 6<sup>th</sup> " - M<sup>r</sup> Edwd. Arnop and M<sup>r</sup> Hampton of Moore, Churchwardens. 1767

[Published in Petworth Parish Magazine in 1958]

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## New Members

- |                     |                                                     |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Mr. & Mrs. K. Bates | 43 Parkway, New Addington, Surrey, CR0 OJA.         |
| Mrs. M. Dormer      | 14 Orchard Close, Petworth, GU28 OSA.               |
| Mr. & Mrs A. French | 34 Kilmersdon Road, Haydon, Radstock, Bath BA3 3QN. |
| Mr. M. Ralph        | 327 High Street, Petworth.                          |
| Mrs. J. Scammell    | Scammell's Garage, Balls Cross, Petworth GU28 9JP.  |
| Mr. R.T. Sneller    | Old Rectory Barn, Tillington.                       |
| Mr. M. Terry        | 8 Lund House, Wyndham Road, Petworth, GU28 OEL.     |
| Miss T. Williams    | Keytes, Middle Street, Petworth, GU28 OBE.          |

