

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY
Magazine



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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 £15.00. Further information may be obtained from any of the following:

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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

See Chairman's notes.

Chairman's Notes

As you will see from Keith's AGM report we have two new committee members, Mrs Carol Finch and Mrs Patricia Turland. They were elected at the meeting. There was already one vacant place while Mrs Betty Hodson had decided to retire. When Betty joined us in 1984 she had already been with us for so long that her becoming a committee member was something of an afterthought. I remarked at the time. "Anyone who goes to anything the Society does will know Betty and it is unlikely that anyone will be very surprised that we have coopted her. Perhaps the only surprise is that we haven't put her on the committee before." Betty was a member of that definitive committee that masterminded the first Toronto Scottish visit in 1985. Although she will be much missed, I know that she is anxious to keep up her links with us.

For health reasons John Crocombe feels he cannot continue as town crier – at least on a regular basis. There is no question of allowing the office to lapse. As I see it we have two alternatives: either a straight replacement – much the tidier solution – or a kind of college of criers consisting of those who have done the job once and who would, when called upon, do the job again. I await suggestions.

Apologies, as every year, to those who have missed out on the annual dinner. With a fixed number of 88 disappointment seems inevitable and this year's list is even longer than last year's. The Charleston trip will be over by the time you read this but is already fully booked. Time perhaps to think of next year's excursions.

Two general points. First lorries. I imagine that most members will applaud a movement toward width limits, always assuming that irregular but necessary deliveries to local businesses can continue. The point recently made that width is not the whole problem, excessive length being at least a comparable and compounding difficulty, is clearly a valid one.

Lastly a cloud on the horizon, and one that is probably not going to pass over. Opinions on the desirability or otherwise of a South Downs National Park have always been divided. What opens a very disturbing perspective is the suggestion that Midhurst and Petworth be perched on the edge of the National Park. As I write in mid-July these are early days and I await the response of the Parish Council. Clearly as a Society we do have to be very concerned. No doubt by the time you read this, our course of action may be a little clearer.

Peter 20th July

Confessions of a town crier

Having thought it wiser to relinquish my role as town crier for medical reasons, it has been suggested that I commit a few thoughts to print for the magazine. I first got involved when

visiting a pensioner neighbour, who said, "I have found just the job for you," he had seen the advert put out by Peter Jerrome. Peter and I had a chat and it went on from there.

We agreed that the message was the thing and the image was not so important! This meant that, "No uniform", was agreed and that I would do whatever was asked with certain restrictions. I was very happy with the no regalia aspect as I often broke off whatever I was doing just to make an announcement or two and changing into fancy gear would have made the job much more onerous. Also I would often make the same announcement several times during the day. The present clothes I wear for serious occasions just happened to belong to me – they were charity shop anyway – except the deerstalker hat. That was purchased from Allans with a voucher that I won at some raffle, the twinning meal if I remember correctly.

Arch Knight would "cry" anything asked of him, for a shilling, ranging from lost pets to important announcements. I decided that charitable announcements would be free but for any commercial ones I would take a donation for a charity, if offered. The only seriously important function of the crier is the opening of Petworth fair in November. A modern innovation, it is now very much part and parcel of the fair. The crier used also to collect rent from the stallholders, a perk which has now lapsed.

The bulk of the announcements have been just that, fetes, meetings and other events. It was always difficult to judge the effect because at any one time, the population of the Square is very variable. A good time used to be to address the queue for the W.I. market, which is now discontinued. I never did any market research to see if anybody really attended anything as a result of my efforts. My most spectacular "cry" was when, unusually, my wife and I looked on teletext on New Year's Day and saw Peter's name in lights for his honour! I had a lot of fun with that announcement.

Potentially, the most embarrassing was when I came back to Petworth, from being a camp cook, halfway through the week, bringing several bins of material for my compost heaps on my allotment, near the Godsmark abode. I was dressed in a filthy top and Bermuda shorts. Pearl comes out to announce the birth of a new grandchild and could I "cry" it. I knew I would not be back to Petworth until the weekend so I retrieved the bell from my house and went as I was to the Square, and then did my bit for her celebration! I imagined that there would only be people who knew me in the Square and would not care too much about the unconventional attire. As I finished my announcement, I heard a huge cheer and looked up to see the Square half full of tourists, American by their accents. I have no idea from whence they came but guess there is some town in the States, whose image of Petworth is somewhat strange particularly with regard to the town crier especially as cameras were clicking. Peter and I had agreed that the message was the important thing rather than the messenger. This was before the sash was available!

Mr Golden, chairman of the millennium committee map makers was very kind when he pointed out my image on the map, that it was not a good likeness. I suspect many other people think it is!

One of the funnier cries, suggested by the man who used to sweep the pavements, was on April the first, one year. I often used to pass the time of day with him, and he came up with the idea that a new E.U. regulation came into force on that day. The message ended up as

"As from today, all dog dirt deposits, deposited on the pavement would be D.N.A. tested and the suspect dog depositors would also be tested and if found to be the offender would be summarily destroyed and their owners fined." I doubt it made any difference to the turd world we have to negotiate occasionally, but it was a laugh.

The office of Town Crier actually belongs to the Petworth Society and the bell is in Peter's care. Any member of the society is eligible to perform and all help would be appreciated. John Crocombe CAN still walk and talk at the same time, contrary to popular belief, but walking and shouting could possibly have unintended consequences. The sash will fit anybody so do not be shy in coming forth and having a go. The worst is a sore throat and I do recommend an Olbas pastille before you start.

John Crocombe

"The Special Nature of the West Weald Landscape"

How many people know that a very special environment lies beyond the town of Petworth, one of both national and international importance for the wildlife that it contains?

Indeed this rural landscape is so significant as to count on a dedicated initiative to conserve and improve it further: the West Weald Landscape Project (WWLP), made up of a partnership of government organisations, local authorities and voluntary bodies that includes the Sussex Wildlife Trust (SWT) where the Project is based. Through this project we seek to encourage more integrated management of a healthy and enhanced landscape for both people and nature over a large area of the Low Weald, stretching from Petworth in the south almost as far as Godalming in Surrey. This area constitutes one of the finest lowland landscapes in Britain.

What makes the West Weald so special? We asked ourselves this question as part of our wide-ranging research into the area's natural environment to document its assets, identify issues and potential conflicts, and set a baseline from which future changes can be assessed. Covering natural elements as diverse as air and water quality, light pollution and tranquillity, and management, nature conservation and recreation, our study delves deep in to this historic medieval landscape, much of which has survived through to the present day with its old hamlets, small fields, diverse hedgerows and wealth of ancient woodland.

The natural resources of the West Weald are fortunately in relatively good condition, with low levels of air pollution away from the main roads and towns and generally good water quality in the main rivers of the Lod, Kird and Loxwood Stream. These rivers feed the River Arun furthermore, an important source of water for a much larger population in Sussex.

The wildlife interest of our landscape is exceptional, given the extent of woodland (much of which has endured for many centuries) that covers a third of the project area to make it one of the best wooded parts of Britain. Such ancient natural forest landscapes are now rare

in lowland areas of the UK and Western Europe, many having been replaced by urban areas, cleared for intensive agriculture and forestry, or exploited by heavy industry. The woodlands present are home to a variety of rare species, such as the Pearl-bordered Fritillary butterfly whose populations have been reduced to just a handful of sites in the whole of the South East. Less colourful and visible wildlife includes the rare Barbastelle bat, which serves as a "flagship" species to conserve the wider landscape as it ranges widely from its mature woodland roosts in the SWT nature reserves of Ebernoe Common and The Mens, out along hedgerow networks to the wet grasslands where it feeds.

The West Weald is notable for more than its trees and winged wildlife, however, acting as an island of tranquillity for people in the built-up south east, where it offers good access to natural greenspace despite the sparse rural population present and limited number of visitors that it receives.

Farming is essential to maintaining and strengthening the rural character of a healthy countryside, with much scope for landowners to benefit further from the advice on land management for nature available through the WWLP and from the grants available from government bodies which have not been fully capitalised on as yet. The delivery of a diverse range of goods and services by West Weald landowners for the public good becomes ever more important in the face of challenges such as climate change, pressure on water resources, declining water quality, and habitat loss furthermore. The West Weald Landscape Project exists to support local people to take action to conserve, enhance and enjoy their remarkable environment.

A summary version of our research report "The State of the West Weald's Natural Environment 2006" is available to download from the project website www.westweald.org.uk, or alternatively paper copies may be requested (by email to richhoworth@sussexwt.org.uk or phone 01273 497538). The WWLP project manager Rich Howorth will be presenting the work of the project, and natural environment study in particular, to members of The Petworth Society on the evening of Tuesday 16th October at 7.30pm at the Leconfield Hall.

Book Review: Michael Oakland: *A Richer Dust - the Lurgashall War Memorial*

Pre-1914 Lurgashall has its own memorial in H.S. Roots' beautifully written recollections.¹ Roots had attended the village school where his father was headmaster. After more than a decade at Lurgashall, the family moved to another school, at Caterham. By this time, Roots, somewhat sickly as a child, had grown up in the company of the village boys. He would return just the once, many years later, to stand before the war memorial and reflect on the loss of his friends. He himself had known the trenches, but survived.

¹ *A View of Edwardian Lurgashall* (Window Press 2000)

In *A Richer Dust*, Michael Oakland, formerly parish clerk at Lurgashall, has tried to come to some sort of terms with the names on the war memorial. In the nature of things he has had to be parochial, but this only intensifies the consciousness of the impact of an alien outside world on that enclosed "idyll" that Roots portrays. Idyll is a curious word for it would seem appropriate only from the perspective of the war years and after. In truth Roots' world was a harsh unforgiving environment. The war not only shattered Roots' vision: it shattered that of the old rural England. The very narrowness of Oakland's focus makes the book the more powerful in that Lurgashall symbolises the experience of a generation and that experience becomes the microcosm of a suffering which in its totality is simply unimaginable.

I can only admire the diligence of Michael's research: if you are going to tackle a subject like this, you owe it to those who died to do it properly. Michael has done this and more; he has been faithful to those he honours. Reading the book right through (and I did) is an extraordinary experience that transcends the purely local. In a sense it is a tragic sequel to Roots' minor masterpiece. Hoopshavers, carters, gardeners, unmarried and family men, sucked in by the desire for a change, peer pressure, conscience. The social divide, and it was a chasm, would be swept aside in death, Lurgashall had its wealthy elite too.

Inevitably the 1914-1918 war dominates through the sheer scale of the carnage, but the later conflict receives its full due. Graves and inscriptions are carefully documented and illustrated and the background military history explained. So much travel, so much research, attractively presented in colour. At the Book Sale we see so much dross, ephemeral novels, writers cashing in on their temporary status as "personalities", T.V. spin-offs. Here, and unheralded, is a real book.

One last thought. To an extent time has covered over the old wounds; it would never heal them. It is difficult now for Michael to put flesh on these bones. A book like this done in the 1920s would have been so different. But could it have been done? Surely the searing pain would have made it impossible.

P.

A Richer Dust is available at Methvens for £14.50, or direct from Michael Oakland at Mill Farm Cottage, Lurgashall. Please allow £2 for postage and packing. Michael will give a presentation to the Petworth Society in early November.

The 33rd Annual General Meeting – Quest and Inquest

Appropriately, an Annual General Meeting will be in the nature of an inquest on what has happened. Then, after the business, Peter, our Chairman led us 'In quest of the Window Press'.

Business first, then. Mr Andy Henderson, the Treasurer, was able to give a rosy account of the finances, despite annual subscriptions no longer covering the costs of producing the

quarterly magazine. The continued success of monthly book sales provided the balance and as long as that level of income was maintained, subscriptions would not need to rise. Between 65 and 70 new members had been recruited as a result of a publicity campaign using fliers.

Some changes on the committee. Mrs Betty Hodson stood down after 23 years and Peter expressed the appreciation of all for her loyal and valued service. The maximum number of 15 was restored by the election of Mrs Carol Finch and Mrs Pat Turland, who are particularly interested in the Fair Day activities.

In his Chairman's Report, Peter said that with 698 subscriptions, many representing couples, the Society was probably as successful numerically as it had ever been. It had to be admitted that the Magazine was the main reason for joining. There had been fewer and shorter walks, but outings were proving popular. Many members had thought that the season of monthly meetings had been the best ever. Petworth Fair had been a triumph after the debacle of 2005 when the Harris brothers Southdowns Gallopers ride had suffered an arson attack. Generous support in cash, time and skill had ensured restoration, when it had been feared that the future of the Fair and of the Harris brothers' living was under threat.

As is the custom now, the report was illustrated by slides of the year's activities, ending with a video presentation of the Petworth Town Band playing 'Sussex by the Sea' on the revolving Gallopers to the accompaniment of the cheering crowd on Fair Day. We thank Ian and Pearl Godsmark and Dani, their granddaughter, not only for that part of the evening but also for the work throughout the year which makes it possible.

So much for the inquest. Then came the quest. Although most present were familiar with the publications of the Window Press, it came as a surprise to realise how many there have been, starting with the enormously popular 'Tales of Old Petworth', followed by 'Cloakbag and Common Purse', five collections of Garland photographs and then the limited editions on local historical subject (Florence Rapley's diaries, the Loxwood Dependants, the history of Ebernoe, etc.) culminating in the two big volumes of the history of Petworth. There was even a little-known book of Peter's own poetry.

The background stories made this an interesting insight into the ups and downs of private publishing and a useful reminder of the contribution of the Window Press in preserving local history.

Peter tends to play down the appeal of the Annual General Meeting, partly because we cannot invite a special speaker for the shorter and indeterminate time available after the business, but that is a pity, because it's never dull and even has its surprises. The photographic record is entertaining as well as a valuable resource and the evening deserves a bigger audience.

KCT

Mile's bound-treading walk, May 20th

Over the road bridge at Coultershaw, past Badgers, then right into Kilsham Lane to park just short of the bridge. The overwhelming green of a mid-May when the rain has finally ended a long dry spell. It had been scratch dry in Stag Park in April. Keith points out a young elm in the hedgerow, leaves beginning to curl. The disease gives the young trees a chance to grow but is otherwise relentless. We remember the absent David Pollard, a Rogation walk institution. He'd missed one when he was away, possibly, we thought, one more. Keith read the Rogation poem, very much now part of the ritual. "All the way, to the meadows of Cathay Bristol Town to Wetherby."

Along the river bank. This walk is very largely on private land. A submersible pump purrs away, serving, no doubt, acres of fleece-covered salad. Plugs planted in grooves. What would the old labourers have thought of that? Bluebells are already in bloated seedpod, the nettles still fresh and green. Late spring is a fragile season, over almost before you realise it's upon you. We look for the Society's boundary plaque. It's gone. A trophy perhaps in someone's W.C. To cross at the "new" bridge over the river, JT, DW, old familiar initials with others on the metalwork. Then on up the river to Perryfields, another "new" bridge and the old bridge rusting away in the field. Who remembers the old settlement here? I certainly do, watching the demolition from a distance, clouds of dust rising into the air. It seems a long time now. Miles says there were kennels here a hundred years ago. This time the Society plaque is still on the bridge, quite faded, but still there.

On the opposite bank now. Jean's Scottish deerhounds make for a watering hole; the river's shallow here and the spot protected from the cows whose continued attentions will threaten the river bed. Time for the latter to recover with barbed wire and healing gravel and shingle. Blackberries already in flower and the red campion we'd missed in Stag Park. Yellow pimpernel, stitchwort, speedwell. Now along the railway track. Those unbelievable brick bridges, suffering but with some slight signs of remedial work. Or so we thought. Back through the farmyard and up the lane. Not too far, very familiar territory for me. But that overwhelming green conquers all.

P.

Ian's "Shambolic" walk. July 15th

On the face of it nothing to suggest the unusual. Some rain forecast for Sunday afternoon. Nothing to deter the resolute, except perhaps the title "Ian's shambolic expedition". Why the shambolic? Simple enough. When the last quarter's Activities Sheet was in preparation I asked Ian where we were going. "Haven't the faintest," was his nonchalant reply. "Seems a bit of a shambles," I replied and the title stuck. "Actually," Ian confided at the Saturday Book Sale. "It's going to be Ambersham Common and the heather's beautiful now. I've just been round to see."



Station Road July 15th
 Photograph by Pearl Godsmark.

Dani are waiting in the car. It's getting worse. Two cars have run into one another at the Tillington Road roundabout. Driving is virtually out of the question. Now great hailstones are crashing against the car wind screen. Ten minutes. There's no let-up. No walk. A proud record succumbs.

The tradition of walks goes back a good thirty years. We began to write them up for the Magazine in the late 1980's but the beginnings were already lost to memory. As early as March 1983 I wrote, "The Sunday walk on Lavington Common was well-attended with between 40 and 50 members taking part. The weather was kind as it happened but whoever heard of a Petworth Society walk being called off because of the weather?" Quite. And a walk in January? Those were the days.

Three o'clock and the sun is shining. Silt on the pavements and sandbags at the door of the Star. July 15th? Nothing happened but in a sense everything happened.

P.

Greenwich and Crossness. A Society Epic

The coach picks its way through the streets of South London. It's Sunday morning and the shops are largely closed. Endless façades, fast food, hair styling, Persian cuisine, ethnic grocery, to let. Kennington, Camberwell, New Cross, all the long way east to Greenwich. The domain of the 163 bus. Parliament Hill Fields to Plumstead. Does it still run? A crew would make just the two journeys in a shift. Even turn at Camden Town if they were hopelessly late.

Once I left a Syriac grammar on the bus and had to go to New Cross garage to retrieve it. Not too many of those in the course of a year, I suspect. I'm day-dreaming. Why are South London pigeons small and coal black?

Greenwich. The Royal Naval School. It's huge. Enough here for half a dozen visits. We're divided into two parties and lose touch with the others almost completely. Our guide is an Italian lady with a marvellous accent and matching sense of humour. She once informed a party of American visitors that Francis Drake had circumcised the globe, did it just the once. No, not Francis Drake, our guide. We couldn't begin to take things in as a whole, just strands and snippets. Nelson's body being preserved in brandy at sea. When it came back most of the brandy had disappeared. And the funeral, like nothing before or since. Trafalgar had laid the foundation of British sea-power. We were shown the skittle alley. The old sailors at the hospital had not been great readers but they did like a game of skittles. And the bowls, huge and made of lignum vitae, the hardest wood in the world. Ken knocked over all but one skittle, I couldn't even keep the bowl on course. Our guide showed us grooves in the stone window sill where the surgeons had sharpened their knives. This had formally been the amputation room

Time to meet Samuel Pepys, taking time off from pursuing the alluring Mrs. Bagwell to share some of his experiences. The crowd surging forward on that day in January 1649 to catch drops of blood from an anointed king. Or that numbing fear of plague, or fire drops in the smoking air. Two great disasters. God's judgement. But on what? The execution of a king? Or the recall of his son? Hardly both.

On to the chapel. A service just concluded. The huge painting of a shipwrecked Saint Paul. Appropriate enough in this naval context. And the viper? No vipers in Malta now. Their venom is said to have gone into the tongues of fishermen's wives. So said our guide. Twelve apostles and two evangelists all represented in the chapel. Why only two evangelists? Or perhaps I heard wrong. No time to enquire. The finest baroque organ in England. But we must be outside to see the Greenwich globe fall. It's one o'clock exactly. Lunch - but quick. We're due elsewhere.

Back across South London to Crossness. The cathedral of ironwork. So much so that our genial guide reported one particular lady (not of our party) as insisting on being shown the font. The largest rotative beam engines in the world. Transported in pieces from Birmingham on the waterways and put up on site. And the finest cast ironwork in London. The aim was to save London from cholera and typhoid; before 1865 sewage had been discharged directly into the Thames.

Faced with something on so vast a scale, it was possible only to cling to the personal. The school for workers' children that survived until 1939 - those who grew up living on the site - in the housing provided - still keeping in touch. The four Home Guard members killed in the school by a flying bomb. The ironwork listed Grade I, the building itself Grade I star, sharing the distinction with Tower Bridge. We're late again. Our jovial hosts working well past closing time. Back down the M25. A spontaneous burst of applause for Andy (and Annette). Oh yes, a Society epic.

P.

“The red potatoes darken green”

Early summer at 346

June is advancing and the Museum garden slowly venturing into flower. *Salvia* “Forest Fire” in the larger bed. I would have liked the old-fashioned variety we had two years ago, but it wasn’t available this year. Poor germination apparently. White *ageratum* at the front of the plot, then a mixture of *calendula*, *nicotiana*, *antirrhinum* and African marigold in the side border.

The Museum goes its own way, as impervious to direction as a small shop or a Westie. They’re my personal comparisons, you could invent your own. Eleven years on and the sense of novelty is gone; the Museum simply takes its turn with other town attractions. No special treatment. It can be very busy; it can be slack. Logical attendance patterns? Particular days? A will of the wisp.

The red potatoes darken green in the kitchen handbowl - metal not plastic of course - and a wooden handle. We may claim to arrest the passage of time, but even that crucial compass point of 1910 is not immune. 86 years have already hardened into 97. The high-backed chair with the tumbling block pattern still sits unrepaired in the sewing room. A kind of victory over time? Or you might say it’s upholstery not sewing.

As in 1910 so in 2007 a rare incident can punctuate the slow succession of the days. A pigeon has been reported at a Museum window. Time for action. Illogically perhaps I envisage it as being downstairs. It isn’t of course. Pressed hard against the glass pane its feet are standing on that same wide window sill on which Agnes Phelan sat in 1919 watching a band pass in the street below and briefly putting to one side her book *Tam O’Shanter*. A pigeon is a very solid presence in a confined space but fortunately it’s as keen to escape as I am to see it off. Some debris in the hearth and some chewed leaves from the Christmas cactus. Mrs. Cummings coming home from a day at the great house would have found a lot more damage.

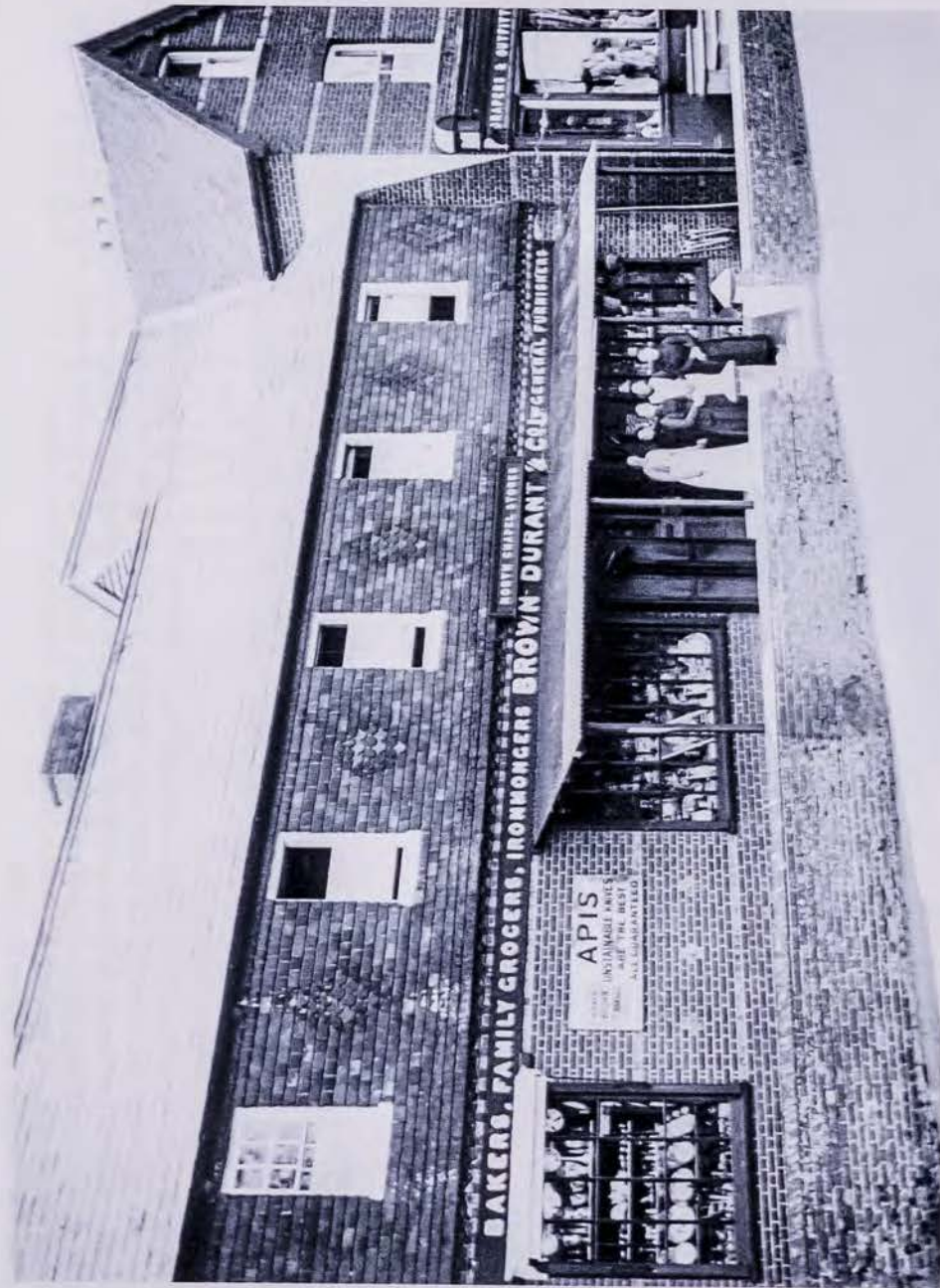
..... Full sun at the evening Museum. High Street’s quiet compared with Pound Street. In 1910 a car would attract a gaggle of spectators - not now. Into the garden. There’s a smoke trail in a clear blue sky. In 1910? 346 really needs an air exclusion zone. It’s a fragile illusion. Chives, marjoram, sage, bay, curled and flat-leaved parsley. Time for watering but not with that big metal can: there’s a lighter one in green plastic in the W.C. Yes, a fragile illusion.

P.



“A LURGASHALL DISTRICT WORTHY

Here is Octavius James Madgwick, who lives out in the Gospel Green district, almost on the Sussex-Surrey border. Aged 71, he was christened Octavius because he was the 8th child. His father was a Fernhurst farmer, but the family moved to Lurgashall when Octavius was still very young. Before he was 11 years old young Octavius was driving a plough on his father’s farm. For 48 years he worked at Park Farm, Lurgashall, and while there married - on 11/- per week! He has lived the whole of his long life in the Lurgashall district, and may now be found in an old Sussex cottage near Gospel Green.”
A Garland character study from the 1930s.



Northchapel Stores in the early century. c.1910? Photographer not known.

“Bananes de Martinique” - the June book sale

That quiet period after lunch. The Hall windows open, the eternal line of traffic easing southbound through the Square. By half-past one it's picking up again, but we're in the shadow of the three o'clock closure. The pick of the books has long gone, frenetic has given way to leisurely. Have we enough empty boxes to take away what's left? Our customers have gone off with a fair few. The Penguin section's a wreck. The last remnants of the £1 table will probably go through largely to the end now. A few will be reincarnated as £1s at the July sale, the rest simply merge with the ordinary stock. A child's running about, another screams from a push-chair. Well, we're a Book Sale not a library. Early morning they simply wouldn't have made it through the crush. The fiction table's ebbed a few feet and we had brought up a good twenty boxes as reserve stock. I look under the counter, “Bananes de Martinique”, one of the boxes soon to be filled.

Survivors. In a sense all the books here are survivors of some sort. - from fêtes, clearances, coffee mornings, unsold stock. If something's worth saving, the chances are we'll find it a new home. And there's the flotsam that goes with older books, never, ever, money as I have observed before. Here's an Eastern National Omnibus ticket. 8^d return. On the reverse, “Look out in the Black-out.” It must have survived for over sixty years. What story could it tell? It remains, of course, silent.

If we've regressed to the 1940s, here's another survivor, very badly battered and from 1947. An unusual translation of Alain-Fournier's *Le Grand Meaulnes*.¹ Spine in tatters, illustrated dust jacket vanished. So battered it would let the side down if we put

it out for sale. But *Le Grand Meaulnes* - my favourite book? I just have to save it. “A” level French at Midhurst so long ago. Vera Lucas starting us off with *Le Grand Meaulnes* and then *La Princesse de Clèves*. Neither anything to do with the set syllabus but what an introduction. I re-read them both at intervals. Alain-Fournier's beginning is like nothing else I know. Of course Fournier couldn't quite keep it up, reality had to encroach on the mystery. Perhaps that's just the whole point. As a reflective Meaulnes says later, “I am convinced, now, that when I discovered the nameless manor, I was at the height of what stands for perfection and pure motive in anyone's heart, a height I shall never reach again. In death alone, as I once wrote to you, I may hope to find again the beauty of that day.”²

Alain-Fournier was killed in the 1914-18 war.

P.

¹ *The Wanderer* translated by Françoise de Lisle. Illustrated by John Minton, Paul Elek. 1947. The more usual translation is *The Lost Domain* by Frank Davison

² Page 158-9

Editor's Postbag

An enquiry

Fortuinstraat 88, 8310 Brugge, Belgium

Dear Sir,

I am trying to find information on the life and background of aircraftman 1st Class Percy Maurice Yeatman, originally of 520 Upperton, Petworth and son of Harry Percy and Selina Yeatman, age 20 in August 1917, service No F115882, Royal Naval Air Service.

On the night of 25th August 1917 seven Handley Page 0/100 bombers set off from the aerodrome at Coudekerque in France to attack St Denis Westrem aerodrom near Ghent in Belgium. HP 0/100 No 3137 was crewed by H.H. Booth, S.A Canning and P.M. Yeatman. The plane came down at the village of Ursel Chaffuay between Bruges and Ghent and near the hamlet of Keigat and the public house "Het Hoog Prijkel". I was born at Ursel and know the crash site well.

For our local history magazine and for the Belgian History Aviation Association I would appreciate any information, and enclose an eyewitness report from 1917 by Gerard Vandeviere then town clerk. Aircraftman Yeatman is buried in the Cement House cemetery.

Yours truly

Leo Bral

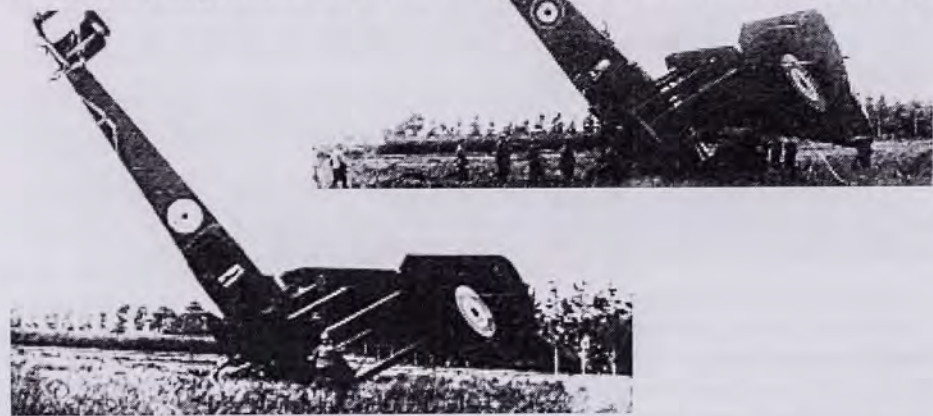
[I have slightly modified Mr Bral's original letter which was sent to Andrew Howard as Chairman of the Parish Council. Gerard Vandeviere's report follows with photographs. Ed.]

26th August 1917

Last night a French aeroplane was shot down here over "t Hogg Prijkel". "Shot down" I say, but if the word is well-chosen I dare not assert, for actually no one here knows exactly how it happened. Anyway, there cannot be any doubt about the craft having been damaged or being low on fuel; it is absolutely certain it had to come down, tearing off the top of a pear-tree while making its final turn. But the rest of the story? Remains secret. The early morning church service hadn't even commenced yet when I already had heard the news; rumours like that spread like wildfire and of course at about noon I went and had a look myself.

Sure enough, I was far from the first man to arrive. On top of the hill, at the "Hoog Prijkel", along the lane, in the surrounding woods and on that side of the meadow where the aeroplane lay - or rather: "stood" - the place swarmed with people who had come from everywhere to sate their curiosity. An unexpected opportunity indeed of which our countryfolk took full advantage. Everyone kept hanging around, kept on looking and chattering, tirelessly contemplating and discussing this huge wondrous thing with its four propellers, its gigantic wings and its colossal belly and tail, in all its cumbersome heaviness standing there, nose downwards, tail in the air, as if planted into the ground. The weird contraption was laying at a couple of hundred yards right in front of the "Hoog Prijkel" inn with its lower propeller blades buried in the ground up to the shaft; it must have taken a terrible bumping and those who were inside wouldn't have gotten away unscathed either. Who will ever find out what became of the airmen? No one heard or saw them.

The first one to be on the spot was Edward Miel, the innkeeper. He was forced by the Germans - who had also come rushing to the spot - to crawl into the plane before them; however, there was nobody left inside and unless the airmen themselves show up, no man will be able to tell anything about it, except ...lies. Meanwhile, German mechanics are very busy dismantling the whole lot. They will load everything on trucks and that will be the end of the beautiful thing.



(as written down by Gerard VANDEVEIRE)

Christine Chaundler (see Magazine 128)

Peter,

You will recall my request in the June magazine for any information regarding Christine Chaundler the author who lived at Fittleworth until her death in 1972. I was doubtful if I would have any response and so was very pleased when just a couple of days after the magazine was published I had already received several calls from people who knew her. I say knew her in the loosest sense for it appears that many locals knew of her but as it turned out very few would be able to offer up more than the briefest details of her life.

Fortunately one of the callers was Diana Alden who it turned out is Christine's niece. Diana and her husband Dick live in Fittleworth little more than a stone's throw from Fleet Cottage which Christine had built when she first moved to the village during the 1920s. The cottage stands in the woods beneath Wyncombe Hill, visible from the road, it is surrounded by mature trees no doubt planted by Christine in an attempt to secure her privacy. Diana says such was her desire for seclusion that she became obsessed with the notion that the local Rector was spying upon her with binoculars. You see at that time there were no other properties between Fleet Garage at one end of The Fleet and the Rectory at the other, a considerable distance indeed. Christine loved nature and would often be seen feeding the squirrels and other animals that came to the cottage.

Born at Biggleswade in 1887 she attended schools in Caversham and Wales before settling down with her mother in a house at Shottermill near Haslemere. It seems likely that

it was her mother's eventual death that prompted her to move to Fittleworth where despite her preference for animals over humans she became popular with the village children to whom she would regularly hand out small gifts at Christmas. A prolific author, Christine published some 53 girl's school stories between 1915 and 1947, and in 1924 alone she released 6 books. Added to this were a number of boy's stories written under a pseudonym and other non-fiction books on various subjects. Several of her books were serialized for radio and read on 'Listen with Mother' the long-running children's programme. With this prodigious literary output it is not surprising that Diana recalls a light burning at Fleet Cottage in the early hours of the morning with her aunt still busy writing.

It is unclear whether Christine had any real friends in the village, she was certainly close to her niece and according to Diana she was friendly with Gertrude Jennings the playwright and Mr Padwick the artist both of whom lived in Fittleworth.

The irony is that despite her huge popularity and world-wide success as an author we know so very little about the woman herself. However, I cannot help but think that considering her desire for privacy Christine would not have wanted it any other way.

Miles Costello

Don Simpson writes:

Peter,

The press photograph and article regarding the Boy's School pipe band reminds me of my own involvement in 1937/38. (Soc. Magazine 128.)

The pipes were made in four sizes - treble, alto, tenor and base. The treble was about 1" diameter by 12" long, also 1½ x 15, tenor 2 x 20 and base 3 x 30. The latter was a little difficult to play due to the span required of small hands to cover the holes.

The boy in the centre of the photo appears to be holding a treble, to his left an alto and tenor and on the table part of a base. I believe Mr Stevenson would mark the various holes to be made and we were left to file the holes until the pipe was properly tuned.

The only outing I remember was a school in Bosham for a concert, transport possibly by Mr Roberts' coach from Pound Garage.

My one regret of this time is that we were not taught to read music. Scores were transposed to number 1 - 8 with what we called "halfnotes" written as 5/2, 3/2 etc. These numbers are so ingrained that I can still remember some tunes today.

Apart from his interest in music Mr Stevenson was also a keen gardener and it seemed to me that most afternoons were spent either practising with the pipes or in the school allotment in the Horsham Road.

Following the school bombing I was given a tenor pipe which had been recovered from the rubble, this proved to be one that I had made and painted. In later years I put it in the props box of the Dramatic Society from where it sadly disappeared.

Tillington and Muscovy

On the south wall inside Tillington Church is a brass in memory of Henry Stiles, Gent., who died in the City of Moscow, 1711, and left £50 to the poor of Tillington parish; also of Thomas his brother, a merchant, who died in 1713 and added £50, its interest to be spent on bread for the poor of the parish. They were the sons of Richard and Jane Stiles, of Tillington.

So says their memorial. What was Henry doing in Moscow, far off and exotic? "Gent." short for "Gentleman" implies a person of affluence, but not an owner of landed estate; often a member of the professions such as the law or medicine. Russia, till the reign of Peter the Great (1689-1725) was backward, insular, regarding trade as a sideline only; it relied on foreigners' know-how and actions. Moscow was the centre of commerce and old ways; Peter disliked it, and had St. Petersburg built on the Baltic, from 1703 (construction began to be noticeable from 1709). In the 1720s, Peter brought in many trading rules. Law is an unlikely profession for an Englishman in Russia, but medicine or architecture were more promising. Peter wanted Russia to become civilised, i.e. Westernised, fast.

Note that the brass does not say Henry was a merchant (though he could have been - on retirement, he could style himself "Gent.") If he was, he would run exports or imports or both, on his own account or perhaps for a syndicate. The London Muscovy Company, formed in 1555, had the Tsar's blessing, but overdid its trading and was restricted from 1667; it could have sent Henry to Moscow. His age is not stated on the brass. Nor does it say that Thomas was in Moscow; but it implies that he was - two brothers together. As for their parents, they were not Tillington-born, but had settled there. Even in the early 18th century, Tillington attracted the affluent and genteel, as it still does.

Jeremy Godwin.

Six Feet and More, in Petworth – Part I

I came from the North: through the leafy rides of Berkshire, and into the jungle which is Guildford. Few directional signs for the traveller heading South, so I have to rely on an innate sense to find the twists and turns which lead to the B3100. So with patience, to God-almighty-ing: and more problems getting into the correct lanes. Am I on the road for Milford? I hope so!

And that at last into the woodland scenes of West Sussex. Why is everyone whizzing around at 60 m.p.h. when I would much prefer to enjoy my time at 45? I find somewhere to pull aside and soak in the rural heaven of this special county.

Then it is as if I were in a different world. The lead into Petworth starts with a wall, a long wall which accompanies the route for over a mile right into the town. The wall and some ancient buildings crowd in on either side, narrowing the road and funnelling the traffic into a one-way system which could only work here. I see the church, I see the pubs, I see the antique shops, and I see the town-hall in the town square: it is all so typically English that I

am not surprised to find that the streets nestle against one corner of a huge stately house and park.

I drift into the car-park, turn off the engine, and close my eyes. It is all very strange, but I feel at home here! Born and bred in Cheshire, where I have lived almost seventy years, yet I feel at home in a place I have never even seen.

Normally in unknown places I ask: "What am I doing here?" This time I know, and it all starts with my family history. William Bourne married Charlotte (Foot(e) at Petworth on November 17th, 1799; their daughter Elizabeth was baptised in Petworth on July 29th, 1801. According to my family, Elizabeth married George Jekyll Newman in London on August 26th, 1828.

How did George, a Londoner, meet a girl from Petworth? I knew of Petworth House, it is in my National Trust Guide, and I had seen Turner's attractive paintings of the scene on my visits to the Tate Gallery in London. Something or someone was urging me to visit the place, so I sent for the Chichester and District Guide and booked into a local farm for a week. Now it has become like my second home!

Where to start? The local church of course: St Mary the Virgin. Welcoming and friendly on probably the highest part of the town, and attractive with the magnificent cherry trees, and yet a most curious mix on closer inspection. What has happened to it? I knew nothing of a spire when William married Charlotte, nor of a later one which was also unsuccessful. I ventured inside to try and imagine how it might have been, and I read all the memorials although I had no expectation of finding any Bournes or Foot(e)s. A walk around the graves also yielded no clues, because those of the early nineteenth century have become virtually illegible.

Chichester demanded a visit, not only for its own sake and the cathedral and precincts, but because I had learnt that there was the West Sussex Records Office. Record Offices should all be granted Saint's names: certainly the staff have the patience of Saints. With their help, and like hundreds of others, I was shown the rudiments of the parish-Register system. Using what little homework I had done, my search could begin!

Petworth Parish: Baptisms and Marriages, around 1800. Of the Bourne's I found only confirmation of William's marriage to Charlotte Foot, and Elizabeth's baptism. Of the Foot(e)s I found five other marriages and six baptisms (to which I owe the title of this work).

(to be continued)

Keith B. Newman

Solution to 128

Across

7 Ploughing, 8 Match, 10 Pandoras, 11 London, 12 Mens, 13 Embers, 17 Rotunda, 19 Bartons, 22 Walled, 24 Lane, 28 Cinema, 30 Laguerre, 31 Elgar, 32 Pier Glass.

Down

1 Glean, 2 Hurdle, 3 Chorused, 4 Aniseed, 5 Barn, 6 Actor, 9 Club, 14 Rut, 15 Box, 16 Inn, 18 Una, 20 Allegory, 21 Idyllic, 23 Loaf, 25 Needle, 26 Rifle, 27 Crest, 29 Eyas

Deborah's Rather Watery Crossword



Across

6 It's the end of the journey for the river Arun (13)

7 Town dominated by its castle (7)

9 Covering a considerable distance – like the Arun (7)

10 Lock on the Wey & Arun Canal (6)

12 J.K. ----- wrote about three men in a boat (and a dog!) (6)

15 The Arun's former name (7)

18 Riverside hamlet near Pulborough with church famous for its frescoes (7)

21 Tom barged into another ship between Fittleworth and Pulborough (7,6)

Down

1 Bridge support (4)

2 Be happy in the glade (4)

3 A stream (5)

4 A small piece of a plant – from the Petworth florist perhaps (5)

5 The Arun's source is just to the east of this market town (7)

7 The Arun's easterly neighbour (4)

8 Almost no-one here when the sun is at its hottest (4)

11 Murky river water has it (7)

13 Water plant (4)

14 Peak district village that famously endured the Great Plague (4)

16 Harvests (5)

17 Aromatic downland plant (5)

19 Like many plants which grow in the Arun valley (4)

20 Underwater plant (4)

“Martinack to Gemeaco,” pressed for a sailor 1793

“I am writing to inform you that I was pressed in March and ordered on board the said ship bound to the East Indies.” So Michael Beagent of Northchapel writing home to his parents on April 22nd, 1793. He is on board the Powerful. No doubt it would be some time before the letter arrived. Would the Beagent family, mother, father, brother and sister, be surprised? Relieved perhaps that he was still alive? Probably neither. They would have known of the press gang by local report: we may assume that Michael had been picked up in or near

Northchapel. We cannot know. He continues: "I am sorry to think that I had no opportunity of writing to you before we were ordered to sea." The *Boyn*, ninety-eight guns, as opposed to the *Powerful's* seventy-four, had come some distance out with them, but had returned to England. Michael's letter would come back with her. "Don't make your selve uneasy about it as I am in good health and verry happy." Michael seems to have been prepared to make the best of what, on the face of it, looks a pretty bad job.

The first voyage with the *Powerful* proved relatively trouble-free, the ship putting in at St. Helena having seized the French ship *Countess Trautmansdorff* returning from Pondicherry in India with a valuable cargo of bale goods. By October Michael is back in England but confined to Deal Hospital on the Kent coast: "I have had an affliction with a pain in my limbs ... but I am getting a good deal better." There is talk of peace and he hopes to be home soon. With wages and prize money still to come he will need half a guinea from home. Peter Biffin, a shoemaker who has worked in Lodsworth and in Petworth, is also in the hospital and informs Michael that an aunt at "Luggersale" has died. Michael trusts she will have remembered him in her will. As for the half guinea, if it is given in at the post office, the postmaster will tender a receipt and it will be forwarded to Deal.

Later in the month the money has arrived and Michael writes to say how pleased he is to hear of his younger brother's progress with the violin. His aunt has not, it appears, made any provision in her will, but with prize money and wages to come and the possibility that the French will surrender, if not to the English, then to the Austrians, he will be able to settle back into his "business". Unfortunately he does not say what this is. His health is much improved but some pain remains. In a last letter from Deal he tells his parents to wait until he knows his next ship before they try to contact him. Prize money, irrespective of wages, will be in the region of £130.

By the 12th August 1794, Michael is on Drake sloop in home waters. He hopes a former shipmate from Thursley will have brought news of him "but as for the bloody war I expect not to be home until next Christmas."

Another year on and Michael is still with the Drake but in the West Indies. Sailing on the 24th May with a large fleet the Drake had lost the other ships by the 28th and "made the best of our way by ourselves to Burbeados arriving exactly a month after leaving England." They then proceeded to Fort Royal at Martinack¹ before proceeding to Gemeaco.² On the way they happened on two French "private a tears" a brig and a schooner but after a skirmish lasting seven and three quarter hours lost them. Just the two men wounded.

By May 1796 Michael is off the island of Hispaniola and concerned at not having heard from home, several letters having gone unanswered. Once more there is talk of an end to hostilities, once more abortive. By June 1797 he is still in the West Indies based at Port Royal Island, Jamaica. He has heard nothing from home. He is in good health and anxious to know "the state of affairs of England ... I understand there is a change of ministry and hopes it will put an end to this tedious war." "Cruizing" off Cape Francios, the Drake had been chased by

¹ Martinique

² Jamaica

a French frigate but gave it the slip. Some days later roles were reversed. A French ship, about to be captured, hoisted her boats and sent all hands on shore having laid trains in all parts of the ship. "We had the pleasure of seeing her blow up on Sunday, the first day of May 1797."

This is Michael's final letter. Did he ever come home? By June 1797 it will have been some four years since he had been pressed. Of his family we know only what we can deduce from the letters. Violin playing and the ability to send half a guinea may suggest a certain status, as may Michael's hand, a good steady one even if spelling can be a little erratic. If he did come back to Northchapel, did he look back on the years in the navy as wasted - or did he take a more pragmatic view? As we have already said, Michael Beagent was someone who made the best of things in what must have been a challenging environment, at different times exciting, exotic, tedious or life-threatening.

P.

"Ten returns." The Window Press 1976-1990

Did I first meet Jonathan through George Garland? Probably not, but George was there somewhere. He usually was. It would be the early 1970s. At any rate George had what was then the unique copy of the *Tales of Old Petworth*, a tattered galley proof he had rescued years before from a precarious existence on the bar at the Angel Inn. Jonathan had a background in book production and wanted to try out his ideas, while I felt the *Tales* were a crucial entrée into earlier nineteenth century Petworth. As for George he was pleased at the prospect of the *Tales* being reprinted in his lifetime. He had for years fought a fairly lonely battle for the traditions of an older Petworth. Curious that John Osborn Greenfield, author of the *Tales*, should have at one time owned the Angel. The document's arrival there was, according to Garland, quite fortuitous.

And so the Window Press was born, brought into being for a single book. No hint of a progression. Why the "Window" Press? Jonathan's idea. The distinctive logo reflected a particular window in the Old Station Yard where Jonathan was living at the time. The new book would have black and white drawings by Jonathan and be softback. The front cover boasted a rustic standing at the Rotherbridge entrance to Hungers Lane, itself an integral part of the *Tales*. It was somewhat ironic that this typical "Garland" study was not by Garland himself, but a most uncharacteristic offering by his predecessor, Walter Kevis. The book appeared: George Garland was pleased. It sold. It was, after all, something quite new for Petworth. Another edition was called for. The first carried the misprint "anecodatal" in the Introduction, corrected in the second.

This first book introduced us fairly gently to a problem which would endure, distribution. Jonathan and I, in our quite different ways, liked book production. We did not particularly like selling books. Going "on the stump" didn't appeal to either of us. As it happened, with the *Tales* the problem didn't arise in any aggravated form: as a local book the *Tales* was something of a novelty. Bookshops, even other outlets, were keen enough to have

it, even at Midhurst, Haslemere, Billingshurst, Chichester and Horsham. As a general rule, the further we were from home territory the more difficult it became while in the end it simply didn't repay the time and effort. It was my last year teaching at East Grinstead. I left ten copies at a bookshop there, sale or return. I came back a few months later. Ten returns.

In our different ways Jonathan and I had achieved our aim. Perhaps as important, so had an ailing George Garland. He died in 1978. At this time the Petworth Society handwriting group (long since disbanded) had been formed to read documents written in the "secretary hand", standard for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A number of articles on individual subjects appeared in the Society Magazine at this time. Over a period, however, efforts became concentrated on the elemental struggle between succeeding Earls of Northumberland and their tenants over emparking and copyhold law. The extraordinary figure of William James of Upperton slowly materialised from centuries of neglect. If anything or anyone captured the very essence of Petworth's long past, then it was William James and his story. Jonathan was once more prepared to design and draw. The Window Press was at large again. Very much in the format of the *Tales, Cloakbag and Common Purse* would, we supposed, do much as its predecessor. We printed 2,000, a long run for a local book. I still have some - as fresh looking now as when they were delivered in 1979. The book was quite well received there was even some talk of it being translated into German. For all its interest however, it lacked the popular appeal of *Master Greenfield* and it was slow on its home base and very difficult away from it.

With George Garland so recently departed there was a resurgence of interest in his work. He had been taken for granted for too long. His negatives, to the number of some seventy thousand, had passed to the Record Office at Chichester. As Garland's executor I felt a selection of his work might be an appropriate memorial. The Record Office approved the idea and Jonathan and I went ahead. At this time there was no suggestion of a series of such books and I don't know why I took the decision to concentrate on one particular period of Garland's work as opposed to offering a general review. In retrospect it seems a curious decision. I suspect it was simply that the pictures from the 1920s interested me the most. They still do, although it is generally considered that Garland's quintessential work comes from the 1930s.

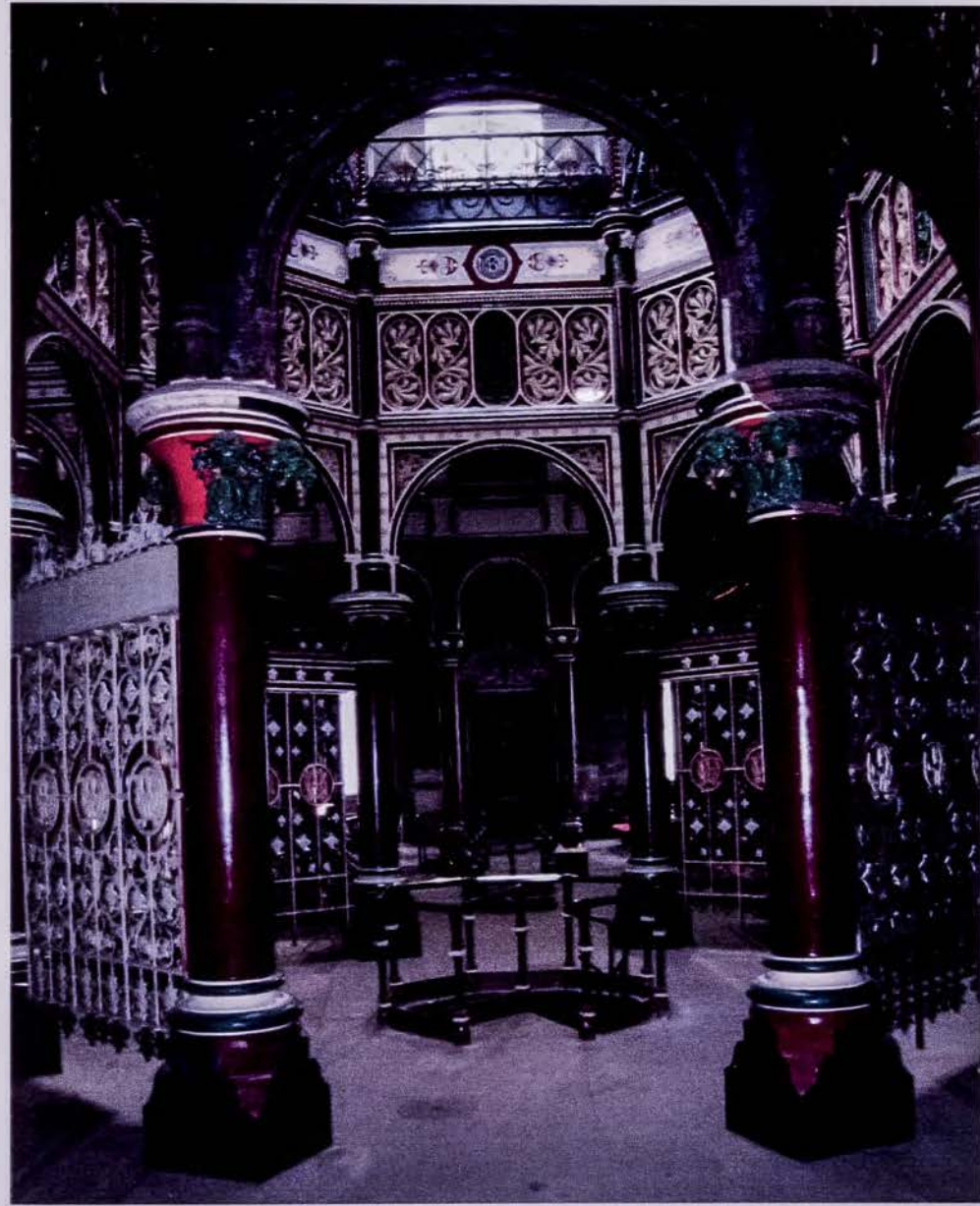
I soon found a difficulty inherent in the material. Garland's captioning ranged from the grudgingly informative to the laconic and from the laconic to the non-existent. "Haymaking June 1924" might be a median example. The more I thought, the more it seemed that here was an opportunity. By 1980 memory of the 1920s was receding fast but it was still available: I knew this from interviews for the Society Magazine. I selected a nucleus of photographs and set about talking to those who remembered. Sometimes two or three together, more often individuals. It soon became obvious that Garland's world of the 1920s was a very insular one, difficult to reinvisage let alone to recreate. Insular without a doubt. Those half-ubiquitous tractors contracted to a single Sanderson Model "G", or Mr. Balchin's "International" at Limbo. And those men weren't legion. Garland portrayed the same men again and again, Jack Townsend, Bill Lodge, Edward Cooper, Jack Luff. In truth it was a very enclosed world indeed.



This picture of "Round the Hills" may be by local artist Stanford Killick. Courtesy of Professor R. Potter.



*An encounter with Samuel Pepys. See "A Petworth Society epic." Greenwich June 24th.
Photograph by Pearl Godsmark.*



"The Cathedral of ironwork." Crossness June 24th. Photograph by Roger Newberry.



Nineteenth century High Street. Has anyone information on this painting?

And Garland himself. While, in time, he would become a Petworth institution, born in 1900, in the 1920s he was still a young man, still a peripheral figure. Never more so than when lurking on the perimeter of that aristocratic round of house parties, hunt meets, hare coursing meetings and point-to-points. Here were possible exclusives in sepia for *The Tatler*, *Queen*, *Eve* and other society magazines. "Lady X shares a joke with Colonel Y." Again we printed 2,000 copies. It was the golden age of the "book of old photographs." This time we had an outside appeal; narrow as was Garland's vision, it was emblematic of a whole period. In 1980 it was easier to get reviews, even perhaps an instant of television space. Paperback again. The title *Not submitted elsewhere* reflected Garland's early attempts at placement. "Perfect" (unstitched) binding. *Not submitted* seemed to strike a chord.

Perhaps we should try a second photograph book. People had liked *Not submitted*. We hadn't reckoned on more than one book. *Proud Petworth and Beyond* (1981) reprised the 1920s, but also featured the 1930s. If anything *Proud Petworth* had a more general appeal than its predecessor. It would however have been better sewn in sections; we were not to use perfect binding again. *Proud Petworth* has been out of print for many years now. *Petworth Time out of Mind* (1982) followed celebrating Petworth's pre-Garland heritage, then we returned to the 1920s with *Petworth: the Winds of Change* (1983), once more looking back to the 1920s. I still preferred that period. Some thought the title a little grandiose, but I saw Petworth as a microcosm of a larger world and I thought the title fair enough. We weren't making very much but we weren't losing either: there was enough for me to issue a book of my own poems *A Bag with Holes* (1982) echoing a bleak saying of Haggai. An attempt to combine the experience of running a small shop with an awareness of modern biblical scholarship. Did I expect a response? The odd review. Geoffrey Grigson at least was complimentary. An excursion into a world as insular as Garland's of the 1920s and as remote. I left it at that: I'd done what I wanted. I still have some copies.

Locally almost unnoticed among the succeeding Garland books was the most successful we ever did - in commercial terms at least. Alison Marshall made contact with us. Her father had been a noted early century photographer at Waterlooville and while by no means all his work had survived, there was sufficient for a conspectus. Herbert Marshall had specialised in postcard views and had also captured pictures of the first trams. Alison had wanted to produce such a book for years but it had eluded her. She ran an art and accessories shop in Waterlooville and had begun to ask her commercial travellers. Would Eyre and Spottiswoode be interested? Probably not, but there was a small local press at Petworth which seemed to specialise in books of this kind. Curiously the traveller had Petworth connections, rather distant by this time, and with the Angel! We liked Alison Marshall, she liked us and we agreed to do the book. I would undertake the introduction and captioning. Jonathan the layout and printing arrangements. I didn't know Waterlooville and the occasional visit didn't help much. Turn of the century Waterlooville was lost for ever while oral tradition, relatively prolific at Petworth, was reduced to a few scraps. *Waterlooville: a modern village* went through several printings and Alison was delighted. Copies aren't easy to find - recently one on e-bay in Singapore attracted a significant number of bids.

The Men with Laughter in their Hearts (1986) was followed by *Old and New, Teasing and True* (1988), the latter in hardback. We also reprinted *Tales* and *Not submitted* in hardback. The two photograph books marked something of a departure: the same attention to captioning but also a determined effort to represent Garland speaking for himself, using what remained of his longer captions and his newspaper features and articles. We had presented a representative selection of Garland's work between the wars and we felt it was probably time to move on. There did remain however a nagging question: Garland had worked on until the late 1960s. What of the oral tradition of those later pictures, to say nothing of that legion we had not used from between the wars? The negatives, chemically damaged as some were by inadequate original cleaning, were safe enough but their essential framework, the testimony of those who remembered, was being eaten away by time, as surely and as irrevocably as any chemical. It's not a question that has eased over the intervening years.

Sandwiched between the last two photograph books was *A Shepherd's Daughter* (1987), a step in a rather different direction. We'd always used the Press to publish our own work or something particularly close to us like the Garland or Kevis photographs or, by extension, those of Herbert Marshall. Evelyn Pentecost's life story didn't fall easily into any of these categories. Possibly Evelyn had her own family in mind originally; certainly it was an unassuming account, but the more convincing for its very lack of pretension. If Evelyn had made any effort to find a publisher it had been in vain. More likely she hadn't. I'd serialised a little in the Society Magazine and suggested it was worth publishing in book form. Not without a certain diffidence, Evelyn agreed. We printed 1500, hardback. At a distance of twenty years *A Shepherd's Daughter* remains a very attractive book. Evelyn was delighted. The book sold and there was a small profit. Evelyn wanted this to go to a hospice of her choice and it did. The book has been out of print for years and today a good copy in a dust jacket will probably cost you £20 - if you can find one.

Had the Window Press finally run its course? It was the late 1980s, over a decade since we had started. I was giving evening classes on Petworth history while the volume of recollection in the Society Magazine was growing with every issue. Ringing the changes on a local history theme I did a course on Petworth's ancient streets. The material was to hand - why not work it up into a kind of informal, peripatetic history? *Tread Lightly Here* (1990) is still in print. In practice I looked back to 1900 as a kind of compass point with 1990 as a coordinate. Given the increasing distance from 1900 and the changes since 1990, such fixed points look increasingly relative, not to say arbitrary. As to the Press itself we'd done more than we might reasonably have hoped but the new book had stretched finances. Time to reconsider. Time perhaps to stop.

(to be continued)

P.

"Croquet set in box"



"Dear Nellie,

Tillington Rectory, nr. Petworth

I shall be coming (sic) to Littlehampton on Thursday, 2nd Oct. I will arrive sometime about dinner time. I hope the weather will be nice. With love from Eunice, many thanks for letter."

The above postcard, was sent to Mrs. Low of 26, Gloucester Place, Littlehampton at some time before 1914. Unfortunately, as so often, the back of the postcard has been defaced by the removal of the stamp and with it the postmark.

Postcards, of course, at one time very much filled the place of the later telephone and, latterly, electronic mail. The difference is that those that survive, and they will be at most a tiny remnant of a once mighty host, have a permanence the other media lack. The picture side shows Tillington Rectory with a girl, possibly Eunice, possibly not. Servants did not usually assume a public role. At any rate, it would seem that such was Eunice's status and that the Thursday in question would be a rare free day for her. Through the postcard Eunice flits briefly before us. Perhaps she was at Tillington for years, perhaps months or even weeks.

A very rough context can be provided by an extraordinary survival, a complete professional inventory of the contents of Tillington Rectory,¹ prepared by William Burgess,

¹ The "Old Rectory" adjoining the church. The present rectory was built in the 1930s. Ern. Andrews recalled working on it (PSM 126)

a Chichester valuer, in November 1898 on the entry into the rectory of the Rev. G.F. Heather, the contents remaining the property of the Rev. George Martin Straffen, incumbent since 1876. Kelly's Directory for 1907 has the Rev. Edward Hayter Cox as curate-in-charge and it seems a reasonable assumption that Mr. Heather was fulfilling the same function, the Rev. Straffen being non-resident. Certainly he is not living in Tillington in 1907. The directory gives the very high valuation of £428 for the living, more than Petworth (£415) and Midhurst (£95). The living is in the gift of Lord Leconfield, and the garden remarkable for its noble trees. By 1907 Straffen's long incumbency was nearing its end. Florence Rapley in her diary (1909-1912) knows only his successor Mr. Goggs.

The inventory is minutely detailed and takes up a good portion of a thick black notebook measuring some nine inches by seven. Despite some damp staining and discolouration it remains in reasonable condition and perfectly legible. There are two hands: the great bulk is in the orthodox forward hand of Burgess himself, some subsidiary items in the upright hand of an assistant. The latter's spelling can be uncertain; certainly with book titles in the library.

The rectory was in no way cramped: the inventory listing items in dining room, drawing room, hall, lobby, store room (or library), dressing room, half-landing, box room, upstairs store room, landing, principal landing, bedroom over dining room, ante room, servants room, servants bedroom (no.2), attic, kitchen, "outside", and inner cellar. Some drawers and cupboards are noted as locked. Sometimes the location of keys is indicated, sometimes not. Notable is an inventory of individual books in the library running to some four pages, as is another four pages devoted to china and glass. The collection of books would appear a valuable one, even given that the Rev. Straffen may well have left at the Rectory only those books he did not use on a day to day basis. He seems to have been something of a scholar.²

Clearly Messrs Burgess and Heather had their work cut out. Their Odyssey through the inventory was certainly not cursory, and would be a matter of hours if not days. Amendments are made in Burgess' own hand. Clearly the two men are working to a previous list, rewritten by Burgess and to be ticked off by individual items. If the Rev. Cox may well have been the last curate-in-charge, it is likely enough that the Rev. Heather was not the first. On such matters the inventory is silent. It may be that we will return to the inventory in a later magazine, but given our initial concern with Eunice, we may be allowed to begin with "outside" and the servants' quarters, to put the cart before the horse if you like.

For "outside" Master Burgess is happy enough to list a few items and leave his assistant to note the rest. Here, amongst other items, we find a wooden fronted pigeon house, a pork tub, a brewing tub, a steamer, sundry garden tools and pea protectors, a wheelbarrow (sic), a 13" Ransome lawn mower and cover, two iron bound brewing tubs, a 9 tred (sic) library ladder with leather top, a broken 10 tread step ladder, a knife cleaning machine, a croquet set in a box and an 18" iron garden roller.³

While Eunice would no doubt have a passing acquaintance with the contents of

² Straffen had given the 1874 Hulsean Lectures at Cambridge on the biblical notion of sin

³ Probably to be seen in the left foreground of the postcard. It is possible that the gentleman in the background is the gardener

"outside" this would be essentially the preserve of the gardener. At this distance in time it is, of course, no longer possible to say whether items such as the pork tub were still in regular use or simply deposited outside as no longer needed.

More certainly part of Eunice's life would be the "servant room". Mr. Burgess is unfortunately somewhat sparing with his apostrophes. Predictably this room, the servant's bedroom (no. 2) and the attic contrast rather starkly in their fittings with the relative opulence of the rest of the house. The lack of a bed in the servants room suggests that this was used as a living cum rest room, while a bed in the attic suggests this may have been servant's bedroom no. 1, but this is not made clear by the inventory. This is the complete inventory for bedroom (no. 2).

	Annotations
3'0" stump ⁴ bedstead	
Flock mattress	
Coloured quilt	
2 cane seat chairs	1 defective seat
Painted chest 3 long drawers	
Painted tray top washstand (2 drawers)	
7 pieces ware	
Painted towel rail	
Beehive chair	
Painted dressing table with drawer	
Pair chintz curtains	

The servants room is also relatively austere:

	Annotations
Piece kidder ⁵ carpet	
2 cane seat chairs	
Deal linen chest with 2 drawers under	Locked
Painted washstand with undertop and drawer	
White ware jug and basin ⁶	
Mahogany chest 4 long drawers	
Swing frame dressing glass slate 16" x 12" with 2 drawers	
Painted beside cabinet	
Pair chintz curtains	
Japanned top bath	
Iron bound box	
Mahogany chest 3 long and 2 short drawers	1 handle missing

P.

⁴ Possibly I have misread this

⁵ Kidderminster

⁶ Not ticked and apparently not found by Messrs. Burgess and Heather

“Down the hill to meet Mrs. Bateson”

I was born in Upperton in the early years of the war, and although I now live at Bewdley in Worcestershire, and have done so for years, childhood memories are always with me. My husband and I come back quite often to Petworth to say with the Dunctons at Osiers. Janet and I have been friends since we were children. I went to Tillington school and for the first term I was the only girl in the reception class. The next term Janet arrived and there were two of us. Later in the year we had a few reinforcements. Tillington school, you'll gather from this was a very small school, dealing with pupils aged five to fifteen in two classrooms. An early event, a little hazy for me now, was a school production of the Pied Piper. It would certainly have involved a good deal of staff input. There's a Garland group photograph taken in the field inside the wall just down from the church. I would imagine that there was a performance at the Old Rectory, possibly for the summer fête, and another in the school itself, but I may well be wrong. Others may have a better memory and also recognise more people in the photograph. Remember that, in the late 1940s Tillington Village Hall had not been built.

The head teacher when I arrived was Miss Shuffleton with Miss Dabson taking the primary class. Those aged eight to fifteen were in Miss Shuffleton's class, divided into separate groups. Mrs. Page was school cook. We lived at 524 Upperton and Mrs. Page next door to us. We had a Leconfield Estate cottage but, as far as I know my father never worked for Lord Leconfield. He was a foreman bricklayer for Boxalls, the Tillington builders.

I loved being at Tillington school. Miss Shuffleton left after a year or two to be replaced by Mrs. Bateson who had been transferred from Ebernoe. Small village schools were losing ground. Whatever today's education theorists may say, we had a really varied education and one which never lost touch with the surrounding countryside. Mrs. Bateson came in on the bus from Petworth and we'd run down the road from the school to meet her. Winters were colder then - we had an old-fashioned solid fuel stove, probably a tortoise, but if it got really cold, we'd go home. Time to get out the sledges!

Mr. Gibson always appeared as Father Christmas, with cape and sack of presents and ringing his bell. Of course we all knew who it was, but that only added to the occasion. Granny Bryder lived next door to the school and in playtime we'd go into her for a drink of water. I've no idea why, the school must have had its own drinking water. One thing I remember is Ronnie Bryder running up to the school wall and saying, "The king's dead." Later the Coronation would be celebrated on the Sports Field at Upperton and we watched the great event on the school's single television.

The new County Secondary School was being built at Midhurst and the Tillington girls went there. In truth it's difficult to see where else we could have gone, Chichester and Horsham were effectively out of our reach and few parents had cars in those days. When I left Midhurst I went to work for a time at Masons Nursery on Codmore Hill at Pulborough. I have always loved plants.

Out of school there were the Brownies and the Guides, both presided over by Miss Sophie Mitford. Brownies do not camp, and every year we'd go to East Preston where a church hall was made available to us. Swimming, the beach, games on the sports field, we

loved every minute. When we moved on to the Guides, again under Miss Mitford, we might camp in the orchard at Manor of Dean. At Christmas we'd go carol singing round Tillington and Upperton, always ending up at Manor of Dean where there were chocolate truffles for us children and, no doubt, mulled wine for the adults. When Mr. Yorke came to replace Mr. Campion there was a youth club at Tillington Rectory.

Our family had deep roots at Upperton and Tillington and my father and grandfather were both keen sportsmen. Dad badly damaged his ankle playing football and eventually had his leg amputated below the knee. He had a wooden leg but still cycled and climbed ladders as if nothing had happened. Working for Boxalls, he built Stevens Park at Stopham. My grandfather, T.C. Wilson, lived next door to the Horse Guards. By trade a painter and interior decorator, he ran the football club and a good deal else, as well as the local branch of the "Hearts of Oak". My grandmother was a Bridgewater, an old Upperton family. My father worked with horses before becoming a bricklayer and builder. He continued to love horses and horse-racing all his life. My mother was a great singer, and very much enjoyed being part of the "Nomads", a local variety group. I wonder if anyone remembers them, I have some Garland photographs from just before the 1939 war. When Leslie Yorke came to Tillington in the late 1940s he had a group of singers who travelled with him to funerals and weddings. Mother was a keen member. I had piano lessons with Mrs. Collins in East Street. Something else from school. Intersports days with neighbouring schools. I remember Lurgashall and Lodsworth - there may well have been others. Once I won a running race. Or rounders in the field at Upperton or tennis in the evenings. Tennis was a big part of my schooldays. I played in the school team. Our Upperton club had quite an active junior and senior membership. I was also an active member of Tillington Players, very much a force in the village then, which was great fun.

Sheila Lawes was talking to the Editor.

“I always do it. Don't you trust me?” At the Northchapel Stores in the 1950s

I was very interested in Robin Ellks' letter in PSM 127 concerning the Rolls Royce used by Messrs. Brown, Durant in the mid-1950s to deliver goods in the Northchapel area. There were two local rounds, repeated on alternate days and taking in a wide area. From its Northchapel base the first round covered Shillinglee, Gospel Green, Windfallwood, Stag Park and Blackdown and along the Petworth Road as far as Colhook Brickyard. Three deliveries a week by Bob Ellks. John Talman was the other driver, having the little Morris and taking in Northchapel village as far as Fisher Street crossroads, Lurgashall, Ebernoe and Mitchell Park. Groceries, paraffin, bread and items like ironmongery, china or drapery ordered from Brown, Durant's various departments. Bob Ellks had designed and built a covered trailer for the Rolls and it had the name Brown, Durant painted on the side. The original bread van remained in

the garage. I wonder what eventually happened to it.

My first acquaintance with the stores at Northchapel came in 1953, and this would be also my first real contact with the religious community known as "Cokelers" (or Dependants as they preferred to be called).¹ What had once been a flourishing business had entered on a long decline. Quite simply the community members who had once run the Stores had either died or grown old and there was no one to replace them. Younger blood was needed and if that meant operating with staff who were not adherents of the community then this had to be accepted. A number of us came at much the same time. Bob Ellks was himself fairly new in 1953. Mr. Smith the baker had found baking at night and delivering during the day too much for him and the bakery wasn't operating.

Although we were originally from Angmering, our family was living at Crawley Down. I had been working for a Mr. Jones in his grocery shop while Dad was working at a local baker's. Mr. Jones sold up and took a shop at Warnham and the Dependants there asked him if he would be prepared to run the Northchapel business as it was getting too much for the few elderly members that remained. Meanwhile my Dad's former boss at Crawley Down had given up and Dad was working for new people. Mr. Jones said he wasn't prepared to take on Northchapel as a full-time operation but he would supervise it and also ask our family if we would go to Northchapel and help out. We agreed and the whole family moved to Northchapel to live at the Stores. Dad re-opened the bakery and I went into the grocery department. My sister, who was a draper, went into the drapery department. My mother worked part-time with me in the grocery and also made the tea for everyone. Tea was announced by the ringing of a handbell and as soon as you were free in the shop you went along. It so happened that the other Northchapel shop changed hands at around this time and turnover, long in decline, began to rise. It was a time of change: the long-serving Mr. Varns and his two sisters left.

When we first came to Northchapel the drapery department was right at the northern end by the chapel with the furniture down by the garage on the far end. We moved the drapery in with the furniture, my sister shifting everything in a wheelbarrow and taking a flight of steps in her stride. The grocery and ironmongery had been adjacent and connected by a little door, with china in another little room on the other side. Mr. Jones decided to put the ironmongery and china together and to take down a partition wall to enlarge the grocery. In practice it was all left very much to us; Mr. Jones coming over from Warnham once a fortnight with Miss Mills, the secretary. The ironmongery was run by Miss Cole, one of the sisters, and in time an off-licence was put in where the ironmongery had been. One or two of the sisters still worked in the Stores. Miss Luff was with my sister in the drapery, in place of one of the Varns sisters, Mr. Miles being manager. He had his own car, and once a month would go round the district with samples, taking orders which would later come out in the delivery vans. Mr. Price was general manager, later replaced by Mr. Flarry and the staff was now basically non-Dependant. Mr. Brock, the caretaker, had a flat of his own and attended Northchapel church. The old order was changing: my nephew was the first baby to be seen on the premises certainly within memory. Miss Luff proudly carried him down the stairs. The influx of non-brethren

¹ For earlier history of the community see Peter Jerrome: *John Sirgood's Way* (Window Press 1998)

or outsiders not only halted the slide in the fortunes of the Stores: it increased the turnover very considerably. When I left in 1957 turnover was up five-fold from what it had been in 1953 - and these were hardly inflationary years. Wednesday was a half day and we worked a five and a half day week.

I should mention the W.C.s - unchanged I suppose from much earlier times. There were four down in the garden behind the garage. You entered through a single door and were then confronted with two more doors, each giving access to seats side by side. Privacy was definitely at a premium. We had family friends down for a weekend and the "arrangements" made a great talking point. Fifty years and more on, one of those who visited said to me only last Christmas, "I'll never ever forget those toilets!"

The Dependants, given their somewhat austere reputation and principles, were rather more relaxed about alcohol than might have been expected. After all, had not old Mr. Bicknell at Hillgrove, very much a Dependant, for years been the local cidemaker? One day my Dad wasn't feeling a hundred per cent and Miss Luff said to him, "Here, have a good drop of this Mr. Moller, it'll pick you up." And, lifting up her apron, she produced a half bottle of brandy. Drink for recreational purposes was taboo, but was in order for "medicinal" purposes. On other matters, too, the Dependants could be surprisingly relaxed. I had a little office where I looked after the books and invoices. Miss Cole came in to me and asked whether it would disturb me if she had the radio on. "Not at all," I replied. I seem to remember her listening to Terry Wogan. Was he really about in the mid-1950s, or does my memory play tricks? Miss Cole once said to me that she half-wished she'd got married, like her sister. It was widely believed that the Dependants did not countenance marriage. This was not strictly true: it was simply that marriage didn't fit very well with the communal, almost monastic, style of life that was their ideal. Certainly when I married in 1957 the Dependants were very generous with their presents, hardly an indication that they disapproved of marriage as such. At this time we bought our furniture from the Stores. Most of it we still have, look at this table with the wartime Utility mark underneath.

As regards wholesalers: I don't now remember them all. Lebus for furniture. Groceries from Eversheds of Shoreham, Mr. Randall being the rep. Some goods came direct, bags of flour for retail sale from Gwillims at Coultershaw, once a month. Our breadmaking flour came from the Cox's Lock Milling Company at Weybridge. I didn't have anything to do with the drapery, but I do remember visiting some relatives in London with my sister and going to Cooks of St. Paul's, just by the Cathedral. By this time my sister was doing some of the ordering. I don't know about the china and ironmongery. Confectionery came from Pelletts at Petworth, once a fortnight on a Friday. We went out to the van and took it from the van into the Stores.

The Dependants certainly didn't press their religion on their outside staff, quite the reverse in fact. I don't think I ever went into the chapel, I just have an impression of rows and rows of benches. Sunday services were at ten, two and six with evening services weekdays, Tuesday and Thursday. It wasn't something we incomers became involved in. Nor did I ever attend a Dependant funeral although I remember the beautifully made bier with glass panels. This the Dependants pushed and pulled to the cemetery themselves. The Northchapel Dependants were not buried at Loxwood, but in a special area in the Northchapel cemetery.

Despite their reputation as being rather strait-laced I found the Dependants quite humorous. They could certainly take a joke. Long before my time, when the muffin man was a regular visitor to Northchapel, some of the village boys rang a similar bell and retired behind a hedge, waiting for the black-clad Dependants to appear with their plates from the Stores. There was, of course, no one there. The brethren took it all in good part. When my husband's family, who lived directly opposite the Stores were down with measles between the wars, the Dependants came over with rice puddings, trifles, anything that would help. This was a regular practice of theirs locally.

While I was still at the Stores, the drapery moved in with the furniture and the space made was let out as a café, selling fish and chips and operating a milk round. The premises were always called by the name of Brown, Durant, but I never knew why. You say there were the original partners when the Stores were opened. Combination you say was the old word for the Dependants' commercial activity, but I do not remember ever hearing the expression.

The Dependants were unworldly and in some ways very trusting. When we came they banked weekly and a lady customer took the money into Haslemere on the bus. We didn't know this and were quite surprised when she came into the shop to ask for the takings. She caught the same bus every week and returned by the same bus. She was quite put out when we hesitated. "I always do, it, don't you trust me?" It wasn't of course a matter of trust, more a matter of changing the system. One of the men would take the money in weekly. "Who wants a haircut?" was the phrase. Grocery and drapery were banked separately for accounting purposes.

Dorothy Talman was talking to the Editor.

"The Lord was good to her" A reading of WSRO Add. Ms. 42155

When I was preparing *John Sirgood's Way*¹ in the mid-1990s, the Dependants were already quiescent. Formerly dominant at Loxwood, Warnham, Northchapel and elsewhere, the sect is now largely remembered for its extensive commercial activity. By the 1990s they were represented by their last surviving elder, Alfred Goodwin at Loxwood. Over the years the sect's experience with outside reporting had been, at least in their eyes, almost entirely negative and they had the reputation of being secretive. Alfred himself had been initially reserved, but came to be persuaded that sympathetic recollection of a significant past might be preferable to oblivion. He helped greatly with both reminiscence and documentation. When I had finished the book, I moved on to other things, but recently the chance discovery

¹ Window Press 1998. The Dependants were commonly known by the nickname "Cokelers", a name they did not readily acknowledge



An alternative view of Tillington old rectory taken by Walter Kevis in 1904. See "Croquet set in box."



*Tillington school children in the Pied Piper of Hamelin – see “Down the hill to meet Mrs Bateson.” How many can you identify?
Photograph by George Garland.*

of a transcript I had made of a Dependant notebook at the County Record Office reminded me of Dependant days. In the event, having made the transcript, I hardly used it, having copious other, and earlier, material to hand.

The notebook, from 1912, written by Eliza Stemp, is, by Dependant standards, relatively late. John Sirgood, founder of the Society of Dependents had been active on the Surrey-Sussex borders from the mid-1850s. He died in 1885. Springing originally from the Peculiar People in Essex, themselves a breakaway Methodist movement, Sirgood’s Church had taken on an ethos and an administration that was all its own. He wanted no obstacle between man and God: the usual adjuncts to religion; sacraments, set liturgy and ordained ministry were to be swept away as inimical to that relation. Hymns were to be of the Society’s own composition, using tunes, sometimes sacred, sometimes secular, that already existed. Worship rested on testimony, extempore prayer, the reading of Scripture and the singing of hymns. The spirit might be manifested in any of these activities. Sirgood’s converts tended to be, at least initially, unsophisticated and largely uneducated, his own attitude was unremittingly populist. He was, however, no dreamer and well aware of the challenging nature of his ideal. The spirit might come or it might not. It was certainly not something to be turned on and off like a tap. Given two or three Sunday services and others in mid-week, there might certainly be dry periods, in biblical terms “no open vision.” Sirgood knew that his ideal was a counsel of perfection but he persisted and he made no compromise.

A sister from Lord’s Hill,² Eliza in her notebook unconsciously suggests some of the strains that were part and parcel of Sirgood’s initial insight. Arriving in Brighton by train, Eliza was soon very much at home, even among strangers. Sunday morning service offered the usual Dependant patterning of hymn, testimony, Scripture reading and extempore prayer. There was, too, some indication of the spirit at work: “The brethren spoke and got much refreshed ...” while, ... “a dear sister read the 4th of Ephesians and the Lord was very good to her.” “Refreshed” and “the Lord was good to her” are effectively technical terms here - indicating the activity of the spirit. Afternoon service was followed by a “nice prayer together in the tea-room” and this in turn by evening service. A particularly Dependant note is struck by a chorus “We shall soon hear the trumpet and then we shall with Jesus reign and no more part again.” Both the end itself and the next world were very real for Sirgood and his followers. In the early days the founder had often had to implore his disciples to return home in the early hours, so intense was their expectation of the end.

The Dependants’ reserved attitude to marriage, or, perhaps more accurately, their preference for celibate communal life, would over the years exact its own retribution. Already by 1912 the Dependants bore signs of an ageing community. Significantly Eliza spends Monday morning visiting infirm, older members. In the evening she attends a house church at Portslade.

Leaving Brighton on the train, Eliza reflects, “Oh, how my heart did swell with love and gratitude to God for all his loving kindness to us all that he had made such provision for all mankind and there was a few upon earth that was living in the enjoyment of what was

² A Dependant stronghold just south of Guildford

provided." This awareness of separation from the rest of mankind is characteristically Dependant. Initially a source of strength, it would, as the Society ebbed through the death of older members, become a barrier to the sect's survival.

Once arrived in Warnham, Eliza was soon plunged into the familiar pattern of worship. Pleased at the Wednesday service to hear "The young lambs offer praise,.." there may, nevertheless, be here an element of whistling in the dark. Young members there certainly will have been at this time, but scarcely sufficient to arrest an overall decline in numbers. In fact Eliza's visit to Warnham coincided with a certain excitement in the little community. Brother and Sister Spooner from Northchapel had paid a visit on the Sunday and mid-week testimony very much reflected this. It cannot have been easy to find something different to say, Sunday and mid-week, week after week.

The Warnham brethren took Eliza on to Loxwood. Here she listened to a reading from Jeremiah 31 and observed that "although we did not get much manifestation of the spirit, it was very good to hear the brethren." John Sirgood's way continued as it had always been: simple, simplistic even, but never easy. A visit to the house church at Plaistow was followed by a visit to Northchapel. "I am sure that many felt like I did thankful to God for his help to us that altho' our dear Brother John had passed from the earth so many years ago, the good instruction he had given us had not been in vain." Dead already these twenty seven years John Sirgood's presence remained all-pervasive.

Very much a silver age document; Eliza's notebook is, like so much Dependant writing, discursive. The relentless piety and almost precious language will mask any tensions within such a tight-knit community, given, of course, that such tensions would be unlikely to surface during a series of visits. Some of the potential difficulties I have sketched would exacerbate with time. Distinctive as they once were, the Dependents are now no more.

P.

Nob's Lot

I was born at Somers Place, Billingshurst on 25/04/29 as Brian Thomas Blackman, and my mother always said I was a rogue, thief and a bloody liar. I cannot remember a lot about the place, but over the years when Mum was alive I heard a good bit. She told me the owner was a major and I only knew he had two sons. Mum always said that if they would not get up to go to school when asked the major would stand at the bottom of the stairs and shout up to the boys to get up by cracking a horse whip. If they didn't get up then, he would go up, and after a scream or two they were up.

The first place I have vague memories of was Muddberry Farm at Bosham. My Dad and two older brothers worked on the farm. Dad was a cowman and his brothers did farm work. Ken, the older one, used to take the milk to Bosham Station to catch the milk train. He used to have an Arab horse called Nobby. If I went missing from home I was always found in the field with Nobby so I got the nickname Nobby, and it still sticks.

We moved from Bosham to a place called Claygate in Surrey. The farm was close to Surbiton Golf Course. Us nippers used to go and find lost golf balls, take them back to the clubhouse and we would get one or two bars of chocolate or a bag of crisps. One of the players gave us an old club to play with. But do not do as I did - play golf with wasps nests!! I was stung from head to foot. The farm had gypsies in to hoe the mangles etc. We used to go and play with their kids, a nice lot. We would get tea made in an old tin over a wood fire. It was at Claygate I first started school. Mum took me there to sign me in ok, but by the time she walked home the mile and a half I was home indoors sitting at the table - you guessed it - I played hooky. My older brother used to get me to pick up fagends on the way home from schooldays they told me. So in the evening we used to go up to a place called Rucksly Heath, go across the field through the hole in the hedge and we were in Chessington Zoo. They had bought some peanuts, so we ate the nuts and put the fagends in place of the nuts. And, were those monkeys wild - they shook the cage bars and after a few more visits we were no longer welcome.

Then we moved from Claygate, after some good time to South Lane, Tillington where my Dad worked for Mr. Duck and Mr. King. I went to school in Tillington and had a lot of good times. I got friendly with a couple of boys that lived down a lane out towards Ladymead Lock. On light nights and weekends, as I was tall and narrow, I used to crawl in the hutch of the farm's chicken house down the field and pass out the eggs - not all out of one house - perhaps two or three. I think the boys' surname was Silvester, and we used to go down to their place and have a fry up with about six eggs.

Dad got fed up at South Lane and we moved to Shoreham-by-Sea to look after my Mum's mum and dad as they were getting old. I loved Shoreham. We got hold of an old pram and on Saturdays and Sundays two or three of us pushed the pram around the town to pick up horse droppings. Then we sold it for one old penny or tuppence to any gardener that wanted it. Dad had an accident at Glyndebourne Opera House, hurt his back, and wanted to get back into cows.

We moved to a hamlet called Byworth on 16/10/36 to work for a farmer called Mr. Thorne. That was the best thing in my book that my Dad ever did. They had a small herd of mixed shorthorn "could they bloody kick" Jersey/Guernsey cows. You name then - they were there. They built up the herd to about 24 and one old cow called Granny. I was taught to milk by hand (no machines in them days) I was only seven and a half years old. One of Dad's jobs was to exercise a bull. It had a ring in its nose and a halter. He had the undercowman, Mr. Stoner, to help him. I used to go to Petworth Boys' School before it was bombed. War broke out in 1939, but by Christmas my Dad had died with lobo pneumonia - cigarettes I think played a part in it. My Dad taught me how to set rabbit wires. We lived on rabbit stew and baked rabbit in the oven. He loved his garden as I love mine now.

We had to move from Byworth down the road to a place called Froghole. It was lovely: quite out of this world. In summer, with the window wide open, you could hear the moorhen, duck and geese singing on the pond. When war broke out they put a searchlight battery across the field under a hedge. Soldiers looked after it. One of them taught me how to use a catapult, I got to be a good shot, so again, no shortage of rabbits, pheasants, etc. He used to put out a

fishhook with bread on it to catch the duck on the pond. Really good food. Me and my brother Sandy (Alan), my sisters Barbara and Shirley went to Fittleworth School on the bus driven by Mr. Bert Sayers. By now most of the Common contained troops - Canadians, Yanks, and free French. In 1942 Petworth Boys' School was bombed and I lost a lot of old school pals. If you did anything wrong at home or in the village, when you got to school the next day the local copper would be waiting for you at morning breaktime, standing at the gate. He would shout your name out to go to the gate and tell you, plus about six more boys to be up the footpath called the Alley Dick. He would give you a bloody good talking to and a good clump round the earhole and that was the end of it - until next time - then it was harder. One winter we got snowed in and could not get to school. So we made up some sledges from old wood we got from the council clutter pit and started sledging down the hill by Froghole pond which had frozen over. After two or three days, and doping the runners with water the hill was deadly. You could start at the top and go down like hell, across the pond and hit the garden hedge. Coo, it did hurt if it turned over or went sideways. I can remember one time when it was nearly dark, it was the last run of the day. After all day with no dinner or hot drinks four of us got on the bigger sledge, kicked off down the hill, got down to the pond ice, hit a stump sticking out. You can guess what happened next - the sledge ground to a halt, we got offloaded onto our bellies, shot across the ice heading for the hedge. We all got up and had a damn good laugh - those were the days.

I can remember when we lived in Byworth between 1936-1940 we would play gingerbread knock door and bolt off. Another one was tip it. You would put a shirt button on a piece of black cotton with a pin in the putty around the window glass so that the button was about halfway down the glass. You'd connect a long piece of cotton across the road into somebody else's garden and tap the glass with the button. They did get uptight when you kept tapping the window. Or we would tie black carpet thread to one knocker on one side of the road and tie the other end to one on the other side. We would knock the door and run like hell, then as they opened the door the other knocker went. Good clean fun. My nephew and I played hooky for about five weeks up in the Gog Common with the Canadians. They gave us our dinner, so we had to be home by teatime and say we had a good day at school. But my sister (who was bombed out at Pompey) went down to the boys' school in North Street to take my nephew and me to get a new pair of school shoes, but we were not at school! So you can guess we had it coming to us when we got home. We had one bloody good hiding, no tea, and straight to bed.

As I got older I was offered some odd jobs. One was helping a Mr. Hurley from River Hill collecting grass mowings from different houses and taking it up to two big chicken houses, spreading it out thinly to dry, then bagging it up. We put it in bags on the donkey cart that used to deliver milk, cream and butter to Petworth House. We'd go up Froghole Hill to Egdean, up the main road to Plum Pudding Corner. There was a little hill just before you got there and the donkey used to jib so much that we had to turn him around and back up the hill till he had had enough.

While at Fittleworth School the schoolmaster's name was Mr. Bowyer. If he did not like you ok - look out - you could get six strikes of the cane, and that really hurt if you forgot

to put your thumb up above your hand. The last two years at school in the autumn some fifteen to twenty boys were sent on the school bus to Bedham. We were sent to a farm run by a Mrs. Hastings to pick up potatoes by hand. When we were up there sometimes the sky was black with Flying Fortresses going on raids to France and Germany. It was very frightening at the time because of the amount of noise. One time at dinner break my nephew found an old goose egg. One of our schoolmates knew it all, and could do nothing wrong. Basil shouted, "Hi hup, catch this." He did - the egg smashed - and did he stink. Nobody would work with him for the rest of the day. Sometimes we would work till 5 o'clock and then we had to walk the long way home. Another job I had in July and August was at Hallgate cutting thistles at two and sixpence an acre.

I left school aged fourteen and a half on 18th April 1943. Or should I say I didn't go any more as the head teacher couldn't control me, and started work in the cowshed at 5.30am. Had breakfast at 9 o'clock, and dinner was at 12 - 1 o'clock, so you could listen to the news about how the war was going. The farm was mixed. Pigs, sheep, beef cattle, heifers to go to milk, plus about 20-25 milkers. We were supposed to finish at 5pm but sometimes it would be 5.30-6pm. Then I had to pushbike a mile and a half home to Froghole in all weathers. It was a sod sometimes in the winter coming to work in the snow as it would drift. Blackout was in and you wouldn't see, go straight into the drift, over the handlebars and wallop. You got up, swore, got back and away. During the war we sometimes had one or two landgirls. Some were good, and some were as useful as a hole in the bottom of a water bucket. We grew a lot of home grown crops. Kale for cows, mangles for sheep and pigs, wheat for flour, and barley to grind for winter feed. You had to set out mangles or swede at 6-9" apart. That was a ruddy job - gave you backache as it was all done by hand. The hedge cutting and dungcart was done by horse and cart. Picking up potatoes was done by hand and bucket. A lot of soldiers helped when we were spudding, and you did not dare to put up your back end or it was hit by a well aimed spud. One of the jobs I liked best was harvest time, shokeing sheaves of corn. One favourite job was to go round the field and at arms length put out a good wad of grass or straw. You would do your shoking as the horses did the cutting. At the end of the day, go round the field, put your arm down the rabbit hole. Sometimes you got nothing, sometimes up to three rabbits. Lovely grub. I did not like haymaking the old way - it was hard work. Done by tractor sweep and elevator. I was nearly always put under the end of it. Dirty job as everything was put in hay or corn ricks. But at the end when they were thatched they did look nice. Not like our present day - lumps covered by flapping black plastic. I was taught to thatch and I loved it, but you did not stand back and admire what you had done, you did it from the ground. The old hand that taught me to thatch said he had known thatchers who had fallen from the top of the rick, got up and gone. He knew someone who had slipped on the second rung of the ladder and broke one or both legs. In the winter the threshing tackle would come in to do the barley for home use or to sell for malting, wheat for flour or oats for horses or cow feed. Oats were put in west of England sacks - at one and half cwt, barley was put in at two cwt, and wheat at two and a quarter cwt. At fifteen it was hard work to shift it on soft ground or load onto a lorry by hand. Then came all the hedge cutting and ditching before the rain came. No floods on the land in the 1940s - 1950s! Mr. Thorn had a son called Peter. We used to get on like

two brothers. We would work together at all sorts of jobs. We had one tractor bought in 1937 for £98.00. A recon. engine could be put in for £22.00. They bought another tractor on spade lugs. The other was on rubber tyres. Both were Ford Standard for ploughing. One day they went to Guildford Market so Peter and I went to a field with the iron wheeled one so he could show me how to plough with a 2 farrow Lister Cockshot. He said, "This rope trips the plough down, do it at the other end of the field, bring it back up. This lever on the drawbar holds on forward off back. This one puts the front farrow deeper or shallower. Twisting this one puts back deeper or shallower." Three turns of the field he said, and he would see me after dinner as he was going to market with Dad. Get on as best as you can. As years went by we got more modernised with better gadgets. The farm went in for acres of sugar beet - ruddy wet, muddy job. Once the beet was ready to lift you spent days knocking dirt off, topping them ready to take down to Petworth station and put into a truck to go to the factory. If you dropped the station master a good drink you got a good place to unload, if not it was in an awkward place. On one occasion Mr. Parker and I got in a hurry to finish a truck before the 12 o'clock goods train time. We went to the Railway Inn pub for a pint. We could hear the train whistle blow, blow, blow and next minute in walks the guard swearing like hell - yes, you guessed it - the station master was in the pub with a few pints in front of him.

Nobby Blackman.

[A rather less robust piece from Nobby is in PSM 61, September 1990. Ed.]



Wisborough Green 1951. A drawing by Harold Roberts.

- Outside
- ✓ 2 Low Tables 5'6" x 2'0"
 - ✓ Wood Front Pigeon House.
 - ✓ Park Tub.
 - ✓ Brewing Tub.
 - ✓ Skimmer.
 - ✓ Laundry Garden Tools & Pea protectors
 - ✓ 4 lengths Tan Netting
 - ✓ Weelbarrow
 - ✓ 15" Ransoms Sawndlower & Cover.
 - 6 9ft Planks
 - 7 Wicker Fruit Hampers
 - ✓ Two Iron Bound Brewing Tubs One 3" + One 3'6"
 - 3 Stirrers Wooden.
 - ✓ 9 Tred Library Ladder Leather Tok
 - ✓ Pair 10 Tred Steps
 - ✓ Knife cleaning Machine
 - ✓ Croquet set in Rose
 - ✓ 3 ft Wire stand
 - ✓ 3'6" Wicker Work & Co
 - ✓ 18" Iron Garden Roller.
 - ✓ Long dead Cupboards

"Outside" inventory at Tillington Rectory in 1898.

A sidelight on George Garland's early days¹

The Franciscans at Duncton were attached to the Catholic church there and were mainly lay brethren as I recall. The priest-in-charge would certainly be in orders and there might be at least one other priest but otherwise the brothers were lay. Many had their own trades which they used for the benefit of the little community. Brother Bernardine for instance was a tailor and he made the cassocks. Brother Lawrence's hobby was photography and he was a great friend of George Garland, then in his late teens, who lived with his mother and stepfather at the Railway Inn (now Badgers). It is generally thought, and Garland himself claimed, that his interest in photography went back to these early days with Brother Lawrence. I well remember the latter coming over to the Post Office to ask if he could take my photograph. There was also a Father Laurence in the tiny community and as Brother Laurence came from Northern Ireland and Father Lawrence from the south there were some lively discussions! These were the days before partition, days of the Black and Tans.

Toward the end there was a considerable turnover at the presbytery, people coming and going. It would be the early 1920s and the whole community had gone by the mid-twenties. My feeling was that they had become too poor to continue. They all lived in the cottage over by the church. Other members were Brother Nicholas and Brother Benedict, the latter an Italian. The lay brethren tended the garden, cleared the church, or did the cooking. There was Brother Matthew too, an elderly Irishman, and Brother James who had been a padre in the 1914-1918 war. The Franciscans had several such communities and I seem to remember that the few remaining brothers eventually went to Crawley. Father Pacificus was definitely a priest and used to preach, but I'm not sure that he was in overall charge. He may have been. As children we were often in the garden at strawberry time, and in the evening we would see across to the brothers going in and out for Compline. At Christmas they'd make festoons of holly leaves hung up with string. The brothers did a lot of good in the village and would help anyone whatever their religious persuasion.

Soon after I left school I was asked to help with Mrs Streeter, George Garland's mother. Cec. House used to take Mrs Streeter out during the afternoon but she'd found a job at the International Stores in Petworth. I used to go down to the Railway Inn every dinner time from twelve to two to take Mrs Streeter and her little dog out. Sometimes we'd go over to Fittleworth Mill on the train for her to have treatment for her arthritis. She was crippled with it. I became very fond of her.

At this time in the early 1920s George and my brother Bill were working together. Bill had had a week or two working for Nelson House the farmer but he didn't like the work. He really wanted to go into some kind of engineering something he eventually managed. When Mrs Streeter died, George left his stepfather at the inn and stayed with us for a time before moving to Petworth.

¹ From notes of a conversation with Ethel Goatcher some fifteen years ago. The Goatcher family ran the Post Office at Duncton for years. Ethel will be looking back to the 1920s and before. For other recollections by Ethel see PSM 52 and 76.

[For more on George Garland's links with the Franciscans see PSM 71 and 75.]



A Garland press picture of manoeuvres at Lavington Park in the early 1920s. It appeared in the News of the World – not one of Garland's usual press outlets.

Virtue and Fame

In writing of Charles Wyndham, second Earl of Egremont¹ I tried to do justice to his not inconsiderable impact on Petworth. I have however a handwritten copy of a "MS found in Anne Hallett's (Mrs Wm. Maude's) diary of her honeymoon tour in 1813." The whereabouts of this diary are unknown to me. A pencilled note by Colonel Maude says, "Hugh, 4th Lord Leconfield, informs me that these lines were written by Lord Chancellor Hardwicke in praise of Alicia Maria wife of Charles 2nd Earl of Egremont." The pencil note comes from the 10th February 1955. While the poem at first seems difficult, on an attentive reading it becomes quite clear and has its own charm. How justified is the Lord Chancellor's eulogy? I have retained capital letters as in the original.

Virtue and Fame the other Day
Happened to cross each other's Way:

¹ Peter Jerrome: Petworth from 1660 to the present day (2006) Chapter 8 "On defying the turtles ...". I did not however find occasion to treat of Alicia Maria his wife.

Says Virtue, "Think you, Madam Fame,
 Your Ladyship is much to blame;
 Jove bids you always wait on me,
 And yet your Face I seldom see:
 The Paphian Queen employs yr Trumpet
 And bids you praise some handsome Strumpet;
 Or thundering thro' the Ranks of War
 Ambition ties to you her Ear."
 Says Fame, "Dear madam I protest
 I never think myself so blest
 As when I humbly walk behind you;
 But 'tis so mighty hard to find you –
 On such obscure retreats you lurk,
 To seek you is an endless Work" –
 "Well," answered Virtue. "I allow
 Your Plea; but hear, and mark me now:–
 I know the best of Wives and Mothers,
 Who never passed a useless Day
 In Scandal, Gossiping or Play;–
 Whose modest Wit classified by Sense,
 Is lively cheerful Innocence;
 Whose Heart nor Envy knows, nor Spight,
 Whose Duty is her sole Delight;
 Nor ruled by Whim, nor slave to Fashion,
 Her Parents' Joy, her Husband's Passion."
 Fame smiled and answered, "On my Life
 This is some country Parson's Wife,
 Who never saw the Court or Town,
 Whose face is homely as her Gown;
 Who banquets upon Eggs and Bacon –"
 "No, Madam, no — you're quite mistaken:
 I beg you'll let me set you right;
 'Tis one, with every Beauty bright;
 Adorned with every polished Art
 That Rank, or Fortune can impart;
 'Tis the most celebrated Toast,
 That Britain's spacious Isle can boast;
 'Tis princely Petworth's noble Dame
 'Tis Egremont – Go tell it Fame! –"

[I have used quotation marks to divide speeches. These are absent in the original - but the poem is much clearer with them. Ed.]

1923 RECOLLECTIONS OF A.E.W. MASON WHEN HE LIVED AT TILLINGTON. EARLY
 SCENES OF "THE WINDING STAIR" LAID IN THE VILLAGE. MY MEMORY OF
 MASON TALKING ABOUT "AT THE VILLA ROSE" WITH THE LATE REV GOGGS,
 RECTOR AT TILLINGTON AT THAT TIME. MASON'S ASSOCIATION WITH E.V. LUCAS
 WHEN HE WAS LIVING AT CARDINAL MANNING'S OLD HOUSE IN TILLINGTON.
 AFTER MASON MOVED TO NEW GROVE, PETWORTH, I INTERVIEWED HIM
 FOR "THE BOOKMAN". OF MY TWO MORNING VISITS AND OF HIS GOOD WINE
 AND CIGARS. THE PICTURE OF A.E.W. (WHO WAS ALWAYS KNOWN LOCALLY
 AS "MAJOR" MASON) AND "SANDOW" HIS BIG RETRIEVER DOG, AND OF ITS
 SUBSEQUENT PUBLICATION IN AMERICA TOGETHER WITH MASON'S OBSERVATIONS
 UPON ITS PUBLICATION THERE. I ONCE HEARD HIM SPEAK AT A WOMEN'S
 INSTITUTE GATHERING AT NEW GROVE, AND WAS MUCH STRUCK BY HIS
 ABILITY IN THIS SPHERE. MASON'S HABIT OF WALKING UP AND DOWN THE LANE
 LEADING TO QUARRY FARM WHEN HE WAS THINKING OUT PORTIONS OF HIS BOOKS.
 1928 MY VISIT TO "PITSHILL" TO PHOTOGRAPH THE HOUSE WHEN KING GEORGE V
 WAS GOING TO STAY THERE FOR GOODWOOD RACES. MY VISIT TO "PITSHILL"
 TO PHOTOGRAPH THE HOUSE PARTY. MY INTRODUCTION TO THE KING, AND
 HIS SELECTION OF A PLACE FOR THE PHOTOGRAPH. CHANGING THE PLACE WHILE
 HE WAS CHANGING HIS HAT. HE WONT LET BE TAKEN IN THE ROSES. THE KING
 ARRANGED THE GROUP. BE QUIET SIR THE PHOTOGRAPHER IS DOING HIS BEST
 FOR YOU. YOU CAN TAKE AS MANY AS YOU LIKE BUT I WANT MY LUNCH.
 THE KING'S THANKS ON THE LAST DAY OF GOODWOOD, AND OF THE MANNER IN
 WHICH I VISITED HIM TO RECEIVE THEM!
 PHOTOGRAPHING THE ROYAL AMBULANCE AT PULBOROUGH WHEN HE WAS ON THE
 WAY TO CRAIGWELL HOUSE, AND HOW I FOUND MYSELF ON THE SIDE OF THE
 DRAWN BLINDS. OF MY LATER VISIT TO CRAIGWELL HOUSE AND OF HOW I WITH
 OTHER NEWSPAPER MEN WAS DRIVEN AWAY. THE DAILY MAIL SENT AN AEROPLANE
 AFTER THIS AND GOT SOME PICTURES.

*George Garland's notes for a talk about his early career. Can anyone fill out this synopsis?
 I will do what I can in the next Magazine. [Ed]*

